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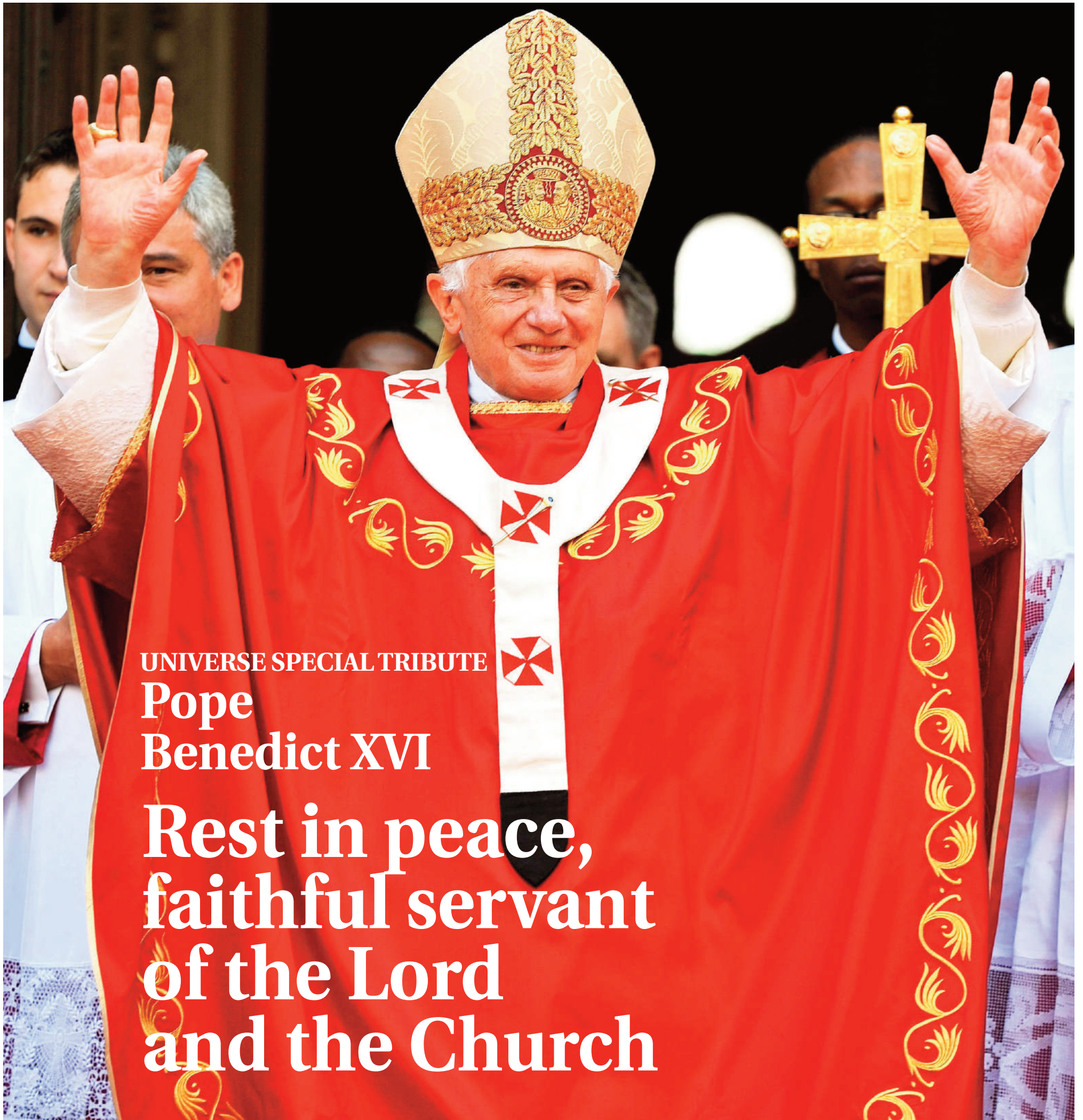
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UNIVERSE SPECIAL TRIBUTE

Pope
Benedict XVI

Rest in peace,
faithful servant
of the Lord
and the Church

A gentleman, a scholar, but above all, a man of God

Andy Drozdziak

Cardinal Vincent Nichols has paid tribute to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who served as Supreme Pontiff from April 2005 to February 2013 and has died aged 95, as “one of the great theologians of the 20th century.”

After two days of speculation about the failing health of the former pontiff, Matteo Bruni, director of the Holy See’s Press Office, issued a short statement on 31st December, saying: “With sorrow I inform you that the Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, passed away today at 9:34am in the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery in the Vatican.”

Cardinal Nichols, President of the Bishops’ Conference, led UK tributes, calling Benedict “a man of God” and “his humble servant.”

“I am deeply saddened to learn of the death of Pope Benedict. He will be remembered as one of the great theologians of the 20th century,” he said, adding his personal reflections of the late pope’s ‘remarkable’ visit to the UK in 2010.

“I remember with particular affection the remarkable Papal Visit to these lands in 2010. We saw his courtesy, his gentleness, the perceptiveness of his mind and the openness of his welcome to all he met,” the Cardinal said.

“He was through and through a gentleman, through and through a scholar, through and through a pastor, through and through a man of God – close to the Lord and always his humble servant.”

“Pope Benedict is very much in my heart and in my prayers. I give thanks to God for his ministry and leadership.”

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales celebrated Requiem Masses for the repose of the soul of the late Pope Emeritus in their cathedrals throughout the New Year weekend. Prayer cards were also distributed to Catholic parishes throughout England and Wales.

Pope Francis went to pay his respects immediately after Archbishop Gaenswein called to



Retired Pope Benedict XVI embraces Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster during the consistory in 2014 at which the head of the Church in England and Wales was made a cardinal

inform him of Benedict’s death shortly after 9.30am on Saturday.

During a morning Mass at St Peter’s Basilica, Pope Francis prayed for Benedict.

“Today we entrust to our Blessed Mother our beloved Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, so that she may accompany him in his passage from this world to God,” he said.

Calling the late pope a “great master of catechesis”, he said: “His acute and gentle thought was not self-referential, but ecclesial, because he always wanted to accompany us in the en-

counter with Jesus.”

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI’s last words were “Lord, I love you,” his long-time secretary said, quoting a nurse who helped care for the 95-year-old former pontiff in his final hours.

German prelate Archbishop Georg Gaenswein said the nurse recounted hearing Benedict utter those words at about 3am on Saturday.

The retired pope died later that morning.

“Benedict XVI, with a faint voice but in a very distinct way, said in Italian, ‘Lord, I love you,’” Archbishop Gaenswein told media.

UK tributes to Pope Benedict XVI

Andy Drozdziak

As the news of Pope Emeritus Benedict’s death broke, UK bishops were quick to pay their respects to the “inspirational shepherd” who offered an “inspiring moral authority to the world.”

Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham, was present at the Beatification of Cardinal Newman – the main part of the 2010 visit. He recalled “the warmth and impact of Pope Benedict’s presence in 2010 and especially during his visit to Birmingham for the Beatification of Cardinal Newman.

“He showed us the love of the pastor’s heart which had guided his ministry as priest, as bishop and as Supreme Pastor.”

The Right Reverend Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds, highlighted Benedict’s “gentleness and serenity” that sprang from “an intense personal relationship with Our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Bishop Philip Egan mourned the loss of “an inspirational shepherd who demonstrated a unique and inspiring moral authority to the world.”

Some bishops shared personal recollections of encounters with the late pope. **East Anglia Bishop Peter Collins** recalled a visit in 1988 to deliver the annual Fisher Lecture at the Catholic Chaplaincy in Cambridge. “When the chaplaincy was raising funds for a new chapel in 2005, Ratzinger, by then Pope, sent a donation of £2,000 from his own pocket,” Bishop Peter said.

Church offers thanks for long life of a true servant of the Church

Bishop Nicholas Hudson, Auxiliary Bishop for the Diocese of Westminster, fondly recalled introducing students from the Venerable English College in Rome to Pope Benedict. “The meeting ended with our presenting the Holy Father with a book containing images of English and Welsh Martyrs down through the centuries. Showing him pictures of Martyrs from the Venerable English College, the Holy Father was again visibly moved. Touching the book with the palm of his hand, he told the seminarians: ‘You are their successors,’” Bishop Hudson said.

Mark Davies was appointed Bishop of Shrewsbury by Pope Benedict and recalled how he spent 15 minutes discussing the Shrewsbury Diocese with him. “He spoke that day of the need of courage in giving witness to Christ,” Bishop Davies said. “This was the courage we saw in Pope Benedict himself...”

“This witness will be enduring.”

Bishop of Northampton David Oakley gave thanks “for his long life of service in the Church,” while **Bishop of Brentwood Alan Williams** said Benedict “brought his own gifts and unique personality to communicate effectively with young people.”

Middlesbrough Bishop Terry Draney called Pope Benedict’s writings “a legacy and a treasure.”

Bishop of Arundel and Brighton Richard Moth said he was deeply grateful for Pope Emeritus Benedict’s “steadfast witness and legacy,” while **Bishop of Lancaster Paul Swarbrick** said that Benedict leaves a “profound legacy for which we will be eternally grateful.”

Malcolm McMahon OP, Archbishop of Liverpool, called the late pope a great theologian who “opened the words of scripture to many.” **The Archbishop of Southwark, John Wilson**, focused on “his witness of service to the Church” and intellectual legacy of writing, “which is now

Meeting Archbishop Rowan Williams in 2010



part of the Church’s treasury for the future.”

Bishop of Wrexham Peter Brignall gave ‘thanks to God for the blessings bestowed upon the Church’, while **Archbishop of Cardiff Mark O’Toole** said: “Since he was a young man, Pope Benedict’s encounter with Jesus Christ gave the whole of his life a new horizon and a definitive direction.”

Salford Bishop John Arnold highlighted Benedict’s constancy at a changing time. “In a time of many political challenges and social change, Pope Benedict remained constant in his promotion of Gospel values.”



'Benedict, may your joy be complete as you hear His voice, now and forever!'

The historic funeral of Pope Benedict XVI took place on Thursday at the Vatican, the first time in centuries that a pope has celebrated the funeral of his predecessor.

Pope Benedict XVI "spread and testified to" the Gospel his entire life, Pope Francis told an estimated 50,000 people gathered for the funeral Mass. Cardinal Vincent Nichols joined around 120 cardinals, another 400 bishops and 3,700 priests who celebrated.

"Like the women at the tomb, we too have come with the fragrance of gratitude and the balm of hope, in order to show him once more the love that is undying," Pope Francis said in his homily.

Pope Benedict, who retired in 2013, had requested his funeral be simple; the only heads of state invited to lead delegations were those of Italy and his native Germany.

However, many dignitaries, including Queen Sofia of Spain and King Philippe of Belgium, and presidents and government ministers representing more than a dozen nations were in attendance, as were most of the ambassadors to the Holy See.

Guests included the late pope's closest friends and representatives of the Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Anglican, Protestant and evangelical communities. Jewish and Muslim organisations also sent delegations.

Pope Francis presided over the Mass and Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals, was the main celebrant at the altar.

Pope Francis spoke of Jesus' grateful, prayerful and sustained devotion to God's will and how Jesus' final words on the cross, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit,' summed up his entire life.

"His were hands of forgiveness and compassion, healing and mercy, anointing and blessing, which led him also to entrust himself into the hands of his brothers and sisters," he said.

"Father into your hands I commend my spirit," the pope said, is the plan for life that Jesus quietly invites and inspires people to follow.

"Like the Master, a shepherd bears the burden of interceding and the strain of anointing his people, especially in situations where goodness must struggle to prevail and the dignity of our brothers and sisters is threat-

ened," the pope said.

Quoting his predecessor's homily marking the start of his pontificate in April 2005, Pope Francis said: "Feeding means loving, and loving also means being ready to suffer. Loving means giving the sheep what is truly good, the nourishment of God's truth, of God's word, the nourishment of his presence."

"Benedict, faithful friend of the Bridegroom, may your joy be complete as you hear his voice, now and forever!" he concluded.

The Vatican has released the official history of Benedict's life, a short document in Latin known as a '*rogito*', or deed, which was placed in his coffin before it was sealed.

The document gave ample attention to Benedict's historic resignation and referred to him as 'Pope emeritus', citing verbatim the Latin words he uttered on 11th February 2013, when he announced he would retire.

The document also cited his theological and papal legacy, including his outreach to Anglicans and Jews and his efforts to combat clergy sexual abuse "calling the Church to conversion, prayer, penance and purification".

Among the mourners was Fiona-Louise Devlin, who had travelled to Rome from Scotland with a friend specifically for the funeral.

"He's the pope of our generation. I've travelled around the world to go to celebrations that he's been a part of, so I wanted to be here for this," she said.

The crowd applauded as the pope's cypress casket was brought into the square and placed before the altar.

The pope's master of liturgical ceremonies, Mgr Diego Giovanni Ravelli, and Archbishop Georg Gänswein, the late pope's longtime personal secretary, together placed an opened Book of the Gospels on the casket. The simple casket was decorated with his coat of arms as archbishop of Munich and Freising, Germany, which depicts a shell, a Moor and a bear loaded with a pack on his back.

At the pope's funeral, like any Catholic funeral, Communion was followed by the 'final commendation and farewell.' A bell tolled solemnly and the assembly applauded for several minutes – some chanting "Benedetto" – as pallbearers carried the casket into St Peter's basilica.

All of Ireland saddened by pope's passing

The leader of the Catholic Church in Ireland, Eamon Martin, said he was "saddened" by Benedict's death and praised the former pontiff's reaction to the abuse scandal in the Church.

Primate of All-Ireland Martin hailed the late pope's contribution to addressing the abuse crisis, highlighting the "urgent action" he called for to address the crisis.

Archbishop Martin said: "At this time of mourning in the Catholic Church throughout the world, we remember his gentle soul in prayer, asking God, in His great mercy, to

Archbishop Martin hailed Benedict's contribution to addressing the abuse crisis



forgive his sins and human failings, while rewarding his generous service and complete dedication to the Gospel and to the Church.

"On behalf of the Irish Bishops' Conference, and the faithful across Ireland, I extend sympathy to Pope Francis, to the family members and carers of the Pope Emeritus, and to all those in his native Germany and around the globe who loved him and will mourn his loss."

The Archbishop of Armagh pinpointed "humility and gentleness" as attributes which struck him when he first met Pope Benedict in 2009.

"I found him to be calm and softly spoken, kindly and personable, and genuinely interested in the Church in Ireland," he said.

"Having met the Irish bishops in Rome in February 2010, he issued a unique pastoral letter to the Catholics of Ireland expressing profound sorrow for those grievously wounded by abuse in the Church.

"He called for urgent action to address the legacy of abuse which, he wrote, 'has had such tragic consequences in the lives of victims and their families', and which has 'obscured the light of the Gospel to a degree that not even centuries of persecution succeeded in doing'."

Archbishop Martin also highlighted many of Benedict's "outstanding" achievements during his time in office.

"Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI was a person of deep spirituality and prayer, an outstanding apostle of Christ," he said.

"With his great capacity to listen combined with a personal, discreet charm, the late pope was able to win people to Christ wherever he was: during the World Youth Day celebrations, he attracted the attention of thousands of young people; his encouragement for the World Days of the Sick, World Meetings, and his travels around the world and meetings with religious leaders, politicians and academics."

Archbishops Eamon Martin and Dermot Farrell attended the Funeral Mass in the Vatican.

Francis praise for great master of catechesis

Pope Francis has praised Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's "acute and gentle thought" as he presided over a general audience in the Vatican while thousands paid tribute to the former pope on the final day of public viewing of his body in St Peter's Basilica.

Francis was greeted by an enthusiastic crowd in the Paul VI auditorium and shouts of "Viva il papa" or "Long live the pope" as he arrived for his weekly appointment with the faithful.

This week's audience drew an unusually large

crowd as more than 130,000 people have flocked to the Vatican following Benedict's death on Saturday and lined up to pay their respect to the German pope as he lay in state on the basilica.

Francis drew applause when he noted all those who were outside paying tribute to Benedict, whom he called a "great master of catechesis".

"His acute and gentle thought was not self-referential, but ecclesial, because he always wanted to accompany us in the encounter with Jesus," Francis said.

Benedict, who was elected pope in 2005 following John Paul's death, became the first pope in six centuries years to resign when he announced in 2013 he no longer had the strength to lead the Catholic Church.

"We can't forget the example that he gave in his resignation; he more or less said, 'Look, I'm not in this for the prestige, the power, I'm in it for service, as Jesus taught,'" recalled Cardinal Dolan, whom Benedict named archbishop of New York in 2009 and cardinal in 2012.

The deep-thinking theologian who never considered himself ‘papabile’

The Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales pays its own official tribute to the late Pope in this obituary

Benedict XVI was Pope for fewer than eight years – 19th April 2005 to 28th February 2013 – and became generally known in Britain as the second pope in history to visit the UK, in 2010. The first such visit had been by Pope John Paul II, in 1982.

There were plenty of gloomy predictions for Pope Benedict’s visit: hostile demonstrations were expected, while apologists for a new atheism resurrected a nickname for him as ‘God’s rottweiler’. But he was cordially welcomed by the Queen in Edinburgh and cheered by the crowds.

The turning-point that sealed the visit as a national success came on the second day: the Pope’s address to representatives of society, including parliamentarians, under the ancient beams of Westminster Hall. He spoke about “the legitimate role of religion in the public square” and he was listened to.

He pressed the idea that “the Church and the public authorities can work together for the good of citizens” and he was applauded by David Cameron, the then-Prime Minister, and his predecessors Gordon Brown, Tony Blair, John Major and Margaret Thatcher. The Pope received a standing ovation as he walked down the great length of the hall.

The central purpose of the visit was to beatify – declare Blessed – the great 19th century English theologian Cardinal John Henry Newman. Some 55,000 people stood for hours in a grassy field at Cofton Park, Birmingham, in intermittent drizzle, for the Mass of Beatification. They sang Newman’s *Praise to the Holiest in the Height* and the liturgy to the music of James MacMillan.

In his homily, the Pope mentioned that the day happened to be the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. “For me as one who lived and suffered through the dark days of the Nazi regime in Germany, it is deeply moving to be here with you on this occasion, and to recall how many of your fellow citizens sacrificed their lives, courageously resisting the forces of that evil ideology.”

As for Newman, the Pope singled out his “gentle scholarship, deep human wisdom and profound love for the Lord.” As he had recalled in 1990, he was inspired by Newman’s teaching on conscience as a seminarian at Freising after the War.

One other detail from that visit struck many television viewers: the evening prayer vigil, the night before the beatification, attended by the



Pope in Hyde Park. It was not so much what was said, as the sight of 80,000 people silent for a good spell as they prayed before the Blessed Sacrament in a public place.

There is a website dedicated to Benedict XVI’s visit to the UK in 2010.

Early Years

This Pope who had won over British hearts was baptised Joseph Ratzinger on the day of his birth, 16th April 1927 – Holy Saturday – at Markt am Inn, in Bavaria, near the Austrian border. His mother had worked as a cook; his father was a policeman whose criticisms of the Nazis led to the family moving from

one small town to another.

In 1943, Joseph was conscripted into anti-aircraft duties and later began training in the infantry. He deserted the army as war finished, and was interned for a while as a prisoner of war by American troops. On 29th June 1951, he and his brother Georg were ordained priests.

Ratzinger’s thesis for his doctorate in theology from the University of Munich was on St Augustine’s idea of the People of God. His post-doctoral thesis in 1957 was on St Bonaventure, and this, to his alarm, he had to revise to satisfy the objections of one of the examiners, who saw in its approach to revelation a ‘dangerous modernism’,

Ratzinger recalled.

Ratzinger taught theology at Freising and then in Bonn. From 1963 to 1966 he taught at Münster, and from 1966 to 1969 in Tübingen, where in 1968 he observed ‘a very violent explosion of Marxist theology’.

In 1969 he took up a professorship at the University of Regensburg.

In 1962, aged 35, he had accompanied Cardinal Josef Frings of Cologne as a *peritus*, or theological adviser, to the Second Vatican Council, attending all four sessions. Ratzinger’s insights into divine revelation as the source of Scripture and tradition, which had caused trouble in his post-doctoral thesis, found a place in the Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*.

In 1972, Ratzinger joined Hans Urs von Balthasar, Henry De Lubac and others in founding the theological journal *Communio*.

Archbishop and Cardinal

In 1977, came a change in direction for his life, up to then directed towards theology. Pope Paul VI named him Archbishop of Munich and later that year he was made a cardinal.

Three years into his pontificate, in 1981, Pope John Paul appointed Cardinal Ratzinger as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the department of the curia responsible for promoting and defending the Catholic faith.

In that role, as during his years as pope, his position as a respected theologian proved invaluable. That was his métier and – in the professional life behind his hierarchical offices – his vocation.

In 1984, Ratzinger issued an instruction drawing attention to ‘certain forms of liberation theology which use, in an insufficiently critical manner, concepts borrowed from various currents of Marxist

thought’. This was followed up two years later by a more positive instruction on ‘the Christian doctrine on freedom and liberation’ which lies ‘at the heart of the Gospel message’.

In the six years leading up to its publication in 1992, Cardinal Ratzinger headed the committee that drew up the Catechism of the Catholic Church, a project which had come out of the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops in 1985, encouraged by Pope John Paul II. It aimed at being an organic synthesis of the essentials of Catholic doctrine, as regards both faith and morals, in the light of the Second Vatican Council.

Ratzinger made his first visit to England in 1988 to give the annual Fisher lecture at the Catholic chaplaincy at Cambridge on ‘Consumer Materialism and Christian Hope’.

When the chaplaincy was raising funds for a new chapel in 2005, Ratzinger, by then Pope, sent a donation of £2,000 from his own pocket.

At the funeral of Pope John Paul in 2005, as Dean of the College of Cardinals, he preached a homily, as he did at the Mass for those assembled to elect a new pope, during which he said: “An ‘adult’ faith is not a faith that follows the trends of fashion and the latest novelty; a mature adult faith is deeply rooted in friendship with Christ.”

Elected Pope

On 19th April 2005, Cardinal Ratzinger, aged 78, was elected the 265th Pope, and chose the name Benedict. Commenting on this choice, he made reference to Pope Benedict XV (1914-22) as an apostle of peace, and to the monastic founder St Benedict of Nursia (480-547) “whose life evokes the Christian roots of Europe”. He was the first German pope in almost 1,000 years.

As a theologian, Ratzinger had long emphasised the role of Judaism in revelation and salvation history. As Pope, Benedict visited Auschwitz in 2006. He said of the Nazis: “By destroying Israel, they ultimately wanted to tear up the tap root of the Christian faith.”

The year after his election, Pope Benedict was caught up in a controversy regarding Islam. Invited to give a lecture at the Regensburg University, where he had spent happy years as a professor, he referred in passing to a dialogue in 1391 between a Byzantine emperor, Manuel II Palaeologus, and a Persian, in which the emperor had said: ‘Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new and there you will find things only



Queen Elizabeth II and Pope Benedict XVI exchange gifts during an audience at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh during the pope’s visit to the UK in 2010

bad and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached.'

This quotation was not intended to reflect the Pope's own attitude, but critics thought he should have seen the potential for offence. Despite initial alarm, the lecture was followed by an open letter signed by 38 respected Muslim leaders declaring that they accepted the Pope's 'assurance that the controversial quote did not reflect his personal opinion.'

A year later, 138 Muslim scholars published an open letter 'A Common Word Between Us and You', emphasising that Muslims and Christians worship the same God and should live in peace.

Encyclical Letters

Pope Benedict wrote three encyclicals. *Deus caritas est* (*God is Love*, 2005) discussed the positive value of two Greek words for love, eros and agape, and of the word for friendship, philia. The encyclical incorporated some work left unfinished by Pope John Paul II.

In *Spe Salvi* (*Saved by Hope*, 2007) he explored the relationship between the virtue of hope and Christian redemption. *Caritas in veritate* (*Love in Truth*, 2009) covered aspects of social justice, global development and respect for the environment.

A fourth encyclical begun by Benedict, *Lumen fidei* (*The Light of Faith*) was finished by his successor, Pope Francis.

An unconventional aspect of Benedict's pontificate was the publication of three devotional books on the life of Jesus written under his own name, Joseph Ratzinger, not intended to be part of his teaching as Pope.

Pope Benedict's attitude to the liturgy was no unthinking reversion to ways of the past. In his youth he had been enthused by the reforming liturgical movement in Germany. Like his successor, Pope Francis, Pope Benedict was an admirer of Romano Guardini (1885-1968), who had encouraged lay participation in the Mass, with use of the vernacular, long before the Second Vatican Council.

Tridentine Rite

But Benedict did not want to cut off Catholics who loved the older version of the Latin Mass, and in



Pope Benedict XVI at the beatification of John Henry Newman in Cofton Park, Birmingham

2009 he issued an Apostolic Letter, *Summorum Pontificum*, which made it much easier for most priests to say Mass according to the version of 1962, the revised Tridentine Missal promulgated by Pope John XXIII, the instigator of the Second Vatican Council. In England and Wales an indult already existed that had made it possible for priests to use the older form. This remained the case until July 2021 when Pope Francis published the *motu proprio*, *Traditionis Custodes*.

Ordinariate

An exercise in ecumenism came in 2009 with the apostolic constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus*. This made provision for personal ordinariates (a little like bishoprics of the armed forces) in which people from an Anglican background could retain some of their 'heritage' while being fully part of the Catholic Church. England proved to be the first place it was tried, with the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham being set up in January 2011.

St Hildegard of Bingen

In 2012, Pope Benedict canonised St Hildegard of Bingen, the 12th-century theologian, natural scientist and composer, and declared her a

doctor of the Church. She was one of the few prominent woman in the medieval church and joined the ranks of Saints Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Sienna and Therese of Lisieux – just four women of the 35 saints – to be declared Doctors of the Church.

Evil of Abuse

Benedict felt personal pain in contemplating the evil of sexual abuse within the Church. From 2001 he had put the then Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith at the service of the campaign to prevent further abuse. During the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday 2005, days before his election, he had exclaimed: "How much filth there is in the Church."

In 2010, writing to victims of sexual abuse in Ireland he said: "I openly express the shame and remorse that we all feel." He could only look to the example of Christ: "Like you, he still bears the wounds of his own unjust suffering."

Praying for the Church

Pope Benedict was shy in manner. He did not wow vast crowds like John Paul II. He travelled nevertheless, taking trouble to be there for World Youth Day in Cologne (2005), Sydney (2008) and

Madrid (2011). Like his brother Georg, a choirmaster, he appreciated church music and enjoyed playing the piano. Benedict was pleasantly taken by the music at Westminster Abbey, when he visited England, as he was by the outstanding choir of Westminster Cathedral.

He had a feeling for traditional clerical dress. Perhaps because he felt the cold he resumed the use of a fur-trimmed mozzetta in winter, but he showed an insight into the mystical significance of the ancient wool-scarf called the pallium that he donned when he became pope: "The lamb's wool is meant to represent the lost, sick or weak sheep which the shepherd places on his shoulders and carries to the waters of life."

Pope Benedict's idea of a holiday was not mountaineering, like his predecessor, but spending a few days in a theological colloquium. He loved cats. His brother Georg remembered one that used to follow him to lectures at Tübingen.

Nothing in his pontificate took the world by more surprise than his announcement, kept brief, in Latin, on 11th February 2013 that he would abdicate at the end of the month. He would, at 85 years and 318 days, be the fourth oldest person ever to be Pope. He had long hoped for peace to study and write, but had repeatedly agreed to new duties laid upon him.

16 years earlier, in 1997, at the age of 70, he had hoped that he might retire and devote himself to research in the Vatican archive. It was not to be. But in 2013 he saw, with brave realism, his increasing weakness in the face of the physical and mental demands of the papacy.

Benedict was to be known as Pope Emeritus, and he continued to wear a white cassock, but without the mozzetta and red shoes. The Ring of the Fisherman that he had used for his pontificate was formally destroyed.

He lived in a house in the grounds of the Vatican. He sometimes met Pope Francis, but he never meddled. He did what he said he would: he prayed for the Church.

In brief

Benedict hailed as 'a genuine friend of the Jewish people'

Pope Benedict XVI will be remembered as "a genuine friend of the Jewish people", said Rabbi David Rosen, international director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, and is a pope who leaves "a committed legacy in fostering Jewish-Catholic relations."

Rabbi Rosen praised the way he fleshed out the Second Vatican Council's call to reject antisemitism, placing the relationship between Catholics and Jews "in unique theological terms."

Despite some missteps, Pope Benedict ensured that engagement between the Catholic Church and the Jewish community, pioneered by Pope St. John Paul II, became "what popes do" as a matter of course, added Rabbi Noam Marans.

Phillip Cunningham, an expert on Jewish-Catholic relations told OSV News that the late pope's "stress on the importance of ongoing dialogue with Jews will be his greatest legacy with regard to Catholic-Jewish relations."

Noted biographer in sainthood claim

Noted religious biographer Peter Seewald has described Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as someone "who is what he says and what he preaches," and "will be canonised someday."

During his meetings with the pope "I saw a person who is what he says and what he preaches – also someone with extreme intelligence," Seewald said.

The pope did not "not put himself in the foreground, but who, from the knowledge of the Church, from the witnesses of the Gospel, from the tradition of Catholicism and from his very own power of thought and inspiration (could) tell you something that transforms a person of our time, a modern person."

He added, "So I found out that he is a personality not only exciting and worth listening to, but also someone that moves you to follow his path, and I did that myself."

Seewald wrote an international bestseller with Pope Benedict XVI and a thick biography followed.



'He lived in a house in the grounds of the Vatican. He sometimes met Pope Francis, but he never meddled. He did what he said he would: he prayed for the Church.'

Pope Benedict XVI timeline

Key dates and events in the life of Pope Benedict XVI

April 16, 1927: Joseph Ratzinger is born in Markt am Inn, Germany.

1945: With World War II ending, the 18-year-old conscripted soldier deserts from the German army and is held briefly as a US prisoner of war.

June 29, 1951: He is ordained a priest along with his brother, Georg, and continues his theological studies.

1958-1977: He teaches theology at five German universities.

1962-1965: Father Ratzinger serves as an expert at the Second Vatican Council.

May 28, 1977: He is ordained a bishop, becoming the archbishop of Munich and Freising, Germany.

June 27, 1977: Pope Paul VI elevates him into the College of Cardinals.

1981-2005: He serves as prefect of the Holy See's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

April 19, 2005: Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, 78, elected pope and takes the name Benedict XVI.

Dec. 22, 2005: In a meeting with top aides at the Vatican, Pope Benedict insists the teaching of the Second Vatican Council must be read in continuity with the Church's tradition.

Sept. 12, 2006: In a speech about faith and reason at the University of Regensburg, Germany, Pope Benedict cites a historical criticism of violence in Islam, setting off consternation and protests.

April 16, 2007: The first of what would be a three-volume work, *Jesus of Nazareth*, by Pope Benedict goes on sale and is an immediate commercial success.

July 7, 2007: Pope Benedict issues an apostolic letter, *Summorum Pontificum*, permitting wider use of the 1962 Roman Missal.

April 15-20, 2008: Pope Benedict visits Washington, New York and the United Nations, meets with victims of clerical sex abuse for first time.

January 2009: With Pope Benedict's approval, the Vatican issues a letter lifting the excommunication of four traditionalist bishops belonging to the Society of St. Pius X to clear the way for reconciliation talks with the group.

Nov. 4, 2009: With the apostolic constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus*, Pope Benedict establishes personal ordinariates for Anglicans entering into full communion with the Catholic Church.

July 15, 2010: With the approval of Pope Benedict, the Vatican releases streamlined procedures for handling accusations of clerical sexual abuse and removing from the priesthood those found guilty.

May 1, 2011: Pope Benedict beatifies Pope John Paul II.

Feb. 28, 2013: Pope Benedict, 85, becomes the first pope in almost 600 years to resign; he cited declining strength because of age.

2013-2022: Lives a 'monastic' life of prayer and study, receives visitors in a renovated monastery near the Vatican Gardens. With prompting from Pope Francis, he appears in public for a number of significant Church events at the Vatican.

Dec. 31, 2022: Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI dies.



Pope Benedict XVI with the then Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks at a meeting of religious leaders at St Mary's University College Chapel in Twickenham, London, in 2010. An expert on Catholic-Jewish relations has described Pope Benedict as a "genuine friend of the Jewish people."

Churches unite in praise of much-loved pontiff

Christian Churches across the world have expressed deep sorrow at the death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and remember him as a fine theologian committed to ecumenical dialogue and a very humane person.

World Council of Churches

Following the announcement of his passing away on 31 December, the acting general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Reverend Ioan Sauca, expressed the "deepest condolences" of all its member Churches, highlighting his significant contribution to ecumenical dialogue.

Noting that he was the first pope to have come from a country, Germany, with a roughly equal balance between Protestants and Catholics, and one that had been at the very centre of the 16th century Reformation, Rev. Sauca said that Benedict XVI was the first Pontiff to have belonged to a committee of the WCC, as one of the Catholic members of its 'Faith and Order Commission'.

"He demonstrated courage as much in his leadership, his writings, and his pronouncements," said Sauca, remarking that "In the one ecumenical movement, he constantly affirmed as irreversible the deep involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in ecumenism, especially in responding to the challenging issues for the church in the world."

Lutheran Church: Theologian who left an impression on all Christians

The president of the Council of the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD), Annette Kurschus, highlighted the Pope Emeritus' theological acumen, as well as his contribution to ecumenical dialogue.

"Joseph Ratzinger has provided theological contributions with great insight and intellectual synthesis that have impressed Christianity in general and the public far beyond the Catholic Church," the Lutheran theologian said. "At the same time, he has given guidance

to many people."

Kurschus recalls in particular Benedict XVI's words during his Apostolic Journey to Germany in 2011 in which he stressed that "the most important thing for ecumenism is not to lose sight of the great things in common that make us Christians in the first place."

Patriarch Bartholomew: Respect, love and gratitude

Benedict XVI's commitment to Christian unity and courage in resigning have been also highlighted by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I who expressed "respect, love and gratitude" for the late Pope.

During a Divine Liturgy celebrated on Sunday at the Phanar for the first day of the year, the Head of the Greek Orthodox Church, recalled the Common Declaration they signed on 30th November in Istanbul, during his Apostolic Journey to Turkey, marking a historic step forward in Catholic-Orthodox relations.

Noting that they worked together all along his pontificate, the Patriarch again highlighted was a distinguished theologian, whose deep knowledge of Orthodox theology was very

much appreciated in the Orthodox world.

Bartholomew further highlighted his "fortitude and courage" to resign just eight years after his election as Bishop of Rome.

Orthodox Church

Leaders of Orthodox Churches also shared their condolences for the Pope Emeritus' death. Among them were Pope Tawadros II, head of the Orthodox Coptic Church in Egypt, who hailed Benedict XVI as "the best successor to the best predecessor" Pope St. John Paul II, who spent his entire life in "the service of his Roman Catholic Church"; Romanian Patriarch Daniel described him as a "venerable and well-known contemporary personality."

Ukrainian Catholic

Ukrainian Catholic Eparch Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski recalled with deep affection how he spent time in prayer before the Pope Emeritus. The Ukrainian Catholic Church in England and Wales was elevated to eparchial status – effectively a diocese – on Pope Benedict's watch in January 2013.

He will be remembered as a strong friend of Ukrainian Catholics, he added.



‘A man of peace... who was deeply engaged with modern thought...’

Church and political leaders across Britain and Ireland paid tribute to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on learning of his death.

King Charles III

In a message to Pope Francis, King Charles III said he learned of the death of the Pope Emeritus with “deep sadness.”

The British monarch wrote that he remembered “with fondness” his meeting with Pope Benedict in the Vatican in 2009. He said the late Pope’s state visit to Britain in 2010 was important in strengthening the relations between the Holy See and the United Kingdom and praised Benedict’s “constant efforts to promote peace and goodwill to all people.”

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said he was “saddened” to learn of the death of Benedict XVI. The late Pope was “a great theologian whose 2010 visit to the UK was an historic moment for both Catholics and non-Catholics throughout our country.”

Leader of the Opposition Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer recalled how “the pope’s state visit in 2010 was a historic and joyous moment for Catholics in Britain.”

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, whom Benedict met during that same visit to Britain, said



Pope Benedict XVI with the then Prince Charles in a meeting at the Vatican in 2009. The King recalled his “great fondness” for the former pope, and praised his efforts to deepen relations between the Holy See and the UK

that he joined with all those mourning the death of the late Pope.

The archbishop described Pope Benedict as one of the greatest theologians of his age, adding that throughout his life and ministry, Benedict strove to direct people to Christ.

Scotland’s First Minister Nicola Sturgeon paid tribute to the former pope after his “special” visit to Scotland. She wrote on Twitter: “Sad to hear of the death of Pope Benedict. His visit to Glasgow in 2010 was a very special moment in the life of our

nation. My condolences to all those in the Catholic faith in Scotland and beyond – and to everyone across the world mourning him today.”

Irish President Michael D Higgins has led tributes to former Pope Benedict, praising his “steadfast interest

in peace in Northern Ireland”.

Mr Higgins said that, at a time of the return of war on the European continent, Benedict will be remembered “for his untiring efforts to find a common path in promoting peace and goodwill throughout the world, including a steadfast interest in peace in Northern Ireland”.

“He will be remembered too for the value he attached to intellectual work and for the personal commitment he gave to such within the Catholic Church, this work being respected by both supporters and critics,” he added.

“Of particular importance was that, during his tenure, Pope Benedict sought to highlight both the common purpose of the world’s major religions and his injunctions as to how our individual responsibilities as citizens require the highest standards of ethics in our actions.”

Bishop Hugh Gilbert, the President of Scotland’s Catholic Bishops’ Conference, recalled how, during his visit to the UK in 2010, the late Pope’s “gentle and prayerful intelligence disarmed critics.”

Benedict was, he said, “often misunderstood, even caricatured” but contrary to a widespread perception, the late Pope was “deeply and critically engaged with modern thought” and “pastorally sensitive.”

First Minister leads Wales in mourning death

The First Minister of Wales, the Rt. Hon Mark Drakeford MS, attended a service of Memorial Vespers in Cardiff’s Catholic Cathedral on 3rd January to pay his respects to the late pope, and paid tribute to his ælife of service to the Church.”

Archbishop Mark O’Toole, Archbishop of Cardiff and Bishop of Menevia, led the service and used his sermon to pay a warm tribute to Benedict XVI in the presence of ecumenical and interreligious

guests as well as local dignitaries.

“He did not want to be served but to serve,” Archbishop O’Toole said. “He was a faithful and humble servant of the Gospel.”

“He gave out all the wealth of his heart, and intellect, and serving in this way, he has left us rich fruit, especially in the corpus of his writings, homilies, papal audiences, as well as his sensitive attention to the person in front of him.”

‘An honour to work with him’

Archbishop Leo Cushley has recalled the “honour” of working closely with Pope Benedict XVI.

Archbishop Cushley, who has been Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh since 2013, accompanied the pope on international trips in his capacity as the head of the English language section of the Vatican Secretariat of State between 2009 and 2013. They included visits to Malta, Cyprus and the UK in 2010. In 2012, he took on an additional ceremonial position at the Vatican where he assisted Benedict as he received visits from prominent dignitaries.

The archbishop said the 2010 papal visit to the UK was a personal highlight.

Benedict met the Queen at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh before travelling to Glasgow for an open air Mass at Bellahouston Park. It was the first papal visit to Scotland since Pope John Paul II in June 1982.

Archbishop Cushley told BBC Scotland: “I had never seen anything like it. I don’t think the Pope had either. It was a wonderful day.”

He added: “I had the honour of working with him closely. He was a good priest and a meticulous scholar. He was also quietly kind “His scholarship and his writing will be remembered, as will his humility and humanity. He will be deeply missed.”

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Public Engagement by Catholics for the Common Good

Benedict was at odds with the modern world, but he leaves a legacy of intellectual brilliance

CATHOLIC COMMENT

Mathew Schmalz

Benedict XVI leaves behind a complex legacy as a Pope and theologian.

To many observers, Benedict was known for criticising what he saw as the modern world's rejection of God and Christianity's timeless truths. But as a scholar of the diversity of global Catholicism, I think it's best to avoid simple characterisations of Benedict's theology, which I believe will influence the Catholic Church for generations.

While the brilliance of this intellectual legacy will certainly endure, it will also have to contend with the shadows of the numerous controversies that marked Benedict's time as pope and, later, as pope emeritus.

Priest and professor

Benedict was born Josef Alois Ratzinger on 16th April, 1927, in Marktl am Inn, Germany. During World War II, he was required to join the Hitler Youth, a wing of the Nazi Party. He was later drafted into an anti-aircraft unit and then the infantry of Nazi Germany.

In 1945, he deserted the German military and was held as a prisoner of war by the Americans; he was released when World War II concluded. In 1946, he went to study for the priesthood and was ordained five years later. He completed his doctorate in theology in 1953.

While teaching at the University of Bonn, Ratzinger was chosen as a theological adviser to Cardinal Joseph Frings of Cologne, a strong critic of Nazism, for the Second Vatican Council held between 1962 and 1965. The Second Vatican Council attempted to renew the Catholic Church by engaging the modern world more constructively. At the council, Ratzinger argued that Catholic theology needed to develop a "new language" to speak to a changing world.

But while sounding open-minded to changing the Church, as pope, Benedict would later reject more progressive interpretations of the council as a revolutionary event that was intended to remake the Catholic Church. While the council did bring substantial changes to Catholic life, particularly by allowing Mass in local languages, Benedict resisted any suggestion that the Second



Vatican Council was calling for a fundamental break with centuries-old Catholic doctrine and tradition. And during his pontificate, he would permit wider celebration of the old Latin Mass – a decision that his successor Pope Francis would later reverse.

In 1966, Ratzinger accepted an important teaching position at the University of Tübingen. During the late 1960s, Tübingen saw widespread student protests, some of which called for the Catholic Church to become more democratic. When protesting students disrupted the Tübingen faculty senate, Ratzinger reportedly walked out instead of speaking with students, as other faculties did. Ratzinger was disturbed by what he felt were dictatorial and Marxist tendencies among the student protesters.

Ratzinger then moved to the University of Regensburg before, in 1977, he was named Bishop of Munich and Freising by Pope Paul VI. Soon after, he was named a cardinal and quickly elevated to positions of administrative power.

Cardinal and pope

As a skilled theologian, Ratzinger

was chosen by Pope John Paul II to head the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which oversees and enforces Catholic doctrine. In this position, Cardinal Ratzinger disciplined a number of theologians. Most notable was the case of American priest and theologian Charles Curran, who was fired from The Catholic University of America because he challenged official Catholic teachings on sexuality.

Ratzinger was also chosen to head the committee drafting *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Published in 1992, *The Catechism* remains an important foundation for any understanding of Catholic thought and practice.

After John Paul II's death in 2005, Ratzinger was elected pope. He chose the name 'Benedict' in honour of Benedict of Nursia, the founder of Western monasticism, a religious movement that preserved Western culture after the fall of Rome. The name 'Benedict' also acknowledged Benedict XV, a much-overlooked pope who tried to broker a peace agreement to end the First World War.

Controversies in the pontificate

After his election, Pope Benedict

XVI had to confront the growing sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church. While a cardinal, he had publicly downplayed the extent and seriousness of the crisis. And it was under his leadership that The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith decided not to remove Lawrence C. Murphy from the priesthood, even though Murphy had been accused of molesting more than 200 boys at a Catholic school for the deaf in Wisconsin.

As pope, however, Benedict did take some strong steps that his predecessor, John Paul II, did not. Most significantly, Benedict punished Marcial Maciel Degollado, an incestuous bigamist, serial paedophile and the powerful founder of the Legionaries of Christ, an important Catholic religious order, by taking away his permission to preach or to say Mass publicly. He also criticised Irish bishops for their mishandling of the sexual abuse crisis.

For many survivors of clerical sexual abuse, these actions were not nearly enough. Benedict refused to open Vatican records to public investigation, and he also failed to discipline cardinals and bishops who reassigned paedophile priests.

Beyond the sexual abuse crisis, Benedict's pontificate had other controversies that drew worldwide attention. During a lecture in Regensburg in 2006, Benedict seemed to criticise the Islamic view of God and the legacy of the Prophet Muhammad. This lecture led to protests in the Middle East and South Asia. However, his official visits to Beirut and Istanbul repaired some of the damage.

Benedict also reached out to Catholic splinter groups. In 2009, he lifted the excommunication of bishops of the order of St. Pius X, a breakaway Catholic sect that rejects the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. After doing this, Benedict learned that one St. Pius X bishop, Richard Williamson, had made antisemitic comments and denied the Holocaust.

Benedict said his lack of knowledge about Williamson's views was an "unforeseen mishap" due to a lack of familiarity with the internet as a "source of information."

Theological writings

As pope, Benedict continued his theological writing and produced three important encyclicals or papal letters.

The first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, or 'God is Love', defends 'charity' as love that is freely given. Charity is not simply a good deed but an act that changes both the giver and the

recipient.

The second encyclical, *Spe Salvi*, or 'Saved in Hope', reflects upon the hope that God gives human beings in a world that often seems hopeless.

In the third encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, or 'Charity in Truth', Benedict argues that charity is fundamentally related to justice. And when it comes to questions of human progress and fulfillment, we cannot place our trust in the nation state or market economies because "without God, man neither knows which way to go, nor even understands who he is."

These papal letters attempt to defend Christianity in a world that Benedict believed was growing increasingly hostile to religious faith. What was striking about Benedict's thought – even to his theological critics – was how elegantly he presented his case for Christ and Christianity's transforming power as sources of truth, beauty and love. But long before he became pope, Benedict admitted that Christianity would continue to lose cultural ground and dwindle to an ever smaller group of faithful believers. Writing in 1969, Ratzinger predicted the Church would have "to start afresh from the very beginning," which meant that someday, Christianity would have to build itself up again from its foundations.

The legacy of Benedict XVI

When Benedict resigned as pope in 2013, it took the world by surprise. In saying that he could no longer bear the burdens of the Papacy, Benedict promised to live in seclusion.

But controversy also followed his resignation. For example, he gave interviews and put his name on writings that appeared to criticise the reforms of Pope Francis. Most recently, a January 2022 report on sexual abuse in the diocese of Munich criticised Ratzinger's 'inaction' regarding four cases of sexual abuse during his period as archbishop from 1977 to 1982. In response, the pope emeritus apologised but did not admit to any administrative failures.

Benedict XVI's writings will be relevant decades from now, but his pontificate will inevitably be associated with controversies.

As for his own personal legacy, that will likely be defined by the one issue that concerned Benedict the most: how the Catholic Church can still make a difference in the modern world.

Mathew Schmalz is a Professor of Religious Studies, College of the Holy Cross

Pope offers world his spiritual testament

Pope Benedict XVI prepared his own spiritual testimony, which was released to the world as news broke of his death. A copy has been buried with him in St Peter's. It is reproduced here:

If, in this late hour of my life, I look back at the decades I have been through, first I see how many reasons I have to give thanks. First and foremost I thank God himself, the giver of every good gift, who gave me life and guided me through various confusing times; always picking me up whenever I began to slip and always giving me again the light of his face. In retrospect I see and understand that even the dark and tiring stretches of this journey were for my salvation and that it was in them that He guided me well.

I thank my parents, who gave me life in a difficult time and who, at the cost of great sacrifice, prepared for me a magnificent abode that, like clear light, illuminates all my days to this day. My father's lucid faith taught us children to believe, and as a signpost it has always been steadfast in the midst of all my scientific acquisitions. My sister has assisted me for decades selflessly



The two popes: Pope Francis prays with retired Pope Benedict XVI at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, March 2013. Shortly after his election, Pope Francis travelled by helicopter from the Vatican to Castel Gandolfo for a private meeting with the former pontiff. The pair remained close throughout Francis' papacy, with the Holy Father often visiting his predecessor in his home in the grounds of St Peter's

“ I thank God himself, who gave me life and guided me through various confusing times; always picking me up whenever I began to slip and always giving me again the light of his face.

against the faith have vanished, proving to be not science, but philosophical interpretations only apparently pertaining to science; just as, on the other hand, it is in dialogue with the natural sciences that faith, too, has learned to understand better the limit of the scope of its claims, and thus its specificity. I see how, out of the tangle of assumptions the reasonableness of faith emerges again. Jesus Christ is truly the way, the truth and the life — and the Church, with all its insufficiencies, is truly His body.

Finally, I humbly ask: Pray for me, so that the Lord, despite all my sins and insufficiencies, welcomes me into the eternal dwellings. To all those entrusted to me, day by day, my heartfelt prayer goes out.

and with affectionate care; my brother, with the lucidity of his judgments, his vigorous resolve and serenity of heart, has always paved the way for me. Without this constant preceding and accompanying me I could not have found the right path.

From my heart I thank God for the many friends, men and women, whom He has always placed at my

side, the collaborators in all the stages of my journey. I gratefully entrust them all to His goodness. And I want to thank the Lord for my beautiful homeland in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps, in which I have always seen the splendour of the Creator Himself shining through.

I thank the people of my homeland because in them I have been able to experience the beauty of faith. I pray that our land remains a land of faith, and I beg you, dear countrymen: Do not let yourselves be turned away from the faith. And finally I thank God for all the beauty I have been able to experience at all

the phases of my journey, especially, however, in Rome and in Italy, which has become my second homeland.

To all those whom I have wronged in any way, I heartily ask for forgiveness.

What I said before to my countrymen, I now say to all those in the Church who have been entrusted to my service: Stand firm in the faith! Do not let yourselves be confused! It often seems that science is able to offer irrefutable results at odds with the Catholic faith. I have experienced the transformations of the natural sciences since long ago and have been able to see how, on the contrary, apparent certainties



The Pope is accompanied from Westminster Hall by the Commons Speaker, Lord Speaker and Archbishop of Canterbury. Photo: Deryc Sands, Parliamentary copyright

‘A momentous time for UK Catholics’

Of all Pope Benedict's XVI's actions during his time as pope, arguably the most important as far as UK Catholics were concerned was his visit to these shores in 2010. Cardinal Nichols said the visit was “momentous” and a “unique occasion” in an interview with Vatican Radio.

In particular he recalled the address he gave in Westminster Hall.

“Every living British prime minister was present, with all the great and the good, and in that very historic setting. Pope Benedict spoke of his esteem and respect for democracy and for the British institutions that support, and indeed promote, democracy,” he said. But “he also challenged us by

saying that democracy needs to be rooted in clear moral principles.”

“Those moral principles are not established by social consensus, they are arrived at by the use of reason illuminated by faith.”

Those comments are still as relevant as ever, the cardinal said.

The late Pope understood European history and culture and the dramas of the 20th century.

“His own childhood in Germany with the emergence of the Nazism, out of a democratic society, I think, alerted him to some of those dangers,” he said.

Of the visit itself, the cardinal said “I never thought I would see such an all-embracing welcome by Britain to the head of the Catholic Church.”

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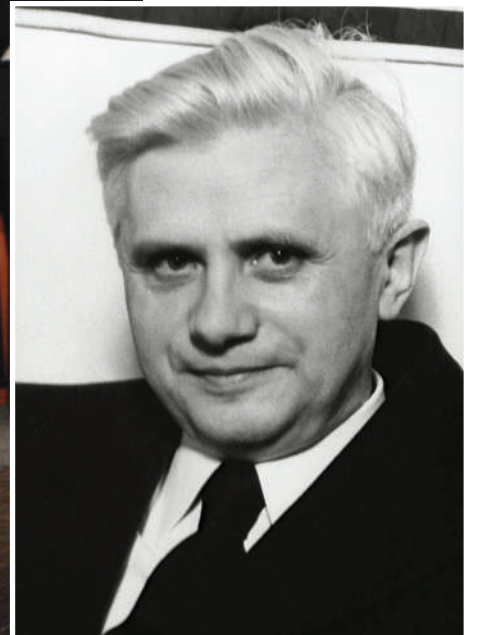
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Pope Benedict XVI: A pictorial special



Pope Benedict XVI through the years. Top, as a young conscript in the German anti-aircraft corps, in 1943...

Middle, an undated photo thought to be from the 1960s shows the pope in non-clerical dress, a rarity...

Bottom, more formally attired, in a 'saturno' hat when pontiff. The pope brought back several pieces of papal garb, liturgical vestments and furnishings used by his predecessors.



Pope Benedict XVI waves enthusiastically to the cameras as he is escorted by US President George W. Bush during his visit to the States in 2008.



Pope Benedict XVI observes a moment of silence in the Hall of Remembrance at Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem in 2009.

Below, Pope Benedict XVI greets a baby as he leaves a general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican in 2012. Also pictured is Mgr Georg Ganswein, the pope's personal secretary who stayed by his friend's side for decades, first in Germany, then in Rome and finally during his papacy and subsequent retirement years. Such was the prestige with which the former pope held his secretary in, Ganswein placed the official document of office in the casket during the funeral.



Right, the pope posts his first tweet on his Twitter account, @Pontifex, in 2012, ushering in a new era of papal communications



Pope Benedict XVI stands next to Emrullah Hatipoglu, imam of the Blue Mosque, and Mustafa Cagrici, right, the grand mufti of Istanbul, as he visits the Blue Mosque in Istanbul in 2006. The pope's unexpected prayer next to the mufti in the mosque soothed anger in the Muslim world over a quote about Islam in his lecture earlier that year in Regensburg, Germany. It was only the second time a pontiff had entered a mosque.



Waving to the crowds at World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia. With him is Cardinal Pell, a long-time ally



The beatification of John Henry Cardinal Newman
© Mazur/www.thepapalvisit.org.uk



Pope Benedict XVI arrives at Cofton Park in Birmingham, England, to celebrate Mass and the beatification of Cardinal John Henry Newman in 2010. The visit was a great success, despite a huge amount of personal criticism being directed at the pope by the media in the run-up to the visit

Benedict XVI and his quest for hope

Sir John Battle



At a recent Catholic teachers' day of reflection, the leader introduced the day with a prescient metaphor. She stressed how hard-pressed teachers are "breathing out" hour after hour in giving to their students, and hardly have time to "breathe in" and re-energise themselves.

Yet living well depends on that regular rhythm of breathing in and breathing out. Moreover, for those who experienced the Covid symptoms of desperate breathlessness, and had to patiently be helped to breathe naturally again, that awareness of breathing in and out became vital.

Tributes to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI as one of our Church's brilliant theologians can too quickly pass into the obituaries without moving us sufficiently to actually revisit his theological work. Too often, for example, papal encyclical letters are quickly summarised in the press and passed over without being reflected on and digested – not least at the parish level of the lay faithful. Pope Benedict XVI produced, among others, three major encyclicals: *Deus Caritas Est*, *Spe Salvi* and *Caritas in Veritate*. Here he dealt with the three major virtues of faith, hope and charity, rooting them in the economic, political, technological and cultural challenges of our contemporary world.

As we embark on this new year in uncertain times of continuing wars (not least in Ukraine), endemic poverty and hunger in our world, political tensions and the climate crises, it is worth recalling Pope Benedict XVI's advice that what we face is not a crisis of faith or charity but rather "a crisis of Christian hope". In *Spe Salvi*, he spells out how action and suffering are settings for learning hope: "Only the great certitude of hope that my own life and history in general, despite all failures, are held firm by the indestructible power of Love, and that this gives them their meaning and importance, only this kind of hope can then give the courage to act and to persevere". (para 37).

Perhaps we should now revisit *Spe Salvi* as our text for 2023. Between "breathing in" and "breathing out", it is occasional a good exercise to pause and hold your breathe, and experience the presence of the Spirit developing hope.

May Pope Benedict rest in peace and rise in glory.

Pavone has paid harsh price for wanting a clerical life as well as a political one

CATHOLIC COMMENT

Caroline Farrow



I was saddened to read of the recent decision by the Vatican to laicise Fr Frank Pavone, who is a well-known figure in the pro-life community, albeit a controversial one.

Mr Pavone, as he must now be formally known, was founder and director of the Priests for Life apostolate and also acts as the chairman and pastoral director of the Rachel's Vineyard project.

I first encountered Frank Pavone's work and writing on my return to the Church and found it profoundly helpful on both a secular and spiritual level. Pavone struck me as someone with a real heart for this mission and I was particularly impressed by the obvious care and compassion he had for women dealing with the aftermath of abortion. He wrote convincingly about why pro-lifers ought to be careful about confronting women with the images of aborted babies because he said, it could cause women who had not healed, real psychological trauma.

This did not, however, stop the former priest from making a video in the run-up to the Presidential elections in 2016, in which he placed the body of an aborted baby on a table that was sometimes used for the celebration of Mass, in an attempt to urge Catholics to cast their vote for Donald Trump. It was an act that caused me, and many of his allies to wince.

While Pavone's supporters claimed that it was necessary to bring home the brutality of abortion and were at pains to point out that the table was not actually an altar, it was still a grossly abhorrent act, one which even Pavone himself said, with hindsight, he ought to have handled differently.

Many Catholic commentators have attempted to suggest that Pavone has been unfairly penalised in an attempt to disassociate or move the Catholic Church away from her stance on abortion, and compared Pavone's laicisation to other priests who have acted in a far more egregious fashion and seemingly not incurred any canonical penalty.

The sad truth is that while harsh, Frank Pavone's penalty is likely deserved, not because of this one incident, but because he has a history of disobedience towards his bishop, in contravention of his obligations. I have to admit that if I



Frank Pavone was a powerful voice in the US pro-life movement

was an American, faced between a choice of Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump, I would most likely have cast my vote for Trump, but this would have been with an extremely heavy heart and sense of reluctance, and based only upon Clinton's extreme pro-abortion stance.

I have never held a particularly high opinion of Donald Trump, who I perceive to be a raging narcissist, but he was at the time the 'least worst' choice for America, something that we have seen played out with the reversal of *Roe v Wade*, which was only made possible by Trump's appointment of socially conservative judges to the Supreme Court.

But even if I were the most die-hard Trump fan, Pavone's campaigning would still have made me deeply uncomfortable because priests have to be extremely careful about getting too personally invested in politics. It is one thing for a priest to point out that a particular party or candidate may not endorse policies that are commensurate with Catholic teaching or the common good; quite another to become so personally invested in a particular candidate that it compromises your priestly ministry and authority.

Frank Pavone not only supported Trump, he worked as a co-chair of a campaign group advocating for him, which arguably put him in a position of civil power. Not only that, but he used profanity and swear words to describe political opponents on

social media, which was a source of scandal and unbecoming for a priest.

While still not an infraction worthy of permanent laicisation, over the past ten years, faithful conservative Catholics had been warning of a growing problem with Fr Pavone. He appeared to be raising millions of dollars for the pro-life cause but refused any kind of episcopal oversight or authority, and lashed out when his bishops expressed concerns over sums that were not being accounted for properly.

To be fair, it is not suggested that Pavone was scamming members of the public and spending money on high-living for himself and his associates, but more that he had raised money for a specific diocesan seminary and to set up a religious order, but this had all fallen through and it was being used to cover general expenses for his organisation.

This week, a US Catholic outlet has obtained a copy of a letter sent to Pavone from his bishop in 2017, warning him that laicisation was on the cards, because Pavone could not exercise sufficient humility to obey his local bishop. He had, for example, been banned from broadcasting in the media since 2014, but still continued to stream on a daily basis; he had also been forbidden from wearing clerical garb and celebrating Masses publicly since 2016, and yet still persisted in doing so, and specifically celebrated a funeral Mass when permission had been denied for him to do this.

This all came on top of warnings about political partisanship and exploitation of foetal remains.

Sadly, it looks as though the Church was left with little other choice. None of that should, however, detract from the excellent work that is still undertaken by Rachel's Vineyard, which continues to do so much to help women heal from the trauma of abortion.

Neither does it invalidate any of Frank Pavone's attempted work for the unborn. The problem is that he believed himself to have a dual vocation of both priest and political campaigner and appeared to believe that he ought not to be accountable to any kind of episcopal authority or spiritual oversight.

'Celebrity priests' have always been an issue for the Church and indeed, one only needs to look to the trials of Padre Pio who was placed under some unfair interdicts, but perhaps Pavone ought to take heed from the words of this great Franciscan, who said "without obedience there is no virtue", and it was this obedience that anchored his life and led to his legacy.

Padre Pio understood that it was through obedience to the orders and leadership of men that God put in place, that one obeyed God. As did another famous 20th century saint, Faustina, who said "the devil can imitate humility, but he can never imitate obedience."

That's something we can all do well to learn from.

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Stop the refugee attack, Sunak!

Andy Drozdziak

A major Catholic justice charity has dismissed Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's pledge to curb Channel crossings and "stop the boats" as 'cruel, dangerous and unworkable.'

Listing the plan as one of his five priorities during a speech in east London, Mr Sunak said on Wednesday: "We will pass new laws to stop small boats, making sure that if you come to this country illegally, you are detained and swiftly removed," adding that new laws are the "most important thing" the Government needs to introduce to curb Channel crossings.

Dr Sophie Cartwright from JRS UK condemned the pledge.

"Once again, the Government boasts of plans to make it impossible to seek sanctuary here, and refuses to engage with the simple reality that there are no safe, accessible routes available to most refugees," she told the *Universe*.

"Plans to forcibly remove refugees who arrive here in the only way they can are cruel, dangerous and unworkable."

Mr Sunak's comments came as Government figures showed that 45,756 migrants crossed the Channel to the UK in 2022 and more arrived on Monday, marking the first crossings in 2023.

The Prime Minister said: "We want to make sure that that new legislation means that if you come here illegally to our country you will not be able to stay," adding that the Government needs to make sure the controversial Rwanda policy "works" and mention-



A group of people thought to be migrants are brought in to Dover, Kent, onboard a Border Force vessel on 2nd January

ing deals with France and Albania.

But Dr Cartwright urged him to stop his "attack" on migrants and refugees, some of the world's most vulnerable people.

"The Government must abandon this attack on refugees, which cannot

be a solution to anything, and focus on real solutions to ensure that refugees can access protection," she said.

Other refugee campaigners claimed his plan would "leave thousands of men, women and children in limbo."

Enver Solomon, chief executive of the Refugee Council, urged the Government to "create safe routes" for refugees.

"The Prime Minister's proposal to remove anyone who arrives in the UK on a small boat will in fact simply

leave thousands of men, women and children in limbo," he said.

"The only way to stop small boat crossings is to create safe routes, such as those set up successfully for Ukrainian refugees, for those fleeing war and persecution."

Police link more crime to gambling addiction as new curbs demanded

Police officers in England and Wales are now routinely screening criminal suspects for a gambling addiction, it has emerged, as calls for new, robust gambling legislation increase.

The Observer reports that ten police forces are asking suspects in custody about their betting habits as well as their use of narcotics.

The newspaper understands that a further seven forces in England and Wales are now drawing up plans for similar interventions in 2023.

Police Scotland also started a

similar six-month pilot project in October in two areas of the west of Scotland.

Police and crime commissioners are also calling for action to prevent the proceeds of crime being used for gambling.

The Government is coming under increasing pressure to publish a whitepaper on gambling reforms, which has been delayed four times, the most recent delay taking place last summer.

The document, a manifesto pledge by the Conservative Party, is meant to set out a way of improving

outdated laws to better protect gamblers.

Christian charity CARE's Director of Communications and Engagement, James Mildred, said: "The Government must get on and introduce robust, far-reaching reforms that treat gambling addiction as a public health issue."

In the UK, more than two million people are thought to be addicted to gambling or at risk of becoming addicted.

Chaplain for sport Fr. Vlad Felzmann told the *Universe*: "Gambling is a scourge that has

ruined so many lives."

Gambling today takes place on smartphones, which give consumers 24/7 access to online casinos and slot machines.

"The Government must introduce robust, far-reaching reforms that treat gambling addiction as a public health issue."

Adverts pour fuel on the problem by encouraging 'in play betting', where punters can bet constantly during a football match.

Around one gambling-related suicide occurs every day and the NHS reports rising numbers of patients citing gambling problems.

Matthew Gaskell, consultant psychologist and clinical lead at NHS Northern Gambling Service, said: "People start gambling as soon as they wake up in the morning. They're gambling in the shower, gambling while they're driving to work."

CONTACTS

The Universe Catholic Weekly is published by the Universe Catholic Weekly Ltd.

Universe Catholic Weekly, PO Box 585, Sale M33 0JH
www.universecatholicweekly.co.uk

General enquiries: t: 0791 849 9993
e: Info@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
Editorial enquiries: t: 0743 661 7604
e: news@universecatholicweekly.co.uk

Managing Editorial Director: Michael Winterbottom
e: michael.winterbottom@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
t: 07753 987124

News: Andy Drozdziak
e: andy.drozdziak@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
t: 07527 237293

Director of Sales & Marketing: Andrea Black
e: andrea.black@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
e: advertising@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
t: 0791 856 0608

Circulation Sales Manager: Michelle Jones
e: michelle.jones@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
e: sales@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
t: 0743 661 7650

Finance & Operations Director: Mary Concannon
e: mary.concannon@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
e: accounts@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
t: 0743 661 7605

Administrative Support: Theresa Bowling
e: Theresa.bowling@universecatholicweekly.co.uk
t: 0743 661 7611

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Catholics back new legal challenge to mine plan

Andy Drozdziak

A Catholic justice group has expressed support for environmental group Friends of the Earth, which is taking legal action against the Government for proceeding with a controversial new coal mine in Cumbria.

After Levelling-Up Secretary Michael Gove gave the green light to a new coal mine in Whitehaven, Cumbria, campaign group, Friends of the Earth (FoE) said it believed he had “acted unlawfully”.

Ellen Teague, from the Columban Justice, Peace and Ecology team, believes the proposed coal mine “is incompatible with the UK’s legally binding emissions target” and praised the FoE’s response.

“Well done for challenging government plans,” she told the *Universe*.

“Friends of the Earth says the climate impact of this coal mine has not been thoroughly assessed and is incompatible with the UK’s legally binding emissions target.”

Backers argue the new mine will create around 500 jobs for the area and will save on having to import energy at a time of high prices, with fuel prices having rocketed as a result of the Ukraine war.

Opponents say that it will cause damage to the environment and create



PA/ Friends of the Earth photo issued by Friends of the Earth, of protests outside the site. The campaign group is taking legal action against the Government for proceeding with a controversial new coal mine in Cumbria.

more greenhouse gas emissions when the UK is looking to establish a net-zero economy by 2050. Coal produces almost twice the amount of emissions as natural gas.

“The challenge shouldn’t have to be taken to court in a nation with a net-zero target, which has attended climate summits and supported a global phase-out of coal in the power sector,” Ellen Teague said.

“The mine will cause damage to our environment, harm our international reputation, and isn’t the best way to help areas like Cumbria that need new, sustainable jobs in green industries, such as renewable energy and insulating our buildings.”

Michael Gove has previously ac-

knowledged that the mine may be subject to a legal challenge, and Ellen Teague criticised the “insensitive” response to environmental concerns.

“Resort to the legal process is the latest way to lobby against this coal mine, as campaigning at the site and elsewhere has fallen on deaf ears of a UK government insensitive to the public desire to build a sustainable future without fossil fuels,” she said.

South Lakes Action on Climate Change (SLACC), another leading opponent of the extraction programme, confirmed its legal team had sent a “pre-action letter” to Mr Gove.

SLACC is currently crowdfunding to raise £70,000 in order to mount a challenge.

Priest praises Scouser solidarity with Ukraine

Andy Drozdziak

The Ukraine war has been “distressing” and “worrying”, but the support from the people of Liverpool has been amazing, according to a Ukrainian priest based in Liverpool.

Fr Taras Khomych is parish priest at St Oswald and St Sebastian’s church, a chaplain to the Ukrainian community, a theology lecturer at Liverpool Hope University and chaplain at St Edward’s College in Liverpool.

“In Ukraine, there is a saying that you will recognise a real friend in time of trouble,” he said.

“This past year has made me realise that I have so many real friends here. People, especially those in Liverpool, have offered a lot – they have been simply amazing.”

Fr Taras experienced conflict and persecution growing up in Ukraine when it was run by the Soviet Union, and it was not possible to be a practising Catholic. He called the past 12 months, with the onset of war, “a distressing and a very worrying time.”

“Over the past year, the hardest thing pastorally is having to deal with so many people who are distressed as they are so worried about family members over there. Many people have had to leave their sons and husbands in Ukraine,” he said.

“I started organising lots of meetings and liaised with charities here and in



Poland as the Ukrainian border was closed. Little by little I was establishing contacts and procedures of how to act in different situations and establishing the best way to support Ukrainians. And of course, there was lots of praying involved.”

In an eventful 2022, Fr Taras also met Prince Edward and the Countess of Wessex at the Ken Dodd Happiness Hall in Knotty Ash, while he was also involved in Liverpool’s successful bid to host the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest. “I was delighted the city won as they want to feature Ukrainians as much as possible,” he said. “The city is very much in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.”

He added that he remains optimistic peace will come “through prayer.”

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In brief

Strike laws 'breach human rights'

Bosses will be able to sue unions and sack staff under government plans to curb the right to strike, claimed *The Times*. New laws will enforce 'minimum service levels' in six sectors, including the health service, rail, education, fire and border security.

The legislation will require a proportion of union members to continue working to retain a 'minimum level' of service.

Trade unions may take legal action over the plans, believing they are in breach of the human rights act.

Cold medicine supplies low

Pharmacy leaders said cough and cold medicines are in short supply because of a lack of planning by the government.

The Association of Independent Multiple Pharmacies said chemists were struggling to get hold of remedies including throat lozenges, cough mixtures and certain painkillers.

Leyla Hannbeck, its chief executive, accused ministers of being "in denial" over issues with the drug supply chain. The Department of Health and Social Care said it was aware of low availability of some brands.

Amazon joins tech cutbacks

Amazon will shed more than 18,000 roles as it cuts costs, the tech giant's boss says. The job cuts amount to around six per cent of the company's 300,000-strong corporate workforce.

Chief executive Andy Jassy said the announcement was brought forward "because one of our teammates leaked this information externally".

The retail behemoth is the latest tech giant to unveil painful cutbacks as the cost of living crisis eats into profitability.

Police 'lose interest in fraud'

A leading fraud barrister has claimed that police have lost interest in catching scammers and fraudsters.

Clare Montgomery, a recorder and High Court judge, who has been involved in some of the nation's biggest fraud cases, said that although "you get the occasional show trial in that area" the reality is that "99 per cent of fraud at that level is not even investigated, still less prosecuted".

Just 0.8 per cent of the police workforce were focused on economic crimes, despite fraud accounting for 39 per cent of all crime.

Canada sends a warning signal to Scotland on assisted dying

Campaigners have warned that proposals to allow assisted suicide in Scotland will open the door to a Canada-style system in which people will be permitted to end their lives for mental health concerns, branding the proposals "regressive and dangerous."

While MSPs in Holyrood consider a proposal to make assisted suicide legal, opponents of the legislation have pointed to Canada, arguing that a change in the law will open the way to more extreme legislation in future.

Canada introduced assisted suicide in 2016 under certain conditions, including that death be 'reasonably foreseeable', but this has been removed and from 2023, assisted suicide and euthanasia on the basis of mental health alone will be permitted.

Spokesperson for the Better Way campaign, Dr Miro Griffiths, said: "The development of Canada's euthanasia framework since it was introduced should trouble every politician in the UK who is being asked to back legal assisted suicide."

"Canada shows that laws of this kind are inherently unsafe and unpredictable."

"In Canada and other European jurisdictions, safeguards have failed and



been dispensed with over time as activists push for wider access to legislation. This cannot ultimately be denied by parliaments and courts because doing so is felt to be exclusionary."

"Cases of coercion and abuse, and worsening discrimination against marginalised groups are also part of the global picture. People feel forced to opt for assisted death because of poverty, homelessness, or a lack of care. These laws offer only an illusion

of choice."

"The evidence heard in previous debates about assisted suicide makes it clear that legalising this practice in Scotland would jeopardise the safety, dignity, and equality of many Scots. It remains a regressive and dangerous plan," Dr Griffiths added.

MSPs in Holyrood have twice voted against making assisted suicide legal in Scotland, with First Minister Nicola Sturgeon twice voting against the pro-

posal. However, she now claims to be "more open" to a change in the law.

The assisted suicide legislation in Scotland is being proposed by Liam McArthur MSP. Under the plans, a mentally competent adult who is thought to have no chance of recovery from an illness which will result in death could be prescribed lethal drugs on the NHS.

Those opting for assisted suicide would have a "period of reflection" before ending their lives.

In 2021, 10,064 people ended their lives by assisted suicide and euthanasia in Canada, an increase of over 32 per cent from the previous year. This is 3.3 per cent of all deaths in Canada.

According to the latest report on Medical Assistance in Dying from Health Canada, 17.3 per cent of people cited "isolation or loneliness" as a reason for wanting to die, while in 35.7 per cent of cases, patients believed that they were a "burden on family, friends or caregivers".

Right To Life UK spokesperson Catherine Robinson said: "Campaigners are right to be concerned about where this kind of legislation leads and the Canadian example should serve as a warning sign."

Stella Maris CEO vacates the helm for anti-slavery charity

Martin Foley is stepping down as CEO of Catholic seafarers' charity Stella Maris to take up a similar role with the Arise Foundation, an anti-slavery NGO.

Martin will continue serving as Stella Maris CEO until March, when it is expected he will take up his new post.

Esteban Pacha, Chair of Trustees, paid tribute to Martin's dedication and hard work, saying: "On behalf of the Trustees, I would like to express my thanks to Martin for his service to Stella Maris."

"As the leading provider of welfare support for seafarers, fishers, and their families, Stella Maris is in a better place now than it was 13 years ago.



That is due to Martin's dedication and hard work in collaboration with all our volunteers, chaplains, staff, trustees, and supporters.

"His wonderful efforts for seafarers, fishers and their families have produced tremendous fruit, both here in the UK and overseas through the global Stella Maris network."

Stella Maris is the largest ship-visiting network in the world, and the official maritime charity of the Catholic Church. Its chaplains and volunteers visit hundreds of thousands of seafarers and fishers every year. Their activities include listening and talking, arranging Mass onboard ships, offering practical help in a crisis and bringing free Wi-Fi onboard so seafarers can call home. Often, these simplest practical kindnesses make the greatest difference.

Martin Foley said it had been a "privilege" to lead the Stella Maris team, saying it was an "outstanding charity."

He added that he hoped his new employer and old one would work closely with each other in the future, as both "are involved in the fight against slavery and human trafficking."

"In my new role with the Arise Foundation I hope to continue to collaborate with Stella Maris, here in the UK and overseas, to eradicate slavery in the maritime sector."



King's first honours hands personal award to cathedral organist

James O'Donnell, the former Organist and Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey who was Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral in London from 1988 to 2000, has been made a Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order (LVO) in the King's first New Year's Honours list.

The Royal Victorian Order recognises distinguished personal service to the British monarch and their family.


During his time as Organist and Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey, James has been responsible for the music at royal, state and national occasions, including the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on 29th April 2011, and the fu-

neral of Queen Elizabeth II in September last year.

James left his position at Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day to take up a new position as a Professor in the Yale School of Music and Yale Institute of Sacred Music later this month.

The Dean of Westminster, the Very Reverend Dr David Hoyle, paid tribute to his "breath-takingly distinguished service," adding that he was "delighted to see his work recognised in the New Year Honours."

"He has maintained the highest standards in our daily offering of worship and overseen the music at services profoundly in the public gaze."

A photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a white floral-patterned top, holding a young child. The child has a visible eye condition, likely trachoma, with a visible growth on the eyelid. The background is slightly blurred, showing an outdoor setting.

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CATENIANS

A time for giving

Roger Lille,
Catenians
President



CATENIANS

“Christmas is the time for giving”. That’s a phrase I’ve heard many times over the past few weeks. An admirable comment but to my mind the focus on giving has somewhat got out of hand these days.

As mere mortals, we received the ultimate gift 2,000 years ago. The habit of using Christmas as a time to specifically give presents is, of course, admirable. However, it has become a marketing exercise in our secular society and very much based on a financial aspect.

But gifts need not be financially based. As Catenians, we place great emphasis on ‘support’. That is support for each other and others in our communities and I think it is this idea of support which proves to be a valuable gift.

For instance, support can be shown through gifts of one’s time. Time is tangible and valuable as demonstrated by the phrases ‘time wasting’ and ‘time is precious’. We have a finite amount of time on Earth and must use it wisely. To give some of our allocated time here for the benefit of others is surely a valuable gift.

But there are other gifts we can hand to others. What about friendship and company to those with few friends, a lending ear to those with problems, enthusiasm to those feeling downcast to name a few. As the Christmas carol *In the bleak mid-winter* says ‘What do I have to give, poor that I am. If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.’

The message should be to be prepared to give part of oneself!

Perhaps we should be looking at the principle of giving rather than looking at it as a financial transaction. At the beginning of this New Year we are following the trend of giving up something. Perhaps we should concentrate on just giving something. We have so many opportunities and perhaps we should look at what we have and what we can share or give for the benefit of others.

Let us hope 2023 is a successful year with many outstanding problems resolved through support for each other using all the talents we possess.

On behalf of the Catenian Association, I wish all readers a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

Welby urges action to fix broken care system

The Archbishop of Canterbury has urged the Government to take action to fix the country’s “broken” social care system.

In his new year message, the Most Rev Justin Welby said care homes are “struggling” to deal with rising bills while trying to find and retain the staff they need to keep going.

He said the country – including the Government – needs to “rise to the challenge” of repairing the present system.

His comments came as he prepares to publish, with the Archbishop of York, the Most Rev Stephen Cottrell, what he described as a “significant report” on social care.

“We know our care system is broken, but it doesn’t have to be. We can rise to the challenge of fixing it. That means action from all of us: you, me, families, communities, government,” he said.

Archbishop Welby stressed the importance of ensuring the work of carers is properly valued by society.

“Why work as a carer when you might get paid more in less demanding jobs? Caring’s certainly not easy. Good carers are wonderful people to be valued,” he said.

He said his report, due out in a few weeks, will offer a “hopeful vision of our society”.



“One where no one is held back, overlooked or treated as a burden – where families and unpaid carers get support too,” he said.

“Caring goes to the heart of what it means to be human. It is hard, but it can also be the most life-giving thing we ever do. It comes back to that essential lesson: we need each other.”

A Government spokesman said min-

isters had prioritised social care in last month’s autumn statement, making available up to £7.5 billion in support over the next two years.

“This will allow more people to access high-quality care and help address some of the challenges in the sector – including waiting lists, low fee rates, and workforce pressures,” the spokesman said.

Coronation must reflect faith, says MP

A Catholic MP has called for the King’s coronation to be a spiritual event and ‘not a kind of dumbed down woke-fest’.

Former minister Sir Edward Leigh told the Commons that the link between the Church of England and the King needed to be maintained when the coronation takes place later this year.

The Gainsborough Conservative MP said: “By immemorial custom, the coronation is a deeply religious and spiritual event.

“Will he convince us that the Church of England will use their influence to ensure that it remains as such, particularly the anointing, and it doesn’t just degenerate into a kind of dumbed down woke-fest celebration of so-called modern Britain?”

Responding on behalf of the Church Commissioners, Conservative MP Andrew Selous said: “I can reassure him.

“The anointing of the monarch goes back to biblical times, recognising the outpouring of God’s grace on us all, and a sovereign’s covenant to give his life in service to his people and his God.

“It is the foundational principal underlying our constitutional settlement.”

The King’s coronation will take place on Saturday 6th May in Westminster Abbey.

Buckingham Palace has previously said the ceremony will be “rooted in longstanding traditions and pageantry” but also “reflect the monarch’s role today and look towards the future”.

It is expected to be on a smaller scale and shorter than the late Queen’s in 1953, which lasted around three hours.

It is also expected to be more inclusive of multi-faith Britain than past coronations, but will be an Anglican service.

Mr Selous had earlier said that the Church was joining other organisers in “planning a service of great national rejoicing and indeed spiritual significance”.

Thunberg statue is ‘greenwashing’

Students have accused Winchester University of “greenwashing” after it spent almost £24,000 on a statue of Greta Thunberg.

Members of the Labour Society, the Allotment Society, and the Sustainability Society gathered at the West Downs Centre, where the statue is located, to protest.

The group said they wanted beef taken off the canteen menu, cheaper vegan options and buildings made more energy efficient “rather than wasting money on meaningless statues”.

Protest organisers added that the statue suggested the university was paying tokenistic lip service to the issue that Thunberg represents.

Countdown on to get entries in to Columban competition

Ellen Teague

There is now a six-week countdown for submissions to the 2023 Schools Competition of the Columban Missionaries in Britain. The title is: *‘Building Peaceful Futures’* and entries close on **10 February 2023**.

The competition is targeted at students aged between 13-18 years old who are invited to demonstrate an awareness of conflict and peacemaking in the world today through the submission of either a written article or an original image.

Students are being asked to do their own research and spotlight people, communities and/or organisations who are trying to make the world a better place for everyone by building peaceful futures.

They can also submit original artworks.

In his role as Columban Justice and Peace Education Worker in Britain, James Trewby visits young people in schools and sixth forms and runs workshops, retreats and assemblies to promote justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

He is one of the judges and he explains: “There is much conflict in the world at the moment, but we mustn’t lose sight of the fact there are also many initiatives designed to build bridges and promote peace too!

“The Columbans are keen to nurture the student voice and provide an op-



portunity for young people to explore these areas and determine their own thoughts on conflict and whether it is inevitable. Besides this we want to ascertain young people’s understanding of peacebuilding, how and where it’s taking place and how faith can play a part.”

Cash prizes will be awarded to the winning entrants and the first prize is £300. High-profile judges from the world of journalism have been secured, including Ruth Gledhill of *The Tablet* and Josephine Siedlecka of Independent Catholic News.

Winning entries will be published in the Columbans’ Far East magazine,

Vocation for Justice newsletter, Columban websites and social media and in other Catholic media.

Teachers and students will find the Columban Competition website a useful resource. It includes information on the theme, an introductory video, examples of Columbans and others dedicated to building peace throughout the world, as well as Catholic Social Teaching on the theme of peace. There are also details on submission of entries and a helpful FAQ page. The website provides material suitable for students, teachers and parents.

More at <https://www.columbancompetition.com/>

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Papal message for World Peace Day: War, hunger, turmoil are connected

Cindy Wooden

The interconnected “moral, social, political and economic crises” facing the world cannot be solved if individuals and nations continue to focus only on their own, immediate interests, Pope Francis said in his message for World Peace Day 2023.

“The time has come for all of us to endeavour to heal our society and our planet, to lay the foundations for a more just and peaceful world, and to commit ourselves seriously to pursuing a good that is truly common,” the pope said.

The Catholic Church celebrates World Peace Day on New Year’s Day.

The theme was ‘No one can be saved alone,’ and the text urged people to learn from the experience of the global effort to combat COVID-19 and to recognise the poverty and inequalities the pandemic laid bare, especially as regards to access to food, medicine, health care, education and technology.

Pope Francis asked people to reflect on a series of questions: “What did we learn from the pandemic? What new paths should we follow to cast off the shackles of our old habits, to be better prepared, to dare new things? What signs of life and hope can we see, to help us move forward and try

to make our world a better place?”

As soon as it seemed the pandemic was nearly over, the pope wrote, “a terrible new disaster befell humanity. We witnessed the onslaught of another scourge: another war.”

Russia’s war on Ukraine, he said, “is reaping innocent victims and spreading insecurity, not only among those directly affected, but in a widespread and indiscriminate way for everyone, also for those who, even thousands of kilometers away, suffer its collateral effects,” including rising fuel prices and shortages of grain.

“This war, together with all the other conflicts around the globe, represents a setback for the whole of humanity and not merely for the parties directly involved,” the pope said.

Massive co-operative efforts led to vaccines for COVID-19, he said, but “suitable solutions have not yet been found for the war,” even though it is true “the virus of war is more difficult to overcome than the viruses that compromise our bodies, because it comes, not from outside of us, but from within the human heart corrupted by sin.”

Canadian Cardinal Michael Czerny, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, presented the message at a news confer-



ence said the pope’s message “gives me hope because it puts a finger on not what important people need to do, but what each of us needs to do, which is just to take the time to ask ourselves, ‘What did I learn or not learn? And how is my life going to change from there?’

“Hopefully, the lessons will be for the good of everyone.”

People’s experience of the pandemic, the lockdowns, the possibility of

continuing to work and the scrambling for vaccines were different around the world, he said, but that experience loses its power if people do not reflect on it and share it.

Pope Francis’ message, he said, is a reminder “that we are too quick to forget” and then humanity is forced to move on to the next disaster without having made changes to alleviate suffering.

Salesian Sister Alessandra Smerilli,

secretary of the dicastery, said the pope was asking people “to return to those frightening, difficult and painful moments” at the beginning of the pandemic in early 2020. “This is time to ask ourselves whether, as individuals and a community, are we better or worse off three years later?”

The reflection, Pope Francis wrote, should encourage people to change from a self-centered focus to a real commitment to the common good and to promoting solidarity and a greater sense of fraternity.

Co-operative efforts are needed to ensure health care for all and to “put an end to the conflicts and wars that continue to spawn poverty and death,” he said.

People must work together to combat climate change, overcome inequality, end hunger and create dignified work for all.

“We also need to develop suitable policies for welcoming and integrating migrants and those whom our societies discard,” the pope said.

“Only by responding generously to these situations, with an altruism inspired by God’s infinite and merciful love, will we be able to build a new world and contribute to the extension of his kingdom, which is a kingdom of love, justice and peace.”

Palestinians voice anger as ultra-nationalist Israel minister makes ‘provocative’ visit to sacred site

An ultranationalist Israeli cabinet minister has visited a flashpoint Jerusalem holy site for the first time since taking office in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s new far-right government last week.

Itamar Ben-Gvir entered the site known to Jews as the Temple Mount and to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary, flanked by a large contingent of police officers.

The visit, seen by Palestinians as a provocation, came shortly after Palestinian officials said a 15-year-old boy had been killed by Israeli army fire near the occupied West Bank city of Bethlehem.

The Israeli military said its forces had shot a person involved in violent confrontations with soldiers.

Mr Ben-Gvir has long called for greater Jewish access to the holy site, which is viewed by Palestinians as provocative and as a potential precursor to Israel taking control over the compound.

Most rabbis forbid Jews from praying on the site, but there has been a growing movement in recent years of Jews who support worship there.

The site has been the scene of frequent clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli security forces, most recently in April last year.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,



Itamar Ben-Gvir pictured on his visit to Temple Mount, with the Dome of the Rock in the background

which acts as custodian of the contested shrine, condemned Mr Ben-Gvir’s visit “in the strongest terms”.

His stated intention of visiting the site earlier this week drew threats from the Islamic militant group Hamas.

He wrote on Twitter after his visit that the site “is open to all and if Hamas thinks that if it threatens me it will deter me, they should understand that times have changed”.

Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem said that Mr Ben-Gvir entering the

site was “a continuation of the Zionist’s occupation aggression on our sacred places and war on our Arab identity”.

“Our Palestinian people will continue defending their holy places and Al-Aqsa mosque,” he said.

Ofir Gendelman, who has long served as Mr Netanyahu’s Arabic-language spokesman, released a video showing that the “situation is completely calm” at the holy site after Mr Ben-Gvir’s departure.

The hilltop shrine is the third-holiest site in Islam and an emotional symbol for the Palestinians. It sits on a sprawling esplanade that also is the holiest site for Jews, who call it to the Temple Mount because it was the location of two Jewish temples.

The competing claims to the site lie at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and have sparked numerous rounds of violence in the past.

Mr Ben-Gvir is head of the ultranationalist religious Jewish Power faction and has a history of inflammatory remarks and actions against Palestinians.

A day earlier, opposition leader Yair Lapid, who until last week was Israel’s prime minister, spoke out against Mr Ben-Gvir’s intended visit, saying it would “lead to violence that will endanger human lives and cost human lives”.

The visit came after months of mounting tensions between Israelis and Palestinians.

On Monday, Israeli rights group B’Tselem said 2022 was the deadliest year for Palestinians since 2004, a period of intense violence that came during a Palestinian uprising. It said nearly 150 Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire in the West Bank and east Jerusalem.

The Israeli military has been conducting near-daily raids into Palestinian cities and towns since a spate of attacks against Israelis killed 19 last spring.

A fresh wave of attacks killed at least another nine Israelis in the autumn.

In Tuesday’s shooting incident, the Palestinian Health Ministry said Adam Ayyad, 15, died of a bullet wound to the chest.

The Israeli military said Border Police officers came under attack in the Dheisha refugee camp next to Bethlehem. It said troops shot at people throwing petrol bombs and confirmed that a person was shot.

The Israeli army says most of the Palestinians killed have been militants, but stone-throwing youths protesting against the incursions and others not involved in confrontations have also been killed.

2022 labelled ‘worst ever year for attacks on Church’ by Nicaraguan lawyer

A leading human rights lawyer and researcher has described 2022 as “the most disastrous year for the Nicaraguan Catholic Church,” citing a number of attacks on personnel and property.

Martha Patricia Molina Montenegro said that the year had seen “140 attacks from the dictatorship” on the Church.

President Daniel Ortega and his wife Rosario Murillo have been ruling Nicaragua as a dictatorship since 2007.

Among the attacks “are unjust criminal proceedings that do not adhere to what the laws mandate, confiscations, kidnappings, hate speech and the prevention of freedom of movement.”

In addition, the regime shut down non-profit religious organisations and religious media outlets.

The lawyer also said that the dictatorship has deported, exiled, and expelled people; perpetrated desecrations and robberies; carried out sieges; made threats and prohibited processions.

The Church in Nicaragua has resisted interference from the Government and a number of clerics have spoken out against Ortega’s regime.

“The dictatorship has been incessant and doesn’t give respite to the clerics,” she said.

Among its most high-profile attacks was the arrest of Bishop Rolando Álvarez in August. He has been held under house arrest ever since as he awaits trial.

The bishop was charged with “the crimes of conspiracy to undermine national security and sovereignty and the propagation of false news through information and communication technologies to the detriment of the Nicaraguan State and society,” according to his indictment.

In addition, the dictatorship has arrested and exiled several priests.

The regime also expelled the apostolic nuncio, Archbishop Waldemar Stanislaw Sommertag, in March, and order Mother Teresa’s Missionaries of Charity to leave the country in July.



Bishop Rolando Álvarez: still under house arrest and awaiting trial

Politician echoes pope’s concerns over Nagorno-Karabakh as blockade

A leading politician serving the Republic of Artsakh – the name given to the disputed Azerbaijan enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh – has strongly echoed the Pope Francis’ concerns about the humanitarian situation in the region.

Ruben Vardanyan, State Minister of Artsakh, told the Catholic News Agency that the international community must act in order to prevent a “humanitarian catastrophe” resulting from the blockade of the Lachin Corridor, which links the Christian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh with neighboring Armenia and cuts through Muslim-majority Azerbaijan.

Vardanyan warned that if the Lachin corridor is not unblocked, “Artsakh will need a humanitarian air corridor to Stepanakert. This will certainly prevent a humanitarian catastrophe.”

In an Angelus address before Christmas, Pope Francis expressed his concern about the situation: “I am concerned about the precarious humanitarian conditions of the people, which are in further danger of deteriorating during the winter season.”

Vardanyan accused Azerbaijan of trying to create a humanitarian crisis in the unstable region. “Azerbaijan has blocked the Lachin corridor, which is the only road between Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) and the outside world, before Christmas.



“We made several suggestions to negotiate and try to find a solution without keeping as hostages 120,000 people, but unfortunately Azerbaijan aims to create humanitarian catastrophe in Artsakh, which will be an additional tool to force Armenians to leave their homeland,” he continued.

“The international community needs to put pressure on Azerbaijan, because we can’t put in danger the lives of 120,000 people. We have 30,000 kids living in Artsakh, who have the right to have a normal, peaceful life.”

Vardanyan highlighted the significance of the Republic of Artsakh to Christians everywhere. “Artsakh is significant for the entire Christian world. It has a 1,700-year Christian heritage. We are grateful to all those who called upon Azerbaijan to unblock the corridor, which is truly a road of life for 120,000 people.”

While its occupants are ethnically Armenian, Nagorno-Karabakh is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan but is a disputed territory subject to peace talks mediated by

the OSCE Minsk Group.

In 2020, a war broke out in Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding region. The result was a trilateral ceasefire agreement between Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia, which compelled Armenia to return all the remaining occupied territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh and stated that “the Republic of Azerbaijan shall guarantee the safety of traffic of citizens, vehicles, and goods along the Lachin corridor in both directions.”

“Currently the situation is hard, but we try to keep it under control, stay strong and endure as long as it’s possible until international pressure forces Azerbaijan to implement its obligations, which were laid down in 2020,” Vardanyan explained.

“Azerbaijan has a duty not to create any obstacles to the connection between Artsakh and Armenia, but they probably think that international law norms can be ignored,” he said.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has grabbed the media spotlight throughout 2022 and as a result, “Azerbaijan feels it can use these tactics without fear of reprisal.”

With Russia in international isolation for its invasion of Ukraine, it has few levers it can pull within the UN to help ensure the tri-party agreement signed in 2020 is adhered to by both parties on its southern border.

In brief

Relief as two clerics freed in Eritrea

Two members of the clergy arrested by security forces in Eritrea two months ago have been released without charge.

Bishop Fikremariam Hagos Tsalim and Father Mehereteab Stefanos were freed on New Year’s Day, sources said.

The 52-year-old bishop heads the Eritrean Catholic Eparchy of Segheneity, while Fr Stefanos was a parish priest at St. Michael’s Parish in the same eparchy.

A third cleric arrested at the same time, Capuchin Friar Abbot Abraham, has not been released, however, and his whereabouts are unknown.

Bishop Tsalim and the two priests were arrested at Asmara International Airport in October after returning from a trip to Europe.

Members of the Eritrean Catholic Church welcomed news of their release, but called for a full disclosure of the whereabouts of the third cleric.

State authorities have refused to say why the trio were arrested, but the three had criticised human rights violations in their homilies, included the forced military enlistment of young people and evictions and confiscation of property of those who refused to go to war.

The release of the bishop and the priest comes amid agreements to end the civil war in Ethiopia, where the Eritrean government has sided with the Ethiopian government against the regional leaders of the Tigray province.

Democracy hopes for Myanmar in ’23

Myanmar’s ruling military leader Min Aung Hlaing has detailed plans for an election later this year and called for national unity as he led a ceremony marking the 75th anniversary of independence from Britain.

He urged other nations and international organisations, as well as his country’s citizens, to support “a genuine multi-party democratic system” – a concept the ruling military has defined as its goal.

The first real move toward holding polls could occur at the end of this month, when the latest six-month extension of a state of emergency is completed. The state of emergency was instituted to allow military rule after the army seized power in February 2021 from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Hopes of true democracy being reintroduced in the country got off to a poor start, however, when courts sentenced former leader San Suu Kyi to a further seven years in jail on charges most foreign observers said were trumped up and handed down after a sham show trial.

VATICAN LETTER

CINDY WOODEN



Pope looks forward to more travels in 2023 – but his biggest challenges will be those he faces at home

Pope Francis will soon pack his bags for his first foreign trip of 2023, a year that promises to be as busy as ever.

The pope, who celebrated his 86th birthday on 17th December, can move quickly – in a wheelchair – and keeps saying in interviews that a functioning head and heart – not a well-functioning knee – are essential to the exercise of the papacy.

And, so, his appointment book for 2023 is starting to fill up, although he usually agrees to appointments with the caveat of ‘God willing’.

Several events are already inked in:

- A pastoral visit to violence-torn Congo from 31st January to 3rd February, followed by an ecumenical pilgrimage for peace to South Sudan from 3rd-5th February with Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury and the Rev. Iain Greenshields, moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

- Pope Francis celebrates his 10th anniversary as pope on 13th March.

- He is scheduled to join perhaps 1 million young people from around the globe for World Youth Day from 1st-6th August in Lisbon, Portugal.

- And the first session of the world Synod of Bishops meeting on synodality is scheduled for 4th-29th October at the Vatican.

His constant pleas for peace in Ukraine will not end until the war does.

And while Pope Francis indicated 21st December that he had reached, or at least was reaching, the end of a series of general audience lessons about spiritual discernment – what it is, how it is done and how the results are judged – his emphasis on teaching Catholics how to listen to the Holy Spirit when making decisions individually or communally will continue as the synod process does.

In October, saying he did not want to rush the process of discerning how the Holy Spirit is calling the Church to grow in “synodality”, the pope announced that the assembly of the Synod of Bishops would take place in two sessions. The gathering scheduled for 2023 is only the first session.

Having published his constitution reforming the Roman Curia in June, Pope Francis is expected to make



Pope Francis has been heavily involved in planning for the synods in 2023 and 2024

some changes in the top positions of Curia offices in the coming year.

The normal retirement age for cardinals and bishops working in the Curia is 75, but the pope has often kept cardinals who are prefects of dicasteries in place beyond their 75th birthdays.

The two cardinals likely to retire in 2023 are Cardinal Luis Ladaria, prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, who will be 79 in April and has been in office since 2017; and Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, head of the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican tribunal, who turned 78 in September and has led the office since 2013.

Four other cardinals continue to serve in senior Vatican roles past the age of 75. Cardinal Michael Czerny, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, celebrated his 76th birthday in July. Cardinal Joao Bráz de Aviz will turn 76 in April. Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, turned 75 in September. Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of

Saints, celebrated his 75th birthday on 22nd December.

In 2023 Pope Francis also will hear continuing calls to address the clerical sexual abuse scandal and, especially, to ensure greater consistency in dealing with abusers and greater transparency in how the Vatican has handled the cases.

The case of Jesuit Father Marko

Rupnik, the Slovenian artist, will continue to make headlines this year. In late December the Jesuits asked victims of his abuse to come forward, and published a timeline that showed the Vatican's doctrinal office in May 2020 confirmed the priest had incurred automatic excommunication for granting sacramental absolution to a woman

with whom he had had a sexual relationship.

After Rupnik formally recognised his abuse and expressed repentance, the excommunication was lifted the same month.

In 2021 another allegation of abuse was made by several women who belonged to the Loyola Community he served as a spiritual adviser in Slovenia; the doctrinal office ruled that the statute of limitations had passed and closed the case. News of his previous excommunication came out only after the second case was dismissed, raising questions about why the statute of limitations was not waived and about whether Pope Francis knew about and was involved in lifting the previous excommunication.

Returning to Rome from Bahrain in November, Pope Francis told reporters that over the past 20 years, the Catholic Church had made huge efforts to stop hiding abuse cases and simply shuffling abusive priests to new assignments – something he described as “an ugly habit,” – and said the Church was “moving forward.”



PAPE FRANÇOIS
RDC 2023
TOUS RÉCONCILIÉS
EN JÉSUS CHRIST



"I pray that all may be one" (Jn 17)

The official logos for the pope's forthcoming visits to Congo and South Sudan

Charitable Corporation's collapse has echoes with today's scandals

HISTORY

Amy Froide

In modern capitalism, it seems as if stories of companies and managers who engage in fraud and swindle their investors occur like the changing of the seasons.

In fact, these scandals can be traced back to the origins of publicly traded companies, when the first stockbrokers bought and sold company shares and government securities in the coffee houses of London's Exchange Alley during the 1700s.

As a historian of 18th century finance, I am struck by the similarities between what's known as the Charitable Corporation Scandal and the recent collapse of FTX, the cryptocurrency exchange and crypto hedge fund that collapsed recently and which was at one time the third-largest cryptocurrency exchange by volume

A noble cause

The Charitable Corporation was established in London in 1707 with the noble mission of providing 'relief of the industrious poor by assisting them with small sums at legal interest.'

Essentially, it sought to provide low-interest loans to poor tradesmen, shielding them from predatory pawnbrokers who charged as much as 30 per cent interest. The corporation made loans available at the rate of 5 per cent in return for a pledge of property for security.

The Charitable Corporation was modelled on Monti di Pietà, a charitable institution of credit established in Catholic countries during the Renaissance era to combat usury, or high rates of interest.

Unlike the Monti di Pietà, however, the British version – despite its name – wasn't a non-profit. Instead, it was a business venture. The enterprise was funded by offering shares to investors who, in return, would make money while doing good. Under its original mission, it was like an 18th century version of today's socially responsible investing, or "sustainable investment funds."

Raiding the fund

In 1725, the Charitable Corporation diverted from its original mission when a new board of directors took over.

These men turned the corporation into their own piggy bank, taking money from it to buy shares and prop up their other companies. At the same time, the company's employees began to engage in fraud:

'These scandals can be traced back to the origins of publicly traded companies, when the first stockbrokers bought and sold company shares and government securities in the coffee houses of London's Exchange Alley during the 1700s...'



Safety checks ceased, books were kept irregularly and pledges went unrecorded.

Investigators would ultimately find that £400,000 or more in capital was missing – roughly £89 million today.

In the autumn of 1731, rumours began to circulate about the solvency of the Charitable Corporation. The warehouse keeper at the time, John Thomson, who was in charge of all loans and pledges but also in league with the five fraudulent directors, hid the company's books and fled the country.

At the shareholders' quarterly meeting, they found that money, pledges and accounts had all gone missing. At this point, the proprietors of the Charitable Corporation stock appealed to the British Parliament for redress. One-third of those who petitioned were women, a proportion that equalled the percentage of women who held shares in the Charitable Corporation.

Many women were drawn to the corporation because of its public mission in providing small loans to working people. It's also possible that they had been intentionally targeted for fraud.

The parliamentary investigation led to various charges being levelled against both managers and employees of the Charitable Corporation. Many of them were forced to appear before Parliament and were arrested if they did not. The managers and employees

deemed most responsible for the 1732 fraud, such as William Burroughs, had their assets seized and inventoried in order to help pay back the shareholder losses.

Bankruptcy proceedings were started against the banker and broker, George Robinson, and the warehouse keeper, Thomson. Both Sir Robert Sutton and Sir Archibald Grant were expelled as members of the House of Commons, with Grant being prevented from leaving the country and Sutton ultimately prosecuted in several courts.

In the end, the shareholders received a partial government bailout – Parliament authorised a lottery that reimbursed only 40 per cent of what the corporation's creditors had lost.

The risks of concentrated power

There are several key characteristics that stand out in the collapses of both the Charitable Corporation and FTX. Both companies were offering something new or venturing into a new sector. In the former's case, it was microloans. In FTX's case, it was

cryptocurrency.

Meanwhile, the management of both ventures was centralised in the hands of just a few people. The Charitable Corporation got into trouble when it reduced its directors from 12 to five and when it consolidated most of its loan business in the hands of one employee – namely, Thomson. FTX's example is even more extreme, with founder Sam Bankman-Fried calling all the shots.

In both cases, the key fraud was using the assets of one company to prop up another company managed by the same people. For example, in 1732, the corporation's directors bought stock in the York Buildings Company, in which many of them were also involved. They hoped to juice stock prices. When that didn't happen, they realised they couldn't cover what they had taken out of the Charitable Corporation's funds.

Fast forward nearly 300 years, and a similar story seems to have played out. Bankman-Fried allegedly took money out his customer accounts in FTX to cover his cryptocurrency trading firm, Alameda Research.



The management of both ventures was centralised in the hands of just a few people... and the key fraud was using the assets of one company to prop up another company managed by the same people.

News of both frauds also came as a surprise, with little advance warning. Part of this is due to the ways in which managers were well respected and well connected to both politicians and the financial world. Few public figures mistrusted them, and this proved to be a useful screen for deceit.

I would also argue that in both cases the company's connection to philanthropy lent it another level of cover. The Charitable Corporation's very name announced its altruism. And even after the scandal subsided, commentators pointed out that the original business of microlending was useful. FTX's founder Bankman-Fried is an advocate of effective altruism and has argued that it was useful for him and his companies to make lots of money so he could give it away to what he deemed effective causes.

After the Charitable Corporation's collapse in 1732, Parliament didn't institute any regulation that would prevent such a fraud from happening again.

A tradition of loose oversight and regulations has been the hallmark of Anglo-American capitalism. If the response to the 2008 financial crash is any indication of what will come in the wake of FTX's collapse, it's possible that some bad actors, like Bankman-Fried, will be punished. But any regulation will be undone at the first opportunity – or never put in place to begin with.

Amy Froide is a Professor of History, University of Maryland.

A VIEW FROM THE PEWS

MICHAEL CAINE,
ST WINEFRIDE'S PARISH, LYMM, CHESHIRE



If we follow the road Jesus took we reach the Mass we celebrate today

I've wondered many times about the origin of the Mass. I've never been able to find a direct answer, but the following two stories could be examples:

1. The original disciples introducing Christ and his teachings to foreigners.
2. The story of 'The Road to Emmaus'.

Teaching Christianity to foreigners

When the risen Christ showed his disciples the holes in his hands and feet made when he was crucified, and the one in his side made by a Roman soldier's spear thrust, even the most sceptical were convinced he was the Son of God. They now had no hesitation to take the words of Jesus Christ to foreign lands.

The problem they must have had was convincing people to listen to them, but they did have two things to help them. One was that storytelling was a great form of entertainment. The other was that the Israelites had many great and exciting stories about their history: the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, Joseph, Moses, Kings David and Solomon, and many others.

This could have been a great way to get their audience to listen to them.

These stories were a great way of introducing their one God and the promise of a Messiah. Once their listeners were enthralled, they could introduce Jesus Christ as the Messiah and tell what had happened, with themselves being eyewitnesses. If their listeners were then interested, they could absolve their sins and give them consecrated bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ.



If this is what happened, then all this was a two-part process:

1. Listening to the Word of God as in the Israelite scriptures.
2. Taking the consecrated bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ.

Isn't this the simple format of the Mass?

The road to Emmaus

Immediately after the death of Jesus, the disciples in fear for their lives hid in a secret room in Jerusalem. On the third day after the

death of their master Jesus Christ, two disciples thought they would be a lot safer if they were back in their hometown of Emmaus and set out to go there as fast as possible on foot.

Back in Jerusalem, Jesus rose from the dead as he'd promised. Meanwhile, the two disciples on the road home to Emmaus were approached by a stranger who asked if he could walk with them. They agreed and when he asked why they were so sad, they told him about the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. He

then engaged them in a debate about the scriptures and what these foretold about the Messiah.

When they reached Emmaus, the two disciples, impressed by the wisdom of the stranger asked him to stay with them overnight. He agreed and when they started to eat, he took the bread, blessed and broke it just like Jesus had done at 'The Last Supper'. They now realised that here was the risen Christ. He'd kept his promise and had risen from the dead. He was truly the Son of God.

They didn't hang around; they

wanted their fellow disciples to know what they now knew. Disregarding their own safety, they immediately set off back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples about seeing the risen Christ telling them "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

The two disciples had gone back into the jaws of death, to the city of Jerusalem from which they'd fled in fear of their lives a few days earlier. They were now in no doubt that the stranger they had met was their lord and master Jesus Christ. He had risen from the dead as promised and they wanted their colleagues to have the same burning hearts that they'd experienced. Returning in fear for their lives as they had done was proof of what they'd seen and heard. They wanted their colleagues to know that they were no longer afraid and were ready to teach Christ's message of love to people all over the world.

The two disciples had been engaged with a stranger learning more about the scriptures in such a way as to make their hearts burn.

They saw the stranger bless, then break bread in the same way Jesus had done at the 'Last Supper'.

Again this was a two part process:

1. Discussing the Scriptures - Liturgy of the Word.
 2. Receiving Holy Communion - Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- This is the Mass: isn't this the simple format of the Mass as we know it today?

Could these happenings have been the source of the Mass? Have you your own ideas about this?

Why 'dying well' is all part of God's plan for us

Gretchen R. Crowe

What does it mean to die well? The end is inevitable for all of us. When, we don't know. How, we don't know. Where, we don't know. But we know it's coming.

St. John Vianney, the French curé d'Ars, once said: "If we were required to die twice, we could jettison one death. But man dies once only, and upon this death depends his eternity."

In other words, while walking this journey on earth, we must never take our eyes off the ultimate reward – life with God – and we must never lose sight of what it takes

to get there. We do, after all, only get one death.

One supposes this must have been a constant consideration in recent years of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who retired to a life of solitude and prayer in 2013 at age 85. What was there left to do but to prepare to die well?

His preparations, though, had been lifelong. In his spiritual testament dated more than 16 years before his death, Benedict reflected on his life, and on those whom he had encountered, with gratitude. He gave thanks to God. He asked for the forgiveness of those he may have

wronged. He asked for our prayers. And he took one last opportunity to point people to the truth.

"Stand firm in the faith! Do not be confused!" he urged. "For 60 years now, I have accompanied the path of theology, especially biblical studies, and have seen seemingly unshakeable theses collapse with the changing generations, which turned out to be mere hypotheses ... I have seen, and see, how, out of the tangle of hypotheses, the reasonableness of faith has emerged and is emerging anew.

"Jesus Christ is truly the Way, the Truth, and the Life — and the

Church, in all her shortcomings, is truly His Body."

In his final statement on earth, Pope Benedict was determined to do what he did best: demonstrate how to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. He led with gratitude, sought reconciliation with his fellow man, underscored the importance of prayer, and taught the Faith. Through that witness and that teaching, he sought to do what every disciple is called to do: to bring others to Jesus Christ. This is dying well.

In a talk on St. Thérèse of Lisieux in April 2011, Pope Benedict reflected on the final words of the saint, uttered on her deathbed Sept.

30, 1897, when she was just 24 years old: "My God, I love you!"

"These last words of the saint are the key to her whole doctrine, to her interpretation of the Gospel. The act of love, expressed in her last breath was, as it were, the continuous breathing of her soul, the beating of her heart," Pope Benedict said. "We too must be able to repeat to the Lord every day that we want to live out of love for him.

Should we succeed in that, we too might find that, when our time comes, our own focus is right where it should be: expressing our love of God. This is dying well.

JOURNEY IN FAITH

EFFIE CALDAROLA



Catholic social teaching, and the care for creation by consuming less

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII articulated his vision of Catholic social teaching impacting the affairs of our world. Like Jesus, who entered the world among the poor and outcasts, Catholic social teaching endeavours to speak to the lives of people who struggle with the real and messy issues of life.

Catholic social teaching emphasises the importance of working toward 'the common good'. According to Catholic teaching, our lives and our societal structures must be concerned with what is good for the whole of humanity.

Today, perhaps no issue impacts the lives of so many as does the reality of climate change and environmental degradation. A major theme of Catholic social teaching is 'care for God's creation,' and the moral responsibility for caring for our common home falls to each of us.

Many people are aware that Pope Francis dedicated an entire encyclical to the care of God's creation. But this text, *Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home*, builds on a long line of statements from popes, bishops' conferences and scripture as it outlines the crisis we face and our need to respond.

Most of us remember stories from our grandmothers or great-grandmothers about how, in their day, items were used, reused and repurposed. Throwaway plastic didn't exist. Furniture was passed down from generation to generation. Good, classic clothing was sewn or purchased to last for years.

Perhaps nothing speaks to this environmental respect more than the beautiful quilts and rugs that many people have inherited. Often, each piece speaks to a reused piece of fabric, an old wedding or christening gown, perhaps, a special garment now worn out but cut up and sewn for new use.

Today, our challenge is to return to this attitude of respect for the gifts that the resources of our world provide us. We need look no further than Genesis to see that God created the earth and commanded humans to care for this creation (Gn 2:15).

I once heard a wise bishop gave a lecture which exhorted us to us to "show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation." Care for the earth is not just a nice slogan. The bishop told us it "is a requirement of our faith."

To solve climate change and environmental degradation, we need to view the issue as one

Caption: "A major theme of Catholic social teaching is 'care for God's creation,' and the moral responsibility for caring for our common home falls to each of us."



impacting our spirituality and our faith life.

Today, we see unprecedented hurricanes and frequent '100-year' floods. We experience historic wildfires, warming ocean temperatures, melting Arctic ice and record-breaking summer heat. Resources are used and discarded with impunity. Categories of animals disappear. Often, it is the poor who are impacted most by rising coastal waters or changing environments for subsistence farming or fishing.

Pope Francis, in *Laudato Si'*, tells us, 'Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.'

And as Pope Benedict XVI in the encyclical *Charity and Truth* expressed, 'The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility toward the poor, toward future generations and toward humanity as

a whole.'

Catholic social teaching speaks directly to the modern scourge of consumerism. Our emphasis on having, possessing and buying uses the resources of our world in unsustainable ways.

St John Paul II said that modern people have a "desire to have and to enjoy rather than to be and to grow." All of us must look at this desire in our own lives and question our own culpability.

In the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, which was compiled under St John Paul, the



Each of us constructs a quilt from the fabric of our lives. Each piece is cut from cloth that reflects our values. By deciding to consume less, to reuse, repurpose, recycle, we deepen our commitment to the loving Creator

Vatican tells us that in modern times, 'the aspect of the conquest and exploitation of resources has become predominant and invasive, and today it has even reached the point of threatening the environment's hospitable aspect: the environment as 'resource' risks threatening the environment as home.'

We humans have developed the ability to exploit resources at an incredible rate. And so we do. Rather than treat our environment, with the creatures that abound in it, as our sacred and shared home, we use it

as only a commodity and we risk destroying it.

Many Catholic dioceses, schools and universities are attempting to address this important aspect of Catholic social teaching by converting to solar, cutting carbon emissions and using less. Under Pope Benedict XVI, Vatican City began installing solar panels in 2008. The Vatican has banned single use plastic bags and has committed to zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Yet we have a responsibility as individuals to live out Catholic social teaching, which tells us we are much more than what we have and consume.

Each of us constructs a quilt from the fabric of our lives. Each piece is cut from cloth that reflects our values. By deciding to consume less, to reuse, repurpose, recycle, we deepen our commitment to the loving Creator who gives us every good gift and desires that we share with all of humanity for the common good.

CREDO

FR HUGH DUFFY

New year and new thinking if we are to save the planet and its people

To all my readers, I wish you a happy and healthy New Year, 2023.

Let us be clear about this: 2022 has not been a good year for us or for our planet. We are living in a dangerous place at the moment. Need I mention the terrifying climactic changes to our environment this past year: the loss of lives from wildfires, tornados, cyclones, and floods? A large part of the world's population lives in poverty and is indeed starving to death. We cannot be complacent nor can we afford to ignore the suffering of our poorer brothers and sisters, worldwide, who need to live dignified human lives.

God has implanted in our hearts an instinct to take care of ourselves and the environment he has entrusted to us. Fortunately, many courageous people have been stepping forward this past year to highlight the ravages of gun and knife violence in our cities, to alert us to the effects of climate change worldwide, and to speak out against the grind of poverty on the helpless. These prophetic voices are good news in spite of all the bad news.

The question, however, is... what are you going to do in 2023?

1. I think you need to begin with yourself. You don't have to flit around the world attempting to solve all its problems. Bloom where you are planted. A weed is nothing more than a flower or plant out of place. Find your own place where you can do the most good. Put God and his kingdom of truth and justice first in your life and everything else will fall into place (Matthew 6 : 33).

2. Second, make your environment,



your surroundings, a better place to live in and to work in. The greatest problem we face is apathy when good people do nothing but stand idly by while things crumble around them. You matter, and you can make a difference. So, don't just talk. Do something, and surprise yourself.

3. Cultivate a spirit of peace in your life. Who among us does not

want peace? If you are living with regret, you are living in the past. If you are living with anxiety, you are living in the future. But, if you are at peace you are living in the present. Cultivate this gift by living in the present. As this New Year begins, the voices of people of good will be calling us to peace. These voices are mere words and idle rhetoric unless

you find peace within yourself and are able to live in peace with one another.

We are living in a society made up of different cultures and beliefs. People of different cultures and beliefs are reading these messages. It is wonderful when people of different backgrounds and beliefs draw closer together. We have so

much in common. We are all searching for the truth, and for good news that binds us together, in spite of our differences. Let us begin with ourselves this new year by becoming better people, by reaching out to others and helping them. Whenever you reach out to feed the hungry, whenever you clothe the naked, whenever you give drink to the thirsty, and whenever you help those in need, you are putting into practice the good news of the Gospel, and by this you will be known as a follower of Christ (Matthew 25:31-46).

You can start your new year by helping someone in need. It could be a family member, it could be a neighbour, it could be a charitable organisation that helps the poor. We cannot solve all of the world's problems, but we can make a difference when we do our part in our own environment and where necessary, in other parts of the world, to help our brothers and sisters in need.

Whatever the new year brings, even it is no better and even worse than the last one, remember "that all things work together for good to those who love God" (Romans 8 : 28). Pray for the grace to handle whatever comes your way, be it good or bad, in the proper spirit, knowing that God who often writes straight with crooked lines will make everything right.

Cherish the beautiful gifts of Faith, Hope, and Love that draw you closer to your Maker who loves all things both great and small.

May you always take care of one another and be at Peace.

A happy and peaceful 2023 to you.

Why are the Beatitudes so important?

Fr Duffy

The Beatitudes are important because they are the heart and soul of Jesus's teachings. They are what make his teachings unique and set him apart from all other teachers, rabbis, imams or gurus in the history of mankind.

Yet, you hear precious little about the Beatitudes when you turn on the radio or television and listen to preachers and televangelists talk about Jesus. Why is this? Do they regard the Beatitudes of lesser importance than Armageddon, the Ten Commandments, or the rapture? Or is it possible they don't understand the importance of the Beatitudes and their significance in

the lives of Christians?

There are eight beatitudes (Matthew 5: 1-10). These beatitudes are habits of the heart. Unlike the Ten Commandments, the beatitudes are not new laws to live up to, but a new way of living that completes the commandments, complete what you do in life. These new habits of the heart form the core of the gospel which ushers in the reign of God.

In the beatitudes, Jesus speaks the language of benediction where, for example, humility means more than pride (first beatitude), where mourning our own sins and who we once were means more than self importance (second beatitude),

where meekness is more important than haughtiness (third beatitude), where generosity counts for more than success (fourth beatitude), where mercy tempers justice (fifth beatitude), where truthfulness puts the lie to deviousness (sixth beatitude), where waging peace is superior to waging war (seventh beatitude), and where courage, in the face of persecution, overcomes complacency (eighth beatitude).

These wonderful attitudes of Christ urge us to look beyond appearances to find real spiritual substance within us by changing our hearts.

The cynic may say that only winners, not the meek as in the

third beatitude, will inherit the earth. This assessment of life's purpose is entirely wrong even if it is very common today. It stops at appearances and misses the real point in living.

To be a good winner means achieving what you want out of life with meekness and integrity of spirit, not by lording it over others, or getting ahead in life at other people's expense.

The eight beatitudes impart the proper attitudes in your dealings with one another. They are an invitation to strive to put on the spiritual attitudes of Christ that change the heart from within.

Jesus gave us these eight blessed

attitudes so that we may conduct our lives in the proper spirit. Your attitude is important because it affects the WAY you do something. A bad attitude breaks a family, a church or a business, but a good attitude renews a family, a church or a business. That's why the beatitudes are so important. They renew the WAY we act; they bless us and others by what we do because they spring from the right, interior attitude.

The wonderful thing is that the Holy Spirit gives us the power to adopt the right kind of attitudes in all that we do each day.

Cherish the Beatitudes of Jesus by the way you live.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC PRIESTS



Celebrate baptism of the Lord, the day our world changed forever

Sunday – 08 January 2023. The Baptism of the Lord
Jesus brings justice and divine life to the nations. As his baptised family, we seek the kingdom of God through justice and peace.

1st Reading: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

A courageous servant of God will help others to keep the Covenant
 Thus says the Lord: "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

2nd Reading: Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38

After his baptism of Jesus went about doing good. Baptism sends us out to do good

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him."

Gospel: Mt 3: 13-17

Having a clear purpose in life

During a pilgrimage to the Holy Land I and some friends stood up to our knees in the river Jordan, to renew the promises of our baptism. It was a moving experience as we remembered the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus just after HIS baptism. By being baptised into him we are counted as members of God's beloved family. United with Jesus, we are made like him, God's own daughters and sons. Others who stood that day in the Jordan will remember that moment today and



A modern day baptism takes place in the River Jordan

use it to renew their commitment to Jesus. But all of us were baptised somewhere, sometime, and we can claim that baptism fully as our own.

Our Lord's baptism is a vital moment in our story of salvation, where he joined with humanity in the humble outreach to God, and where the Father and the Spirit are seen and heard to be there with him. Our gospel says that "the heavens were opened," a powerful statement of the point of contact between Heaven and earth. Later on, as Jesus completes his life-journey on Calvary, we read how "the veil of the Temple was rent in two," a symbol that we are not completely free to enter the Holy of Holies. Today's gospel has Jesus beginning a journey which each of us is asked to travel. It is a journey full of purpose, a journey of intent. We need a sense of purpose and pattern to our living. St Peter summarised the purpose and pattern of Christ's life when he said, "went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him." We are each invited, personally, to make this purpose our own.

A Dubliner travels

A little story about finding direction: A Dubliner was down the country travelling along by-roads where the signposts were few and far between. After a while, unsure of his directions, he decided to ask the first person he saw. When he came

across a farmer driving his cows home for milking he stopped the car and asked if he was on the right road to Mallow. The farmer told him that he certainly was on the Mallow road. The driver thanked him and was about to move forward when the farmer added, in a nonchalant way, "You're on the right road, but you're going in the wrong direction!" Let's look into our own lifestyle today, to see if our direction is right.

Celebrating Baptism

The sacrament I most like celebrating is the sacrament of baptism. It is always such a happy occasion when a child's birth is publicly celebrated and cheered, and here they are received into a larger family, the family of the Church. In being received into our Church-family, these children become our brothers and sisters in the Lord, sons and daughters of God, and temples of the Spirit. The joy of faith and hope is palpable, especially when the parents and godparents come up to the baptismal font and the water is poured over the head of the child by the celebrant. Each child is anointed before and after baptism with special oil of catechumens and the oil of chrism; the baptismal shawl is placed around the child and the baptismal candle is lit. The whole occasion is uplifting in a way that is unique to that sacrament.

Of course, the majority of

baptisms are of children, who are oblivious to what is happening around them. A big decision is being made on their behalf without their knowing anything about it. Yet, just as parents make all kinds of other big decisions for their children without consulting them, so they happily make this significant decision on their behalf. There is a story in the gospels of parents bringing little children to Jesus. When the disciples tried to stop parents doing this, Jesus rebuked his disciples and said to them, "let the children come to me and do not stop them, for to such as these the kingdom of God belongs."

Parents continue to bring their children to Jesus today whenever they present them for baptism, because in baptism they are being baptised into the person of Christ; they become members of his body; Jesus begins to live within them through the Spirit. When parents bring their children for baptism they are making a decision for them that is very much in keeping with the Lord's desire. 'Let the children come to me and do not stop them.'

Today we celebrate the feast of the baptism of Jesus. It is a good day to reflect on our own baptism and its significance for us. The day of Jesus' baptism was a watershed in his life; it was a day of new beginning. On that day he began his public ministry during which he gave himself fully in the service of God

and all of God's people. On that day Jesus launched forth as the one who came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. As he set out on that momentous journey for all of us, he was assured of God his Father's favour, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you', and he was empowered by the Holy Spirit, who descended upon him like a dove.

Even though Jesus was baptised by John as an adult and we received Christian baptism as children, our baptism was also a day of new beginning for us. On that day we were launched on the great adventure of becoming disciples of Jesus in our own time. On that day, we too were given an assurance of God's love and favour, and we too were empowered by the Holy Spirit for the journey ahead of us. On that day we were caught up into Jesus' own very special relationship with God and we became a member of Jesus' family of disciples, the Church. It is a moment of grace that has the potential to shape our lives in a very fundamental way, in a way that is in keeping with God's purpose for our lives.

In a sense we spend the rest of our lives trying to catch up with that day of new beginning. We are baptised as children but it is as adults that we confirm our baptism for ourselves. It is as adults that we say our own adult 'yes' to the Lord who said 'yes' to us as young children on the day of our baptism. It may be in our late 20s or our late 30s or 40s or even later that we come to say that 'yes' with all our heart and soul and mind. It is often in those mature years that we can hear the call of Isaiah in today's First Reading, 'O come to the water all you who are thirsty; Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near.' The Lord keeps calling out to us from the moment of our baptism, and as the Lord declares in that First Reading, 'the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.' Our response to the Lord's call, the Lord's word, can be slow in coming, but his call, his word, remains powerfully creative and will in some way or other make of us what God wants for us. [M Hogan]

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH FR DOYLE

The role of 'centering prayer' – and why baptists wait for christenings

Q. Having seen references in a book I read to something called 'Centering prayer', I decided to learn more – and now I'm quite confused. A number of websites, which identify themselves as Catholic, condemn centering prayer as dangerous or even heretical. But I've also heard that centring prayer was developed and promoted by some Catholic priests. So I have two questions. First, is centering prayer a good thing or a bad thing? And if it's acceptable, then why do people object to it so strongly?

A. Centering prayer (by the way, the American spelling is due to the fact the practise originated in the USA) is a method of Christian contemplation that places a strong emphasis on interior silence. The aim is to forego all thoughts and images to experience the direct presence of God.

It grew popular in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly through the writings of three Trappist monks from St. Joseph's Abbey in Massachusetts: Abbot Thomas Keating, Fr Basil Pennington and Fr William Meninger. A book written by Fr Pennington in 1980, *Centering Prayer: Renewing an Ancient Christian Prayer Form*, was published in several languages and sold more than one million copies.

Some critics claim that centering prayer blurs the distinction between the creator and the created and borders on pantheism, with the belief that we are all connected to an impersonal energy force that is divine. In 1989, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a document entitled, *On Some Aspects of Christian Meditation*. It warned of potential dangers in blending Christian prayer with Eastern methods of meditation – although it never specifically mentioned centering prayer.

The guidelines for centering prayer invite the user to sit quietly with eyes closed, choose a sacred word as a gently present anchor ('Jesus,' perhaps, or 'Abba') and focus not on any discursive thoughts but solely on one's desire to be in the presence of the Lord and open to any divine promptings.

No doubt there are people who can do that in a way that is theologically orthodox – not with an amorphous "melting into God" but with the consciousness of one's own frailties in the face of God's majesty.

One needs to remember, though, that contemplative experience of God in prayer comes only as a gift and can never be guaranteed by any particular technique.

Q. I often hear references, both in worship and in religious teaching, to 'fear of the Lord'. I struggle with



A priest hears the confession of a boy in Lourdes.

this because I think of God as so forgiving and passionate in his love for the people he has created. Do we really mean 'fear', or just the highest respect?

A. The word 'fear', in many people's minds, has a negative connotation. But closer study shows there are really two kinds of fear – servile and filial. 'Servile' comes from the Latin word for slave, and that sort of fear is self-centred, worried about being punished for a misdeed. 'Filial' is from the Latin for son or daughter, and filial fear is inspired by love.

It is the desire never to disappoint a parent or to betray a trust; filial fear is based on wonder and awe, reverence and respect.

Your question tells me that you understand this distinction. It is the second sort, filial fear, that is meant in the Book of Proverbs 9:10, when it says fear of the Lord is 'the beginning of wisdom'; this is also the type of fear referred to when the Acts of the Apostles 9:31 says of the early Christians: 'The Church throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria was at peace. It was being built up and walked in the fear of the Lord, and with the consolation of the Holy Spirit it grew in numbers.'

Without forgetting that there are consistent reminders in the Scriptures about divine retribution

for sinfulness, a Christian should primarily be motivated not by fright but by fidelity, by a desire to return God's lavish love.

It is so important for us to know that God is a God of love and fear does not come from him. In fact, Jesus spent lots of time telling people: "Do not be afraid." See, for example, the time he walked on water (Matthew 14:22-33) and immediately told the frightened disciples: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

I sometimes ask people to tell me the first image they think of when I say the word 'God'. To some extent, this is a function of personality type and, perhaps even more, of a person's early religious education.

For me – and, I suspect, for many – that first image used to be of some giant scorekeeper in the sky, writing pluses and minuses on a large blackboard. But no more; now I think, instead, of the father of the prodigal son, running down the road to throw his arms around his once-wayward boy and saying: "It's OK. Don't worry about it. You're home. Let's have a party." That is the image Jesus projects of his heavenly Father, someone much more ready to embrace us than to punish.

Q. A Baptist friend recently invited us to his church. During the

service, they had a baptism, and the minister said: "After inquiring about his faith, this 9-year-old boy has now decided to become a Christian." Afterwards, my friend and his family kept stressing the importance of being baptised at an age when one is able to understand the basics of the faith and to make one's own choice – unlike Catholics, they said, where infants are baptised while they have no capability of understanding. I tried to explain that faith is passed on from parents to their children and that all children need parental guidance on their journey of faith – even when they've reached the age of 9. Is there anything else I should have said?

A. Most Christians belong to denominations that practise infant baptism – including Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Reformed. Baptists are among those who do not, joined by most Pentecostals and evangelicals. These latter groups reserve baptism for those who have reached an age when they are capable of making a conscious decision to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church in No. 1250 states that 'children also have need of the new birth in baptism to be freed from the

power of darkness' and in No. 1252 that 'the practice of infant baptism is an immemorial tradition of the church. There is explicit testimony to this practice from the second century, and it is quite possible that from the beginning of the apostolic preaching, when whole 'households' received baptism, infants may also have been baptised.'

Baptism marks the child's entrance into the life of the sacraments and signifies the desire of the parents to pass on to their child their most precious possession, the gift of their faith. And I agree with you that their formative influence on their child's faith will last far beyond the age of 9 and often into adulthood.

In the first few centuries of the Church's existence, when adult converts were entering in great numbers, the sacrament of baptism was thought of principally as a rite of initiation, the beginning of the Christian life.

Towards the end of the fourth century, St. Augustine, seeking to explain the presence of evil in the world, decided that evil reached us from the original sin committed by Adam and Eve. Baptism then assumed a new importance, as removing this inherited sin, and that is the understanding of baptism which most of us grew up with.

Over the last half-century, there's been some refinement in the church's perception, and baptism and original sin are seen in a new light – which is actually a return to something more traditional.

There is no "stain" on the infant's soul that defiles it; the little baby-as you can tell by looking – is innocent and pure.

If that baby were to die before being baptised, I feel safe in believing that God would find a way to bring the child to Heaven.

But every person is born into an imperfect world, a world where sin and selfishness are and have been real forces, and that's a more refined view of what we mean by original sin. That child will very much need the grace of God and the help of the Christian community to resist selfishness and to advance in holiness.

Baptism begins that life, opens a channel of grace through the sacraments – which explains why the catechism in No. 1250 feels compelled to point out that "the church and the parents would deny the child the priceless grace of becoming a child of God were they not to confer baptism shortly after birth."

Please note that this column does not accept reader inquiries or questions

SPIRITUAL THEOLOGY

DAVID TORKINGTON



Prayer is a fitness routine for the soul

Prayer is for a Christian what a gymnasium is for an athlete, where the muscles of your heart and not the muscles of your body are exercised, as they practise what is called 'weight training' or 'pumping iron'.

The principle behind it is very simple. By repeatedly raising weights above your head in the gymnasium you are not just developing the muscles in your arms and legs, but virtually every other muscle in your body as well simultaneously, in one simple action. The whole person is not only made stronger and more powerful but is given powers of endurance beyond those who do not use this method.

The spiritual gymnasium

It is the same in the spiritual gymnasium that is prayer. What is prayer but the raising of the heart and mind to God? It is just like weight-training.

Whatever form of prayer you are engaged in, whether it is saying your morning prayers, trying to meditate or even contemplating you will always experience distractions, so you will always have to keep raising your heart and mind to God time and time again. As a person is doing this then the muscles of the heart and mind are continually being exercised, gradually transforming the whole spiritual metabolism. Athletes know that this concentrated period of physical exercise will give greater ease and facility to whatever they do in the rest of their day. The same is true for the spiritual athlete. It is not only they, but others too, who will benefit from the love generated in prayer where the muscles of the heart are developed more quickly and more fully than anywhere else.

The sacrament of the present moment

There is no time like the present. This journey can begin now in what the great mystic Jean Pierre de Caussade S.J called "the sacrament of the present moment" where alone time can touch eternity. Never be deceived into believing that continual failures will disqualify us from this journey. God judges us by how best we try no matter how many times we fall, for only he knows the power of our personal 'demons' and how best we have tried to overcome them.

Everyone begins life with a different hand of cards. Everyone begins with different parents or only one or even none. Even the best of parents are themselves psychologically handicapped by what nature and nurture has failed to give them, and what we therefore have failed to receive from them.

But remember, God ultimately



judges us by how best we have tried despite the odds that seem to have been against us from the beginning. And he judges those who have received so much and yet have given so little too. Only God knows the quality of our endeavour in comparison with what we were given at the beginning of our life, so only he can judge us at the end of it, by how best we have tried. He does not judge us by what the world may think that we have achieved, but what he knows we have achieved. There is an old Spanish proverb that says, 'You see what I drink but you do not see my thirst'. God does!

The difference between us and the Saints

Only Our Lady was conceived without sin, and that means that the rest of us were not. That is why we are continually falling, both inside and outside of prayer, whether we like it or not, and that includes the saints too. The difference between us and the saints is not that they did not sin and we do. They sinned just as we do. What distinguishes the saint from the sinner is the speed with which they get up after having fallen. The saints do not waste precious time pretending they do not sin, or making endless excuses,



Sometimes we can spend years on the run because pride will not allow us to admit what we have done. Our inability to eat humble pie means that we can spend half a lifetime suffering from spiritual starvation.

or blaming others for what they know only too well was their own fault. When passing through Purgatory Dante noticed that now at last people saw the truth, so they did not spend their time blaming others but only themselves, for the sins that separated them from God. The saints saw this even in this life. The moment they fell, they did not waste time blaming others but only themselves and so they sought forgiveness and began again, knowing they had sinned, but trusting in the mercy of God.

A lesson from Adam in Eden

Herein lies one of the main differences between the saints and sinners like us. Only too often people simply cannot face their guilt so they run away from God and hide, as Adam did in the Garden of Eden. When God called out, "Adam, Adam, where are you?" (Genesis 3:9), God knew exactly where Adam was: it was Adam who did not know where he was. He had lost his way trying to hide his sin and the guilt that shamed him.

Sometimes we can spend years on the run because pride will not allow us to admit what we have done. Our inability to eat humble pie means that we can spend half a lifetime

suffering from spiritual starvation.

What is even worse than the pride that comes before a fall, is the pride that follows the fall, because it stops us from getting up, sometimes permanently.

Whether in or out of prayer, the measure of spiritual advancement can always be determined by the speed with which we turn back to God from the distractions, the temptations, or the sins that try to turn us away from him.

However, what all the saints discovered was that this speed can only be maintained with the help and strength from God.

Wisdom from St Teresa of Avila

That is why, although they may have differed from one another in

everything else, they were one in their daily commitment to prayer. They knew without a shadow of a doubt that without it they had no power to do anything of any real value or worth, let alone advance in the spiritual life. That is why each of them in different ways echoed the words of St Teresa of Avila, when she said, "There is only one way to perfection and that is to pray. If anyone points in another direction then they are deceiving you."

The very essence of our spiritual journey then, is in endlessly getting up no matter how many times we fall. It is in this, more than anything else, that the real quality of our love is measured.

Even if we do not have a pure and humble heart to begin with, a pure and humble heart will be God's gift for those who persevere in following their heart's desire, come what may. The most pernicious stumbling block to our spiritual advancement is the pride that follows our fall, which induces us to pack up and run away from God rather than face the truth of our sinfulness. Yet again then I insist that the difference between the saint and the sinner is not that they never fail and we do, but the speed with which they seek forgiveness and begin again immediately no matter how many times they fall. This takes great humility and is how true humility is learned.

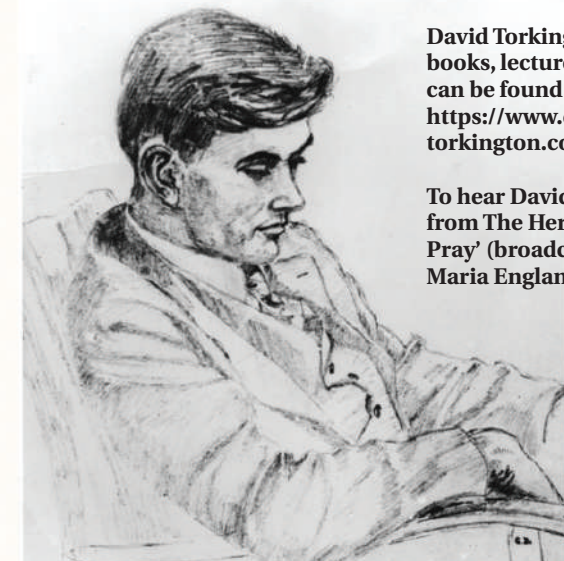
And remember this: "When you stop falling then you are in Heaven, but when you stop getting up then you are in hell.

"In the trying is the dying, and in the dying is the rising that draws us up into the mystical body of Christ and into his mystical contemplation of his Father" (Peter Calvary, Hermit).

David Torkington's blogs, books, lectures and podcasts can be found at <https://www.davidtorkington.com/>

David Torkington reads from The Hermit – Episode 1

by David Torkington | Jan 16, 2021 | Mystical Prayer, Podcast | 10 comments



David Torkington's blogs, books, lectures and podcasts can be found at <https://www.davidtorkington.com>

To hear David read excerpts from 'The Hermit' and 'How to Pray' (broadcast on Radio Maria England), [CLICK HERE](#)



AROUND THE PARISHES & EDUCATION



The Universe Catholic Weekly's guide to Catholic life in your neighbourhood

School comes to the rescue of Christmas shelter

Tributes paid to school and governors for helping city project

Fr Michael White

Birmingham Christmas Shelter found its own guardian angel this Christmas after St Catherine's school offered to host over 100 destitute people in need of support

The shelter runs for four nights every year but struggled to find a venue this Christmas, having asked numerous schools with no success. However, St Catherine's, our wonderful Catholic school in the centre of Birmingham, stepped up to provide the necessary accommodation.

The Shelter hosted over 100 destitute people over the Christmas period, offering them food, accommodation, entertainment, friendship, clothing and some

health services. It's like a mini holiday camp in the centre of Birmingham.

The charity's founder, Shirley Mallon, was full of praise for St Catherine's: "If it wasn't for the school, I don't know what we would have done. It is a tribute to the governors and staff at the school that they have opened their doors during the school holiday to some of the most needy people in the city.

"And what a wonderful message it sends to the children, too.

On their first day of opening, I blessed the event and met with organisers, guests and volunteers.

Over 400 people came forward to help run the project, and the organisers had to turn down 100.

St Catherine once wrote: "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire." That fire is burning brightly in the parish and school of St Catherine of Siena.



Happy guests at the shelter (above) were well provided for with food cooked by the many volunteers (left)

Tell your school's story to readers of the Universe Catholic Weekly!

Just email your stories to **Andy Drozdziak** at

News@universecatholicweekly.co.uk



Strong performances from across the year groups ensured St Bede's Catholic Primary and Nursery School were the champions at the South Tyneside Cross Country competition at Temple Park. A total of 42 children took part in the competition, which included eight races for boys and girls from Year 3 to Year 6. St Bede's Y3 boys, Y4 girls and Y4 boys won their events, while the

Y3 girls claimed the silver. These were backed up by good performances from the Year 5 and Year 6, helping St Bede's claim overall victory at the event and claim the District Champions Shield. It was proof that training pays off, with the children taking part in Friday practice sessions after school in the build up to the event. This helped the St. Bede's runners prepare and

achieve personal best performances on the day. Coach and Y3 teacher Brian McVittie said: "I was delighted how everyone supported each other at the event, with our Year sixes cheering on the Year threes and vice versa. I hope the success of the squad will encourage more children to get involved in future school cross country events."

Young readers thrilled with new school library

Young readers in Whitley Bay were thrilled when their Catholic primary school opened the doors to its new library.

Star of the Sea converted its former computer suite to make the new facility, which now houses more than 1,000 books.

English lead at the school, Clare Taylor, said: “The new library is part of the original building that has been refurbished, and is a fabulous new resource for us.

“Classes can go to the library for story time, and children are encouraged to borrow books and develop a love of reading.

“Although it’s a small room, it’s very well stocked, with a wide range of books, mostly fiction, suitable for children from nursery to Year 6.”

She continued: “Previously we did not have a library room, and reading books were in the classrooms. It

took two or three months to organise – buying new shelving and liaising with the schools library service.

“The furniture came out of school funds, with books from the schools library service and donations from the children, who were asked to give a book and were given bookplates to show who had donated them.”

Clare Taylor added that use of the new facilities is shared between the school’s 370 pupils, with a timetable

in the library allowing classes to book the space.

“It is lovely to have so many books to choose from to read with the children or for them to borrow. The children love it – they enjoy going to the library and having story time and choosing a book,” she said.

“It is hugely important to have a good range of books, so that all children can find books that are suited to their interests, to promote a life-long love of reading.”



Pupils of all ages are loving the new space to read and explore the books on offer



Fr Peter, a master of the homily, mourned

Many in the Church are mourning the death of Fr Peter Edwards, who died on 18th December.

From 1997 until 2021, Fr Peter was assistant priest at St Philip Howard Church in Cambridge. Though working full-time right up until his death, he was able to devote time and energy to the liturgical, spiritual and social life of the parish. His own homilies were appreciated as insightful and thought-provoking, and through his work with Redemptorist Publications many parishes will listen to his homilies which draw on the sermon notes of this Cambridge priest and author.

His enjoyment of folk music (especially the Cambridge Folk Festival) and of rugby at Twickenham were interests which bonded him with parishioners of all ages. He developed close bonds and lifelong friendships with his parishioners.

Although his condition, muscular dystrophy, gradually affected his mobility and, eventually, required him to use a wheelchair, he was determined to continue with family, social and church activities as much as he could. He said Mass regularly, including the weekly Saturday evening Mass, up until the start of the pandemic. Indeed, his muscular dystrophy gave him a deep understanding and empathy with his parishioners who had their own health difficulties and challenges.

Fr Philip John, his parish priest,

writes: “Peter was a model for persistence and will power. He wasn’t ready to give up anything because of his illness. He always tried to maintain the priestly *koinonia* in the deanery and was a good example for keeping relationships.”

Having been ordained originally in the Church of England and serving as an Anglican priest for 10 years in three different parishes, Peter and his wife, Gill, and daughters, Zoe, Lucy and Maria, gave up their home in Suffolk and moved to Cambridge to become part of the Catholic Church. They brought their own family life as an enrichment to the parish.

The parish and the Diocese of East Anglia extend their heartfelt condolences to them, as well as their sincere gratitude for all that Fr Peter contributed over many years and despite the challenges of illness.

Fr Peter is pictured at his daughter’s wedding party in July 2022.





RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

From April 2023 or September 2023

Ratcliffe is an outstanding day and boarding School for over 900 students from age 3 to age 18. Set in almost 200 acres of beautiful grounds the College is seeking to appoint an inspirational, creative and well-qualified teacher to lead and co-ordinate academic and co-curricular Music throughout the College.

The post presents an exciting opportunity for an ambitious candidate to develop this thriving department. The College Chapel, Music Recital Hall, Old Library, Drama Hall and Lockhart Garden are amongst the College’s inspiring venues for music concerts and events. The refurbished Music department, boasts state-of-the-art Mac suite and touch screens, 10 individual practice rooms, 3 music classrooms, a departmental office and the Director of Music’s office.

The department staffing comprises two further full-time and one part-time Music teacher who assist with the curriculum delivery across the College. The Music Administrator supports the Director of Music with event planning as well as the co-ordination of the peripatetic staff. The Music Department also benefits from the support of other high calibre musicians amongst the teaching staff, including the leader of the Leicester Symphony Orchestra.


Application is via the School’s website:
www.ratcliffecollege.com/about/vacancies/

The closing date for receipt of applications is Tuesday 31st January at midday.


Ratcliffe College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check.





AROUND THE PARISHES & EDUCATION



The Universe Catholic Weekly's guide to Catholic life in your neighbourhood

Warm welcome for bishop as he visits Ascot church, school

Bishop Philip Egan

I went to Ascot in December to bless a new statue in the church of Our Lady of Fatima.

This beautiful work was given as a donation by a former Chief Knight of St. Columba in memory of his dear wife. At the same time, a number of Knights were present and they had collected an amazing £10,000 for the Thames Hospice in Maidenhead.

The Knights Council 984 covers Ascot, Windsor, Maidenhead, Staines, Wokingham and Bracknell. They champion faith, family and fraternity, and highlight the Catholic faith, family life and fraternal support. Their prime local function is the support of parishes and clergy, supporting local schools and local and national charities, such as HCPT, Comboni Missions, Mary's Meals, Thames Hospice, Burma Orphanage and more.

I also visited St. Francis primary school while in Ascot. Canon PJ Smith, the Episcopal Vicar for Education, and Fr. Anthony Fyk, bishop's secretary, accompanied me. Upon arrival, we were met by headteacher Rhona Miccoli the, and the Head Boy and Head Girl. I then led a short period of eucharistic adoration with the whole school in the school hall, finishing with Benediction. Fr. Kevin Bidgood, parish priest, brought the Blessed Sacrament over from church and Fr. Bruce Barnes, the bishop's chaplain to Heads and Principals, played the piano to accompany the singing.

At the end of the short liturgy, the children sang one of the carols they were going to sing that evening in church at their Christmas carol concert. After spending time with the headteacher, I then made a brief tour of the school and enjoyed some



refreshments with the Head and senior leadership team.

It's been a while since I visited St. Francis, and so I was delighted to be there once again and to find everyone in great spirits.

Above, eucharistic adoration with the children and staff at St Francis and right, receiving a cheque for the local hospice



Bishop Peter Collins has hosted Diocese of East Anglia seminarians from as far away as Rome and Birmingham in his first Mass and lunch with them since being ordained as Bishop of East Anglia in mid-December.

The seminarians were joined by Fr Pat Cleary and Fr Padraig Hawkins, the director and assistant director of vocations respectively, for Mass at Our Lady of the Annunciation in Poringland on 29th December, followed by lunch.

Pictured before the lunch are, from the left, Fr Padraig Hawkins, Fr Mark Dunning, Matthew Allen, Guy Cranfield, Peter Ho, Fr Pat Cleary, Bishop Peter, Rev Bienn Carlo Manuntag, Anthony Asomugha and Dr Anthony Reilly. Not present were seminarians Rev Mark Ashwood, Benjamin Barnett and Dominic Nyathi.

Parish changes keep faith alive as church marks 50 years

Brian Swanson

Parishioners of St Margaret's, Clydebank, have marked the 50th anniversary of the opening of the church with a Mass of thanksgiving celebrated by Archbishop William Nolan.

Among the guests was the previous parish priest Canon Gerry Tartaglia who served for 18 years before moving recently to Holy Family and St Ninian's parish in Kirkintilloch.

Parishioners recently welcomed Canon Gerald Sharkey as their new parish priest from his previous role as administrator of St Andrew's Cathedral.

The 'top of the hill' parish was founded in 1969 to cater for population changes after the war in Clydebank and the striking modern church was opened in 1972.

For many years, Mgr. James McShane was the legendary parish priest.

In a sign of the times, the parish was linked with the fine old parish of Our Holy Redeemer in 2005.

The former mother church of the town had a dwindling population of parishioners and the link with St Margaret's allowed the preservation of the beautiful sandstone building on Glasgow Road, while uniting the two congregations under the pastoral leadership of St Margaret's



parish priest.

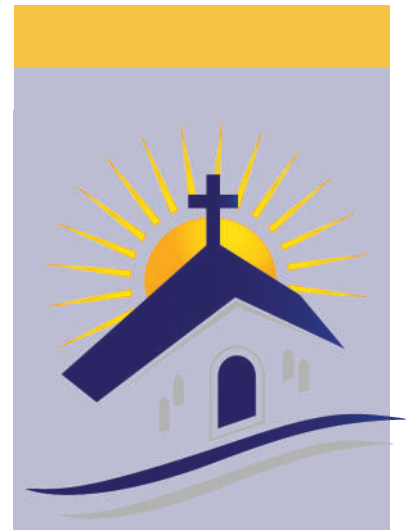
Archbishop Nolan said: "It is always a pleasure for me to take part in significant milestones for parishes in the Archdiocese.

"It was a pleasure to visit St Margaret's and to thank the clergy and parishioners for all their hard work over the last half century and

encourage them as they look to the future."

Picture above are Celebrant Archbishop William Nolan with parish priest Canon Gerald Sharkey, former parish priest Canon Gerry Tartaglia and clergy. Photo by Paul McSherry

"It is always a pleasure to take part in milestones for our parishes... and a pleasure to visit St Margaret's and to thank the clergy and parishioners for all their hard work ..."



Tell your school's story to readers of the Universe Catholic Weekly!

The Universe Catholic Weekly loves celebrating the achievements of our faith's schools and college.

Just email your stories to **Andy Drozdziak** at

News@universecatholicweekly.co.uk

And we love great pics – so send them too!

SCHOOLS MEDIA COMPETITION

Columban Missionaries are looking for students (aged 13-18 inclusive) to submit an original piece of writing or an original image on the theme:

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- ✓ Where and how is peacebuilding taking place?
- ✓ What role can faith play in peacemaking?

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From the Columban Statement on Peace

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GARDENING

Think ahead if you want your plants to thrive throughout the year

It might only be January but the summer will be upon us before we know it. You're looking forward to a relaxing time lying on the beach or sightseeing, shopping and dining out. You've booked your flights and hotel, arranged for your pets to stay at the kennel or catteries. Everything's set, right? But wait – what about all your plants growing in containers, those pots and hanging baskets that need watering every day when it's hot?

Compared to plants growing in the ground, plants in containers are growing in a limited volume of soil. This means that they don't have much of a reservoir of moisture to draw on to meet their water needs. They are dependent on you, the gardener, to give them a drink when they get thirsty.

Depending on the size of the container, its exposure, and weather conditions, plants in pots may need watering daily or even twice daily during hot spells. Larger containers with their greater volume of soil will require the least maintenance, while hanging baskets, which generally contain a relatively small volume of soil and are more exposed to drying winds, need the most watering attention.

Find a 'plant sitter'

It can be a challenge to make sure your container plantings and hanging baskets don't dry out while you are away. The best option is to find a plant sitter, someone who can come daily to check on plants and water as needed while you're away. A responsible neighbourhood teenager looking to earn a little extra money is often a good bet for holiday plant care.

If you have a helpful neighbour and just have a few smaller containers or hanging baskets, you might load the plants up and take them over to the neighbour's garden where they'll be easy to take care for in your absence and you can offer to return the favour with their plants when their holiday time comes. I take my hanging baskets that need daily watering to my grown children's houses and do the same for them in return when they go on holiday.



“Compared to plants growing in the ground, plants in containers are growing in a limited volume of soil. This means that they don't have much of a reservoir of moisture to draw on to meet their water needs. They are dependent on you, the gardener, to give them a drink when they get thirsty.”

make it easier to leave for a long weekend and know plants won't dry out.

Make a pre-holiday harvest

If you're growing edibles in your containers, harvest all vegetables that are likely to be overripe before your return, such as beans, cucumbers and carrots, even if they aren't mature yet. This will prevent plants from getting the signal to stop producing. Give your flowering annuals a good going over as well, deadheading those blossoms that are likely to go to seed before your return; this will help them continue to keep producing new flowers.

Consider Drip Irrigation

If you like to garden in containers and take frequent or extended summer vacations, you may want to consider investing in a drip irrigation system controlled by an automatic timer. Set up a system with drip emitters going to your individual containers and you'll be able to take off on vacation and be confident your plants will be in good shape on your return. Many garden and home stores carry kits that make it easy to set up a simple system.

Move to the shade

If you don't have a reliable plant sitter, move containers small enough to transport easily to a shaded, wind-sheltered location and water them well right before you leave. Remove any saucers that might hold standing water so that pots won't be left sitting in water after a rain.

If containers are too large to move easily, erect temporary shade cloth structures over those in full sun to keep plants cooler and reduce water loss. You can also place purchased plant watering bulbs or spikes in the pots, or make your own from recycled 2-litre fizzy drinks bottles. These devices let water slowly seep into the soil, maintaining a steady supply of moisture for the plants. While they may not provide enough water to see plants through a two-week vacation, using these plant watering devices can



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HEALTH

Pain: it's all in the mind... or is it? The answer can guide your treatment

Rich Harrison & Tim Salomons

People often use the phrase 'mind over matter' to describe situations where aches and pains in the body are overridden using the mind.

A gardener comes in from gardening and is surprised to discover a nasty cut on her hand, something she wasn't aware of while focused on her plants. Or a soldier is wounded by a bullet but feels little pain until he is safe in the infirmary. If pain was directly and entirely linked to bodily injury, these examples would be impossible. A cut would always lead to mild pain, whereas a gunshot wound would immediately cause severe pain. But this is not always the case.

Pain scientists are careful to distinguish between a harmful (noxious) stimulus and pain. In the case of the soldier, his stimulus (a bullet injury) is noxious but not painful. Research has shown the brain has the ability to tone down how intensely a harmful stimulus is experienced. This process is known as 'pain modulation' and is how our body allows us to put mind over matter in some situations.

To understand pain modulation, we need to understand how thoughts and feelings influence pain. Over the past two years, a project involving psychologists and philosophers at the University of Reading and doctors and patients at the NHS Royal Berkshire Hospital has explored this question. Our idea is that people hold views about pain – some of which they may not even be aware they hold – that influence how they experience pain and, perhaps more importantly, how they benefit from certain kinds of pain treatment.

Where do you feel it?

We are investigating whether people intuitively view pain as something in the mind or the body. People talk about pain in both ways, stressing the bodily aspect when saying things like: "The pain is in my finger." And stressing the mental aspect by saying: "The pain feels like torture." But do people have a default position? Does one person tend to think of pain as a bodily experience, while another thinks about it as a mental state? To find out, we designed a series of short hypothetical scenarios that probed people's view of pain. We found that people can adopt either a more bodily or a more mental view of pain and that their views can change, depending on the context.

The next and perhaps most important question is whether these views affect



the healthcare people receive for pain. Chronic pain is a debilitating condition, carrying with it huge personal, social and economic costs. It is also a very difficult condition to treat, with surgical and pharmaceutical approaches often having poor results.

Psychological interventions, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), on the other hand, are often effective and have few side-effects. Crucially, however, these treatments don't work for everyone. Some people with chronic pain find these programmes no help at all or they drop out of treatment without even giving it a chance. So the question is: why do these treatments work for some people and not for others?

Our research is focused on whether the background assumptions about pain that someone carries with them into a clinic may determine whether a treatment like CBT will work for them. After all, if you were a patient who viewed your lower back pain as a feature of your spine, rather than as a combination of your spine and your mind, would you not



Chronic pain is a debilitating condition and is very difficult to treat, with surgical and pharmaceutical approaches often having poor results. Psychological interventions, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), on the other hand, are often effective and have few side-effects... but don't don't work for everyone.

be confused or annoyed to be sent for therapy to alter your mindset?

Living with pain can be a constant burden. If you believe you have been given the wrong kind of treatment, dropping out or not fully participating is a logical response. If we can show that someone's existing beliefs about pain influence how they access and benefit from psychological treatments, we can work on altering these beliefs to allow them to achieve maximum benefit. To do this, we are going to design and test an enhanced CBT programme which helps people recognise the role of the mind in experiencing pain. We hope that this kind of enhanced programme could help more patients benefit from mind-based interventions, making mind over matter a reality for more patients.

Rich Harrison is a Post-doctoral Researcher, Pain, University of Reading

Tim Salomons is an Associate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, University of Reading

It's all in the mind. Why can we sometimes subject ourselves to injury, such as cutting ourselves while working in the garden or kitchen, without immediately feeling pain?

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LIFESTYLE

Tips for eating well when you're short on time

For many families, back to school in January means back to busy. Between work, groups, sports teams and clubs, preparing home-cooked meals for your family can be difficult.

Just because you're short on time doesn't mean you have to default to fast food. Instead, think about how you can plan ahead and have healthy, tasty meal options.

To make things easier on yourself, check out these four tips for eating healthy when you're short on time.

1. Prep food for the week

Prepping your food on the weekends, especially Sundays, is a great way to save

time and ensure you have delicious homemade meals and snacks ready to go, even on your busiest days. Make a list of meals you'd like to cook during the week, gather the ingredients and start chopping.

This is especially helpful if you're trying to incorporate more healthy foods into your family's diet, as you can easily pack them as a side or snack.

2. Keep easy meals in the freezer

There will be days when you don't have the time or energy to make a whole meal. Sometimes you don't want to order in either. For those occasions, it's best to keep easy meals in your freezer. This

doesn't mean you have to pack your freezer with TV dinners. Instead, find delicious and nutritious options for quick meals, like Morey's Fine Fish & Seafood products.

3. Make enough for leftovers

When cooking your meals, it can be a good idea to make enough to have leftovers. That way, you can incorporate parts of that meal into future meals for your family or have ready-made options to include in lunch bags for school or work.

Leftovers also make for a quick dinner that you can warm up when you're short on time and energy. You can even plan a night, say Friday or Saturday, when your family can choose from this week's leftovers for dinner.

4. Plan a weekly takeaway night

Limiting takeout food is a good practice, but let's face it, sometimes you just need to order in.

Make takeout a special treat for you and your family by having a planned, weekly takeaway night. To make things

easier, make a list of restaurants everyone in the family enjoys and rotate which ones you order from each week.

You can even take this opportunity to try out new places.

Ordering takeout can be especially nice to have delivered if you're prepping your meals for the next week.

Be prepared for the busyness of the coming school year by making meal plans ahead of time.

Using these four tips, you can rest easy knowing your family will eat well even when you're short on time and energy.

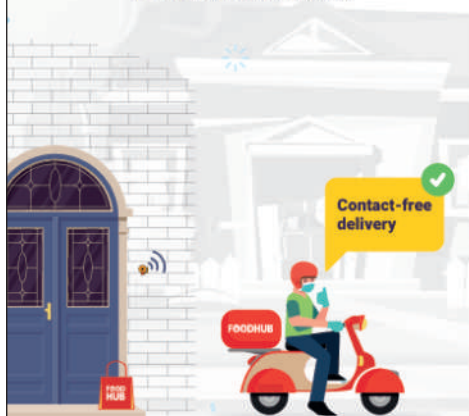


FOOD

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Save cash on your favourite Indian dish – prepare it at home!

Butter chicken is a favourite Indian dish that can be cooked in advance and left for up to two days until you want to eat it. It's truly delicious when served with basmati rice and Indian breads. Best of all, preparing it at home costs a fraction of the price of eating out

Ingredients

- 4 large skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 tbsps butter
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 1 tbsp curry paste
- 2 tsp tandoori masala
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 175g tomato puree
- 15 green cardamom pods
- 1 (400ml) tin of coconut milk
- 200g natural yoghurt
- salt to taste

Method

1. Heat the butter and vegetable oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Stir in the chicken, onion and garlic.
2. Cook and stir until the onion has softened, for about ten minutes.
3. Stir in the curry powder, curry paste, tandoori masala, garam masala and tomato puree until smooth. Pour into an ovenproof dish and stir in the cardamom pods, coconut milk and yoghurt. Season to taste with salt.
4. Cook in the oven at about 150 deg C for about three hours or until the chicken is tender and the sauce has reduced to a thick consistency.
5. Remove and discard the cardamom pods before serving.



CINEMA

Heartbreaking story of racial injustice looks ready for the awards season

Till
 Cert 15
Set in the 1950s during the American civil rights movement, *Till* is a heart-wrenching biographical drama film that portrays the strength of a loving mother who lost her son, Emmett Till, through a lynching, and how she changed the world afterwards.

The plot stays faithful to the story on which it is based and follows the grieving mother, Mamie Till Mobley (Danielle Deadwyler – a nailed-on cert for a Best Actor nomination at the Oscars), who is seeking justice for her son, a 14-year-old boy named Emmet Till (Jalyn Hall) who was brutally lynched while visiting his cousins in Mississippi.

As she grieves the loss of her son, Mamie then embarks on a journey in which she turns her grief into action. She turns from an educator to an activist – reminding people that 'whatever happens to any of us had better be the business of all of us.'

Till is directed by Chinonye Chukwu, a Nigerian-American film director who worked on the drama film *Clemency* (2019). Chukwu also wrote the film along with producers Michael Reilly and Keith Beauchamp.

The Guardian's Peter Bradshaw is full of praise for her efforts. "Chukwu, who is Nigerian-American, has crafted a sensitive, aching film that is careful not to revel in physical trauma and attuned to Mamie's interiority, an echo of Chukwu's superb 2019 drama *Clemency*."

Bradshaw singles out Chukwu's the depiction of Mamie, and her grief, for special praise. "Till is most effective and illuminative in depicting how Mamie's only son became, in death, a public figure, her grief a national symbol," he says. "There's the click of cameras as she wails over her son's casket, a shot that expands from a single mourner at his funeral to a crowd. Chukwu and cinematographer Bobby

Bukowski often capture Deadwyler, never less than riveting, in mirrors and windows, her image reproduced, splintered, reflected.

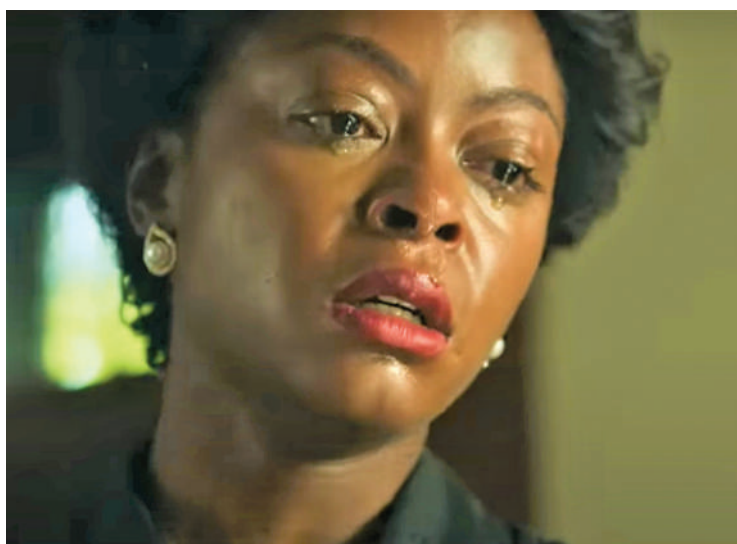
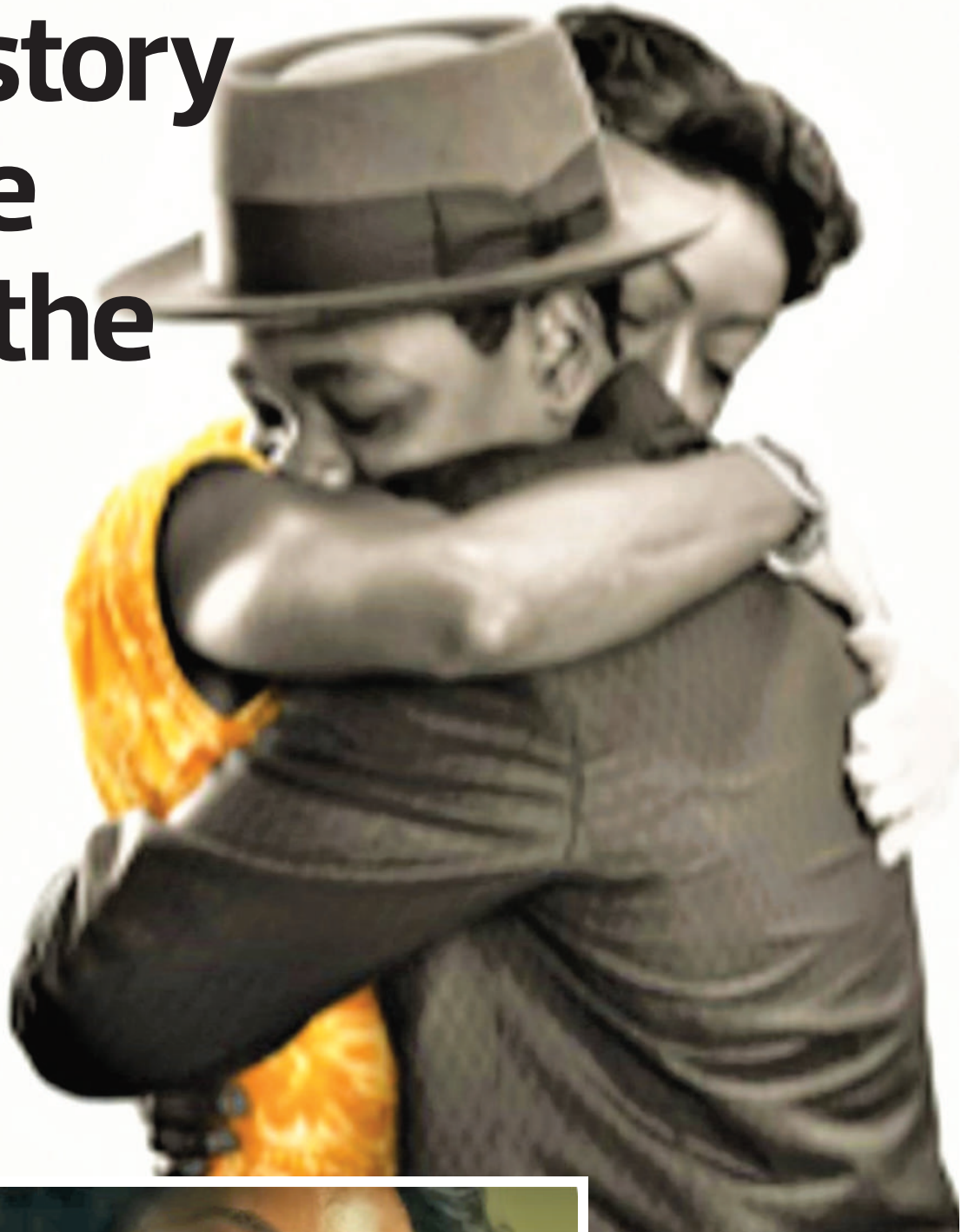
"It swerves into thornier territory where the ethics aren't as stark – the pressure placed on Mamie to show her grief publicly by NAACP members who rightly identified a rare window for attention, or the gut-wrenching confrontation between Mamie and the uncle who chose protecting his family over fighting the men who took Emmett."

The Upcoming is similarly gushing in its praise of Deadwyler's "devastating" portrayal of Mamie, suggesting that it should be considered for prominent awards. "You will struggle to find a performance of such raw emotion and power in any other movie this awards season," Guy Lambert wrote.

"To embody such a resilient and inspirational figure is at first a challenge, but introduce the harrowing circumstances in which Mamie found herself and you have one of the acting challenges of the century; Deadwyler is a breakthrough sensation and rises to the occasion superbly. The rest of the supporting cast play their part amicably, but this movie is Deadwyler's and hers alone."

Deadwyler, who plays Mamie, has featured in several projects, including *The Haves and the Have Nots* (2013), *Gifted* (2017), *It's Time* (2018), and *The Harder They Fall* (2021). Hall, who portrays the son Emmet, is a 15-year-old American actor known for his roles in *The House With A Clock in Its Walls* (2018), *Shaft* (2019) and *Space Jam: A New Legacy* (2021). Also joining the cast are Frankie Faison, Haley Bennett, and Whoopi Goldberg.

Till is released today, 6th January 2023, in the UK.



Deadwyler's (left) "devastating" portrayal of Mamie should be considered for prominent awards, many critics say. "You will struggle to find a performance of such raw emotion and power in any other movie this awards season," Guy Lambert wrote.



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Epiphany's three wise men: Kings, astrologists, charlatans or 'outsiders'?

FAITH IN HISTORY

Eric Vanden Eykel



Christmas Nativity scenes around the world feature a familiar cast of characters: Jesus, Mary, Joseph, an angel or two, some barnyard animals, shepherds and, of course, the three wise men led by a star.

Within the New Testament, the story of the wise men is found only in the Gospel of Matthew. It spans 12 short verses, and is simpler than most readers likely remember. The wise men arrive in Jerusalem from an unnamed location 'in the East', led by a star and in search of a new king. They make their way to Bethlehem, where they bow before Jesus and offer gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Then, they return home by a different route.

The details in this story are slim, and so it raises more questions than it answers. Where were the wise men actually from? Why were they interested in Jesus? And, above all, who were they?

I am a scholar of early Christian literature who has spent years researching and writing about the wise men. I maintain that their identity in Matthew's Gospel is ultimately more mysterious and more complex than what traditional Christmas stories suggest. One of the keys to understanding them lies in what Matthew calls them: 'magi'.

What's in a name?

'Magi' is a Greek word that is difficult to translate. Some versions of the New Testament render it as 'wise men' and others say 'astrologers.' But neither of these captures the full sense of the term.

'Magi' is where the English word 'magic' derives from, and just as magic can have both positive and negative connotations today, so too did magi have a range of meanings and uses in the ancient world. Some ancient authors speak positively of individuals they describe as magi, while others consider the label to be more of an insult.

Take, for example, the New Testament Book of Acts, which mentions two magi: one is named Simon, and the other is named Elymas.

Simon is a performer who amazes crowds with his ability to do magic, and he angers Jesus' apostles by offering them money in exchange for some of their powers. Elymas is an adviser to a government official on the island of Cyprus, and he is referred to as a 'false prophet'. He is struck blind for trying to interfere with the apostle Paul's attempts to convert the official to Christianity.

When it comes to both of these



characters, the label 'magi' is meant negatively. It was intended to suggest to readers that they are sinister charlatans, and not to be trusted.

In other ancient literature, however, magi are sought-after specialists who possess valuable skills like divination. In the Greek translation of the Book of Daniel, the king of Babylon summons magi to his court and asks them to decipher the details of a strange dream.

The Greek historian Herodotus tells a similar story in which the Median king Astyages asks magi about a dream featuring his daughter, and they foretell the birth of the Persian king Cyrus the Great. The Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria likewise speaks of magi as people with the special ability to understand mysterious visions.

Many ancient authors who speak

of people as magi also frequently do so in the context of religion and ritual. One of the more well-known instances of this is a teacher named Zoroaster, from whom Zoroastrianism takes its name.

The Greek biographer Diogenes Laertius says that Zoroaster was actually the first of all the magi. He also writes that magi lived simple, ascetic lives characterised by limited comforts, and that they had a reputation for worshiping their gods through sacrifice.

The Greek biographer Plutarch speaks similarly of Zoroaster as a magi who taught a form of spiritual dualism, good versus evil.

The identity of Matthew's magi

Who, then, are the magi who visit Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew? The answer, it turns out, is complicated. Matthew doesn't tell his readers exactly what he means when he

refers to his visitors in this way, and so it is up to them to figure it out.

Biblical scholars often argue that Matthew intended for the magi in his Gospel to be understood as gentiles or non-Jews who come to Bethlehem to worship Jesus. They surmise that this story is meant to foreshadow the fact that Christianity would eventually become a gentile religious movement instead of a Jewish one.

The argument that the magi are meant to be understood as gentiles is based in part on the fact that they come to Jerusalem and Bethlehem 'from the East', which could suggest that they are 'outsiders'. But in light of how magi are spoken of in other ancient literature, this understanding is too simple. Had Matthew intended to say that gentiles came to Bethlehem, he would have done so without using a loaded word like magi.

Because Matthew doesn't bother to say exactly who these visitors were supposed to be, the magi have fascinated readers and kept them guessing for nearly 2,000 years.

They have been imagined as Zoroastrian priests, astrologers and, of course, as kings. They have appeared in various forms in paintings, in film, in literature and in song.

Given the complex nature of the word magi in the ancient world, one has to wonder if Matthew chose this word precisely to inspire a sense of mystery in his readers, and to keep them wondering about who the magi actually were.

If this is the case, then I would argue that he certainly accomplished that goal many times over.

Eric Vanden Eykel is an Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Ferrum College

Standing in the shadows of Vinny

SPORT

Fr Vlad Felzmann

Employers used to be able to force workers to retire at 65 (known as the Default Retirement Age) but, following a campaign by Age UK, this law was scrapped in April 2011.

This means that you can keep working beyond 65 if you want or need to. However, for elite sportspeople it's their bodies that force them to retire – typically before they reach 40.

Beyond sales and coaching, a sizable portion of athletes try their hand at entrepreneurship, with 10% taking on founder and business owner roles in the wake of retirement. Many of these entrepreneurs lean on their athletic background in their second acts.

It's not a common occurrence, but in some cases, we've also seen ex-players put sports behind them entirely and enter a completely new profession.

Before TV turned successful footballers into millionaires, many retired to run pubs. Bobby Moore opened his own pub in Stratford, London, in November 1976. Phil King, who played in the Premier League with Sheffield Wednesday, has run the Dolphin pub in Swindon since the early 2000s. He's a pillar of the community who helps replace stolen bikes, among other things.

Legendary forward Dixie Dean, who spent 12 years at Everton, helping the club to two league titles and an FA Cup success, scored 349 goals during his time the Merseyside giants, including an amazing 60 in one season. He took over the Dublin Packet pub in Chester in 1957.

Remember when Rio Ferdinand announced plans to enter the world of professional boxing way back in 2018? This was not a joke.

Ferdinand, who enjoyed a near 20-year playing career, winning 81 caps for England in the process, decided he wanted to give the 'sweet science' a go at the tender age of 38, only to be rejected a licence by the sport's governing body.

Since hanging up his boots in 2015, after representing Queens Park Rangers following a trophy-laden period with Manchester United, he's forged a successful media career.

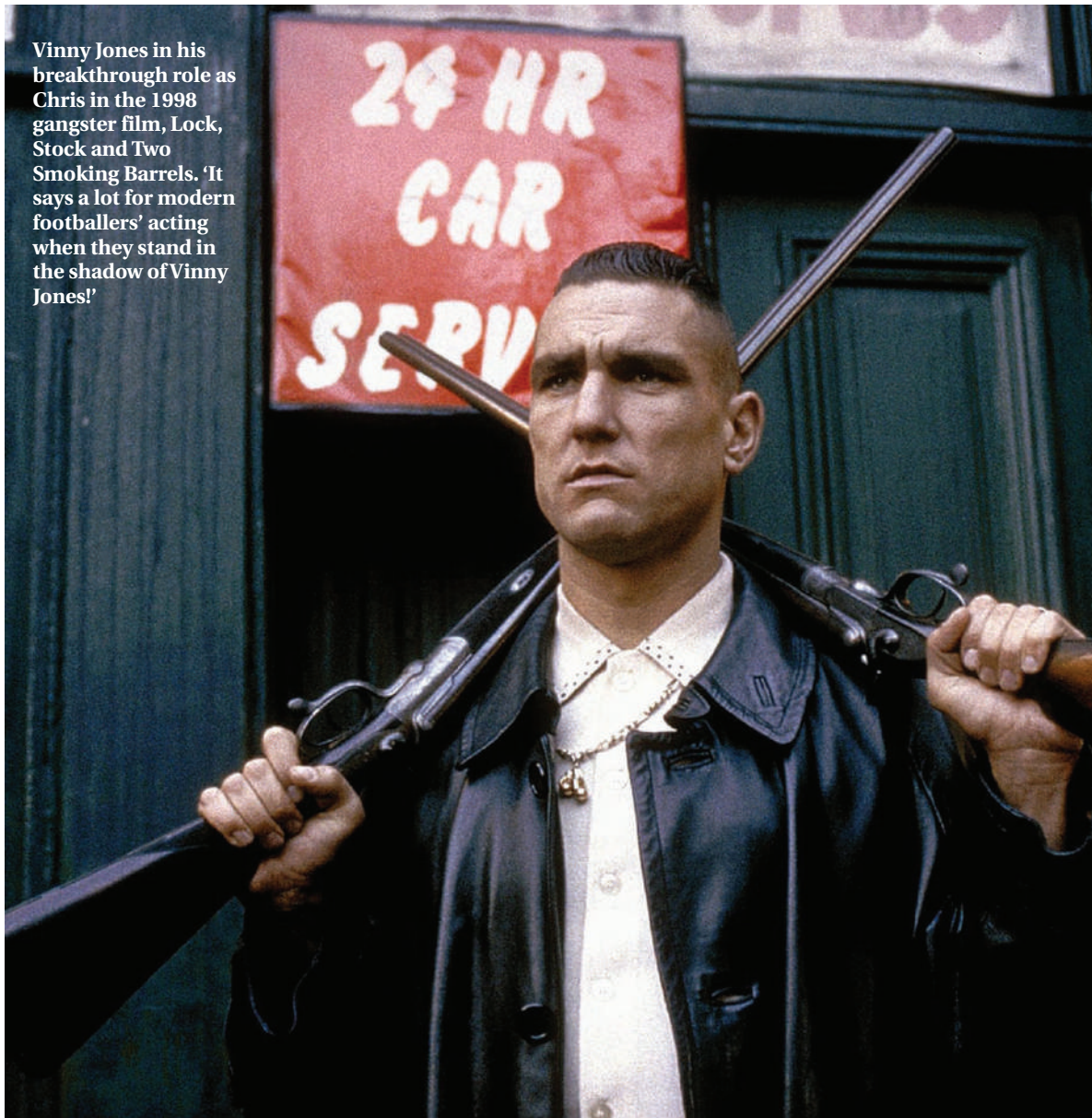
But the competitive itch, that engulfs every professional athlete, doesn't immediately go away. Ferdinand is no different. Despite his failure to crack the world of boxing, many footballers move into another sport once they've called time on the beautiful game.

There are a number of great managers who learnt their trade after retiring from a less-than-successful playing career. Sir Alex Ferguson and Jose Mourinho are two of the finest examples of this.

However, there are a number of the world's best coaches that flourished following glistening careers playing the game.

Two of the most popular routes

Vinny Jones in his breakthrough role as Chris in the 1998 gangster film, *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. 'It says a lot for modern footballers' acting when they stand in the shadow of Vinny Jones!



are plunging into either coaching or punditry after retirement, with some players also earning their coaching badges while still active.

After retiring from professional football in 2017, ex-Blues midfielder Frank Lampard worked on his coaching qualifications and was appointed manager of Derby County in 2018.

He later joined his old club Chelsea as manager in 2019, taking over from Maurizio Sarri.

Legendary former Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard, likewise, retired from the game playing for the LA Galaxy in 2016 and took up a role coaching Liverpool's Under-18 side before the start of the 2017-18 campaign. The following season, Gerrard was named head coach of Rangers. Prior to the Rangers job, Gerrard also contributed punditry and analysis to BT Sport's football coverage. He eventually moved to Aston Villa, where his run of success ended.

The likes of former England players Phil and Gary Neville, Ryan Giggs and John Terry have also taken up coaching jobs.

Jamie Carragher, meanwhile, decided to take the non-coaching route and went into punditry soon after he called time on the game in 2013. Carragher has since been one

of the most well-known pundits in the game, helming Sky Sports' football coverage alongside former England team-mate and Manchester United rival Gary Neville.

The duo are one of the most recognisable faces in football punditry, with their Monday Night Football coverage a television mainstay – combining expert analysis with their wealth of experience as former professionals.

Derek Redmond was part of the 4x400m relay team that triumphed against the much-fancied Americans in the 1991 World Championship in Tokyo. But perhaps he is most famous for the semi-final of the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. After injuring his hamstring during the race, Redmond decided he still wanted to cross the line as a symbolic gesture. In a moment that would go down in Olympic history, his father Jim joined him on the track and they crossed the line together.

Today Redmond is a motivational speaker with his own business and recently joined psychometric testing provider Thomas International. The company has adapted its employee-testing suite to athletes and Redmond's experience in both fields will prove invaluable for the company's development. Redmond

told Growth Business that "the mindset of the successful sportsman is no different to the successful businessperson".

"For years I've been advocating this through my motivational speaking but I've also been practising what I preach," he said. "Part of my new role as performance director at Thomas is to help others to do the same thing. I'm taking what I've been talking about to other organisations and one has said 'okay, come and do it in our organisation'."

Danny Mills, the former Leeds and England footballer was best known for his uncomplicated defence and short fuse during his playing days. But this overshadowed some impressive achievements within the game. His 19 senior international caps include an appearance at the 2002 World Cup.

These days Mills, as well as being a regular TV and radio pundit, is an advisory board member of equity investment business Enact. He was instrumental in saving the West Cornwall Pasty Company from administration. As well as his business interest Mills made the final of 2012 Celebrity Masterchef and rowed across the English Channel for charity in 2013. He's certainly not taking his retirement

lying down.

Another footballer who has kept himself busy since his retirement is Liverpool fan favourite Robbie Fowler. After a sparkling career with Liverpool, Fowler became a big player in the UK property market. In fact, he started even before his retirement from the game.

His ever-growing property portfolio led to fans singing 'we all live in a Robbie Fowler house' to the tune of Yellow Submarine.

As well as his property portfolio, Fowler's other business interests include Robbie Fowler Sports Promotion and The Macca and Growler Group – a company co-owned with former team-mate Steve McManaman that invests in racehorses.

His various business interests led to Fowler being named on the Sunday Times rich list in 2005. At the time his combined wealth was estimated at £28 million. Today his bricks and mortar housing empire is thought to be worth in the region of £31 million.

Some sports stars just want to keep on seeing their name in lights and look to the 'silver screen' to do so. Eric Cantona, something of an enigma during his playing days, made a seamless transition into the creative arts and to this day is one of the most successful cases of footballer-turned-actor. The ex-France international enjoyed a breakthrough role in 1998's *Elizabeth*, but it was in the 2009 journey of discovery *Looking For Eric* that he really came into his own on screen.

Pele, arguably the most famous face in football history – now sadly no longer with us – was also among the first to step off the pitch and onto the screen with his part in 1981's *Escape to Victory*. Sir Michael Caine and Sylvester Stallone also headline the cast of this football classic, with the late Bobby Moore and Ossie Ardiles making cameo appearances.

Pele added other small acting roles, including that of orphanage worker in *A Minor Miracle* (1983) and soothsayer-cum-football guru in *Hotshot* (1987).

However, in terms of sheer acting volume, Vinnie Jones is undoubtedly the most prolific footballer to have turned his attention toward cinema, racking up more than 60 roles to date.

From the leader of Wimbledon's Crazy Gang to a well-known face in certain parts of Los Angeles, Jones has taken on leading parts in British flicks *Snatch* (2000), *Mean Machine* (2001) and *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* (1998).

However, not to become type-cast as that old English brute, the 50-year-old has also played Marvel's Juggernaut in *X-Men: The Last Stand* (2006) – complete with cockney accent – as well as villain Brick in DC series *Arrow* (2015).

It says a lot for modern footballers' acting when they stand in the shadow of Vinny Jones!

The funeral of Pope Benedict XVI

An emotional Pope Francis blesses the coffin containing the body of his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI



Over 200,000 people queued to pay their respects to the former pope as he lay in state in St Peter's Basilica



Italian President Sergio Mattarella and his daughter, Laura, pay their respects at the body of Pope Benedict XVI in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican



The scene inside St Peter's as the body of Pope Benedict lay in state.

Left, a German Catholic proudly flies the flag of the homeland of the former pope



Right, Cardinals process in to the funeral in St Peter's Square before the funeral. An estimated 50,000 people gathered for the funeral Mass, with 120 cardinals, another 400 bishops and 3,700 priests who concelebrated.



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LITURGICAL CALENDARS

Ordinary Form

Sunday Year A, Weekday Cycle I

Sunday, 8th January: The Baptism of the Lord, Isa. 42:1-4, 6-7; Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10 r. 11; Acts 10:34-38; Mt. 3:13-17

Monday, 9th January: Heb.1:1-6; Ps. 97; Mk.1:14-20

Tuesday, 10th January: Heb.2:5-12; Ps.8; Mk.1:21-28

Wednesday, 11th January: Heb.2:14-18; Ps. 105; Mk.1:29-39

Thursday, 12th January: St. Aelred of Rievaulx, Religious

Heb.3:7-14; Ps.95; Mk.1:40-45

Friday, 13th January: St. Hilary, bishop, Doctor of the Church, Heb.4:1-5,11; Ps 78; Mk.2:1-12

Saturday, 14th January: Heb.4:12-16; Ps.19; Mk.2:13-17

Extraordinary Form Calendar

according to the Roman Missal of 1962 (Tridentine Rite)

Sunday, 8th January: Holy Family Col. 3:12-17; Lk. 2:42-52

Monday, 9th January: Feria Readings of Sunday repeated

Tuesday, 10th January: Feria Readings of Sunday repeated

Wednesday, 11th January: Feria Readings of Sunday repeated

Thursday, 12th January: Feria Readings of Sunday repeated

Friday, 13th January: Baptism of Our Lord Isa. 60:1-6; Jn. 1:29-34

Saturday, 14th January: St Hilary, bishop, confessor and doctor 2 Tim. 4:1-8; Mt. 5:13-19

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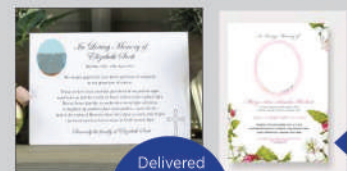
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Pope Benedict XVI pictured after celebrating Mass at Yankee Stadium in New York on 20th April, 2008.
Photo: Nancy Wiechec

