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Bishop tells Braverman to dial down rhetoric on migrant issue

Andy Drozdziak

Catholic leaders have joined migration activists in calling for politicians to tone down the rhetoric over the Dover migrant issue and refrain from using inflammatory language after Home Secretary Suella Braverman labelled the crisis an “invasion” of England’s south coast.

The Home Secretary is facing criticism after she said the Government is committed to “stopping the invasion on our southern coast”.

Paul McAleenan, Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees at the Bishops’ Conference, called for politicians to show “respect and dignity” to people desperate to enter the UK.

“It is imperative that everyone refrains from inflammatory language that undermines people’s humanity and creates tensions between communities,” Bishop Paul told the *Universe*. “Above all we need to remember that migrants and refugees, such as those currently held in the Manston facility, are human beings, made in the image of God.”

His remarks came after the Home Secretary told the House of Commons: “The British people deserve to know which party is serious about stopping the invasion on our southern coast and which party is not. Some 40,000 people have arrived on the south coast this year alone, many facilitated by criminal gangs, some of them actual members of criminal gangs. So let’s stop pretending

that they are all refugees in distress.”

Ms Braverman is under mounting pressure over the illegal conditions at the Manston immigration processing centre in Kent, where around 3,500 people are being detained for weeks in a site intended to hold 1,600 for a matter of days. Bishop Paul called for action at the “worrying” news.

“Regardless of how or why people have made the journey here, they must be treated with respect and dignity. Reports of people being held in overcrowded and unsafe conditions are worrying and must be addressed as a matter of urgency,” he said.

Political leaders were quick to condemn the Home Secretary’s rhetoric, with Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper accusing Ms Braverman of ramping up her language because she had no answers to the problems.

“No home secretary serious about public safety or national security would use the language Suella Braverman did the day after a petrol bomb attack on a Dover centre that was linked to a far right extremist,” Ms Cooper said.

Refugee charity Care 4 Calais also condemned the language used, labelling it “deeply offensive.” “Refugees are escaping from conflicts – they know what being invaded feels like. We are lucky that many of us do not,” the group tweeted.

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Salute Fr Phil, the Commando priest

Meet the first priest in 40 years to earn the coveted Royal Marines’ Green Beret - see page 18

Inside



It’s time to choose life!

We must end the pain of abortion says Bishop John Sherrington as UK marks harrowing milestone – pg 3

Bonfire night cupcakes

PLUS

All hail the humble Sudoku

IN COMPANION





People gesture to journalists from behind the wire at the Manston Immigration facility in Dover

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“To suggest they are committing an act of war when that is what they are fleeing is indefensible. This is incredibly offensive.”

Albanian prime minister Edi Rama has also joined in the criticism after his country’s citizens were blamed for the increase in migrant numbers. He accused Britain of becoming like a “madhouse” with a culture of “finding scapegoats.”

Bishop Paul said co-operation with the international community was needed to solve problems created by migration. “As well as the right to migrate, Catholic Social Teaching also speaks of the right not to migrate. Our politicians must work with the international community to help create conditions that will eliminate the conflict, poverty and suffering that forces people to leave their own homelands in the first place and undertake dangerous journeys in search of a better life,” he said.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak admitted that the migrant crisis is a “serious and escalating problem” and acknowledged that “not enough” asylum claims are being processed.

The grim conditions at Manston were laid bare in a letter thrown by a young girl over the perimeter fence to a PA news agency photographer, claiming there were pregnant women and sick detainees there.

The note, written in broken English and addressed to ‘journalists, organisations, everyone’, suggested 50 families had been held there for more than 30 days. Asylum seekers were also reportedly left at London’s Victoria station without accommodation after being taken off the premises.

On Thursday, the Home Secretary visited the Manston facility where a petrol bomb attack was launched last Sunday by a man with far right political views: Catholic justice charity JRSUK said the attack was “the fruit of a politics that is intent on human cruelty.”

“It is important to face up to the reality that (the attack) did not occur in isolation but in the context of vaunting demonisation and marginalisation of those seeking sanctuary on our shores,” JRSUK’s Megan Knowles said.

“This information emerged shortly after the Home Secretary had ignored warnings that people were being held at Manston unlawfully. The attack is, among other things, the fruit of a politics that is intent on human cruelty.”

Speaking of the crisis, Government climate minister Graham Stuart said: “None of us are comfortable with it. We want it tackled, we want to get a grip, that’s exactly what the Home Secretary is focused on.”

Mr Stuart sought to blame an “unacceptable surge” in small boat crossings for the problem, adding that the “system is struggling to cope”.

Pact path could boost prisoner outcomes

Andy Drozdzia

Catholic prison charity Pact has pledged to support the Government deliver prisoner support after a report found that a scheme to help prison leavers resettle in the community was ‘not working.’

A joint inspection led by HM Inspectorate of Probation, with HM Inspectorate of Prisons, has found Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) is falling well short of expected standards – calling for the model to be overhauled.

The inspection said the model is too complex and inflexible, there is a lack of understanding, communication is ineffective and it delivers poor outcomes for prisoners.

Pact CEO Andy Keen-Downs agreed that change was needed in bringing prisoners back to society, but pointed out that the prison service faced a number of challenges. “Staff recruitment and retention is at crisis point – you can’t run safe, secure, decent

prisons without professional, experienced staff,” he said.

“We can help. There’s an opportunity for a much greater multi-agency approach, with greater numbers of third sector colleagues working alongside HMPPS staff to deliver rehabilitation on the frontline.”

Chief Inspector of Prisons, Charlie Taylor, said the report “shows the ex-

‘We must put family relationships right at the heart of the prison regimes’
Andy Keen-Downs



tent that OMiC is failing to achieve the aims for which it was designed.”

“There is a lack of staff in Offender Management Units while the key work scheme, that was meant to be an integral part of OMiC, is not providing anything like the support that was envisaged.”

Mr Keen-Downs said Pact had

coached hundreds of prison staff every year, to support prisoners who need to improve their family relationships. HMPPS needs to draw upon this expertise and knowledge of the third sector more proactively,” he said. “The third sector can train more staff in what it means to be a ‘rehabilitative’ prison officer.”

Mr Keen-Downs underlined the importance of ‘putting family relationships right at the heart of the prison regimes.’

“The whole system must redouble efforts to support prisoners to stay in touch with loved-ones – this creates safer prison regimes and reduces re-offending,” he said, explaining how Pact is putting this into practice.

He highlighted current projects such as Routes2Change in HMP Isis and Brixton, which puts family relationships right at the heart of the prison regimes, providing support from day 1 of a prison sentence right up to six months after release.”

Caritas is ready to help as cost-of-living crisis bites

Caritas Salford has said alleviating the effects of the cost-of-living crisis is its top priority as families increasingly struggle to make ends meet.

Consumer prices are now 10.1 per cent higher than this time last year, with gas prices up by 96 per cent and domestic electricity prices by 54 per cent. Bank of England mortgage rates are also up, to a recent high of three per cent, increasing the financial pressure on families.

Patrick O’Dowd, the director of Caritas Salford, said his charity was doing all it can to ease the burden on struggling families, particularly through the Caritas Bishop’s Fund. “It’s been operating for a few years now, but received additional support through the Diocese of Salford and our benefactors who have helped us build up this crisis support fund for families and people in acute need across our area.

“People are able to make bids and applications to that fund, and they

are reviewed very quickly. Support can then be offered through school parishes and schools to provide really basic material support.”

Patrick said the financial crisis was hitting children especially hard, with many lacking the essentials, food and warmth. “Research from the University of Loughborough highlighted that about 228,000 children in Salford diocese live in poverty. That’s around 42 per cent of children.



“What’s shocking is that in 40 per cent of cases at least one person is working. It’s tragic that people are working but don’t have enough income to be able to support their families.”

Caritas Salford is working with other Catholic agencies and local authorities, to ensure the needs of the people are met.

“We have an extraordinary relationship with other Catholic partners – the Saint Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) being a prime example – other Caritas agencies and charities like Out There in Trafford, so there’s a really strong network across the Catholic community. I think our role is to try and animate that and where we can provide support and assistance to sign-post out to other agencies who can try to work with parishes as well.”

Left, Caritas Salford has a great network of volunteers ready to help those in need

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Andy Drozdziak

A leading Catholic bishop has told pro-life activists that the time has come to “choose life” as a march took place to mark 10 million abortions in Britain.

Supporters gathered in Parliament Square, Westminster to mark the 55th anniversary of the 1967 Abortion Act.

John Sherrington, the Lead Bishop for Marriage and Family Life at the Bishops’ Conference told them: “We’re here marking the loss of the children who have died. We’re marking the loss for the women, many of whom carry trauma or pain because of their abortion. My message today as we grieve is to say: ‘Choose life and let’s change hearts and minds’. It’s not just hearts and minds that need changing though; we also need better legal protection for women and their unborn children.”



March for Life UK were joined by representatives from the Catholic, Anglican and Evangelical churches, as well as political leaders and members of pro-life groups.

Many dressed in black and held posters saying ‘10 Million Too Many’ to commemorate the ten million lives prematurely ended.

Conservative MP Fiona Bruce said current abortion laws “are some of the gravest in Europe – a baby can be aborted up till birth because they

have a cleft palate or club foot. One of my sons was born with a club foot yet if you looked at my son, Sam, now you would never even know. Yet in recent years over 200 babies have been aborted simply because of this condition,” she said.

Calvin Robinson, political commentator, journalist and clergyman of the Church of England, said: “There’s nothing more important in this world than life. The sanctity of life is worth fighting for, it’s worth dying for. Right now too

many people are choosing the wrong option, they think it’s the only option they have.”

Alithea Williams, public policy manager at SPUC: “It’s important to be in this place, in Parliament, and to make a witness to the people who run this country that 10 million lives lost is too many and it needs to stop.”

“Not only have 10 million babies lost their lives to abortion but now MPs want to make it illegal for people to even offer help to women or express

an opinion on abortion within 150 metres of a clinic. It’s a worrying sign that the pro-life voice is being censored and we need to push back against this.

David Kurten, leader of the Heritage Party, said: “That 10 million unborn children have been killed since the passing of the Abortion Act - this is a horror. And now they want to censor our voices, too. We need to stop this horror from happening in our country.”

Church’s World Day of the Poor reaches out to the excluded

The sixth World Day of the Poor will be celebrated by the Catholic Church on Sunday, 13th November, following the theme: ‘For your sakes Christ became poor’ (2 Cor. 8:9).

Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN), the Bishops’ Conference agency promoting domestic social action, has produced a number of resources with Redemptorist Publications, including a novena, reflections, an activity for school or parish groups, and more.

Pope Francis, in his message for the upcoming day, said: “The World Day of the Poor comes this year as a healthy challenge, helping us to reflect on our style of life and on the many forms of poverty all around us.”

Highlighting the current challenges facing the world’s poor, he added: “Several months ago, the world was emerging from the tempest of the pandemic... Now a new catastrophe has appeared on the horizon [the war in Ukraine], destined to impose on our world a very different scenario.”

The Christian approach to the poor is not a kind of ‘welfare mentality’ or a patronising activism, but it involves a “sincere and generous concern that



makes us approach a poor person as a brother or sister, who lends a hand to help me shake off the lethargy into which I have fallen,” the pope said.

Jesus shows “there is a poverty that humiliates and kills, and another poverty, Christ’s own poverty, that sets us free and brings us peace,” he added.

Raymond Friel, CEO of CSAN, said: “Our resources are offered to the Catholic community to deepen our encounter with those who are poor, of examining our own conscience about our lifestyles and how our faith is expressed in loving action.”

“The poverty we are called to is the poverty of Jesus – this is the poverty that sets us free, sets us free from attachment to the idol of wealth and all the anxiety it brings.

“The poverty of Jesus was his self-emptying love, excluding no one, especially the marginalised and those deprived of the necessities of life. Our freedom is the sharing of our lives and restoring dignity to all.”

Visit the CSAN website for further information: <https://www.csan.org.uk/news/world-day-of-the-poor-2022/>



SJOG HOMES FOR UKRAINE




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THE ALBERT GUBAY

In brief

Police vetting failures exposed

A report has found that police recruits with links to serious organised crime and histories of predatory behaviour have cleared official vetting.

Forces have accepted applicants with “convictions for robbery, indecent exposure and domestic abuse”, said *The Times*, with one recruit found to be a pimp. “It’s far too easy for the wrong people to get in,” said Inspector of Constabulary, Matt Parr. Martin Hewitt, National Police Chiefs’ Council Chair, said “the confidence of the public and our staff is dependent on us fixing these problems with urgency, fully and for the long term”.

Far right bomber hated migrants

A man who attacked an asylum seeker processing centre in Dover, in a suspected terrorist incident, had previously ranted about migrants in racist Facebook posts.

Andrew Leak, 66, from High Wycombe, Bucks, was named by police as the man who launched three home-made bombs at the Tug Haven processing facility in Dover on Sunday. He was found dead inside a car which he had driven to the scene.

A source told *The Telegraph* that in addition to his hateful view on immigration, Leak had also been investigated for child sex offences, and threatened to kill himself while being questioned by police.

Sewage leak horror for beauty spot

A sewage leak at a Cornish beach over the weekend is the 10th time in three months the beauty spot has been “polluted by effluent”. The brown tide, that was caught on camera at Trevaunance Cove in St Agnes, Cornwall, left locals and surfers “horrified”, said the paper.

“Unfortunately it’s not uncommon to have these sewage pollution events,” the charity Surfers Against Sewage said.

Starmer told to narrow party focus

Keir Starmer has been told that Labour needs a more “coherent narrative” to win the next election. The Labour leader has been urged by his team to put his party on a general election footing with a “laser-sharp” focus on courting voters with a small number of key pledges rather than a plethora of policies.

It comes as Rishi Sunak has overturned Labour’s lead on who voters trust most to manage the economy, according to a poll published at the weekend.

Pro-lifers risk losing freedom of speech over buffer zone plan

The Minister for Women, Maria Caulfield MP, has joined peers, politicians and pro-life groups in opposing the imposition of buffer zones.

An amendment to the Public Order Bill currently going through Parliament seeks to create these zones outside all abortion centres in England and Wales, in a significant crackdown on freedom of speech.

And now the newly-appointed Minister for Women, Catholic Maria Caulfield MP, has defended the actions of pro-lifers who offer “comfort” outside abortion clinics to women in difficult situations.

Ms Caulfield, who has previously supported a reduction in the abortion time limit, made the comments in an interview covering the proposals, which would criminalise all activity pertaining to abortion in the area surrounding such settings, with any person caught advocating against abortion liable to a criminal conviction and 6 months in prison.

Pro-life organisations have said buffer zones – sometimes referred to as ‘censorship zones’ – are an unjustified infringement of the right to free expression, and protest.

They also warn that legislation of this kind could create a harmful precedent, and lead to further curbs on lawful but politically incorrect expression in years to come.

Speaking on BBC’s *Politics Live*, Ms Caulfield said: “The definition of ha-

arrassment is open to interpretation.” She added: “There’s a possibility of someone going up to a woman who may be upset or distressed, offering them some comfort, that could then be accused of harassment and lead to six months in jail.”

Clare McCullough, founder and director of The Good Counsel Network, said: “Buffer zones limit how near we can go to abortion centres to offer

help. This means that hundreds of women who have been able to approach us for help, the most vulnerable of women, are now going to be blocked from finding the help they need, so it is women who will suffer.

“We can’t beat this just by clever ideas alone – we need a lot of prayer and fasting to overcome this particular demon.”

CARE has described buffer zones

as unnecessary and disproportionate.

“Pro-life organisations stand peacefully and silently near hospitals or clinics with signs saying ‘Choose life’ or ‘We can help,’” CARE’s Louise Davies said. “Over the years, many women have encountered such people voluntarily and made a decision to continue their pregnancies.

“In a free and democratic society, these exchanges ought to be allowed.”

She added: “Given the sufficiency of current laws, the peaceful nature of pro-life activity, and the fact that some women do appreciate offers of help outside clinics, a blanket buffer zone law can only be seen as a disproportionate and unnecessary restriction of civil liberties.”

Strong opposition to the buffer zones clause was expressed in the House of Lords. Liberal Democrat Peer Lord Beith said it was “the most profound restriction on free speech I have ever seen in any UK legislation and I could not support it if it remains in its present form.”

His fellow peer, Lord Farmer, said: “If passed into law, Clause 9 would mark the most significant shift away from English law’s presumption of individual liberty and freedom of expression in the interest of ruthlessly censoring pro-life views”.

It is now expected that the Government will bring forward a new version of the clause.

Maria Caulfield MP



Scottish gender bill dubbed unsafe as SNP unity crumbles on divisive issue

A controversial law which allows gender change within three months of requesting it and which has received the support of a majority of MSPs has been condemned as harmful and unsafe by commentators ranging from Scottish Catholic leaders to Harry Potter author JK Rowling.

The Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill was supported by 88 MSPs, while 33 MSPs voted against and four abstained.

Nine SNP politicians defied the party whip by failing to support the legislation, the largest rebellion against SNP government legislation in 15 years of power, with one senior minister quitting the government in protest.

Anthony Horan, director of the Catholic Parliamentary Office, said that the Bill “raises serious concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of children and vulnerable people and safe spaces for women and girls.”

The purpose of the Bill is to amend the Gender Recognition Act 2004: a law which allows individuals to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate to legally change gender. The Bill, which looks very likely to become law, will remove the current requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria

and reduce the requirement to have “lived in” the “acquired” gender for two years to three months. The Bill also reduces the age at which someone can apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate from 18 to 16 years.

“This Bill has been branded unsafe and potentially harmful to children by the Scottish Council on Human Bioethics,” Mr Horan said. “It introduces a de facto system of self-identification and raises questions about freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

“It is deeply irresponsible of Parliament to ignore these valid concerns and to march on with this Bill, which

is unpopular with the Scottish public.”

Mr Horan added: “This law sends a message that biological sex can be changed. Yet sex is genetically, anatomically and physiologically fixed from conception. It is not capable of being changed.”

Meanwhile, Ash Regan, the SNP MSP who quit the Scottish Government over the Bill, has been hailed as a “heroine” by JK Rowling.

Ms Regan said that her conscience would not allow her to vote for the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill, quitting her ministerial post just hours before it faced its first vote at Holyrood.

JK Rowling wrote on Twitter: “@AshenRegan will rightly be seen as a heroine when future generations of Scottish women look back at the profoundly misogynistic legislation currently being pushed through by the Sturgeon government.”

Groups representing women and girls have raised concerns over safety if the Bill is passed in its current form.

Ms Regan said: “I am touched that some have shared their experiences of trauma with me and their need for safe spaces.”

John Mason, the MSP for Glasgow

Ash Regan



JK Rowling

Shettleston, also voted against the Bill. During the debate, Mr Mason stated that there are “two sexes: male and female”, before adding: “biological sex cannot be changed.”

Pam Gosal, member for West Scotland, said that the proposed law was “a let-down for women and girls, faith communities and children who require the protection of the law.”

Scottish Social Justice Secretary Shona Robison told Holyrood that the changes would make the process of obtaining a gender recognition certificate “simpler, more streamlined.”

The Bill now moves to the next stage of parliamentary scrutiny.

Catholic bodies unite to back Homes for Ukraine scheme

Saint John of God Hospitaller Services (SJOG), a national non-profit organisation, has partnered with Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) to provide hosts and guests with a matching, training and support service under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

The number of people escaping the Russian war in Ukraine after months of fighting is still significant and will only increase as winter draws near. Russian forces continue to occupy portions of Ukrainian land, where citizens are subjected to torture, criminal prosecution, coercion, and a lack of access to basic services. Meanwhile, there is extensive evidence of war crimes.

The Ukrainian government is trying to keep up with its pre-planned evacuations from dangerous frontline and occupied areas.

In order to reach their goal of evacuating 500,000 people by winter, Ukrainian authorities have already helped 100,000 people relocate from war-torn districts in Ukraine between August and September 2022.

Bohdana and Anton, two appreciative recipients of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, have described their 'incredible' experience of welcome in



the UK: They told the Universe: "We are so grateful to the UK government for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. The Homes for Ukraine Scheme has been truly incredible for me. I feel safe here, away from the sounds of sirens, curfew, and living in constant fear of shelling. The scheme has given me time to find my feet and build a new life in the UK," they said.

"Moving to the UK was the decision to get stability and safety for my family and myself.

"My sponsors were very helpful with settling in the UK. They provided me with detailed information about local infrastructure: groceries, shops, restaurants, cafes, and many other points of interest. They showed me the things we never used in Ukraine. They were accommodating in terms of cultural differences and were very patient with [us]. This programme is extremely helpful for Ukrainians that seek a safe place to stay while the war is happening in the country."

Evelyn, their host, explained why she opened her home to Ukrainian guests. "I just wanted to help," she said. "It has been great helping out two young women from Ukraine get settled in London. I have enjoyed meeting them and providing some support."

The programme's objective is to provide temporary housing for those who have been displaced by the war in Ukraine and to aid them as they adjust to starting over in the UK. The scheme offers the rare chance to discover more about Ukrainian culture and help those in need.

Find out more

To learn more about the programme, visit the SJOG Hospitaller Services website: www.sjog-homesforukraine.uk

Alternatively, search 'SJOG Homes for Ukraine' on Facebook, or email homesforukraine@sjog.org.uk.

CSAN has also published a resource on support for Ukraine at <https://www.csan.org.uk/ukrainetoolkit/>

Sunak ditches Truss plan to shift embassy

Another plank of the failed premiership of Liz Truss was overturned this week after Rishi Sunak scrapped her plans to relocate Britain's embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.

Cardinal Nichols had led protests against the move, writing to the then PM Truss to voice his opposition after it was revealed she had ordered a review into whether the UK should follow the Trump administration in moving the embassy from Tel Aviv.

However, a No 10 spokeswoman said this week: "There are no plans to move the British embassy."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols had said he had "profound concerns" about the plan after it was revealed Truss had told her then Israeli counterpart, Yair Lapid, that she was in favour of a shift. Cardinal Nichols said such a move "would be seriously damaging to any possibility of lasting peace in the region and to the international reputation of the United Kingdom."

The British government and most other countries have maintained their embassies in Tel Aviv, waiting for a final agreement to be reached on the 'Corpus separatum,' granting Jerusalem special status as a city holy to Christians, Muslims and Jews.

This special status aims to safeguard the freedom of religion, respect and access to Jerusalem's holy places and its sacred character as a holy city.

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As winter approaches, people on low incomes will be hardest hit.

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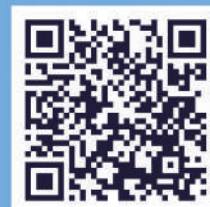


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COMMENT ‘Public wants to see police focus on real crime and catching criminals’

Three years ago, the Conservatives were elected after promising to bear down on crime. Despite recruiting thousands of extra officers since then, the reverse has happened.

Police-recorded crime in England and Wales is now at a record high and the proportion of crimes solved has fallen to a record low. Just one in 20 offences now results in the perpetrator being charged, down from around just under one in six less than a decade ago.

Impunity reigns. It is a trend of lawlessness and injustice that cannot be allowed to continue.

Soaring crime figures are not the only scandal to have sullied British policing in recent times. Dreadful examples of racism, misogyny, corruption and worst of all, the murder of Sarah Everard by serving officer Wayne Couzens, have combined to undermine public trust.

The best way of restoring public confidence would be for police to do what the public wants and prioritise basic law and order. There is little point recruiting additional officers if they are to spend their time on politically correct campaigns rather than locking up violent offenders.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman has rightly insisted that police need to fight actual crimes. She remains under significant political pressure, but the Prime Minister has stood by her. He should make it clear that the real test of her performance at the Home Office, alongside stemming the flow of illegal cross-Channel immigration, will be to oversee a serious crackdown on crime.

Police forces have been diverted by too many woke campaigns, policing the web instead of attending crimes in person.

Now that they are thousands of officers stronger, there will be no excuse if they do not clean up their own act, and focus again on their real job.

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The UK asylum system is in crisis, but who is to blame?

POLITICS

Melanie Griffiths



Kent Police are investigating an attack on a Home Office migrant processing centre in Dover, after incendiary devices were reportedly thrown at the building on Sunday, 30th October.

Reports have said that witnesses at the scene described these devices as petrol bombs, with one found in the car of the person, now deceased, who is reportedly suspected of having carried out the attack.

Just days before the attack, the independent chief inspector of borders and immigration, David Neal, told the Home Affairs Select Committee that he was left “speechless” by his visit to the Home Office’s short-term holding facility in Manston. He described an “alarming” and “really dangerous situation” of overcrowded and insanitary conditions.

The Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, has said the UK’s asylum system is “broken”, stating that she aims to stop the “invasion of our southern coast”.

The Manston facility is a “processing site” at an airfield in Kent. Opened in February 2022, on paper it is intended to hold 1,000 people, each for up to five days while they undergo security and identity checks. Neal, however, said he found the camp past “the point of being unsafe”, with 4,000 people now housed there in tented accommodation and for long periods of time. People, including children, are sleeping on the floor for weeks.

The facility is fast becoming a public health risk. There have been

outbreaks of norovirus, scabies and diphtheria, the latter a highly contagious and normally extremely rare disease in the UK.

In his report on Manston, published on 1st November, His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Prisons Charlie Taylor highlights that healthcare processes are lacking, children are being detained for far too long and staff are poorly trained. With a further 700 people moved from Dover to Manston after the Dover attack, we can expect the situation there to get even worse.

This is the latest inappropriate and dangerous quasi-detention centre used to hold asylum seekers in recent years. In 2020, the former military Napier barracks in Folkstone were used for similar purposes.

A House of Lords committee warned of overcrowding, fire risks, “filthy” facilities and buildings so “decrepit” they were deemed unfit for habitation. In June 2021, the high court declared Napier inadequate for housing asylum seekers and found the Home Office guilty of employing unlawful practices.

By law, save for the tiny number of people selected for official resettlement from Ukraine or Afghanistan, to claim refugee status, a person must already be in the UK. Without legal channels available, people seeking protection are forced to make dangerous journeys and enter the country illegally.

UK policy prescribes that general immigration detention be used for minimal periods, in the last resort and only for (non-vulnerable) adults.

Detention in short-term holding facilities is treated slightly differently, but the routine detention of thousands of asylum seekers, including children, for lengthy periods is an aberration of an already problematic practice.

Detaining asylum seekers as a matter of routine is a new practice in the UK. It has come about as a reaction to the increase in small boats crossing the channel and the lack of asylum accommodation caused by a huge backlog of cases at the Home Office.

The small boats receive disproportionate and inaccurate political and media attention. This includes misrepresenting their occupants as “illegal immigrants”.

In fact, however, these people largely go on to claim and are usually granted refugee protection. The majority of migrants arriving in small boats, including those from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Eritrea, are found to have genuine protection needs warranting refugee status. This includes women and children.

It is important to remember, as I have pointed out that men are also legitimate refugees, despite the feminised imagery of the “genuine refugee”.

The numbers of people crossing the channel by small boat are unprecedented. Five years ago, 300 people arrived this way. In 2022, there have already been over 30,000.

However, the UK receives just 0.5 per cent of the world’s asylum claims and far fewer than many other European countries. Germany, for example, received nearly 150,000 asylum claims in 2021. These numbers, in turn, are dwarfed by those from countries further afield. Turkey currently hosts 3.6 million refugees from Syria alone.

A system in crisis

The UK’s asylum system is indeed in crisis, but not because of those making dangerous journeys to seek protection. To suggest that the terrible conditions people face once they arrive in the UK is their own fault is deeply disingenuous. As

Enver Solomon, chief executive of the Refugee Council has put it, it is a crisis “of the government’s own making”.

The number of people forced to wait over six months for an asylum decision has trebled since 2019. The backlog of people awaiting a decision is now a whopping 100,000.

People are waiting years for a resolution, during which they are kept in a dependent limbo of near destitution. They are forbidden from working, forcing them to rely on the Home Office for housing and subsistence. These amounts are tiny: asylum seekers live off £5.80 a day. The overall cost of the asylum system, however, is £1.5 billion a year.

These people have a legal right to claim protection from persecution and they are being failed. The implications are dire for both them and the public purse.

And the imperatives are clear. When the home secretary blames asylum seekers for the failings of the system, she not only distracts attention from the real causes, she risks fuelling community tensions, normalising xenophobia and ultimately encouraging far-right extremism. Rather than ineffective and cruel spectacles, such as threatening to send asylum seekers to Rwanda, the UK needs a functioning asylum system.

The government knows that providing safe and legal channels to reach the UK is the ultimate answer. It has shown as much in its response to the war in Ukraine.

The world is turbulent and will only become more so with climate crises. Draconian immigration policies cannot stop people crossing borders. They can only determine how dangerous such journeys are. **Melanie Griffiths is an Assistant Professor and Birmingham Fellow, University of Birmingham**

A helping hand: UK Border Force rescue another migrant boat in the Channel



Priest banned from saying Mass after homily attacks gay people

A priest who gave a widely condemned address in Co Kerry church over the weekend is to be prevented from saying Mass again after the Bishop of Kerry rebuked his comments as un-Christian.

Retired priest Fr Sean Sheehy told worshippers at St Mary's Church in Listowel that gay couples were sinful, and criticised free contraception being for "promoting promiscuity".

A video of Fr Sheehy's comments, in which he also criticised abortion and the transgender community, has been shared widely online.

"What is so sad today is you rarely hear about sin but it's rampant. It's rampant," Fr Sheehy said during his homily last weekend.

"We see it in the legislation of our governments, in the promotion of abortion. We see it in the example of this lunatic approach of transgenderism.

"We see it, for example, in the promotion of sex between two men and two women.

"That is sinful, that is mortal sin. And people don't seem to realise it, but it's a fact, it's a reality."

Some people attending the Mass left the church as a result, to which the priest told them "God help you... and God bless you who are here, who are worshipping God".

In response to the comments, Bish-

op of Kerry Ray Browne apologised to those who were upset by Fr Sheehy's "offending" homily and said his views do not represent "the Christian position".

He said that to have "total respect for one another" was a "fundamental Christian teaching", and for these issues to be spoken of "in such terms" at Mass was not appropriate.

"I am aware of the deep upset and

hurt caused by the contents of the homilies in question delivered over the weekend. I apologise to all who were offended.

"The views expressed do not represent the Christian position."

Speaking to local radio station Radio Kerry on Tuesday afternoon, Fr Sheehy said the bishop had told him he was "to be taken off all Masses".

"I know myself that what I said can-

not be disproven by any honest-to-God Catholic, Christian or Catholic teaching, and that's the bottom line."

He added that he believed that the bishop was "muzzling the truth in order to appease people".

The video sparked backlash from some on Facebook and Twitter. One person said that the sermon was "like stepping back to 1980s Ireland." Human rights advocate Colm O'Gorman said in response to the priest's homily: "To genuine, open hearted, joyful love, love without judgment, love that expands rather than diminishes one's connection with one's own humanity. I am not lost. He is."

However, some sprang to Fr Sheehy's defence. Media commentator Ben Scallan said: "Ultimately, this priest is being persecuted for the unforgivable offence of being a Catholic in 2022. He was absolutely within his rights to say what he said, and nobody is forcing anyone to go to church at gunpoint if they don't like the message."

Journalist Michael Kelly questioned the secular backlash. "If we're all for separation of Church and State, why are so many secular people trying to tell a priest what he can and can't say...inside a church where people have voluntarily decided to attend?" he asked on Twitter.

Caroline Farrow: Pg 8

Warm welcome in our parishes, says Liverpool

The archdiocese of Liverpool is responding to the cost-of-living crisis by offering its parish centres as 'warm and cosy' centres to those in need.

Around 40 parish centres across the archdiocese will open their doors as the costs of energy and heating continue to rise.

"This winter our parish centres are open as 'warm and cosy' centres - a safe place that people can visit, have a free cup of tea or coffee, access to wifi, a chance to watch TV or read books and enjoy friendly company," the archdiocese said.

The offer comes as a survey found the vast majority of people think the Government is not doing enough to support vulnerable households this winter, despite the Energy Price Guarantee and the Energy Bills Support Scheme. Some 83% are "very" or "quite" worried about their bills.

Opening the parish centres was the initiative of Jill Boggan, Director of Finance at Liverpool Archdiocese, who said: "It is about giving people a warm welcome in these difficult times. Many of our centres host activities during the day and we have set aside extra room to welcome people. In many areas we have liaised with other community groups to try and ensure that people have somewhere to go every day during the winter months."

Opening hours and information on the parish centres can be found at <http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/index.php?p=2561>



A screenshot from YouTube of Fr Sean Sheehy delivering his homily. Inset, Bishop Kerry Ray Browne has apologised for the priests' remarks

Ministers wrong to blame slavery laws for rise in migrants

Christian charity CARE has expressed concern about the UK Government's narrative around migration and modern slavery, as ministers threaten to tear up modern slavery laws.

Robert Jenrick, the new immigration minister, said Albanians were "abusing" the Modern Slavery Act in order to frustrate attempts by the Government to deport them.

He added that he would look at "radical options" to "deter people from coming to the UK".

Home Secretary Suella Braverman has also claimed that "modern slavery laws are being abused by people gaming the system", adding that "many" people are making spurious claims order to avoid being deported and "gaming the system."

But the Oxford Migration Observatory stressed that 86 per cent of Albanians who received positive decisions on asylum applications in the year ending June 2022 were women, whose leave to remain was granted on the basis that they were likely to have been trafficked by criminals and in genuine need of protection.

CARE's analysis shows that false or

spurious claims by migrants are not a significant threat under existing legislation.

Rebecca Stevenson, a trafficking policy expert at CARE, explained the situation. "The narrative currently being spun by UK Ministers is concerning," she said.

"It is unlikely that there are many spurious claims as an individual cannot self-refer into the NRM. A referral is made by a first responder who needs to have evidence of potential trafficking. A person's referral into the NRM may delay a person's deportation but will not be stalled unless the person receives a reasonable grounds decision based on the Government's own criteria.

"The 2021 NRM data for reasonable grounds decisions made on referrals shows around 90 per cent of decisions made in 2021 led to positive reasonable grounds decisions. Once a person gets this decision, they are entitled to support and cannot be deported until they have a conclusive grounds decision. 90 per cent of decisions made in 2021 led to positive conclusive grounds decisions."

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Public Engagement by Catholics for the Common Good

Food and water: It's Kairos time

Sir John Battle



What President Putin glibly calls the suspension of the agreement to allow Ukrainian grain ships to leave the Black Sea, is in fact an act of holding the poorest of the world hostage to famine.

Forty per cent of Ukraine grain shipments go to the international agencies that supply grain as food aid to lower and middle income countries where poverty and hunger remain a serious challenge. Nor will the impact of the blockade just affect food aid. It will also mean another round of soaring increases in wheat prices, pushing the cost of bread and pasta up worldwide. In practical terms the cost of living crisis which hits the poorest hardest in our society is again deepening.

The news that the Collins dictionary has decided that its new word for 2022 is 'permacrisis' is depressing. It also reminds us of that the concurrent climate crisis cannot be sidelined until the disastrous mini-Budget is rectified by needless reductions in public expenditure. 2022 has so far been a year of droughts and flood with the downpours in the wrong places. Sub-Saharan African countries in particular are set to harvest far less this year as a result of water shortage. Families in Zimbabwe's driest regions are facing acute water shortage.

Lack of access to the basics of food and water for millions is a tragic indictment of a 21st century world of wealth and technological achievements. While a war in Europe weaponises food provision, worldwide the talk of a permacrisis undermines any sense of hope and realisation that we hold the collective power to change. It builds in a defeatist nihilism that condemns millions to the culture of fear and death.

The word 'crisis' is originally a Greek word whose roots are the verb to 'decide'. Perhaps it should be checked against that other Greek term 'Kairos' which refers to a qualitative time, an extraordinary time, a key critical moment and appropriate time for something new.

Kairos is also a Gospel term referring to reaching a point where we recognise a critical moment in the need to acknowledge God's action in our history, and to actively respond, as Jesus said, in faith.

Priest banned by the Church for preaching the Catholic doctrine? Welcome to the new age of faith!

CATHOLIC COMMENT

Caroline Farrow



As you will have read on page 7, and no doubt elsewhere in the media, Irish priest Fr Sean Sheehy has been taken off the parish roster, in other words effectively banned from celebrating official diocesan Masses, by the Bishop of Kerry, following complaints about a homily delivered by Fr Sheehy over the weekend.

The homily was so controversial and offensive that it apparently caused 30 parishioners to leave in disgust.

Taking a priest off the parish roster isn't the same as laicisation – Fr Sheehy is still free to administer the sacraments as well as celebrate Mass either on his own or for private gatherings – but the bishop's actions have the effect of saying that he cannot be trusted to preach at ordinary diocesan Masses and probably ought to have limited contact with the general public in the future.

One could therefore be forgiven for thinking that Fr Sheehy must have said something particularly egregious, nasty or unpleasant, or perhaps he contradicted Catholic teaching in some way. Maybe he was racist or used unacceptable slurs and incited hatred towards minority groups? Perhaps he employed expletives or used graphic and explicit descriptions of things that were quite unsuitable for the ears of any children who may have been present? After all surely a bishop wouldn't take such draconian action without very good reason?

The answer is that Fr Sheehy did none of those things. His crime was to give a warning about sinful behaviour.

He said: *"What is so sad today is that you rarely hear about sin but it is rampant. We see it, for example, in the legislation of our Governments, we see it in the promotion of abortion, we see it in the example of this lunatic approach of transgenderism. We see it, for example, in the promotion of sex between two men or two women. That is sinful. That is mortal sin. And people don't seem to realise it. But it's a fact. And we need to listen to God*



“ Fr Sheehy did not condemn people. It is a very rum do indeed when a Catholic priest is effectively cancelled by his own superior for preaching Catholic doctrine...

about it, because if we don't, then there's no hope for these people."

All of this is undoubtedly true. Abortion is promoted as female healthcare with no recognition that it involves the ending of a human life and Western societies are encouraging young people to cause their bodies and psyches irreparable damage in the mistaken belief that we can change our biological sex.

It may not be palatable to say it, but sex outside of marriage, which the Church teaches can only be between a man and a woman, is sinful whether the participants are straight or gay.

We do live in a society that wants to justify sin and if we are in the business of evangelising or saving souls which is another facet of our faith, then it is imperative that we don't turn a blind eye as our friends and neighbours merrily trip off down the road to perdition.

Whether or not it is wise for us as Christians to focus solely upon sin and what we should not do, as opposed to encouraging people to develop a close personal relationship with Christ, is a matter of prudential judgement, but it does not mean that Fr Sheehy was wrong or even ill-advised to say what he

did. If we truly love Christ and we want to spend eternity with God then we would be wise to follow His commandments and do our best to please him, which includes moving away from all of our sinful behaviour.

It is completely acceptable to tell others that certain acts or behaviours are not in accordance with God's will. Stating that abortion is a grievous or mortal sin does not mean that we are devoid of sympathy for women in desperate situations and neither is it sitting in judgement upon their souls. It is, at worst, a recognition that they have done something which is objectively wrong and for which it would be wise for them to atone. It would be deeply irresponsible to say that because somebody finds themselves backed into a corner or in terrible circumstances, they are justified in perpetuating acts of evil.

Fr Sheehy didn't, however, just preach about sin but also about forgiveness. He said: "How will people know that God wants to forgive them if we don't tell them? How will people who are lost be found if we, as God's people, don't call them and say "Look! God loves you! He has come to call sinners! And He wants you to have life, and

have it to the full."

It may make for difficult hearing and I'm not surprised that many people walked out, because somewhere along the line, people have got the message that going to church is all about making oneself feel good as opposed to hearing any difficult truths or being effectively challenged to really live out your faith. In removing Fr Sheehy from active duty, the Bishop of Kerry, Ray Browne, has effectively capitulated to Irish media and politicians who have no business deciding what should and should not be preached about in church. Even more seriously Bishop Browne has also incorrectly stated that Fr Sheehy's views do not express the Christian position. Has Catholic doctrine changed? Do sinful acts no longer exist? If so, I didn't get the memo.

Fr Sheehy did not condemn people. Being charitable, I'm going to suggest that perhaps Bishop Browne hasn't actually listened to the homily in question or even read it in full. Perhaps if he does, he will apologise and reinstate Fr Sheehy at the first possible opportunity.

It is a very rum do indeed, when a Catholic priest is effectively cancelled by his own superior for preaching Catholic doctrine.

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World In brief

North and South Korea fire missiles

Tensions have risen in East Asia after North and South Korea both fired missiles across their maritime border for the first time.

Pyongyang fired at least 10 missiles from its east and west coasts, including one that landed close to South Korean territorial waters for the first time since the 1945 division of the peninsula, according to South Korean officials.

Seoul said this was an “unacceptable” breach of its territory and fired three air-to-ground missiles in response, which officials said landed a similar distance past the Northern Limit Line.

Sleep issues can lead to glaucoma

Sleep problems may increase the risk of glaucoma, a common eye condition that affects millions of people and can lead to blindness. After a decade-long study involving 400,000 people in the UK, a new report has found that sleeping too little or too much, snoring, daytime sleepiness and insomnia may all lead to glaucoma. “These findings underscore the need for sleep intervention for individuals at high risk of glaucoma,” said the international team of academics, led by researchers from Beijing, China.

Panic as lions escape enclosure at zoo

Five lions caused an early morning alarm at an Australian zoo after escaping from their enclosure. The animals – one adult and four cubs – were spotted outside their exhibit at Sydney’s Taronga Zoo on Wednesday morning, prompting the zoo to go into lockdown with a “code one” alert. Its guests staying overnight as part of its ‘Roar and Snore’ programme were forced to stay inside their accommodation while the lions were caught.

“This is a significant incident and a full review is now under way,” a zoo director said.

Biden ‘lost temper with Zelensky’

Joe Biden lost his temper with Volodymyr Zelensky when the Ukrainian “did not show enough gratitude” after Washington signed off on \$1bn worth of military assistance, NBC News claims. The US president raised his voice when Zelensky began itemising what else Kyiv needed shortly after Biden has signed off the weapons aid package. The president was said to have been getting increasingly angry for weeks before the June 15 call.

Schools are struggling to make the sums add up

EDUCATION

Chris Rolph



We have barely reached the autumn half term and school leaders are already beginning to worry about what the academic year beginning in September 2023 will hold. The combined effect of the cost of living crisis with unexpected salary costs have already made it almost impossible for schools to balance budgets in 2022. Head teachers are now warning that worse is to come if urgent action isn't taken.

An open letter, sent jointly by unions and leaders of educational organisations to Conservative MPs, warned of a £2 billion shortfall in school funding by 2024. On average they estimate that secondary schools will face a shortfall equivalent to losing four or five teachers. But of course, many schools are far from average: one headteacher simply states that his school will be bankrupt within a year.

While things are undoubtedly more difficult for smaller schools, even large academy chains are experiencing the same crisis. Steve Chalke, founder of the Oasis Trust of over 50 academies, said: “No one is in a position to keep going for very long eating their reserves.”

So, are the nation's schools really at risk of bankruptcy?

The short answer, based on recent government figures, appears to be

yes. Tables published by the Department for Education show that by the end of the 2020/21 financial year, 8 per cent of local authority maintained schools were in deficit.

Of those with a surplus, the reserve which can be carried forward – and which could potentially be used to support the budget in a difficult year – was an average of £322,000 for secondary schools. This represents about 6 per cent of a typical school's budget of around £5.5 million. It's not even enough to fill the gap left by inflation, which is currently running at 8.8 per cent.

The government has been encouraging schools to convert to academy status as part of multi-academy trusts, but things are little better for these schools. Official figures for academy trusts show they have average reserves of around £1.5 million. Though it's a lot of money, this represents 13 per cent of total income, so Steve Chalke's analysis is right. Two more years of inflation at similar levels to now and it will all be gone.

The government does have ways to respond to this. Aside from the obvious answer of injecting more money into the system, there are some policy decisions which could ease things for schools even if they don't solve the root cause of the problem.

One example might be to relax the rules around pupil premium funding. This huge pot of money – £2.44 billion in 2020-21, according to a House of Commons report – is distributed to schools annually to support children identified as

disadvantaged.

The targeted nature of the funding means that it is difficult for schools to spend it where it is most needed, on qualified teachers, but there is little evidence that it represents good value for money in its current form.

Analysis from 2019 by the Education Policy Institute suggests that, at the present rate, it would take more than 500 years for the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers to close – and COVID-19 lockdowns have made the situation worse.

It could well be time to respond to calls to wrap the pupil premium funding into the national funding formula for schools. Schools would still receive the pupil premium in proportion to the number of disadvantaged children, but could spend it in a more flexible way.

Similarly, the National Tutoring Programme provided schools with £349 million in 2022-23 towards the cost of qualified tutors to help children catch up on learning lost during the pandemic. School leaders might well appreciate the same money simply flowing into their budgets, without the need for rules around how they spend it.

What schools can do

The measures that schools can take to save money are more limited. School leaders will be making tough decisions about every aspect of their spending.

Some solutions only work on paper. Reducing the number of teachers and making classes bigger

sounds fine, but rooms are generally designed for a maximum of 30 children. Others need months or years of planning: reducing the choice of subjects in secondary schools can save costs but would need to be initiated now in order to take effect next September.

Even losing staff is difficult. So-called “natural wastage”, where those retiring or moving on are not replaced, is a slow process. Making people redundant is not just unpleasant, but also expensive. It is hardly surprising that Leora Cruddas, chief executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, has said that it is not realistic to expect budgets to be balanced within existing limits.

Things may look particularly bleak, but the government has the opportunity to enact changes. In December the Department for Education would normally publish its 2023-24 indicative budgets for schools. This provides a chance to commit to a per-pupil funding increase that is at least in line with inflation, as well as adjusting the formula to reduce the strings attached to some aspects of funding.

At the same time Gillian Keegan, the new secretary of state for education, could thrash out a deal with the chancellor to provide a one-off injection of funds to help schools get through the next 12 months. If they don't work together, the doomsday scenario is that our nation becomes educationally bankrupt.

Chris Rolph is Director, Nottingham Institute of Education, Nottingham Trent University



GK Chesterton collection bought for US university's London base

An American university has celebrated its association with G.K. Chesterton with a new acquisition of his works.

Holy Cross Father John I. Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame, led a dedication ceremony to celebrate the Catholic university's acquisition of the G.K. Chesterton Collection for its London Global Gateway.

The collection is a treasure trove of the writings, personal effects, art and other items related to the life of the renowned 20th-century English Catholic writer, orator, apologist journalist and literary critic.

Over the course of several decades, Chesterton expert Aiden Mackey assembled the materials that make up the collection, which has moved from Oxford to the Notre Dame centre in central London on Trafalgar Square.

The transfer of the collection makes the world and work of Chesterton more accessible to scholars and includes a public exhibit for Chesterton devotees who live in or visit London.

"We give thanks for the life and work of G.K. Chesterton and the remarkable dedication and commitment of Aiden Mackey in compiling this fine collection," Fr Jenkins said in his prayer of dedication.

"May Notre Dame's commitment to educating hearts and minds be furthered by this collection, and may the writings and life of G.K. Chesterton serve as a witness to faith and hope," he added.

The 100-year-old Mackey attended the ceremony, which was hosted by

Notre Dame. Previously he said of the transfer: "The collection's elevation to so prestigious a home as the London Global Gateway is, for me, warming beyond measure."

Gilbert Keith Chesterton is one of the most famous English Catholics and his work has influenced many to

join the Church, including fellow author CS Lewis.

Notre Dame's association with Chesterton began nearly 100 years ago when, in 1930, he visited the university in South Bend, Indiana, to deliver 36 public lectures over six weeks and receive an honorary degree.



Pictured left, Holy Cross Father John I. Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, prays at the dedication and blessing of the Chesterton Archive at the Catholic university's London Global Gateway. Also pictured are Holy Cross Father Jim Lies, senior director for academic initiatives and partnerships for Notre Dame's London Global Gateway; Aidan Mackey, a G.K. Chesterton expert who founded and hosted the archive in his home for a time; and Mackey's daughter Patricia.

Photo: Matt Cashore, University of Notre Dame

Grieving relatives attack Hancock

Former Health Secretary Matt Hancock is facing fresh anger from Covid-bereaved families after it was announced that he will appear on ITV reality TV show *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!*, which launches this weekend.

Grieving relatives accused him of "cashing in" on his legacy as health secretary that left Britain with one of the highest death tolls in Europe.

The Daily Mirror described Hancock as "shameless", *The Telegraph* predicted that "viewers will humiliate Hancock – but he'll think it means he's popular".

The Guardian said the "consensus" within Westminster is that Hancock is a "prat" and "asking for trouble"... "this won't make him look good at all."

Government 'war games' blackout

Ministers have "war gamed" plans to cope with energy blackouts lasting up to a week in the event of a national power outage.

The *Guardian* has seen documents marked 'official sensitive' warning that in a "reasonable worst-case scenario" all sectors including transport, food and water supply, communications and energy could be "severely disrupted" for up to seven days. The government would prioritise food, water and shelter for young and elderly people, as well as carers.

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Double the Love boost means Mary's Meals go twice as far this winter

Donations to school feeding charity Mary's Meals this winter will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.5 million – meaning the public's kindness will go even further to reach more desperately hungry children with life-changing school meals.

Mary's Meals launched its Double The Love campaign on 1st November, which will run until 31st January 2023. Thanks to the charity's low-cost approach, just £15.90 can normally feed a child with Mary's Meals every school day for a year, but during this time that donation will feed two children.

Mary's Meals serves nutritious school meals in 20 of the world's poorest countries and its work has never been more important. The charity currently feeds over two million 2,279,941 children every school day.

Daniel Adams, executive director of Mary's Meals, says: "In a world devastated by conflict, food insecurity and drought, bringing new hope to desperately hungry

children with our life-changing school meals has never been more urgent.

"That's why our Double The Love campaign is so important. This winter donations will go twice as far, allowing us to reach even more children in countries including South Sudan, Yemen and Haiti. Just £15.90 will feed two children for a whole school year – fuelling their learning and hopes for the future.

The charity has prominent support from Scottish actor Gerard Butler, Emma Thompson and Scottish folk/pop group The Proclaimers.

Mary's Meals provides a nourishing meal for children at school, helping them concentrate through the day and giving them an extra incentive to attend – something that is often challenging in the first place.

• Find out more about the Double the Love campaign at <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk>

St Macartan's community spirit earns it church award

Andy Drozdziak

A small Irish Catholic church has won a prestigious national church award.

The top prize of Church of the Year 2022 at the National Church Awards was won by St Macartan's Church (The Forth Chapel).

The church, located in the heart of the Clogher Valley, dates from 1838 to 1846 and was once the cathedral of the Catholic diocese of Clogher.

The National Church Awards celebrate churches and the people who use and look after them. Judges praised the combined strength of the approach to looking after the building, the involvement of local people as volunteers, and the way that St Macartan's part of the heritage of County Tyrone.

Parish priest Canon Noel McGahan and members of Clogher parish joined comedian Hugh Dennis and Rev. Canon Ann Easter, a former chaplain to Queen Elizabeth II, at the ceremony at Mercers' Hall, London.

Hugh Dennis paid tribute to churches as the 'beating heart of the nation.'

"A huge congratulation to all of the winners of this year's awards," he said.

"Packed with heritage, centres for vital community support and places for worship and reflection, churches are a beating heart of the nation."

Judges were impressed by the recent restoration project, which received support in 2020 through the Treasure Ireland project from the National Churches Trust. This proved to be a catalyst for many people to enjoy a



new sense of vibrancy and become involved in church life.

Reflecting on the award, Canon McGahan said he was 'overjoyed' to win. "This is an outstanding achievement to get such recognition at UK level," he told the *Universe*, calling St Macartan's "a hidden treasure".

"The people of the area are so proud of this building and are truly grateful to past generations who built it and to those who have maintained and cared for it as a special place of worship," he said.

The judges said St Macartan's is "a shining example of a church which is open, relevant, looked after, in good repair, in use and is an inspiration to others across the UK."

As well as winning the Church of the Year Award, St Macartan's also won the Northern Ireland category in the Naylor Awards for Excellence in Church Maintenance and a cash prize of £2,500.

Nina McCready from the National Churches Trust told the *Universe* why St Macartan's was the clear winner. "The parish is very passionate about sharing its heritage with a wider audience than just the congregation, and is really pro-active in showcasing it. That really stood out," she said, paying tribute also to the 'astounding' work taken of St Macartan's volunteers.

"Most churches rely on volunteers to research their place of worship and it's just astounding that they do this while working and having families," she said. "They just do it because they love it and are connected with their place of worship."

Claire Walker, Chief Executive, of the National Churches Trust, said: "The Church of the Year is a shining example of a church, chapel or meeting house which is open, available to all and supported by the local community."

More on St Macartan's on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/StMacartansTheForth>



Plymouth builds a garden tribute to those we have lost

A Remembrance Garden has opened in Plymouth Catholic Cathedral for the month of November.

The Garden ties in with the feast days of All Saints and All Souls, as well as Remembrance Sunday.

"November is a time when we traditionally remember and pray for loved ones who have died," the diocese said.

"In the build up to Remembrance Sunday on 13th November, we remember all those who have died in the service of their country in the two world wars and later conflicts."

During this month dedicated to those who have died, the Dean of St Mary and St Boniface Cathedral, Canon Mark O'Keeffe, a former army

chaplain, is inviting the recently and not so recently bereaved to light a candle and/or plant a Remembrance Cross in the Remembrance Garden to remember loved ones who have died.

"November has always been a special time for the Church to remember those we have lost. All Saints Day is a holiday in many parts of Europe," Canon O'Keeffe said, "a celebration of all Christian Saints – those known to us and those who remain unknown."

"November 2nd is All Souls Day – a day when we traditionally visit the graveyard where our loved ones rest and pray for them."

"We have been getting the Garden of Remembrance ready for the com-

munity of Plymouth – a quiet space where all can come and remember and light a candle or plant a Remembrance Cross if they so wish."

The Remembrance Garden will be open throughout the month of November from 9.30am to 3.30pm weekdays and 7.30am to 7pm on Sunday. Masses took place on All Saints Day, 1st November, at 10am and 6pm and All Souls Day, 2nd November at 10am and 6pm, and a Mass is also planned for Remembrance Sunday.

Right, Canon Mark O'Keeffe and his Cardigan Corgi Welly at the Remembrance Garden

Photo: O'Keeffe/
www.plymouthcathedral.co.uk



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Two Religious advent calendars with envelope. A4 size: 11.5" x 8.5" (30 x 21 cm). Featuring 2 different nativity scenes, with windows for opening, with glitter. Each opening window has a motif or scene from the Christmas story, and pictures are translucent when held to light. Supplied with presentation envelopes.

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Ref: X0641 price £6.95

Advent Calendar: Come let us Adore Him

Religious advent calendar with envelope. A4 size: 11.5" x 8.5" (30 x 21 cm). Featuring children and their pets approaching manger with gifts, with festive border, with glitter. Each opening window has a motif or scene from the Christmas story, and pictures are translucent when held to light. Supplied with presentation envelope

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Nativity set including eleven 3.5" (9 cm) resin figures and wooden Italian-made stable. Hand-painted movable figurines with gold accents. Wooden shed 12.5" x 10" x 7" (32 cm x 25 cm x 18 cm).

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In brief

Vatican announces Christmas plans

The Nativity scene that will sit under a 98-foot-tall silver fir tree in the middle of St Peter's Square this year will feature 19 life-sized figures carved in cedar by artisans in the northeastern Italian town of Sutrio.

The tree comes from Rosello, a village of only 182 residents, in Italy's central Abruzzo region. The decorations are being made by young adults at a residential psychiatric facility in Rosello.

The tree will be lit, and the traditional Nativity scene unveiled, on 3rd December and remain up until after the feast of the Baptism of the Lord (8th January).

The cedar for the Nativity scene figures came from trees selectively cut by gardeners to improve the health of other trees in several public and private gardens. None of the trees were cut specifically for the sculptures.

The Vatican's Philatelic Office has also announced that this year's Vatican's 2022 Christmas stamps have been painted by Italian artist and activist Francesco Canale.

Use compassion, not condemnation

God always sees people's potential, looking past their mistakes and understanding what they can become, Pope Francis said.

If people feel they are "not up to the challenges of life and, even less, of the Gospel, mired in problems and sins, Jesus always looks at us with love," the pope told people gathered in St. Peter's Square for the recitation of the Angelus prayer.

Jesus "comes toward us, he calls us by name and, if we welcome him, he comes to our home," he said. Commenting on the encounter between Jesus and Zacchaeus, who collected taxes on behalf of the Roman rulers, the pope said Zacchaeus was rich, hated and branded a traitor and a sinner. But, despite his lowliness, Zacchaeus "feels the need to seek another way of looking" and "awaits someone who will free him from his condition," the pope said.

St Francis is role model to follow

St. Francis is the saint Catholics should follow, as he is known for celebrating creation and as a man of peace and poverty, Pope Francis told a meeting of Franciscans in Rome. "But he is misunderstood," the pope added, "and people do not realise that his one true love was Jesus Christ."

The Franciscans were in Rome to plan a series of events marking 800th anniversaries of: the Rule of St. Francis

November is pope's month to pray for the suffering children

During November Pope Francis is asking people to pray for children who are suffering because of poverty, war and exploitation.

"Let us pray for children who are suffering, especially for those who are homeless, orphans and victims of war. May they be guaranteed access to education, and may they have the opportunity to experience family affection," the pope said in a video released

on Monday by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network.

He explained his November prayer intention was for "children who suffer."

"An abandoned child is our fault," the pope said in the message. "Each marginalised child, abandoned by his or her family, without schooling, without health care, is a cry! A cry that rises up to God and shames the system

that we adults have built," he insisted.

Pope Francis noted that there are millions of boys and girls around the world living "in conditions very similar to slavery." Yet, they are human beings with names and faces and an identity that God gave them, he said. And they have a right to an education and "to feel the love of a family so they know that God does not forget them."



A welcome banner for the pope adorns the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Manama, Bahrain, one of the religious sites the pope will visit during his trip to the Gulf State this weekend

Dicastery toughens Church response to abuse cases

The revised Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors has laid the groundwork for devising an annual report on child protection efforts by the Catholic Church globally.

Oblate Father Andrew Small, commission secretary, said members also looked at the commission's new relationship to the disciplinary section of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and continued their efforts to promote greater transparency and fuller reporting to victims about the outcome of their cases.

"In our engagement with victim survivors, the acknowledgement of the wrong that was done to them is primary, being listened to, being believed," Fr Small said. "There's nothing that takes the place of being believed and heard."

He acknowledged that for victims, "seeing the wrongdoer continue to flourish at times or to appear without sanction is also very painful, and vic-

tims are understandably confused or upset when they are not informed about actions taken by the Church against an accused offender.

The priest accepted that the Church still looked like it had a problem with how it handled abuse cases after journalists asked him about French Bishop Michel Santier. Santier had announced his retirement on health grounds in 2021, only for it later to be revealed that he had been credibly accused of sexual misconduct and disciplined by the Vatican.

"The Vatican still needs to find a way to be more open while respecting local laws that protect the reputation of someone who is not guilty of a civil crime but may have violated Church law," Father Small said.

"If we cannot figure that out not only will it be bad for the institutional Church, but it will be continually painful for the victims

The Pope's recent reorganisation of

the Roman Curia gives the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors independence as an advisory body but with access to the bodies that exercise leadership within the Church, and oversight of all Church policies in the area of abuse prevention and safeguarding. It has power "to act where it sees wrong within the Church."

It has been given the green light to set up suitable centres where individuals who have experienced abuse can find acceptance and an attentive hearing, and be accompanied in a process of healing and justice.

The commission is also expected to deliver a comprehensive report on all Church safeguarding and abuse procedures, country by country, by the middle of next year, with the emphasis on locating examples of best practice and helping those countries that were falling behind in their responsibilities.

Blessed saints? They were the revolutionaries of their time!

The saints were not "starched" picture-perfect conformists, Pope Francis said; they were "countercultural and revolutionary."

The multitude of men and women honoured by sainthood lived according to the Eight Beatitudes, which made them decidedly out of place in the world, Pope Francis said before reciting the Angelus prayer.

With thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square, including runners who had participated in the 10k All Saints' Day race, Pope Francis encouraged people to go to Mass and pray for the saints as well as their own family members who had died.

Talking about saints and the day's Gospel reading of the beatitudes, Pope Francis focused particularly on "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Everyone says they want peace, he said, but often what they mean is they want "to be left in peace, to have no problems, just tranquility."

But, if one reads the beatitudes in the Gospel, he said, they will see that Jesus does not say, "Blessed are those who are at peace," but blessed are "those who make peace, the constructors, the peacemakers."

"Indeed, peace must be built, and like any construction it requires effort, collaboration, patience," he said. And it requires acts of justice and mercy.

While many people today try to convince everyone that only power and force can guarantee peace, the teaching of Jesus and the example of the saints show "peace is not achieved by conquering or defeating someone, it is never violent, it is never armed."

To begin to sow peace, Pope Francis asked people to look at themselves and ask, "In the places where we live, study and work, do we bring tension, words that hurt, gossip that poisons, controversy that divides? Or do we open the path to peace: Do we forgive those who have offended us, care for those who are at the margins, redress some injustice by helping those who have less? This is building peace."

At the end of his midday talk, the pope asked for prayers for this weekend's trip to Bahrain so that his meetings with local Christians and with Muslim leaders would promote, "in the name of God, the cause of fraternity and peace, which our times so desperately and urgently need."

And "please don't forget martyred Ukraine; let us pray for peace, we pray that in Ukraine there would be peace."





Pope Francis celebrates a memorial Mass for cardinals and bishops who have died over the past year, in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on 2nd November, All Souls' Day.

Below, Pope Francis uses holy water to bless the tombs of those buried in the Vatican's Teutonic Cemetery, a medieval cemetery now reserved mainly for German-speaking priests and members of religious orders, during a visit on All Souls Day

Love and mercy are key to entering Heaven, pope says on All Souls' Day

Cindy Wooden

As Christians await their death and the final judgment of God, the Gospel tells them what they must do to be welcomed into Heaven: love others because God is love, Pope Francis said.

In life "we are in the waiting room of the world," hoping to hear Jesus say, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father," the pope said during a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on 2nd November, the feast of All Souls.

Pope Francis celebrated the Mass with special prayers for the nine cardinals and 148 archbishops and bishops from around the world who died between 30th October 2021 and 17th October this year.

After the Mass, the pope visited the Vatican's Teutonic Cemetery, a medieval cemetery now reserved mainly for German-speaking priests and members of religious orders.

The Gospel reading at the Mass was St. Matthew's description of the last

judgment when those who fed the hungry, welcomed the stranger and visited the prisoner are welcomed into God's kingdom, and those who neglected to care for others are sent into "the eternal fire."

While praying for those who have died, he said, the feast day also is a call to "nurture our expectation of Heaven" and question whether one's strongest desires are for union with God or for earthly status and pleasures that will pass away.

"The best careers, the greatest achievements, the most prestigious titles and accolades, the accumulated riches and earthly gains – all will vanish in a moment," the pope said.

But the Gospel of Matthew makes clear what will last, he said: love and care for others, especially the poor and those usually discarded by society.

And, he said, the Gospel also explains that God's final judgment is not like a civil court where the judge or jury sifts through every piece of

evidence and weighs them all carefully.

In the divine tribunal, the only thing that counts "is mercy toward the poor and discarded: 'Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me,'" the pope said. "The Most High is in the least, he who inhabits the heavens dwells among the most insignificant to the world."

Jesus' measure is "a love beyond our measures, and his standard of judgment is gratuitousness," he said. "So, to prepare ourselves, we know what to do: love those who are on his priority list, those who can give us nothing back, those who do not attract us" and do so without expecting repayment.

Too often, Pope Francis said, instead of living the Gospel, people try to water down the words of Jesus.

"Let's face it, we have gotten pretty good at compromising with the Gospel, saying 'feeding the hungry yes, but the issue of hunger is complex, and I certainly can't solve it!' or 'Wel-

coming migrants yes, but it is a complicated issue, it concerns politics,'" the pope said. With little objections "we make life a compromise with the Gospel."

"From simple disciples of the Master, we become teachers of complexity, who argue a lot and do little, who seek answers more in front of the computer than in front of the crucifix, on the internet rather than in the eyes of our brothers and sisters," he said.

Believers become experts "who comment, debate and expound theories, but do not know even one poor person by name, have not visited a sick person for months, have never fed or clothed someone (and) have never befriended someone in need."

The Gospel teaches people how to live while awaiting death and God's judgment – "loving because he is love," Pope Francis said. God "waits for us among the poor and wounded of the world."

"And he is waiting to be caressed not with words but with deeds."



In brief

Warning over loss of religious freedom in Mexico, Nicaragua

Alliance Defending Freedom International (ADF) has called on the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to do more to defend religious freedom in the region, with a special emphasis on Mexico and Nicaragua.

“Latin America is currently experiencing a surge of human rights abuses in the area of religious freedom,” stated Tomás Henriquez, ADF International’s director of advocacy for Latin America. “What we are seeing is indicative of an alarming disregard for this foundational human right, with severe consequences not just for people of faith, but also for the future of democracy in the region as a whole.”

Henriquez told a hearing in Costa Rica that “concrete action” must be taken against the violations of religious freedom in Nicaragua, Mexico, and Argentina, among other countries in the region.

In Nicaragua, the authoritarian government of Daniel Ortega has arrested clergy, closed religious charities and waged a war of intimidation against the Church, while in Mexico, draconian laws that prevent clergy from speaking out on political issues had been used to arrest a cardinal, a bishop and several priests. “All they did was criticise corruption in the government and appeal for more help for the poor,” Henriquez said.

Car blasts kill 120 in Somalian capital

The death toll from twin car bombings in Somalia’s capital has reached 120, with over 300 injured.

The blasts took place in a busy junction in Mogadishu and was Somalia’s deadliest attack since a truck bombing at the same spot killed more than 500 people five years ago.

It is not clear how vehicles loaded with explosives again made it through a city full of checkpoints and constantly on alert for attacks.

The al Qaeda affiliate al-Shabab has claimed responsibility for the bombings and said it targeted the education ministry, which it accused of turning youth away from Islam.

Somalia’s government under the recently elected President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has been engaged in a new offensive against al-Shabab, including efforts to shut down its financial network.

The government has said the fight will continue and appealed for international help to track down and defeat the terror cell responsible for the blast.

Bishops breathe sigh of relief as da Silva wins Brazilian vote

Rob Beswick

The Brazilian bishops’ conference has congratulated Luiz Lula da Silva for winning the nation’s presidential election, but noted there was still much work ahead as tensions continue to build across the divided nation.

“The exercise of citizenship does not end with the end of the electoral process,” said the bishops. They called for peace and unity even as thousands of President Jair Bolsonaro’s supporters called on the military to keep the far-right leader in power.

His supporters gathered outside the Eastern Military Command in Rio de Janeiro, one of the army’s eight regional headquarters, chanting “Armed forces, save Brazil!” and “United, the people will never be defeated!”

Meanwhile, truck drivers who for days have maintained roadblocks across the country to protest Mr Bolsonaro’s defeat were still out in force, despite a Supreme Court order to dismantle them.

The protests came amid international recognition of Mr da Silva’s victory and a recommendation from the Brazilian Supreme Court that Mr Bolsonaro accept the results of Sunday’s election.

Since the result was announced the military, which has taken on a prominent role under Mr Bolsonaro, has remained largely silent, which is possibly a sign it is likely distancing itself from the ex-army captain.

“In a democracy, the armed forces do not have a say in the electoral process,” said Eduardo Munhoz Svartman, president of the Brazilian Association for Defence Studies. “This silence is desirable.”

Mr Bolsonaro lost to Mr da Silva in a nail-biting contest, garnering 49.1% of the vote to da Silva’s 50.9%. It was the tightest presidential race since Brazil’s return to democracy in 1985,

A delighted Luiz da Silva celebrates his victory, but Bolsonaro’s supporters have set up road blocks and called on the military to intervene and overturn the result



and marks the first time Mr Bolsonaro has lost an election in his 34-year political career.

The outgoing president took nearly two days to address the nation, amid speculation that he might fight the result after repeatedly questioning the reliability of the country’s electoral system before the election.

But while he stopped short of conceding to Mr da Silva, Bolsonaro did say he would continue to obey the constitution. However, he also encouraged protests by his supporters, as long as they remained peaceful.

At one roadblock in Sao Paulo state, protesters set tyres on fire, causing huge traffic jams, while in Rio, reporters saw truck drivers kneeling in front of police officers and refusing to evacuate.

Bolsonaro supporters have also taken to social media to denounce the

result and demand that the military take the streets.

The bishops, who frequently clashed with Bolsonaro when he was in power, called for calm and urged all sides to come together “to build a better, more tolerant and more peaceful Brazil.”

“May everyone walk together to build better politics, at the service of the common good, as defined by our beloved Pope Francis,” they added.

Many Catholics who work with the poor, Indigenous and landless peasants were pleased to see Bolsonaro removed from power.

“Lula’s victory rekindles the hope of (the return of) respect for Indigenous minorities and traditional communities, as well as for the forest and nature in the Amazon, in the resumption of the state’s role in controlling deforestation, land grabbing, violence and the looting of natural resources

at the expense of the poorest and most vulnerable,” Josep Iborra Plans, a former priest now working with the church’s Pastoral Land Commission, told Catholic News Service.

Lula, who served as president from 2003 to 2010, said one of his first actions as president would be to try to remove Brazil from the United Nations’ Hunger Map.

The country was removed from the map in 2014 due mainly to food security action plans implemented during Lula’s first two terms in office. However, the country was added again in 2018.

A study on food insecurity, conducted by international aid organizations, showed that 33.1 million Brazilians have nothing to eat and another 125.2 million Brazilians have experienced some degree of food insecurity in the past year.

Church demands inquiry after South Korea stampede

Catholic bishops in South Korea expressed sorrow and offered prayers after more than 150 people died in a stampede during Halloween celebrations in Seoul – but have also demanded a detailed investigation to identify the cause of the incident.

The tragedy occurred when around 100,000 people – mostly in their teens and 20s, wearing Halloween costumes – poured into Seoul’s narrow, winding streets to party.

“We entrust to God’s mercy the victims who lost their lives in the tragedy,” the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Korea said in a statement.

“In addition, we offer our deepest condolences to the bereaved families, and we also pray for the speedy recovery and peace of the wounded,” said the statement.

But finding out why the deaths occurred was vital. “For the peace and safety of the people, the relevant authorities must thoroughly examine the cause and process of this tragedy



and ensure that irresponsibility and oblivion are not repeated,” the statement said.

Archbishop Peter Chung Soon-taick Chung of Seoul also expressed his condolences and prayed for the victims and their family members, as well as “the authorities involved in the accident and all those who are working on rescue operations.”

Pope Francis asked people gathered in St. Peter’s Square for the Angelus last Sunday “to pray to the risen Lord also for those – especially the young – who died in Seoul, as a tragic consequence of a sudden crowd surge.”

The Halloween-related tragedy sparked nationwide public shock and anger in a country known for its crowd management.

“I am devastated by what happened, they were just trying to have a good time,” Hwang Gyu-hyeon, 19, told reporters. She wept and struggled to speak clearly as she explained how the deaths of so many people her age had affected her.

“I pray for the victims. I can’t believe this accident happened despite the signs that were clear beforehand. Nothing was done to prepare for this crowd,” she said.

The government defended its policing plan of deploying 137 officers at the venue. “(The crush) was not a problem that could be solved by deploying police or firefighters in advance,” Interior Minister Lee Sang-min told a briefing.

President Yoon Suk-yeol ordered a week of national mourning.

The Halloween party was the first to be organised after the nation lifted its strict COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and allowed public gatherings without masks.

Ethiopian hope for peace after rivals agree ceasefire

Mogomotsi Magome

Bishops in east Africa have praised negotiators after a permanent cessation of hostilities was agreed between Ethiopia and its semi-autonomous region, Tigray. It brings to a halt a two-year conflict which has killed hundreds of thousands and shunted the regional economy.

Former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, acting for the UN, said Ethiopia's government and the authorities in Tigray have agreed on "orderly, smooth and co-ordinated disarmament", including the restoration of law and order, civic services unhindered access to humanitarian aid".

This is good news, said Ethiopia's Bishops' Conference, "but we have seen ceasefires called before, which have held for months and then collapsed. It is up to the authorities to make this one last."

"We must all honour this agreement," said the lead negotiator for Ethiopia's government, Redwan Hussein. Lead Tigray negotiator Getachew Reda expressed similar sentiment, and noted that "painful concessions" have been made.

The war, which marks two years on Friday, saw abuses documented on either side.

Eritrea, which has fought alongside neighbouring Ethiopia, was not part of the peace talks. It is not immediately clear to what extent its government,

which has long considered an autonomous Tigray a threat, will respect the agreement. Eritrean forces have been blamed for some of the conflict's worst abuses, including gang rapes, and witnesses have described killings and lootings by Eritrean forces even during the peace talks.

Forces from Ethiopia's neighbouring Amhara region also have been fighting Tigray forces, but Amhara representatives are not part of the peace talks.

"Amharas cannot be expected to abide by any outcome of a negotiations process from which they think they are excluded," said Tewodrose Tirfe, chairman of the Amhara Association of America.

A critical question is how soon aid can return to Tigray, whose communications and transport links have been largely severed since the conflict began.

Doctors have described running out of basic medicines such as vaccines, insulin and therapeutic food while people die of easily preventable diseases and starvation.

United Nations human rights investigators have said the Ethiopian government was using "starvation of civilians" as a weapon of war.

"We're back to 18th century surgery," a surgeon at the region's flagship hospital, Fasika Amdeslasie, said this week.

"It's like an open-air prison."

A humanitarian source said their organisation could resume operations almost immediately if unfettered aid access to Tigray is granted.

"It entirely depends on what the government agrees to. If they genuinely give us access, we can start moving very quickly, in hours, not weeks," said the source.

The conflict began in November 2020, less than a year after Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for making peace with Eritrea, which borders the Tigray region. His government has since declared the Tigray authorities, who ruled Ethiopia for nearly three decades before he took office, a terrorist organisation.

The brutal fighting, which also spilled into the neighbouring Amhara and Afar regions as Tigray forces tried to press toward the capital, was renewed in August in Tigray after months of lull that of aid into the region. Hundreds of civilians have died in the last month, as well as an unknown number of combatants.

In a speech before the peace talks' announcement, Ethiopia's prime minister said that its country's negotiators "need to replicate the victory we got on the battlefield in peace efforts, too."

"We are finalising the war in northern Ethiopia with a victory ... we will now bring peace and development."



An Afari militia member walks next to a house destroyed in the fight between the Ethiopian military and the Tigray People's Liberation Front forces in Kasagita, Ethiopia. Catholic bishops in Ethiopia have welcomed a new peace deal brokered by the UN

Top German cleric resigns after abuse row

Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Archbishop Ludwig Schick of Bamberg, who had had been in charge of the Bavarian archdiocese since 2002.

Schick recently came under pressure for the handling of sexual abuse cases in his diocese and had been called on to step down by campaigners. However, in a statement announcing

his resignation he made no mention of that, only stating that he left his office confident that "the tasks of the Church, the proclamation of the Gospel, the divine services, pastoral care and charity can be fruitfully continued on a good foundation. That is my wish and my request!"

Schick is not the first German archbishop to ask the pope to accept his

resignation in recent months as pressure has grown over the German Church's handling of abuse. In 2021 its most high-profile figure, Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich, who has also come under criticism for his handling of sexual abuse cases, offered to step down, but the pope declined to accept his offer. Marx has publicly said he may attempt to resign again.

The site of the pre-Islam monastery



Pre-Islam Christian monastery found in UAE

Jon Gambrell

A Christian monastery possibly dating as far back as the years before Islam spread across the Arabian Peninsula has been discovered on an island off the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The monastery on Siniyah Island, part of the sand-dune sheikhdom of Umm al-Quwain, sheds new light on the history of early Christianity along the shores of the Persian Gulf.

It marks the second such monastery found in the Emirates, dating back as many as 1,400 years – long before its desert expanses gave birth to a thriving oil industry which led to a unified nation home to the high-rise towers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

The two monasteries became lost to history in the sands of time as scholars believe Christians slowly converted to Islam as that faith grew more prevalent in the region.

Christians remain a minority across the wider Middle East, though Pope Francis is arriving in Bahrain this weekend to promote interfaith dialogue with Muslim leaders.

Timothy Power, associate professor of archaeology at the United Arab Emirates University who helped investigate the newly discovered monastery, said the UAE today is a "melting pot of nations".

"The fact that something similar was happening here 1,000 years ago is really remarkable and this is a story that deserves to be told," he said.

Siniyah Island shields the Khor al-Beida marshlands in Umm al-Quwain, an emirate some 30 miles north east of Dubai. Archaeologists discovered the monastery on the north east of the island, and carbon dating of samples found in the monastery's foundation date between 534 and 656.

Islam's Prophet Muhammad was born around 570 and died in 632 after conquering Mecca in present-day Saudi Arabia.

Viewed from above, the monastery on Siniyah Island's floor plan suggests early Christian worshippers prayed within a single-aisle church at the monastery. Rooms within appear to hold a baptismal font, an oven for baking bread or wafers for communion rites, a nave with an altar and an installation for communion wine.

Next to the monastery sits a second building with four rooms, likely around a courtyard – possibly the home of an abbot or bishop in the early church.

Historians say early churches and monasteries spread along the Persian Gulf to the coasts of present-day Oman and all the way to India. Archaeologist have found other similar churches and monasteries in Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

In the early 1990s, archaeologists discovered the first Christian monastery in the UAE, on Sir Bani Yas Island, today a nature preserve and site of luxury hotels. It similarly dates back to the same period as the new find in Umm al-Quwain.

However, evidence of early life along the Khor al-Beida marshlands in Umm al-Quwain dates as far back as the Neolithic period – suggesting continuous human inhabitation for at least 10,000 years, Mr Power said.

Today, the area near the marshland is known for the low-cost alcohol at the Barracuda Beach Resort and a planned £595 million development.

Mr Power said the site will be protected from the development. "It's a really fascinating discovery because it's hidden history – it's not something that's widely known," he added.

Law society backs US state's plans for abortion ban

The Thomas More Society, a not-for-profit, national public interest law firm based in Chicago, has backed Indiana's plans to outlaw abortion, saying the proposals "pass the constitutional litmus test".

"Nothing in the language, history, or interpretation of the Indiana Constitution supports a right to abortion," the society said, "especially in light of Indiana's prohibition of abortion going back to 1835, 16 years before the relevant part of that constitution was adopted."

The law in question was enacted by the Indiana General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Eric Holcomb in August.

It bans most abortions except in cases of rape, incest and specific medical conditions.

"This law passes the constitutional litmus test," said the Thomas More Society.

Pro-abortionists have filed a lawsuit against the law, which if successful would allow abortions in the state up to 22 weeks gestation.

The Commando priest: Fr Phil adds Green Beret to his clerical wardrobe

Fr Phil Carroll (aka Padre)

It is just over a year since I left Bishop's House and my role as Bishop's secretary to embark upon a new opportunity to carry out my ministry as a priest.

Two years ago, Bishop Philip kindly gave me permission to pursue what I believe the Holy Spirit has been calling me to for a long time, to enter into the Armed Forces as a chaplain.

As a child my family worshipped at the Catholic Forces Cathedral in Aldershot where I met these rather different priests: military chaplains who caught my intrigue.

The desire to join the military first came to me at 16 when my academic tutor gave me an application for the Royal Marines and said "I think this would be right up your street". I was far too young to meet the standard required but also felt a little uneasy about taking another life. It was then that I considered becoming a medic, but the Lord then hit me with the bombshell of following Him into priesthood.

As providence would have it when the time came for my ordination, it would be celebrated at the Military Cathedral where I had spent much of my youth. After ordination I felt an immediate desire to pursue that call towards military chaplaincy. Then, having been appointed as Bishop's secretary in Portsmouth, it would be the Royal Navy that would begin to lure me in.

Having applied and finding myself before the Admiralty interview board I shared my journey so far and to my great surprise they said; 'well it's 24 years since it was suggested you join the Royal Marines, how about now?'

The first step as a chaplain in training for the Royal Navy is to head to the Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth. Much like a grand seminary, the building is quite a spectacle and steeped in history.

Every three months a new intake of Officer Cadets join Dartmouth and the chaplains are thrown into the mix. I must admit it was like my first day at school all over again. With a sharp short back and sides and shoes glistening, off I headed. It was a bit of a shock to the system on arrival as we were split into divisions and sent off to our accommodation. It was quite the surprise to see a large dorm room with bunk beds either side running down the room!

Life at Dartmouth was fast paced. Up most days around 5am, each day would consist of a vast array of events including lectures on Naval history, navigation, Naval standards of operation, practising drill, heavy exercise, power boating, firefighting, repairing holes in a sinking ship, and a considerable amount of ironing!

Most days our accommodation would be inspected and our appearance too and woe betide



Col. Chris Haw, Commandant Royal Marines Training Centre; Fr David Conroy KHC VE, Deputy Chaplain of the Fleet and Principal Catholic Chaplain, Royal Navy; Fr Phil Carroll; Bishop Philip Egan, Bishop of Portsmouth; Bishop Paul Mason, Bishop of the Forces; and Maj Gen Zachary Stenning OBE, Commandant Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst

those who weren't up to standard. Being with the same cadets in my division really did help to forge great relationships, once these young cadets (average age 22) got used to this grey-haired chaplain. Not only did it help to forge a great team ethos but it wasn't long before as a chaplain, I could start to speak of the love of the Lord to those young people who didn't really have any concept of theological faith.

Each Saturday myself and the other Catholic chaplains celebrated a weekly Mass and it wasn't long before a few intrigued cadets began to attend. In addition, each Sunday every cadet would be taken to Church to familiarise themselves with being in that setting. Exposed to prayer, preaching and, of course, some good old fashioned hymns, the cadets would often come out of Church speaking of how much they enjoyed it.

After a few months and some pretty demanding exercises on

Dartmoor the chaplains then went off to life on *HMS Albion* for a month and on return, prepared for passing out. This was celebrated in December and the guest of honour was His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

After pass-out I was then sent to the Commando Training Centre for the Royal Marines in Lympstone. Here I would get the chance to work alongside the Royal Marines as a padre, supporting both those 'Nods' (the name for recruits, as due to the intensity of training, they are nodding off at any given moment) and trained ranks. For the first five months I worked alongside the two other padres here learning the art of being a chaplain. This would consist of ministering to the trained ranks and the recruits, visiting them out in the field, helping recruits who are struggling to discern their way forward and, like Dartmouth, offering weekly Sunday worship where we would receive a different

troop each week. Every week there would be at least 50 young men being introduced to prayer and the person of Jesus Christ.

Then, in May I got the opportunity to pursue that thought which I entertained 24 years ago, training as a Royal Marine. Padres have a unique privilege in this regard. It is the only example where someone over the maximum age of entry (32) can enter into mainstream training. However, it is considered the longest and hardest initial military training in the world.

Armed with a lot of prayer I began the course. I began with '329 troop' and again, like Dartmouth, it wasn't long before they were all wondering what this older man was doing alongside them. Like Dartmouth the daily life is fast paced, relentless exercise and living out in the field. The field exercises are something which I hope having been through might take a few years off my time in purgatory as they are pretty shocking. In one exercise over five days I averaged about 2 hours sleep a night and lost 5kgs in five days. In addition to yomping (walking at fast pace) with serious weight on your back (heaviest so far has been 45kgs for six miles) the recruits are subject to kit inspections, navigation with extensive map reading (night and day), stalking enemies, wet and dry routine (being marched to a body of water at night, being submerged and then setting up your tent which stands about two foot off the ground, changing into dry kit and trying to sleep for 10mins before you are woken up for sentry duty where you need to put your cold wet kit back on again) and many other gruelling training methods.

Despite its challenges, entering in to training gives the padre a wonderful opportunity to really get

to know the recruits and understand what they are going through.

That empathy is a wonderful gift to establish trust and to enter into deeper conversations about faith.

For example, after the summer leave I joined another troop that I would accompany in their last six weeks of training. We set off for our 'Final ex', 10 days in total ranging across Bodmin moor, Dartmoor, and in Plymouth. Being relatively new to the troop, initially the recruits were perhaps a little perplexed by this old padre with them. Over the duration of the exercise we discussed the role of the padre is and how you become one. In revealing that a padre was there to pray for them, this then prompted a little more intrigue but when asking if they would like a blessing there was a little reluctance.

However, when returning from final exercise and beginning the Commando tests, I offered to give a blessing before the Endurance course (a four-mile march to Woodbury Common, two miles around the common through tunnels and bogs and then four-mile sprint back to CAMP), as you could imagine the invitation was well received. One recruit (who took a considerable amount of time off from his last run through) approached me at the end to say that it was because of the strength that he received through that blessing that helped him to smash the test.

By the time the final test came around (the 30-miler across Dartmoor) I didn't even have to offer a blessing, the recruits were demanding one!

Funnily enough all those that were prayed for passed, God is good indeed. Thankfully I was among those to pass too and am now the proud owner of the famous Royal Marines Green Beret.

What a blessing it is to have passed the course and equally that it has now come to an end! This 'green lid' will hopefully allow me to gain a little more access to those who us padres are called to minister too.

I often have to pinch myself as to the tremendous gift that this ministry presents in terms of evangelisation. For an institution that would be predominantly secular, the role of the padre is still held in high esteem. What I would have given in secular ministry to have the chance to preach to 50 young men each week about the Lord.

All in all it has been a bit of a rollercoaster since having left Portsmouth diocese but it is great to have been given this opportunity, there is never a dull moment in following the Lord!

• **Fr Phil is the first Catholic Royal Navy Chaplain to have completed the Royal Marines Commando course for over 40 years.**

"We are all very proud of Fr Phil Carroll who has received his 'green lid' having successfully completed his training with the Commandos. Not only did he get through but he excelled in all aspects of the training. More importantly, he provided a solid Catholic presence in a highly dynamic and challenging environment. That the Church can credibly reach out to so many young people and be a presence of Our Lord in word and action is a real joy and a sign of hope. Please pray for all our military chaplains who are true missionaries of our Catholic faith. Bishop Paul Mason, Bishop of the Forces



Fr Phil pictured during his assault course run

TALKING POINT

Could this be the world's biggest phone?

SEAN ELLARD



Buckle up, folks! There is an ancient UFO buried beneath the Holy City of Jerusalem and it is possibly emanating a frequency our human brains are receiving. What that signal is and why it is being broadcast isn't clear.

A curious claim but one that is particularly interesting when overlaid with comments from Bob Lazar, who first brought the world's attention to Area 51 and S4 over 40 years ago. These top secret US military bases in the Nevada desert are long rumoured to have been a research and testing grounds for UFO/UAPs. Lazar claimed that while he was working there, he was aware of multiple types of UFOs on site being researched, including one, according to Lazar, that came from an archeological dig. It was allegedly ancient. It also reinforces a growing topic of unavoidable discussion.

Could some of the big answers to what is flying around in our skies today be found hidden in the dirt and not the stars? It would seem so. Claims by Tom DeLonge, Blink-182 singer and one of the key founders of To The Stars Academy (TTSA), support this. TTSA is a leading enterprise with some of the biggest names involved in helping the disclosure movement, including securing US government research contracts to work on UAP-related issues.

DeLonge claims there could be a giant pyramid underground in Alaska – he suggests it might be emanating a frequency that is disrupting human consciousness. Considering the giant heads that covered the Easter Island are actually full statues buried up to the neck, it shows how even obvious things can float under the radar unnoticed for centuries.

The TV show, *The Secrets of Skinwalker Ranch* (which sits next to

Area 51), is focused on trying to unearth a large object buried in the ground, which the show suggests it might also be emanating a frequency of some kind, or at least is reactionary when humans and electronics are nearby.

Real or not, these kinds of narratives and themes of buried, ancient, potentially alien technology, will likely be an important keystone in putting the modern UAP issue into context going forward.

When people like DeLonge talked about what he thought was in Jerusalem, my brain immediately hopped a flight to Cairo, and thought about Giza. He adds there is possibly something significant that has yet to be unearthed, hidden beneath the Giza plateau, similar to what may be in Jerusalem. And he feels the site is much older than we realise and the construction may have involved help from outsiders, aka, not people.

Here's an oversimplification of the theory: the main pyramid (where no mummies or hieroglyphs were ever found, fyi) sits atop a water table. The pressure created from water channeled up through the two main granite shafts, one of which has rose granite, means the quartz in the granite undergoes a piezoelectric

reaction – creating an instant electrical charge, created simply by putting the quartz granite under intense water pressure.

When the charged particles in the water from the two types of granite meet at the top in one of the main chambers, a potential hydrogen reaction can occur, while the energy resonates at a particular frequency, based upon the interior design of the pyramid.

The energy from the reaction is then channelled up through the pyramid's gold cap (one of the best conductors of electricity, also fyi) and is then distributed through the atmosphere, just like Tesla's design.

OK, but why? No cell phones in Egypt. Here is where the thought experiments get really interesting. Around the world at some of the most ancient megalithic sites on earth, many show evidence of high speed precision tooling, drilling and cut marks in the rock – many of which can only be duplicated with today's electrical equipment and lasers.

So how was it done back then? How were these ancient tools powered? Is this why many ancient cultures also have legends of moving very heavy objects with unknown energy forces? Could this be part of the puzzle? And what the heck are

you talking about?

All great questions because there are no definitive answers. But what exists is a growing body of evidence that demands a far more open minded, creative and alternative look at our historical Lego blocks and how it all really fits together.

Understanding a potential global network exists between ley lines and energy points, carving out the earth into a geodesic sphere, covered in a grid of criss-crossed energy lines, likely explains why some key structures and sites, like the pyramids of Giza or Jerusalem, are located exactly where they are. So, where did the foundation for that kind of knowledge come from – and why was it important? For now, we'll tuck that elephant back under the rug just a bit longer.

One of those ley lines that runs from Cairo goes directly through a private Lamb Island in Scotland. A great example is the Cochno Stone in western Scotland. An intricate, baffling mosaic of carvings, images and stars on a giant slab of rock, at least 5,000 years old (possibly much, much older). What it means, who made it and why – is unknown. But it hints, like so many other ancient sites, at a knowledge far more complex than many older civilizations are given credit for.

Which speaks to the fact we really don't have a good gasp on much of this as a society. What we have is dogmatic, institutional bias based predominantly on 200 years of antiquated Euro-centric thinking – thinking that is partially rooted in racism and belief that other cultures and civilizations were too primitive to have achieved things modern (white European) humans could not.

It is a tainted lens (viewed in hindsight) through which the planet, its people and history, was unjustly muddled. But knowledge is

no longer an exclusive commodity for the wealthy and elites, which is why so many obvious points of historical contradiction and omission are being openly discussed and justly debated.

One of the big launch pads for understanding the current UAP climate is finding a starting point. How does one begin to rationalise the abrupt contradiction to institutional social conditioning that UFOs aren't real? It is a hard turn, one we are all going to make, but difficult nonetheless. In a world where nonsense is a highly valued commodity used to fill the vacuum created by the absence of good information, knowing where to begin can feel overwhelming.

All of it reinforces the likelihood, just like the pyramids, that our whole existence from our history to our conscious reality and even time, bobs and weaves on a tidal flow of electrical signals, impulses and frequencies.

The same things that are helping UAPs defy today's known scientific and engineering limitations – possibly into a quantum realm / multiverse. Or at the very least, bending space/time to allow travel of vast distances along a very short path.

We need to go back as an educated populace and take a sobering look at what we already know to be true but fail to incorporate into the foundational thinking of how we are trying to progress as a society. Our minds, like everything else, are physiologically hardwired into the electromagnetic spectrum around us. The more we acknowledge the strange and unusual as commonplace and normal, it allows our fogged lens to wipe clear the bias that still obstructs our view of what lies ahead.



We really don't have a good gasp on much of this as a society. What we have is institutional bias based predominantly on 200 years of antiquated Euro-centric thinking – thinking that is partially rooted in racism and belief that other cultures and civilizations were too primitive to have achieved things modern (white European) humans could not.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

BARB UMBERGER

Mums' group leads the protests after judge removes abortion protections

As the debate around abortion laws intensifies across the United States, Barb Umberger reports from the USA on the latest developments, including a group of passionate pro-life mums who are taking on their local judiciary and legislature in a bid to save unborn babies' lives

As it is for so many parents around the world, it's been a busy time of year for St. Paul residents Susan and John Neuville, parents of five children, including two teenage girls.

The school year began in early September, a point when the pair were faced with a growing stack of permission slips and release forms for their children's various sports clubs, societies and other extra-curricular activities.

Nothing is left to chance by the school to make sure the children are kept safe and, more importantly, they have permission to perform certain actions – just like you find if you are a parent of a child in the UK. "I'm required to supply the name of another adult to contact in case of emergency to advise on treatment if I'm unreachable," Susan said. Without adult permission, her children cannot go on a field trip, have their photo taken, perform in a school concert, travel in the school minibus or a teacher's car for a sports match, receive basic dental care, be vaccinated or be served ice cream.

"What I would like to understand is how it would make any sense to have that same child decide whether or not to have an abortion," she said during a news conference at the Minnesota Capitol. "Wouldn't this be the most critical time to ensure that she has the best support available, most likely her own parents?"

Susan Neuville, who was joined by a group of mothers, was speaking out against a recent ruling by Ramsey County District Court that struck down six abortion laws that had been previously insisted upon by a lesser court, including the law requiring that parents be notified at least 48 hours before an abortion is performed on a minor – a child under 18, in the state's eyes.

Other protections that were struck down included a 24-hour waiting period before a woman can have an abortion; a requirement that only physicians perform abortions; an abortion data reporting law requiring reporting of information such as reasons for a given abortion, the abortion method used and the stage of fetal development; and a law requiring that abortions performed after the first trimester be done in a hospital.

The decision to remove all these protections has horrified many. The ruling also struck down a 2003 law



Susan Neuville, left, addresses a news conference at the Minnesota State Capitol by a pro-life group called MOMS -- Mothers Offering Maternal Support. Photo: Dave Hrbacek, The Catholic Spirit

requiring that women know the gestational age of their unborn child, the risks of carrying the child to term and of the abortion procedure, and that they be offered information on the baby's development and alternatives to abortion.

In his 140-page ruling, Judge Thomas Gilligan Jr. wrote that "These abortion laws violate the right to privacy because they infringe upon the fundamental right under the Minnesota Constitution to access abortion care and do not withstand strict scrutiny."

Neuville, a member of the pro-life group MOMS – Mothers Offering Maternal Support – had spoken out, along with other group members, against the judge's decision.

Teresa Collett, a law professor and director of the ProLife Center at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, is serving in a private capacity as lead counsel for MOMS. She filed a motion to intervene as a party to the lawsuit on behalf of the MOMS group because only those who are party to a lawsuit can appeal a court ruling, Collett said.

The motion to intervene covered the four protections that specifically pertained to the group's interest in protecting the health and safety of

their daughters: parental notification, informed consent, physicians only and the waiting period.

During an interview for the 'Practicing Catholic' radio show, Collett said members of MOMS came together out of their concern to protect not only their daughters, but all Minnesota women, from overreaching by the abortion industry.

She said the group has "asked that the trial court allow us to come in and defend these laws in a way that the attorney general of the state did not ... and that's really the crux of the complaint."

On 19th October, both the plaintiffs – which include an obstetrician-gynecologist who performs abortions and a Minneapolis nonprofit, Our Justice, that provides financial and logistical help to people seeking an abortion – and Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison, who has declined to appeal the ruling, objected to the MOMS' attempt to intervene. The group's legal team will respond to the objections, Carlson said.

An official with the Minnesota Catholic Conference said the MOMS face an uphill battle but they have "stepped in where public officials

have failed to lead. That is a witness that should inspire all of us."

Susan Neuville's husband, John, is the son of the late Tom Neuville, a Catholic Republican state senator in Minnesota for 17 years (1991-2008) who ran on a pro-life platform in 1990.

Susan said he believed in the sanctity of life and defending the rights of the mother and unborn, and co-authored the woman's right to know legislation in 2003 that now has been declared unconstitutional.

"I believe that all women, especially those underage, should be empowered with a complete understanding of the important aspects of any medical procedure and especially one that is irreversible, potentially life ending and bearing lifelong consequences," she said.

Another member of MOMS is Barbara Waldorf, a mother of seven, including four daughters. Her late father-in-law, Gene Waldorf, a Democrat state legislator, authored the two-parent notification bill in 1981.

When the bill was drafted, he and other supporters were not trying to put restrictions on abortion, Waldorf said, adding that they believed that parents had a right and a

responsibility to be aware of major medical procedures that their minor children might have.

The bill had broad support from the public and "a good amount of bipartisan support," she said.

"The language of the bill was carefully chosen because at its core, it wasn't about whether you were pro-life or pro-choice," Waldorf said. "It was about protecting the health and safety of young women and girls."

Dr. Michael Valley, an obstetrician-gynecologist in St Paul, said the state's abortion laws that had been in place provided a layer of protection, including the parental notification provision for minors.

"Minors have a decision-making process that is not mature and can benefit from parental adult involvement," Valley said.

He added: "Minors who undergo other medical procedures are required to have parental involvement and sometimes consent before they undergo the procedure, and abortion should be no different."

Umberger is on the staff of The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

VATICAN LETTER

BISHOP NICHOLAS DIMARZIO

New thinking is needed on migration

In the age of globalisation, when goods and services circulate freely between countries, the concept of labour migration needs to be examined.

While we encourage the movement of goods and services, many countries have difficulty with the movement of human beings who seek to fill important jobs in our economy.

The recent high number of apprehensions along the U.S.-Mexico border is a case in point. This phenomenon has caused many to believe that we are experiencing an “invasion”.

However, the numbers can be deceiving because the metrics used sometimes do not account for the recidivism of migrants trying to re-enter.

In fact, of the over two million people taken into custody in fiscal year 2022, 22 per cent were apprehended at least twice.

Moreover, the number of asylum-seekers from authoritarian countries – Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua – increased by 175 per cent this year.

Meanwhile, the number of migrants from the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras decreased by 45 per cent.

The 1.6 million apprehensions that happened during 2021 should also be closely analysed, as only 40

per cent were Mexicans, changing a long-standing trend.

In an age of globalisation, cross-border movements are natural, with points of entrance and departure for the normal flow of goods, services and workers.

Border management has three basic goals: to intercept drugs, to stop undocumented migration and to keep out terrorists and those on a watch list. These goals are more efficiently met at airports, but along the 2,000-mile southern border,

these goals are nearly impossible to meet.

What is the solution to this problem? As long as opponents stoke the public's fear of uncontrolled migration, legal reform will be politically difficult to achieve.

However, a reformed system that favors legal pathways for family unification and to meet workforce needs will help reduce the number of migrants who cross into the US without authorisation.

By creating more legal pathways

for entry, we will be able to meet our future demand for labour in a safe and orderly manner.

The labour needs of globalisation make border control more difficult. Eliminating both human trafficking and smuggling requires new forms of international co-operation.

Regional structures can help limit unauthorised migration for those fleeing violence and extreme poverty while also providing them protection.

The proposed solutions will

depend on international cooperation and increased resources to assist in giving prompt asylum hearings and attention to other humanitarian protection needs.

This may be accomplished by having orientation safe havens close to the exit points of people's home countries that would allow for them to apply for asylum and avoid making dangerous journeys.

Catholic social teaching reminds us that sovereign nations have a right to protect their borders and admit those in conformity with their laws.

But this must be balanced by the common good of those seeking entrance and the needs of a country.

When we look at refugee and asylum situations around the world – such as the admittance of more than 2.5 million refugees by Poland from Ukraine – we realise that our country can afford to be much more generous.

We also need to increase the legal pathways for workers and for family reunification.

Globalization requires a new immigration system that only immigration reform can provide. **Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio is the retired bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. He writes the column 'Walking With Migrants' for Catholic News Service and The Tablet.**



Migrants are detained by border agents after crossing into the USA from Mexico to El Paso, Texas, and turn themselves in to request asylum.

Photo: Jose Luis Gonzalez, Reuters

Book offers Vatican II primer but falters in interpretation

To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II

by George Weigel, Basic Books

Agostino Bono

For contemporary Catholics born into the groundbreaking changes brought about in Catholic Church life by the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), a primer may well be helpful to understand exactly what Vatican II said and the historical circumstances influencing its views. This is the purpose of *To Sanctify the World*.

Vatican II was the Church's signature event of the 20th century and its 16 documents remain the basis for actions 60 years later. It convened the world's bishops and was conceived as a pastoral council to update Church practices to effectively preach God's word to a modern world. Church doctrine was pretty much left intact.

A key aim was to express the faith through positive means rather than

imposing it, a condition influenced by the fact that the Church was no longer the official or favoured religion in many historically Catholic countries.

It also wanted to leave room for incorporating local customs and

traditions into Catholic thought and practice.

Probably the most impactful changes affecting today's Catholics involves the liturgy, allowing the use of vernacular languages to replace most of the Latin at Mass.

The council also approved ecumenical dialogue with other Christian churches in the search for unity. Dialogue with non-Christian religions was encouraged.

Regarding Judaism, it explicitly said that all the Jews of Christ's time and those of today are not responsible for Christ's death. This pulled the rug out from under centuries of Christianity being used as a reason for antisemitic pogroms. And it came less than 20 years after the Nazi Holocaust.

Also important was the Declaration on Religious Freedom, which says religious freedom resides in the individual and has to be respected by social organisations and civil governments.

These changes were not accepted quietly by many Catholics at the time and some unrest remains.

To Sanctify the World makes a concerted effort at a refresher course. It offers historical analysis leading to the secularist, anti-clerical and political authoritarianism that challenged the church and faith in general; it gives a rundown of the basic teachings in the 16 documents; and it offers guidelines for understanding the teachings.

The author, George Weigel, has written numerous books on Catholicism, including a biography of St. John Paul II. He does a good, well-researched job in providing the historical context and in describing the basic teachings of Vatican II, and stresses the Christocentric nature of the teachings and its overall aim of providing the Church with the tools to sanctify the world.

However, he tends to exaggerate the tension among some Catholics, especially theologians, between the texts of the documents and what is referred to as a more open, flexible “spirit of the council”.

The major fault comes when he discusses guidelines – what he calls

“keys – to understanding and implementing the documents. The fault is not so much what he says, but what he leaves out.

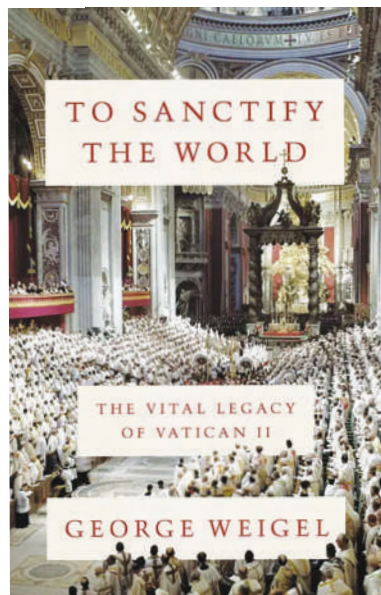
There is little mention of the numerous official post-conciliar documents issued on implementation and understanding. These certainly provide ‘keys’.

St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI get separate chapters on their interpretations and elaborations. This is justified as, besides being popes in the post-conciliar era, they were both actively present at Vatican II, John Paul as a Polish bishop and Benedict as a German theological expert.

Weigel does not look into the criticism those two popes received by some who thought the popes may have been rolling back the reforms of the council.

Nor is there a separate chapter on St. Paul VI who presided over most of the council and was pope for 13 years after the council ended.

A more robust view of the post-conciliar papacy would have served readers better.



TALKING POINT

CINDY WOODEN



Synod reports show enthusiasm for mission, but also identify obstacles



Pictured at the Vatican conference on the synod are, from left, Cardinal Mario Grech, secretary-general of the Synod of Bishops, Msgr. Piero Coda, secretary-general of the International Theological Commission; Italian Jesuit Father Giacomo Costa, adviser to the secretary-general of the synod; Anna Rowlands, professor of Catholic social thought and practice at Durham University in the United Kingdom; and Matteo Bruni, director of the Holy See Press Office.

Church needs to create a 'tent' as large as God's if synod is to broaden our faith's reach

Catholics around the globe long to share the Gospel with a world in need, but they see situations and tensions within the Church that challenge their ability to do so, said one of the drafters of the document for the continental phase of the Synod of Bishops.

The reports sent to the Vatican from local and national listening sessions show 'a deep, deep hunger for a new confidence in the Church, a confidence in its ability to proclaim the Gospel to a world so deeply in need,' said Anna Rowlands, a professor of Catholic social thought and practice at Durham University in England.

Rowlands, who read many of the contributions to the synod before helping draft the new document, told reporters at the Vatican that the reports showed that confidence is challenged by internal Church problems, especially the clerical abuse scandal.

With just as much focus on mission, she said, the reports ask, "what condition does the Church have to be in in its own internal life and relationships to be able to carry that message to the world? To meet Christ in the world and bring Christ to the world in a Spirit-led way?"

In talking about exclusion and clericalism and a lack of listening to each other, "the reports are saying there are aspects of our own

relationships, our capacity for genuine unity in diversity," that stand in the way, Rowlands said.

The reports acknowledge that it is difficult to speak authoritatively to the world of reconciliation in Christ "if we cannot ourselves be brothers and sisters, if we can't heal our own divisions, our mutual suspicions, our lack of fundamental trust."

The synod document is titled *Enlarge the Space of Your Tent*, a quotation of the Lord's command to the people of Israel in the Book of Isaiah.

"Enlarging the tent requires welcoming others into it, making room for their diversity," the document said. But echoing the

submissions to the synod's Vatican office, the document listed people and groups who often feel excluded or are seen to be excluded: women, young people, people with disabilities, the poor, those who are divorced and civilly remarried, single parents, those in polygamous marriages and members of the LGBTQ communities.

Asked if there were limits to who could be let into the Church's tent and about Catholics who do not want the tent enlarged, Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg, relator general of the synod, responded, "There will be groups sitting in the tent who are

not very happy that some people are in one corner."

"But who is invited to the tent? All the people created and loved by God. All the people," he said. "Our behavior perhaps is sometimes a bit more fragmented, and our love is not as big as the love of God, so therefore we create segregations, even inside the tent."

Everyone naturally likes some people more than others, but in the church all are called to look at each person as "someone loved by God, called into being by God. Christ died for this person on the cross, so if I am not capable of giving space to this person in the tent, I have a

problem with God."

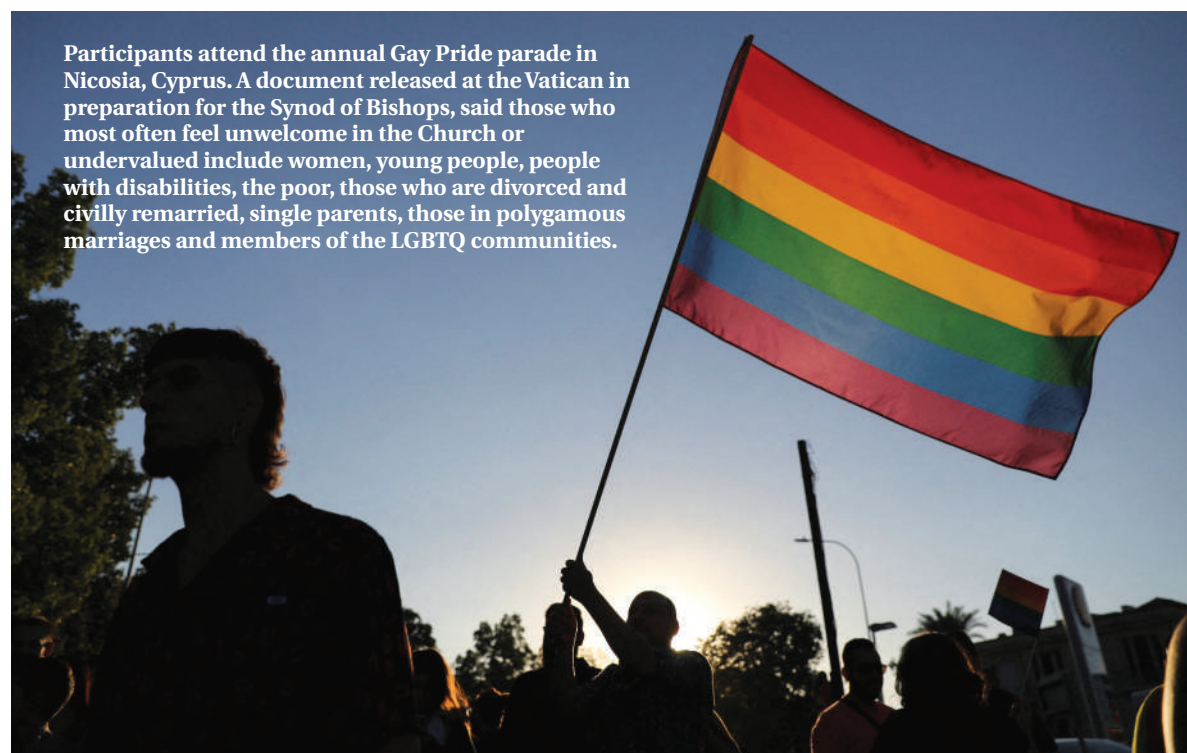
Asked about the document drafters pushing or prioritising certain themes, such as the call for women to have a greater role in Church leadership, to continue studying the possibility of women deacons and the mention of some reports that even called for the ordination of women priests, Cardinal Mario Grech, synod secretary-general, insisted the document only reflects what the reports sent in said.

"No decisions have been made on any issue," he said. "We are not pushing any agenda. This has been said from the beginning. Our responsibility was to present and to give back to the people of God that which was entrusted to us. There is no agenda."

Rowlands added that in drafting the document, if an issue came up "over and over" in the national syntheses, "we had to honour" and include it in the document.

The question of women's role in the Church and society and their experiences in both "were brought up across the reports; it is an astonishing, common theme," she said. But it is also important to note how they spoke about the issue; "this is rooted in people's sense of the common dignity that comes from their baptism."

The discussion was not about women's rights, but about "the living out of a common baptismal vocation in the Church in such a way that the charisms of the Spirit, the gifts and capacities and skills of all the baptised, are able to be honored and nurtured and flourish," Rowlands said.



Participants attend the annual Gay Pride parade in Nicosia, Cyprus. A document released at the Vatican in preparation for the Synod of Bishops, said those who most often feel unwelcome in the Church or undervalued include women, young people, people with disabilities, the poor, those who are divorced and civilly remarried, single parents, those in polygamous marriages and members of the LGBTQ communities.

JOURNEY IN FAITH

CHRIS MCDONNELL



When the ice flow melts, see what is revealed

Our planetary home is always changing as the seasons come and go. The rise and fall in temperature, times of rain and days of high winds, all contribute to unending variation.

This summer, one of my grandsons, Connor, spent time in the French Alps. One of the many images he took showed the edge of a melting glacier. Through the clear and very cold water you can see the stone grit and larger pieces of rock that slowly are being carried to the sea. Light and dark shades, irregular shapes dragged down from some higher outcrop.

Later in the year, when the winter cold returns, the water will freeze again as glacial ice is re-formed and this detail will be lost.

In the time that it can be seen we have a small snapshot of the otherwise hidden earth.

In so many ways the early 60s, the years of the Council and beyond, were a similar period of thaw and vision. Those times were often summarised by the Italian word *Aggiornamento*, a 'bringing up to date'.

It was certainly a time when we looked beneath the surface and explored the substance of the Church in a more open and expansive way. We asked questions rather than just receiving answers, looked for ways to explore the Gospels, appreciating the teaching that is there in a manner that could be understood in our times, a story



for our own particular journey.

The Council brought recognition to many theologians whose stature had been diminished in earlier years, many of whom are now no longer with us, such as Hans Kung. I have no hesitation in repeating a

comment I made here recently. "A most significant and charitable action towards Kung would be for Francis to restore Kung's credentials as a Catholic teacher who, throughout these difficult years has remained a priest in good standing".

A stone uncovered by the thaw if ever there was one. That restoration never happened.

For that time of thaw, when we explored beneath the surface for a while and found there excitement and refreshment of our faith, that time closed all too quickly. In the years that followed there were many attempts to regain a centrality of control that served only to enforce a clericalism that was no longer viable. The stones under the ice were lost to view as the waters froze again. But not quite.

Too much had happened to prevent a complete return to pre-conciliar days. There is an awareness, that now is global, where people ask honest and sincere questions, where their exploration of faith is a lived experience. It is of course easier to be told what to do, how to behave, what to believe. That is a process that limits our true acceptance.

A good teacher does not tell the pupil all the answers but encourages the pupil to ask the pertinent question that leads to an answer, for there maybe more than one answer to a question and in some cases no answer at all.

Why do we always expect matters of belief to have a clearly formulated structure when that is exactly what faith is all about, a trust in seeking?

The Gospels are just that. Parables, actions, events that were offered by the Lord for 'those who

have ears to hear'. Then and now.

Dogmatic statements where there was expectation of acceptance without question were not his way of teaching. In the gospel of John we read of Philip calling Nathaniel to follow the Lord.

Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth."

Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Those final words of Philip are telling, 'come and see'. Not words of finality, not a teaching of 'you will do this' but an invitation to come and see what they had found, and then to act accordingly.

Once something that was hidden is seen, it is hard to forget it. What has happened cannot be undone.

Even though the glacial ice returns each Winter and hides the debris exposed by the Spring and Summer warmth, we know it is there, we cannot remain in ignorance.

Francis is anxious that we continue our exploration of faith in the context of the Council's teaching, his open-handed invitation is there for all to see. Maybe that should be the essence of our generosity as a Christian people towards those we meet, come and see and be with us.

Is it not possible that we can love them both?

Richard Doerflinger

"Why not love them both?" has been a message of America's pro-life movement for many years, expressing a commitment to both the unborn child and his or her mother who may be considering abortion.

For decades the movement has put its money where its mouth is, by sponsoring and funding thousands of volunteer-staffed pregnancy aid centres offering free pregnancy tests, baby clothes, access to prenatal care and social services, and other support.

Now that the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision has reopened a fierce debate on abortion, much more is needed. Pro-life advocates are urging legislators to expand financial and social support for pregnant and parenting women and their families.

Leading the way is the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, whose 'Walking with Moms in Need' project for many months has called on all parishes to assess and improve local pregnancy assistance.

The conference, which supported the

original Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, has stepped up its call for this programme to include paid leave.

Even before Dobbs the bishops had endorsed expanding the child tax credit and making it refundable for lower-income families and passing a Pregnant Workers Fairness Act requiring reasonable accommodations for employees while they are pregnant.

On 26th October, the chairmen of four USCCB committees wrote to Congress to promote what St. John Paul II called "radical solidarity" with mothers, their born and unborn children, and families. Their recommendations include these measures and many others, including elimination of the 'marriage penalty' in the tax code.

Other pro-life leaders have not been idle.

The University of Notre Dame's de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture has spearheaded a 'Women and Children First Initiative' to research and promote the most effective ways to assist pregnant and

parenting women in need.

In Washington, the Ethics and Public Policy Center has issued a statement, 'Envisioning a Pro-Family Policy Agenda,' that dovetails with much of what the bishops advocate. Authored by a dozen experts in law and policy, it has been endorsed by dozens more.

Another group has issued a 'Joint Statement on building a post-Roe future' with similar goals.

The Ethics and Public Policy Center is commonly associated with conservative politics, while the second statement was co-authored by some seen as more liberal, such as Professor Charles Camosy.

But their proposals overlap extensively with each other and with the bishops' goals. The authors realize that these goals are easier to state as general concepts than to turn into legislative language. (Full disclosure: I've endorsed both statements.)

The greatest challenge of all, however, will be to bring these proposals into a political climate in which demonising one's political

opponents is a virtue and bipartisanship is seen as betrayal.

Among the legislative goals, for example, is improved support for pro-life pregnancy aid centres. But some abortion activists have vandalised or tried to destroy these centres – and Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts has declared that "we need to shut them down all around the country."

President Biden's recent statement that promoting abortion will be his first priority if his party takes full control of the Senate included not a word about supporting other options for pregnant women.

Yet those options will be essential in states restricting abortion, so women will know where they can find help. And they will be essential in states promoting abortion, so these women won't feel social and economic pressure toward thinking that abortion is their only choice.

One advantage of divided government is that it may get politicians of both parties to finally sit down and talk about this.

CREDO

FR HUGH DUFFY

Only the Lord can lift you from the daily grind of your ordinary life

Courage is one of the cardinal virtues and it has to do with being persistent in the pursuit of one's goals, in staying the course in good times and in bad.

This is not easy to do in a world full of smoke and mirrors, dirty tricks and put-downs, but it is possible, with God's help, to stay the course and fight the good fight to the end. Jesus recognises the necessity of this kind of courage when it comes to prayer, and he relates a parable about the need "to pray always without becoming weary" (Luke 18 : 1-6).

Life is not a bed of roses. It is a gauntlet we must go through, and it takes courage to face that gauntlet. If you believe in what you are doing, and if you have the courage to stick with it, God will not abandon you, but will answer your prayer, and "see to it that justice is done." Nothing lasts forever.

Whatever trials or misfortunes befall you, they will pass. They will pass and be no more like dust in the wind. If you are a faithful Christian and pray without ceasing, you will be able to overcome the setbacks of life itself.

Many people go to church on Sunday out of routine. But, they never really listen. These people can be described as Sunday morning Christians. Their minds are on something else – a job, the family, a car, a movie or bills to pay. It is only when they awaken to the message



'Many people go to church on Sunday out of routine. But they never really listen. These people can be described as Sunday morning Christians. Their minds are on something else – a job, the family, a car, bills to pay. It is only when they awaken to the message, they are hearing that they understand its power to liberate them from the monotony and grind of daily living'

they are hearing that they understand its power to liberate them from the monotony and grind of daily living.

Life suddenly takes on a whole new meaning. This awakening or awareness normally happens when a person is plunged into a personal crisis and feels the need to delve deeper into the scriptures in search of meaning.

I have often been approached by

individuals who told me that they attended mass for years without ever really appreciating what was going on, without ever listening to the words they heard. They were like the people Jesus described as "having ears, but hear not." [Mark 8:18]. But, what a transformation can take place when, in silent prayer, they let the word penetrate their minds and hearts. That takes courage!

Life does not have to boil down to an endless, monotonous routine, one day much like another. What makes life interesting is a sense of meaning, and something to strive for. Prayer or meditation on the scriptures can provide you with meaning and answers to your deepest needs.

At some point in our lives, we must face the fact that nothing in our world lasts for ever, neither fame

nor riches nor poverty nor health nor success nor troubles, nor sickness, nor happiness.

"Heaven and earth will pass away," says the Lord, "but my words will never pass away." [Matthew 24:35]. Jesus shares with us his word that will never pass away.

But, he wants you to invite him into your life by praying "always without becoming weary."

Fr Lew has some easy tips for praying the rosary

James Ramos

Although the idea of praying the rosary might be daunting for some, Dominican Father Lawrence Lew, the general promoter of the rosary for the Dominicans, said it doesn't have to be.

Fr Lew shared a handful of tips about this prayer.

"Begin praying the rosary slowly," Father Lew said. "If you've found it (lacking), slowly begin with one decade a day."

For those moments during the rosary, or at any time in prayer when the mind wanders or get distracted, he suggested having something to focus on, such as sacred art.

The priest, who is rector of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary in London and also a prolific photographer, recently published a book with Ignatius Press called *Mysteries Made Visible: Praying the Rosary with*

Sacred Art, which features his own photographs.

He traveled to the USA recently for the rosary celebration at Holy Rosary in California, and preached during a weekend Mass there.

He advised those starting to pray the rosary to continue to gradually increase the number of decades prayed each day, praying one decade at a time, spreading each throughout the day.

For example, he said to consider praying one decade in the morning when getting ready for the day. Then, as the day progresses, he suggested keeping the rosary close at hand or using fingers to keep count of prayers. Fr Lew said the moments in between that fill our day can be a special time for grace and prayer, such as waiting at a stoplight, being on bus or the elevator.

In his role as general promoter of the

rosary, he actively advocates and preaches about the rosary within the Dominican Order and encourages his fellow Dominicans to preach about the rosary, which he said is part of the sacred heritage of the Dominican order.

"According to tradition, Our Lady gave the rosary to St. Dominic and entrusted the order with that job of preaching the rosary," Father said.

He compared praying the rosary to a doctor prescribing a new medicine to a patient. The effects aren't typically immediate but people trust that the medicine will help in some way.

"That's Mary's prescription to us. Begin by praying the rosary slowly because we trust in Mary, and we know that she's our mother," he said. "She's been given to us by Our Lord Jesus to be our mother, and she loves us. That's why I pray the rosary, and I encourage everyone to begin that way."

The rosary should "stir up and deepen our love for God. That's the goal of prayer," he added. "In a sense, it's pointless to pray the rosary by rote in a way where it's just ratcheting off words."

He said is "very, very clear in the Dominican tradition and Dominican teaching that the rosary must be prayed as a meditation. It's better to pray one decade at a time, to pray that decade well rather than try to rush through all five decades in 20 minutes."

But if people find themselves praying the rosary as a habit more than a meditation, they shouldn't feel guilty, he added.

"We're human, and human beings get distracted in prayer," Fr Lew said.

As he sees it: "As long as we set our intention and begin to pray and our motivation is out of love for God and we're still distracted, our prayer doesn't lose its merit."

THE THOMAS MORE CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP FORMATION PROGRAMME

The Thomas More Christian Leadership Formation programme is helping create bright, balanced, theologically sound leaders. Programme leader Stefan Kaminski told Andy Drozdziak how the programme can help the young people of today become the leaders of tomorrow

Stefan Kaminski is passionate about the Thomas More Christian Leadership Formation programme, an initiative to train young Catholics that was launched in 2021.

It is aimed at students currently in Lower 6th or S5 (Scotland). The programme runs every year, offering a philosophical, ethical, spiritual and practical formation for tomorrow's leaders.

Stefan, 37, is the Director of The Christian Heritage Centre at Stonyhurst. Having been appointed four years ago, his task has been to give the charity practical shape and direction. He saw the potential to set up a new Catholic formation project, which became the Christian Leadership Formation programme.

"It was Lord Alton's idea. Once I took up running the charity three years ago, we looked at how could we offer the core building blocks in a way that would be credible to students," he told the *Universe*.

"Coupled with that, we thought that we really want to get them before they get to university and before they're given the full-on 'secular' agenda, because that's one of the key transition points."

Living a life of faith

Stefan is keen for those undertaking the course to be able to apply their faith to complex social issues. He says that the course gives students an "intellectual, philosophical and theological grounding to do with the human person, human society and the basis for civil law."

"How do we apply these to specific areas as Catholics—specifically issues around the human person, as well as issues emerging in the medical field eg cloning, stem cell research, as well as issues from Catholic social teaching? How do we formulate a fair policy using, for example, the principle of subsidiarity?"

He is keen to emphasise the importance of living a 'life of faith', a key feature of the course.

"That's the intellectual aspect, but it can never be divorced from a life of faith, which is quite rigorous—we'll have Mass every day, morning prayer, guided prayer to show them that the two things are linked. You can't be a committed disciple without being grounded in Christ," he said. "Being grounded in Christ means having practical consequences that feed into work life."

'A depth of theology and philosophy'

The course has already proved to be highly popular with students, after the first cohort completed the course. Klaudiusz Ozog from St Thomas More Catholic School in Purley said: "I was guided into a depth of theology and philosophy which I, as a scientist, never knew I would enter."



Helping young Catholics build a life of faith

Meanwhile, Eva Mcmonigle from St Robert's Catholic Sixth Form College, Washington, said: "I have enriched my understanding of the Christian vision of the human person, and am now able to wholly elaborate upon this rationally. The educational aspect of the course highlighted that we have been provided with our world (by God) to allow us equal opportunities to flourish."

Stefan has high hopes for the new

cohort and is encouraging young people to do the course. Lord Alton described the course in this way: "In an increasingly fast moving and complex world, where decision makers have to grapple with ethical challenges about which they feel ill-equipped to deal with, a course which provides formation, maps and sign posts will be greatly welcomed by many," he said.

The programme is offered to students who are motivated by their

faith to help shape and create a society founded on Christian values: students who are seriously considering some form of public life or leadership role, and who are driven by a love of God and of neighbour.

Developing leadership skills

Candidates will need to demonstrate a strong level of academic ability through their GCSE grades and predicted A-level grades

(or N5 qualifications in Scotland), as well as evidencing leadership qualities and an applied spiritual life.

Students will need to have the support and recommendation of their school in order to apply, with schools being invited to submit a maximum of three applications each.

"We are under the patronage of St Thomas More, as he was an exemplar of someone who had a strong faith which was integrated with his high office. There are Catholic politicians who we try to bring in to bring their angle on the challenges they have had in terms of creating a Christian society," Stefan said.

The course is delivered over three residential modules. The third module involves a visit to Parliament, with a tour and closing ceremony to conclude the course. The course costs £1,500 per student.

For parents who are unable to cover the full cost of their child's place, part- and full sponsorships are available. The course has already proved immensely fruitful for the young people who have completed it.

One said that "The programme made me realise that my professional and spiritual lives are synonymous and not separate." Another young person said it was "probably the best thing I have done all year."

It seems that the future is in good hands, with a group of young Catholics set to help build a bright future and build God's Kingdom on earth, a kingdom of peace, justice and truth.

For any queries about the course, please contact:
clf@christianheritagecentre.com
For further information, visit the website: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/clf/>



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH FR DOYLE

Confession and the Rite of Penance is your path to the Lord's forgiveness

Q. I was raised Catholic and served as an altar boy for several years. About 12 years ago, I married in a Methodist church. I never had the marriage 'convalidated' in the Catholic Church since my wife was against involving the clergy.

I gradually learnt that my wife was actually an atheist; she spoke negatively about faith and especially the Catholic Church. We have two children.

Due to her infidelity, we are now divorced. I went to Catholic Masses throughout our marriage. If I were to remarry, could I get married in the Catholic Church?

I have been living with a wonderful woman who shares my Catholic faith. We attend Sunday Masses together.

A. Since you evidently did not receive the Catholic Church's permission to be married in a ceremony in a non-Catholic church, you could have, especially if your bride was Methodist and that was her parish, and since you did not subsequently have the marriage blessed by a Catholic priest or deacon, your first marriage was not recognised by the Catholic Church.

Therefore, you would be free to marry now in a Catholic ceremony.

What you would need to do is to meet with a priest and provide some information about that first marriage. The priest would then submit that paperwork to the diocese for what is generally called a *Declaration of Nullity Due to Lack of Canonical Form*. There is usually a fairly quick turnaround, requiring no more than a few weeks.

Based on your question, though, I do feel the need to make two further points. First, you say that you are now living with the woman you may marry. I'm sure you know that this is in clear violation of Catholic moral teaching; the long-held and consistent view of the Church (actually, of many religions) is that a couple should not be living together until there has been a lifelong commitment ratified by a civil and religious ceremony.

Also, the story of your first marriage highlights the need for a couple to take the time during courtship to examine each other's deepest values; foremost among them, in my mind, are religious values since those affect greatly how a person will think and behave.

Thus, the wisdom of pre-Cana programs, which can help prospective spouses do just that.

Q. What is the reason behind some sermons sounding like a scolding and some being so uplifting? Our new pastor is the complete opposite of our former priest, and I hate being scolded. I need instead



to be given a positive message to carry me through my week.

A. The reason is that a parish priest is father of a spiritual family. As with any family, people need occasionally to be chided, but mainly to be encouraged.

A case in point: A couple of weeks ago, at a parish nearby, the celebrant reprimanded those who were leaving Mass early. Before the dismissal rite-in fact, while coming up the aisle after receiving Communion-more than a dozen people were heading straight toward the doors.

The celebrant remarked that such an early exit disrespects not only the Lord but those who are still trying to worship. His comment created a bit of a stir; some were surprised by its directness, but one woman was heard to remark, "It's about time somebody said something."

In my mind, it's a question of balance. Once in a great while, you can do something like that. But for the most part, as you mention, worshippers need to know that God loves them unconditionally, that He is interested in their lives and that He has a wonderful plan for them.

Q. I have done something terrible. I committed a mortal sin and then I received the Eucharist. Am I going to be condemned? I am very worried. I am 17, and I was baptised just two months ago. If I go to confession, will I be forgiven? I was afraid that my parents would question me if I did not take Communion, so I went up to

receive even though I knew it was wrong. Please help me to know what to do at this point.

A. Please be at peace. You are not going to be condemned, and you will surely be forgiven in the sacrament of penance. It strikes me that some of our best-known saints made their way back from moral wrongs to find healing and joy in God's forgiveness.

I'm thinking of St. Paul, who once persecuted those who believed in Jesus; of St. Peter, who during Christ's Passion denied that he even knew Christ; of St. Augustine, who had fathered a child out of wedlock. God can forgive anything, and he wants to. His very purpose in creating us was so that we could share eternal happiness in his presence. Remember the joy shown by the father in Jesus' parable of the prodigal son: 'Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found' (Lk.15:23-24). Jesus is telling us that this is exactly how God responds to us when we return to Him-He is delighted that we are



Some of our best-known saints made their way back from moral wrongs to find healing and joy in God's forgiveness. I'm thinking of St Paul, who once persecuted those who believed in Jesus; of St Peter, who during Christ's Passion denied that he even knew Christ...

Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, has written this: "In the case of erectile dysfunction, a normal biological process may have become impaired due to age or injury, and through the use of Viagra, this impairment can sometimes be remedied. Viagra does not aim to disrupt normal function, but rather to restore it. Within marriage, the medical use of Viagra for such restorative functions does not generally raise moral problems."

I am assuming, of course, that your question does refer to married men. If not, of course, that would change the moral calculus. The Catholic Church has always taught that sex "must take place exclusively within marriage. Outside of marriage it always constitutes a grave sin and excludes one from sacramental Communion," as stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (No. 2390).

Q. You recently stated: 'Strictly speaking, one is obliged to go to the sacrament of penance only for serious sins – although it is certainly a good idea to confess regularly even for lesser sins and imperfections.' The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, however (No. 1457), that all Catholics should go to confession at least once a year. If this is a precept of the Church, my understanding is that all of the precepts must be obeyed under penalty of mortal sin.

Can you explain your position on this and why it differs from the catechism – or was it just an oversight?

A. My recent answer is consistent with Catholic teaching. The section to which you refer in the Catechism of the Catholic Church actually says: 'After having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year.'

Again, though, I make a plea for much more frequent confession, even for venial sins. The introduction to the rite of penance states: 'Frequent and careful celebration of this sacrament is also very useful as a remedy for venial sins. This is not a mere ritual repetition or psychological exercise, but a serious striving to perfect the grace of baptism so that ... his (Christ's) life may be seen in us ever more clearly.'

Editor writes: Sadly, the Universe was informed that Fr Doyle died this week. This column runs in tribute to his work over the many years, both as a priest and a journalist. We will continue to run his column in the coming weeks, before bringing it to a close.

SPIRITUAL THEOLOGY

DAVID TORKINGTON



The whole truth and nothing but the truth will save the Church from itself

Why did God demand that Christ should have to suffer the most humiliating, degrading and painful death that the Romans could devise? The simple answer is that he did not; we did.

Re-read the Passion account and you will see that it was us, we fallen human beings in the person of the leaders of the Jewish religion who demanded it, not God. If we were in their position we would have done the same. If you confront anyone, or any group of people with the truth and that truth is in conflict with the power, the position and the pleasure-seeking in which they glory then beware. For in their own time and in their own way they will crucify you as Christ himself was crucified.

Speaking truth to power

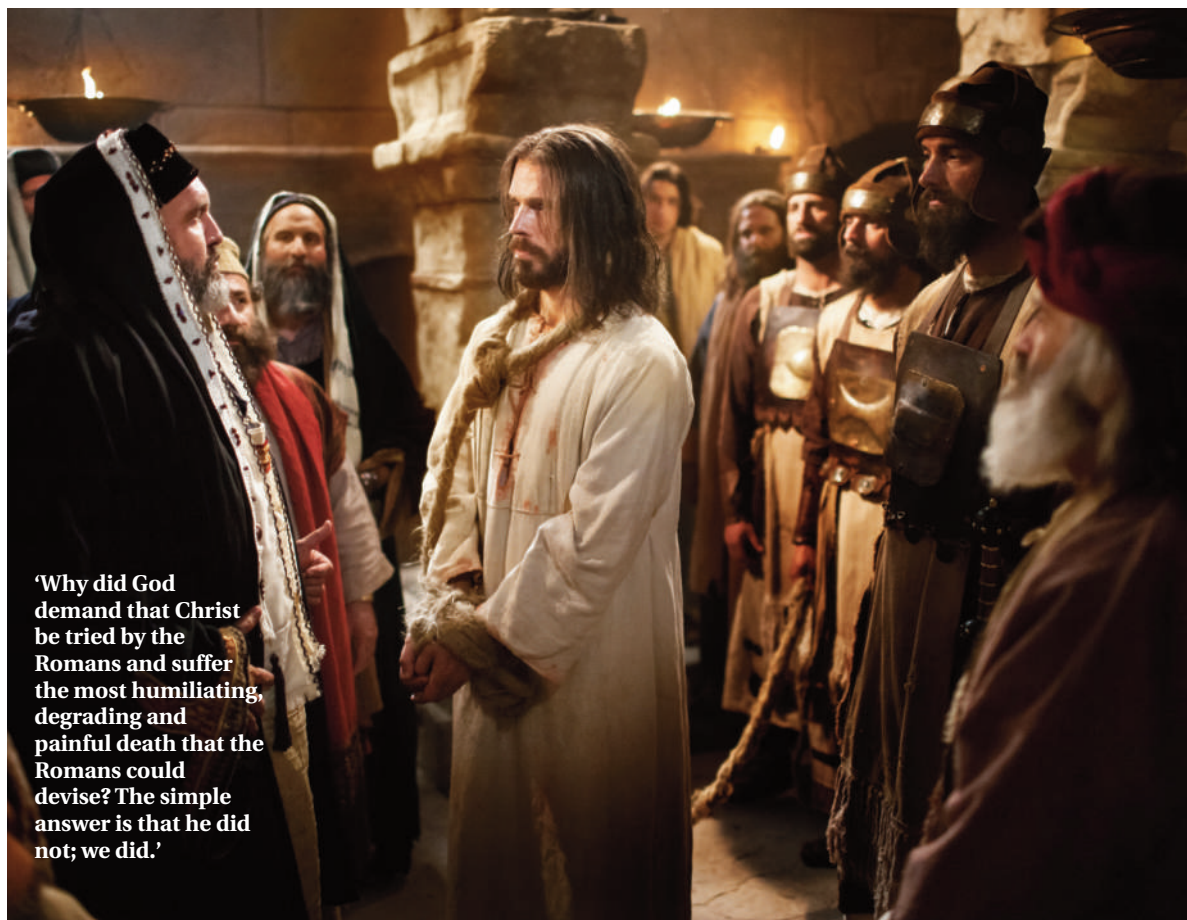
Hundreds of years before Christ, Socrates was put to death for speaking the truth that the authorities did not wish to hear, like the prophets in the old Testament. They begged God not to use them as his mouthpiece, because suffering and death was so often the penalty for speaking the truth.

And remember, Christ himself promised that his followers would, like him, be asked to suffer and often die for the same truth that he died for, proclaiming it loud and clear (John 15:20-21, Luke 11:49-51, & 21:12). The fact of the matter is that even living a good life is seen as a reproach to those who do not, and if you are called to preach and teach how to live such a life to those in power and their peers, then the writing is on the wall. When you look at the battered, bruised and bleeding body of Christ on the Cross you are literally looking at the carnage perpetrated by evil on unalloyed goodness. You are looking at the evil of those whose hatred of him and his truth could not be satisfied by anything less than the extreme tortures, torment and the ultimate degrading of the person who threatened to unmask them.

Rigid retro-traditionalists

Even today in tyrannies throughout the world, tyrants still do to those who threaten them what was once done to Christ and those who followed him. However, in most democracies today, such extreme barbarism is thankfully unacceptable, so instead modern hypocrites like the politically correct, have devised their own ways of preventing them from speaking in the first place.

Even in the Church, lest Christ should speak again through others



'Why did God demand that Christ be tried by the Romans and suffer the most humiliating, degrading and painful death that the Romans could devise? The simple answer is that he did not; we did.'

as he did before, would-be prophets currently called whistle-blowers, trouble makers or rigid retro-traditionalists are being psychologically undermined, or to use the current terminology, simply cancelled and relegated to outer darkness.

Meanwhile, those who continually try to cancel them and consign them to oblivion are busily employed in remaking their god and his truth in their own image and likeness.

Yet the truth of decline and fall must be seen, stated and accepted no matter how much we would like to sweep it under the carpet with those who proclaim it. If this is not done and not done now, for we are in the last minute of extra time, then the truth necessary for new birth and resurrection will never be heard.



Tyrants still do to those who threaten them what was once done to Christ and those who followed him. However, in most democracies today, such extreme barbarism is thankfully unacceptable, so instead modern hypocrites have devised their own ways of preventing them from speaking in the first place.

A disturbing downward trend

If the rise of the family-based spirituality that Christ originally introduced into the early Church were to be depicted as a graph, then it would by and large be seen as a continuous upward line. But after the spiritual deterioration that set in after Christianity had become the official religion of the Roman Empire, that graph changed course. Down to the present day, and for reasons, some of which I have described, the graph has followed a downward trend, albeit with numerous upward spikes thanks to the great saints who have tried to return to what has been forgotten.

As the graph has gradually plummeted downwards, characteristics notable by their absence in the early Church soon

became commonplace. The first Christians were notable not just by their love of one another, but for others too and that included their enemies, with the self-same love with which Christ loved them.

Not enough religion to love but only to hate

But sadly, as subsequent centuries unfolded, that quality of love has sufficiently diminished for Dean Swift to say, "We have enough religion to enable us to hate, but not enough to love one another".

The way in which so many different religions have behaved to each other, not to mention the way they have treated their own, is scandalous. Add to this the ways Christians have warred against each other, most particularly in Europe for hundreds of years, more recently in two world wars, have more than confirmed what Swift had regrettably realised. And that is not to mention how, instead of converting the world as Christ told them to do, Christians exploited it for their own financial gain, and advantage. 'You gave us the Bible', the dispossessed conceded, 'but took away our lands, our possessions, and our sons and daughters'.

In general, contemporary

literature remained silent about the infamy that underpinned English society. Only in her novel *Mansfield Park* does Jane Austen insinuate that her world of wealthy landowners, decorous manners and superficiality was only possible thanks to the greatest moral blot on English history. I am referring to the forced migration and mass degradation of hundreds of thousands of innocent Africans brutally torn from their homes and families and sold into slavery to finance the worst period of moral degradation in our secular history.

Chastity without Love is lethal

If wars and slavery symbolised just how far Christianity had strayed from her origins in past history, then sexual abuse and cover ups have done the same in more recent history. This can clearly be seen not just from the worldwide sexual abuse of children, but by the well documented abuse of women by priests and the abuse of young women and children by female religious. That is not to mention the sexual relationships between priest and religious and lay men and women with mutual consent, that is still being covered up. And before the rise of whistle blowers, the almost universal silence of those 'good priests and religious' and their superiors who might not have sinned themselves but committed the sin of omission by their silence. In law they are called accessories. In the Gospels they are called hypocrites, and whited sepulchres. The recently released governmental report into sexual abuse in Britain makes horrifying if salutary reading and silences the usual deniers with evidence that cannot be denied.

Religious brainwashing

Consciences brainwashed into believing that the desecration of the innocent is preferable to safeguarding the reputation of the institution, show yet again just how far our leaders have digressed from their origins. It also shows just how far the prayer that unites priest and religious with their Lord has long since been neglected.

A spirituality that has been stripped of the mystical prayer in which selfless giving is taught, that can alone turn sinners into saints through inner purification, is no longer fit for purpose.

When this form of prayer is ridiculed, as it is today, then so also is Christ and the cross that he carried and died on, as an example to all who would follow him (1 Corinthians 1:23-30).



AROUND THE PARISHES & EDUCATION



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



Westminster Cathedral Choir directed by Simon Johnson at last year's Christmas Celebration in Westminster Cathedral
Photo: Mazur/CBCEW.org.uk

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Germans lavish praise on Westminster choir

When its busy liturgical schedule permits, the Choir of Westminster Cathedral is in demand for concert performances all around the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic put a temporary stop to this, so it was particularly exciting that the choir was invited to take part in two festivals in Germany in September: the Internationale Musiktage at the Dom zu Speyer, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and the IMAD Festival in the Paderborner Dom, where they performed alongside other major international artists, including British choir Voces 8 and the WDR Rundfunkchor.

These were also the choir's first concert performances outside the UK under its new master of music, Simon Johnson.

The choir performed a suite of music centred around the *Mass for Five Voices* by William Byrd, with two contemporary pieces inspired by Byrd's music: *Kyrie after Byrd* by

Roxanna Panufnik and *Ave verum corpus* reimagined by Roderick Williams.

The concerts also included two pieces composed for the choir itself in 1915: Gustav Holst's setting of the *Nunc dimittis*, and a *Salve Regina* by Herbert Howells; as well as the *Three Latin Motets* by Charles Villiers Stanford.

The concerts were attended by packed audiences, and the choir's performances were met with standing ovations and great acclaim. German newspaper *Die Rheinpfalz's* review of the performance praised 'its exquisite intonation, its clarity, purity and beauty of sound.' The Holst was sung in 'particular with a phenomenal sound and a brightly shining, multifaceted luminosity.'

Westminster Cathedral Choir remains the only Catholic cathedral choir in the world to sing daily Mass and Vespers, occupying a unique position at the forefront of English

Church Music. German newspaper *Die Rheinpfalz* was full of praise for the 'sensational' choir. 'It's not for nothing that the British Isles have long been setting standards when it comes to choral singing – and Westminster Cathedral Choir gives the tradition its very own colour through its connection to a Catholic repertoire,' *Die Rheinpfalz* said.

'In short: the performance of the English choir under its new Music Director Simon Johnson was sensational.'

Christmas concerts

• Westminster Cathedral Choir's Christmas Celebration will take place this year on Tuesday 20th and Wednesday 21st December. Tickets for this annual favourite are now available.



Bishop Alan evokes call of Matthew as diocese celebrates its deacons

Alan Hopes has celebrated the annual Mass for the permanent deacons and their wives at St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich.

During this Mass, Bishop Alan conferred the ministry of Acolyte on Paul Raynes from St Etheldreda in Ely parish and admitted to candidacy Jonathan Wright from the parish of Our Lady of the Assumption and the English Martyrs in Cambridge, Jonathan Callejo from the parish of the Cathedral of St John the Baptist and Edwin Mothis from the parish of Sacred Heart and St Oswald in Peterborough.

Candidacy is admission to the first stage of diaconal studies.

Paul Raynes's conferral of Acolyte marks the final year of his studies for the diaconate.

In his homily, Bishop Alan reminded the congregation of the call of Matthew and encouraged

the students for the diaconate to continue to listen to God's call in their lives.

He spoke of the meaning of the name Matthew – a gift of God – and prayed that each one of them would be a gift of God for the church in their ministry. He thanked them for their courage and commitment to the Church and to the diocese of East Anglia.

Later, Fr Andrew Eburne, Director of Studies for the Permanent Diaconate, encouraged all the deacons and students for the diaconate to keep the Eucharist central to their lives every day and to rely on Our Blessed Lady and her prayers and intercessions.

Pictured after Mass are, from left: Jennifer and Jonathan Wright, Sarah and Paul Raynes, Bishop Alan, Edwin and Suzanne Mothis, January and Jonathan Callejo.



Academy's IT technicians rise to the challenge

A pair of IT technicians at a Coventry Catholic academy have received promotions after completing their apprenticeships.

Cern Diston has completed his Level 4 Network Engineer course and takes up the role of senior technician, while Kamran Bhakta has been named junior IT technician following two years at Romero Catholic Academy while completing his Level 3 Infrastructure Technician course.

The pair, who both gained their qualifications via Primary Goal, will continue to be based at Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School but offer remote support across the Academy's seven primary schools.

Primary Goal is a national digital industries apprenticeship training provider working with schools and businesses to deliver high quality teaching and learning apprenticeship programmes.

Cern said: "The Level 4 course has helped me learn about IT issues in more detail, not only to solve

problems, but to know how they might have been caused in the first place.

"The new position has a lot more responsibility with it and means I'll get to work more closely with any new staff arriving and help them find their feet, which I'm really looking forward to.

"The apprenticeship was challenging but I received lots of support to help me pass."

Kamran said: "I've really enjoyed the last couple of years and learnt a lot during my apprenticeship and from my colleagues along the way and I'm hoping I can continue to progress as part of a great team."

Hitesh Vara, Head of IT at the Romero Catholic Academy, said: "Kamran and Cern are two highly valued members of the team and we are delighted to have been able to support their personal development.

"They will continue to provide a high level of service across the Romero Catholic Academy, taking on more responsibility as they progress in their careers here."

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Fundraising drive to get the bells ringing again

Our Lady's Church in Stowmarket has been raising funds for new ironwork and a ladder to get the church bells ringing again.

"The bells at Our Lady, Stowmarket have not been rung for over 20 years," explains Sandra Portas, stewardship and fundraising co-ordinator for the diocese of East Anglia.

"The bells hung in the tower for swing chiming are dated 1747 (the larger one) and 1857 (the smaller one) and are the work of the Mears Foundry in Whitechapel. All canons are intact, and the bells retain their cast-in crown staples."

The project comprises two elements: repair to the supporting ironwork of the two bells which is in an advanced stage of rusting. This involves two new canon straps to be manufactured and installed on the bell headstocks.

The second element of the project is the improvement to the access to the bells. The current ladder and slab are deemed to be unsafe from a health and safety perspective. The

necessary works include the fabrication and installation of a steel-runged CAT ladder to reach from the main entrance of the tower to below the slab floor.

The current slab floor will be reinforced with steel to ensure it is made safe to use.

The final part of the project is to install electrically operated chime hammers to the bells, so that the daily Angelus and Mass Tolling could be automatically sounded, and a "key fob" wire free push button control added, which could be used to sound the bell in the Mass, and to activate continuous tolling on command.

Grants have been raised externally from a number of trusts including Suffolk Historic Churches Trust (£4,250), DC Moncrieff Trust (£500), Alfred Williams Trust (£2,000) and Sharpe Trust (£200). Any funds raised locally will be added to these generous donations to pay for the work.

Below, one of the Stowmarket bells.



Photo: Simon Caldwell

Bishop inaugurates historic church as a Eucharistic shrine

The Bishop of Shrewsbury has inaugurated a historic Stockport church as a Eucharistic shrine of perpetual adoration in a major initiative of prayer for priestly vocations.

The Rt Rev. Mark Davies has dedicated St Joseph's Church in the town centre of Stockport as "a place of continuous Eucharistic adoration with a special mission to intercede for new and generous vocations to the priesthood and the sanctification of priests".

Catholics are being invited to sign up to participate in a schedule of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament that there may be sufficient numbers for this prayer to continue from morning till evening.

The Eucharistic Shrine of St Joseph was formally inaugurated at a Mass celebrated by Bishop Davies on Saturday, 22nd October, the feast of Pope St John Paul II, a Pontiff who encouraged the practice of Eucharistic adoration.

The Bishop spoke of this new Eucharistic mission as being in continuity with the long story of the Catholic faith in Stockport. Bishop Davies thanked the Sacred Heart Fathers who had cared for the church during the past four decades,



and formally welcomed Fr Sean Davidson as the new parish priest.

In his homily at the Mass of inauguration, Bishop Davies said: "This new Eucharistic mission stands in the long continuity of the witness of this church set on a hilltop."

"Fr Sean Davidson was led to Saint Joseph's along a path as unexpected as the fulfilment of my own hope that a church might be dedicated as a 'Eucharistic Shrine', fostering renewed love for the Holy Eucharist, worthily celebrated and continuously adored."

"This mission of adoration and intercession is a response to Pope

Francis's invitation for the young to be attentive to the silence of the Eucharist in order to discover their unique vocation in life, and that of his predecessor, Saint John Paul II, whose memory we celebrate today, who invited the whole Church to rekindle 'Eucharistic amazement' at the dawn of this new millennium. It also helps us to understand the Catholic priesthood in the light of the Eucharist declaring that, 'Without the Eucharist we do not exist, we are reduced to lifeless shadows. The priest can never reach fulfilment if the Eucharist does not become the root and centre of his life ...'.

"Today, I ask you to pray that Saint Joseph's will continue to be the Emmaus we have always known, a church with open doors. In Pope Francis's words, may all come through these doors also come to a new and personal encounter with Jesus Christ."

"For here we ask that all eyes may be opened to recognise Jesus Christ anew in the Sacrifice and Sacrament of the Eucharist. And may hearts burn once more in responding to their unique call, especially the call to the priesthood, on which all other Christian vocations depend."



Glasgow's precious relic venerated by local children

One of the most precious relics of the Archdiocese of Glasgow was venerated recently to mark the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

The parish of Holy Cross in Croy has a fragment from the wood of the Holy Cross. The attached certification states 'ex Ligno sanctissimae Crucis D. N. Jesu Christi' (from the wood of the Holiest Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ) found by St Helen around 327AD.

The piece of the cross – now enclosed in a precious reliquary – was certified by the Holy See on 17th September 1929.

The relic was presented to the parish by Rev A McSparran, with a request to pray for the donor.

Fr Joe Sullivan, the current parish priest in Croy, arranged for the precious relic to be made available for veneration after Mass on the Feast Day at the end of all Masses the following weekend.

Children from the local primary school were invited to mark the feast day Mass and showed great interest in the relic of Christ's cross.

Pictured above are three local schoolchildren with the relic. Photo by Paul McSherry

Mini Vinnies stand ready to help



Following on from a Harvest Festival assembly, the Mini Vinnies of St Teresa's Primary School in Wokingham were delighted to deliver donations to the Wokingham Foodbank, writes Paris Finnegan.

The children were blown away by the warehouse and were very humbled by the hard work of the volunteers they met.

While there the children had a tour around the warehouse, reviewed stock levels and spoke to the volunteers about how things were arranged.

The Foodbank manager, Annette, answered lots of questions from the children and explained how their donations would make their way to those who needed them most.

The children never miss an opportunity to help others and have already started to organise another collection later on in the year, and have volunteered to offer their time to help sorting donations at the warehouse. It was so lovely to see our children turning their concerns into action.

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COMPANION

The Universe Catholic Weekly's guide to the more leisurely side of life



CAREERS

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Top hobbies employers like to see on an applicant's CV



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What you do in your spare time should not play a role in whether you get a job or not, but there are some interests and hobbies which attract employers and may lead to them considering your application more closely.

Competition for jobs is tough and you need to show something to stand out and, for some people, this may be hiding in the hobbies and interests section of their CV.

Keep in mind the kind of hobbies an employer might want to think about and consider if any of the below pastimes rank amongst your favourites and should be included on your next job application.

Playing an instrument

Singing or playing an instrument is a clear sign of dedication and commitment. It shows you have a creative side, especially if you write your own music. Singing and musicianship can also demonstrate you have a degree of confidence which employers are looking for.

Musicians also need to be disciplined to succeed and this is a characteristic recruiters and employers want in their staff.

Puzzles and mind games

Exercising your grey matter will appeal to employers as it shows you have a logical mind and can think analytically. In particular in professions such as law and engineering, where this kind of thinking is absolutely key.

If puzzles and mind games occupy your spare time, then they should definitely be included on the CV, as it shows you have a logical mind, intelligence and patience. Almost all employers will view these skills positively.

Volunteering

A voluntary job or any kind of volunteering shows passion and dedication. Volunteering is great for your CV as it shows you have an experience where you develop skills as well as social experiences and the chance to help others in need. Volunteering also shows you are willing to commit to something which isn't all about the money you'll make and this is always viewed in a good light.

Sports

Not everyone is built for sports and exercise but, if you're a member of a sports team, it shows you've got a competitive side and also that you're used to teamwork and getting on with people from different backgrounds.

Team sports players also have to get used to conflict management and resolution. If you're more of an individual, and are into an extreme sport such as mountain climbing, this will show employers you are energetic and able to take measured risks.

Blogging

Having your own blog is a way of showing employers you are interested in the role you are applying for, especially if you're looking to work in

advertising, publishing or journalism.

Similarly, if your blog catalogues your love of all things fashion and you're trying to find a job in retail this could sway the employer. Running a successful blog is also something that takes time and commitment, so if your blog is doing well this will impress potential employers as they'll be able to see you can manage multiple commitments.

Next time you update your CV have a look at that section dedicated to your interests. You may find ways of making your hobbies sound more appealing or realise you've missed out something important (like those above!) which could influence an employer to give you a chance.



Having a sporty side is never a bad thing to put down on your CV – even if it's just cycling with the children

GARDENING

Bringing your home's variegated plants to life – and keeping them that way

Gregory Moore

Fads and fashion have always influenced the plants we keep. And so it is with variegated plants, which have become very popular with indoor plant enthusiasts these days.

Variegated plants possess multiple colours – typically on their leaves, but in some cases on stems, flowers and fruit. Their patterns include stripes, dots, edges and patches. They're usually green with either white or yellow, but can also feature red, pink, silver and other colours.

Variegated plants can divide opinion. I recall a great aunt telling me many years ago of her great fondness for the variegated *Aspidistra elatior* growing her garden. But I've also heard gardeners and garden designers dismiss variegated foliage because it didn't fit with their design or colour themes.

Now, it seems indoor variegated plants are considered a "must-have" home decor accessory. But before you rush out and buy one, make sure you know how to keep it happy.

Understanding variegated plants

Most plant species are entirely green but occasionally a variegated individual arises. Some catch the eye of a dedicated plant collector or nursery worker and become a popular variety.

Plant variegation can occur for several reasons.

In some plants, such as the flowers of tulips, it's due to a viral infection. The resulting streaks of different colours may be cursed or valued depending on the aesthetic effect.

Others plants, such as those in the genus *coleus*, are naturally patterned. Groups of cells produce different colour combinations, causing leaves to grow with attractive markings.

Plant variegations can also arise from genetic mutation.

When growing variegated plants, it's important to understand how the various colours affect the way it functions.

The green part of plants contains chlorophyll, a pigment essential for photosynthesis. (Photosynthesis, of course, is the process by which the leaves convert sunlight into oxygen and carbohydrate that provides energy for plants to grow.)

In variegated plants, white parts of leaves do not contain chlorophyll and so do not photosynthesise.

Yellow parts of leaves can help send



energy to the chlorophyll, but can't perform photosynthesis on their own. The same goes for some red, orange and pink patches of tissue.

But all cells in the leaf – green or not – use the plant's energy. That means variegated plants are less efficient energy producers than their all-green counterparts, which causes them to grow more slowly.

Some plants have mutated into albinos containing no chlorophyll. These normally die within a few days or weeks of germination.

Caring for your plant indoors

It's no coincidence many popular indoor plants – such as *coleus*, *philodendrons*, *monstera*s, *dracaenas* and *calatheas* – are variegated. Because they're usually far less vigorous than all-green versions of the species, they won't be pushing against the ceiling within

weeks.

The decorative colour and pattern of a variegated indoor plant is an added bonus.

Variegated plants can take longer than others to reach a size considered appropriate for sale at a nursery, so may be comparatively more expensive. But there are ways to protect your variegated investment.

First, watch out for "reversion". This can occur when a variegated plant sends up an all-green shoot. The shoot will grow fast compared to the variegated parts and can eventually take over, causing the whole plant to revert to green.

To avoid this, vigilantly remove any green shoots before they get big.

You don't want variegated plants quickly outgrowing their space, but remember they're low on chlorophyll and so need good light.

And like any indoor plant, ensure its leaves are kept free of fine dust and you don't give it too much, or too little, water.

Variegated plants in the garden

The popularity of indoor variegated plants will almost certainly lead to greater use outdoors.

Their slow-growing nature means outdoor variegated plants are usually much less likely to be "weedy" and spread where they're not wanted.

This can be an advantage if you've avoided planting a species because it will take over the garden. The variegated versions of *pittosporum*, *figus* and *nerium oleander*, for example, are far less intent on global domination than their all-green counterparts.

When planting a variegated plant outdoors, watch that it doesn't become shaded by other quicker-growing plants. Many variegated plants already struggle

to photosynthesise sufficiently. A bit of extra shade can damage or even kill them.

So ensure they get enough light – and every so often give them a hand by trimming back nearby plants.

Growing with flying colours

Variegated plants are having their moment in the sun. But their interesting biology is always in fashion!

These plants can brighten up your indoor space and provide attractive colour and pattern in the garden.

By learning about how variegated plants function and considering their special requirements, you can enjoy them for years to come.

Gregory Moore is a senior research associate, School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences, The University of Melbourne

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FOOD

A savoury classic: tasty sausage and cheese pie

There is something about sausage and pastry together that create a real treat of a meal – or a centrepiece for a buffet.

To bring in some changes, use different types of sausage for the meat filling – or spice it up a bit for a cold autumn night by adding some smoky paprika to the mix.

Ingredients

- 368g puff pastry
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 225g sausage meat
- 170g Cheddar cheese, grated
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 2 tbsp fresh breadcrumbs
- 1 egg, beaten
- salt and pepper to taste
- milk to glaze

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200 C. Line a 25 x 36cm baking tray with greaseproof paper.

2. Roll out the pastry. Make sure it's large enough to fit the baking tray, and place it on the prepared tray.

3. Mix the onion, sausage meat, cheese, tomato puree, breadcrumbs, the beaten egg, and salt and pepper to season together in a bowl with your fingers.

4. Lay the mixture in the centre of the pastry in a long sausage shape.

5. Dampen the edges of the pastry with the milk and seal. Turnover the pastry so that the join is underneath. Make some diagonal cuts in the top of the pastry all the way along and then brush with milk to glaze.

6. Bake the pie in the preheated oven for 35 to 40 minutes.

7. Serve immediately. Great with an onion gravy, roast potatoes and seasonal roasted vegetables.



Sparkling Bonfire night cupcakes

These fun cupcakes use chocolate flake pieces as the wood and red, orange and yellow icing as the bonfire flames – so you can create your own perfect little bonfires for bonfire night. Matchstick type chocolate can also be used as well as, or instead of, the flaked chocolate.

INGREDIENTS

For the cupcakes:

- 110g margarine, at room temperature
- 110g caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 110g self-raising flour
- 1 to 2 tbsps full fat milk

For the decoration:

- 140g butter, softened
- 280g icing sugar
- 6 flaked chocolate bars
- 1 tube each of red, orange and yellow icing

METHOD

The cupcakes:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Line a 12-piece muffin tin with paper cases.
3. Beat together the margarine and sugar in a large bowl until creamed.
4. Beat in the eggs, one at a time until mixed fully then add the vanilla extract. Fold in the flour and slowly add the milk to form a smooth mixture. Divide evenly between the 12 paper cases.
5. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean then remove from oven and cool completely before decorating.

The decoration:

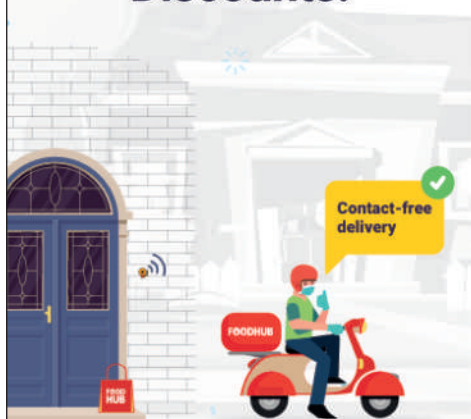
1. Make the icing by beating butter and icing sugar in a bowl until smooth.
2. Pipe the icing onto each cake in a mound to create the bonfire effect.
3. Break the flaked chocolate into long pieces to create a wood effect and press into the icing.
4. Pipe the red, orange and yellow icing between the flakes to look like flames – and serve.



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HEALTH

Gum disease could create a link to some of our biggest killers

Christine Bryson

Gum diseases are among the most common chronic human diseases, affecting between 20 to 50 per cent of people worldwide.

They happen when plaque, a sticky film of bacteria, builds up on teeth. The earliest stages of gum disease are treatable and reversible (gingivitis).

But some people develop a chronic destructive form of gum disease, which is irreversible. This disease progresses to tooth loss.

A growing body of evidence shows that gum disease can also make people more likely to develop other serious health conditions.

Here are a few of the common health conditions linked to gum disease and how they are connected.

1. Alzheimer's disease

Several large studies and meta-analyses agree that moderate or severe gum disease is significantly associated with dementia.

For example, one study showed suffering from chronic gum disease for ten years or more was associated with a 70 per cent higher risk of developing Alzheimer's than those without. Research has also shown a link between gum disease and a six fold decline in cognitive ability.

Initially, it was thought bacteria were directly responsible for this link.

P. gingivalis, bacteria common in chronic gum disease, was found in the brains of people who had died of Alzheimer's disease.

Toxic bacterial enzymes called gingipains were also found, which are thought to worsen gum disease by preventing the immune response from turning off and hence prolonging inflammation.

However, it's not certain whether bacteria in the brain, a modified immune response or other factors – such as damage from systemic inflammation – explain the link.

But taking care of your oral health could be one way to reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

2. Cardiovascular disease

Cardiovascular disease is also firmly associated with gum disease.



In a large study of over 1,600 people aged over 60, gum disease was linked with an almost 30 per cent higher risk of first heart attack. This link even persisted after researchers adjusted for other conditions (such as diabetes and asthma), or lifestyle habits (such as smoking status, education and marriage) that are known to increase a person's risk of a heart attack.

More recently, studies have also shown that systemic inflammation caused by chronic gum disease causes the body's stem cells to produce a hyper-responsive group of neutrophils (a type of early defence white blood cell). These cells may damage the lining of arteries by

damaging the cells that line the arteries – triggering the build-up of plaques.

3. Type 2 diabetes

Gum disease is a known complication of type 2 diabetes, and chronic gum disease increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

The processes that link the two diseases are the focus of much research, and it's likely that inflammation caused by each condition affects the other. For instance, type 2 diabetes raises the risk of gum disease by increasing inflammation in the gums. Gum disease has also been shown to contribute to impaired insulin signalling and insulin

resistance – which can both exacerbate type 2 diabetes.

Several clinical trials have shown an intensive dental cleaning can improve blood sugar control in diabetic patients for several months, further showing the links between the two diseases.

4. Cancers

Gum disease is also linked to a greater risk of developing many types of cancer. For instance, patients who reported having a history of gum disease were shown to have a 43 per cent greater risk of oesophageal cancer, and a 52 per cent greater risk of stomach cancer.

Other research has also reported

Gum disease has strong links with Alzheimer's cancers, heart diseases and diabetes

people with chronic gum disease had a between 14–20 per cent higher risk of developing any type of cancer. The same study also showed a 54 per cent higher risk of pancreatic cancer.

It's not clear why this relationship exists. Some think it has to do with inflammation, which is a factor in both gum disease and cancer. Inflammation disrupts the environment that cells need to stay healthy and function properly and is a factor in the progression of both gum disease and tumour growth.

Improving gum health

Gum disease is preventable and reversible in the early stages.

While some risk factors for gum disease can't be changed (such as your genetics), you can change your lifestyle to reduce your overall risk.

For example, eating less sugar, avoiding tobacco and alcohol and reducing stress can all help.

It's also important to know that certain medications (such as some anti-depressants and hypertension drugs) may lower saliva production, which can increase your risk of gum disease. People taking these medicines need to take extra precautions, such as using special gels or sprays to increase saliva production, or making sure to take extra care while brushing their teeth.

Of course, the most important things you can do to protect yourself from gum disease (and subsequently your overall health) are brushing twice daily with fluoride toothpaste and avoiding using mouthwash after brushing – and taking care not to rinse after brushing to allow the fluoride to remain on your teeth. Interdental cleaning at home (such as flossing) and regular dental visits will also help you keep your oral health in check.

Christine Bryson is a senior lecturer, medical science, at Anglia Ruskin University

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A VIEW FROM THE PEWS



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

I prayed for a bike ...

Three years ago, I was asked if I'd give a talk about praying, to the young people in our parish who were to be Confirmed. I agreed, but soon realised that I hadn't a clue how to do this.

How I could interest 13 and 14 year olds in praying? That's when I prayed and prayed. I believe my prayers were answered, because I suddenly remembered what had happened to me when I was eight years old. I decided to tell my story to the children.

The story

I was born on the 11th April 1939, the year World War II broke out. We were a Catholic family, and my father was a South Yorkshire coal miner. During those war years, toys at Christmas had to be made by our parents, because the manufacturing companies had to make things to help the war effort. After the war, going back to peacetime, manufacturing, especially of toys, was very slow.

Two years after the war had ended, in 1947, when I was eight, I became an altar boy at church. One Sunday in early October, our 'Old Priest', as we children called him, was giving his sermon during Mass and for once I found myself listening. He said that God always answers our prayers if we pray to Him in an honest manner.

This interested me as I'd heard that a company somewhere in England had started making bikes.

In all my seven years, I'd never seen a bike, only pictures of them. From that day on, I prayed honestly every night asking God, in my innocence, for a bike for Christmas. I didn't miss one day.

I looked at my young audience – who were now listening quite attentively – and told them that on the morning of Christmas Day I went quickly downstairs to see my bike. What do you think I found I asked. They all answered "a bike".

I said "You're wrong" and went on to explain that there wasn't one.

I was devastated. I'd prayed every night in an honest manner, so where was my bike?

My audience was now listening fully to my story

I told them that the following Sunday after Mass, the old priest asked us altar boys if we'd had a good Christmas. The others all said yes, but he could see that something was bothering me, and asked if something was wrong. I don't know why, but I decided to tell him everything. I finished by asking how he could be right about God always answering our honest prayers.

He looked me straight in the eyes and said, "But God did answer you". He went on to say, "What happens when you ask your parents for anything? Do they always give you what you asked for?" I said, "not always".

He said "God doesn't either, and in your case, he said no".

He then went on to say "God always answers our honest prayers, but his answer can be YES or NO, and whatever answer he gives, if you've prayed honestly it will always be in your best interest".

I told my young audience "I've got to admit, I wasn't convinced," and I could see it in their faces that they were now listening to my story.

A few days later, I was playing with my friends. One of them had been



given a bike for Christmas and I was jealous. He was also an altar boy at our church and knew of my desire for a bike.

He came over to me and asked if I'd like a go on his new bike. I was overjoyed. The road we were on was on an incline, and having never

ridden a bike, I tried to do so, up the incline.

In no time at all I was pedalling up the road. At the top, I turned round and came speeding down the incline. To me it was very thrilling.

When I reached my friend, I put on the brakes, but having no

experience of bikes, I only put on the front brake. The front wheel stopped dead. The rest of the bike and myself didn't. Over the top we went and of course, in those days there were no helmets, elbow or knee pads, or any protective gear at all. I recovered consciousness in my bed, luckily with no bones broken, but covered in bandages and plasters and very sore all over.

The confirmation children were now all smiling

I was off school for just over a week, and on one day while I was lying there feeling sorry for myself, I remembered what the Old Priest had said about God always answering our honest prayers, and whatever His answer is, YES or NO, it will always be in our best interest.

I now knew that I'd found that out in a very painful way.

Everything the Old Priest had told us was correct.

If we pray honestly asking for God's help, He'll always give it, but we have to remember that His answer may not always be what we've asked for, but it will be in our best interest.

I finished up my story to the children by saying I've always remembered that advice and still say my prayers honestly and often, and that I never doubt how powerful it is. I finished by thanking them for listening.

I'll never forget that day. I'd not thought of that episode in my life for over 70 years. Why had I done so now? I had no doubt that God had answered my prayers.

Proof that we should never doubt the power of prayer.

Building a better, bigger world for both sexes

Elise Ureneck

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council. I've found myself rereading the council documents recently, and found a treasure trove of insights about the liturgy and scripture.

I never ceased to be stirred when reading the opening lines of *Gaudium et Spes*: "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ."

But it's a text from the closing of the council with which I'm preoccupied these days, and one that underscores Pope Francis' characterisation of St. Paul VI as

prophetic.

In 1965 Pope Paul VI penned an address to women, summoning them to meet the challenges of the modern world: "The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of woman is being achieved in its fullness, the hour in which woman acquires in the world an influence, an effect and a power never hitherto achieved."

The pope was not referencing a worldly power, as if he were calling for more female world leaders, but saying the Church would, in the decades after the council, advocate for women's equal dignity and treatment and insist that their gifts be welcomed into every social, political and economic sphere.

And the Church would even apologise for the ways in which it

was complicit in women's oppression throughout history.

But the power and influence the pope referenced was to be like our Lord's. It was to be leadership for the sake of others. It was an explicit call to women to "reconcile men with life" and help all people understand both the fullness of their humanity and our common destiny.

One glance at today's headlines shows that our work is still cut out for us.

Take the steady number of women who face an unplanned pregnancy each year. With the question of abortion now open for debate, women have a critical role in persuading men and women against taking the lives of their children.

Women, with their 'love of beginnings', can help other women

be reconciled with the new life growing inside of them.

Or take the growing number of people seeking assisted suicide. One recent news report chronicled the story of a Canadian mother who happened upon her 23-year-old son's appointment to die at the hands of a doctor. Afflicted with diabetes and blindness, her son filled out an online application for 'medical assistance in dying'.

As of 2021, more than 30,000 Canadians died this way, many meeting the minimum criteria of having a condition that is 'intolerable to them', terminal or not.

Last, consider the growing number of men who are opting out of education, work and relationships, who spend more time in front of screens than with other people.

Women who seek justice need not dream of a world without men, or one in which they are optional but unnecessary. Women must summon these men to be better, dream bigger and find a place in families and society at large.

Men must be reconciled with life in its fullness and not be content to pass their days listlessly or without purpose.

Many people in our midst struggle to recognise God's presence in life's tribulations. It is more important than ever that women, with their capacity to make the 'truth sweet, tender and accessible', share the good news that our God is a God of the living.

In so doing, they will do as Pope Paul VI encouraged and "save the peace of the world."

Why the tragedy of the commons must drive COP27 to real progress

CLIMATE CHANGE

Professor Victor Resco de Dios

The search for solutions to climate change is reminiscent of the 'tragedy of the commons', where neighbours benefit from shared goods, such as an area of pasture or an irrigation pond, but their overexploitation ends up degrading the shared resource.

Faced with a situation that harms everyone involved – in this case, out-of-control greenhouse gas emissions – the actors are unable to reach consensus positions that guarantee the common good, ie, limiting global warming to below 2°C.

To address this "tragedy", the United Nations will host the 27th summit on climate change (COP27) in Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt) from November 6 to 18.

What are COP meetings and what are they for?

In 1992, the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, better known as the Rio Conference, established the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), among other agreements. The summits known as COPs (Conference of the Parties) are some of the instruments that attempt to reach binding international agreements on emission reductions.

The UNFCCC has hosted an annual COP, from the first one in 1995 in Berlin to the 26th in Glasgow last year. Perhaps the most famous COP was the third (COP3), in 1997, which established the Kyoto Protocol: a set of commitments to achieve the decarbonisation of society and limit the damage from climate change.

Another particularly important COP was COP21, held in Paris in 2015. Countries there signed an agreement to limit global warming to 2°C. It also included the aspiration to limit it to 1.5°C.

What happened at COP26?

Last year's COP is considered by many to have fallen short of its expectations, but some progress was made.

A firm commitment on zero emissions by 2050 was expected, in order to maintain the possibility of limiting global warming to 1.5°C. This required a 45 per cent cut in emissions in 2030 compared to 2010 emissions. However, the agreements signed set us on a path for an average temperature increase of about 2.4°C.

Last-minute negotiations were particularly frustrating, as the term

A boy is pictured standing in front of wind turbines at the Ashegoda Wind Farm, near Mekele in Ethiopia's Tigray region. Africa is desperate for green technology to help eradicate fossil fuel use but needs help from the wealthy north to finance it



"phase out" of carbon was changed to "phase down" just before the negotiations were due to close.

Another key issue at COP26 was how to finance clean development in poorer countries and how to compensate them for the damage they have suffered because of climate change, for which more industrialised countries are responsible. At COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009, a climate fund of \$100 billion per year was pledged for developing countries from 2020 onwards. The current figures are still far below that target.

What can we expect from COP27?

This year's COP is seen as the one that will bring concrete actions and commitments on emission reductions and also on the financing of losses and damages resulting from climate change to the global south.

It has been called the "African COP" because important commitments are expected, in particular for the African continent. It's one of the most vulnerable continents to climate change from an environmental and social point of view, but paradoxically one of the least involved in the historical

accumulation of emissions.

Despite agreements at previous COPs, the UN estimates that emissions in 2030 will be higher than in 2010, which eliminates the possibility of limiting warming to below 2°C. COP27 is therefore expected to be the one where effective emission reduction policies are implemented.

The risk of greenwashing

COP27 is also expected to make significant progress in the fight against tropical deforestation. Terrestrial ecosystems are essential in the fight against climate change, absorbing 25 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions.

But we must be vigilant that the possible establishment of the Forests and Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP) does not end up being a propaganda strategy – or so-called 'greenwashing' – that would allow big business to continue to emit while hiding behind uncontrolled and unmonitored tree plantations, which often generate more environmental damage than benefits and undermine the interests of indigenous communities.

Impact of the war in Ukraine

The war in Ukraine has highlighted Europe's vulnerability due to dependence on fossil fuels and the need to rethink its energy model. After decades of calling on developing countries to grow

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It has been called the 'African COP' because commitments are expected for the African continent. It's one of the most vulnerable continents to climate change...

through renewable energy, Europe's energy crisis is forced to be exemplary and to make a firm commitment to non-fossil fuel energy. Otherwise its credibility and opportunity to influence the global energy transition will be undermined.

It is also foreseeable that the US will try to reinforce its technological leadership by promoting ambitious initiatives and gain the ground lost during the previous administration.

Another possible consequence of the war is whether the resulting new geopolitical status quo will affect emissions. In addition to the traditional influence of Western countries, China has a growing presence in Africa, which may encourage important agreements to strengthen its position on the continent.

Is international co-operation really possible?

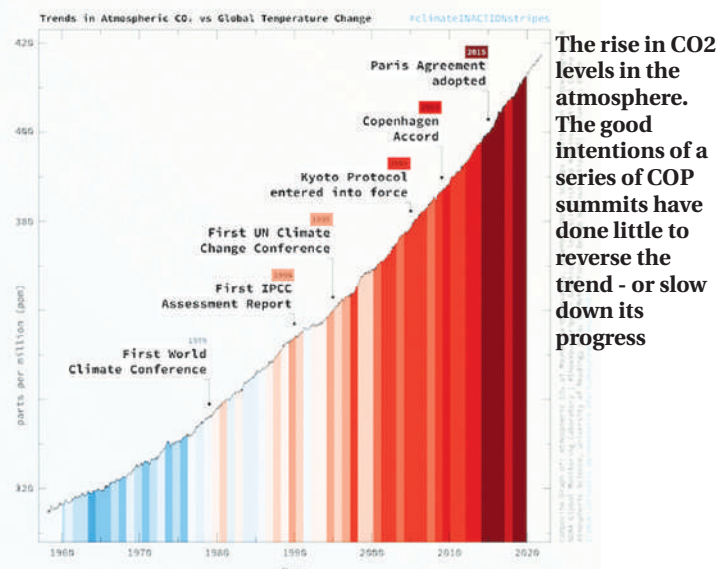
COPs are often experienced with a certain optimism and excitement before they begin and with disappointment after they close. Replacing the main source of energy – fossil fuels – and the current short-term economic growth model is extremely complex. The outcome will not be known until the end of the 12-hour meeting on the final day.

Whatever the final outcome, the scientific community has a key role to play in rigorously documenting the impacts of climate change, the future risks for different regions and integrating the social perspective with the ecological one.

Different studies show examples of possible consensus solutions to avoid overexploitation of shared resources and, ultimately, the tragedy we all potentially face if nothing is done.

Víctor Resco de Dios is Professor at the University of Lleida

He was helped in this article by Miguel Ángel de Zavala Gironés from the Ecology Department of the University of Alcalá, Madrid



A pictorial round-up of the past seven days...



The 'Highwayman and Horse' on display at the Ghosts in the Gardens display in Museum Gardens in the York, which claims to be one of the ghostliest cities in Europe



Performers on Tower Bridge during the traditional Mexican parade of Dia de Muertos



Angela Sheard puts the finishing touches to the Great Dining Room at Chatsworth House, part of its 'Deep Midwinter: A Nordic Christmas at Chatsworth' event



The Royal Mint has produced a commemorative 50p to mark the classic tale of the Snowman (above)



The Prince of Wales awards Achilles Brunnell Byaruhanga of Uganda with his award for Conservation in Africa during the 10th annual Tusk Conservation Awards



Goths descend on Whitby for the annual Goth Weekend, held where Bram Stoker found inspiration for Dracula after visiting the Yorkshire town in 1890.

Rosie Labs announced a new partnership with Boarding Noah's Ark (BNA), an artistic, entertainment-based initiative designed to bring awareness to myriad global environmental concerns through a playful, animated recasting of the famed story. The programme previewed this week at NFT London.

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LITURGICAL CALENDARS

Ordinary Form

Ordinary Form Liturgical Calendar

Sunday Year C, Weekday Cycle II

Sunday, 6th November: 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time: 2 Macc. 7:1-2, 9-14; Ps. 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15 r.15; 2 Thess. 2:16-3:5; Lk. 20:27-38

Monday, 7th November: Tit.1:1-9; Ps.24; Lk.17:1-6

Tuesday, 8th November: Tit.2:1-8,11-14; Ps.37; Lk.17:7-10

Wednesday, 9th November: Dedication of

the Lateran Basilica, Ezek. 47:1-2, 8-9,12; Ps. 46: 2-3,5-6, 8-9 r.5; 1 Cor. 3:9-11, 16-17; Jn.2:13-22

Thursday, 10th November: St. Leo the Great, pope, doctor, Philemon 7-20; Ps.146; Lk.17:20-25

Friday, 11th November: St. Martin of Tours, bishop, 2 Jn. 4-9; Ps.119; Lk.17:26-37

Saturday, 12th November: St. Josaphat, bishop, martyr 3 Jn. 5-8; Ps.112; Lk.18:1-8

Extraordinary Form Calendar

according to the Roman Missal of 1962 (Tridentine Rite)

Sunday, 6th November: Twenty Second Sunday after Pentecost, Phil. 1:6-11; Mt. 22:15-21

Monday, 7th November: Feria Readings of Sunday repeated

Tuesday, 8th November: Feria Readings of Sunday repeated

Wednesday, 9th November: Dedication of the Lateran Basilica, Rev. 21:2-5; Lk. 19:1-10

Thursday, 10th November: St Andrew Avellino, confessor Eccus 31:8-11; Lk 12:35-40

Friday, 11th November: St Martin, bishop and confessor Eccus. 44:16-27,45:3-20; Lk. 11:33-36

Saturday, 12th November: St Martin I, pope and martyr, 1 Pet. 5:1-4, 10-11; Mt. 16:13-19

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An image issued by the European Southern Observatory (ESO) of the ghost of a giant star captured in detail with the VLT Survey Telescope, hosted at the European Southern Observatory's Paranal site in Chile

A GHOST IN SPACE