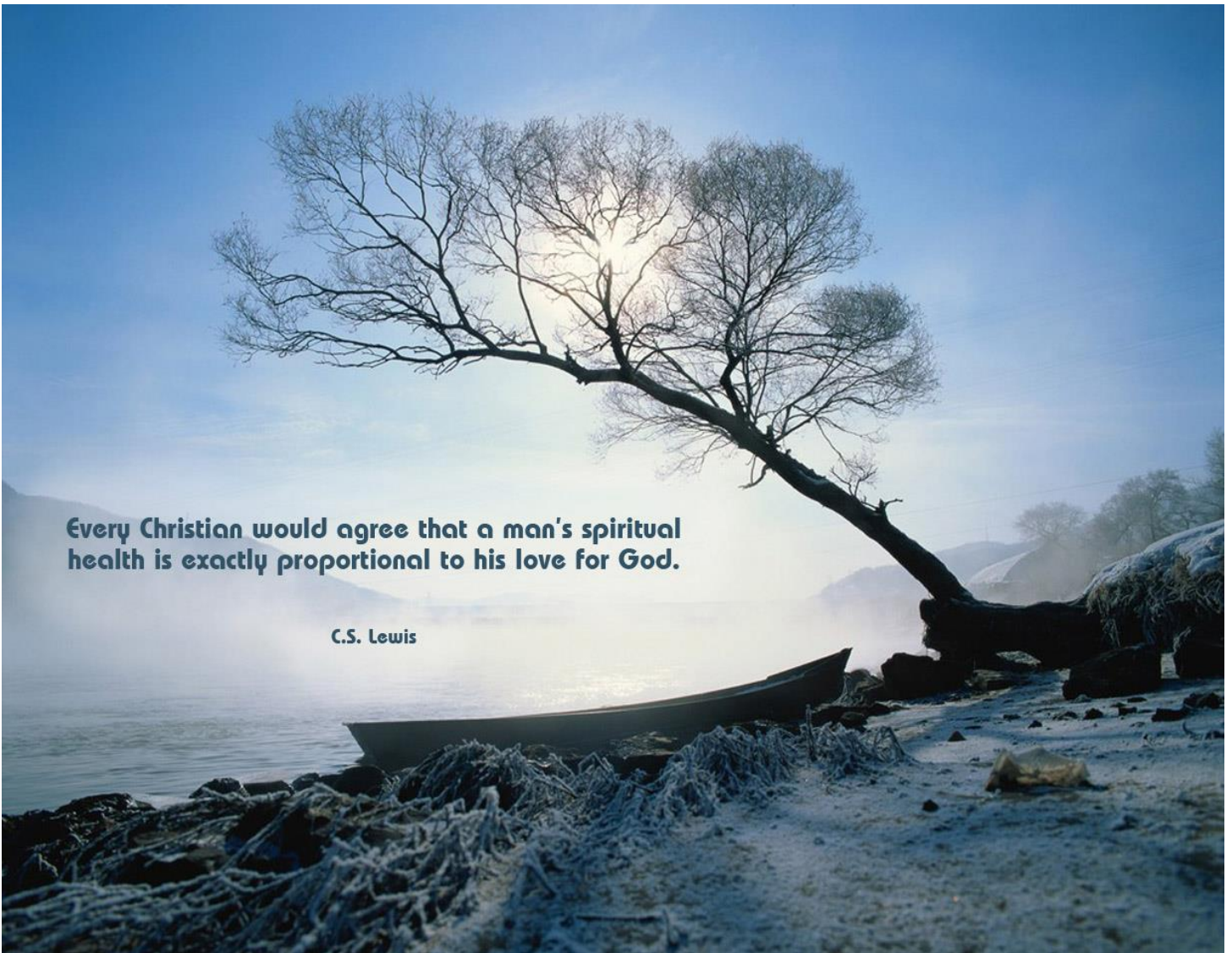


Holy Trinity and St. George Parish Magazine

Winter 2024



Every Christian would agree that a man's spiritual health is exactly proportional to his love for God.

C.S. Lewis

Suggested Donation: £1

A Look at the Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions of Communion (Bear with Me!)

Dear Friends:

Happy New Year, if it is not too late to extend the greeting. We hope 2024 is filled with blessings for you and your loved ones.

Welcome to Issue 25 of the magazine, filled as always with items of interest from our own parishioners and from sources further afield. The timeline is going to be quite a challenge as Lent comes a mere five weeks after the start of Ordinary Time! Bear with us as we are already begging for items for the Lent/Easter/Spring issue!

I have mentioned before that I am an Associate of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Each year we choose a book to share, and this year we are reading The Compassion Connection: Recovering Our Original Oneness by Sr. Catherine T. Nerney. It is a thought-provoking read, and today at the retreat house we discussed Ch. 7 which includes an introduction to what Nerney calls the *vertical and horizontal dimensions of communion*. The vertical dimension refers to our own relationship with God through contemplation, revelation and the life of the church. This was the dimension favoured by Pope Benedict. The horizontal dimension of communion refers to "...an experience of human belonging shared among the gathered people of God, an empowering and popular image emerging from the documents of Vatican II." This dimension is favoured by Pope Francis. Both dimensions are essential to a healthy balance in our experience of God. We benefit from parish life, communal celebrations, private prayer and sacraments as we benefit from interacting with and serving others and acting as God's hands and feet on earth. At various times in my life, each dimension has been ascendant, but I try to foster both equally. Keeping my Sundays free from work, a chance to catch my breath and rest, has been very successful in supporting my efforts at keeping my busy week in check.

Holy Trinity and St. George offers many fulfilling opportunities to develop both dimensions. We are blessed to have an active, vibrant parish with beautiful liturgies and committed outreach ministries such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society. It is a warm and welcoming place where our particular gifts and talents are always in demand. The more we give, the more we gain from our engagement. Many thanks to those of you who include the magazine in your allocation of time and talent! And of course, many thanks to those who read and appreciate the content.

This issue we have contributions from most of our usual team ~ **Raymond Daley, Pamela Boyes** and **Brian Stabler** ~ as well as items from **James Leeper** and **Jenny Davies**. We hope you enjoy it and that you may consider contributing to our next issue. Happy reading and hang in there... spring is coming!

Celeste



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It occurs to me that some of you may be interested in submitting but may be unsure of what it entails. I hope this little guide helps. I will run an abbreviated version of it in future issues.

I Have Something for the Magazine... Now What...?

by Celeste Bonfanti

Submitting to the parish magazine is easier than you might think. And we would love to have submissions from more of you. I wanted to share some thoughts about this with you.

The addresses to email items to are yorkistatheart@gmail.com for me and jraymonddaley@gmail.com for Raymond.

Hopefully, you have noticed that, by and large, the magazine has a standard “look,” that it hangs together as a unified whole. It is, of course, a collection of disparate parts submitted by multiple people. It is in the editing phase that the items are “smoothed out,” as it were, and presented as part of a whole. Unless you have worked to give your submission a different “look,” your piece will be formatted to fit into this whole. In fact, the less formatting, the better, as it is easier to insert the pieces and give them this standard look.

The magazine is assembled in Word, which is much easier to work with than pdfs. I send both the completed Word magazine and a pdf copy of it to the parish. The pdf format is uploaded the website and the Word format is copied by Raymond Daley for the hard copies. Submissions in Word are much preferred to pdfs. If you are not a typist, you may submit items in longhand and the ever-gracious Raymond will type it up to send to me.



You will notice that each page has a graphic or two. They are added as part of the editing process. You do not need to look for pictures to accompany your piece unless you want to. I will try to find the most appropriate image to accompany the text. If you provide images as part of your submission, I may need to resize them in order to make everything fit. If so, I try to do this with the least amount of impact to the piece.

Don't worry about spelling and grammar; again, all that is part of the editing process.

I am well aware of the differences in preferred grammar, punctuation, etc. between British and American English and I try to keep conflicts to a minimum. Apologies if missed Americanisms are distracting or annoying. I am sure I miss some.

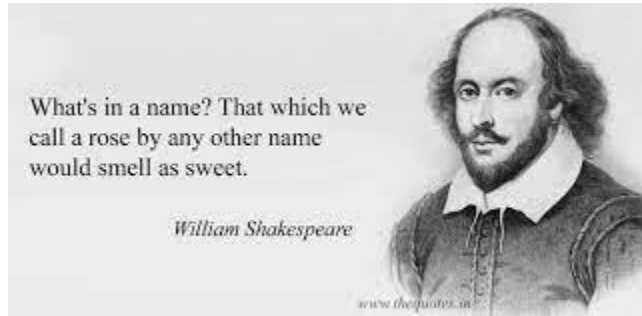
You are aware, I'm sure, of the wide variety of items we publish: articles, poetry, recipes, reflections, book reviews, comics, puzzles, coloring pages and the like. We love to serialise longer pieces, as we did with Kath Hargreaves's dad's reminiscences of the war. Readers have expressed a wish to have more items of local interest. And it is always wonderful to include updates of parish news: reports from various ministries, news of the Mini Vinnies, etc. Each issue has a sprinkling of snippets to complete a page as well. Have you been struck by a quotation or the verse of a song? Submit it!

We really want the magazine to be tailored to your interests, and the only way we can do this is with your help! We love feedback, so please keep the lines of communication open. Thanks for reading! And now....

After 25 Issues, It's Time to Name the Baby!

While "Holy Trinity and St. George Parish Magazine" is, of course, a worthy name, it's a bit of a mouthful! Other publications have a proper name. Why shouldn't we? All suggestions gratefully received! We will list them in the next issue and open the voting!

Let us hear from you!



Thanks to Raymond Daley for this item. His points here are well-taken (although I am as horrified as anyone about the Post Office scandal). I am more and more incredulous that the plight of the poor in our prosperous countries remains largely out of the public discourse. It is surely a disgrace worth addressing.

St. Vincent DePaul Society Update



The Post Office scandal has received a lot of news headlines recently. Many commentators on it have been saying things like, "I have been reporting on this since 2004" or "I have known about this for more than 20 years." Why ~ if this has been a public story that so many people say they have been aware of for so long - has it only received the public attention it needed now?

We all know why. An ITV drama shone a spotlight and brought it to our attention. Victims now have faces, families and shared fears. Audiences are outraged. People have signed petitions with over a million signatures in 24 hours, politicians have been asked to explain their decisions with a collective call for exonerations, investigations, accountability, new laws and compensation.

On 12 February, there will have been an SVP presence in England and Wales for 180 years. **How much injustice and scandal have we encountered in that time?** The plight of 700 postmasters certainly deserves justice, but many other scandals have gone on for years without headlines. The profound impact of loneliness

on people, the increasing need for hard-working families to rely on food banks, people placed in hotels and on barges without any reassurance that they are welcome or safe, those unable to see an NHS Dentist or arrange an appointment with their G.P.... I could go on at length, but where is the outrage for those things? SVP members have seen our share of tragedy and sought to be part of the world's solutions. We have befriended, given material support, care, dignity, hope and Vincentian Christian love.

You might recall how in 2016 Ken Loach highlighted injustices in the Benefit System in his film "I Daniel Blake." Daniel, a widowed 59-year-old joiner had a heart attack. His doctor had not allowed him to return to work, but he was deemed fit after a Work Capability Assessment. He was denied Employment & Support Allowance. Daniel found out his doctor had not been contacted about this decision and applied for an appeal. He found this difficult because he had to complete forms online and was not computer literate. The system doesn't make it easy for many people to obtain justice, and as the Post Office Enquiry continues, we see more previously-unknown facts brought out into the public domain. These problems have not gone away. They still affect the lives of many disadvantaged people every day.



What would an SVP drama look like? While we quietly support and show love to others, there are situations and stories which we could be more vocal in sharing. I have regularly been moved when meeting those we help that they want people to know about their injustices. They want to shout about the comfort and kindness they have found with us. We are well-placed to hear people's stories, to let them share fears, be vocal about feelings and to bring comfort. We are well-placed to tell others on their behalf, challenge law makers, invite people to engage and to join us in finding solutions to the problems. The current government made 'levelling up' central to its manifesto. Levelling up was a commitment by the government to achieve economic rebalancing towards the poorest regions in the UK. Levelling up regions across the country through regeneration has been the focus of some policies of the current government, but so far has had mixed reviews.

The SVP supports people and families in some of the most deprived parts of the country. Therefore, we know what issues people are experiencing. Our Community Support Projects and members witness the impact that poverty, inequality, lack of resources, lack of investment in skills & employment and other issues have on people every day.

We want to make sure the voices of people at the sharp end are heard, and the experience of those supporting and working alongside them understood by policymakers. Our reach puts us in a unique position of being able to provide insight into the issues and solutions to some of today's biggest societal issues. At national level, we regularly meet with policymakers to discuss our insight and provide recommendations on how we can ensure the country is truly 'levelled up'. Our latest Levelling Up Report can be read here: [Levelling up, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and regional inequalities | St Vincent de Paul Society \(svp.org.uk\)](https://www.svp.org.uk/levelling-up-the-uk-shared-prosperity-fund-and-regional-inequalities)

Blessed Frédéric Ozanam founded the SVP to seek charity and justice. My prayer for us all is that 2024 will be a year of limitless generosity and a renewed commitment to support of those in need.

Raymond Daley

Email: RaymondD@svp.org.uk

Kendal SVP President & SVP Social Justice Committee Member

Out of the Mouths of Babes

I had collected my three-year-old grandson Tom from nursery and we met a neighbour on the walk home. We stopped for a chat and, after we'd separated, Tom asked me what was the lady's name. I told him she was called Mary and his eyes lit up in amazement. "Oh Grandma," he said, "I didn't realize you knew Jesus' mother!"



submitted by Jenny Davies

A Prayer of Verses to the Holy Spirit

Submitted by James Leeper

This prayer is Inspired by Cardinal Mercier's 'Prayer to the Holy Spirit' and expanded upon through prayer, meditation and contemplation. It has evolved over many years through following the Cardinal's instruction on finding five minutes each day to enter into myself, controlling my imagination and closing my eyes to things of sense and my ears to the noise of the world (something I have always found difficult, being easily distracted). In this way, the prayer enables me to listen with the ear of my heart, speak with the sound of silence and see with the eye of the Holy Spirit.... through the sanctuary and sanctity of my soul.

Oh, Holy Spirit, beloved of my soul, I adore you!
Enlighten me, guide me, strengthen me, console me!

Oh, Divine Spirit of Wisdom, in the Temple of my baptised soul, tell me what I should do. Give me your orders, directing and instructing me, in the midst of joy and trials!

Oh, Spirit of Truth, alert me to the dangers that are poison to the wellbeing of my body and the eternal life of my soul. Discern in me the path that I will safely walk in your Grace.

Oh, Spirit of Humility, I promise to submit myself to all that you desire of me and humbly accept all that you permit to happen to me as Blessed Mary did.

Oh, Holy Paraclete, let me know only your will so that I may follow and serve your will with all my faith, using all my strength of heart and mind, body and soul, inspired by your Love and fulfilled by your Holy Grace and sevenfold gifts.

Oh, Spirit of Life, nourish and aid me with your twelve fruits,
That I may love God more and more each day,
Love my neighbour as myself, including my enemies,
And forgive all who hurt, harm and hate me,
Just as Christ forgave those who crucified him.



Oh, Spirit of Kindly Light, when the time comes, be at my side that I may walk into the valley of darkness, leading me to pass through death's dark veil! fear no evil as I

Oh, Creator Spirit, accompany me to that eternal abode beyond, the Gates of Paradise, that I may enter the Father's Kingdom of Heaven,
Where it is so much my earnest desire to rest in Christ's everlasting peace, giving praise and honour to God and to the Glory of His Grace.

Note:

Each verse is a prayer in itself as well as the whole. It also draws upon and elucidates a wealth of Christian tradition, teaching and example from Blessed Mary and the Saints that has been nurtured within my conscious and subconscious self. It is most of all a prayer of love and trust.

© P N James Leeper, 19th March 2020, given freely with an open generosity of heart for those in need.

*And now it's time for **Pamela's Pages!** Many thanks to Pamela Boyes for these items, and if this issue's recipe is half as nice as those blueberry scones, you are in for a treat!*

The Lighter Side!

Seeing one of her students making faces at others on the playground, Ms. Smith decided to gently reprove the child. On return to the classroom and smiling sweetly, the teacher said, "Tommy, when I was a child, I was told that if I made ugly faces, it would freeze and I would stay like that forever."

Tommy looked up and replied, "Well, Ms. Smith, you can't say you weren't warned."



Little Johnny asks his teacher, “Mrs. Robert’s, can I be punished for something I haven’t done..?”

Mrs. Robert’s is shocked. “Of course not, Johnny, that would be very unfair!”

Little Johnny is relieved. “OK, Mrs. Robert’s. Sorry, I haven’t done my homework.”

A lovely little girl was holding two apples with both hands. Her mum came in and softly asked her little daughter with a smile, “Kathy, love, could you give your mum one of your two apples?”



The girl looked up at her mum for a few seconds; then she suddenly took a quick bite on one apple, and then quickly on the other.

The mum felt the smile on her face freeze. She tried hard not to reveal her disappointment.

Then the little girl handed one of her bitten apples to her mum and said, “Mummy, here you are; this is the sweeter one.”

MORAL OF THE STORY: No matter who you are, how experienced you are, and how knowledgeable you think you are, always delay judgement. Give others the privilege to explain themselves. What you see may not be the reality.

When all the Christmas cake has been eaten and the cake tin is empty, this is a delicious traybake to make during the winter season.

Ginger and Treacle Spiced Traybake



Preparation time: Less than 30 mins.

Cooking time: 30 mins to 1 hour

Makes 15-20 slices

225g/8 oz. margarine, softened (but I use butter!)
175g/6 oz. light muscovado sugar
200g/7 oz. black treacle
300g/10 oz. self-raising flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. ground mixed spice
1 tsp. ground allspice
4 free-range eggs
4 tbsp. milk
3 pieces stem ginger from a jar, finely chopped (ground ginger can be substituted, 1/4 - 3/4 tsp)

For the icing:

75g/2-1/2 oz. icing sugar, sieved
3 tbsp. stem ginger syrup
3 pieces stem ginger, chopped coarsely

Method:

- Cut a rectangle of non-stick baking parchment to fit the base and sides of a 30x23x4 cm greased traybake tin.
- Preheat the oven to 160C/325F/Gas Mark 3.
- Measure all the ingredients into a large bowl and beat well for about two minutes until well blended. A hand electric mixer is best for this.
- I have always found treacle difficult to weigh accurately, as it tends to stick to the scale bowl, and this recipe suggests weighing it on top of the sugar to overcome this problem, which I found does help.
- Turn the mixture into the prepared tin and level the top gently with the back of the spatula.
- Bake in the preheated oven for about 35-40 minutes, or until the traybake springs back when pressed lightly with a finger in the centre and is beginning to shrink away from the sides of the tin.
- Allow the traybake to cool a little and then remove the cake from the tin by easing the paper away from the sides.
- Turn onto a cooling rack, remove the lining paper and leave to cool completely.

To make the icing, mix the icing sugar and syrup together in a small bowl until smooth and a spreading consistency.

Pour the icing over the cake, spread gently to the edges with a palette knife and sprinkle with the chopped stem ginger to decorate.

Allow the icing to set before slicing the traybake to serve.





Last year I received an Ancestry DNA kit gift. Over the years I have enjoyed helping younger relatives research our family trees and I saw this as a little more information and fun at the same time. My DNA results were from North West Europe and the Nordic countries of Sweden, Denmark and Norway, Scotland and the Isle of Man. Scotland surprised me because there are no known relatives past or present and no Irish DNA, despite great-grandparents! It has answered a couple of questions, but there is definitely no DNA from exotic countries far away!

Nevertheless, there is a mixture of ancestry, which brings me to the quirky, amusing and cleverly written poem below by the late contemporary British poet Benjamin Zephaniha.

The British



Take some Picts, Celts and Silures
And let them settle,
Then overrun them with Roman conquerors.

Remove the Romans after approximately 400 years.
Add lots of Norman French to some
Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Vikings, then stir vigorously.
Mix some hot Chileans, cool Jamaicans, Dominicans,
Trinidadians and Bjans with some Ethiopians, Chinese,
Vietnamese and Sudanese.

Then take a blend of Somalians, Sri Lankans, Nigerians
And Pakistanis,
Combine with some Guyanese
And turn up the heat.

Sprinkle some fresh Indians, Malaysians, Bosnians,
Iraqis and Bangladeshis together with some

Afghans, Spanish, Turkish, Kurdish, Japanese
And Palestinians.
Then add to the melting pot.

Leave the ingredients to simmer.
As they mix and blend allow their languages to flourish
Binding them together with English.

Allow time to be cool.

Add some unity, understanding, and respect for the future.
And enjoy.

Note: All the ingredients are equally important. Treating one ingredient better than another will leave a bitter unpleasant taste.

Warning: An unequal spread of justice will damage the people and cause pain.

Give justice and equality to all.



Born 15 April 1958 ~ Died 7 December 2023

[A poem calling for justice, respect and equality; but also having an element of humour in it, as he reflects on the diverse backgrounds of the people currently living in the UK, all mixed up in the shape of a recipe.]



Looking at old photos or meeting someone I haven't seen for a long time and reminiscing, I often hear myself saying, "Where have all the years gone?"
Perhaps this sounds familiar!

The Years Go By

by Catherine Pulsifer

Where do the years go, my dear, I wonder,
Do they vanish in a cosmic blunder?

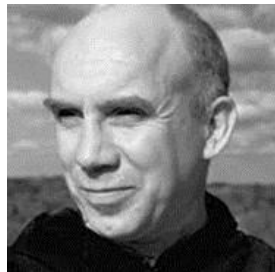
Like socks that vanish from the dryer's heat,
The years go missing, vanishing complete.
Yet still we say **Happy New Year!** with cheer,
As though it's victory, not loss we hear.
Perhaps, my dear, it's simply our way
Of embracing change and finding joy each day.

*Catherine Pulsifer is a Canadian poet and author.
Her work is known for its inspirational and encouraging messages.*



Born October 26th 1957

Merton Corner



Our glory and our hope ~ We are the Body of Christ. Christ loves us and espouses us in his own flesh. Isn't that enough for us? But we do not really believe it. No!

Be content, be content. We are the body of Christ. We have found Him, He has found us. We are in Him, He is in us. There is nothing further to look for, except for the deepening of this life we already possess. Be content.

Thomas Merton in Entering the Silence

Spring passes and one remembers one's innocence.
Summer passes and one remembers one's exuberance.
Autumn passes and one remembers one's reverence.
Winter passes and one remembers one's perseverance.

Yoko Ono

Here is a reflection by Karianna Frey based on the theology of African-American Servant of God Thea Bowman. It is included in [We Are Beloved: 30 Days with Thea Bowman](#) [part of the Great Spiritual Teachers Series].



“Father, please give me the strength to never be embarrassed to let others know that I belong to you. Send your spirit upon me so that I can shine your light to illuminate the darkness around me. Do not let me hide your light in fear of giving offense or making others uncomfortable by my actions. Help me to see the Beatitudes as more than just instructions to live life, but as a call to action.

“I am poor in Spirit when I offer time to you in daily prayer and in service to others. To those who mourn, may I reach out with words of comfort and with offers to ease their burdens and may I accept offers of help when I am in need.

“I acknowledge my humility and meekness when I not only see those around me but acknowledge that I am no better than they are.

“May my voice be used to elevate the voiceless and to speak out for those suffering injustice in all forms.

“May I listen with patience to those with whom I disagree, show mercy to all around me, and seek the narrow path of peace over the wide plains of war.

“Lord, help me to never be ashamed to tell the world that I am your child, and may I rest in the knowledge that, when I need the right words, your Spirit will descend upon me and give me the words of life.

“Help me to see how the Beatitudes are connected to each other, that no individual Beatitude can exist without the others. May I share the glory of your Gospel by my words, deeds and actions.

“I ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.”

Quote from a Speech by the Late Queen Elizabeth II

“Nativity was the birth of an idea and of an ideal.”



Submitted by Jenny Davies

We are grateful as always for these interesting items from Brian Stabler. I am particularly pleased to read his submission of the Robert Frost poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" as it was often quoted by my father and will always remind me of him. And this issue's "Castaway" offers a beach companion I am fairly sure MANY parishioners would find appealing!

Bible Reflection



Mark 7:24-37

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, 'Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' But she answered him, 'Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' Then he said to her, 'For saying that, you may go ~ the demon has left your daughter.' So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'

I love watching sport on television and especially the big tournaments like the Rugby Union and Football World Cups, etc. But I particularly like to see the Olympic games. The athleticism and skill shown by the competitors is spell-bounding. I also love the Paralympic Games, which is a periodic series of international multi-sport events involving athletes with a range of disabilities. To call them disabled, though, does not do them justice, in my opinion, as to see the competitive pure grit that they display in their efforts is no less than that of 'able bodied' competitors. We now seem to be living in a time where the rights of many disabled people are realized, though there are areas of disablement equality that still needs some work.



That leads us beautifully into the Gospel reading from Mark today where it says: "They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech." Whenever Jesus performed his many miracles, there were usually many people present ~ sometimes in their thousands. When it was the healing of a person, it must have been incredibly difficult, even embarrassing, for that person. It was bad enough to be treated as an outcast, or unclean by many, but to be attended to in such a place must have been way beyond his comfort zone.

But Jesus was completely aware of the situation and took the deaf man to one side to cure his ailments. This way the deaf man received Jesus' undivided attention and loving care and would be made to feel important to



him. Then he touched his ears and spat on and touched his tongue and said: “Ephphatha”, or be opened. Suddenly he could hear and speak. He heard Jesus! One can only guess what that moment meant to him.

To those people who suffer from deafness in any degree, like myself ~ the outside world can often seem as though it is a detached place, for though you can almost touch it and be healed, it often seems to be just out of reach. It is so much harder still when the only guaranteed sound one can hear is the ear-splitting noise of *tinnitus* ~ ringing or buzzing in the ear, though there are now many ways of improving partial hearing loss with hearing aids, and ways to help control tinnitus.

Physical loss of hearing, however, is not the only way of becoming deaf. Many people are deaf to the needs of other people. The homeless ~ and that includes all the refugees around the world displaced because of war, conflict, cruel dictatorial governments, etc.; also the poor, in such an affluent society in general. There are huge numbers of people who are without the basic comforts of living, such as food, clothing and education. Despite constant calls to help others, their words can fall on deaf ears. Many people seem to be dumb as well to the call of those in need. It seems that some are good at muttering their concerns among others, but don't or can't raise their voices enough to be heard by those in power. There are many ears to be opened and voices to be heard.

Touching the ears and the tongue actually made its way into the rites of Holy Baptism in the early Church, and some churches still perform it today. In touching the ears and tongue of the man in the Gospel, Jesus also touched his wounded heart... he touched his wounded heart! It was that, above all, that made the man new. That was the real miracle. We need to help those who need to hear and those who need to speak. If we can do that, then we will have touched their hearts, and God will then touch ours.

GREAT POPES

The best popes change not only the course of the church, but of the world.

Pope Francis

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the man who is now known as Pope Francis, is a breaker of tradition. And he couldn't have come at a better time. With contemporary culture becoming more and more suspicious of the Catholic Church due to sex abuse scandals, corruption, and a rising spiritual apathy, Pope Francis has brought his faith back into the spotlight in a positive way. His humility, emphasis on God's mercy, and concern for the poor and oppressed have made him one of the most popular popes in recent history, and his work to establish interfaith dialogue has built new bridges between the papacy and other religious leaders. From his very first day as pope, Francis was different ~ he chose a papal name that held associations with the poor and ~ most tellingly ~ asked the crowd to pray for him rather than blessing the crowd.

The future looks bright for the Catholic Church as Pope Francis works to bring in more new members than ever through his sincere willingness to serve.



Pope John Paul II

Karol J. Wojtyla became the first Polish pope ~ Pope John Paul II ~ in October of 1978, and continues to be remembered as one of the most beloved contemporary popes. His theology was second to none, and he took it upon himself to commission an official, modernized declaration of what the Catholic Church believed about God, creation, and humanity. Not only this, but Pope John Paul II's letter, "On the Dignity and Vocation of Women," was groundbreaking. He described women as "the representative and the archetype of the whole human race," embracing women as full persons rather than second-class citizens of the Church. In addition to this, he also personally helped bring about the fall of a little something called the Iron Curtain. Pope John Paul II lived through the Nazi occupation of Poland, witnessing the sufferings of his people during WWII.



During his time as pope, he worked to normalize relations with Communist Russia, urging them to bring the Berlin Wall down. His continued work in promoting the ideals of unity and kindness laid the framework for the eventual breaking of the entire Iron Curtain, and the peaceful reunion of the East and West. He didn't stop there, though. The drive to save people from inhumanity pushed Pope John Paul II to have a hand in the peaceful fall of several other dictators, for which he is still vividly remembered to this day.

Pope John XXIII

Born the fourth child in a poor family of fourteen children, Angelo Guisepe Roncalli would go on to be elected to the papacy in October of 1958. He entered the priesthood at eleven and became Pope John XXIII at age 76. Very much like Pope Francis, Pope John XXIII was a tradition-breaker, and a man of great mercy, empathy, and kindness. He paused his religious training during WWI to serve as a military chaplain, where he helped save the lives of Jews fleeing the Holocaust, providing them with transit visas. For this, he was recognized for the "Righteous Among Nations," award, which recognizes non-Jews who risk their lives to save Jews.



On becoming pope, he worked hard to improve the relationship between the Catholic Church and other faiths, removing anti-Semitic language from the traditional Good Friday prayer. Like Pope Francis, Pope John XXIII put the doctrine of God's love into practice, earnestly working to create peace and unity in whatever sphere he entered.



Pope Pius XII

Eugenio Maria Giuseppe Giovanni Pacelli was elected Pope Pius XII in March of 1939, which placed him squarely in the path of WWII. He was accused by some of taking too neutral a stance during the tragedies of the Holocaust, and indeed Pope Pius XII did try to stay out of the war which

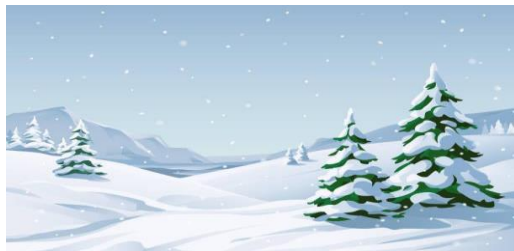
threatened to bring down the Vatican itself, at least at first. But that didn't last long. He soon openly condemned the Nazis, their violence, and their racist policies in a series of official public statements, and went on to supervise a rescue network which saved hundreds of thousands of Jews. He also saw that food, aid, and general relief efforts were coordinated for oppressed Jewish populations.

Walking a fine line between Nazi retaliation and secretly aiding the Jewish people, Pope Pius XII risked the very seat of Catholicism in order to aid those in need. Despite the controversy regarding his initial reluctance to enter the fray, his later decisions, supported by testimonies of Jewish Holocaust survivors, make him one of the greater popes in history.

[Source: *Wesley Baines*]



There are many fine poems written about winter. Here are some of them.



The Cold Earth Slept Below

by Percy Bysshe Shelley

The cold earth slept below;
Above the cold sky shone;
And all around,
With a chilling sound,
From caves of ice and fields of snow
The breath of night like death did flow
Beneath the sinking moon.

The wintry hedge was black;
The green grass was not seen;
The birds did rest
On the bare thorn's breast,
Whose roots, beside the pathway track,
Had bound their folds o'er many a crack
Which the frost had made between.

Thine eyes glow'd in the glare
Of the moon's dying light;

As a fen-fire's beam
On a sluggish stream
Gleams dimly - so the moon shone there,
And it yellow'd the strings of thy tangled hair,
That shook in the wind of night.

The moon made thy lips pale, beloved;
The wind made thy bosom chill;
The night did shed
On thy dear head
Its frozen dew, and thou did'st lie
Where the bitter breath of the naked sky
Might visit thee at will.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.





CASTAWAY



This article is based upon the famous Radio 4 show, ‘Desert Island Discs’ created by the legendary Roy Plomley. After being imaginarily shipwrecked, it shows how our chosen guest will keep themselves busy by remembering some of their favourite things. Our Castaway this time is: **Robert Aindow**.

Favourite Music 1 - From five favourite pieces of music, what is your first choice. These would be two tracks from the great American female singer **Linda Ronstadt**: “Desperado” and “Silver Threads & Golden Needles”. Linda started her singing career in the sixties and her last recording was a compilation album with Emmylou Harris and Dolly Parton. Sadly, she was diagnosed with a progressive form of Parkinson’s disease in 2019.



Your Favourite Place to Visit:

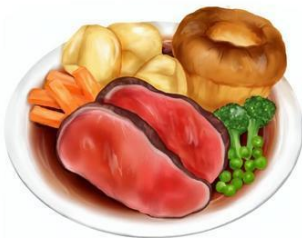


This has to be the beautiful cathedral city of **Ripon** in North Yorks. It may be the third smallest city in the UK, but it is certainly big in ambience and atmosphere. The Cathedral Church of St Peter and St Wilfrid, known now as Ripon Cathedral, started life as a monastery on this site in the 660’s and has evolved many times into today’s cathedral which was built between the 13th and 16th centuries. It has recently been seeking planning permission to expand again.

Music 2: I love the music of the **The Beatles**. I particularly like the songs “When I’m 64” and “Eleanor Rigby.” The Beatles were formed in 1960 and have very recently had a No. 1 record with “Now and Then”, 63 years after their formation. The huge catalogue of songs written by Lennon & McCartney have been covered by endless singers and musicians over the years.



Favourite Food - Your food on the island might be just fruit and nuts, so what other of your favourite foods would you love to be eating?’



This would have to be an **English roast dinner with English mustard, followed by Apple pie** ~ delicious!

Music 3:

Hoagy Carmichael has to be my third choice. “Stardust” and “Buttermilk Sky” are the two songs I particularly like. Hoagy ~

Full name: Hoagland Howard Carmichael ~ was an American composer, singer, self-taught pianist, and actor who wrote several of the most highly regarded popular standards in American music. He was a very popular and prolific composer. As the golden age of American popular song waned during the advent of rock and roll in the 1950s, Carmichael continued to write songs, including such minor hits as “My Resistance Is Low” and “Winter Moon,” but had no more major successes as a songwriter. He also acted in a variety of television roles, such as his recurring dramatic part on the popular western series, “Laramie.”



Your 'Man' or 'Woman Friday' - Someone, alive or dead who you would love to meet and spend a little time with?

I would like to meet **Elizabeth Taylor**. She was a British and American actress who began her career as a child actress in the early 1940s and was one of the most popular stars of classical Hollywood cinema in the 1950s. She then became the world's highest paid movie star in the 1960s, remaining a well-known public figure for the rest of her life. She would have many a tale to tell while strolling along the beach.



Your Favourite Book - Apart from the Bible.



v**"Born Free"** by **Joy Adamson**. Fifty years ago, Joy Adamson first introduced to the world the story of her life alongside Elsa the lioness, whom she had rescued as an orphaned cub, and raised at her home in Kenya. But as Elsa had been born free, Joy made the heartbreaking decision that she must be returned to the wild when she was old enough to fend for herself. It was made into a popular and tear-jerking film starring Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers.

Music 4 - Your Favourite Hymn

The stirring and rousing **"Battle Hymn of the Republic"** ~ otherwise known as **"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."** This was written by the American composer **Julia Ward Howe**. She was mainly well-known through her prose and poetical works. Her "Battle Hymn of the Republic" was written in 1861 at the outbreak of the Civil War.



Finally, One Special Item - If you could save one thing from the wreck, or one thing from your imagination to help you while away the time, what would it be?



This would have to be a radio. A wind-up or a solar version would be absolutely ideal. Though I would be cut off from the rest of the world, it would be good to know what was going on elsewhere and perhaps hear (and dance) to my favourite music.



"In the Bleak Midwinter" it is lovely to read this account (and see such lovely pictures) of summer travels and a wonderful faith-filled adventure.

Some Pilgrimage Memories from the Summer

by Raymond Daley

It is comforting, during these cold winter months, to recall the warmer days of the Lourdes Pilgrimage made by a few of us from the parish last summer. We travelled with the Hosanna Childrens' Pilgrimage Trust ~ a charity that organises pilgrimage to Lourdes for disabled children and adults, supported by volunteer helpers. Link: <https://www.hcpt.org.uk> We travelled from a warm Kendal in late July, flying from Manchester directly to Tarbes where it was on average just 3 degrees warmer. Not too hot.



This is the view of the Pyrenees from the terrace of Hosanna House on a relatively cloudless day.



We had daily Mass in the chapel plus much opportunity for private prayer and reflection. I had been to Lourdes before with a combined group from St Mary's, Cleator and St Benedict's, Whitehaven with Mancunia. Then we stayed in the town where it was constantly busy like most Lourdes Pilgrims do.

Hosanna House provides a different experience as it is four kilometres above the town in a more scenic and peaceful setting. Having our own space, i.e. chapel, shop, and other facilities ~ without facing constant competition from the many other Lourdes Pilgrims ~ certainly made it a more restful, peaceful experience. We had the opportunity to have our own social activities and to get to know others in the group which included disabled adults and a number of Deaf pilgrims who relied on signing to communicate. Our leader was Fr. Paul Fletcher, a Jesuit Priest who was also Deaf.



The Underground Basilica

Apart from the devotional opportunities, such as visits to the Grotto, Rosary Basilica, Cachot and the Underground Basilica, the itinerary included visits to French cafes and markets and a day at the Lac de Lourdes.



Optional, but for me not to be missed, a spectacular ride on the Funiculaire Pic Du Jer.



The view from the top of the Funiculaire Pic Du Jer.

<https://www.picdujer.com/en>



Lac de Lourdes



Our Group 555 Bear

Overall, it was a richly varied personal spiritual experience and holiday that I would certainly recommend. I would like to thank Christine Jamieson, HCPT and all Group 556 Members for a special, most enjoyable experience.

*With every passing day, the situation in Gaza grows more and more grim.
I thought it might be useful to have a brief look at the American perspective as I understand it.*

America and the War in the Middle East

by Celeste Bonfanti

Like all of us, I find it very difficult to watch news of the nightmare in Gaza. The day I heard of the Hamas attack on Israel, I am sure we were all saying the same thing: “How could they do this, when the Israeli response is positively guaranteed to be devastating and to decimate the civilian population of Gaza?” The ensuing conflict has been even worse than most of us could have imagined. Life in Gaza has been hard enough in peace time.

I find it even more difficult to gauge the perception outside the US of our stubborn refusal to back a ceasefire to stop the killing. The situation is very difficult to tease out but I want to clarify a few things:

- First and foremost, the US is not and has never been a monolith. The political situation here is so dysfunctional, the simplest issues are made insurmountable through partisan bickering and gridlock. Everything is a point of contention. While it may appear that the US is solidly behind Israel, this is not the case. An increasing number of Americans (including the Biden administration) are highly critical of Israel’s response to the Hamas attack, its disproportionate ferocity, its seeming disregard for the lives of innocent civilians and its apparent unwillingness to differentiate between Hamas and the Palestinian people.
- I do not for a moment minimise the horrors to which the Jewish people have been subjected in their history. However, I have always been disgusted at how, despite (or perhaps because of) its history as the tiny kingdom surrounded by superpowers, as its fortunes have changed, Israel has become an increasingly cruel oppressor. One could have hoped that the memory of its own oppression could have produced a more enlightened world view. Instead, the building of illegal settlements continues, as does the refusal to entertain the concept of a two-state solution to “the Palestinian problem.” They seem unconcerned that their barbaric actions are certain to stoke a burning hatred in the hearts of many otherwise peaceful residents of Gaza.
- Even within the framework of the dysfunctional politics in Washington, things are particularly knotty at the moment. With the backbone of the Christian fundamentalist movement, one could expect that the Republicans would be all about standing up for Israel. Instead, they are holding up funding to Israel in their attempt to hold the Democrats’ feet to the fire re: immigration and the frightful situation at our southern border. They are not at all pro-Palestinian, but apparently their regard for Israel doesn’t match their hatred of Joe Biden.
- Nearly 6 million American adults identify as Jewish; that’s nearly 3% of the adult population. There has been a strong relationship between the US and Israel since its inception, although Netanyahu presents major headaches for the Democrats. And a very significant portion of the Jewish population in the US is politically engaged. We are in an election year, and the Jewish vote is split between the parties. With the voting population so equally split, both parties are fighting for every vote and every fundraising dollar (let



us remember the obscene amount of money spent in American elections ~ it positively boggles the mind of a person who works in our little Camden thrift shop each Saturday surrounded by destitute people).

- While no one knows what will happen in the next few months, at this point the presumed nominee for the Republicans is Donald Trump. And no Democrat, least of all Joe Biden, wants to live through the chaos of another Trump presidency. But this presents a unique problem for Biden. He is either going to support the legacy relationship with Israel and alienate the progressive wing of his party and a growing number of centrists, or he is going to go to bat for the beleaguered Palestinian people and lose the Jewish vote and their very significant donation potential.



We all know there is a lot going on behind the scenes, and both Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken are trying to thread the needle as best they can. Both are vocal about the need for a two-state solution as the only feasible resolution to the crisis. But there is no doubt that, in the eyes of most of the world, the American response to the conflict is woefully lacking. The “shining city on the hill” loses moral standing by the day as the bombs continue to fall on this vulnerable population. It is a source of grief to anyone with a heart in their body and blood in their veins.

On 31st October of last year, I read this in the daily reflection from the Centre for Spiritual Development: “In the essay *The Meaning of this War*, during World War II, Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote the following: ‘For evil is indivisible. It is the same in thought and in speech, in private and social life. The greatest task of our time is to take the souls of men out of the pit. The world has experienced that God is involved. Let us forever remember that the sense for the sacred is as vital to us as the light of the sun.’ [Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity, 211]”.

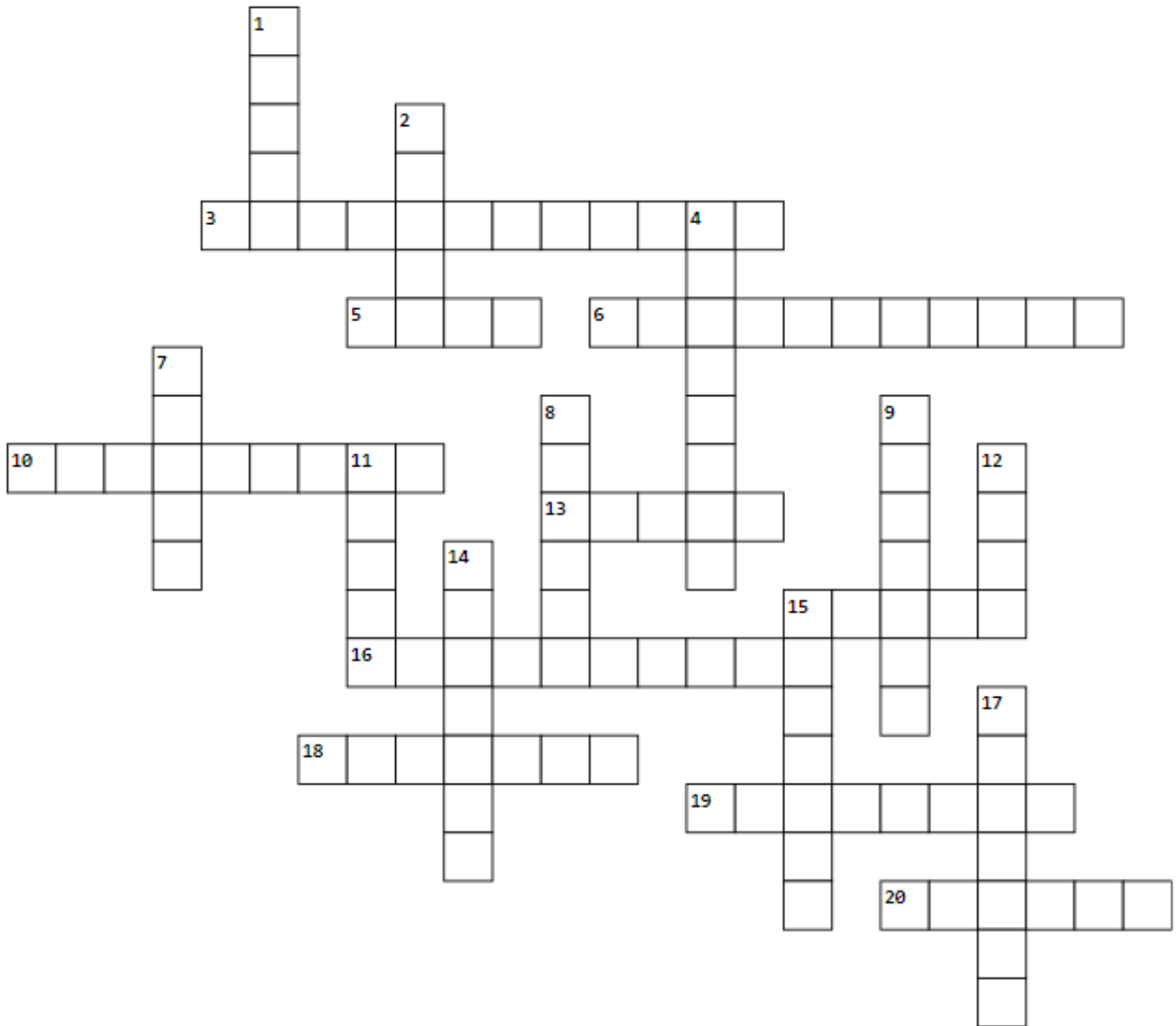
Many Americans are praying without ceasing for Gaza. My sister Maria has gone so far as to write to Biden to urge him to change his stance. We long to take these poor souls out of the pit. We search in vain for the sense for the sacred in the nightmare, and pray that the killing will end with some kind of justice for the Palestinian people and a chance to rebuild their lives in peace.

“Scripture scholars contend that the original language of the Beatitudes should not be rendered as “Blessed are the single-hearted” or “Blessed are the peacemakers” or “Blessed are those who struggle for justice.” Greater precision in translation would say, “You are in the right place if... you are single-hearted or work for peace.” The Beatitudes is not a spirituality, after all. It’s a geography. It tells us where to stand. Compassion isn’t just about feeling the pain of others; it’s about bringing them in toward yourself. If we love what God loves, then, in compassion, margins get erased. “Be compassionate as God is compassionate” means the dismantling of barriers that exclude.”



Fr. Greg Boyle
Tattoos on the Heart

WINTER



ACROSS

3. Fear of snow
5. Site of the 1952 Winter Olympics
6. This country invented the winter sport of bobsledding
10. To spend the winter in a dormant state
13. Traditional winter dwelling of the Inuit
15. A sport similar to ice hockey, played with a ball instead of a puck
16. Ancient stone monument aligned with winter solstice sunset
18. Sport in which players slide stones on a sheet of ice
19. Severe snowstorm with high winds
20. A food stored by squirrels in winter

DOWN

1. Direction birds fly for the winter
2. Roman god of doors and gates from which January gets its name
4. Dogsled race that goes from Anchorage to Nome, Alaska
7. The North American colour for beginning ski slopes
8. Greek goddess of snow
9. A vertical channel that extends smoke and gases up through the roof of a building
11. What moose eat in winter
12. A “___” shade of winter
14. Traditional sweet fruit bread from Germany
15. First city to host both Winter and Summer Olympics
17. In the film “White Christmas,” General Waverly has a ski lodge in this US state

Winter Wonderland

This monster word search includes more than 50 winter words going in every possible direction. Can you find them all?



- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| avalanche | gloves | January | slippery |
| blanket | hail | Kwanzaa | slush |
| blizzard | Hanukkah | lunar new year | snowball |
| chimney | heater | melt | snowboard |
| Christmas | hibernate | migrate | snowdrift |
| coat | hockey | mittens | snowflake |
| cold | holidays | New Year's Day | snowman |
| December | hot chocolate | quilt | snowmobile |
| earmuffs | ice fishing | scarf | snowplow |
| February | ice skates | shovel | snowstorm |
| fireplace | icicles | skiing | sweater |
| freeze | igloo | sled | vacation |
| freezing rain | Jack Frost | sleet | Valentine's Day |
| frigid | jacket | sleigh | |



