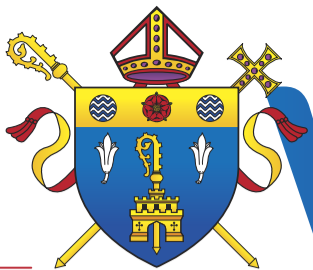


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The Catholic



VOICE of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to the Diocese of Lancaster

Issue 359 + May '24

INSIDE: pg14 Back in the Habit! A Different kind of Abbey (Road) for chart-topping Nuns



Pope Francis spoke these words in March:

... You can have flaws, be anxious, and even be angry, but do not forget that your life is the greatest enterprise in the world. Only you can stop it from going bust. Many appreciate you, admire you and love you.

Remember that to be happy is not to have a sky without a storm, a road without accidents, work without fatigue, relationships without disappointments.

To be happy is to find strength in forgiveness, hope in battles, security in the stage of fear, love in discord. It is not

only to enjoy the smile, but also to reflect on the sadness. It is not only to celebrate the successes, but to learn lessons from the failures. It is not only to feel happy with the applause, but to be happy in anonymity. Being happy is not a fatality of destiny, but an achievement for those who can travel within themselves. To be happy is to stop feeling like a victim and become your destiny's author. It is to cross deserts, yet to be able to find an oasis in the depths of our soul. It is to thank God for every morning, for the miracle of life.

Being happy is not being afraid of your own feelings. It's to be able to talk about you. It is having the courage to hear a "no". It is confidence in the face of criticism, even

when unjustified. It is to kiss your children, pamper your parents, to live poetic moments with friends, even when they hurt us.

To be happy is to let live the creature that lives in each of us, free, joyful and simple. It is to have maturity to be able to say: "I made mistakes". It is to have the courage to say "I am sorry". It is to have the sensitivity to say, "I need you". It is to have the ability to say "I love you".

May your life become a garden of opportunities for happiness ... That in spring may it be a lover of joy. In

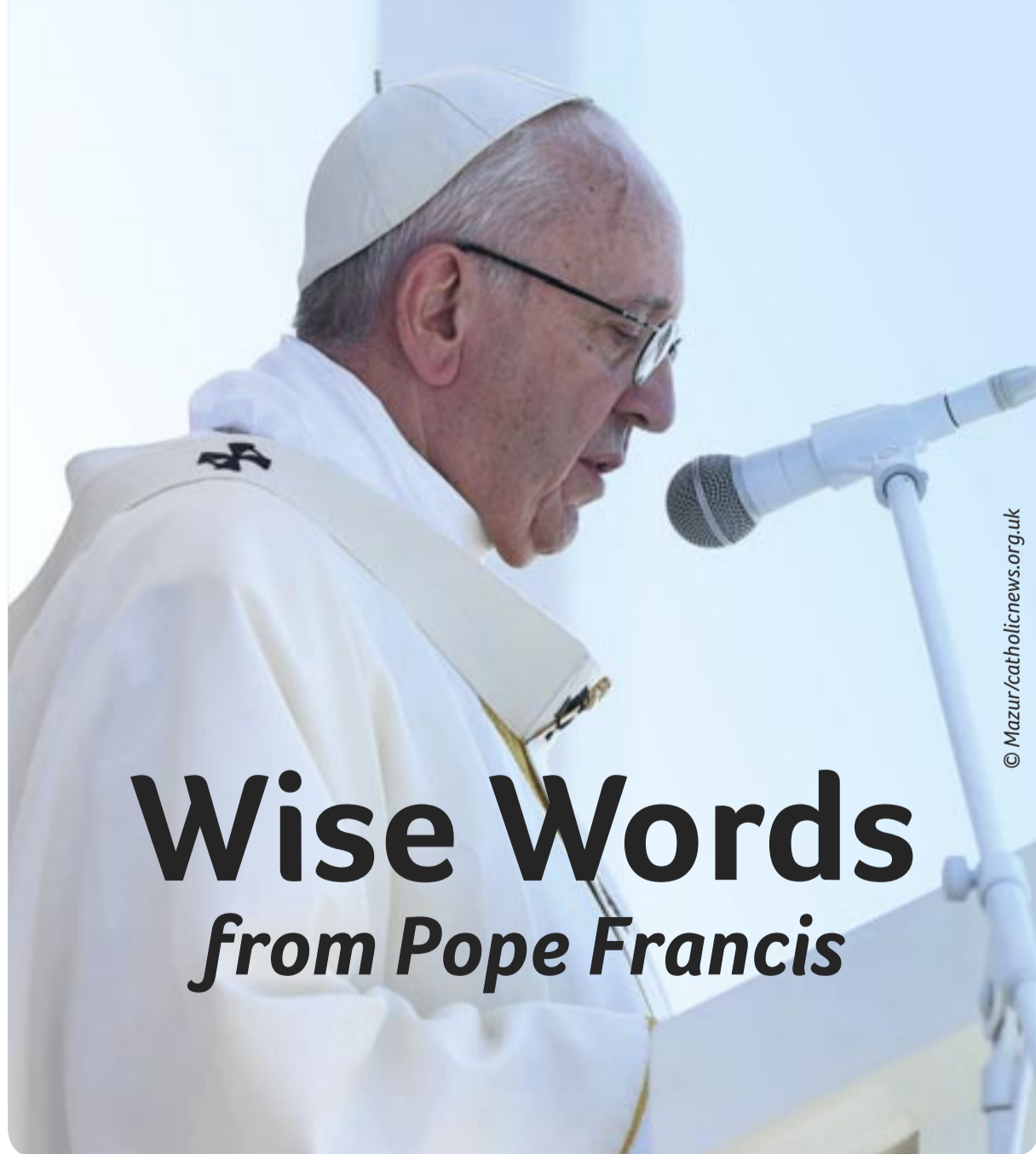
winter a lover of wisdom. And when you make a mistake, start all over again.

For only then will you be in love with life. You will find that to be happy is not to have a perfect life. But use the tears to irrigate tolerance.

Use your losses to train patience. Use your mistakes to sculpt serenity.

Use pain to plaster pleasure. Use obstacles to open windows of intelligence.

Never give up Never give up on people who love you. Never give up on happiness, for life is an incredible show.



Wise Words from Pope Francis

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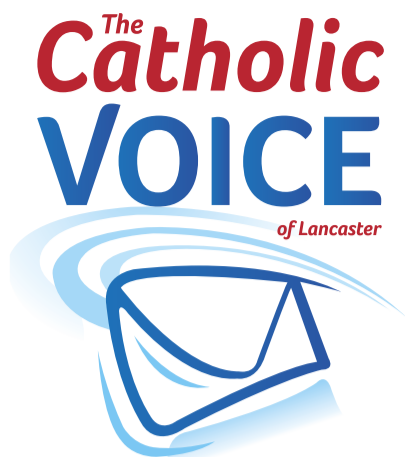
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EDITOR:

Edwina Gillett
01253 736630 / 07969 967268
edwinagillett@hotmail.co.uk

ADVERTISING:

Charlotte Rosbrooke / CathCom Ltd.
01440 730399
charlotter@cathcom.org
www.cathcom.org

DESIGN & LAYOUT:

Rob Hotchkiss / Hot Creative
01253 730343
rob@hot-creative.co.uk
www.hot-creative.co.uk

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Articles to:

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Letters to:

voicelatters@hotmail.co.uk

POSTAL ADDRESS:

FAO Edwina Gillett
99 Commonsides, Ansdell,
Lytham St. Annes FY8 4DJ

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Sycamore Gap and Living Simply

The LiveSimply Award

The LiveSimply award is a scheme for Catholic communities (*parishes, schools, religious orders and chaplaincies*) to show how they have been answering the call for us to care for our common home and stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world by living: simply; sustainably and in solidarity with people living in poverty. The award celebrates what you have already done and inspires you to do more. It helps your community live, not just more simply, but also more fully.

Many of us were outraged at the felling of the “iconic” tree at Sycamore Gap on Hadrian’s Wall in an act of vandalism. It was just one sycamore, but we cared because it was a beautiful tree in a glorious position in our own locality.

Far away, in the Amazon, millions of trees and the wonderful plants and animals that depend on them are destroyed each year, not as acts of vandalism, but as acts of greed. The indigenous peoples, “the guardians of the rainforest”, are driven from their land and their leaders subjected to intimidation and sometimes murdered. Injustice is rampant.

The main perpetrators are the meat and extractive industries, particularly gold mining. The meat industry clears the forest for cattle ranching or to grow soybeans for animal feed. Gold mining creates huge amounts of spoil and pollutes rivers with toxic mercury waste. On the other side of the world, in Borneo,

the rainforest and its Orang-utan habitat is being destroyed for palm oil plantations.

Pope Francis takes us to task for this destruction: “Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity. Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence. We have no such right”. (Laudato Si’ #33)

The sad thing is that the destruction is unnecessary. It occurs to satisfy the lifestyles of the well-off - and that includes ourselves. The very profitable burger industry has an insatiable demand for cheap beef, whilst the pork and poultry industries import huge amounts of soybean from the Amazon for feed. According to the gold industry’s own statistics, nearly 90% of the gold mined

today will end up as bullion in bank vaults or as jewellery - icons of wealth and status. The Golden Calf is alive and well.

Is this what life is about - the frantic race to eat more, own more? Surely, true living is about peace, contentment and wholesome relationships. It is about living simply, sustainably and in solidarity with Jesus’ particular friends, the poor. It is about gratitude, not “attitude”. As Pope Francis puts it: “Christian spirituality proposes an alternative understanding of the quality of life, and encourages a prophetic and contemplative lifestyle, one capable of deep enjoyment free of the obsession with consumption” (Laudato Si’ # 222).

In November 2022, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales published four “Resolutions on Environmental Matters”. The first re-iterates observing the Friday abstinence from meat, recognising the environmental impact of meat



production; doing so as an act of solidarity with those who face hunger and poverty every day; and dedicating to God the pressing need for us all to live more simply.

The third states: The Bishops' Conference commends the LiveSimply award as a response to Pope Francis' invitation in Laudato Si "to work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us". Recognising that some schools and parishes may already have similar projects ongoing, the bishops encourage all remaining schools and parishes to consider signing up to this award as a sign of their solidarity with the poor and their desire to live in harmony with God's creation.

Wow! What a challenge!.....But as a member of a parish which has the award, I can say that getting started was not too daunting as we were doing much of what was required anyway, but it provided a fresh focus for doing more.

“
*Because of us,
 thousands of
 species will
 no longer give
 glory to God
 by their very
 existence.
 We have no
 such right.*

Pope Francis

There is plenty of help and guidance available from people who have been through the process. A good start might be to put it on the agenda for the next parish Pastoral Council meeting. You can find out more at: <https://cafod.org.uk/campaign/livesimply-award>. You can also contact CAFOD Lancaster at lancaster@cafod.org.uk

St Francis of Assisi said "Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if you have to". Living simply provides an eloquent statement of gospel values in our distracted world.

Meanwhile, let us contemplate and celebrate God's wonderful gift of creation, especially in our own diocese, and seek to protect what is good and beautiful in our world, including sycamores!

Stephen Garsed, Environmental Justice Lead, Lancaster Diocese Faith & Justice Commission. Campaign Volunteer Co-ordinator, CAFOD Lancaster.



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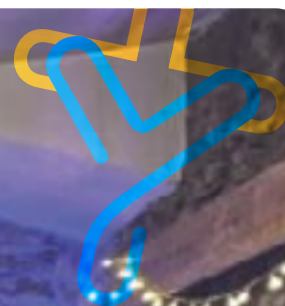
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 Saint Benedict.**

YOUTH MATTERS



As I write, we are three days away from our Easter Retreat. We've got a great programme planned and we're expecting a great crowd. The weather is also starting to look a little brighter in Keswick and we're hoping for a nice weekend. After all, a lot of the Easter Retreat is outside!

The Big News!

First of all, let's start with a big announcement! Are you ready...?

On Sunday September 15th, we are holding our first Castlerigg Open Day

since before Covid! Remember those days? Anyway... We are opening up the house and grounds for a day and welcoming not just the local Keswick community but the whole diocese. Basically, anybody who wants to come.

Now (*full disclosure...*) this was only confirmed today – the same day I'm writing this – so we're a long way from having a full programme but trust us when we say that it's going to be a lovely day! And hopefully mid September will still be warm, or at least warm-ish.

The day starts at midday, 12pm and ends with Mass at 3pm. Bishop Paul will be with us to celebrate Mass – a Mass which will also be a commissioning for the new Castlerigg team as they begin their year together.

September 15th. Castlerigg Manor. 12pm Start. Mass at 3. Get it in your diaries!

That's the big news. What else is there this month?

Would you like to join the team?

We are currently looking for a Programme Leader as well as interns to join the team! We've got a really lovely team at Castlerigg at the moment and we're engaged in some really exciting work. Maybe you or somebody you know might want to join us..? We now operate a rolling recruitment system for interns (*formerly called Gap Year volunteers*) which means that suitable people can start at various different points in the year. Our Catholic Youth Ministry Internship scheme offers great training and experience working in a dynamic youth service.

For more information contact jack@castleriggmanor.co.uk

We are looking for a paid Programme Leader to start in mid-August. We are looking for a committed Catholic, ideally with some youth ministry experience. It's a two-year fixed term post and it's residential too. The salary package is £26-28k, which is £19-21k paid salary plus accommodation, food and so on.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

Summer Retreat // May 24-25 // The Summer Retreat is the new kid on the block. Our newest general open retreat will hopefully complement the Advent and Easter Retreats by giving people who have been to Castlerigg a chance to come back and take the experience that little bit deeper. Like those retreats though, it's not restricted to those who have been before. Bookings will open after the Easter Retreat.

Catholic Students Retreat // Nov 15-17 // After the success of our first students retreat last year, we are holding another one this autumn. Once again, there will be a discounted rate for students and this year there will be a theme holding the weekend together. Bookings will open in the summer.

Advent Retreat // Dec 13-15 // The next open retreat after the summer retreat will be the Advent Retreat in mid December. Bookings open in September. *Jack Regan*

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Incorporating Technology in Ministry: Engaging Today's Youth

In an era where technology is intertwined with almost every aspect of life, incorporating it into church ministry is essential, especially when engaging with today's youth. Technology is not just a tool; it's a language that young people speak fluently, and the church needs to become conversant in this language to remain relevant and connected.

The first step in integrating technology into youth ministry is understanding the platforms and mediums that resonate most with young people. Social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are not just channels for entertainment; they are spaces where young people form communities, share ideas, and express themselves. These platforms can be used by the church to share messages, create faith-based content, and open dialogues with the youth.

Creating engaging content that speaks to the youth in a language they understand is crucial. Short, impactful videos, interactive posts, and thought-provoking images can capture their attention and provoke deeper thinking and engagement with faith-based concepts. This content can range from day-to-day reflections and Bible verses or the day's Mass readings to answers to common questions about faith, morality, and the role of the church in modern society.

Another significant aspect is the use of apps and websites. Apps for daily prayers, Bible reading plans, and faith-based podcasts can help integrate spirituality into the daily lives of young people. Websites that are youth-friendly, with resources like blogs, forums, and Q&A sections, can be invaluable for those seeking to explore their faith at their own pace.

Virtual and augmented reality present new frontiers for immersive religious experiences. Imagine a virtual reality tour of historical churches or biblical

locations, or augmented reality applications that bring Bible stories to life. Such technologies can make religious education more interactive and engaging.

The power of technology also lies in its ability to foster community. Online prayer groups, virtual bible study sessions, and live-streamed church services can reach those who might not be able to attend in person, including youth with disabilities or those living in remote areas. These digital communities can offer support, fellowship, and a sense of belonging, extending the church's reach far beyond its physical walls.

However, while embracing technology, it's crucial to address the challenges it presents. Navigating issues like online safety, digital etiquette, and screen time balance should be part of the church's dialogue with its youth. Providing guidance on using technology responsibly and ethically can be an integral part of modern ministry.

Incorporating technology in ministry also means equipping church leaders with the necessary skills and understanding. Workshops or training sessions on using social media, content creation, and understanding digital trends can be highly beneficial. It's about bridging the gap between traditional ministry methods and contemporary communication channels.

In conclusion, integrating technology into youth ministry is not about replacing traditional methods but enriching and expanding them. It's about meeting young people where they are, in the digital spaces they inhabit, and using these platforms to communicate the timeless messages of faith, hope, and community. By doing so, the church can remain a relevant, engaging, and nurturing presence in the lives of its youngest members, guiding them in their spiritual journey in a language they best understand.

David Pope dip FD MBIFD



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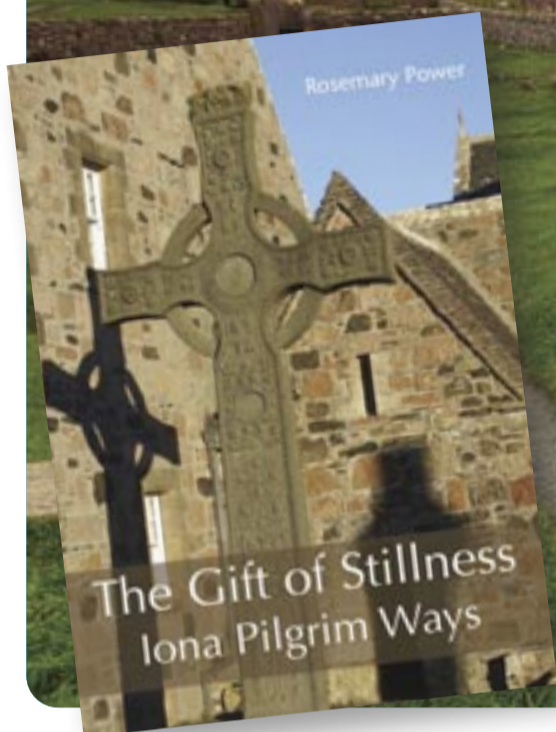
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A new book from Wild Goose Publications offers a spiritual guide and a cherished companion for those seeking a deeper connection with themselves and the world around them. It is written by Rosemary Power who is a member of the Iona Community. She writes both academically and for the general reader. She is the author of several books, including *Image & Vision: Reflecting with the Book of Kells*, and *The Story of Iona: Columban and Medieval Sites and Spirituality*.



Embracing stillness on Iona



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We are a growing family of schools.
Our Trust is now 13 schools, 11 Primaries and 2 Secondaries across North Lancashire and Cumbria.

Many visitors to the sacred Isle of Iona yearn to undertake the traditional seven-mile pilgrimage around the island, but physical limitations can make this journey impossible. Rosemary Power provides an alternative path for those seeking a slower, more contemplative pilgrimage experience in her new book, *The Gift of Stillness*.

The book emphasises that pilgrimage is a state of mind and spirit, not just a physical journey. Iona's beauty and enduring atmosphere of prayer and contemplation encourage deep reflection and connection with the sacred and natural worlds.

Authored by a writer with long personal experience of disability, the book caters to pilgrims who wish to explore Iona at their own pace. The focus is on reflection and mindfulness, encouraging readers to find meaning in the island's sights, sounds and rich history.

The book offers three sections:

- **Personal reflections:** Meditations on Iona's medieval carvings and buildings and on prayers associated with the island.

- **Cloister walk:** A guided exploration, either alone or with a small group, focusing on the natural world depicted in the cloisters' modern carvings.
- **Island pilgrimage by boat:** A journey around the whole coastline of the island by boat, encompassing most of the traditional stopping points of the walking pilgrimage and more.

The Gift of Stillness is more than a guide; it's an invitation to slow down, be present and connect with the deep spiritual essence of Iona. It reminds us that pilgrimage is a journey of the heart and mind, open to all. It gently leads readers on a journey of reflection and spiritual renewal, suitable for all abilities.

A testament to the enduring allure of Iona and its profound spiritual significance, *The Gift of Stillness* will resonate with pilgrims, historians and seekers of inner peace alike.

The Gift of Stillness is available for purchase at a recommended retail price of £10.99.

For more info and to purchase, please visit: www.ionabooks.com/product/the-gift-of-stillness/



World Children's Day

Mission Together – the children's branch of Missio, the Pope's charity for overseas mission – is helping children to join with their global sisters and brothers to celebrate World Children's Day over the weekend of 25-26 May.

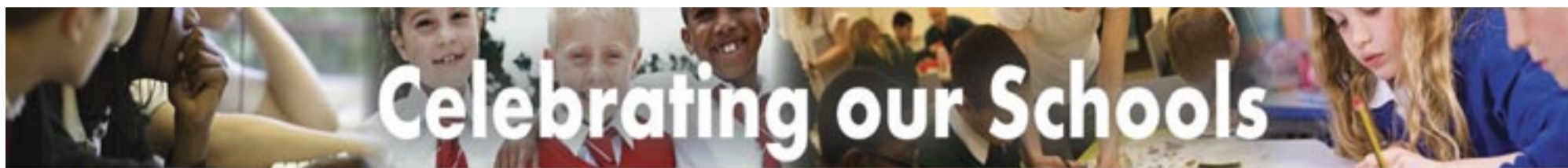
Pope Francis announced the inauguration of this special day on 8 December 2023. The concept came from a nine-year-old boy, Alessandro, who, just a few months earlier had written to Pope Francis with an idea to bring children together from different countries for a special event. Alessandro's hope was that the children could get to know one another, play and pray together, and become friends.

Alessandro's idea leans into the practice of accompaniment, which Pope Francis says is at the centre of being a missionary disciple. For the Holy Father, accompaniment means encountering others and listening to them so that we can form connections, build relationships, and reflect the love of Jesus to them. World Children's Day invites children from around the globe, including those from areas of conflict and children of different faiths, to join together as sisters and brothers. Although the event focus will take place in Rome, Pope Francis calls on Catholics around the globe to celebrate this special event in their own Diocese too.

Cardinal Mendonça, Director, WCD

World Children's Day is an occasion to put children, who are the present and the future of humanity, back at the centre of the world's attention...

It offers children the possibility to become protagonists through moments of prayer, friendship, and formation.



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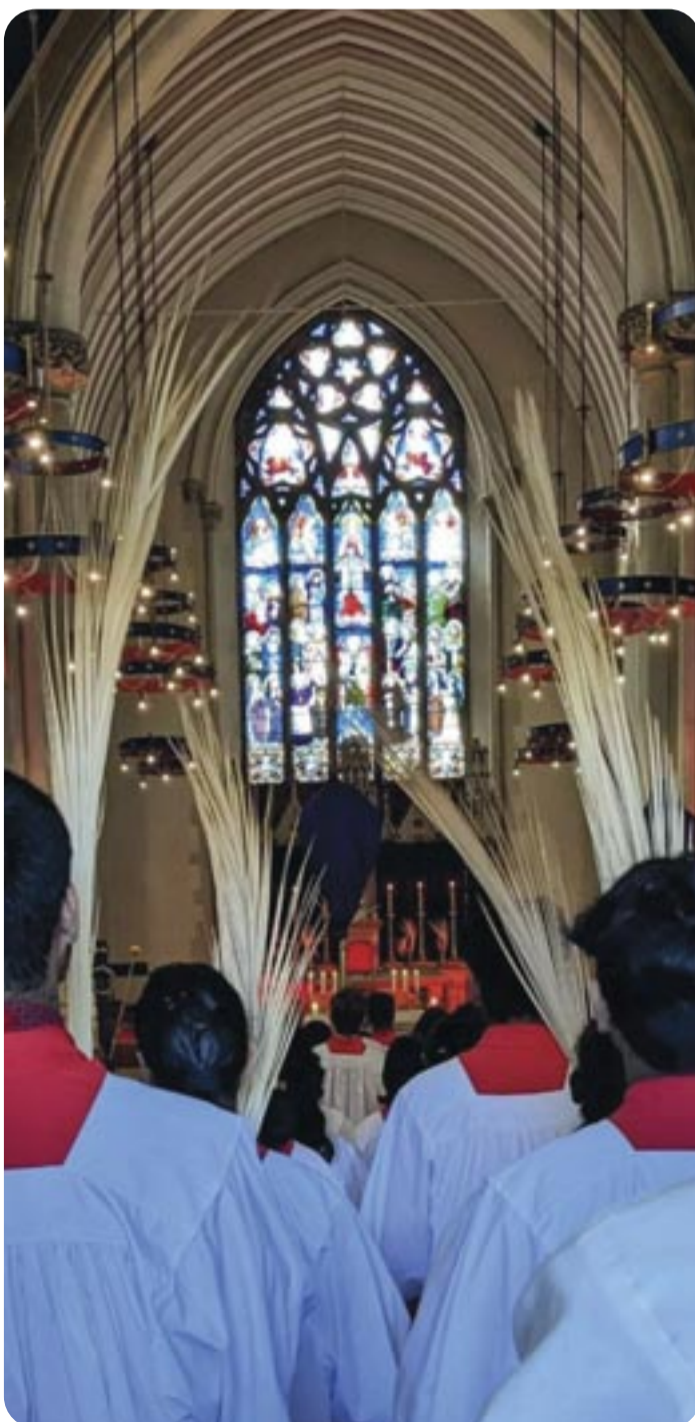
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Why Become a Catholic?

This report is by its Lead Researcher, Philip Kemp.

With a background of an increasingly secular society, why do some adults still decide to join the Catholic Church? A new report by the Diocese of East Anglia Commission for the New Evangelisation throws some light on the matter.

Most people will be aware of declining attendance at regular religious services and increasing numbers of those who do not identify with any religious faith in an increasingly secular society. Yet there are many adults who do choose to join the Catholic Church.

The Diocese of East Anglia Commission for the New Evangelisation recently carried out a research study to explore why adults decided to become Catholics and whether there are any lessons for evangelisation. Ten individuals (*five male and five female*) from across a broad range of parishes were interviewed in depth and the interviews were then systematically analysed to identify common themes which appeared to inform participants' journeys into the Catholic Church.

There were six key interrelated themes identified. Interviewees experienced a spiritual restlessness, including already committed Christians in another denomination. It was accompanied by a deliberate quest for this to be resolved and was often a very protracted process over a number of years.

Their quest was intellectually driven. Participants were highly proactive in their quest to find a spiritual home and in the process acquired impressive knowledge about Catholicism. They drew heavily on YouTube channel speakers for their spiritual formation.

Intellectual rationales were insufficient on their own. Intellectual drivers interacted with affective experiences. At various points in the process to become a Catholic, participants experienced particular moments of being profoundly moved in a deep spiritual sense, for example, through Holy Mass or Adoration services, which acted as catalysts.

Participants' gravitation towards the Catholic Church followed an incremental process whereby serial illuminations provided heightened appreciation of Catholic beliefs and practices. This

often involved de-mystification of pre-existing prejudices or misunderstandings.

The discovery of reverence in Catholic practices was a central illuminating experience which had a profound impact, including among those who had previously been committed Christians from a non-Catholic denomination.

The journey to the Catholic Church was largely a self-initiated process. However, having eventually decided to become a Catholic, key end-stage facilitators, often but not exclusively a parish priest, played a crucial role in drawing individuals in and facilitating the sacramental steps for formal entry to the Church.

One interviewee said:
"Everything I was hearing made sense. I was listening to lots of testimonies.... It was just beginning to build up and I just, I still had, lots of questions. I still was not sure about Mary, purgatory, or praying to the saints, things like that. But I was growing but I couldn't stop, I just couldn't stop listening and reading and at the same time I felt drawn to the Catholic Church."

Analysis of the interviews in this study suggests that the process for an adult deciding to become a Catholic is a largely self-initiated, protracted, complex and multi-dimensional. There were no sudden conversions.

Similarly, there was no single decision nor single event that provided overwhelming grounds for joining the Catholic Church. Rather there appears to be an incremental process of increasing understanding and insights, a series of spiritually rich experiences, and timely significant relationship encounters. All of these factors have a cumulative effect over an extended period of time. These findings indicate a number of areas of consideration and challenge which might help inform evangelisation strategies and practices.



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Sun Rise service

On Easter Sunday 85 parishioners from Churches Together in Fulwood and Broughton, Preston, worshipped together on Beacon Fell. Catholics, Methodists, and Anglicans prayed together as the sun rise reminded them of the risen Christ. One visitor to Our Lady and St Edward's parish, Anne, wrote about the event.

"As dawn broke on Easter Sunday, the view from Beacon Fell summit took our breath away. We quickly realised the crazy early alarm and stumbling up the hill in the pre sunrise darkness was entirely worth it. Against the backdrop of an amazing sunrise, we took part in a short Easter service organised by Rev. Jane Wild from Fulwood

Methodist church, and Rev. Martin McDonald from St. Cuthberts church. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience revelling in the beauty of the crisp morning and the camaraderie of this special occasion. The event concluded with hot cross buns, cups of tea and a beautiful atmosphere of fellowship and community. Perfection, would highly recommend this annual event to all.

See you there next year!"

Rev Jane Wild (superintendent Minister) said "It was lovely to see so many different traditions worshipping together on the most significant Sunday of our Christian year."

Elizabeth Alty



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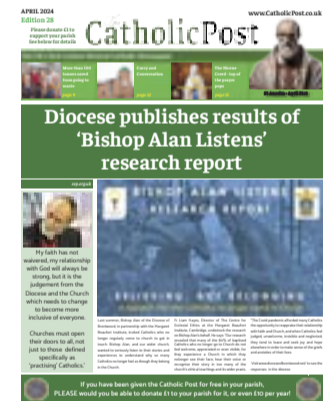
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L'Arche UK: A Joyful Rebellion

On 20th January 2024, if you had wandered into Canterbury Cathedral's crypt, you would have found yourself at a banquet. Hundreds of people with and without learning disabilities, crammed in, waving colourful flags, dancing to Abba, making a holy noise in that ancient building. This was L'Arche Kent's fiftieth birthday party. In one of the speeches, someone asked: what do you do when a miracle happens? 'You see it and you believe it,' rang out a voice in the front row.

L'Arche UK began in 1974 in a village outside Canterbury, when a group of people with and without learning disabilities moved into a house together inspired by the L'Arche communities in France, Canada, and India. At that time, people with learning disabilities were generally living with family or in long-stay hospitals where abuse was rife.

L'Arche began with a series of 'what ifs': what if people with and without learning disabilities were partners in community-building? What if sharing life was better than living alone? What if friendship is at the heart of the gospel?

That beginning was a miracle. It is even more miraculous that we are still here, fifty years later. L'Arche is now an international federation of communities of people with and without learning disabilities. We are based at eleven sites across the UK, from London, to Preston, to Inverness. Friendship, faith, and celebration are at the heart of our shared life. But when you live in L'Arche, you witness fragility and pain as well as friendship and joy. The last five years have been bruising. The pandemic, a social care funding crisis, Brexit, and revelations of historic abuse have hurt us. And yet, miraculously, we're still here – see it and believe it.

Our jubilee theme is 'joyful rebellion', something urgently needed in 2024. Sharing life as people with and without learning disabilities is a rebellion against a care sector that doesn't always care, and a society that too often sees disabled people as less capable of relationship or creativity. But, throughout our history, we have rebelled with joy rather than letting ourselves be deadened by anger.

When I arrived at L'Arche in 2018, I was angry. Austerity, rising populism, a collapsing environment, a divided Church – the UK felt broken. Life in L'Arche was often tiring, mundane, overwhelming. But I found myself invited into a different way of living, a community where miracles were to be expected and inclusion was the norm. Six years on, I am firmly convinced of the power of community to change the world. 2024 is a momentous year, as a quarter of the world will vote in elections, and war and

climate destruction spreads. Community is not an easy fix but an antidote to that familiar poison: that voice in all of us that says, 'you do not matter, you cannot make a difference'. Living in L'Arche is a masterclass on how to live together in a hurting and imperfect world: gently, joyfully, rebelliously, expecting miracles.

Join our joyful rebellion and apply for our live-in programme, the Soulful Internship. You'll live and work alongside people with learning disabilities whilst being guided through a programme all about mindfulness, embodiment, and L'Arche's distinctive charism. *Mary Osborne*

Learn more at: www.larche.org.uk/soulful-internship Alternatively, you can sponsor an intern for a year. Get in touch with us at livein@larche.org.uk



Dear Editor *****

Parrhesia: The biblical art of fearless speech

As the various UK Parliaments attempt to silence even silent prayer and thinking outside abortion clinics with threats of imprisonment, we do well to consider freedom of speech.

Unlike other Greek terms commonly used in liturgy, parrhesia is not necessarily a term most Catholics are familiar with. And still, it occupies an important place in Scripture, and thus in the spiritual lives of believers. As is often the case, the word is composed of another two: pan (*meaning all, as in Pantocrator, the one who has authority over everything*), and rhēsis (*meaning speech*). That is, parrhesia is about “saying it all” without reservation. In more ways than one, the word encompasses the notion of fearless and uninhibited candid speech. Early philosophers like Heraclitus, Socrates, and Diogenes are seen as the embodiment of parrhesia.

Socrates exemplified parrhesia in his relentless pursuit of truth through open dialogue. He fearlessly confronted societal norms and authority, speaking candidly to expose ignorance and challenge conventional wisdom. His methodical, philosophical use of parrhesia presupposes that genuine knowledge emerges through the unfiltered exchange of ideas – even if it means challenging some of the prevailing beliefs of the time.

In Catholic theology (*and in Scripture*) parrhesia takes on additional layers of meaning. While preserving this Socratic component of unreserved speech, Pauline letters encourage believers to speak the truth in love (*Ephesians 4:15*). If Socratic parrhesia allows for the discovery of truth in dialogue, unreserved loving conversation brings together the transformative power of fearless love and intimate communication.

In more ways than one, this is what the Word of God does: an unreserved, infinite, fearless donation of itself. Christ himself, the embodiment of truth, used parrhesia in challenging the religious authorities of his time, exemplifying the alignment of forthright speech with higher moral and spiritual principles.

Philosophical and theological traditions have always explored the relationship between truth-telling and spiritual transformation, examining how sincere speech plays a role in the development of the self. Indeed, parrhesia becomes a tool for self-examination and confession, paving the way for a deeper connection with ourselves, others, and the wholly Other – namely, God. The act of speaking truth, even when uncomfortable, becomes both a form of spiritual purification and an avenue for divine revelation.

Thinking of Jesus’ unreserved speech, not only when confronting the Pharisees, but also with his friends and family, serves as a reminder that genuine dialogue, rooted in authenticity and courage, is not only a philosophical pursuit of truth but also a transformative act with clear spiritual implications.

Brian McKenna via e mail *****

Your Letters

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Altar Server Lóic being admitted to the Guild of St Stephen. He is seen here with Fr Paul Dadson his Parish Priest at Our Lady & St Patrick's Maryport.



Back in the Habit! A Different kind of Abbey (Road) for chart-topping Nuns

Following on from their debut album in 2020 entitled *'Light of the World'* which soared to No 5 in the UK official album chart, The Poor Clares of Arundel return with a second album *'My Peace I give You'* which is due for release later this month on Decca Records.

Highest-charting nuns ever, the Poor Clares of Arundel are answering the prayers of eagerly waiting fans, by announcing today their return with a second album *'My Peace I Give You'*, out on May 24th on Decca Records. These nuns captured the hearts of millions of listeners in 2020 with their uplifting debut album *'Light for the World'*, which soared to No.5 in the UK Official Album Chart, infusing Latin hymns and mediaeval texts with a unique 21st Century production. The sisters are now gearing up to bring music from the 13th Century back to the mainstream pop chart once again.

For some, it is so often a case of the *'difficult second album'*, but the difficulty for the sisters was saying no to making one! Since the release and success of their first record, they have been inundated with *'fanmail'* asking for another. Recorded at the convent chapel in Arundel, West Sussex and mixed at Abbey Road Studios, this new album is a message of peace for a fractured world and the importance of caring for the planet. Never ones to do things by halves, the sisters are this time bringing you the album in Dolby Atmos!

As the nuns themselves say, there is no need to be religious to love their music. Sister Graça explains, *"My longing is for our music to touch people's hearts, and that's been the response. A lot of people saying, 'I don't believe in God, but there is something about your music that takes me somewhere that I had never experienced before'. That's it."*

The universal messages resonate with all who seek peace and harmony, especially in these challenging times.

A call to embrace happiness, the album invites listeners on a journey of reflection and connection with the world around us, sharing their ethos of kindness, calm and meditation through music. A time to pause and find solace in moments of introspection, that aid our ever-evolving search for inner peace. The Canticle of Creation, written by St Francis of Assisi, great friend to St Clare, is at the core of this album, and was divided across 7 songs. It is a thank you letter for all the beauty we can find on the planet: from the animals to the plants, and the sun to the water. Written in 1224, it is still relevant exactly 800 years later, where everything is at risk with global warming.

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Helping others being central to the work of the nuns, the Poor Clares were delighted to donate their profits from sales of their first album to charity, and will continue to do so. The sisters have also continued their work in the community, from time spent at running their small guesthouse in Arundel, to helping the local community in Bungoma in Kenya, where the sisters have a foundation. This, along with the letters, has also provided inspiration for the new record. Paired with the teachings of St. Francis and St. Clare, the Poor Clare Sisters of Arundel here celebrate peace, forgiveness, healing, patience, and joy. Beginning with biblical texts and transitioning to celebrate the wonder and beauty of the planet, the album underscores the importance of living in harmony with nature and one another.

Spanning ages from 50 to 96 and representing 6 different nationalities, the Poor Clares of Arundel is a diverse and vibrant community, defying expectations with their distinct personalities, rich sense of humour, and strong opinions. Secluded but not disconnected, they love watching a film to relax occasionally or dancing to the tunes of Bob Marley.

Gardening (*the sisters are almost completely self-sufficient in fruits and vegetables*), cooking, baking and heartfelt conversations populate their very orchestrated lives, all set to the rhythm of services, prayer, and reflection.

Chant plays a large role in the daily lives of the community of 23 nuns. Living, working, laughing and praying according to the form of life drawn up by St Clare of Assisi in 1253, they became the UK's best-selling classical artist debut of 2020, more than 800 years after they were founded. The original Light for the World release remained at the top of the UK Specialist Classical Chart for nineteen weeks after its release in October, with 80,000 copies worldwide and 60 millions streams. A Christmas track followed, along with the 'deluxe' edition released in January 2021.

"We are thrilled that the Poor Clare Sisters of Arundel are again inviting us into their quiet sanctuary with much needed messages of peace and hope, providing a place for focus and reflection in a busy world" said Fiona Pope (A&R Manager & Creative Partnership at Decca Record)



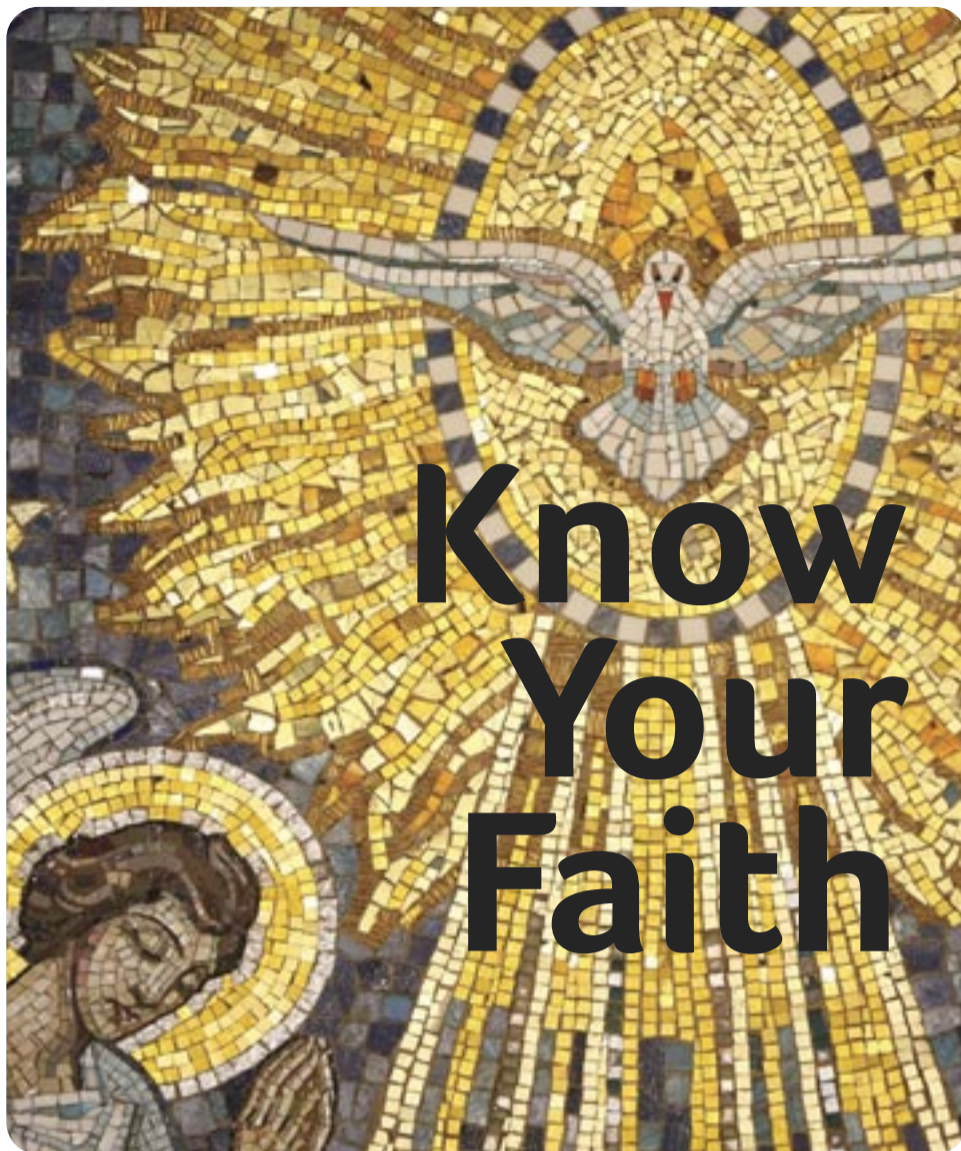
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Know Your Faith

In what way do the people of God share in the three functions of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King?

The people of God participate in Christ's priestly office insofar as the baptised are consecrated by the Holy Spirit to offer spiritual sacrifices. They share in Christ's prophetic office when with a supernatural sense of faith they adhere unfailingly to that faith and deepen their understanding and witness to it. The people of God share in his kingly office by means of service, imitating Jesus Christ who as King of the universe made himself the servant of all, especially the poor and the suffering. *Further reading: CCC 783-786*

In what way is the Church the body of Christ?

The risen Christ unites his faithful people to himself in an intimate way by means of the Holy Spirit. In this way, those who believe in Christ, in as much as they are close to him especially in the Eucharist, are united among themselves in charity. They form one body, the Church, whose unity is experienced in the diversity of its member and its functions. *Further reading: CCC 787-791, 805-806*

What is the mission of the Church?

The mission of the Church is to proclaim and establish the Kingdom of God begun by Jesus Christ among all peoples. The Church constitutes on earth the seed and beginning of this salvific Kingdom. *Further reading: CCC 767-769*

Why is the Church called the temple of the Holy Spirit?

She is so called because the Holy Spirit resides in the body which is the Church, in her Head and in her members. He also builds up the Church in charity by the Word of God, the sacraments, the virtues, and charisms. "What the soul is to the human body, the Holy Spirit is to the members of Christ, that is, the body of Christ, which is the Church." (Saint Augustine) *Further reading: CCC 797-798, 809-810*

What are charisms?

Charisms are special gifts of the Holy Spirit which are bestowed on individuals for the good of others, the needs of the world, and in particular for the building up of the Church. The discernment of charisms is the responsibility of the Magisterium. *Further reading: CCC 799-801*

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