

**The Catholic**  **VOICE** *of Lancaster*

*The Official Newspaper to  
the Diocese of Lancaster*  
Issue 279 + May 2016

**INSIDE:** p09 The Church as Mother  
p14 World Youth Day '16



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# The Catholic VOICE

of Lancaster



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## EDITORIAL

**T**here are some things people would rather we did not say... People are content for Christians to do charitable works, and even to go to Church on Sundays, but there are certain messages that the wider world seem to prefer us to keep to ourselves.

One of these is the ever-unpopular teaching that the only moral option for a Christian in their sexual life is either total abstinence or lifelong fidelity to one's spouse. This has never been a popular or easy line. When Jesus spoke on the subject, the response was, 'This is a difficult teaching. Who can accept it?' The Pope's Apostolic Exhortation on the Family, *Amoris Laetitia*, reminds us that whilst setting a demanding ideal, Christ "never failed to show compassion and closeness to the frailty of individuals like the Samaritan woman or the woman caught in adultery" (AL 38).

However, the ideal remains clear and unaltered. Stephen Clark, philosopher, argues that people become extremely anxious about sins they would rather not regard as such – indeed the world has tried to make certain sins 'expiable by redefinition'. The most effective way society has come up with thus far to alleviate the anxiety caused by guilt is to deny the existence of God, and with Him the existence of any absolute moral demands, thereby leaving ourselves free to pursue our pleasures without compunction.

A common human reaction to a person presenting truth is that people wish to 'stone' them. British people are naturally too polite to actually do this, but we are entering times when the primitive wish to 'do away with' the one who confronts me with what I have no wish to hear or a message I disagree with will increasingly take the form of disciplinary enquiries, scape-goating, and accusations of intolerance, discrimination, unprofessionalism or impropriety.

In our secular relativist culture a Christian's freedom to speak in the name of truth is being trumped by the other's right not to be offended. Thus we have the situation of a cinema not showing a Church of England advert because it included the Our Father, in case somebody would be offended, and the BBC omitting the

saying of Grace from a historical drama where the protagonists would naturally have prayed before meals.

We live in pluralist society. Free speech is a precious and integral value of British society. This right is properly limited where its expression would cause injury or offence to others. It is not responsible for instance to satirise Mohammed on the cover of a magazine, nor is it just to engage in inflammatory or derogatory speech about people who are gay.

However we are entering times where one person's right not to be offended is trumping another person's right to express a considered opinion. Witness for instance transgender activists trying to bar Germaine Greer from lecturing because she has expressed the view that wearing make-up and changing one's name, and having a gender-reassignment operation is not sufficient to make a man into a 'woman'.

We need to read the signs of the times. With adoption laws applied to Catholic charities in the UK, and litigation in US which could require the Little Sisters of the Poor to fund contraceptive provision for employees, we are seeing the beginnings of a subtle but pernicious campaign, conducted through legislation, litigation and the media, that would seek to silence Christians and drive us out of the public square.

Perhaps the biggest challenge for us as Catholic Christians will be not to fudge matters of truth on the one hand, nor – on the other – to allow ourselves to be shoe-horned into roles of actual or perceived judgmentalism, or angry pre-occupation with freedom of religion and life and death issues.

The really important truth that we must proclaim is that God loves us, and that he gave his Son to die for us, to redeem us from our sins and win us life. And if society would muffle us, we must say with Peter and John, 'You must judge whether in God's eyes it is right to listen to you and not to God. We cannot promise to stop proclaiming what we have seen and heard.' For if we are silent 'the very stones would cry out'.



# “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted”



**Mourning** evokes thoughts of grieving the death of a loved one. Sacred Scripture is filled with examples of this kind of mourning. In the Book of Genesis we see death and suffering enter the world through one act of disobedience.

In the Old Testament, death is seen as a biological event, a “*breaking of human existence*” in the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict; yet in the New Testament, death is “*transformed from within*” because of Christ’s own death and Resurrection. Breaking the bonds of death, Christ thereby creates “*a new beginning*” for human beings.

This beatitude also promises comfort to another kind of mourner: the one who mourns evil in this world, and refuses to let it permeate his or her heart. To these Christ says: “*Truly, truly I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice . . . you will have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you*” (John 16:20-22).

Based on this, St Thomas Aquinas distinguishes two main kinds of mourning:

1. The grief we feel for our own sins and those of others (which are like a spiritual death), and
2. The grief caused by being a pilgrim in this life with all its trials.

Pope Emeritus Benedict further observes that there are two kinds of mourning over evil. The first is the mourning that has lost hope and no longer trusts

love and truth. This kind of mourning “*eats away and destroys a person from within*.” The second kind of mourning arises from an encounter with truth that leads the person to conversion and to resist evil. This mourning heals “*because it teaches the person to hope and to love again*.” Judas is an example of the first kind of mourning; Peter is an example of the second.

We have many examples of those who mourn evil in the world today and who suffer because they refuse to conform with it. The world is goaded by this kind of mourners because, like the righteous ones in Ezekiel 9:4, they choose to fight under the Standard of the King rather than capitulate to the standard of the world. To them is given the promise of the true comfort: the Kingdom of God.

The icon of this Beatitude is Mary at the foot of Jesus’ Cross. Mary refuses to be consoled by any consolation apart from Christ. In His suffering, Jesus as “*the man of sorrows*” and the Son of God opens up the possibility for our death to be the beginning of our resurrection.

Faith invites us to look again at the dying process. Death, says Pope Emeritus Benedict, is the realisation of our Baptism which ends only on our deathbed. Thus, “*the matter of baptism is as serious as death, and the matter of death is as joyful as baptism*.”

Adult formation talks continue, the schedule for May is: Lancaster 3rd May, 7pm (Education centre); Carlisle 10th May, 7pm (Our Lady & St Joseph’s); Preston 17th May, 7pm (Our Lady & St Edward’s).

Sr Mary Julian Ekman, RSM



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**M**id-March brought with it the famous pro-life Youth Conference put on year after year by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children.

2016's conference was no let down. It was a fabulous weekend which not only provided well over a hundred enthused young adults with lots of encouragement, great company and a superb ceilidh; but also equipped the next generation with knowledge needed for fighting the pro-life battle. As Catholics it is crucial we don't bury our heads in the sand when it comes to issues that can overwhelm, but stand strong and proclaim the truth with love. The weekend conference inspired us all to do just that in regards to pro-life matters. The heart wrenching testimonies that we heard, could not have demonstrated more effectively how personal these issues are and how sensitively they must be dealt with; whilst also highlighting how essential it is, for every life affected, to speak out for justice and the right to life.

your prayers that we may witness the fruits of their work!

Finally, the cherry on the cake for me was the great joy of meeting so many wonderful, life-loving, like-minded young people. Nothing is more inspiring, in a world riddled with abortion, hurt and confusion, than the hope and commitment that is experienced when in a room full of young pro-lifers. It was noticeable, and as a young Catholic, heart-warming, to see that a great number of those who attended were Catholic. It is a superb display of Christ's love to see Catholics' compassionate and uplifting pro-life work which so ardently protects the vulnerable and defenceless. I urge you readers to not be disheartened! We are the pro-life generation. And, I am proud to say, it is passionate young Catholics who are leading the way most wonderfully. They inspire me and I applaud them!

In a nut shell...

- If you get the chance to go to next year's Youth Conference - don't miss it! There is often funding available for young people to attend. (Find this year's speakers online!)
- If you are looking to get involved or know more about the pro-life cause - don't hesitate! (There's no time like the present...!)
- If you are keen to get involved in a pro-life event coming up - get to March for Life UK in May, and LIFE Charity's big relaunch in June!

The wonderful speakers inspired us with the work they do and have done, in striving to make sure care is given to the lives most at risk of being neglected: the unborn; the disabled; the elderly; the dying. Some of the other speakers opened our eyes to issues perhaps generally less well known. To name a few: Fiorella Nash and her empowering feminist talk highlighted the reality of gendercide, whilst Uju Ekeocha illuminated attitudes to abortion in Africa, their pro-life energy, and the pressure the African countries face from the Western world to legalise abortion.

Alongside a spectacular and inspiring line up of speakers, there were stalls by groups such as: APS (Alliance of Pro Life Students) providing a huge amount of support for university pro-life groups, and LIFE offering positive alternatives and fantastic educational pro-life talks and workshops for students, and more. This meant pro-life work could very realistically be extended beyond the weekend by those attending. Keep the efforts of inspired individuals in

Thank you for your prayers and please keep praying for a world that upholds utmost respect for all human life from fertilisation to natural death. With God's grace the pro-life joy will be unstoppable.

**Mary, mother of all life - pray for us.**

*Clare, Penrith*

Clare works for LIFE charity, based in the North West. If you are interested in finding out more/booking a compassionate pro-life talk in your school/youth group, please contact her at: [clareplasom-scott@lifecharity.org.uk](mailto:clareplasom-scott@lifecharity.org.uk)



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## Taking some time out –

## Young people journeying through Lent and Easter in Whitehaven

**L**ent and Easter are busy times in any school. There are mock exams, making sure everything has been covered on the syllabus before the real exams, and everything else that gets crammed into a school day.

Whilst all of this is very important – it's also important to stop, take time out and reflect. That's exactly what we tried to encourage at St. Benedict's school in Whitehaven this past term. We thought a little deeper about Lent and Easter, by stopping and taking a moment to reflect. Students led assemblies at the beginning of Lent to encourage us to think about what we can do to grow closer to God, and learn more about Jesus during Lent. Some of our year 10 students took that message on board, and led a retreat day for year 3 and year 6 of Saint Begh's primary school, thinking about the different events of Holy Week.

When Holy Week arrived the school chapel was set up with prayer stations. These consisted of many different types of prayer, to explore all the different things happening during Easter. Every student in year 7 had the chance to reflect during an hour spent in the chapel, and had the opportunity to be with God, learning exactly what He has done for each of us.

*Richard – Lay Chaplain at St. Benedict's, Whitehaven*

## Being a YOUNG Catholic Today

Aoife, 20, Preston



**B**eing a young Catholic is a wonderful rollercoaster ride, that can be fantastic and terrifying at the same time.

When I look back at my faith journey over the past couple of years, I can't help but be astounded by the amazing things God has done in my life. Starting university can be really scary! It's not easy being thrown into a flat with people you've never met before, in a strange city, and on top of all that it's the first time you've lived alone.

So on my first Sunday evening at university, I decided to go to Mass at the Catholic chaplaincy. I thought that at least having something familiar would make me feel a bit better.

The strange thing is, even though I started going to Mass each Sunday out of habit, I soon got to the point where it was no longer a comfort blanket.

I wanted to go to receive the Eucharist. I could feel something inside me drawing me to Mass, and I even started going during the week too.

It was this pull of the Eucharist that has really helped me to strengthen my faith. Receiving Christ each day has made me feel much more comfortable to start questioning what I believe, and finding out more. I'm not using it as a comfort blanket anymore, so I feel free to explore much deeper. Of course I have times when I really struggle to be Catholic in such a secular society. I have times when the views and comments of others make me question what I believe.

However, I'm lucky to have a fantastic chaplain to talk to, and the strength that Christ's Real Presence gives me, to help me grow from a child's faith into something that can support me for the rest of my life.

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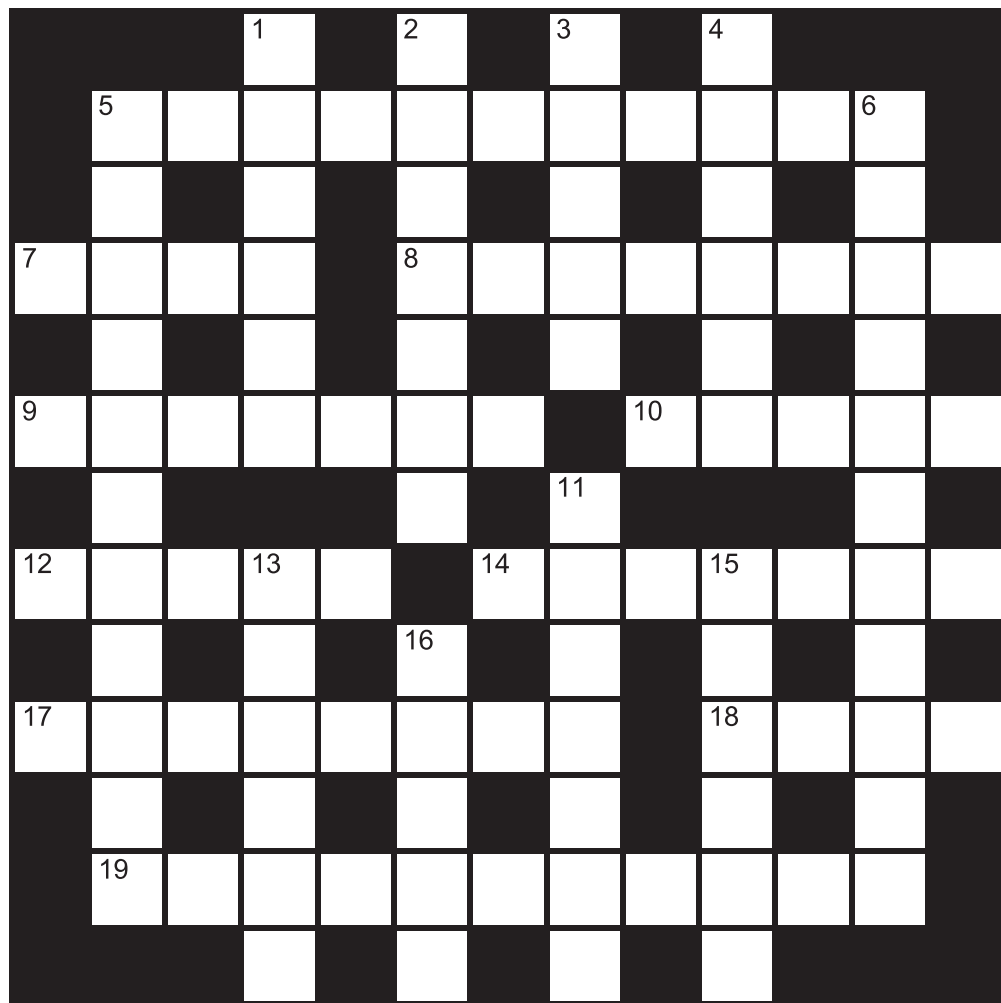
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The Catholic Voice is grateful to our publisher CathCom for this new addition to our Paper.

You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same. So, if you want to try the CRYPTIC puzzle, for instance, but are unsure, use the QUICK clues to help you work out the solution. Similarly, if you try the QUICK clues, use the CRYPTIC clues to help you prove the solution.

### EXPLANATIONS (of Cryptic Clues)

**Across:** 5 double def & pun, 7 hidden word in 'MajORCAN', 8 anag, 9 Redd(E)er, 10 homophone of 'Ethel', 12 double def, 14 red+coat, 17 Lut(H)e+ran, 18 double def, 19 anag.

**Down:** 1 St+R+and, 2 gent+eel, 3 a(BO)rt, 4 to+PH+a+at, 5 anag, 6 anag & pun, 11 double def, 13 'a+hit' in 'T(-ha)i', 15 cur+ate, 16 R+R (evenly) in 'out' [rev].

### CRYPTIC

- 5 Novel sort of priestly intrigue? (6,5)
- 7 Whale seen in Majorcan straits (4)
- 8 This rash criminal that Jonah headed for (8)
- 9 More colour, perhaps, around a key game (3,4)
- 10 Articulate girl gets alcohol... (5)
- 12 ...for Virginia or Georgia (5)
- 14 British soldier in communist film (7)
- 17 He reformed instrument to capture the earliest piece of Haydn performed (8)
- 18 Don Juan leaves implement in the garden (4)
- 19 When portents are confused, prayer is needed (5,6)

### CRYPTIC

- 1 London Street: street on the river, what's more (6)
- 2 Refined chap, a slippery customer (7)
- 3 Get rid of smell by painting over it? (5)
- 4 Headgear to get engaged in after going to a pub first (3,3)
- 5 Slow-witted type's solution to stump forger (7,4)
- 6 Being snaky, or peer improperly? (5,6)
- 11 Island convention for old friends... (7)
- 13 ...one in the Pacific, popular among Thai on vacation (6)
- 15 One with a dog collar dog devoured (6)
- 16 Bishop's regularly in print over West Country town (5)

### QUICK

- 5 GK Chesterton's clerical sleuth (6,5)
- 7 Killer whale (4)
- 8 Distant place to which Jonah set sail (8)
- 9 Large grazing animal of temperate Europe and Asia (3,4)
- 10 Radical, C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>, the base of common alcohol (5)
- 12 Condition: realm (5)
- 14 British soldier of old (7)
- 17 Follower of the architect of the Reformation (8)
- 18 Lothario (4)
- 19 The Lord's Prayer (5,6)

### QUICK

- 1 Maroon (6)
- 2 Marked by refinement in taste and manners (7)
- 3 Cut short (5)
- 4 Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers vehicle of 1935... (3,3)
- 5 ...and a six-time Oscar winner in 1994 (7,4)
- 6 Person who meddles in the affairs of others (5,6)
- 11 French island of the Indian Ocean... (7)
- 13 ...and one of the Pacific (6)
- 15 Junior cleric (6)
- 16 County town of Cornwall (5)

**SOLUTION**  
**Across:** 5 Father Brown, 7 Orca, 8 Tarshish, 9 Red deer, 10 Ethyl, 12 State, 14 Redcoat, 17 Lutheran, 18 Rake, 19 Pater noster.  
**Down:** 1 Strand, 2 Gentee!, 3 Abort, 4 Top hat, 5 Forrest Gump, 6 Nosey Parker, 11 Reunion, 13 Tahiti, 15 Curate, 16 Truro.



1

1. Newly installed Provincial President of the Catenians, Robert Thompson of Our Lady Star of the Sea parish, St Annes, is seated middle centre with incoming Circle Presidents for the coming year.



2

2. There was a strong turnout for a Clergy Night hosted by the Carlisle and Penrith Catenian Circle when Fr John Baron entertained the company with a verbal portrait of his clerical colleagues in the style of Gilbert and Sullivan. From left, Fr John Baron, Carlisle, Fr Tom Butler, Maryport, Fr Jim Allen, Carlisle, Circle President Eddie Smith, Fr John Moriarty, Castlerigg, Fr Norman Johnston, Carlisle, Provincial President Michael Carter, Fr Anthony Gaskin, Carlisle, and Deacon John Constable, Carlisle

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# 'Sanctifying the Spirit' ... by Julia Beacroft



**A**s the wonderful celebration of Pentecost rolls around again this year, we are invited again to experience the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

At the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, the Twelve undergo their own mind-blowing encounter with the Spirit, when a violent wind, tongues of fire and conversing in many languages came upon them in no uncertain way.

While it is extremely unlikely that we will be witness to anything of such an extraordinary nature, we should be well and truly assured that the Spirit is alive, well and working tirelessly within us at this point in time. Why, you may ask, I am making this particular assertion? The answer is quite simple.

In this time of the New Evangelisation, there can be little doubt that many of us, fired by the same Spirit, are helping to bring about great things.

In my own diocese, we were kick-started on our New Evangelisation journey by Bishop

Mark O'Toole's keynote address, 'It is the Lord'. In it he explained his diocesan vision for the Pope's directive, with practical schemes to implement it. In short, it showed us precisely the direction we should take to bring Jesus to as many of our brothers and sisters as possible.

And since that time it has gained momentum and gone from strength to strength.

## Successful

Enterprises such as 'Night Fever' – which consists of churches opening their doors to all who wish to enter to pray or light candles – has already proved hugely successful. On a more practical level, some parishes have already organised aid for the homeless by providing food and shelter where required and the T.O.W.N.S. project which took place in Torbay, Devon, during the months of January and February 2016, was enormously successful in helping those who have so little, while we can give so much.

Yet again, parish evangelisation teams have been, and are being, organised in many parishes and their mission is to bring faith, hope and love to all those who are in need of it. In other words, to reach out to those who have, for whatever reason, lost sight of the Lord.

## Gratitude

I know that following Pope Francis' edict, the New Evangelisation has become a priority for parishes, deaneries and dioceses across the country, and, that great things are happening in the name of Christ.

In my own diocese of Plymouth, Bishop Mark O'Toole told us to 'cast the net wide, take a risk and who knows what you might catch?' It seems to me that already our nets are filling fast and soon we will be in the same boat as the disciples were – our nets will be at breaking point. Therefore in gratitude this Pentecost let us sanctify the eternal work of the Holy Spirit.

## Sanctifying the Spirit – the book

Married to Patrick with four children including twins Julia Beacroft is a convert to the Catholic Faith and I had the pleasure of meeting her, and Patrick, earlier in the year whilst attending a meeting in London.

For some time now Julia has been writing short pieces reflecting on the major feast days of the year and the *Catholic Voice* has published many of these reflections over recent months.

At Pentecost this year Julia launches her book *Sanctifying the Spirit* in which she takes everyday situations and finds God at

the heart of them whether they are happy or sad, funny or fraught from the beginning of life to its closure. She writes in a straightforward style engaging the reader as if talking to them face to face. Julia explores how each one of us can have an impact, whether we think we can or not. She looks at the complete picture of Catholic teaching and how we all need to build our relationship with God but recognises that it is in our day to day experiences where the real evangelisation can take place and that we can become the hands of Christ in the unlikely of places and situations. By using her own experiences Julia invites the reader to journey with her to find and experience the effect of God in our lives.

A person of deep faith who believes that we all have something to offer *Sanctifying the Spirit* is the culmination of her early work of short stories with added Catechesis drawing on a wealth of renowned writers to provide a deeply spiritual book. It is a book that expresses the worth of each individual, explores our relationships with one another and how our words and actions impact on those around us. In Julia's words "It is only when we have regained our own strength that we can fulfil our mission to help others find hope and joy in the wonderful life Christ has gained for us." *Edwina Gillett*

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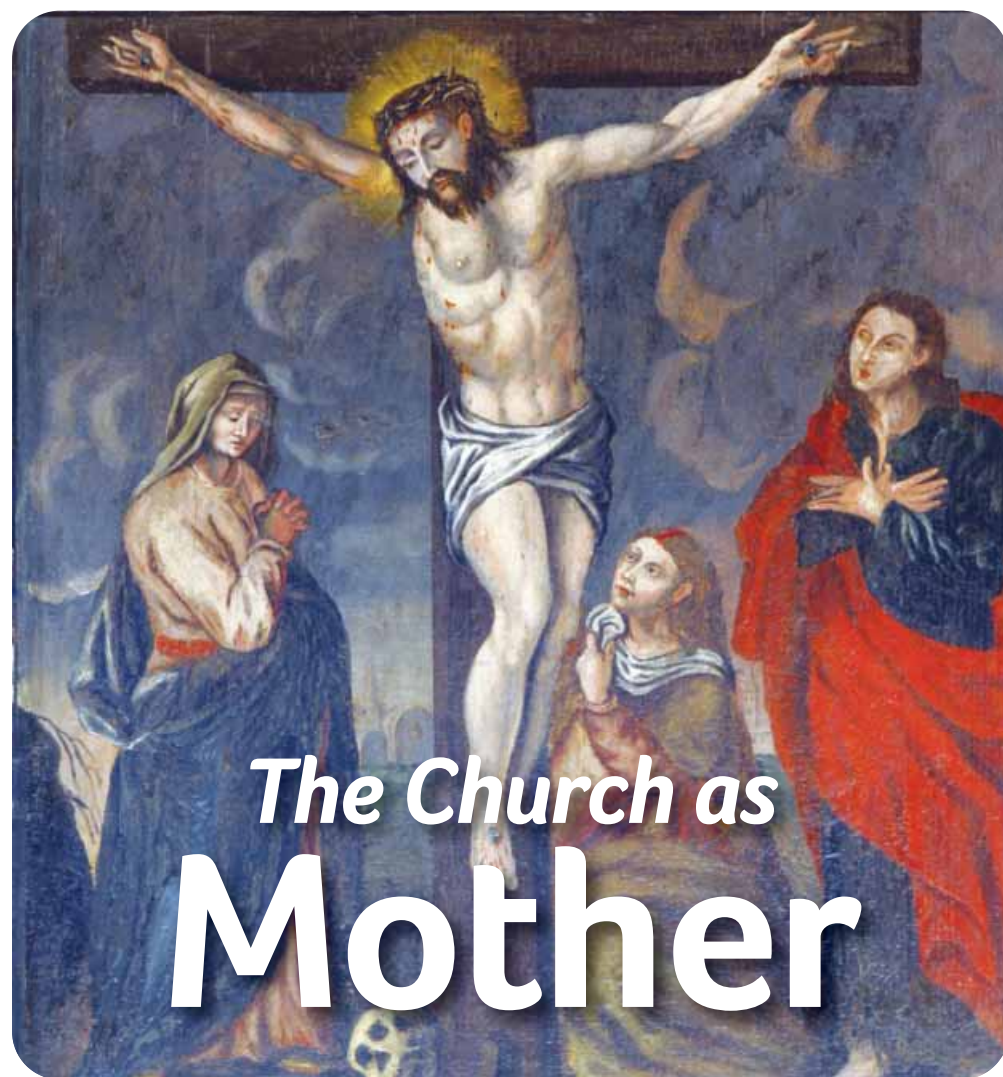
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# The Church as Mother

## Attachment Theory

In the 1950s, British psychoanalyst John Bowlby observed that human beings are socially orientated from the earliest months, and – in situations of anxiety – seek proximity to their primary care giver – who is usually the mother. When distressed, the baby exhibits ‘attachment behaviours’ (crying, following, cooing) in order to bring the parent close to meet essential survival/growth needs. When the mother is reasonably secure she is able to contain and digest these powerful and primitive emotions and, through responding sensitively to the need, lets her baby know that she understands, and that these feelings are manageable.

The mother is a ‘Safe haven’ for the child to return to when overwhelmed or simply when they need to ‘refill their emotional cup’. The child who is settled and confident, then uses the mother as a ‘Secure Base’ from which to explore the environment. Attachment needs are lifelong and are most evoked in situations of vulnerability, ill-health or crisis. Bowlby writes: ‘All of us, from cradle to grave, are happiest when life is organised as a series of excursions, long or short, from the safe base provided by our attachment figures’.

## Small Groups Foster Belonging

Institutions (school, church, hospital, care home) can provide similar maternal functions. Church is – or should be – a Secure Base to go out from (‘Go forth, the Mass is ended’) and a Safe Haven to return to: (‘...protect us from all anxiety’). Even adult parishioners transfer some of our child-parent type dependencies onto our priests, who are spiritual fathers and shepherds to us. A small group (e.g. choir or cell group) or a pastoral care team can fulfil this function too, as may become more necessary as the

pastoral demands on our priests increase. One purpose of this article is to encourage us as Church to think about creating small groups within parishes.

Within my own church, being part of the Choir enabled a degree of belonging to a group-within-a-group that it would have been hard to experience as quickly within the whole parish community. Often church congregations do not meet together socially at a frequency necessary to build relationship. With social fragmentation and increased mobility, we are far less familiar with our neighbourhood and parish than we would have been in the past. This means that tea and coffee, and parish celebrations – to build relationships – is more important than ever.

Large Evangelical churches – have a tradition of people joining cell groups to build community bonds that can nurture, challenge, and develop the gifts of its members – leading to enriching forms of service and outreach. The small group is well placed to act as a ‘Safe Haven’, mopping up the wounds of its members, noticing when someone isn’t well, and providing a place of belonging and mutual support. To remain safe the paramount consideration is the maintenance of boundaries, and ensuring that confidences are kept, and are not even divulged under the auspices of prayer requests, or including another’s material in your confession.

A group can hold a certain number of more vulnerable individuals without placing an undue burden on one person.

## Attachment Theory informs Evangelisation

Attachment theory has implications for Evangelisation: We tend to trust people we

know. So we are far more likely to listen to and trust someone familiar talking about their faith than a stranger. If the Church is to evangelise effectively it depends on you and I talking about our faith to the people God has placed in our immediate circle, who may not hear the Gospel from anyone else. It is bonds of trust, familiarity, longevity, that earn us their confidence and the permission to speak.

It is anxiety-provoking for most people to go to a strange place, where no one is familiar and one doesn’t share the belief-set of the host group. A person is much more likely to set foot in Church for the first time if someone they know and trust invites them to go along with them.

Pope Francis is encouraging us to take Church out of the buildings to the periphery. Can we think about bringing aspects of Church to environments people already feel comfortable in? E.g. a Cafe gathering to explore ‘Big Questions’; or a film and discussion in a community centre.

For many people ‘belonging comes before believing’. Building social ties over a shared meal could be a good place to start.

## The mother who meets our deepest needs

We each have needs which no human or group can ever meet. Church mediates our relationship to the Ultimate and Eternal Perfect Father/Mother who can meet all our

needs, who loves us more than we can ever ask or imagine. In Isaiah 66:12-13 God promises: ‘and you shall suck, you shall be carried upon her hip, and dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you’.

In the Mass, we receive, as it were, milk from our Mother the Church, as she feeds us with the Blood of Christ. At every Mass we can enjoy intimate communion with the Person of Jesus who loves us. ‘And Thou Jesus, dear Lord, art Thou not a Mother too? ... Indeed Thou art and the Mother of all mothers, Who didst taste death in Thy longing to bring forth children unto life’ (St Anselm).

God is the ideal Mother: Closer to us than we are to ourselves, yet utterly respecting our freedom. Understanding how we feel before we say it: ‘Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD you know it completely’ (Psalm 139:4). When our Lord gave his Mother to St John, ‘Son, behold your mother’, He gave her to each of us. If we knew how much she loves us, we would cry with joy.

The Church provides us with a whole host of mothers! The Church herself, Mary, Jesus, the Father, individuals, groups. If only we could be more creative in bringing people in, they – and we – might glimpse more fully the succour offered in these Mysteries. *Katherine Daniels (The Virgin Eye by Robin Daniels, edited by Katherine, is being released in October 2016).*



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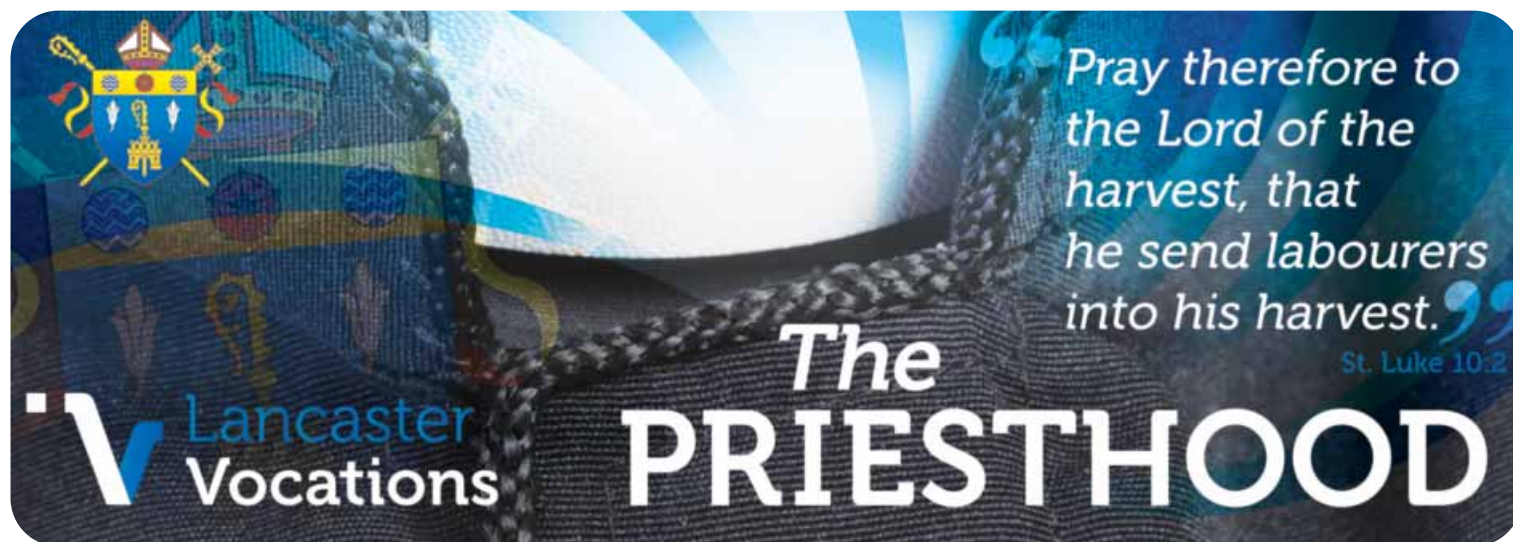
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### When does God Call men to the priesthood?

God calls Catholic men to the priesthood at all stages of life, young boys can feel called to priesthood from a very early age, others feel called in their late teens and early twenties, while others can feel called much later on in life. Of course all Christians are called to live a 'priestly' life, which means

they offer their whole lives in prayer and service to God in union with the offering of Jesus the High Priest. This is our 'baptismal' priesthood.

The 'ministerial' priest, however, through the sacrament of ordination, shares in the priesthood of Christ in a special way. His very being is transfigured in this sacrament, so that he can represent Christ the Good Shepherd for us, Christ as the Head of the Church. He not only offers his own life to the Father in sacrifice, as all Christians do, but he also stands before the Church and ministers to us as Christ 'in person'. When he teaches with the authority of the Church then Christ teaches; when he forgives sins in the sacrament of Penance then Christ forgives; when he offers the Sacrifice of the Mass then Christ offers that Sacrifice; when he loves and supports and cares for his people then Christ is present with his people.

This month we are looking at late vocations to the priesthood, both for those who have been married and those who are single. Fr Tom Hoole shares with us his journey to priesthood after 35 years of marriage. I also share my journey to priesthood as a younger late vocation.

*Fr. Darren Carden, Vocations Director*



### A Vocation to the Priesthood with a difference!

I was ordained to the priesthood on July 13th 2002 by Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue in my Parish church of St John the Evangelist in Poulton le Fylde. His opening remark was "You must all be thinking what on earth is going on, the bishop ordaining a 62

year old granddad". Possibly most of the congregation (including myself) were of the same mind.

The journey to ordination for me had been a long one, commencing with my time at St. Michael's junior seminary, Thistleton and subsequently Ushaw. I left in my teens because of family circumstances and eventually was conscripted into the army. During this period I met and married my lovely wife Pat and we had two daughters. She was a great wife and mother and we were very happy for 35 years.

In September 1996 Pat was diagnosed with a terminal cancer. At Christmas 1996, she recognized she was dying and said to me "I am dying Tom" I replied "I know". There was what seemed a prolonged silence but actually was probably only seconds when she said "Well, you've always got your church". Pat was referring to my life long involvement in the parish of St John's where I'd been an altar boy, club secretary, member of St Vincent de Paul and Eucharistic Minister. Shortly after she made this statement Pat died peacefully aged 58 in Trinity Hospice.

In the days following Pat's death I experienced anger and challenged God "What do you think you are doing"? I found myself at church and spoke to Fr Gerry Muir RIP, my parish priest. He suggested I went to Hying Hall at Carnforth for some peace and reflection. It was whilst I was there that I was able to make my peace with the Lord and started to accept my bereavement. I visited again and was fortunate to have the good counsel of Sister Mary Nivard RIP, she guided me and I left feeling lighter in spirit although the pain of bereavement had not diminished. My heart was broken and I realised that it was actually a physical pain.

Time went on and I was praying a great deal and drawing comfort from it. I realised that I was thinking about the notion of the priesthood again but not with any serious thought that it would be possible. I had come to realise how much I had been loved in my life and that I must remind people that God really does love them and just how much.

Eventually and to my great surprise (*but not my family or friends*) I was accepted by Bishop Brewer and sent to the Beda College Rome.

Since ordination I have spent my time at the Cathedral, Holy Trinity and St George Kendal and finally as parish priest of St Mary's Fernyhalgh and director of the Ladywell Shrine. My last appointment was for nearly ten years and it was a wonderful and fulfilling ministry enabling me to promote my main mission which is to tell everybody "that God really does love them".

Now having retired from the shrine because of health issues, I am still able to live my life as a priest doing supply and carrying on my mission.

God waited patiently for me and despite my almost pensionable age allowed me to serve him in a wonderful and most fulfilling way.

My message to all you men and women is to think seriously about the priestly or religious life, even in your mature years you still have a great deal to give your church but most of all to Our Lord the Saviour of us all.

I am very happy to speak to anyone who may hopefully be thinking about a vocation.

*God bless, Tom Hoole*

### It is Never Too Late

I am 44 years old and I have been ordained for only four and half years. So I am considered a late vocation. One of the reasons I am a late vocation is that in one way or another I managed to avoid God's call. I was like most teenagers in that I stopped going to church once I went to high school, but this changed when I received a letter from the assistant priest in my parish, the letter was inviting me to attend a meeting with regard to receiving the sacrament of confirmation. I decided to attend the meeting and attended the course and I received the Sacrament of Confirmation some time later. It was then that I continued to practise my faith. I became very involved in my parish and through this involvement when I left school I landed a job in the local funeral directors; by the time I was seventeen I was arranging and conducting funerals, things were going really well.

I remember attending World Youth Day in Poland in 1991 with the



NeoCatechumenal Way, I was part of a community based in my home parish in Liverpool. This was really a turning point in my life as it was during these days in Poland that I really felt called to the priesthood, so much so that at one of the events held in a football stadium there was a call for those to stand up who felt called to the priesthood, I was among hundreds that stood up that day. When I returned from Poland I was invited to attend a pre-seminary session in London which was part of the NeoCatechumenal Way, I also attended the Liverpool Archdiocese vocations centre. Like everyone else I was seeking meaning and fulfilment in my life and I really thought I could find it through serving God and his people as a priest.

At the age of around twenty two things began to change. I felt that there must be more to life and so I decided to leave the funeral directors and try to discover meaning and fulfilment for my life. I started to work in the Security Industry and built a good career over a 10 year period. For this ten years I found myself living life without the "Church". I would say in the deepest part of my mind God was always there in one way or another mostly when things went wrong. I lived for the world and what it could offer me. Did it give me happiness? At the time yes, how wrong I was in saying this! I realise now that I said such a statement because my love for the world was much stronger than my love for God.

However in the midst of all that was going on in my life I woke up one morning in July 2003 and felt that something was missing from my life. I was at the height of my career now working as head or Security and Loss Prevention in a retail company, I had my own house and did not want for anything, what could be missing? I began to think about my life and where it was going. I looked back and thought what have I done? What am I doing? Where am I going and what is the meaning of my life. I began to discover that the things of the world could not provide me with this so called "meaning" and "fulfilment" which I was searching for. It was in these moments that I was drawn to God and began to think that maybe it was only God that could provide me with what I was looking for.

I began to think back to the time in Poland when I stood up to answer the call to priesthood and thought that this was maybe what was missing from my life. I spent much time pondering and praying about what God was calling me too. I began to practise my faith again and more and more I felt drawn to priesthood.

Confronted with feelings of confusion, wonder, awe and fear, I felt I needed to know whether God was truly calling me to be a priest. However I went on with my everyday life as usual, with the consolation that nobody knew what was going on inside me except God and me. Many people who feel called to priesthood will have things going through their mind, like 'Lord I am not good enough to be a priest.' And the Lord will answer 'I do not chose you because you are good but because I want you' or 'I am not holy enough' and he will answer 'I do not chose you because you are holy, but because I want you'. I was no different I had these thoughts and I got the same answer. As you can see I lost the argument and I am a priest. It is not because I am good or holy, but because God wanted me to do this and I agreed. Do you ever feel that you are not good enough or holy enough for what God asks of you on your Christian journey? I believe this is a common feeling when it comes to priesthood. I encourage you if you feel called to priesthood make that step and talk to someone about what you are feeling.

To answer God's call is something that we cannot do alone I discovered this very early on. I first talked to my parish priest who in turn put me in contact with the vocations director. It was through my parish priest and the vocations director that I was able to begin to make sense of what was going on in my life. I encourage anyone who feels that God is calling them to the priesthood to make contact with the vocations team who will be able to help you discover God's will in your life. God calls men young and old alike.

Fr Darren Carden

## Do not be afraid... Think Priesthood!

If you feel called to the priesthood contact:  
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# A Palestinian Saint devoted to the Holy Spirit



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**I**n May last year, Pope Francis canonised two nineteenth century Palestinians, in what was received by Palestinians as a great gesture of encouragement for Christians facing persecution in the Middle East. The ceremony was attended by Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas. The Carmelite, Mariam of Jesus Crucified (1846-1878) will have her feast day on 26 August.

The life of Mariam Baouardy was truly extraordinary. Her parents lost twelve sons in infancy, one after another, and eventually Mariam was born after they made a pilgrimage on foot to Bethlehem to petition the Virgin Mary for a child, promising to call her Mariam. Both parents died within days of one another before Mariam reached the age of three. She was separated from her one brother (whom she never saw again) and taken into the care of her paternal uncle.

At the age of 6, whilst burying some birds whom she had accidentally killed in the process of giving them a bath, she heard Christ say *'All things end in this way; but if you will give me your heart, I will be yours forever'*.

When her uncle betrothed her at the age of twelve to her aunt's brother, Mariam showed her view of the plan by cutting off her plaits and placing these on the tray on which was served the customary coffee for the party of the intended groom. Mariam suffered ill-treatment as a result of her rebellion.

Complaining of her plight to a Muslim former-servant of her uncle's, the servant blamed her troubles on her Christian faith and encouraged her to convert to Islam. Mariam firmly refused, at which he drew his

scimitar and slashed her throat. He took his victim's body to a deserted street. Mariam later recounted that she was rescued by a nun dressed in blue who took her to a cave and stitched her wound. Mariam understood her rescuer to be Our Lady.

Marks across her throat (10 cm long by 1 cm wide) were verified by doctors in Marseilles, Pau and Bethlehem, and were visible after her death. Some missing discs from the tracheal artery provide further evidence of an unusual martyrdom.

She placed herself in domestic service, and this took her to the Holy Land (where she was falsely accused of theft and experienced imprisonment), and then to France. She tried her vocation with the Sisters of St Joseph. However her health declined and they found her mystical experiences troubling and so she was dismissed, but accepted by the Carmel of Pau. In her recommendation letter, Mother Veronica said *'she will be obedient to the point of a miracle'*.

St Mariam's sufferings did not end there. She was later one of a group of sisters sent to found a convent in Mangalore. There she was vilified by her community, abandoned by her only supporter, and sent back to France. The nuns of Mangalore later heartily repented. She ended up going to Bethlehem, upon the inspiration that God wanted a Carmel there. She founded a convent on what is believed to be on the hill where King David once lived.

Mariam is exceptional among the saints in having had all of the charisms: she was a stigmatist, experienced ecstasies, levitations, transverberation of the heart, knowledge of hearts, prophecy, bilocation and possession by a good angel (following



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a demonic possession lasting 40 days). She was one of those rare souls in whom the mystery of Christ's suffering was reproduced to an extraordinary degree: a 'pillar of pain' which upholds the world and the Church. But such phenomena are not the important thing; a tree is known by its fruit. In St Mariam we see humility, love and obedience to an extraordinary degree.

What can this Carmelite saint teach us in the twenty first century? Firstly we can learn from her striking devotion to the Holy Spirit. Her Novice Mistress observed 'The dear child cannot hide it, she has an extraordinary devotion to the Holy Spirit. When she speaks of Him, it is with burning expressions and all her exterior becomes illuminated'. In June 1877 she sent the

following request to Pope Pius IX:

“”

***"The world and the religious communities are looking for novelties in devotions and neglect the true devotion to the Paraclete. This is why there is error and division and never peace and light. The light is not called upon as it should be called upon: it is light which gives the knowledge of truth. It was revealed to me that in the whole universe it must be established that every priest says one Mass of the Holy Spirit every month."***

Some thoughts of St Mary of Jesus Crucified:

- 'Love one another. Do not nurse bitter feelings.'

- 'The essential is to accept with love all it pleases God to send, with complete conformity to His Will, always and in everything.'
- 'When a struggle comes upon you, kneel down and thank God for it, thank Him for making you suffer. Keep your heart raised up to Him, and pray only that He may not allow you to offend Him.'
- 'God is ready to pardon a sinner who humbles himself. He looks with more love on a soul who returns to Him in humility, than on a faithful soul who finds pleasure in its virtues.'
- 'Everyone in the world or in religion, who has devotion to the Holy Spirit and

who invokes Him, will not die in error. The custom must be introduced all through the Church that every priest celebrates a Mass of the Holy Spirit once a month. All those assisting at it will receive very special grace and light.'

*Katherine Daniels*

***Prayer of St Mariam Baouardy***  
***Holy Spirit inspire me.***  
***Love of God, consume me.***  
***To the right path lead me.***  
***Mary my mother,***  
***look down upon me.***  
***With Jesus, bless me.***  
***From all evil, all illusion,***  
***all danger, preserve me.***

**JOE WALSH TOURS**  
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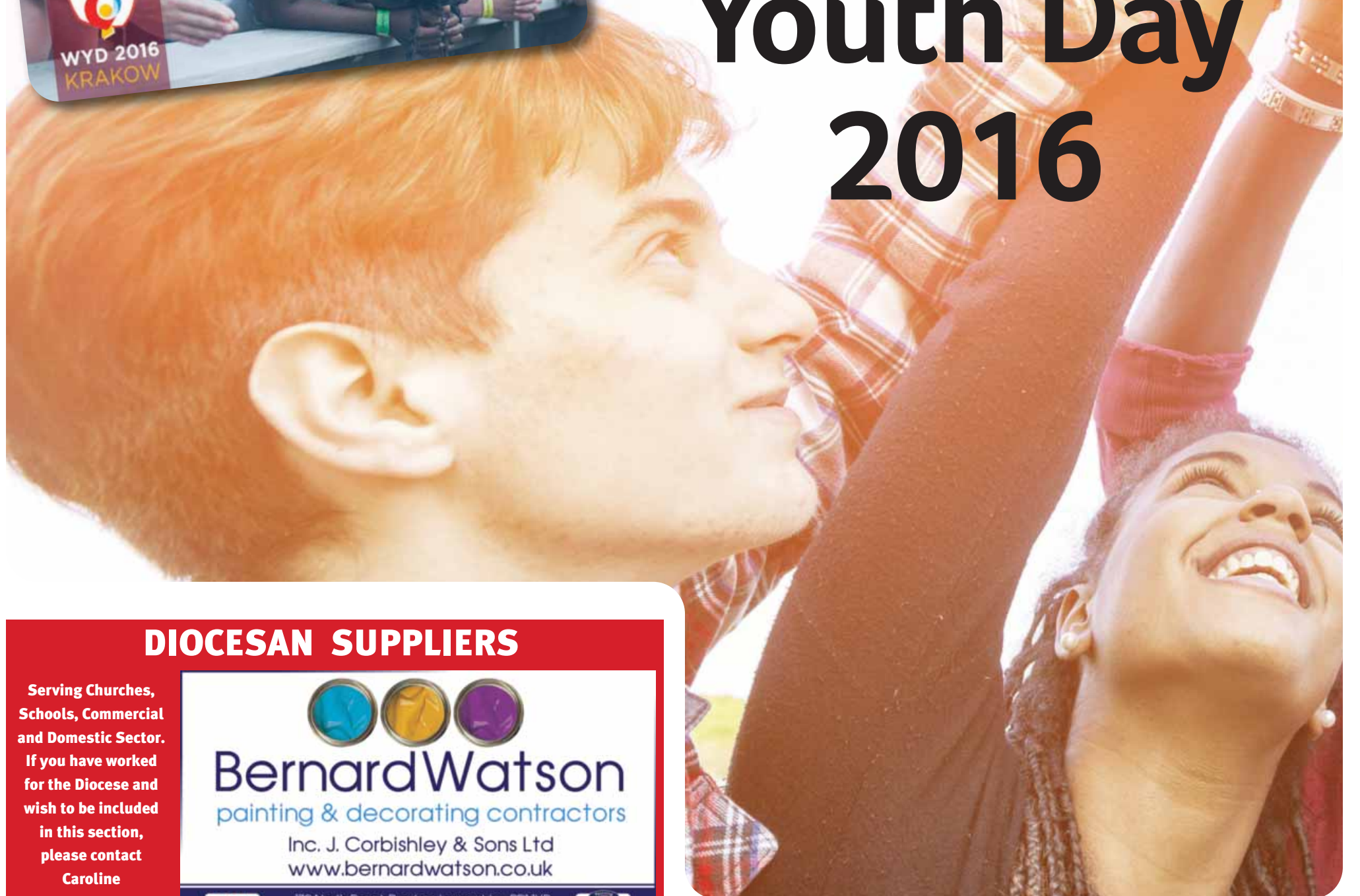
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# World Youth Day 2016



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Every Sunday at 6.00 pm  
Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle

Shrine Church of St Walburge, Preston  
Mondays – Fridays: 8.30 am, Low Mass (except First Fridays & Holy Days 7.00 pm)  
Saturdays: 10.30 am, Low Mass  
Sundays: 10.30 am, Sung Mass

Sunday 1st May at 10.30 am  
Patronal Feast of St Walburge, High Mass with veneration of relic St Walburge, Preston

Sunday 22nd May at 10.30 am  
Trinity Sunday  
May Procession after Mass  
St Walburge, Preston

Thursday 26th May at 7.00 pm  
Corpus Christi  
Sung Mass & Procession  
St Walburge, Preston

Thursday 26th May at 7.00 pm  
Corpus Christi  
Missa Cantata  
Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle

Sunday 29th May at 3.00 pm  
Second Sunday after Pentecost  
St Mary's, Hornby

Mass is also celebrated every Sunday at 8.30 am at St Mary Magdalene, Leyland Road, Penwortham and 11.30 am at St Catherine Labouré, Stanfield Lane, Leyland.  
Local Representatives: Bob & Jane Latin  
Telephone: 01524 412987  
Email: [lancasterlms@gmail.com](mailto:lancasterlms@gmail.com)  
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**W**orld Youth Day (WYD) takes place in Krakow, Poland, from 25 - 31 July. WYD events have been celebrated for three decades.

In 1986, Pope St John Paul II began the tradition in St Peter's Square, Rome, with a global youth celebration to which the entire Church was invited. Now, three decades later, Pope Francis will open the 21st gathering of what has become a worldwide youth phenomenon - the opportunity for a million plus Catholics to celebrate their faith with the Holy Father.

The theme of the 21st World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland, is: *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt 5:7).*

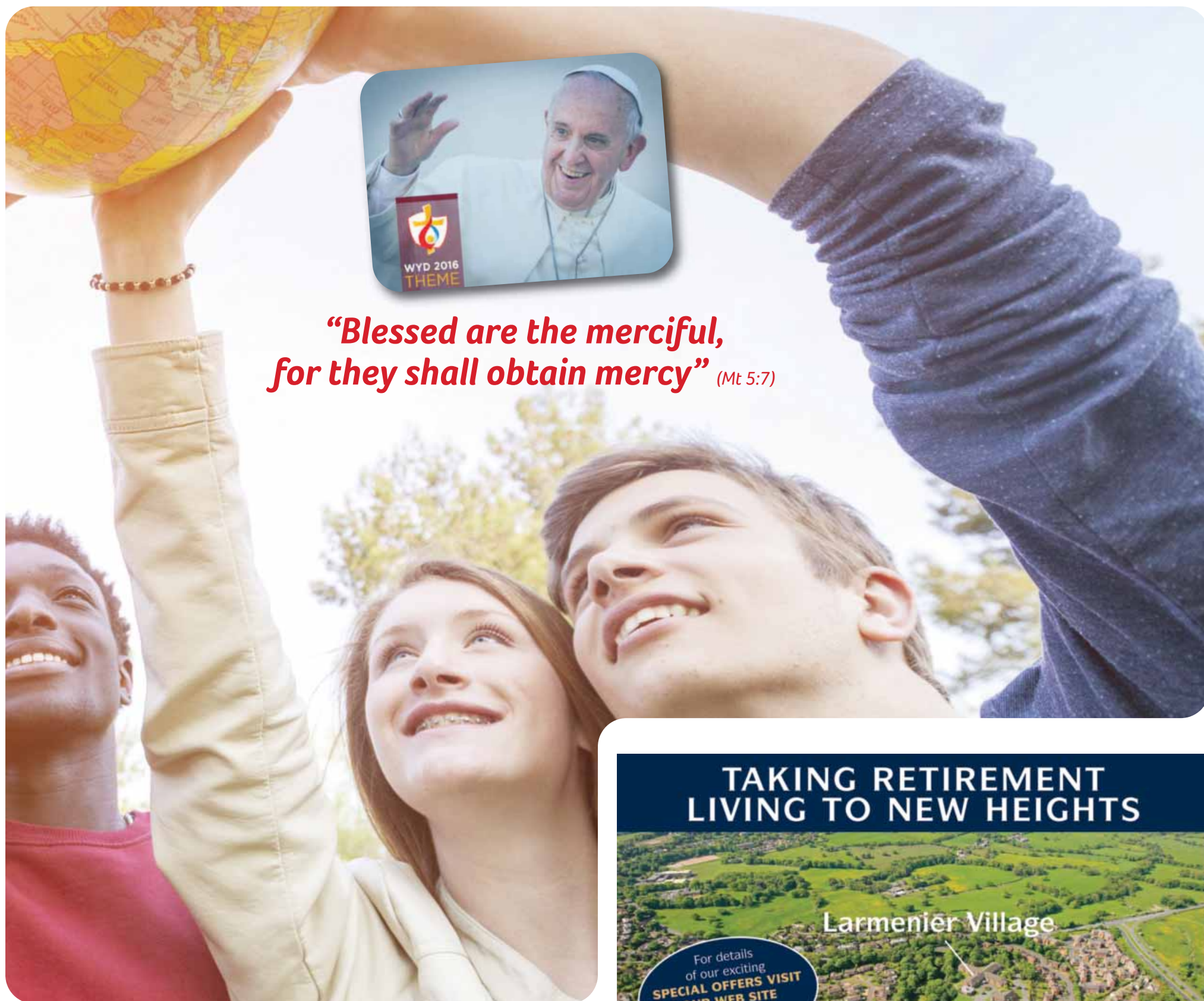
Pope Francis has chosen this, the fifth of the eight Beatitudes given by Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, to show the importance of the Beatitudes at the very heart of Jesus' teaching. In his first Sermon, Jesus presents us with eight examples of the qualities that

bring us closer to the Kingdom of God.

Fittingly, in this Jubilee of Mercy, Krakow is the providential home for World Youth Day 2016. Since Christ's appearance to Polish nun Sister Faustina, mercy has been radiating from Krakow-Lagiewniki to the whole universal Church.

Sister Faustina received apparitions of Jesus inspiring the devotion we know today as the Divine Mercy. She wrote in her diary that on one occasion she saw Jesus dressed in a white robe, one hand raised to bless, the other touching his robe near his heart, with two rays of light - one red, one white - shining from the robe. The Lord said to her *"Make a statue of me, exactly as you see me now, and under the statue you should place the words 'Jesus, I trust you!'"*

Consequently, Krakow is widely known as the centre of worship of God's mercy, and young pilgrims who come will want to see the place of the revelations – Sister Faustina's tomb and shrine – the place



**“Blessed are the merciful,  
for they shall obtain mercy” (Mt 5:7)**

where St John Paul II entrusted the world to God’s Mercy.

It’s worth noting that the fifth Beatitude sums up the first two years of Pope Francis’ pontificate as well. During that time he has shown the Church God’s love towards man and the importance of being merciful to each other. At a meeting with young Argentinians in Rio, Pope Francis advised: “Read the Beatitudes, it will do you good.”

Our task is to re-read the message of the Beatitudes. For three consecutive years, the Pope has chosen for us three out of the eight Beatitudes as the themes for the WYDs. Each one is elaborated on in his addresses, in which he comments on theological matters and gives the youth some tasks for the next year of spiritual work.

All of the World Youth Days – according to their founder and patron, St John Paul II – focus on one biblical thought, which often refers to the spirituality of the particular

host city. The main topic accompanies young people not only during the preparation stage for WYD, but it is also discussed during the main events; at catechesis with the Bishops and in the messages and homilies delivered by our Holy Father during the central events.

**“When Jesus sent the Twelve out on mission, he said to them: ‘Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff; for the labourers deserve their food’ (Mt 10:9-10). Evangelical poverty is a basic condition for spreading the kingdom of God. The most beautiful and spontaneous expressions of joy which I have seen during my life were by poor people who had little to hold onto.”**

– Message of Pope Francis for World Youth Day 2014. Catholic Communications Network

**Our own Diocese of Lancaster has 50 places at WYD which includes many of our young people as well as some adult leaders.**

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**A** Cheque for £600 from the Catenian Bursary Fund was presented to Miss Hannah Spencer of Cabus near Garstang, by Terence Donnelly earlier in the year.

Hannah aged 22 years lives with her parents and is a parishioner of SS. Mary & Michael's Church, Garstang.

About 18 months ago Hannah left University with a degree in Environmental Sciences. Shortly after leaving University she spent two months in Madagascar to further her environmental experience. She is currently working in the Environmental Science Department at Lancaster University.

Hannah travelled to Nepal in March with the Voluntary Overseas Program to undertake 3 months voluntary work helping the people there whose lives were devastated by the earthquake in Kathmandu. She is living with one of the families there.

In preparation for the trip Hannah organised a number of fundraising projects, one such project was to raise money to purchase books, pens, pencils to help towards the Nepalese children's education. And she also approached the Catenians who were pleased to support her with a grant from their Bursary Fund.

# Bursary Grant Presentation



## Charity Night

**T**om Ibison, President of Garstang Catenians, and his wife, Mary, hosted an excellent Wine and Finger Buffet at their home raising £710 for the Catenian Bursary Fund.

The purpose of the Bursary Fund is to provide grants which will assist Catholics aged 16 to 24 participate in a qualifying volunteer project, (no Catenian connection is required). The project must be of benefit to others, clearly involve the fulfilment of Christian principles and assist in the personal development of the volunteer.

The event was very enjoyable and well supported by Catenians from across the Province, either by their attendance on the night or by donations from those who could not attend. *Thomas R. Rigby*

**Our next edition  
June 2016**

**Schools** - let us know what you have been up to, send your reports and photographs as indicated on page 2.

**Parishes** - what is your Parish/Deanery doing for the Year of Mercy and the New Evangelisation initiative, share your endeavours with the rest of the Diocese.

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