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Light of the North: the magazine of the Diocese of Aberdeen

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# Lockdown in Pskov

Over the past four months I've probably spent more time than I usually do on the internet. The other day I came across an unusual article, first published in the *British Medical Journal* in 1900, that seemed to have a particular resonance for today's reader just emerging from lockdown:

"A practice closely akin to hibernation is said to be general among Russian peasants in the Pskov Government, where food is scanty to a degree almost equivalent to chronic famine. Not having provisions enough to carry them through the whole year, they adopt the economical expedient of spending one half of it in sleep. This custom has existed among them from time immemorial. At the first fall of snow the whole family gathers round the stove, lies down, ceases to wrestle with the problems of human existence, and quietly goes to sleep. Once a day every one wakes up to eat a piece of hard bread, of which an amount sufficient to last six months has providently been baked in the previous autumn. When the bread has been washed down with a draught of water, everyone goes to sleep again. The members of the family take it in turn to watch and keep the fire alight. After six months of this reposeful existence the family wakes up, shakes itself, goes out to see if the grass is growing, and by-and-by sets to work at summer tasks."

If there is something that lockdown has taught us, it's that we can live more simply, perhaps not quite as simply as the folk from Pskov! However, there's a lot to be said for simple pleasures: going for a walk; time spent in the garden, time spent cooking or baking. It's also been an opportunity to think, to reflect and maybe to discover God's plan for us in this strange new world we find ourselves in.

And, talking of simple pleasures, don't forget the *Light of the North!* Plenty of food for thought in this issue, not least Bishop Hugh's letter (p3) in which the author considers how, as humans, we are so adaptable to changed circumstances and how versatile a faith we have. Then there's Deacon John Wire's Lockdown Diary (p10) and, for our Polish readers, Lidia Konar marks the 15th anniversary this year of the death of St John Paul II (p5).

## Cowan



**The Light of the North is free of charge but a suggested donation of £1.00 will be gratefully received and will be used directly to benefit your own parish.**



Our front cover this issue features the work of local artist and historian, Ann Dean. Ann's delightful pen, ink and watercolour illustrations for Alasdair Roberts' historical articles in the *Light of the North* have been a regular feature of the magazine since 2012.

This particular image illustrates a rosary procession led by Fr Lachlan McIntosh to the newly established chapel at Corgarff on Donside in the early 19th century.

The chapel has been restored recently and a celebratory Mass is planned for 12.00 on Sunday 23rd August.

You can read Alasdair Robert's account of the building of the chapel on page 23.

Managing Editor  
**Deacon Tony Schmitz**

Editor  
**Cowan Watson**  
 ☎ 07816344241  
 ✉ editor@lightofthenorth.org

Editorial Advisor  
**Dr Glen Reynolds**

Advertising Manager  
**Jim Skwarek**  
 ☎ 01233 658611  
 ✉ jim.skwarek@geeringsprint.co.uk

**The Light of the North**  
 St Mary's Cathedral  
 20 Huntly Street  
 ABERDEEN  
 AB10 1SH  
 🌐 www.lightofthenorth.org



## A Letter from Bishop Hugh Gilbert O.S.B.



Dear Friends,

**One thought that has been with me during this time concerns versatility. We have all had to be versatile and adjust to changed circumstances – working from home, for example, or avoiding places we would usually frequent, not shaking hands when we'd spontaneously do so, enduring zoom meetings or rediscovering cooking skills. We are in fact the most adaptable of animals; no other animal on the planet can manage so many environments. And it has struck me too how versatile our faith is, or how it helps us be versatile. "I can do all things in him who strengthens me", said St Paul famously. Not all of us may feel so confident, but neither need we be entirely hapless or hopeless.**

We have been largely deprived of Holy Communion, of that great sacramental support. And yet, not for a moment has it been impossible for us to be a Christian. "Faith, hope and love; these three remain", says St Paul again. We can believe, hope and love in the most varied circumstances. The Holy Spirit, who is in a way divine versatility in person – insinuating himself into everything, adapting to everything, falling like rain and entering as water does into a whole range of bio-systems – this Holy Spirit gives Christ's disciples a share in his own versatility.

The Church, for example, lives her earthly pilgrimage in a whole spectrum of situations. In some places, Christians are a tiny minority, as for example in countries overwhelmingly Muslim or Buddhist. The normal public expressions of her life may be impossible or restricted; she may be confined to the sacristy, as it were. Or, as in the penal days in our own country, it may be feasible only to meet clandestinely. And yet the Church can find ways, often hidden, to express her faith, hope and love, all the way from the kindnesses of daily life to the ultimate witness of martyrdom. In places where religious freedom is guaranteed, she can take evangelising, cultural, social initiatives of most varied kinds. The Church can live as a minority or a majority, as legally and culturally

endorsed or as barely tolerated. She can live in areas where she is numerically declining and yet can be spiritually alive. Such is the power of our faith. Such is the insuppressible flexibility of divine grace.

We too have sometimes found ourselves in unusual situations during lockdown: too much on our own or too much with only a few people, suddenly without work, confined when we are used to mobility, too much in one place. But faith can fill any space, or salvage us in any situation. Faith can bring an element of colour and life into the drab and the grinding. Faith can fill the space of our personal, inner life, enriching it hugely; of our domestic, household life. Faith now can carry us back, like an incoming tide, into the space of the churches we love; our faith can

refind its liturgical expression. Further still, faith can urge us to be bolder in our witness in the wider world; inspire us to go public as Christians. Faith is useful when we're young or old, sick or healthy, on an "up" or the opposite. It elicits our natural adaptability. It keeps us buoyant. Even when we feel we cannot access it, that it eludes us, we should not be so sure. It can still bubble up unexpectedly. We are waving it goodbye from the front door, and it is quietly clambering in through a back window. It eludes our lockdowns.

Jesus spoke of the wheat that can fill a field, even among the dandelion, of the yeast that leavens all the dough, of the little mustard seed which ends up a kind of cosmic tree. These are images of faith.

Our present experience is asking us for faith.

It is natural to feel anxiety, uncertainty, fear. The future does not look unremittingly cheerful. Faith, though, is like the still small voice that revived the fugitive, exhausted prophet Elijah. Faith quietly says, "Do not be afraid."

May God bless us all with the gift of faith.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

+ **Bishop Hugh OSB**



If you have access to the internet do take a look at some of the many inspiring talks and homilies given by Bishop Hugh Gilbert OSB and other members of the clergy and which are now available on "You Tube". These include videos of the Diocesan Faith Formation Seminars led by Bishop Hugh which cover a wide range of topics such as "Why does God allow evil?" and "The Seven Deadly Sins". To access these videos just go to the YouTube site and search for the Diocese of Aberdeen channel.

# Despite Covid Crisis St Columba's Parish, Banchory continues to help those in need

**S**t. Columba's Parish of Banchory has continued supplying food and other items to the homeless and others in need during the Covid crisis 'lockdown'.

Angus Hay, a Banchory parishioner and a member of the Order of Malta, leads the project (seen in the centre of the accompanying picture) initiated, and led, the arrangements and organisation of the project, and commented:

"Our Banchory parish of St. Columba's has, over the last two years, provided monthly hot meals for the homeless in St. Mary's Cathedral, Aberdeen. We had to rethink this operation when the Covid lockdown came into effect, as it would not have been possible to enforce safe social distancing at that time. However, this obstacle could not hold back our volunteers, who wished to find an alternative way of providing support for those in need.

"I contacted the Co-op Store, (the Hill of Banchory branch), who generously agreed to provide us with surplus food items on a daily basis. They are collected and stored and then delivered twice weekly to the Cathedral, where they are distributed to the homeless by the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the St. Andrew Community.

"In addition, parishioners have responded to requests from



*From left to right: Greg Sloan (St. Vincent de Paul Society), Angus Hay (Order of Malta), Charlene Morgan (St. Andrew Community) at Cathedral Clergy House with donated items*

the St. Andrew Community with donations of food and other necessities.

As illustrated in the photograph, face masks are worn when and where necessary, and are kindly supplied to both the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the St. Andrew Community by local seamstress Martine Blair, who lives near Aboyne.

Social distancing is observed at all times. The project is a great example of team work with St. Columba's Parish, the St. Andrew Community the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Co-op all working together for the good of the community.

The next issue of the Light of the North will be published in the autumn. If you would like to sponsor the next issue or a page of the issue, perhaps in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion, please contact our advertising manager Jim Skwarek. Tel: 01233658611 or email: [jimskwarek@geeringsprint.co.uk](mailto:jimskwarek@geeringsprint.co.uk)



*Mary and Bob Durno enjoying the lockdown sunshine earlier in the year and making the most of it by working on the parish garden of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Inverurie.*

# Jan Paweł II - Co zostało w nas z jego nauk?

BY LIDIA KONAR

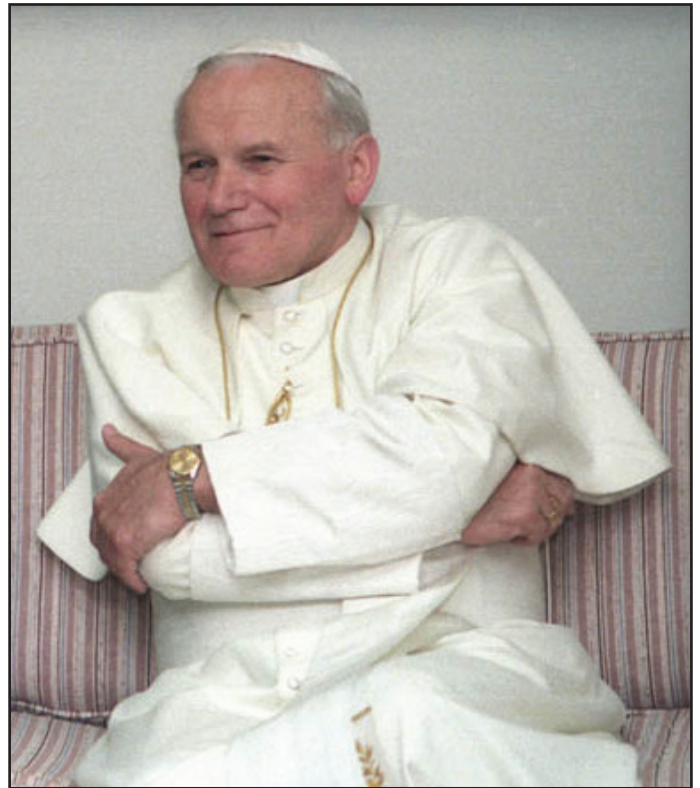
*April 2nd this year marked the 15th anniversary of the death of Pope John Paul II and May 18th the 100th anniversary of the birth of the saint. Not surprisingly the Polish parliament has established the year 2020 as the "Year of Saint John Paul II". In the following article Lidia Konar asks some of her Polish compatriots to reflect on his legacy and what it means to them.*

**Z** lekkim zawodem przeczytałam kiedyś artykuł pewnego polskiego publicysty, który dowodził, że Karol Wojtyła jako wychowawca Polaków przegrał. Jego zdaniem po papieżu Polaku między innymi został tylko święty obrazek. Czy rzeczywiście?

Od pewnego czasu jestem szczęśliwą posiadaczką ciekawej publikacji – zbioru kwietniowych numerów Naszego Dziennika z 2005 roku, w całości poświęconych Janowi Pawłowi II. Pozwolę sobie przytoczyć fragment artykułu Wincentego Łaszewskiego pt. „Droga krzyżowa Ojca Świętego”: „Świat zamilkł, ale nie jest to głuche milczenie. Świat woła, ale jest to wołanie, które przebija niebo. Swą modlitwą, na kolanach, bez ruchu, ludzie zatrzymali w miejscu czas”. Ów tekst jest bardzo emocjonalny, ale chyba niemal każdy, kto pamięta wydarzenia sprzed 15 lat może potwierdzić, że wtedy 2 kwietnia 2005 roku świat rzeczywiście jakby zatrzymał się na chwilę. Cała Polska mocno przeżyła śmierć Karola Wojtyły. Mieszkałam wówczas w Lublinie i pamiętam wielką żałobę, jaką okryła się ta stolica wschodniej Polski. Noszę również w pamięci białe marsze, na które przychodzili niemal wszyscy ludzie, także i moi znajomi odzegnujący się od Kościoła i jego tradycji. Modlitwy tłumu były przeplatane szlochom ludzi. Nawet mężczyźni nie wstydzili się łez. Znam takich ludzi, którzy po odejściu Karola Wojtyły przeżywali żałobę, niczym po stracie członka najbliższej rodziny.

Czas osuszył nam łzy po Janie Pawle II, nawet te najboleśniejsze. W przeddzień 42 rocznicy wyboru Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II na Stolicę Piotrową, po przeszło 15 latach od jego odejścia do Domu Ojca, warto zadać sobie pytanie, co zostało w nas z nauk polskiego papieża, tym bardziej, że żyjemy w czasach, gdzie wartości moralne, których on nauczał często traktowane są jako przestarzałe i wręcz niesprawiedliwe, bo każdy chce dziś mieć prawo do życia po swojemu. Kobiety chcą bezwarunkowo decydować o aborcji, nie brakuje też zwolenników „miłosiernego aktu” na rzecz cierpiących, zwanego eutanazją. Z lekkim zawodem przeczytałam kiedyś artykuł pewnego polskiego publicysty, który w swoim artykule dowodził, że Karol Wojtyła jako wychowawca Polaków przegrał. Jego zdaniem po papieżu Polaku między innymi został tylko święty obrazek. Czy rzeczywiście? Jak to widzą Polacy na emigracji w Szkocji?

„Jan Paweł II i jego nauka zawsze były obecne w moim życiu. Kiedy studiowałam w dwuletnim Diecezjalnym Studium Rodziny, miałam okazję zapoznać się z wieloma dziełami Ojca Świętego dotyczącymi małżeństwa i rodziny.



Jan Paweł II (1984)

Z tej nauki ciągle czerpię. Teraz aktywniej (jako mężatka), niż wcześniej. Słowa Jana Pawła II często są drogowskazem i pomocą w moim codziennym życiu” – tak na moje pytanie o tym, co zostało w niej z nauk Wojtyły odpowiada Kasia, która w chwili śmierci naszego Ojca Świętego miała niewiele ponad 13 lat.

Z kolei Polka o wdzięcznym imieniu Marcia, urodzona w Brazylii wyznaje, że papież Polak jest bardzo kochany przez mieszkańców tego największego państwa Ameryki Południowej. Marcia prawie jednym tchem wylicza mi całą listę wartości, które dostrzega w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II: „patriotyzm, prawo do miłości i obrony państwa, tradycja i wartości kulturowe oraz umiłowanie Matki Boskiej i oddanie się pod Jej opiekę. To są ważne wskazówki do życia w tym pogmatwanym świecie”. Marcia ponadto bardzo ceni przyjaźń i szacunek, którymi papież darzył naród żydowski.

Kolejna moja rozmówczyni - Iwona, mama małej Zosi, odpowiada krótko i prosto: „Nigdy nie zapomnę jego poczucia humoru i determinacji połączonej z pogodą ducha. Chciałabym jak on z ufnością oddać się Bogu”. Na swej drodze spotykam i Maćka, który ma dla mnie dosłownie kilka minut. Jana Pawła i jego nauki docenił dopiero w roku 2005.

„Miałem niecałe 21 lat. Moja dziewczyna (a obecna żona) zaszła w ciążę. Nie byliśmy jeszcze po ślubie”. Maciek przyznaje, że wtedy różne myśli nim targały. Przede wszystkim czuł się zbyt młody, by zostać ojcem, bo studiował i nie miał żadnej pracy. Rozważał nawet aborcję i wtedy stało się coś nieoczekiwanego. Przyszły wieści o umierającym Ojcu Świętym. „Przypomniałem sobie, jak Jan Paweł II bardzo walczył o nienarodzone dzieci, jak był zawsze dla młodzieży i to mnie tak mocno uderzyło, że nie

mogłem zrobić tego kroku, a potem sama myśl była dla mnie strasznie obrzydliwa, że w ogóle mogłem coś takiego rozważyć". Maciek wierzy, że dzięki temu, iż pochylił się nad nauką umierającego papieża ma dziś syna, z którego dziś jest bardzo dumny.

Wydaje się, że nauki Jana Pawła II wciąż są żywe, że ziarno, które zasiał powoli wydaje plon i to wbrew powszechnej

modzie kreowanej przez media na negowanie tego, co wartościowe. W chwilach trudnych, gdzie trzeba wybierać pomiędzy dobrem, a czymś pozornie dobrym, warto przypomnieć sobie proste słowa Jana Pawła II, które wypowiedział na Jasnej Górze w 1983 roku: "Musicie od siebie wymagać, nawet gdyby inni od Was nie wymagali".

## John Paul II - What of his legacy remains?



*A "White Walk" in Kraków in April 2005 to give thanks for the pontificate of John Paul II*

**I am the proud owner of a collection of the April 2005 issues of the Polish newspaper *Nasz Dziennik*. These newspapers were entirely devoted to the life of John Paul II. Let me quote from an article by Wincenty Łaszewski regarding Pope John Paul II's death entitled "Way of the Cross of the Holy Father": "The world is silent, but this is not a hollow silence. The world is calling out, but it is a call that pierces heaven. People stopped time with their prayers, on their knees, without moving". It's an emotional piece of writing which expresses how affected we all were by the death of Karol Wojtyła 15 years ago.**

During that period of time I was living in Lublin and I remember how the City went into mourning. I also remember the "White Walks" when Poles gave thanks for John Paul II's pontificate. These were attended by just about everyone. For some it was like the loss of a dear family member and even some of my friends, who were not practicing Catholics, still lamented the passing of John Paul II.

Time has dried our tears, but on the eve of the 42nd anniversary of the election of the Holy Father John Paul II to the See of Peter, and more than 15 years after his death, it is worth asking: What of the Polish Pope's teachings remain with us? It seems sometimes that the moral values which he taught are often now regarded as outdated and even unjust! Today, everyone wants the right to live however

they want, but how do Poles living in Scotland view St John Paul's legacy?

Kasia, who was just 13 years old at the time of our Holy Father's death, put it like this: "John Paul II and his teachings have always been present in my life. During the course of my studies I had the opportunity to get to know many of the Holy Father's writings concerning marriage and the family. I still draw from his teachings. Now, as a married woman, the words of John Paul II often serve as guidelines to help me in my everyday life."

Marcia, a Polish woman born in Brazil, tells me that the Polish Pope is very much loved by Brazilians. She enumerates a long list of the values that she sees in the teachings of John Paul II: "Patriotism, the right to love and to defend the state, tradition and cultural values, love for the Mother of God and putting oneself under her protection. These are important precepts for us, living in this complicated world." Marcia also greatly appreciates the friendship and respect that the Pope had for the Jewish people.

One respondent - Iwona, mother of little Zosia - answers me simply: "I will never forget his sense of humour and determination combined with cheerfulness. I would like to give myself to God with all confidence like he did."

Another interviewee, Maciek, told me that he had only come to appreciate John Paul's teachings in 2005. "I was 20 years old. My girlfriend (now my wife) got pregnant"

Maciek felt that he was too young to be a father, as he was a student without a job. He even considered an abortion, and then something unexpected happened – the death of the Holy Father. "I remembered how John Paul II was always there for young people, that he fought a lot for unborn children, and that hit me so hard, that I could not take this step." Maciek believes that it is because he began to fully appreciate the teachings of the dying pope, that today he

is a proud father.

It seems that the teachings of John Paul II are very much with us, that the seed he sowed has yielded a harvest, contrary to the naysayers of the media. When you're going through difficult times it is well worth remembering the simple words of John Paul II, spoken in Jasna Góra in 1983: "You must demand of yourselves, even if others would not demand of you."

## Sabine Cross receives Papal award for her outstanding service to the Church

**G**audete Sunday of 2019 was definitely a day of rejoicing for Sabine Cross in the Parish of St. Joseph's, Invergordon. On behalf of Pope Francis and Bishop Hugh Gilbert OSB, Fr. Domenico Zanre, in his role of Vicar General for the Diocese of Aberdeen, presented Sabine with the Benemerenti Medal for her long service to the Church, and in particular her voluntary work as a leader on numerous International World Youth Day Pilgrimages.

Sabine has given great service to the Church. In particular she has helped many young adults to encounter Christ, and to share and experience their Catholic faith on the international world stage. Sabine's reaction of shock and surprise was clearly evident as she received the award with great joy. "I had no idea. Thank you. I did not see it coming at all, but I am very grateful and humbled to receive the Benemerenti Medal," she exclaimed.

Sabine's seventeen-year involvement began in 2002 when she, along with her husband Richard, began fundraising to send their own children and friends to attend WYD Toronto. In 2005, she travelled to WYD in Cologne, Germany, and in 2008, she accompanied the young adults to WYD in Sydney, Australia, linking up with the Diocese of Paisley.

In 2011, the prolonged blistering heat at WYD Madrid was a challenge. Sabine, as a calm, motherly leader and first-aider to the growing diocesan group of about 40 young adults, made her way into everyone's heart as she prioritised the health of the group, the WYD Co-ordinator, priests, seminarians and young adults from across the Diocese.

World Youth Day 2013 in Rio De Janeiro was the next big challenge. The Diocesan group spent the first week staying with families in the beautiful town of Petropolis before travelling down to Rio De Janeiro to stay with families in the poor parish of St Cecilia, with its strong focus on music and culture. This parish was initially developed by two Scottish priests, Fr. Wilson and Fr. Arthur, before the arrival of the Jesuit mission. The organizers had put a lot of thought as to where they were going to place us. The choice was an interesting one particularly as we had a family of musicians with us, with bagpipes and fiddles.



*Fr Domenico Zanre presents Sabine with her award*

Sabine and Iain MacGillivray had produced a performance play entitled "The History of our Faith in Scotland". We were raring to go! Sabine gave great support to young adults adapting to a very different and difficult environment: all of the joys, discoveries, and challenges of enabling young adults to have an encounter with Christ.

One of her most memorable memories was at the Saturday night vigil, with six million young people kneeling in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, together with Pope Francis, on Copacabana Beach. All you could hear in the silence was the sound and rhythm of the waves as they crashed on the shore. On returning home, four young men entered the seminary, and one joined a religious order. God worked in a very powerful way!

By 2016 and WYD in Kraków, Sabine had built up great



*Sabine with husband Richard and all the family at the award ceremony*

expertise as a leader in supporting our group of 140 young people, comprising priests, religious, leaders, and young adults in Warsaw and Krakow, ensuring that their health and emotional wellbeing could cope with the busy WYD schedule. Sabine has such a big heart for the Lord, and she has all the virtues that she shares with others. Her principal focus is that young people should encounter Christ with joy, and enter into a personal relationship with Him. Her papal award is richly deserved!

*Gaynoll Craig*

## Ordination to the transitional diaconate of Malachy Eze and Christopher Doig

**T**he ordination to the transitional diaconate of Malachy Eze and Christopher Doig took place in St Mary's Cathedral, Aberdeen on Thursday 16th July, the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Hugh Gilbert OSB following the lifting of some of the lockdown restrictions placed on churches.

Attendance at the ordination had to be restricted due to the pandemic but that didn't stop over 2,300 well-wishers watching the Mass live on YouTube.

During his homily Bishop Hugh said: "A Christian is not a Christian for herself; he or she represents Another and serves others. And a deacon is not a deacon for himself. What this ordination and your generosity give us,

Malachy and Christopher, is an assurance that the Lord, here and now, in Aberdeen in 2020, has not forgotten us. He's at work among us. He still holds us in his care and is bothered about us and his Church in this place. He is still calling and sending and inspiring, and pouring out his Holy Spirit to equip his disciples for service. He is our Shepherd and he is with us. "My Father is working still, and I am working" (John 5:17). You are messengers, bearers, deacons of that – for the good of us all!

Both new deacons have now started their final year of study and formation for the priesthood; Christopher Doig at the Scots College, Rome and Malachy Eze at Oscott College, Birmingham.



*New deacons Christopher Doig and Malachy Eze*





*Christopher Doig*



*Christopher Doig with sister Natalia, mother Kamila and father Alexander*



*The candidates prostrate themselves as a sign of surrender to Christ*



*Malachy Eze*



*From left to right: Mrs Stella Onuoha, Mrs Nimi Ogbeifun, Mr Martin Orakwe, Sr. Mary Grace DDL, Fr Gabriel Emeasoba, Fr. Peter Eze, Fr. James Anyaegbu, Fr. Maximilian Nwosu, Fr. Kingsley Chigbo, Mrs Ngozi Amu and Engr Emeka Onuh.*

# Exciting new catechesis resource for children - and it's absolutely free!

Born of a determined request from my children's liturgy class and my passion for creative catechesis, along with support and encouragement from my then parish priest, this coming Advent will mark the 3rd birthday of "Explore Weekly".

Explore Weekly is an activity sheet for primary school-aged children aimed at reinforcing the Sunday Gospel within a home environment while also reinforcing what is learnt during a children's liturgy session in a fun, colourful and appropriate way. Designed so that younger children can sit with a family member and work through the sheet, while older children have the option of working independently, my classes love to show and tell me about their completed activities! Best of all, it's available for free!

Initially developed for use within my parish, it was picked up by my local Catholic primary school before it was discovered by the Dominican Sisters of St Cecilia who promoted it and it is now available across the Diocese thanks to the Ogilvie Centre.

Like most publications, Explore Weekly develops continually, with the latest change occurring due to COVID-19 and the suspension of Masses and catechesis for children. Moving from a one-page activity sheet to a two-page sheet, it still contains reflections, prayers and activities. However, it now contains the Sunday Gospel in child-friendly language side by side with a family based activity such as crafting or cooking. The activity sheet aims to open up conversations about the Gospel at home while supporting the child and their family with some basic

Sunday 2 August 2020      18th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Yr A)

## EXPLORE Weekly

### Feeding 5,000

When Jesus heard what happened to John, Jesus left in a boat. He went to a lonely place by himself. But when the crowds heard about it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus arrived, he saw a large crowd. He felt sorry for them and healed those who were sick.

Late that afternoon, his followers came to Jesus and said, "No one lives in this place. And it is already late. Send the people away so they can go to the towns and buy food for themselves."

Jesus answered, "They don't need to go away. You give them some food to eat."

The followers answered, "But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish."

Jesus said, "Bring the bread and the fish to me." Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves of bread and the two fish. Then he looked to heaven and thanked God for the food. Jesus divided the loaves of bread. He gave them to his followers, and they gave the bread to the people. All the people ate and were satisfied. After they finished eating, the followers filled 12 baskets with the pieces of food that were not eaten. There were about 5,000 men there who ate, as well as women and children.

based on Matthew 14:13-21


### Weekly Prayer

Loving Father, thank you for the endless love and care you have for me. Help me to share this love and goodness with others. Amen

---

### To Ponder...

Do you remember a time when you felt better because someone showed with love?



## Love & Care

Image by LoveYou'll from Pixabay

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### Gospel Reflection

People in today's gospel followed Jesus because they had been amazed by his teachings. In his words they had been finding new hope, a sense of life and comfort. They had not been expecting free meals. Jesus' disciples started worrying about the empty stomachs of the followers when night was approaching. They also have a ready solution: 'send the people away and let them look after themselves'. Yet Jesus had a different idea. He decided to give out five loaves carried by the disciples, although it was hardly enough even for them. But first he asked the crowd to sit down on the patches of grass. As a result the people had to move closer. Following Jesus' example the people may have started to share their own food hidden in their bags for themselves. Jesus changed the hearts and minds of those people; he freed them from selfishness.

When Jesus was fasting before the beginning of his public ministry, he was tempted by Satan to turn stones into loaves of bread to satisfy his hunger. In response he said that man doesn't live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Miraculous multiplication of food isn't the kind of miracle we need; it seems that on global scale enough food is produced to feed everyone. Shamefully, a lot of it is wasted in the rich countries, while the poorer ones suffer. The only miracle we need is a change of heart, turning away from selfishness and greed on a global scale. This process begins nowhere other than in your heart; you are the miracle that God has made to change the world.

Created by Miss Sabrina Maguire, Children's Ministry at St Peter's Buckie.

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Sabrina Maguire

## Deacon Doug gives seafarer helping hand

**A** Filipino fisherman hospitalised in Aberdeen since the start of lockdown after a suspected stroke has thanked a local seafarers' charity for providing virtual support while in hospital.

Twenty-three-year-old Jericho who was working on a vessel in the North of Scotland had to be airlifted to the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary for emergency treatment after taking ill suddenly.

Local port chaplain Deacon Doug Duncan who works with charity Stella Maris (Apostleship of the Sea) was informed about the incident. Over the weeks Doug picked up, washed and delivered Jericho's clothes and supplied fruit, chocolates and magazines to the hospital.

Doug also communicated regularly with Jericho via social media, helping keep his spirits up and reassuring him.

On 13 July two days before he was due to fly home to the Philippines, Covid-19 restrictions were lifted at the Infirmary.

Doug was named as the allotted person who could visit Jericho.

Following all safety precautions Doug visited Jericho who was delighted to see a friendly and welcoming face. They chatted and prayed, and Doug gave Jericho a blessing.

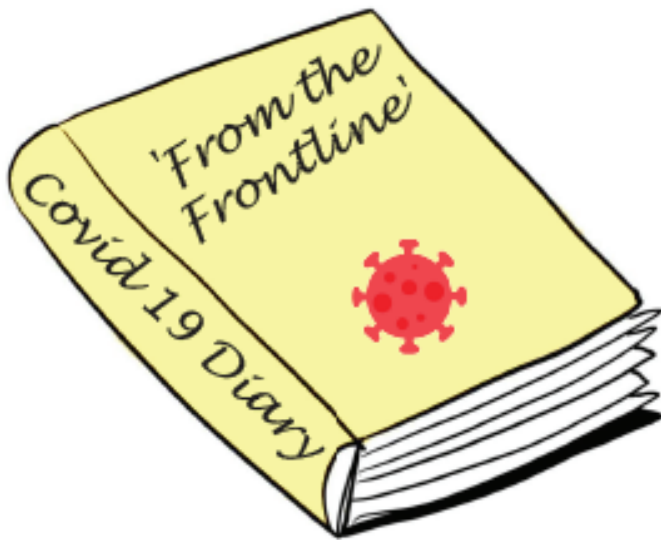
Doug said, "Having gone through so much and still extremely weak down his left side Jericho's only complaint was the hospital didn't serve rice at breakfast, lunch and dinner!

"Thankfully, a local Filipina lady helped out with some local dishes and assisted him with translation."

On 15 July, Doug waved off Jericho at the hospital and the fisherman finally flew home to the Philippines where he is now receiving further treatment in hospital.



Jericho with Deacon Doug Duncan



*Based on 'Thought for the Week' by Deacon John Wire written during the weeks of Lockdown.*

BY DEACON JOHN WIRE

**Thursday 26 March 2020**

Lockdown! The world that we have known for so long has suddenly changed. It's almost as though we are extras in a science fiction horror movie. The world is grinding to a halt. Shops, pubs, restaurants, cinemas, and places of worship are ordered to close. Attending Mass on Sunday is stopped, by order! Imposed change has taken away our weekly ritual of worshipping God. However, through prayer and meditation or saying the rosary, we can continue our spiritual journey. "When you pray go to your private room... And your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you." [Mt 6: 6]. The sudden change that the pandemic has brought to our lives is a harsh wakeup call for us and for the world. In every aspect of our stewardship of planet earth, from the atmosphere and beyond, to the smallest living creature buried in the ground, this is a time to think about taking stock.

**Thursday 2 April 2020**

Every one of us will have experienced anxiety, fear, even panic at times as we followed the spread of the pandemic across the world. Like a rollercoaster, our emotions and fears rise and fall as the news and statistics fill the media. Our vulnerability is exposed and what we once considered to be certainties in our lives our proved not to be so. It also lays bare all those ideas we have of what we think nourishes our soul. However unpalatable the thought of our own demise may be, our priority must be the welfare of our own soul because the brightness of it is what will propel us into eternity with God.

**Sunday 12 April 2020**

Easter Sunday! Easter brings hope not only for an end to the 'lockdown' but more importantly the hope of salvation. In the natural world plants are pushing through and trees are blossoming. Gérard de Nerval a 19th century French



poet wrote, "Every flower is a soul blossoming in nature." Gardens provide food and beauty, places to enjoy, to relax in, to meditate in, to pray in or just be in. Gardening can be therapeutic, taking us away from the stress of life and bringing us closer to the natural world created by God. "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb where no one had been laid," [John 19:41].

**Saturday 2 May 2020**

Today we will have been in 'lockdown' for forty days. To many of us the weeks and days of 'lockdown' may have felt like being in a wilderness, as Jesus experienced. Coming to terms with not having many of the things we took for granted before the virus changed everything. Being in a virtual wilderness is certainly a challenge to our mental ability to accept and embrace the significant changes to our lives that have been imposed in order for each one of us to be safe, to keep the potential of being infected by the virus at bay.

**Thursday 21 May 2020**

Today is the Feast of the Ascension when Jesus left his disciples, having appeared to them at various times during the forty days since his resurrection. The disciples believed that He would return very soon, certainly in their lifetime. However, as time went on and He had not returned they must have become despondent. Did their faith begin to wane at the creeping realisation that it wasn't going to happen when they wanted? No, because while His departure marked the end of His physical presence in the

world, it also marked the beginning of his presence in quite a different way. "I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Paraclete to be with you forever" [John 14:16], "the spirit of truth... he will be my witness" [John 15: 26].

#### **Thursday 11 June 2020**

With a suddenness that left us wondering, the Coronavirus pandemic has been knocked off centre stage by the media circus surrounding the death of an African American. The incident has ignited protests across the globe, highlighting racism and racial inequality between peoples of different colour and ethnic origins. In the gospel of Mark, Jesus is asked by one of the Scribes, "What commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answers, "The first is to love God with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this, to love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." [Mark 12: 28-31].

#### **Thursday 25 June 2020**

The effects of the 'lockdown' have produced a surge in the number of food banks and 'soup kitchens' across the country, supporting those who are struggling to cope. "At the end of life, we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, or how much money we have made, or how many great things we have done. We will be judged by, 'I was hungry, and you gave me to eat, I was naked, and you clothed me, I was homeless, and you took me in.' [Mt 25: 35]. Hungry not only for bread: but hungry for love. Naked not only for clothing: but naked for human dignity and respect. Homeless not only for want of a room of bricks: but homeless because of rejection." This quote from Mother Teresa reminds us of our responsibility to those less fortunate than ourselves, not only today but every day.

#### **Thursday 16 July 2020**

During the weeks of 'lockdown' I have been kept busy with my work for the diocese from home. I also thought it would fill some time by writing about what I had done in my life so far for future generations of the family to read. The family is the foundation stone of society, particularly our Christian society and our example of living out our Christian family life should be a beacon of light to our neighbours. The strength of family bonds is so crucial when adversity strikes; the support and love of the family are there to ease the pain of an otherwise traumatic event and to rebuild hope out of disaster. Mother Teresa said, "The openness of our hearts and minds can be measured by how wide we draw the circle of what we call family."

#### **Thursday 23 July 2020**

After several months of traversing the emotional peaks and troughs of the pandemic and trying to keep in contact with our loved ones and friends by phone or video calls; meeting together face to face is a source of great joy. Grandparents can meet and hug their grandchildren; it's

been a long time coming. And now with the new found ability to meet socially our thoughts turn to sharing a meal together for the first time in what seems an age. Being able to sit and talk and enjoy the moment is a joy in itself. St John writing in his second letter says, "I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete." [2 John 1: 12]. The light of change is beginning to spread through the gloom as we appreciate once more the warmth and closeness of our family. "Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do." [Ecclesiastes 9: 7].

#### **Thursday 30 July 2020**

The return to some semblance of normality has stalled. The prediction of when life may return to what we knew before the outbreak of the Covid virus is pushed back to an as yet unknown date. Yet this is the precise time that we need to muster our resilience, our ability to recover from the setback, however great it may be. The Old Testament story of Job is an example. Job loses his family and everything he owns and becomes ill as a result. He is harangued by his friends who urge him to blame God for all his misfortune, yet he resists their arguments, and steadfastly maintains his belief in God. Eventually good fortune returns to him. Resilience is built when people confront a threat realistically and discover that they have the resources to cope with it together. In his letter to the Romans St Paul says, "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." [Romans 12: 12].





## Jesus' Garden of Souls

BY ALISON DE SOUZA

*During the lockdown St Mary's Cathedral parishioner Alison De Souza has been looking for some good news to relieve the COVID-19 gloom and has been busy interviewing folk over the 'phone. In the following article Alison talks to fellow parishioner Pixie Mather about her daily lockdown routine.*

**T**here is a theory that there are six degrees of separation between an individual and every other individual alive on the planet. Recent research suggests that with advances in modern technology there may even be fewer degrees of separation between us all. In our daily lives each of us makes an impact just like a pebble when thrown into a pond - the ripples extend outward.

To find out how the network of people I know through St Mary's Cathedral, and their families and friends, have coped through the lockdown period, I decided to undertake a series of interviews and share any good news they had with you. I will also try and test how many connections I have through the Cathedral and how far my circle extends!

Pixie Mather and I first met in 2015 when I joined the volunteer flower arrangers at the Cathedral. Pixie was then in charge of flower arranging and I was a novice. It is fitting that my first interview is with her as she trained me from scratch. Pixie's family had a florist shop when she was a child growing up in South Africa, and she and I also share a love of Africa as I grew up in Kenya.

Pixie started self-isolating on the 16th of March. She celebrated her 81st birthday in April during the lockdown, and recently had a joyful reunion with her two-year old granddaughter in her garden. Her two sons have helped deliver food shopping to her every week. One of



*Pixie Mather as a child in KwaZulu, Natal with her father and celebrating a recent birthday (inset)*

her daughters works for the NHS and is in direct contact with COVID patients so it was felt that it was safer for her not to visit, while her younger daughter and grandson were diagnosed with COVID-19 but thankfully had mild symptoms and recovered.

On the 30th of March, Pixie had a fall at her home leading to a deep cut on her leg just above the ankle. This wound has just healed following weeks of home visits by nurses and rounds of antibiotics.

I ask Pixie about her daily routine. She tells me that if she has had a good night's sleep, she gets up about 7.30-8 a.m. and does some cleaning and pottering around followed by some gardening if her leg allows. She then spends a portion of the day in prayer.

I ask her if she has a specific place for prayer or set prayers that she uses, and she does say a perpetual novena daily but is not a great one for formal prayer. Instead, she takes time to talk to the Lord about how she feels wherever she is. In fact, one of her favourite places to speak to the Lord is in the bath!

She also watches Mass online every day. Pixie says she has attended Mass in Nairobi, Vancouver, Port Elizabeth, the beautiful Shrine to Our Lady at Knock and even Walsingham, which reminded her of the time she had lived there. She makes a point to check in with Fr Keith's celebration of Mass at St Mary's Cathedral. We discuss how people around the world are attending Sunday Mass online at the Cathedral. Pixie mentions that she recognises several names online and believes these are former parishioners

who were connected to Aberdeen through the oil industry.

One day during Lent, Pixie was lying down in pain from her leg wound and focusing on a beautiful crucifix that she has had for 30 years. She started to think about Christ being crucified and nails being hammered through His hands and feet, and all that agony. She thought of all the weight of the body on the hands and the feet, and trying not to put pressure on the hands as the flesh would then tear. She said it was the biggest wake - up call with regard to the "pain" and she remarked that we don't meditate often enough on the crucifixion and its true significance for us. This is the

**//...she remarked that we don't meditate often enough on the crucifixion and its true significance for us. This is the message she wants to share with us.**

message she wants to share with us.

While Pixie recounted the above, I remembered watching the film "Risen" over Lent. This portrays the experience of a fictional Roman tribune Clavius who was tasked with finding the body of Jesus following the resurrection in order to stem political unrest. In one scene, Clavius threatens one of the disciples with crucifixion and shows him the nails used. Crucifixion meant a slow, painful and public death; reserved for serious crimes to serve as a deterrent. The nails were longer than the length of my palm - crudely made - heavy and thick. The disciple visibly blanched.

Pixie tells me she desperately misses attending Mass in person, as she loves going to Mass and it has been such a fixture of her life. I ask her about the healing services which she was involved with pre-lockdown and we wonder when they will be able to resume.

In the meantime, she tells me her home always has flowers and plants, and she loves spending time in her

garden. Many people have found that the renewal of nature in spring has been a symbol of hope during the lockdown. The time and space they have had during this period has also allowed them to appreciate the beauty that they may have missed in the hustle and bustle of daily life.

When the relics of St Therese visited the Cathedral, I shared the following quote with Pixie. St Therese is also the patron saint of florists:

"I understood how all the flowers God created are beautiful- how the splendour of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not take away from the perfume of the violet or the simplicity of the daisy. I understood that if all flowers wanted to be roses, nature would lose her springtime beauty, and the fields would no longer be decked out with little wild flowers. And so it is in the world of souls...Jesus' garden. He willed to create great souls comparable to lilies and roses, but he created small ones as well...and these must be content to be daisies and violets destined to give joy to God's glances, when He looks down at His feet."<sup>1</sup>

No matter what we are facing at this moment, if we are fearful and feel alone and anxiety takes over, we can take this to the Lord in prayer and share our fears with Him who carries all our burdens. I have at times felt that alleged peace that passes understanding amid turmoil. As we heard recently in Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

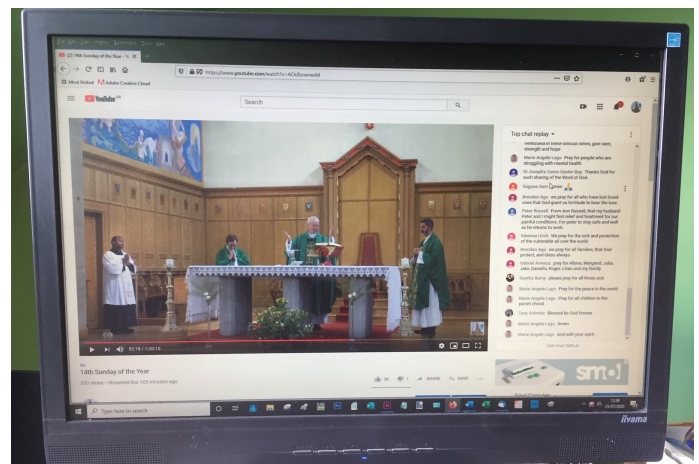
<sup>1</sup> From "Pearls of Wisdom" by M. Susan Lautenbach. See <https://blog.littleflower.org/prayers/pearls-of-wisdom/st-thereses-wisdom-garden-of-souls/>

# Getting some perspective on our spiritual communion

BY SR ANNA CHRISTI SOLIS OP

*While thankfully our churches are now open for worship, the opportunity to take part in Mass online during the lockdown has been a Godsend and no doubt it will become a permanent feature of the 'new normal'. While there can be no substitute for sacramental communion, Sr Anna Christi Solis OP reflects on how "both spiritual and sacramental communion prepare us for the ultimate reality of eternal union with our Trinitarian God who has a place prepared for us in the Father's house."*

From the years when I was a small girl, I remember my father's business trips, which would last as long as a week or fortnight. All during his absence, which we felt keenly, we would communicate nightly by telephone, plan his welcome-home party, and wonder, "What is he doing now?" Ironically, because of the deep spiritual bond that united us as a family, his absence was somehow another mode of his presence. Though separated by space, we knew



that we were with him, and he with us - truly one in our love for each other; and our longing for our father's presence only increased our love for him.

This longing for the presence of a loved one is at the heart

of the practice of “spiritual communion” which the Church encourages during the difficult time of coronavirus pandemic. “Spiritual communion” is based on faith in the Eucharist and in the sacramental presence of the One Whom we love, Who gives Himself to us and in whose divine life we share. Even at this time when we are separated from the sacramental presence of Christ in the Eucharist and Holy Communion, the focus of our thoughts and desires remains united to Him and His to us - preparing for the great day of sacramental reunion in our churches.

By faith in Christ and by baptism, we have become members of Christ’s body the Church, children of God, and participators, by grace, in God’s own divine life.<sup>1</sup> United to Christ as members of his body, we have also become a “priestly people.” This means that every moment of every day can be offered with Christ to the Father. *Lumen Gentium*, a document of the Second Vatican Council, articulates it beautifully:

"For all their works, prayers and apostolic endeavours, their ordinary married and family life, their daily occupations, their physical and mental relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne—all these become 'spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ'. Together with the offering of the Lord's body, they are most fittingly offered in the celebration of the Eucharist. Thus, as those everywhere who adore in holy activity, the laity consecrate the world itself to God."<sup>2</sup>

Christ’s one sacrifice to the Father is made present at every Mass, allowing the offerings of our daily lives to be united with Him on the altar. This is articulated during the doxology when the priest prays “Through Him, with Him, and in Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, Almighty Father, forever and ever.”<sup>3</sup> Our “Amen” at this moment voices our faith and offering through, with and in Christ.

The sacrifice of the Mass is offered all over the world at every moment of the day. We can pause at any moment of the day and intentionally, spiritually unite ourselves to that sacrifice. When we tune in to a television broadcast or online Mass, we have a more mediated experience of pausing to do that, focusing our eyes, ears, and hearts on the Mass being offered at that moment. In addition, there is an opportunity during these Masses to pray a prayer of spiritual communion, expressing our love and desire for Christ in the sacrament. There are many versions of the spiritual communion prayer and you can also compose one of your own.

"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen."<sup>4</sup>

The sacramental encounter we have with Christ at the Mass will be much more fruitful to the degree we have made spiritual communions during the inaccessibility of the physical presence



*"Reflecting on those joyful homecomings with my father during childhood, I wonder how barren they might have been if we had done nothing to stoke the fire of our love in his absence."*

of the Mass. This was an idea developed first by Thomas Aquinas, then the great saints like Teresa of Avila, Francis de Sales, and Alphonsus Liguori.<sup>5</sup> They recommend the practice of spiritual communion even when Mass is readily available and one is a daily Mass attender; it powerfully prepares for the sacramental encounter with our Eucharistic Lord.

Reflecting on those joyful homecomings with my father during childhood, I wonder how barren they might have been if we had done nothing to stoke the fire of our love in his absence. This experience of daily life points me to the much more graced reality of the Mass. Spiritual communion has value both in itself as a living expression of love and as a preparation for the return of the sacramental encounter with the Lord.

May this prolonged time of “spiritual communion” raise our awareness that every moment can be offered with the one sacrifice of Christ in the Mass. May it increase our desire for the return of Mass in our churches. And may both spiritual and sacramental communion prepare us for the ultimate reality of eternal union with our Trinitarian God who has a place prepared for us in the Father’s house.<sup>6</sup>

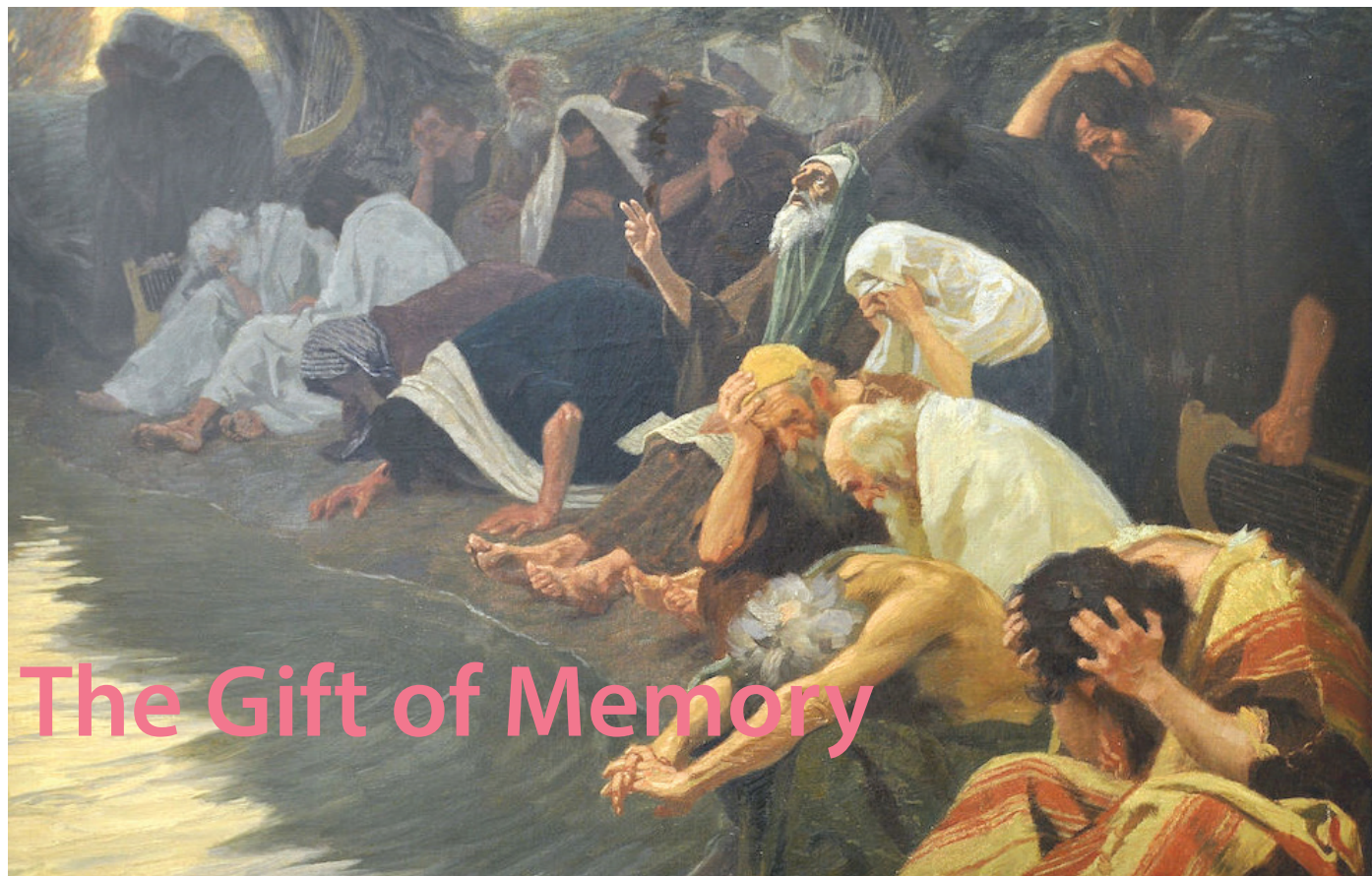
1 CCC 1265.

2 *Lumen Gentium*, 34.

3 Doxology of the Roman Missal.

4 Spiritual Communion Prayer, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/act-of-spiritual-communion-339>

5 Bernard Blankenhorn, OP “A Short History and Theology of Spiritual Communion,” *Church Life Journal*, (University of Notre Dame, 8 April 2020). <https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/the-theology-and-history-of-spiritual-communion/>  
6 John 14:2.



## The Gift of Memory

BY EILEEN CLARE GRANT

*In the second part of this exploration of the gift of memory Eileen Grant recounts how the action of Jewish liturgy and prayer was carried into Christian liturgy.*

**A**fter the story of Joseph in the Book of Genesis, the next time that God remembers is at the end of Exodus 2, when He hears the groaning of His people and remembers His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. “And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God saw the people of Israel, and God knew their condition” (Ex 2:24). Thereafter, human beings are instructed by God to remember throughout the generations what their God has done for them, but to remember rightly in the same way as God has done for them – in an active, productive, merciful way. The day of deliverance from slavery in Egypt, they are instructed, is to be a day of remembrance for them for all generations (Ex 12:14). “And Moses said to the people, Remember this day, in which you came out of Egypt, out of the land of bondage, for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place” (13:3). The story of the Exodus is about memory, right remembrance of God and His covenant, as opposed to false memories which surface when the people start complaining in their journey through the wilderness, murmuring against Moses and the Lord as they think back to the fleshpots and bread of Egypt.

Much of the Book of Deuteronomy, on the observances of statutes, repeatedly urges remembrance: for example, of the commandment to keep the Sabbath holy and free

*'By the Rivers of Babylon', painting by Gebhard Fugel ca. 1920. Source: Wikimedia Commons.*

from worldly concerns, allowing servants also to rest; releasing creditors from their debts after so many years; helping the poor, the widowed and the orphaned. “You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt and the Lord your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day” (Dt 5:15). “You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and you shall be careful to observe these statutes” (16:12). And on the subject of justice and workers’ rights: “You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this” (24:18).

In the Book of Psalms, the Psalmist is constantly asking his God to remember His people, and exhorting others to remember what the Lord has done for them, pledging everlasting remembrance – some 50 times, plus another 33 about forgetfulness. The long psalm 118 /119, repeats several times the importance of remembering the Lord’s precepts and his mercy: even if others forget I will never forget. Psalm 76/7 is a litany of remembrance – “I remember the deeds of the Lord/ I remember your wonders of old.” And asking others to recall the Lord’s goodness: “Remember the wonders he has done, /His miracles, the judgements he spoke.” (104/5)

Remember your mercy, Lord,  
And the love you have shown from old.  
Do not remember the sins of my youth.  
In your love remember me. (24/25)





On my bed I remember you  
On you I muse through the night  
for you have been my help. (62/3)

The Psalmist recalls also the grief that comes in exile when remembering happier times alongside the pledge never to forget:

By the rivers of Babylon  
there we sat and wept,  
remembering Sion. (136/7)

Psalm 105/6 tells the story of Israel and the ingratitude of the people who forgot God and the wonders He had done for them, but, in the end, "For their sake he remembered his covenant./ In the greatness of his love he relented,/ and he let them be treated with mercy/ by all who held them captive." And we might say that the whole of Psalm 135/6, often referred to as a Paschal Hymn, is a hymn of remembrance, keeping always in mind God's steadfast love:

He remembered us in our distress,  
for his great love is without end.

For the righteous Jew, then, his remembrance, like God's, must be an active thing; and the exhortation to remember God's saving action is recalled several times a day in the Shema Yisrael ('Hear, O Israel'), aided by physical reminders in tiny written scrolls (tefillin) and in the knotted fringes of their prayer shawls. "Therefore, place these words of Mine upon your heart and upon your soul, and bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for a reminder between your eyes." "They shall be to you as tzitzit (tassels), and you shall look upon them and remember all the

commandments of the Lord and fulfil them" (Num 15:38-9). And once a year, at the Passover Seder, as commanded before the Exodus, God's saving actions are recollected. At the celebration of Pascha/Passover, the youngest participant asks the question, "Why is this night different

**//As the Jew can say "I too was – am – there when God led us out of Egypt", so the Christian can say "I too was there when Christ died on the Cross and rose again from the dead."**

from all other nights" (Ma Nishtana), and, in an unfolding liturgy, the Exodus from Egypt is not only remembered and commemorated, but is re-actualized, re-presented through the retelling of the Exodus story (Maggid). Those present are not only remembering something in the past, as if they were witnessing the event from afar, but are participating in the actual Exodus through the liturgy. Their celebration is a part of God's ongoing saving activity, not only in the past, but here and now.

In a similar fashion, the Exultet, the great hymn in the liturgy of the Christian Easter Vigil, recalls and makes present, here and now, God's saving action on behalf of His people, with the repetition of "This is the night, this is the night... when once you led our forebears from slavery in Egypt [up until] the night when Christ broke the prison-bars of death and rose victorious from the underworld." As the Jew can say "I too was – am – there when God led us out of Egypt", so the Christian can say "I too was there when Christ died on the Cross and rose again from the dead." This remembering action of Jewish liturgy and prayer was carried into Christian liturgy from early times and forms the basis of the Mass when God's saving action in Christ Jesus is made present here and now on the altar.

## Divine Footnotes: Living in the divine will

BY DR ANTONY LUBY

**T**hroughout the ages, there have been so-called "private" revelations, some of which have been recognized by the authority of the Church. They do not belong, however, to the deposit of faith. *It is not their role to improve or complete Christ's definitive Revelation, but to help live more fully by it in a certain period of history. (Emphasis added)*

(Catechism of the Catholic Church n.67)

With regard to God's revelation to His people, sufficient for salvation has been revealed within the Holy Bible – but God has not stopped communicating with His people. Indeed, Catholic devotion has often been based upon private revelations made public – one only has to think of the many saints, mystics, and popes receiving such revelations from God e.g. the visions and locutions from Our Lord to Sister Faustina now known as the Apostle of Divine Mercy with a feast day established by Saint Pope John Paul II.

That said, Catholic mysticism only truly came alive for me through reading *The Poem of the Man-God*, a work in five volumes by Maria Valtorta, a bed-ridden Italian mystic.



*St Faustina, the apostle of Divine Mercy*

Maria also received regular visions that she was instructed to write down. Relating the life of Jesus in greater detail than the Gospels – Maria's book is not only in accord with Catholic doctrine but also spiritually edifying. This helped to prepare me for my introduction to the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta. According to Mark Mallett, the work of



The Italian mystic Maria Valtorta



Luisa Piccarreta, also known as the "Little Daughter of the Divine Will"

Sister Faustina may be regarded as a divine footnote to the Scriptural passage that "God so loved the world He gave his only Son..." (John 3:16).<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the lifetime work of Luisa Piccarreta is a divine footnote to the Our Father prayer, in particular, "...Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

As the introductory quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains, the purpose of private revelation made public is to "help [us] live more fully by it [God's revelation] in a certain period of history." For some learned commentators and modern day seers (e.g. Iannuzzi, 2012; Mallett 2020b; O'Connor 2019) our certain period of history may be no less than "the end of an age."<sup>2</sup> Drawing upon the writings of Luisa Piccarreta; Fr Joseph Iannuzzi, Mark Mallett, and Daniel O'Connor reckon the end of this age to be the end of sin. Aligning the words from Our Lord to Luisa with both biblical teaching and Marian apparitions, they point to the vital role being played by Our Lady, Queen of Heaven and Earth as the woman who crushes Satan. This

1 Mark Mallett. 2020b. The Divine Footnotes. <https://www.markmallett.com/blog/2020/01/09/the-divine-footnotes/>

2 Rev. Dr J L Iannuzzi. 2012. The Operations of the Divine and Human Will in the Writings of the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta. PhD thesis. Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University.

Mark Mallett, 2020a. On Luisa and her Writings. <https://www.markmallett.com/blog/2020/01/07/on-luisa-and-her-writings/>

Daniel O'Connor. 2019. The Crown of Sanctity: On the Revelations of Jesus to Luisa Piccarreta. <https://danieloconnor.files.wordpress.com/2019/07/the-crown-of-sanctity.pdf>

will bring an end to our age of unprecedented sinning and herald the new "Era of Peace" i.e. the triumph of Mary's Immaculate Heart.

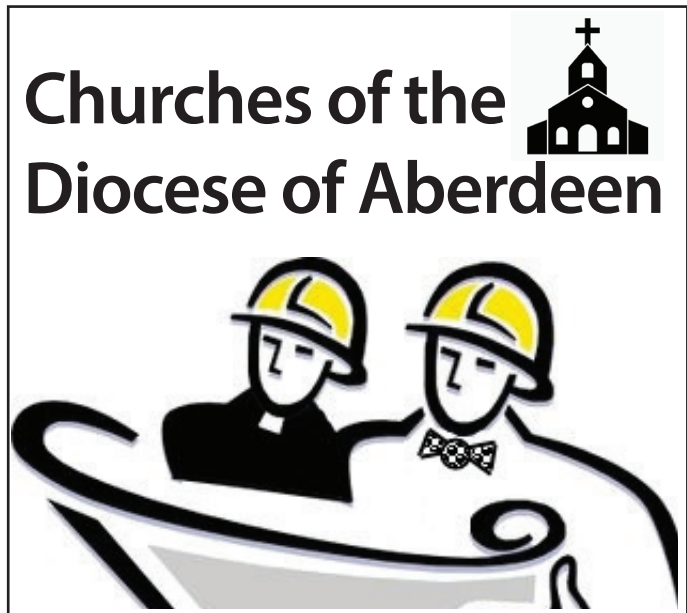
In the meantime, as we await the end of this age of sin, according to the mystic Luisa Piccarreta, God is offering to us "Living in the Divine Will" i.e. a daily surrender of our will to Jesus in response to his prayer, "...Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". Surrendered to God, our wills becomes as one with the Trinity and the will of the Father, Son and Spirit become manifest through our wills here on earth. Such life is to prepare us for the forthcoming chastisements that correspond with apocalyptic (revelatory) biblical prophecies. Ultimately, though, dawns the new Era of Peace whereby humanity and the rest of creation is restored like Eden.

"...it is still true today that God is stronger than the dragon, that it is love which conquers rather than selfishness... Mary... says to us: 'Take heart, it is love that wins in the end!' ...The 'woman clothed with the sun' is the great sign of the victory of love, of the victory of goodness, of the victory of God; a great sign of consolation."<sup>3</sup>

3 (Pope Benedict XVI, 2007, Homily, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary) [http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2007/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_hom\\_20070815\\_castelgandolfo.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20070815_castelgandolfo.html)



If you know somebody who is unable to get to church to pick up a copy of the *Light of the North* please let them know that for just £10.00 they can be put on our subscribers' mailing list, and we will send them a year's issues of the magazine by post. All cheques should be made out to: "Levies"



*Under the aegis of Archbishop Emeritus Mario Conti we continue our series celebrating the rich variety of church buildings in the Diocese. The third building in this series, the Church of St Margaret, Huntly opened its doors in 1834. The church building was funded by the Gordon family of Wardhouse. The family had moved to Jerez in Spain and were involved in the sherry business, hence the inspiration for the architectural style of the building which is undoubtedly Spanish. The following article is based on the scale drawings and text of architect Oliver R. Humphries FRIAS and the line drawings of Professor John R. Hume, a talented illustrator, historian and architectural expert.*

# The Church of Saint Margaret, Huntly

BY OLIVER R HUMPHRIES FRIAS AND PROFESSOR JOHN R HUME

**T**he New Statistical Account of 1845 describes the town of Huntly as ‘a burgh of barony, having been built on what was a barren heath and marshy swamp. It is now well drained and its situation is particularly healthful, being sheltered from almost every wind by the surrounding hills.’ The douce burgh of Huntly still benefits from these advantages.

The 18th Century saw many new towns laid out and developed. The formal grid was the preferred plan form and the Burgh of Huntly is no different. The two main streets intersect at the centre of the town at a generous square. The Church of St. Margaret is located to the north of this square at the meeting of Chapel Street and West Park Street. Sited on the corner, the main facade looks out diagonally. A projecting porch, built of Morayshire sandstone, nicely detailed, with pilasters and a pediment, faces the passer-by. Superimposed on this porch is the most extraordinary square tower or spire, in an architectural style which is not of Huntly, Scotland, but of Spain. This tower which is 80 feet (24.4 metres) high, terminates in a crown superimposed by a cross and



Stanley Howe / St Margaret's Church, Huntly / CC BY-SA 2.0

forms the bell tower. Within the bell tower there is ‘a well-toned bell’ making St. Margaret’s Church the first Catholic chapel in Scotland to have both bell and spire.

The plan of the church is octagonal, a plan form which permitted the architect, Mr. William Robertson of Elgin, to cleverly exploit the corner location, giving dominance to the entrance porch and tower while turning the corner at the same time. The sacristy is attached to the south face of the octagonal plan with direct access to the church. To the sacristy the two-storey presbytery house is attached. (I am uncertain whether the presbytery house was built at the same time as the church since it has a slightly later feel).



Line drawing of St Margaret's, Huntly by John Hume



*The magnificent interior "explodes in colour".*

The sanctuary, rectangular in form, is attached to, but projects beyond, the octagonal plan at a position directly opposite the entry porch. The church was designed to take 350 to 400 persons seated with the pews laid out radially from the altar.

The finely detailed parts of the church are built in fine axed Morayshire sandstone, these being the porch and tower, the presbytery house (main facade) and all window and other dressings. The main body of walls remaining are of coursed random freestone. A continuous string course two-thirds up the elevation of the church forms the springing line for six lunette windows symmetrically located about the main axis. These windows let natural light into the church through leaded cathedral glass. An octagonal, comparatively low-pitched roof springs from the wall

head. The single storey lesser volume of the sacristy is also lit by a lunette window and it too is covered by a slated roof. The Gordons of Wardhouse were a prominent Catholic family of the Huntly area in the 19th Century and the monies necessary to build and dress the church came from the benefaction of two brothers of this family, Carlos P Gordon of Cadiz and John Gordon of Jerez and Wardhouse. The inspiration for the architectural style for the building must also have come from Spain and cleverly interpreted and integrated by the architect, Mr Robertson of Elgin.

Not only did the Gordons provide monies for the building but they donated two statues, 'one of our Blessed Lady holding the divine infant in her arms, the other of St Joseph, patron of the universal Church'. The seven oil paintings in St. Margaret's were also gifts of the Gordon family and came from Spain. Another important benefactor was Alex Steward of Huntly.

Although the exterior of the building is striking in its context in a street in Huntly, Aberdeenshire, the interior is a revelation. On entering the church from the vestibule, the whole explodes in colour with bright and intricate stencil work to walls, ceiling and within and around the sanctuary. Saints' heads, painted in the pendentives supporting the domicular ceiling look down on the faithful below, the filtered top light enhancing the whole effect.

The church was extensively restored in 1989/90 when the failing roof structure, wall strapping and plaster finishings including the stencil work of 1905, were totally removed. The masonry walling was treated and the whole reformed and faithfully reproduced in great detail, complete to the exact pattern of the original work.

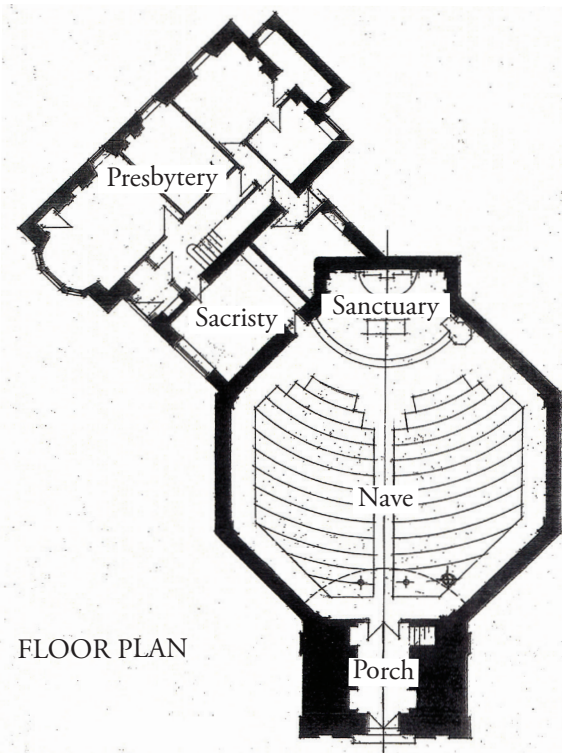
The original stencil work which helps create the magnificent interior was totally recorded in exact detail in pattern and colour prior to the duntakings. The restoration is therefore a complete and accurate replacement of the original.

When completed, the works won that year's annual award from The Worshipful Company of Plasterers for the best plaster restoration works for the whole of Britain. The quality of the finished work is distinctly a testament to the skill of the contractor who executed the restoration.

This jewel, the Church of St. Margaret, Huntly, was officially opened 'with great solemnity' on Sunday the 31st August, 1834.

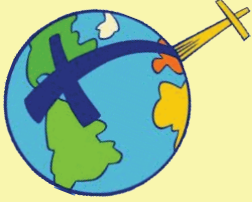


MAIN FACADE ELEVATION (Presbytery house and Church)



FLOOR PLAN

# Oot an Aboot with Ron Smith



## The Grand St Bernard Pass

*Ron's travels have been rather curtailed due to the present pandemic, but in the following article he reflects on a fascinating visit he once made to the Grand St Bernard Pass in Switzerland.*

**M**ost people seem to know about those great big cuddly St. Bernard dogs with a wee barrel of brandy around their necks – but what is the real story behind these four-legged life-savers?

These dogs were bred and used to locate travellers in difficulty in the snowy conditions of the Grand St. Bernard Pass in Switzerland which is 2473 metres above sea level (8,120 feet)

The St. Bernard Pass is lies on one of the ancient trade routes between Italy and Switzerland, has been used for over 1,000 years, and for over 6 months of the year is closed by deep snow. St. Bernard of Montjoux opened a hospice and monastery at the summit in 1050, and Augustinian monks, brothers and priests have been there ever since to help travellers in distress, using the famous dogs who are thought to have saved more than 2,000 lives over the years.

Today a road tunnel (opened in March 1964) cuts through the mountains and so it is no longer traders but tourists who throng to the Pass.

The journey starts at Martigny, Switzerland. Here you'll



*The Grand St Bernard Pass at the Italy - Switzerland border*

find the St. Bernard Dogs Museum. It's located in an ex-military warehouse next to a Roman amphitheatre. It is run by a foundation, and the famous dogs live here all the year round.

Probably the most well known of all the St Bernard dogs in the history of the hospice was a dog called Barry who was credited with saving around 70 lives. Barry was born in 1800 (the year Napoleon crossed the pass to enter Italy). He wasn't the first rescue dog but he is certainly the most famous. – today he is preserved in a museum in Bern.

The monastery started using dogs around 1660, but today there is no need for working dogs. Our modern vehicles and technology have made them redundant. In the summer tourist season, some of the dogs go up to the Pass, where they have quarters and tourists can take one for a walk!

To get to the Pass, a special train leaves Martigny main railway station to Sembracher, where you cross the platform to board another train that carries on up to Orsières. Here a waiting bus will transport you up a bleak narrowing valley. After passing the entrance to the road tunnel through the mountains, the bus continues via vicious zig-zag bends until you arrive at the Pass. Here you will find the monastery, shops, cafés, and the dogs. There is a wee lake with Italy on the other side of it, where there is a huge statue of St. Bernard.

St. Bernard was an arch-deacon in Aosta, Italy, on the Italian side of the Pass. He had heard many stories about the hardships faced by travellers, not only the natural ones of cold, snow, ice, treacherous paths and avalanches, but also bandits who preyed on wayfarers.

St. Bernard felt a call from God to establish a new order of Augustinians and to construct a hospice and monastery for travellers. This must have been a tremendous undertaking in 1050, as there is such a narrow weather window in the short summer season. However, he succeeded, and today the congregation of over 40 men and women continue to follow the rule of St. Augustine and still offer shelter and sustenance to weary travellers, free of charge.

The road is open from the 1st of June to mid October (and it can snow at any time!) so the term "closed order" is particularly fitting during the long winter months when



*What every visitor wants to see!*



The interior of the magnificent monastic church

only hardy skiers and snowshoers make it up there.

The monastery welcomes volunteers for up to three months to work on building repairs and maintenance, housekeeping, looking after visitors, and benefiting from the peace and tranquillity of the high mountains as well as

the community life. Their maxim: "To welcome the stranger is to welcome God himself" or, as Hebrews 13.2 says: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares".

There is a lot to see at the Pass including the museum of the Monastery which contains a fascinating collection of stuffed animals and birds native to the area, many of which we also see in our Cairngorms. It also contains many relics from Roman times and of course there is the magnificent church; solid, heavy, baroque, and inspiring.

The mountains can be inhospitable and savage, and yet here in the bowl of the Pass itself, with its small lake, is a wonderful welcoming monastery, continuing the tradition established by St. Bernard. It is a lively, dynamic and uplifting centre for individuals and groups alike who come here on retreat, to work, or just to pass the night.

For more information: [www.foundation-barry.ch](http://www.foundation-barry.ch) [www.musee-saint-bernard.ch](http://www.musee-saint-bernard.ch) [www.gsbernard.net](http://www.gsbernard.net) and [www.gsbernard.ch](http://www.gsbernard.ch)

## Samuel Webbe - a forgotten composer

BY DR SHELAGH NODEN

**O**ne of the casualties of the ban on public worship over the Easter period this year was the well-loved four-part setting of the Marian antiphon *Regina Caeli* by Samuel Webbe. Although the composer marked it *andante* (not too fast) it always seems to be sung with considerable verve, and great enjoyment. A pity not to hear it, as this piece seems to be the sole survivor of the many church compositions of this prolific eighteenth century composer, and in 2020 it missed its chance of a once-a-year performance.

So what do we know of its composer? Samuel Webbe was born to British Catholic parents in Menorca in 1740 where his father was a government official. His father died while Samuel was a baby and his mother brought him back to London. Money was tight so at the age of 11 young Samuel was apprenticed to a cabinetmaker and began to learn a trade. His life changed when he was put to work repairing the case of a harpsichord, and out of interest he tried a few notes. By the time the job was

**His life changed when he was put to work repairing the case of a harpsichord, and out of interest he tried a few notes. By the time the job was finished he had taught himself to play it.**

finished he had taught himself to play it. He must have been a very industrious young man because he also developed an interest in languages and learned Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, German, and Italian. His interest in music grew; he found work as a copyist of musical scores and eventually took lessons from Carl Barbandt, the organist of the Bavarian embassy chapel in London.

Although Catholic worship was illegal in Britain at this time, it was permitted in the chapels associated with the embassies of Catholic countries, such as Spain, Portugal and Bavaria, because

Samuel Webbe and the well-loved four-part setting of the Marian antiphon *Regina Caeli*

these places were deemed to be foreign soil. A thriving musical tradition grew up in the chapels and they were well attended by London Catholics. In 1776 Webbe became the organist at the Sardinian embassy chapel near Lincoln's Inn and remained there for twenty years. In 1782 he wrote a treatise for choirs, *An Essay on the Church Plain Chant*, expanded and reprinted in 1799. He was busy as a composer, producing *A Collection of Sacred Music* (c. 1790), *A Collection of Masses for Small Choirs* (c.1792) and also in 1792 *A Collection of Motetts [sic] or Antiphons*.

These works came out at just the right time for Catholic musicians in Britain because life was at last beginning to get easier for them. In 1791 the Catholic Relief Act gave English Catholics freedom of worship. It followed an earlier Act, passed

in 1778, which had begun the process. Scottish Catholics had to wait until 1793 for similar legislation. These developments encouraged the use of music in Catholic worship, which, owing to the need for secrecy, had until then been conducted almost entirely in silence.

Samuel Webbe's music was written specifically for the small inexperienced choirs that began to appear, so became extremely popular. Aquhorties College, the seminary founded near Inverurie in 1799, is known to have possessed a copy of his treatise on plainchant and his collection of motets. The staff generously shared manuscript copies of these pieces with local Catholic choirs; no copyright restrictions in those days! A surviving order of service for Easter Sunday 17th April 1808 at Aquhorties comprises no fewer than four motets by Webbe, including his *Haec Dies*. A list of music sung by the choir at Tombae church in 1817 shows that ten of the eighteen items in their repertoire were by Webbe. The two printed collections of church music produced in 1822 and 1829 by George Gordon, the priest at Dufftown, also contain a substantial number of works by Webbe. Half of the Masses included in the first volume are his work.

Webbe's compositions remained popular with Catholic choirs until the Second Vatican Council, with his settings of the four Marian antiphons often heard. However, as his motets all set Latin texts they fell out of favour in the years following the Council, especially as, owing to misinterpretations of some

Council documents, many choirs were disbanded.

Webbe's hymn tunes have been more fortunate. His tune *Melcombe* is commonly heard with the words *O Salutaris hostia* and appears in the *New English Hymnal* as *New Every Morning*. The tune *St Thomas* is often heard as *Tantum Ergo*, and several others can be found in hymnals.

There is another side to Samuel Webbe. During his lifetime he was best known as a composer of glees and catches, short light-hearted part-songs, particularly popular with groups of men in taverns. In 1766, he was given a prize medal by the Catch Club for his *O that I had wings*, and in all he won twenty-seven medals for his canons, catches, and glees, including *Discord, dire sister, Swiftly from the mountain's brow* and *Would you know my Celia's charms*. In all he published nine books of glees, between the years 1764 and 1798. Many are still performed today by enthusiasts.

Is it time for a Samuel Webbe revival? Possibly. It has to be admitted that some of his pieces are rather pedestrian, in fact the contemporary composer Samuel Wesley sarcastically described Webbe's Mass in G (a simple piece which rarely changes key) as 'the Grand Chromatic Mass in G major'. However, Webbe's best pieces are tuneful, pleasant and (crucially) not too long. Some have more difficult sections for soloists or small groups, thus keeping all the singers happy. His Lent motet *Preces populi*, and a motet for Compline *In manus tuas* are well worth hearing. Perhaps something to try when choirs get back together?

## The right trousers!

BY MARIA VERRECCHIA



**I was just starting to trim the front garden when two young lambs from the nearby farm, no more than a couple of weeks old, approached me very eagerly.**

They didn't bypass me to go to my brother or to my friend close by. I was delighted, and my maternal instinct to protect them felt very strong. I decided not to return them to the 'nursery' paddock, as they were likely to repeat their escape, and they

sounded hungry and the farmer was already preoccupied assisting a ewe giving birth in another field. They butted my legs repeatedly and skipped along bleating loudly. I attempted to scoop one of them up, but my brother advised me to just let them follow, and to my surprise they did.

I headed for the barn, as I remembered that there were some containment pens inside. I had to negotiate a heavy barred gate, tied up with some fiddly twine. It was very awkward and the twine was splitting as I undid it and I was aware that the lambs were becoming restless, and the barn was also adjacent to a blind bend in the road.

Eventually, I managed to prise open the gate and corral the 'escapees' and felt much relief and satisfaction at securing their safety. As I headed back out of the barn, I remembered

the awkward gate and didn't want to struggle with it again, so I looked for another exit and walked all around the perimeter of the barn, no other gates, I considered the fence, but the barbed wire looked particularly fierce, so I had no choice but to go out the way I had come in, through the same 'troublesome' gate.

Some minutes later, as I resumed my strimming, I considered why the lambs had 'chosen' me and then suddenly a clear image of the farmer came to mind. He was wearing his usual garb, his green, waterproof over-trousers. I looked down at mine, the same colour and material, then the penny dropped, no I hadn't been reliving a scene from *Wallace and Gromit*, these trousers were the right ones and not because of any pastoral abilities on my part did those lambs come to me, but purely because I resembled their



*Through that troublesome gate!*  
Albert Bridge, Wikimedia Commons

true shepherd, the same shepherd that had been hand feeding them, as I was to discover later.

I thought on about the whole experience, the barn gate, and Jesus' warning about trying to enter heaven through other 'false' gates. Yes, the gate I had to use was heavy and awkward and I was certainly reluctant to continue its use. I had searched for an easier way, which only led to danger and 'dead ends'. The lambs had been fed the food of life by their father, and kept safe by His real helper, the Holy Spirit,

who, with some human assistance, kept the lambs safe within the refuge of His Church until His eagerly awaited return.

So for everyone out there trying to help their family members and friends find peace, especially in these challenging times, that only comes from a life with Jesus, one piece of advice, make sure you're wearing the right trousers!

## Adultery: Twenty-one times in one week!



BY FR VINCENT TRAVERS OP

**I** remember preparing for my fourth confession as a seven-year-old. I was looking for a way to lump together my usual sins of pretending not to hear my parents when they called, causing trouble in school, not saying my prayers, telling lies, fighting with my sisters, being late for meals, and so on. As I wasn't sure I would remember all these sins, I looked for a word that would summarise them. Since we were told the commandments covered all sin, I knew I would find the elusive word in the list of ten. I rattled the commandments off to myself. When I got to "Thou shall not commit adultery", I said to myself, adultery is the word I am looking for. Adultery must mean, not obeying adults. Why else would they call it adultery? I didn't know any better, because Sister Stan's explanation was pretty vague. She told us that adultery was a big sin. It made our soul turn black, and you would go straight to hell if you were hit by a car. It was such a big sin that most people never did it in their whole life. But here was I, a seven-year-old, and I had already committed adultery twenty-one times, in just one week. I was very careful when crossing the road!

Finally, Saturday came and I headed off to the parish church with my sister. She must have had a good week. She was out in less than half a minute, smiling angelically.

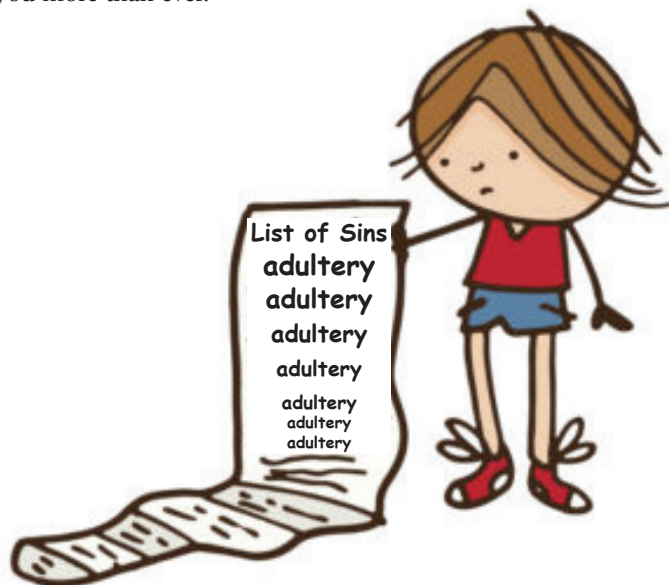
Now it was my turn. He pulled the slide. He was a young

priest, just ordained. He'd probably never heard of adultery committed twenty-one times in one week. He might collapse and die in shock, and the people would want to know what whopper I had confessed.

I had worked out my strategy. I decided to start with a little sin: I missed morning and evening prayers nine times. I knew that would not get his attention, so I quickly made it twenty times. Next, I said, I fought with my sisters seventeen times." At the last moment, I decided to make it twenty-seven times to make sure I was making an impression. Then I dropped my voice and tried to bury the adultery part, and quickly whispered 'adultery twenty-one times." I then raised my voice and closed with something not so serious," I wouldn't get up when I was called in the morning for school." The ploy didn't work.

The priest raised his voice loud enough for every sinner in church to hear him say, "Did you say adultery? You committed adultery?" There was a long pause, and I knew I was in for it. Eventually, after what seemed like an eternity, the priest said, "How old are you? What grade are you in?" I knew I was in big trouble. "I'm seven and a half years old." "I thought so," he said. Then he said, "I don't think you committed adultery. But even if you did, do you know that Jesus forgives you and loves you more than ever." "Yes, Father!"

I felt thoroughly cleansed of all my sins. I knew now, I could cross the road without fear of going to hell if I was hit by a car. Then I stepped out of the confessional, a sea of faces stared at me. I could hear my sister's voice, several rows away, saying in a stage whisper, "What did he say to you?" I have never forgotten the words," Even if you did what you say you did, Jesus forgives you more than ever."



*We are indebted to Fr Vincent Travers OP for this article which appeared in January's issue of 'Don Bosco's Madonna' monthly magazine.*



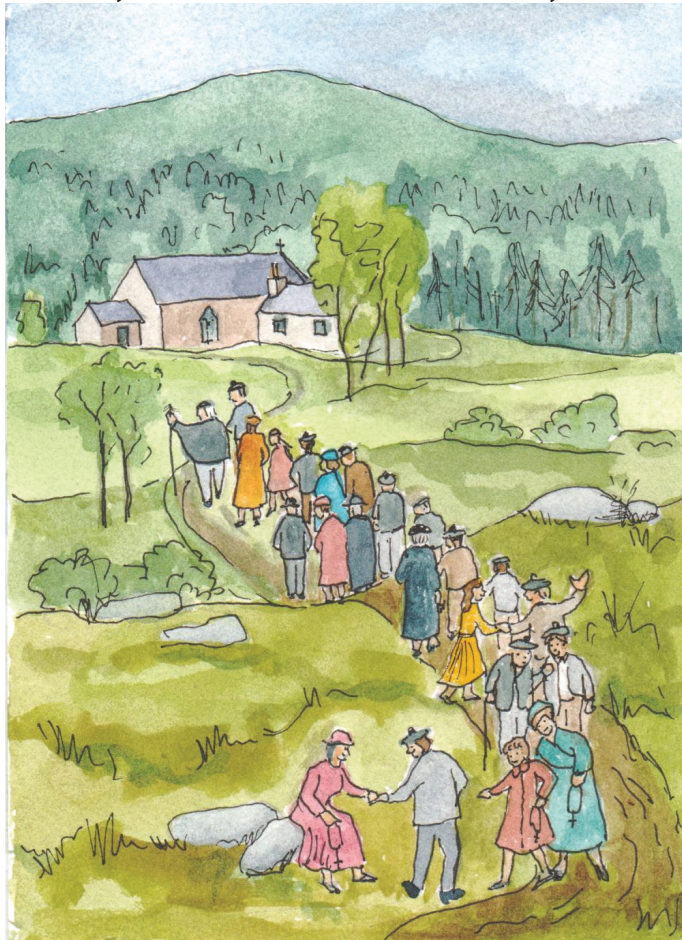
# Mission to Corgarff

*Alasdair Roberts and Ann Dean continue their exploration of Catholic life in the 19th century in Glengairn on Deeside including the establishment of a small chapel at Corgarff (Our Lady of the Snows) in 1808 by Fr Lachlan McIntosh. The chapel has recently been refurbished and a celebratory Mass is planned for 12.00 on Sunday 23rd August to which all parishioners are warmly invited.*

BY ALASDAIR ROBERTS & ANN DEAN

'I am in the most pitiable situation imaginable in Corgarf, for want of a place for divine worship. Tis in the wretched dark kiln I officiate there at present. I am resolved if possible to build a Chapel in that Country.' Thus wrote Lachlan McIntosh, priest of Glengairn on Deeside, to the Rev. Charles Maxwell in 1807. Maxwell was procurator of the Scots Mission with responsibility for funds, and an exchange of letters followed about raising the necessary £300. This was not the first northern priest to use a corn-drying barn or 'Killogie' for worship. Bishop George Hay did the same.

An older Corgarff Mass-centre had been the house of Ordachoy, five miles north of Glengairn's heather-thatched chapel. William McLeod alias McHardy, resident priest there, had Protestant family connections. James McHardy was married by a kinsman the Rev. Charles McHardy of Crathie



*'When crossing the Glaschoille to or from Corgarff, Fr McIntosh used to say the Rosary and the people followed making the responses.' (A charming watercolour by Ann Dean*



*Our Lady of the Snows Chapel at Corgarff*

kirk - 'the Apostate brother' to Catholics. Mass was moved from house to kiln. Sadly McLeod, who seems to have been recruited for the Scots College in Spain by Lachlan McIntosh, died of tuberculosis after being posted to Braemar. A fine Innes Review article (Spring 2009) has explored the challenges he faced there.

In contrast to heather thatch, the chapel which was raised at Tornahaish (Corgarff Chapel) required 'Sclatterwork - Sclates from Corgarph quarry laid on with lime.' Larger stones were brought from Auchindoir at the foot of Strathdon. In a letter of 22 November 1808 Mr McIntosh emphasised the cost of building: 'My expenses are very high and God knows how I'll clear them. I officiated in the new chapel at Corgarf on Sunday eight days ago altho' not entirely finished. This Country is very poor.' There were no Catholic gentry to hand, but a visit to Sir James Gordon of Letterfourie helped. His money had raised the Preshome building.

**///A miraculous snowfall in the August of 367 AD was commemorated by Rome's second-ranking church, Sancta Maria Maggiore ad Nives. Weather reports of the blocked road between Cock Bridge and Tomintoul make the Roman title apt for Corgarff.**

As for the priest's stipend or quota from Rome, 'Fifteen pounds a year will not make bread and brochan to me.' The local Royal Bounty missionary received £28 yearly<sup>1</sup>. An early travel-writer took time off describing Highland scenery to measure the chapel's dimensions at '40 feet by 20 without the walls'. He learned that it had been dedicated to Our Lady of the Snows. A miraculous snowfall in the August of 367 AD was commemorated by Rome's second-ranking church, Sancta Maria Maggiore. Weather reports of the blocked road between Cock Bridge and Tomintoul make the Roman title apt for Corgarff.

Father Thomas Meany collected stories, many of them in broad Scots: 'On Corgarff days a vast o' pranks played! He heard something of this in well-turned English from the sister of John Michie. He had the school at Ardoch, and in later life entered the abbey at Fort Augustus as

Brother Nathalan. Mrs Mackenzie (as she became) herded the priest's two cows as a girl. Her grandmother had kept

<sup>1</sup> A missionary minister of the Church of Scotland who received a grant from the Royal Bounty Fund with the object of Protestantizing Catholic districts where people still clung to the faith and practices of their fathers.



house for him and she grew up browsing his books: 'When crossing the Glaschoille to or from Corgarff, Fr McIntosh used to say the Rosary and the people followed making the responses. The tail of the procession, made up generally of the younger folks, sometimes gave way to distractions in the course of the long walk and the Rosary became for them a "gey roch" Rosary, whilst the more serious people prayed devoutly with the old priest.'

There were pious people between the headwaters of Dee and Don. Many fasted on Sundays out of respect for the Eucharist although communion was normally limited to eight annual feasts. Lachlan McIntosh heard confessions on Saturday evenings - in his house in stormy weather, more so as he grew old. Mass at Corgarff took place every three weeks, involving some 'very cold jaunts' on a sheltie. 'Priest' Gordon came from Aberdeen with £5 6s 4d of Glen Garden Poor Money and told Bishop Kyle he felt 'humbled' by the

priest's devotion: 'On the second Sunday after Easter he had been officiating at the chapel five miles above him, a journey which can hardly now be expected of him.' He was ninety-one.

Younger clergy came in support, and money became available through Sir Charles Forbes of Newe. A parishioner explained an application for support from the Rev. George Forbes: 'What Mr Forbes means by the people crowding round the Chapel wall, Sir Charles, is that having no vestry he has to use the Chapel to speak to his congregation each individual privately. . . They very often have to stand around the Chapel for an hour or two in any weather till such time as they can all be admitted.' The result was a 'But and a Ben' with a door into the chapel. Towards the end of last century Barbara King lived there. Visits from southern clergy friends, including an ex-administrator of Westminster Cathedral, brought the chapel back to life.

## Memories of the Huntly Street Lark



BY GAY MURTON

*The Spring 2017 issue of the Light of the North included a short memoir of Bernadette Moran by Alasdair Roberts. Bernadette was one of two daughters of the redoubtable Irish journalist and author James Joseph Moran. Despite severe health problems Bernadette, who died in 1999, was an inspirational Aberdeen Catholic and author of "The Lark still Sings", her moving account of a prayerful life. St Mary's Cathedral parishioner Gay Murton has recorded these happy recollections of her.*

**W**e came to Aberdeen in 1980. I was English, not a Sacred Heart or Craiglockhart alumna, living at the north side of town, children too old (nine and six) for me to meet other mums at the school gates. And a bit of a language barrier ! I had to work quite hard at meeting congenial people.

I went to a meeting in the Ogilvie Centre at St Mary's Cathedral – perhaps the Newman Association? Very erudite, beyond me. After the cup of tea I was sliding towards the door when I overheard a genteel dispute between two older ladies – one jolly and smiling, wanting to stay, the other a bit distressed wanting to go home, but afraid of something. Could I help, I offered.

This was Molly and Bernadette Moran. Molly wanted to stay, Bernadette wanted to go home, but was afraid of the stairs, the dark street, the possibility of being mugged. Just over the road ? No bother. A strong arm down the stairs, chatting as we went. I realised I had read an interview with Bernadette – although coping with cerebral palsy, she had boldly said "NO, she did NOT wish she'd never been born!"

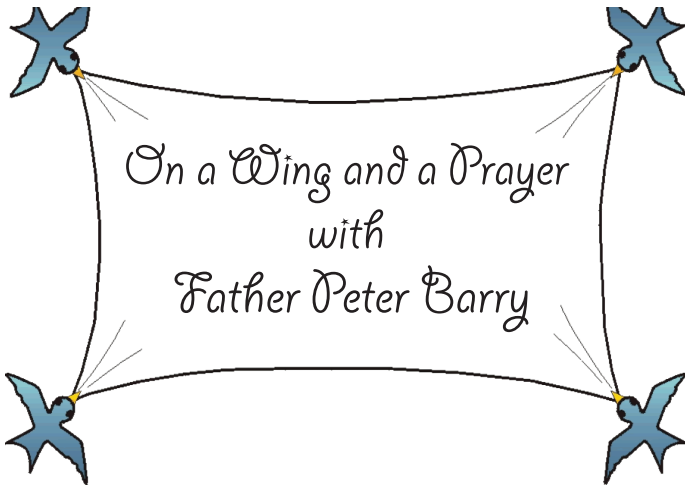
Though her speech was sometimes distorted, she was articulate and cheerful. We stood chatting, and she warmly invited me to call any time at her home at 23 Huntly Street, just over the road.

Diffidently, I did so and was warmly welcomed. Often

Molly was over at the Cathedral – she ran the bookshop. She was pleased Bernadette had regular company – I used to swim at Bon Accord Baths and call in afterwards. Every nun passing through Aberdeen called at 23 Huntly Street. The sitting room on the first floor faced south. It was above adjoining buildings, always bright and welcoming and full of people. One of Bernadette's nicest characteristics was that she assumed all her friends would like each other, and always introduced them, whereas some people keep their friends in separate compartments – THESE are Glasgow friends, they won't like THOSE Shetland nuns – Bernadette assumed they would.

On an early visit I found the toilet seat dangerously loose. I located the wing nuts and tightened them up, - never completely securely ! - and told B. I had done so. "Fat nuns!" she hissed. It became a secret joke, and a regular small service, sometimes urgently sought !

We enjoyed a happy, casual friendship for some years; I shared the joy of the public ceremony when Bernadette became a "Consecrated Woman in the World" like Molly – a nun outwith a convent. I met dozens of people through them, but sadly they were mostly of an age with the sisters, a generation older than me and most of them are long dead. Things changed – one of my children came home for lunch, cutting my day, Bernadette became very frail and agoraphobic though still welcoming. Then, Molly died. "She just didn't seem to fight!" said a shocked friend. After a lifetime of service, Molly went joyfully to her beloved Lord. Bernadette went to the old Nazareth House – off my beat. I did visit once – a room with high windows she couldn't see out of, facing north. Alas for the sunny room in Huntly Street. I went to her funeral, and was given a little booklet of her poems which the then Bishop of Aberdeen, the Rt Rev Mario Conti, had kindly had printed, "The Lark Still Sings" and if I could find it, the lark would still sing for me in her own words. The warm sunny memories of kindness and humour and courage in adversity are with me always.



## God's kingdom through the magnifying power of the lens

**H**igh in the mountains of Arizona, the Director of the Vatican Observatory is ready to begin his work. The sky is crystal clear, and there is no light pollution. Guy Consolmagno is a Jesuit brother, who has lectured at Harvard on planetary science. As the daylight fades, Brother Guy prepares his two mirrors, at 1.8 and .38 metres in diameter. During the hours of darkness he will look upwards to the stars and the planets, trying to unravel their mysteries.

My own hobby, ornithology, requires no more than a small pair of binoculars, a telescope which can be mounted to my car window, and a camera. I did find a rare bird in Shetland that hadn't been seen in the UK for 27 years. The Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*) as the name suggests, 'enucleates' the kernel from pine cones in Siberia, and occasionally breaks out of its natural habitat. In this case a

bird landed in the garden opposite St Margaret's Church, and set off an influx of 'birders'. Around 400 made the trip north. No one, in the present generation of bird watchers, had this bird on their list

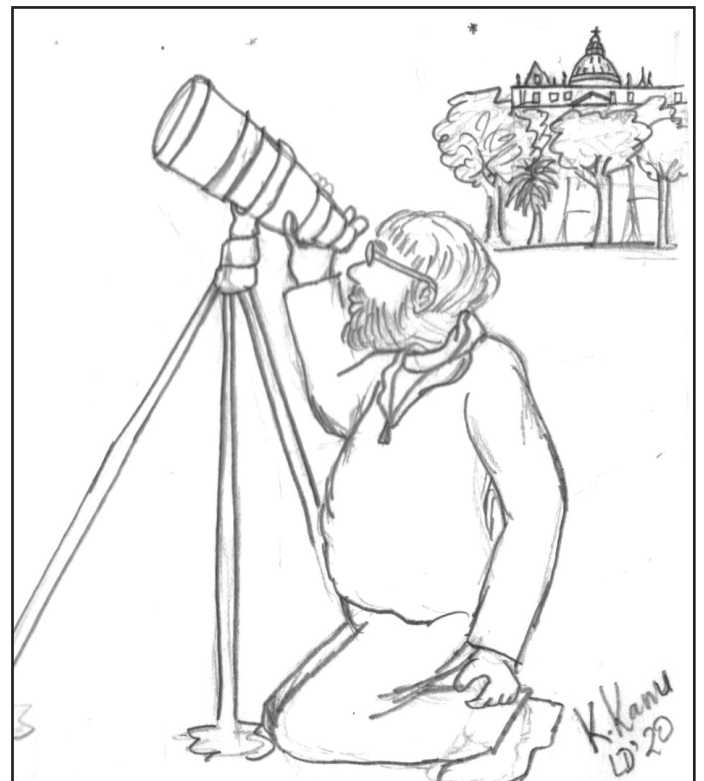
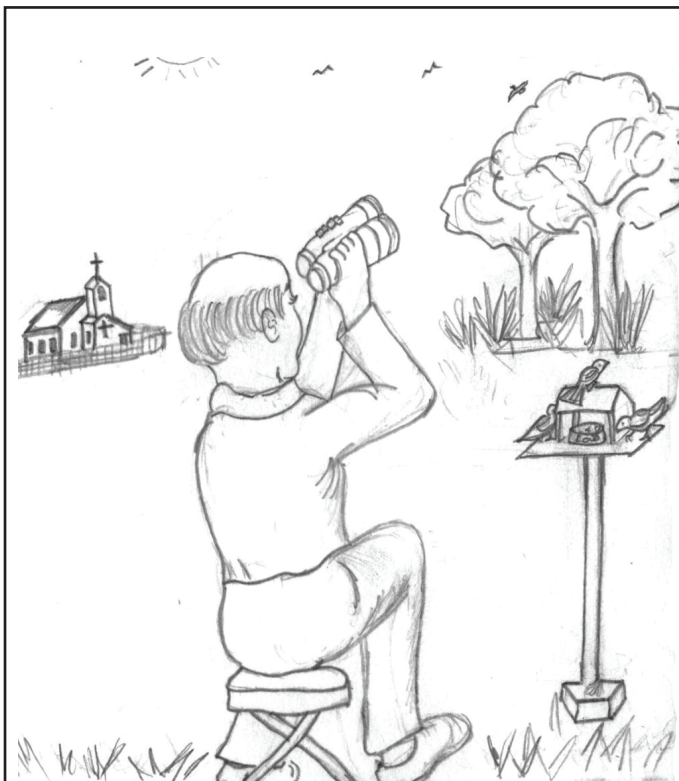
But I am just a 'twitcher', not a scientist, and birdwatching is a hobby. Brother Guy who has written a doctoral thesis on planetary science has discovered a cluster of meteorites in the ice-fields of Antarctica, and has an asteroid named after him. In 2014, he won the Carl Sagan prize for advancement in the public understanding of astronomy. His name is added to a long list of Jesuits who added to the corpus of scientific discovery.

For astronomers and simple bird watchers, the mysteries of God's kingdom are made clearer through the magnifying power of the lens.

But as far as I know, Brother Guy has never seen the aurora borealis. On frosty winter evenings it danced above the church in Shetland, curtains of green lights on the horizon. Occasionally the colour was red; streams of light rushing up into a peak a thousand miles overhead. If there was no background noise, a gentle sound like the rustling of silk could be heard.

For Brother Guy, there is no necessary clash between science and religion. This is one of the themes in the papacy of Pope Benedict XVI. His encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (faith and reason) shows that they are not competing ideologies. It's encouraging for people of faith when a scientist is also a professed believer, and follows the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Brother Guy writes with insight and imagination on astrophysics, surely the most cerebral of all the sciences.

Guy Consolmagno says he knows God better through his observations, not least because science doesn't have all the answers. There are hypotheses in cosmology which may have a high explanatory power, but they inevitably



"For astronomers and simple bird watchers, the mysteries of God's kingdom are made clearer through the magnifying power of the lens." Illustration courtesy of Kelechi Kanu

give way to another hypothesis, then another again, and so on. It's good to have a believer who can provide a counter-argument to the materialist and militant atheist. This can provide an entry point into lives and hearts, when there is a shared language.

When the Jesuit priests went to evangelise China, they took medicine with them. They had worked in Peru with the indigenous tribes, who had found a cure for malaria. The bark of the cinchona tree could be pulverised and produced some remarkable results. In France, the young Dauphin, Louis XIV, was cured of malaria, in those days called Ague, by a Jesuit missionary. In 1692 a French Jesuit, Pere Fauntery, prepared a concoction which cured the Kangxi emperor of malaria. In gratitude the Jesuits were permitted to build a house with a small chapel attached, near Tianamen Square. Their knowledge of medicine provided an entry point into lives and hearts. To this day, the cinchona tree is called Jesuit's Bark.

How did Jesus penetrate the hearts of those he encountered? Jesus taught them using images from nature. The crops, the harvest success and failure, the

jealous enemy who planted weeds among the wheat, the fig tree which refused to bear fruit. The language of their own familiar world spoke to them more powerfully than any clever syllogism.

The evidence that Jesus presented of the Father's love was all around. The blind man, now sighted and walking freely, would convince the most sceptical mind, although some would never be convinced.

**//How did Jesus penetrate the hearts of those he encountered?**

I sometimes watch these debates, filmed at the Oxford Students Union, where a clever atheist like Christopher Hitchens pits his wits against a clever believer like Ravi Zacharias. The arguments swing back and forth like a game of table tennis, but no protagonist ever manages to convert the other. People who are curious for answers to the three great questions: "Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?" are more likely to examine the quality of their own lives. How might they evaluate that great paradox, the strength that comes from our gentleness? Do we take a real interest in their lives, walking with them with neither approval nor condemnation, but with love? If that touches their hearts, God will do the rest.

# So what will you remember about the lockdown?

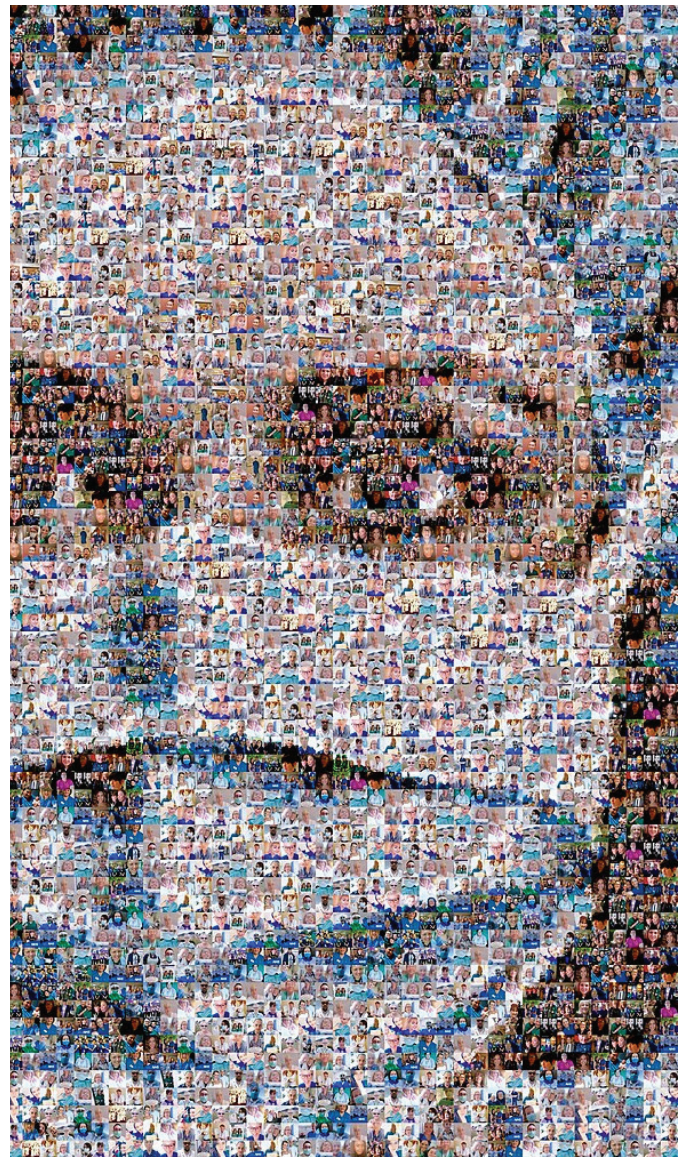
BY SR JANET FEARNs FMDM

**A**s I write this article, I am marking four months and four days since I began working from home. Because of the nature of my work and the fact that my office and room are currently one and the same, it has meant confinement for up to twenty hours daily, seven days each week.

There have been many moments of sheer delight. Even as I write this paragraph I can hear the barking of the trio of adolescent fox cubs which are almost old enough to leave their mother but which, for the moment, are very happy to romp together on the grass outside my window in the early evening. A young roe deer and her fawn also wandered peacefully across the same patch of grass. The lockdown has been, for many of us, a wonderful opportunity to see wildlife.

Many of us also enjoyed the Thursday evening clap for the NHS. For my part, I didn't clap: an old plastic tray and a wooden spoon made a much more satisfactory noise. My community members "borrowed" tin lids and other items on our way to the front gate. The neighbours certainly heard us as we happily united to celebrate the generous self-sacrifice of thousands of care workers across the country. Our applause was also heartfelt because we have on the property a care home for our own Sisters and saw at first hand the kindness of our lay staff.

There were also the sad moments. Three of our older Sisters



Digital collage created by portrait artist Nathan Wyburn of 200 NHS workers during the pandemic. [Nathan Wyburn / CC BY (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)]

died of non-Covid-19-related causes within the space of one week. Three deaths in such a short space of time was a very unusual event. Sadly, because of the tight restrictions imposed by having so many elderly and vulnerable people on site prevented the rest of us from being with them in their last hours and subsequently paying our respects. We couldn't have a Requiem Mass, even in our own chapel and, although we have our own graveyard within the grounds, couldn't be at their burial. That I was able to watch, albeit uncomfortably, was because the interment happened in line of sight from my room, from where I used a pair of binoculars – but how many people across the world couldn't be with their loved ones at the end of their lives and couldn't attend their funerals? I attended the funeral of my young niece - but only because I conducted it (a first-time experience, but I was classed as “a minister of religion” for the occasion and, as a young police officer declared, was making an “essential journey”).

Of course, there were no Masses or Eucharistic services and, alongside Catholics across the world, we depended on the Internet for Mass. It was amazingly enriching. For priests and people, it was also a learning experience. A friend told me that the first time he tried to celebrate Mass online, he only discovered afterwards that the camera was on its side. Another friend, shielded and unable to livestream Mass, filmed his Sunday homilies using his phone and sitting in front of a different part of his historic church for each homily. Somehow, he managed to fit an explanation of the font, pulpit, statue or whatever into the theme of the Sunday Gospel and sent it out via WhatsApp.

We saw Pope Francis doing his best to be a parish priest to the whole world with the daily televising of his Mass from the Santa Marta chapel, the Wednesday General Audience, the Sunday recitation of the Angelus, the Holy Week ceremonies, his extraordinary Urbi et Orbi from the steps of St Peter's in a deserted piazza... We all depended on the lifeline with which the Church reached out to the world.

Amidst the solemnity and anxiety of the lockdown, there were the moments of unexpected laughter as people used their talents to send genuinely funny material via email, WhatsApp and other media. The flashes of humour helped, didn't they, often breaking a moment of gloom and “fed-upness”.

There have been the increased contacts with family, even from a distance, thanks to our electronic media, ensuring that, even if we couldn't physically get together, there were more than usual opportunities for messaging and keeping up with the news. Of course, it was very hard to be prevented from visiting family members in care homes or who were/are shielding but I know from my own family's experience,



*Clapping for carers and key workers*

[By Clint Budd - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/58827557@N06/49841444191/>, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=89796398>]

the staff of the care home where my mother is staying did better than their best to offer their support to the residents and families with and for whom they work.

Of course there have been the frustrations. Lockdown has had an effect on all of us. For many people, the experience of furlough has raised the question of whether or not there will be a job at the end of the day. Good employers have sweated blood as they tried to support their staff, keep the business going and address each new piece of legislation.

As the restrictions are loosened, the world is not quite the same. We're all more cautious whilst, at the same time, aching to experience normality once more. The difficulty was not so much being unable to do something as to not have the freedom to make choices beyond whether to turn right or left at the gate for the life-saving exercise. Sooner rather than later, there is little difference between seeing the same trees from a clockwise or anticlockwise approach.

Covid-19 has shown us that we don't have all the answers. We've discovered the unsuspected generosity, creativity and sheer goodness of complete strangers. We've reset our priorities and, hopefully, rediscovered the importance of giving time and space to God.



If you know somebody who is unable to get to church to pick up a copy of the *Light of the North* please let them know that for just £10.00 they can be put on our subscribers' mailing list, and we will send them a year's issues of the magazine by post. All cheques should be made out to: “RC Diocese of Aberdeen”



BY CANON ALISTAIR M DOYLE

**M**oral theologians talk about the principle of double effect (unintended consequences). An unintended consequence of my reading of Fr. Leonardo Boff's treatise on the Holy Spirit *Come Holy Spirit* in my preparation for Pentecost was a brief journey in modern cosmology.

Einstein's theory of relativity and his equation  $E=mc^2$  are accepted by most cosmologists so that energy is at the root of all matter and therefore the universe. They talk of 'primal energy' or 'deep energy' and 'keeping matter in existence'. Fr Boff writes that "many cosmologists e.g. Bran Swimme - believe that the whole universe and all beings are continually created, infused and upheld by a mysterious deep energy, a nourishing abyss, which starts before space and time, before the before."

On reading this passage I recalled the first page of my Penny Catechism in primary one, age five – Q. "Who made you?" A. "God made me." Q. "Can you see God?" A. "No, because He is a Spirit." I remember also a phrase in Bede Jarrett's *Meditations for Layfolk* that "the Holy Spirit lurks at the heart of creation." My idea of God has become more refined since I was five years old. More along the lines of Ezekiel chapter one: "I saw four animals and among the animals was something that looked like a burning torch. The fire would blaze up and shoot out lightning." Before the power and majesty of a God like that the only response is to prostrate oneself.

Physicists say that the atoms, protons, neutrons and bosons that make up matter are relational. Without their desire for communion one with another, the universe would not exist. Brian Swimme again: "The universe is upheld by co-operation among all things, not by the survival of the strongest"... "Life on earth began through co-operation of the energies of the sun, planet earth and the rest of the universe." Christian belief in a triune relationship of God ties in with this belief in a creation of relationships. The Trinity is at the heart of creation and since a genuine relationship presumes love, the creator must love creation. The remark that viruses are solitary and destructive is very apt at this time. A virus seeks to destroy the relationship of cells and organisms because it is selfish about its own

reproduction. Much food for thought there!

On the emergence of life, especially intelligent life, the scientists identify in matter the original electron charge, gravity and the magnetic pull of stars and planets. For life to exist, all these forces must be carefully calibrated. In *A Brief History of Time* Stephen Hawking wrote: "If the electron charge had been slightly different it would have thrown off balance the gravitational and electromagnetic force of the stars and either they would not have converted hydrogen and helium or they would have exploded. One way or the other, life could not exist." Fr. Boff points out also that the science indicates that the conditions in the cosmos were so arranged that life would certainly emerge (Heisenberg says 'might'). The universe is arranged for a purpose. Freeman Dyson: "It seems that the universe somehow knew that we would arrive and was getting ready for the evolutionary process." These observations by (agnostic) scientists reaffirm our belief that God had a design for

**// "It seems that the universe somehow knew that we would arrive and was getting ready for the evolutionary process"**

His creation and does not act randomly. God acts through love.

Mystics such as St. Francis and Julian of Norwich have known and reflected God's love for the cosmos. St. Francis called the moon and sun his sister and brother and Julien talked of the world like a nut in God's hand. I also recall Fr Teilhard de Chardin's theory in his books *Le Milieu Divin* and *Man's Place in Nature* that the universe and man are still evolving until we reach the omega point of Christ's return to establish His kingdom.

Dipping a toe into cosmology is all very well, but in our prayer, we need to both visualise and conceptualise. We can conceptualise God as love, mercy, energy, harmony etc. and, to visualise, God has given us Jesus Christ: "To have seen me (Christ) is to have seen the Father." (John 14)

"O loving wisdom of our God .... a second Adam to the fight and to the rescue came." (John Henry Newman).



## Food and Faith *with Margaret Bradley*

*The Diocese of Aberdeen is home to Catholics from all over the world. Giulia Bicchichi, a parishioner at St Columba's Church in Banchory, who spent many years working in Rome and whose family originally come from Parma, shares a recipe for one of her favourite Italian dishes, Pasta alla Carbonara.*

**P**asta alla Carbonara is a pasta dish which has a sauce made with pancetta (Italian cured pork), eggs and cheese. It is a simple dish, easy and quick to make. The pasta should be tubular, as in penne pasta, or long, as with spaghetti, as these shapes are better able to hold the sauce. The cheese should be a hard Italian grating cheese, either parmesan made from cow's milk which has aged for two to three years or pecorino made from sheep's milk which is aged for only a few months.

Pasta alla Carbonara is said to be a speciality of Rome, although its origins are obscure and its name only dates from the 1950s. The name "carbonara" means charcoal burner so it may have originated as a traditional hearty meal for charcoal burners. Some believe that it has a connection with Lazio, to the north of Rome where Roman families were evacuated to during the Roman occupation of World War Two. When Rome was liberated in 1944 families returning to Rome brought with them a recipe for pasta with bacon and eggs. Others say that the dish developed after World War Two influenced by the US military rations of bacon and dried eggs which were distributed to the inhabitants of Rome who added them to their pasta dishes. The dish became very popular and by the early 1950s had emerged as a Roman speciality, known as Pasta alla Carbonara.

Variations of the carbonara sauce can be made by using

Italian sausage, skinned and chopped or seafood such as clams, small squid and shrimps, with the addition of anchovies, garlic, tomato, parsley and basil. Vegetables such as mushrooms, peas, broccoli, onions and leeks can also be added. Also different pasta shapes can be tried such as schiaffoni or paccheri, short tubular pasta, which have a large surface area that will hold the sauce well. Pancetta can be substituted with bacon or to create a really traditional version of the dish use guanciale, or pig's cheek.

A sweet to follow might be Zabaione eaten hot or cold and made by whisking 6 egg yolks with 3 tablespoons of caster sugar until pale and foamy. The mixture is then placed in a bowl over simmering water. Gradually beat in six 6 fl oz of dry white wine or Marsala until the mixture is thick. Pour the mixture into serving glasses and serve hot or place the bowl in a larger bowl of ice and whisk until thick and cold.



### Pasta alla Carbonara

For each person you will need:

100g pasta

One egg plus an extra yolk

Chopped pancetta or chopped unsmoked bacon (a large handful or an amount to suit)

Olive oil for frying the pancetta or bacon

A large spoonful of grated parmesan or pecorino cheese

Coarse black pepper

Boil the pasta in plenty of salted water. Fry the pancetta or bacon in the olive oil. Beat the eggs. When the pasta is cooked, drain it but retain some of the liquid to be added later. Return the pasta to the pan and add the pancetta or bacon with the cooking oil and then the eggs to produce a creamy sauce. Be careful not to let the eggs curdle. Add the grated cheese and a little of the pasta cooking liquid to prevent the dish becoming too dry. Sprinkle with coarse-ground black pepper and serve.



*Pasta alla Carbonara*



*Chilled Zabaione for desert*

# Humour from the Vestry



## Employment Ads And How To Interpret Them!

'Competitive Salary - We remain competitive by paying less than our competitors.

'Join Our Fast Paced Company" - We have no time to train you. Casual Work Atmosphere' - We don't pay enough to expect that you will dress up.

"Must be Deadline Oriented" - You will be six months behind schedule on your first day.

"Some Overtime Required" - Some time each night, some time each weekend.

"Duties will Vary" - Anyone in the office can boss you around.

"Must have an Eye for Detail" We have no quality control.

"Seeking Candidates with a wide variety of experience' - You will need to replace 3 people who've left.

"Problem Solving Skills a Must" - You are walking into a company in perpetual chaos. Your first task is to find out what is going on.

Requires Team Leadership Skills' - You will have the responsibilities of a manager without the pay or respect.

"Good Communication Skills' - Management communicates poorly, so you have to figure out what they do.

## Take Him To The Zoo

One day Joe's mother turned to Joe's father and said, "It's such a nice day, I think I'll take Joe to the zoo."

"I wouldn't bother," said father.

"If they want him, let them come and get him!"



"Mum, you gave me some terrible financial advice!"

"I did? What did I tell you?" said her mother.

"You told me to put my money in that big bank, and now that big bank is in trouble."

"That's one of the largest and best banks in the country," she said. "There must be some mistake."

"I don't think so," she sniffed. "They just returned one of my cheques with a note saying, 'Insufficient Funds'."

## Elijah And The Prophets Of Baal

A Sunday School teacher told her class about the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal. The prophets of Baal tried to get their god to send fire to ignite the offering they had put on their altar. Of course, their god couldn't do it. Then Elijah put his offering of a bull on an altar. But before he called on God to ignite it from heaven, he had the people pour water on the bull four times. The teacher asked the class if they knew why Elijah would do that.

A little girl waved her hand excitedly. "I know, I know," she said, "To make the gravy!"

A lot of people cry when they cut onions. The trick is not to form an emotional bond.

After morning Mass, a mother with a fidgety seven-year-old boy told her priest how she finally got her son to sit still and be quiet.

About halfway through the homily, she leaned over and whispered, "If you don't be quiet, the priest is going to lose his place and will have to start his homily all over again!" It worked!

## To Whom Am I Speaking?

Teacher (speaking on the phone): You say Michael has a cold and can't come to school today? To whom am I speaking?

Voice: This is my father.



## They Are All The Same Size

Little Johnny and his family lived in the country, and as a result seldom had guests. He was eager to help his mother after his father appeared with two dinner guests from the office.

When the dinner was nearly over, Little Johnny went to the kitchen and proudly carried in the first piece of apple pie, giving it to his father who passed it to a guest. Little Johnny came in with a second piece of pie and gave it to his father, who again gave it to a guest.

This was too much for Little Johnny, who said, "It's no use, Dad. The pieces are all the same size."

## Like Father, Like Husband?

If it's true that girls are inclined to marry men like their fathers, it is understandable why so many mothers cry so much at weddings.



## Tax Squeeze

One day at a local café, a woman suddenly called out, "My daughter's choking! She swallowed a 20p piece! Please, anyone, help!"

Immediately a man at a nearby table rushed up to her and said he was experienced in these situations. He calmly stepped over to the girl, then with no look of concern, wrapped his arms around her and squeezed. Out popped the 20p.

The man returned to his table as if nothing had happened. "Thank you!" the mother cried. "Tell me, are you a doctor?" "No," the man replied. "I work for the Inland Revenue."

## Never Felt Better

In a court in Tralee, deep in County Kerry, Ireland, this conversation is reported to have taken place:

Lawyer: 'At the scene of the accident, Mr O'Brien, did you tell the Garda officer that you had never felt better in your life?'

O'Brien the old farmer: 'That's right, sir.'

Lawyer: 'Well then, Mr O'Brien, how is it that you are now claiming you were seriously injured when my client's car hit your cart?'

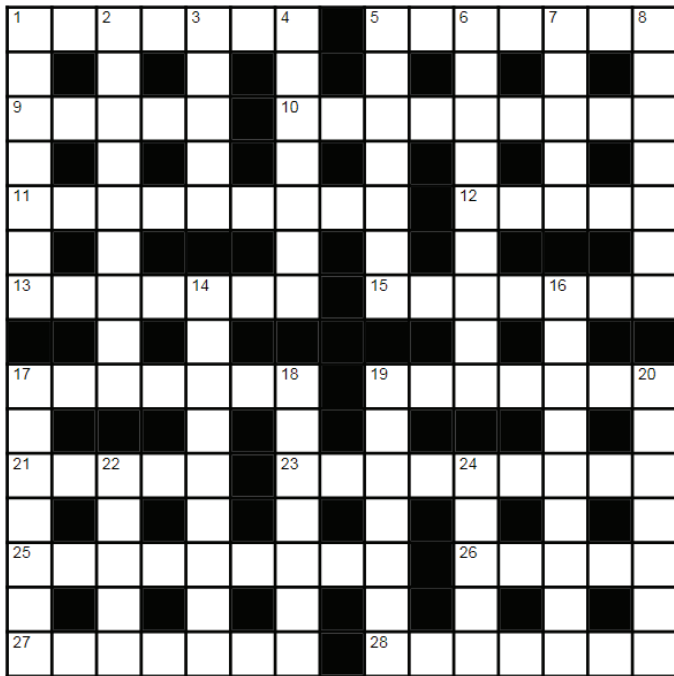
O'Brien the farmer: 'When the Garda arrived, he went over to my horse, who had a broken leg, and shot him. Then he went over to Darcy, my dog, who was badly hurt, and shot him. When he asked me how I felt, I just thought under the circumstances, it was a wise choice of words to say I've never felt better in my life.'





**WORD**  
No.44

This issue's competition winner will receive a copy of Thomas Merton's famous autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, one of the greatest works of spiritual pilgrimage. Just send your completed entry by the 1st November to: Light of the North, 20 Huntly Street, Aberdeen AB10 1SH. First correct entry drawn out of the hat is the winner.



by Philologus

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Name .....

Address .....

.....

Telephone .....

**Across:**

- 1 Purifies (7)
- 5 Tainted (7)
- 9 Forbidden objects of worship (5)
- 10 Abundant (9)
- 11 Wife of David (9)
- 12 Lift up (5)
- 13 Grapple (7)
- 15 Lack of rain (7)
- 17 Sennacherib's realm (7)
- 19 Domain (7)
- 21 Biblical clothing (5)
- 23 Supplant (9)
- 25 Announced (9)
- 26 Tamar's brother (5)
- 27 Person seeking redress for wrong (7)
- 28 Decorates (7)

**Down:**

- 1 Colourful arc seen after the flood (7)
- 2 Forehead ornaments (9)
- 3 Bird homes (5)
- 4 Greatest in status (7)
- 5 Servant (7)
- 6 Time of day (9)
- 7 Ruth's mother in law (5)
- 8 Lineage (7)
- 14 Separating wheat from chaff (9)
- 16 Legion's people (9)
- 17 King who was almost persuaded to be a Christian (7)
- 18 One more (7)
- 19 Pummelled bread (7)
- 20 Grass clippings (7)
- 22 Holy book (5)
- 24 Barter (5)

**Answers to Crossword No. 43**

**Across:** 1 Hushed, 4 Assigned, 9 Lands, 10 Chaldeans, 11 Nets, 12 Roof, 13 Leave, 15 Saffron, 16 Idea, 19 Deaf, 20 Escaped, 23 Lured, 24 Hail, 25 Fool, 27 Shepherds, 28 Shine, 29 Trespass, 30 Hungry.

**Down:** 1 Holiness, 2 Sanctify, 3 East, 5 Sea of Tiberias, 6 Indulgence, 7 Naaman, 8 Dishes, 10 Crown of thorns, 14 Friendship, 17 Opposing, 18 Adultery, 21 Closet, 22 Greece, 26 Esau.

**Little Horror Sudoku No. 31**



If you prefer sudoku to crosswords then you still have a chance to be a prize winner with our super tough sudoku puzzle.

	8						4
		4		3			6
6	7				4		5
5		2	8			9	
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Name .....

Address .....

.....

Telephone .....

**Congratulations to our last competition winner, José Turvey from Farley, Salisbury**