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The Turin Shroud Re-evaluated

The Fathers and Brothers of the Bournemouth Oratory have been privileged to host the exhibition of the life-size replica of the famous shroud of Turin. The exhibition of this replica offers an outstanding opportunity to examine not only this extraordinary object but also related artefacts which provide an informative and contextual understanding of the shroud. An official Shroud brochure will be on sale during the exhibition which runs up to Sunday 10th November at Sacred heart Bournemouth.

The piece of linen, some fourteen feet by three feet is reputedly the cloth in which Christ's body was wrapped when He was placed in the tomb. The cloth bears the eerily reversed image, like a photographic negative, of a gaunt, bearded, male bearing the marks of having been tortured and crucified. It was claimed that the image on the cloth is that of the crucified Christ. Controversy has surrounded the shroud from its earliest known history.

The shroud first made its appearance in France in 1354 when it was donated to a church in Lirey by a knight, Geoffroi de Charny. Some thirty years later the bishop of Troyes denounced it as a fake. Pope Clement VII declared it a man-made religious icon rather than a relic.

The shroud was moved to Chambéry in 1453, and while there was damaged by fire. In 1578 it was taken to Turin. Since 1683 it has been kept in a Chapel specifically designed for it by the architect Guarino Guarini. On the death of former King Umberto II in 1983 the shroud came into the ownership of the Catholic Church.

In 1988 tiny snippets of the material were subjected to radiocarbon dating by laboratories in Oxford, Zurich and Tucson. The tests suggested the cloth dated from between 1260 and 1390 AD. It seemed that science had shown the shroud could not possibly have been the cloth in which Christ's body was wrapped.

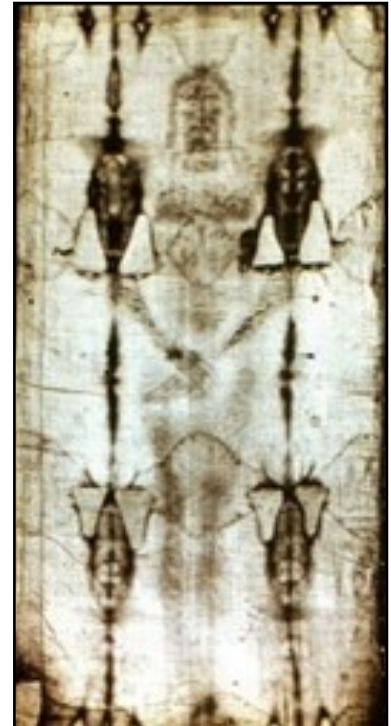
However, those test results have been questioned by a team led by Professor Liberato De Caro. They used a modern state-of-the-art dating method called Wide-Angle X-ray Scattering which analysed the structural degradation of the fibres. The tiny sample from the shroud matched results from a sample of material known to date from the Siege of Masada in 73AD. Their findings indicate the material could indeed be 2,000 years old. The techniques used by the team are non-destructive which means that the tests can be conducted by another laboratory. The two samples are awaiting further independent examination.

Scientists believe that the earlier radiocarbon dating results may have been skewed by contamination from various factors including repairs and the effect of smoke and chemical contacts over the centuries.

Professor Giulio Fanti from the University of Padua has studied the Shroud for over 25 years. His research suggests the bloodstains on the Shroud of Turin are consistent with the torture and death of Christ as described in the Bible. He says that the bloodstains are consistent with pre-crucifixion flagellation, the marks on the head consistent with a "crown" of thorns, blood marks on hands and feet consistent with crucifixion, and the marks on the chest are representative of a post-mortem spear wound.

No-one has been able to conclusively demonstrate how the image was created. American environmental scientist Bill Lauto has claimed that the characteristics of the shroud's image suggest a burst of radiant energy, something that medieval technology could not produce. This, he says, supports the notion of the image being created in a moment akin to what is described in the Gospels as the Resurrection of Jesus.

These arguments and new research are certainly significant, but the authenticity of the shroud being the actual burial cloth of Jesus and the image being of Our Saviour must remain unproven by science alone. Professor De Caro said: "Science can take us only to a certain point. Everything beyond that is a matter of faith."



St. Gertrude the Great

Gertrude was born on the Feast of the Epiphany, 6th January, in 1256. There seems to be some confusion over how she came to be taken in to the school in the convent of St Mary at Helfta at the age of four, but it may well have been that her parents were dead and she was housed as an orphan.

The monastery was one of the great religious communities of the time and the community was distinguished by the number of learned women and famous mystics associated with it.

St. Mary's Monastery in Helfta, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany, was founded in the 13th century and is known as the "Crown of German women's monasteries". As well as producing original religious works the nuns were renowned for the impeccable copies of valuable writings, and the monastery was a spiritual and cultural centre – a tradition that is alive today as the monastery attracts visitors from all over the world who go to experience concerts, lectures and retreats.

At the age of 21, Gertrude was professed as a nun, though she herself claimed that she only felt a true vocation some four years later. The turning point came one evening when she experienced a vision of Christ in the form of a young man. He spoke to her saying, "Fear not for I will save and deliver you." The vision was bathed in dazzling light which emanated from his five wounds.

For the rest of her life Gertrude experienced frequent mystical revelations, usually as dialogues with Christ whom she referred to as her "Beloved Spouse." She was convinced that these revelations were not intended for herself alone and so she forced herself to record them in a book, *The Herald of Divine Love*, a work which combines deep theological sophistication with mystical passion. There is no doubt that the revelations changed the course of her life. Her priorities shifted away from secular knowledge and toward the study of scripture and theology. Gertrude devoted herself strongly to personal prayer and meditation and began writing spiritual treatises for the benefit of her fellow nuns. Gertrude became one of the great mystics of the 13th century.

Nearly all the themes of Catholic theology are covered in *The Herald of Divine Love*, though the principal theme is that of God's love for his creatures. She had a particular devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, seeing it as the point where human and divine love are most closely joined.

Despite poor health, Gertrude served her community diligently as a spiritual director, and she was frequently called upon to lead the community in prayer, until her death on 17th November 1302.

After her death, Gertrude's works seem to have vanished almost without trace. Only five manuscripts of the *Herald* have survived, the earliest one being written in 1412, and only two of these manuscripts are complete. With the invention of printing, Gertrude became far more prominent, with Latin, Italian and German editions being published in the sixteenth century. She was popular in seventeenth-century France, where her trust in and burning love for God were potent antidotes to Jansenism, a heresy which denied man's participation in his salvation via the exercise of his free will.

Gertrude showed "tender sympathy towards the souls in Purgatory" and urged prayers for them. She is invoked in aid of the suffering souls in Purgatory. The following prayer is attributed to Gertrude, and is often depicted on her prayer card, and is most appropriate during this month of November:

Eternal Father, I offer you the Most Precious Blood of your Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal Church, for those in my own home and in my family. Amen.



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News from the Synod

Bishop Nicholas Hudson, auxiliary of Westminster, who was chosen by Pope Francis to be a Synod member, has sent the Bishops of England and Wales a fascinating insight on proceedings as the Synod entered its latter stages.

We have been asking, for two weeks now, how we can be a missionary Synodal Church. There is a strong sense in the Synod Hall that, at the end of this Assembly, we shall be wishing to communicate something which will be easy to comprehend; and able to empower parishes to embark on a more synodal approach.

It has been a fascinating journey already. We gathered first in retreat – led by the newly-named Cardinal, Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP. He urged us in this Synod to be above all good listeners. Echoing Paul – that “faith is born of listening” (Romans 10, 7) – he suggested we should listen in order not so much to *reply* as to *learn*. As we came together for the first experience of round-table sharing, it was moving to listen to one another recalling the fruits that had been harvested from last year’s session. These had been gathered up comprehensively in the ‘Foundations’ section of the *Instrumentum Laboris*, the working document which guides our journey.

They included the centrality of salvation, which it had been pointed out was missing from the report of last October’s Assembly, and which I was pleased to find mentioned frequently in this ‘Foundations’ section of the working document – a measure of how the creators of the Synod had listened to the priests. We recalled, in those first few days, major insights yielded by last year’s Assembly – insights into coresponsibility, the importance of including laypeople in discernment at all levels of the Church, the gift to the Church of Conversation in the Spirit – and so much more.

Soon we found ourselves in the groups to which we would belong for a fortnight to navigate together the process of the Synod proper. My table has been facilitated impressively by a female lecturer from Australia – the group comprising: two other women, one from Jordan, the other, Sr Nathalie Becquart XMCI, French Undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops; Cardinal Roche, and bishops from the US, Kyiv, South Sudan, Nigeria, and Pakistan; with a German Presbyterian minister as our ‘fraternal delegate’. I find myself recalling often the words of Pope Francis in his opening address, when he said the presence of so many committed laypeople emphasises the need for collaboration between lay and ordained.

It has been extraordinarily stimulating in this group to navigate together the three major sections – on ‘Relationships’, ‘Means’ and ‘Contexts’.

I marvel at the breadth of Church experience represented at my table! It is a feeling I found well captured in the very first pages of the working document which describes a synodal Church as “a pilgrim people in every part of the world seeking synodal conversion for the sake of mission.” It conjures up our table wonderfully!

Our consideration of ‘Relationships’ majored on the Trinitarian foundation of discipleship in baptism; that communion is for mission, initiation for mission. In my intervention, I pointed out that the word ‘Evangelisation’ is entirely absent from the document; and yet a synodal Church must have the New Evangelisation at its core. I suggested Conversations in the Spirit might be understood as a most timely strategy for realising the call of successive popes for synodal conversation – not only among ourselves but also with members of other ecclesial communions, other faiths and people who profess no faith. Formation for this would be essential. Transparency and accountability also featured largely in the section. Sharing perspectives, lastly, on ‘Contexts’ has yielded a striking sense that Church belonging is in many places no longer simply a matter of geography.

The significance of digital media for evangelisation also featured highly. But there was a rootedness in our sharing too, an awareness that, where the Church is more stable, deep consideration needs to be given to how the diverse councils for discernment at our disposal might be made more synodal. We have yet to conclude the discussion of ‘Contexts’; and to see what it may continue to yield. Then we move back to our first groups to begin work on the document about which we shall vote.

The Synod is a unique experience. It feels very much like a journey, a shared journey that we make together – much more a pilgrimage than a conference. In his opening address, Pope Francis indeed chose to describe this journey as a “journey we make together with hope, humility and trust.” Hope, humility and trust – these three words I have held onto and sought to aspire to; and find they capture wonderfully the spirit in which so many around me also seek to live this unique enterprise.



Jubilee Year and Indulgencies

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, Pope St Paul VI taught, “An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints.” Indulgences are plenary (full) or partial depending on whether they remove all or part of the temporal punishment due to sin.

The Papal Decree on Jubilee Year indicates there are three main ways to gain the Jubilee Indulgence: Pilgrimages to any sacred Jubilee site; pious visits to sacred places; and works of mercy and penance.

The first method is to make a pilgrimage to one of several designated Holy Places. The first category of Jubilee places includes the four Major Papal Basilicas in Rome (St Peter’s, St John Lateran, St Mary Major, and St Paul’s Outside the Walls); and the Holy Land Basilicas of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the Nativity in Bethlehem, and the Annunciation in Nazareth; as well as Cathedrals and other churches or sacred places designated by Bishops in the particular Churches.

Each Diocese is permitted to establish ‘Shrine Churches’ where the faithful can go on pilgrimage, attend Mass and receive the Sacrament of Penance, and at the same time gain a Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions.

Bishop Philip has announced five Jubilee Year Shrine Churches for our Diocese. The five designated churches are St. John’s Cathedral in Portsmouth, St. James’s Reading, Sacred Heart Bournemouth, St. Thomas’s in St. Helier, Jersey, and St. Joseph’s in St. Peter Port, Guernsey.

The Indulgence can be gained by “devoutly” participating in Holy Mass at the site, or by taking part in a Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Hours (Office of Readings, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer), the Via Crucis, the Rosary, the Akathist Hymn, or a penitential service that includes individual confessions.

The second way is to visit “sacred places”. These include the Roman Basilicas of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, San Lorenzo al Verano, and San Sebastiano; as well as the Sanctuary of Divine Love (Divino Amore), the Church of St Paul in Tre Fontane, and the Catacombs. Special mention is made of the churches of the Jubilee Pathways linked to member countries of the European Union and to female Patron Saints and Doctors of the Church.

Other sacred places throughout the world include two Basilicas in Assisi, Marian sanctuaries in Italy, and “any minor basilica, cathedral church, co-cathedral church, Marian sanctuary, or any distinguished churches designated by local bishops.

The faithful are required to spend a “suitable” amount of time during their visit in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the recitation of the Our Father, any legitimate form of the Creed, and invocations to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Those who cannot go on pilgrimage or make a visit to a sacred place for serious reasons will be able to gain the Indulgence wherever they are by uniting themselves spiritually with those who do so, and reciting the Our Father, the Creed, and other prayers connected with the Holy Year while offering up their sufferings or hardships.

Finally, the Decree provides for the ability to obtain the Indulgence by performing works of mercy and penance.

They can do so by taking part in popular missions, spiritual exercises, or formation activities on the documents of Vatican II and the Catechism, according to the mind of the Holy Father; or by visiting those in need (“in a sense, making a pilgrimage to Christ present in them”).

Similarly, they can offer acts of penance (such as fasting and abstinence), donate to the poor, support religious and charitable works (“especially in defence of life in all its phases”), or engage in other volunteer activities.

Healing Prayers Group



The Healing Prayers Group meets in the parish church each Tuesday evening between 6.30pm and 7.00pm.

If you would like to choose a theme, scripture reading and music, or would like a copy of the El Shaddai Healing Prayer or if you would like any further information, please contact the parish office.



Seminarian Owen Dugan

Owen is studying at St. Mary's College Oscott, Birmingham. When he is home, he attends the parish in Gosport or Stubbington.

I write on the back of a long weekend here at Oscott where we have hosted thousands of people over three days for Adoremus 2024 (The National Eucharistic Congress) and its connected events. People of all ages and from different parts of the country travelled here to give witness to and deepen their love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. St. Alphonsus reflecting on a visit to the Blessed Sacrament writes, *“the sparrow and turtledove, says David, make a home for themselves in their nests; but it is on the altar that You, my King and my God, have found a home and a nest for Yourself, that you might live in our midst and that we might be able to find you there always.”*

I am reminded that without the priest, God could not make the altar his dwelling place on earth, for it is by the priest that Jesus is made present on our altars for us to find, to speak to, to love. Who is worthy of this most noble vocation? Nobody; yet Christ still calls some to take on this great, yet terrifying task.

Is the Lord drawing me into a deeper love for Him in the Holy Eucharist? Is there a desire in my heart to give my whole life to love and adore Him in the Most Blessed Sacrament? To make Him better known and loved in the Eucharist? I would say these are all questions which should enter into the mind and heart of one that Jesus is calling to love Him in this particular way. This has certainly been my experience, and if nothing else, I pray this upcoming year in seminary will be one where my own love for Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament grows more and more each day.



Portsmouth Seminarians

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR PORTSMOUTH SEMINARIANS
2024/2025

 Rev. Ryan Browne St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth	 Sean Barnes Pontifical Beda College, Rome	 Owen Dugan St Mary's, Oscott	 Francis Ezeani Allen Hall, London
 Jack Ryan Venerable English College, Rome	 Rev. Diego Hoyos St Mary's, Oscott	 Ryan Hawkes St Joseph & St Edmund Parish, Southampton	 Nathan King Allen Hall, London
 John Aburn Sacred Heart House, Fareham	 Farvin Gonsalves Allen Hall, London	 Adam Trzebriski Allen Hall, London	

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Chaucer's Catholic Pilgrims in the Firing Line



So-called “trigger warnings”, which alert the reader or viewer of potentially disturbing content, have become common. We most often see them at the start of television programmes, warning the viewer that the programme contains material as diverse as smoking, violence, mental health issues, or bad language, so they are a useful method of identifying programmes which the viewer may find upsetting, inappropriate or frightening.

However, there seems to be a growing trend for educational establishments to issue such warnings when students are studying English Literature. There have been trigger warnings attached to Shakespeare plays including *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth* and *Richard III*, and novels including *Pride and Prejudice*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.

Now Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the medieval collection of two dozen stories telling of pilgrims travelling to Canterbury Cathedral to visit the shrine of St Thomas á Becket, has fallen foul of the virtue-signalling English Department of the University of Nottingham which has deemed it necessary to warn students that the stories contain expressions of the Christian faith alongside “Violence and mental illness”. The university has expressed concerns about the 14th-century text's clear expressions of Christian faith and how those might affect today's students.

Andrea Williams, chief executive of Christian Concern, has questioned from what point in history are we going to censor literary texts given that most are steeped in a Christian world view. Trigger warnings for Christian themes in Literature, she argues, are demeaning to the Christian faith and without an understanding of the Christian faith there will be no way for students to access the world of Chaucer and his contemporaries, and to censor expressions of the Christian faith is to erase much of our literary heritage.

Ms Williams added that: “True education engages and fosters understanding, not avoidance. Our universities should allow students, who have chosen to study some of the greatest works in English literature, the freedom of academic thought to make up their own minds rather than planting loaded warnings about the Christian faith.”

No-one at the university seems to have been concerned about the explicit references to sexual misconduct, duplicity and anti-Semitism contained in the tales.

A university spokesman said that it “champions diversity” and that even today's Christians could struggle with “aspects of the late-medieval world view” which are “alienating and strange”.

It seems quite extraordinary that students should be warned about Christian expressions of faith in a collection of stories about characters sharing a Christian experience in a Christian society. The stories were written at a time when the whole of Europe was Christian, and they depict aspects of the Christian way of life experienced by the characters, all of whom are on their way to a shrine dedicated to a Christian martyr. If the university's academics don't think students need to know and appreciate the historical context of the work one wonders whether they should be allowed anywhere near a kindergarten let alone a respected seat of higher education.

HMS Royal Oak Remembered

Last month, Bishop Philip joined the Anglican Bishop of Portsmouth, Rt Rev Dr Jonathan Frost, in leading a Service of Remembrance at The Hard to commemorate the 85th anniversary of the loss of HMS Royal Oak. During the service a new memorial in the form of a 2.5-metre-high granite obelisk was blessed.

The service was attended by the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, the chaplain and members of the HMS Royal Oak Association and many of the descendants of men and boys lost in 1939.

HMS Royal Oak, a veteran of the Battle of Jutland, was sunk on 14th October 1939 when German submarine U-47 slipped



into Scapa Flow and fired three torpedoes at the Revenge Class Battleship. The torpedoes struck the starboard side of the ship causing a magazine to explode. The battleship rolled over and sank in less than 20 minutes. Of the crew of 1,234 there were only 386 survivors. The loss of 834 men and boy sailors, who were not yet 18 years old, was the largest ever such loss by the Royal Navy in a single action.

As we approach Remembrance Day, let us pray for all who died in the two World Wars and in subsequent conflicts, and for all serving to preserve our peace and freedom.

New Cardinals

Pope Francis has named 21 new cardinals, significantly increasing the size of the College of Cardinals to 256 and further cementing his mark on the group of prelates who will one day elect his successor.

Among those named by history's first Latin American pope were the heads of several major dioceses and archdioceses in South America.

They include the heads of the Catholic church in Santiago del Estero, Argentina; Porto Alegre, Brazil; Santiago, Chile; Guayaquil, Ecuador; and Lima, Peru. The new cardinals will get their red hats at a ceremony, known as a consistory, on December 8th – an important feast day that officially kicks off the Christmas season in Rome.

Even before the recent announcement, Pope Francis had already named the vast majority of the voting-age cardinals who will one day vote in a conclave to choose his successor. According to Vatican statistics, before Sunday, 92 of the cardinals aged under 80 — and thus eligible to vote in a conclave — had been named by Pope Francis, compared with 24 named by Pope Benedict XVI and six by St John Paul II.

Added to their ranks on Sunday were two Vatican officials who hold positions that do not usually carry with them a cardinal's rank: the official in charge of the migrants section of the Vatican development office, the Reverend Fabio Baggio, and the official who organises the pope's foreign travels, the Reverend George Jacob Koovakad.

In a form of recognition of the importance of the current synod under way at the Vatican this month debating the future of the church, Francis also named the Reverend Timothy Radcliffe, a British theologian who is one of the spiritual advisers for the Synod, among the new Cardinals. Fr. Radcliffe is an English Dominican friar who served as Master of the Order of Preachers from 1992 to 2001. Cardinal Timothy Radcliffe has strong family links with our parish, and we congratulate him on this greatly deserved honour and pray for him and his family.

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP of Liverpool has warmly welcomed the news: "I'm delighted that my brother and fellow Dominican priest Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP will be elevated to the rank of Cardinal by Pope Francis. During his time in the priesthood, Fr Timothy has been tirelessly dedicated to his ministry and has made significant and valuable contributions to the Catholic Church, including his recent involvement in Synod discussions."

After the consistory, the Catholic Church in England and Wales will have four members of the College of Cardinals: Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Arthur Roche, Prefect of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments and former Bishop of Leeds, Cardinal Michael Fitzgerald, former Prefect of the then-Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and Cardinal-elect Timothy Radcliffe. Three of the four will be Cardinal-electors. The number of Cardinal-electors will number 141. Once Fr Radcliffe turns 80 on 22 August 2025 he will no longer be eligible to vote at a conclave to elect a new pope.

Since early in the 20th Century, a potential cardinal must already be at least a priest, but laymen have been cardinals in the past. Cardinals are known as "princes of the Church" and are appointed for life by the pope. Though there are no strict criteria for elevation to the College of Cardinals, most cardinals are bishops or archbishops prior to being appointed. On the death of a pope, the cardinals under the age of eighty gather in closed session known as a conclave to elect the new pope. The term conclave comes from the Latin for "without a key" as the cardinals are locked in the Vatican and allowed no contact with the outside world while the voting is in progress. During the conclave, the cardinals continue to vote until a candidate has a two-thirds majority. The chosen candidate is then asked if he will accept the election to the Throne of Peter, and if he accepts he then announces the name under which he will be known,



Cardinal-elect Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP

SVP Appeal for South Sudan

South Sudan gained independence in 2011 after years of civil war, making it the world's newest country - and one of its poorest. 2.4 million people are displaced and 6.2 million are in urgent need of assistance.

The work of local SVP groups in South Sudan includes running baby feeding centres which feed hundreds of children a week, providing free life-saving medical treatment at SVP medical centres, and offering vocational training for young people to help them learn a trade.

Over the last five years, 2,800 adults have completed vocational training courses. These programmes help young adults learn a trade and find a pathway out of poverty, while supporting their family and local communities. Courses in adult literacy, building and construction, animal husbandry, medicine and engineering are enabling a new generation to develop skills and slowly rebuild their nation.

Each week 700 children are given nutritious meals to give them a chance to grow-up. Free medical treatment and essential medication is provided for 13,000 people each year, and 11,000 people in two internally displaced persons camps are provided with emergency food and water.

In addition to those on-going projects, the “*Be in Hope*” home in Juba, South Sudan provides a sanctuary for 15 orphan children and young adults who have suffered from hunger or violence, and who are often preyed upon by gangs and armed militias. The idea for the home came from young people who fled the conflict in Khartoum where they themselves had been supported by the SVP.

Speaking of the invaluable help received from the appeal in England and Wales, Dr Bertram Kuol, the Programme Manager for the SVP in South Sudan has said: “We are so encouraged to know that we are not alone or forgotten. Please accept our wholehearted gratitude for your concern about the situation here in South Sudan, and the safety of the Vincentian family in our country”.

The Andover Conference of SVP is again asking for your help to support the extraordinary work of the SVP brothers and sisters in South Sudan. Over the years our parish has been generous in supporting the Sudan/South Sudan appeals.



Wisdom Centre

On **Thursday 14th November**, the Wisdom Centre in Romsey is holding a day for beginners and of all levels of experience in the art of “Mindful Calligraphy. The day will start at 10am and end at 3pm. It will be facilitated by Sunita Auger.

To book for this event email: reception@wisdomhouseromsey.co.uk or telephone 01794830206.

The idea of the day is for each individual to learn how to use a broad edged pen using the inspiration provided by their own ideas to create patterns and letters with a mindful approach.

Mindful calligraphy is a practice that combines the art of calligraphy with mindfulness principles. It involves engaging in the process of creating calligraphic strokes with full awareness and concentration in the present moment.

Practitioners of mindful calligraphy focus on the sensations of the nib or brush against the paper, the flow of ink, and the formation of each stroke, allowing creativity to unfold intuitively.

Equipment is provided, but if attendees prefer they can bring their own. We are using simple nibs and inks. Adults with certain additional needs may need the support of another adult.

Lunch is provided.

On **Thursday 28th November** there will be a day for beginners and all level of experience in the art of lino printing for cards.

This day will start at 10.30am and end at 4.00pm and will be led by Sue Hofman. To book for this event email: reception@wisdomhouseromsey.co.uk or telephone 01794830206.

During the day attendees will have the opportunity to learn how to transfer their designs/ideas into a print for producing cards or pictures using soft-cut lino. All materials are provided including coloured inks and papers to experiment with. If you know what image you'd like to create, please bring it or some examples of similar designs with you. There's no problem if you don't know what you want to do, we always have plenty of ideas and examples to show you.

We are using simple cutting and carving tools. Adults with certain additional needs may need the support of another adult. If you have a carer, or are a carer hoping to support a participant, please let us know as we have special rates for carers to cover lunch costs only. Both these workshops are intended for adults and are suitable for all abilities.

The Pope's Intentions



The Pope's Intention for March

Every year, the Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month. You are invited to answer the Holy Father's request and to join with many people worldwide in praying for this intention each month. The Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month.

This month of November he asks us to pray for anyone who has lost a child: We pray that all parents who mourn the loss of a son or daughter find support in their community and receive peace and consolation from the Holy Spirit.

The Surprises of the Spirit

The Pope's Prayer Intentions and the Reflections which frequently accompany them each month are produced by The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, run by the Jesuits. Here Fr. Carlos Franco Revelo, S.J. explores his own thoughts on the Synod and Synodality:

At the opening of the Synod of Bishops concluding this October 2024, Pope Francis, in his homily, expressed that "to do synod means to walk together in the same direction," which requires encounter, listening, and discernment.

Today, rather than reflect on synodality based on these words of Francis, I feel inwardly called to examine my journey with others in the mission entrusted to me as national coordinator of the World Network of Prayer of the Pope in Colombia. Since my first meeting in 2014 with a group of elderly ladies at the Sanctuary of St. Peter Claver in Cartagena—members of the Apostleship of Prayer, with whom we transitioned to the Pope's World Prayer Network—we have experienced countless encounters in the presence of the Lord. He has allowed us to share our lives, joys, sorrows, and dreams, all through attentive listening, recognizing God's presence, and discerning how to move forward, embracing the path He is leading us on. Along this journey, which has welcomed new generations, I sought to perceive what God was doing in our lives.

A particularly significant experience took place in January 2023 during a two-day spiritual retreat with the national team of six people. Our purpose was to pray for our mission in light of the Statutes and the document "Guidelines for Understanding the Communities of the Pope's Prayer Network," which outline the Network's foundations and mission. At the time, I thought I had clarity about how to continue with our current structure and the development of our mission. However, as Pope Francis said in his homily, "everything changes when we are capable of authentic encounters with Him and with each other, without formalisms, falsehoods, or make-up."

After each team member had a personal encounter with the Lord, we shared our spiritual movements with one another through the Spiritual Conversation method. It was through this listening that we discovered we needed to close one chapter and begin another, with a new organizational structure—though we had no idea what that structure might be. The plans I had for advancing the mission suddenly collapsed and completely changed. Initially, like everyone else, I felt an emptiness from the uncertainty of how to proceed. But the certainty that what we had discerned was the fruit of the Spirit's action filled me with trust and encouraged me to inspire the others to trust as well. We concluded our retreat with the celebration of the Eucharist, thanking God for His guidance thus far, and praying for the grace to keep listening to His voice, confident that He would continue to show us the way, even in the midst of this dispersion.

Soon, we began to see the positive fruits of this choice. The first Community was formed in Cartagena, growing stronger each day and actively engaging in its mission in the Archdiocese. The coordination was moved to Bogota the following month, where new meetings helped expand the Network's apostolic outreach. After a year of working with those joining the mission, we formed a new National Apostolic Team, comprising members from distant cities such as Bogota, Cartagena, and Manizales—yet the distance posed no obstacle to our mission, which continues through encounter, listening, and communal discernment.

It is a great comfort to know that I do not walk alone in this mission, but that I am joined by others equally called to be collaborators in Christ's mission. Our current coordinating team for the World Network of Prayer of the Pope in Colombia includes three laypeople, a religious sister from the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, a permanent deacon, and a Jesuit priest.

Carlos Franco Revelo, S.J.

National Coordinator of the PWPN - Columbia

Fly Me to the Moon (2024)

This is an enjoyable and well-crafted piece of cinema that will well repay the time spent watching it. At heart, it's a simple boy meets girl tale (a "Rom-Com"). Thankfully – and necessarily – it's infused with sufficient dramatic gravitas by being set in Mission Control in Houston around the Apollo 11 Moon landing in 1969. To flavour the pot more; there's a large tablespoonful of conspiracy blended in.

It's 1968 and Apollo 11 is due to take off for the Moon in just under one year. Problem is that nothing seems to work right and can't seem to get fixed. It's worse. Apollo 1 still casts its shadow over the project (the three crew all died in a fire in a ground test) and the US Congress is veering towards stopping the money. Fortunately, President Richard Nixon has determined it has to go ahead and succeed. Why? Got to beat the Russians or the US (that is - ME – the President) will look weak. Failure is not an option.

To "fix" the problem and get the job done, Intelligence spook Mo (Woody Harrelson), hires PR super guru, Scarlett Johansson, to come in and sell NASA and the Moon to the American public and Congress. Hitting the ground running, she is soon blazing brand "NASA" all over everywhere. The Moon astronauts wear this type of watch and no other – and so on.

All good, save she has to deal/work with the "boy" in the story. He's Channing Tatum, the overall Techie in charge to get the guys to the Moon and back. He's completely competent and the right person in the right job. Of course, as it's a Rom-Com he loathes Miss Johansson and works with her only under duress. That's how these films operate.

Now, into the mix re-enters, Mo. His new orders from on high are to ensure that the Moon landings do take place and that AMERICAN astronauts are seen having a jolly old time frisking about on the lunar surface – even if they're not. To this end, he compels Miss Johansson to organise a fake lunar romp, exactly choreographed to what is intended. As our Scarlett has a very murky past, she does what she's told.

With the plot thickening it's all looking quite promising. All of the dissident Senators are brought into line by our PR lady oozing her considerable charm on each and every one of them and anybody else as she needs to. Mr Tatum is, in spite of himself, de-frosting a bit towards her, if not actually warming up. Then back comes Mo and he has fresh orders.

When the Astronauts land on the Moon and descend for their lunar walk the television signal from the LEM (Lunar Excursion Module) will be replaced by the fake television signal from the fake lunar site set up in a very out of the way hangar. Both our boy and girl think not and what they make happen is the real LEM television feed. As it's a Rom-Com they get away with it and they both now realise the stars have meant them for each other. Roll credits.

John Newland



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From The School

Early in October CAFOD Family Fast Day, a campaign to raise awareness of global need and hunger, was celebrated in school. The children have been fundraising together, encouraging all to be generous in their support of others around the world. A popular fundraiser has been “Guess how many sweets are in the jar”. A lucky girl in Year 5 guessed the closest to the 243 sweets, and generously shared the sweets with friends and family. Another fund-raiser saw Mrs Pearson sportingly subject herself to having water-filled sponges thrown at her, all in aid of CAFOD.

The children in Red House, whose patron saint is St Francis of Assisi, celebrated his feast day on October 4th. They were invited to wear red on that day, and many did. Even red hair was spotted! St Francis was gentle and loving, embracing illness, poverty and imprisonment to follow Christ, and those in Red House try to emulate his life of service to others and to encourage others to do so too.

Recently Year 2 welcomed their Farleigh Friends to St John the Baptist School. The children spent time getting to know each other and then gathered together for Celebration of the Word, where they created their own rosaries to use in prayer. This was the first of many gatherings the children will have over the course of the year, strengthening the friendship between the two schools.

The St John the Baptist Breakfast and After School clubs would be very pleased to accept unwanted toys and games which might be unearthed during a pre-Christmas toy cupboard sort out. All will be gratefully accepted and put to good use.

Early in October the school celebrated the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, focussing on Mary’s powerful intercession on our behalf. To mark October, the month of the Rosary, Year 6 have been leading a lunch-time Rosary, choosing one Mystery to share with their prayer group each day, and encouraging children to bring in their own rosaries to use.

There are several school events in which parishioners are welcome to participate. These include:

On November 26th Years 4 and 5 will be joining parishioners to celebrate the 10 o’clock Mass in the parish church. On December 13th Key Stage 2 will be holding their Advent Service in the parish church at 6pm, and all are warmly welcome.



The Pope, G7, and Disabilities

On 17th October 2024, an amazing event occurred in the Vatican. Hosted by the Italian government, ministers of the G7 Summit gathered - from all over the world - to meet with Pope Francis. They had been reflecting for two days on the life and value of people who experience disability. This was the first time the G7 had addressed such an issue. However, within the Church, this is not something new. Indeed, over the past twenty years, many individuals with a Disability, theologians, practitioners and families have begun to share their stories and experiences of faith. Together, as Pope Francis has so powerfully expressed, there has been a shift from seeing people as vulnerable to a vision of human dignity. This has become critical to the shaping of a society and a Church, that values each individual, as *they are*, for *who they are*. Where the *valuability* of the person is placed at the centre of all we do, as people of faith, the person emerges and belonging is made possible. This is what Jesus did. He met, loved, welcomed and enabled. Thus, we have the best of models to follow. One young man with neurodiversity, once said to me, “*Yes you do include me, but do you love me? Can I really come to church now?*”? Valuing the dignity of people, who live with an experience of disability, sends a resounding “yes” and together we become a testimony, to all we believe and teach.

This article by Cristina Gangemi, first appeared in the newsletter of the Catholic Union of Great Britain. Cristina is the Director of The Kairos Forum an independent consultancy which serves to enable the lives of people who have disabilities and who have been Intellectually Disabled (KFCID).

The consultancy is born out of a research project with the University of Aberdeen. The forum acts as advisors to organisations, such as the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, providers of education, health and care. Kairos has also provided training in SEN and legislation to over two thousand teachers in the United Kingdom. We also work with families and individuals in many areas of the life and hopes of people with disabilities. They have recently provided consultancy to the Pontifical Council for Culture concerning Disability, Culture Sport and Theology, co-patrons of the

Please pray for those who have died recently

Elizabeth Walsh, Joanna Williams, Georgina Page and Mary Hathaway

and for those whose anniversaries occur in November

Bob Jones, David Allergant, Frances Cross, John Webster, James Fenyhough, Eileen Weatherly, William Dwyer, Thomas Cullen, Mary Sweeney, Michael Doyle, Emma Taylor, Pat Thornton, Mary Palmer, Leonard Biggs, Oliver Plunkett, Richard Morgan, Winifred & Maurice Creighton, Edward Davis, John Boland, Michael Kane, Romeo Bisson, John Gordon-Stables, Bartholemew Bruen, James Potter, Kathleen Fisher, Mary Glasspool, Francesco Segolo, Mrs Dobson, Ann Curry, John O'Neill, Adele Fisher, James Nash, Fr Liam Cosgrove, Cecilia Antrobus, Robert Laversuch, Mrs Mitchell, Margaret Murrell, John Nash, Stanley Bell, Patrick McCathy, Cathy Grey, Fr Tom Doyle, Jane Merrifield, John Hynes, Sadie Haughian, Katherine Houghton, Ken Loftus, Stan Evans, Ida McNeil, Fr Donald McDonald Benigno Mosquera, Anne Searle, Andrew Graham, Patricia Lona Kopka, Ethnea King, George Hill, Clive Richardson, Thomas Savage, Andrew Sharkey, Tommy Hynes, Tony Ryder, Catherine Futcher, Margaret Hassan, Michael Keegan, Eileen Flynn, John McGlynn, Tom Egan, Mary Broderick, Ellen Kemp, Catherine Morris, Thomas Wilmot, Michael Hughes, Patrick Pettigrew, Eileen Farbutt, Molly Hacket, Keith Bale, Mary Clarke, Fr. Jack Blaney SMM, Kay Watson, Mary Doonan, Annick Cremier, Isabel Thompson, Margaret Bystranowski, Daphne FynnFred Smith, Billy Kidney, Mary Gillespie, George Davis, Molly Ludlow, Olive Randall, Christina Savage, Molly Ravenscroft, Jacob Pearce, Adele Kilroy, Violet Conaghan, Hilda Mary Agnes Brown, Andrew Kladko, John Sexton, Moira Johnston, Harriet Crosby, Maureen Alland, Dennis Townsend, Lana Rose Fishwick, Simone Klukowicz, Christine Clarkson, Les Greenslade, Margaret Golding, Michael Burke, Fr Thomas Dunne, Dom Magnus Wilson OSB, Naria Barlow, Rose Plummer, Terry O'Kelly, Margaret Henry, Anne Brown, Lewis Theodoropoulos, Valerie Muir, Alan Daws, Paul Murray, Rita Binsley, Kathleen Ineson, Eileen Dickie, Durval Barreiros, James Murray, John Binsley, Joy Ling, Ruth Wheelright, Ann-Marie Kelly, Josephine Booth, John Valenzia, Jean Woodward, Gaige Binsley, Bill Mitford, Gertrude Powell, Mavis Niblett, Joseph and Bridget Sarsfield, and Patick Moore

**During the month to come please remember in your prayers
the following who are sick:**

Esme Coveney, Rita Lane, Margaret Williams, Patrick Arnold, Sheila Muir, Mary Oak, Bernard Ivinson, Fiona Hilleard, Tony Fabian, Helen O'Connell, Douglas Manning, Victor Trapani, Diane Mahoney, Catherine Ash, Sile Monnelly, Bill Jago, Linda Creaven, Wendy Rawlings, June Saunders, John Foster, Rose Bull, Paul Owens and all those in need of our prayers.

If you know that anyone on this list is now happily recovered, or if you would like a name added to this list, please contact the editors.

PLEASE NOTE

Articles printed in *The JOURNAL* are printed in good faith and are not necessarily the views of the editors. Contributions must be accompanied by full name and address, which may be withheld on request. The editors reserve the right to amend all contributions. Please support our advertisers, they support us.

ENDPIECE

Many thanks to the various contributors to this month's *The JOURNAL*. The next edition will be issued on 7th & 8th December. Contributions should be with the editors by Monday 2nd December. Please leave contributions at the Presbytery or email them to: stjohnsjournal@googlemail.com