

The Catholic  **VOICE** *of Lancaster*

The Official Newspaper to the Diocese of Lancaster
 Issue 283 + October 2016

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 p15 An Awesome Journey



“
 A life not lived for others is not a life.
 ”

“
 Go into the world today and love the people you meet. Let your presence light new light in the hearts of people.
 ”

“
 Do not wait for leaders; do it alone person to person.
 ”

St Teresa of Calcutta

A Saint for our Time

On Sunday 4 September in St Peter's Rome Pope Francis canonised Mother Teresa of Calcutta just nineteen years after her death. Originally from Albania St Teresa of Calcutta devoted her life to the poor and destitute demonstrating in her words and actions the true meaning of mercy in a world that often shows an indifferent attitude to those in desperate need.

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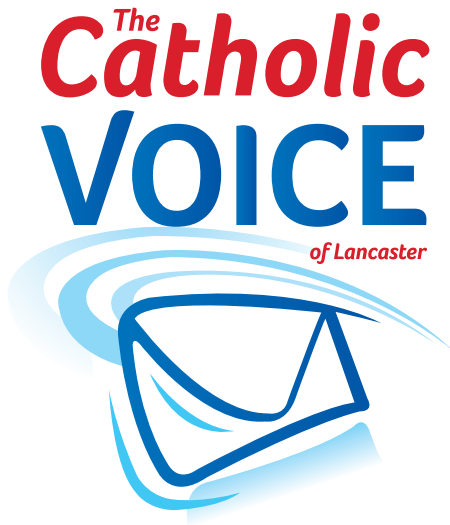
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EDITORIAL

The recent canonisation of St Teresa of Calcutta puts before us the life of someone who is contemporary to most readers of the *Catholic Voice*.

Small and unassuming in a physical sense, St Teresa of Calcutta was a giant in the spiritual sense with a true understanding of the meaning of love. Everyone who came into contact with this little woman from Albania was greeted with a smile; a smile that crossed the boundaries and reached into their very soul, a smile that recognised each individual as a 'Child of God'. It didn't matter whether the person came from a filthy back street in Calcutta, was the Pope (Pope John Paul II) or a member of the Royal Family (Princess Diana) each was received with the same compassion. Her advice was always "Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love".

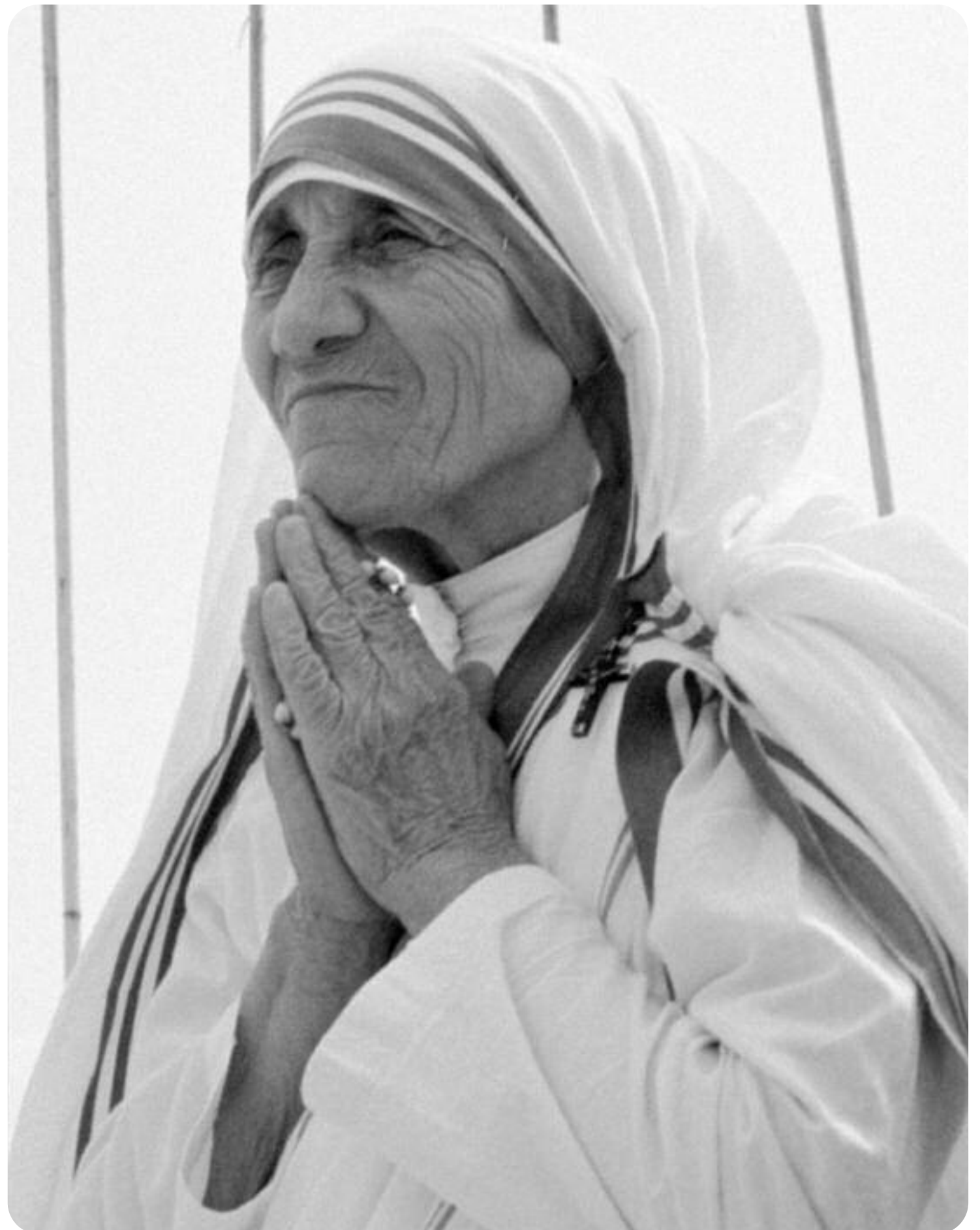
St Teresa of Calcutta worked amongst the poorest of the poor and demonstrated that even if it was beyond human capability to change the world it shouldn't stop us helping those directly in our midst. She once said I want you to be concerned about your next door neighbour. Do you know your next door neighbour? Not everyone is called to service in the overseas missions but we are called through our Baptism to love one another and be mindful of the needs of others. As St Teresa once said "Love begins at

home, and it is not how much we do... but how much love we put in that action".

So often we can get caught up in the pace of modern day living that our focus can shift from God to the things of this life; exams, career path, financial planning, leisure activities etc. We can take our eye off the ball so to speak. St Teresa of Calcutta provides a clear example of how living a simple life of self giving and seeing God in others can reap rich blessings. "Let us more and more insist on raising funds of love, of kindness, of understanding, of peace. Money will come if we seek first the Kingdom of God – the rest will be given" she once said.

There have been many Saints and Martyrs throughout the ages and their lives and ordeals are richly recorded and celebrated by the Church. But in St Teresa of Calcutta we have a Saint who lived in our world and in our time. No one can say 'well it was different in her day' because she lived in the here and now. St Teresa didn't manage to change the world but she did have an effect on all she came into contact with, she did the little acts of kindness in a most extraordinary way.

The final words are hers "Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier!"



A Vineyard



Most women who arrive at the start of a Rachel's Vineyard retreat have already judged themselves as unworthy of love – from either God or themselves.

Over the weekend that follows, the job of the volunteer team members is to ease their crippling burden of grief and guilt by helping them see that God's mercy is a gift for each and every one of us.

Rachel's Vineyard was started in America in 1995 by Doctor Theresa Burke. As a young Catholic woman training to be a psychologist, she carried out some research involving troubled young women and discovered that many had undergone an abortion in the past.

She gradually identified a devastating set of symptoms that can include depression, anxiety, panic attacks, suicidal thoughts, guilt, low self-esteem, self-hatred, fear and an inability to maintain healthy intimate relationships. These have come to be known as post-abortion syndrome (PAS) and can be indicators that someone is suffering from the trauma of abortion.

Inspired by her faith, Theresa developed a programme to help people, based on the living words of Jesus Christ in the scriptures. Twenty years on, Rachel's Vineyard now offers more than 750 retreats each year in more than 25 countries.

Part-time teacher Susan Walsh, a parishioner of Ampleforth and a volunteer team member and developer, has seen for herself the devastating impact abortion can have.

"Women – and men – can become isolated and locked in a downward spiral, feeling so far from God and themselves that they can't find any forgiveness, peace or reconciliation," she says. "Their true feelings are usually suppressed because it's taboo to talk about, fearing they would meet the same condemnation from others that they already experience inwardly.

"In this country alone, tens of thousands of pregnancies each year are ended by abortion. Women are often coerced into abortion or choose it because they are frightened by the reality of the pregnancy and they don't often consider adoption, for instance, as an alternative way forward.

"If they come to the point where they realise they need help, they might search on the internet and find Rachel's Vineyard. And if they then find the courage to come on the weekend, that's a huge step forward, because so much of the work is actually getting them there. Once there, God's grace can flow by entering into the shared group process, which will allow them to experience their grief with Christ in a safe emotional space."

The team is made up of a facilitator, a counsellor, a priest and other volunteers who work very closely, praying for

participants before, during and after the weekend.

"The welfare of each person is treated with the utmost care and confidentiality," says Susan. "The team are also supported in prayer by the extended family of our faith communities."

Although the programme is about acknowledging the truth, it isn't a talk therapy.

A number of carefully chosen "Living Scripture" passages are gently introduced and participants are invited to place themselves in the story. After that, they each share their experience of what the events depicted mean to them. Simple props and music are used in conjunction with the scripture meditations to help reveal the truth about their experience.

Theresa Burke says: *"Jesus will encounter the wounded soul through the process of the retreat, according to his perfect will and timing. Everyone is invited to trust this process, as it is a gift from the Holy Spirit."*

During the weekend, the women have the opportunity to tell their own story – often the first time they have ever done so.

"Some people have never even said the word 'abortion', it's so painful and raw," says Susan. "We lead them towards discovering that their truth is full of painful emotions, such as anger, and these are part of the grieving process. It is then that they can move into a time of grace."

The weekend includes time in front of the Blessed Sacrament and there's always a priest available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

"It's a bit like the Easter story – the first 24 hours is entering the tomb and acknowledging the reality and darkness of where they are, naming the emotions they are feeling and discovering that the other participants are feeling the same as them.

"They move through powerful emotions and, after lots of tears, are gradually led into the time of resurrection on Sunday morning.

"By then, they're usually able to begin to see there is hope for their future and that it's possible for them to live without that burden dominating their lives.

"The job of the team is to be completely non-judgmental, compassionate and nurturing, and to offer ourselves wholeheartedly, day or night, giving unconditional love.

"By being alongside them in this way, they begin to realise they're not unlovable and that it's not the unforgivable sin because God's mercy is bigger than we can possibly imagine.

"We're facilitating a very personal, face-to-face encounter with Jesus, and that usually

happens for everyone at some point on the weekend. Occasionally it doesn't – God sometimes works in other ways and at other times.

"But we've had so many letters saying, 'I can't believe how much my life has changed'. Others have told us Rachel's Vineyard literally saved their lives, because if they couldn't find God or forgiveness, they were going to end it.

"It's about healing and bringing people who feel so unworthy back into a place where they can lead a fuller life, and perhaps have their faith rekindled, or ignited. It's about restoring relationships, with God, and self. That's why we volunteer to do this."

For more information about Rachel's Vineyard, including details of forthcoming events, or to make a donation, visit www.rachelsvineyard.org.uk

Mike McGeary

emotions that I was.

At the beginning of the weekend I never believed I would feel forgiveness. How could God forgive me for something I could never forgive myself for?

But by the end of it I knew that God had forgiven me and that I had forgiven myself. I also knew that all the fear, the shame and the guilt had disappeared into the abyss, never to return and harm me again.

I've been completely healed of the abortion and now facilitate retreats myself. I want the healing I've received to be used by God as an instrument to bring other men and women to the place I've found. For 40 years I thought I had grey eyes. After the retreat I realised they were blue.

Pam Nelson

Pam's Story

I had an abortion when I was 18 and spent 40 years burying the guilt and shame. Four years ago I was invited to attend a Rachel's Vineyard retreat in Ireland. I was very frightened and it took a lot of courage to get on that plane because I felt that everyone could see a big "A" written across my forehead.

At the retreat centre I was met by a team of people who were very caring, very supportive and very non-judgmental. Then I met the other ladies who were attending the retreat with me. It was very healing just to be in a safe environment with people who were going through exactly the same

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BEING A YOUNG CATHOLIC TODAY! ++++

My World Youth Day Experience

The ten days we spent in Kraków for World Youth Day was an amazing experience that I will never forget. It was incredible to be surrounded by other young people who were so different to ourselves in terms of culture, appearance, language yet we all had one key thing in common which had brought us together – our faith.

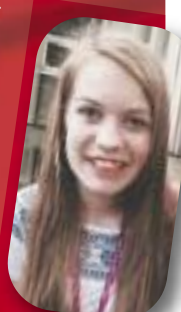
The atmosphere at the events was indescribable when there were 3 million people from 187 countries all united in prayer and showing love for God. It doesn't seem possible until you experience it for yourself and I feel so privileged and thankful to have got the opportunity to do so.

It was quite moving how well everyone got on. Everyone was high-fiving and saying hello to people from different

countries in the streets. We sung on trams, danced in fields, joined congas, took photos, played cards and swapped things with people who we'd never met before. I couldn't help but think how much happier the world would be if life was always like this.

Being a young Catholic in a society where people are so conscious of what other people think of them is something I sometimes struggle with but celebrating Mass with the Pope and seeing so many other people my age who share my belief in God has made my faith a lot stronger and being able to share it with friends (both new and old) has given me so much joy.

*Hannah, 17,
Barrow-in-Furness*



It's hard to believe that World Youth Day has come and gone already. I had such an amazing experience in Kraków with the Diocese of Lancaster. Our pilgrimage began as you would expect, the coach was running late arriving at the Phantom Winger Pub on the 24th of July as the rain began to pour and as a car show was taking place in the car park. Of all the days to have a car show, they choose the day of the WYD Pilgrimage departure!

After waiting for the group to arrive from Castlerigg with Fr John Moriarty, who was our spiritual leader for the trip, the 48 pilgrims from the Diocese united in Preston and set off for the long, long, long journey to Kraków in Poland. We had had a few meetings prior to the trip so we knew each other rather well before the journey began. The 37 hours spent on the coach from the UK to Poland allowed us to get to know each other a little better! It was not the swiftest journey, but at least it gave us the opportunity to say many a cheeky decade of the Rosary as we travelled.

After a ferry crossing from Dover to Calais and a journey across Europe, we arrived in Poland on the evening of the 25th of July and attended a Mass in the bursa where we were staying, located right across the street from Błonia Park. This was the main venue for the Masses and the services that would take place during the week. After a late tea and a chat with our smaller groups, we settled down for our first night in Poland and our first sleep in a bed since travelling across the continent two days earlier.

Our first full day in Poland was spent exploring the city of Kraków. We went off in our small groups and during the day, we walked through the city streets which were already packed with pilgrims from all corners of the globe. It was incredible to see the impact of World Youth Day and the importance of faith this early on in the week. On the evening of the 26th, we attended the first big event for World Youth Day. The Opening Ceremony took place in Błonia Park in the pouring rain and Lancaster arrived in style, wearing the bright red ponchos provided by the World

Youth Day organisers. Only the Diocese of Lancaster could make these look good!

The ceremony was a wonderful way to begin World Youth Day officially. It gave us the opportunity to speak to other pilgrims from different countries, swapping stories and trinkets whenever possible. There was a poignant moment for me with ceremony and the clouds parted, revealing the most amazing sunset. I think that certainly set the mood for the rest of the pilgrimage, it was as though God himself knew that he wanted us to enjoy the prayerful times in Poland.

After the Opening Ceremony, the Lancaster pilgrims had a venture into the city for the evening. We dispersed with our newly-formed friendship groups and went out to soak up the ambience of Kraków by night with pilgrims from all over the world.

There was singing, cheering and good vibes all around. The Pilgrimage of Mercy took place the next day. We took a tram and joined the many hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to travel to the Divine Mercy Sanctuary. There, we processed through the John Paul II Centre, and saw the vestments worn by Pope John Paul II when an attempt was made on his life in 1981.

In the evening, we travelled to Tauron Stadium for a Youth Festival Concert. Unfortunately, the arena was full to capacity so we were unable to actually enter the building. There was a live-feed of the musicians who performed inside, so we could listen to the music as we mingled with the pilgrims. I managed to get a sneaky selfie with the Pontiff (cardboard cut-out, of course!)

For the next two days, we attended Catechesis and had a lot of time to meet with pilgrims to discuss the importance of faith among the young people. We had talks from a bishop from Australia and a Cardinal from Tonga and had the opportunity to go to confession and attend Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The Welcome Mass took place on the evening of the 28th in Błonia Park. The Pope arrived after travelling on his



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own personal Polish tram (*the Tram del Papa*) and greeted the enthusiastic pilgrims who chanted "Papa Francesco!" or, if you were part of the Diocese of Lancaster, "We love you, Francis! We do!" After a morning of Catechesis on the 29th, we attended the Way of the Cross. The stations were acted out, which gave a great sense of emotional realism with incredible live music throughout.

Saturday was the biggest day for the World Youth Day pilgrims. It saw 1.8 million young people make their way to Campus Misericordiae for the Vigil Mass. Where else could you be in the company of this many young people and not have any trouble whatsoever? The atmosphere was electric; to be able to share this experience with so many likeminded people was something I will never forget. We fell asleep to the sound of praise and worship being performed on the distant stage and the sight of several shooting stars wheeling overhead. It was an uncomfortable night's sleep, I must confess, but on the Sunday morning, everyone was in high spirits. This was partly due to the fact that the group was pleased that they had accomplished the feat of camping outdoors with 1.8 million people, but mainly due to the praise and worship group singing a favourite song of the Lancaster pilgrims from the film *Sister Act!* The journey back from the Sunday Mass after the announcement for WYD in

2019 in was memorable indeed. We were caught in not one, not two, but three thunderstorms!

After 12 miles of walking ankle deep through waterlogged roads and enduring high winds, thunder and lightning, we were blessed with warm food, hot showers and comfortable duvets and mattresses back at the bursa. Everybody slept very well that evening and enjoyed the 8:30am lie-in the next day! The last few days spent in Kraków were used as time to explore the city once again. On Monday 1st August we visited Wawel Castle, had a very good lunch in a local restaurant and went out for an evening drink in our groups, discussing what we had spiritually gained during the week. This was after visiting the relics of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and the relics of St Therese of Lisieux. On the Tuesday, we had the opportunity to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau. It was a sombre experience, and many people said that they were glad they had the chance to go despite initial reservations about visiting. I found the whole experience deeply moving. As we walked around the camps, a group of Jewish visitors began to sing a solemn hymn in Hebrew and said a prayer for the Jews who were murdered at Auschwitz. In response, we made our own tribute later in the form of silent prayer and spent some time that night in the bursa reflecting on the events of the day. Our journey home commenced on the

Wednesday. We said goodbye to the staff, thanking them for their hospitality and kindness during our stay, and made the 37-hour coach trip back to Lancashire.

Obviously, we managed to do a few more cheeky decades on the way! World Youth Day in Kraków was an experience I will never forget. I have returned spiritually strengthened, and I have made a lot of new friends that I feel blessed to know. A few of us are planning to meet up regularly and I can't wait to see my friends again. The overall theme of World Youth Day 2016 was "Blessed are the merciful" (this was the main chorus of the official song which was heard at every possible location).

Pope Francis' message to the young people was as follows: "We have come here from different parts of the world, from different continents, countries, languages, cultures and peoples. Some of us are sons and daughters of nations that may be at odds and engaged in various conflicts or even open war. Others of us come from countries that may be at "peace", free of war and conflict, where most of the terrible things occurring in our world are simply a story on the evening news. Some situations seem distant until in some way we touch them. We don't appreciate certain things because we only see them on the screen of a cell phone or a computer. But when we come into contact with life, with people's lives, not

just images on a screen, something powerful happens... The times we live in do not call for young "couch potatoes", but for young people with shoes, or better, boots laced... Today Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life, is calling you, you, and you to leave your mark on history. He, who is life, is asking each of you to leave a mark that brings life to your own history and that of many others. He, who is truth, is asking you to abandon the paths of rejection, division and emptiness. Are you up to this? Are you up to this? What answer will you give, and I'd like to see it, with your hands and with your feet, to the Lord, who is the way, the truth and the life? Are you up to this?"

Thank you to the Diocese of Lancaster for making this World Youth Day an amazing one. I'm already saving up for WYD 2019 – Panama, here I come! *Lizzie, 24, Blackpool*





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Dear Editor

Quite a few years have gone by since I was asked to share out the *Catholic Voice* newspaper. I can still give pleasure to Catholics from the Diocese of Lancaster. Some have gone to their eternal rest, new people take their place. I realised today that I have eight readers. Thank you for your supply. Plenty of intentions to pray for.

Sr. Margaret Mary, Larmenier retirement Village

Dear Editor


Thank you for the feature about Mr McGlone (Can God be found in A&E?- July edition). I really enjoyed reading it and found it inspiring. It showed faith in action. Having experienced Mr McGlone at work on several occasions my late husband and I found confidence when he treated us.

Regarding your Editorial (July edition) about talents and using the media to promote the Catholic Church, I feel there is a mountain for lay people to climb in order to have any influence in the Church.

The Catholic Church has never been democratic and despite the wishes of Pope Francis there are too many tiers of the hierarchy determined to cling to their power and resist change. Let's pray it will come in time before we lose all our young people who have been educated to question everything.

Yours faithfully

Maureen Gerrard, Glasson Dock



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Parish Mission in Carlisle

The Institute of Christ the King came to preach a parish mission in Our Lady of Eden, Carlisle this July as part of the Year of Mercy.

Canon Altieri and Canon Tanner both visited schools, consecrated homes to the Sacred Heart and visited the sick. During the week we reflected on the theme of mercy, both receiving it ourselves and sharing it with others. The week concluded with a High Mass for the feasts of Our Lady of Mt Carmel.

Fr John Millar



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Ever Virgin



“
How can this be
since I am a virgin?
”

The teaching that Mary remained ‘ever virgin’ is something long accepted by Christians, but which many individual Catholics and others, other than the Orthodox have struggled with since the 1700s. The mention in Mark 6:3 of Jesus’ brothers and sisters is often cited to prove that Mary had other children. This interpretation goes beyond Scripture. The Greek word adelphos has a wider meaning than simply genetic brothers – and can refer to cousins or other relatives. It is used for instance, to describe Abraham’s relation to his nephew Lot (Genesis 13:8).

James and Joses are referred to as the brothers of Jesus (Mark 6:3), and are sometimes alleged therefore to be sons of Mary. However we know from the Crucifixion narrative in Matthew 27:56 and Mark 15:40 that they were the sons of another Mary who was mother of the sons of Zebedee, present at the cross and therefore very close to Jesus. She is one of the women who followed Jesus and supported him and his disciples.

St John’s crucifixion narrative provides the strongest possible evidence that Mary had at least no capable surviving children at the time of Christ’s death. Christ says to John “Here is your mother” and we learn that ‘From that time on the disciple took her into his home’ (John 19:26). In a culture which so prized family and

emphasised family responsibilities it is inconceivable that Jesus would have entrusted his mother’s care to John had there been a surviving biological brother, as some allege James to have been (Gal 1:19).

To me however the most compelling evidence that Mary had, at the time of the angel’s visit, already decided to consecrate her virginity to God is her response to the angel: ‘How can this be since I am a virgin?’ If an angel were to have appeared to me as an engaged woman – or if a prophet were to have told me – ‘you will conceive and bear a son’, I would naturally have assumed that God intended to bless the union with a child, in the ordinary way.

Being acquainted with the facts of life, I would not ask ‘how can this be?’ St Jerome argues that it is because Mary must have taken a vow of perpetual chastity (understood and accepted by Joseph) that she wondered how the birth would come about in the context of a commitment already made before God, and carefully discerned. Thus in her response ‘since I am a virgin’, the subtext is ‘and God knows I am pledged to remain one’. Time limited virginity has never been a bar to motherhood. Perpetual virginity is.

Our contemporary culture is so pre-occupied with sex that it

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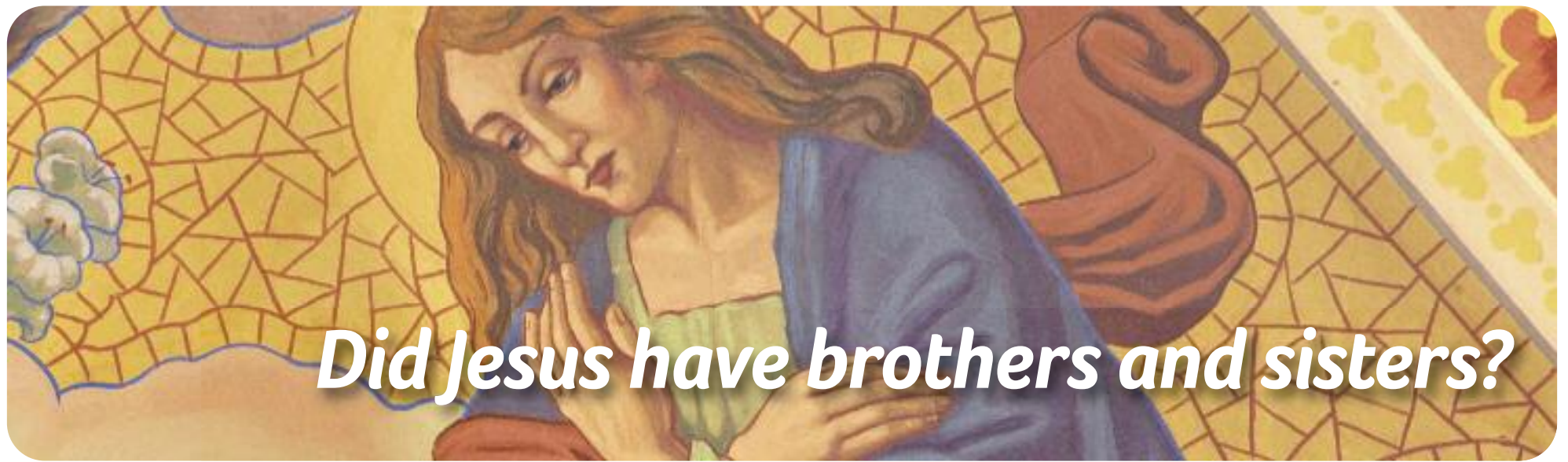
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Did Jesus have brothers and sisters?

cannot imagine that a holy couple could live a celibate life together. But plenty of saintly couples have done this – Catherine and Eddie de Hueck-Doherty to mention just one recent example. If they could achieve such a thing surely two exceptional people marked out by God to parent the Messiah could do so, especially if Joseph was a mature man as tradition suggests. It is not that it would have been bad for Mary and Joseph to have had other children, it would have been quite natural, it just didn't happen.

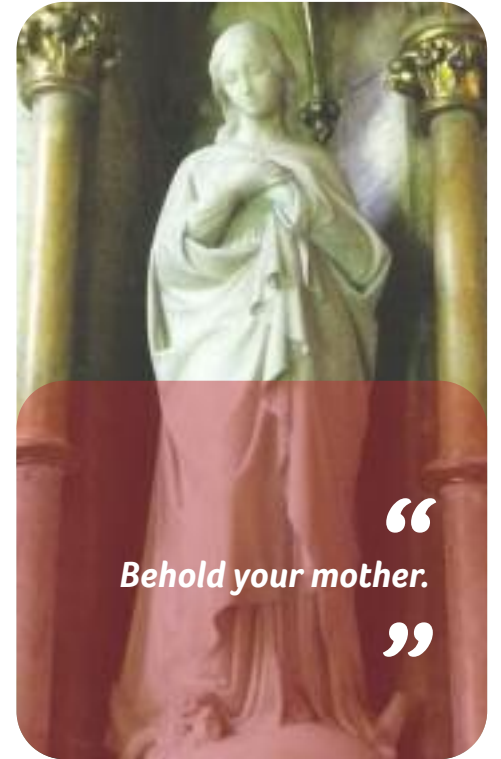
This teaching is not a late Catholic addendum. Documents of the early church testify to Our Lady's ever-virginity from as early as 150 AD: The Protoevangelium of James (non-canonical admittedly), and fourth century texts by St Athanasius of Alexandria, and St Jerome and Pope St Leo I refer to the belief. The questioning of Mary's perpetual virginity is something that only came in the 1700s, based on Westerners imposing their own restricted understanding of the word 'brother' on a translated text. When I lived in Tanzania people frequently referred to cousins or even friends as kaka (brother) or dada (sister).

If there were heirs and descendants of Mary – natural biological brothers of Jesus – surely they would have commanded a degree of respect in the Church community, and been a rich source of

history and anecdote. The descendants of Mohammed (sayyid and sayyida) are estimated in the tens of millions and evidence of descent has been carefully passed on through the generations and is a mark of honour. There is no parallel phenomenon in Christianity: no claimants to be descended from the nuclear family of Jesus. If there had been, in those early centuries when family trees were well known and remembered, some descendant or other would have piped up that Our Lady was in fact his great grandmother (and the doctrine would have crumbled). The Bible itself makes no mention, for instance, that the Holy Family returned from Egypt with a new baby, or that Mary and Joseph returned to the Temple with his siblings when Jesus was twelve.

As a woman who conceived outside wedlock – wrongly perceived to have transgressed the moral code; as widow, virgin and mother; married then single, Mary can empathise with every state in life. In her purity lies a powerful spiritual fecundity: through the person of the beloved disciple Christ has given her to us all to be our mother, a mother who loves, nurtures and teaches her children – Christ's many brothers and sisters.

Katherine Daniels, Editor of The Virgin Eye: Towards a Contemplative View of Life by Robin Daniels, due for publication 21st October and available to pre-order on Amazon.



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”

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Saturdays: 10.30 am, Low Mass
Sundays: 10.30 am, Sung Mass

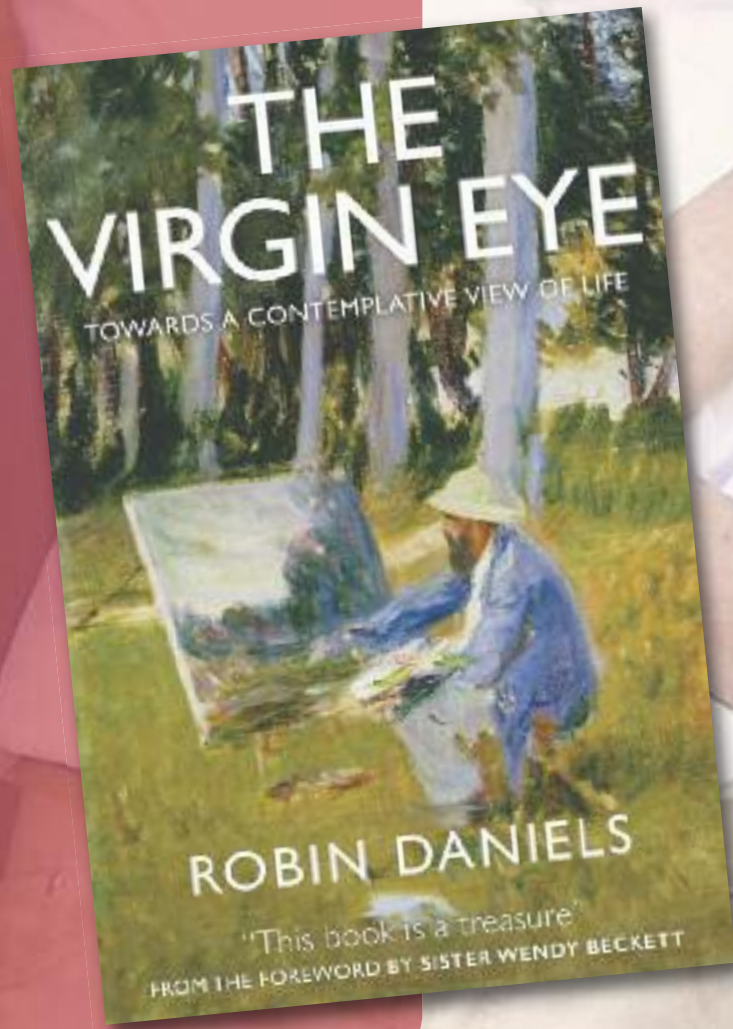
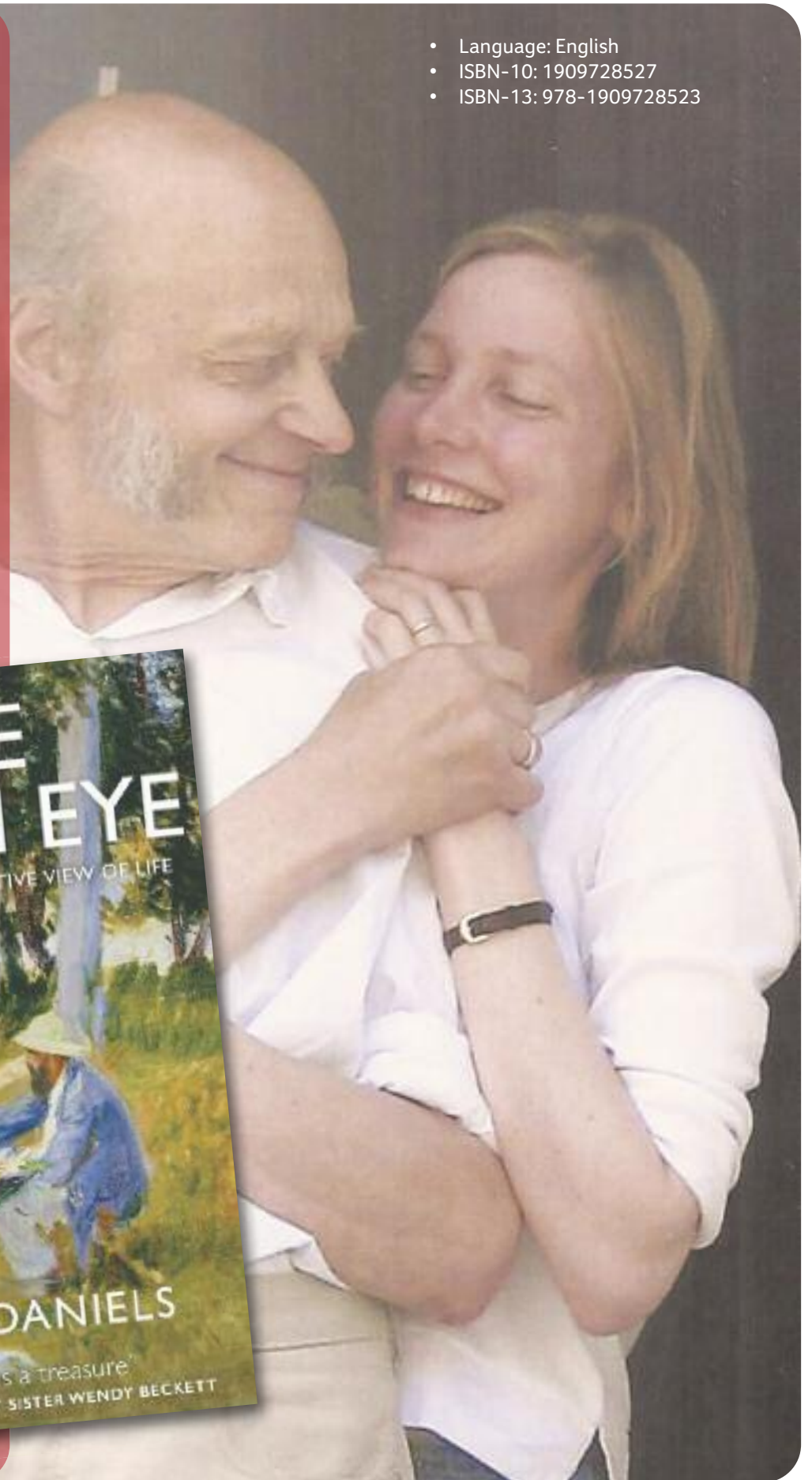
Sunday 23rd October at 3.00 pm
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Email: lancasterlms@gmail.com
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BOOK REVIEW

The Virgin Eye: Towards a Contemplative View of Life

- Language: English
- ISBN-10: 1909728527
- ISBN-13: 978-1909728523



Robin Daniels was a man of wide interests and wide experience. His working life included periods as a music critic, a social worker and a psychoanalyst. His previous books covered sport, music and religion, for example, his *Conversations with [Yehudi] Menuhin*. He had a deep interest in contemplative prayer and contemplative living. Late in life he married, and became a Catholic just 18 months before his death. *The Virgin Eye*, edited by his widow, is the fruit of this rich life.

Daniels wants us to practise the presence of God. For this, he says, we need above all to slow down. 'Pause' is one of his favourite words; 'stillness' and 'relaxed' are two others. To slow down and to attend. To see the everyday world as a painter or writer or child sees it, with fresh, innocent eyes, without preconceptions. And then to be grateful and give praise. Daniels' psychotherapeutic experience is evident in his awareness of the pervasiveness of stress in modern life, and in his attention to the ways in which we allow false, often hidden, emotions to drive us along paths we would prefer to avoid. His solution is first to focus on God in prayer; second to focus on oneself in gentle self-correction and re-education ('self-work' is his term); and third to focus on others in generous self-giving. Another theme is lack of possessiveness, related to a delight in letting others be and flourish, by listening without judgement and encouraging without rivalry.

This is a big book, which plays out variations on the main theme at an unhurried tempo, from a range of overlapping perspectives. It is not best read straight through, but rather pondered selectively, following the titles of its short sections. It is packed with quotations, poetry and prose, often from unexpected sources: George Bernard Shaw rubs shoulders with St. Francis de Sales.

Daniels challenges us to the highest standards of self-dedication and self-awareness, in our use of time, of the material world, of the opportunities offered by every encounter, however small or uncongenial. It is not a book for the faint-hearted, or for those with only a casual interest in spiritual progress. There are also passages which busy parents, for example, or those committed to difficult marriages, may find over-optimistic. *The Virgin Eye* comes highly recommended by authorities such as Sr. Wendy Beckett, who wrote the Foreword, Bishop Brian Noble and Fr Vincent O'Hara. If you are serious in your search for a deeper spiritual life, and prepared and able to give this real time and effort, this could be the book for you.

Robin Daniels, *The Virgin Eye: Towards a Contemplative View of Life*, edited by Katherine Daniels, Instant Apostle, £9.99, paperback, 416 pages. Available from 21 October. To order a copy visit www.mindfulnessforchristians.com

Sr. Margaret Atkins CRSA, Boarbank Hall

Persecuted Christians in Pakistan

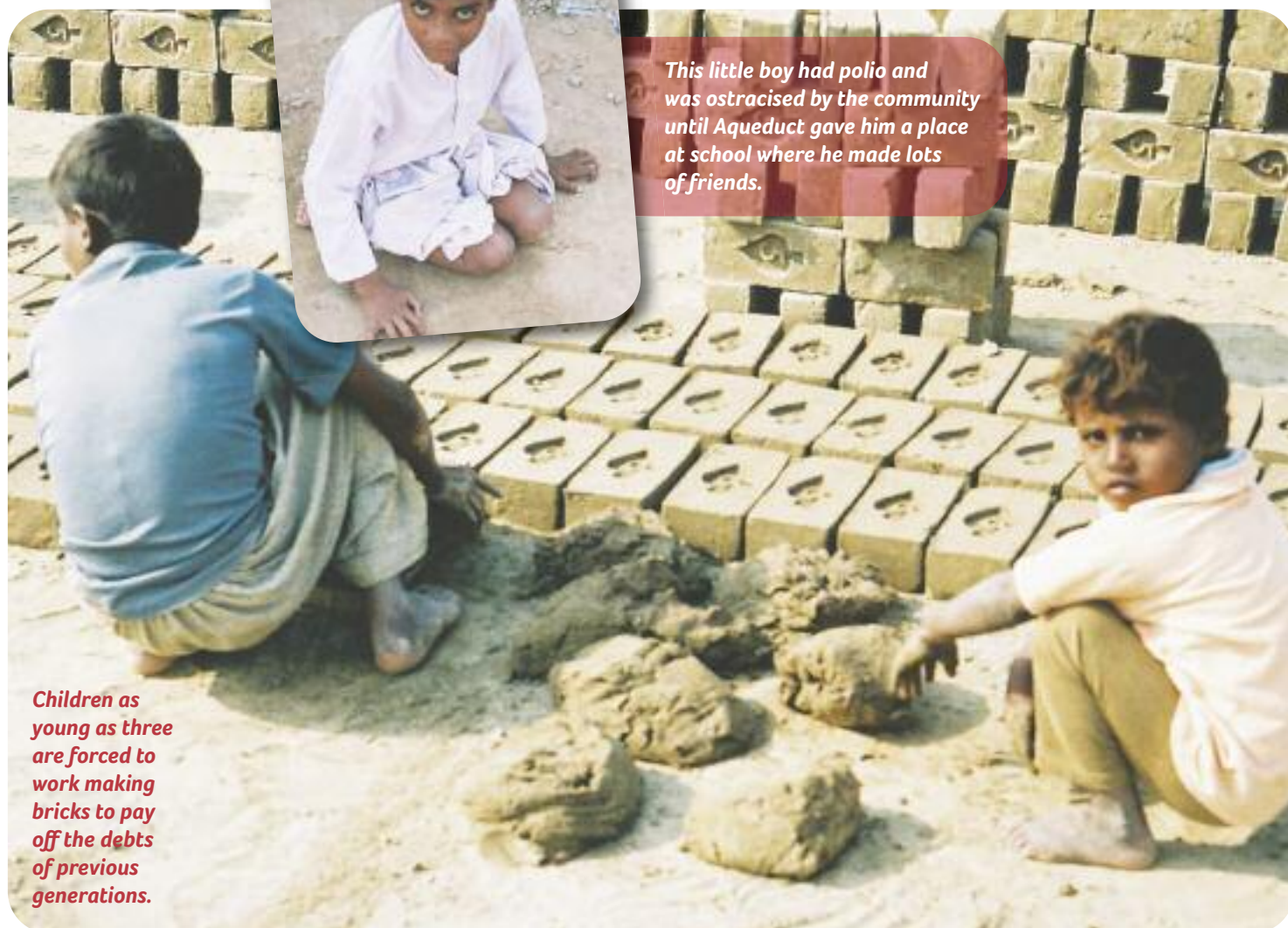
St Joseph's Lancaster hosted a talk by Dr Peter Lingwood about the plight of the Christian minority in Pakistan. He has visited Pakistan over 20 times since his first visit in 1996.

When he learnt about the suffering of Christians, he thought something should be done, and approached various charities to encourage action. They all had good reasons for being unable to help. So Peter found himself called to do something about the situation himself. He and his wife set up the charity Aqueduct – so named because an aqueduct carries resources from a place rich in resources to one that is poor. Peter's work is not without risk. He has had two death threats, but told the group at St Joseph's 'Somehow I am not afraid. I am not sure how but God sustains me'. Peter's slides gave a shocking insight into the life of ordinary Christians, and especially the suppression of women.

Here are some highlights from the talk.



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Katherine Daniels



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Over 100 people at St Joseph's Ansdell gathered for a Blessed Sacrament procession and Benediction to celebrate the Year of Mercy.

garden where a Prayer Station had been specially erected for some short prayers and reflections. Throughout the procession 'O Sacrament Most Holy O Sacrament Divine' was intoned. The procession then moved into church through our Holy Door which had been decorated by the children of St Peter's School and the service concluded with Benediction.

Anne Cawthorn of St Joseph's Liturgy Team said "The service began in the church hall with a short address from Sr Anne Chantel of Hying Monastery before Fr David Burns accompanied by the altar servers brought the Blessed Sacrament to the hall in a simple procession where it was exposed in the Monstrance for a short period of adoration. After this everyone moved to the garden and the solemn procession began moving on to the main roads around the church and back into the

"We were overwhelmed by the number of people who attended this special service and the truly wonderful artwork produced by the children to cover the Holy Door. And we were most grateful to St Kentigern's Blackpool who loaned us their Blessed Sacrament canopy for the occasion."

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Small Schools Celebration

What has now become an annual tradition children from our small primary school Catholic Cluster came together for a day of Laudato Si celebration hosted this year by the school of St Francis, Goosnargh.

A full day of workshops, followed by lunch and then an Open Air Mass was organised. The children were all mixed up into different groups so they could make new friends and it was just wonderful to reflect on Laudato Si with others. We wrote prayers on stars in The Millennium Walk, drew pictures of our pets or favourite animals using charcoal and laptops, collaged parts of the creation story to take up to our St. Francis Icon in Mass, planted seeds to take home, cared for chickens and undertook Prayer and Liturgy activities in The Cottage. We even had sun moon and stars helium balloons to add a creative dimension to the Mass and all of the children presented things they had made during the morning to the altar.

We have spent a lot of time this year reflecting on Pope Francis' Encyclical and are really linking this with The Year of Mercy as we care for our common home: plants, animals, the environment and each other. The Mass was of thanksgiving for Creation. We even learned the Peruvian Gloria!

The schools belonging to the Cluster are: St. Francis', Goosnargh, St. Mary's Great Eccleston, St. Mary's Lea Town, St. Mary and St. Andrew Barton, St. Mary's Claughton, St. William Pilling and St. Joseph's Wesham.



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Mercy in the Year of Mercy

In HMV stores you will always find a section with CD's entitled EASY LISTENING. That is the phrase I kept hearing when people were happily describing the talks that Father John McGowan ODC gave to us on Saturday, June 18th in St. Joseph's, Ansdell. The day was organised by Women Together in the Diocese of Lancaster who had invited Father John to lead the sessions.

In the morning, very simply and humbly, he used his own life experiences to reveal how God's tender, loving mercy had accompanied him on his life journey, from his childhood in London, his early adult years as a 'lapsed' Catholic, his fervent return to a life of faith in his twenties and then the discovery of his Carmelite vocation. In this way he brought it home to us how important it is always to go on learning, discovering the God who loves us unconditionally so we can accept ourselves as we really are. This is how we grow healthily in God's love, for it is a love that does not judge or condemn us.

Those who were at the day will certainly remember Father John's words about the Sacrament of Reconciliation, so sadly neglected these days, often because of a very misguided spiritual formation in which God was presented as someone to be feared. He enabled us to realise how humbling and awe-inspiring it is for him as a priest to be able to minister to others in this great Sacrament where we are invited to experience the Father's merciful love.

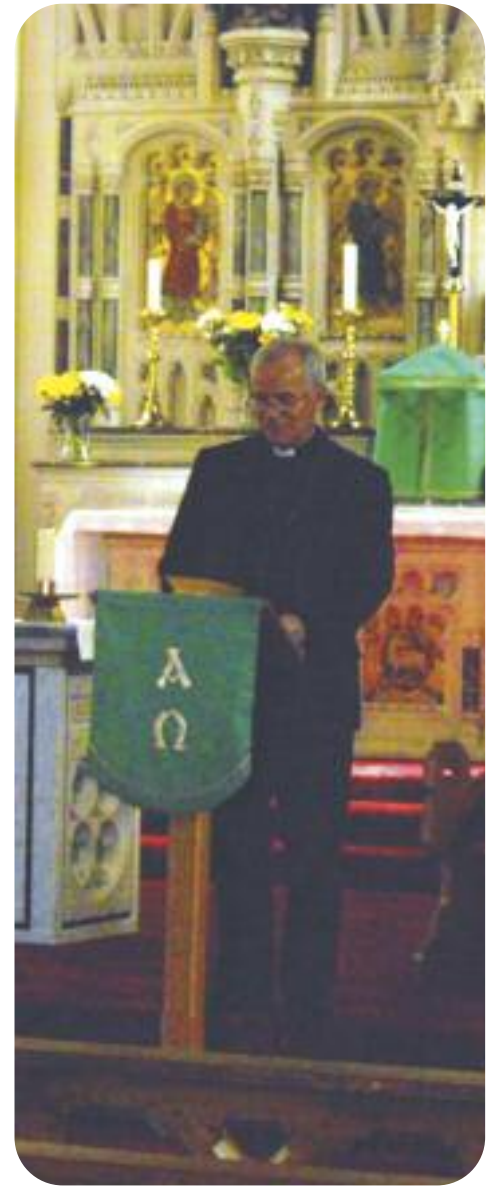
Many of us were trained as children always to use the formula at the end of confession: "For these and all the sins of my past life I am very sorry." Father John called that making a "fool proof" confession, as if we were fearful of missing something. But that is to misunderstand God completely! He used sayings from Carmelite saints: Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross and Therese of Lisieux to emphasise the totality of God's forgiveness and merciful love. "If we are sorry, they will not be remembered."

After lunch together we went into the church for a time of silent prayer with the Blessed Sacrament exposed and then Benediction. Afterwards Father John spoke to us about this Year of Mercy. He reminded us how passionate Pope Francis is to reawaken the whole Church to this heart of the Good News of God's love and tenderness. He shows this again and again in his concern for those who most need us to show them compassion and love and calls us to put into practice both the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

Father John then put before us Jesus in the Gospel, over and over again, being "merciful like the Father".

For everyone who attended, yes, this day was "easy listening" in the sense that the gospel of mercy message came to us so simply and humbly, but it came also as a challenge, because it is what we are called to receive and in turn be to others and that is a lifetime's work!

Philomena Grimley SHCJ



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All Roads Lead to Rome

As one of the major events within the Catholic Church in Celebration of the Jubilee of Mercy, His Holiness Pope Francis invited all Permanent Deacons from around the world along with their wives and children to gather in Rome from Friday, May 27th to Sunday 29th May 2016.

I am a Permanent Deacon in the Diocese of Lancaster and more locally in the parish of St Beghs Whitehaven. And I decided to make the spiritual journey to Rome and participate in the Celebrations.

Two main themes were reflected on during the weekend:

- The Deacon: Image of Mercy for the Promotion of the New Evangelization in particular – the Family, the Parish and in the Workplace.

- The Deacon: Called to the Service of Charity in the Life of the Community

In addition to the two main gatherings during which the Deacons reflected on the above themes, the highlight of the weekend concluded with approx. 2,000 Deacons joining the Holy Father for Mass on Sunday May 29th in St. Peter's Square.

This was my first visit to Rome, there are so many places of significance and interest to see that it was impossible to view everything in such a short space of time. So many people from other faiths are drawn to Rome and the visit gave me a real appreciation of the extent to which Rome attracts many visitors from all over the world. It was truly a memorable experience and enjoyable time.

Deacon Stephen Scott

**World Mission Sunday
23rd October**

An Awesome Journey

by Julia Beacroft

I have sometimes thought that the young people in our communities use a language that is entirely their own, a language with which they are perfectly at ease and which their peers easily and readily understand. Let me give a few examples: 'Bad' meaning good(!), 'Fit' meaning attractive, 'Buff' as in muscly, 'Gross' meaning unpleasant, 'Sick' which means impressive or enjoyable and so the list goes on...

And my twenty-three year old twins are no exception to this. They refer to 'selfies', tell me "Nice one!" when I've earned their approval and frequently allude to 'Lol' (laugh out loud), when I've cracked a joke. As this has been going on for a few years, I can probably boast that I'm now fairly up to speed with most of their words and expressions.

Yet a few weeks ago I found myself surprised by a turn of phrase my son produced. I had explained to him that I was feeling a bit tired as I'd done a lot of walking that day and when he asked where I had been, I give details of the route I had taken.

"Wow, that's a mission, Mum" he exclaimed in admiration. I will readily admit that this was new ground for me. I was definitely unfamiliar with this term. However, the meaning was clear enough – he was referring to a journey of great length.

Pope's Message

On 23rd October the Catholic Church again celebrates Mission Sunday, when we pray for missions and the church declares its commitment to missionary organisation. Last year, as part of Pope Francis' message for World Mission Day he said:

'The mission of the servants of the Word – bishops, priests, religious and laity – is to allow everyone, without exception, to enter into a personal relationship with Christ.'

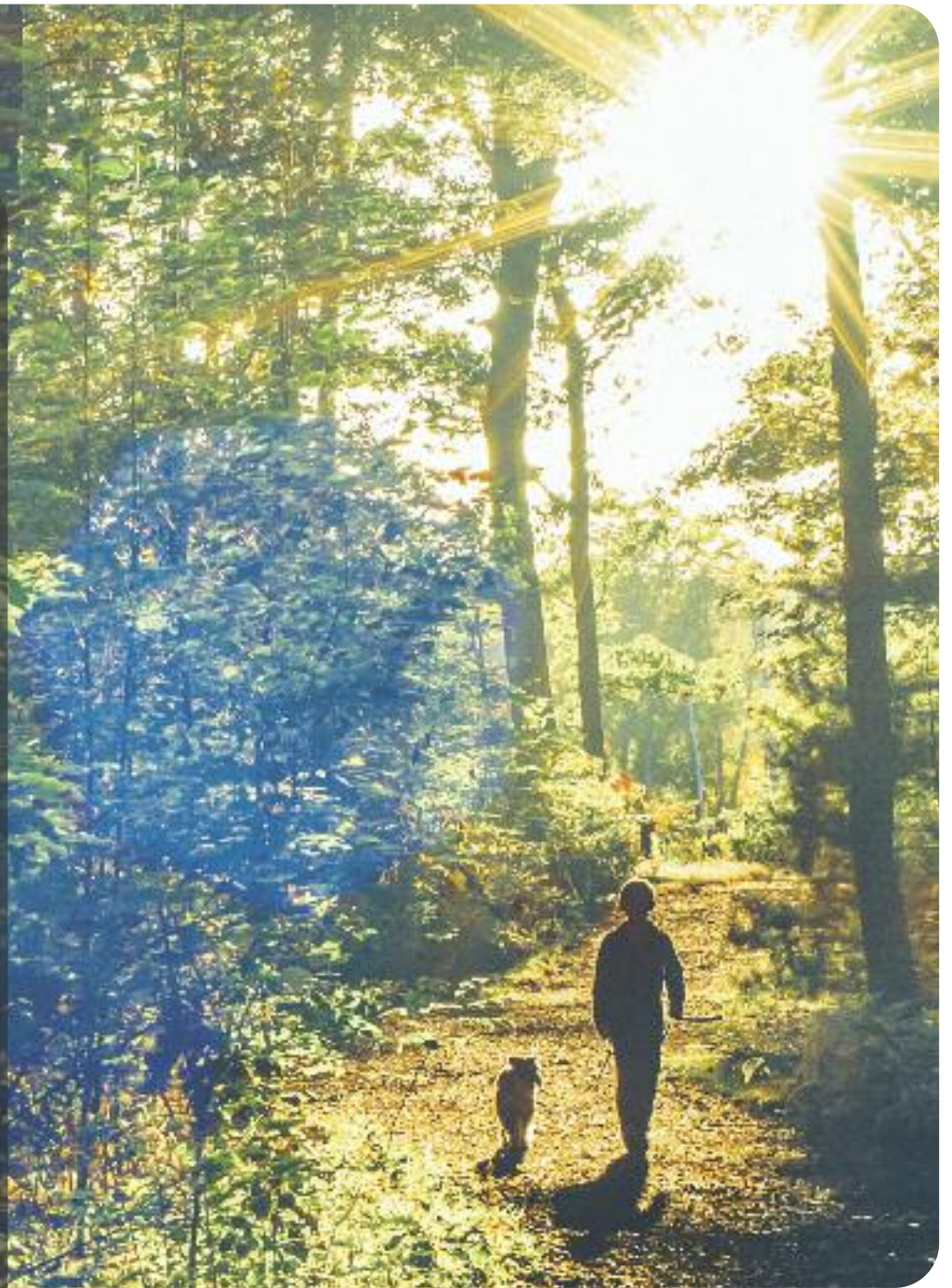
Upon reflection, I was stuck by the fact that possibly my son's use of the word 'mission' (interpreted as lengthy journey) was not so wide of the mark after all.

Pope Francis reminds us that the mission of all is to have an intimate relationship with the Lord. Yet of course, in so doing we embark upon our own journey of faith. On Mission Sunday we share our love and concern for our overseas brothers and sisters, with our charitable donations journeying to distant shores to supply the aid that is so necessary. And not least of all is the fact that we are a missionary church, thereby spreading the Gospel of Christ to all and in so doing journeying and following the same path as the Lord himself.

So on this coming Mission Sunday, may we remember others who are less fortunate than ourselves and delight in our journey in Christ. And finally, if anyone asks why you are a follower of Christ – tell them that it's because he is cool, awesome and wicked! Nice one!

Julia Beacroft is a catechist and pastoral volunteer who lives in Torquay. Her first book 'Sanctifying the Spirit' is now available to buy. Please visit www.sancioobooks.com for more information or order from AMAZON.

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Working with Our Lady's Catholic High School

JYM Partnership are proud to be associated with Our Lady's Catholic High School and their continued success.

We are a Preston based practice of Architects, Building Surveyors, Quantity Surveyors and Principal Designers with extensive experience working for schools and a variety of public and private sector organisations. In 2009, we were appointed by the Diocese of Lancaster to provide property consultancy services to Our Lady's Catholic High School and to its cluster Primary Schools and have since received similar appointments from further Diocesan schools.

In 2015 and as part of the schools ongoing development, we were approached by the school to investigate the possibility of providing a further Humanities Classroom to the school. A

number of options were investigated including reconfiguring of existing spaces, and provision of extensions onto the school grounds.

The chosen solution adopted was the utilisation of a redundant flat roof area of the school. This option held the attractions of utilising existing access and escape staircases, being sited in close proximity to existing Humanities Classrooms and offices and having no impact upon the external hardstanding, car parking and landscaping to the site. Investigations of the existing structure and services confirmed that the solution proposed was viable.

The structure was designed to span between existing load bearing elements of the school. It included the use of pre-patinated copper coloured external claddings, inspired by the shape and form

of existing copper roof scapes currently provided throughout the school and provides a strong unity to the upper levels of the school. These have been used elsewhere in the school and will, over time, weather naturally to match existing copper facings.

Technical difficulties overcome during the design and construction of the classroom include the non-load bearing nature of existing roofs surrounding the area, a site location 3-storeys above the Year 7 quad and adjacent ground conditions that prevented the use of conventional lifting cranes. The new area provided forms a distinctive classroom with plenty of natural light and a monopitch sloping ceiling to improve acoustics and ambience within the room. The extension builds on the already high standard of accommodation provided by the school.

Nigel Ranson, Headteacher, said "we are delighted with the new classroom, which has enhanced the provision in History. It is such an improvement on what we had before and is being put to good use every day".

Previous projects at Our Lady's Catholic High School include landscaping of quads, internal refurbishment of Drama hall with fully retractable seating, refurbishment of music department to create new music studios and teaching areas, refurbishment of school corridors and ongoing replacement of roof coverings throughout the school. Works are also currently on site to refurbish the existing Arts Classrooms.

At JYM Partnership, we look forward to continuing our current good relationship with the school and Diocese, assisting in the further development of the school.

JYM partnership

JYM delighted to be continuing our work with Lancaster Diocese and schools, including new rooftop Humanities Classroom and refurbished Arts facilities at Our Lady's Catholic High School

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