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The Catholic  VOICE of Lancaster

The Official Newspaper to the Diocese of Lancaster  
Issue 324 + November '20

INSIDE: p6-9 Priestly Vocations Special  
p8 The Rite of Candidancy



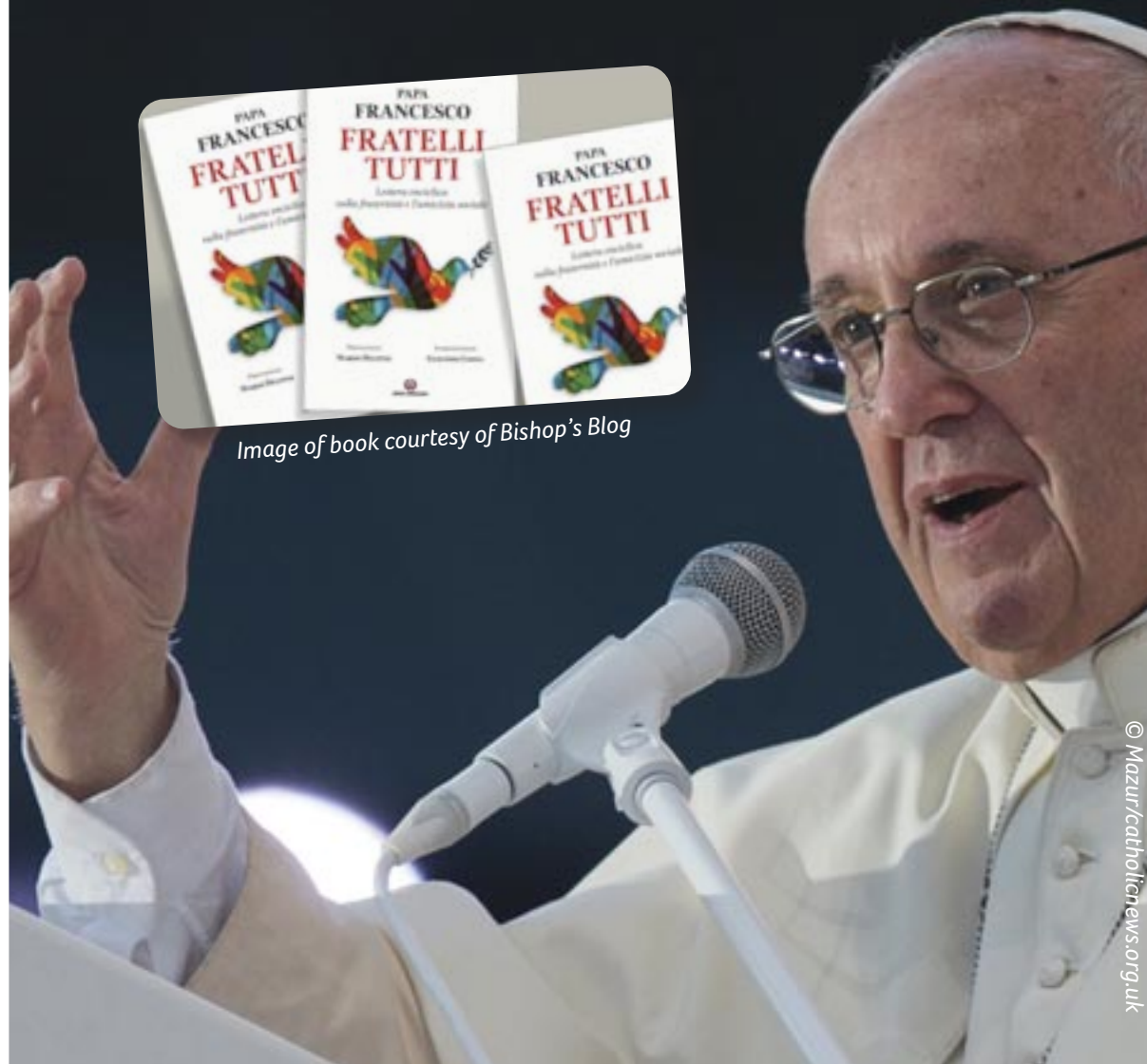
ENCYCLICAL LETTER

# Fratelli Tutti

## Pope Francis on Fraternity and Social Friendship



Image of book courtesy of Bishop's Blog



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### A Prayer to the Creator

Lord, Father of our human family, You created all human beings equal in dignity: pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit.

And inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter, dialogue, justice and peace.

Move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.

*Pope Francis*

Introducing his Encyclical 'Fratelli Tutti', (translated means brothers all), Pope Francis wrote:

"Fratelli Tutti" - with these words, St Francis of Assisi addressed his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel. Of the counsels Francis offered, I would like to select the one in which he calls for a love that transcends the barriers of geography and distance, and declares blessed all those who love their brother "as much when he is far away from him as when he is with him". In his simple and direct way, St Francis expressed the essence of a fraternal openness that allows us to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives. This saint of fraternal love, simplicity and joy, who inspired me to write the Encyclical Laudato

Si', prompts me once more to devote this new Encyclical to fraternity and social friendship. Francis felt himself a brother to the sun, the sea and the wind, yet he knew that he was even closer to those of his own flesh. Wherever he went, he sowed seeds of peace and walked alongside the poor, the abandoned, the infirm and the outcast, the least of his brothers and sisters.'

The Encyclical is a long document touching every aspect of our lives at a local, national, international and global level and because of this it is challenging for individuals, religious leaders and politicians and opinions may differ.

But at the heart of the Holy Father's encyclical is 'love of neighbour' and how the world needs to hear the teachings and example of Jesus through the good news of the Gospel.



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## Kieron Bassett

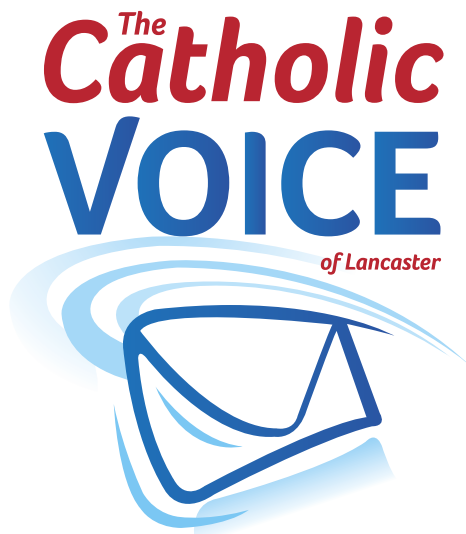
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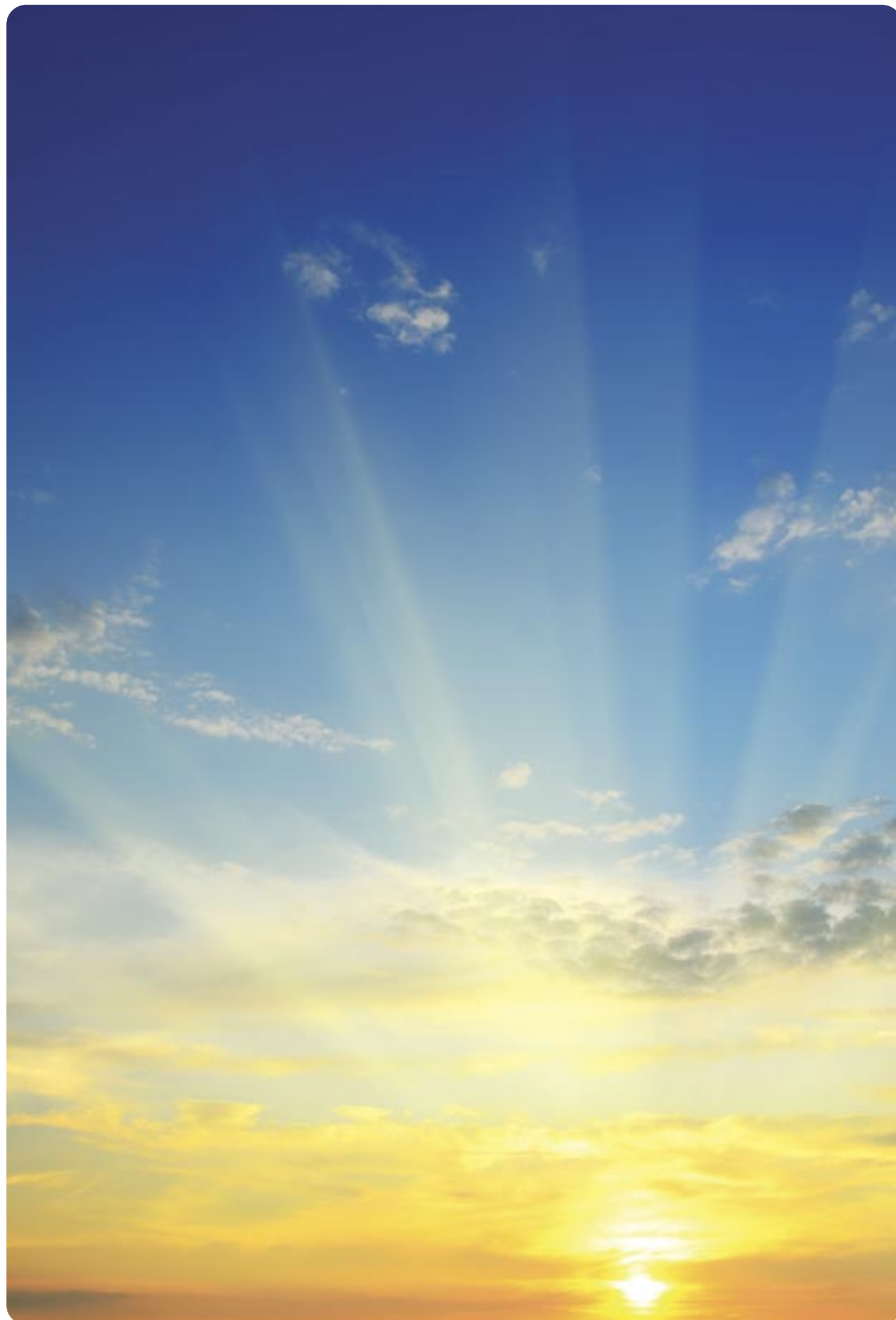
### EDITORIAL

**O**ne might be forgiven for feeling sombre in November, after all there are fewer daylight hours and the weather is often damp and cold and we have the annual commemoration for the fallen from the two World Wars and subsequent conflicts. Even the Church in the readings for the month encourage us focus on the end of life and the end of time. Add into this heavy mix the persistency of the coronavirus and local restrictions that impact our daily lives and one might imagine there is very little to cheer about.

But wait, through our Baptism we are meant to be people of hope, the lights in the darkness, the hands and feet on earth of our Saviour in heaven. We are in fact mini churches in our own right. The *Catholic Voice* believes that we should not let anything come between us and the lives that the promised eternal life

demands of us. Whatever our circumstances, or limitations nurturing a relationship with the Lord and following his teaching ought to be our first priority. It is only when we become more and more Christ like that we are able to become like the seed that fell on fertile ground and become fruitful in growing the kingdom.

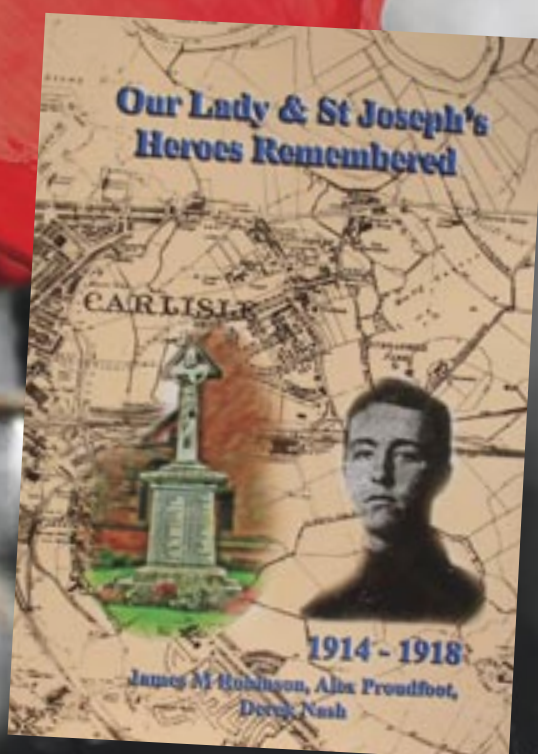
Becoming Christ like, we can truly become the beacons of hope for those around us. There are people all around who are suffering in many different ways, emotionally, mentally and economically, they need both our practical and spiritual support. The *Catholic Voice* encourages love of God and love of neighbour to be our continuous focus this November so that the light of Christ permeates through the gloom and brings hope to those who need it.





# Our Lady & St Joseph's Heroes Remembered 1914-18

By  
James M Robinson,  
Alex Proudfoot  
& Derek Nash



**S**tanding proudly in the grounds of Our Lady & St Joseph's Church, Carlisle is an 18ft White Marble Memorial bearing witness to the 75 men who fell in the Great War. Little was known of those men, some of whom are remembered without their Christian name or initials.

Following four years of dedicated research, the authors' have been able to painstakingly trace the lives 73 of these lost men all of whom made the supreme sacrifice for their King and country far from home. This book has traced their parents, siblings, careers and sadly the last few days leading to their loss.

Men who came from all walks of life, some born abroad, three made new lives in Canada and Australia, heard the call of duty of the mother country to which they returned to don Khaki. Poignant moments include when the Parish Priest announces the loss of a Parishioner to his congregation. The sad letters home, the telegrams that didn't arrive, the lost and precious belongings that didn't make it. A son who was only identified by his button, a father who waited for twelve months before his beloved son was traced, men who continue to share a grave - men who still lie

somewhere in foreign fields. A printer, a farmer, a decorator, a mine owner, a future priest, a career soldier all are recorded as their young lives become known to us.

Seminarian Francis McNiff shot down over the English Channel on his first flight; James Murray who was discharged, for ill discipline, from the navy then joined the Army using a false name; Arthur Henry was imprisoned for being under-age, before being returned to Carlisle.

Many of the Catholics who died did so with their most precious possessions in their pocket; their Rosary and a prayer book.

These compelling personal stories are contained in over 80,000 words and over 200 illustrations and graphs. We acknowledge with gratitude the help of all those who have contributed, including Gil Hitcon, and our publisher David Ramshaw of P3 Publications, to this everlasting record.

Copies of this book can be obtained from D. Nash, Bramerton Lodge, Wood St, Carlisle, CA1 2SF, or from local Booksellers at £20. Proceeds from the sales will be passed to military and parish charities.

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It's a fairly typical 2020 experience really – you can't do the stuff you usually do, and so you get creative and try to think of what to do in its place. For most people, that means Netflix and zoom. For us in the Youth Service, it means parish visits, school visits, lots of training for the team, and well, okay also zoom - in the form of our new online retreats! Here are the highlights:

**Life at Castlerigg**

The new team are adjusting well to life at Castlerigg and coping admirably well with the fact that the experience they're getting probably isn't what they signed up for. We're getting more and more work with young people now, and when we're not working we're finding a lot to do. A few weeks back we spent the day climbing Cat Bells.

**Out and About**

We are now working regularly in two schools in Cumbria – St Benedicts and St Joseph's – and pretty soon we're starting the first of a series of visits to St John Henry Newman School, with a few other school visits in the pipeline. We are also working to set up youth groups in two parishes in West Cumbria. If you're reading this and wondering if the youth service can come and help you out, the answer may well be yes. Get in touch – we'd love to talk to you!

**Online**

Like most of the world, we've moved a lot of what we do online this year. We've also come up with a few new things too. Our online 'ENGAGE' course for adults interested in Youth Ministry is currently half way through its first cohort, with the second starting in the new year, and we're about to launch our first online retreat!

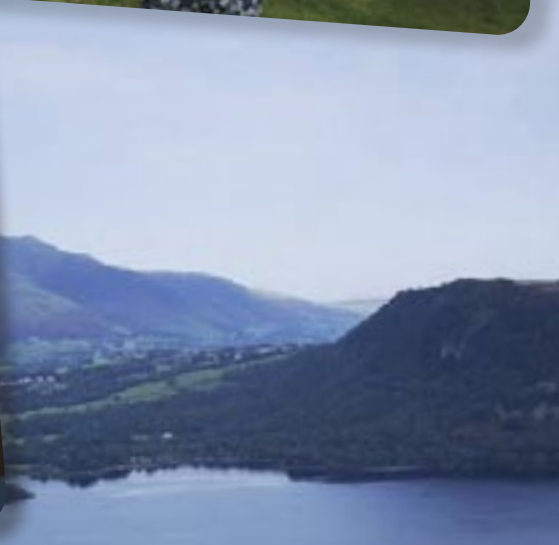
On the weekend of November 6-8th we are holding a Young Adults' retreat online. The suggested donation is £25, but we don't want the cost to be an obstacle for anybody, so if you want to come but can't pay, that's no problem! Get in touch for more information.

**Training Centre**

We will also be delivering two Mental Health courses for adults in October. There is a two-day 'Youth Mental Health First Aid' course at Castlerigg, which has a few places left.

There will also be an online 'First Aid for Mental Health' course aimed at adults who deal with adults. Not really youth related, but it's been requested by quite a few people!

There's a lot more going on in the Youth Service at the moment. To stay current, follow us on social media @castleriggmanor.





## BECOME A YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER

Two Day courses at Castlerigg Manor, Keswick, £175 (£195 with B&B)

August 10-11  
October 22-23  
December 14-15  
February 25-26

Jack@castleriggmanor.co.uk

JRA Training

What are 'protective factors'?

How do I respond to a panic attack?

How is anxiety linked to depression?

How can I help a young person who is self-harming?

What about eating disorders?

How likely is recovery?

What is psychosis?

What should I do if somebody is suicidal?



- Nov 13-15th Open Sixth Form Retreat
- Nov 14th Study Day (Catholic Social Teaching) [For adults]
- Nov 20-22nd Catechists' Retreat
- Nov 27-29th Retreat for Confirmation Candidates (Year 9-11)
- Dec 4-6th Retreat for Confirmation Candidates (Year 6-8)
- Dec 11-13th Advent Retreat
- Dec 14-15th Youth Mental Health First Aid Course
- Dec 18-20th Past Teams Retreat
- Jan 9th Study Day (What is the Church?) [For adults]
- Jan 22-24th Young Adults Study Weekend
- Feb 10-12th School Staff Conference
- Feb 25-26th Youth Mental Health First Aid Course
- Mar 13th Study Day (Salvation History) [For adults]
- Apr 1-4th Easter Retreat
- May 7-9th Retreat for Confirmation Candidates (Year 6-8)
- May 15th Study Day (Understanding the Bible) [For adults]
- July 17th Study Day (Understanding Vatican II) [For adults]
- Aug 7-11th Summer Week (Year 10-13)
- Date TBD Altar Servers Retreat (2021)

## YOUTH DAY RETREATS IN YOUR PARISH

Bring the Castlerigg Team to your parish for a day with your young people  
For more information Email jack@castleriggmanor.co.uk

Youth Group Days

Confirmation Day Retreats

**Online courses for adults, check website for dates**  
- Introduction to Youth Mental Health

**Parish Youth Days**  
- Get in touch to book us!

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- ✿ MAKE FRIENDS
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[www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/donate](http://www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/donate) And most importantly, please keep us in your prayers.

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# My Propaedeutic Experiences


– Simon Marley Seminararian

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**I'm surely not alone in thinking that the last year has been truly momentous, we have all been confronted and challenged by quite unprecedented circumstances recently.**

Where do I start with my story? If I can retrace my steps somewhat (*for those that don't know me*), my working background is in Accountancy. I graduated in that subject in 1988 and qualified professionally (*as a Chartered Accountant*) in 1993.

Plying my trade in Public Practice, Industry, Financial Services, Housing Associations and latterly York St John University, I became increasingly disenchanted with the financial sector. I finally decided to call an end to that part of my life in 2017.

Simultaneously, I had begun to respond actively to the nagging voice in my head which had, over many years, been quietly but persistently asking me *'Why not consider Priesthood?'*

So, thirty years later than hindsight would suggest (*it's never too late!*), I took the great leap of faith.

Pivotal to my 2017 change of direction were two events; an individually guided retreat at St Beuno's Jesuit Spirituality Centre which was led by Monsignor Peter Verity from our Diocese of Lancaster and a series of supportive sessions with my

friend and Spiritual Director, Fr Andrew Broster in Kirkham.

During 2018, I became much more involved (*on an informal basis*) in my local parish (*Our Lady of the Assumption, Blackpool with Fr Jim Burns*), and was allowed thereupon to apply formally to become a candidate for the Diocese in early 2019.

I started my Year of Formation at the Royal English College in Valladolid, Spain in September 2019, one of fourteen students setting out on a nine-month course of personal discovery and study, at the beginning of our individual journeys into priestly formation.

Our backgrounds couldn't have been more diverse. Our ages covered nearly four decades (*18-57*). Irish, Welsh and Norwegian nationalities complimented the main English contingent.

There are four fundamental strands of development to the Propaedeutic year; Human, Intellectual, Pastoral and Spiritual. Alongside these studies, we also had lessons in Spanish Language and Spanish Culture. I was amazed to discover that our *'Culture'* teacher (*Mr Gregory Starkey*) was a long-standing friend of our family dating back to the 1970's. God certainly works in mysterious ways, his wonders to unfold!

One month of the Course (*January 2020*)



was spent on pastoral placement back in our home dioceses. I was particularly blessed to be granted a move to Fleetwood, based at the Parishes of St Wulstan's and St Edmund's with Canon Alf Hayes. A special mention to all the wonderful Fleetwood folk, they so graciously shared their time and experiences with me. I found the pastoral aspects of my time there both rewarding and challenging.

Of course, the global pandemic struck with a vengeance in March 2020, and our studies had to be completed online back at home. I found the loss of direct companionship with my seminarian brothers one of the most difficult things to cope with. Equally missed were the moving experiences of Holy Week in Spain ('Semana Santa') and two pilgrimages to Lourdes.

The course concluded in June 2020, the product of which was a final report to our sponsoring Bishops, highlighting progress made and 'areas for improvement'.

Thankfully, I have been allowed to proceed in applying to take my place at Main Seminary (the Beda College in Rome) in Autumn 2020. Hopefully Coronavirus will not have the final say in that regard!


I am greatly looking forward to continuing my Formation journey, in another new country with another new language. The 'Beda' is acknowledged as being particularly well suited for 'mature' vocations like mine. Please do continue to keep all seminarians in your prayers. And I will carry on thanking the Lord for his infinite patience with me, a late developer.



Receiving blessed crucifixes during a ceremony held in the Main Chapel at Valladolid Seminary.





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# The Rite of Candidacy

- Celebrant His Grace, Archbishop Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham



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**C**andidacy is a very important milestone in a seminarian's discernment process, the whole focus at Seminary changes. From day one at college until the end of year four, yourself and the staff at seminary, including the diocesan Bishop and Priests are focusing whether I am a suitable candidate for holy orders. During this time I am being continually assessed by the four strands of formation: Intellectual, Spiritual, Pastoral, and Human.

During year four I was able to apply for Candidacy which includes a written self-reflection essay to the Rector and the college staff explaining why I feel suitable to become a Candidate for Holy Orders. The college staff then have a scrutiny meeting in private to assess my progress over the years in formation. It is not until the Rector gives his permission that the Rite of Candidacy can commence.

During Vespers on Sunday 13th September the Rite of Candidacy occurred, and I was asked the following questions by Archbishop Longley:

*My sons, the pastors and teachers in charge of your formation, and others who know you, have given a favourable account of you, and we have full confidence in their testimony.*

*In response to the Lord's call are you resolved to complete your preparation so that in due time you will be ready to be ordained for the ministry of the Church? Are you resolved to prepare yourselves in*

*mind and spirit to give faithful service to Christ the Lord and his body, the Church?*

*The Church receives your declaration with joy. May God who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfilment. Amen.*

After receiving Candidacy my focus has now changed to ordination for the transitional diaconate. I am also allowed to wear the colours of the Church, meaning, to be able to wear clerical clothing including the Roman collar.

It was a wonderful occasion even if I had to wait a few extra months to receive Candidacy, due to the coronavirus outbreak and the nationwide lockdown. Unfortunately no guests were allowed, but I managed to celebrate with my brother seminarians over a few glasses of sparkling fizz.

I am so humbled to receive Candidacy, and serving my Lord Jesus Christ. I pray that I may be fruitful in my work and in the people I meet.

Please continue to keep me and my fellow seminarians at Oscott in your prayers, as I continue to keep you all in mine. God willing, my ordination to diaconate will be next June at Oscott College.

*God Bless, Philip Wrigley*

**'All nations shall come to adore you and glorify your name, O Lord' - Psalm 85:9**

Philip Wrigley is a 5th Year Seminarian for the Diocese of Lancaster, studying at St. Marys College, Oscott.





## Ordination to the Diaconate



## Digging in during lockdown!

Canon Alf with Patrick and June Dempsey.

Everyone knows how restricting life was during lockdown in the early months of the pandemic. It was especially frustrating for most of us priests who were not allowed to visit parishioners, enter nursing homes or hospital, or most frustratingly of all, allowed to celebrate Mass with a congregation.

With all these pastoral opportunities taken away, inventiveness was called for to avoid going stir crazy. With Maria Doherty's technical expertise, we were able to broadcast Mass every week and our foodbank was able to join with other organisations in town to form 'Fleetwood Together' taking out crates of food to over 600 homes every week. But there were still afternoons to fill!

I had often looked at the presbytery garden, which was just a large piece of grass and thought of creating a vegetable garden, but when would I ever find time?

Enter the coronavirus! Suddenly we had all the time in the world.

With the help, enthusiasm and hardwork of a few parishioners, ably marshalled by Keith Urwin and Patrick Dempsey, we set to, and are now reaping the reward of a harvest of potatoes, carrots, parsnips, Swedes, three types of beans, peas, cabbage, broccoli, lettuce, tomatoes, sprouts and beetroot. We started late in the year, as it took quite some time to dig the beds, but next year we hope to have a bigger crop. We sell some of the produce and take the rest to the foodbank.

We have also grown some flowers for the Altar and for our 'Glory Bees' at the other end of the garden. Unfortunately, this year has not been a good year for honey production in our apiary but, hopefully, like Man United, they'll come buzzing out ready for action next season!

Canon Alf Hayes,  
St Wulstan's & St Edmund's Fleetwood



The 14th September, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross was a special day. It's a reminder of the Lord's passion and the importance of the sacrifice Christ paid on Calvary for us. I had the privilege of being ordained as a deacon on this day.

The day couldn't have gone any better. The liturgy was beautiful, we were fortunate in the seminary that a small choir was permissible and so there was a nice repertoire of music. The weather was

also perfect, (something we aren't used to back up North). And then in the evening I presided at vespers and benediction, a day of many graces.

Please continue to pray for me, all our seminarians and for an increase in vocations to the priesthood. May I also say thank you to all those who have prayed for me over the years of formation and continue to pray for me and for all the kind messages and cards for my ordination. *Deacon Stuart Chapple*



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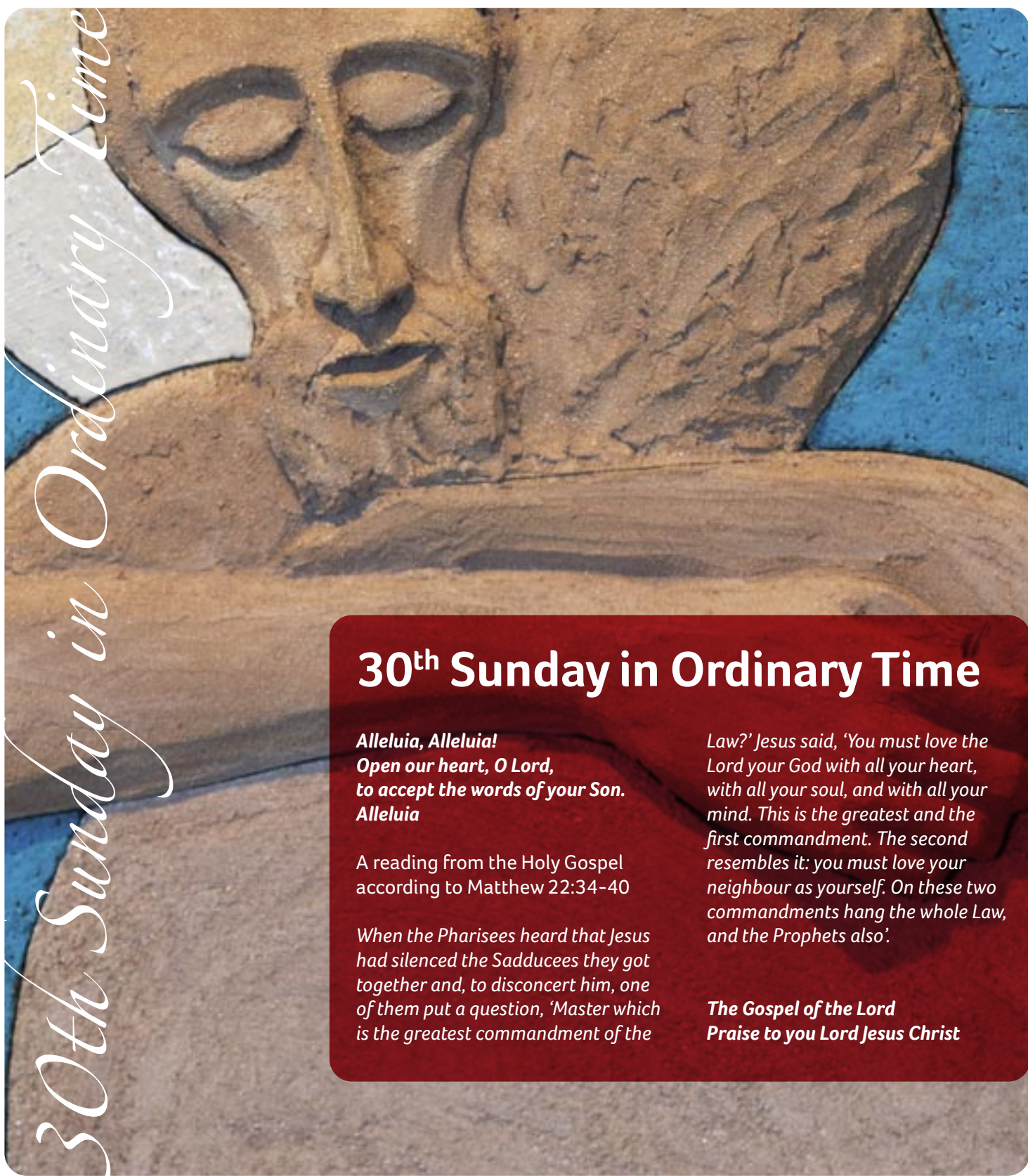
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**30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Alleluia, Alleluia!**  
**Open our heart, O Lord,**  
**to accept the words of your Son.**  
**Alleluia**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 22:34-40

*When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master which is the greatest commandment of the*

*Law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'*

**The Gospel of the Lord  
 Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

**+++ HOMILY ++++++**  
**"You must love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself"**

**O**ur Lord's in conflict with the religious authorities. The dispute's about the kingdom of God — what it's really like. The parables of the vineyard and the wedding banquet have told us that life in the kingdom is God's gift; offered freely to all who welcome Jesus into their life; including the outcast and the sinner.

St Matthew's keen to show Jesus escaping from the traps the religious leaders set for him. He contrasts their hypocrisy with our Lord's integrity. Once again in this Sunday's Gospel Jesus turns an attempt to trap him into a challenge to his hearers. It's a challenge also to us.

Last Sunday, our Lord warned us to be diligent about our obligations to God: "Give back to God what belongs to God." This Sunday's incident builds on that.

By the time of Jesus, the religious Law of the Old Testament had expanded way beyond the ten commandments: the total stood at 613. Ordinary folk weren't expected to know all six hundred; they sought advice from respected teachers like Jesus. They'd ask: what's the heart of the Law? - what's really important?

Our Lord's reply is perfectly traditional and orthodox. Neatly and clearly, he summarises the two great statements of the Law in the Old Testament. One's in the book of Exodus (*our first reading this Sunday*), the other is in the book of Deuteronomy.

But St Matthew has his own particular angle. Jesus gives two commandments: Love of God is not the same as love of neighbour, but love of neighbour is equally important as love of God. Love of God and love of neighbour go hand in hand, the two have equal weight. These two commandments together are the foundation of our life of faith and discipleship. Every other aspect of Christian living hangs on these two commands.

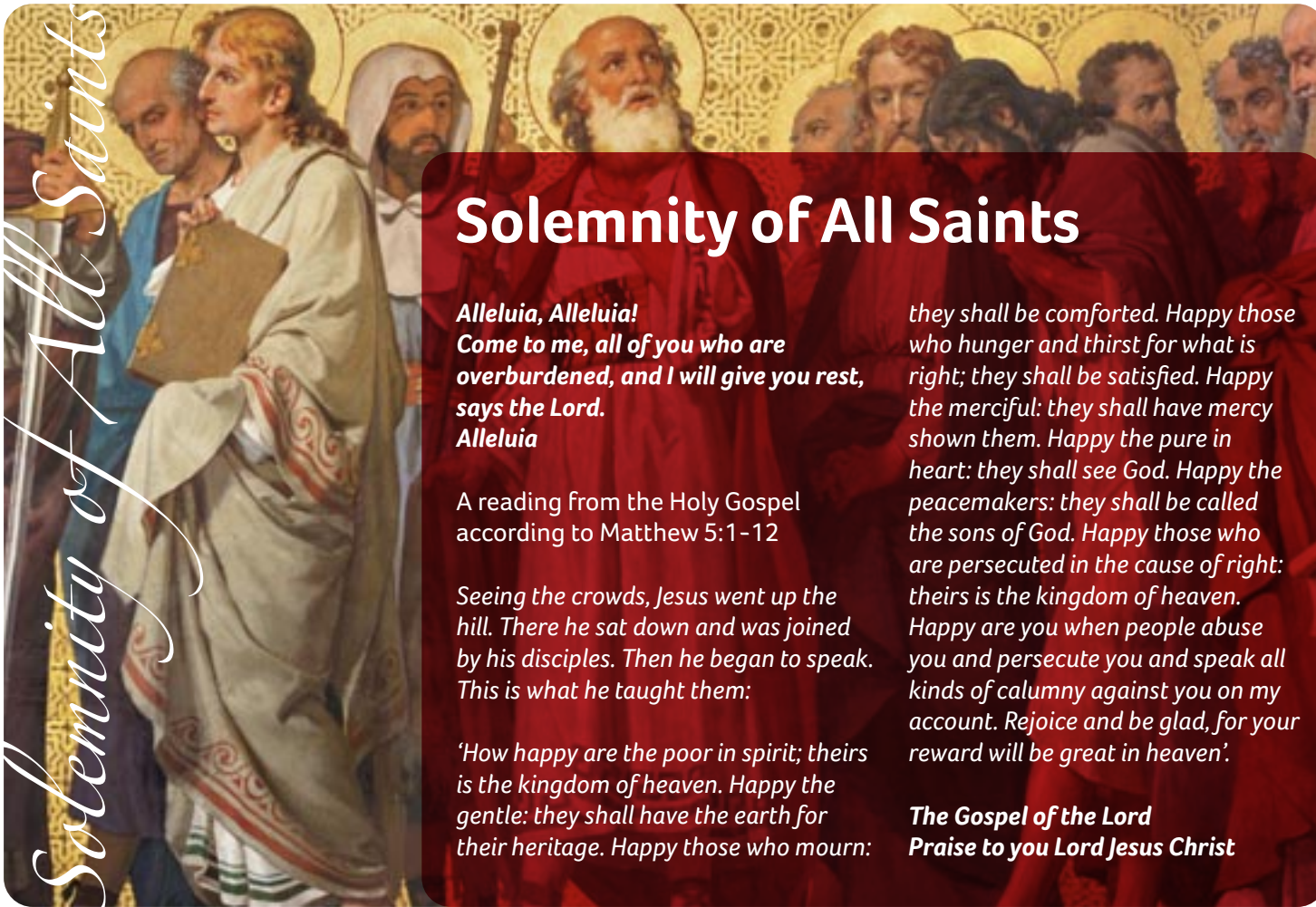
To be diligent about "the things that belong to God", is to love God with our whole heart, and love our neighbour as ourself.

Our worship of God deserves to be the most prayerful, the most beautiful, the most whole-hearted we can possibly manage. Beyond Mass we are to tend well to our personal prayer and reflect on the scriptures, to our life together in our parishes, our care and concern for one another, our service and response to folk who are in need, wherever they might be.

**Worship of God and service of neighbour together show Christ to be alive and active in the world. Allow one aspect to slip, Christ is diminished.**

So: How whole-hearted is my prayer and worship of God? How well do I love my neighbour as myself? How might I allow God to help me find the balance Jesus demands of us?  
 - The balance that will make us eloquent and convincing servants of the Gospel. **Fr. Geoffrey Steel, Garstang & Scorton**





# Solemnity of All Saints

**Alleluia, Alleluia!**  
**Come to me, all of you who are overburdened, and I will give you rest, says the Lord.**  
**Alleluia**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:1-12

*Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:*

*'How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage. Happy those who mourn:*

*they shall be comforted. Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right; they shall be satisfied. Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God. Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called the sons of God. Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'*

**The Gospel of the Lord**  
**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

## +++ HOMILY ++++++

### “Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven”

**T**oday being 1st November we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints. In two days time on Tuesday 3rd November the people of the United States of America will be going to the polls to vote for their new President. Today's celebration is very important and so is the upcoming election in America. Some would say that this is the most important election in the whole history of America!

The question is: which is more important – today's Solemnity or the Election? I believe it is today's celebration!! Let us see why?

We do live in very strange times indeed! Nearly all this year we have been coping with COVID 19 throughout the whole world, with accusations of different governments/countries messing up and failing their people, and at the same time everything is fluid and keeps changing. We seem to have moved from being in a Dunkirk spirit in March, to now in November being gripped by irrational fear! In America as the Election approaches there has been accusation and counter accusation, animosity, riots, pulling down of statues even of Our Blessed Mother, and most of all sheer hate and animosity on both sides – Democrats/ Republicans. Over here there is the same animosity towards those who support Brexit or those who want to remain in the EU. This fear is a “fear of death”. Not of physical death but a fear in the ontological sense. A fear of losing ourselves, and it is rooted in the ‘Original Fall’.

This fear and hate has no place in today's celebration, and should have no place in our daily lives also. The grace of this Feast is to dispel all fear and anxiety that comes from the ‘prince of lies’, namely Satan.

In fact John tells us in the second reading of today that “Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children, and that is what we are.”

**We are invited today to reflect on our relatives who have gone before us who expressed this love in their lives that make us believe that they are now “like him because we shall see him as he really is!” They are in heaven and eternal life praying and interceding for us. This is what we need to emphasise – our love and communion in Christ and not lies, deceit and hate that permeates our secular world.**

We see this love in the person of His Son Jesus Christ who came humbly and out of immense love for humanity to give His life's blood on the Cross for you and I, and to rescue us through His Resurrection from slavery to sin and to become His child! The

whole Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5,6 &7) which begins with the Beatitudes, as we see in today's gospel, is only fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the one who is ‘poor in spirit’, ‘the merciful one’, ‘the pure in heart’, and the one who was abused and persecuted!

The other and most important aspect of this Solemnity of All Saints is that we are invited through this celebration, to lift up our eyes, and look towards our proper home – our Heavenly home! In the first reading we have this Apocalyptic vision which is calling us towards love, joy and hope. Towards the time we will be wearing the “white robes” and worshipping and praising the Lord forever and ever.

This is why, today's Solemnity is much more important than the Presidential Election or Brexit! All that will pass away in time. But our Heavenly home will never pass away! Today we are being reminded that we are His children and that our destiny is to be above the angels in Eternal Bliss.

St Augustine sums this up when he says the following:

*“O! what a happy alleluia there, how carefree, how safe from all opposition, where nobody will be an enemy, where no-one will ever cease to be a friend! God's praises sung there, sung here – here, by the anxious; there, by the carefree – here, by those who will die; there, by those who will live forever – here, in hope; there, in reality – here, on our journey; there, in our homeland.*

*So now, my brethren, let us sing, not to delight our leisure, but to ease our toil. In the way that travellers are in the habit of singing, sing, but keep on walking. What does it mean, “keep on walking”? Go onward always – but go onward in goodness, for there are, according to the Apostle, some people who go ever onward from bad to worse. If you are going onward, you are walking; but always go onward in goodness, onward in the right faith, onward in good habits and behaviour. Sing, and walk onwards”. (From a Sermon by Saint Augustine in the Office of Readings 12/09/20)*

So let us keep on walking towards our heavenly homeland with Jesus Christ, Crucified and Risen, in our sights? Like the people in the first reading let us shout out aloud: “Victory to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Fr Junipero Serra, whose statue the anarchists have toppled in California, constantly said in his life – in fact it became his motto: ‘Siempre Adelante’ - Always Forward

Fr Jim Allen, Freckleton & Westby

  
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# 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Alleluia, Alleluia!**  
**Stay awake and stand ready,**  
**Because you do not know the hour**  
**When the Son of Man is coming.**  
**Alleluia!**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (25: 1-13)

Jesus told this parable to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven will be like this: Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were sensible; the foolish ones did take their lamps, but they brought no oil, whereas the sensible ones took flasks of oil as well as their lamps. The bridegroom was late, and they all grew drowsy and fell asleep. But at midnight there was a cry, "The bridegroom is here! Go out and

meet him." At this, all those bridesmaids woke up and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish ones said to the sensible ones, "Give us some of your oil: our lamps are going out." But they replied, "There may not be enough for us and for you; you had better go to those who sell it and buy some for yourselves." They had gone off to buy it when the bridegroom arrived. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding hall and the door was closed. The other bridesmaids arrived later. "Lord," they said "open the door for us." But he replied, "I tell you solemnly, I do not know you." So stay awake, because you do not know wither the day or the hour."

**The Gospel of the Lord**  
**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

+++ HOMILY ++++++

**"The bridegroom is here!  
Go out and meet him"**



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Those of us who have reached a certain age will remember the various changes which have been made to the Liturgy of the Eucharist over the years since the Second Vatican Council. Most of the changes have centred on the translation of the central parts of the Mass, but in the near future we might have to get used to a new translation of the Readings which form the Liturgy of the Word. Our present version is the Jerusalem Bible - which translates the parable which we have in today's Mass as the Parable of the Sensible and Foolish bridesmaids. I hope the new Lectionary translation, when it eventually comes into use, will get rid of the word 'sensible' and replace it with 'wise'.

We are talking here about the Wisdom of God, a reflection of His eternal light and an image of his power. 'Sensible' doesn't really do that image justice!

Just look at the first reading today, from the Book of Wisdom:

*'Even to think about her is understanding fully grown. She herself walks about looking for those who are worthy of her, and graciously shows herself to them as they go, in every thought of theirs coming to meet them.'*

And the psalm which follows this reading is even more explicit in its description of the need which we human beings have to be united with the God who made us all:

*'O God, you are my God, for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water.'*

I hope I am sensible, at least some of the time! But I would be very upset if I weren't striving to be wise, in every moment of every day. To be wise is to be as God is.

*Fr Tom Singleton, Keswick & Cockermouth*



# 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time



## 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Alleluia, Alleluia!**  
*Even if you have to die, says the Lord, keep faithful, and I will give you the crown of life.*  
**Alleluia!**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (25: 14-15, 19-20)

*Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man on his way abroad who summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents, to another, two, to a third one; each in*

*proportion to his ability. Then he set out. Now a long time after, the master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more. "Sir" he said "you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join your master's happiness."*

**The Gospel of the Lord**  
**Praise be to you Lord Jesus Christ**

### +++ HOMILY ++++++

## “You have been faithful in small thing; come and join in your master’s happiness”

**This Sunday’s Gospel is one of the more familiar parables of Jesus. Yet whilst it is reassuring, there is a disconcerting feel about it as it does contain a warning.**

God is the giver of all gifts, and God gives them as He sees fit: They are given for a purpose. The Catechism (no 1937) puts it well:

*“These differences belong to God’s plan, who wills that each receive what they need from others, and that those endowed with particular talents share the benefits with those who need them. These differences*

*encourage and often oblige persons to practice generosity, kindness and the sharing of goods: they foster mutual enrichment...”*

In other words the talents we have been given are not primarily for keeping to ourselves, they are for the good of others or more particularly for helping the mission of Christ and the Church He founded. Moreover we can – with God’s help – allow our own talents to grow by what we learn and share from others.

As I mentioned there is also a disconcerting element to the parable.

Jesus told this parable in the context of His second coming and part of that return brings in the idea of Judgement. This is something that most of us don’t really think about, but it is part of the teaching of Jesus Himself. Using the talents that God has given us helps us all to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The fact that Christ will come again should in fact spur us on to carry out the mission of Christ. The one who had the five talents was eager to increase what he had. We too should have that same eagerness. At this time in the Church’s history there is an urgent need for

Christ’s followers to use their God given talents, to build up the Body of Christ, the Church.

At every Sunday Mass in the Creed we say “Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead”. Let us not be like the lazy servant who was fearful of his master and chose to be selfish and do nothing. We pray we will be eager to share and, dare I say, increase our talents in the service of the Gospel. Maybe we can reflect on the prayer after the Our Father which echoes St Paul “as we await the Blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ”

*Fr. Paul Harrison Workington*

## Kindness really matters during COVID 19 – ‘Be at Peace’

**Hi I’m Lois 16 and I’m Eden 14, we are members of Preston Impact Youth Group.**

With all the issues surrounding the pandemic which forced us all into lockdown, we felt as young people we needed to help cheer people up. We realised that all people in care homes were isolated from families and friends and the staff who worked in the homes.

We have attended Preston Impact Group for many years and decided to work alongside Sherwood Care Home, Bethany House and Laurel Villas care homes, to try and cheer the residents up for Easter. We produced cards and messages for

the staff and residents. We also provided banners wishing them a Happy Easter and them all the best. We hope we brought a smile to their faces and made sure they knew people were thinking of them and care about them. The young people from all the Impact Youth Groups also distributed biscuits and chocolates to thirteen care homes in and around Preston.

We also felt the need to acknowledge the amazing NHS workers and so we produced another banner dedicated to the NHS, which is fixed to a safety guard on Sharoe Green Lane near Preston Royal Hospital and provided a card and biscuits for the staff working in the

A & E dept. We have done all this work and banners on behalf of Preston Impact Group to create an air of peace and show kindness in justice for everyone.

The youth group all pulled together to care about families and individuals to support the Salvation Army who were in desperate need of donations of food, all the young people and families working together for justice, so that people could have food to eat and feel less isolated.

One of our Group said, “being able to see a smile on someone’s face is wonderful. If we don’t take care of one another, no one else will, “kindness really matters!”

All the Impact Youth Group and EmpowHER youth project wrote messages to each other to ensure our members that we are all still together, even though we are apart.

During COVID 19 it has been important for everyone to never really feel alone so letters were sent to families to check that they were okay and even phone calls to check on their wellbeing.

We also undertook some workshops in schools stressing that wellbeing is important for inner peace and outer peace evoking the words of Pope Francis “humanity needs justice, peace and love”.

*Lois & Eden, Preston*



# Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ,

# King of the Universe

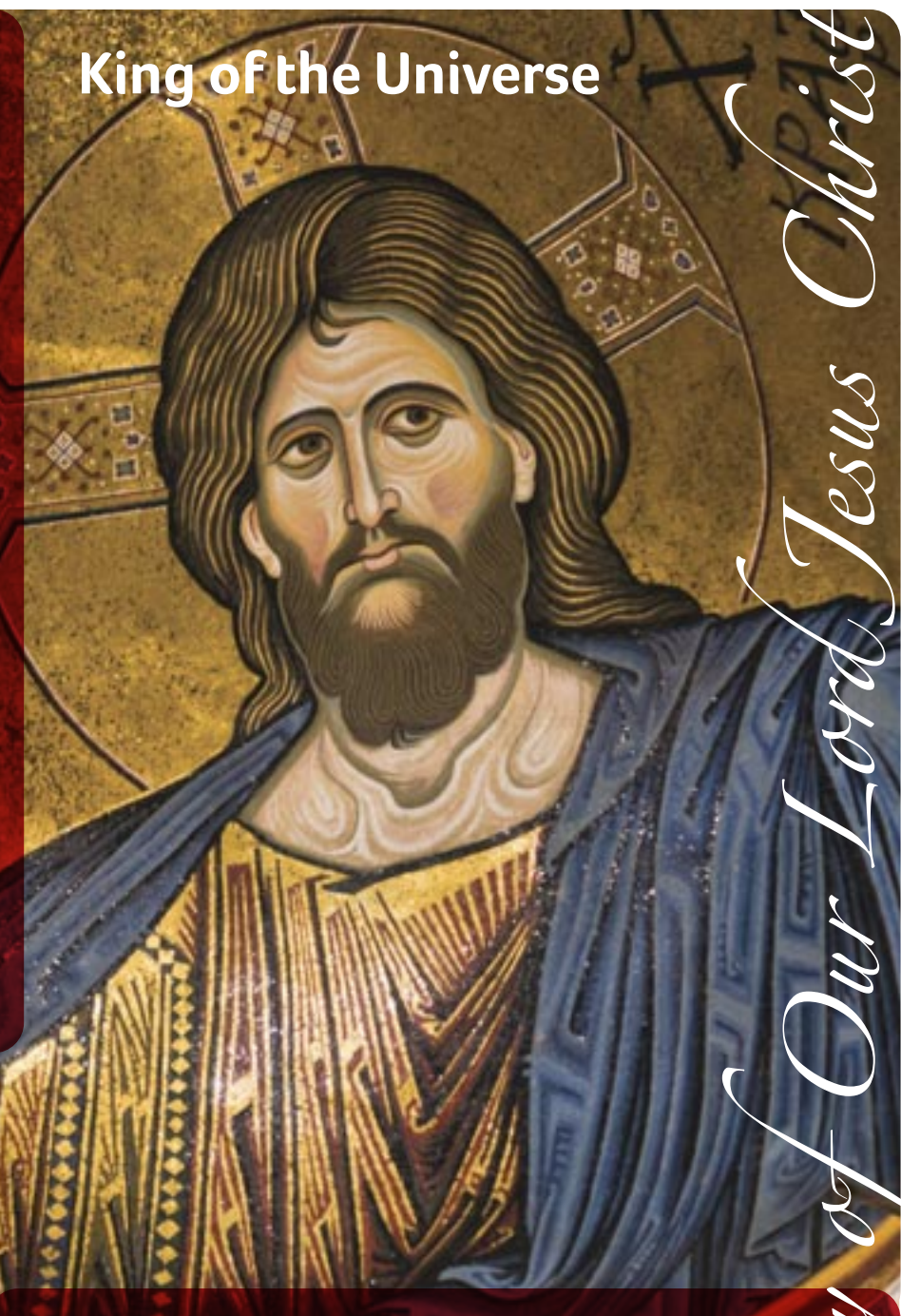
**Alleluia, Alleluia!**  
**Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David.**  
**Alleluia!**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (25:31-46)

Jesus said to his disciples: 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right hand, Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.' Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, 'Lord, when did we

see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?' And the King will answer, 'I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me.' Next he will say to those on his left hand, 'Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me.' Then it will be their turn to ask, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?' Then he will answer, 'I tell you, solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.' And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.'

**The Gospel of the Lord**  
**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**



## +++ HOMILY ++++++

**“He will take his seat on his throne of glory, and he will separate men one from another”**



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**In today's Gospel Jesus tells us that the sheep go to heaven and the goats go to hell. The virtuous go to heaven and the wicked go to hell.**

Does hell exist? Undoubtedly yes, is it something to be worried of? Again, undoubtedly yes! But what is hell? - A place with fire and demons with pointy sticks, tormenting you for all eternity? That imagery which was all too prevalent and used in the past to scare people doesn't sit well with me today. We have seen all the movies depicting hell in these terms, the lakes of fire and the scary demons with horns on their heads, it all seems a bit infantile? But, is this what hell is? And if so, why would an all loving merciful God create such a place?

I would argue that hell is a necessity because of the immeasurable gift from God of free will, we can choose! God will never abandon us, but we all too easily abandon Him. We have free will and can turn our back on the fire of Gods' love and that self-same fire will be a torment for us.

In every thought and action there is a decision to be made, towards the good or away from the good. It's the cumulative effect of all these choices that determine where we are heading, the state of heaven, with God or the state of hell, turned away from God. Every action has a consequence, if we live our life as if there is no God, and we can please ourselves what we do and how we live then we have to take the consequence of that decision, and that consequence will be hell.

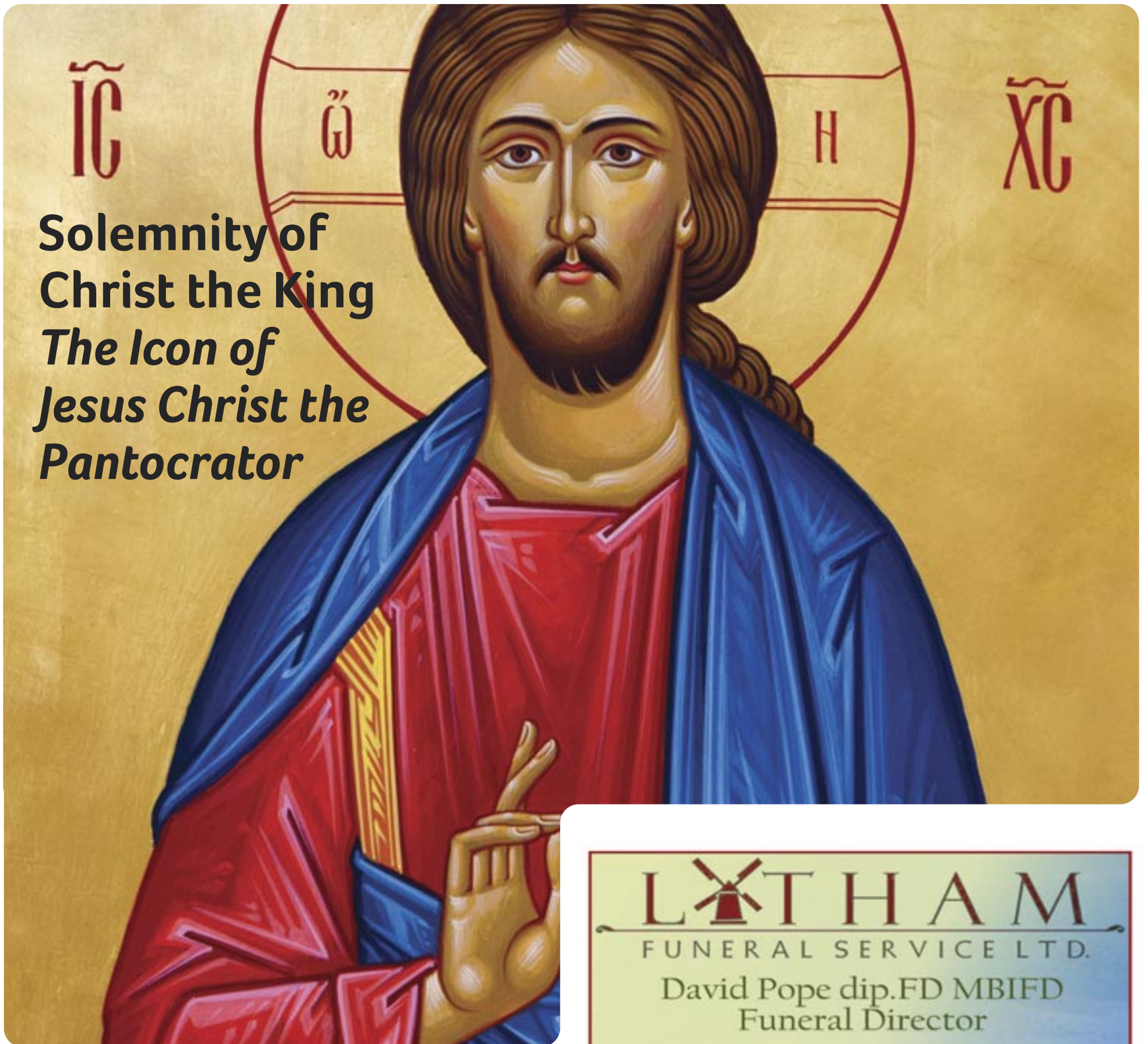
Jesus asks us in the Gospel, did you feed the hungry? Did you clothe the naked? Did you welcome the stranger? Did you tend for the sick? Did... you.... love.... Me....? If we are living the gospel values then that answer will be "yes", if we turned the other way the answer will be "no". The choice is ours we have no-one to blame but ourselves.

Hell is a choice, and only we are capable of making that choice.

**Heaven or Hell.... The decision is ours!**

*Fr Stephen Talbutt, Blackpool*





## Solemnity of Christ the King

### The Icon of Jesus Christ the Pantocrator

**T**he icon of Jesus Christ the Pantocrator is very ancient way of portraying Jesus as Lord of the Universe. After the Council of Nicaea in 325 had confirmed that Jesus was the visible & perfect image of the Father, there followed three centuries of struggle against the heresies that denied either the Divine nature of Christ [Arianism] or his human nature [Monophysitism]. It was finally acknowledged that Christ embodied the union of two natures: human & divine which we know as the hypostatic union.

So this icon is a theological statement of faith that: Christ is Lord of the Universe in the East & West of the Catholic Church. In recent times in the Western Church: Christ the King.

I will point out the symbols used to illustrate this teaching such as the gold halo with the cross in it – the God Man has saved us by His cross & resurrection. In the cruciform halo are the Greek initials which translated are “He that is”. This halo is divided into three the Trinity.

The gold is used to signify that this metal is precious & uncorrupted. It also sheds a beautiful lustre by candlelight allowing one to be drawn into the face of Christ’s presence. The thick neck of Christ represents the full breath of the Holy Spirit. The icon “is what you see is what you get” in modern parlance. The blue/green tunic represents the divinity & red tunic the humanity of Christ, on the tunic is a gold threaded stole to point to Christ as priest of the Order of Melchisedech – which is what we all share in as the common priesthood of the faithful. The open [or closed] Book/Scriptures is held by the one who inspired it. The right hand is held in benediction. Last, but not least, are the essential Greek initials for Christ: IC XC - Jesus Christ Son of God.

This icon for me is such a powerful image of Christ to pray with as He draws you in to where He is. It’s visual lectio; it is theology in line & colour. To me it brings you into the mysterious presence of Christ. It is an icon for Church and the prayer corner/room in your house. It is my joy to write icons. *Sr. Mary Stella, Hyning*

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# A Message of Hope

By Julia Beacroft



I was watching a programme on 'catch-up' the other night and I must admit that I wasn't particularly impressed with hearing Peppa Pig singing 'Wash, wash, wash your hands' to the tune of 'Row, row, row your boat' at every single ad break! On the other hand, however, I do think that the government's new Coronavirus ad campaign of 'Wash hands, cover face, give space' is quite effective. It's short, snappy and to the point. It gets the message across. It makes sense. And of course the even shorter version of 'Hands, face, space' tends to stick in the memory.

### A Sense of the Spiritual

Most of us would probably be able to recite the Lord's Prayer from memory if asked to do so, but many other prayers would probably be forgotten over time. Yet so often our memories can be jogged by the simplest of things – a sight, sound, smell, word or phrase.

If we put the pandemic to one side for a moment – which I'm sure many of us are only too glad to do! – we can appreciate that the COVID 19 jingle also re-awakens in us a sense of the spiritual and more – a message of hope...

### Grace

**Hands** - Take my hands and make them as your own, and use them for your kingdom here on earth. Take my hands, I give them to you, Lord. Prepare them for the service of your name. In other words, use our hands – use us for the Lord's work on earth.

**Face** – Lift up the light of your face on us O Lord. Give us Lord, your grace and blessing. Let us see you face-to-face in Heaven when our earthly life has ended.

**Space** – A time to pray. A sacred space to spend time in the Lord's presence and aspace for us to grow in our faith.

And so it is that the secular has been transformed to the spiritual and the negative to the positive. The slogan becomes almost like a prayer! The maxim of 'Hands, face, space' refers to Coronavirus precautions but by the grace of God can mean so much more. It re-awakens in us a sense of hope in the Lord.

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