

**The Official Newspaper to
the Diocese of Lancaster**

Issue 373 + October '25

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**Cleator Moor & St Mary's Grotto
Jubilee Pilgrimage Story and Pictures**



Celebrating 100 Years of Lancaster Diocese



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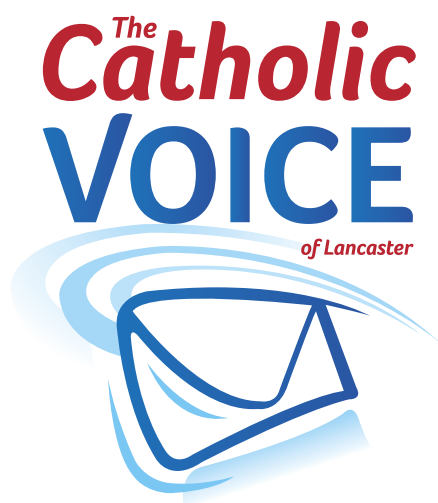
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Bishop Paul Swarbrick Reflects on the Diocesan Centenary Celebrations

The Centenary Year will end on 22nd November 2025. The Holy Year of Hope will conclude on the Solemnity of the Epiphany, 6th January 2026. The work of the Church will continue until the end of time!



By promulgation of the Papal Bull *Universalis Ecclesia*, dated November 22nd 1924, the Diocese of Lancaster came into being. Bishop Thomas Wulstan Pearson OSB was appointed our first Bishop. It marked an expansion of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, a time of growing numbers, increasing vocations and deepening maturity.

Looking back on that moment of history we give thanks first to Almighty God for His constant care of his people. Out of love for us He sent His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, to offer Himself on the Cross for our Salvation. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ.

Our work is the continuation of the work of Christ; our mission in these days is to perpetuate the mission of Christ, the sacrifice of Christ, the Gospel that is Christ and His Resurrection. We must also give thanks to God for the people of that time. They discerned the need to form a new Diocese, and, together, they worked to help make it happen, under the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit. The southern part of our Diocese (*north Lancashire*) had been part of the Liverpool Archdiocese; Cumberland and Westmorland were originally part of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.

In the Diocesan Directory for 1975 you will find a Pastoral Letter written by Bishop +Bernard Foley to mark what was the Fiftieth Jubilee of the Diocese. I commend that Letter to you, reproduced in this edition. An exhibition was held in the Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston, gathering various items of historic and contemporary interest. A great Mass was also celebrated, taking place on 29th September 1975 in the Guild Hall, Preston, gathering people from across the Diocese as well as national figures and including invited representatives of other Christian denominations, faith communities and civic dignitaries.

Our own celebration Mass to mark the Centenary takes place in Saint Peter's Cathedral on Saturday 18th October, and will be graced with the presence of the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop +Miguel Maury Buendia as well as Bishops, ecumenical and faith partners and civic figures. I decided to combine our celebrations with the keeping of the Holy Year, with its theme of Pilgrimage and Hope. The two events, the Holy Year and the Centenary, share the same ultimate purpose; to confirm us in Faith, strengthen our witness as disciples of the Risen Lord in our own times, and to rekindle the Light of the Gospel so that the whole world may be drawn to the Heart of the Saviour.

There is much that works to discourage us about the state of creation and the state of society. What have we done with the gift of creation and the gift of life? It would not be hard to become overwhelmed by all that is wrong, not only with the world but also within the Church. But our hope rests in Christ, not in ourselves.

You may not have been able to travel to any great events in the Diocese for either the Holy Year or for the Centenary, but I have every hope that you have been caught up in some way wherever you practice your faith and live your life. May you sense the part you are called to play in these times in the Mission of Christ. May you know that the Holy Spirit has been given to you and is active in you for a good purpose.

The Centenary Year will end on 22nd November 2025. The Holy Year of Hope will conclude on the Solemnity of the Epiphany, 6th January 2026. The work of the Church will continue until the end of time!

Come, Lord Jesus! With my blessing upon you and your families.
+Paul Swarbrick+ Bishop of Lancaster



Dean of Lancaster Cathedral,
Rev John Miller.



Joan Fox, Parish Administrator
at Cathedral House.

St Peter's Cathedral, Lancaster prepares for the historic Centenary Thanksgiving Mass and a Special Historical Exhibition this October

Bishop Paul's plan to commemorate the Diocesan Centenary by highlighting 100 notable things to represent its heritage and community is making good progress.

An exhibition featuring John Lingard and Ann Fenwick was successfully arranged by the parish at St Mary's, Hornby, to coincide with their garden party in July.

Further exhibitions were organised as National Heritage events, including "The Chapter House of Cokersand Abbey."

This October, a special Historical Exhibition is planned at St Peter's Cathedral, Lancaster for the weekend of the Cathedral's Dedication, on October 4-5th.

The Centenary Historical Exhibition will be located at St Peter's Cathedral, Lancaster and will be held after 12.15 Mass on Saturday 4th October and after 10.30am Mass on Sunday 5th October for 1 hour (approx).

The exhibition is FREE entry and it will be an exhibit of historic vestments, books and art belonging to the cathedral, from medieval through the recusant period until late 19th century.

Helpers are warmly welcomed to assist at the Historical Exhibition, and if you are interested, please contact *The Catholic Voice of Lancaster* with your contact details which will be forwarded to the 100 Objects Committee.

A talk is also to be given on 'North West Catholic Writers' by Professor Keith Hanley

in the Cathedral Library on Monday, 27th October in association with Lancaster University.

The major item being prepared to celebrate the Centenary of the Diocese, which it is hoped will appear next spring, is a pictorial History of the Diocese of Lancaster, edited by a team led by Professor Michael Mullett for which research is well underway.

It will be disseminated in various forms, and the volunteer steering committee are keen to invite any donations towards its production from any interested parties.

If anyone has any bright ideas or materials for the contents, please contact the 100 Objects group through *The Catholic Voice of Lancaster* contact details on page 2.

Cathedral Dean, Rev John Miller is overseeing many aspects of the Cathedral's Thanksgiving Mass and other special events during October along with Joan Fox, Parish administrator and event organiser for the historic Centenary Thanksgiving Mass on Saturday October 18th. Joan is busy organising all the invites and formal reception of the Apostolic Nuncio. The Pope's Ambassador to Great Britain will be visiting the Cathedral between the 16th-18th October.

Joan Fox is working hard behind the scenes to ensure smooth running and all health and safety aspects of the Centenary Thanksgiving Mass as well as organising the guest list and managing the seating plan. The Mass will be attended by the Cardinal, the Apostolic

Nuncio, many bishops, civic and ecumenical guests and most important of all, representatives from every parish and school in the diocese. Admission is by ticket only and each church has allocated attendees.

Joan is working together with all at the Cathedral to ensure a memorable day: "The admin related side may have fallen to myself and Fr John but there are many other people involved too, of course. Parishioners who will do a clean of the church beforehand, the choir who will be practicing in readiness, those who will act as stewards on the day etc. It's very much a team effort but some things are handled more behind the scenes than others and we are all anticipating a very historic day for the Cathedral and Diocese."

Make a Visit to Lancaster Cathedral for the Centenary Year

If you are not attending the Thanksgiving Mass, you could consider a visit to Lancaster Cathedral for Mass anytime, as part of your personal Centenary celebrations and a mini prayer pilgrimage. It is a beautiful place of worship and treasure of our Diocese. Well worth a visit to come along to pray, go to mass, stay a while in the presence of the Lord Jesus and also enjoy its beautiful architecture and breathtaking stained glass windows. It is full of history and a most spiritually uplifting experience. The choir is heavenly and the majestic organ is masterfully played by Director of Music Damien Howard with divine grace and symphonic soul. You may even be lucky enough to hear one of Bishop Paul's legendary sermons!

WHAT'S ON IN OCTOBER:

Daily Mass at 12:15pm

Adoration and Confession
every Saturday 11am-12noon

Sunday Vigil Mass 18:30pm
Sunday Mass 10:30am & 18:30pm

Feast of The Dedication of The Cathedral
Sunday 5th October. The Bishop will celebrate the 10:30am Mass and Solemn Vespers at 4pm. All welcome.

The Rosary for Vocations
begins on Sunday 5th October at 10am.

Historical Centenary Exhibition at the Cathedral
Saturday 4th October after 12:15 Mass for an hour. Sunday 5th October after 10:30am Mass for an hour. Located in the Cathedral library. FREE Entry.

Vespers & Benediction with the Nuncio
Thursday 16th October 6pm. All welcome.

Diocesan Centenary Thanksgiving Mass
Saturday 18th October. The Bishop will celebrate Mass at the Cathedral with representatives from every parish and church of the Diocese. Ticket only.

Centenary Talk on "North West Catholic Writers" with Keith Hanley
Monday 27th October in the Cathedral Library. Doors open 6:00pm. Starts at 6:30pm. Free.

For further information please visit:
www.lancastercathedral.org.uk



St Mary's Grotto in Cleator Moor hosts special pilgrimage in Centenary Year

The Deanery Jubilee Mass in honour of Our Lady's birthday at Cleator Moor - St Mary's Shrine & Grotto saw a great crowd from across Cumbria and Lancaster, Religious Sisters and Brothers from the different convents and monasteries, and priests from across the Deanery.

Over 400 people attended this year's service, with some travelling from as far as Blackpool and Lytham to join in.

The pilgrimage held extra significance as part of the Diocese centenary year celebrations.

Bishop Paul Swarbrick hosted the service, which guided pilgrims through prayer, hymns, and Holy Communion.

Father Paul Johnstone, the parish priest, said: "This is a special year for us as it is the jubilee year that was announced by Pope Francis. It is a double celebration as we join together to acknowledge one hundred years since the founding of our Lancaster Diocese."

Christ The Good Shepherd parish Cumbria brought a good number of pilgrims as well as being

represented by Sr Eleanor who read the Second Reading and Angel and Elisha, two of their servers, who served at the altar.

The Mass concluded with a blessing for those who are sick and infirm, and refreshments in the marquee in the grounds and visits to the beautiful grotto.

Julia McClelland, a parishioner and volunteer at St Mary's Church, said: "It was so lovely to see our magnificent church full with around 450 pilgrims. Personally, having bishop Paul on our altar, supported by priests from across the Diocese and especially our very own Canon John Watson, made it feel incredibly special. It was a truly beautiful service and such a meaningful way to celebrate both the Holy Year and our Diocesan centenary here at Cleator."

The grotto at St Mary's has a rich history and has been a focal point of the parish for decades. On July 27, 1980, Cardinal Hume visited Cleator and rededicated the grotto following its restoration. This date coincided with the 1500th anniversary of the birth of St Benedict, which recognised Cleator's long links with the Benedictines.

Photos courtesy of Christ The Good Shepherd Parish.



Bishop Paul with Angel & Elisha, Altar servers at Christ The Good Shepherd Parish.

David Pope dip FD MBIFD

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Pupils at Corpus Christi Catholic High School receive their Metanoia awards from Bishop Paul at St Wilfred's Church, Preston.



Corpus Christi Catholic High School Faith In Action Metanoia Project Awards

A joyous celebration was enjoyed as around 50 young people from Corpus Christi Catholic High School, Preston received their Faith In Action Awards from Bishop Paul Swarbrick as part of the Metanoia Project.

Ruth White, Director of The Metanoia Project, was delighted with the success of the ceremony:

“Young people undertake the Pin and Bronze awards with us through our Chaplaincy work at Corpus Christi High School, and our Young Leaders who undertake the Yoke programme in their own time, work towards the Silver and Gold awards by committing to a life of prayer, formation and service.

“We heard from young people who had completed Silver and Gold awards about how they had grown in their faith and

from a former young leader who shared how she had carried her faith forward in her University studies. We also, of course, heard from Bishop Paul as he preached on Matthew 11: 28-30, encouraging the young people in their journey of faith, by continuing to make good decisions about who to have around them to help.

“Thanks to all the young people, their families, school staff, Metanoia volunteers, Fr Chris Pedley SJ, Bishop Paul, and everyone else who made this such a special evening.”

www.metanoiaproject.co.uk

Jesus said: “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.” Matthew 11: 28-30

A photograph of the exterior of Cardinal Newman College, a large brick building with a prominent entrance and many windows. The building is surrounded by greenery and outdoor seating areas.

CARDINAL
NEWMAN
COLLEGE

OPEN
DAYS

SATURDAY 11TH OCTOBER

SATURDAY 15TH NOVEMBER

10AM - 1PM



CAFOD

Jubilee Year Pilgrimage Workshops A Success

Staff and pupils at The Cathedral Catholic Primary School in Lancaster were delighted to welcome CAFOD volunteers, Diane and Frances, to lead an assembly and workshops for the Jubilee Year.

In the assembly, Diane explained how the money raised by our school during Lent will be used to fund projects to support families in Kenya. In the

pilgrimage workshops, we learnt about what it means to be Pilgrims of Hope and reflected on how the small actions we take can make a big difference to the lives of others. Everyone engaged well with the visit and we strongly recommend the Pilgrimage workshops to other schools during this Jubilee Year.

*Claire Dickinson,
Year 5 Class Teacher, The Cathedral
Catholic Primary School, Lancaster*

Pupils at The Cathedral Catholic Primary School at The CAFOD workshops.

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as we grow together in faith and love to serve the community.



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Centenary Vocations: God's Call in Every Season of Life

Fr Robert Hannaford reflects on his ordination as a Catholic priest after decades of Anglican ministry, while seminarian Chris Sumner shares his journey towards priesthood in Rome.



“Bringing out things old and new” The Journey of Seminarian Christopher Sumner



Christopher Sumner's story begins beside the Irish Sea... his dad hailed from Blackpool, his mum from St Anne's; they married at Our Lady Star of the Sea and settled in a new-build in Lytham St Annes. Baptised at St Peter's, Lytham, Chris grew up surrounded by faith. *“Going to Mass was something normal and natural,”* he recalls. Family life, parish life and school life all pointed in the same direction, forming a strong Catholic identity rooted in worship, celebration and community.

At St Peter's Primary, excellent catechists prepared him for the sacraments, and the first stirrings of vocation arrived early. *“I started thinking about priesthood when I was about seven,”* he remembers. Encouraged to pray a daily Hail Mary for his vocation, the thought never quite left him. As a teenager he became an altar server, gradually discovering that the call to serve the Lord was more than just a passing thought.

After Cardinal Newman College, Preston, and a tentative start at university, Christopher continued searching for the Lord's will. A chance meeting with a Dominican friar led him to Oxford, where he studied theology at St Benet's Hall under the renowned Benedictine scholar Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB. Oxford opened his mind to the riches of Scripture and the Church's intellectual tradition. Later, through a PGCE, he discovered his vocation as a teacher, accompanying young people in faith.

For over a decade he taught Religious Education in Abingdon, Reading and London. Teaching, he says, was a ministry of listening: *“Young people are inquisitive. You listen to their questions and then walk with them towards the wisdom of the Church.”* That conviction reflected the Dominican motto veritas—that truth, wherever it is found, need never be feared.

In 2018, while teaching a Year 7 class, Christopher suffered a brain haemorrhage. It was a moment of profound vulnerability,

but also of grace. *“I was whisked away to hospital, operated on, and given back my life,”* he recalls. His recovery brought gratitude and a renewed attentiveness to the Lord's call. Moving to Carlisle in 2019, he became head of RE at Newman School and grew closer to the Diocese of Lancaster through the Lourdes pilgrimage, where his lifelong gift for music found fresh expression in service as musical director.

The deaths of his father in 2020 and mother in 2021 deepened his prayer and discernment. With the support of Canon Luiz Ruscillo, diocesan vocations director at the time, Christopher recognised the quiet call that had accompanied him since childhood. He applied for priestly formation in 2022 and was accepted by Bishop Paul Swarbrick. After a formation year in Valladolid, he is now at the Beda College, Rome, entering his third year. He has received the ministries of lector and acolyte, and God willing, will be ordained deacon in 2026 and priest in 2027.

Christopher names his parents, dedicated teachers, and priests such as Fr David Elder and Fr Anthony Doe among his influences, alongside the Jesuits and Dominicans. He also recalls how The Faith Movement was particularly formative in his twenties. Attending its summer and winter conferences, he discovered a vibrant community of young Catholics exploring how faith and reason belong together. *“It gave me confidence that our Catholic tradition has the answers people are searching for,”* he says. *“It showed me that science and religion are not opposed, but illuminate one another.”*

He draws further inspiration from his confirmation saint, St Dominic, and from St Thérèse's “little way” of confidence in God's mercy. Looking ahead, he hopes to serve as a priest who listens deeply and accompanies faithfully: *“It's not about having all the answers. It's about walking with people and sharing the treasures of the Church—things old and new.”* *Andrew Wygladala*

THINKING OF BEING A PRIEST? Come to the day of recollection and discernment!

The day is for single men 16 years or over who are considering priesthood: **Saturday 22 November 10am–4pm** at the Cathedral in Lancaster. The day will include Mass, adoration, guided prayer, talks to assist discernment, lunch. To book, call: **01524 841190** or email: Heather.Watts@lrcd.org.uk

Marking 100 Years: Two Journeys, One Vocation

As the Diocese of Lancaster celebrates its centenary, two very different but deeply connected stories remind us that God's call continues to shape lives.



My Vocational Journey Fr Robert Hannaford

I was ordained as a Catholic Priest by Bishop Paul in his Cathedral Church on Saturday 28th June 2025 after over forty years' service as an Anglican priest. It was a deeply moving experience, one which has come as an unexpected joy: just as I thought my ministerial life was coming to an end, it has entered a new and exciting chapter.

I was born into a Christian family. My parents attended a Baptist Church, and it was there that I learned habits of Christian life which remain with me to this day; here, also, my vocation to ministry was encouraged. While in the sixth form I had something of a crisis in faith and began to explore other, less Evangelical forms of faith. I found inspiration in Catholic and Anglican sources and was eventually confirmed in the Church of England. I attended an Anglican Church with an Anglo-Catholic tradition and learned to value the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church, and devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

Early in my undergraduate days I was selected for training as an Anglican priest and began seminary training after a year teaching RE in a large Comprehensive School. Most of my ministry as an Anglican priest was devoted to teaching and researching Theology in Colleges and Universities, but I also

held several posts as an honorary parish priest, serving mostly in rural parishes. Throughout my time as an Anglican, I had the support of my wife, Catherine. We have four sons, three of whom are married, and two grandsons. Faith and family life have been and remain the bedrock of my life.

After retiring from my University work, I returned to full-time parish ministry in Workington, on the West Coast of Cumbria. I was asked to lead the Carlisle dioceses' education programme for ministry. I began to feel that my true spiritual home lay in the Catholic Church. I had long since ceased to believe and pray as a Protestant Christian. I think two things helped me to make the cultural leap towards reconciliation with the Catholic Church: first, my use over many years of the Divine Office and secondly the active support and encouragement of Catherine.

We were received into the Church on Ascension Day 2021 by Canon John Watson. It felt like a wonderful homecoming and has been exceeded only by my great joy upon receiving the gift of Catholic priesthood. I am grateful for the warmth of support I have received from family, friends and the clergy and parishioners of the parish of Christ the Good Shepherd, Workington.



Bishop Paul ordains
Fr Hannaford.

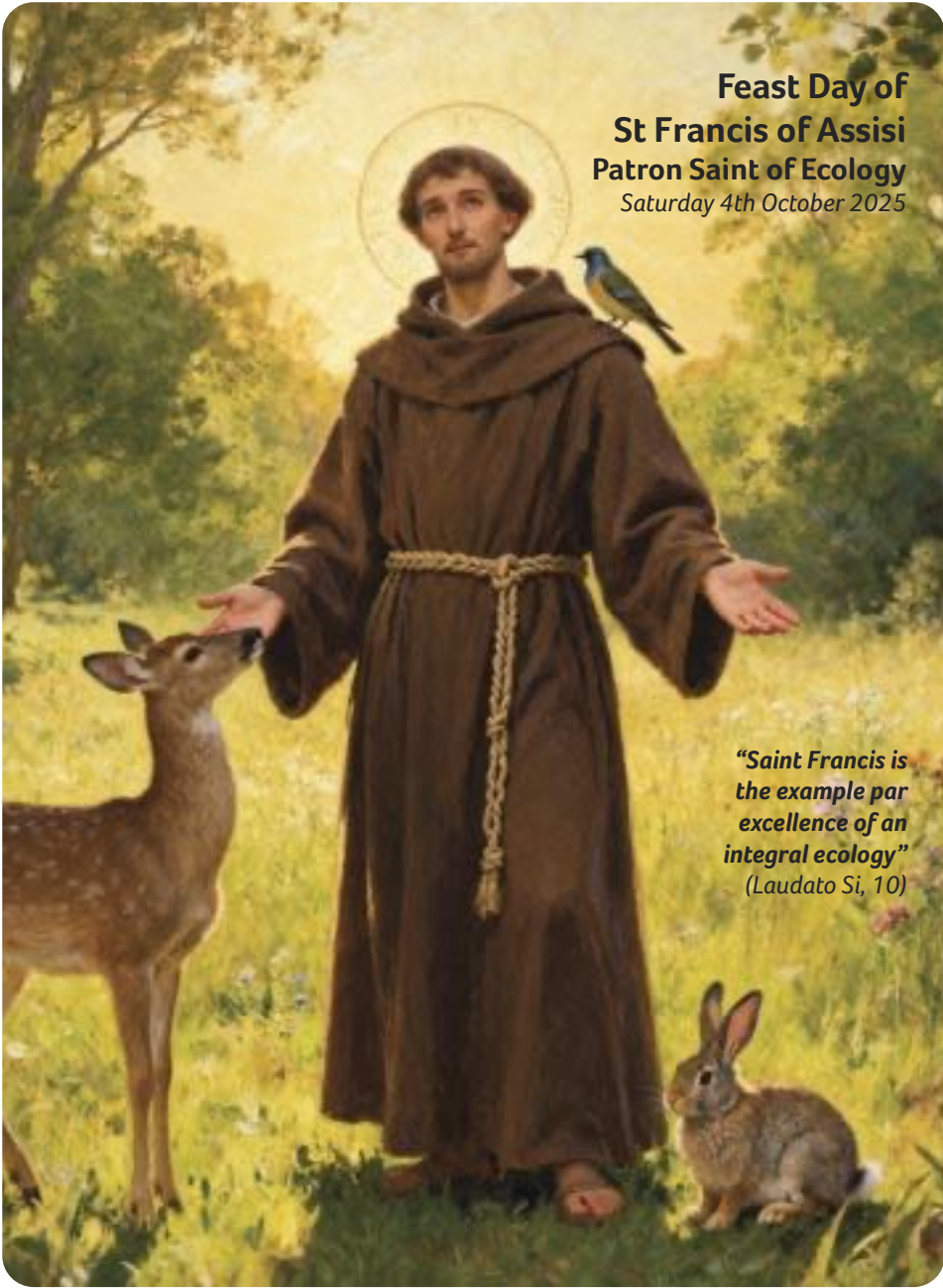
**ROSARY FOR PRIESTS
AT LANCASTER CATHEDRAL
Cathedral Dean Fr John Miller
invites all to come along and pray
the Rosary:**

"Several parishioners have asked if we can have a regular time of prayer in our parish for priests and for vocations to the priesthood. We know that it is by the hands of the priest Jesus offers the Mass and feeds us with His Body and Blood, it is by the hands of the priest that our sins are forgiven in confession, with his hands we are anointed when we are sick. We are in great need of vocations so it is right we turn to the Lord trustfully in prayer.

Therefore, starting on 5th October, the rosary will be said in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral at 10am each Sunday for priests and for vocations. Please come and join us!"



Stephen Garsed
Diocesan Environmental Lead
Faith & Justice Commission
Diocese of Lancaster.



Feast Day of
St Francis of Assisi
Patron Saint of Ecology
Saturday 4th October 2025

*"Saint Francis is
the example par
excellence of an
integral ecology"
(Laudato Si, 10)*



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A year before *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis wrote this: *"Brothers and sisters: creation is not a property, which we can dispose of at will; much less so is it the property of some, of a few: creation is a gift, it is a present, a wonderful gift that God has given us to take care of and to use for the benefit of all, always with respect and gratitude"*

Those last three words underpin the whole quote. One of the *"signs of the times"* in Western society has been a decline in gratitude and, consequently, respect for the world and for others. It is a root cause of the *"me, me, me"* lifestyle where gratitude is being replaced by attitude - *"my wants are more important than yours"*.

Yet the gospels are full of parables about people who came unstuck because they took things for granted and there are so many times where Jesus himself gave thanks, most notably at the Last Supper.

Making gratitude central to our lives is transformative and liberating. In this way of thinking, for example, our time is not ours, it is the Lord's, so we take care to use it wisely. We are grateful for our *"daily bread"* (I include here water and shelter) so we take care not to waste anything; give thanks for our food at mealtimes; and we take time to appreciate the natural world.

Gratitude also feeds compassion. If we truly appreciate all the wonderful gifts we have been given, we will be far more

attentive to the needs of others. Moreover, it will lead us to live more lightly on the earth, just taking what we need and avoiding as far as possible being contributors to the throwaway society.

In short, gratitude inspires us to the contentment of *"being more"* rather than just having more.

The Season of Creation is a time when we can put gratitude at the heart of things in our communities alongside a determination to express that gratitude in practical action. For instance, a bidding prayer might go something like: *"We thank you, Lord for our wonderful world and all that it contains. We pray that we may always be inspired to respect, cherish and protect it"*.

We might also express, in our prayers, gratitude for our children and young people as we strive to provide a world fit for them to live in. Our young should have a big part in the celebration, including decorating the church, hopefully with lots of pictures of creepy-crawlies. Last year, we invited our children to bring their favourite animal toys in procession to the altar. The unspoken point about the need to care for their future was well taken and much appreciated by the congregation.

So be imaginative this Season of Creation - *always in respect and gratitude!*

Stephen Garsed, Diocesan Environmental Lead, Lancaster Faith & Justice Commission

FAMILY FAST DAY

Friday 3rd October

CAFOD's Family Fast Day Appeal: Life-Saving Water in a Changing Climate

In Southern Ethiopia, the climate crisis is threatening lives. Once, rains fell reliably, fields were green, and water was close by. Now, the seasons are unpredictable, and long droughts are forcing women like Waré to walk for hours each day — even while pregnant — just to find water for drinking, washing, and livestock.

"It was very traumatising," Waré says. "When I was pregnant, I had to go fetch water in the mountains. Sometimes I felt so weak I could fall down, so I worried about my child."

Yet, Waré refused to give up. Guided by her own faith and uniting with her neighbours, she took action. With support from CAFOD and local water expert Abbott, they built an underground water tank to collect and store every precious drop of rain. Now, over 300 families have safe, clean water just a few steps from their homes.

This is the Gospel in action: *love made real through compassion, courage, and community.*

As Catholics, we are called to be stewards of creation and stand alongside our sisters and brothers affected by climate change. Your prayers and generosity make this transformation possible. But many more communities still walk miles for water.

This Family Fast Day, please give what you can so more families can access clean water, stay healthy, because a better world needs all of us. Donate today at cafod.org.uk/envelope or call 0303 303 3030. Thank you for everything you do to support Family Fast Day (Friday 3 October) this Harvest.

By fasting, giving and praying together this Harvest, we can spread hope to all who seek it. *Patrick Gardner, Community Participant Co-ordinator, CAFOD Lancaster*

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Ware with a water tank.



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Spirituality Space With Ursula Walker



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Last month I talked about going away on Retreat or taking the opportunity to pray with others in Church in a particular setting. This month I want to introduce you to the world of spiritual nourishment that can be found on the internet. You do not need to leave your house to use these but they should only be secondary to any liturgies (Mass, talks, Holy Hours, etc.) that are being offered at Church. For Jesus tells us "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

We use the internet and our phones for everything these days so why not use it to feed your spiritual life? Instead of spending hours on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or whatever your favourite time waster happens to be. Let your phone help you come closer to God. There are many Apps, websites, YouTube channels out there that offer good quality spiritual "time wasters" (although I would rather say – "wasting time with God"). Henri Nouwen said that "Prayer was wasting time with God."

Here are a few of the Apps I use to help me pray or feed my spiritual life:

HOLY BIBLE - Cost: Free

The Catholic Bible is the Jerusalem Bible which was the translation we used in our Liturgies until earlier this year. Apple also do a version of the Bible too.

HALLOW - Cost: Free & Paid versions

This has music; prayers for evening morning; the Rosary; audio books; daily reflections on the readings at Mass each day; short Sunday sermons; and mini-series on different saints. It also has a daily Trivia section. I use it a lot.

PRAY AS YOU GO - Cost: Free or Donation

This is a Jesuit production. It offers you a way to reflect on one of the daily readings. The reflections last about 10 minutes. It also offers series/reflections on The Gift of Sleep; Morning Offerings; When we don't know how to Pray. It also has Daily Examens.

UNIVERSALIS - Cost: One-off £10 fee

This App has all the Office (Prayer of the Church on). It includes the weekday and Sunday readings for the whole year. Once you have downloaded it you can customise the Calendar so that it looks at the Lancaster Diocese and will show the feasts for this Diocese and all the readings associated with it.

WHATSAPP - Cost: Free

I know of two groups who started using WhatsApp during COVID to keep in touch with each other. One is still using it as a parish WhatsApp group to keep in touch. The other in Ulverston has turned into a prayer and support group where people share news of people who are ill or ask for prayers for family members, or anything they want prayers for. It is also used for sharing prayers, pictures and supporting each other. Could your parish do something similar for the elderly or those who cannot get to Mass regularly?

If you don't like reading or looking at the screen hurts your eyes there is also YouTube. Full of videos on all sorts of topics. Here are a few ideas to search on:

- Richard Rohr (well known author and speaker)
- Fr Mike Schmitz (well known priest who is very good at making the Sunday readings very easy to understand)
- Bishop Barron (does a 10-15 talk on the Sunday readings)
- Ascension (an American Catholic broadcaster). This is but a few.

You can also use Spotify for Podcasts on various topics. Just put in your topic of interest and listen along while you are washing up or cleaning the windows. The good thing with listening to things is that you can listen while you are doing jobs in the house. You don't also need to take time out!!

I could not write this article and not mention *The Chosen*. For those who have not heard of it, it is a crowd funded production of the Life of Christ. An actor called Jonathan Roumie plays Jesus. It is available on Netflix and on Amazon Prime (have to pay extra). It is an excellent production and worth watching.

I have only given you a taster here. I am sure there are lots more out there. Please let me know your favourite ones. In the New Year we can do an update. I am always happy to learn from you. Again I must emphasise that going to Mass online or praying other liturgies should NOT REPLACE GOING PHYSICALLY TO CHURCH. We need the spiritual nourishment we get from meeting others in person and praying together.

Happy listening and learning.

Ursula Walker, Spiritual Rep for the Diocese
07312 129900 / uwalker@uwclub.net



Cyber Saint Carlo Acutis leads us into a digital search for our souls. *The Catholic Voice of Lancaster* Editor, Pearl Mina, celebrates the new Patron Saint of the Internet.

"We are all called to be saints!" Pope Leo XIV said before the start of the Mass & canonizations of Blessed Frassati and Carlo Acutis.

He greeted the crowd before the solemn ceremony to share in their joy for what he called a great event for the church and world.

In today's digitally aware and active society, Saint Carlo Acutis inspires us to be called agents of love, hope and faith in a technology based and digitally connected world.

As our first Millennial Cyber Saint of the digital age, St Carlo Acutis says that our mission is clear: to communicate

and embody these virtues—not just through words, but through presence, compassion, and truth.

Let our screens become sacred spaces where Love is shared, Hope is nurtured, and Faith is deepened through digital holiness.

Let our search on the internet be for God and good spiritual nourishment and soul enriching Catholic teaching and faith filled content.

Let our scrolls be of the biblical and sacred theology nature and not doom scrolling futility.

Saint Carlo Acutis, pray for us.

Take a virtual journey of prayer & pilgrimage around the world from your own home in October!



Msgr. Stephen Rossetti and St Michael the Archangel.

Thursday October 2nd is the Feast of the Holy Guardian Angels, following on from St Michael and The Archangels Feast Day, and is a good time to pray to St Michael and our own Guardian Angel. In keeping with our theme of October online prayer, an excellent deliverance livestream session is on:

Monday October 6th

The St Michael Centre for Spiritual Renewal Maryland, USA online at: www.catholicexorcism.org

Monsignor Stephen Rossetti leads the monthly online and livestream Prayer webinar, Rosary and Deliverance session on – sign up and if you miss it, as it's on at 7:00-8:00pm Eastern Time – that's 11.00pm UK time, you can register and watch it again at a reasonable UK time of your choice. Father Rossetti welcomes the faithful from all over the world to take part: "Join in and witness how good God is to us all and how he wants to heal us. All Glory to God"

Trivia Quiz – Who is the Patron Saint of the Internet? Is it:
a) Carlo Acutis b) St Isidore of Seville
c) St Basil the Great d) Catherine of Sienna
Answer on page 14 >>



Walsingham Catholic National Shrine UK – If you can't attend the Lancaster Diocesan Pilgrimage to Walsingham on 20-24th October you can watch the Pilgrimage Mass and Live Stream. Also join in daily Mass live any day from the Catholic National Shrine and the Basilica of Our Lady at Walsingham, England's Nazareth. Follow on Facebook (Walsingham Blog) or on X (@WalsinghamEN) for latest news from #Walsingham and the Shrine. For more info about Mass Times: www.walsingham.org.uk



The Feast Day of St Jude and St Simon is on Tuesday October 28th – You can visit via the internet to The National Shrine of St. Jude in Chicago, USA where Fr Byron and fellow Claritians, warmly invite you to join in and experience via livestream the St Jude Feast Day Mass. Join in via Facebook or their website & start the Solemn St Jude Novena from October 20th-28th with special talks, guest speakers and also watch their virtual pilgrimage anytime. Facebook: National Shrine of St Jude Website: www.shrineofstjude.org

Spirituality Space in October What's On Guide

First Friday
3rd October

First Friday
3rd October

Saturday
4th October

Saturday to Friday
4-10th October

First Saturday
4th October

First Sunday
5th October

Every Monday
6th October

Tuesday
7th October

Every Thursday

Every Wednesday

Friday
10th October

Thursday
16th October

Saturday
18 October

Saturday
18 October

Monday to Friday
20-24th October

Eucharistic Holy Hour at St John Vianneys RC Church, Blackpool. 7pm. All welcome.

Healing Mass & Sacrament of The Sick at St Joseph's RC Church, Ansdell. 2pm. All welcome.

Celebrating the Season of Creation with Layton Churches Together at The Grange, Grange Park, Blackpool. 2pm. All welcome.

Celebrating Creation – Talks & Walks at Boarbank Hall. Booking required. For more details please contact Boarbank Hall.

Miraculous Medal Novena & Mass at St John Vianneys RC Church, Blackpool. 9.30am. All welcome.

Rosary & Benediction at St John Vianneys RC Church, Blackpool. 3pm. All welcome.

Holy Hour – Exposition, Rosary & Prayer at St Kentigerns RC Church, Blackpool. 6-7pm. All welcome.

Hour of Quiet Prayer at Our Lady of the Assumption RC Church, Blackpool. 7-8pm. All welcome.

Bell Ringing Practise at St Joseph's RC Church, Ansdell. 7-8:30pm. If you are interested in learning Bell Ringing please contact Tower Captains: Stacey 07921 032390 or James 07743 684900.

Lectio Divina Scripture, Prayer & Discussion at St Joseph's RC Church, Church Hall, Ansdell. 10:00am. All welcome.

Metanoia Project – Unveiled Scripture, Talk, admission, Praise & Worship at St Wilfred's RC Church, Preston. 7:30-9pm. All welcome.

Evening Prayer with Papal Nuncio at Lancaster Cathedral, Lancaster. 6pm. Booking required. Contact the Cathedral for tickets.

Diocesan Centenary Thanksgiving Mass at Lancaster Cathedral. 11.30am. Booking required. Contact the Cathedral for tickets.

Day of Renewal – Mass, Talks & Prayer at St Clare's RC Church, Preston. 10am-4pm. All welcome.

Diocese Pilgrimage to Walsingham. Full program of events (£475-£550). Call Deacon Charlie on 07895 742732.

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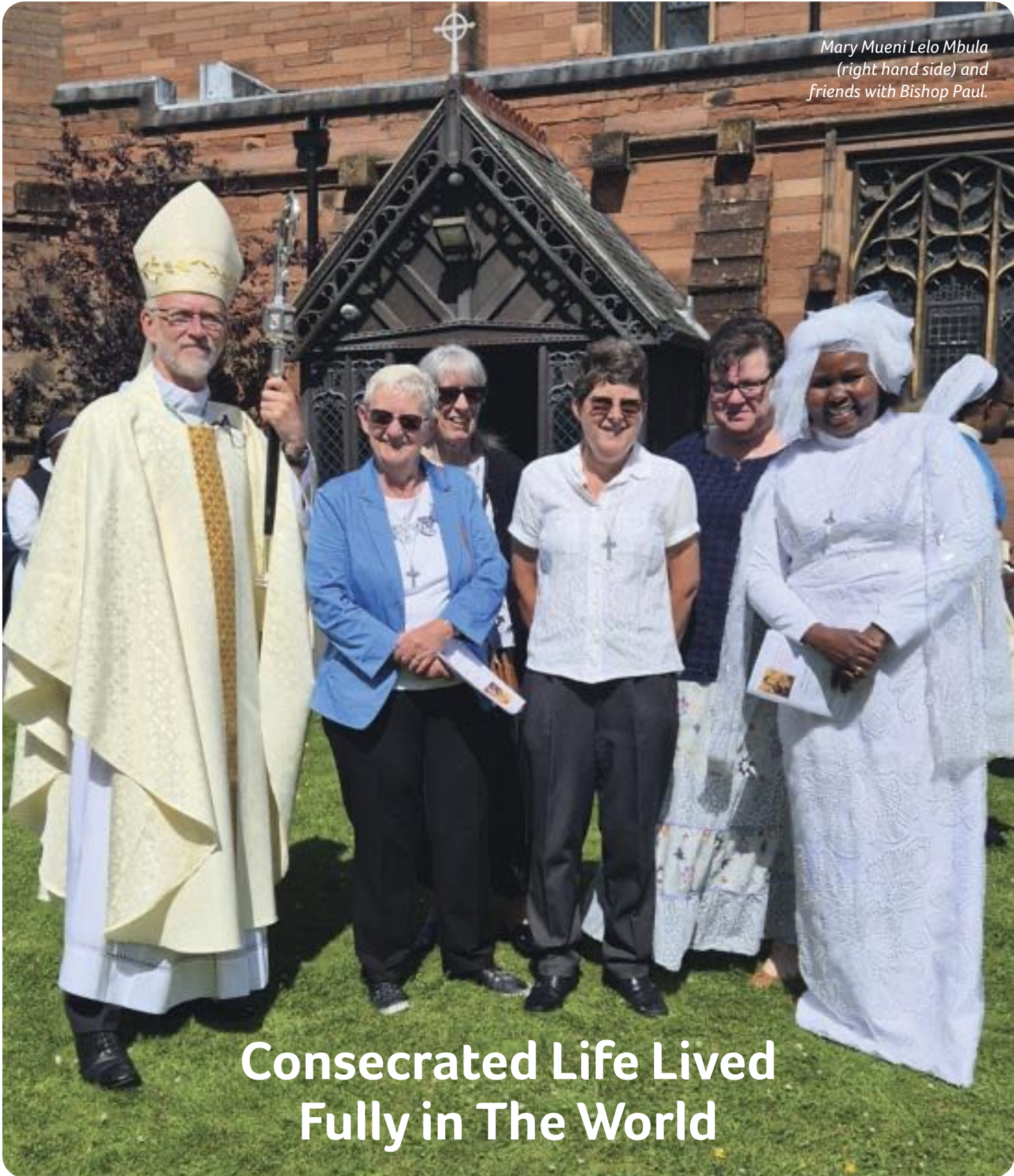
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Mary Mueni Lelo Mbula (right hand side) and friends with Bishop Paul.

Consecrated Life Lived Fully in The World

We join together as a Diocese, in praying for Mary Mueni Lelo Mbula, who was solemnly consecrated to the Order of Virgins by Bishop Swarbrick recently.

This ancient rite took place during the parish Mass in the church of Our Lady and St Joseph, Carlisle. Mary was supported by the Consecrated Virgins and Widows from our Diocese, by Religious Sisters from Carlisle, Preston, and Hying Monastery, as well as her very many friends from her Parish.

At the end of Mass Mary was presented with the insignia of Consecration: the ring, the Liturgy of Hours, and the cross. Special thanks must go to Bishop Paul, Canon Ruscillo, and parishioners for the beautiful liturgy and subsequent celebration in the parish centre.

Since the time of Jesus, women have been drawn to follow a life of perpetual chastity in imitation of Christ's own celibate life and the life of his Virgin Mother, totally dedicated to the plan of the Father. Long before the emergence of convents of women living their religious life in common, consecrated virgins and widows had a distinctive identity in the Church. (1 Cor.7; 1 Tim. 5). Some of the early Saints, such as St. Agnes, St. Anastasia,

St. Lucy, and St. Agatha are mentioned in Eucharistic Prayer 1. Over time, communal forms of religious life became the usual form of consecration; since the Second Vatican Council there has been a renewal of the ancient form of consecration known and acknowledged by St Paul –

"to live one's life 'in the world', yet consecrated to God."

In this vocation, virgins and widows are "consecrated to God, dedicated to the Church, and mystically espoused to Christ" (Canon 604), while living in their own homes and maintaining responsibility for their own livelihood. A characteristic of this form of consecrated life is to live in the local parish, in the specific and social context of the home.

Consecration reserves virgins and widows to God without distancing them from the environment in which they live.

In our Diocese we have three Consecrated Virgins, two Consecrated Widows, and one candidate in Formation. We live under the authority and pastoral care of Bishop Paul, to whom we are indebted for his enduring encouragement, support and guidance. *Chris Doyle, Delegate for Consecrated Virgins & Widows*

The Trivia Question answer from page 13 is (a) Carlo Acutis. He was born in England but lived in Italy. He had a great devotion to the Eucharist and spread this devotion on the Internet. He died when he was 15 of leukæmia. He was only canonised this year. St. Isidore of Seville is patron of technology.



(Left) Philip & Christina Rydeard celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

(Right) Eileen & Bernard Holyoake celebrate their 70th Wedding Anniversary.



The Catholic Voice of Lancaster would like to hear from you!

If your parish or school has any news or if you would personally like to submit an article for publication, please send us what you have. Contact details can be found on page 2.



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Diocesan Centenary Celebration: Couples Blessed at Milestone Wedding Anniversary Mass

On a glorious summer's day in early July, couples from across the Diocese gathered at the Cathedral, at the invitation of Bishop Paul, for a special Mass of celebration and blessing.

The service brought together 37 couples marking milestone wedding anniversaries in this, our Centenary year, including a couple sharing a remarkable 70 years of marriage and another whose 50th wedding anniversary fell upon the very day itself. They were joined by many other couples, at different stages of their journey, from a couple newly-wed to those long established in family life, all joined by relatives and friends.

Bishop Paul warmly welcomed everyone and offered a spiritual and heartfelt homily, reflecting on the strength and beauty of lifelong marriage as a sacred vocation. He spoke of the grace that sustains couples through both joys and trials and gave thanks for their enduring love and steadfast commitment. With sincere sensitivity, he expressed gratitude to non-Catholic spouses acknowledging the encouragement and support they offer within the family; a witness of love and unity that enriches Catholic marriages and strengthens faith at home.

With compassion, he also remembered those whose husbands or wives had passed away, honouring the love they had shared and assuring them of the Church's prayerful closeness entrusting their loved ones to God's eternal embrace.

The Milestone Wedding Anniversary Mass was a true highlight of the Centenary year. It was a day filled with many blessings, smiles, warm conversations and shared memories. New friendships were formed and old acquaintances delightfully renewed. Many remarked that it was a special, uplifting occasion, for some, deeply emotional but for all very memorable.

Whether newly married or celebrating seven decades together, every couple present bore witness to marriage as a continuing source of love, hope, strength and inspiration for the Church and wider community.

After Mass, the celebrations continued in the Cathedral's Parish Rooms, where a lively reception of tea, coffee and slices of a beautifully decorated wedding cake were shared in a relaxed and happy atmosphere, bringing this lovely day to a most fitting close.

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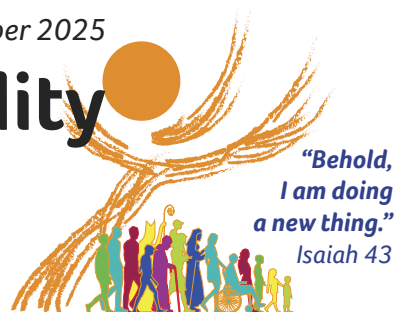
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News of Synodality Working at the Grassroots



In the Deanery of Blackpool and North Fylde, all the parishes have been holding meetings bringing people together to begin to think, talk, listen and pray about the future shape of our parishes and ministry.

We want to discover, priests and people together, what God is asking us to be and to do in the light of the changes that are already affecting us: "God's new thing!"

These meetings are in preparation for a Deanery Day on Saturday November 15th, bringing together as many of us as possible. The meeting will be facilitated by Vron Smith, a member of the Jesuit Institute, who has done extensive work with parishes in the Hexham and Newcastle diocese.

We are asking one another:

- What kind of Church God wants us to be in the future?

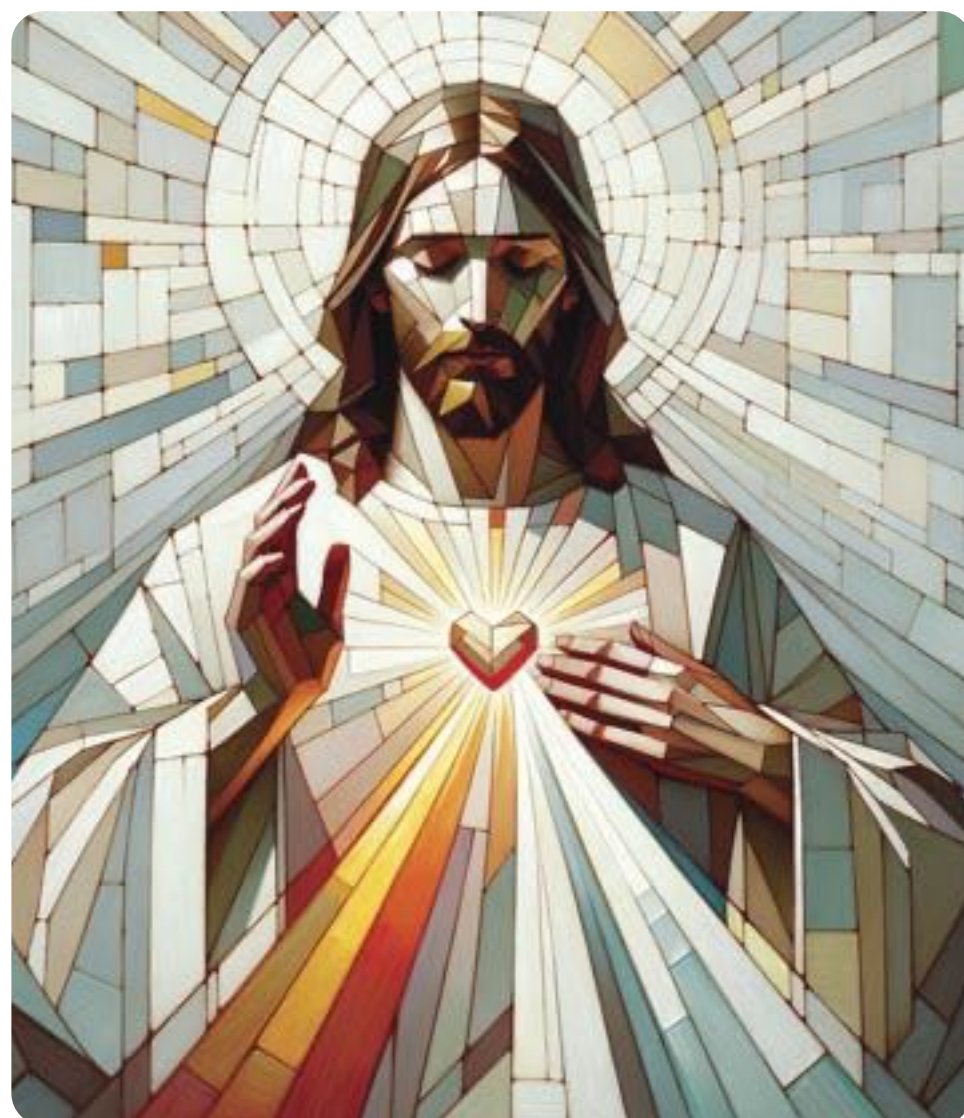
- What will need to change in order for us to grow into the Church God wants us to be?
- How can each of us be part of this change?
- What can we offer, and what do we need in order to be part of this change?

We see this process as our endeavouring to put into practice becoming a Synodal Church which Pope Francis began and now Pope Leo has affirmed. The global Church has now entered into the Implementation Stage of the Synod on Synodality which lasts until 2028.

Other parishes in our diocese may be interested in exploring for themselves the helpful resources that are available on the SCHOOL FOR SYNODALITY website. There are videos and documents you can download e.g. *A Tool Kit for Re-Imagining the Parish Pastoral Council and Pathways for the Implementation Stage of the Synod.*

Blackpool and North Fylde Deanery

Visit the website: schoolforsynodality.org.uk to explore the helpful resources



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