



FLOURISH

FEBRUARY 2008

JOURNAL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF GLASGOW

60P



Feast amid the fast

Your Lentfest guide pages 11-13

MORAL QUAGMIRE

Country's ethical climate being destroyed by dabbling in the grotesque, warns Lord Alton

URGENCY is needed if the controversial Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill going through parliament at Westminster is to be defeated.

That was the clear, unequivocal message delivered to an audience in Glasgow, last month. Veteran pro-life MP Ann Widdecombe hammered home the point: "We have one month to raise the nation's conscience."

The HFE bill covers a range of complex scientific and moral matters – human/animal hybrids, the nature of parenthood and acceptance of fatherhood, saviour siblings and access to abortion. Yet, to date, the Labour government has imposed a three-line whip on its members.

The Scottish Bishops, among others, have call for a free conscience vote.

Archbishop Mario Conti repeated the call when he spoke at the public meeting in the Glasgow University Union.

He said: "This issue is one of the most important coming before parliament – even if you wouldn't recognize it by the silence among sections of the media.

"The Church stands on the right of every individual to make decisions according to well-informed consciences on matters of truth, on matters of morality. That is why we are calling for all members of parliament to be given the right to a free vote."

The call was backed by Lord David Alton who also addressed the Glasgow meeting.

He said: "These are complex questions which should be decided upon by the nation as a whole, not just a gaggle of 'experts'."

The independent peer highlighted the concern at Britain's willingness to sanction human/animal hybrid research and called

By Vincent Toal

for a comprehensive review of embryo stem cell legislation

"Already 2.2m human embryos have been destroyed – and not a single cure has been found anywhere in the world through human embryo experimentation. By comparison, using adult stem cells no fewer than 80 cures have been progressed."

He warned: "We are dabbling in the grotesque. Just because something is possible does not make it right. People go on about a slippery slope, we are wading in the quagmire now."

BISHOPS' LETTER – page 4

"There is a lack of clarity about what is being proposed, driven by interests which are not representative. It is time to rouse the nation.

"We do not need animal/human hybrids. It is cannibalistic. It raises false hopes and manipulates people who suffer terribly."

Ann Widdecombe reiterated the call for urgency: "How many people know about human/animal hybrids? How many are aware of the proposal for only one doctor's signature to sanction an abortion?"

"Is that really where we have arrived, that what you don't see you don't care about. You can tear it from the womb and throw it away."

She outlined her reasoning for pressing for a reduction in the abortion time limit.

"It is not ideal, but it is manageable and will save lives," she insisted.

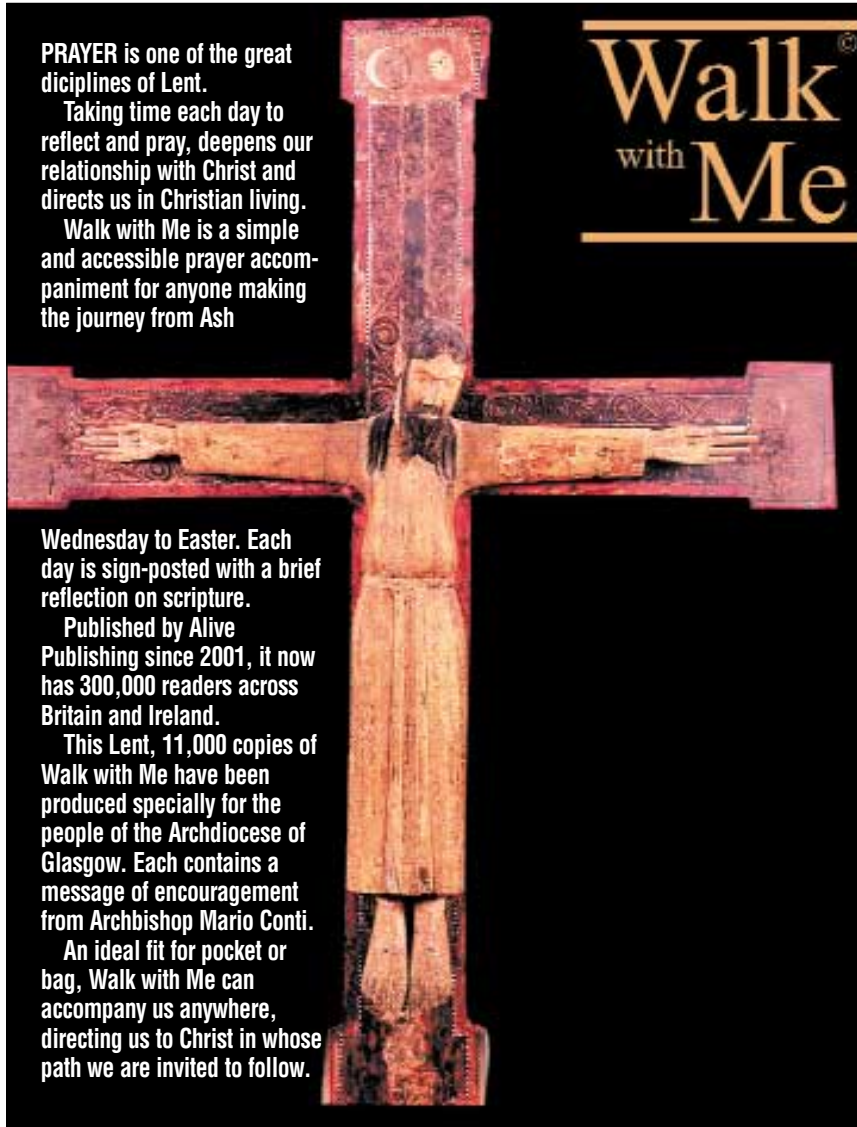
"This may be our last chance for years to do something to change the law in this country. We have got the power to make our voice heard. We must use it."

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The Mungo



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SCIAF campaign



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Langside



Carmelites close chapter

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Promises Delivered

FRIDAY 1ST - Meeting of Reference Group, 196 Clyde St

SATURDAY 2ND - Cardinal Winning Lecture, Bute Hall, University of Glasgow (10.30am); Feast of the Presentation Mass for Religious, St Andrew's Cathedral (1pm)

SUNDAY 3RD - Preaching at University of Glasgow Chapel (11am)

MONDAY 4TH - Pastoral Cabinet (11am); Vocations Information Evening, 196 Clyde Street (7pm)

WEDNESDAY 6TH - Launch of LENTfest (11am)

THURSDAY 7TH - Meeting of Bishops Finance Committee, Gillis College, Edinburgh (10.30am)

SUNDAY 10TH - Rite of Election, St Andrew's Cathedral (3pm); Torchlight Procession, Carfin Grotto (7pm)

MONDAY 11TH - Archdiocesan Ecumenical Commission (11.30am)

TUESDAY 12TH - Bishops' Meeting

THURSDAY 14TH - Meeting of Council of Priests, 196 Clyde Street (Noon)

SUNDAY 17TH - National Mass for those engaged in the Medical Profession, St Andrew's Cathedral (Noon)

MONDAY 18TH - Meeting with Church Reps, Baptist office, Pollokshields (Noon)

FRIDAY 22ND - Mass with Primary Head Teachers Assoc, Schoenstatt (9.30am)

SATURDAY 23RD - Opening of Beatitudes Exhibition, St Patrick's, Anderston (2pm)

SUNDAY 24TH - Glasgow Old People's Welfare Diamond Jubilee Year Ecumenical Service, Glasgow Cathedral (2.30pm)

MONDAY 25TH - Inter-faith Committee Meeting (2.30pm)

TUESDAY 26TH - Visit to Mungo Foundation projects (2.30pm)

WEDNESDAY 27TH - Finance Council Meeting (11am)

THURSDAY 28TH - Meeting with Professor Janet Smith (Noon)

FRIDAY 29TH - EBAG Meeting (2pm)

To Serve with



a Sincere Heart

Letting go of sin to draw closer to Christ

LENT has come early this year. It seems only yesterday that we were celebrating Christmas and welcoming in a New Year.

The message of Christmas always gives us hope for the New Year. It is the message of God-with-us, Emmanuel.

Lent underlines the meaning of the other name given to the Word-made-flesh, Jesus – given because he is the one who “will save his people from their sins” (Matt 1:21-23).

Lent is a time for repentance and making good with God's help what we have undone by our sins.

It means walking with Christ as a Church in a spiritual journey, which goes by the way of the cross to a share in his resurrection, a victory over sin now and a victory over death in due course.

During Lent, we recognise and acknowledge the sin that is part of our life.

Sin is a reality. It is not simply a construct of religion, but in a sense requires the construct of religion to make sense of it and deal with it.

The Book of Genesis is hardly open when we come upon sin. It is described as an act of disobedience, a defiance of God. It is also seen as an act of weakness arising out of curiosity and a desire to “be like God”. All that implies – not least pride!

There is something mysterious about the nature of sin. St Paul himself appears to struggle with both the concept and the reality. He writes: “Sin came into the world through one man (Adam) and death through sin, and so death spreads to all men because all men sinned,” (Romans 5,12).

Paul, having accepted that death was the consequence and punishment of sin, concludes that all had sinned. But how?

The problem was that prior to the deliverance of the law at Sinai under Moses, there were no commands to be disobeyed. “Sin indeed was in the world before the law was given”, Paul writes, “but sin is not counted where there is no law, yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam.” (Rom 5:13,14)

Sin before Moses was not therefore the result of formal disobedience, but rather the consequences of man's weakness. It arose out of native selfishness, self-interest and all the accompanying human passions.

This has undoubted relevance to today's

Drawing on the writings of St Paul, ARCHBISHOP CONTI offers a thoughtful Lenten reflection on sin and salvation

world where formal disobedience cannot be counted against those who do not know the law of God. However, earlier in his letter to the Romans Paul notes that he does not consider such men exonerated since their sin is a failure to acknowledge the existence of God and his rule over us:

“Ever since the creation of the world [God's] invisible nature, namely his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made so they are without excuse; for although they knew God they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened.” And further on: “Since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a base mind and improper conduct.” (Rom 5:20-21,26).

St Paul is referring here to what we would call the natural law, the ability of men and women to discern (through the use of human reason and by the dictates of their conscience) what is proper and improper conduct. However it is clear, that without the gift of grace, and the example of virtue, many remain clouded in their perception of the things of God.

The mysterious thing is that, nonetheless, most people experience a sense of guilt when they have acted within with extreme self indulgence, despite their hearing on many sides that sin is simply a religious construct and guilt its hangover.

Sin is recognised not only in this subjective experience of guilt but also in the multifarious forms of evil manifested throughout the world – and evidenced in our own lives, if we have the decency to acknowledge it.

It is often said that modern man has lost a sense of sin. I am not sure that that is right. It might be wiser to say, he has denied his guilt.

The news of the incarnation, God-with-us, was accompanied by the call to repent of sin so as “to prepare the way of the Lord” and “make his paths straight”.

St Mark the Evangelist sees John the Baptist fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, and reports: “John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin” (Mark 1, 3-4).

Commencing with Ash Wednesday, Lent renews that call. The liturgy tellingly

reminds us, “Remember man that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return”.

While theologians argue that by the incarnation itself we would have been saved, (how could the Father not accept those with whom his Son formed one body?) yet, in God's plan, his Son was to take flesh so that by his death he could undo the sin of Adam, and by his rising to life overcome death.

Insofar as we share in Adam's sin and the consequence of it, namely death, we can consider Adam the typical man. Indeed St Paul calls Adam “a type of the one to come”, implying not only Christ sharing our human condition, but being, as it were, head of the line; in the case of Christ, the head of renewed humanity.

St Paul drives the message home: “As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous ... so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom 5:19, 21).

The righteousness our holiness of life is not achieved without our co-operation – without in a sense our copying Christ by the grace he gives us. It implies our obedience, our self-denial, our prayer and our almsgiving.

Lent is the season for this effort. It is the time for us to renew our baptismal promises – as we do around the font at the Easter Vigil.

“How can we who died to sin still live in it?” asks St Paul. “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ were baptised in his death?” We were buried therefore with him by baptism unto death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Rom 6:3-4).

If by our public penance we witness to sin, and by the sacrament repent of it, we witness even more powerfully to the risen life by living it – living it in the joy of the Lord.

This Lent may we all draw closer to the Lord, and may our lives be filled with the grace of his forgiveness and peace.

And may the Spirit impel us forward towards others, enkindling in us the fire of love, making us missionaries of God's charity.

“It is often said that modern man has lost a sense of sin. I am not sure that that is right. It might be wiser to say, he has denied his guilt.”



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Historic set of accounts for Archdiocese of Glasgow

End of an era for historic parishes

TWO Glasgow parishes with a combined span of almost 200 years closed their doors in recent weeks.

St John Ogilvie's, Easterhouse, and Our Lady & St Margaret's, Kinning Park, have both succumbed to the effects of dwindling populations.

The final Mass was celebrated in St John Ogilvie's on the feast of the Epiphany, 6 January.

Earlier, on the Sunday before Christmas, Archbishop Conti joined the small parish community which had reached its golden jubilee milestone in 2007. The Archbishop thanked the parishioners for their perseverance during difficult times and assured them of their continued pastoral care as members of the extended St Jude's parish.

Originally dedicated to Blessed John Ogilvie, the parish was home to John Fagan whose miraculous cure from illness helped pave the way for the canonization of the Jesuit martyr in 1976.

Historic artifacts, reflecting devotion to the Glasgow priest, are to be housed in St Jude's.

When Our Lady & St Margaret's was established in 1874 it served a burgeoning population on the south of the Clyde. It was served by up to five priests at a time during the first

By Vincent Toal

half of last century.

The first parish priest Rev. Donald MacKintosh spent, 40 years of Ministry in Kinning Park before he was appointed coadjutor Archbishop in 1912. He oversaw the opening of a magnificent new church in the 1880s.

From 1982, when the original church closed, parishioners gathered in a makeshift building hemmed in by industrial workshops. The surrounding area is dominated by the motorway and offices.

Last November Fr Larry McMahon announced that he would be retiring as parish priest on Christmas Day. After consultation, parishioners readily accepted the decision of Archbishop Conti to close the parish.

The Archbishop celebrated Mass in the parish on Sunday 27 January. He joined with parishioners in giving thanks for over 130 years of the parish's life and mission and the many thousands of lives nourished by the sacraments.

Mgr John Gilmartin, the local dean who administered the parish in its last weeks, said new boundaries were still to be agreed but the area would likely be divided between St Antony's, Govan, and Our Lady of Lourdes, Cardonald.

Photos: Paul McSherry



Offering the gifts at Our Lady & St Margaret's, Kinning Park



St John Ogilvie's, Easterhouse



10 month old Merin and 5 year old Merlin Kunjumon & parents with Archbishop Conti

■ As well as the retiral of Fr McMahon, two long-serving parish priests retired from parish ministry in January.

Canon Jim Simcox marked his 80th birthday bidding a fond farewell to St Martin's, Renton, where he served for 27 years. He was succeed-

ed by Fr Peter McKelvie last October.

Another octogenarian Canon Bernard Devine retired from St Margaret Mary's, Castlemilk, having taken the parish to its golden jubilee. Fr John McGuire, on home leave from the missions in Brazil, has taken temporary charge.

Station Masses

Archbishop Conti will celebrate a Station Mass in each deanery during Lent. This month's schedule:

Friday, 8th
Sacred Heart,
Cumbernauld

Thursday, 14th
St. Joseph's,
Helensburgh

Tuesday, 21st
City North Deanery

Tuesday, 26th
St. Helen's,
Langside

Wednesday, 27th
St. Patrick's,
Anderston

Thursday, 28th
Our Holy Redeemer,
Clydebank

Keeping the golden smile in Carmyle



Photos: Paul McSherry

A CAREFULLY crafted statue depicts St Joachim cradling a lamb in his arm. It is symbolic of how the Church in Carmyle - dedicated to the father of Mary, Mother of the Church - has guided the people in its care over the past 50 years.

On Sunday 9 December, Archbishop Conti - chief shepherd of the Church in Glasgow - joined the community to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the founding of the parish in 1957.

All generations were represented in the packed church.

Pupils from St Joachim's Primary made up the angelic choir, leading the hymns of praise and thanksgiving.

And one of the newest parishioners, five-month old Erin Gillies was introduced to the Archbishop.

Parish priest Fr James Docherty said the parish had been looking forward to and preparing for the jubilee over a number of years.

"As well as exercises in spiritual renewal, a major refurbishment of the church and parish hall has been achieved.

"Most of this work has been undertaken by parishioners who have also been very generous in donating inspirational new works of devotional art."

St Joachim's, on the eastern border of the Archdiocese, is also home to the Comboni Missionaries.



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HOSPICE HOPES RAISED

MSPs take up St Margaret's cause and address funding issues

PRESSURE is mounting for Greater Glasgow health board to reverse its planned cuts in funding for acute care beds at St Margaret of Scotland Hospice.

Before Christmas, friends and staff of the Clydebank hospice delivered a 60,000 signature petition to the Scottish Parliament.

It called for Government guarantees for the retention of "continuing care provision for patients who require ongoing complex medical and nursing care" as already provided in a 30 bed unit at St Margaret's.

The petition was drawn up by Marjorie McCance whose mother is being cared for at the hospice. I also called on the Scottish Parliament to investigate whether funding for palliative care at hospices is fair and reasonable.

Addressing the Holyrood's public petitions committee, Mrs McCance asked why St Margaret's receives only £21,000 per hospice bed when other hospices with fewer beds receive double that amount?

"I cannot believe that MSPs have been aware of that grossly unfair situation, of the uneven distribution of public money and of the NHS's



■ **BIG-HEARTED** parishioners in St Andrew's, Bearsden, rounded off the old year in fine style.

To mark the 40th anniversary of the parish they adopted St Margaret of Scotland Hospice as the beneficiary of various social and charitable events.

Hospice chief executive, Sr Rita Dawson, joined the parish community at Mass during Advent.

Her joy increased when Fr William Donnelly presented a cheque for £4593 to support developments at the Clydebank hospice.

dismissive attitude to our longest serving hospice," she said.

Poignantly, she added: "My mother will die with love, care, respect and dignity at St Margaret of Scotland Hospice. You, I and everyone else in Scotland deserve the same treatment."

Each year, St Margaret's has to raise over £1.5m from charitable donations to maintain services

which are available to people across West and East Dunbartonshire, Glasgow and beyond.

In January, the issue was raised on the floor of the parliament. MSPs questioned why the hospice was being asked to change its provision of care for the elderly when demands for existing services was undiminished.

Clydebank MSP Des McNulty said: "With 100 per cent occupancy and geriatricians continuing to refer patients, there is clearly a real need for continuing care at St Margaret's.

"Many patients and relatives have drawn very favourable comparisons between the approach that is adopted at St Margaret's and their experience elsewhere.

"The hospice board is, quite rightly, unwilling to abandon its integrated care model, to be forced to change the skills mix of its staff or to run the risk of altering its ethos in the absence of better planning and a more inclusive approach from the health board."

Scottish Health Minister Nicola Sturgeon was expected to visit St Margaret's before the end of January.

■ **Oasis of calm** - page 15

Vocations Awareness at John Paul Academy



■ The Little Sisters of the Poor were among a host of religious congregations and lay associations taking part in a vocations awareness day at John Paul Academy organised by SERRA

Bishops warn of scientific opportunism

EARLY in this new year the Westminster Government will present legislation which would extend the scope already enjoyed by researchers and genetic scientists to create human embryos in vitro and experiment on them (up to a period of 14 days).

The fact that other countries have drawn the line at human cloning has not detained our Government from proposing to go further still, to permit inter-species fertilisation and the fusion of animal and human material resulting in hybrid embryos. Such a step has appalled other legislatures and has been described by the President of the Pontifical Academy for Life as a "monstrous act against human dignity."

We recognise that there is a drive on the part of those pursuing genetic experimentation to extend the scope of their work, and it is totally consistent with the motivation of international drug companies to push what might prove to be in their commercial interests. There is a natural desire for this on the part of those affected by genetic diseases and by other conditions which theoretically might benefit from further research, but we should never seek to do good by doing wrong. The opportunism of those in the scientific field in the pay of commercial interests appears staggering in its cynical exploitation of the situation.

Prudent

It is also questionable whether the dedication of finite resources to ethically ambiguous or morally unsound experimentation is prudent, when examples can be given of successful outcomes by other means, as in the recent case of adult versus embryonic stem cell research; the former already producing ethically sound dividends and successful therapies.

The Catholic Church is likely to be criticised for seeking to influence the current debate in Parliament. This should not deter us from standing up for what is right. Apart from the fact that the Church is not alone in its opposition to the proposed legislation, it

In a Pastoral Letter sent to all 500 Catholic parishes the Bishops' Conference of Scotland urged the Government to allow a free vote in parliament on the forthcoming Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill.

The letter was written by Archbishop Mario Conti, President of the Joint Bio-ethics Committee

has a democratic right to support those who adhere to its well-developed and coherent bio-ethical teaching and to put forth arguments to assist politicians who seek to make a conscientious decision in their role as legislators.

The Church acknowledges and defends their right and duty to vote in such issues according to conscience. It is true that Members of Parliament represent their constituents and must reflect in a general way their needs and aspirations. They must also be mindful of the pragmatic manifesto of the party to which they belong and for which they were elected.

Convictions

However their personal integrity is essential both in regard to their private lives which should conform to their public stances and their votes which should reflect their ethical convictions in issues of justice and morality. In such matters they must enjoy the freedom which belongs to every citizen and it is to be hoped that the Prime Minister and his Cabinet will respect that freedom and allow a free vote for all in Parliament.

"The moral well-being of the world can never be guaranteed simply by structures alone, however good they are," wrote our

Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI, in his recent encyclical, Spe Salvi.

Our democracy is a case in point. The Holy Father continued by noting that such structures "cannot and must not marginalise human freedom. Even the best structures function only when the community is animated by convictions capable of motivating people to assent freely to the social order." There is a challenge here not only to politicians but to all who, in a democratic society, have the right and duty to express their convictions in matters of justice and moral behaviour.

In a following paragraph the Pope states: "Science can contribute greatly to making the world and mankind more human. Yet it can also destroy mankind and the world unless it is steered by forces outside it." (Spe Salvi: 24,25) It is our conviction that such a steer is provided by the wisdom of the ages, influenced by the word of God mediated through the Church's teaching and expressed today by well-informed, conscientious decisions of men and women of good will and faith.

It is this which gives us the confidence to write as we do, and to commend our case not only to our own people but to all who hold human life and its integrity in great respect.



RIGHT TO LIFE

It is vital that people write to their MPs protesting at a number of clauses in The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill.

These include:

- interspecies animal/human fertilisation;
- the denial of an IVF child's legal right to a father who is male;
- the production of "saviour siblings" so that their organs or tissues may be used to treat their brothers and sisters.

Details and information from Right To Life:
PO Box 26264, London W3 9WF,

Telephone: 020 8992 7657 Fax: 020 8896 1859
Email: phyllis@righttolife.org.uk

www.franciscanvocations.org.uk

FOR WOMEN EXPLORING
FRANCISCAN VOCATION

'White Mass' to express solidarity with sick

HEALTHCARE workers from across Scotland are invited to join Scottish Bishops and hospital chaplains at a Mass in St Andrew's Cathedral, Glasgow, on Sunday 17 Feb at 12 noon.

It will honour the 150th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady to St Bernadette at Lourdes and mark the Church's World Day of the Sick (11 Feb - Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes).

Archbishop Conti said: "Just as we have an annual 'Red Mass' for those involved in the legal

profession, it is important that we recognise the vocation and professional skill of those who dedicate their lives to healthcare service.

"The hope is that an annual celebration of what is likely to become known as the 'White Mass' will express the solidarity of the Church with the sick and those who care for them."

The wearing of hospital and nursing uniforms, identifying health workers, is encouraged at the Mass.

In his message for the World Day of the Sick, Pope Benedict connects the Eucharist with Lourdes and pastoral care of the sick:

"Associated with the sacrifice of Christ, Mary,

Mater Dolorosa, who at the foot of the cross suffers with her divine Son, is felt to be especially near by the Christian community, which gathers around its suffering members, who bear the signs of the passion of the Lord.

"May the World Day of the Sick invoke in a special way the maternal protection of Mary over those who are weighed down by illness."

At Carfin Lourdes Grotto, a novena in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes will be offered from 2-10 Feb, with confessions, Mass and Eucharistic devotions each day. It will culminate with a torchlight procession on Sunday 10th.

■ **Carfin Novena - Full details page 16**

Placida's plea for Kenya

THE SCOTS Franciscan Sister who has spent the past month feeding and sheltering hundreds of people caught up in the violence sweeping Kenya has appealed for more prayers.

Sister Placida McCann found herself in the eye of the storm as violence erupted across western Kenya in the wake of the country's disputed elections.

As fires raged next door to the Franciscan convent in Kericho, the Greenock-born nun fought against the clock to tear down fences and prevent the nearby church and houses catching fire.

The Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception have been based in Kenya since the 1990s and have a flourishing novitiate.

In Kericho, Sr Placida works alongside two Kenyan colleagues, Sr Esther and Sr Grace, managing the Live With Hope centre which provides a lifeline to men, women and children with HIV. They are being assisted by two volunteer missionaries Louise Brown from Suffolk and Tony McKay from Hamilton, on two-year contracts with Live With Hope.

In a letter thanking Scots benefactors for their rapid response to



The church compound in Kericho and Sr Placida, inset

their plight, Sr Placida urged:

"Please pray that the poor people here who have been affected by all of this will be helped to get back to normal and that those who have lost close relatives in all the fighting will be consoled.

"Please pray too that peace and unity will return to the country, and that its leaders will be able to put aside their own selfish ambitions and work together for the good of the Kenyan people.

"And if you have another prayer to spare, please pray that all of us who are trying to help the displaced get the necessary strength to keep going even when things seem so difficult."

In Glasgow, Sister Loyola Kelly, the Superior of the Franciscan congregation, has been in regular contact with the sisters and volunteers in Kenya.

"Placida is an amazing person and has wonderful people with her, but they are all exhausted," she said. "The work they've been doing with HIV sufferers is absolutely crucial because there's been so many people dying of Aids."

On January 17, Archbishop Conti offered Mass in St Andrew's Cathedral for all caught up in the violence and prayed for peace in Kenya.

SCIAF provided £20,000 in

emergency aid to provide food, shelter and medicines for the hundreds camped out around the Franciscan convent in Kericho.

Sr Placida said: "We are so grateful for the love and concern of the people of Scotland.

We have a team of young people who represent all the major tribes of Kenya and we are trying to promote intertribal unity by having them work together to distribute relief food and other basic items.

Please pray hard for this country. It is a lovely country with lovely people and it is heartbreaking to see the way it is today.

Glasgow Lourdes Hospitalite gear up for 60th pilgrimage

Six million people go to Lourdes every year. Why?

They go because Lourdes is a different place:

- A place where Christians can freely express their faith
 - A place where the sick and people with disability have priority
 - A place of prayer, of service and fraternity between people
 - A place that children and young people say is "super"
 - A place where a person can be open to God
- It is a place that people keep returning to.

The story of Lourdes began in 1858 when the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous.

Since then the number of pilgrims has increased each year. It is a place of spirituality that helps people to live in our world today.

Jacques

Perrierm the Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes said: "The story of Lourdes is written each day by the pilgrims who come here, it is a living story. After 150 years people still come to give thanks.

"This year we will give thanks for graces received, we will discern God's will as we embark into the 3rd millennium and we will make more available the service of the sanctuary."

Celebrations of the 150th anniversary officially began on 8 December. Lourdes was packed with pilgrims.

Among them were Scots,

including members of the Glasgow Lourdes Hospitalite which this year celebrates its own milestone - its 60th birthday.

Margaret Letham of GLH said: "If you ask anyone who has been to Lourdes to try to describe the experience, they'll probably struggle to find the words.

"Lourdes is hard to capture in mere words. It is a place of pilgrimage which has to be experienced personally.

"Every pilgrim comes with their hopes and prayers and leaves with unique memories and blessings."

S h e

added: "You just need to look at the volunteer members of the GLH to see how much Lourdes means to all of us - why else would we go there year on year if not to answer the call of Our Lady and to

be in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Nancy Smith was so keen to get to Lourdes in 1974 that she actually sold some of her possessions, including her much loved guitar to pay the fair.

She said: "We are looking for helpers to join the GLH, we particularly require to recruit men to assist in the role of brandcardier."

■ **If you are interested in finding out about the GLH and how to join us as a volunteer, contact Carol Picken on 0141 638 2402.**

Glasgow Lourdes Hospitalite 1948 - 2008

ST AGNES' CHILDREN'S CHOIR LAMBHILL, GLASGOW

Affiliated to
The Royal School of Church Music

A limited number of places are now available for children aged between 8 and 16.

Members are required to follow the RSCM Voice for Life Programme for the attainment of Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

Auditions take place in St Agnes Church, Lambhill, Glasgow, on Saturday 9 February, at 12 noon.

Prospective Choristers should be accompanied by a parent.

For further information telephone 0141 336 8175

LEISURE TIME TRAVEL LOURDES BY AIR

GLASGOW ARCHDIOCESE PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 2008

Leisure Time Travel is proud to be the official travel agent for the 2008 Glasgow Archdiocese Lourdes Pilgrimage

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OTHER PILGRIMAGES FROM GLASGOW

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- 20 March Lourdes 7 day Coach (No overnight driving) - £330
- 28 May Lourdes 7 day Air from Prestwick - £649
- 18 July Lourdes 9 day Express Coach - £439
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GLASGOW LOURDES HOSPITALITE GLASGOW ARCHDIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2008 18-25 JULY

Anyone wishing to apply to go to Lourdes as a Pilgrim under the care of the Glasgow Lourdes Hospitalite, including anyone wishing to travel on the Jumbulance, should write for an application to:

**Mrs D Fitzsimons
28 Overwood Drive
Glasgow G44 5SG**

The cost will be from approximately £613.

Please Note:
The closing date for return of applications is 31 March 2008.



Peace priest for Gonzaga

A REDEMPTORIST priest who played a key role in negotiations which paved the way for the Good Friday peace agreement in Northern Ireland will address an audience in Glasgow this month.

Fr Alex Reid C SSR was based at Clonard Monastery in Belfast during the Troubles. Through contacts with senior Sinn Fein figures, he helped pave the way for negotiations between the IRA and the British and Irish governments.

Now helping Basque and Spanish negotiators seek a way out of conflict, Fr Reid will give the first of this year's Gonzaga Lectures at St Aloysius College on Tuesday 19 February.

The annual Lenten series has proved a popular draw, regularly



attracting capacity audiences.

Other speakers addressing this year's theme 'Faith and Public Life' include Fr Gerry Hughes SJ, author of the best-selling *God of Surprises*.

The series closes on 11 March when Bishop Joseph Devine of Motherwell will tackle to of the great bugbears for the Catholic Church in Scotland - sectarianism and secularism.

SAINT MUNGO'S ACADEMY



Pictures: Paul McSherry

In its 150 years, St Mungo's Academy has formed many young people who went on to contribute to the life of the Church and society in positions of leadership and service.

Among the clergy concelebrating the Jubilee Mass with Archbishop Conti were former pupils Bishop Philp Tartaglia, Abbot Raymond Jacanelli, Mgr Henry Docherty, Fr Paul Francis Spencer CP, Mgr John Gilmartin, Mgr Noel Woods, Fr George Gillespie, Fr John Hughes, Canon Gerard Tartaglia and Fr Frank Wilson

THE ICONIC status of St Mungo's Academy in the story of Catholic education in Glasgow was honoured as the famous east end school celebrated its 150th anniversary.

At a Mass of Thanksgiving in St Andrew's Cathedral, the significance of the milestone was reflected by the participation of past and present pupils and staff, members of the Marist Brothers, representatives of Glasgow City Council and senior education directors.

Archbishop Conti was principal celebrant of the Jan 17 celebration, and was joined in the sanctuary by a number of priests who were educated at St Mungo's. They included Bishop Philip Tartaglia of Paisley, Abbot Raymond Jacanelli of Nunraw and Mgr Henry Docherty, former general secretary of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland.

The school's accomplished orchestra and choir ensured that the volume of praise reflected the length of the anniversary being marked.

In his homily Archbishop Conti

Shining star in the east-end

By Vincent Toal

recalled the impoverished conditions existing in Glasgow when three Marist Brothers - Procope, Tatianus and Faust - arrived from London in the summer of 1858.

St Mungo's Academy was opened in the Brothers' house at Gamgadhill on 23 August. Among the six pupils who enrolled that day was John Maguire who became Archbishop of Glasgow in 1902.

Archbishop Conti, who succeeded to Glasgow a century after Archbishop Maguire, reflected: "The first Marist Brothers who opened the school doors back in August 1858 may well have felt that they were setting up in highly unpromising territory. They must have had their doubts about the success of this endeavour.

"Yet the Brothers set up their new institution, trusting only in divine providence to find a way through the many obstacles which lay ahead."

He added: "Tonight I wish to thank publicly the Marist Brothers

on behalf of this Archdiocese for their tremendous service of the community of Glasgow and for their sterling example of dedicated Christian witness over the decades.

"The Archdiocese has benefited tremendously by the labours of the religious orders who have been invited to work in the city over the years. We have benefited too from the devotion of all those lay men and women whose like commitment to Catholic education is one of the glories of the local church. Those who stand today in place of the Marist Brothers are truly their worthy heirs."

Merger

The school remained in Townhead, next to St Mungo's church on Parson St, until 1976 when it moved to the Gallowgate. In 1989, following the merger with Our Lady and St Francis Secondary, it became co-educational. At the beginning of the new millennium, the school was rebuilt

to reflect modern tastes and needs.

Archbishop Conti said: "In a sense the St Mungo's Academy story mirrors that of Catholic education in post-Reformation Scotland. From humble, unpromising beginnings, through times of trial to a new era of excellence and acclaim."

He then stressed the need to meet fresh and, at times, more sinister challenges.

"Today's pupils are being formed in what can appear to be a very hostile environment. Strident voices are raised which would relegate Christian living to the margins of public life. They care little for the value of human life and even less for the wisdom of the Church's insights and teachings.

"In many ways, today's pupils face a harder challenge in living a full Christian life than their poverty-stricken predecessors 150 years ago. That is why we must do all we can to improve the formation experience of children in our

Together in prayer on Feast of St Mungo

CHRISTIANS from across Glasgow united in prayer to celebrate the Feast of St Mungo, the city's patron, on Sunday 13 January.

At St Mungo's Cathedral, an evening service of prayer saw a large congregation come together over the place where the 6th century bishop is reputed to have been buried.

Rev Dr Laurence Whitley, Minister of the Cathedral, led the service and welcomed everyone to Glasgow's mother church.

Archbishop Conti, who earlier celebrated Mass for the Feast at St Mungo's, Parson St, gave the homily.

He told the congregation: "It is right that we should be here together, all of us St Mungo's children, in the cathedral dedicated to his memory on his Feast day.

"We are all children of St Mungo because we share his faith in Christ Jesus Our Lord whose Gospel he firmly planted amongst us."

The Archbishop, who preached



at the same service in the Cathedral in 2003, added: "This Cathedral stands as a monument to the faith Mungo planted here.

"From its humble beginnings this church grew through the centuries into one of our greatest Scottish buildings with its high vaults and beautiful crypts which contained St Mungo's shrine and

where perhaps his body is still buried. In coming here, we follow in the footsteps of many pilgrims."

Archbishop Conti spoke of the baptism, shared by all who profess faith in Christ, and the expression given to that faith in service and love of one another, as a foundation of unity.

And referring to the city motto,

bequeathed by St Mungo, he encouraged: "What St Mungo did in obedience to Christ, he instructed us to do also for the flourishing of the community he founded - Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of his word and the praising of his name."

The praise was led by the St Mungo Singers.



ST ALOYSIUS' COLLEGE
GLASGOW

2008
Gonzaga
Lectures

Faith in Public Life

**Faith and Peace in Public Life
from the Experience of
the Peace Process**

Rev. Fr. Alex Reid CSSR

(A Redemptorist priest who was instrumental in the Northern Ireland peace process and is now helping with the Basque and Spanish peace process)

**Can a Christian be a
Committed Politician?**

Rev. Fr. Gerry W. Hughes SJ

(Jesuit priest, Spiritual Director and writer whose books include: *In Search of a Way, God of Surprises, God in all Things and God Where Are You?*)

**Obstacles to Faith...
seen from the Darkness**

Rev. Fr. Andrew Monaghan

(A priest of the Archdiocese of Edinburgh, producer of 'View from Earth' on Radio Forth and author)

**Sectarianism and Secularism:
Bugbears for the Catholic
Church in Scotland**

Rt Rev. Bishop Devine

(Bishop of Motherwell and President of the Catholic Education Commission)

All lectures take place in the College Hall
commencing at 7.30pm. Admission free.

45 Hill Street Glasgow G3 6RJ
Tel: 0141 332 3190 www.staloyusius.org

BRINGING OUT THE BEST FOR 150 YEARS



Catholic schools.

"We must be ever prepared to use the most effective means at our disposal to assist our young people in their faith development and academic achievement.

"Good quality, orthodox teaching materials are our equivalent of the nets used by the disciples in their miraculous catch of fish. We must seek them out and use them well in the service of our young people.

Heroes

"In our work we will be guided by the example of so many who have gone before us - heroes of the faith in their own environment, who quietly and effectively put into effect the faith they professed."

Returning to the tradition of the Marist Brothers and the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, the Archbishop concluded: "We will be assisted too by Our Lady, the Seat of Wisdom, under whose mantle so many of the teaching efforts in St Mungo's history have been carried out, and

whose monogram is proudly represented on the school badge.

"Let us turn to her as we cross this important threshold in the life of the school and ask her to intercede for us in this anniversary year and every year".

A civic reception in the City Chambers followed the Mass.

Baillie Catherine McMaster, whose brothers went to St Mungo's while she attended Our Lady and St Francis, welcomed the guests on behalf of the Lord Provost.

Hailing St Mungo's as a "magnificent school with a magnificent history", she described it very colourfully as "an icon in the east end".

She added: "This celebration is a knitting together of the past and the present. Staff and pupils have created a fabric of humanity - ministering to the needs of others, caring for the needs of the poor, breathing life into the boredom of adolescence."

What better way than through Catholic education to build for life.



GIRLS ALLOWED - St Mungo's became co-ed in 1989

INVITE TO JOIN NEW MARIST FRATERNITY

ONE OF Glasgow's most senior Marist Brothers, Bro John Ogilvie, is spear-heading a drive to create a fraternity of men and women to meet and pray in the spirit of the Marist founder St Marcellin Champagnat.

Although still in formation, the already named Marist Fraternity is scheduled to meet for the first time on Tuesday 8 April at 2pm in St Mungo's church, Parson Street. Anyone who feels they may benefit from time together in prayer and reflection is invited to take part.

Bro John Ogilvie, who has been a Marist for 70 years, said: "My desire is to build and consolidate a community of faith, hope and love. To build a community is to discover the delight of being ordinary and normal, like other people, and belonging to each other.

"The common possession of vitally significant values will direct

members towards a togetherness in which everyone will feel welcome."

The Marists were founded as a teaching congregation in France in the 1820s. This year marks the 150th anniversary of their coming to Glasgow - their first Scottish house.

In the spirit of so many of his confreres, Bro John Ogilvie devoted many years to working in classrooms in the east of Glasgow. He taught in St Mark's junior secondary and St Mungo's. Then, after returning to St Mark's, he was appointed headteacher of St Andrew's Secondary, Carnynte, where he served for 15 years.

Now 87, Bro John reflected: "I am content with my life. I've enjoyed good health and would like to leave behind something permanent for people to come together in the spirit of Marcellin Champagnat.

"Christian community and our Marian spirituality have sustained me in my vocation," he said. "I would like to see more people share that spirituality and to enjoy the



gifts of fraternity.

"The Marist Fraternity's distinct mark will be its fidelity to the faith that comes down to us from the apostles. Our model is Mary, our Mother, who wishes to lead us into the fullness of life which is Christ."

The Rosary, with its focus on Christ, will be the mainstay of the fraternity's prayer, leading to a focus on the Eucharist - the soul, source and summit of the spiritual life.

The fraternity which it is hoped will meet each Tuesday afternoon will reflect the Church's liturgical year, allied to the lives of the saints and martyrs.

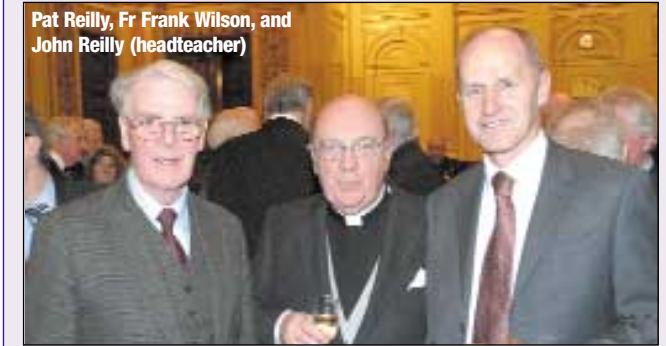
■ **Anyone interested in becoming part of the Marist Fraternity can contact Bro John Ogilvie at St Benet's, 227 Nithsdale Rd, Glasgow G41 5HA. Tel: 0141-427 1750. Or meet at St Mungo's on April 8.**

Former pupils' memories of the Mungo

John Reilly, Headteacher of St Mungo's since 2004

"There is no doubt that St Mungo's will forever be associated with the teachings and influence of the Marist Brothers. Their influence on the religious, moral and academic ethos of the Academy remains at the heart of the school community to this day.

Yet St Mungo's is a school community which has in recent years embraced and thrived on change. Our year of celebration will recognise and celebrate 150 years of service to the City of Glasgow in general and Catholic education in particular".



Patrick Reilly (1943-48)

Emeritus professor of English Literature, University of Glasgow

As a community we are particularly indebted to the Marist Brothers for giving a lifeline to the children of working class families and providing us with a sound Catholic education. I was taught by the Marists at St Patrick's, Anderston, before going up to the Academy, and retain a great respect for most of my old teachers.

My happiest memory of St Mungo's was playing football for the 1st team. I played alongside Tommy Heneghan who went on to Brentford and Kilmarnock and represented the US national team in the 1950s.

Stephen Smyth (1962-68)

Marist Brother, General Secretary of ACTS

I prefer to remember the teachers who treated us as if we were intelligent young men rather than just kids. I was sufficiently impressed and influenced by the Brothers, especially Dorotheus, to join them. I returned to St Mungo's as a teacher and was principal of Religious Education from 1980-94.

Henry Docherty (1943-49)

Former General Secretary of Bishops Conference of Scotland

An abiding memory is that on my first day at St Mungo's I walked past it - I didn't know it was up a close! It was war time, and we were drilled in the courtyard every day by Brother Germanus with his whistle. We had wonderful teachers who brought out the best in us and encouraged us to use our learning and talents for good.

Allan Millar (2001-07)

Pharmacy student Strathclyde University

The teachers gave us space to develop and find our feet. You appreciated that you were part of a distinguished tradition, but it didn't weigh too heavily.


Len Murray (1944-51) *Lawyer*

I think I was at St Mungo's longer than just about anyone. I did all my highers at 15, I was too young to go straight to uni - so I hung around for a couple of years. I made life-long friendships. A group of us meet up every Wednesday for a coffee - what draws us together is that we are all St Mungo's FPs.

The Lodging House Mission

Building on nearly 100 years of dedicated service, LHMM today operates as a day centre, drop-in café, learning hub and church for Glasgow's homeless, hostel dwelling and resettling communities.

We appreciate your continued support that is necessary at this time and throughout the year, for us to offer our wide range of services and support.



35 East Campbell St, Glasgow, G1 5JT
Tel: 0141 552 0285
Email: enquiries@lhm-glasgow.org.uk
Website: www.lhm-glasgow.org.uk

Thank you for your Support this Winter

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among the destitute, the distressed, the excluded, and all being passed by.



JESUS AT THE HEART OF OUR TOWNS IN OUR TIMES

Vocations details for ENTHUSIASTIC YOUNG MEN from:
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CONGREGATION OF ALEXIAN BROTHERS

The Alexian Brothers, as followers of Jesus the Healer, dedicate their lives to serving the sick and those on the margins of society. They do this with the support of prayer and community life.



Is Jesus calling you? For information contact the Director of Vocations at: Alexian Brothers, St Mary's Road, Moston, Manchester. M40 0BL. TEL (0161) 681 1929

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An international community of missionary priests for Africa. We are called to the service of the most abandoned - that is, those who have not heard the Gospel preached to them, and those in need of liberation from poverty, hunger and oppression.

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St Theresa's, Clarendon Place, Dumbane, Perthshire FK15 9HB

Make a BIG difference with SCIAF's WEE BOX

Lent is a time for prayer, self denial and almsgiving. Every year, SCIAF provides material for Lent which invites us to use this special time to reach out to those in desperate poverty through our giving, reflection and action. The little things we do can make a great difference in our lives, and in the lives of our sisters and brothers around the world.

Last year's WEE BOX, BIG Change campaign raised over £870,000.

It was Scotland's second largest fundraising campaign and won the Best Campaign Award from the Institute of Fundraising Scotland.

SCIAF wants to go a big step further this year and has developed a range of ways for you can get involved, starting on Ash Wednesday, 6 February.

The aim is to raise as much money as possible to help people living in poverty around the world.

We also want to increase awareness of the issues people face in developing countries, and let you know how your actions

are making a difference.

SCIAF works in 23 countries across Asia, Africa and Latin America benefiting thousands of people living in extreme poverty.

Many thousands of people will be taking part in the campaign with over 100,000 WEE BOXES being used by schools, parishes, and members of the public.

Many people give something up - their daily bag of crisps or fizzy drink and put the money they save in their WEE BOX. Others put on events like coffee mornings.

Whatever the size of your contribution, it will help make a BIG change to people around the world.

Your support enables SCIAF to provide life-saving resources such as food, cooking utensils,



mattresses, medicine, seeds, tools, school books, pens, and practical skills training.

It will also provide counselling for those traumatised by violence and support for individuals, families, and communities living with

disabilities, HIV/AIDS, poverty and war.

Your contribution will help deliver practical help and make a real difference to thousands of people living through hard times.



Call for action on climate change

AN OVERWHELMING majority of Scots are joining with SCIAF to call on the Scottish Government and MSPs to ensure the country does its 'fair share' to tackle climate change.

According to an opinion poll commissioned by SCIAF:

- 90% agree that the Parliament should accept Scotland doing its fair share to tackle climate change;
- 85% agree that politicians have to take the lead in setting targets and keeping greenhouse gas emissions within sustainable limits;
- 94% agree that companies should take responsibility for their carbon footprints.

SCIAF is part of the Stop Climate Chaos Scotland coalition and is calling for the Scottish Government and Parliament to commit to limiting the global temperature increase to 2°C and

reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 3% per annum.

It is also calling for a 'carbon fund' to give financial incentives to encourage emission reductions. A proportion of the fund would help pay for adaptation in developing countries to compensate damage caused by Scotland's emissions.

In 2005, just one of Scotland's power stations, Longannet on the River Forth, emitted ten times more CO2 than Malawi produces in a year, and more CO2 than ten sub-Saharan African countries combined.

Cardinal Keith O'Brien, president of SCIAF, said: "I saw for myself the effects of climate change in India where I met poor women who described how droughts had increased significantly over

their lifetime. As a result, they were struggling to grow enough food to feed their families.

"While climate change will affect us all, it will hit the poorest people hardest although they have contributed least to the problem. Yet they are already witnessing increased droughts, floods and changing weather patterns."

SCIAF's advocacy manager Chris Hegarty said: "The harsh effects of global warming are already being felt by people in developing countries. Many such countries have poor infrastructure so people can lose everything, their homes, families, and livelihoods, in one climatic event.

"Unless urgent action is taken the situation is likely to get much worse."



FairTrade status could be awarded to the Archdiocese of Glasgow.

All that's needed is for half the 97 parishes to prove their fair trade credentials.

The drive to achieve the recognition is being pursued by the diocese's Justice & Peace team to highlight the Church's solidarity the world's poorer farmers and producers.

Glasgow J&P's Dorothy McLean said: "Edinburgh is in line to be the first Scottish diocese to achieve FairTrade status, so we don't want to be lagging behind."

To be classed as 'FairTrade', a parish needs to use FairTrade tea and coffee at meetings for which the parish is responsible; hold a fair trade event during the annual FairTrade fortnight (this year 25 Feb to 9 March); and promote other FairTrade products.

Dorothy said: "Fair trade products are readily available in many shops and the quality has improved greatly.

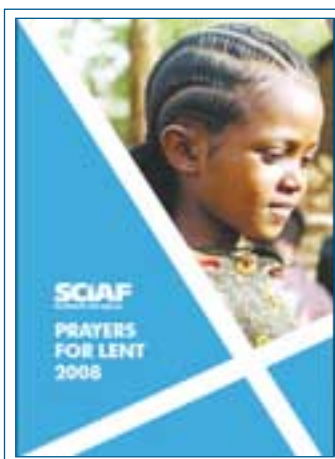
"We feel it is a matter of justice to use and promote products which are helping some of the world's poorest farmers to achieve to achieve a higher standard of living, allowing them to provide for the education of their children and safeguard the health of their family."

An information evening is being held in St Leo's, Dumbreck, on Wednesday 13 Feb at 7.30pm.

There will be advice on the availability of products and the benefits the FairTrade movement is having on families and communities around the world.

Meanwhile the first general meeting of the newly-formed Scottish FairTrade Forum was due to take place in Glasgow on Saturday 2 Feb.

Any parish in the Archdiocese which already qualifies for FairTrade status is asked to contact the J&P team - email: d.mclean4@ntlworld.com



Prayers for Lent

Every parish in Scotland has been SCIAF Prayers for Lent booklet.

The prayers were written by three Scottish priests who visited Ethiopia last September to celebrate the Ethiopian Millennium with the Church there, and to visit projects supported by SCIAF.

The booklet includes Stations of the Cross, meditations for the Sundays of Lent, prayers of the faithful for the fourth Sunday in

Lent, and a prayer in honour of Our Lady.

You will find a prayer card for daily use in your Lent Pack which you can keep in your prayer book or use as a bookmark.

On SCIAF's website there is a powerpoint presentation of African Stations of the Cross which can be downloaded for use with the Stations from Ethiopia. There is also material for the children's liturgy on the fourth Sunday of Lent.

Further copies of Prayer for Lent are available from SCIAF.

Jenneth set on journey of hope

The Face of the WEE BOX, BIG Change campaign



Photo: Thomas Omand

SCIAF brings real hope to the lives of thousands of people every year.

One such person is Jenneth - the young woman on this year's WEE BOX.

At 14, Jenneth was abducted from her home in northern Uganda and forced to become a child soldier, innocently caught up in a conflict that has been running since 1986.

For five years Jenneth survived a brutal life amongst violent rebels called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

Jenneth was rescued by a priest who had bravely entered LRA territory.

After their escape she was taken to a centre for practical skills training, funded by SCIAF.

Along with other girls who had been abducted, she was given the

chance to learn how to support herself and provide for her two children. Having missed years of education she took a three year course in tailoring.

Now 21, she has been provided with a refuge and the chance to reintegrate into her community after years of living in the wilderness.

Jenneth now looks forward to a brighter future for herself, and her two boys, Wulter and Gurfre.

With your help, SCIAF can support skills training centres around the world to help thousands like Jenneth live with hope.

By taking small steps to help SCIAF this Lent you will be helping others like Jenneth take the first steps on a journey of hope.

www.weebox.org.uk

SCIAF has also set up a special WEE BOX, BIG Change web site which is packed with everything you need to know about the campaign and how you can play your part.

The specially developed site is easy to use and can help you get a real insight into the lives of people you will be helping and have helped in previous years.

There is a wealth of material including photo galleries, video clips, stories of change, an A to Z of fundraising ideas, blogs, and reports on SCIAF's work in conflict zones.

So if you are up to speed with computers and the internet don't hesitate, turn your computer on and start clicking.

40 ways 40 days

Top ten ways you can make a difference

There are many ways you can get involved in the WEE BOX, BIG Change campaign.

SCIAF has produced a 40 ways 40 days leaflet for schools and parishes highlighting a variety of things to do each day during Lent. To help you get started here's a snapshot of our top ten ideas of things you can do this Lent:

1. First, decide on what you are going to give up for Lent - putting the money you save in your WEE BOX.
2. Think about how people living in poverty often feel the effects of climate change the most. Think about how you can help these people by making some wee changes to your life.
3. When brushing your teeth, turn off the tap! Every year 1.6 million people die because they don't have access to safe drinking water.
4. Turning off all your appliances at the wall instead of leaving them on standby saves energy. Put £1 in your WEE BOX if you leave any on during Lent.
5. Cycle or walk to work. Collect the money you save on petrol, bus or train fares and put the proceeds in your WEE BOX.
6. Many people in the world have become separated from family and friends because of conflict - send a nice post-card or text to three people and make them smile!
7. Have a karaoke night with friends and donate 50p to your WEE BOX every time someone chooses an 80's song!
8. Put 50p in your WEE BOX each time you use your phone today.
9. Make packed lunches this week and put the money you save in your WEE BOX.
10. If your friends have helped you to fill your WEE BOX, tell them how much you raised and say a big THANK YOU!



Photo: Sean Sprague

SCHOOLS IN FOCUS

2007 was a record-breaking year for schools too - £162,000 was raised during Lent 2007 which was an all time high!

Schools play a huge role in raising funds for SCIAF's work all year round, but Lent is a time when they really pull the stops out.

To give young people a real insight into the lives of people in developing countries SCIAF has produced a fantastic CD-ROM for schools across Scotland. It is packed with stories, videos, and pictures of all the people featured in this year's campaign including Jenneth.

Young people can watch videos of first hand accounts of how SCIAF is making a big difference to peoples' lives. There are teaching aids and guidance notes together with Day in the Life stories, information on SCIAF projects, and lots of fun downloads like WEE BOX stickers, posters, school assembly ideas, and WEE BOX certificates to celebrate the achievements of young people.

SCIAF
Scotland's aid agency

WEE BOX

BIG CHANGE
6th FEB - 20th MARCH 2008

Make a difference.

At 14, Jenneth was abducted by violent rebels during the conflict in northern Uganda. Five years later she escaped. Now 21, through a SCIAF-funded project she is learning tailoring skills and her boys, Wulter and Gurfre, attend a day care centre.

Support others like Jenneth by joining SCIAF's WEE BOX, BIG change campaign this Lent. Why not make a WEE change - give up snacks or walk to work and put the money you save in your WEE BOX.

Your WEE change can help make a BIG change to someone else's life. Order your WEE BOX or donate online at www.sciaf.org.uk/weebox or call SCIAF on 0141 354 5555

SCIAF is the official aid and development agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland. We help some of the world's poorest people, regardless of religion and encourage to change the root causes of poverty. F11

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Registered Office:
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Prater: Thomas Omand

Give something up... but don't go without...

If you don't have a WEE BOX yet, or would like any of the materials mentioned - from the prayer books to additional Lent packs - SCIAF will post them out to you FREE of charge.

All you need to do is call SCIAF on 0141 354 5555 or order online www.sciaf.org.uk

FAITH COURSES FOR LENT

A SERIES of short courses helping adults to develop their understanding of faith are being offered across the Archdiocese.

Four weekly courses available between mid-February and mid-March are designed to appeal to all parishioners, particularly those involved in RCIA, readers, parents of children preparing for the sacraments and members of justice groups.

The courses are:

- **Matthew's Gospel** by Dr Noel Donnelly at St Flannan's, Kirkintilloch
Mondays 18, 25 Feb, 3, 10 March at 7.30pm
- **Deus Caritas Est (God is Love)** Fr Jon Gannon St Mary's, Duntocher
Thurs 21, 28 Feb, 6, 13 March at 7pm
- **The Sacraments of Initiation**, Patricia Lockhart Our Lady of Lourdes, Cardonald
Tues 19, 26 Feb, 4, 11 March at 7pm
- **Who do you say I am? (the person of Jesus)** Fr John O'Connor St Paul's, Shettleston
26 Feb, 4, 11 March at 7pm

Fr Tom Kilbride, director of the Archdiocese's Religious Education Department said: "These courses were first held in different parishes last November. The feedback was extremely positive and the numbers coming along were good."

"We hope even more people will take the opportunity of Lent to take the time to participate and deepen their understanding of aspects of Church teaching and tradition."

St Gregory's stalwart is 'Volunteer of the Year'

By Vincent Toal

ROSALEEN Glancy's unstinting commitment to serving others has been recognised with the Prince's Trust Volunteer of the Year Award.

A parishioner of St Gregory's, Wyndford, she has been involved with the Trust for the past ten years. But her commitment to serving the most needy and vulnerable young people, stretches back to her own youth involvement with the St Vincent de Paul Society and other Church groups.

Receiving her award at a ceremony in Glasgow last December, Rosaleen said: "The Prince's Trust does a fantastic job in helping many disadvantaged young people change their lives and it is a real honour to have been recognised for the small contribution I've been privileged to make."

Impressed

Rosaleen's involvement with the Prince's Trust Scotland began with a secondment from her Benefits Agency post in 1997. So impressed was she with the work being done that she stayed on as a volunteer.

As a development award assessor for the past five years, she has helped around 230 young people overcome barriers that have prevented them from fulfilling their potential in education and employment.



After retiring from managing Drumchapel's Jobcentre Plus, last year, Rosaleen devotes two days a week to the Trust. As a mentor, she is on hand to advise young adults, helping them negotiate barriers and change their lives for the better.

She said: "I get a great deal of satisfaction from seeing young people developing, getting their life in order and going on into employment or meaningful training."

One in five young people across the UK are not in work, education or training. Many are then susceptible to crime or at risk. Since 1976, the Prince's

Trust has helped over half-a-million such people into work.

"You have to build up a rapport with young people who are at a crossroads in their lives, looking at what they can do and how they can contribute to society," Rosaleen insisted.

Motivation

"Not everybody is academic. More channels need to be opened to these youngsters who have their own strengths and weaknesses. What they need is motivation and encouragement to put the skills they have to good use."

Besides her involvement with the

I have been privileged to see hundreds of people overcome hardship and change their lives for the better. I count my blessings.

Prince's Trust, Rosaleen devotes time to St Gregory's and the St Vincent dePaul.

"Without doubt my faith gives direction to my life and influences how I try to behave towards other people," she said.

"The demand of faith is to put ourselves out for others with our time and talents. We are asked to recognise Christ in everyone."

This Vincentian spirit has been a constant in Rosaleen's life from childhood. She grew up in St Charles', Kelvinside, where the Daughters of Charity had a base. The family readily opened its door to strangers and devoted time to supporting the Deaf Club, the Talbot Association and other charitable causes. Rosaleen's sister Eileen is a Daughter of Charity, now based in England.

"It was instilled within me from childhood to help wherever there is a need. Now, more than ever, it is young people - often new to the city - who are particularly in need of support."

While accepting the accolade as 'volunteer of the year', Rosaleen recognised the thousands of fellow volunteers who give their time everyday in caring for and supporting their neighbours.

"If you see just one person turn their life around, then that makes it worthwhile," she said. "I have been privileged to see hundreds of people overcome hardship and change their lives for the better. I count my blessings."

■ www.princes-trust.org.uk

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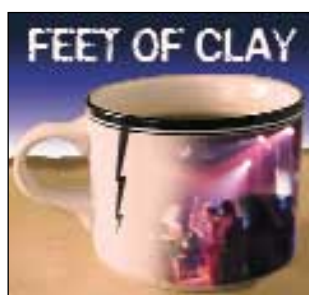
Salamanca, Spain – 21st – 30th May. This retreat is held at the Scots College in Salamanca. You will need to organise your own travel.

Skelmorlie – Weekend retreat 13th – 15th June; 8 Day retreat 1st -10th August. In the Notre Dame Apostolic Centre overlooking the Clyde Estuary.

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INSIDE ON CENTRE PAGES



Feet of Clay

Fast-paced play is parable for today



Man Dancin'

Director to discuss award-winning film



Peter Kearney

Australian musician hopes for full house

Stars shine light on LENTfest 2008

This Lent feed your senses

6 Feb - 23 March 2008
LENTfest

An imaginative fusion of the Arts and Faith

ARCHDIOCESE OF GLASGOW ARTS PROJECT
Visit www.lentfest.co.uk for details

AFTER last year's successful pilot, Lentfest 2008 opens on February 6 – Ash Wednesday!

In a time of self denial, it promises a feast of creative art for reflection and spiritual uplift.

The six-week long festival is an initiative of the Archdiocese of Glasgow and is set to become a major annual event in Glasgow's cultural calendar.

With live theatre, cinema, music, literary events, and visual arts exhibitions, Lentfest is billed as an imaginative fusion of the arts and faith with events and performances across the archdiocese

Highlights include:

- The world premiere of a new composition by acclaimed composer James MacMillan

hosting concerts and plays are parish halls – reflecting the desire to encourage more people to use the arts in expressing their faith. Each of the nine deaneries of the Archdiocese will host at least one event.

The opening concert – showcasing many of the festival's artists – will be staged in St Andrew's in the Square, one of Glasgow's most atmospheric concert venues.

Based on the Beatitudes, PILGRIM seeks to take you on a journey through the present as a way to understand the future, using music, dance, song, narrative and visual projection.

It features Fathers Song, Glasgow University's Madrigals, Schola Glasguensis, Steve Nelson, Kaye Smith, the Cross Border Band and Aleksander Kudajczyk. Shorter

PILGRIM

"We are only pilgrims on this earth...for the future, can we not make that pilgrimage together hand-in-hand?"

Pope John Paul II - Bellahouston Park, Glasgow, 1982.

PILGRIM is an imaginative fusion of Faith and the Arts that will open the music programme for Lentfest 2008.

Sunday 10th and Monday 11th February at 7.30pm

St Andrew's in the Square, Glasgow

Tickets £10 (£8 concession) Contact: SECxtra: 0870 013 4060 or www.secextra.com

Shorter Version:

14th March St Ninian's, Knightswood, at 7.30pm

15th March St Joseph's, Milngavie, at 7.30pm

(Tickets £5, available at the door)

- A concert by Aleksander Kudajczyk - the Polish concert pianist discovered working as a cleaner in Glasgow University
- A Film and Faith Event with appearances by award-winning film-makers Norman Stone and Sergio Casci
- And a new play, *Feet of Clay*, written and directed by Lentfest director Stephen Callaghan.

Stephen is the manager of the Archdiocese Arts Project which he helped establish 18 months ago.

He said: "The idea of Lentfest developed from the setting up of the arts project itself. It seemed a natural progression to move from the support of all-year round activities to the establishment of an annual arts festival.

"Our ethos is broad ranging, embracing both the popular and the classical, the contemporary and the traditional. Content need not be overtly religious as art can be a vehicle for leading us towards faith."

Most of the Lentfest venues

performances will also be staged at St Ninian's, Knightswood, and St Joseph's, Milngavie.

A public art exhibition being staged in St Patrick's, Anderston, will also reflect the Beatitudes as interpreted by a variety of artists. It will be opened on 23 February with a short concert by Eddi Reader, a former parishioner of St Patrick's.

Everything from a male voice choir to a poetry cafe also make it onto the ambitious programme.

The performance schedule is complemented by an education programme open to all schools in the Glasgow area.

Archbishop Mario Conti founded the Arts Project as a way of restoring the link between the Church and the Arts.

He said: "Our vision is for more churches, more schools, more artists and more community members to become involved in this annual opportunity for expressing, exploring and sharing Christian culture through the arts."

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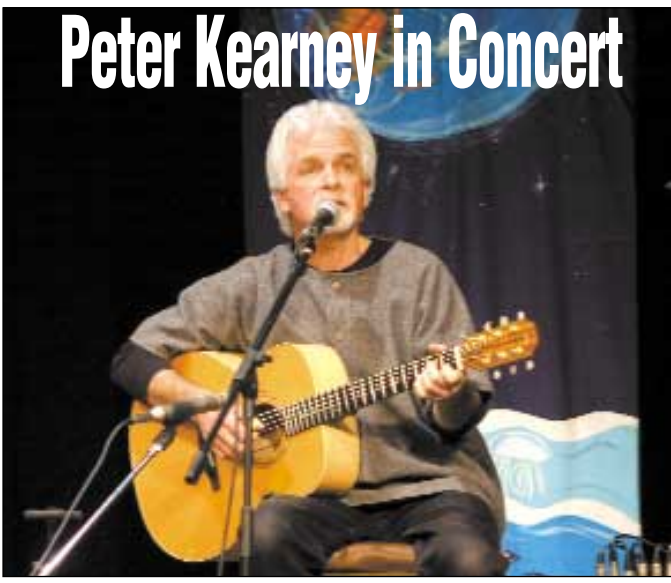
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Australian songwriter Peter Kearney's earliest published songs and hymns included 'Fill My House' (now internationally known) and 'The Beatitudes'. Thirteen albums of his songs have been published since, with material ranging from justice ballads, to songs for children, to a large-scale work on the life of St. Francis of Assisi.

For over twenty years Peter has made music his full-time work, travelling widely to give his workshops and concerts. Peter is living in Ireland during 2008 with his wife Madge.



Peter Kearney in Concert

Songs & Hymns
Monday 18th February, 7.30pm, St Michael's Church, Cardross Road, Dumbarton
Thursday 21st February, 7.30pm, St Joseph's Church, Buchanan Street, Milngavie

Good Morning, Good People
St. Francis of Assisi - his life in song and story
Tuesday 19th February, 7.30pm, St Paul's Church, Shettleston Road, Shettleston
Friday 22nd February, 7.30pm, St Mungo's Church, Parson Street, Townhead

Saturday 23rd February, 8pm, St Gabriel's, Merrylee Road, Merrylee
Sunday 24th February, 7.30pm, St Lucy's, Abrohill, Cumbernauld

School Workshop Concert with St Mirin's Primary School
Wednesday 20th February, 2pm (Enquiries to the School), Christ the King, Carmunnock Road, King's Park

Father Kennedy: Australian Prophet
Wednesday 20th February, 7.30pm, Turnbull Hall, University of Glasgow Catholic Chaplaincy, Southpark Terrace



Songs of Love for Valentine's Day
Thursday 14th February, 7.30pm
Turnbull Hall, 15 Southpark Terrace

Martin Jones (singer-songwriter, guitarist), John Wilson (singer-songwriter, guitarist), and 'UNEXPECTED!' a new group of singers and musicians from RSAMD. A musical celebration of love - human and Divine.



Father's Song
Friday 29th February, 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, 89 Abercromby Street, Calton

Experience the marvellous sound of forty men singing shoulder-to-shoulder - Father's Song is a male-voice choir with a difference! Blending gentle harmonies one might expect with a boy band with the robust praise sound of an Evangelical Christian choir - Ian Watson directs this musical evening, accompanied by guitarist singer-songwriter, Garry Brotherston.



Film & Faith Event:
'Man Dancin' Directed by Norman Stone

With special post-film conversation with contributions from director, Norman Stone, and screenwriter, Sergio Casci.

Wednesday 27th February 2008, 7pm
Gilmorehill G12 Cinema, University of Glasgow
University Avenue, Glasgow G12 8QQ



Award-winning film *Man Dancin'* is a gangster movie with a difference. After nine years in a Northern Ireland jail, Jimmy Kerrigan (Alex Ferns) returns to his family home in a tough Glaswegian estate. It's only been a few years but the Glasgow that he knew has changed and, more importantly to those that knew him, so has Jimmy Kerrigan. Some say he's gone soft, others suspect he's found religion, but they don't ask and he doesn't say.

The Beatitudes
Exhibition of works produced by nine artists from across the greater Glasgow area interpreting each of the nine beatitudes. Some works will be on sale at the exhibition.

St Patrick's Church, North Street, Anderston
Sunday 24th February - Saturday 29th March
Open Daily (11am - 4pm) FREE



Poetry-Music-Café-Bar
Friday 22nd February 7pm
Christ the King Parish Hall

An evening of poetry reading and live music in a relaxed cafe/bar setting. Stephen Eric Smyth and Mary Hanrahan lead an evening of poetry and offer you the chance to take part in an open mic stage or simply relax to sound of solo musician Steve Nelson.

Contact: Tickets Scotland 0141 204 5151 or www.tickets-scotland.com
Tickets £5. Tickets booked from Tickets Scotland subject to an additional £1 booking fee per ticket. Some tickets will be available from the host venue or at the door.
Enquiries: arts.project@btconnect.com



If you could live Fast-paced

ADAM POTTER runs a café with a difference! At the Potter's Wheel Café, people can come and drink from a special mug and feel...well, unique and special too.

Like the customers who visit, "every item is unique but every item is imperfect... that's what makes them special and that's what gives them character".

The father's dream for his sons to inherit the family business are obscured when John, the younger son, takes off in search of freedom, leaving Adam and his older son, Michael, to look after the business.

But does the hedonistic nightclub culture in which John finds himself really offer him the freedom he desires?

Feet of Clay is a fast-paced, funny, and moving blend of the Gospel parables told for today.

The familiar stories of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, and the Unmerciful Servant are given an unexpected new twist in a quirky continuous story of love, revenge, heartache and ultimately, forgiveness.

The play is written and directed by Callaghan, Art Project manager and author of year's Lentfest theatrical hit *Passionate Visions* director of two plays by Pope John Paul II.

He said: "Feet of Clay is very different to I've directed or written before. For one thing, a lot more comedy in it than either *Passionate* or the plays of Karol Wojtyla. I think people will find this play very accessible and entertaining, with food for thought."

Stephen, who also stars in the play, adds: "I've always been fascinated by stories and the way they are told, whether it be myths, folk tales or fairy tales - stories that are capable of conveying great truths in a simple and exciting way."

"I think Jesus understood this and was a storyteller. We only have to look at the parables that appear in the Gospels."



For **ELAINE KELLY**, who plays Laura and Mandy, being involved has felt like coming home.

She said: "I've been keen on drama since I was very young. I always loved performing, and the theatre became a huge part of my life, until I decided to take a break."

"However, I began to miss it terribly and when my friend emailed me the advert for the auditions for Feet of Clay, I knew I had to go along."

"The play has given me the opportunity to combine my two passions - my faith and the theatre. I've been blessed by the chance to be involved."



Feet of Clay with no regrets – what wouldn't you do? A parable with timely message



Stephen Kerr's face will be familiar to TV viewers as one of BBC Scotland's top news reporters. He is swapping the screen for the stage as he takes a lead role in Feet of Clay. "I went to see Passionate Voices at last year's Lentfest and thought it was superb," he said. "I thought it would be a bit of fun to get involved, even though I've never done any acting before."

Feet of Clay is not overtly religious. God is not mentioned once – not even in an expletive way, as is common in so much modern drama.

It offers a simple story about everyday people, with a profound moral message. The Potter's Wheel Café where the scene is set stands as a metaphor for the Church in society – dismissed as outdated, judgemental or elitist, but, in fact, open, receptive and forgiving.

Stephen explained: "Feet of Clay is really the culmination of a long-term desire to re-imagine the parables for contemporary society. I had planned to have an evening of short plays based on the parables but, in the end, I opted for one continuous story, which fuses together the basic narrative of the best-known parables – with a few interesting twists!

"To some extent, I have tried to tackle the corrosive culture of hedonism. Many young people are lured into this kind of culture without appreciating

the dangers – not just the obvious ones of alcohol, drugs or promiscuity – but ultimately a loss of dignity and self-worth."

Feet of Clay is performed by a varied cast of people from across the Archdiocese of Glasgow, including BBC Reporting Scotland's David Kerr in the role of John, the younger son.

Having guided the cast through auditions and rehearsals, Stephen said: "All of them are very committed and have shown real integrity and versatility. We are very lucky to have such talented actors living in the Archdiocese of Glasgow and keen to contribute to its cultural life.

"Many of the actors change roles during the play, which works well in the context of a 'parable' because in parables and folk tales, characters are always shell-like rather than three-dimensional, allowing the audience to put itself into the shoes of the characters in the story – the actors do that literally!"

Feet of Clay opens in the James Arnott Theatre at Gilmorehill G12 on Friday 15 February at 7.30pm (Tickets: 0141 330 5522 boxoffice@gilmorehillg12.co.uk)

The dress rehearsal on Wednesday 13 Feb at St Philip's Hall, Drumlochry Road, Ruchazie, is FREE.

Over the following two weeks it will tour parishes across the Archdiocese:

Saturday 16th Feb
Our Lady of Consolation Hall, Inglefield Street, Govanhill

Sunday 17th Feb
St Lucy's Hall, Abrohill, Cumbernauld

Tuesday 26th Feb
St Patrick's Hall, Strathleven Place, Dumbarton

Thursday 28th Feb
St Robert's Hall, Peat Road, Househillwood, Glasgow

Saturday 1st March
St Stephen's Hall, Park Road, Dalmuir

Sunday 2nd March
St Paul's Hall, 1653 Shettleston Road, Shettleston

All performances at 7.30pm

Tickets £5 - Tickets Scotland 0141 204 5151 or www.tickets-scotland.com (subject to £1 booking fee per ticket). Some tickets will be available from the host venue nearer the time or at the door.

David, who plays younger son John, attends rehearsals at Our Lady of Consolation straight from the new ultra-modern BBC studios at Pacific Quay. The contrast in venues is reflected in the different styles between reporting and acting. "While a live broadcast lasts a few minutes, the play lasts nearly an hour - that's terrifying."

Strongly committed to the Catholic Church, David is full of praise for the ambition shown by the Arts Project to express faith through the arts. "The Gospel is ever contemporary and ever relevant. In every generation, people have adopted scenes from the Gospel and set them in their own day. We are doing the same in 21st century Scotland."

Has Feet of Clay enough to entice the public to give up the telly for an evening and take in Feet of Clay?

"You can expect to be entertained, to laugh, to cry a wee bit, and hopefully enjoy a theatre production which deals with the deeper issues and realities that we all face."



At just 16, **MARYFRANCES JENNOW** is the youngest member of the cast. Since leaving Notre Dame High last summer she has been working with The Pavillion theatre in Glasgow.

"I'm absolutely thrilled and honoured to be a part of Lentfest 2008 and to be working with some truly incredible and inspiring people!

I'm really excited about the show, and love my character, Suzie – just your average teenager who will hopefully provide some laughs."



PAUL MELLON is a tutor in supported learning, specialising in creative arts.

He plays Adam, the owner of The Potter's Wheel Café where "every person is as unique as the mug they drink from". And doubles up as Willie, a scheming con artist who uses any means to gain his ends.

Paul said: "I am working with polar opposite roles: good and evil. I try to characterise that bad things happen to good people, but that there is enough goodness and solid values in society to indicate the path to redemption."

Coming up in March...

Schools Film & Faith Event

Wednesday 19th March 2008, 12.30pm – 3pm
Gilmorehill G12, University Avenue, Glasgow
Secondary pupils (S1-S3) will have an opportunity to explore faith issues through a screening of an acclaimed film adaptation of the early life of Karol Wojtyla, the student/actor/playwright who later became Pope John Paul II.
This film has not previously been screened in UK cinemas.

Schola Glasguensis & Madrigals

Sunday 9th March 7.30pm
St Patrick's, North Street, Anderston
The rich acoustic of medieval chant as the male-voice Schola Glasguensis of the Archdiocese of Glasgow unite with the University of Glasgow Madrigals.



From Prison to Praise

Friday 14th March 7.30pm
Ruchazie Community Church, Ruchazie
Singer-songwriter Garry Brotherston shares his remarkable story of how his time in prison changed him from a life of drink, drugs and weapons to discover true freedom through faith in Christ.

Clyde Consort

Tuesday 18th March 7.30pm
University of Glasgow Memorial Chapel
University of Glasgow Organ Scholar, Peter Yardley Jones, directs this evening of classical music



Aleksander Kudajczyk in Concert

Saturday 8th March 7.30pm
St Mungo's Church Hall, Parsons St, Townhead
Polish concert pianist discovered working as a cleaner in Glasgow University plays his own choice of Chopin.

Schools Art Competition The Kingdom of Heaven

Secondary School pupils are invited to compete for the Junior and Senior awards for Excellence in the Expression of Faith Through Art by submitting their interpretation of "The Kingdom of Heaven".
Closing date for competition entries: Friday 29th February
Exhibition of Entries Friday 15th March – Saturday 29th March
St Patrick's Church, North Street, Glasgow

The Passion - A Musical Play

Tuesday 11th March 7.30pm
Wednesday 12th March 7.30pm
St Joseph's Primary School, Milngavie
St Joseph's Primary Senior Pupils present a Musical Passion Play written and directed by Jim Thomson.



Soul Sisters

Friday 7th March 7.30pm
Turnbull Hall, 15 Southpark Terrace, Glasgow
Celebrating womanhood through the women of the New Testament.

Blessed Are You!

AGAP Theatre Project with Turnbull High School
Wednesday 12th March 7pm
St Matthew's Hall, Bishopbriggs
"Blessed Are You!" is the culmination of an eight week workshop programme run by the Archdiocese of Glasgow Arts Project, involving pupils at Turnbull High, Bishopbriggs. The show will be a vibrant, colourful mish-mash of theatre, music, and the visual arts, exploring the Beatitudes and reflecting on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.
Musical input by James Macmillan.

Easter Morning Mass

Sunday 23rd March 11am
St Columba's Church, Hopeshill Road, Glasgow
Strathclyde University Chamber Choir with World Premier of a motet by James Macmillan

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Foolishness of Sapienza 'liberals'

In seeking to silence Pope Benedict, protesters succeed in winning him a global audience

I FELT a particular interest in the story that Pope Benedict had called off a planned visit to Rome's La Sapienza University due to protests by some staff and students.

The reason is that I was a student there myself in 1986. I remember it as a happy, rather chaotic modern campus, largely constructed in the style of Mussolini's favoured neo-imperial architecture.

There was a relaxed attitude to lectures - having a cigarette in the corridor, perching on the window-sill or sitting on the lecturer's desk were all ways of "being present" at courses.

Yet despite the easy-going style, there was an 'atmosphere' about the place - an undercurrent of political tension.

A few years before I arrived, one of the professors, Vittorio Bachelet, had been assassinated just after giving a lecture. His crime? Being part of the Christian Democrat machine and close to the Vatican on a series of issues then dividing the country.

In Rome, as elsewhere, the simmering hostility of a section of the highly secular, liberal elite occasionally overflows into outright manifestations of intolerance.

The protesters insisted that the Pope should not come to a secular university because he is "hostile to science", "against Galileo" and an opponent of freedom of expression.

For a start, such charges are based on embarrassingly inept research.

The reference to Benedict being against Galileo is based on an erroneous in the on-line encyclopaedia Wikipedia. In fact, during the 1991 lecture in which he is charged with defending the Church's handling of the Galileo case, the then Cardinal Ratzinger described it as "drastic".

But the supreme irony in all this is the illiberal attitude of hard-line liberals. So much for freedom of expression!

There are lessons to be learned from this rather pathetic episode.

Attempting to muffle the opinions of others is a counter productive strategy.

In trying to prevent the Pope's words reaching a few academics at a Roman university, the protesters succeeded in having them reported round the world. His lecture, delivered in his absence, has been read



by an audience countless times more numerous than the original recipients!

In passing, they also inadvertently brought about a demonstration of support by 200,000 people in St Peter's Square the following Sunday - all there to show solidarity with the Pope.

Secondly, we learn that even in the heart of a Catholic culture such as Italy there is a determined, almost obsessive hatred for the Church and its message. How much more so in our own secular liberal land!

Perhaps one man not surprised at the venom shown is Pope Benedict himself.

After all, in his last published sermon as a Cardinal, just before entering the conclave in April 2005, he noted: "Today, having a clear faith based on the Creed of the Church is often labelled as fundamentalism."

And he added: "We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires."

This idea that the realms of science and religion should not overlap is something the Pope sees as a growing danger.

In last month's thought-provoking lecture, he pointed out: "If our culture seeks only to build itself on the basis of the circle of its own argumentation, on what convinces it at the time, and if - anxious to preserve its secularism - it detaches itself from its life-giving roots, then it will not become more reasonable or purer, but will fall apart and disintegrate."

As the banner in St Peter's Square read - Christ is the true wisdom (*Sapienza*).

Oasis of calm is mark of love-filled hospice

CELEBRATIONS marking the 20th birthday of St Vincent's Hospice in Renfrewshire start this month.

I will always have a particular affection for St Vincent's because it was there that my mum died one gentle December afternoon three years ago.

To say that she died there is almost to miss the point. She LIVED there in the 10 days or so before her passing, and it was the quality of that living which makes hospices like St Vincent's so special.

To this day, I recall the almost unbelievable tenderness and care of the staff; the beautiful surroundings; the atmosphere of welcome and of affection for patients and relatives alike. The small details... Knowing what anxious relatives take in their tea. Knowing when to speak and when to keep silent. Caring for the patients' appearance even in their final hours. Reaching out to hold a hand.

These are the hallmarks of care that no institution can possibly hope to provide.

St Vincent's - and other hospices like St Margaret's in

Clydebank - can give such care because they are not institutions.

Each is an oasis. A home filled with love. A fitting and sacred space in which to move from time into eternity. Medical care is second to none and spiritual care a constant.

When I was young, I used to wonder at the meaning of the rather strange phrase which appears on death notices: "Fortified by the rites of Holy Church".

As I watched my mum respond with serenity and gratitude to the ministrings of Canon Sean Cunney, be they the old prayers she knew so well or just gentle hope-suffused encouragements, I understood very well that she was being "fortified" - strengthened almost imperceptibly for the journey home.

If you ever face the dilemma of terminal illness - your own or that of a friend or family member - do not instantly write off hospices as "places to die". They are not.

They are wonderful places in which to live life right up until its most sacred transitional moment.

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Time to return to dust?

I don't know about you but I rather miss the old phrase on Ash Wednesday, "Remember man that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return..."

It really brought home the need for conversion of life!

In recent years most priests have replaced it with the more prosaic, "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel".

According to the missal, both are acceptable options.

So I was wondering - any chance of a revisiting of the more traditional formula? Even by way of a change!

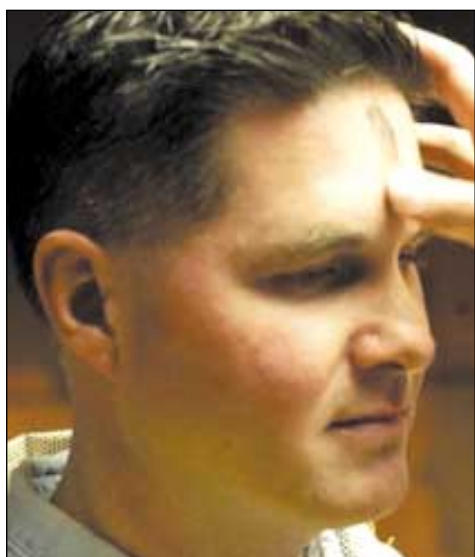
■ ON the subject of Lent... I was caught by one liturgically sensitive priest recently doing quite the wrong thing - eating a cream egg

before the end of Christmastide.

My excuse seemed pretty reasonable - I had to get them all eaten before Lent starts.

I may not be a liturgical fanatic, but even for me a chocolate egg on Ash Wednesday would probably be a sin!

And yes, I appreciate they used to be an Easter treat before the supermarkets took over. But remember some traditions are more sacred than others.



Ethics Prof in Scotland to discuss contraception



A LEADING authority on ethical and bioethical issues is set to address a major conference in Glasgow marking the 40th anniversary of *Humanae Vitae*.

Professor Janet E Smith, who teaches Life Ethics at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, will deliver the keynote speech to the Fertility Care Scotland Conference on Saturday 1 March.

Lucille McQuade of Fertility Care said: "Professor Smith's expertise in teaching on matters of human sexuality and in particular her positive message about why contraception is bad for relationships and family life makes her an obvious choice to speak at our half-day conference."

"The invitation stems from our desire to provide an opportunity for the work of Fertility Care to become better known across Scotland."

Prof Smith is the author of *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later* and editor of *Why Humanae Vitae Was Right: A Reader*. She speaks nationally and internationally on several issues, especially the Catholic Church's teaching on sexuality. Over a million copies of her tape, *Contraception: Why Not*, have been distributed.

Humanae Vitae is the encyclical of Pope Paul VI issued in the summer of 1968 which addressed the issue of human

sexuality in the context of love and family life.

Prof Smith, 57, is a consultant to the Pontifical Council on the Family. On the back of her invitation to Scotland she has also been invited to address conferences in Dublin and London.

She begins her visit on Tuesday 26 Feb with a talk to students at Turnbull Hall, Glasgow University's Catholic chaplaincy. On Wednesday 27 she give a talk to clergy at St Charles' hall, Paisley, and on Thursday 28 addresses an audience at St Mary's Cathedral hall, Edinburgh; On Friday 29 she will provide in-service training for Catholic teachers at the SCES centre in Glasgow.

The half-day conference (9.30am-1.30pm) takes place in the GTG Conference Centre at 1330 South St, in Whiteinch.

Further details and a booking form are available from Fertility Care Scotland on 0141-221 0858.

Fertility Care Scotland was founded in 1976. It has teachers throughout Scotland who are trained in The Billings Ovulation Method.

■ www.fertilitycare.org.uk

Passionist jubilarians to the four

A YEAR of milestone celebrations for Glasgow's Passionist community culminated with a Golden Jubilee double in mid December.

A large number of well-wishers gathered in St Mungo's church for a Mass of Thanksgiving marking the 50th anniversaries of ordination of Fr Eustace Cassidy CP and Fr Justinian McGread CP. Both priests have been part of the Townhead team since 1989.

Glasgow-born Fr Justinian, who was previously chaplain to the Royal Infirmary in the mid 1960s, has also served in Canada and Paris. His brother Canon Thomas McGread is a retired priest of Galloway diocese.

Fr Eustace hails from Ballymote, Co Sligo, birthplace of Brother Walfred Kerins, founder of Celtic FC. He has helped out in a number of Glasgow parishes during his years in the city.

Earlier in 2007, Father Hubert Hurley CP celebrated his Diamond Jubilee of ordination, and Father Marius Donnelly CP quietly marked 55 years in the priesthood.

This year, rounding off a busy 12 months of toasts, Fr Anthony Behan CP reaches his 50th anniversary milestone.

Fr Paul Francis Spencer CP, rector of St Mungo's, said: "These anniversaries are joyful moments but they are also reminders to us



Fr Eustace and Fr Justinian and, below, Fr Anthony and Fr Hubert



that we are all getting older.

"No religious community can continue to flourish without new members. Pursuing a religious or priestly vocation is the happiest and most fulfilling life possible for those who are called to it by God."

One young man who is discerning that call is Gareth Thomas. He is living at St Mungo's while attending classes at Scotus College, Bearsden – the national seminary in Scotland.

Fr Paul Francis added: "In 2008 we will continue our series of Passionist Religious Life Weekends – retreats for young men who are interested in knowing more about the Passionist Community and its life and mission."

"I invite anyone interested in taking part in one of these weekends to contact me or another member of the Passionist community."

■ www.saintmungo.org



THE outstanding highlight of the past year for the worldwide Passionist community was the canonisation of St Charles of Mount Argus at St Peter's, Rome.

Pope Benedict summed up the life and ministry of the Dutch-born Passionist priest who died in Dublin in 1893: "During his many years of priestly ministry in England and Ireland, the people flocked to him to seek out his wise counsel, his compassionate care and his healing touch."

"In the sick and the suffering he recognised the face of the crucified Christ, to whom he had a lifelong devotion.."

A fuller account of St Charles life is contained in *To Heal the Broken Hearted*. Written by Fr Paul Francis Spencer CP, rector of St Mungo's Retreat, Glasgow, the very readable book places 'poor old Charlie's' renowned healing ministry in the context of his own sufferings and humiliations, as well as the history of the local Passionist communities.

A compelling read, it is published by Ovada Books, the Passionists own publishing wing. It is available from St Mungo's bookshop, attached to St Mungo's, Parson St.

Novena to Our Lady of Lourdes 2nd to 10th February 2008



© Sanctuaires de Lourdes

Saturday 2nd February

10.00 am Mass & Novena
11.30 am - 12.30 pm Confessions (Church)
1.00 pm Mass & Novena
3.00 pm Novena & Benediction
4.30 pm - 5.00 pm Confessions (Church)

Sunday 3rd February

12 noon Benediction & Novena
1.30 pm - 2.30 pm Confessions (Church)
3.00 pm Jubilee Pilgrimage Service & Novena
6.00 pm - 7.00 pm Confessions (Church)
7.30 pm Novena & Benediction

Monday 4th February Tuesday 5th February

7.00 am Mass & Novena
10.00 am Mass & Novena
1.30pm - 2.30 pm Confessions (Church)
1.00 pm Mass & Novena
7.30 pm Mass & Novena

Wednesday 6th February (Ash Wednesday) Thursday 7th February

7.00 am Mass & Novena
8.30 am - 9.30 am Confessions (Church)
10.00 am Mass & Novena
1.00 pm Mass & Novena
6.00 pm - 7.00 pm Confessions (Church)
7.30 pm Mass & Novena

Friday 8th February

7.00 am Mass & Novena
10.00 am Mass & Novena
1.30pm - 2.30 pm Confessions (Church)
1.00 pm Mass & Novena
7.30 pm Mass & Novena

Saturday 9th February

10.00 am Mass & Novena
11.30 am - 12.30 pm Confessions (Church)
1.00 pm Mass & Novena
3.00 pm Novena & Benediction
4.30 pm - 5.00 pm Confessions (Church)

Sunday 10th February

12 noon Benediction & Novena
1.30 pm - 2.30 pm Confessions (Church)
3.00 pm Jubilee Pilgrimage Service & Novena
6.00 pm - 7.00 pm Confessions (Church)
7.30 pm Torchlight Procession & Novena

The Novena (with Mass or Benediction) will be prayed in the Glass Chapel.

Confessions available at other times on request

A plenary indulgence can be obtained by participation in the Novena

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
7.30 am - 7.30 pm

Carfin Lourdes Grotto

For further information, telephone 01698 263308



True meaning of life brought home to Karen among people for whom prayer is at heart of their day

SWAPPING Bishopbriggs for the southern shores of Lake Victoria has meant many changes.

I've had to get used to regular power-cuts, but when you consider only around 10 per cent of the population has electricity I shouldn't complain. You adapt and get on with it.

But it is more difficult to come to terms with children living on the streets. And it is heartbreaking to encounter elderly people, who have lost fingers and toes to leprosy, reduced to begging.

Poverty is pretty extreme. No wonder they imagine all white people are rich without limit.

Life in Mwanza is very different from Glasgow but it has been enriching. Living next door to a convent has curbed my late nights, but I've discovered a new joy in prayer. By some miracle, the local store stocks Im-Bru – can you believe it, a little bit of heaven!

My time is spent teaching in the Catholic primary school and helping out an orphanage run by a British couple.

Nyakahoja Primary School is run by a local group of religious Sisters. It is one of the best schools in the area and has a long waiting list. I love teaching there.

As you can imagine, it is quite different from Glasgow where I am a secondary school teacher. When I started there my biggest fear was how to handle indiscipline.

Squeeze

Well, in Mwanza, there is no such worry. The children just want to learn and the job of teaching is so much easier.

My class has fifty pupils. It is a tight squeeze, but we have fun. The children are so respectful and will do anything for you – even carry your bags!

Whether they are from very poor or relatively well off families, every one of them appreciates that education is their way forward. It is the answer to bringing everyone out of poverty and helping improve the prospects of society.

School starts at 7.30 each morning – a bit early for me – with prayer time for the teachers. It is a lovely way to start the day.

Prayer here is a natural part of

Since last September, Glasgow teacher KAREN PARTYKA has been living in Mwanza, Tanzania, on a six-month assignment with the Jesuit-run Xavier Volunteer Programme. Karen, who celebrated her 23rd birthday in mid January, is a former pupil of Turnbull High, Bishopbriggs. She is a graduate of Glasgow University and spent her probationary year at Notre Dame High School, Downhill, teaching Music and Religious Education. Here she provides a glimpse into the lives of the people she is working alongside and the lessons she is learning

life and whatever people do they will say a prayer. If the children are sitting exams or doing something important, they always ask me to pray for them. It is an inspiration for me to be able to help them achieve their dreams.

Teaching is not a highly paid job and, on the whole, people go into it because they really want to do. Those are the kind of teachers who can influence children's lives and really make a difference.

At Forever Angels orphanage the hazards of life are in sharp relief. This is home to around 30 children from newborn to aged five – from baby Juma to lively Joseph. Some have been abandoned, others lost their parents, others have families who are unable to care for them.

Little Davey is ten months old but still very small. Tragically, his mum died of Aids soon after giving birth. His dad had already succumbed to the deadly illness.

Davey contracted the virus from his mother, but is anti-retrovirals which allow him to have a relatively normal life. He is prone to infections, though. When the other children get a cold, he tends to get pneumonia. So the staff keeps a watchful eye on him.

Davey has a gorgeous smile that just melts my heart. He loves playing or being cuddled and tickled, just like any other baby.

We often take the toddlers swimming at the local hotel pool. They love it. They enjoy the freedom of being in the water. I have to say I particularly like it myself.

Forever Angels is a place that gives these young children the hope of a better future and I am glad I have spent time helping to give them a proper opportunity in life. It is such a surprise and a joy to hear nothing but laughter and to see the children having so much

fun.

Tanzania has lots of problems, particularly with corruption, but it excels in faith. It feels like everybody is religious. Christianity is the main faith in Mwanza, with large Catholic parishes.

The local church is about the size of St Aloysius, Garnethill, and is practically full for each Mass on Sunday. From my room, I can hear the celebrations – it feels like the whole church is singing its heart out.

Precious

In Tanzania, Sunday is definitely the Lord's Day. People devote the day to going to church and spending time with their families.

Living in Mwanza has taught me a lot of things and made me look at myself and my home in Glasgow differently. I can see now how life is precious.

I do not know what tomorrow will bring, but I know that I have to trust in God. For me prayer has become the answer to everything and I have learned from my own experience that God will give me answers – even if I do not, at first, like them.

The past few months have brought home to me the duty and responsibility we have to help our neighbour. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

When you think about it, we all have problems of one kind or another. We should be there to help others, trusting that they will be there in turn in our time of need.

Life can be hard here but I enjoy it. When I see suffering or am not sure about what to do when confronted with difficult problems, the words my parish priest told me one day come back and inspire me to keep going.

"The meaning of life", he said, "is to be like God."



Karen with Bhatti and Falum at Forever Angels orphanage

MBE for Sister Mary Ross, SND

SISTER MARY ROSS, who stood down last year as clinical director of the Notre Dame Centre in Glasgow's west end has been recognised by the Queen in the New Year's Honours.

The Sister of Notre Dame will be made MBE for her services to children and families in the city.

The Notre Dame Centre was founded 76 years ago in response to local demand from parents, teachers and other professionals who needed specialised help for vulnerable children.

Over the years, it has become renowned for its innovative and successful approach in the treatment of young people with emotional and behavioural problems. From child abuse to the loss of a parent, from drug addiction to adoption – the centre has helped youngsters and their families through stressful and often dangerous situations, by giving them the practical and emotional support they need.

Kinnoull

Redemptorist Centre of Spirituality

St Mary's, Kinnoull, overlooking the historic city of Perth, is at the gateway to the Highlands of Scotland and, since the 1860's, has been a place of sabbatical rest and spiritual renewal.

Holy Week Retreat Healing in the Spirit: Spirituality of true self-esteem

17 – 22 March 2008

Fr. Jim McManus C.Ss.R. and Miss Marie Hogg

Celebrate Holy Week in the healing environment of St. Mary's and begin living more consciously a spirituality of true self-esteem. Self-esteem is often the missing dimension in a good person's life.

Theology of the Body An introduction to the teaching of Pope John Paul II

28 April – 2 May 2008

Fr. Jim McManus C.Ss.R.

Pope John Paul's Theology of the Body has been described, by George Weigel, as a "theological time bomb set to go off, with dramatic consequences, sometime in the 21st Century". There is a growing realisation that his highly original teaching, which he himself called, The Theology of the Body, will be his lasting legacy to the Church. This week will introduce the main insights of Pope John Paul and help you begin a much needed dialogue on the theology of the body.



Healing in the Spirit: A Spirituality of True Self-Esteem

Fr. Jim McManus C.Ss.R. and Sr. Germaine O'Neill

5 – 9 May 2008

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Tel: 01738 624075 E-mail: copiosa@aol.com Web Page: www.kinnoullmonastery.org



The young teacher with pupils of the Nyakahoja school

Accounts and financial statement for Archdiocese of Glasgow at 31 March 2007

Faith Into Action

ONE of the major achievements of the year was the continued success of Faith Into Action. The fundraising campaign was launched in 2004 to raise a minimum of £7million in gifts and pledges to support common priorities and to launch new initiatives.

Capital raised from the campaign will be invested and the income from the investments will be used to promote developments in parish life, care and support of clergy and the restoration of St Andrew's Cathedral.

By 31 March 2007, £9,360,971 had been pledged through 10,412 pledges and gifts, with £4,558,418 actually received; £2,004,133 was received during 2006/07.

During the year, £52,687 of income was used by the Archdiocese to support the purposes of the campaign.

By 31 March 2007, eight parishes had reached their goal and £175,911 had been paid to these parishes by way of 10% and 75% returns.

(An update on Faith Into Action at 31 December 2007 will feature in the March 2008 edition of Flourish)

Buildings

THERE are approximately 300 churches, presbyteries and halls throughout the Archdiocese including a range of over 60 listed buildings and sites.

The effort to maintain and preserve these buildings has been assisted by a Conservation Working Group – a small forum set up by the Archdiocese, with representatives from Glasgow City Council and Historic Scotland.

During the year, significant repair work was carried out on the churches of St Simon's, Partick, Sacred Heart, Bridgeton and St Mary's, Abercromby Street. In the coming year, essential work will be carried out on St Mary's, Pollokshaws, and St Margaret's, Clydebank. St Teresa's, Possilpark, and St Paul's, Whiteinch, are also in line for work to begin.

Revaluation of property

Non-parochial property owned by the Archdiocese was revalued at 31 March 2006, which gave rise to a gain on revaluation of £1,450,000, reflected in last year's accounts.

Non-adjointed parochial properties – parish halls, presbyteries and other parochial properties not physically joined to each other or to the church – were valued at 31 August 2007 at £20,844,000.

Investments

THE investments of the Archdiocese include a modest portfolio of diverse stocks and shares of £391,701 at 31 March 2007, and a 43.7% share amounting to £7,796,939 in the National Contingency Fund managed by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland on behalf of five of the Scottish dioceses.

The continued improvement in the stock market over the financial year had an impact on the investment portfolio with an unrealised gain of £337,144.

During the year, capital of £155,000 was transferred from the National Contingency Fund to fund the revenue shortfall in the costs of caring for our sick and retired clergy.

The Archdiocese seeks not to invest in equities directly or mainly involved in the manufacture and/or the supply of goods and services which would be in conflict with the teachings of the Gospel and the social teachings of the Catholic Church, particularly those which promote the dignity of the human person, the sanctity of human life and the imperative of peace on earth.



St Margaret's, Clydebank

Central funds and parishes as one

A SINGLE set of accounts covering parishes and the curial offices of the Archdiocese of Glasgow have been published for the first time.

Changes in charity law mean that as a designated religious body the Archdiocese is required to produce one set of financial statements covering all the elements included in that designation. So the statement for the year ending 31 March 2007 includes the assets, liabilities and transactions of the 99 parishes as well as central diocesan funds.

Since parishes previously recognised 31 December as the year end, their income and expenditure is calculated over a 15 month period to align the accounts.

The accounts show a surplus of £1,861,475 on curial funds – due mainly to income from the Faith Into Action campaign.

Assets

Curial net current assets were £4,576,708 – a near £2m increase from 2006 – and parochial net current assets were £3,671,628 – up slightly on the previous year. Parochial reserves totalling £24,515,628 represent the assets and transactions of individual parishes and are available only to the designated parish.

When the value of fixed assets in property and investments are added to the net current assets, the accounts show that overall funds



total £43,453,060.

The main source of income for the Archdiocese is from the parishes through an annual levy and special collections. In the year under review, £1,501,217 was raised in levy and a further £672,795 was contributed through special collections. Without the additional levy, covering the first three months of 2007, curial funds would have recorded a deficit of £87,646.

In their report, the trustees state: "The underlying deficit in the unrestricted funds of the Archdiocese arises from income being insufficient to meet the responsibilities faced by the Archdiocese in relation to retired priests, education of students, national responsibilities to

the Bishops' Conference of Scotland, diocesan services provided through various bodies such as the Religious Education Department and the administration of a diocesan office. Expenditure is constantly under review and new sources of income are being sought to bridge the gap."

The main expenditure over the year includes the administration of the diocesan offices and provision of parish services, as well as responsibilities towards retired priests, the education of students, and the national Bishops' Conference. Total resources expended amounted to £10,281,447, including £8,324,687 on parish activity and support costs. Total parish income amounted to

£9,877,166, and included £4,067,508 from weekly offerings.

The curial office of the Archdiocese covers the functions of chancery, diocesan archives, communications, child protection, approval of Catholic teachers, as well as provision of estates, financial and personnel advice to parishes. On average, 50 staff were employed in the course of the year, with costs running to just under £1m.

The Trustees of the Archdiocese are Archbishop Mario Conti, Mgr John Gilmartin, Vicar General, Mgr James Clancy, Mgr Owen Gallagher, Treasurer, and Canon Peter Gallacher.

Generosity

In their report, they thanked the whole Catholic community for their continued generosity towards the Church's mission through provision and support of activities relating to pastoral care and assistance.

They concluded: "The Archdiocese of Glasgow seeks to continue its promotion of the Gospel of Christ, as it has done for the past five hundred years, in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. This will be done through continuation and development of its current activities which Faith into Action will allow to flourish and grow."

CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY

THE Archdiocese of Glasgow comprises nine deaneries, covering ninety-nine parishes in and around the city of Glasgow. Glasgow is the main population centre along with Dumbarton in the west and Dumbarnauld in the east.

The Archdiocese of Glasgow is legally constituted as a Trust and the relevant Deeds of Declaration of Trust are registered in the Public Records of Scotland. The Archdiocese of Glasgow is a registered Scottish charity (SC 018140).

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, for safeguarding the assets of the Archdiocese and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Finance Council, which comprises the trustees and lay advisers, meets quarterly to discuss and give advice on financial and major administrative matters, including approval of an annual budget for curial office activities. For acts of extraordinary adminis-



tration the Archbishop needs the consent of the Finance Council and of the College of Consultors.

Day to day administration of the Curial funds is carried out by the senior officers (and their staff) who report to the trustees and appropriate committees.

While parishes are now accounted for within the financial statements of the Archdiocese, their distinct canonical status under the Church's Code of Canon Law remains, with parish assets and liabilities clearly defined as restricted funds.

Administration of parochial funds is the responsibility of each parish priest who is assisted in this task by a parish finance committee. Each parish is required to provide an annual financial return.

Curial Restricted Funds

Restricted funds include funds where the purpose is stated by the donor and where parish collections are given for stated purposes. The figures represent the balance at 31 March 2007 and (contributions made through collections) during the financial year

Pro Life £128,793 (£36,817) – Promote pro life issues at diocesan and national level.

Catholic Education £127,473 (£43,479) – To promote Catholic education at a national level.

Assisted Parishes £198,028 (£127,468) – Four collections to support poorer parishes in the archdiocese.

Justice and Peace £107,844 (£42,507) – Promotion of justice and peace issues at a national and diocesan level.

Cardinal Winning Pro Life Initiative £16,018 – Assists women facing crisis pregnancy through public donations and an annual contribution from the Pro Life Fund.

Sick and Retired Priests £137,429 – Allows expenditure for sick and retired clergy to be allocated against funds given solely for that purpose. The balance represents the Lenten Alms 2007 collection which will offset the costs of the fund for the year ending 31 March 2008.

Education £201,263 – Education of students to the priesthood (partly represented by an investment portfolio).

Education of Students £133,029 expended, (£75,557) – Similar to the Education Fund, it allows income given for the purpose to be matched against expenditure for the education of students to the priesthood and permanent diaconate.

Photo: Paul McSherry



Milestone for St Mark's

FORTY years of primary school education in St Mark's, Shettleston, in January.

The whole school turned out for a Mass of Thanksgiving for all the blessings bestowed on the east end school over the past four decades.

Archbishop Conti led the celebration which took place in St Mark's church, just across the road from the school.

Parish priest Fr Gerry Barnes also took part and was joined by Fr John Gannon who was once a pupil at St Mark's – not long after it opened in 1968!

The pupils prepared for the big day and were in good voice as they joined in the singing. While some of the senior pupils served, a range of children offered the prayers of the faithful.

Among those remembered specially were former pupils of the school who have died in recent years.

Nurturing young people with VALUES FOR LIFE

Last year, the Catholic Education Commission asked a working group to develop a resource which would help teachers to consider the importance of values in the lives of young people.

The outcome of their efforts is 'Values for Life: nurturing values and virtues'. This has been designed as a publication which will develop teachers' understanding of values today, of how they are acquired by young people and of how they can be learned in school.

In particular, it explores a Catholic understanding of "Gospel values", based on Christ's teaching as expressed in the Beatitudes.

The values contained in the Beatitudes are unconventional; they run counter to the trends of society.

Jesus uses them to challenge our priorities, to help us to learn that, in order to be happy – "blessed" – we must be peace-loving, merciful, pure of heart and meek.

Pope Benedict XVI, in his recent publication Jesus of Nazareth, summarises the paradoxical nature of the Beatitudes:

"When man begins to see and live from God's perspective . . . then he lives by new standards. . . Jesus brings joy in the midst of affliction."

Values for Life not only unpacks Gospel values for teachers; it also teaches about the meaning of virtues – the personal habits which each of us can develop to live moral lives, doing good for ourselves and for others.

It helps teachers to understand the teaching of the Catechism on

By Michael McGrath

virtues such as faith, hope, love, prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance – and to connect these to current educational priorities.

Values for Life will help school managers to plan appropriately for Curriculum for Excellence, the new framework being developed for the teaching of all subjects in primary and secondary schools.

It takes each of the values engraved on the Scottish Parliament Mace – Wisdom Justice, Compassion, Integrity – and defines them in Christian terms. It provides detailed examples of how schools can make provision for the development of these values in the lives of young people. It helps schools to consider how to express their values in important school documents and policies.

In addition to the Values for Life textbook which is aimed at teachers, complementary resources are also available.

A CD provides, among other materials, three attractive presentations with images and music on different aspects of values and how they are expressed in real lives. There is also a set of attractive posters which illustrate each of the Beatitudes and the Gospel values contained within them.

These can be used in schools and parishes to stimulate reflection and discussion on this important issue.

The development of this Values for Life resource is important for all Catholic schools. It offers particular support on an issue which can be difficult for teachers and for parents today.

We live in an age when our values are often determined by convenience rather than by

conscience, when the autonomy of the individual is paramount, when the wisdom of faith is unknown to so many.

To counter a pie'n'mix approach to moral decision-making, young people need help to understand the core values and beliefs upon which to build good, healthy lives, with Jesus at the centre.

Values for Life will certainly help teachers who are committed to nurturing young people in values and virtues.

■ Michael McGrath is the director of the Scottish Catholic Education Service



Staff and pupils of St Aloysius College attended a ceremony which marked the presentation to the College of permission to continue to use its coat of arms.

Until recently, the coat of arms was being displayed without being recorded in Edinburgh at the Court of Lord Lyon. Three years ago, the College petitioned the Lord Lyon to grant the right to keep the Eagle and Crown, as well as house badges representing Jesuit saints.

The Letters Patent were formally presented by one of the great officers of state, the Carrick Pursuivant of Arms, during a service in St Aloysius church attended

by the whole senior school and led by Archbishop Conti.

Pictured above: Back row: Mr Devlin, Father Banyard, Father Girffiths Father Bishop, Mr Stoer (the Head Master), David Lumsden of Cushnie representing the Sovereign Order of Malta, John McCabe (Knight of St Gregory)
Second row: Aimee Taylor, Fiona Burns, Ross MacAskill, Monica Burns, Salomi Barkat, William Sullivan, Andrew Gilbert, Nicholas Puschmann, with altar boys Padraig O'Duffin, Finlay O'Duffin, Carlo Paloni, Seumas O'Duffin
Front row: Julia Clarkson (captain), The Carrick Pursuivant of Arms, Archbishop Conti, and Christopher Oldroyd (captain)

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Fr Gordian Marshall

Created ties binding Christian, Jew and Muslim

GLASGOW'S Dominican community and the parish of St Columba's, Woodside, were shocked at the sudden death of Fr Gordian Marshall OP on Friday 14 December. He was 69.

A highly respected figure in Catholic education and inter-faith dialogue, Fr Gordian had been the superior of the Glasgow Dominicans since 1990. In 2005, he oversaw the transfer from Blackfriars on the south side to St Columba's and the move into parish ministry.

John Francis Marshall was born in Portobello, near Edinburgh, in 1938. He attended Holy Cross Academy in Edinburgh. Just three months before his death, he preached the homily at a Mass celebrating the school's centenary.

In Edinburgh he met the Scottish Dominican Fr Anthony Ross, and decided to enter the Order. Taking the religious name of Gordian, he was professed on 24 September 1957. He was ordained priest on 25 July 1963.

After his studies in philosophy and theology he taught briefly at the Dominican preparatory school at Llanarth, in Monmouthshire. From there he went to Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds where he graduated B.Ed. He was assigned



Fr Gordian Marshall, Dominican superior in Glasgow

to the Dominican Conference Centre at Hawkesyard, Staffordshire, where he taught classes in scripture, Hebrew and religious studies, and organised conferences of the Council of Jews and Christians. He then worked in Leicester, as chaplain to the university.

In 1990 he was assigned to the Dominican house at Blackfriars, Glasgow, as superior.

In Glasgow he taught religious studies at St Andrew's College, Bearsden, and later at the department of Religious Education at the

University of Glasgow, from which he recently retired.

More widely, he served on the Churches' Agency for Interfaith Relations, the Scottish Interfaith Council, Action of Churches Together in Scotland, and the Council of Religious Superiors in Scotland. He was in constant demand as a lecturer, preacher and retreat-giver.

For much of his life Fr Gordian was involved with inter-faith dialogue, initially with the Council of Jews and Christians. He was elected to an Honorary Fellowship

at Leo Baeck College, the rabbinical training college in London, in recognition of his work in Jewish-Christian relations.

He attended and lectured at the annual conference of Christians, Jews and Muslims in Germany. His knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Koran enabled him to make important contributions to discussions and debates.

In 2005 the Dominican community moved to St Columba's, Hopehill Road, assuming responsibility for the parish alongside the chaplaincy to Strathclyde University. Father Gordian expressed gratitude that the Order of Preachers now had their own public pulpit in the city they had returned to in 1981.

Fr Allan White OP, Prior of the Dominican's English Province was the chief celebrant of the Requiem Mass in St Columba's on Friday 21 December.

Archbishop Mario Conti, who had readily accepted the Order's offer to administer the parish, presided in the sanctuary alongside Cardinal Keith O'Brien, a classmate from their days at Holy Cross.

In tribute, the Archbishop said: "Fr Gordian made an important contribution to the life of the Church in Glasgow and beyond. His influence was felt and appreciated particularly in the fields of education and in inter-religious dialogue where, along with Sister Isabel Smyth, he was a pioneer."

Molly's music for a unique audience

Mary Wallace FitzPatrick, known to her friends and relatives as Molly, was a teacher in St Vincent's School for the Deaf for 30 years.

Born on 12 October 1914, she was the first of the six children of Thomas FitzPatrick and Janet Wallace. When she was two years old her father was called up for service.

In 1919 her education began in Our Lady and St Francis' Convent School in Charlotte Street, continued in Notre Dame High School, Dowanhill, and from 1932 at Glasgow University.

Molly was a student of the University's first Professor of

music, W Giles Whittaker, played the tamps in the University orchestra and became a member of the Bach Cantata Choir.

After training at Dowanhill, her teaching career began in St Thomas', Riddrie, and St Anne's, Dennistoun, at times coping with classes of around 50 pupils.

On the outbreak of WW2, Glasgow's plan for the evacuation of mothers and children went into action. Molly was one of those teachers who worked with the children until the scheme came to an end.

After the war, she undertook a specialist course of training for teachers of the deaf, at Manchester University, then taught in St Vincent's, Tollcross, until she retired. For a time at the end of her

career she was called upon to act as headmistress of the school.

She brought a new dimension to the teaching of the deaf and the partially deaf by introducing them to musical sounds and rhythms through the use of the melodica.

During her long retirement she devoted her remarkable energy to serving others in many ways – a supporter of the Deaf Club; organist in St Albert's church; universal aunt to her multitudinous nephews, nieces, grand-nephews and -nieces; and knitting blankets for Mother Teresa's poor.

Requiem Mass was offered for her in St Constantine's, Govan, on 24 December 2007, before her burial in St Conval's cemetery, Barrhead. May she rest in peace.

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Carmelites close their chapter on Langside story



LANGSIDE'S place in the annals of Scottish history was secured hundreds of years ago with the 1568 battle which sealed Mary Queen of Scots' fate and forced her into exile.

In more recent times, this area of Glasgow's south side has enjoyed greater tranquility which made it a draw for a number of religious houses.

Such was the convergence around Mansionhouse Road that the area was known as Pope's corner. The Marist Brothers and Jesuits were at Camphill Avenue, with the Bon Secours, Helpers of the Holy Souls and the Carmelites strategically stationed at the top of the hill.

An important chapter in the history of this little corner of Glasgow ended last month. For the Carmelite Sisters locked the door of their monastery for the last time and moved to their new home in Kirkintilloch. Only the Bon Secours remains on Mansionhouse Road.

Langside monastery was founded in 1918, the first Carmel to be opened in Scotland after the Reformation.

The founding sisters, Veronica, Mary of St Bernard and Mary of the Holy Child, came north from

the Carmel in Nottinghill, London. Sister Catherine of Jesus joined as a postulant. Three original extern sisters, Francis, Agnes and Catherine of St Joseph, faithfully served the needs of the monastery for many years.

In the early 1950s vocations were so abundant that it became necessary to expand. A little house was acquired in Kirkintilloch and a new Carmel was formed in 1953.

The founding prioress was Mother Catherine – the one who had entered Langside as a postulant in 1918. And among the first Sisters at Kirkintilloch were Sr Mary of St Michael and Sr Catherine of Christ who are still part of today's community.

With the decline in numbers entering religious life in recent years, the Langside and Kirkintilloch Carmels began the process of amalgamation.

In 2005, the Kirkintilloch sisters moved to Langside and in March 2006 the official amalgamation took place. The new Carmel is under the patronage of Our Lady and St Joseph.

Although the amalgamation boosted numbers at Langside, the need for a property more suitable to their requirements had already been identified.

By Vincent Toal



Carmelite community together in Langside with Fr Paul Murray and Fr Frederick Abe

And so the community now finds itself back in Kirkintilloch on the site of their old monastery which was demolished in 2005. The new purpose-built house was funded from the sale of Langside.

One of the last public Masses in the monastery chapel that has echoed with the voice of prayer for 90 years was offered on St Andrew's Day, 30 November.

Fr Paul Murray, parish priest of St Helen's, Langside, and Fr Frederick Abe offered the Eucharist in gratitude for the graces bestowed in this oasis of prayer over the years.

The community of 15 Sisters was joined by a number of friends who regularly attended Mass at the convent.

Mother Allaine, the prioress, said: "Today as we celebrate this thanksgiving Mass we wish to

remember all our Sisters who have gone before us, whose entire adult lives were spent in prayer and community and in the physical upkeep of this house.

"This Carmel is part of our heritage from them and we believe that we are honouring their memory by moving on to a place where we hope to make a new beginning."

She added: "Any ending is sad, but we are an Easter people. We believe that God is faithful and he will provide for us as we leave and for you our friends whom we leave behind.

"For us too there is a path marked out that we must follow, trusting in Christ who calls us and how gathers up all human history – even our own little history of 90 years – and brings it into completion and fulfillment."

Building award

THE JESUIT house in Glasgow's Hill Street has won two prestigious architectural awards.

The Saltire Society awarded the two year-old building a commendation in its Housing Design Awards 2007. And it was also recognised by the Chartered Institute of Building in their Scotland Good Building Awards.

The top three floors of the new house provide living accommodation for ten resident Jesuits, while the ground floor is occupied by the Ignatian Spirituality Centre, with entrance on Scott St.

The architect for the project was Elder & Cannon, who also designed the nearby St Aloysius College Junior School (1998) and Clavium Building (2002) – both recipients of major awards.

Tom Elder, senior architect, said of the Scott St residence: "By bringing light into the building in different ways, we have been able to give variation to the house. And by opening corridors out into reading spaces and using fire engineering solutions at stairs and voids, we've attempted to overcome the institutional character that can occur in multiple occupancy buildings."

Jesuits' new Superior General

THE JESUITS have chosen a 71-year-old Spanish priest who has spent most of his ministry in Asia as their new leader.

As superior general, Fr Adolfo Nicolas becomes the 29th successor to St Ignatius Loyola, who founded the Society of Jesus in 1540.

His election followed four days of prayer and discussion among 217 electors gathered in Rome for the Society's 35th general chapter.

Fr Nicolas succeeds Fr Peter-Hans Kolvenbach who served as leader for almost 25 years and asked to retire as he nears 80.

A native of Palencia, Spain,

Nicolas was ordained a priest in Tokyo in 1967. During his time in Asia he has taught theology at Sophia University in Tokyo, directed the Pastoral Institute in Manila, been provincial in Japan and from 2004 served as moderator of the Jesuit Conference for Eastern Asia and Oceania.

The appointment reflects the desire of the order, which has 20,000 members around the world, to build bridges with the East.

"Asia has a great deal to offer to the Church but has not been explored fully," said Fr Nicolás in an interview last year. "Perhaps we have not been courageous enough, or we have not run the risks we should have."

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Sunday 17 Feb
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Beatitudes are bolster against temptation

LENT is very early this year – but you've probably realised that already! It means we scarcely make any inroads into Ordinary Time before we leave our week-by-week reflection on the Gospel of Matthew.

The interruption comes just as we begin reading from the Sermon on the Mount. By the time we return, on 1 June, we have reached the final extract from the Sermon.

But if we are to be restricted to a

fraction of the Sermon on the Mount, then what better than to hear again its flagship text – the Beatitudes!

3 February – Sunday 4a
Matthew 5:1-12

In the bible, the mountain is frequently the place for meetings between God and humans. Jesus sees the crowd, so he goes up the mountain.

Sitting with his disciples, Jesus adopts the characteristic pose of the rabbi, a teacher of the law. And so he begins to teach.

In the beatitudes that follow, his words have their origin in the Jewish scriptures – but they also show the true meaning of these statements. This is the real purpose of Jesus' teaching in Matthew's gospel: He has come to fulfil the law, to show its true meaning. This is because all authority in heaven and earth was given to him.

"Happy are the poor in spirit..." These are the ones who believe that the kingdom of God is theirs not by right or by virtue. It is God's free gift

"Happy are the meek, they shall have the earth for their heritage". This is a completion of Psalm 37:11 – "the humble shall have the land for their own to enjoy untroubled peace". The poor in spirit and the meek are closely related. They are the anawim, the little ones of the Lord, in the Old Testament.

"Happy are the pure in heart; they shall see God". The heart, for the Hebrews, was where thought took place, where decisions were made. So purity of heart is about integrity.

Psalm 24 asks: "Who has the right to climb the mountain of Yahweh, who the right to stand in his holy place? He whose hands are clean, whose heart is pure, whose soul does not pay homage to worthless things and who never swears to a lie".

Jesus adds that the pure in heart will not just be admitted to the Temple: they will see God's face. This is new. Jews had believed that no one could see God and live!

Finally, peacemakers are those who do the work of God. Peace, shalom, was the fullness of God's gifts. Only God can bring about true peace. Those attuned to the kingdom of God play their part in spreading his peace. That's why they are called God's children.

Each gospel gives a slightly different version of the story of the

temptations of Jesus, because each evangelist wants to highlight a different aspect. Matthew reflects similar themes to those highlighted in the Beatitudes.

The temptations occur after Jesus' baptism, challenging his status as Messiah.

He is challenged to make bread from stone, to demonstrate his power by throwing himself off the Temple, to give allegiance to Satan and take possession of the kingdoms of the earth.

In each case, the promised outcome seems reasonable.

Why should Jesus not eradicate all poverty by turning rocks into loaves? Why not attract attention and followers by throwing himself off the Temple and be rescued by angels? Why not take full control of the earth and how people behave?

Jesus quotes scripture to answer each of these challenges, but he could equally have repeated the Beatitudes:

Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God – "Happy are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness".

You shall not put the Lord your God to the test – "Happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven".

You must worship the Lord your God and serve him alone – "Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God."

The devil can quote scripture; Jesus embodies its true meaning.

17 Feb – 2nd Sunday of Lent
Matthew 17:1-9

The story of the Transfiguration is best read against the background of the glory of God descending on Mount Sinai when the Israelites were in the desert (Exodus 24:16).

The glory of the Lord is an Old Testament term for God's presence and takes the form of a cloud. Jesus' glory is seen on the mountain, and when the voice of God is heard, it is from a bright cloud.

When Moses came out from meeting with God, his face shone. But in this transfiguration, Jesus' face and clothes shine in their own right, because he is the glory of God – the "Beloved Son".

As they descend the mountain, Jesus talks again about his passion. His glory is inseparable from it.

Notice that when the voice speaks, the disciples fall to the ground – an expression for worshipping God. In the very last verses of Matthew's gospel, the



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disciples meet Jesus on a mountain. When he appears, they fall down and worship him too.

The one who has endured the passion and death on the cross, has all authority on heaven and earth. He is the father's beloved Son. We must listen to him.

24 Feb – 3rd Sunday of Lent
John 4:5-42

Our Gospel texts now move to John and key passages which for many centuries had been used for the final stages of preparation before the baptism of adults. Since Vatican II, they have been restored to their former place in the liturgy of Lent.

Today we hear of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. There are many ways to read this passage. One is how it shows people growing in faith by stages.

We first encounter a woman with no faith and no hope. She cannot see beyond the need to collect water from a well that is used by animals as well as humans. Her life is controlled by her misery.

Because of her reputation, she cannot go to the well early in the morning with the other women. She has to wait until the hottest part of the day, when no one is around.

Through her discussion with Jesus, we see the early signs of a developing faith. She recognises that Jesus is a prophet from his words. And eventually she wonders if he might be the Christ.

As her faith grows, so the woman's life assumes new meaning. Shunned after six failed relationships, now she is able to tell others about Jesus.

She has come alive because she has met Jesus. This is what our Lent is about – new life through a deeper encounter with Jesus.

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10 Feb – 1st Sunday of Lent
Matthew 4:1-11

Each gospel gives a slightly different version of the story of the



Council's new chief

ST ANDREW'S, Bearsden, parishioner Lorraine McMillan has been appointed chief executive of East Renfrewshire Council.

Married with a teenage son and daughter, the 46 year-old is an active member of the parish where she helps organise the children's liturgy.

Born in Johnstone where she attended St Margaret's High School, Lorraine is a graduate in physics and business administra-

tion. She has spent almost 20 years in local enterprise and development, including the past eight years as chief executive of Scottish Enterprise Renfrewshire.

She said: "I am looking forward immensely to working with the councillors, staff, residents and communities of East Renfrewshire. The council has an excellent reputation and I will be doing all I can to further enhance that by pursuing excellence in service delivery at all times."

PARISHIONERS of St Mary's, Calton, thought they had seen it all when it comes to fundraising extravaganzas.

After witnessing their priests kitted out in kilts, white suit and toast-master's outfit, they wondered 'What next?'

Well, Fr Tom White didn't disappoint. He crowned off a magnificent medieval banquet by dressing as a Tudor king.

Long-suffering parishioners joined in the feasting with their own interpretation of knights and dames.

And where was the parish priest, Mgr Peter Smith, in all this?

Just out of shot - Friar Tuck greedily eyeing the boar's head.

As the parish continues to fund major restoration work on one of the diocese's oldest churches, it is staging a charity ball in the Crowne Plaza hotel on Friday 25 April.



Calton is king at FUNdraising

Diamonds Forever

Picture: Bill Carlton



Walter and Sadie Woodford celebrated their Diamond Wedding with a Mass of thanksgiving in St Gabriel's, Merrylee, on Monday 31 December – the feast of St Sylvester.

The celebrant was their son Fr Michael Woodford parish priest of St Gabriel's. He was joined by his brother Philip, family and friends in giving thanks for 60 years of marriage.

Archbishop Mario's on the march



A TUNE composed for the great Highland bagpipe is music to the ears of Archbishop Conti.

For the jaunty 2/4 march glories in the title of 'Archbishop Mario Conti's Welcome to Eskdale'.

It was composed to mark his

visit to St Mary's, Eskdale, in Strathglass, last November. He celebrated the vigil Mass of the Feast of Christ the King in the church, built in 1827 when the area was a stronghold of the Catholic faith.

The march was written by Donald Shaw who moved to the area three years ago with his wife Teresa after teaching in Edinburgh's Holy Rood High school for 34 years.

Taught to play by the great Pipe Major Willie Ross, Donald received his lessons in the magnificent setting of Edinburgh Castle.

A more humble marquee provided the stage for the first airing of the Archbishop's march, as the honoured guest enjoyed some typical Highland hospitality.

Donald said: "We were determined to celebrate the visit of His Grace, who holds this place of worship so dear to his heart, by giving him a piping hot welcome.

"The tune has been well received by other pipers in the area and already there is a good young piper learning to play it."

As well as being regaled by Donald's pipes, Archbishop Conti was presented with a framed copy of the music by Jessie Matheson, a stalwart of the Eskdale parish.

Any piper wishing to master the march can order the music from the Archdiocesan offices.

PEW AT THE BACK

Prayer for unity involves all of us all the time, all the while

LIKE the seasons sweeping across the globe or the tides that can be predicted years in advance, the week of prayer for Christian unity has been and gone yet again.

What in Church terms is called the Chair of Unity, 18-25 January is set aside as a time for special prayer. Whether in fact this happens is a moot point.

Most churches make some kind of nod in the direction of praying for Christian unity – some using the very useful set of prayers and aspirations provided by the Archdiocese's ecumenical commission.

Worshippers have as many attitudes towards the exercise as there are worshippers. Some view it with enthusiasm, running the risk of being labelled 'ecumeniacs'. Others allow it to wash over them, bring a sense of nonchalance to the procedure.

Others again see it through the tinted glasses of a suspicion that their parents and grandparents are being sold down the river. Yet more are prepared to continue indefinitely with an ignorance-is-bliss bravado.

Many are unacquainted with the extent to which, as a Reformation saint said, Christ's Body is crucified again. The majority of Catholic congregations, I am prepared to wager, can drum up only a skeleton crew to man the services that take place to pray for Christian unity.

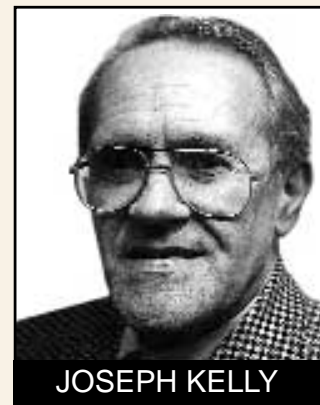
This is a shame. Christian unity is not yet viewed as being an essential component of the Catholic DNA of the west of Scotland. Perhaps the irreligious conceits that we tend to emphasise and are emphasised for, seem more attractive.

Regardless of the social integration that Catholics have made and of the sophistication that many profess, in times of stress we still tend to revert to some of the close knit-society attitudes that our forefathers had to construct in order to survive.

The hardships that they endured are spoken of in more hushed tones than usual. How long it will take to shrug off this kind of recidivism completely is difficult to calculate.

Meanwhile 2008 is the centenary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Started by an Anglican American, it was refined by a French priest, Abbe Coutourier whose prayer was "as Christ wills it." While it has been heavy going for most of that century, the Vatican Council gave it an official blessing.

All popes from Blessed John XXIII onwards have emphasised the need for unity and the need to pray for it.



JOSEPH KELLY

This year's theme, 'Pray without ceasing', was championed by Pope Benedict when on the eve of the octave he stressed: "It is indeed necessary to pray without ceasing, insistently asking God for the great gift of unity among all the Lord's disciples.

It would be wrong to suggest that little or no progress has been made. It has.

Some paths have been cleared between Catholics and Lutherans, and between the Catholic community and the Orthodox. Even we, in a country in which the Reformation was rigidly and ruthlessly applied, have made progress and for this we should thank God.

As well, we should ask that we step more courageously into an uncertain and unknown future.

Tagged on

Only a simpleton would dream of setting off on such a journey without the necessary preparation. Initially and probably ideally, our Catholic community has to come to recognise that there is a need for communion, for unity and that this is not an optional extra tagged on at the end of believing.

Equally this entails a greater involvement of people. Most basic of all is the need to recognise that in the quest for unity, no one is going anywhere without praying for it.

Right from the very start, the Council Fathers set the guidelines out clearly. "This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name 'spiritual ecumenism'."

Confining prayer for unity to a week in January is self-defeating in terms of spiritual ecumenism.

Christian unity calls out to be kept in the public eye and public prayer all the year round.

Perhaps we could use the Prayers of the Faithful to ask God for forgiveness for the institutional obstacles we have placed in the way of unity.

Attention all group organisers

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