DUNKELD NEWS

SERIES 2 ISSUE 2 DECEMBER 2025



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SUBMISSIONS

The next issue of *Dunkeld News* will published towards the end of March 2026. We welcome your contributions in the form of news, community news, features and opinion articles.

Wherever possible you should also send photographs and/or illustrations with your written contribution. Images should be of the highest quality and as large as possible

Please note you must name all of the people in any photograph, the name of the photographer and you must obtain permission from all of the people in the photograph for it to be used in the magazine.

The deadline for the next edition is

FRIDAY 6 MARCH

Please email your contributions to dunkeldnews@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

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DUNKBLIDNEWS

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Reflections on love, renewal and the spirit of Advent



BY BISHOP ANDREW MCKENZIE

elcome to the Advent edition of the Dunkeld News.

I was delighted with the feedback we received for our first edition, with the smiling face of our Holy Father on the front page. My thanks to all the team for their hard work producing it.

As we enter a holy season of the year preparing for Christ to be born among us and renewed in our hearts, we reflect in these pages on Pope Leo's first exhortation *Dilexi Te*, in which the Holy Father reteaches St Francis' lesson that a preferential love for the poor can renew both the Church and society.

Pope Leo urges us to recognise the growing numbers of people living in poverty, its structural roots and calls for action addressing the deeper causes of poverty and a change in social attitudes toward wealth and dignity. He highlights the value of small gestures of solidarity and recalls St Francis as a model of renewal.

As we always pray and work for those less fortunate than ourselves during Advent, this is a good time to delve deeper into *Dilexi Te*.

A summary of the Pope's exhortation is on Page 19.

Our children are a focus of the gift of life at Christmas. We have a centre pull-out of Advent prayers and puzzles for your children and grandchildren to help them pray and celebrate the coming of the Christ child and his message of love and hope.

As we enter a New Year, I would like to read your news and hear your voices in the *Dunkeld News*.

Please do not hesitate to contact our team if you have something you would like to share. This is our paper, together.

My thanks to all my brother priests and laity for your hard work in our parishes and schools.

You will find news of this in these pages.

For all the unmarked works of love, care and service, I hold you all in my prayers and wish you a happy and holy Christmas.

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More changes made to our parish clergy

Bishop Andrew McKenzie announced a further series of clergy changes in October:

Fr Louis Uwaezuoke was appointed parish priest at St John the Baptist, Perth.

Fr Leszek Wiecaszek, SAC will be appointed as parish priest of Our Lady of Lourdes, and parish priest of St Mary Magdalene's, both Perth.

Canon Steven Mulholland was appointed as parish priest of St Bride's, Pitlochry, including Our Lady of Mercy, Aberfeldy, and St Columba's, Birnam.

















Fr Louis Uwaezuoke, Fr Leszek Wiecaszek, Canon Steven Mulholland, Fr Emmanuel Adindu, Fr Charles Angelo Chukwa, Fr Martin Pletts, Fr Abraham Poonoly and Fr Emmanuel Odeh.

Fr Emmanuel Adindu, MSP was appointed as parish priest of St Joseph's, Callander.

Fr Charles Angelo Chukwa was appointed as parish priest of Holy Family, Dunblane.

In addition Fr Martin

Pletts returned to being parish priest at St James, Kinross, only.

Fr Abraham Poonoly joined Fr Leszek Wiecaszek at Our Lady of Lourdes and St Mary Magdalene's, Perth.

Fr Emmanuel Odeh

joined Canon Kevin Golden within his cluster of parishes in Dundee.

Bishop Andrew expressed his gratitude to all those involved in these moves and their willingness to assist with these new arrangements.

Commemoration in Perth for Polish veterans

Solemn ceremony held at Perth cemetery in honour of Polish war heroes

n 2 November a solemn ceremony was held in Perth to honour the Polish veterans buried in the local cemetery.

The event was attended by representatives of the City of Perth, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Edinburgh, Scouts and many guests from the local communities.

During the ceremony, tribute was paid to all Poles who served their homeland and found their final resting place far from their native country.

A special remembrance was given to the history of Polish veterans in Scotland — men and women who, during the Second World War, fought alongside Allied forces, trained on Scottish soil, built friendships with local communities and later made Scotland their home.

Their legacy remains deeply rooted in



Honouring the memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

gratitude, courage and shared history between Poland and Scotland.

After prayers and the laying of flowers at the graves, the commemoration concluded with Holy Mass celebrated at St Mary Magdalene's, where prayers were offered for the fallen and deceased veterans and their families.

May the memory of their courage and sacrifice endure for generations to come.



CELEBRATING A SHARED FAITH

Young Marist leaders gather in L'Hermitage

BY CANON KEVIN GOLDEN

enedict Okeke, an altar server at St Mary's, writes: 'On 2 October, I was privileged to travel to L'Hermitage along with 10 other Marist leaders from St John's.

'My group and many other Marist leaders gathered to celebrate our shared faith, collaborated with people from various places and deepened our faith with the Marist Brothers' community.

'While there, we explored many locations, including La Valla and Le Rosey, and participated in countless activities at L'Hermitage, providing us opportunities to connect with other Marist leaders.

'During our stay we saw many other schools from the UK.

'We (the Marist leaders) would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the organisers of the entire event: the Marist Education Team.

'From our experience, we have learned that many hearts can be connected through one faith.

"Truly, when two or three gather in his name, he is there with them" (Matthew 18:20) is a powerful testament to this truth.'

Given our proud history of the work and contribution of the Marist Brothers in the parish of St Mary's, Forebank, and indeed in the city of Dundee, it is so edifying to see our young people continuing the Marist tradition and values by undertaking such an experience as this.

Our gratefulness to all who supported them in this endeavour.

Welcoming two new priests to the diocese

wo priests from the Diocese of Minna in Nigeria recently arrived in Dunkeld

Fr Charles Chukwa and Fr Emmanuel Odeh arrived in Scotland in late September and moved to Dundee after acclimatising to the Scottish weather.

Bishop Andrew has appointed Fr Charles to be parish priest at Holy Family, Dunblane, and Fr Emmanuel to join the cluster of parishes in Dundee that include St Andrew's Cathedral.

Fr Charles said: 'I am so glad and privileged to give back to this part of the world, the seed of faith I once received. I thank Bishop Andrew for requesting my service to the Diocese and for entrusting me with this responsibility'.

Fr Emmanuel added: 'I am delighted to be here. It has been wonderful thus far and the people are remarkable and hospitable. I have been received with open hands and lots of love'.

Bishop Andrew thanked both priests for their willingness to come to Scotland and to our Diocese: 'I am delighted to welcome Fr Charles and Fr Emmanuel to the Diocese

'Special thanks to Bishop Martin Uzoukwu of Minna Diocese for allowing them to come to Scotland. I am sure the people of the Diocese will extend a warm welcome to them both'.



Fr Charles.



Fr Emmanuel.

Scottish synodality team in Rome

Scottish members of the Diocese of Dunkeld Synodality Core Group took part in the Jubilee of Synodal Teams and Participatory Bodies in the Vatican from 24-26 October.

Our representatives spoke of a strong sense of welcome and communion as participants gathered in Paul VI Hall and processed through the Holy Door.

Keynote talks addressed hope, ministry, tensions within the Church and the relationship between unity and diversity.

Pope Leo joined the assembly and answered questions.

Delegates also met with participants from many countries and attended a programme of workshops and prayer.

One of the workshops examined the ecumenical potential of the synodal process, highlighting the role of shared silence,



The diocese synodality team: Mary Meg Wilson, Maureen Ruddy, George Haggerty and Mgr Aldo Angelosanto.

mutual listening and respect for the sense of the faithful across Christian communities.

Participants were encouraged to speak of 'all Christians', share gifts, revisit history with openness and consider new ecumenical paths.

A second workshop

set out principles of spiritual and communal discernment, inclusion and attention to people.

Participants were urged to read the signs of the times, engage with social challenges and ground planning in prayer, formation and the vision of Vatican II.

Financial difficulties threaten our schools

St Pius X RC primary is under threat of closure, while Clackmannanshire Council has voted to permanently relocate St Mungo's RC primary to Alloa Academy





The schools at the centre of the controversy. *Pictures from Google Maps.*

BY CANON TOM SHIELDS

t Pius X RC Primary School in Dundee is under threat of closure.

After a long and hard campaign fought by the parent council, the church, local councillors — especially Councillor Dorothy McHugh, and with the help of Michael Marra MSP — the Scottish Government is reviewing the situation at the time of writing, but nothing is certain.

Clackmannanshire Council has voted to make permanent the relocation of St Mungo's RC Primary School to Alloa Academy, a move the Diocese was originally assured was temporary because of flooding in St Mungo's previous home.

Despite the efforts of the parent council and the Church, the Scottish Government has refused to intervene.

The Diocese is moving ahead with the next steps to press the case for a separate school building.

In both cases, neither the parents, the Church nor His Majesty's Inspectorate Scotland (HMI) were convinced of the educational benefits of the decisions by Dundee and Clackmannanshire councils.

In fact, the HMI report in both cases alluded to the struggle it was having to discern any benefits from potential closure or relocation.

Why, then, are these decisions being taken?

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE MONEY BUT IT'S NOT WITHOUT THE MONEY

The short answer is lack of money. Councils and schools are being asked to do more and more with less and less

We can all jump on the bandwagon of complaint, and no doubt some of it is justified, but education is often the second biggest outlay for a council and, with the financial constraints of the last 15 years or so, they are desperate to cut costs.

Councils are human entities and as with any individual, family or community, economic difficulties affect every aspect of relationships.

Councils and their officers can become more evasive, obfuscate and are wary of saying too much. This affects trust. Bluntly, our confidence in how councils are dealing with Catholic schools has been affected.

This is the case not only with the incidents cited, but with a whole

range of issues — recruitment, appointment, training provision and resourcing — while recognising the genuine difficulties councils face.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

It is true that the Diocese has withdrawn from discussions with Dundee City Council that sought to form an overall strategy and plan for the future of our Catholic schools.

This would seem to be a step in the wrong direction. After all, shouldn't we be trying to draw closer not further away?

We took the decision to pause our meetings with Dundee City Council because of the vote to close St Pius, even though we presented cogent and compelling arguments for its remaining open and had made a generous offer to the Council regarding a review of the overall Catholic provision in the City.

However, to rebuild faith, in more ways than one, we must engage more fully with councils as well as schools.

Our young people and families must be our primary focus: their welfare is the shared concern of all involved. Christmas often arrives with bright colours and familiar traditions, yet it can still feel strangely shallow. We should take the opportunity of this Advent to look past the surface and rediscover a celebration that is rooted in hope, depth and the coming of Christ.

BY **BISHOP ANDREW MCKENZIE**

ast year I remember trying to put my Christmas tree up and discovering that it was far larger than the trees I had in previous years.

It was a beautiful tree, but it must have been five or six feet across the bushy bit. Every time I would set it in the old stand it would topple over. So off I went to B&Q searching for a new Christmas tree

I was amazed at the variety of trees on offer. They had artificial trees in all colours, real trees in pots, trees like mine cut off above the ground, fibre optic trees, collapsing trees, trees for your garden, trees for your living room, trees for your car: they even had an upside-down Christmas tree with the bushy bit at the top, designed for smaller houses where floor space is at a premium. They were incidentally sold out of stands!

Now, before you think that this could be a commercial for B&Q, maybe I should get to the

I think there are as many approaches to Christmas as there are Christmas trees. Think about it, there is the artificial approach that sees Christmas back in the box not long after it has begun, only to be introduced and decorated probably in the same way next year. It can be tired and synthetic and amount to very little indeed.

But before you get offended if you treasure your artificial, but environmentally-friendly tree, there are also Christmas trees like mine, beautiful to look at, traditional and real, but severed from their roots. Cut off and taken from the forest with no hope of future growth, no chance that it might tower with the true giants of the forest. It could represent a Christmas beautiful to look at but divorced from life: all show, no depth and little hope for the future.

I am not sure how you resolve this conundrum. Maybe the truth is that it doesn't matter what your tree looks like as long as your approach to Christmas doesn't follow it. Maybe it doesn't matter whether your tree is upside down or artificial as long as your Christmas is real. Rooted not in some snowy fairy-tale world, but in your life and in the life of this community where the Child whose birth we celebrate comes to offer hope for the future and reconciliation for the past.

The solemnity of Christmas involves the careful telling of a beautiful story, generation after generation, year after year, God's plan

unfolding.

At its core is one important truth: this Jesus who is to be born for us is the one who has been awaited for generations. This Jesus is firmly rooted in centuries of longing expectation for there is nothing artificial or contrived here. Here God acts in a never-to-be-repeated way.

The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name that means "God is with us"."

If we take this seriously, if we try to understand it, then Christmas can never be something to be pulled out of the box every 12

For Christmas itself is pregnant with hope, rooted in expectation and nourished with ancient roots. For in Jesus, born in a stable at Bethlehem, God does not come close, he does not pretend to be along with us: he becomes one of us.

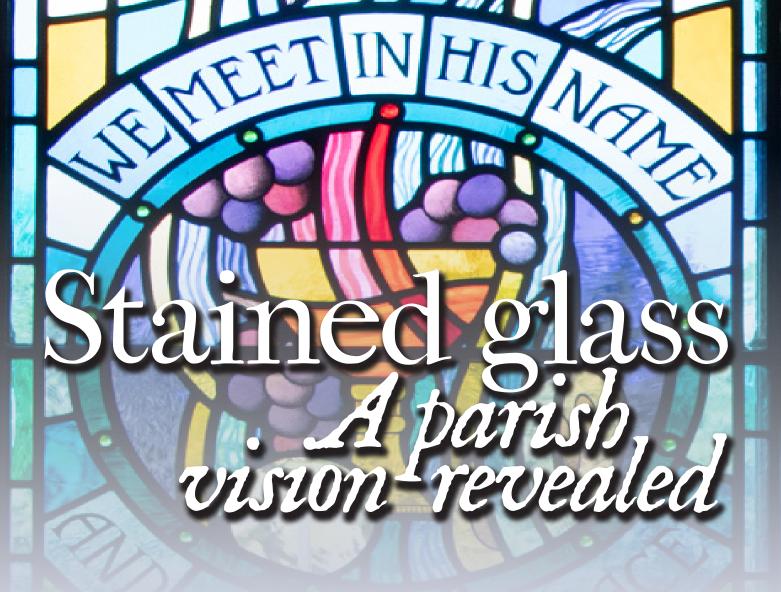
Humanity is changed and offered a new beginning.

The Word made flesh for our salvation. Christmas means a new way of seeing things and an offer of greater union with God.

I felt sorry for my Christmas tree as I looked at it in the days after Christmas. As each day passed it dropped another few needles to the floor. Robbed of its forest majesty it twinkled with fairy lights.

I am glad it wasn't upside down, or pink or brown, and I pray that this Christmas I may proclaim the promise and reconciliation of the one it heralds, 'Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages' but now revealed in our time. If my Christmas tree helps me to do that, then maybe it was the right kind of tree after all.





BY MONSIGNOR BASIL O'SULLIVAN

On 21 September, Bishop Andrew celebrated Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Auchterarder, after which he blessed the church's stainedglass windows by Huntlybased artist Shona McInnes

ow that our bishop has blessed our windows, we can take this opportunity to reflect on them.
We got the idea of installing the windows because we inherited our little country church from a

A beautiful church, they kept it going in good times and bad — usually bad.

very small, poor congregation.

In recent years the congregation shared in the general affluence, and we thought we would enhance our little church for the benefit of those who come after us: hence the stained glass windows.

The medieval purpose of stained glass windows was to turn the natural light of the sun into a proclamation of the wonderful works of God.

Of necessity, there was no overall

plan for them — we don't know how long we are going to get in this world.

Our decisions developed organically as the money came in from the parishioners — the first windows inside the door depict the flora and fauna of the countryside around Auchterarder, with suitable biblical texts.

The second window, on one side Advent and Christmas. on the other Holy Week and Easter.

The next window represents the Rosary and commemorates the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Scotland in 2010 and the beatification of Blessed John Henry Newman with his motto *cor ad cor loquitur* (heart speaks to heart).

Opposite, there are scenes from Scottish church history, including St Ninian, St Columba, St Brigid and St Margaret. It also depicts the reformation and the persecution of the Mass.

At the bottom of the window there is reference to the decree of Pope Leo XIII, *Ex Supremo Apice*, restoring the Scottish hierarchy in March 1878.

In the sanctuary we have a parish family at prayer *Bring flowers* of the fairest, and on the opposite side, the Holy See is represented by the promise of the keys to Peter and St Peter's Basilica, while below we

have the prayer of St Andrew as he welcomes the cross on which he is to be crucified.

Our final windrow represents Auchterarder with its High Street and its motto taken from the Sermon on the Mount: A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.

It is unusual for the same artist to be given the opportunity of creating all the windows of a church.

Thanks to the generosity of the parishioners and the skill of our artist we will be able to hand over our little rustic church to those who come after us in an even more beautiful state than when we received it.

This small Catholic church in Auchterarder, which was built soon after Catholic emancipation allowed public worship again in Scotland, was dedicated to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour at a time when the devotion was just beginning to spread beyond Rome.

It reflected the enthusiasm of early Scottish Catholics, possibly inspired by local Redemptorists or clergy who had studied in Rome or were influenced by that new Marian devotion.

This made it the first parish church to be formally dedicated under that title anywhere in the world.



Pictures by Andrew Mitchell.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Education Jubilee

Parishioners of St Stephen's, Blairgowrie, gathered on 12 October for a special Mass marking the Jubilee of Education, part of the Church's Jubilee Year of Hope celebrations.

The liturgy, led by Fr Gregory Umunna, united parish and school communities in thanksgiving for the mission of Catholic education.



St Stephen's Primary head teacher, Ms Lynsey Smith (pictured), offered a moving reflection on being 'pilgrims of faith', honouring those who built Scotland's Catholic schools in the belief that education forms both minds and hearts.

She spoke of faith guiding her leadership and of Catholic education as 'a source of hope for young people, families and society'.

Quoting Pope Francis, Ms Smith reminded the congregation that hope is bold, and urged all to walk with young people towards the life God promises.

Fr Gregory thanked her for her inspiring witness and her dedication to faith-filled education.

Rainbows

Rainbows at St John's RC Church Hall welcome girls aged 5–7 for fun, friendship and learning. Join us for games, crafts, cooking and caring for others every Friday, 5.30–6.30 pm, Melville Street, Perth.

Contact Anne Mitchell on 01738 628039 or visit bit.ly/4iiPOzk to register.

Catechism Classes

The Missionaries of Charity will run catechism classes at St Clement's for children preparing to receive the Sacraments in 2026, especially those children who are not attending a Catholic school.

Extra tuition is also available for Catholic school pupils.

Please register soon with the Sisters on 01382 612861.

Rite of Initiation

Classes for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) for those thinking of becoming Catholic will begin soon for those not yet baptised or wishing to be received into full communion with the Church.

Please speak to Fr Alexander Obiarah at St Columba's, Dundee, for more information and to make arrangements.

Esther McNair-Chaplin



After 25 years of faithful service, Esther McNair-Chaplin has retired as sacristan at St John the Baptist Church in Perth.

Her quiet dedication, craftsmanship and warmth have left a lasting mark on the parish.

Having lived in Iran, Ethiopia, Uganda and Nigeria before settling in Scotland, Esther brought calm resilience to her work.

A talented needleworker, she cared for the church's linens and vestments, creating beautiful antependia for the altar and ambo.

Fr Ronnie McAinsh of Kinnoull Monastery called her 'the soul of welcome', praising her dignity and beaming smile.

Known for her resourcefulness and generosity, Esther often funded her own materials and even supported other parishes.

As she passes her duties to Sr Colette IMH, parishioners give thanks for a quarter-century of devoted service that enriched the beauty and reverence of worship at St John's.

SCIAF Christmas Fair

This will be held in St Mary's Lochee Church hall from 11am to 1pm on Saturday 6 December. Admission is free

Coffee Morning

St Andrew's Cathedral is holding its Christmas coffee morning from 11am to 1pm on Saturday, 6 December.

Entry £3 for adults. Children free.

Father Malcolm

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Fr Malcolm continues to make steady progress and is now walking short distances with the aid of elbow crutches.

SSVP Appeal

The St Vincent de Paul Society in St John the Baptist parish, Perth, has been asked to coordinate an appeal for good-quality men's clothing which can be donated via Perth Welfare Society in Milne Street any weekday 9.30am-4.40pm.

Parish Meal

St John the Baptist, Perth, is having a merry pre-Christmas parish meal with live music and dancing in the Hall at 6.30pm on Wednesday, 10 December.

Date for the Diary

A Christmas party for all the children up to the age of 12 in Our Lady of Good Counsel, St Patrick's, St Mary's Forebank and St Andrew's Cathedral parishes will take place in St Patrick's Church Hall on Saturday, 20 December.

Perth Italian Circle



After more than 30 years of friendship, faith and service, the Perth Italian Religious Association – also known as the Perth Italian Circle – has formally closed. The occasion was marked by a Mass in Italian at Our Lady of Lourdes, Perth, celebrated by their long-serving chaplain, Mgr Aldo Angelosanto.

Secretary, Miss Norma Giulianotti, thanked the three Perth parishes for their support through pilgrimages, retreats and community events. Over its history, the Association raised more than £40,000 for charities, including the Mukuru Street Children project in Kenya and Mary's Meals in Malawi.

A lifelong parishioner of St Mary Magdalene's, Miss Giulianotti received the Italian community's Medaglia D'Oro for her outstanding service and dedication to cultural integration. She said inclusiveness was always central to the group's mission.

Cleary Cup winner



Nicholas Huzar, a former pupil of SS Peter and Paul's primary school, who is currently in S1 at St John's RC High School, is pictured with Mrs Nessie Cleary after being awarded the Cleary Cup.

The cup was donated by Mrs Cleary and her late husband, Eddie, and is awarded to the pupil who does most to foster links between the school and the parish.

Warm Welcome

Parishioners at St John's, Perth, welcomed Fiona Young and Karen Grant from Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) on 16 October for a moving presentation about the charity's work supporting children with life-shortening conditions and their families.

Fiona spoke about the holistic care provided at Rachel House in Kinross, Robin House in Balloch and in family homes, while Karen outlined CHAS fundraising events such as abseils, parachute jumps and zipslides.

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The talk, both emotional and uplifting, highlighted the compassion and joy found within the hospices.

The morning concluded with the presentation of a £2,742.25 cheque to CHAS from the proceeds of the ZIPSLIDE the Clyde event, supported by donors from across the Diocese of Dunkeld.

Guests, including Fr Abraham and parish volunteers, helped create a warm and prayerful atmosphere as the parish gave thanks for CHAS's vital work and ministry of care.



Christmas Party

SS Leonard & Fergus will hold its over-55s Christmas party on frm 12.30pm on Saturday, 6 December in the church hall, with the meal served at 1pm.

Those who wish to attend should include their name and that of their friend on the sign-up sheet at the back of the Church.



Learning leadership in the Eternal City

BY BISHOP ANDREW MCKENZIE

his September I took part in the Course for New Bishops in Rome run by the Dicastery for Bishops and affectionately and unofficially known as the Baby Bishops' Course. It was a gathering of bishops from around the world, all ordained, roughly speaking, in the last 12 months.

The purpose of the course was to introduce new bishops to various subjects that should be of help to the bishop in the administration of the diocese.

Around 250 bishops from around the world took part.

It was my first visit to Rome as a bishop and an unforgettable reminder of the universality of the Church.

The formal title of the course was Witnesses and Announcers of Hope Founded in Christ.

We were encouraged as bishops to be messengers of hope and builders of bridges in today's world.

We were reminded of the importance of the Synodal Journey on the structures, life and leadership of the diocesan community.

Practical matters were also included, concerning young people, safeguarding, religious and the migration crisis facing many countries of the world.

Aside from the formal lectures. two events will remain with me.

On Sunday 7 September we were privileged to take part in the canonisation of St Carlo Acutis and St Pier Giorgio Frassati.

Carlo Acutis has been referred to as the 'patron saint of the Internet', 'God's Influencer' and the 'first millennial saint'.

Pier Giorgio Frassati is remembered for his zest for life, devotion to prayer, generosity to the poor and commitment to justice.

Both men serve as an example for young and old alike.

As the canonisation liturgy began, we processed out through the doors of St Peter's Basilica and were seated before the huge crowd gathered in St Peter's Square.

In bright sunshine we soaked up the atmosphere and found inspiration from the faith of so many and the example of St Carlo Acutis and St Pier Giorgio Frassati.

The second event took place the following Wednesday, 11 September when we were invited to meet His Holiness Pope Leo XIV.

Before greeting us individually Pope Leo remarked that he had 'thought of coming on the course himself, dressed in black!'

He, of course, having not long been appointed Bishop of Rome.

The Pope was relaxed and friendly, speaking in both Italian and English, he recalled the identity of the bishop, encouraging the new bishops 'to walk in humility and prayer, and to make themselves servants of the people'.

Afterwards we queued to greet the Pope. When it came my turn. I introduced myself as the Bishop of Dunkeld and thanked the Pope 'for doing this', meaning for taking time to greet everyone.

To this he replied: 'The same to you', by which he meant agreeing to be Bishop of Dunkeld!

The Baby Bishops' Course was an experience that I will not forget!



St Carlo Acutis.



St Pier Giorgio Frassati.

Pope Leo XIV and Bishop Andrew. Picture © Vatican Media.

Understanding Grace: A Catholic education

BY CANON TOM SHIELDS

Julie Walters stands up in an assembly hall and says: 'I'm going to say good morning, and you're going to reply good morning headmistress'.

This is an early scene in the film Ahead of the Class, based on the true story of Dame Marie Stubbs who took over at St George's RC school after it had been placed on special measures following the murder of its former head teacher Philip Lawrence.

PRESSURE

Even a decade ago, you might have thought this film depicted events not typical of the average school. I'm afraid the scenes depicted are are all too common in some.

Trying to hold it all together are under-pressure teachers working with fewer resources.

In the middle of this is the often fragile relationship between teacher and pupil: the former frustrated by the behaviour of some, hampered by workload and the increasing expectations of a society that wants schools to solve all our ills.

Recent surveys show 96% of teachers say they are coping with increasing mental health problems among pupils, 80% have experienced violence or abuse, while 48% of teachers and 61% of head teachers have considered leaving the profession.

UNDERSTANDING GRACE

While there is artistic license in *Ahead* of the Class, the basics are there: the insistence on lesson plans, getting children to attend and teachers to be able to teach. The energy comes from a will to educate and better the lives of the pupils, in getting to know people, establishing a relationship and having a perspective that looks up rather than down.

Whether by accident or design, a crucifix is in every other shot.

In one scene, the chaplain is reciting the beatitudes when a fight breaks out: he keeps going while Marie Stubbs



Canon Tom Shields.

Grace does not destroy nature but perfects it

ST THOMAS AOUINAS

takes out the offenders and speaks to them.

Catholic education is about conversion of the whole person. We believe the grace of Christ operates at all levels, bringing the person closer to God through each human encounter.

'Grace does not destroy nature but perfects it', wrote St Thomas Aquinas, who knew a thing or two.

This is what the staff in our Catholic schools and catechism classes are engaged in up and down the country.

AN EDUCATIONAL CONSTELLATION

'I speak of a "constellation", because the world of Catholic education is a living and pluralistic network... Each "star" has its own brightness, but together they chart a course. Where in the past there was rivalry, now we ask the institutions to converge' (Pope Leo XIV, *Drawing New Maps of Hope*).

This statement from the Holy Father sums it up beautifully. Only by replacing the pull and push of a polarised society with the grace-filled work of a community of faith, and only by strengthening our institutions instead of weakening them with endless individualistic and consumerist demands can we really encourage hope.

The Vicar Episcopal for Education in the Diocese of Dunkeld attempts to facilitate this. I have emerged from more than eight years of firefighting and reacting to crises to finally realise that it is together in grace that we Christianise the human.



Canon Tom with pupils from St Dominic's RC Primary in Crieff.

Pull out these fun pages and use them during Advent to prepare for the birth of the Baby Lord Jesus

The birth of our Saviour

Mary and Joseph were travelling to Bethlehem because the ruler wanted everyone to go back to the town their family came from and write down their names.

When they reached Bethlehem, the town was so busy that there was no room anywhere.

The only place they could stay was a small stable.

That night, Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him in cloth and laid him in a manger.

Out in the fields, shepherds were

watching their sheep when angels appeared and told them that a Saviour had been born.

They hurried to the stable and knelt before Jesus with joy.

Later, wise men followed a bright star across distant lands. The star stopped over the place where Jesus was, and they brought gifts to honour him

Jesus was born in a simple place to show that God's love is for everyone.

His birth invites us to welcome him and share his kindness with others.



DEAR GOD

Thank You for this special time of Advent, a season of waiting and preparing for the birth of Jesus.

Help us to slow down and remember that Christmas is about Your great love for us.

Fill our hearts with hope, peace, joy and love as we share kindness with others and celebrate the gift of Jesus.

AMEN





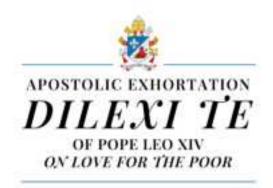
HOW MANY WORDS AND NAMES CAN YOU FIND?

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ELIZABETH	JESUS	JOSEPH	BORN	AFRAID
SON	KINGDOM	DAVID	GABRIEL	BIRTH
MARY	TOWN	ANGEL	THRONE	VIRGIN

DEAR LORD

Please bless our families, our friends and everyone in the world who is waiting for Your love to shine in their lives. Help us to remember that Christmas is not just about presents and decorations, but about the greatest gift of all... JESUS.





The care of the poor is part of the Great Tradition of the Church, like a beacon of light that, from the Gospel onward, has illuminated the hearts and steps of Christians of all time. Therefore, we should feel the urgency to invite everyone to immerse themselves in this river of light and of life that comes from recognising Christ in the face of the needy and the suffering. For us Christians, the question of the poor leads to what is essential in our faith, since the poor are not a sociological category, but the very body of Christ.

ope Leo XIV's exhortation offers a heartfelt reflection on what it means to love the poor in the light of the Gospel.

Written in a simple, pastoral voice, it continues the mission of Pope Francis, reminding us that love for God cannot be separated from love for those who struggle.

The title comes from the words of Christ in the Book of Revelation: 'I have loved you'.

The Holy Father begins by recalling that God's love always starts with those who seem forgotten or powerless. Every act of compassion toward someone in need, he says, is an act of love offered directly to Christ himself.

When Jesus identifies with the hungry, the sick and the stranger, he leaves no room for a faith that turns away from human suffering.

The exhortation draws on the story of Moses and the burning bush, when God said, 'I have heard my people's cry'.

That same cry, Pope Leo writes, still rises today — from the poor, the elderly, the unemployed, the displaced and the lonely.

Their suffering is not a background noise to be tolerated, but a call from God that demands a response.

The Holy Father warns against the belief that poverty is a personal failure or that the poor are to blame for their condition.

Instead, he invites every believer to look on them with the same tenderness that God shows in Scripture.

Jesus, he reminds us, lived and died as a poor man. From the stable in Bethlehem to the cross on Calvary, his life was marked by humility and closeness to those on the margins.

A Church that claims to follow him must also be 'poor and for the poor' — a community that shares the hopes and sorrows of ordinary people and that refuses to look away from injustice.

Love for the poor, the Pope insists, is not a side concern but part of the core of our faith.

The parable of the Last Judgment in Matthew's

Gospel remains a mirror for every disciple: we are judged not by our words, but by our mercy.

The first Christians understood this clearly when they shared their possessions and cared for widows, orphans and the sick.

Throughout history, the saints have shown that loving the poor is at the heart of Christian holiness.

Whether through the service of the sick, the education of children, or the welcome given to migrants and strangers, their witness reveals that charity is never just sentiment — it is the love of Christ made visible.

Pope Leo calls this enduring witness a 'living chain of mercy' that continues through every generation.

Yet *Dilexi Te* also reminds us that personal charity is not enough. Love must extend into the social order, shaping communities and economies where every person's dignity is respected.

The Church's social teaching, from *Rerum Novarum* to *Fratelli Tutti*, is presented as a continuous call to build a world of justice, solidarity and peace.

In one of the document's most striking points, Pope Leo says that the poor themselves can evangelise the Church.

Their faith, patience and hope reveal the face of Christ and teach us to depend more fully on God.

Finally, the Holy Father encourages Christians to rediscover simple acts of mercy — service, prayer and almsgiving — as living expressions of love.

He calls almsgiving 'the wing of prayer', lifting both giver and receiver toward heaven.

At its heart, *Dilexi Te* is a reminder that the measure of Christian love is found in how we respond to those who suffer.

When the Church listens to the cry of the poor, it reflects the heart of Christ himself.

SOCIAL MEDIA

FRANCESCA FORBES



Over recent months, our social media channels have continued to highlight the life and mission of the Church.

Among the many moments shared were coverage of the Vocations Mass, and messages and prayers from Mgr Ken McCaffrey in Lourdes, as part of the autumn pilgrimage with the Diocese of Killaloe.

We also accompanied Mgr Aldo Angelosanto and the Synod group in Rome for the Jubilee of Synodal Teams and Participatory Bodies, marking another step on our Synodal journey. Closer to home, our Diocesan Mission Day at St Mary's, Forebank, provided a meaningful opportunity for reflection, renewal, and shared faith.

Francesca manages content across Facebook, Instagram. TikTok and X, covering key events, pilgrimages and liturgical celebrations.



tinyurl.com/dunkelddiocese



tiktok.com/@dioceseofdunkeld



instagram.com/dioceseofdunkeld/



x.com/DunkeldDiocese



Simone McCourt, Clare McGraw, Carole Smith, Bishop Andrew, Joanne McCourt, Anna McCourt. *Picture by DPAPS*.

BY FRANCESCA FORBES

Based at St Columba's
Presbytery, Dundee,
Dundee Pregnancy and
Parenthood Support (DPAPS)
is a local voluntary organisation
dedicated to helping pregnant
women, parents and families across
Dundee and the surrounding area.

Led by Joanne McCourt and Clare McGraw, DPAPS provides practical assistance and compassionate support rooted in the Catholic Church's belief in the intrinsic value of every human life.

The team sorts, cleans and checks all donated baby clothes and equipment to ensure high quality for families in need.

With an open-door policy and commitment to privacy, DPAPS offers companionship, respect and a welcoming space for anyone seeking help.

The service is entirely volunteerrun, and new volunteers are always welcome — whether to help sort donations, clean items or assist families directly.

At present, DPAPS is especially looking for donations of larger baby items such as cots, buggies, prams and highchairs, though all baby essentials are greatly appreciated.

Donations can be brought on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings or left in the collection bin beside the building whenever the main gates are open.

To learn more or get involved with the organisation, then please check the DPAPS Facebook page at bit.ly/49N76SZ

DUNDEE PREGNANCY AND PARENTHOOD SUPPORT

We urgently need cots and buggies.

Open Tuesday and Wednesday 9.30am to 12pm

Thank you for your kindness and support.

07453 784295

dundee1paps@gmail.com

St Columba's Presbytery Beside St Columba's RC Church Near Asda in Kirkton.





LETTER FROM ROME

A new academic year has begun at the seminary in Rome, marked by a reflective retreat, busy studies and remarkable encounters.



King Charles III and Queen Camilla at the Vatican. Picture by Heute.at (CC BY 4.0).

he new term is under way at the seminary. The year started with the annual retreat given by Fr Mark Sultana, Spiritual Director at the Archbishop's Seminary in Malta, which is held at the convent of the Sisters of Christ the Redeemer in Bagnoregio.

The retreat put us on the right track for the coming year and the seminarians have settled into the rhythm of college life with courses at the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Pontifical University of St Thomas (Angelicum) and more.

Of course, we have Mass and Morning and Evening Prayer together, and as the seminarians also have to find time for their private study and meditation, it is no wonder they wish there were 48 hours in a day

Life here in Rome is also peppered

with events that are outside the ordinary. Along with the Venerable English and the Pontifical Beda colleges, we hosted a celebration to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Priesthood of Cardinal Arthur Roche, who has been a great friend to and supporter of the college.

We marked the occasion with Evening Prayer at which the Cardinal presided and preached, followed by a reception attended by the communities of all three colleges and some of the Cardinal's friends.

We welcomed King Charles and Queen Camilla during their state visit to the Holy See.

As rector I was invited to the Service of Midday Prayer in the Sistine Chapel. The liturgy was led by the Holy Father who was joined in prayer by the Archbishop of York.

In the afternoon, all were present

at an ecumenical service in St Paul's and at a reception at the Beda for the King and Queen, who were piped in to the college by Deacon Matthew McCafferty.

Then we were present at Mass celebrated by Pope Leo for the members of the pontifical universities, while at the end of the week wes celebrated again with the Holy Father at the Mass at which St John Henry Newman was declared a Doctor of the Church.

Six of our seminarians served at the Mass, something that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.

All these experiences remind me what a privilege it is to be in Rome and what a formation it offers our seminarians.

Please continue to pray for our men as they discern where and in what way God is calling them to serve him.

The light of Advent and of Christmas

BY FATHER LESZEK WIECASZEK

Only God made man can save us from losing ourselves. And only those who kneel before Him truly know what it means to be free.

dvent is a time of waiting — not just for Christmas Day, but for the moment when God draws near again.

At Christmas, something wonderful happens: God reveals Himself in human form. The Child of Bethlehem is more than a lovely

story or a symbol of peace: He is the living sign of who we truly are and who we are meant to become.

Many people today search for meaning and identity: Who am I? What gives my life purpose?

When we lose sight of God as our Creator, we begin to build life on our own terms.

But when God is pushed aside, freedom becomes fragile and often empty.

Advent reminds us that God's answer to our confusion is not a theory, but His presence.

In Jesus, God enters our humanity completely.

He does not take away what it means to be human — He embraces it.

He shows us that true freedom and faith belong together, and that life itself is a gift to be received, not something to be endlessly redesigned. The manger in Bethlehem teaches us a new kind of greatness. God becomes small — a child who needs care and love.

This tells us that greatness is not about power or success, but about the capacity to love.

True freedom is not creating ourselves, but being thankful for the gift of who we are.

The Child of Bethlehem comes to heal what sin has broken.

He reminds us that we are not trapped by our weaknesses. God's grace can lift us up and love can

make us new.

Every time we pray, receive the sacraments or show kindness, Christ is born again in us.

The true meaning of Christmas is not just remembering what happened long ago, but letting God renew our hearts today.

When we allow the light of Bethlehem to shine into our lives, we remember that we were created by love — and called to share that love with others.

So, what does all this mean for the world where many try to live as if God were unnecessary?

The Child in the manger whispers a quiet yet powerful truth: only God made man can save humanity from losing itself.

And only those who kneel before Him — in wonder, humility and love — truly know what it means to be free.



Luisa Campbell.

Scots Bishops appoint their new General Secretary

he Bishops of Scotland have appointed Luisa Campbell to succeed Fr Gerry aguiness as General Secretary of the Bishops' Conference from February next year.

Luisa has long been active in the Church at parish and diocesan level, involved in youth work, administration, liturgy, evangelisation, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and finance.

She retired in 2020 to focus on voluntary service in the Church.

Her professional background includes degrees in engineering and business administration and nearly 40 years in industry, including more than 20 as chief executive of a Scottish company.

She has experience in leadership, governance, strategy, finance, mergers and acquisitions and organisational development, and has also served as a charity trustee, non-executive director and pension scheme trustee.

Raised in the Diocese of Galloway and with experience living and working across Scotland, she will be the first layperson as well as the first woman to hold the post.

Luisa said she is looking forward to serving the bishops in her new role.

Bishop John Keenan, President of the Bishops' Conference, welcomed her appointment and highlighted her service to the Church and her professional experience.



THE TRUE MEANING OF THE NATIVITY: GOD MADE HUMAN, LOVE MADE VISIBLE

Christmas holds a special place in our hearts, recalling both childhood wonder and divine love. As the world rushes past the season, we are invited to rediscover its true meaning: God made human, love made visible.

love Christmas. I appreciate that, theologically, Easter is a more important feast, but I think the birth of a child is something that always touches every heart.

We are reminded about Christmas by commercial companies and stores from mid-October. The reality is that for most of the commercial world, Christmas starts in mid-autumn and ends on 24 December.

For we who are members of the Church, Christmas begins on 25 December and ends either on 6 January, the feast of the Epiphany or, to be more liturgically correct, on 2 February, the feast of the Presentation in the Temple, which is the official end of the Christmas season.

And of course, we have that wonderful period before Christmas called Advent, when we wait with quiet joy for the birth of this child, when our thoughts are with Mary, who was carrying the child, and Joseph, the upright man to whom she was married, as they began their journey to Bethlehem.

What was it that made the angels sing with joy? What was it that brought the shepherds and the Wise Men hastening to the feet of Jesus?

I believe it was a deep realisation that something world-changing happened in that moment when God became one of us. That moment when as a human being, He took on our flesh and was born as one of us.

That is why my favourite line of the Bible is 'Thus God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten son' (John 3.16).

It was an act of extravagant and overwhelming love that caused the Father to send His Son to enter into our human existence and to give it a dignity and a new meaning.

That is why Christmas is such a time of hope and promise and joy, because God became human so that we humans could share the very life of God in a truly real way. And that is just what He did.

'He was born in an obscure village, the son of a peasant woman. He grew up and worked in a carpenter's shop until He was 30. Then for three years He was a wandering preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held office. He never had a family. He never owned a house. He didn't go to university. He never visited a big city. He never travelled more than 200 miles from where He was born. He did none of the things usually

associated with greatness. Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today He is still the central figure of the human race and the leader of humanity's progress. And all the armies that have ever marched, and all the navies that have ever sailed, and all the parliaments that have ever sat and all the kings that have ever ruled, all put together, have not influenced the life of people on this earth as much as this one solitary life'.

Jesus it is who shows us the face of the Father. We may not be able to understand the mystery of God, but we can all understand another human heart and another human personality: and in the face of Jesus, we come to know God.

This Christmas I suggest we reflect on the Nativity story again. I suggest we visit the crib in the days after Christmas and just spend a few moments there, giving thanks for this Child.

The community in the Monastery at Kinnoull, wishes everyone in the Diocese a very happy and blessed Christmas.

On Christmas afternoon, after our evening prayer, each one of us will renew our vows — trying to give back to God the wonderful gift of life that has been shared with us.

Happy Christmas.





MISSION STATEMENT

- The diocese is called to a shared, inclusive vision.
- Catholic identity gains meaning when lived in community.
- Clergy should unite around a common mission.
- This mission should be outward-looking and welcoming.
- The goal is to draw people back to a Church that is changing and looking ahead.

LISTENING

- The Church should listen and make space for people's experiences.
- It needs to understand why it seems exclusive to some.
- Questions of exclusion call for compassion and an outward focus.
- Falling attendance requires reflection on why people leave.
- Listening at every level should guide how the Church meets people's needs.

YOUTH

- Young people need meaningful roles in parish life.
- Stronger school links and active priestly presence matter.
- Family involvement supports youth engagement.
- Parishes should follow good examples and offer varied roles.
- Retreats and pilgrimages help formation, so costs should be eased.

SOCIAL ASPECT

- Parish social groups build community and help welcome newcomers.
- Broad involvement in parish events is valuable.
- Ecumenical co-operation meets local needs and supports shared action.
- The Church should be present in the community while keeping a clear Catholic identity.
- Simple ideas can invite engagement and support prayer for others.



Mission and the modern **Roman Catholic identity**

Dunkeld's Mission Conference called clergy and laity to renewal through listening, inclusion, youth engagement and shared mission in today's changing Church.

BY **FATHER MIKE FREYNE**

A DAY FOR REFLECTION AND RENEWAL

The Diocese of Dunkeld's annual Mission Conference took place on 18 October, continuing a long-standing tradition of gathering clergy and laity on the eve of World Mission Sunday. Once again, the day was marked by prayer, reflection and lively discussion, guided by Bishop Andrew and the diocesan community.

This year's theme, Mission and the Modern Catholic Identity, was led by guest speaker Duncan MacLaren, former director of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) and Caritas Internationalis.

Though now retired, Duncan remains active in Catholic social action and synodality. His talk explored how mission today must balance faith identity with outreach in a changing world.

RETHINKING MISSION IN DUNKELD

Participants joined in discussion in the spirit sessions, asking what could our mission be in the Diocese of Dunkeld? Across five groups, several key themes emerged.

There was broad recognition of the good work already taking place, but also awareness of the challenges posed by an ageing population and the need for renewal. A recurring call was for collaboration between bishop, priests and people in developing a shared diocesan vision of mission — one that looks outward, focuses on inclusion and invites people back to a living, dynamic Church.

LISTENING, INCLUSION AND DIALOGUE

Listening to those who feel excluded is seen as being central to the Church's mission. Participants spoke of the importance of understanding why some have drifted away and of reaching out with compassion

to those who feel unwelcome due to divorce, sexual orientation or past hurts. True renewal, it was agreed, requires listening from the top down, building communities that reflect Christ's love.

ENGAGING THE YOUNG

Another major theme was youth involvement. Delegates emphasised the need for deeper engagement with schools and young people beyond primary level, with priests taking an active and visible role. Suggestions included youth Masses, children's liturgies, retreats and service projects, as well as family-centred parish life to encourage shared participation.

COMMUNITY AND ECUMENISM

The social life of parishes was seen as being vital in strengthening community. From coffee mornings to parish groups, such activities were viewed as ways to build relationships and renew the Church's missionary spirit. Participants also highlighted the value of working with other Christian denominations and community groups, promoting mutual support, joint prayer and public witness.

A NEW MISSIONARY AGE

The conference concluded with a reflection on Pope Leo's recent appeal for a new missionary age — a mission of remaining that proclaims Christ through hospitality, compassion and solidarity. Rather than focusing solely on missions abroad, participants were urged to recognise the missionary field within their own streets and parishes.

The day closed with gratitude and encouragement as Dunkeld continues to discern how best to live out its call to be a Church of welcome, service and hope.

Treading the path of faith

BY FATHER ALEXANDER OBIORAH

ommunion with the dead.

In full consciousness of
this communion of the whole
Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the
Church in its pilgrim members,
from very earliest days of the
Christian religion, has honoured
with great respect the memory of the
dead; and 'because it is a holy and
wholesome thought to pray for the
dead that they may be loosed from
their sins', she offers her suffrages
for them'. Our prayer for them is
capable not only of helping them,

but also of making their intercession for us effective (CCC #958).

This excerpt from the Catechism comes under the analysis of the 9th article of faith.

In line with this beautiful practice and long-standing tradition of the Church, the parishioners of SS Leonard and Fergus and St Columba's, Dundee, visited Birkhill Cemetery on 3 November on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, to pray for the departed souls.



Parishioners at Birkhill Cemetery.



Fr Alex Obiorah.



n his message for the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees on 4–5 October, Pope Leo described migrants and refugees as witnesses of hope in a world marked by conflict, inequality and displacement.

He warned that war, climate crisis and economic injustice have created frightening scenarios, forcing millions to flee their homes, with more than 123 million people displaced globally by the end of 2024.

Migrants, the Pope said, embody the virtue of hope through their courage, resilience and faith, showing humanity's longing for peace and dignity. Communities that welcome them also become living witnesses to hope, recognising all people as children of God.

Pope Leo urged Catholics to see migration as a mission, calling migrants missionaries of hope who can renew faith and vitality in host communities.

Their presence, he said, is a divine blessing and a grace that gives new energy and hope to the Church.

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£20	£80	£960	£1200			
£25	£100	£1200	£1500			

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GIFT AID HELPS OUR PARISHES AND DIOCESE THRIVE.

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WORDS ON THE WORD

J. J. Collins, G. Hens-Piazza, B. Reid and D. Senior (eds) (2022), *The Jerome Biblical Commentary for the 21st Century*, 3rd ed., £83.99 hb

J. E. Aguilar Chiu, R. J. Clifford, C. J. Dempsey, E. M. Schuller, T. D. Stegman, R. D. Witherup (eds) (2018), *The Paulist Biblical Commentary*, £86.04 hb

ne of the most important emphases in Vatican II's reform of the liturgy was to stress that the liturgy of the Eucharist (Mass) was divided into two complementary parts: the breaking of the word and the breaking of the bread.

Breaking the word, however, demands of the preacher (mandated to do so in the Sunday Eucharist) to expound on the scripture readings given in the lectionary; demands also of the hearers of the word to be able to receive what is thrown at them in desperation by the preacher.

Both need an informed perspective on the complexities of the biblical narratives.

In fact, however, the Bible has become a closed book to most families in the UK — witness the extremely clever young people taking part in the likes of University Challenge who know everything but the answers to Bible knowledge questions.

Yet, biblical knowledge has never been more impressively available, as these two commentaries illustrate.

In both, the clerical/male dominance has been expanded by a substantial number of female biblical scholars, religious and lay.

Offering a verse-by-verse explanation of every book of the Bible, backed by succinctly expounded scholarship, edited to a remarkable lucidity, and at an affordable price (OK, a meal

ne of the most important for two at a good restaurant or a emphases in Vatican nightclub venture for a student) II's reform of the liturgy these commentaries provide stress that the liturgy of all that the reader needs.

Well, almost. You still need to get your Bible off the shelf.

Regarding Bible translations, I would gently note the version currently used in our lectionary, the English Standard Version, Catholic Edition, reflects a traditional approach to language and interpretation, which may resonate with some, for others it may be less aligned with recent developments in biblical scholarship and contemporary English usage.

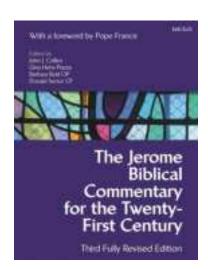
The New Revised Standard Version is the most accurate translation, available for around £10, but it is not designed for reading in the liturgy unless the readers can supply the missing punctuation.

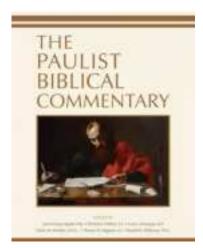
The new revised translation of the Jerusalem Bible, using inclusive language and approved by the bishops' conferences of Ireland, Canada and Australia is the best bet.

Most translations are done by a committee, so the objective of the horse ends up as a camel.

Nicholas King SJ has produced a fresh translation of the Bible the early Christians knew, translating the Greek version of the Old Testament with the New.

Highly recommended.







A FAMILY OF HOPE

A zeal for the dignity of the Blessed Sacrament is what will revive parishes



ow do we get a parish to function and operate like a family of hope? This is a question that challenges many parishes, and indeed, dioceses.

And from my understanding, across the Catholic world our responses often seem to try and make the parish more 'fun'.

But this formula misses the point. We

need to get back to basics.

Our Holy Mother Church teaches that the Eucharist is the 'source and summit' of Christian life; therefore, any answer to our challenges must necessarily involve the Eucharist.

Take, with this insight, the fact the Christian is called to minister at the

In the context of the Eucharist, this must surely mean those members of our parish communities who cannot travel to the Church for the Eucharistic celebration and communion.

So far, so good.

And yet, what can we do in this ministry that would ensure our parishes operate as families of hope?

Too often, the ministry of communion for the home-bound is a lonely affair with the

Viaticum, by Domingos Rebelo (1919). Nucleo de Arte Sacra do Museu Carlos Machado.

Father Jason is a native of Goa. He studied law at the National Law School of India and obtained a master's degree and a doctorate in anthropology at ISCTE-Lisbon University Institute. He worked for some years at the Centre for Research in Anthropology at ISCTE before being ordained as a priest. He currently serves in the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman.

minister trudging off by oneself. God bless their service!

Yet how wonderful it would be, and how much things would change, if this minister were to go, not singly, but in the company of volunteers!

Accompaniment out of consideration not just for the minister or the communicant, but for the sake of the dignity of the Blessed Sacrament!

Ferrying Him in a four-wheeler or even processing on foot.

And how wonderful, if it were not just one person who travelled with the minister, but many, all caring for the dignity of the Blessed Sacrament.

If the visit of the minister of communion becomes not a single affair, but one in which the entire parish or neighbourhood participates, I am convinced our parishes would start becoming families of hope.

Care for the Eucharist and care for our home-bound brethren would ensure that it is not just the job of the minister, but a task that all of us feel obliged, and delight, to participate in, changing the character of our parish!

Nurturing a culture of care

Diocese safeguarding statement 2025

BY **BISHOP ANDREW MCKENZIE**

Dear brothers and sisters. It falls to me as Bishop to make our annual safeguarding statement and to renew our commitment to the support of survivors of all forms of abuse.

s always, our goal is to nurture a culture of care within our Diocese by demonstrating a shared commitment to creating safe church environments, offering shelter, support and compassion to all those affected by abuse.

Our safeguarding procedures are there to assist in creating this culture of care.

These procedures include our safe recruitment policy, which makes sure volunteers do not start their ministries until all necessary checks are completed, and our mandatory reporting policy, which ensures all allegations of abuse are reported to the police.

Safeguarding training plays a vital role in equipping all volunteers, group leaders and parish safeguarding co-ordinators with the knowledge to report all safeguarding issues appropriately.

Our clergy also receive training in safeguarding procedures and associated topics.

While these processes are crucial, it is equally important that our culture of



We pledge our commitment to offer the best support possible to anyone who needs our help.

care encourages all in our parishes and communities to be vigilant, care for each other and pass on any safeguarding concerns.

I wish to give my thanks to Roger Bromage and members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group whose knowledge and expertise continues to guide us in our aim to ensure our people, places and activities are safe within a culture of transparency and understanding.

Additionally, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Linda Gourlay, our Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, to clergy, parish safeguarding co-ordinators and volunteers for their ongoing work and commitment to safeguarding.

We humbly reach out to all *survivors* of abuse within the Catholic Church. There is no time limit for those who have suffered to come forward to share their experience of abuse.

We pledge our commitment to offer the best support possible to anyone who needs our help.

I ask that you all remember survivors of abuse in your prayers as we continue to pray for their healing and peace.

With every good wish. Yours in Christ,

Charlenge

On behalf of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group

IF YOU ARE A SURVIVOR OF ABUSE BY SOMEONE WITHIN THE CHURCH AND WANT TO FIND OUT WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE, YOU CAN DO SO BY CONTACTING OUR DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR IN CONFIDENCE

OUR SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR IS LINDA GOURLAY

safeguardingadvisor@dunkelddiocese.org.uk
01382 225453 (Option 5)

The Catholic Church in Scotland has a mandatory reporting policy. The means all allegations of abuse are reported to the police. Although all allegations are reported, you will have the right to decide whether or not to engage with the police at this stage. If you wish to make a statement to the police, or if you decide you are unable to do so at the moment, the Safeguarding Advisor is still available to offer you support.

BISHOP OF DUNKELD

Right Rev. Andrew McKenzie bishops-secretary@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

VICAR GENERAL

Very Rev. Kevin J. Canon Golden kevin.golden@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

VICARS EPISCOPAL

Adult Faith Formation

Very Rev. Kevin J. Canon Golden kevin.golden@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Clergy

Very Rev. Andrew Clark fr.andrew.clark@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Ecumenism and Inter-Faith Dialogue

Very Rev. Louis Uwaezuoke louis.uwaezuoke@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Education

Very Rev. Dr Thomas Canon Shields thomas.shields@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Mission, Justice and Peace

Very Rev. Mike Freyne stbernadette@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Religious

Very Rev. Elias Gweme elias.gweme@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Youth

Very Rev. Michael Ngobili michael.ngobil@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Vocations Director

Very Rev. Jim Walls james.walls@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

PARISH DIRECTORY AND TIMES OF MASSES

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL, BROUGHTY FERRY:

Canon Kevin Golden standrew@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 5.30pm (Sat), 9.45am **Weekday**: Mon-Fri 10am

Holy Day of Obligation: Vigil 6pm

(previous evening), 9am

OUR LADY OF LOURDES, PERTH:

Father Leszek Wiecaszek ourladyoflourdes@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 5pm (Sat), 10am **Weekday**: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

OUR LADY OF MERCY, ABERFELDY:

Canon Steven Mulholland

stbridespitlochry@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9.30am

Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR, AUCHTERARDER:

Monsignor Basil O'Sullivan chancellor@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 10am Weekday: Wed 10am

Holy Day of Obligation: Vigil 6pm

OUR LADY OF SORROWS, DUNDEE:

Father Gregory Murphy

ourladyofsorrows@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11.30am

Weekday: Mon, Wed 10am

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA, TAYPORT:

Monsignor Patrick McInally stcolumbacupar@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: Vigil 5pm (Sat) Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

SS LEONARD AND ST FERGUS', DUNDEE:

Father Alex Obiorah

stleonardstfergus@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 6pm (Sat), 10am **Weekday**: Mon, Wed 6.30pm, Fri

9.30am

Holy Day of Obligation: Vigil 6pm (previous evening), As announced

SS PETER AND PAUL, DUNDEE:

Monsignor Ken McCaffrey

stpeterandstpaul@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: Vigil 6pm (Sat), 10am

Weekday: 9.30am

Holy Day of Obligation: Vigil 7pm,

9.30am

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL, DUNDEE:

Canon Kevin Golden

standrew@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11am, 6pm

Weekday: 1pm (daily except Sat); 10am

(Sat)

Holy Day of Obligation; 1pm, 7pm

ST ANNE'S, CARNOUSTIE:

Monsignor Aldo Angelosanto stbridesmonifieth@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9.30am

Weekday: Tues, Fri 10am Holy Day of Obligation: 11am

ST ANTHONY'S, KIRRIEMUIR:

Father Dijo Thomas stfergusandanthony@ dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: 9.15am

Weekday: Tue, Fri 9.30am **Holy Day of Obligation**: 6pm

ST BERNADETTE'S, TULLIBODY:

Father Michael Freyne

stbernadette@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 5.30pm (Sat), 8.30am,

11.30am

Weekday: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Sat

9.30am, Frid 7pm

Holy Day of Obligation: 9.30am, 7pm

ST BRIDE'S, MONIFIETH:

Monsignor Aldo Angelosanto stbridesmonifieth@dunkelddiocese.org.uk Sunday: Vigil 5pm (Sat), 11.30am Weekday: Mon, Thurs 10am Holy Day of Obligation: 9.30am, 7pm

ST BRIDES'S, PITLOCHRY:

Canon Steven Mulholland

stbridespitlochry@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11.30am Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST CLEMENT'S, DUNDEE:

Father James Walls

stmaryslochee@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9.30am

Weekday: Wed 9.30am; rest of the week 10am (at Immaculate Conception,

Dundee)

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST COLUMBA'S, CUPAR:

Monsignor Patrick McInally stcolumbacupar@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 6.30pm (Sat), 11.15am

Weekday: As announced Holy Day of Obligation: 7pm

ST COLUMBA'S, DUNDEE:

Father Alexander Obiorah stcolumba@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11.30am

Weekday: Tue, Thu 8.30am, Sat 9am

Holy Day of Obligation: 9am

ST COLUMBA'S, DUNKELD:

Canon Steven Mulholland stbridespitlochry@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: Vigil 6pm (Sat) **Weekday**: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST FERGUS', FORFAR:

Father Dijo Thomas stfergusandanthony@ dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: Vigil 6pm (Sat), 11.15am Weekday: Wed, Thu 10am

Holy Day of Obligation: Vigil (previous

evening) 6pm

ST FILLAN'S AND ST ALPHONSUS, DOUNE:

Father Emmanuel Adindu

stjosephcallander@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9.45am Weekday: Wed, Fri 10am Holy Day of Obligation: 6pm

ST FILLAN'S, CRIEFF:

Father Tobias Okoro

stfillancrieff@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 5.30pm (Sat), 11am

Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: 9.30am, 7pm

ST FILLAN'S, NEWPORT-ON-TAY:

Monsignor Patrick McInally

stcolumbacupar@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 10.15am

Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST JAMES', KINROSS:

Father Martin Pletts

stjames@dunkelddiocese.org.uk Sunday: Vigil 5pm (Sat), 10am Weekday: Mon, Wed, Fri 10am, Tue

6.15pm, Thu 6.45pm

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, PERTH:

Father Louis Uwaezuoke stjohn@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: Anticipated 4pm (Sat), 9am,

11am, 6.30pm

Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST JOHN VIANNEY, ALVA:

Father Andrew Marshall

stjohnvianney@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9.30am, 6.15pm

Weekday: TBC

Holy Day of Obligation: 9.30am,

6.15pm

ST JOSEPH THE WORKER, CALLANDER:

Father Emmanuel Adindu, stjosephcallander@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11.30am

Weekday: Tue, Thu 10am Holy Day of Obligation: 10am

ST JOSEPH'S, DUNDEE:

Father Michael Ngobili

stjosephdundee@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11am

Weekday: Wed 6pm, Thu, Sat 10am Holy Day of Obligation: Morning as

announced, evening 6pm

ST LUAN'S, ALYTH:

Father Gregory Umunna ststephen@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9.30am Weekday: Wed 10am

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST MARGARET'S, COMRIE:

Father Tobias Okoro

stfillancrieff@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9.30am

Weekday: As announced Holy Day of Obligation: 6pm

ST MARGARET'S, MONTROSE:

Father James High

stmargaret @dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11.30am

Weekday: Mon, Fri, Sat 10am

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST MARY MAGDALENE'S, PERTH:

Father Leszek Wiecaszek

stmarymagdalen@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: 10am, 12.30pm (Polish)

Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST MARY, OUR LADY OF VICTORIES, DUNDEE:

Canon Kevin Golden

standrew@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11.30am

Weekday: Mon-Fri 11.30am Holy Day of Obligation: 11am

ST MARY'S MONASTERY, PERTH:

Sunday: 10am

Weekday; Mon-Sat 12.15pm

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST MARY'S, IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, DUNDEE:

Father James Walls

stmaryslochee@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 4.30pm (Sat), 11am **Weekday**: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat 10am (Wed 10am Liturgy of the Word with

Holy Communion)

Holy Day of Obligation: 10am, Vigil (as

announced)

ST MATTHEW'S, AUCHTERMUCHTY:

Monsignor Patrick McInally

stcolumbacupar@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9am

Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST MUNGO'S, ALLOA:

Father Michael Carrie

stmungo@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 6pm (Sat), 9.30am **Weekday**: Tue, Thu, Fri 10am

Holy Day of Obligation: Vigil (previous

evening) 7pm, 10am

ST NINIAN'S, BRECHIN:

Father James High

stmargaret@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 10am

Weekday: Tue, Thur 10am Holy Day of Obligation: 6.30pm

ST NINIAN'S, DUNDEE:

Father Michael Ngobili

stninians@dunkelddiocese.org.uk Sunday: Vigil 5pm (Sat), 9.30am Weekday: Tue 6pm, Wed, Fri 10am Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST PATRICK'S, DUNDEE:

Canon Kevin Golden

standrew@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 9.30am

Weekday: Mon, Thu 9.30am

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST PIUS X, DUNDEE:

Father Gregory Murphy stpiusx@dunkelddiocese.org.uk Sunday: Vigil 5pm (Sat), 10am Weekday: Tue, Fri 9.30am

Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST SERF'S, HIGH VALLEYFIELD:

Father Michael Carrie stmungo@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 11.30am Weekday: Wed 10am Holy Day of Obligation: 2pm

ST STEPHEN'S, BLAIRGOWRIE:

Father Gregory Umunna ststephen@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Sunday: 5.30pm, 11am

Weekday: Tue, Fri 10am, Wed 7pm Holy Day of Obligation: As announced

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, ARBROATH:

Canon Tom Shields

stthomas@dunkelddiocese.org.uk **Sunday**: Vigil 5pm (Sat), 10.45am

Weekday: As announced

Holy Day of Obligation: 10am and 7pm,

(School Mass as announced)

THE HOLY FAMILY. DUNBLANE:

Father Charles Chukwa

holyfamily@dunkelddiocese.org.uk Sunday: Vigil 5pm (Sat), 11am Weekday: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 10am Holy Day of Obligation: 10am, 3pm,

7pm

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Young voices shape DYA's year ahead

n 21 September, the Dunkeld Youth Association (DYA) hosted the 6pm evening Mass at the cathedral, turning the focus to the young people of the diocese and particularly welcoming those who are embarking on another year of academic studies.

Led by youth director Fr Michael Ngobili, the Mass was vibrant with young people who served throughout in many ways.

Following Mass, the youth were invited to gather in the hall below to share a meal together and discuss their hopes and intentions for the year ahead.

Kindly supplied with pizza, snacks and refreshments by Canon Kevin Golden, the DYA coordinators posed four key questions to the 35 young people present:

What is your favourite thing about being Catholic?

What is (at least) one faith activity to which you wish you had more access?

What is (at least) one social activity you would like to do with other young Catholics?

What currently prevents you from accessing these things?

Their answers have been collated, highlighting a real desire for community, with more opportunities to deepen their faith and spend time in adoration and praise with the Lord, as well as participate in fun leisure activities in fellowship with other young like-minded people.

These answers will be used to form a programme of activities that the DYA will facilitate over the coming year.

A number of the young people also volunteered to participate in the planning and coordination of these events, showing their commitment and desire to foster a strong faith community for young people!

Following these September events, the DYA has since facilitated a waterfront walk and bowling social, as well as another successful Cathedral dinner and an informative and uplifting catechesis session with young people from the Neo Catechumenal Way community in Glasgow.



Members of the DYA after their September cathedral dinner. *Picture by Charles Mary.*



Archbishop Cushley. Picture by Andrew Mitchell.

YOUTH PILGRIMAGE DRAWS HUNDREDS TO THE FAIR CITY

More than 250 young Catholics gathered in Perth on 20 September for the National Catholic Youth Pilgrimage, led by Archbishop Leo Cushley and Bishop Andrew McKenzie.

Marking the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, the event invited participants to renew their Baptismal promises.

The pilgrimage began at St John the Baptist Church and continued to St John's Kirk, the site of John Knox's 1560 sermon that sparked destructive iconoclasm in the city.

This year's visit was marked instead by prayer and reconciliation, with Rev. Sandy Gunn welcoming the pilgrims and joining the Archbishop in leading reflections.

The litany of Scottish saints included St William of Perth, a 12th-century parishioner known for his charity and later venerated at Rochester.

After returning to St John the Baptist Church, the pilgrims celebrated Mass with clergy from across Scotland, supported by music from Dunkeld's Youth Association.

Archbishop Cushley reflected on the recent canonisations of Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, encouraging young people to follow their example of holiness. Fr Abraham Poonoly welcomed the pilgrims to the parish for refreshments to end the day.