

DIOCESE OF MOTHERWELL

FREE

# FONTES

MAGAZINE

AUTUMN 2025 | ISSUE 20 | FREE



## ORDINATION JOY

Celebrations as Coatbridge man ordained newest priest for the Diocese

[Read More Page 4&5](#)

- + Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes + Jubilee Cross to travel round Diocese
- + New African Catholic Community launched in the Diocese +
- + Bishop's plea for Palestine + Caritas Cup goes to Rome



# INSIDE THIS EDITION

## PAGE 3

News from around the Diocese

## PAGE 4-5

Ordination of Fr Christopher Furrage

## PAGE 6-7

Jubilee Cross gets ready to tour the Diocese

## PAGE 8-9

Young teachers in Rome for Jubilee

## PAGE 10

Into the Margins Conference

## PAGE 11

Caritas Cup goes to Rome

## PAGE 12

Bishop Toal inaugurates African Community in Motherwell Diocese

## PAGE 13-16

Pilgrims of Hope in Lourdes

## PAGE 17

Schools News

## PAGE 18-19

Youth Summit

## PAGE 20-21

Tributes to the late Mr Frank Cassidy and Fr Tommy Toal

## PAGE 25

Bishop Toal writes to Prime Minister in support of Palestine

## PAGE 26-27

Starting a Care of Creation group in your parish



[rcdom.org.uk](http://rcdom.org.uk)

## NEXT EDITION

October 2025

Send your news, events and articles to  
[media@rcdom.org.uk](mailto:media@rcdom.org.uk)

Cover photo: Bishop Toal embraces the newly ordained Fr Christopher Furrage



**Carfin Lourdes Grotto**  
The National Marian Shrine of Scotland



**National Pilgrimage**  
3.15 PM

**Holy Mass at the Shrine of Massabielle**  
**Celebrant and Homilist:**  
**Most Rev. Leo Cushley**



**SUNDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER**  
Day of the Canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati



**Centenary Pilgrimage**  
to pray for the Beatification of

**The Venerable Margaret Sinclair**

**SUNDAY**  
**21 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**St Patrick's Church**  
**Cowgate-Edinburgh**  
**EH1 1NA**

**12.30-1.30pm**  
Refreshments and sale of candles & goods

**1.30-2.30pm**  
Holy Hour  
(Exposition, Rosary, Benediction, Confessions)

**3.00-4.00pm**  
Reflection on the Venerable Margaret Sinclair  
given by Fr Joe McAuley, Vice-Postulator  
with Prayers, Petitions & Blessings with Relic

**4.30pm**  
Holy Mass (Sung)  
Principal Celebrant: Archbishop Leo Cushley  
Homilist: Fr Jamie McMorris

**CONFESSIONS AVAILABLE ALL DAY**

[margaretsinclair.scot](http://margaretsinclair.scot)



**Cause of the Venerable Margaret Sinclair**





# PILGRIMS TAKE ON THE CAMINO



**BY FR TOM DEVLIN**  
**On July 7th, a group of 21 parishioners from St Ambrose's Baillieston travelled to Spain to undertake the Camino to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia.**

Having previously walked a 100km section of the French route in 2019, we opted for the Portuguese Way this year. Sixteen members of the group completed the 62-mile journey from the town of Vigo in southern Galicia over five days. The terrain posed occasional challenges; however, Galicia's climate—characterised by midsummer temperatures in the mid to high 20s—proved ideal for hiking.

Throughout the pilgrimage, participants appreciated the region's pleasant weather, picturesque landscapes, and vibrant culture, and each evening we celebrated Holy Mass in the towns along our route. Our thanks to Alba Tours for their expert organisation of the trip and to the volunteers at each church on the route for their hospitality. Special thanks are also due to Father José Lago, Dean of the Cathedral, for his warm reception of Father Devlin and Deacon Michael. Alongside hundreds of fellow pilgrims arriving from around the globe, we gave thanks at the Vigil Mass for a wonderful experience. With our feet now fully recovered, we eagerly anticipate a future return.

# FAREWELL TO FATHER JOHNNY

**After four years serving in the Diocese, parishioners recently bid a fond farewell to Father Johnny Vettickal Abraham.**

Father Johnny has served as chaplain to the Syro Malabar community in the Diocese since 2021. Initially based in St Ninian's and St Cuthbert's Hamilton, Fr Johnny also spent time living in St John Ogivlie's Blantyre and latterly St Anthony's Rutherglen where the community is now based.



Before leaving, Fr Johnny returned to St Ninian's and St Cuthbert's parish for a send off where parishioners expressed their love, affection, appreciation and consideration for Fr Johnny.

Pic: James McCluskey



## CANON CLEMENTS FINAL GIFT TO SCOTS COLLEGE

**During the summer, Bishop Toal and Bishop Frank Dougan of Galloway visited the Royal Scots College in Salamanca and brought with them a gift for the college - the chalice and paten which belonged to the late Canon Joe Clements.**

Canon Clements was a student in the college in Valladolid from 1956 until 1962 and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Motherwell in the college chapel in Valladolid by Bishop Black on 29th April 1962. He retired as Parish Priest of St Aidan's Wishaw in 2015 and died in 2023.

He was a proud 'colegial' and a frequent visitor to the college throughout his priesthood and requested that after his death his chalice be gifted the college which meant so much to him.

*Above: Bishop Toal, Bishop Dougan with Fr John Carroll, Rector and Fr Stuart Chalmers, Spiritual Director. Below: Canon Clement's Chalice.*



## ST MICHAEL'S MARKS SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

**St Michael's Moodiesburn is celebrating 65 years since the founding of their parish and 60 years since the opening of the original church with a Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by Bishop Toal on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September at 6.00pm. Afterwards, there will be a function in the Knights of St Columba Social Club from 7.30pm with tickets costing £10.**



# Ad Multos Annos

Joy as Father Christopher Furmage ordained to the Priesthood for Motherwell Diocese

**St Augustine's Church in Coatbridge was packed on the Feast of St Thomas as family, friends and parishioners gathered in a spirit of joy as Father Christopher Furmage was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Toal.**

The ordination Mass was celebrated by Bishop Joseph Toal, joined by clergy from the Diocese and across the country as well as Bishop Frank Dougan of Galloway.

The new priest was joined by a large number of family and friends, in particular his parents Eleanor and Mark, his sister, Elaine, and grandfather Jimmy. Also present were a number of people from both HCPT and the Scouts, both of which Chris has been heavily involved with during his life.

During the Mass, Fr Chris was presented with his priestly vestments by his mother and vested by parish priest, Fr Michael Kane, while his grandfather and sister brought forward his chalice and paten.

Father Chris's journey to priesthood has been shaped by years of discernment, prayer and formation, both in the Royal Scots College in Salamanca where Fr Chris took part in the Propaedeutic period before beginning his seven years of studies at the Pontifical Scots College in Rome. For the past year, since his ordination to the Diaconate, Fr Chris has served as a Deacon in St Joseph's Blantyre, where he has been appointed to continue to serve as Assistant Priest.

At the conclusion of the ordination Mass, Bishop Toal said: "It's been a great privilege for me to ordain another priest for the Diocese of Motherwell and as priests of the Diocese we give Father Christopher a very warm welcome."

The next day, hundreds gathered again as Father Chris celebrated his Mass of Thanksgiving in honour of Our Blessed Lady. The vestment worn by Father Chris for his Mass of Thanksgiving was a gift from his home parish of St Augustine's.



*Fr Chris kneels before Bishop Toal for the prayer of Ordination. Fr Michael Kane vests Fr Chris.*



During Fr Christopher's First Mass, Fr Gerry Chromy preached the sermon in which he acknowledged that it was 100 years to the day since the death of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, who is due to be canonised on 7<sup>th</sup> September, and drew example and encouragement from the new saint for our new priest. Blessed Pier Frassati was someone who had a great faith and "lived that faith in generous service to the Lord and his people by being a man of prayer and valuing the Eucharist, which led to a selfless and generous use of his time and talents for others." Fr Chromy said.

Fr Chromy continued: "Today is a celebration too and an appreciation of all that Chris has shared over the years of his life thus far, for these have brought him to this day. Family first but also friends, parish communities, schools, college, seminary, the world of work, all have been the building blocks of his life and together with the providence of God's guidance and love have made him the man that he is and will contribute in no small way to the priest he will become."

"To bring Jesus to others and inspire them on their faith journey, the priest has to know Jesus personally for it is in friendship with Him that not only guides the priest's life but provides for him reassurance, consolation, encouragement especially when efforts made prove disappointing or unappreciated or seem fruitless. Blessed Pier Frassati was a man of prayer, it was for him the springboard for his active life of service and of witness. The celebration of the Eucharist is the



*Fr Chris with Bishop Toal, his parents Eleanor and Mark, grandfather Jimmy and sister Elaine.*

high point of every priest's life in the service of his parishioners but is also strength for him and coupled with the other liturgies, personal prayer, adoration, the rosary, these are four ways the priest is with his Lord and strengthened thereafter to go to the heights in imitating Jesus the Good Shepherd."

At the end of his First Mass, the new Father Chris took time to thank everyone who had helped and support him on his journey and presented gifts to his parents and sister thanking them for their unwavering love and support. Fr Chris said: "First and foremost I thank God for calling me to this life, and to Bishop Toal for accepting me to the priesthood and his support over these last years. Thanks to all my now brother priests for your kind friendship and especially to Father Kane and Father Towey who I've got to know very well over these past few years and they have been very kind to me. My thanks to everyone in St Augustine's

Parish for everything you have done for me but also of St Joseph's Blantyre where I've been for the past year."

The Diocese of Motherwell, like much of the Catholic Church in Scotland and across Europe, continues to face challenges of priestly shortages and growing pastoral needs. The ordination of Father Chris brings renewed hope that young men are still responding to God's call and giving their lives in service to the Church as priests.

This hope continues as the Diocese also looks forward to the Ordination of Rev. Christopher Igwe to the priesthood on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September at 6.30pm in Our Lady of Good Aid Cathedral, Motherwell. On Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August, the Diocese also welcomed a new Permanent Deacon, Rev. Stephen Nevans, who was ordained by Bishop Toal in St Benedict's Easterhouse.



*Fr Chris celebrates his First Mass the day after his Ordination and presents his mother with flowers.*



# INVITATION TO MARK THE HOLY YEAR IN SEPTEMBER

**From 27<sup>th</sup> August until 16<sup>th</sup> September, the Diocesan Jubilee Cross will make its way around the Diocese to mark the Holy Year in parishes and schools.**

The Pilgrimage will include a Ceremony of Welcome for the Cross followed by a Jubilee Mass in each of the six Deaneries with the hope that the people from the parishes in each deanery will gather as Pilgrims of Hope for their Mass to pray for the future well-being of our Church and our World.

During this special period the National Pilgrimage at the National Shrine to Our Lady of Lourdes, Carfin, will take place on Sunday 7th September, with the Jubilee theme 'Pilgrims of Hope' being the focus of the Mass. Holy Mass will be celebrated at the Shrine at 3.15 pm, the main Celebrant and Preacher being the Most Rev. Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, who is celebrating his 40th Anniversary as a priest this year.

Our new Pope, Leo XIV, recently announced that Blessed Carlo Acutis and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, will be canonised on this day in Rome, so it seems an ideal day for the Scottish Catholic Community to come together to joyfully celebrate our faith in communion with Pope Leo and the Universal Church.

The Jubilee Cross will also be welcomed and processed at a number of school celebrations during this period including the

Walk of Hope for Secondary Schools from Carfin on Friday 29th August and the Jubilee Mass for Primary Schools at Carfin on Thursday 4th September at 11am.

We will also celebrate two Ordinations during this time – Stephen Nevans will be ordained to the Permanent Diaconate on Friday 29th August at 7pm and Deacon Christopher Igwe will be ordained to the priesthood in the Cathedral on Wednesday 3rd September at 6.30pm.

The Jubilee Pilgrimage will conclude with the annual Diocesan Vocations Mass in Our Lady of Good Aid Cathedral at 7.00pm on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September, the Feast of St Ninian, a missionary in our own country. It is a beautiful moment for us to gather as a diocesan family to pray for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

Encouraging parishioners to participate in the forthcoming Diocesan Pilgrimage, Bishop Toal said: "As you can see, this is a very full programme, and I invite you to participate as much as possible. The idea is to celebrate Jubilee 2025 around the Diocese through the presence of the Cross and local participation. We pray that it may offer opportunity for prayer and renewed vigour in our journey as Pilgrims of Hope and enhance our sense that as the Diocese we will have participated in and from the Church's Jubilee Year."



**“We pray that it may offer opportunity for prayer and renewed vigour in our journey as Pilgrims of Hope”**

## WHAT DEANERY DO YOU BELONG TO?



The Diocese is divided into six pastoral areas called Deaneries and each parish falls under a deanery.

### AIRDRIE

**Airdrie:** St Andrew's, St Edward's, St Margaret's & St Serf's **Calderbank:** Corpus Christi **Chapelhall & Salsburgh:** St Aloysius' & Sacred Heart **Coatbridge:** The Most Blessed Trinity **Plains & Caldercruix:** St. David's & St Mary's.

### COATBRIDGE & NORTHERN

**Baillieston:** St Ambrose' **Bargeddie:** St Kevin's **Craigend:** St Dominic's **Coatbridge:** St Augustine's, St Bartholomew's, St James', St Mary's, St Monica's, St Patrick's **Easterhouse:** St John Bosco's **Glenboig:** Our Lady & St Joseph's **Moodiesburn:** St Michael's **Muirhead:** St Barbara's **Stepps:** St. Joseph's.

### EAST KILBRIDE & RUTHERGLEN

**Cambuslang:** St Bride's **East Kilbride:** St Bride's, St Leonard's, Our Lady of Lourdes, St Vincent de Paul's **Halfway:** St Cadoc's, **Rutherglen:** St Anthony's & St Mark's, St Columbkille's.

### HAMILTON

**Blackwood & Larkhall:** Our Lady of Fatima **Blantyre:** St Joseph's **Bothwell:** St Bride's **Hamilton:** St Ninian's & St Cuthbert's, St Mary's & St Paul's, Our Lady & St Anne's, St Peter's **Strathaven:** St Patrick's **Uddingston:** St John the Baptist's.

### MOTHERWELL & CENTRAL

**Bellshill:** Sacred Heart & St Gerard's **Carfin:** St Francis Xavier **Holytown:** Christ the King **Mossend:** Holy Family **Motherwell:** Cathedral Parish, St Bernadette's, St Brendan's, **Newarthill:** St Teresa's **New Stevenston:** St John Bosco's **Viewpark:** St Columba's, St. Gabriel's.

### WISHAW DEANERY

**Carlisle:** St Athanasius' **Cleland:** St. Mary's **Lanark:** St Mary's **Newmains:** St Brigid's **Shotts:** St Patrick's **Wishaw:** St Aidan's, St Ignatius', St Patrick's, St Thomas'.





# JUBILEE DEANERY PILGRIMAGE

## 27 AUGUST - 16 SEPTEMBER

The Jubilee Cross will travel round the Diocese at the end of August and beginning of September. The Pilgrimage will include a Ceremony of Welcome for the Cross followed by a Jubilee Mass in each Deanery. The hope is that the people from the parishes in each deanery will gather as Pilgrims of Hope for their Mass to pray for the future well-being of our Church and our World.



### NORTHERN & COATBRIDGE DEANERY

**WEDNESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST | 7.00PM**  
ST MONICA'S COATBRIDGE



### NORTHERN & COATBRIDGE DEANERY

**SUNDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST | 11.30AM**  
ST BENEDICT'S, EASTERHOUSE



### AIRDRIE DEANERY

**MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER | 7.00PM**  
ST ALOYSIUS' CHAPELHALL



### JUBILEE MASS FOR SCHOOLS

**THURSDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER | 11.00AM**  
NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES, CARFIN



### NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE TO CARFIN GROTTO

**SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER | 3.15PM**  
NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES, CARFIN



### CENTRAL & MOTHERWELL DEANERY

**TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER | 7.00PM**  
SACRED HEART BELLSHILL



### HAMILTON DEANERY

**WEDNESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER | 7.00PM**  
ST BRIDE'S BOTHWELL



### WISHAW DEANERY

**THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER | 7.00PM**  
ST THOMAS' WISHAW



### RUTHERGLEN & EAST KILBRIDE DEANERY

**MONDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER | 7.00PM**  
ST BRIDE'S CAMBUSLANG



### VOCATIONS MASS AND CONCLUSION OF DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE

**TUESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER | 7.00PM**  
OUR LADY OF GOOD AID CATHEDRAL,  
MOTHERWELL



# CALLED TO TEACH: PILGRIMS OF HOPE

## Walking Together in Faith: Reflections from Five Young Teachers on a Pilgrimage to Rome



BY MARTIN BUCKNELL, KEVIN CAMERON, LARA CONNELLY, BETHANY DIAMOND, MICHAEL SEENAN

**Earlier this July, we—five young teachers from Motherwell Diocese—had the privilege of taking part in a unique spiritual journey: a pilgrimage to Rome, organised by the Catholic Education Services of the Bishops' Conferences of Scotland, Ireland, England, and Wales as part of this Jubilee Year of Hope.**

Over the course of our week-long pilgrimage, we walked in the footsteps of saints, celebrated Mass in some of the most sacred Basilicas of the Catholic Church, and deepened our understanding of the Church's mission in education. The experience was more than just travel—it was a pilgrimage of heart, vocation, and new-found friendship.

Our journey began with arrivals from across our cohort and a sense of exciting anticipation was in the air. That evening, we gathered in the Baptistery of the Basilica of St John Lateran—the Pope's cathedral—for the opening Mass.

"Taking part in the opening Mass served as an opportunity to come together with everyone in a peaceful celebration. After Mass, we shared dinner together – already beginning to form connections that would grow stronger with every shared step of the pilgrimage" - Michael Seenan, Holy Cross High , Hamilton

Our first full day arrived, the day we had been eagerly anticipating. We travelled to the Vatican to attend a private Papal audience. Simply being in St Peter's Square felt unbelievable, yet we were about to experience something most people could only dream of – meeting the successor to St Peter. Gathering in the Apostolic Palace, being in the presence of Pope Leo XIV and hearing his message felt deeply affirming of our role as Catholic educators. He reminded us that we are role models to our young people both in faith and in life.

"Meeting Pope Leo was truly one of the most special moments I will experience in life. I am blessed to have experienced it, especially at such a young age and so early in my career. I had planned carefully what I wanted to say to him, and in the end was so nervous that I just shook his hand said that I was so pleased to meet him, asking if he would kindly bless my rosary beads. I don't think there would ever be enough time to say everything I really wanted! We were so in awe afterwards and as a group we kept saying we didn't understand how we could be so lucky to have experienced what is the honour of a lifetime. His speech was so emotional to me and has inspired me greatly to continue my pilgrimage as I return home." - Bethany Diamon, St Bernard's Primary, Coatbridge

Later, we celebrated Mass in the stunning Basilica of St Mary Major, pausing also for a moment of prayer and reflection at the tomb of the late Pope Francis, thanking God for his steadfast commitment to the Catholic Church during his pontificate. Afterwards, we took in the sights of the city on a coach tour.

The Sunday morning began with a community Mass at the Irish College, followed by coffee and conversation. In the afternoon, we travelled to the peaceful Palazzola retreat and visited the beautiful Villa and Gardens of Castel Gandolfo. It was a day of quiet reflection and joy.

"The Palazzola retreat looking over Lake Albano was like something out of a movie. The lunch was delicious and brought us as a group closer together. The trip to the other side of Lake Albano brought us to Castel Gandolfo, the Pope's summer residence. The tour of the palace was mesmerising as it gave us the opportunity to see for ourselves the quarters that until recent years were not for public viewing". - Kevin Cameron, a student teacher at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

On Monday, we travelled to Montecassino, visiting the WWII Commonwealth Cemetery before celebrating Mass at the Abbey of



Montecassino—founded by St Benedict. It was a humbling moment to stand at the crossroads of faith and history.

“The views from the Abbey were truly breathtaking. I learned a lot at the Abbey and was particularly taken back from the fact that the statue of St Benedict was one of the few things to survive heavy bombing during WWII, perhaps imagery for the strength of St Benedict in providing stability in faith.” - Martin Bucknell, St Ninian’s High School Livingston

After lunch, we toured the ancient ruins of Pompeii. Walking among the remnants of a lost civilisation led to profound reflections on time, resilience, and what we choose to build our lives upon.

On Tuesday, we rose before dawn to celebrate Mass at the tomb of St Peter, deep within the Vatican. Praying in such a sacred place reminded us of the great cloud of witnesses that came before us—and the responsibility we carry as Catholic educators.

“To join in the celebration of Mass, and to be asked to read, at the tomb of St Peter, and also of many of his successors, was an honour for me. The experience has left a lasting impact on my life and provided me great comfort on my own faith journey” - Lara Connelly Holy Cross High School Hamilton.

After a tour of the Vatican Museums and Gardens, we had free time to explore or simply rest. That evening’s city tour and shared meal gave us time to process all we had seen and felt.

On Wednesday, we visited the Holy Doors of St John Lateran’s and St Paul’s Outside the Walls. As well as this, we also gathered for a moving Mass at St Paul’s. The afternoon’s visit to the catacombs reminded us of the courage of early Christians—a powerful reminder of faith under pressure.

For Kevin Cameron, who is studying to be a music teacher, he had the added privilege of playing in St Paul’s Basilica. “I enjoyed visiting the picturesque Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls. I was honoured to play the organ and cantor, not just here, but during many of our Masses. As a young Music teacher, I felt this was a way in which I could contribute to the experience of my fellow pilgrims.”

In the evening, we had the chance to meet with representatives from three Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, followed by a reception and Q&A session. Their passion for Catholic education left a lasting impression.

“Sister Pat Murray, once a teacher from Loreto schools in Ireland, gave an awe-inspiring talk on being the difference maker in education. The

grace, and enthusiasm with which she spoke continues to provide food for thought in how I can continue to support the faith journeys of the young people in my class” - Martin Bucknell.

Our final full day brought us on a day trip to Assisi, offering a change of pace. We walked through the hillside town where St Francis and St Clare lived and prayed, and we celebrated Mass at the tomb of Blessed Carlo Acutis—a young saint-in-the-making whose story deeply resonated with us as modern educators.

“Visiting the tomb of Blessed Carlo was a true honour for me. I have had a special devotion to Carlo since my school welcomed the Carlo Acutis Eucharistic Miracles exhibition a few months ago. This is an experience I can take back to the young people in my school to deepen their own devotions to Blessed Carlo” - Michael Seenan.

We left Assisi with our hearts full and our minds turning over how we can carry Franciscan simplicity and Carlo’s digital discipleship into our classrooms.

Friday came, and we left Rome for Glasgow Airport with new friends. As we return to our schools, we carry more than souvenirs, we carry with us renewed commitment to Catholic education, inspired by the words of Pope Leo XIV. We also carry forward with us our shared laughter and prayer, ready to build on this experience to benefit the young people that we are entrusted to nurture and holistically develop.

Our hearts are full. Our faith is renewed. And our mission—teaching and witnessing to Christ’s love—is stronger than ever.





# INTO THE MARGINS

## Motherwell Diocese and our Response to Deprivation and Marginalisation

**Deacon Michael Ross** invites you to join a special conference organised for the Diocese to mark the Jubilee for the Poor which will look at issues of deprivation and marginalisation across the Diocese and our response.

**On Sunday, November 16, 2025, the Church will host 'The Jubilee of the Poor' in Rome, as part of the broader Jubilee Year events. This event will highlight the dignity and rights of the impoverished and will encourage acts of solidarity and compassion toward the deprived and marginalised in society. The Jubilee Year has been a significant period of spiritual renewal for all Catholics across the world.**

In response to this event, a Conference, entitled **'Into the Margins: Motherwell Diocese and our Response to Deprivation and Marginalisation'** will be held at St. Bride's Hall, Motherwell, on Saturday, November 15, 2025, from 10.00am to 3.00pm. This Conference, which will include time for reflection, discussion, and lectures, will seek to generate discussion on issues in deprivation and marginalisation across the Diocese, and will further seek to develop an 'Action Plan' for future activity in these arenas. Catering, including lunch, will be provided.

The Conference will aim to consider both material deprivation (food poverty, heat poverty, etc.) and will also explore deprivation of meaning in life experienced by many in our contemporary world. As stated by Pope Leo XIV, '...the gravest poverty is not to know God. Wealth often disappoints and can lead to tragic situations of poverty - above all the poverty to recognize our need for God and of our attempt to live without Him.'

The Church has a significant relationship with deprivation and marginalisation, both historically and in contemporary contexts. Referred to as the 'Preferential Option for the Poor', Catholic Social Teaching highlights a strong emphasis on God's concern for the deprived and marginalised and strongly advocates for actions that promote well-being for all. As always, the beginning point for all social teaching is human dignity. Crucially, deprivation, can be considered more broadly than simply an emphasis on material poverty. Deprivation can also be considered as a sense of scarcity, that we are not enough, that life is meaningless and empty. This constitutes a sense of desolation, a moving away from, rather than toward God, and it both these concepts, material poverty and desolation, that the Conference will seek to address.

The Guest Speakers are **Sir Harry Burns, Professor of Global Public Health and former Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, and Professor David Hillier, Associate Principal and Executive Dean of the University of Strathclyde Business School.**

The Conference organisers (Rev. Stuart Parkes, Danielle Healy, Mary Keenan Ross and Rev. Michael Killoran Ross) hope to encourage discussion in each Parish on these issues, through Parish meetings, and, further, will invite Caritas pupils from across the Diocese to participate and to take an active part in this event.



**SIR HARRY BURNS**



**PROFESSOR DAVID HILLIER**

## SIGN UP

Registration for the Conference will open on September 1, 2025, and the Registration Form (and a schedule for the Conference) can be accessed on the Motherwell Diocese website at **[rcdom.org.uk/into-the-margins](https://rcdom.org.uk/into-the-margins)** or scan the QR code below. We look forward to your participation in this important event!





# YOUNG LANARKSHIRE MEN TAKE THEIR FOOTBALL DREAM... TO ITALY



Caritas cup goes all the way to Rome as the Vatican celebrates Jubilee for Sport

**It's a bit like taking coals to Newcastle... but three Lanarkshire friends spread their love of football and God all the way to Rome last month - and even got to see the new Pope Leo XIV.**

The Caritas Cup was founded five years ago by school friends Adam, Aiden, Bailey, and Daniel who all attended St Margaret's High in Airdrie. The aim was to unite pupils from local Catholic schools through football and netball tournaments - while supporting SCIAF and other great causes.

The Vatican was celebrating a 'Jubilee of Sports' and the Caritas Cup was at the centre of the celebrations - and saw the friends playing football in 38 degrees heat!

Adam said: "It was hard going - walking around in summer in Rome is hard enough but playing a game of football is a whole new level.

"We had a great time though and we were playing with Seminarians from the Scot's College in Rome as well as guys from France, Sweden and Italy.

"The Caritas Cup started as a game of football between two schools in Airdrie and Coatbridge four years ago now. It then spread to multiple sports across many parts of Scotland and now it's reached Rome.

"Pope Leo said that sport has a unique way of bringing people together and that exactly what the Caritas Cup is all about.

"We support SCIAF due to the values instilled in us from a very young age. The values that resonate with people across our Diocese of Motherwell.

"To help our neighbours and all in need. This is just a very small part of what SCIAF does, we want to highlight the valuable and crucial work that SCIAF do in every corner of the world and we hope that through this project we can highlight that a better world is possible."

Bailey said: "The links between sport and faith have never been clearer for us and seeing over 800,000 young people participating in the Jubilee events, solidified that.

Michael Hamilton, SCIAF's Community Engagement officer said: "Working with the Caritas Cup team over the past couple of years has been amazing. It has been so inspiring to us at SCIAF to see their passion for their faith, sport, charity and community. We are delighted to see the initiative grow to Rome and see the team connect with other young people from across the world in this Jubilee year."



# Bishop Toal officially opens African Catholic Community in Motherwell Diocese

BY FR OLUWAFEMI VICTOR  
ORILUA CSSP

**Sunday, 13th July 2025, was a day of joy and thanksgiving as Bishop Joseph Toal officially inaugurated the African Catholic Community in the Diocese of Motherwell at St Patrick's Craigneuk.**

The celebration began with a vibrant Holy Mass attended by over 150 people representing various African nations and sizeable number of Scottish faithful.

The initiative, envisioned by Bishop Toal, is not about establishing African identity in isolation, but creating a haven of at-home-ness for Africans while bringing the beauty of African culture closer to the Scottish context. It offers new arrivals a "landing space" among their own, while still benefiting from Scotland's warm and welcoming culture.

In his homily, Bishop Toal drew from the parable of the Good Samaritan, urging the congregation to embrace a love that knows no boundaries. His open-mindedness is evident-not only in this initiative-but also in the six African priests currently serving in the diocese and in his ordination of Rev. Christopher Igwe, of African descent.

The inaugural Mass was graced by several clergy and religious from within and beyond the community. Among those present were: Fr. Ricklan Maylla CSSp, Fr. Ghislain Bakulikire Mulumanzi, Fr. Emmanuel Ikpa, Fr. Oluwafemi Victor Orilua CSSp, Fr. Romanus Eyinnia, Fr. Godfrey Odigbo CSSp, Fr. Vincent Lockhart of Missio Scotland, Deacon Harry McKenna, and later joined by Deacon Christopher Igwe and Fr. James



Flynn CSSp. Also in attendance were three Nigerian Sisters of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus: Sr. Immaculata Njoku, Sr. Evelyn Okonta and Sr. Felicitia Lewis.

It is noteworthy that several priests from Scotland have served for many years in Africa. Fr. James Flynn CSSp spent 30 years in Angola and 10 years in Cameroon; Fr. John McFadden CSSp served in Nigeria for 10 years; Fr. Patrick Gaffney CSSp devoted 33 years to ministry in Nigeria and Fr. Vincent Lockhart worked in Cameroon for 10 years. These men faithfully carried out Christ's mission among African communities before returning home. Many other Spiritan priests, now of blessed memory, also dedicated significant portions of their lives to missionary service on African soil.

Moreover, the Mass reflected Africa's cultural diversity through multilingual Prayers of the Faithful-Shona, English, Luganda, Bafang, Chichewa, and Kikongo-and music coordinated by Seminarian Valentine Nwafor-Orizu, CSSp. The offertory procession, with fruits in


traditional baskets followed by bread and wine, added a distinct African liturgical flavour.

More so, after Mass, the reception in the parish hall became a lively blend of cultures, as Scottish parishioners joined in enjoying African dishes. The symbolic cutting of the inauguration cake, with Bishop Toal at the centre, crowned the day. The warm turnout, shared meals, and mutual joy revealed the Scottish soil to be fertile ground for this community's growth.

From all indications, this is a right step in the right direction-a platform for bonding, cultural inclusion, and faith expression that will enrich and enliven the Church in Motherwell Diocese for years to come.

## MONTHLY AFRICAN MASS

 **Third Sunday of the month**

 **1.00pm**

 **St Patrick's Craigneuk**



# PILGRIMS HEAD TO LOURDES

**From 14<sup>th</sup> to July, pilgrims from across Motherwell Diocese took part in the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes.**

The Pilgrimage was led by Bishop Toal along with a number of priests of the Diocese including Fr Gerry Maguinness, Pilgrimage Director, and Fr Kevin Lawrie, Diocesan Chaplain to the sick.

The week-long pilgrimage to Our Lady's shrine included the opening Mass in St Joseph's Chapel, the torchlight procession, Blessed Sacrament Procession, Stations of the Cross and International Mass in the Underground Basilica.

A number of parish groups also joined the Diocesan pilgrimage this year including groups from St Mary's Lanark, Our Lady of Lourdes East Kilbride and St Francis Xavier's Carfin.

Over forty young people from across the Diocese took part in the pilgrimage, making up the Diocesan ALMA youth Group, providing essential help and support to the pilgrims. The youth group were commended for their invaluable support, their kindness and generosity and for the witness they gave throughout the week.

Returning home, Bishop Toal paid tribute to all who made the pilgrimage possible saying: "The Diocesan Jubilee Pilgrimage to Lourdes returned a few days ago and I wish to express thanks to all who participated in the Pilgrimage and those who supported the pilgrims, either as parishes or individually. Our time in Lourdes went very well and we felt refreshed and uplifted by our days together and our participation in the liturgies and spiritual devotions at Our Lady's Shrine. A special word of thanks therefore to Fr Gerry Maguinness, our Pilgrimage Director, and all who assisted in preparing for the Pilgrimage and managing its progress through the days in Lourdes. The presence of our young people as members of The Diocesan Alma Group was essential for the assistance so well offered to elderly pilgrims particularly, so I record our appreciation to them, and to Fr Mark O'Donnell and the other leaders. Well done to all involved and we look forward to the 2027 Pilgrimage."

In August, St John Bosco's New Stevenston and Christ the King Holytown led a parish pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine, led by parish priest, Fr Gerry Haddock.



*Members of the ALMA Youth Group*



*Some parishioners from St Joseph's Blantyre on the Pilgrimage*



*Fr Jim Grant with a group from St Francis Xavier's Carfin*



*Pilgrims from St John Bosco's & Christ the King in Lourdes*





# 'WE HAVE COME TO LOURDES'

**On 16<sup>th</sup> July, the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Motherwell Diocesan Pilgrims celebrated Holy Mass at the Grotto of Massabielle in Lourdes, along with the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh. During the Mass, Bishop Toal preached the following sermon:**

"We gather today, pilgrims from Scotland and elsewhere, to celebrate Mass at this special shrine – the Grotto of Massabielle where Our Lady appeared to St Bernadette 18 times between 11<sup>th</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> July 1858. This day marks the anniversary therefore of Our Lady's Final Apparition to St Bernadette. By that time the authorities had barricaded off the area before the Grotto and St Bernadette knelt outside the fence on the riverbank. Although more distant than during the earlier apparitions St Bernadette felt Our Lady as close to her. No words were spoken, but she described the Lady "as more beautiful than ever".

## RETURNING TO LOURDES

Some of us have visited Lourdes many times and the visits to the Grotto, particularly our times of prayer here, are special. Just as St Bernadette felt Our Lady growing in beauty, so our repeated visits hopefully produce a growth within us, particularly in appreciating the beauty of our Catholic Faith and the beautiful effects it produces in our lives, as we open our hearts and minds to God, and, with St Bernadette, to the intercession of Our Blessed Lady.

For those of us who are coming to Lourdes for the first time, or returning after a number of years, you will be struck by the visible presence of so many people of all ages and nationalities gathering as one in prayer, expressing a communal and personal reaching out to God, touching the rock face, seeing the water coming up from the stream, and looking up to the statue of Our Lady dressed in the beautiful attire described by St

Bernadette. It is indeed wonderful for all of us to be here and to celebrate Mass together this morning.

## SING AND REJOICE

In the Scriptures today the Prophet Zechariah encourages the Daughter of Zion to "sing and rejoice". In the celebration of the Holy Liturgy we indeed do that. Our singing of God's praises is an expression of our faith that the Lord is truly in our midst and is always worthy of our praise and worship. Our liturgical and devotional gatherings here in Lourdes express these feelings of love and trust we experience in knowing the Lord is truly present, particularly during the Celebration of Holy Mass. This invokes within us and among a strong sense of Thanksgiving to God for the graces we receive, particularly through our pilgrimage to Lourdes and our prayer at the Grotto. Our Lady herself is the "The Joyful Daughter of Zion" and shows this most powerfully in her great





# ES AS PILGRIMS OF HOPE'

hymn of praise to God – the Magnificat. As we join with Mary in praying the Magnificat our souls magnify the Lord and our spirits rejoice in God as our Saviour. We recognise also that the Holy Spirit is gifted to us all, as with Mary, and through the Spirit we are called by the Lord to do “great things”, however small or unworthy we may feel. St Bernadette shows this in a most special way and we ask Our Lady and St Bernadette to inspire the same courageous and generous response to do God’s will in our lives.

In today’s Gospel Jesus instructs us that “whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother”. We can’t be closer to him than that but we know the challenge of remaining close and fulfilling God’s will, however demanding, in our lives. We are a great family though of believers, the Body of Christ, and together we support and care for one another both in action and

prayer. Coming to Lourdes we bring our special intentions for our own families, particularly for those in poor health or distressed in some way. The needs of particular family members and other loved ones can feel overwhelming and to come here to Lourdes does offer some space and time to bring their needs before our Loving Father. In the consoling company of Mary and our brothers and sisters in the Communion of Saints, we seek the Lord’s healing and blessing for our loved ones. The opportunity we have also to light our candles as we pray for them renews our faith in Christ Our Light who shines as a beacon of hope in the darkest places.

## PILGRIMS OF HOPE

In this Jubilee Year we have come to Lourdes as “Pilgrims of Hope”, and I recall St Paul’s words that “our hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit”. The Gift of the Holy Spirit allows us

to believe that we have been saved by the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and thus reconciled to God, we can live and persevere in his grace through the power of the Sacraments. We can bear the trials and sufferings, as well as the joyful moments, of human living, because the Lord sustains our Hope in him through the journey of life here on earth with the mighty promise of Eternal Life.

In conclusion, we are here in Lourdes, at the Grotto this morning, because we believe in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and we hope to participate in his promise of external life in heaven in the Communion of Saints. Our Lady and St Bernadette have gone before us and are indeed Beacons of Hope for us all. May their intercession renew that great hope within and among us all.”





# A JOURNEY OF FAITH AND FRIENDSHIP

Cardinal Newman High School's Pilgrimage to Lourdes

BY SIMON MCGRORRY

**In June, 38 senior students and staff from Cardinal Newman High School in Bellshill, along with school chaplain, Fr Stuart Parkes, embarked on a 'Pilgrimage of Hope', to Lourdes. For many, this wasn't just a school trip; it was a profound experience of faith, reflection, and connection.**

The journey is a well-trodden one - the 6<sup>th</sup> pilgrimage to Lourdes in recent years from Cardinal Newman, each one building on the success of previous years. Months of preparation, fundraisers and group meetings built anticipation and unity. "We weren't just going abroad," one student reflected. "We are following Our Lady's instruction to come in procession, wash in the waters and pray for sinners. We realised that we were joining generations of pilgrims who had gone before us searching for something deeper."

The journey from Bellshill began with Mass in the school with families and teachers. For some students this was their 2<sup>nd</sup> pilgrimage with the school but for most, it was their first time traveling without family.

Each day began with Mass, led by Fr Stuart. We often joined the candlelight procession as well as the Blessed Sacrament Procession

and blessing of the sick. At these breathtaking liturgies students witnessed the universality of the Church through their fellow pilgrims from across the globe walking with them and praying alongside them.

One of the most moving moments came during our final evening in Lourdes when the group lit the Pilgrimage candle and each person lit their own candles from this for their own intentions and that of others who had asked for their prayers.

Service was a central theme of the pilgrimage. One teacher said. "Students were honoured to be asked by the Sanctuary to lead not only the Marian Torchlight Procession and carry the statue of Our Blessed Mother but also lead the Blessed Sacrament Procession and serve during the liturgy and benediction". Whether carrying a banner or flag, offering directions, or simply sharing a smile, they embodied the Gospel in action.

Though deeply spiritual, the pilgrimage was also filled with joy. Throughout the week the group took part in other activities such as visiting local villages, including Gavarnie and Bartres, as well as flying high through the trees on a high ropes course and rowing



down the rapids during the rafting afternoon.

Friendships blossomed as students supported one another through emotional moments and celebrated the lighter ones. "We laughed, we cried, we prayed," said one pupil. "I've never felt so close to my classmates."

Teachers noted how the experience helped students grow in confidence and empathy and back in the school, the impact continues to ripple through the school community. Many of the students have taken on leadership roles as School and House Captains.

For Cardinal Newman High School, Lourdes wasn't just a destination - it was a spiritual milestone. It reminded everyone that faith is lived, experienced, and shared and can't just be taught in a classroom.

Plans are already underway for future pilgrimages, ensuring each pupil has the chance to experience the transformative power of Lourdes.





## Award for St Columbkille's Piazza

The recent ground works at St Columbkille's in Rutherglen received a silver award at the recent Scottish Design Awards.

Architects, Loader Monteith, in collaboration with landscape architect, Mark Donaldson, has revitalised the external landscape of Category-A listed St Columbkille's Church in Rutherglen, Glasgow, transforming it into a vibrant and accessible public space.

Championing this transformation, Father Bernard Mournian envisioned a more inclusive and engaging public space, which enhances accessibility, strengthens community ties and sets a precedent for a thoughtful landscape design, ensuring St Columbkille's remains a welcoming place for generations to come.

## Fr Ricklan celebrates 25 years

Father Ricklan Mallya recently celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his Religious Profession in the Spiritan Congregation.

A Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated in St Patrick's Shieldmuir, where he is currently parish priest along with St Brendan's Muirhouse, and was joined by parishioners a number of Spiritan clergy as well as priests from the Diocese.



## Celebrate the growth of Mary's Meals at their Open Day

BY SARAH MALLON

From humble beginnings feeding just 200 children in a school in Malawi, Mary's Meals has grown its mission to now provide meals to over 2.6 million children each school day, with more expansions in progress. The support from parishes across Motherwell Diocese has been an important part of this story, with parishioners coming together to sponsor schools, organise fundraising events and support the mission in prayer.

To celebrate the growth of Mary's Meals, all are invited to the charity's open day on 20 September at Broomhill Hyndland Parish Church. The event will include the chance to hear insight from visits to our programme countries, learn about the long-term impact of our work on individuals and communities, and listen to some inspiring stories of local fundraising. Tea, coffee and home-baking will also be served. Further details and booking on Eventbrite:

[marysmealsopenday.eventbrite.co.uk](https://marysmealsopenday.eventbrite.co.uk)



## SCIAF's 60th Anniversary Mass

### Please join us



12 noon, Saturday 13th September



St. Columbkille's R.C Church, 2 Kirkwood Street  
Rutherglen, Glasgow, G73 2SL



Refreshments in the hall afterwards



# YOUTH MINISTRY SUMMIT: Embrace, Empower and Evangelise



“

“parishes must open their doors to young people, fostering genuine relationships and authentic connections “



**Earlier in the spring, the Diocese of Motherwell hosted a vibrant Youth Ministry Summit, organised by the Youth Ministry Office, under the leadership of Mishal Novani, the Vicar Episcopal for Youth, Fr. Stephen Reilly, and the Youth Chaplain, Fr. Mark O'Donnell.**

Among the notable participants were Beccy Roseman from Birmingham and Dr. Novani, a psychiatrist. Both delivered inspiring keynote addresses that enriched the summit and left a lasting impact on the attendees.

The summit was opened with a prayer led by Fr. Stephen Reilly followed by an introduction to the theme: “Disciples for the Next Generation,” centred on three key words - Embrace, Empower, and Evangelize.

Introducing the topic, “setting the scene on the next generation/ evangelisation through the generational gap”, Mishal delivered the welcome address, passionately expressing concern over the mass exodus of young people from the Church. She presented youth ministry as a vital and timely response to this pressing challenge. Drawing from the Church document *Lumen Gentium*, she reminded the audience of the words of the Church Fathers, who described the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ, where every member is called to participate.

She emphasized that the parish remains the heartbeat of the Church, with Christ as its head. As such, parishes must open their doors to young people, fostering genuine

relationships and authentic connections. Mishal urged all to follow the model of Christ, who built personal and meaningful relationships with his disciples.

The first keynote address, delivered by Beccy, focused on understanding the very people we are called to serve: today's youth. She described them as an anxious yet passionate generation, fun-loving, beautiful souls who crave to be seen and heard, who fear being judged, yet long to succeed and make a meaningful impact. Many of them feel disconnected from the Church, perceiving it as distant or irrelevant, as evidenced by their minimal presence in parish life. However, they still carry deep spiritual longings.

Moreover, the youth love stories, appreciate heartfelt prayer, and are especially moved when liturgy is enriched with good music. relationship. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 lockdowns deeply affected them, leaving emotional and spiritual wounds. Some youths even believe they can never be holy or good enough to participate in Church life because of their past mistakes. These are precisely the individuals we are called to welcome, without judgement, into a spiritual home where they feel safe and accepted.

Drawing on Life Teen's approach, Beccy proposed a relational model as the most effective method for engaging with young people. This model includes six key elements: Contact, Connect, Care, Challenge,



Commitment, and Co-Workers. Once we have made contact and formed a connection, we are called to care for them genuinely, challenge them lovingly, and walk with them toward commitment. Working alongside others, we empower youth to take ownership of their faith and grow into active co-workers in the vineyard.

The programme then transitioned into a dynamic panel discussion with the young people, centered around the question: "What inspires you?" It was both moving and insightful to hear the youth testifying how joining the youth group has deepened their connection with Christ. A central takeaway from this session was the critical need to establish youth groups in every parish - spaces where young people can belong, grow, and be nurtured in faith.

Mishal then shared her powerful testimony, recounting how the love of Christ and her calling to serve youth led her away from worldly careers and into her fulfilling role at the Youth Office of the Diocese of Motherwell. She introduced three key pillars for youth ministry: Formation, Fellowship, and Fun. These pillars emphasise the importance of creating relaxed, welcoming environments where youth feel free to express themselves, connect with others, and learn about their faith.

Beccy's interjection added even more depth to the session. She reminded the audience that today's youth are naturally curious, intelligent, and full of questions. They desire authenticity and real roles in the Church. We must accompany them on their journey, recognizing that it may take up to seven invitations before a young person says "yes" to Church involvement.

A particularly tender and thought-provoking moment came when Dr. Giancarlo Novani, a psychiatrist, spoke on "Responding to Mental Health Crises." He highlighted the devastating impact of the COVID lockdown on the social and emotional wellbeing of young people. The mental health struggles they face today are also intensified by social media, where digital life often replaces real relationships. Many feel unseen in a world driven by algorithms and consumerism, where personal data is commodified. Amid all this, youth are simply searching for affirmation, for someone who genuinely listens, cares, and helps them rediscover a reason to live.

Dr. Novani emphasized the need for empathetic presence. Sometimes, the best we can do is sit with someone, listen deeply, and allow them to feel what they're feeling. At the same time, youth must also come to understand that suffering is a natural part of life - and often, our most meaningful growth comes through pain. It is in these difficult experiences that the seeds of greatness are often sown.

### Closing Session: Rooted in Prayer

The summit concluded with what was arguably the most important session - a deep dive into prayer, our essential and irreplaceable means of communion with God. This final moment, led by Mishal, focused on how to pray with young people. Quoting her powerful words, "To do the

work of God, we have to be people of God," she reminded everyone that prayer is the cornerstone of youth ministry.

Following from the success and demand for more youth ministry trainings, Mishal at the Youth Office is delivering the next session, Sharing the Good News with Young People, on the 9th of September 2025 at 7pm at the Diocesan Centre. For more information, email: [mishal@rcdom.org.uk](mailto:mishal@rcdom.org.uk)

**PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY TRAINING**

# SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

A training workshop on speaking with young people and sharing the Good News.

**SPEAKING TO EVANGELISE**

OPEN TO ALL PARISH YOUTH LEADERS



7PM-8:30PM  
09 Sep, 2025  
Diocesan Centre, Motherwell

**YOUR MESSAGE HAS POWER!**



**SIGN UP NOW**



## NATIONAL YOUTH PILGRIMAGE

### KINNOULL, PERTH

**20TH SEPT: 1230 - 1700**

WALKING | PRAYER | INPUTS | HOLY MASS | COMMUNITY

ONE PILGRIMAGE. TWO GROUPS. 51-56 AND 18-35.  
INDIVIDUALS WELCOME. YOUTH / YOUNG ADULT GROUPS WELCOME. FAMILIES WELCOME.

CONTACT [MISHAL@RCDOM.ORG.UK](mailto:mishal@rcdom.org.uk) FOR MORE INFO



# Tributes after death of first lay chancellor



*Frank (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) receiving the Papal Knighthood from Bishop Toal in 2014, alongside Bishop Emeritus Joseph Devine and Fr Dominic Towey*

**Mr Frank Cassidy, the first ever lay Diocesan Chancellor in the UK has died, at the age of 91.**

For 17 years, Frank served as Chancellor of the Diocese of Motherwell, serving both the late Bishop Devine and Bishop Toal.

Born in Flemington, Motherwell, in 1934 within the parish of St Patrick's, Shieldmuir, Mr Cassidy was educated in St Patrick's Primary School and Our Lady's High School, Motherwell, before leaving for two years National Service in the Royal Artillery.

After leaving the army he spent 32 years with Caterpillar Tractor Company in its Uddingston Plant, until its closure, and as a director of Hussmann Refrigeration, Glasgow, for 8 years after which he retired.

In 1958 he married Mary Hamilton in St Bridget's Church, Baillieston where they continued to live following their marriage and had two children, Marie Therese and

Paul. In 1997 Mary died of cancer, nine years after they moved to live in Uddingston.

At the age of 63, he was asked by Mgr Alex Devanny, who was a friend of Frank's from their school days and who was the Vicar General of the Diocese, if he would come into do some work in the Diocesan Office for two weeks to help sort things out. That fortnight soon became 17 years as Bishop Devine appointed Frank Chancellor of the Diocese. This was a significant appointment at the time as it was a role only held by clergy until then and was the first time a lay person had been appointed chancellor in the UK.

Frank continued to serve as chancellor, managing the Diocesan office and overseeing the administration of the Diocese, until his retirement in December of 2014.

In recognition of his service to the Church, Bishop Toal invested Frank with the insignia of The Order of St

Gregory the Great at his home parish of St John the Baptist, Uddingston in December 2015.

The Requiem Mass was celebrated in his home parish of St John the Baptist's Uddingston, by his former parish priest and close friend, Father Dominic Towey, who was joined by a number of clergy from across the Diocese.

Fr Towey spoke of their close friendship over many years and the support he received from Frank as well as his great generosity and sense of humour.

During his homily Fr Towey said: "Frank was a defender of the faith and used the gifts he had been given very generously for his family, for his parish and for the church in general, he was tireless and unselfish in helping other people. He was someone you could look up to and someone who tried to please God in everything he did."

*May he rest in peace. Amen.*



# A life devoted to Our Lady

**With sadness, the death was announced of Fr Thomas Toal, who died at home in Coatbridge in the early hours of 21<sup>st</sup> June, following a long illness.**

Tommy was born in Coatbridge on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1942, the third of twelve children to Joe and Cathy Toal. He grew up in a strong Catholic household in the parish of St Mary's Whifflet.

He attended St Patrick's High, Coatbridge, and then joined the Civil Service. From his young days, Fr Tommy had a great devotion to Our Lady and was involved in the Legion of Mary, both locally and nationally. He developed a love for travel and regularly travelled to Lourdes and Fatima and also made a trip to the Holy Land. He also made very regular trips to a certain football stadium in Glasgow's East End with Celtic FC being a large part of his life.

In 1976 he took a sabbatical from work to go to Uruguay as an envoy for the Legion of Mary during which time he was involved in establish many praesidia. He was inspired by his experience to

consider a vocation to the priesthood and was ordained a priest on 12th October 1986 for the Diocese of Melo, Uruguay. His ministry there was one of mission, travelling around all the stations to bring the sacraments to people. He would send a message to parishioners through the local radio that he would be coming to their village to celebrate Mass with them.

He returned to Scotland many times over the years, coming home to celebrate family weddings and baptisms, and after retiring from active ministry he returned home to live in Coatbridge. After his return he provided supply in parishes across the Diocese and beyond, and with a true missionary spirit was always happy to go wherever he was needed, often travelling on public transport to get there. This was greatly appreciated by priests and parishioners across the Diocese and made him a well known face throughout Lanarkshire. He also continued to be very active with the Legion of Mary and was involved in the life of the Diocese, attending many of the Diocesan Masses and events throughout the year.



His Requiem Mass was celebrated in St Augustine's Coatbridge on the Feast of Our Lady of Aberdeen, by Bishop Toal, with whom he was proud to share a surname. During his homily at the Requiem Mass, Bishop Toal said: 'I was privileged to visit him the day he died, which was a great blessing for me personally, and when we prayed with him, although he wasn't able to say much and was in some distress, he was participating in the prayers and blessing himself. He had a huge faith in the Lord which gave him great joy and contentment.'

*May he rest in peace. Amen.*

# Father Marcel Fango RIP

**The Diocese was also saddened by the news of the death of Fr Marcel Fangoo CSSp, a dedicated priest and missionary of the Holy Ghost Fathers (Spiritans). His devotion, humility, and zeal for the Gospel touched many lives.**

Fr Marcel was well known in the Diocese of Motherwell having served as a deacon in the parish of St Francis Xavier, Carfin and was renowned for his dedication to the sick and the housebound. He was ordained a priest in St Francis Xavier's Church by Bishop Joseph

Devine on 20th November, 1992, and returned to Carfin in 1917 to celebrate his Silver Jubilee.

Fr Marcel died in Chester on 9th June, 2025. Although his Requiem Mass took place in Chester, a Memorial Mass was celebrated in St Francis Xavier's Carfin attended by a number of people from the local community.

*May he rest in peace. Amen.*





# The Scriptures

by FATHER THOMAS MAGILL



## 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Year C 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025

*Sirach 3.17-18, 20, 28-29; Psalm 68; Hebrews 12.18-19, 22-24; Luke 14.7-14*

We know that the Lord enjoyed hospitality. Think of all those stories about him breaking bread with others. More often than not those others were people who had been “othered” by “good” society – the rejected, the downcast, those who were avoided and passed by. Today’s parables drive home his message. (Gospel) When we get together with people, we don’t dominate the gathering, monopolise the conversation, or push ourselves forward. “The affliction of the proud has no healing.” (1<sup>st</sup> reading) Who are those we prefer to spend time with? Who do we exclude? Our Eucharist is where we experience deeply the Lord’s hospitality. He accepts us as we are and in so doing begins a transformation within us. He gives us hearts of hospitality which open us up to the stranger. As the Church grows in synodality we learn to walk humbly with each other learning that the hospitality the Lord asks of us “is not an invitation we initiate but a visitation we did not see coming” (John Caputo). As you leave Mass today why not greet someone whom you don’t know? You might discover you have met one of those “angels in festal gathering” (2<sup>nd</sup> reading) without knowing. You might be that angel yourself.

## 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Year C 7<sup>th</sup> September 2025

*Wisdom 9.13-18; Psalm 90; Philemon 9-10, 12-17; Luke 14.25-33*

“Great crowds accompanied Jesus,”

today’s gospel tells us. These are the same great crowds who would howl for his death. Seemingly good people later turn into a mob filled with resentment and seeking vengeance. What happened in the meantime? The Lord’s teaching on discipleship gives a clue. Following him brings a cost – hating one’s family, carrying the cross, selling possessions. (Gospel) Discipleship demands conversion of mind and heart, a change in the way we relate to others, to ourselves, and to material things. It changes everything in the light of Christ. “Hate” is a heavy word but it is telling us that nothing and no-one can come before our relationship with the Lord. We must die to the old way of living and relating (“carrying the cross”) in order to rise with Christ to his new way of living. When this happens, everything is transformed: we love more deeply and honestly, our attachments to people and things no longer enslave us, we are no longer “bond-servants” (2<sup>nd</sup> reading) but beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord. A synodal Church requires this conversion of each of us so that we can live this new way of being Church, filled with the wisdom of God and the Holy Spirit sent from on high. (1<sup>st</sup> reading) As you leave Mass today with your family and loved ones, why not reach out in greeting to others who are by themselves?

## Exaltation of the Holy Cross C 14<sup>th</sup> September 2025

*Readings: Numbers 21.4-9; Psalm 78; Philippians 2.6-11; John 3.13-17*

The children of Israel were full of poison. (1<sup>st</sup> reading) That came from the serpents, yes, but more fatally

from the impatience, the complaints, and the lack of trust gnawing deep inside them. Looking up at the bronze serpent, they were pulled out of their negativity and self-obsession and recognised their sinfulness. The poison was drawn. Christ is lifted up for us to gaze upon him in his crucified and risen state and as we gaze he draws us to himself and through himself to the Father. (Gospel) Christ’s Paschal Mystery (his Death and Resurrection) draws the poison of evil, sin, and death, and places us deep within himself where are healed and made whole. Born in our likeness, Christ was raised up (2<sup>nd</sup> reading) so that we might already share in God’s life and here and now experience the eternal life he has won for us. Each time we celebrate Mass together, we enter into Christ’s Paschal Mystery by dying to self and rising with him to the new life he draws us into. A synodal Church will be patterned ever more fully after Christ’s Paschal Mystery, dying to old ways of doing things to rise to the occasion of the new life Christ offers. What’s the part of my life I really need to die to this week?

## 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year C 21<sup>st</sup> September 2025

*Readings: Amos 8.4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Timothy 2.1-8; Luke 16.1-13*

Jesus told his parables to stop us short in our tracks, to invite us to evaluate our thinking, and perhaps discover a new way of living. Today’s parable certainly does that. (Gospel) Surely the Lord is not suggesting we be dishonest? As the manager lowers the bill of the debtors, we immediately hear echoes of that prayer of the Lord “Forgive us our debts (trespasses) as we forgive those who are in debt to us.” Since we have been forgiven, so must we forgive others. The riches of God’s mercy have been lavishly poured into our hearts making us bringers of that mercy to others. Even the rich man was changed when he saw how forgivingly his manager behaved. Through forgiveness, the manager entered into new relationships with others and what he thought was a catastrophic end was in fact a new beginning. All of us have been richly endowed in



Christ, the one who is our great ransom (2<sup>nd</sup> reading), and been made able to encounter him especially in the poor and needy of this earth. (1<sup>st</sup> reading) Who needs my generosity and compassion this week?

**26<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year C**  
**28<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

*Amos 6.1, 4-7; Psalm 146; I Timothy 6.11-16; Luke 16.19-31*

We still live in a world of gated communities and high walls which the rich and the powerful build to keep people out. People do it and nations do it. Today's parable talks of the resulting impoverishment but it points not to Lazarus but to the rich man. (Gospel) His chosen life-style is what makes his life so empty. Thinking that the gate will give him security and freedom, he lives in utter isolation. The more he has, the smaller his life has become. Stretched out on his couch and gorging himself on fine meat and drink (1<sup>st</sup> reading), he is utterly deaf to the cry of the poor. His choices are killing him and they will literally lead to death. The isolation and torment he experiences in Hades are simply the intensification of the impoverished life he had chosen. Like all the Lord's parables, this challenges us to change our thinking and the way we live. We have the Word of Christ, the one who rose from the dead, which enables us to listen deeply to each other, especially the needy and the poor, and to bridge the chasm and gulf which so often separates us. A synodal Church encourages us to listen deeply and to hear Christ addressing us through each other. Who do I really need to listen to?

**27<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year C**  
**5<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

*Habakkuk 1.2-3; 2.2-4; Psalm 95; II Timothy 1.6-8, 13-14; Luke 17.5-10*

When they ask the Lord to "Increase our faith," the disciples reveal two misunderstandings. (Gospel) Firstly, they see faith as a "thing", exclusively as a body of knowledge which will tell them what's right and wrong, what to do, and what to believe. Secondly, they see faith as "theirs," something they can possess or claim as their own and allow them to think they can

assess the quality of the faith of others. St Paul, by contrast, talks of the faith of Jesus which enabled him to have radical trust in his heavenly Father. This deep trust was the driving force of his mission bringing him into deep relationships with those he encountered, especially the rejected and the dejected. Faith as trust and relationship strengthened him in all the ups and downs of his ministry and ultimately to face the cross. That shows that faith doesn't change what is happening or will happen in our lives but changes us. Faith becomes a way of life in which we radically open ourselves to Christ in this relationship of trust. This in turn transforms our relationships with others and God's good earth. Living lives of faith as trust and relationship, we don't look for compliments or "well done's" since faith is its own reward. It leads us to a deeper humanity, a flourishing life, and a steadfastness in everything life throws at us. This is the righteousness which comes from faith (1<sup>st</sup> reading) manifested in the gifts of the Spirit -- power, and love, and self-control. (2<sup>nd</sup> reading). A synodal Church will always teach the content of the faith (Catholic belief) but will encourage us to live by faith through relationship and trust. Does my faith open me up to others, especially those very different from me, or lead me to shut that gate?

**28<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year C**  
**12<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

*II Kings 5.14-17; Psalm 98; II Timothy 2.8-13; Luke 17.11-19*

Leprosy disfigures, isolates, and banishes its sufferers to the fringes of society. Modern science has banished the disease from the developed world and is still working to combat it elsewhere. What it cannot do is cure spiritual malaise. How many people, especially the young, feel uncomfortable in their own skin, how many feel not good or attractive enough and end up in isolation and indeed are tempted by suicide? The ten Samaritans, (doubly excluded by their leprosy and their being Samaritan) obey the Lord and their flesh is restored and cleansed by the priest. (Gospel)

The one who returned understood that there was more going on than a physical cure. His gratitude shows that healing took place in him at a deeper level, in his very heart and soul. (Gospel) He wasn't content with the surface level; he knew a deeper healing was needed so that he might know the comfort of God himself. Physical pain is part of being human and most often that pain can be treated. But the pain of the heart is something else. Only Christ can give the deep healing to our spiritual discomfort and ache, our dissatisfaction and yearning which so often scar us. The scar tissue left within us will be a constant reminder not only of the healing Christ gives but also of the need for his Cross through which we die in order to live with him (2<sup>nd</sup> reading) Then we no longer live superficially, on the surface, but take a deep dive into the love of God. A synodal Church leads us from a superficial spirituality to that deep place within ourselves where we experience the healing of Christ and our utter dependence on God (1<sup>st</sup> reading). What is the healing I yearn for?

**29<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year C**  
**19<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

*Exodus 17.8-13; Psalm 121; II Timothy 3.14-4.2; Luke 18.1-8*

There is a profound contrast in today's gospel between human justice and divine justice. We know litigation in our courts can go on for months and even years. It's a system where one party wins and another loses. Clearly, it was the same in the time of Jesus – an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth (Leviticus 24.20). The judge finally accedes to the widow's demand only out of his self-interest and self-preservation. (Gospel) How utterly different, the parable makes clear, is the justice and the judgment of God. God is a just judge insofar as he makes us just. We become justified in his sight not based on our own actions but through the Paschal Mystery of Christ, who judges the living and the dead. (2<sup>nd</sup> reading) God finds in our favour, in the favour of everyone, through Christ's Death and Resurrection. He does this speedily and without delay -- in baptism we were

accepted by God and given a share in his life. Through prayer we continue to grow in this justice of God and bit by bit discover and experience this justice as the divine mercy and compassion. We must persevere in that prayer all our lives, even when we grow weary. (1<sup>st</sup> reading). A synodal Church is not a Church of judgment and condemnation but of divine mercy and compassion. Who needs my compassion today?

### 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year C

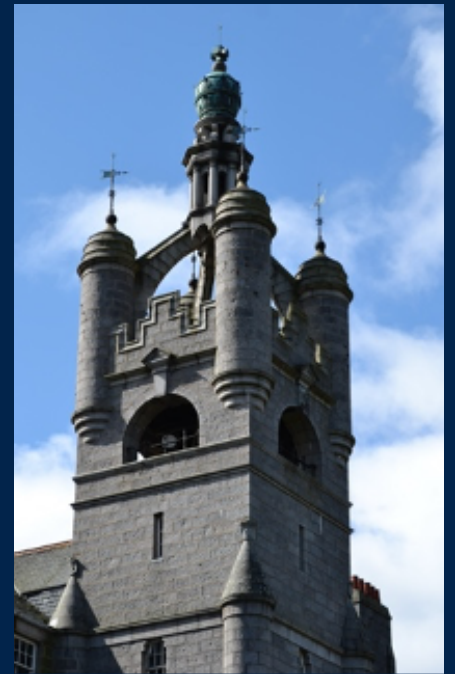
26<sup>th</sup> October 2025

*Sirach 35.15-17, 20-22; Psalm 34; II Timothy 4.6-8, 16-18; Luke 18.9-14*

I'm sure Rabbie Burns would have had this parable in mind when he wrote "Holy Willie's Prayer" in which Willie sees himself as "a chosen sample," "a pillar o' Thy temple." Like Willie, the Pharisee compares himself with others, in particular the tax-collector, and he comes out trumps (!). (Gospel) Notice how often "I" appears in his prayer, puffing up his ego and revealing his self-will. His good deeds have the effect of making him think he is superior to everyone. His prayer has the effect of closing himself off to others, erring in his understanding of God in whom there is no partiality (1<sup>st</sup> reading), and diminishing his humanity. The tax-collector, by contrast, is justified not by recounting his good deeds but by opening himself to the mercy of God. God's mercy opens the door to a new life, a new world, a new self-understanding, and a new relationship with God. As he stands far off and beats his breast he shows he understands Christ's teaching that those who would save their life must lose it. He comes to know the dead places of his life formed by his ego and self-will and this is the beginning of his resurrection. Only by dying in Christ can we rise with him and be made able to proclaim his message by the lives we lead. (2<sup>nd</sup> reading) A synodal church is a Church at prayer opening us up to be formed and moulded by the Holy Spirit. What does this tell me about my prayer life?

# Blairs College The Bell

**David McCann** recalls his days as a student at Blairs College as the bells rang out for prayers.



**The tolling of the main bell in the college tower summoned students from the far corners of the estate to important college events, liturgical, academic or recreational.**

This important bell was controlled from an electric switch at the junction of the main classroom corridor and the one which led to the college study-hall. This switch differed in no respect from other switches and many a hapless new entrant to the college was asked by veterans to switch on the corridor light only to be bewildered and confused by the lack of electric illumination and the distant sound of a ponderous peal of great bells. I was the victim of such a trick in my first days in the college. Other bells within the college corridors would give seven or three-minute warnings of imminent events. There was an office of bellman, the holder of which was charged with ensuring the college was notified of such events. In our latter years in the college, Eddie McG was given a great responsibility and was raised to the venerable office of bellman. Creativity being a strongpoint of Eddie's personality, we were not surprised when one of his bells was given a name. He called his handbell 'Michelle'. When asked why by an unsuspecting enquirer he was referred to a current Beatles' song of the day which began 'Michelle, ma belle...'.

The ringing of bells often signified a communal activity and much of the movement of people was done in ranks. Students would walk in two long lines with censors (Blairs prefects) walking between the ranks to keep order and to note any signs of indiscipline, which included talking after the final bell had sounded. Usually moving in ranks was done in normal day-to-day manner but on Sundays and major festivals we processed to the Church in choir dress of soutane and surplice. There was something quite unique about a nearly two hundred people processing into the Church to the sound of a Bach organ classic or some stirring hymn in Latin or English, stopping at 'the mat' to bow towards the high altar and then filing in order to their places in the benches or choir stalls in the nave of the church.

My memories of these, sometimes solemn, processional occasions are not without humour. One of my form-year, a student from Motherwell Diocese who was a censor, used to walk between the ranks of the newer seminarians. Camouflaged in the whiteness of his surplice, he would carry a white handkerchief. As he passed the ranks of these younger students, he would feign a suppressed sneeze before blowing his nose loudly into the camouflaged handkerchief to the utter horror of the youngsters who were convinced that he had used the front of his surplice.



# Bishop Toal urges Prime Minister to recognise state of Palestine

**Bishop Toal has written to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Sir Keir Starmer, urging the UK Government to support a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and work towards recognising the state of Palestine.**

In his letter the Bishop said: "As Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in the Diocese of Motherwell, I write to express my profound concern, encouraged by our Justice & Peace Group, regarding the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. The suffering of civilians—especially children and the vulnerable—calls for urgent, principled action. I appeal to you, in the name of our shared humanity and moral responsibility, to support a permanent ceasefire, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, and work actively toward the recognition of the State of Palestine."

He continued: "The recent words of Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, echo the cry of the people in the Holy Land. He spoke of "entire neighbourhoods erased", families torn apart, and a population living in fear and despair. He called not only for peace, but for a renewed global conscience, one that places compassion and justice above politics and division."

"As a nation historically engaged in the region, the United Kingdom has a vital role to play. It is not enough to express concern—we must act. A lasting ceasefire is urgently needed to prevent further loss of life and to allow unrestricted humanitarian access. The suffering in Gaza is unconscionable and demands our immediate attention," the Bishop urged.

The Bishop noted that the path to peace is through justice and support of the rights of the Palestinian people by recognising the two states. "Beyond the

emergency response, the path to peace must be rooted in justice. The continued denial of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination perpetuates a cycle of violence, resentment, and instability. Recognising the State of Palestine—alongside the State of Israel—is a necessary and morally just step toward a future built on mutual dignity and hope."

"As a Bishop, I feel compelled by the Gospel of Christ to be a voice for the voiceless and a peacemaker in times of conflict. We, in Motherwell Diocese, urge your government to listen to the cries of those who suffer, and to lead with integrity, compassion, and courage.

"Prime Minister, the United Kingdom's foreign policy should reflect its deepest values: respect for human life, the pursuit of peace, and a commitment to justice. In the face of such grave suffering, silence is not an option. Now is the time to renew our efforts to act decisively for peace and the common good."

The Bishop's letter follows a statement issued by Archbishop of Glasgow and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland last month following the loss of life after a missile struck the Holy Family Parish Church in Gaza.

In their statement, Rt Rev William Nolan and Rt Rev Rosie Frew, said: "We join today to express our profound sorrow at the loss of life and the injuries sustained following a missile strike on the Holy Family Parish Church in Gaza. Further, we echo the words of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV in his call for a ceasefire, and his 'profound hope for dialogue, reconciliation, and enduring peace in the region."

"We recall the visit to Glasgow by Fr Gabriel Romanelli, priest of the Holy Family Parish, in April 2024 and the Declaration: "From Glasgow to Gaza: A Cry for Peace in



the Holy Land" signed on that occasion.

"The Declaration concluded: 'Today we cry out to all people in positions of power to end this senseless violence. We pray to Almighty God that their hearts may be turned towards compassion, and that they may have the courage and wisdom to pursue the path of justice and peace for all who call the Holy Land home'.

"We reflect on the continued relevance of these words and we renew the call for a permanent ceasefire and the pursuit of "the path of justice and peace".

During a three-day conference in which UN member states debated how to establish peace between Israel and Palestine, the Holy See Permanent Observer, Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, argued that lasting peace can be found only in the two-state solution.

"The Holy See remains gravely concerned by the worsening humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. The devastating impact on civilians, especially the number of children killed, has been compounded by the destruction of homes, hospitals, and places of worship, with the recent attack on the Holy Family Church further wounding an already distressed community," said Archbishop Caccia.

"The Holy See remains convinced that the Two-State Solution, based on secure and internationally recognized borders, is the only viable and equitable path toward a just and lasting peace."

# Why Start A Care For Creation Group In Your Parish?

Ahead of the Season of Creation which begins on 1<sup>st</sup> September, **Eileen McQuade** suggests why your parish should launch a Care of Creation Group.

**Why, you may ask, is there any need to start a Care for Creation Group in your parish when there are already so many other climate action groups in Scotland? The short answer is, Care For Creation is not just another climate action group. It's not a Catholic version of Greenpeace.**

Our world is faced with enormous challenges; human trafficking, global warming, social isolation, consumerism, a throwaway society, abortion, euthanasia, secularism, loss of biodiversity, etc., Ten years ago Pope Francis addressed his encyclical, *Laudato Si* to the whole world. In it he identified these global problems as interconnected symptoms of the deep crisis affecting humanity. The crisis is a spiritual one caused by our broken relationships with God, with one another and with creation. If we try to solve these problems without addressing their root cause our fundamental relationships will remain broken. We will remain, where modernity has placed us, trying to control and order creation and one another by putting ourselves where only God should be.

Inspired by *Laudato Si*, a Care For Creation Group was formed in St Ninian and St Cuthbert's Parish, Hamilton in 2021. We could have felt too small to make a difference but instead we were encouraged by something Pope Francis said. If we feel like snowflakes in front of the challenges confronting the world, remember that snowflakes can come together to form avalanches. We realised that our little "snowflake" needed to join up with others.

While raising awareness of social and environmental issues, our Care For Creation Group sought from the beginning to build relationships not only within our own church but with other Catholic parishes, with other denominations, with our local community, local associations and charities and with the youth. We have used ideas and resources from others and we are proactive in trying to share ours. This has allowed us to develop a network that goes far beyond our own church, diocese and even country. Doors opened in ways we could never have expected or planned for. Working for our common home from a spiritual dimension has taken us beyond our church walls and into the community. It has raised the profile of our church in the local community and further afield.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR PARISHES STARTING A CARE FOR CREATION GROUP



### PARISH GROUPS

- Care for Creation is a whole parish responsibility.
- Recognise what is already being done in your parish to care for creation.
- If you don't have SVDP group, Legion of Mary, One World Group, Children's Liturgy, Justice and Peace try to set up some of these or other groups to take ahead different aspects of caring for creation.



### SCREEN 'THE LETTER'

- Cardinal Michael Czerny said of 'The Letter', "This beautiful film – a heartbreaking yet hopeful story – is a clarion cry to people everywhere: wake up! get serious! act together! act now!"
- "The Letter" is free to watch on YouTube. More details at: [www.theletterfilm.org/screenings](http://www.theletterfilm.org/screenings)
- Provide hospitality and allow people time to share their thoughts and consider what action can be taken individually and as a parish.



### FOLLOW UP

- Try to form a Care For Creation Group in the parish.
- Advertise in the parish bulletin for members but in our experience people respond better to a personal invitation.
- Recognise and make good use of the individual talents in the group.



### ECO-CONGREGATION

- To help structure your efforts and evaluate your progress, register with EcoCongregation and work towards an EcoAward.





## SCIAF

- To raise awareness, consider asking SCIAF to run their two excellent workshops on Integral Human Development which highlight the varied work SCIAF does in responding to the cry of the poor.



## YOUTH

- Meet the children where they “are” by doing activities they enjoy e.g., make seed bombs, have a children’s garden, feed the birds at parish bird feeders etc.,
- Give Caritas pupils a meaningful engagement with parish life eg helping with the children’s liturgy, the Sunday Cafe, fundraising activities.
- Introduce Caritas pupils to Laudato Si to help them view the crisis from a different perspective and empower them to act to bring about change



## ECUMENICAL

- Try to build stronger relationships with other churches.
- Consider having an ecumenical Taizé Service with hospitality afterwards
- Care for our common home is a project that brings people together. Our Care For Creation Group very quickly developed into an ecumenical group with our local Church of Scotland



## WIDER COMMUNITY

- Find ways to work with the wider community. Become part of what is already there.
- Could you get involved with resident associations, council groups, local charity groups? Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered in my name there I am in their midst.” Two or three of us together is enough to take the church into the community.
- Bring The Community To Us
- The church hall can be the interface between the local community and the church.
- Use your hall to build relationships between the church and the wider community.
- Stereotypes of what a Christian “looks” like exist. By inviting people in the community to craft groups, afternoon teas, etc. relationships are built up and stereotypes are dismissed. Little by little, in our experience, people start to engage with the charitable works of the church and get drawn into the life of the church.

### Last Words....

Our goal was to help heal broken relationships while raising awareness of the global problems we are facing.

When our parish received a Silver EcoCongregation Award, we were delighted to be commended for :-

- The connection to the wider community and local community projects.
- The ecumenical connections and joint working with other churches.
- The active involvement of young people and the activities for them, including the Eco-Comic, the involvement of Pope Francis and Caritas award pupils.
- The high levels of energy, creativity and commitment from the group and their willingness to act as an example of an active Catholic eco-congregation

Dr Lorna Gold, Chair of the Laudato Si Movement, said that the capacity to put the lives of our children first and to do what is necessary so that they can thrive, was the force that would bring about change. Pope Francis was clear that the politicians who wouldn’t bring about the necessary change. It would only come from the grassroots upwards.

This is the role of Care for Creation Groups. They are needed to raise awareness of what is happening in our world and the spiritual crisis which lies behind it. They are needed to help snowflakes bring about an avalanche of change.

If you are interested in starting a Care For Creation Group and would like some advice, contact [careofcreation@icloud.com](mailto:careofcreation@icloud.com)

### CARE OF CREATION & INTERFAITH PRAYER SERVICE

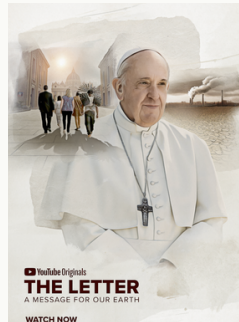


## Taizé

TUESDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER | 7.00PM

Hillhouse Parish and St Ninian and St Cuthbert’s Parish warmly invite you to their fourth Season of Creation Taizé service. It is an opportunity to reflect on God’s word and to pray together for our world to be healed.

ST NINIAN’S CHURCH | ST NINAN’S ROAD | HAMILTON | ML3 9TS



AN INVITATION TO 18-25 YEAR OLD TO A SCREENING OF

## THE LETTER

TUESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER | 7.00PM

ST NINIAN’S HALL | ST NINAN’S ROAD | HAMILTON | ML3 9TS

### CARE OF CREATION & INTERFAITH PRAYER SERVICE

#### MORE THAN AN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Organised by the Diocese of Motherwell Care for Creation Group, this introductory meeting provides an opportunity to come together with others and reflect on the place of Care for Creation groups in faith communities and parishes

SATURDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025 | XAVIER CENTRE, CARFIN

Please register at [careofcreation@icloud.com](mailto:careofcreation@icloud.com)





# NEW MUSIC FOR YOUR PARISH

## *Mass of Saint Carlo Acutis*



Celebrate Carlo's Canonisation by singing this newly composed Mass, dedicated to him in his honour. Described as 'lively and very rhythmical' (*Catholic Talent Network*), parishes and schools are now enjoying this contemporary style of liturgical music. Booklets of the Mass are now available and full recordings can be used for teaching by scanning the QR code above.

Order your free booklets at [enquiries@paulcarrollmusic.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@paulcarrollmusic.co.uk)



*May Saint Carlo Acutis intercede for all who will use this Mass setting*

