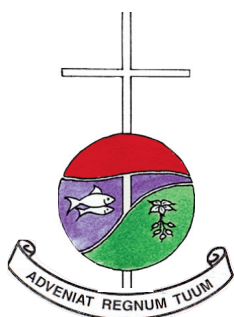


Amoris Lætitia The Pope's 'love-letter' to families



The Diocese of Banjul NEWSLETTER

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter



For farmers and the Church, it's the green season!



10 years at the helm: our Bishop, Robert

Thoughts, prayers and readings for all Sunday Masses in June and July





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2. Bakoteh	6868816	21. Kaw Junction L/Kunda	6868861
3. Barra, North Bank Region	6868858	22. Kololi Highway	6868832
4. Banjul Lemam Street	6868806	23. Lamin Village Opp Galp	6868815
5. Bansang	6969915	24. Latrikunda Sabiji	6868847
6. Basse Santa Su	6868839	25. London Corner	6868807
7. Basse Highway	6969865	26. Old Jeshwang	6868831
8. Brikama Nyambai	6968874	27. Old Yundum Market	6868843
9. Brikama Hawla Kunda	6868810	28. Sanyang	6868824
10. Brusubi Mini Market	6868819	29. Sayer Jobe Avenue	6868808
11. Brusubi Galp Station	6969873	30. Serrekunda Bartess	6868836
12. Bundung	6868821	31. Serekunda Mosque Road	6868814
13. Busumballa	6868827	32. Soma	6868837
14. Churchill's Town	6868817	33. Sukuta	6868856
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16. Dippakunda	6868812	35. Tallinding	6868809
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18. Farafenni	6868838	37. Westfield Next to Church	6868864
19. Kanifing Estate	6868842		



By way of introduction



Sunday by Sunday, day by day

WITH the recent celebration of Pentecost, the great season we call Easter Time has come to an end; but the Church calendar and events in our diocese and parishes provide plenty of opportunities for prayer and activity.

The calendar for June includes three great solemnities: days for particular rejoicing. First comes the Sacred Heart of Jesus on Friday 3rd June. A picture of Jesus and his wounded heart is familiar throughout the year to the many Catholics who display it in their homes. Just as we rejoice in Jesus' love for us, so we ask his forgiveness for wounding him by our sins of neglect and wrong-doing. He deserves better; and if we ask, he will give us grace to serve him and our neighbour more faithfully.

On Friday 24th May comes the Birth of John the Baptist. The first two chapters of St Luke's Gospel tell us of the birth of John and of his cousin, Jesus. John was to hail Jesus as the Lamb of God, and Jesus was to declare: 'I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John.' (Luke 7:28). And John, like his Master, Jesus, was to suffer a cruel and unmerited death. Let us, like John the Baptist, look steadfastly to Jesus as the Lamb of God.

Just five days after celebrating John the Baptist we come to

the Solemnity of St Peter and St Paul. These two men were so different in background, personality, temperament and gifts; but they were as one in their devotion to the Risen Lord Jesus, and full-hearted in their zeal in spreading the Good News. The apostolic faith spread by Peter and Paul is our faith today, and it is in the spirit of their endeavours that here and now, in our own diocese, we seek to live and spread the faith.

Such feasts as these remind us that though we meet every Sunday to celebrate our faith, we are not just 'Sunday Christians'. It is our duty and joy to live the faith every day, and to show something of Christ's kindness and compassion to everyone. We can take part in the Church's weekday celebrations, even if we cannot go to daily Mass, by reading the Scripture passages prescribed for each day (see page 28), and base our prayers and witness on what we've read.

We have recently celebrated the tenth anniversary of our Bishop's episcopal ordination. As we thank him for his love and care, we pray that following his lead, we may be loyal disciples of our Lord, working together in the Lord's name for the good of our families, our communities and our nation.

And we extend warmest best wishes to our Muslim brothers and sisters as they enter their holy season of Ramadan.



Reminders for the rainy season

page 13

Invaluable, beautiful trees

page 13



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Incorporating *The Catholic Newsletter*

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Here & there

NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE

'Breaking down the walls'



'BREAKING down the walls of Jericho' (Hebrews 11:30) is the theme of a six-day revival mission by AMSP and MSP priests in The Gambia held at St Therese's Lower School from Monday 23rd to Saturday 28th May at 6pm each evening.

The event's organisers are Fr Benedict Mba MSP, Parish Priest at Lamin, and members of the Missionary Society of St Paul and the Associate Members of the Society.

The leading speaker is Fr Daniel Ikeja of Nigeria.



Fr Benedict Mba MSP

Founded in Nigeria

The Missionary Society of St Paul was conceived in 1950, but it was not until 1978 that the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria erected the Missionary Society of St Paul.

The first member of the society trained in its seminary was ordained in 1985, and 11 others were ordained the following year. Since then around nine ordinations have been held each year.

'Ambassadors for Christ'

The society takes as its motto words of St Paul: 'We are ambassadors for Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:20)

Close partners of the priest members of the society are the Associate Missionaries of St Paul (AMSP), lay faithful who support the society's work with their time, talents, resources and prayers.

Members of MSP now work in Nigeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Chad, The Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, South Africa, South Sudan, Britain, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, the Bahamas, Grenada, Sweden and the United States.

The society has over 250 priest-members.



Papal Nuncio visits

THE PAPAL Nuncio, Archbishop Miroslaw Adamczyk, visited the Diocese of Banjul from Thursday 5th to Sunday 9th June.

The archbishop is based in Monrovia.

He was appointed Nuncio to Liberia, Sierra Leone and The Gambia by Pope Benedict VI in February 2013, and episcopally ordained two months later.

He presented his letters of credence to President Jammeh on Monday 4th November 2013.



20 years a diplomat

Miroslaw Adamczyk was born in Gdansk, Poland, in July 1962. He was ordained priest in May 1987, and after entering the diplomatic service of the Holy See in 1993, served in the nunciatures of Madagascar, India, Hungary, Belgium, South Africa and Venezuela.

Gambian ties with the Vatican

The Gambia established diplomatic relations with the Holy See in 1979.

The first Gambian ambassador to the Vatican was Alhaji Ousman Semega Janneh, and the first Papal Nuncio to The Gambia was Archbishop Yohannes Dyba, who presented his credentials to President Sir Dawda Jawara on 29th February 1980.

The immediate predecessor of Archbishop Miroslaw Adamczyk was Archbishop George Antonysami, now Nuncio in Madras, India.

A nuncio's functions

Since 1537, successive popes have sent nuncios to reside in the countries to which they are sent.

The title 'nuncio' (in Italian, *nunzio*) derives from a Latin word, *nuntius*, which means 'messenger'.

A papal nuncio represents the Catholic Church in the country or countries to which he is assigned, and serves as a mediator between the local Catholic Church and the Vatican.

The nuncio announces the appointment of new bishops, serves as the Pope's representative at the installation of a bishop, and attends meetings of the local bishops' conference.

Generally, a papal nuncio has the rank of archbishop.

Four schools win Bible story-telling

IN the Bible story-telling competition at GPI on Friday 15th April, four schools tied for first place, all achieving 80 per cent. The schools were Presentation Basic Cycle School, Brikama; Notre Dame Lower Basic School, Soma; St Edwards' Basic School, Bwiam; and St Charles Lwanga Basic School, Fajikunda.

Runners-up were St Aidan's Basic School, Mariama-kunda, with 77 per cent, and St Peter's Lower Basic School, Lamin, with 76 per cent. Eighteen schools took part in the event.

The chief judge was Fr Pius Gidi CSSp, assisted by Fr Antoine Sambou, Madeleine Jallow and Anne-Marie Jawo. The moderator was Therese Valentine, and the general overseer Obi Laz Enwelani.

The event was organised by the Biblical and Catechetical Commission.

Priests, sisters and people congratulate their Bishop



PRIESTS, sisters and lay people gathered at the Church of the Holy Family Fajara on Friday 20th May for a Mass to mark Bishop Robert Ellison's tenth anniversary as Bishop of Banjul.

The Mass was followed by a reception at Shalom, the retreat house in Fajara attended by Christian and Muslim leaders.

The landmark anniversary was celebrated at a Mass of Thanksgiving at Holy Family Church Fajara on Friday 20th May, followed by a reception at Shalom Retreat Centre attended by Christian and Islamic leaders.

'From that day, he did not disappoint'

Speaking at the reception, Fr Bruno Toupan pointed out that Bishop Ellison had been ordained priest in 1969, and it was in 2006, when he was General-Secretary of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, serving in Rome, that Pope Benedict XVI appointed him Bishop of Banjul.

Fr Toupan described Bishop Ellison's episcopal ordination at Bakau Stadium as 'the most moving ceremony in my Catholic life. And from that day, he did not disappoint...'

In his ten years as Catholic leader, Bishop Ellison has ordained nine priests, and 14 Gambians are now studying for the priesthood in Senegal and Ghana.

Fr Toupan described Bishop Ellison as a man of 'team spirit', evidenced when he was Director of GPI and since, as bishop, having set up the College of Consultors and the Diocesan Finance Committee and travelling up and down the country to meet his flock.

Fr Toupan declared that ever since the Diocesan Assembly of 2008, the concept of 'self-reliance' has been Bishop Ellison's legacy. He concluded: 'I wish to assure you...that we appreciate you and will continue to pledge our loyalty to you as your first collaborators and co-workers in the Lord's vineyard.'

Page 7: Rejoicing: Bishop Ellison's career

Page 30: Walking together: Bishop Ellison's address on 14th May 2006

Corrections

In the Newsletter for April/May 2016, the statement in 'From beyond' on page 21 that the number of Catholics worldwide is 1.3 million should have read '1.2 billion' – although some estimates are nearer 1.3 billion.

Under the heading, 'Freshness, imagination and newness' on page 4, the year '2104' should have been given as '2014'.

IN BRIEF

HOLY CROSS Church in Brusibi celebrated its anniversary on the Fifth Sunday in Easter Time (Sunday 24th April). The preacher at the Mass of Thanksgiving was Fr Yenes Manneh.

A CONFIRMATION Retreat, 'The Cathedral Twelve', was led by St Marie Murphy at GPI from Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th April. The retreat included adoration, silence, morning and night prayer, Mass, scripture-sharing and reflections. Among those leading sessions were Fr Peter S. Lopez, Fr Antoine Sambou, Fr Victor Ndecky, St Jeanne-Therese and Veronic Mendy.

*Best wishes to our Muslim
Brothers and Sisters
for
The Holy Month of Ramadan
and for Tobaski*

Congratulations

On Friday 8th July, two priests serving the diocese celebrate the tenth anniversary of their ordination



Fr Michael Gomez CSSp
Fr Peter Jammeh CSSp

During June and July, five other priests celebrate the anniversary of their ordination.

Thursday 23rd June

Fr Gabriel Secka 2001

Tuesday 28th June

Fr Benedict Mba MSP 2003

Tuesday 5th July

Fr John Sharpe CSSp 1964

Sunday 10th July

Fr Pius Kwasi Gidi CSSp 2004

Friday 15th July

Fr Peter S. Lopez 2000

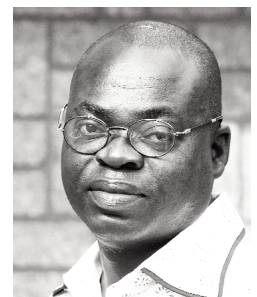
Among priests formerly serving in the diocese, *Sunday 12th June* is the anniversary of Fr Seán Devereux (1987); *Sunday 26th June*, Fr Francis Eyo MSP (2003); *Friday 1st July*, Fr Jean-Baptiste Ballaboore CSSp (1998); *Sunday 3rd July*, Fr Michael Casey CSSp (1968) & Fr Jean-François Diagne CSSp (2004); *Friday 15th July*, Fr Reginald Gillooly CSSp (1951)



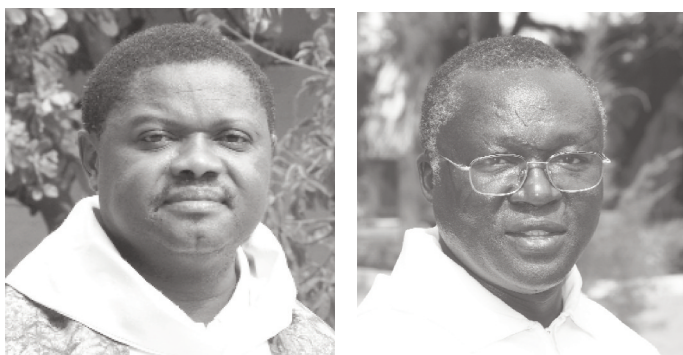
**Do
you
know?**

- 1 Who, in the Old Testament, was David's closest friend?
- 2 Name the Anglican Bishop of Gambia
- 3 Which apostle said to Jesus, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied'?
- 4 What is an acolyte?
- 5 Name the priest shown on the right.

Answers on page 28



30th anniversary



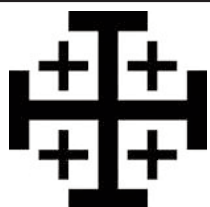
FATHER Edward Gomez and Fr David Jimoh Jarju have recently celebrated their thirtieth priestly anniversaries.

Fr Edu, fellow-priests and many well-wishers came together on Sunday 17th April for a Mass of Thanksgiving at the Church of the Resurrection, Brikama.

Fr Jarju similarly celebrated at St Martin's Kartong on Saturday 30th April.

2016 PILGRIMAGE

THE OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME



The National Catholic Pilgrimage Committee is pleased to inform all interested Christians that this year's pilgrimage to Israel, Jordan and Egypt (Mount Sinai) will take place from Friday 14th to Saturday 29th October.

The cost of the package is D159,000, and includes

- Return air tickets (Brussels Airlines)
- Half-board hotel accommodation
- Group visas for Israel, Jordan and Egypt
- Travel insurance
- Tours to Biblical sites
- All entry/departure taxes

We are offering pilgrims a special BONUS this year (Jubilee of Mercy)

Six nights in Rome (Saturday 29th October to Friday 4th November).

Pilgrims will spend All Saints Day and All Souls Day in the 'Eternal City', receive the Papal Blessing and walk through the Holy Door. (Terms and conditions apply)

Payment should be made at Alvarenga Travel Agency, 55 Ecovas Avenue Banjul, before the deadline on Tuesday 2nd August.

Further enquiries: Fr Peter S. Lopez, telephone 9940456/7741575

OBITUARY

Distinguished medical practitioner, administrator and churchman

THE DISTINGUISHED pathologist, former Head of Health Services and deacon of the Anglican Church, the Revd Dr Fred Oldfield, died on Sunday 15th May at the age of 84.

The only child of Samuel and Verona Oldfield, Frederick Samuel Jonathan Oldfield was born in Banjul in March 1932.

He attended St Mary's Primary School and the Methodist Boys' High School before going to the United Kingdom in 1952. After further studies he was admitted to the medical school at Queen's University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, where he graduated in 1960, being awarded a Commonwealth Fellowship to McGill University in Montreal, Canada, where specialized in pathology. Later, he was to proceed to Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, and gain a degree in public health.

Dr Oldfield was the first Gambian pathologist, and was industrious in expanding a poorly-equipped laboratory into one which offered much better public services.

In 1980 he became Head of Health Services, where his many initiatives brought improvements in primary health care and the equipment of facilities in health centres, attracting grants from the World Bank and bi-lateral donors. He served on the executive board of the World Health Organisation, and was chairman for two years.

Dr Oldfield retired in 1987 but was retained on contract to run the pathology laboratory until 1998.

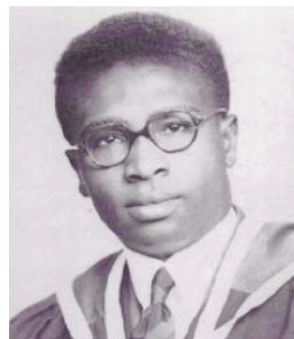
He was a founder member of the West African College of Physicians, a Justice of the Peace, a charter member of the Rotary Club of Banjul, and a regular at the Banjul Dinner Club.

In 1943 Dr Oldfield helped Bishop John Daly (the then Anglican bishop) to found St Paul's Church Fajara. In the mid-80s he became a licensed lay-reader, and in February 2009 was ordained deacon. He was a generous benefactor of St Paul's.

In 1974 Frederic Oldfield married his wife Lyna (nee Goddard), who survives him.

Dr Oldfield was a lover of art, jazz and classical music, at one time presenting a weekly programme on Radio Gambia.

A vigil and evensong were held at St Paul's Fajara on Thursday evening, 19th May, and a requiem at St Mary's Anglican Cathedral Banjul the following day, before interment at Banjul Cemetery and a gathering at the Reform Club, MDI Road.



The GPI Communications Unit

Offers digital video production, DVDs and VCDs, documentaries, dramas, weddings, funerals, special occasions, camera hire, digital editing (video & audio).

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Rejoicing at Bishop Ellison's tenth anniversary



ON St Matthias' Day ten years ago, Fr Robert Patrick Ellison CSSp was episcopally ordained at the Independence Stadium as Third Bishop of Banjul. A week later, Bishop Ellison was solemnly enthroned in his Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption, Banjul.



The landmark tenth anniversary was celebrated at a Mass of Thanksgiving at Holy Family Church Fajara on Friday 20th May, followed by a reception at Shalom Retreat Centre.

The bishop first arrived in The Gambia, as Fr Ellison, in October 1970. He became Administrator of the Cathedral in May 1971 and remained there until June 1972, when he left for a year to pursue Islamic studies in Rome. He came back to the diocese to serve at St Michael's Njongon, until he was recalled to Ireland in June 1974. Soon after his return in 1981 he was appointed Vicar-General, taking part in the building



and administration of the Junior Seminary at Lamin. He later became Parish Priest at Star of the Sea Bakau, and in 1994 was appointed Director of the Gambia Pastoral Institute. In 1999 he was called to Rome to become General Secretary of the world-wide Congregation of the Holy Spirit: the post he held until his appointment as Bishop of Banjul.

Na Sa Ngur Dika

The bishop's motto is 'Thy will be done' (*Adveniat regnum tuum; Na Sa Ngur Dika*). His leadership of the Diocese of Banjul has been marked by substantial growth in Church membership and activity, the ordination of nine Gambian priests, and an expanding role for lay Catholics at all levels. The Diocesan Assembly convened by Bishop Ellison in March/April 2008 highlighted his concern that the local Church should increasingly become self-reliant and dynamic – and the positive response of the faithful continues to yield tangible progress.



There has been continuous Catholic missionary activity in The Gambia since 1848, but the mission did not achieve autonomy from Dakar until 1931, and the Diocese of Banjul was not created until 1957.

Bishop Robert Ellison's predecessors were also Irish Spiritans: Bishop Michael Moloney CSSp (1957-81) and Bishop Michael Cleary CSSp (1981-2006).

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CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BANJUL
Recurrent Budget For The Year Ending 31st December 2016

INCOME BUDGET:

	D	%
Income from Investment Properties	7,133,300	70.70%
Income from Investments	1,650,000	16.35%
Revenue Grants	<u>1,306,000</u>	<u>12.95%</u>
	<u>10,089,300</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

EXPENDITURE BUDGET:

Mission/Parish Upkeep	5,246,636	42.40%
Priests Formation & Further Training	2,192,500	17.70%
Bishop of Banjul	557,500	4.50%
Diocesan Secretariat	1,946,260	15.70%
Utilities	395,000	3.20%
Motor Vehicle Expenses	721,500	5.80%
Property Maintenance	620,000	5.00%
General Expenses	395,000	3.20%
Others	<u>309,000</u>	<u>2.50%</u>
	<u>12,383,396</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

FORECAST DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR: (2,294,096)

Source:

Approved Diocesan Budget for the year ending 31st December 2016



**CHILDREN'S
PAGE**

A picture for you to colour

The special day for Saint Peter and St Paul is Wednesday 29th June.

Before he went up to heaven, Jesus called Saint Peter 'the rock'. Jesus asked Peter to lead the Church.

Saint Paul travelled far and wide to tell everyone about Jesus.





My first years in The Gambia

We continue with our abridgement of *The Life of an Irish Missionary Priest* by Fr JOHN SHARPE CSSp, now living in retirement at Kunkujang Mariama

IN June 1965 I called into the office of the Provincial, Fr Tim O'Driscoll, to be given my missionary allocation.

'Father, your obedience is Gambia,' he said simply; and he surprised me by casually adding, 'Father, will you smoke?'

I had no hesitation in replying in the affirmative.

And so the long journey to The Gambia began.

After our sojourn of ten years, all the young priests left Kimmage on the same day, bound for various missionary countries. Some were picked up by their families, others went to a bus stop with their heavy cases. But I made a grand exit in my trusty old Morris Minor, blowing a newly-fitted horn, and waving to all and sundry!

With a mixture of relief and elation, I drove at a reckless 30 mph as I enjoyed an Afton Major cigarette.

Suddenly, the bonnet of the car ended up on the windscreen. I managed to tie it back down with a piece of rope, but it took me the best part of 12 hours to reach my home in Tipperary.



A Morris Minor - but not Fr Sharpe's!

Adventures behind the wheel

My motoring adventures were not over.

On the following morning, myself and a cousin of mine took off for Kerry for a well-earned holiday.

While I was driving through Limerick City, my front wheel became detached and flew along the street in front of me. I managed to pull in to the side, and ran off to recover the offending wheel.

On my return to the car, I was confronted by a Garda [police officer].

'Good morning, Father,' he said. 'May I see your driving licence and insurance certificate?'

I explained that I was leaving shortly for a long sojourn on the missions in Africa. He accepted my explanation and called a garage to repair the car. Having paid £5, I was on my way again, headed for County Kerry; and so began a fortnight of sight-seeing.

I always had to park the car on a hill over-night to facilitate an easy take-off in the morning. At Connor Pass, after I'd pulled in to the side to enjoy the wonderful scenery, the car would not start. So on the narrow road, with a steep drop on one side, and a sheer cliff on the other, I had to turn the car

around, a process which blocked all traffic.

After that, the car behaved well until the last day of the holidays. Coming down a steep hill, the accelerator pedal jammed, and having sped around various bends, I turned off the engine, brought the car to a halt, and freed the pedal.

Before leaving for The Gambia I sold the car for £35 - a profit of £10!

Saying goodbye

On the evening of 11th October 1965, at North Wall in Dublin, I said goodbye to members of my family who had driven up from Tipperary. I set sail for Liverpool to get a ship to The Gambia.

I had mixed feelings of sorrow, but also of elation, joy and hope at the prospect of the challenges that lay ahead of me. I thank God that the same joy and hope still remain with me, half a century later.

Arrival on the *Apapa*

Accompanied by Fr Andrew Carroll CSSp, I disembarked from the ship *Apapa* when she docked at Bathurst on 20th October 1965, after a voyage of eight days.

As well as carrying passengers, the ship brought supplies, mainly for the expatriate community, including frozen food, medicines and materials for schools.

We wore our white soutanes, and as we landed we could see a number of white soutanes in the crowd. It was our welcoming party.

We arrived at the mission in early afternoon, but had to wait until the arrival of Bishop Michael Maloney and other priests before a meal was served. I was weak with the hunger before we finally ate at 9 o'clock.



First six months

My first six months were spent at Bathurst (now Banjul) learning Wolof and exploring the city. A unique community spirit prevailed among us, owing to the difficulties of life, with one car serving the needs of about a dozen priests.

In May 1966 I received my first appointment: replacing Fr Francis Farrell in Kanifing. He was leaving for a three-month break.

After a week's introduction I was left on my own to begin my apostolate. As I was familiar with their language, I was readily accepted by the people. Soon the numbers attending

the small church began to grow, as did infant baptisms and entrance to catechism classes.

Kind and gentle

On Fr Farrell's return I remained at Kanifing as his assistant. I found him kind and gentle; he became a second father to me, and prepared me well for the long missionary life that lay ahead.

It was during this time I had my first clash with the pagan custom of ju-ju or *uchia*.

I had been preparing a group of ten Mandiago women for baptism at Easter, but discovered that they were also participating in a big ju-ju celebration. I went to the ju-ju shrine in my white soutane (always worn in those days), and everyone scattered when they saw me. In my anger I knocked over some gourds and bottles of palm wine.

The 'mother' of the shrine and some others returned and rolled on the ground, covering themselves in dirt. The elders had told her I would die within three weeks, and as I suffered from a bout of malaria a week later, they felt sure the prediction would be fulfilled.

But when I recovered, word spread that my powers were greater than the elders, and as a result I won great respect among the pagan population.

Kanifing expands

During the ten years I spent in Kanifing, the parish of St Therese expanded rapidly, and it was a very rewarding and enjoyable period of my life.

It involved a great deal of foot-tracking, as few roads existed. Bishop Maloney accompanied me when he visited the area, and was not deterred when bitten by a hornet which put him out of action for a week.

Mass-servers also came with me. Some would become The Gambia's first priests [in modern times] such as Fr Tony Gabisi and Fr Peter Gomez.

Fr Farrell embarked on building a new parish church to accommodate up to 1,000 people. But the greatest event was the opening of St Michael's Junior Seminary at Fajara, a large house and compound having been donated to the diocese. Fr Pierre Sagna [later Bishop Sagna] from Senegal became its first Director, with 22 boys from St Teresa's and three from Banjul.

New endeavours

The earliest reference to Tujering and the surrounding area is found in the Kanifing journal: 'Monsignor Moloney CSSP went to Tujering today, 17th March 1952.'

The area was also visited by Fr Mattie Corrigan, and a further report stated: 'There are four small grass and mud churches going up in Bruffut Sanyang, Tujering and Mandinary. Things are not going according to plan, with the exception of three people in Bruffut, two in Mandinary, and one in Tujering. No-one else is interested in giving any help.'

The mud church in question was built on the Tanji side of Tujering where a large number of Manjago people had settled (the present site of a mosque and mango trees).

New villages

Due to traditional customs associated with palm wine and pigs, the people had to move and settle elsewhere, and so the villages of Sanchaba, Kunkujang and Farakundu were formed.

In March 1956, Fr Corrigan wrote in the Kanifing journal: 'Went to Tujering. Here I am told that the Manjago people are leaving the village. We had just built one of the best mud churches here. The people are going to erect new huts about two kilometres away.'

The village referred to is Sanchaba, and the building of a new mud church began there in February 1956.

Two years later a more permanent structure was erected at a cost of £140. The church was blessed by Bishop Moloney in June 1959, although the attendance was disappointing.

The area came under the control of Fr Andrew Carroll, who was stationed at Kartong. But once again the Manjago people moved, this time to Farakunku.

Fr Carroll took down the school, transferred it to Farakunku, and gave the re-building contract with the required cement to workers from Tujering.

But they used mud plaster between the cement blocks. The building collapsed soon afterwards, and the corrugated sheets were stolen. Following this setback, the area was more or less abandoned as a mission for the time being.

Beginnings in the Tujering area

As Parish Priest of St Therese's Kanifing I had established a number of catechism classes on a voluntary basis. Elizabeth Mendy, a native of Kunkujang, was one of the catechists. After attending Tujering Primary School, Elizabeth attended Latrikunda Secondary School. Along with other members of her family she had been baptised by Fr Carroll.

In November 1972 she told me that the Evangelical Mission of Pipe Line had visited her village, distributed clothes and sweets and made arrangements to baptise a number of local people and their children. I visited the village and pointed out that the Lutherans did not belong to the Catholic Church.

When they returned the following day they left with their gifts in great anger when people refused to accept them. Shortly afterwards I began to say Mass there, and got to know the people.

On Christmas Day 1972 I said my first Mass at Kunkujang, on an improvised altar made with sticks. Three adults and seven children attended. The collection consisted of three sour oranges!

On every visit I brought a medical kit with me and spent most of the time bandaging cuts and ulcers. Seeing so many children dressed in ragged clothes and without shoes, I decided to start a little school, and Elizabeth Mendy was chosen to run it. The site was under a big tree in the present mission compound.

More from Fr Sharpe in the August/September issue



Construction underway



family circle

Tremendous transformation

WONDER of wonders! More people than ever can collaborate with more other people from different corners of the globe than at any previous time in the history of the world - using computers, email, fibre-optic networks, tele-conferencing, and dynamic new software.

The computer enables all the world's peoples - hitherto divided by distance, economic, social and cultural circumstances and political differences - to work and trade together as never before.

Beginning in the 1980s

The information revolution began in the early 1980s. Following the release of the pioneering Apple II home computer in 1977, the first IBM personal computer (PC) was marketed in 1981, and the first version of Windows was launched in 1985. Over time, the Apple-IBM-Windows revolution enabled the digital representation of all important forms of expression - words, music, statistics, maps, photographs, and eventually voice and video.

Think of what one person can do with pen and paper. Think of what one person can do with a typewriter. And then think of what one person can do with a PC.



A huge amount of data was accumulated in those pioneering days in people's PCs, but there was no easy way to share it and mould it. The www (World Wide Web) was developed by a British computer scientist, Sir Tim Berners-Lee (*left*) who posted the first web-site in 1991. In 1999, Time magazine named Berners-Lee as one of the one hundred most important people of the 20th century.

Easy to use, easy to instal

The creation of easy-to-instal and easy-to-use browsers brought the Internet to a hugely-growing world-wide number of individuals. Development is increasingly governed by the interests, demands and aspirations of the people, rather than from the top down.

Nowadays, anyone can design and publish documents and data so that they can be transmitted to and read on any computer anywhere.

Where are we heading?

Where is all this going? The great thing about the new systems is that they have been adopted as standard - everything and everyone became interconnected.

The individual can shop and pay bills using the computer, or book and pay for an airline ticket.

Google, MSN, Yahoo are household names, even among those whose only access to a computer is at work or in a cyber-café.

An IT wizard has declared: 'The last twenty-five years in technology have been just the warm-up act...Now we are going into the main event...an era in which technology will literally transform every aspect of business, every aspect of life and even every aspect of society.'

Where does Catholicism come in?

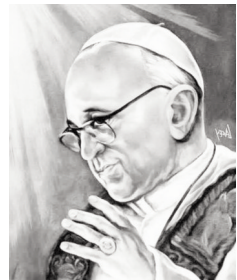
Where does Catholicism come into all this, apart from the Church's use of modern communications technology in evangelisation?

The Church, led by Pope Francis, strongly advocates use of IT to spread the Good News and to foster truth and trust among the world's peoples, seeking always peace and economic parity, with the world's poorest people a top priority.

But Pope Emeritus Benedict has reminded us:

'Progress in the wrong hands can become and has indeed become a terrifying progress in evil. If technical progress is not matched by corresponding progress in man's ethical formation, in man's inner growth (Ephesians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 4:16), then it is not progress at all, but a threat for man and for the world.'

Like water and fire, the internet can be tremendously useful and liberating - if used in the right way.



Right or left?

YOU'RE probably right-handed: you use your right hand rather than your left for writing and for most activities which need co-ordination and skill.



'Handedness' is the term to denote an individual's preference for using the right or left hand.

Some 90 per-cent of adults use the right hand for writing, and two thirds prefer the right hand for most activities which need co-ordination. The rest are either left handed or ambidextrous - which means able to use both hands equally.

There's no difference between males and females in the proportions preferring each hand.

Why can't we use both hands to the same degree?

No one's sure why all of us are not ambidextrous. Inheritance is probably the main factor. Studies have shown a greater number of nerves going to one side of the brain even in the new-born child.

A child made to use the right hand despite a natural tendency to use the left may 'become' right-handed.

The word 'sinister' comes from the Latin word for 'left'. In earlier times, left-handed people were often considered unlucky or even evil.

In some cultures to this day, only the left hand is used for 'lower' functions.

'Ask rain from the Lord'

(Zechariah 10:1)

WILL this year's rains be what our farmers need?

Those who live in Greater Banjul may think of the rains as a nuisance: leaks in the roof, flooding in the streets, more mosquitoes. But for our farmers, rainfall at the right time and in the right quantity is well-nigh essential.

At this time of year, let's remind ourselves that our farmers' needs are greater than those of the rest of us.



Tips and reminders

Here, mostly for town-dwellers, are a few tips and reminders for the imminent rainy season.

- *The cost of roofing materials rises considerably before and during the rains. And roof-repairers raise their charges. So, if your roof needs repairing, you're already late! But better late, as they say, than never...*

- Inside the house, as the rains approach, humidity becomes increasingly high. Clothing and other items become subject to mould. It's helpful to leave cupboard doors ajar and drawers partly open. Open windows wide to maintain a good current of air in your rooms. But don't forget to shut windows when you go out, and during rainfall.

- *Flies and mosquitoes multiply rapidly during the wet season. Keep your compound even cleaner than usual. Use impregnated bed nets and 'moon-tigers', and repair or instal netting at doors and windows.*



- Malaria is most prevalent during and after the rains. If you are feverish, or any member of your household, seek medical help without delay. This is above-all important if the sufferer is an infant or a young child. It's helpful to keep malaria treatment such as Co-Arinate or Fansidar in the house.

- *You may be bothered by prickly heat. Tackle it by applying fungicide cream, which you can find at pharmacies.*

- If you buy an umbrella, don't go for the cheapest. It won't last long, particularly in high wind.

- *Make sure you don't slip or fall in the mud!*



- If leather shoes become mouldy, do let them dry out naturally. Don't try to speed the process by exposing them to sunlight or other sources of heat, which could harm the leather.

- *If you have a garden, consider what plants and shrubs would beautify it.*

- *Cut down grass in unwanted places. Look ahead: eradicate weeds before seeds form so as to reduce unwanted grass and weeds next year.*

- No matter what the season, we have far too many road accidents.

The danger increases during the rains, when road surfaces are often slippery, and visibility is reduced. Make sure you check your car's brakes, windscreen wipers and tyres.

And drive with particular patience and care: **no speeding!**



Invaluable, beautiful trees

TREES are the backbone of life as we know it. They conserve water. They control pollution. They protect the very earth itself.

They are nature's oxygen banks, air cleaners, rain-bringers and erosion preventers. And they are beautiful.

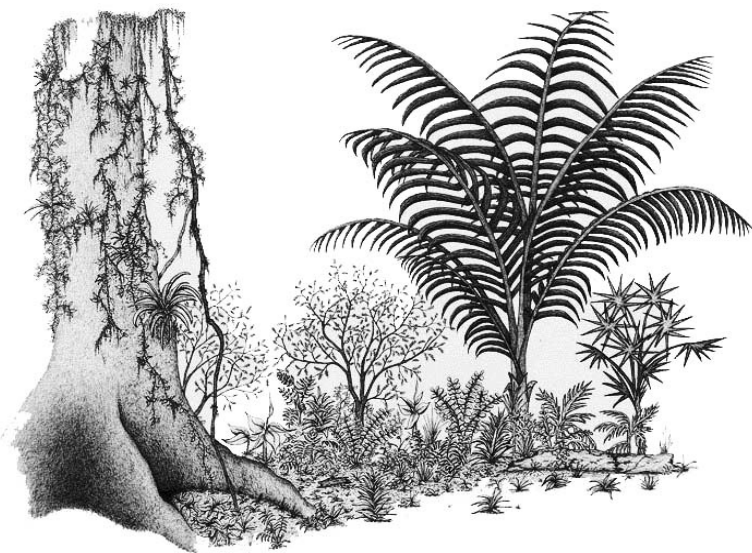
Trees bring us shade, shelter and privacy. Their wood builds houses, bridges and boats. Their fruits feed us. Their dead tissue has been transformed over many years into the fossil fuels of coal, gas and oil that provide energy for industry and enable us to travel by land, sea and air.

Trees supply us indirectly with so much that sustains human life.

Yet for generations we have cut them down without replacement, without a thought for the future.

Already, entire regions have been denuded of their natural tree-cover. The resultant atmospheric pollution of carbon dioxide, which trees would have converted into life-giving oxygen, is causing scientists, planners and politicians great concern.

The Church is also increasingly concerned, for she regards mankind as stewards of God's creation. By continuing to despoil the natural environment we are causing changes to Earth's climate which could ultimately lead to the end of the habitat on which human life depends. *If you're able, please plant a tree this rainy season.*



Dominus illuminatio mea, et salus mea
The Lord is my light and my salvation (Psalm 26:1)

Sunday Reflections

Reflections, readings and prayers
for the Sundays in June & July



5th July

10th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lord of life and death



IF death, as the devout assert, is not to be feared by those who trust in God, why did Jesus raise the son of the widow of Nain from the dead? We may ask the same question about Jesus' raising of his friend

Lazarus (recounted at length in John 11:1-53). Were not the widow's son and Lazarus, in some sense, actually better off dead, in God's loving care - having gone, as some say, to 'a better place'?

The answer seems to be that Jesus in his earthly ministry felt compassion for everyone: above all, for the distressed and afflicted. He felt deep compassion for the widow who had lost her husband and her only son, and who, in addition to her grief, was probably deeply anxious about who was now to take care of her.

Jesus' compassion led always to action, to healing and new life. For the widow's sake, and for the sake of Lazarus' sisters, Jesus restored their loved one. Jesus is Lord of life and death.

Collect

O GOD, from whom all good things come, grant that we, who call on you in our need, may at your prompting discern what is right, and by your guidance do it...

Readings: 1 Kings 17:17-24. Psalm 29:2,4-6,11-13.
Response: I will praise you, Lord; you have rescued me
Galatians 1:11-19

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind so that we can see what hope his call holds for us...

Gospel: Luke 7:11-17.

Prayer over the Offerings

LOOK kindly upon our service, Lord, we pray, that what we offer may be an acceptable oblation to you, and lead us to grow in charity...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time*

Prayer after Communion

MAY your healing work, O Lord, free us, we pray, from doing evil and lead us to do what is right...

12th June

11th Sunday in Ordinary Time

'Who is this man?'



'WHO is this man, who even forgives sins?' This question was put at a Pharisee's dinner-table after Jesus had assured the penitent woman who anointed his feet that her sins were forgiven.

As Christ's followers, our answer to the same question is that Jesus is the divine Son who died and rose again for the forgiveness of the sins of all the world. If we act on this belief, we can say with St Paul (in today's second reading), 'It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.' When we sin, we have no need to consult a book of rules: we simply turn to Christ, and ask him to forgive us. At times of grave sin we do this before a priest in the sacrament of penance (confession).

It is a cardinal Christian belief that no sin is too great to be forgiven. But we must truly repent and resolve to sin no more. Like King David in today's first reading, who admitted, 'I have sinned against the Lord,' and the notoriously sinful woman who wet Jesus' feet with her tears, each of us can turn to God and obtain the peace and joy of forgiveness.

Collect

O GOD, strength of those who hope in you, graciously hear our pleas, and, since without you mortal frailty can do nothing, grant us always the help of your grace, that, in following your commands we may please you by our resolve and our deeds...

Readings: 2 Samuel 12:7-10,13. Psalm 31:1-2,5,7,11.
Response: Forgive, Lord, the guilt of my sin. Galatians 2:16.19-21

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, says the Lord; no one can come to the Father except through me...

Gospel: Luke 7:36 - 8:3

Prayer over the Offerings

O GOD, who in the offerings presented here provide for the twofold needs of human nature, nourishing us with food and renewing us with your Sacrament, grant, we pray, that the substance they provide may not fail us in body or in spirit...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time*

Prayer after Communion

AS this reception of your Holy Communion, O Lord, foreshadows the union of the faithful in you, so may it bring about unity in your Church...

19th June

12th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Acting on the truth

JESUS asked his disciples, 'Who do the crowds say that I am?' And who do we, today's followers of Jesus, say that he is? A mighty prophet, like the prophets of old? The founder of the world's largest religion? The greatest teacher who ever lived? There are many answers. In the creed, we proclaim that Christ was born of Mary, was crucified, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will come again to judge the whole world. More than just words, we need to experience these assertions in our own lives, and put our whole trust in Jesus.

Coming to know and trust Jesus is for many people no easy matter. His very disciples had to struggle to realise and act on the truth. In today's Gospel we hear how Peter acknowledged that Jesus was 'the Christ' (the Anointed One, the Messiah). But how far did Peter and the other disciples understand what Jesus went on to say, that he was to suffer grievously and put to death? How willing were they to take up their cross - to identify themselves with his suffering - and to follow him? We know that, in fact, when Jesus was arrested the disciples ran away.

We know that we, too, shrink from taking up our cross. We're scared of risking our own comfort and safety. Yet we ought to persevere, come what may, because Jesus assures his disciples, 'Those who lose their life for my sake will save it.'

Collect

GRANT, O Lord, that we may always revere and love your holy name, for you never deprive of your guidance those you set firm on the foundation of your love...

Readings: Zechariah 12:10-11; 13:1. Response: For you my soul is thirsting, O God, my God. Galatians 3:26-29.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... I am the light of the world, says the Lord; anyone who follows me will have the light of life...

Gospel: Luke 9:18-24

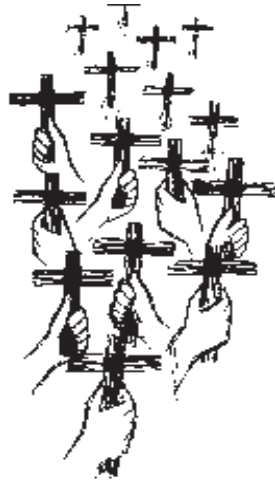
Prayer over the Offerings

RECEIVE, O Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation and praise, and grant that, cleansed by its action, we may make offering of a heart pleasing to you...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time*

Prayer after Communion

RENEWED and nourished by the Sacred Body and Precious Blood of your Son, we ask of your mercy, O Lord, that what we celebrate with constant devotion may be our pledge of redemption...

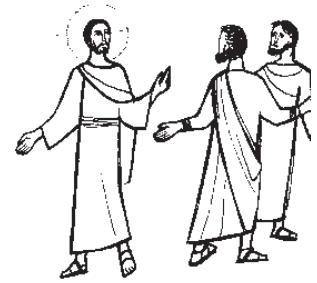


26th June

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The turning point

TODAY' Gospel reading records a turning-point in Luke's account of the ministry of Jesus. Having completed his work in Galilee, Jesus 'set his face to go to Jerusalem'. He knew that in Jerusalem he was to suffer and die as the necessary prelude to his resurrection.



In recent Sundays we've been hearing incidents in Christ's ministry portrayed only in the Gospel according to Luke – this being 'Year C', the 'Year of Luke'. We also learn what demands Jesus makes on his followers. To the man who told Jesus he would follow him wherever he went, Jesus pointed out that he would be following someone both poor and homeless. To the man who said he must first bury his father, Jesus said that preaching the Good News was more important. And to the man who wanted to say goodbye to his family and friends, Jesus said that no one who looked back was fit for the Kingdom of God.

Jesus has sometimes been described as 'meek and mild'. But he is uncompromising about the price of following him. Family concerns must take second place to Jesus' insistent invitation to help spread the Gospel.

From Psalm 15 we sing today, 'You show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence,' and we address these words to Jesus, who is our way to the Father and to eternal joy.

Collect

O GOD, who through the grace of adoption chose us to be children of light, grant, we pray, that we may not be wrapped in the darkness of error, but always be seen to stand in the bright light of truth...

Readings: 1 Kings 19:16,19-21. Psalm 15:1-2,5,7-11. Response: O Lord, it is you who are my portion. Galatians 5:1,13-18.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Speak, Lord, your servant is listening; you have the message of eternal life...

Gospel: Luke 9:51-62

Prayer over the Offerings

O GOD, who graciously accomplish the effects of your mysteries, grant, we pray, that the deeds by which we serve you may be worthy of these sacred gifts...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time*

Prayer after Communion

MAY this divine sacrifice we have offered and received fill us with life, O Lord, we pray, so that, bound to you in lasting charity, we may bear fruit that lasts for ever...

For the full text of today's MASS
or MORNING and EVENING Prayer
visit

Universalis.com

3rd July

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sent out among wolves

TODAY'S Gospel reading tells how Jesus sent out seventy-two of his followers, two by two, 'as sheep among wolves', exposing them to uncertainty and danger. They were to travel without money, and without creature comforts. In Jesus' name they were to cure the sick and tell people that the Kingdom of God was at hand. By no means would everyone welcome them: but those who didn't listen, said Jesus, would suffer the consequences.



When the seventy-two came back, they were jubilant. In Jesus' name they had indeed cured the sick, casting out devils.

Jesus asked his disciples to pray that the Lord would send out labourers to take part in the harvest: that is, to convince others of the truth that is in him. That task now devolves to us. We can take heart from Paul's testimony (Romans 8:35,37): 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ...No: in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.' To achieve something in Jesus' name we must be willing, if necessary, to face poverty, indifference, rejection and even hostility. When we succeed, always in his name, we shall share the joy of true disciples.

Collect

O GOD, who in the abasement of your Son have raised up a fallen world, fill your faithful with holy joy, for on those you have rescued from slavery to sin you bestow eternal gladness...

Readings: Isaiah 66:10-14. Psalm 65:1-7,16,20. Response: Cry out with joy to God, all the earth. Galatians 6:14-18.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father...

Gospel: Luke 10:1-12,17-20.

Prayer over the Offerings

MAY this oblation dedicated to your name purify us, O Lord, and day by day bring our conduct closer to the life of heaven...

Preface: the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time

Prayer after Communion

GRANT, we pray, O Lord, that having been replenished by such great gifts, we may gain the prize of salvation, and never cease to praise you...

An Orthodox Prayer

MASTER, Lover of mankind, Lord Jesus Christ, my God: do not let these Holy Mysteries be for me my condemnation because of my unworthiness, but for the cleansing and purification of my soul and body.
Amen.

10th July

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

'Go, and do likewise'

ALL three readings today are among the best-known passages in all Scripture.

From Deuteronomy we have Moses' assurance: 'The word is very near to you o u'

It reminds us of Paul 'saying of God: '...indeed, he is not far from each one of us' (Acts 17:27). It could be Jesus himself: 'The kingdom of God is at hand for you.' (Luke 10:9).

St Paul's hymn to Christ in his letter to the Colossians (our second reading) is surely unforgettable: '...In him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell...'

Today's parable, given only in Luke, is probably the best-known of all Jesus' parables, remembered even by those who rarely read the New Testament. Like all the parables, the Parable of the Good Samaritan merits study, discussion and prayer.

We are not surprised, perhaps, that a priest, and then a Levite, hurried past the wounded traveller. They were fearful for their own safety - and wouldn't we be, in such circumstances? The passer-by who did help the wounded man was not someone the Jews would recognise as a neighbour; he was a Samaritan, a member of a community shunned by most Jews. (The Samaritans had not gone into exile in Babylon with the Jews, and afterwards were not allowed to help rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem - so they built their own temple.)

Among the lessons of this parable is that no one is a stranger: everyone, regardless of social standing, race, nationality or religion, is our neighbour. When help is needed, whoever needs it, we should offer our help. And we should accept help, whoever offers it.

Today's Gospel reading opens with a question from a lawyer: 'What must I do to inherit eternal life?' It ends with Jesus telling his questioner, 'Go, and do likewise': be a good neighbour to everybody.

Collect

O GOD, who show the light of your truth to those who go astray, so that they may return to the right path, give all who for the faith they profess are counted Christians, the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ, and to strive after all that does it honour...

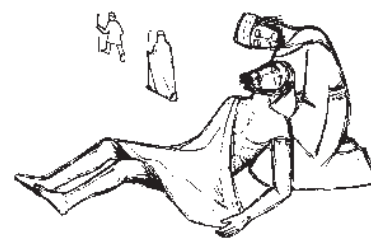
Readings: Deuteronomy 30:10-14. Psalm 68:14,17,30-31,33-34,36-37. Response: Seek the Lord, you who are poor, and your hearts will revive. (*An alternative psalm and response may be used.*) Colossians 1:15-20.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice, says the Lord; I know them, and they follow me...

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Prayer over the Offerings

LOOK upon the offerings of the Church, O Lord, as she makes her prayer to you, and grant that, when consumed by those who believe, they may bring ever greater holiness...



Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time*

Prayer after Communion

HAVING consumed these gifts, we pray, O Lord, that by our participation in this mystery, its saving effects upon us may grow...

17th July

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Hospitality to strangers, friends, and God himself



IN Hebrews 13:2 we're advised, 'Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.' This was the situation of Abraham, who in the heat of the day offered his people's traditional hospitality to three strangers, not knowing they were messengers sent by God.

Today's Gospel reading relates how Martha welcomed Jesus into the house she shared with her sister Mary and her

brother Lazarus. Mary revered Jesus, and sat at his feet to listen to him, leaving Martha to get on with the housework. When Martha objected to this, Jesus gently rebuked her, saying that it was more important to listen to God's word than to be concerned with lesser tasks.

The offering of hospitality is praiseworthy: all of us should welcome those we have the opportunity of looking after, in greater or lesser degree. But even more important is making God himself a guest in our hearts, as in the Gospel Mary does.

Collect

SHOW favour, O Lord, to your servants, and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping your commands...

Readings: Genesis 18:1-10. Psalm 14:2-5. Response: The just will live in the presence of the Lord. Colossians 1:24-28.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Open our heart, O Lord, to accept the words of your Son...

Gospel: Luke 10:38-42

Prayer over the Offerings

O GOD, who in the one perfect sacrifice brought to completion varied offerings of the law, accept, we pray, the sacrifice from your faithful servants and make it holy, as you blessed the gifts of Abel, so that what each had offered to the honour of your majesty may benefit the salvation of all...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time*

Prayer after Communion

GRACIOUSLY be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life...

24th July

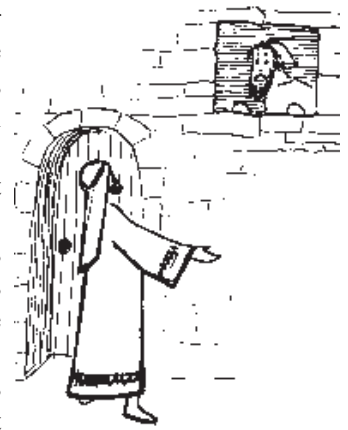
17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Pray without ceasing

HOW many of us, if our prayers seem not to be answered, give up? Today's first reading and the Gospel teach us to persist in prayer; to continually knock, as it were, at God's door.

In the reading from Genesis we're told that the twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were notorious for sinful self-indulgence. Their inhabitants deserved God's anger. But Abraham implored God to spare the two cities, even if there were only fifty good men there. God granted Abraham's request, but again and again Abraham pressed God to show greater mercy, even if there were only ten good men in Sodom and Gomorrah.

This first reading prepares us for today's Gospel, where Jesus urges persistence in prayer: 'Knock, and the door will be opened for you.' We, in turn, should open the door to God every day. He hears our prayers for ourselves, for those dear to us, for friend and foe, for peace in our hearts and in the world. We need to pray every day in union with the universal Church. Jesus has given us the pattern of prayer in the Lord's Prayer, the Our Father, which unites us with him and the world-wide Christian family.



Collect

O GOD, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us, and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that endure...

Readings: Genesis 18:20-32. Psalm 137:1-3,6-8. Response: On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord. Colossians 2:12-14.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... The Word was made flesh and lived among us; to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God...

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13.

Prayer over the Offerings

ACCEPT, O Lord, the offerings which we bring from the abundance of your gifts, that through the powerful working of your grace these most sacred mysteries may sanctify our present way of life and lead us to eternal gladness...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time*

Prayer after Communion

WE have consumed, O Lord, this divine Sacrament, the perpetual memorial of the Passion of your Son; grant, we pray, that this gift, which he himself gave us with love beyond all telling, may profit us for salvation...

Kaadu Dunda Gi - the Living Word

Every Sunday at 1pm, GRTS

31st July
18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

‘All is vanity’



THOSE who’ve read Ecclesiastes, probably written 300 years before the time of Christ, may be perturbed by its insistence that however much we strive for happiness and success in this world, ‘all is vanity’.

Ecclesiastes declares that true wisdom is not to be found ‘under the sun’, but can only be derived from faith in God, the Judge who reigns for ever. This teaching makes good, practical sense in Jesus’ admonition that earthly success, particularly in seeking money, cannot last. ‘Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’ Elsewhere, Jesus said, ‘Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailling treasure in heaven.’ (Luke 12:33)

Collect

DRAW near to your servants, O Lord, and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness, that, for those who glory in you as their Creator and guide, you may restore what you have created, and keep safe what you have restored...

Readings: Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23. Psalm 89:3-6, 12-14,17. Response: O Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to the next. (*An alternative psalm and response may be used.*) Colossians 3:1-5,9-11.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Your word is truth, O Lord; consecrate us in the truth.

Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

Prayer over the Offerings

GRACIOUSLY sanctify these gifts, O Lord, we pray, and, accepting the oblation of this spiritual sacrifice, make of us an eternal offering to you...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time.*

Prayer after Communion

ACCOMPANY with constant protection, O Lord, those you renew with these heavenly gifts, and, in your never-failing care for them, make them worthy of eternal redemption...

World Youth Day expects over two and a half million

TWO and a half million people are expected to attend the World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland, from 26th to 31st July.

Pope Francis will visit Poland for five days, arriving on Wednesday 27th and leaving on Sunday 31st.

On Friday 29th July the Pope will visit Auschwitz concentration camp, where between 1942 and 1944, over a million Jews and others were exterminated at the camp by the Nazis. St John Paul II visited the camp in 1979 and Benedict XVI went there in 2006.

The Archdiocese of Krakow is the former diocese of St John Paul II, who established World Youth Day in 1986.

The logo for World Youth Day (*right*) depicts a red and blue flame of Divine Mercy flowing from a gold cross surrounded by an outline of the map of Poland.

A gold dot represents Krakow and symbolises youth.



Pious practices

MANY devotional practices in the Church are so habitual that we don’t think about them. But whenever we make the sign of the Cross, for instance, or dip our fingers into holy water, we should do so in awareness of what the action means. We shouldn’t perform such actions to impress others or to tell ourselves how holy and good we are. We perform them to honour God and our membership of his Church.

IT is widely known, even beyond the Church, that Catholics must attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. What is less well-known, and less widely-practised, is that Catholics are expected to treat all Fridays (except solemnities) as days of abstinence.

Abstinence on Fridays traditionally meant abstaining from eating meat in recollection of Christ’s crucifixion and as a mark of Catholic identity. Nowadays, abstinence may also be marked in other ways: for example, by abstaining from alcohol or some other pleasure. Catholics may also mark Friday by performing an act of devotion such as attending Mass or making the Stations of the Cross. Or they may perform an act of charity for the sick and suffering, the poor and the lonely.

The observance of abstinence or penance each Friday throughout the year (unless it is a solemnity) is a rule in the Diocese of Banjul. Days of abstinence are marked in the calendar on page 29.

NB This year, Friday 3rd June (Sacred Heart) and Friday 24th June (Birth of John the Baptist) are solemnities, and so are not days of abstinence.



How far does the Order of Mass have a Biblical foundation?

PA GEORGE MENDY examines the Missal and the Bible

THE CATHOLIC Church makes very strong claims for its authority as interpreter of Scripture and tradition. But questions may be raised as to the scriptural basis of Catholic worship. Hence the question: why do Catholics do this or that?

The Church teaches that the Eucharist derives from the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples (Matthew 26:26-29; Luke 22:14-26). The word 'Eucharist' has a Greek origin: *Euchuristia*, meaning 'thanksgiving'. The common name for the Eucharist, known to all Catholics and non-Catholics, is the Holy Mass. During the Mass, Catholics render thanks to God for having given the world his beloved Son to die for sinners, and that they have the grace to partake in his Body and Blood.

How does the Order of the Mass derive from the Bible?



The Church divides the Mass into five parts:

- * The Introductory Rites
- * The Liturgy of the Word
- * The Liturgy of the Eucharist
- * The Communion Rite
- * The Concluding Rites

An examination of the Order of Mass and its Biblical

foundations yields the following:

i. The Entrance Song (Ephesians 5:19-20; Psalm 100:1-2). The Psalmist invites believers, 'Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.'

ii. The Kissing of the Altar (Psalm 2:11-12; Romans 16:16). 'Serve the Lord with fear, with trembling kiss his feet...' 'First, in his death Christ has shown himself as the priest, the victim and the altar.' The priest kisses the altar as a form of respect to Christ the High Priest.

iii. The Incensing (at Solemn Mass) (Psalm 141:2; Revelations 8:3-5). The Psalmist says, 'Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.'

iv. The Sign of the Cross (1 Corinthians 1:18; Luke 9:23). Paul writes: 'For the message about the cross is foolishness for those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.'

v. The Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13; Romans 16:20). 'The grace of our lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.'

vi. The Penitential Rite (Romans 3:22-23; 1 John 1:9). 'For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.'

vii. The Blessing of Water and Salt (2 Kings 2:19-21). 'Thus says the Lord: I have made this water wholesome.'

viii. The Sprinkling with Holy Water (Ezekiel 36:25). 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean...'

ix. The Kyrie (Lord, have mercy) (Luke 18:37-38; Matthew

20:30-31). 'Then he shouted, 'Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me.'

x. The Gloria in Excelsis (Luke 2:13-14). 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours'. We sing the *Gloria* to thank God for having forgiven the sins of his people.

xi. The Collect (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18). 'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances...'

xii. The Scripture Readings (Nehemiah 8:1-3; Luke 4:16). 'He read from the book facing the square from early morning until midday... and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.'

xiii. The Homily (Nehemiah 8:8; Luke 4:16). 'So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense; so that the people understood the reading.'

xiv. The Creed (Deuteronomy 6:4). 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.'

xv. The Prayer of the Faithful (James 1:6/James 5:13). 'The prayer must be made with faith and no trace of doubt...'

xvi. The Collection (Luke 21:1-4). 'He looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow putting in two small copper coins.'

xvii. The Offertory (Matthew 5:23-24; 2 Corinthians 9:7). 'So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother has something against you...'

xviii. Sanctus (Revelation 4:8; Isaiah 6:3). 'Holy, Holy, Holy the Lord God almighty, who was and is and is to come.'

xix. The Mystery of Faith (1 Corinthians 11:26-30; Matthew 28:6) 'For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.'

xx. The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) 'Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven...'

xxi. The Sign of Peace (John 14:27; John 20:20). 'Peace I leave to you; my peace I give to you.'

xxii. Agnus Dei (John 1:29; Revelation 4:12-13). 'Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.'

xxiii. The Blessing: (Numbers 6:24-26; Psalm 121:7-8) 'The Lord bless you and keep you...'

xxiv. The Dismissal: Go in peace (1 Samuel 1:17). '...Eli answered, Go in peace...'

'We have seen the true light'

St Augustine wrote: 'I believe, in order to understand; and I understand, the better to believe.'

I hope the points I have made answer the question, how far has the Order of Mass a Biblical basis?

I am pretty sure that any Catholic will blend his or her voice with the Church, declaring, 'We have seen the true light, we have received the heavenly spirit, and we have found the true faith: we adore the indivisible Trinity, who has saved us.' (*Byzantine Liturgy, Troparion of Vespers of Pentecost*)

The author is a seminarian at the Spiritan Seminary in Ghana

Gambian Christian anniversaries

June and July

65 YEARS AGO, on 15th July 1952, Fr REGINALD GILLOOLY CSSp was ordained in Dublin. He arrived in Banjul aboard the *SS Aureol* on 16th October 1952 (two years before Bishop Emeritus Michael Cleary). Fr Gillooly taught at St Augustine's High School under the headship of Fr Michael Frawley. In 1954 he took charge of the parish at Bwiam, and then worked up-river before becoming Parish Priest at Lamin. Holy Rosary Church was opened in 1995, and later, the 'new' St Peter's. Fr Gillooly's responsibilities included the supervision of education facilities in the parish. After retirement he continued living in Lamin until he left for Ireland in 2006. We learn that he is remarkably fit, active and in good spirits, and send our congratulations.



After Mass early last century at the Hagan Street Church (now the Cathedral)

21st June 1900: Death aged 44 of Fr Charles Amman CSSp, Superior of the Catholic Mission since 1889. In the Cathedral there is a plaque to his memory.

23rd July 1911 (105 years ago): Death of Mortimer Vaughan, an Irish teacher who on his deathbed was professed a member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (CSSp) by the Superior of the Mission, Fr John Meehan.

22nd June 1924 (Corpus Christi): Ordination by Bishop Le Hunsec of Dakar in the Parish Church at Banjul of a citizen of Banjul, Fr Joseph Charles Mendy. There were now five priests serving in the Mission. Fr Mendy was to die in Banjul on 13th July 1932, being regarded by many Christians and Muslims as a saint.

20th July 1937: Ordination in Dublin of Fr Michael Moloney CSSp, who in 1958 was to become First Bishop of Banjul.

9th June 1949: Announcement in *The Gambia Gazette* that Edward Lloyd-Evans had been awarded the MBE.

1st July 1956 (60 years ago): Ordination in Dublin of the priest-scholar Fr Myles Fay CSSp, who subsequently served in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, the US, Italy and The Gambia. He died in Dublin on 2nd February 2006.

28th June 1958: Work began on the building of the Cathedral tower.

3rd June 1965: Departure of Fr William Costelloe CSSp, who had served in The Gambia since 1952.

27th July 1973: Departure of Fr Seamus Fleming CSSp. Since his arrival in 1963 he had principally worked around Basse and Bwiam.

19th June 1977: Departure of Fr Thomas Twarmey CSSp, who had arrived in 1959.

8th July 1977: Announcement that *Sang Marie* (the Assumption, 15th August) was to be re-instated as a public holiday in place of Easter Monday.

24th June 1979: Opening of St Francis Kunkujang

15th June 1985: The St Vincent de Paul Society, founded in The Gambia in 1968, formed a national council.

25th June 1995: Opening of St John the Baptist Church Tenene.

8th June 1996 (20 years ago): Death of Justice Solomon Njie.

21st June 1997: Opening of the new St John the Baptist Church, Farafenni.

24th June 1997: Opening of Holy Trinity Church Kafuta.

21st June 1998: Death in Dublin of Fr Matthew Corrigan.

18th June 1999: Death in Guernsey, Channel Islands, of Eric Foss OBE, Principal of Gambia High School 1966-74.

8th July 2000: Death in Harare, Zimbabwe, of the Rt Revd Roderick Norman Coote, who served in The Gambia from 1941 to 1957, from 1951 as Anglican Bishop of Gambia and Rio Pongas.

25th July 2000: Death of Archbishop Johannes Dyba, first Papal Nuncio to The Gambia.

18th July 2001 (15 years ago): Death in Banjul aged 90 of Sr Albert Byrne, who had served in The Gambia since 1935.

29th July 2003: The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Rowan Williams, began a visit to The Gambia.

2nd July 2006 (10 years ago): Death of Cecilia Cole, teacher, magistrate, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and staunch Methodist.

8th July 2006 (10 years ago): Ordination at Kanifing by Bishop Ellison and Fr Peter Jammeh CSSp and Fr Michael Gomez CSSp.

9th July 2006 (10 years ago): Fr Joseph Boafo CSSp bade farewell at Star of the Sea Bakau, where he had spent 10 years as Parish Priest.

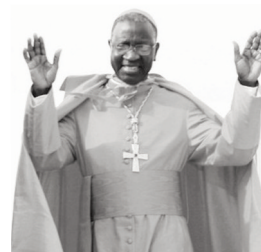
28th June 2007: Bishop Ellison appointed a nine-member Diocesan Finance Committee to serve for five years.

5th July 2007: Death of Edward Mansal, who had retired in July the previous year as Principal of St Edward's Senior Secondary School.

5th to 8th June 2008: Visit to The Gambia of Cardinal Théodore-Adrien Sarr, Archbishop of Dakar.

During June 2009: Sister Pauline Leahy SJC left The Gambia after 44 years of service.

11th June 2009: The 25th anniversary of the John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel was celebrated at an 'open day' at GPI.



13th June 2009: Bishop Ellison and ten priests celebrated Mass at the out-station Church of St Paul Makumbaya to mark the end of the Year of St Paul.

8th June 2010: At Holy Spirit Banjul Fr Matthias Murphy announced his retirement after many years as Parish Priest.

9th-11th July 2010: A young people's procession was held from St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda to St Peter's Lamin as part of a festival of youth.

During June 2011: Fr Seán Devereux of St Kizito's Bakoteh and Fr Jean-François Diagne of Sacred Heart Bansang left the diocese, Fr Seán to Ireland and Fr Jean-François to Senegal. (Fr Devereux was later to return: *see 9th June 2015, opposite column*)

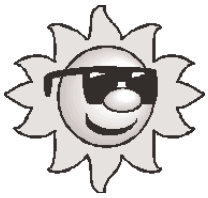
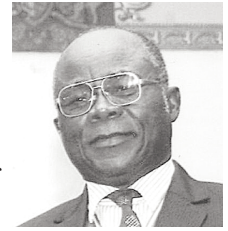
21st-23rd June 2012: Senegalese and Gambian priests met at Kaolack to discuss co-operation between their dioceses.

27th June 2014: Among speakers at a GPI event to mark the end of the pastoral year, T.G.G. Senghore (*right*) spoke on the history of the Roman Catholic Mission in The Gambia.

14th June 2015: In Mali, death of Alhassane Diarra, formerly driver at GPI.

8th-17th June 2015: Visit of a former priest at Basse and Bansang in the late 1980s and early 90s, the Rt Revd John Kwofie CSSp, Bishop of Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana.

9th June 2015: Fr Seán Devereux said goodbye to his parishioners at St Francis Bwiam prior to taking up a media post in his home Diocese of Ferns, in Ireland.



Fee moi Gambia

Reluctant citizens

HOW many people, unless prodded by the authorities, don't pay their local council tax?

How many motorists, unless also prodded, leave the payment for insurance, driving and motor licences until the very last minute?

Asked such questions, some will say that many people are poor. Yes; but the late or non-payment of taxes is not always due to poverty. A good many defaulters have more than adequate resources at their disposal. Some people just don't take the payment of dues seriously. As with small children, only the threat of sanctions prods them into line.

This is a pity. All of us should help the community - particularly, our national and local government - by contributing, however modestly, towards the maintenance and extension of public services: that is, towards the common good.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it thus:

'Submission to authority and co-responsibility for the common good make it morally obligatory to pay taxes... [2240], and quotes Romans 13:7: 'Pay to all what is due to them - taxes to whom taxes are due, respect to whom respect is due....'

And this is what the renowned American statesman, Benjamin Franklyn, had to say: 'In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.'

If Franklyn was right, all of us had better pay up!

Unnecessary suffering

A FRIEND who was being troubled by a rat tells me how pleased he was to have trapped it, using glue.

But instead of dispatching it straightaway he let it suffer, saying it 'served it right'.

But what had the rat done wrong? It was merely being itself, as nature intended. It certainly didn't want to disturb any human being, merely to find food. Understandably we want to be rid of creatures which disturb us. But we should do so

humanely. Causing unnecessary suffering, even to dumb creatures, is always wrong.

Welcome home!

HOW many Gambians are living abroad? I suppose no-one knows. And I suppose that many are living comfortably there; though others may have problems, including homesickness.

We should be thankful that a good many Gambians who have received valuable training overseas, and who could stay there in well-paid jobs, prefer to return home.

We should be thankful, because in most cases their talents are needed here.

There are so many differences between 'abroad' and home, and those who have lived abroad for a considerable time may have some difficulty in re-adjusting to their homeland. But here is where they 'belong'. We must hope that they advise fellow-Gambians overseas to come home and contribute directly to the well-being of the nation.

Europe in need of African missionaries!

I WELL remember Fr Matthias Murphy at Holy Spirit Church some few years ago, saying something like, 'We missionary priests are working towards making ourselves redundant.'

He meant, I think, that one aspect of our diocese becoming increasingly self-reliant and dynamic is that most priests now serving here are Gambian: a situation very different from when Fr Murphy first arrived in this country. So we can call this a success story.

Contrast this with the situation in North Wales (part of the United Kingdom), where the Bishop of Wrexham has announced that 22 churches out of 62 in his diocese are to close by 2020 - some of them within a few weeks. By 2020, only 22 priests in his diocese will be under retirement age. The bishop says, 'It will mean pastors and communities will have to look afresh at how we live parish life, how the Catholic Church in north Wales is profoundly missionary.'

Western Europe, once a power-house of missionary enterprise, is now described as 'post-Christian'. A majority of Europeans are bored by religion, and see no point in it.

In contrast, the Church in Africa is growing faster than anywhere else. It surely won't be long before our Catholic brothers and sisters in Europe will be pleading for us to send them African missionaries...

from beyond the diocese

King of Jordan funds restoration of Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem



A MUSLIM sovereign is footing part of the bill for the restoration of the niche in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which has for centuries been the most venerated Christian shrine in the world.

King Abdullah II of Jordan is to help with the restoration at his personal expense. A letter on his behalf has been sent to the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III.

Three Christian denominations hold joint jurisdiction of Jerusalem's most important church: the Greek Orthodox, the Latins (represented by the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land) and the Armenians.

Restoration is needed because of the deterioration of mortar as a result of condensed moisture from the breath of thousands of pilgrims and candle smoke. The work should take eight months, with completion expected early next year.

The announcement from Amman was warmly welcomed by Patriarch Theophilos III, who is head of the largest Christian community in the Holy Land.

He said, 'King Abdullah embodies in deed, and not only in word, the shared living of Muslims and Christians all over the world and particularly in the Holy Land... He spearheads the efforts of all Jordanians to sow the seeds of love and brotherhood between Muslims and Christians.'

Patriarch Theophilos linked Jordan's donation to the Pact of Umar of AD 637, when Jerusalem was conquered by the Arabs. On that occasion, Caliph Umar, Muhammad's second successor, respected the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, leaving it as a Christian place of worship.

Pope to visit Caucasus

POPE Francis will visit Armenia from Friday 24th - Sunday 26th June. He will travel to Georgia and Azerbaijan from Friday 30th - Sunday 2nd October.

The two trips stem from invitations by Orthodox leaders. Pope Francis is seeking the steady improvement of Catholic-Orthodox relations.

'Catholics and Methodists can teach each other about holiness'

CATHOLICS and Methodists can learn from one another how holiness is lived and understood, Pope Francis has said, and members of both congregations should 'meet regularly, come to know one another, and encourage one another to seek the Lord and his grace'.

The Pope met members of the World Methodist Council, the Methodist Council of Europe and the Methodist Church in Britain when they in Rome for the opening of the new Methodist Ecumenical Office.



The Methodist
logo

The Pope referred to the centre as a sign of a 'growing closeness' between the two churches. Quoting John Wesley, one of the founders of Methodism, the Pope said members of both communities must help one another 'in whatever leads to the kingdom'.

Although Catholics and Methodists cannot 'yet think alike in all things, at least we may love alike', he added.

'None of these differences constitutes such an obstacle as to prevent us from loving in the same way and offering a common witness to the world.'

London elects Muslim mayor



THE NEWLY-ELECTED Labour-party Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, was sworn in on 7th May at a multi-faith ceremony in the Anglican Cathedral at Southwark, attended by many faith and community leaders.

Mr Khan said: 'We're here at Southwark Cathedral because I want to start as I intend to carry on. I'm determined to lead the most transparent, engaged and accessible administration London has ever seen, and to represent every single community, and every single part of our city... So I wanted to do the signing-in ceremony here, in the very heart of our city, surrounded by Londoners of all backgrounds.'

'I'm only here today because of the opportunity and helping hand that our city gave me and my family. And my burning ambition for our city, that will guide my mayoralty, is to ensure that all Londoners get the opportunities that this city gave to me.'

The leader of the Catholics of England and Wales, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, said: 'I welcome Sadiq Khan as the new Mayor of London. I assure him of my prayers for his time in this important office in which he will face the great challenges of London, in its richness, diversity and energy.'

In the election Mr Khan received 57 per cent of the total votes cast. He is the first Muslim mayor of a major Western city.

Praying for the Queen



A SET of prayers for Queen Elizabeth II was offered in all Catholic churches in England and Wales after the principal Mass on Sunday 24th April, three days after the Queen's 90th birthday. She is Britain's longest-ever reigning monarch.

Anglicans and Catholics discuss recognition of ministry



Pope Francis is blessed by Dr Justin Welby, Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury

CATHOLIC and Anglican theologians met in April near Rome to discuss their ordination rites and the ecumenical implications of Pope Francis' document, *Amoris Laetitia*.

The 'Malines Conversation' group met from 17th to 22nd April at Rocca di Papa, culminating in Evensong celebrated by Archbishop Arthur Roche of the Congregation for Divine Worship.

A communiqué said that theologians from seven countries had discussed 'contemporary and historic ordination rites' and the developments that have taken place in both communions since Pope Leo XIII declared Anglican orders 'null and void'.

Fr Tony Curren of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity said that Anglicans and Catholics are facing obstacles which require 'a lot of exploration in an atmosphere of friendship, honesty and frankness to see where progress might be made'. He recalled that Vatican II had recognised elements of the Church which exist beyond the boundaries of the Catholic Church, adding that recent ecumenical efforts have been looking at the implications of that statement in the search for reciprocal recognition of ministry.

He said that such recognition is still not fully possible, but cited many gestures of growing respect and recognition of the ministry exercised by Anglican bishops. In particular, he recalled the gesture of Pope Paul VI, 50 years ago, of giving his own episcopal ring to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey.

Theology, said Fr Curren, needs to 'catch up' and find the 'theological underpinnings to these gestures... I think it's true to say we don't use such language as "null and void" any more, as that's clearly not what is spoken by the gestures, generosity, and warmth which we see time and time again.'



1966: Pope Paul VI gives his episcopal ring to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Michael Ramsey

Catholicism and Islam should humanise society, say inter-faith leaders

CATHOLIC and Muslim leaders meeting in Rome have declared that religion can humanise and civilise communities when their followers adhere to their faith's teachings about loving God and your neighbour.

The Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue and the Amman-based Royal Institute for Inter-faith Studies held their fourth colloquium on 3rd-4th May and examined 'shared values in social and political life'.

Pope Francis told participants that his visit to Jordan in 2014 was 'a beautiful memory that I carry with me'.

He added that dialogue involves stepping outside oneself and listening to the other. 'It is the first step of a journey. Following this meeting of the word, hearts meet and begin a dialogue of friendship, which ends with holding hands. Word, hearts, hands. It's simple! A little child knows how to do it!'

In a statement after the meeting, participants expressed the need to guarantee the inalienable rights and dignity God has bestowed on everyone and protect them with use of the law.

They said that Muslims and Christians share many values, which 'constitute a solid basis [for] peacefully and fruitfully living together, also with persons of goodwill who do not profess a particular religion'.

They pledged their solidarity with all those in need, regardless of their religious, ethnic or cultural background; and underlined that assistance 'should be offered out of compassion' and 'should never be used to proselytise'.

The Vatican delegation was led by Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran. It included experts from Iraq, Syria, Algeria and Indonesia, and Anne Leahy, Canada's former Ambassador to the Holy See. The Muslim delegation was led by Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan. It included experts from Iraq, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon.

Burma 'entering a season of hope'

AFTER decades of suffering, Burma is entering a 'season of hope', Cardinal Charles Maung Bo has said.

Speaking in London, Burma's first-ever cardinal compared the recent history of his country to Good Friday, Easter and Pentecost: 'Our country was taken to five decades of Calvary ... Everyone thought this was a country without an Easter.'

Cardinal Bo said, 'Our Calvary was marked by enforced starvation, denied education to the youth, arrest and incarceration of thousands for asking for basic rights, the death and disappearance of thousands... The Catholic Church was singled out for persecution. Overnight the missionaries serving the poor and the vulnerable were expelled.'

The cardinal added that throughout the hard years, 'God did not abandon our nation' and that in fact the number of Christians increased. 'Amidst one of the most suffocating oppressions, the Church grew. From just three dioceses we grew into 16 dioceses. From 100,000 people we are now 700,000 faithful. From 160 priests we are now 700 priests. From 300 religious we are now more than 2,200 religious, 60 per cent of them below the age of 40.'

'A young and vibrant Church is extending social support through 16 Caritas networks. We are a confident and growing Church in south-east Asia, and recently started sending missionaries to other countries.'



'Without a shadow of doubt'



IN the 1960s Helen Shapiro was a teenage pop music sensation, internationally famed for her massive hit, 'Walking back to happiness'. Now she makes God her number one, and tours Britain with the music trio, Hebron. They set Bible texts to folk, jazz and blues tunes, with a Jewish flavour.

Helen, now aged 69, recognises Jesus as Messiah. She says, 'I was brought up in an area of London with a large Jewish community. We knew we were different... we had different foods, holidays and places of worship. In my primary school we had separate assemblies and RE lessons. In the school playground, another little girl ran up to me, screaming, "You killed Jesus Christ!" I was upset: I'd never even heard of this person. This was my first encounter with anti-Semitism.

'A little bit of this, a little bit of that'

'At 14, still at school, I had my first hit record. That led me into show business, travelling the world. I was carried away by the fame. I didn't give much thought to spiritual things until the late 60s, when I became interested in spiritualism, Buddhism and all kinds of psychic phenomena. I mixed a little bit of this with a little bit of that.

'When I turned 40, I woke up one morning and found I had no belief in them. For the first time in my life I had nothing to believe in. I was successful on the outside, but inside I was empty. My music director was a Christian, but I felt I was unable to consider his beliefs because I am Jewish.

'He handed me a book, "Betrayed", by Stan Telchin, a pillar of the Jewish community in Washington DC. When his daughter announced that she'd accepted Jesus as Messiah, Telchin set out to prove her wrong, talking to rabbis, reading

the Old and New Testaments, and Jewish and Church history. He ended up a believer in Jesus.

Fulfillment of all the prophecies

'Most fascinating were the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah.

'I knew the stories about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David and Daniel. I knew the Jewish people had been promised the Messiah.

'I bought a Bible. I found the New Testament to be the most Jewish collection of books. By the time I'd finished John's Gospel I knew, without a shadow of doubt, that Jesus was the fulfillment of all the prophecies. I gave him my life in August 1987, and have never looked back.'

Asked how Christians should relate to Jews, Helen Shapiro said, 'Prayer is the most important thing. When talking, don't use terms like "Christ". That's an emotive word for Jews. Use the word "Messiah" instead. Present the New Testament as a Jewish book.'

Helen Shapiro no longer works in the main-stream music industry. She left it in 2002 to concentrate on Gospel 'outreach evenings'. With two friends she formed the trio 'Hebron' - the name of the burial place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the Hebrew word for 'fellowship'.

Helen Shapiro declares: 'I would just like to continue to serve the Lord by reaching out to the lost, and letting him use me however he chooses. My greatest prayer is to see the rest of my family saved.'

This article is based on a piece by Clive Price in the publication, 'Families First'

The Pope's Prayer Intentions



June

- That the aged, the marginalised and those who have no-one may find - even within the huge cities of the world - opportunities for encounter and solidarity.
- That seminarians and men and women entering religious life may have mentors who live the joy of the Gospel and prepare them wisely for their mission.

July

- That indigenous peoples whose identity and very existence are threatened will be shown due respect.
- That the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, by means of her mission to the continent, may announce the Gospel with renewed vigour and enthusiasm.

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plant a tree!*





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Pope Francis issues his exhortation on family life

CALLING for an overhaul in the way Catholics approach family issues, Pope Francis on Friday 8th April issued an apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia* ('The Joy of Love').

The document upholds core Church teachings on divorce and sexuality, but stresses the need for 'a healthy dose of self-criticism'.

An apostolic exhortation does not carry as much weight as an encyclical, and is not considered doctrine. But it does advise clergy on its implementation.



Among the many and various topics Pope Francis addressed in *Amoris Laetitia* were the high cost of weddings and care for the elderly. Although the Pope pushed for traditional values to be maintained, he praised greater gender equality, declaring: 'The equal dignity of men and women makes us rejoice to see old forms of discrimination disappear.'

Two-year process

The much-anticipated text, running to 263 pages, is the Pope's response to a two-year process involving two synods on the family and questionnaires sent in from parishes around the world.

While emphasising the importance of Church teachings, Francis said not all issues need to be settled by interventions from the *Magisterium* - namely, the Pope and bishops. 'Different communities will have to devise more practical and effective initiatives that respect both the Church's teaching and local problems and needs.'

Francis described as 'reductive' the approach of simply considering whether a person's actions correspond to a rule, paving the way for pastoral discernment on issues such as remarried divorcees.

Although he did not go as far as allowing divorcees who have re-married the right to receive Communion, he said it was important for them not to feel excommunicated, 'and they should not be treated as such, since they remain part of the ecclesial community'.

Amoris Laetitia is woven with references to religious texts and the views of bishops' conferences from around the world. A key debate during the synods was the Church's response to same-sex unions, which Francis said could not be equated with marriage. 'No union that is temporary or closed to the transmission of life can ensure the future of society,' he wrote. But he called for all people to be respected regardless of their sexual orientation.

Education

Francis dedicated considerable attention to the role of education for children and young couples. He lamented that the Church does not always provide suitable guidance to young married couples: 'They do not need to be taught the entire catechism or overwhelmed with too much information.' He made proposals such as older couples providing guidance, warning 'we can no longer be like a factory' providing courses for newly-weds which are poorly-attended.

Francis remained firm in the Church's staunch opposition to contraception and abortion, describing the 'horrendous contradiction' of a life being 'rejected and destroyed' within a family.

'No-one must feel condemned'

At a press conference after the release of *Amoris Laetitia*, Cardinal Christoph Schonborn of Vienna praised the tone of Francis' text and the change in discourse.

'No-one must feel condemned, no-one is scorned. In this climate of welcome, the discourse on the Christian vision of marriage and the family becomes an invitation, an encouragement, to the joy of love in which we can believe and which excludes no-one - truly and sincerely no-one,' he said.

Other Church leaders around the world hailed the tone of mercy in *Amoris Laetitia*, but cautioned against a hurried reading of the document.

'What is new about this exhortation is its tone,' commented Cardinal Wilfrid Napier of South Africa, pointing out that it calls on all ministers 'to be warm and caring in the way they deal with people in difficult circumstances'.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin called *Amoris Laetitia* an 'encyclopedic document; and, like all encyclopedic documents, much of its most valuable content runs the risk of being by-passed by a preoccupation with one or two of its aspects... But there is a unifying thread: the Gospel of the family is challenging and demanding, but ... with the grace of God and his mercy, is attainable and fulfilling, enriching and worthwhile.'

'It is a long document. You can't whiz through it. It needs reflection,' said Bishop Peter Doyle of Northampton, England. 'It has particular focus on the need to walk with those of us who feel excluded and to let everyone know that they are loved by God and that that love is a tender love, but also a love that challenges us all to change.'

'Field hospital'

In the Pope's home country of Argentina, Bishop Pedro Maria Laxague of Zarate-Campana said the document embraced the papal vision of the Church as a field hospital, treating the wounded and attending to those with needs. 'There is not a good family or a bad family. All require pastoral attention.'

Fr David Neuhaus SJ, Patriarchal Vicar of the Hebrew-speaking community of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, said that the exhortation could help priests and bishops realise that 'nobody is beyond the care of the Church... No one is

outside, no matter what the circumstances ... You can't just take out the law book and say "You have gone out of the boundaries." Every person has to be treated with love and respect.

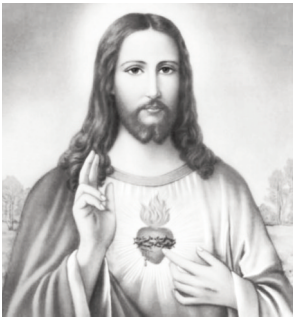
The President of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops described the Pope's latest apostolic exhortation as a 'love letter to families' that invites all people to 'never stop growing in love.'

Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, noted Pope Francis's repeated calls for clergy to take time to get to

know individual circumstance and discuss with people how they can discern God's teaching for their lives.

The archbishop said that the Pope is attempting to help people encounter Jesus and through that encounter feel the love of God.

'The equal dignity of men and women makes us rejoice to see old forms of discrimination disappear'



Some weekday celebrations in June and July

Friday 3rd June: Sacred Heart of Jesus

THE SACRED Heart is a Catholic devotion to the heart of Jesus as representing his love for all humanity. It derives from the visions of a 17th-century French sister, St Marguerite Marie Alacoque. This day has been a solemnity since 1856. Many churches, schools, hospitals and religious houses are dedicated to the Sacred Heart, and many Catholic homes display a picture of the Sacred Heart.

Saturday 11th June: St Barnabas *apostle*

BARNABAS was a Jew from the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, originally named Joseph. He was given a new name, Barnabas (which means 'son of consolation') when he converted to Christianity soon after Pentecost. Bartholomew was not one of Christ's original twelve apostles, but was given the title of apostle because of his association with St Paul, whom he introduced to the early Christian community. He was said to be a cousin of St Mark. Barnabas travelled with Paul to Antioch, but quarrelled with him there, and afterwards accompanied Mark to Cyprus. He is said to have been stoned to death. See Acts 4:36; 9:27; 11:22 and Acts chapters 13-15.

Monday 13th June: St Antony of Padua, *doctor*

ANTONY was born in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1195. He wanted to work in North Africa, but for health reasons had to work instead in Italy, where he gained renown as a preacher. Many miracles are attributed to him. He is widely invoked for the recovery of lost property. Antony died in 1231, and his relics are kept at Padua. Churches at Kololi and Kuntaur are dedicated to him, as is the Cathedral in our neighbouring Diocese of Ziguinchor.

Friday 24th June: Birth of St John the Baptist

AT the time of Jesus it was widely believed that the great prophet Elijah would appear again to 'herald the day of the Lord'. The birth of the 'new Elijah' is beautifully told at the beginning of St Luke's Gospel. As an adult, John would 'prepare the coming of the Lord' by proclaiming the imminence of the Kingdom and the need for repentance. He gathered disciples and taught that the only way to enter the Kingdom was the way of goodness. Nothing else mattered, not even direct descent from Abraham, which the Pharisees made so much of. John saluted Jesus as the Lamb of God, and Jesus spoke in praise of John (Luke 7:24-26). But not everyone flocked to John. The Pharisees denounced him, as later they denounced Jesus. And like Jesus, John suffered an unjust death. The birth of John, who links the Old Testament to the New, is something truly to celebrate.



Tuesday 29th June: St Peter & St Paul *apostles*

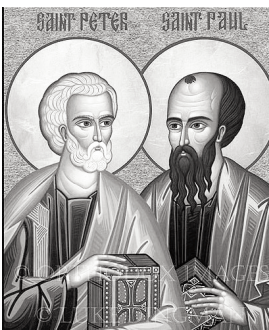
TODAY, like the Birth of John the Baptist, ranks as a Solemnity: a major feast.

Peter and Paul, under Christ, were the pillars of the early Church.

Peter and his brother Andrew were fishermen. Jesus called them to be 'fishers of men', and Peter played a leading part in Jesus' earthly ministry, and afterwards in the infant Christian communities in Jerusalem and Rome. Peter was known as Simon, but when he recognised Jesus as the Christ ('the Anointed One' or 'Messiah'), Jesus declared: 'You are Peter [Greek, *Petros*] and upon this rock [Greek, *petra*] I will build my church.' (Matthew 16:18).

Paul's original name was Saul, born in Tarsus (in modern-day Turkey) to Jewish parents who were Roman citizens. He was brought up a strict Pharisee, and detested the new faith in Christ. But after taking part in the stoning of Stephen he was struck blind on the road to Damascus, and underwent conversion. Paul's ministry was among the gentiles. The vivid account of his missionary journeys in Acts ends with his preaching the Gospel in Rome for two years while awaiting his trial.

In the New Testament, the various letters Paul wrote to Christian communities burn with conviction and zeal.



Saturday 9th July: St Augustine Zhao Rong & companions *martyrs*

AUGUSTINE was a Chinese priest, martyred in 1815. One of his companions, 18-year-old Chi Zhuzi, whose arms had been severed, cried out as he was about to be flayed, 'Every piece of my flesh, every drop of my blood, will tell you that I am a Christian.' Today the Church honours 119 saints martyred in China between the mid-17th century and 1930.

Monday 11th July: St Benedict *abbot*

BENEDICT is known as the father of Western monasticism. He was born into a prominent family in Nursia, central Italy, in 480. He became a hermit outside Rome, and attracted disciples. At his monastery in Monte Cassino he formulated the Benedictine Rule, which gradually became standard in monasteries throughout Europe. Benedict died in 547.

Friday 22nd July: St Mary Magdalene *see below*

Monday 24th July: St James *apostle*

JAMES and his brother John were fishermen. With Peter and John, James witnessed the major events of Christ's ministry, including the Transfiguration and Christ's agony at Gethsemane. In AD 44, by order of Herod Agrippa, James was beheaded (Acts 12:2). He is especially venerated in Spain. Churches at Kandunkou (Bwiam parish) and Sumakunda (Brikama) are dedicated to St James. We pray today for their congregations.

The first witness

MARY from Magdala in Galilee is mentioned by name in the Gospels only a few times, but her meeting with the risen Christ on Easter morning makes her one of the most important Christian saints.

We first hear of Mary in chapter 8 of St Luke's Gospel, where she is described as having become a follower of Jesus after some kind of healing experience. She was one of a number of women who were said to have been set free from evil spirits and infirmities, and who provided for Jesus and the disciples from their own resources.

We do not hear of Mary Magdalene again until the crucifixion. All four Gospel writers mention that she was present, usually in the company of a group of women who had ministered to Jesus in Galilee and accompanied him to Jerusalem. St John is the most precise; he describes her as being among those near the cross with the mother of Jesus.

After Jesus died, Mary Magdalene and her companions waited to see where his body would be taken, so that they could return to perform the customary anointing rites. The next day being the Sabbath they were required to rest, but very early the following morning the women returned and heard the angelic announcement that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Mary Magdalene, still confused and grief-stricken at finding the tomb empty, sought help from a man she took to be the gardener. It was when he addressed her by name that she recognised Jesus, and so became the first witness of the resurrection, taking the news to the other disciples.

Mary Magdalene has been nicknamed 'the apostle of the



apostles', and in the old Roman liturgy the Creed was always recited on her feast day, to mark her importance in the handing-on of the faith.

There has always been speculation about the identity of Mary Magdalene. The third-century writer Hippolytus, in his Commentary on the Song of Songs, identifies Mary Magdalene with both Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus (Luke 10:38-42; John 1:10) and the woman who anointed Jesus' feet (Luke 7:36-50). The 6th-century Pope and doctor of the Church, St Gregory the Great, helped to popularise this identification of the Magdalene.

Modern scholarship has cast doubt on this interpretation, which is not stated in the Gospels, though it has been widely accepted in the Latin Church, and has greatly influenced the portrayal of Mary Magdalene in Western art.

Answers to 'Do you know?' page 5

- 1 Jonathan, son of King Saul (1 Samuel 18:1)
- 2 Rt Revd James Yaw Odico (became Bishop on 24th January 2016)
- 3 Philip: John 14:8
- 4 A server in church, especially one who bears a candle in procession. (Original meaning from Greek: faithful follower, attendant.)
- 5 Fr Pius Gidi CSSp

Daily Mass Readings



Sunday readings Year C Weekday readings Year 2

Wed 1st June	2 Timothy 1:1-3,6-12. Psalm 122:1-2. Mark 12:18-27	St Justin (St Marcellinus & St Peter)
Thu 2nd	2 Timothy 2:8-15. Psalm 24:4-5,8-10,14. Mark 12:28-34	SACRED HEART
Fri 3rd	Ezekiel 34:11-16. Psalm 22:1-6. Romans 5:5-11. Luke 15:3-7	Immaculate Heart of Mary
Sat 4th	Isaiah 61:9-11. Psalm 1 Samuel 2:4-8. Luke 2:41-51	
Sun 5th	1 Kings 17:17-24. Psalm 29:2,4-6,11-13. Galatians 1:11-19. Luke 7:11-17	10th SUNDAY of YEAR (St Norbert)
Mon 6th	1 Kings 17:1-6. Psalm 120:1-8. Matthew 5:1-12	
Tue 7th	1 Kings 17:7-16. Psalm 4:2-5,7-8. Matthew 5:13-16	
Wed 8th	1 Kings 18:20-39. Psalm 15:1-2,4-5,8,11. Matthew 5:17-19	
Thu 9th	1 Kings 18:41-46. Psalm 64:10-13. Matthew 5:20-26	(St Ephrem)
Fri 10th	1 Kings 19:9,11-16. Psalm 26:7-9,13-14. Matthew 5:27-32	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 11th	Acts 11:21-26; 13:1-3. Psalm 97:1-6. Matthew 10:7-13	St Barnabas
Sun 12th	2 Samuel 12: 7-10,13. Psalm 31:1-2,5-7,11. Galatians 2:16,19-21. Luke 7:36 - 8:3	11th SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 13th	1 Kings 21:1-16. Psalm 5:2-3,5-7. Matthew 5:38-42	St Anthony of Padua
Tue 14th	1 Kings 21:17-29. Psalm 50:3-6,11,16. Matthew 5:43-48	
Wed 15th	2 Kings 2:1,6-14. Psalm 30:20-21,24. Matthew 6:1-6,16-18	
Thu 16th	Sirach 48:1-15. Psalm 96:1-7. Matthew 6:7-15	
Fri 17th	2 Kings 11:1-4,9-18,20. Psalm 131:11-14,17-18. Matthew 6:19-23	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 18th	2 Chronicles 24:17-25. Psalm 88:4-5,29-34. Matthew 6:24-34	(of the BVM)
Sun 19th	Zechariah 12:10-11, 13:1. Psalm 62: 2-6,8-9. Galatians 3:26-29. Luke 9: 18-24	12th SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 20th	2 Kings 17:5-8, 13-15,18. Psalm 59:3-5,12-13. Matthew 7:1-5	
Tue 21st	2 Kings 19:9-11,14-21,31-36. Psalm 47: 2-4,10-11. Matthew 7:6,12-14	St Aloysius Gonzaga
Wed 22nd	2 Kings 22:18-13, 23:1-3. Psalm 118:33-37,40. Matthew 7:15-20 (St Paulinus of Nola or St John Fisher & St Thomas More)	
Thu 23rd	2 Kings 24:8-17. Psalm 78:1-3,5,8-9. Matthew 7:21-29	
Fri 24th	Evening Mass of St John Baptist: Jeremiah 1:4-10. Psalm 70:1-6,15,17. 1 Peter 1:8-12. Luke 1:5-17	BIRTH of St JOHN the BAPTIST
Sat 25th	Isaiah 49:1-6. Psalm 138:1-3,13-15. Acts 13:22-26. Luke 1:57-66,80	(of the BVM)
	Lamentations 2:2,10-14,18-19. Psalm 73:1-7,20-21. Matthew 8:5-17	
Sun 26th	1 Kings 19:16,19-21. Psalm 15:1-2,5,7-11. Galatians 1,13-18. Luke 9:51-62	13th SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 27th	Amos 2:6-10. Psalm 49:16-23. Matthew 8:18-22	(St Cyril of Alexandria)
Tue 28th	Amos 3:1-8, 4:11-12. Psalm 5:5-8. Matthew 8:23-27	St Irenaeus
Wed 29th	Evening Mass of St Peter & St Paul: Acts 3: 1-0. Psalm 18:2-5. Galatians 1:11-20. John 21:15-19	St PETER & St PAUL
Thu 30th	Acts 12:1-11 Psalm 33:2-9. 2 Timothy 4:6-8,17-18. Matthew 16:13-19	(First Martyrs of the Roman Church)
Fri 1st July	Amos 7:10-17. Psalm 18:8-11. Matthew 9:1-8	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 2nd	Amos 8:4-6,9-12. Ps 118:2,10,20,30,40,131. Matthew 9:9-13	
	Amos 9:11-15. Psalm 84:9,11-14. Matthew 9:14-17 (of the BVM)	
Sun 3rd	Isaiah 66:10-14. Psalm 65:1-7,16,20. Galatians 6:14-18. Luke 10:1-12,17-20	14th SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 4th	Hosea 2:16-18,21-22. Psalm 144:2-9. Matthew 9:18-26	(St Elizabeth of Portugal)
Tue 5th	Hosea 8:4-7,11-13. Psalm 113:3-10. Matthew 9:32-38	(St Anthony Zaccaria)
Wed 6th	Hosea 10:1-3,7-8,12 Psalm 104:2-7 Matthew 10:1-7	(St Maria Goretti)
Thu 7th	Hosea 11:1-4,8-9. Psalm 79:2-3,15-16. Matthew 10:7-15	
Fri 8th	Hosea 14:2-10. Psalm 50:3-4,8-9,12-14,17 Matthew 10:16-23	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 9th	Isaiah 6:1-8. Psalm 92;1-2,5. Matthew 10:24-33	(St Augustine Zhao Rong or of the BVM)
Sun 10th	Deuteronomy 30:10-14. Psalm 68:14,17,30-31,33-34,36-37, Colossians 1:15-20. Luke 10: 25-37	15th SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 11th	Isaiah 1:10-17. Psalm 49:8-9,16-17,21,23. Matthew 10:34 – 11:1	St Benedict
Tue 12th	Isaiah 7:1-9. Psalm 47:2-8. Matthew 11:20-24	
Wed 13th	Isaiah 10:5-7,13-16. Psalm 93:5-10,14-15. Matthew 11:25-27	(St Henry)
Thu 14th	Isaiah 26:7-9,12,16-19. Psalm 101:13-21. Matthew 11:28-30	(St Camillus de Lellis)
Fri 15th	Isaiah 38:1-6,21-22. Psalm Isaiah 38:10-12,16. Matthew 12:1-8	St Bonaventure <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 16th	Zechariah 2:14-17. Psalm Luke 1:46-55. Matthew 12:46-50	(Our Lady of Mount Carmel)
Sun 17th	Genesis 18:1-10. Psalm 14:2-5. Colossians 1:24-28. Luke 10:38-42	16th SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 18th	Micah 6:1-4,6-8. Psalm 49:5-6,8-9,16-17,21,23 Matthew 12:38-42	
Tue 19th	Micah 7:14-15,18-20. Psalm 84:2-8. Matthew 12:46-50	
Wed 20th	Jeremiah 1:1,4-10. Psalm 70:1-6,15,17. Matthew 13:19	(St Apollinaris)
Thu 21st	Jeremiah 2:1-3,7-8,12-13. Psalm 35:6-11. Matthew 13:10-17	(St Laurence of Brindisi)
Fri 22nd	Song of Songs 3:14 or 2 Corinthians 5:14-17. Psalm 62:2-6,8-9. John 20:1-2,11-18	St Mary Magdalene <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 23rd	Jeremiah 7:1-11. Psalm 83:3-6,8,11. Matthew 13:24-30	(St Bridget of Sweden or of the BVM)
Sun 24th	Genesis 18:20-32. Psalm 137:1-3,6-8. Colossians 2:12-14. Luke 11:1-13	17th SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 25th	2 Corinthians 4:7-15. Psalm 125:1-6. Matthew 20:20-28	St JAMES
Tue 26th	Jeremiah 14:17-22. Psalm 78:8-9,11,13. Matthew 13:36-43	St Joachim & St Anne
Wed 27th	Jeremiah 15:10,16-21. Psalm 58:2-5,10-11,17-18, Matthew 13:44-46.	
Thu 28th	Jeremiah 18:1-6. Psalm 145:1-6. Matthew 13:47-53	
Fri 29th	1 John 4:7-16. Psalm 33:2-11. John 11:19-27 or Luke 10:38-42	St Martha <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 30th	Jeremiah 26:11-16,24. Psalm 68:15-16,30-31,33-34. Matthew 14:1-12	(St Chrysologus or of the BVM)
Sun 31st	Ecclesiastes 1:2 & 2:21-23. Psalm 89:3-6,12-14,17. Colossians 3:1-5,9-11. Luke 12:13-21	18th SUNDAY of YEAR

June & July

Celebrations in brackets () are optional

Walking together



Address by Bishop ROBERT ELLISON CSSp after his episcopal ordination on the Feast of St Matthias, 14th May 2006

FOR my motto, I have chosen a short petition from the Lord's Prayer: 'Your kingdom come' (*Adveniat regnum tuum*).

That choice is based on the kind of Church I can remember from the years I spent here prior to my recent absence.

It is a very small Church; and it forms part of a wider Christian presence which is still very small relative to the vast majority of Gambians who live their faith in God according to the Muslim tradition.

Then there are also those who follow African traditional religions.

That is the context in which the Catholic community in The Gambia is called by God to live out its special vocation or mission.

Enduring resonance

'You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world...' [Matthew 5:13-14] These words of Christ were chosen [in 1992] on the occasion of the visit of the late Pope John Paul II, as a kind of motto or mission statement for the Catholic Church. Today they are being addressed to us once again, for they have an enduring resonance, especially on a day like this.

And these words of Christ find an echo in the document on the Church (Vatican II):

'Although the Church does not actually include all men, and even at times may appear as a tiny flock, it is however a sure seed of unity, hope and salvation for the whole human family.' This short quotation fits our local Church in The Gambia like a glove!

Unity, peace and hope for all

I like to think of our Church as a sign and instrument for bringing about unity, peace and hope not just for its own members but also for all people in this country, whatever their religion, tribe or social condition. In this way it can play a key role in helping to prepare for the coming of God's kingdom in this part of the world. That kingdom is destined to include men, women and children from every tribe, tongue, people

and nation. In that kingdom there will be no barriers or divisions.

In practice, this means very simply that if we don't walk together hand-in-hand along the journey of life with this spirit in our hearts, then we can hardly enter the gates of heaven together or expect to enjoy the perfect peace of God's kingdom. These very gifts that we treasure so much and pray for cannot co-exist where there is division or exclusion of others.

The vision to be shared

That is the vision. And I am aware that a vision has to be shared if it is to be implemented. In a certain sense it is no different to the spirit in which my predecessor, Bishop Cleary, guided and inspired the Catholic community over the past twenty-five years. I trust and hope that this can continue.

When I look at the clergy in this diocese, I see a large group of priests who are enthusiastic and committed to their vocation. In fact, one could justly say they would be the envy of many another diocese.

I am also aware of the spirit of witness to prayer that is found in a special way among the religious congregations – something often hidden and unseen, but nevertheless a powerhouse of energy for the life of our communities. They also provide various services, each according to its specific charism, for the needs of the people among whom they live and work.

Last, but by no means least, the lay faithful: the enormous contribution made by the many Church societies, the parish councils, the team of catechists, the teachers, etc. All of these reach out and reach down to the roots of daily life, where Gospel values permeate society like the seed that grows slowly and silently.

Many and gifted resources

The resources are many and gifted, but they can only bear fruit in abundance if all are pulling together in the same direction, and in a spirit of understanding and respect for each other.

That is how I see the key task of any bishop: to identify, co-ordinate and encourage these gifts and talents that the Spirit has bestowed upon our local Church.

If I were to do nothing else except to promote this need, I think I could retire in peace.

Working together usually slows down the speed of results. But it does produce fruit that will last. Like the farmer, we must be patient for the coming of the harvest, and the fisherman waiting for his catch.

Ndanka, ndanka japa golol!

Lord Jesus, may your kingdom come among us.

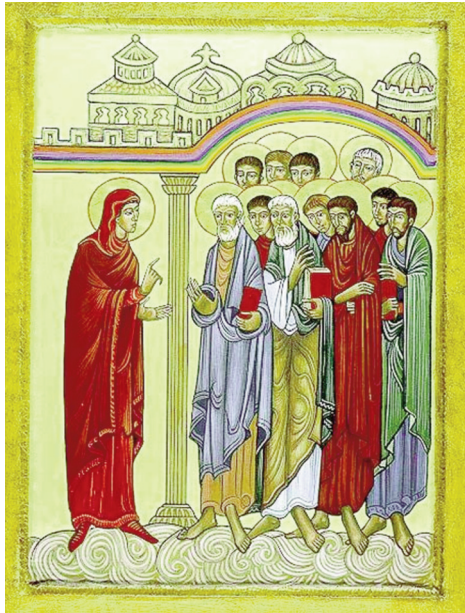


End-piece

Two prayers for 22nd July

O GOD, whose Only Begotten Son entrusted Mary Magdalene before all others with announcing the great joy of the Resurrection, grant, we pray, that through her intercession and example we may proclaim the living Christ and come to see him reigning in your glory.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



O GOD, who arrange all things according to a wonderful design, graciously receive the prayers we pour out to you for our country, that, through the wisdom of its leaders and the integrity of its citizens, harmony and justice may be assured and lasting prosperity come with peace.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

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‘Who is my neighbour?’

A lawyer asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ Jesus replied: ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him, and when he saw him he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.”

‘Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’

He said, ‘The man who showed him mercy.’

Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

Luke 10:29-37

From the Gospel for the 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 10th July

Our illustration is taken from a painting, ‘The Good Samaritan’ by the Italian artist Jacopo Bassano (c.1510-1592), painted about 1562 and now displayed at the National Gallery, London