

PENTECOST

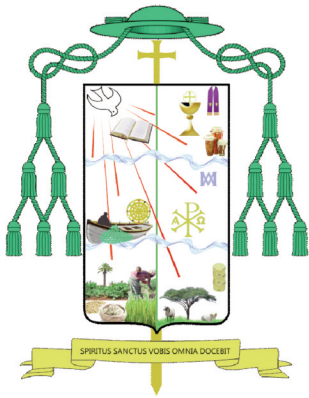
- birthday of our beloved Church



Volume 43 No. 3

JUNE & JULY 2019

D50



The Diocese of Banjul

NEWSLETTER

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

Corpus Christi

and First Communion



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By way of introduction

Celebrating day by day....

THOSE who value the Church's liturgy and calendar will particularly appreciate the month of June, which embraces several outstanding celebrations.

To begin with, on Monday 3rd June, we celebrate St Charles Lwanga – locally notable as patron of one of our most dynamic parishes, in Fajikunda.

Then, on Sunday 9th June the Catholic Church throughout the world observes one of the greatest feasts of the entire year – Pentecost Sunday, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at the Jewish feast of Pentecost: the day when Christ's Church was inaugurated.

Bishop Gabriel Mendy's motto, *Spiritus Sanctus vobis omnia docebit* ('The Holy Spirit will teach you everything') should spur us to make the most of Pentecost, vowing to live and learn under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit.

The great celebrations continue. The Sunday after Pentecost is Trinity Sunday, when we rejoice that God has revealed himself to the Church as Father, Son and Holy Spirit – three Persons and One God.

Sunday 16th June is the Feast of *Corpus Christi*, the Body and Blood of Christ. We give thanks for Jesus' gift to his Church of the sacrifice of the Mass, and his giving of himself in Holy Communion.

In this diocese, *Corpus Christi* is the day when many young people receive Communion for the first time. They and their families need our prayers.

And June has yet more in store. On Monday 24th June we celebrate the birth of the last of the prophets: John the Baptist, who heralded the coming of Christ.



Let's not forget Friday 28th June, which commemorates the Sacred Heart, a devotion dear to many Catholics throughout the world.

The following day, Saturday 29th June, we come to the feast of St Peter and St Paul, who with absolute and joyful faith in Jesus' resurrection, and by his grace, were the devoted and courageous builders of the infant Church.

All this and more, this month of June – not to mention the following month of July. There is, in fact, never an 'off-day' nor dull day in the Church's calendar. Whether a day is a feast, a memorial, or no particular celebration, that day belongs to the Lord. It is a day for worship and for seizing every opportunity to serve God and our neighbour.

The daily Scripture readings at Mass are a great source of enlightenment. They encourage each of us to be more than a 'Sunday Christian' – instead, to be a disciple of Christ every single day, thanking God by serving him in the family, in the community and in the Church.

If you're not able to take part in weekday Mass, at least read the Scriptures for the day, and so begin the day joyfully and purposefully!

Daily readings at Mass throughout June and July: page 28

Sr Ellen-Marie Mendy asks,
'What is reconciliation?'

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A new memorial for the
Monday after Pentecost:
Mary, Mother of the Church

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First published Palm Sunday 1976
THE DIOCESE OF BANJUL NEWSLETTER

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

JUNE-JULY 2019 Volume 43, No. 3

Published by The Gambia Pastoral Institute

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Here & there

NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE



Focus on 'small Christian communities'

'Evangelisation, social justice and small Christian communities' were topics of workshops led by Sr Marie Cooper at GPI in the

week of 13th May.

Among the participants were diocesan catechists.

Sr Marie is a seasoned leader of retreats and spiritual direction attached to the Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny in the Province of the United States and Canada, and comes from Chicago.

This was Sr Marie's first visit to The Gambia and the Diocese of Banjul. In 2003 she spent a month in Sierra Leone, and the following year visited Burundi and South Africa.

Before coming to The Gambia on 5th May, Sr Marie returned to Sierra Leone, where she led a Holy Week retreat and conducted a workshop.

On Sunday 12th May Sr Marie appeared on GPI's television programme, 'Kaadu Dunda Gi'.

Celebrating at Brikama

At the Church of the Resurrection Beikama a Mass of Thanksgiving was held on Sunday 12th May to mark the forty-eighth anniversary of the parish. The chief celebrant was Fr Antoine Sambou, Parish Priest at the Cathedral.

The Grand Chief Patron was Edward Sambou, and the Patroness, Joanna Mendy. The Chief Patroness was Ellen Mendy. The Chief Guest of Honour was Janet Davies, while the Guest of Honour was Augustus Prom senior, and the Special Guest of Honour, Benigna Able Thomas.

Distinguished Methodist who led the Mission in Gambia

A MEMORIAL and Thanksgiving Service for the Revd Professor Peter Stephens, former Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church in The Gambia, was held at the Methodist Cathedral (Dobson Street Church) on Tuesday 14th May.

Professor Stephens died in England on 1st April.

A review of his life and achievements appears on page 7 of this *Newsletter*.

Don't forget **Kaadu Dunda Gi**
every Sunday at 1 pm
GRTS

Principals on Lenten retreat

ABOUT 25 principals and head-teachers from regions 1-3 attended their Lenten retreat at The Gambia Pastoral Institute on Thursday 4th and Friday 5th April. The retreat was led by Fr Bruno Toupan.

Towards the end of the retreat a meeting was held to discuss some challenges faced by heads.

Fr David Jimoh Jarju, Education Secretary at the Catholic Secretariat, attended the meeting.

It was pointed out that some schools do not have a suitable classroom for teaching Christian Religious Education (CRE).

The heads spoke of the need for a GPI team to go round mission, government and private schools at least once a term to observe teachers of CRE in grades 1- 12.

It was suggested that principals and headteachers should form an association, and that CRE teachers should be posted to schools that do not have them.

It was recommended that one week in the school year should be set aside in which the CRE teachers should be invited for further training at GPI.

Fr Jarju spoke at the end of the meeting.

Christian teachers gather at GPI

THE GAMBIA Pastoral Institute organised a workshop from 27th to 29th March for teachers of Christian Religious Education (CRE).

Thirty five CRE teachers from Regions 1-5 attended. The facilitators were Henry Sanyang from Bwiam and Fr Bruno Toupan.

Towards the end of the workshop a meeting discussed challenges the teachers are facing.

In most government schools where there are Christian pupils, no classroom has been allocated a classroom for them; instead they sit under the trees.

Another problem is the lack of Good News Bibles for junior schools and the RSV (the Revised Standard Version) for senior schools, as well as workbooks for grades 7-12.

In some schools, no time nor day set is aside for moral instruction or worship.

Youth Cross Weekend to take place in Soma

AT least two thousand young people are expected to take part in the fifth Youth Cross Weekend. This year, for the first time, it is to be held outside the Kombos - in Soma - from Friday 14th to Sunday 16th May.

This year's theme is 'Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word' (Luke 1:38), which was the theme of the World Youth Day held in January in Panama.

The Youth Cross Weekend has hitherto been held every other year, but, as announced by Bishop Mendy last year, it is now to be held annually.

CRS donation

CATHOLIC Relief Services (CRS) have recently donated motor bicycles and office furniture to GPI. The motor bicycles have been given to catechists.

Extensive refurbishment has been underway at GPI, notably in the administrative building.

GPI is preparing the launch of a new Catholic radio channel, 'Radio Veritas'.

The Shrine at Popenguine is 131 years old



TENS of thousands of Catholics and others, including a large contingent of Gambians, will converge on Monday 10th June at the Shrine of our Lady at Popenguine, on Senegal's Petite Côte, for the 131st annual pilgrimage.

The pilgrims, many of them in organised groups of young people, will travel to Popenguine to celebrate the Black Madonna's feast day on Pentecost Monday.

After a Solemn Mass they will process from the basilica to the nearby shrine of Our Lady of Deliverance, which overlooks the sea.

This year, for the first time, the Monday after Pentecost will be celebrated world-wide as the memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, as decreed by Pope Francis (*see page 20*)

As at Kunkujang Mariama, many Muslims will join in the pilgrimage to Popenguine, side-by-side with their Catholic brothers and sisters.

Since 1888

The shrine dates back to May 1888. The year before, Bishop Mathurin Picarda visited the Holy Ghost Fathers in Guéréo, Senegal, for the baptism of their first Catholic converts. The priests were walking along the coast to the village of Popenguine when the bishop observed, 'What a magnificent site for a sanctuary to the Virgin!'

A native of Brittany, in France, Bishop Picarda decided to designate a famous Black Madonna in Normandy, *Notre Dame de la Délivrande*, as patron of the shrine he wanted to build. A Norman benefactor provided a replica statue which was installed on 22nd May 1888, the Tuesday after Pentecost.

The shrine at Popenguine suffered many setbacks during the following century, including the collapse of a building,

crippling epidemics of yellow fever and sleeping sickness, the Great War of 1914-18, and a shipwreck that took the lives of the bishop and 18 missionaries.

The area remained mainly Muslim, but the Catholic faith and devotion to Our Lady of Deliverance persisted.

Minor basilica

In 1998 a new church was dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. It was proclaimed a minor basilica at the request of a native of Popenguine, Cardinal Hyacinthe Thiamdoum, Archbishop of Dakar.

On 20th February 1992 Pope St John Paul II visited the shrine and crowned the statue of Our Lady of Deliverance.

The Pope's world-wide charity

ON Sunday 30th June many parishes throughout the world will take part in the Pope's charity campaign: the Peter's Pence collection.

Peter's Pence - in Latin, *Denarii Sancti Petri* - is thought to have been first mentioned in 1031 to refer to a tax sent to the Pope in Rome.

Since approval by Pope Pius IX in 1871, Peter's Pence refers to the special collection in Rome on the Sunday closest to 29th June, the solemnity of St Peter and St Paul, the city's patrons. The proceeds are given to the Pope to use at his discretion for charities.

The Peter's Pence collection receives contributions from institutes, societies and individuals.

The United States contributes the largest percentage of the campaign's funds, followed by Italy and Germany. Peter's Pence helps regions affected by natural disasters and people afflicted by violence. Peter's Pence supports development projects in sub-Saharan Africa through the John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel.

'Victorious life' at St Therese's

'VICTORIOUS Life in Christ Jesus' (2 Corinthians 2:14) was the inspiration for a revival programme from Monday 13th to Friday 20th May at St Therese's Lower Basic School.

Conducting the programme were priests of the Nigerian Order of the Missionaries of St Paul.

The host was Fr Godwin Nnadoze, MSP Superior in The Gambia, Parish Priest of St Peter's Lamin, with his colleague there, Fr John Ezeike MSP, and Fr Cornelius Umoren MSP, Parish Priest of St John's Farafenni. The guest was Fr Emmanuel Obimia MSP, from Nigeria.

Those attending the programme were responding to the invitation, 'Experience the manifestation of God's miraculous powers'.



OBITUARY

Police chief and barrister-at-law

THE DEATH occurred on 14th February of Sydney Winston Riley, former Inspector-General of Police and Barrister-at-Law, aged 75.

Known to his family as 'Bal' and to his peers as 'Logou', Sydney Riley was born in Banjul on 12th March 1943 to George A. Riley and Ellen Ellen Ayo Mahoney. His mother was a nurse, and while she was on duty in the up-country, Sydney was brought up by his grandmother, Kenbugul Forbes, at Allen Street.

He attended Albion and St Mary's schools, and went on to the Methodist Boys' High School. In 1959 the school amalgamated with the Methodist Girls' High School to become Gambia High School, under the headship of P.O. Beale.

In 1965 Sydney began an undergraduate course at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. His studies were interrupted by the Nigerian civil war, and he graduated at the University of Ibadan.

In 1969 he joined the Gambia Police Force. He attended several training courses, including Mons Officer Cadet Military School at Aldershot in Hampshire, England. During a course in Britain he met his wife, Elsie Modupeh. They were married in September 1973 at St Andrew's, Wapping, East London. Their three sons are now all living with their families in the USA.

Back home, Sydney Riley rose through the ranks to become Inspector-General of Police.

In 1974 he was awarded a scholarship to read Law at the Middle Temple, London, where he was admitted as Barrister-at-Law.

In Banjul, as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court, he practised law at 'Sydney's Chambers'.

Sydney Riley was a leading member of the Reform Club, the Dinner Club, Mike's Vous and Kerr Susan Vous. As a dedicated Methodist, he was a member of the Men's Fellowship.

Mr Riley is survived by his wife, three sons, four grandchildren, two sisters and many relatives.

His funeral was held at the Methodist Cathedral Banjul (Dobson Street Church) on Friday 8th March, followed by interment at Banjul Cemetery.



In communion with the women saints, we pray:

LORD, through the women martyrs, strengthen your Church in time of trial. Through the married women who graced the lives of the human family, renew the Church in her apostolic mission.

Through all the widows who sanctified loneliness with prayer and hospitality, make your Church a sign of your love for all the world.

Through all the mothers who introduced their children to the kingdom of God and true human life in society, may your Church bring all people to eternal life and salvation.

Through all the holy women who live in the light of your glory, grant to the faithful departed the everlasting vision of happiness....

Noted educationalist

THE DEATH occurred on 20th April at the age of 79 of Theophilus George – known to his family as Dele, and Pompey to his friends – a noted educationalist.

Theophilus Womsley Ayodele George was born at 6 Lancaster Street Banjul on 30th June 1939, the eldest son of Clarence Benjamin Ayodele George and Elizabeth Fanny 'Mam Betty' George, née Forster.

Following St Mary's School, Theo attended the Methodist Boys' High School, where he was a prefect. Encouraged by Reginald Pye (later to become Headmaster) he acquired a life-long interest in the piano and music generally.

Theo studied at Yundum Teachers' College, and from 1962 to 1966 taught at St Mary's School. He then undertook a bachelor's degree in education at the University of Adelaide, Australia, where he was President of the African Students' Union.

After his return home in January 1970, Theo taught at Latrikunda School before becoming Regional Education Officer.

In 1973, Theo and David Nicholas founded the Book Production & Material Resources Unit (BPMRU) at the Ministry of Education. He pursued a master's degree in education at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. On his return he became Director of BPMRU and rose to being Assistant Director of Education Services, retiring in 1994.

From September 1994 to June 1999 Theo was Acting Managing Director of the Daily Observer. He then worked for MacMillan educational publishers.

Over the years Theo served on various boards, including the chairmanship of the Governors of Gambia Senior Secondary School. He was a trustee of Ndow's Comprehensive School, the Anglican Training Centre and the Revd J.C. Faye Memorial School, as well as Vice-Chairman of The Gambia Printing & Publishing Corporation.

Theo was a staunch Anglican. He was devoted to St Mary's Cathedral, having been a boy chorister, choir-master, succentor and member of the Diocesan Board of Education and the Synod.

Mr George's funeral was held at St Mary's Cathedral on Tuesday 30th April, followed by interment at Banjul Cemetery.

Requiescant in pace

Methodist minister of many gifts and achievements

WHEN, having held the office of President and Bishop of the Methodist Church in The Gambia, the Very Revd Peter Stephens returned to England, he recalled that while in this country he'd had little time for research, he'd been able to swim most days in the Atlantic, and to play squash once a week. He'd miss many things and many friends in The Gambia – though he'd be relieved to leave behind a seven-day working week!

An encouraging feature of Bishop Stephen's life here had been ecumenical and inter-faith co-operation, especially with Bishop Tilewa Johnson of the Anglican Church, Bishop Robert Ellison of the Catholic Church, and the Iman Ratib. He would leave with deep gratitude for friendly relations with many in the nation, as well as in the Christian community. Peter Stephens died in England on 1st April 2019, his long career as scholar, Methodist minister and bishop having had an international impact in the service of the Gospel.

THE STORY begins 85 years ago on 16th May 1934, when William Peter Stephens was born in Penzance, Cornwall, south-west England. He was the fourth of four children of Alfred Cyril William Joseph Stephenson and Jennie Eudora Stephens (née Trewavas). The Trewavas family had been Methodists from the 1760s and met John Wesley on his visits to Cornwall.

Cornwall and Cambridge

Peter Stephens was educated at Truro School and the University of Cambridge, where he was an Open Exhibitioner at Clare College (founded in 1326). When he responded to a call to the Methodist ministry he began to read theology, first at Clare, then at Wesley House, the Methodist theology college at Cambridge, where he specialised in the New Testament.

From Cambridge he went to the University of Lund, in Sweden, as a World Council of Churches scholar for research on the relations on the relations of church and state in Martin Luther's teaching. On his return to England he served for three years as Assistant Tutor at Hartley Victoria College, Manchester, teaching New Testament and Greek.

After four years as Methodist circuit minister and University Chaplain in Nottingham he went to the University of Strasbourg, in France, and Münster, in Germany, for doctoral studies. He defended his thesis in French on 'The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Theology of Martin Bucer'.

Teaching in college and university

On his return to England the Revd Peter Stephens was stationed as minister in Shirley, near Croydon, then one of the largest Methodist congregations in Britain. After this came a succession of appointments in Methodist theological colleges – the Ranmoor Chair of Church History in Hartley Victoria College, Manchester, the Randles Chair of Historical and Systematic Theology in Wesley College, Bristol, and Lecturer in Church History in The Queen's College, Birmingham. While in Bristol he was elected to the city council, on which he served for seven years. There followed, from 1986, thirteen years in the University of Aberdeen, Scotland (founded in 1495) as Professor of Church History. He also served as Dean and Provost of the Faculty of Divinity.

In the early 1990s he founded the Society for Reformation Studies, becoming its first President. The society meets every year in Cambridge and publishes a scholarly journal, *Reformation and Renaissance Review*.

Visits abroad

Before retiring from his chair at Aberdeen, Professor Stephens served as President of the British Conference. In this period, he made Presidential visits to the USA, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Germany, France, Italy and Ireland, including pastoral visits to the Pope in Rome and the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople (Istanbul).

In the USA he addressed the conference of Bishops of the four great Methodist Churches (African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, and United Methodists) and made visits to each of them.

In Britain he attended the three main political party conferences and the Trades Union Congress, as well as addressing the Muslim Council of Great Britain when they were celebrating the Prophet's Birthday.

'Wherever there's a need'

Professor Stephens had promised that when he left Aberdeen he would serve the Methodist Church wherever there was a need. This involved several moves until he moved back to his home town in 2006, having served for one or two years in various Methodist circuits.

In 2003 he was asked unexpectedly to come to The Gambia as Methodist Chairman and General Superintendent, and then, equally unexpectedly, to return to The Gambia to the newly autonomous Methodist Mission as President and Bishop. He came on the understanding that he would help prepare for a Gambian to lead the Church, and return to England when that had been accomplished.

Ecumenical endeavours

Alongside his ministry in circuit, college and university, Bishop Stephens had many commitments in the Methodist Church and in the community, especially in ecumenical and European relations. He took part in three international dialogues between the World Methodist Council and the Lutheran World Federation, the Orthodox Church, and the Roman Catholic Church. For over a decade he was responsible for the Methodist Church's relations with European churches. In Britain he was a member for several years of the small standing committee set up by the Conservative Party to advise it on the views of the churches.

Bishop Stephens wrote a number of books and many articles on theological issues, especially on the reformers Bucer, Bullinger and Zwingli. His books on Zwingli have been translated into French, German and Korean.





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A great day for Jews – and for our beloved Church



PENTECOST – in Greek, *Penticosti* - means ‘fiftieth day’. The ancient Jewish festival of Pentecost was the ‘Feast of Weeks’ at the end of grain harvest, 50 days after Passover. Exodus 34:22 says, ‘You shall observe the feast of weeks, the first fruits of the harvest.’

Over time the Jews came to celebrate Pentecost not only to give thanks for the harvest but to commemorate the day when God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses. This day, the Jews assert, celebrates the founding of the Jewish nation - because no people can consider themselves a nation unless they have laws.



Pentecost for Christians

Early Christians thought of Pentecost as the day when the Church was founded, because on that day the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles, as Christ had promised.

Just as the Jews celebrate the beginning of their nation, so Christians at Pentecost celebrate the beginning of the Church, when Peter and the apostles, empowered by the Spirit, at once began proclaiming Christ’s message of salvation.

At Pentecost, Jerusalem was always crowded. It was the ideal time and place: ‘Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem... All those who welcomed Peter’s message were baptised, and that day about three thousand men were added...And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.’ (Acts 2:5,41,47)

The Christian celebration of Pentecost originated in the East in the 3rd century. Pentecost ranks after Easter Sunday as the second great feast of the Christian calendar, celebrated fifty days after Easter Sunday, the seventh Sunday and last day of Easter Time.

‘Freshness, imagination and newness...’

In an ecumenical address at the Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Istanbul, Turkey, on 29th November 2014, Pope Francis declared: ‘The Holy Spirit brings unity to the Church: unity in faith, unity in love, unity in interior life.’



‘The Church and other churches and ecclesial communities are called to allow themselves be guided by the Holy Spirit, and to remain always open, docile and obedient.’

‘Ours is a hopeful perspective, but one which is also demanding. The temptation is always within us to resist the Holy Spirit, because he takes us out of our comfort zone and unsettles us; he makes us get up, and drives the Church forward.’

‘It is always easier and more comfortable to settle in our sedentary and unchanging ways. But in truth, the Church shows her fidelity to the Holy Spirit in as much as she does not try to control or tame him.’

We Christians become true missionary disciples, able to challenge consciences, when we throw off our defensiveness and allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit. He is freshness, imagination and newness...

‘In our journey of faith and fraternal living, the more we allow ourselves to be humbly guided by the Spirit of the Lord, the more we will overcome misunderstandings, divisions and disagreements and be a credible sign of unity and peace.’

A prayer for the Jewish people

Let us pray also for the Jewish people, to whom the Lord our God spoke first, that he may grant them to advance in love of his name and in faithfulness to his covenant.



ALMIGHTY, ever-living God, who bestowed your promises on Abraham and his descendants, graciously hear the prayers of your Church, that the people you first made your own may attain the fullness of redemption. Through Christ our Lord.

From the liturgy for Good Friday

*The Editor & Staff
of The Diocese of Banjul Newsletter
wish all Readers
a Happy & Fruitful celebration
of PENTECOST*



family circle

On the increase

DIABETES is increasingly common. About a third of people suffering from it may not yet know that they have developed the condition. So if you have diabetes you needn't feel isolated: you're one of many.

Diabetes occurs when the level of glucose in your blood is too high, and your body cannot use it for energy.



Normally the glucose in the blood is transferred to the muscles by insulin. Diabetes develops when insufficient insulin is produced, so that the glucose cannot get from the blood to the muscles.

If you have diabetes, you may experience some of the following symptoms:

- **Passing a lot of urine**, especially at night. Your body tries to flush the excess glucose out of your body by filtering it from the blood and passing it in your urine.
- **Increased thirst**. Because you are passing a lot of urine your body needs to take on more fluids to prevent dehydration.
- **Lethargy** (loss of energy). The glucose cannot get from the blood into the muscles, so you will feel low on energy.
- **Recurring infections** such as thrush, urine infections or boils. High glucose levels in the blood are a source of food for bacteria and fungi, and your immune system becomes compromised.
- **Temporary blurred vision**. High glucose levels in the blood temporarily affect the glucose component in the fluid component of your eyes, causing blurred vision. This is usually temporary: once diabetes is under control, your vision may return to normal.
- **Weight loss**. If you have some of these symptoms you should see your doctor, who will perform a simple blood test which will tell whether you have diabetes or not.

Types of diabetes

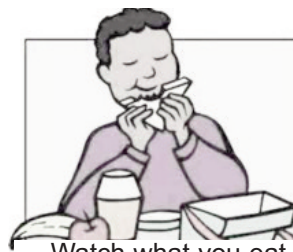
There are two types of diabetes. They are known as Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 2 is much more common than Type 1.

Type 1 usually develops over a few weeks and mainly affects children and young adults. People with Type 1 diabetes produce little or no insulin and manage their condition with insulin injections.

Type 2 diabetes usually develops in people over the age of 40. But increasingly (in The Gambia, for example) it is developing at an earlier age. It develops slowly, and many people don't realise that they have it, because the symptoms may not appear for many years.

People with Type 2 diabetes produce insulin, but either not enough, or the amount they produce may not work properly. They may not have to inject insulin: they can often treat their



diabetes with diet and exercise alone, or in combination with tablets.

Don't think of Type 2 diabetes as 'mild'. People with Type 2 have a three-fold increased risk of suffering a heart attack and are vulnerable to a wide range of health complications.

If you have diabetes you should watch what you eat. Take regular meals; eat fewer sugary, fried and fatty foods; reduce salt intake; and go easy with alcohol.

Take regular exercise: for example, half an hour of brisk walking, jogging, swimming or cycling, at least three times a week.

Once more, the rains

THOSE of us who live in the urban area may think of the rains as a nuisance: leaks in the roof, flooding in the streets, and more mosquitoes – meaning more malaria.

But rain at the right time and quantity is vital for farmers. And this time of year, the needs of the farmers are more important than ours!

Tips for 'urbanites'

Here, mainly for those who live in the urban area, are a few rainy-season tips.

* The cost of roofing materials rises considerably prior to and during the rains. And roof repairers increase their charges. So if your house needs roof repairs, you're already late!

* In the house, humidity will become increasingly high. If clothing and other items are subject to mould, it helps to leave the doors of cupboards ajar and drawers partly open.

Make sure you open your windows wide so as to maintain a good current of air in the rooms. (But don't forget to shut the windows when you're going out, and during downpours!)

* Flies and mosquitoes multiply rapidly during the rains. Keep your compound even cleaner than usual.

Use impregnated mosquito nets and 'moon-tigers' and install or repair netting at doors and windows.

* Malaria is most prevalent during and after the rains. If you or any member of your household becomes feverish, get medical help without delay. *This is especially important when the sufferer is an infant or a young child.*

* You may be bothered by prickly heat. This can be dealt with by using a fungicide cream, obtainable at pharmacies.

* If you buy an umbrella, don't buy the cheapest. It won't last long, especially when the wind is blowing!

* If leather shoes get wet or muddy, let them dry out gradually. Don't try to speed up the process by exposing them to



heat, which could harm the leather.

* Be careful you don't slip in the mud!

* Over many generations, our country has lost much of its former beautiful and valuable 'tree-cover'. If you have the chance, do plant a tree or trees during the rainy season.

* If you have a garden, consider what shrubs and other plants would beautify it. Cut down grass in unwanted places, and eradicate weeds before they form seeds. In this way you will reduce the growth of grass and weeds next year.

* We have too many accidents on our roads the whole year round, and dangers multiply during the rains, when road surfaces are often slippery and visibility is reduced.

Check your car's brakes, windscreen wipers and tyres. Drive with particular care: no speeding!

**When driving your car,
at all times, be PATIENT**



First Communion – and what follows...

AS everyone knows, Christmas is party-time not just for Christians but for many outside the Church who enjoy the general goodwill and the giving and receiving of presents.

Within the Church, First Communion is not dissimilar. Some families are only fitful in the faith, and others may be Catholic only in name: but they attach great importance to First Communion, and spend a good deal of time and money in preparation.



The boy or girl who is to receive Holy Communion for the first time has been carefully prepared by the Church.

For some families, the great day is not so much about the Church as the home and family: the food, the drink, the guests, music and dancing. It involves considerable planning and expenditure, because no family wants a First Communion party that's inferior to that of the neighbours.

The party's over

But the party is soon over. Life returns to normal; and 'normal' in some families does not extend to attending Mass every Sunday.

Some of our young first communicants receive little or no encouragement in the family to partake of Holy Communion every Sunday. So their spiritual life languishes. They are baptised children of God, entitled to receive Christ in Holy Communion, but not yet truly close to him.

The very best way for adults to encourage faith and good practice in their children is to live the Catholic faith day by day in the home: daily prayers and regular participation at Sunday Mass.

Many children do not receive this kind of encouragement at home. It is all the more important that they feel welcome at Mass, and take note that adult worshippers are devout and happy.

Benedict XVI:

'The example of the Lord'

SOME years ago, at a question-and-answer session with Pope Benedict XVI, a priest asked: 'More and more, the young people who receive these sacraments [First Communion and Confirmation] prepare themselves well during catechetical sessions, but then don't come to Sunday Mass... Sometimes there's a desire to say, "Just stay at home." Instead, however, we go on as always and accept them, thinking that... it's better not to snuff out the wick of a weak flame.'

Pope Benedict commented that he wasn't able to give an infallible answer to the dilemma. But he went on: 'When I was young I was rather more severe. I said, "When the faith isn't there, when there's not the practice of the faith, the sacraments can't be conferred."

'When I was Archbishop of Milan, I discussed this with my pastors. There were two factions: one severe, and one more generous. I have realised... that we have to follow the example of the Lord, who was very open with the people who were at the margins of Israel. He was a Lord of mercy - too open, according to the many official authorities, with sinners. He welcomed them, or allowed them to welcome him... drawing them to himself in his communion.'

'When there is no faith, when First Communion is just a party with a big lunch, nice clothes and nice gifts, then it can't be a sacrament of faith. But on the other hand, where we can see even a tiny flame of desire for communion in the Church... from those children who want to enter into communion with Jesus, it seems right to be rather generous.'

Pope Benedict said that catechists should ensure that First Communion and Confirmation are not understood as automatic; they require a 'continuity of friendship with Jesus'.

'I know that children often have the desire to go to Sunday Mass, but their parents don't make this possible. We naturally should do everything possible to reach parents and awaken in them a sensibility for the path their children are taking... It's an occasion for meeting the parents... so that they themselves can learn from their children and realise that this great solemnity [First Communion] makes sense and is authentic only ...in the context of a life of faith.'

LOVING Lord Jesus, grant that young people receiving Holy Communion for the first time may find in you their greatest Friend and only Saviour. May they be faithful to you and your Church Sunday by Sunday, and reverently receive you in Holy Communion with thankfulness and joy.

We pray also for their families and friends, that they may find in the Church strength, comfort and companionship, and seek to know and to serve you with ever more devotion. Amen.





What is reconciliation?

By Sister MARIE-ELLEN MENDY SJC

WHAT does the Bible say about reconciliation?

Why do we need to be reconciled with God?

Reconciliation is an event which changes relationships for the better between persons or communities or groups formerly at enmity with each other. The Old and New Testaments give us insights into the vital nature of reconciliation, either between God and humans, or between humans themselves.

At one time or another every individual encounters the temptation to hate. You may have experienced abuse at the hands of a wicked individual. You may have been betrayed in a business transaction or been fired unjustly. You may belong to a group who have experienced rejection, exploitation and injustice. It is impossible to have lived without being hurt by somebody.

Reconciliation takes place when you and I begin to enjoy an intimate friendship with people who have hurt us. This miracle is made possible by the cross of Jesus Christ. The scriptures tell us the truth about reconciliation: that there will never be any reconciliation for humankind except through Christ.

Breaking down the wall

In Ephesians 2, the apostle Paul addressed the breach between Jews and Gentiles: 'For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.' (Ephesians 2:14)

The Jews had erected a wall in the Temple courtyard to keep the Gentiles away while they worshipped. Paul wrote: 'For he [Christ] himself is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation... so as to create in himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that he might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross (Ephesians 2:14-16).

A Gentile who ventured to pass through the gates in that wall would have been put to death. But Christ has broken down the wall of separation, reconciling Jew and Gentile to God. The laws that kept Jew and Gentile apart at the Temple (Ephesians 2:15) were not the laws of God. They were the rules of men. Paul went on to say, 'And he came and preached peace to those who were far off and to those who were near. For through him we both [Jew and Gentile alike] have access by one Spirit to the Father.' (Ephesians 2:17-18)

God, through the supreme sacrifice of his Son, is not only reconciling us to himself; he is reconciling us to each other, as well. The two processes are inseparable. 'If you bring your

gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,' said Jesus, 'leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.'

Reconciliation available to all

First be reconciled to God. Part of the message of the Gospel that Jesus brought was that all of us can be reconciled to God. It is important to understand how reconciliation takes place – and what it is that separates us in the first place.

Through the prophet Isaiah, God has explained the heart and core of separation. 'Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.' (Isaiah 59:1-2).

Man's separation from God is not God's fault. Our own sins stand between us and God, and we are powerless to remove the penalty that sin brings. The only solution is a divine act of grace. Christ lived on earth without committing a single sin, and was sacrificed in our place so that we could be reconciled to God.

St John explains how this can be: 'In this the love of God was manifested towards us, that God has sent his only-begotten Son into the world... to be the propitiation for our sins.' (1 John 4:9-10).

(1 John 4:9-10).

When we begin to understand that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself...' we are standing at the foundation of all reconciliation. At the cross, mercy triumphed over justice. Because of Christ we can be reconciled to our Creator and to each other.

Have you ever attempted reconciliation while painful memories still torment you? There will be no reconciliation

with anybody unless we first bring our broken hearts to Jesus. Healing begins when we honestly confront the past. Before we can even contemplate forgiveness, we need to face what really happened, and bring it to foot of the cross.

We hear much of the word 'reconciliation' these days. The word has become politically relevant. It seems that if we can achieve reconciliation between opposing groups of people, an era of peace and brotherhood will follow. Such an understanding of reconciliation refers to man-made divisions (between castes, genders, classes, nationalities, ethnic groups and so on), with the aim of establishing harmony and unity. The Biblical understanding, on the other hand, is to reconcile divisions caused by sin; first, the divisions between man and God, then the division between man and man. 'Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God....' Has someone close to you been angry with you? It feels bad; but if you work out your differences and are again on good terms – that's reconciliation.

**'Reconciliation takes place
when you and I begin to enjoy
an intimate friendship
with people who have hurt us...
The scriptures tell us that there
will never be any reconciliation
for humankind
except through Christ'**

Reconciliation is one of my favourite words in Scripture. It is a beautiful depiction of God working throughout history, above all in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to reconcile not only humanity but creation and the world back into perfect union with himself.

Blessed are the peacemakers

The first chapter of Genesis tells us that when God created the heavens and the earth, all that he created was 'good'. He created man and woman as 'very good'.

Adam and Eve lived under God's blessing (Genesis 1:28). Our first parents experienced friendship, order and peace with God, each other and the environment. The Hebrew word *shalom* is translated in English as 'peace' – the absence of tension and conflict. But *shalom* means more. It means completeness and wholeness with God, each other and creation.

In Genesis 3 we are told that God's good creation was corrupted by sin. The *shalom* of the Garden of Eden was destroyed. People's friendship with God was broken. This resulted in broken relations between people, and between people and the environment.

What follows in the Bible is the story of God's plan to restore his creation – to bring back his creation into a right relation with him.

Isaiah 9 prophesies the coming of Jesus. Verse 6 describes him as the 'Prince of Shalom'. It says, 'For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'

The New Testament adopts the Hebrew of *shalom* as wholeness in God's presence. *Shalom*, or peace, comes through Jesus' death on the cross. Colossians 1:19-20 says that 'God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Christ], and through him to reconcile to himself all things, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.' Jesus brings people back into a right relationship with God, with each other, and with creation as a whole.

In Matthew 5:9 Jesus says, 'Blessed are the peace-makers, for they will be called sons of God.' Peace-making is an essential part of the Christian character. Notice the word 'peace-makers': peace has to be *made*, it is not something that just happens. It is interesting that our sinful nature makes us peace-makers. This is shown as much in our world of today as much as in the time of Jesus. Because of sin, people often break the peace – through large-scale wars, conflict between individuals, ethnic or religious groups, and conflicts within or between nations.

People's relationship with God is restored through the blood of Christ. But in these verses from Matthew, Jesus also shows concern for healing within society. He wants people to be reconciled, and his followers to be peacemakers. Christians should make peace with one another. We also have a role in making opportunities for conflicting non-believers to meet and be reconciled with one-another. By providing opportunities for reconciliation, we can show the reconciling power of the Gospel in a visible way. This requires that we ourselves be reconciled with God. It also means that every conflict should be resolved.

Sister Marie-Ellen Mendy is a Sister of St Joseph of Cluny.



The Gambia & the Spiritans

FROM the early 20th century until recently, the Catholic mission in The Gambia was served by pioneering missionary priests of the Irish Province of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit.

Founded in France in 1703, the missionary work of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit has spread throughout the world. It now has about 3,000 members: fathers, brothers and lay affiliates.

Known traditionally as 'Holy Ghost Fathers', priests of the Congregation are nowadays known as 'Spiritans'.

For over a century – the 110 years from 1908 to 2018 – the Catholic Mission in The Gambia was led by five Irish Spiritans. The first was Fr John Meehan, Superior from 1908 until 1946, when he was succeeded by Fr Matthew Farelly.

In 1951 Fr Michael Moloney became Prefect Apostolic (the Mission having been raised to the status of a Prefecture). In 1957 the Mission became the Diocese of Banjul, and the following year Monsignor Moloney was consecrated its first Bishop.

Bishop Moloney's successor, Bishop Michael Cleary, took over in 1981, succeeded in 2006 by Bishop Robert Ellison.

The present Bishop, Dr Gabriel Mendy, is also a member of the Spiritan Congregation, and the first Gambian to head the diocese as Bishop of Banjul.



Congratulations & Best Wishes

to our Brothers & Sisters of the Muslim Community of The Gambia
on the occasion of

Koriteh

***Vere dignum et justum est, aequum et salutare,
nos tibi semper et ubique gratias agere***

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, to give you thanks

Sunday Reflections

for all the Sundays in June & July



2nd June

7th Sunday of Easter

To the ends of the earth

AT Mass on Ascension Day, the Gospel reading reminded us that before taking leave of his apostles Jesus commissioned them to preach 'the forgiveness of sins in his name 'to the ends of the earth'.

That preaching was begun by the apostles and is being carried further 'to the ends of the earth' by their successors to this very day.

But the process is not complete. Many people have not heard of Jesus. Some don't know or understand his teaching. Some turn away from him, or are indifferent.

The challenge to us is to promote Christ's kingdom in our day, wherever we are, and whatever our circumstances. We may derive hope and encouragement from today's Gospel, where Jesus prays that his apostles may be at one with him and the Father, and so partake of glory. Jesus' prayer embraces all mankind, because he invites everyone to become friends of God. Let us pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, so that we may enthuse others with the faith, hope and love given to us by our Lord Jesus.

Collect

GRACIOUSLY hear our supplications, O Lord, so that we, who believe the Saviour of the human race is with you in your glory, may experience, as he promised, until the end of the world, his abiding presence among us...

Readings: Acts 7:55-60. Psalm 96:1-2,6-7,9. Response: The Lord is king, most high above all the earth. Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord; I will come back to you, and your hearts will be full of joy...

Gospel: John 17:2-0-26

Prayer over the Offerings

ACCEPT, O Lord, the prayers of your faithful with the sacrificial offerings, that through these acts of devotedness we may pass over to the glory of heaven...

Preface: the priest may use the Preface of the Ascension, or any of the Prefaces for Easter Time.

Prayer after Communion

Help us, O God our Saviour, and grant us confidence, that through these sacred mysteries there may be accomplished in the body of the whole Church what has already come to pass in Christ her Head...

9th June

Pentecost

**The birthday
of Christ's family**

WE all enjoy birthdays, and Pentecost marks the birthday of the Christian family throughout the world: over a billion Catholics and many millions of Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant brothers and sisters.



The chorus of praise from souls enthused by Christ and the Holy Spirit began in Jerusalem after Christ's ascension. There, huge, excited crowds had gathered to celebrate the Jewish feast of Pentecost - thanksgiving for the harvest and the inauguration of the Jewish nation by Moses.

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended on the little group of apostles, as Jesus had promised. At once they began to proclaim the Good News to everyone who would listen. 'Jesus Christ is risen, and offers salvation to all who call on him!'

From these tiny beginnings, the message spread. We, today's Church, heirs to the apostles, can best celebrate Pentecost by proclaiming and sharing the Gospel as they did. If we don't, who will?

Saturday evening 8th June Vigil Mass of Pentecost

Collect

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, who willed the Paschal Mystery to be encompassed as a sign in fifty days, grant that from out of the scattered nations the confusion of many tongues may be gathered by heavenly grace into one great confession of your name...

or

GRANT, we pray, almighty God, that the splendour of your glory may shine forth upon us, and that, by the bright rays of the Holy Spirit the light of your light may confirm the hearts of those born again by your grace...

Readings: Genesis 11: 1-9 or Exodus 19:3-8,16-20 or Ezekiel 37:1-14 or Joel 3:1-5. Psalm 103:1-2,24,27-30,35. Response: Send forth your spirit, O Lord, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth. Romans 8:22-27.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love...

Gospel: John 7:37-39

Prayer over the Offerings

POUR out upon these gifts the blessing of your Spirit, we pray, O Lord, that through them your Church may be enthused with such love that the truth of your saving mystery may shine forth for the whole world...

Preface: see *Mass for Pentecost Sunday, opposite column.*

Prayer after Communion

MAY these gifts we have consumed benefit us, O Lord, that we may always be aflame with the same Spirit whom you wondrously poured out on your apostles...

9th June Pentecost Sunday

Collect

O GOD, who by the mystery of today's great feast sanctify your whole Church in every people and nation, pour out, we pray, the gifts of the Holy Spirit across the face of the earth, and with the divine grace that was at work when the Gospel was first proclaimed, fill now once more the hearts of believers...

Readings: Acts 2:1-11. Psalm 103:1,24,29-31,34. Response: Send forth your spirit, O Lord, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth. Romans 8:8-17.

Sequence

HOLY Spirit, Lord of light, from the clear celestial height thy pure beaming radiance give.

Come, thou Father of the poor, come with treasures that endure; come, thou light of all that live!

Thou, of all consolers best; thou, the soul's delightful guest, dost refreshing peace bestow.

Thou in toil art comfort sweet; pleasant coolness in the heat; solace in the midst of woe.

Light immortal, light divine, visit thou these hearts of thine, and our inmost being fill.

If thou take thy grace away, nothing pure in man may stay; all his good is turned to ill.

Heal our wounds, our strength renew; on our dryness, pour thy dew; wash the stains of guilt away.

Bend the stubborn heart and will; melt the frozen, warm the chill; guide the steps that go astray.

Thou, on us who evermore thee confess, and thee adore, thy sevenfold gifts descend.

Give us comfort when we die, give us life with thee on high; give us joys that never end.

Latin version

Veni, creator Spiritus. mentes tuorum visita, imple superna gratia, quae tu creasti pectora.

Qui diceris Paraclitus, altissimi donum Dei, fons vivus, ignis, caritas et spiritalis unctio.

Tu septiformis munere, digitus paternae dexteræ. tu rite promissum Patris. sermone ditans guttura.

Accende lumen sensibus, infunde amorem cordibus, infirma nostri corporis, virtute firmans perpeti.

Hostem repellas longius, pacemque dones protinus; ductore sic te praevio, vitemus omne noxium.

Per te sciamus da Patrem, noscamus atque Filium, te utriusque Spiritum, credamus omni tempore.

Deo Patri sit gloria, et Filio qui a mortuis.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Gospel: John 14:15-16,23-26.

Prayer over the Offerings

GRANT, we pray, O Lord, that, as promised by your Son, the Holy Spirit may reveal to us more abundantly the hidden mystery of this sacrifice, and graciously lead us into all truth...

Preface:

For, bringing the Paschal Mystery to completion, you bestowed the Holy Spirit today on those you made your adopted children by uniting them to your Only Begotten Son. This same Spirit, as the Church came to birth, opened to all peoples the knowledge of God, and brought together the many languages of the earth in profession of the one faith...

Prayer after Communion

O GOD, who bestow heavenly gifts upon your Church, safeguard, we pray, the grace you have given, that the gift of the Holy Spirit poured out upon her may retain all its force, and that this spiritual food may gain her abundance of eternal redemption...

Sunday 16th June The Most Holy Trinity

ALL we've celebrated since Advent is summed up in today's proclamation that our Lord God is One in Three and Three in One, the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity.

The mystery of the Trinity isn't easy to understand (let alone explain to others!) The Church did not promulgate the dogma of the Trinity until the Council of Nicea (in modern-day Turkey) in 324. But truths about God's nature had been divinely revealed in earlier times.

That God is One had been proclaimed by Moses and the prophets. We pray to God as the one Creator, and have been taught by Christ to address him as 'Our Father'.

We have learnt from the apostles to pray also to God the Son - Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

We know God's power and love through his Holy Spirit, the 'Lord and Giver of Life who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified'.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the divine reality experienced by the whole Church since apostolic times.

Collect

GOD our Father, who by sending into the world the Word of truth and the Spirit of sanctification made known to the human race your wondrous mystery, grant us, we pray, that in professing the true faith, we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory, and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty...

Readings: Proverbs 8:22-31. Psalm 8:4-9. Response: How great is your name, O Lord our God, throughout all the earth! Romans 5: 1-5



Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, the God who is, who was, and who is to come...

Gospel: John 16:12-15

Prayer over the Offerings

SANCTIFY by the invocation of your name, we pray, O Lord our God, this oblation of our service, and by it make of us an eternal offering to you...

Preface...for with your Only Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit you are one God, one Lord: not in the unity of a single person, but in a Trinity of one substance. For what you have revealed to us of your glory we believe equally of your Son and of the Holy Spirit, so that, in the confessing of the true and eternal Godhead, you might be adored in what is proper to each Person, their unity in substance, and their equality in majesty...

Prayer after Communion

MAY receiving this Sacrament, O Lord our God, bring us health of body and soul, as we confess your eternal holy Trinity and undivided Unity...



**Sunday 23rd June
Corpus Christi**

IN the year 1264, in response to a request by the theologian St Thomas Aquinas, Pope Urban IV instituted the feast of Corpus Christi (the Body of Christ) as a day of thanksgiving for the Holy Eucharist.

We celebrate the institution of the Eucharist in Holy Week, on Holy Thursday; but in that week our thoughts are focused principally on Christ's passion and death. For this reason, Aquinas proposed a particular feast day when the faithful could learn more about the Blessed Sacrament and increase their devotion to it. And so today we rejoice that Jesus in heaven lives within us through his Spirit, and comes especially to us in the Mass. The old Covenant of God with his people, proclaimed in the Old Testament, has become the New Covenant of the Body and Blood of Christ, our eternal High Priest.

Since Vatican II there has been an emphasis on love and unity among Catholics - a unity guaranteed through our common love and adoration of Jesus Christ. This unity is above all signified by Jesus' gift of himself in Holy Communion.

Let us never take the Mass and Holy Communion for granted. Rather, let us thank God that he provides for us a supreme way of worship and a source of spiritual growth that leads us to heaven.

We pray especially for all the young people who are making their First Communion today, that they may grow ever-closer to our Lord in his Body, the Church.

Collect

O GOD, who in this wonderful Sacrament has left us a memorial of your Passion, grant us, we pray, so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood that we may always experience within ourselves the fruits of your redemption...

Readings: Genesis 14:18-20. Psalm 109:1-4. Response: You are a priest for ever, a priest like Melchizedek of old. Corinthians 11:23-26.

The sequence Lauda Sion, or its short form may be sung.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...I am the living Bread which has come down from heaven, says the Lord; anyone who eats this Bread will live for ever.

Gospel: Luke 9:11-17.

Prayer over the Offerings

GRANT your Church, O Lord, we pray, the gifts of unity and peace, whose signs are to be seen in mystery in the offerings we here present...

Preface...for he is the true and eternal Priest who instituted the pattern of an everlasting sacrifice, and was the first to offer himself as the saving Victim, commanding us to make this offering as his memorial. As we eat his flesh that was sacrificed for us, we are made strong; and, as we drink his Blood that was poured out for us, we are washed clean...

An alternative Preface may be used.

Prayer after Communion

GRANT O Lord, we pray, that we may delight for all eternity in that share in your divine life which is foreshadowed in the present age by our reception of your precious Body and Blood...

30th June

**13th Sunday
of Ordinary
Time**

The turning-point

TODAY we resume our observance of Sundays in Ordinary Time with Gospel readings from St Luke.

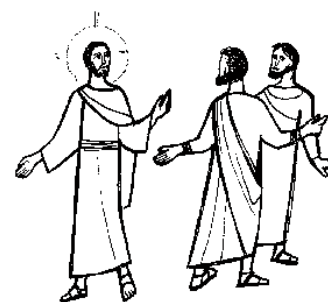
Today's Gospel records a turning-point in Luke's account of the ministry of Jesus. Having completed his work in Galilee, Jesus 'set his face to go to Jerusalem'. He knew that in Jerusalem he was to suffer and die as the necessary prelude to his resurrection.

Jesus didn't promise his followers an 'easy ride'. To the man who assured Jesus that 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'. He was certainly compassionate. But he was 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...

7th 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 and cast 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. But we will 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...

14th 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.' 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' (Luke 10:9).

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

Today's Gospel reading, given only in Luke, is probably the best-known of all Jesus' parables, remembered even by those who rarely read the New Testament.

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 stricken 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.)

This parable teaches us 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 opens with a question: '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...



21st July
16th Sunday
in Ordinary Time

Hospitality to strangers, friends, and to 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

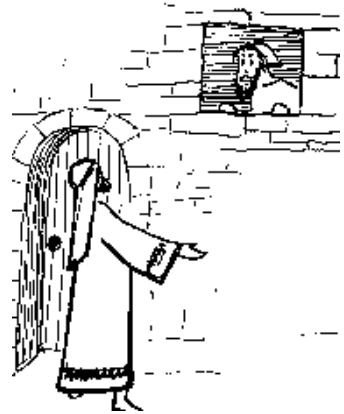
GRACIOUSLY be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life...

28th July

17th Sunday in
Ordinary Time

Pray without ceasing

HOW many of us, if our prayers seem not to be answered, simply give up? Today's first reading and the Gospel teach us to persist in prayer; that is, to continually knock 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*



*Fee moi
Gambia*

Traffic jams, with worse to come?

P, Q, R... Have you noticed how many new - or rather, second-hand - vehicles have been pouring into the country, as evidenced by recent 'BJL' registration plates? Many of them are already 'For Sale', indicating that they were imported for this very purpose.

This, I suppose, is a sign that there's more money around than there used to be. And a good thing, too. But it's in some ways worrying. Many major roads are now far from adequate - the prime example being the highway between Westfield and Tabokoto, choc-a-bloc with juggernauts, fuel-tankers, lorries, vans, buses, cars and taxis, not to mention bikes, motorbikes, donkey carts, hawkers and hapless pedestrians. Police on traffic duty - more of them than ever before - are a great help in keeping traffic moving and forestalling clashes; but if new vehicles continue to be allowed into the country at recent rates, some roads will soon become so congested that for much of the day getting from A to B will take far longer than ever.

Road building and maintenance are costly. The mammoth, never-ending task of creating, extending, up-grading and maintaining roads throughout the country must be one of the authorities' biggest challenges. It would help if many drivers were more careful and considerate of others when behind the wheel; and help, too, if older vehicles were better-maintained or - preferably - jettisoned. Sooner or later we can expect a ban on the import of vehicles over, say, eight years old.

Long gone are the days when some people living in Banjul hardly ever went to Serrekunda, and vice-versa. Now, most of us seem to be 'on-the-move'. It's in many ways a livelier set-up; but not much fun for those whose eight-hour working day is prolonged by two or more hours of frustrating travel to and from work.

Think of Sunday Mass in the urban area. Not so long ago most worshippers arrived on foot. Nowadays, parking at or near church is by no means easy.

A green and pleasant welcome

IT was recently announced that a German airline is to fly regularly to and from The Gambia during the rainy season. Good news; and those in the tourist industry might point out

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...

Visit the website **Universalis**, where you will find the full text of every day's Mass, together with Morning & Evening Prayer

that the rainy season has distinct attractions, including lower room-rates and a greener environment. Yes, mosquitoes are a nuisance, but increased humidity during the rains is tempered between showers by a delightfully cool freshness. (It's October, when the rains are over, that humidity may become oppressive.)

Many of our tourist visitors enjoy this country so much that they regularly return. But let's not forget that tourists from many countries have a wider choice of destinations than ever. Many will only come back if they find that the 'smiling coast' (I cannot think of a better term) is indeed welcoming, and that standards of facilities and service - not to mention value for money - are as good as in rival destinations.

What do visitors make of Mass in a Gambian Catholic church? I'd like to ask some of them. Perhaps one or two will get in touch with the Newsletter...

Bon appetit

WE should all be glad, I think you'll agree, that enterprising Gambians are setting up businesses large and small, particularly in areas hitherto ignored or neglected.

For some time now, those who like honey and jam don't need to buy imported products, but can enjoy excellent Gambian products..

A good many people are trying to avoid taking too much sugar. I do hope the jam-makers are considering the use of artificial sugar to produce for those who want it an alternative, so-called 'diabetic' jam.

Away with dead grass!

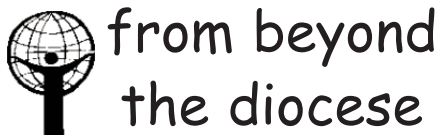
MANY people, however polluted the streets and paths near where they live, don't bother to spend even a short time clearing up the unsightly mess. Instead, they blithely add to it.

Passing along a highway the other day, I noticed that litter was much more worse where there was dead vegetation. Those good people who do sometimes bother to clear litter should also remove the dead grass and remains of bushes and other plants which trap paper and other detritus.

Some time ago the authorities rightly banned plastic bags, and the environment is - to a modest degree - looking tidier.

But check-out staff in supermarkets are still offering bags. The other day I bought a small packet of biscuits which the check-out lady promptly put into a paper bag. 'What do I want this bag for?' I asked.

Cannot check-out staff be instructed to ask, whatever we are buying, 'Do you want a bag?'



from beyond the diocese

Francis institutes a new memorial: 'Mary, Mother of the Church'

ON 10th June the Catholic Church throughout the world will celebrate a new memorial: 'The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church'.



Having often emphasised the importance of Mary in the Church, Pope Francis has now decreed that the new memorial should be inscribed in the Roman Calendar, to be celebrated every year on the Monday after Pentecost.

Celebrations in the Roman Rite are classified as solemnities, feasts or memorials. A memorial is a lower-rank celebration. The new memorial was announced on 3rd March in a decree issued by the

Congregation for Divine Worship, signed by the Prefect, Cardinal Robert Sarah of Guinea.

The decree traces the history of the veneration from the early Church as reflected in the writing of St Augustine (354-430) and St Leo the Great, who was Pope from 440 to 461.

The decree declares: 'As a caring guide to the emerging Church, Mary had already begun her mission in the Upper Room, praying with the apostles while awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit. Then, in the course of the centuries, Christian piety has honoured Mary with various titles, including "Mother of the Church" as found in the texts of spiritual authors and the *magisterium* of Popes Benedict XIV and Leo XIII.'

At the close of the third session of the Second Vatican Council on 21st November 1964, Pope Paul VI declared the Blessed Virgin Mary 'Mother of the Church, that is to say of all Christian people, the faithful as well as the pastors, who call her the most loving Mother.'

At the same time Paul VI decreed that 'the Mother of God should be further honoured and invoked by the entire Christian people by this most tender of titles'.

Francis permits diocesan priests to celebrate the 'Ordinariate' Mass'

TEN years after Pope Benedict XVI established 'personal ordinariates' for Catholics coming from the Anglican tradition, Pope Francis has approved an updated set of norms governing them.

The Ordinariate Mass is approved for public celebration only in Ordinariate parishes, unless explicit permission has been given by the pastor of another parish. When an Ordinariate

priest is not available, any Catholic priest may now celebrate for the community using Ordinariate rites, and any priest may concelebrate at an Ordinariate Mass.

There are three personal Ordinariates: Our Lady of Walsingham in England and Wales; the Chair of St Peter in the United States and Canada; and Our Lady of the Southern Cross in Australia.

Each Ordinariate is led by an Ordinary who has the powers of a bishop, but may not necessarily be a bishop. He is a member of the local bishops' conference.

Ordinariate priests are permitted to be married.

In 2013 Pope Francis declared that the Ordinariates are not only for former Anglicans, but may also include those brought into the Catholic Church through the Ordinariate's ministry.



Monsignor Keith Newton
Head of the English Ordinariate

Terrorist attacks continue in Burkina Faso

JUST one day after six Catholics were murdered by gunmen in Burkina Faso, four more Catholics were shot and killed.

On Monday 13th May, unknown gunmen interrupted a religious procession in a village near Kongoussi, in the north-west. After releasing the children, the assailants killed four adult worshippers and burned a statue of Mary.

'We will not be bogged down by the religious attacks,' said Cardinal Philippe Ouédraogo, Archbishop of Ougadougou.

The previous day, gunmen attacked a Catholic church in Dablo, in a nearby province. During Mass, they shot and killed five men, including a priest.

An estimated 20 to 30 men were believed to be involved with the attack. They burned down the church and set fire to a health centre and a few nearby shops.

In recent years, Burkina Faso has seen an increase in terrorist activity. Human Rights Watch recently reported that the violence has displaced tens of thousands of villagers this year alone.

Last December, the government declared a state of emergency in several northern provinces as a result of these ongoing attacks, Reuters reports.

In April, four Catholics were killed in a separate church attack, and five parishioners and a pastor were shot down in a Protestant church.

On Monday 13th May, the Papal spokesman, Alessandro Gisotti, wrote on Twitter: 'The Holy Father learned with sorrow the news of the attack on the church in Dablo, in Burkina Faso. He prays for the victims, for their families and for the whole Christian community of the country.'

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Ghana's Chief Imam attends Easter celebration

ON Easter Sunday, 21st April, the leader of Ghana's minority Muslim community, Sheikh Ousman Sharubutu, attended Mass in the Church of Christ the King, Accra.

His visit was part of his 100th birthday celebrations.

Many people used the social media to praise the imam as 'a light shining in the darkness'. But others condemned him. He insisted that his attendance was not an act of worship but stemmed from his desire to move relations between Muslims and Christians from mere tolerance to engagement.

The imam's gesture was particularly poignant, as it took place on the day when suicide bombers unleashed attacks on churches in Sri Lanka.

The Chief Imam's spokesman told the BBC that Sheikh Ousman Sharubutu was changing the narrative of Islam from a religion of conflict to a religion rooted in the virtues of love, peace and forgiveness.

The Parish Priest of Christ the King is 73-year-old Fr Andrew Campbell CSSp, who arrived from Ireland in 1971. He has campaigned for lepers, that they should not be stigmatised but treated with dignity.

Anti-Muslim riots in Sri Lanka

ON EASTER SUNDAY in Sri Lanka, gunmen claiming to be operating on behalf of 'Islamic State' opened fire in three churches and in luxury hotels, killing 257 people and wounding nearly 500.

The Archbishop of Colombo, Cardinal Malcom Ranjith (*right*) ordered that no Mass should be celebrated in any church the following Sunday. He offered a televised Mass at his residence, attended by the Sri Lankan President, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.



In the wake of the bombings, anti-Muslim riots broke out, particularly in the North-West Province, where mobs torched dozens of Muslim-owned shops, homes and mosques.

Muslims make up about 10 per cent of Sri Lanka's 21 million population. The largest religion is Buddhism, followed by Hinduism. Christians make up about 7.6 per cent.

Sri Lanka has been under a state of emergency since the attacks. Security forces and police have been given sweeping powers to arrest and detain suspects.

The Prime Minister declared a country-wide curfew to prevent communal violence.

Sri Lanka also temporarily banned some social media networks and messaging apps, including Facebook and WhatsApp, after a posting sparked anti-Muslim riots. The unrest began as Catholic churches resumed Sunday Masses for the first time since the Easter Sunday bombings.

Married life as a 'path to holiness'

THE NEXT World Meeting of Families, to be held in Rome from 22nd to 27th June, will focus on the vocation of married life as a path to holiness.

The meeting will mark the fifth anniversary of *Amoris Laetitia* - Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation on love in the family. The theme seeks to examine family life through the lens of holiness - 'the most attractive face of the Church', as described by the 2018 exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*.

The World Meeting of Families was established by Pope St John Paul II in 1994. It takes place once every three years in a different country, most recently in Ireland in 2018.

The 2021 meeting will be the third time the World Meeting of Families will be hosted in Rome.

The Vatican's announcement declares, 'As marriage and family shape a concrete experience of love, they demonstrate the great significance of human relationships in which joys and struggles are shared in the unfolding of daily life as people are led towards an encounter with God.'

Huge collection for Notre Dame

HUGE sums of money are being raised in France and around the world for the restoration of Notre Dame de Paris, one of France's most famous landmarks, severely damaged in a 15-hour accidental fire on 15th April - Monday of Holy Week.

The cathedral is visited by 12 million people each year. The fire destroyed the spire, oak frame and lead roof. It was speculated that the fire was linked to ongoing renovation work.

The main structure is intact. Firefighters saved the façade, towers, walls, buttresses and stained glass windows. The 18th-century Great Organ was saved, but suffered water damage. Because of the ongoing renovation, the copper statues on the spire had been removed before the fire. The stone vaulting that forms the ceiling of the cathedral has holes, but is otherwise intact.

Since 1905, all French cathedrals have been owned by the state. The French President, Emmanuel Macron, stated that around 500 firefighters had battled the fire. He promised that Notre-Dame would be restored, and called for the work to be completed within five years - though experts have said that restoration will take much longer.

An international architectural competition was announced to redesign the spire and roof, and a law has been drafted to exempt led to an open letter to the President signed by over 1,170 heritage experts urging respect for present regulations.

Tradition has it that Notre-Dame's first stone was laid in 1163 in the presence of Pope Alexander III. The cathedral was completed two centuries later, and is regarded as one of the finest examples of French Gothic architecture. At the time it was finished it was the biggest such building in Western Europe.

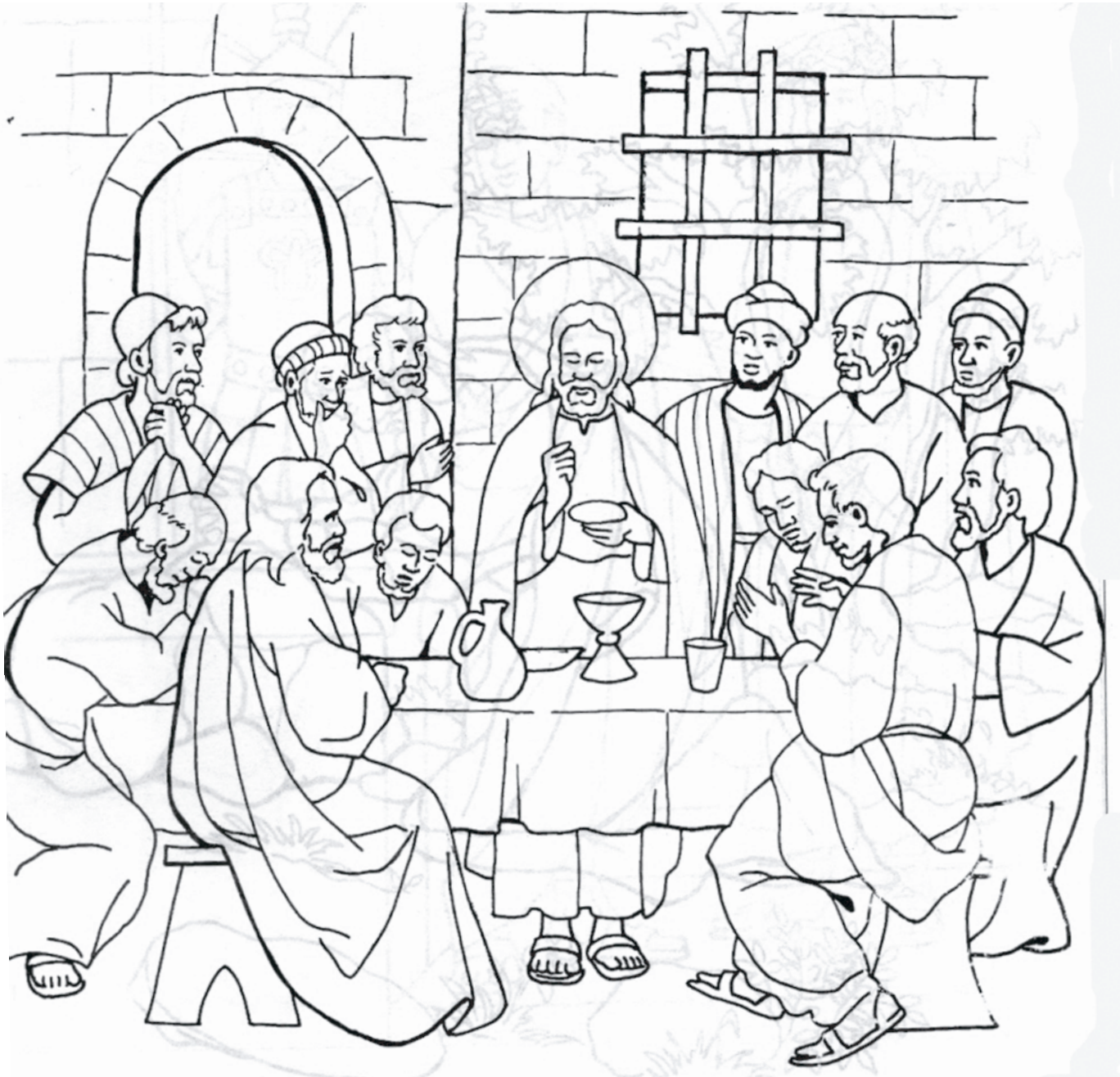
The two splendid rose windows in the cathedral's transepts are among the biggest in Europe: each has a diameter of 13 metres.

The 19th-century French novelist Victor Hugo wrote the hugely popular story which takes place around the cathedral, 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame'.



CHILDREN'S PAGE

Here is a
picture for you
to colour



Jesus sat with his closest friends in an upper room to celebrate the Passover.

Jesus took bread and blessed it. Then he took the cup of wine and blessed it.

He asked his disciples to do the same thing, in memory of him.

This is why, at every Mass, the priest takes bread and wine and blesses them.

We pray for all our friends who are soon to take Holy Communion for the first time.

Luke's lively history of the apostolic Church

EASTER TIME is the Church's longest season: this year, it ends on 9th June. Throughout the fifty days of Easter Time, the first reading at Mass on Sundays and weekdays comes from the fourth book of the New Testament - the Acts of the Apostles.

Acts continues the Gospel of St Luke. It describes how the salvation promised to Israel in the Old Testament and accomplished by Jesus has now, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, been extended to the Gentiles.

This work of salvation was accomplished through the apostles whom Jesus had prepared during his historical ministry and commissioned after his resurrection as witnesses to all that he taught.

Peter the pioneer

Luke does not deal with most of the preachers in the early Church. Instead, he concentrates on Peter and Paul.

Peter was the leading member of the Twelve, a miracle worker like Jesus in the Gospel, the object of divine care, and the spokesman for the Christian community who, according to Luke, was largely responsible for the growth of the community in the early days.

Paul's preaching in Asia Minor

After Peter, Luke turns his attention to Paul (but our Easter Time readings do not contain material from the second part of Acts).

Paul joined the community at Antioch, which subsequently commissioned him and Barnabas to undertake the spread of the Gospel to Asia Minor.

This missionary venture generally failed to win the Jews of the diaspora to the Gospel, but did enjoy success among the Gentiles.

Paul's refusal to impose the Mosaic law upon his Gentile converts provoked strong objection among the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem, but both Peter and James supported his position.

Paul's second and third missionary journeys resulted in the same pattern of failure among the Jews generally, but of some success among the Gentiles.

Paul, like Peter, is presented as a miracle worker and the object of divine care.

Broad survey

In Acts, Luke has provided a broad survey of the Church's development from the resurrection of Jesus to Paul's first Roman imprisonment, the point at which the book ends.

In telling this story, Luke describes the emergence of Christianity from its origins in Judaism to its position as a religion of world-wide status and appeal. Originally a Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem, the Church was placed in circumstances impelling it to include within its membership people of other cultures: the Samaritans, at first an occasional Gentile, and finally the Gentiles on principle.



Suspicion

Fear among the Jewish people that Christianity, particularly as preached to the Gentiles, threatened their own cultural heritage caused them to be suspicious of Paul's Gospel.

The inability of Christian missionaries to allay this apprehension inevitably created a situation in which the gospel was preached more and more to the Gentiles. Towards the end of Paul's career, the Christian communities, with the exception of those in Palestine itself, were mainly of Gentile membership.

In tracing the emergence of Christianity from Judaism, Luke is insistent upon the prominence of Israel in the divine plan of salvation and that the extension of salvation to the Gentiles has been a part of the divine plan from the beginning.

In the development of the Church from a Jewish Christian origin in Jerusalem, with its roots in Jewish religious tradition, to a series of Christian communities among the Gentiles of the Roman empire, Luke portrays the action of God in history, laying open the heart of all humanity to the divine message of salvation.

Guided by the Holy Spirit

Luke's history of the apostolic Church is the story of a Spirit-guided community and a Spirit-guided spread of the Word of God. The travels of Peter and Paul are in reality the travels of the Word of God as it spreads from Jerusalem, the city of destiny for Jesus, to Rome, the capital of the civilised world of Luke's day.

By stressing the continuity between Judaism and Christianity, Luke argues that Christianity is deserving of the same toleration accorded to Judaism by Rome.

Part of Paul's defence before Roman authorities is to show that Christianity is not a disturber of the peace. Moreover, when Paul stands before the authorities, he is declared innocent of any crime against the empire.

Peter declared:
 'Let the entire house of Israel
 know with certainty
 that God has made him both
 Lord and the Christ,
 this Jesus whom you crucified'

Gambian Christian anniversaries June & July



NINETY YEARS AGO: In Banjul, on the Feast of Corpus Christi, 22nd June 1924, Bishop Le Hunsec of Dakar ordained a citizen of Banjul - Fr JOSEPH CHARLES MENDY.

The Superior of the Catholic Mission in The Gambia, Fr John Meehan CSSp, told the overflowing congregation: 'This is in truth the day the Lord has made, a red-letter day in the history of Bathurst [Banjul] which witnesses for the first time the ordination of a priest; and then, it is one of our own, a native of Bathurst.... May his example stimulate many others to follow in his footsteps by offering their

lives to God for the uplifting of their countrymen.'

There were now five priests serving in the Mission. Fr Meehan's prayer that Fr Mendy be a devoted priest whose whole ambition would be to make God better known and loved was truly heard. But Fr Mendy was to die in Banjul eight years later, on 13th July 1932, regarded by many Christians and Muslims as a saint.

TEN YEARS AGO: in June 2009, following 44 years in this country, Sr PAULINE LEAHY retired to Ireland. After her profession in the Congregation of St Joseph of Cluny she had worked for 17 years in Australia before coming to The Gambia in 1967. Until 1988 she taught at St Joseph's Senior Secondary School, then at St Joseph's Adult Education Centre, Banjul. Over many years Sr Pauline was a regular visitor to Mile Two Prison, the mental home, the sanatorium, the Royal Victoria Hospital and the old people's home.



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: 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.

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

9th June 1949 (70 years ago): *The Gambia Gazette* announced that Edward Lloyd-Evans had been awarded the MBE.

1st July 1956: 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 building 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, who since his arrival in 1963 had principally worked around Basse and Bwiam.

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

8th July 1977: Government 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 (40 years ago): 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 (25 years ago): Opening of St John the Baptist Church Tenene.

8th June 1996: 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 (20 years ago): 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 had served in The Gambia from 1941 to 1957, from 1951 as Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Gambia & Rio Pongas.

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

18th July 2001: 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: Death of Cecilia Cole, teacher, magistrate, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and staunch Methodist.

8th July 2006: Ordination at Kanifing by Bishop Ellison of Fr Michael Gomez CSSp and Fr Peter Jammeh CSSp.

9th July 2006: 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.

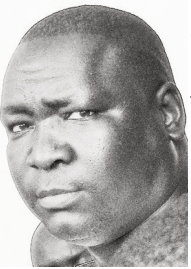


11th June 2009 (10 years ago): The 25th anniversary of the John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel was celebrated at an 'open day' at GPI.

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

8th June 2010: Fr Matthias Murphy CSSp told the congregation at Holy Spirit Banjul that he was about to retire after many years as their Parish Priest.

9th-11th July 2010: As part of the Youth Festival a procession was held from St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda to St Peter's Lamin.



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

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

27th June 2014 (5 years ago): Among speakers at GPI to mark the end of the pastoral year, T.G.G. Senghore spoke on the history of the Catholic Mission in The Gambia.

14th June 2015: Death of in Mali of Alhassane Diarra, former 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 (*right*), Bishop of Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana.



24th June 2017: Bishop Ellison celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral to mark the 60th anniversary of the creation of the Diocese of Banjul by Pope Pius XII.

26th June 2016: Fr Peter Lopez, former Parish Priest at Blessed Sacrament Kanifing, blessed four bells. They were unveiled on 3rd July by Bishop Ellison.

During June 2017: Four Salesian priests visited the diocese to explore the possibility of establishing a ministry in the diocese. They are now serving at Kunkujang Mariama.

7th July 2017: Philip Saine launched his book, 'Challenges to Gambian Churches during Yahya Jammeh's Era'.

16th-17th July 2017: Matthew Lozano, of the US-based Unbound Deliverance Ministry, conducted a workshop described as 'simple, undramatic, but powerful'.

22-24th June 2018: The Youth Cross celebration attracted young people from every parish, together with Anglicans, Methodists and evangelical Christians. Sixty young people from the dioceses of Dakar, Kaolack and Kolda took part, accompanied by three priests and a religious sister.



?

Question Box

When I'm at Mass I feel a strong sense of belief in God and the Gospel. But at other times I don't think much about God – or, if I do, I'm not sure how much I believe in him.

THE GIFT of faith comes from God: it is grace of God.

The Mass is described as the 'source and summit' of our faith, so it's good and proper that you experience a surge of belief when you take part in the Eucharist. But your faith should be something you can always depend on. We do not need to think of God absolutely at all times, but when we do think about him we should feel confidence in him, in his Son, and in the Church.

You are not alone in finding that your faith has its 'ups and downs'. Faith needs nourishing. Although going to Mass on Sundays and other days is the best way you can worship, it is not only at Mass that we encounter God.

Regular prayer is the way to get to know and trust God better. Every Christian should pray every day the common prayers of the Church (Our Father, Hail Mary, the creed, etc), as well as personal, particular prayers. You can say the prayer in Mark 9:24: 'I believe; help my unbelief.'

Christians do not seek to grow in belief in isolation. We have the saints to help us, and our fellow Christians. If you don't belong to a prayer group or other group of Christians you might consider joining one. In any case, this is a practical question you can discuss with your priest, or any individual, or several others. You'll surely find that you are not unusual; many others experience the same ebb and flow of faith.

Seeking to deal with your 'unbelief' should lead you to deeper and surer faith. Make sure you read the Scriptures regularly, and perhaps other Christian writings. And step up your 'good deeds'!

So - in a nutshell - Christianity is not just a 'Sunday' religion: it's a way of life, the way to the Father. Be patient, and remember: you're not alone; you have your fellow Christians, the saints, and God himself to support and uphold you!

Would you like to say **Morning and Evening Prayer** every day, in company with priests and lay-people throughout the world?



Go to **Universalis** website and click on **Morning Prayer, or Mass, or Vespers** – as you wish – and you will find the complete Office

Some weekday celebrations - June & July

Monday 3rd June: St Charles Lwanga & his companions *martyrs*

IN the Diocese of Banjul we have a particular devotion to Charles Lwanga: he is the patron of one of our most lively parishes. Charles was born in 1865, and became a page at the court of King Mwanga II of Buganda, in what is now southern Uganda. The king forced himself immorally on the young men who served him. In 1886 he insisted that Catholics and other Christians at his court should abandon their faith. They refused, and were cruelly put to death. Among the king's victims were St Charles Lwanga and St Kizito. *We pray especially today for the priests and people of St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda and of St Kizito Bakoteh.*

Monday 10th June: The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church

This is a new memorial, celebrated this year for the first time. *See page 20.*

Tuesday 11th June: St Barnabas *apostle*

BARNABAS was a Jew from the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, originally named Joseph. He was given his new name, Barnabas - which means 'son of consolation' - when he converted to Christianity soon after Pentecost. Barnabas was not one of the original twelve apostles, but was given the title of apostle because of his association with St Paul, whom he introduced to the first Christian community. Barnabas was said to be the cousin of St Mark, one of the Gospel writers. He went with Paul to Antioch, but later left Paul because of a disagreement, and accompanied Mark to Cyprus. Barnabas is said to have been stoned to death.

Thursday 13th June: St Antony of Padua *doctor of the Church*

ANTONY was born in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1195. He wanted to work in North Africa, but was obliged for health reasons to work instead in Italy, where he gained renown as a preacher. Many traditions relate to miracles performed by St Antony. He died in 1231, and his relics are preserved at Padua. *Churches at Kololi and Kuntaur are dedicated to St Antony, as is the Cathedral in our neighbouring Diocese of Zinguinchor. We pray especially today for the priests and people in all three congregations.*

Saturday 22nd June: St John Fisher & St Thomas More *martyrs*



JOHN Fisher was a Catholic bishop who at the 16th-century Reformation in England refused to take the oath of allegiance to King Henry VIII as head of the Church of England. Thomas More (*depicted left*) was a learned and devout man who as Chancellor of England had been very close to the king. He also refused. Both men were beheaded in 1535.

Monday 24th June: Nativity of St John the Baptist

IN earlier times, the Nativity of John the Baptist was a great holiday throughout Europe, almost like Christmas. In today's Church it is honoured as a solemnity - a major holy day. John was the last of the Old Testament prophets, and the forerunner of Christ. John's importance is underlined in all four Gospels, but only St Luke tells of his birth (Luke, chapters 1 and 2). Jesus said of John, 'I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John.' (Luke 7:28)

Friday 28th 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 29th June: St Peter & St Paul *apostles*

PETER played the leading part in the ministry of Jesus and in the life of the first Christian communities in Jerusalem and Rome. He and his brother Andrew were fishermen, summoned by Jesus to be 'fishers of men'. Peter was married and took his wife with him on his missionary journeys. His first name was Simon, but when he recognised his Master as Christ, Jesus conferred on him the name of Peter, saying, 'You are Peter (Greek, *Petros*), and upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church.' The Church teaches that 'You are Peter' authenticates the office of the Pope as St Peter's successor, reinforced by the granting to Peter of the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the commission given to Peter by Jesus after the resurrection: 'Feed my sheep.'

Although there is no scriptural reference to Peter living in Rome, testimony to that effect dates from the 2nd century.

PAUL is known as 'the Apostle to the Gentiles'. His first name was Saul, born of Jewish parents who were Roman citizens - which would later give Paul the right to be sent to Rome for trial. Saul was brought up a Pharisee. He opposed the new Christian sect, and took part in the stoning of Stephen, the first martyr. This led to his conversion on the road to Damascus, when he was blinded, and heard a voice saying, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.' Saul took the name of Paul and returned to Damascus to preach Christ. His field of activity was among the gentiles. The vivid account of Paul's missionary journeys given in the Acts of the Apostles ends with his preaching the Gospel in Rome for two whole years while awaiting trial. Thirteen of Paul's letters to Christian communities appear in the New Testament.

Tradition says that Peter and Paul were both martyred in Rome, Peter by crucifixion, Paul by the sword.

Wednesday 3rd July: St Thomas apostle

THOMAS was one of the twelve apostles. His name comes from the Arabic for 'twin' (in Greek, *Didymus*). Although frightened, Thomas went with Jesus to Bethany when the news came that Jesus' friend Lazarus was sick (John 11:16). At the Last Supper, when Jesus told the apostles that he was going from them to prepare a place for them, Thomas said 'Lord, we do not know where you are going; and how can we know the way?' Jesus' reply was, 'I am the way, the truth and the life' (John 14:2-6). Thomas earned the nickname 'Doubting Thomas' because he found it hard to believe that the other apostles had seen the risen Jesus. But when Jesus appeared and showed Thomas his wounds, Thomas exclaimed, 'My Lord and my God!' (John 20:26-29). Tradition says that Thomas established Christian communities in India.

**Tuesday 9th July: St Augustine Zhao Rong and the martyrs of China**

AUGUSTINE Zhao Rong was a Chinese priest who was martyred in 1815. One of his companions, 18-year-old Chi Zhuzi, who'd had his arm cut off and was about to be flayed, cried, '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.

Thursday 11th July: St Benedict

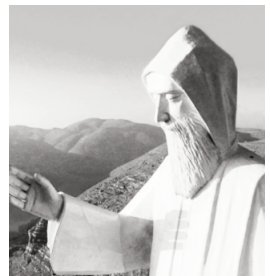
BENEDICT - the 'Father of Western Monasticism' - was born into a noble family around 480. While studying in Rome he was much influenced by the teachings of St Jerome and St Augustine. He retired to a hermit's life, and his sanctity attracted other solitaries. Benedict eventually established twelve monasteries. At Mount Cassino, where he became abbot, he established a wise and humane Rule based on vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Tuesday 22nd July: St Mary Magdalene

MARY came from Magdala in Galilee. Jesus rescued her from possession by devils (Luke 8:2). Mary watched from afar when Jesus was crucified (Mark 15:10). Weeping at his tomb, she asked the risen Christ, whom she took to be the gardener, what had happened to Jesus' body. He simply replied, 'Mary,' and she at once recognised him (John 20:11-18). Mary is sometimes identified as the sister of Lazarus and as the sinner who anointed Jesus' feet. But this is not stated in the Gospels.

Wednesday 24th July: St Sharbel Makhlūf priest

JOSEPH Zaroun Makhlūf was born in 1828, son of a mule-driver in a Lebanese village. His father died when he was only three, and he was brought up by an uncle. At 23, Joseph joined the Monastery of St Maron at Annaya, taking the name 'Sharbel' in honour of a 2nd-century martyr. He was ordained in 1859. From 1875, like the 5th-century St Maron, he lived as a hermit, following a strict fast. He was devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. He died on Christmas Eve 1898. Christians and non-Christians soon made Sharbel's tomb a place of pilgrimage and cures. In 1965 Pope Paul VI beatified him, and canonised him 12 years later. *We pray especially today for the Lebanese community in The Gambia.*

**Thursday 25th July: St James apostle**

JAMES and his brother John were sons of a Galilean fisherman. They were among the first to be called by Jesus. Together with Peter they witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter. They saw Christ transfigured and his agony in Gethsemane. James and John were rebuked by Jesus when they asked to sit by his throne when he came into his kingdom (Mark 10:39). James was beheaded on the order of Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:1-3). He is called 'the Great' to distinguish him from another apostle, James 'the Less', who became bishop in Jerusalem. *The Catholic school at Kity 2 is named in honour of St James.*

Monday 29th July: St Martha

MARTHA lived in Bethany with her sister Mary and her brother Lazarus. When Jesus visited their house, Martha provided for his needs. At her request, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. *We pray today for members past and present of St Martha's Society in The Gambia, founded in 1973.*

**Wednesday 31st July: St Ignatius of Loyola priest**

BORN into the Spanish nobility in 1491, Ignatius became a soldier. He was converted while recovering from wounds. After a pilgrimage to Jerusalem he studied in Spain and France. In 1537 he was ordained, and with Frances Xavier and others he established the Jesuit Order. Two years later Pope Paul III approved the Order, and Ignatius was Jesuit General until his death in Rome in 1556, by when the Jesuits had branches in Italy, Spain, India and Brazil. The Jesuits were the most important force in the Catholic Counter-Reformation and a bulwark of the papacy. Ignatius laid the foundations of Jesuit schools, and his 'Spiritual Exercises' are still widely valued.

Omnes Sancti et Sanctæ Dei, intercedite pro nobis

All holy men and women of God, intercede for us

Daily Mass Readings

June & July

Sunday readings, Year C. Weekday readings, Year I

Memorials in brackets are optional

Sat 1st June Acts 18:23-28. Psalm 46:2-3,8-10. John 16:23-28

St Justin

Sun 2nd Acts 7:55-60. Psalm 96:1,2,6,7,9. Revelation 22:12-14,16-17,20. John 17:20-26

Mon 3rd Acts 19:1-8. Psalm 67:2-7. John 16:29-33

Tue 4th Acts 20:17-27. Psalm 67:10-11,20-21. John 17:1-11

Wed 5th Acts 20:28-38. Psalm 67:29-30,33-36. John 17:11-19

Thu 6th Acts 22:30;23:6-11. Psalm 15:1-2,5,7-10. John 17:20-26

Fri 7th Acts 25:13-21. Psalm 102:1-2,11-12,19-20. John 21:15-19

Sat 8th Acts 28:16-20,30-31. Psalm 10:4,5,7. John 21:20-25

Evening Mass: Vigil of Pentecost: Genesis 11:1-9 or Exodus 19:3-8,16-20 or Ezekiel 37:1-14 or Joel 3:1-5. Psalm 103:1-2,24,35,27-30. Romans 8:22-27. John 7:37-39

Sun 9th Acts 2:1-11. Psalm 103:1,24,29-31,34. Romans 8:8-17. John 14:15-16,23-26

Easter Time ends; Ordinary Time resumes

Mon 10th Genesis 3:9-15,20 or Acts 1:12-14. Psalm 86:1-3,5-7. John 9:25-34.

Tue 11th Acts 11:21-26; 13:1-3. Psalm 97:1-6. Matthew 10:7-13 St Barnabas

Wed 12th 2 Corinthians 3:4-11. Psalm 98:5-9. Matthew 5:17-19.

Thu 13th 2 Corinthians 3:15 – 4:1,3-6. Psalm 84:9-14. Matthew 5:20-26.

Fri 14th 2 Corinthians 4:7-15. Psalm 115:10-11,15-18. Matthew 5:27-32

Sat 15th 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. Psalm 102:1-4,8-9,11-12. Matthew 5:33-37

Sun 16th Proverbs 8:22-31. Psalm 8:4-9. Romans 5:1-5. John 16:12-15

Mon 17th 2 Corinthians 6:1-10. Psalm 97:1-4. Matthew 5:38-42

Tue 18th 2 Corinthians 8:1-9. Psalm 145:1-2,5-9. Matthew 5:41-48

Wed 19th 2 Corinthians 9:6-11. Psalm 111:1-4,9. Matthew 6:1-6,16-18 (St Romuald)

Thu 20th 2 Corinthians 11:1-11. Psalm 110:1-4,7-8. Matthew 6:7-15.

Fri 21st 2 Corinthians 11:18,21-30. Psalm 33:2-7. Matthew 6:19-23 St Aloysius Gonzaga *abstinence*

Sat 22nd 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. Psalm 33:8-13. Matthew 6:24-34 (St Paulinus of Nola or St John Fisher & Thomas More or the BVM)

Sun 23rd Genesis 14:18-20. Psalm 109:1-4. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Luke 9:18-24.

Mon 24th Isaiah 49:1-6. Psalm 138:1-3,13-15. Luke 1:57-66,80.

Tue 25th Genesis 13:2,5-18. Psalm 14:2-5. Matthew 7:6,12-14

Wed 26th Genesis 15:1-12. Psalm 104:1-4,6-9. Matthew 7:15-20

Thu 27th Genesis 16:1-12. Psalm 105:1-5. Matthew 7:21-29

Fri 28th Exodus 34:11-16. Psalm 22:1-6. Romans 5:5-11. Luke 15:3-7

Sat 29th Acts 12:1-11. Psalm 33:2-9. 2 Timothy 4:6-8,17-18. Matthew 16:13-19

Sun 30th 1 Kings 19:16,19-21. Psalm 15:1-2,5,7-11. Galatians 5:1,13-18. Luke 9:51-62

Mon 1st July Genesis 18:16-33. Psalm 102:1-4,8-11. Matthew 8:18-22

Tue 2nd Genesis 19:15-29. Psalm 25:2-3,9-12. Matthew 8:23-27

Wed 3rd Ephesians 2:19-22. Psalm 116:1,2. John 20:24-29

Thu 4th Genesis 22:1-19. Psalm 114:1-6,8-9. Matthew 9:1-8

Fri 5th Genesis 23:1-4,19;24:1-8,62-67. Psalm 105:1-5 Matthew 9:9-13 (St Anthony Zaccaria)

Sat 6th Genesis 27:1-5,15-29. Psalm 134:1-6. Matthew 9:14-17

Sun 7th Isaiah 66:10-14. Psalm 65:1-7,16,20. Galatians 6:14-18. Luke 10:1-12,17-20

Mon 8th Genesis 28:10-22. Psalm 90:1-4,14-15. Matthew 9:18-26

Tue 9th Genesis 32:23-33. Psalm 16:1-3,6-8,15. Matthew 9:32-38

Wed 10th Genesis 41:55-57; 42:5-7,17-24. Psalm 32:2-3,10-11,18-19. Matthew 10:1-7

Thu 11th Genesis 44:18-21,23-29; 45:1-3. Psalm 104:16-21. Matthew 10:7-15.

Fri 12th Genesis 46:1-7,28-30. Psalm 36:3-4,18-19,27-28,39-40. Matthew 10:16-23

Sat 13th Genesis 49:29,32; 50:15-26. Psalm 104:1-4,6-7. Matthew 10:24-33

Sun 14th 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 ORDINARY TIME**

Mon 15th Exodus 1:8-14,22. Psalm 123:1-8. Matthew 10:34 – 11:1

Tue 16th Exodus 2:1-15. Psalm 68:3,14,30,31,33,34. Matthew 11:20-24

or for Carmel: Zechariah 2:14-17. Psalm Luke 1:46-55. Matthew 12:46-50.

Wed 17th Exodus 3:1-6,9-12. Psalm 102:1`-4,6-7. Matthew 11:25-27

Thu 18th Exodus 3:13-20. Psalm 104:1,5,8-9,24-27. Matthew 11:28-30

Fri 19th Exodus 11:10 – 12:14. Psalm 115:12,13,15-18. Matthew 12:1-8

Sat 20th Exodus 12:37-42. Psalm 135:1.23.24.10-15? Matthew 12:14-21

Sun 21st Genesis 18:1-10. Psalm 14:1-5. Colossians 1:4-8. Luke 10:38-42

Mon 22nd Song of Songs 1-4 or 2 Corinthians 5:14-17. Psalm 62:2-6,8-9. John 20:1-2,11-18

Tue 23rd Exodus 14:21 -15:1. Psalm Exodus 15:8-10,12,17. Matthew 12:46-50

7th SUNDAY of EASTER

St Charles Lwanga

St Boniface

(St Norbert)

abstinence

PENTECOST SUNDAY

Our Lady, Mother of the Church (see page 20)

St Antony of Padua

abstinence

(of the BVM)

The MOST HOLY TRINITY

CORPUS CHRISTI

NATIVITY of St John the BAPTIST

(St Cyril of Alexandria)

SACRED HEART of JESUS

St PETER & St PAUL

13th SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME

St THOMAS

(St Elizabeth of Portugal)

abstinence

(St Maria Goretti or the BVM)

14th SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME

(St Augustine Zhao Rong)

St Benedict

abstinence

(St Henry or the BVM)

15th SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME

St Bonaventure

(Our Lady of Mount Carmel)

abstinence

(St Apollinaris or the BVM)

16th SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME

St MARY MAGDALENE

(St Bridget of Sweden)

Wed 24th	Exodus 16:1-5,9-15. Psalm 77:18-19,23-28. Matthew 13:1-9	(St Sharbel Makhluof)
Thu 25th	2 Corinthians 4:7-15. Psalm 125:1-6. Matthew 20:20-28	St JAMES
Fri 26th	Exodus 20:1-17. Psalm 18:8-11. Matthew 13:18-23	St Joachim & St Anne <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 27th	Exodus 24:3-8. Psalm 49:1-2,5-6,12-15. Matthew 13:23-30	(the BVM)
Sun 28th	Genesis 18:20-32. Psalm 137:1-3,6-8. Colossians 2:12-14. Luke 11:1-13	17th SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME
Mon 29th	1 John 4:7-16. Psalm 33:2-11. John 11:19-27 or Luke 10:48-42	St Martha
Tue 30th	Exodus 33:7-11 & 34:5-9,28. Psalm 102:6-13. Matthew 13:38-43	(St Peter Chrysologus)
Wed 31st	Exodus 34:29-35. Psalm 98:5-7,9. Matthew 13:44-46	St Ignatius Loyola

Parishes & Parish Priests

- 1 Cathedral Parish: Fr Antoine Sambou & Fr Gabriel Secka
- 2 Blessed Sacrament Kanifing Estate: Fr Joseph Carl Gomez
- 3 Christ the King Darsilami: Fr Yenes Manneh
- 4 Holy Cross Brusibi: Fr Michael Ndecky
- 5 Holy Spirit Banjul: Fr Bruno Toupan
- 6 Mary Mother of God Soma: Fr Anthony Lippo CSSp
- 7 Our Lady of Fatima Bwiam: Fr Benjamin Juana assisted by Fr Matthias Atubu CSSp
- 8 Resurrection Brikama: Fr James Mendy
- 9 Sacred Heart Bansang: Fr Fredrick Agame CSSp
- 10 St Anthony Kololi: Fr Anthony Sonko (Vicar-General)
- 11 St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda: Fr Joseph Colley
- 12 St Francis Kunkujang: Salesians led by Fr Peter Wojnarowski SDB, Fr Peace Ike SDB & Fr Carlos Valdiviezo SDB
- 13 St John the Baptist Farafenni: Fr Cornelius Umoren MSP
- 14 St Joseph Basse: Fr Joseph Kojo Finn CSSp assisted by Fr Magashi Aernan Terungwa Samuel
- 15 St Kizito Bakoteh: Fr Victor Ndecky
- 16 St Martin Kartong: Fr Pius Gidi CSSp
- 17 St Michael Njongon: Fr Matthew Mendy
- 18 St Peter Lamin: Fr Godwin Nnadozie MSP assisted by Fr John Ezeike MSP
- 19 St Therese Kanifing: Fr Anthony Gabisi assisted by Fr Tanislaus Ndecky
- 20 Star of the Sea Bakau: Fr Michael Gomez assisted by Fr Peter Jammeh CSSp

Also: St Peter's Junior Seminary Lamin: Fr Paschal Mendy, Rector & Director of Vocations



Prayers for the clergy of the diocese

GOD our Father, our shepherd and guide, look with love on your servant Gabriel, our Bishop.

May his word and example inspire and guide the Church, and may all those in his care come to the joy of everlasting life:

Through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord. *Amen*

GOD our Father, grant to our priests a firm faith, zeal in proclaiming the Gospel, and diligence in administering the Sacraments.

May their life of prayer and service inspire and lead those committed to their care.

We ask this through our High Priest, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

Congratulations



During June and July, five priests celebrate the anniversary of their Ordination

Saturday 23rd June	Fr Gabriel Secka 2001
Thursday 28th June	Fr Benedict Mba MSP 2003
Thursday 5th July	Fr John Sharpe CSSp 1964
Sunday 8th July	Fr Michael Gomez CSSp 2006
	Fr Peter Jammeh CSSp 2006
Tuesday 10th July	Fr Pius Kwasi Gidi CSSp 2004
Sunday 15th July	Fr Peter S. Lopez 2000

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





Giving Hope to a World in Need

**The Gambia Programme
Health, Nutrition, Agro-enterprise, Food Security
40 Atlantic Road, Fajara. Telephone 4498000**

Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) Campaign in CRR & URR in 2017

CRS, in partnership with the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) of the Ministry of Health, have been implementing SMC strategy targeting children (3 to 59 months) in Upper and Central River regions from 2014 to 2016, supported by UNITAID ACCESS-SMC project. In 2017, with the support of the Global Fund, this high-impact intervention is being implemented again in the two regions to prevent children from getting malaria. The two regions have been identified due to their relatively high malaria transmission.



SMC is achieved by administering anti-malarial medicines (*sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP)* and *amodiaquine (AQ)*) up to four monthly doses to children. It is administered during the peak of the rainy season (August – December) when the incidence of malaria is high. In total, an estimated 90,925 children are targeted through door-to-door strategy to administer the antimalarial medicine.

Information Communication for Development (ICT4D) uses android devices to enhance data collection, management and rapid analysis for effective decision-making. Despite challenging conditions in accessing communities during the rains, The Gambia is consistently able to reach over 80 per cent of the children targeted since the inception of the project. This is largely due to the commitment, perseverance and hard work of the health staff and volunteers and strong collaboration between the NMCP with CRS.

Answers to 'Do you know?' page 23

- 1 Ruth and Esther.
- 2 A diocesan priest serves in the diocese for which he was ordained (for example, in this diocese, Fr Joseph Colley and Fr Victor Ndecky). A missionary priest belongs to a missionary order, which sends him to serve in a missionary capacity (for example, Fr Cornelius Umoren MSP and Fr Peter Jammeh CSSp)
- 3 1. The Resurrection. 2. The Ascension. 3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. 4. The Assumption of the Virgin Mary into heaven. 5. The Coronation of the Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven.
- 4 St Joseph
- 5 Argentinean
- 6 Fr Matthew Mendy, Parish Priest of St Michael, Ngongen



DON'T drop LITTER
Keep your environment clean



‘Go and do likewise’

A lawyer asked Jesus, ‘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 out 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 one who showed him mercy.’

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

One denarius was the usual day’s wage for a labourer.

The parable of the Good Samaritan, from the Gospel for the 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 14th July.

Our illustration is by the Italian artist Jacopo Bassano, painted about 1562, and now displayed in the National Gallery, London.



End-
piece

The transforming power of the Sacraments

By Fr Julian LARGE

WHEN self-doubt troubles us, we might be tempted to tell ourselves that the disciples enjoyed the obvious benefit of the physical presence of our Risen Lord, while all we have to go on is testimony, which is not the same.

This is to underestimate the nature and the power of the Church's sacramental life. The baptismal water has been invested with the power to transform us just as radically as the experience of the Resurrection changed the disciples. At the font we are truly united with Our Lord's death and burial, so that we emerge overflowing with his risen life.

In the Sacrament of Penance we are raised up from the death of sins committed since baptism and restored to the freshness of life eternal.

In the Holy Mass we offer ourselves with the sacrificial gifts of bread and wine, so that when they are in turn transformed into Christ's Body and Blood we are united mystically with his self-oblation on Calvary. It is then in Holy Communion that we are given the most sublime and transformative encounter with the Resurrection, when he feeds us with his risen, living Body.

When challenged by secularisation in society, it can be a temptation for Catholics to retreat from engagement with the world and to live the faith

more privately, in the hope of being left in peace. The example of the disciples after the Resurrection should save us from such defeatism. The apostles who had previously huddled behind locked doors 'for fear of the Jews' walked voluntarily back into the lion's den, preaching the Gospel daily in the Temple, gaining many converts, and accepting the consequences in the knowledge that life in Christ has the last word over persecution and death.

Transformed by our own encounters with our Risen Lord in this Easter season, may we be similarly emboldened.



*Adapted from an article in the magazine
of the London Oratory*

The Pope's Intentions

June

That priests, through the modesty and humility of their lives, commit themselves actively to a solidarity with those who are the most poor.

July

That those who administer justice may work with integrity, and that the injustice which prevails in the world may not have the last word.



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.

Spiritual Communion

AT MASS, most people receive Holy Communion. But there are exceptions. Non-Catholics may not receive Communion, because by their own choice they are not in communion with the Catholic Church. Others present know that unless they first go to Confession they should not communicate. Others feel that, for one reason or another, they should refrain from Communion.

But everyone may make a 'spiritual communion' – that is, pray for Jesus' blessing.

Many prayers have been composed for such a situation. Below is an 'Act of Spiritual Communion' which you may say carefully while others are receiving Communion:

MY Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all else, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart, I embrace you as being already there, and unite myself to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen

This prayer was composed by St Alphonsus Liguori. He was born at Naples, Italy, in 1698. He became a priest, and later founded the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists). He died in 1787.