

The Diocese of Banjul **NEWSLETTER**

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

***Why we should pray
the rosary***



***Do we really want
to become saints?***

***Remembering the
faithful departed***



***Thoughts, prayers and readings for Mass on
All Saints, All Souls, and all the Sundays
in October and November***



Contact us at

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By way of introduction

Reminders...

EVERY October we're reminded of the benefits deriving from saying the rosary – that simple devotion which over many centuries has brought solace, refreshment and renewed faith to countless Catholics throughout the world. Those of us who know from daily experience how valuable the rosary is, should commend it to family and friends.

By October, our children and young people should be well-settled into school, with all its challenges and opportunities. Parents can't be reminded too often of their responsibility to encourage their children and to support the school by showing a lively interest in their children's school work: education is not a matter for school teachers alone!

November will come round soon enough. It opens, as we well know, with the feast of All Saints. Or perhaps many of us do not know or acknowledge that All Saints is a major holy day - one 'of obligation', when all Catholics should give priority to taking part in the Mass.

The day after giving thanks for the grace of God in all his saints we commend to his mercy all the faithful departed: those who in this life have sought to follow the Christian pilgrimage of the baptised. Indeed, the whole of November is popularly thought of as the month of the dead; but, as with saying the rosary, every day of the year should involve praying for the departed. The doctrine of purgatory tells us why.



The Mass is often referred to as the source and summit of our Christian faith, and so we should value and support those who in Christ's name and with his authority celebrate the Mass for us. His priests are our priests.

During November our Bishop and nine others of our clergy will celebrate the anniversary of their ordination to the priesthood. This may bring to mind our duty to pray for all our priests and to support them in all the ways open to us.

Since Vatican II the lay faithful have been increasingly involved in parish activities and development - a process that is always 'on-going'. We should give willingly and generously of our time, talents and resources to the work and mission of the Church. Our priests have a unique role - one which demands their ceaseless and costly commitment. Let us let them know how much we value the Sacraments - and those who, commissioned by Christ, make them available to us.

O JESUS, our great High Priest, hear our prayer for the priests of this Diocese of Banjul and priests everywhere. Give them a bright and firm faith, and a burning love which will ever increase in the course of their priestly life. In loneliness, comfort them. In sorrow, strengthen them. Show them that they are needed by the Church, they are needed by souls, they are needed for the work of redemption. Amen.

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Here & there

NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE

Pope Francis appoints new Nuncio

ON 17th August, the Bishop of Banjul announced the appointment by the Holy Father of a new Papal Nuncio to The Gambia.

The newly-appointed nuncio (*right*) is Monsignor Dagoberto Campos Salas, born in Costa Rica in March 1966 and ordained in May 1994.

He entered the diplomatic service in July 1999, and has served in Sudan, Chile, Sweden, Turkey and Mexico. In addition to his mother tongue - Spanish - he speaks Italian and English. Monsignor Salas is Nuncio also to Sierra Leone and Liberia.

In his announcement, Bishop Mendy said that the clergy, sisters and lay faithful of the Diocese of Banjul pray for God's blessings and guidance on the office and ministry of Monsignor Salas as Papal Nuncio to The Gambia.

Monsignor Sala succeeds Archbishop Miroslaw Adamczyk, who presented his letters of credence to President Yahya Jammeh on 5th November 2013.

The title 'nuncio' (in Italian, *nunzio*) derives from a Latin word, *nuntius*, which means 'messenger'. From 1537 popes sent nuncios to reside in the countries to which they were accredited.

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

The nuncio announces the appointment of bishops, serves as the Pope's representative at the installation of a bishop, and attends the meetings of the local Bishops' Conference. Generally, the nuncio has the rank of archbishop.

The Gambia established relations with the Holy See in 1979. The first Gambian Ambassador to the Holy See was Alhaji Ousman Semega Jannah, and the first Papal Nuncio to The Gambia was Archbishop Yohannes Dyba.

Fr Sonko returns

IN late September Fr Anthony Sonko returned to The Gambia, having for some years taught at St Paul's Major Seminary, Freetown.

He has taken up the posts of Vicar-General in the Diocese of Banjul, and Parish Priest of St Anthony's Kololi.



St Peter's 'joyous event'

THE CHOIR of St Peter's Lamin, promise a 'joyous event' on Friday 5th October, when they present their silver jubilee concert - their 25th such programme. The concert will be held in the Jaama Hall at Kairaba Beach Hotel, beginning at 9pm.

Bishop Gabriel Mendy's appointments

BISHOP Mendy has made appointments and transfers, effective from 1st October 2018 and renewable after three years.

1 Fr Peter Gomez from St Anthony's Kololi to Bishop's House in residence.

2 Fr Emile Sambou, Vicar General and Parish Priest of St Anthony's Kololi to Ireland for a one-year Sabbatical at Loreto House, Blackrock.

3 Fr Anthony Sonko, Spiritual Director and Bursar at St Paul's Major Seminary Freetown returns to the Diocese as Vicar-General and Parish Priest of St Anthony's Kololi.

4 Fr Moses Drammeh, Vocations Director, begins post-graduate studies in Sacramental Theology at Duquesne University, USA, in the Fall Semester, August 2018.

5 Fr John Mendy, Parish Priest of St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda, begins post-graduate studies in Catholic Social Thought at the Gregorian University, Rome.

6 Fr Joseph Karbo approved for second-year Master's Studies in Counselling in Kenya. Next year he takes up appointment as Rector of the Pre-Major Seminary of St Kizito's Kenema, Sierra Leone.

7 Fr Paschal Mendy, Assistant Parish Priest of St Therese's Kanifing, appointed to St Peter's Junior Seminary Lamin as Rector and Director of Vocations.

8 Fr Joseph Colley, Parish Priest of Mother of God Soma, appointed to St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda as Parish Priest.

9 Fr Benjamin Juwana, Assistant Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Bansang, appointed as Parish Priest of Fatima Parish Bwiam. He will be assisted by a new Spiritan missionary priest, Fr Matthias Atubu CSSp.

10 Fr Tanislas Ndecky, Parish Priest at Bwiam, appointed Assistant Parish Priest at St Therese's Kanifing.

11 Fr Anthony Lippo CSSp, Assistant Parish Priest at St Martin's Kartong, appointed to Mary Mother of God Soma as Parish Priest.

12. Salesians of Don Bosco, under the leadership of Fr Peter Wojnarowski SDB, appointed to St Francis Kunkujang.

Cluny Sisters have their first African Mother General

THE CLUNY Congregation in Anglophone West Africa have their first African Mother-General: Sr Clare Stanley, of Freetown.

Sr Clare is known to many in The Gambia, as for some years she served in Kanifing.

The Province of West Africa includes the Cluny Sisters in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ghana.

Meanwhile, Cluny Sisters in Senegal are engaged in a year-long celebration of the arrival of their pioneer predecessors in Senegal almost 200 years ago.

Beginning in 1819

Mother Rosalie Javouhey and six Sisters set sail for Senegal from France on 2nd February 1819. They landed in

St Louis on 19th March, and at once began working in the dilapidated hospital. On 25th March (Feast of the Annunciation), Mass was said for the first time in a room blessed by the Apostolic Delegate, Fr Tertasse, as a chapel.

As soon as they could, the Sisters established a school. But the Apostolic Delegate was not on good terms with the anti-clerical colonial authorities. He left, and the Church placed the colony under interdict; the sacraments could not be celebrated.

Only every 18 months could the Sisters have Mass and confession. A visiting priest obtained permission to have a government ship sail up the river until it reached a point just outside the banned area, and Mass was celebrated on board.

Despite such difficult conditions, the Sisters remained.

In 1822 the founder of the Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny, Mother Anne-Marie Javouhey (*left*), arrived with six other sisters. The pioneer Sisters were able to return to France for medical care.



Mother Anne-Mari enthused others, and initiated many projects, including a plantation to provide work for young people. At Gorée, she founded a hospital and schools.

From then on, the Cluny Sisters' endeavours began to extend throughout Senegal.

Anne-Marie in The Gambia

In 1823, Anne-Marie Javouhey visited Banjul at the request of the Governor of Sierra Leone and The Gambia, Sir Charles MacCarthy. A street in Banjul at one side of the Francis Edward Small Teaching Hospital is named after her.

The Cluny Sisters began serving in The Gambia in 1883.

Today in West Africa, the Cluny Sisters - Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny, to give them their full title - are working in The Gambia, Sierra Leone and Ghana.

We thank Sr Jeanne-Thérèse Ndeye for supplying information.

Studying overseas

TWO priests of the diocese have left to pursue studies overseas.

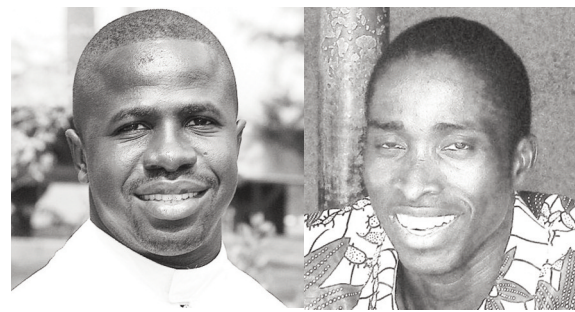
Fr Moses Drammeh (*left, above*) is studying sacramental theology at Dusquesne University in Pittsburgh, USA. Fr Drammeh was ordained in 2002, and in recent years has been Director of the Junior Seminary at Lamin.

Fr John Mendy (*right, above*), who left on Friday 14th September, is following postgraduate studies in Catholic social thought at the Gregorian University in Rome. Until his departure, Fr Mendy was Parish Priest at St Charles Lwanga, Fajikunda, and was ordained in 2008.

Dusquesne University

Dusquesne University of the Holy Spirit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was founded by members of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit in October 1878. It is named after an 18th-century Governor of New France, Michel-Ange Duquesne de Menneville, and is the only Spiritan institution of higher education in the world.

Dusquesne has over 10,000 students from more than 80



countries. There are more than 79,000 living alumni of the university, including two cardinals and the current Bishop of Pittsburgh.

The Gregorian University

The Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome was originally part of the Roman College founded in 1551 by Ignatius of Loyola. The division of philosophy and theology was given Papal approval in 1556, making it the first university founded by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits).

Today, the school has about 3,800 students from over 150 countries. Most students are priests, seminarians, and members of religious orders. Most professors are Jesuits. But in recent years there has been an increase in laity in the faculty and the student body, which represent 30 per cent of the student body.

The university has faculties in theology, canon law, philosophy, history and cultural patrimony of the Church, missiology and social sciences.

'We shall remember them'

THE ANNUAL Remembrance Sunday service will be held at the War Graves Cemetery, Fajara, on Sunday 11th November at 10.45 am. This year's commemoration comes exactly one hundred years to the hour, day and month since the end of the First World War in 1918.



Congratulations

During November, Bishop Gabriel Mendy and nine priests serving the Diocese of Banjul celebrate the anniversary of their Ordination

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Friday 9th November | Fr Victor Ndecky 2013 |
| Friday 10th November | Fr Aimé Joseph Colley 2012 |
| | Fr Matthew Mendy 2012 |
| Wednesday 14th November | Fr Yenes Manneh 2009 |
| Thursday 15th November | Bishop Gabriel Mendy CSSp 1997 |
| | Fr Emile Sambou 1997 |
| | Fr Bruno Toupan 1997 |
| | Fr Antoine Sambou 2007 |
| | Fr Joseph Carl Gomez 2003 |
| Saturday 17th November | Fr Louis Mendy CSSp 2001 |

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 Great High Priest, Jesus Christ.

Do we really want to become saints?



WHEN we do something wrong, or offend someone, we may say, 'I know I'm no saint.'

This is probably all too true. But do we actually want to become a saint?

Who, indeed, are the saints, so honoured by the Church?

THE SAINTS are those throughout history and throughout the world who have striven to discern and obey the will of God.

Thank God we cannot tell how many saints there are. Each year the Church celebrates many of them (for example, in November such heroes as Charles Borromeo, Cecilia, Elizabeth of Hungary and Andrew the apostle). But the names of most of the saints are known only to God.

Some saints were holy throughout their lives. Others struggled and suffered before achieving sanctity. But all the saints were - and are - witnesses to the saving power of God.

Perfect people?

We may think of saints as perfect people. But a saint is rather someone who has given God first place in his or her life.

This is perhaps why some of us, even if unconsciously, hold back from wanting to become a saint. We hope that just by living quiet, uncontroversial, fairly devout lives we may get through our time on this earth without too much stress, and in due course enjoy the life of the world to come.

Maybe. But the saints are made of sterner stuff. All of them, in one way or another, have taken to heart the call of Christ: 'Take up your cross.'

Carrying the cross

Some saints have lived quiet lives. St Therese, for example, understood that she could serve God in 'little things'. But she was not without spiritual struggles, and she had a cross to bear: her poor health, which took her to an early grave.

Other saints, such as Charles Lwanga of Uganda, when faced with a choice between Christ and the powers of this world, have chosen to give up their lives like Christ himself, rather than deny their faith. We call such saints 'martyrs' (which is Greek for 'witnesses').

And witnesses, in one way or another, is what Christ wants every one of us to be. For this we were baptised, for this we were confirmed, for this we receive Holy Communion, for this we are called Christians.

It may be that our witness will consist in serving Christ and the Church quietly in our family and at work (though even a 'quiet life' may have tribulations and challenges).

On the other hand, it may be that we are called to serve Christ in a more dramatic, perhaps controversial way.

Has our country produced any saints?

Has The Gambia produced any saints? We may be confident that it has, and that there are true saints among in our very own day.

Do we have enough faith and courage to join them?

The Catholic Church in this country is not simply a small community at the fringes of the Universal Church. Like Catholics everywhere, Gambian Catholics are at the heart of the Church, because they are at the heart of Christ.

Thus, in our diocese and country, we are Christ's witnesses. We should ask God for the faith and courage to bear witness to him day by day, in sincerity and truth. There is no 'off day' for Christians!

Our inheritance

In the third Eucharistic Prayer we ask God, '*...that we may obtain an inheritance with your elect, especially the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with your blessed apostles and glorious martyrs, and all the saints, on whose constant intercession in your presence we rely for unfailing help...*'

Reflecting on partnership

CATHOLIC Relief Services (CRS) held a 'Partnership Reflection Workshop' at the Shalom Retreat Centre, Fajara, on Tuesday and Wednesday, 11th and 12th September.

Taking part were representatives of eight CRS partners, including the Catholic Development Office (CaDO) and the Gambia Pastoral Institute.

The workshop dealt with roles and responsibilities in partnership. It considered the results of this year's assessment between March and June which measured progress and weaknesses in CRS dealings with its partners, and finalised an action plan.



CRS in The Gambia

Catholic Relief Services began working in The Gambia in 1964 at the invitation of Bishop Michael Moloney. Since then it has provided emergency relief, strengthened food security, tackled malnutrition, enhanced health-care services and provided education opportunities for children and their families.

In 2002 CRS became the first NGO in The Gambia to initiate a comprehensive home-based support programme for people living with HIV. The programme was subsequently adopted by the National Aids Secretariat. CRS continues to work towards achieving zero new HIV infections, zero Aids-related deaths and zero discrimination in The Gambia with support from The Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

CRS is also contributing to the fight against malaria. From 2013 to 2015 CRS was responsible for the distribution of insecticide-treated bed nets. To date, CRS has distributed 1.5 million nets to children under five, pregnant women and the greater population.

In 2014 CRS became the first NGO to secure funding to implement the Seasonal Malaria Chemo-prevention project in two of the five administrative regions .

From August 2015 to November 2015 a total of 82,524 children between the ages of 3 to 59 months were provided with two life-saving malaria preventative drugs, Drugs continue to be delivered door-to-door, with teams of Village Health Workers and fully-trained community volunteers administering the drugs to children.

CRS implements emergency response programming when disasters strike, providing food and materials for housing

repairs, as well as cash transfers so that affected people can choose the necessities they need.

Since 1943

Founded in 1943 by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, CRS now provides assistance to 130 million people in more than 90 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

A member of Caritas International, the world-wide network of Catholic humanitarian agencies, CRS provides relief in emergencies and helps people in the developing world break the cycle of poverty through community-based, sustainable development initiatives. Assistance is based on need - not race, creed or nationality.

CRS headquarters are in Baltimore, Maryland. It operates field offices on five continents. World-wide, it has approximately 5,000 employees.

The agency's original purpose was to aid the refugees of war-torn Europe. Events in the mid 1950s helped CRS to expand operations. In 1955 its name was changed to Catholic Relief Services, and over the next 10 years it opened 25 country programmes in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

In the 1970s and 1980s programmes that had begun as simple distributions of food, clothing and medicines to the poor evolved towards socio-economic development. By the late 1980s, health care, nutrition education, micro-enterprise and agriculture had become major concerns.

In the mid-1990s CRS officials clarified its mission and identity. CRS embraced a vision of global solidarity and a justice-centred focus into all its programming, using Catholic social teaching as a guide.



Question Box

What is the difference between a sin and a crime?

A CRIME is an offence under the laws of the country in which you live, whereas a sin is an offence against God.

In a just and well-ordered society it is a sin to break the laws, because they have been made for the common good.

Some sins are also crimes: for example, theft, slander, assault - all against the laws of God and man.

But some sins are not crimes. For example, it is a sin to receive Holy Communion if you are not in a state of grace: this is against Church law, but not against the law of the land.

Similarly, you commit a sin if you perform sexual acts outside marriage; but this is not necessarily (in some circumstances) against the law of the land.

You commit sin by not attending Sunday Mass, and by not praying regularly; but this is not against the law of the land.

You can commit sin by indulging in impure thoughts or by not doing what, as a Christian, you should do. So avoiding sin demands considerably more than simply not breaking the law of the land.

Some sins are grave, or mortal: they alienate man from God, corrode the soul and endanger the life to come. They should be confessed in the Sacrament of Penance.

Lesser sins weaken the soul.

It is clear that all Christians should shun sin and crime. Their conscience will tell them when they have offended God or their neighbour, or acted against the law.

You should always join in the *Confiteor* (I confess') at the beginning of Mass clearly understanding what you are saying, and saying every word with sincerity.



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4. Banjul Lemam Street	6868806	23. Lamin Village Opp Galp	6868815
5. Bansang	6969915	24. Latrikunda Sabiji	6868847
6. Basse Santa Su	6868839	25. London Corner	6868807
7. Basse Highway	6969865	26. Old Jeshwang	6868831
8. Brikama Nyambai	6968874	27. Old Yundum Market	6868843
9. Brikama Hawla Kunda	6868810	28. Sanyang	6868824
10. Brusubi Mini Market	6868819	29. Sayer Jobe Avenue	6868808
11. Brusubi Galp Station	6969873	30. Serrekunda Bartess	6868836
12. Bundung	6868821	31. Serekunda Mosque Road	6868814
13. Busumballa	6868827	32. Soma	6868837
14. Churchill's Town	6868817	33. Sukuta	6868856
15. Cooperative	6868822	34. Tabokoto	6868813
16. Dippakunda	6868812	35. Tallinding	6868809
17. Fajara	6868825	36. Westfield Opp. World Mobile	6868910
18. Farafenni	6868838	37. Westfield Next to Church	6868864
19. Kanifing Estate	6868842		



The Gambia and the First World War

ONE hundred years ago, at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, the Great War ended. Germany, bereft of manpower and supplies and faced with imminent invasion, signed an armistice with the Allies in a railway carriage outside Compiegne, in France.

The First World War left nine million soldiers dead and 21 million wounded, with Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, France and Britain each losing nearly a million or more lives. In addition, at least five million civilians died from disease, starvation or exposure.

It was all very remote from our country – then known as The Gambia Colony and Protectorate. *Or was it?*

Serving with distinction

During the gruesome First World War, gallant Gambian soldiers served with distinction in West and in East Africa. On the cenotaph in MacCarthy Square are the names of nine Gambian soldiers who died during the First World War I, which raged between 1914 and 1918.

The West African Frontier Force had been founded in 1898, and soon afterwards the British Colonial Office decided to raise a company in The Gambia, as part of the Sierra Leone Battalion. It was founded on 30th November 1901. By February 1902 the company had reached its full strength of 120 men. Thirty were Gambians, and the rest Sierra Leoneans.

War breaks out

At the outbreak of the First World War, the Gambia Company had around 130 soldiers. In September 1914 the signallers were dispatched to take part in the Cameroon Campaign. Half the company was dispatched in January 1915, and the other half in September 1915, leaving the Police Force to provide security in The Gambia.

The detachment from The Gambia served as a preliminary to the Allied advance on Yaoundé.

During an attack on heavily-entrenched positions on 3rd May 1916, Company Sergeant-Major Ebrima Jallow won the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM). During later stages of fighting, two other Gambian soldiers, Private Saljen Sidibi and Sergeant Samba Bah, were awarded the DCM.



In December 1916 the Gambia Company formed part of the Nigerian Brigade that was dispatched to German East Africa.

On 8th April 1918 the company returned to Banjul, and in November a review was held to celebrate the peace agreement - the Armistice.

As a result of the Allied victory, Germany's colonies in Africa - Kamerun (Cameroun), Togo and German East Africa (now Tanzania) - became British or French protectorates.

Priests as chaplains

During the war, French seminarians, priests and missionaries were subject to military service, and 320 French Spiritans were mobilised to serve in the forces as chaplains or medical orderlies.

The horror of the war was brought home to the Catholic community of Banjul when news arrived that Fr Gabriel Sanneh had been killed by shrapnel on 15th April 1916 at the village of Passey in northern France.

Fr Sanneh, a Senegambian priest, had been ordained at St Louis, Senegal, in 1902. From 1904 to 1907 he was attached to Banjul as *vicaire de la paroisse*. In the Great War he became a chaplain to Senegalese soldiers fighting in France, and was known for his dedication - often putting his life at risk in bringing the sacraments to the wounded and dying.

Public figures

The leading Gambian in public life from the 1880s to the early 1900s had been Sir Samuel J. Forster, who was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1886, and held office until his death in 1906. His successor was his second son, also named Sir Samuel J. Forster, who had been educated at Merton College Oxford and was the first Gambian to qualify as a barrister at the Inner Temple in London. In 1906, the Governor, Sir George Denton, had appointed him also to the Legislative Council, a position he held throughout the First World War - and indeed until his death in 1940. He was the founder of the Reform Club.

The Governor from 1914 to 1920 was Sir Edward John Cameron, and the Superior of the Catholic Mission was Fr John Meehan CSSp, who had arrived in this country in 1905, and was to remain Superior until 1948 (he died in 1954).

In



Back pain

BACK pain is common. It can be very uncomfortable, but it is not usually serious. It can affect anyone, regardless of age. But it is more common in people who are between 35 and 55 years of age.

In the majority of cases, the cause of back pain can be linked to the way that the bones, muscles and ligaments in the back work together.

The structure of the back

The back is a complex structure consisting of

- 24 small bones (vertebrae) that support the weight of your upper body and form a protective canal for the spinal cord.
- Shock-absorbing discs (intervertebral discs) that cushion the bones and allow the spine to bend.
- Ligaments that hold the vertebrae and discs together.
- Tendons to connect muscles to vertebrae.
- A spinal cord, which carries nerve signals from the brain to the rest of the body.
- Nerves.
- Muscles.

The lower part of your back is known as the lumbar region, which is made up of five vertebrae. The lumbar supports the entire weight of your upper body (plus any extra weight that you are carrying), and it is under constant pressure, particularly when you are bending, twisting and lifting.

Lumbago and sciatica

Lower back pain, also known as *lumbago*, affects seven out of 10 people at some time in their lives. Lower back pain is a pain on your back in between the bottom of your ribs and the top of your legs. It can come on suddenly or gradually, and is sometimes the result of a fall or injury. The complex structure of your lower back means that even small amounts of damage to any part of the lumbar region can cause pain and discomfort.

If a nerve in your back is irritated, the pain can spread to your buttocks and thighs. This is known as *sciatica*.

When to seek medical advice

Back pain usually lasts from a few days to a few weeks. Pain that lasts longer usually clears up after about six weeks.

If back pain is severe or persistent, seek medical advice so that a correct diagnosis can be reached and appropriate treatment given. Treatment will depend on the underlying cause. For example, pain caused by some types of arthritis may be treated using specific medicines.



Causes of back pain

Most cases of lower back pain are known as 'non-specific' because they're not caused by serious damage or disease, but by sprains, muscle strains, minor injuries or a pinched or irritated nerve.

Back pain can also be triggered by everyday activities at home or work, and by poor posture. For example, back pain may be triggered by

- bending awkwardly
- lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling incorrectly
- slouching in chairs
- standing or bending down for long periods
- twisting
- coughing, sneezing
- muscle tension
- over-stretching
- driving in hunched positions, or driving for long periods without taking a break.

Types of back pain

Back pain is categorised as:

- Acute - where your back pain occurs suddenly and lasts for less than three months, and
- Chronic - where your back pain develops gradually, over time, lasts for more than 12 weeks, and causes long-term problems.

Treating acute back pain

Most cases of acute back pain can be treated using self-help techniques. Paracetamol is usually recommended to treat acute lower back pain. If paracetamol proves ineffective, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) such as ibuprofen may be used. If your back pain is severe, your doctor may prescribe a mild opiate-based painkiller, such as codeine, which can be taken in combination with paracetamol or an NSAID.

Exercise

It's important to remain as physically active as possible. While bed rest may provide some temporary relief from your symptoms, prolonged bed rest will make your symptoms worse. Recommended exercises for back pain include walking and gentle stretching.

If you have chronic back pain, your doctor may refer you to a physiotherapist - a qualified specialist who will be able to help you to improve your range of movement.

Exercises like walking or swimming strengthen the muscles that support your back without putting any strain on it, or subjecting it to a sudden jolt.

There are some simple exercises you can do in your own home to relieve back pain:

- **Wall slides.** Stand with your back against a wall with your feet shoulder-width apart. Slide down into a crouch so your knees are bent to about 90 degrees. Count to five and then slide back up the wall. Repeat five times.
- **Leg raises** - Lie flat on your back on the floor. Lift each heel in turn just off the floor while keeping your legs straight. Repeat five times.

- **Bottom lifts** - Lie flat on your back on the floor. Bend your knees so your feet are flat on the floor. Then lift your bottom in the air by tightening your stomach muscles while keeping your back straight. Repeat five times.

At first you should do these exercises once or twice a day, and then gradually increase to doing them six times a day, as your back allows.



Posture

How you sit, stand and lie down can have an important effect on your back.

Standing. You should stand upright, with your head facing forward and your back straight. Balance your weight evenly on both feet and keep your legs straight.

Sitting. You should be able to sit upright with support in the small of your back. Your knees and hips should be level, and your feet should be flat on the floor. Some people find it useful to use a small cushion or rolled-up towel to support the small of the back. If you use a computer keyboard, make sure your forearms are horizontal and your elbows are at right angles.

Driving. Make sure your lower back is properly supported. Correctly positioning your wing mirrors will prevent you from having to twist around. Foot controls should be squarely in front of your feet. If driving long distances, take regular breaks so you can stretch your legs.

Sleeping. Your mattress should be firm enough to support your body while supporting the weight of your shoulders and buttocks, keeping your spine straight. If your mattress is too soft, place a firm board on top of the base of your bed and under the mattress. Support your head with a pillow, but make sure your neck isn't forced up at a steep angle.

Get rid of mould!

THE RAINS may be over, but throughout October the atmosphere is still humid. At home the dampness, especially in dark, warm places like cupboards, can produce mould on clothing and furnishings.

Mould can't flourish where there's light and a current of air. Even if it looks rather untidy, it's a good idea to leave wardrobe doors open until the end of the humid season.

If clothing and fabrics are damp and mouldy, normal washing should remove stains. If necessary, you can add just a little bleach to the washing water.

If your upholstery is suffering from mould, take the item outside where possible, and knock surface mildew off with a stiff brush. Air the item in the sun. If spots remain, dab with mild disinfectant and rinse.

Black spots on furniture can indicate mould. Don't just varnish over them, treat them first with bleach.

You can use a mixture of bleach and water to wash down tiles in your bathroom and kitchen. Or use a proprietary cleaner from a supermarket.

NOTE: Eau de javel is much less strong than regular bleach. Make sure you dilute bleach adequately. Keep bleach away from children. Experiment with a small area to be cleaned before applying generally. Wear gloves when you are applying it.

What's the time?

THE FIRST Sunday in October is the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, which means that only eight Sundays remain before the end of the Church's year.

'Hasn't time flown!' our older readers may say. And indeed, as we grow older, time does seem to go faster than it used to.



Noting the time, particularly in this 21st century, means a lot to all of us, whether it's the time of day, the week, the month or the year. The exact time is regularly announced on the radio, and we often glance at our watch or mobile telephone to see what the time is. We expect others to be on time. The efficiency of business, industry and the public services depends on good time-keeping - though there are plenty of us who are careless about 'being on time'.

The mobile and the internet enable us to keep in touch with each another, whether on business or socially. And news - good or bad - flashes round the world in seconds. But it was not always so. Our forebears, particularly those in rural areas, took note of the movement of the sun, observed the seasons, but didn't need to know the exact time or date. They weren't 'slaves to time', as some people are today.

The passage of time is inexorable. Births, birthdays, first communions, confirmations and funerals come and go - some, rather more often than we'd like. 'The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away.' (Job 1:21)

The Church's calendar leads us through the times and seasons: Advent, Christmas, the Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and the Ordinary Sundays of the Year. The saints are commemorated on particular days. The pilgrim Church is always moving on through time - just as we all move on in family and community life.

We are often reminded to live each day as if it were our last day. The young may think they will live for ever, but in fact, any one of us may meet a sudden end. That's why Catholics ask Mary, 'Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.'

The moment that truly matters is the present - now, today.

We should not put off until tomorrow what we should do today, particularly in moral matters. 'O that today you would listen to his voice!' (Psalm 95:7). 'Behold, now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation.' (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Regret for past actions or inactions is a highly corrosive emotion, particularly when we have omitted some deed or kindness that we should have performed. In the General Confession before Mass we all admit to have sinned 'in what I have failed to do'.

Of course, God forgives the worst of sins, if we repent. But we need to be aware of the need not to waste the time that is given to us. This may mean going to confession and not putting it off ('one day I'll go...') and repairing relations with those we've fallen out with.

As we move forward in the Church's life, and in our personal lives, let us enrich the time to come by seizing every opportunity to serve others.

Time flies. *Tempus fugit*. But we need not fear the passage of time if we see life as God-given and God-directed.

Gratias Deo super inenarrabili dono eius*Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15*

Sunday Reflections

Reflections, readings and prayers for Mass on all the Sundays in October & November. *The colour for Sundays in Ordinary Time is green.***7th October
27th Sunday in
Ordinary Time****Life-long commitment**

FROM time to time, many people, including some Catholics, assert that this or that Church teaching is too harsh or rigid.

In the case of marriage and divorce, the Church's unchanging teaching derives from the clear word of Christ himself, as related in today's Gospel. 'From the beginning of creation God made them male and female...What God has united, man must not divide.' Jesus was referring to the second of the two accounts of creation given in Genesis (today's First Reading).

Marriage is the lifelong commitment of a man and a woman, come what may, to love and succour one another. The sacrament is of such binding significance that we refer to the Church herself as Christ's bride. The Church is bound to Christ, and he is bound to the Church, in a relationship of love so profound and intense that we learn from it that in all human relationships, above all in marriage, we must seek wholeness and self-sacrificing love - the love of Christ for his Church.

Collect

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, who in the abundance of your kindness surpass the merits and the desires of those who entreat you, pour out your mercy upon us, to pardon what conscience dreads and to give what prayer does not dare to ask...

Readings: Genesis 2:18-24. Psalm 127. Response: May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives. Hebrews 2:9-11.

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

Gospel: Mark 10: 2-16.

Prayer over the Offerings

ACCEPT, O Lord, we pray, the sacrifices instituted by your commands, and, through the sacred mysteries which we celebrate with dutiful service, graciously complete the sanctifying work by which you are pleased to redeem us...

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

Prayer after Communion

GRANT us, almighty God, that we may be refreshed and nourished by the Sacrament we have received, so as to be transformed into what we consume.

**14th October
28th Sunday in
Ordinary Time****Wisdom**

THE BOOK of Wisdom was written about 100 years before the time of Christ by an unknown member of the Jewish community in Alexandria, Egypt. Like other 'Wisdom' books in the Old Testament, it extols God as the source of all wisdom, anticipating St Paul's exclamation, 'To God only-wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever!' (Romans 16:19).

Only God is wise; but we can become closer to him by seeking a measure of wisdom, like the rich man who knelt before Jesus and asked what he must do to inherit eternal life.

This earnest man fully observed the Jewish religious law; but Jesus told him, bluntly, that this was not enough. He must give up all he had, and follow Jesus.

The man's face fell. He went away. Asking for complete submission was asking too much.

Before we condemn this man, we should reflect that though we may be faithful in terms of Sunday Mass, daily prayers and doing a certain amount for our neighbour, almost all of us keep back part of our lives for our own gratification, rather than putting Christ first. Yet Our Lord told his disciples that anyone who gave up everything for him and the gospel would be repaid 'a hundred times over'.

Let us therefore seek wisdom.

The poet T.S. Eliot warned: 'All our ignorance brings us nearer to death. But nearness to death no nearer to God. Where is the life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?'

Do you want information? Go to the Internet.

Do you seek knowledge? Try to understand whatever information you've gathered.

But to attain wisdom, open your heart and mind to Christ!

Collect

MAY your grace, O Lord, we pray, at all times go before us, and follow after, and make us always determined to carry out good works...

Readings: Wisdom 7:7-11. Psalm 89, 12-17. Response: Fill us with your love, that we may rejoice. Hebrews 4:12-13.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children...



Gospel: Mark 10: 17-30.

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 any one of the eight Prefaces provided for Sundays in Ordinary Time.*

Prayer after Communion

WE entreat your majesty most humbly, O Lord, that, as you feed us with the nourishment which comes from the most holy Body and Blood of your Son, so you may make us sharers of his divine nature...

21st October

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mission Sunday)

The cost of discipleship

Why do many of Christ's followers face suffering?

We all hope to avoid discomfort and pain, whether physical or mental. Yet suffering is common human experience, and none of us can entirely escape it. That, in today's Gospel, is what Jesus' disciples James and John didn't understand. Jesus told them that he had come into the world to serve. That service was to culminate in the offering of his life: to his disciples, an unthinkable dreadful end.

We, Christ's followers, may well have to face suffering - suffering that may be inexplicable or seem unjust.

We should take comfort that Christ himself suffered for us, and seek to offer our sufferings to God in union with his own passion. Then in due course we shall enter his kingdom.

The martyrs, those who have given their lives to Christ, often through great suffering, show us the way.

Collect

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, grant that we may always conform our will to yours, and serve your majesty in sincerity of heart...

Readings: Isaiah 53:10-11. Psalm 32:4-5,18-20,22. Response: May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you. Hebrews 4:14-16.

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

Gospel: Mark 10:35-45.

Prayer over the Offerings

GRANT us, Lord, we pray, a sincere respect for your gifts, that, through the purifying action of your grace, we may be cleansed by the very mysteries we serve...

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

Prayer after Communion

GRANT, O Lord, we pray, that, benefiting from participation in heavenly things, we may be helped by what you give us in this present age, and prepared for the gifts that are eternal...

Instead of what is given above, today's prayers and readings may be taken from the Mass for the Evangelisation of Peoples.



28th October
30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

'Shout with joy!'

THE PROPHET Jeremiah is often associated with gloom, but in today's First Reading he commands in the Lord's name, 'Proclaim! Praise! Shout! The Lord has saved his people..!'

We followers of Christ should certainly shout for joy. Not only at Mass but throughout every day we should feel glad to be alive - truly alive in Christ.

We are told in today's Gospel that the blind beggar Bartimæus shouted aloud - he believed that Jesus could restore his sight. And when Jesus did so, Bartimæus followed him - and became a disciple.

Why did Jesus do so much, in an instant, for the blind beggar? Because Bartimæus had faith: 'Your faith has saved you'.

Is our faith in Jesus as strong as that of Bartimæus? Do we even acknowledge our moral and spiritual blindness? Do we proclaim, praise, shout our joy and thankfulness that in Christ we have all we need?

Collect

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, increase our hope, faith and charity, and make us love what you command, so that we may merit what you promise...

Readings: Jeremiah 31:7-9. Psalm 125. Response: What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed, we were glad. Hebrews 5:1-6.

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

Gospel: Mark 10: 45-52

Prayer over the Offerings

LOOK, we pray, O Lord, on the offerings we make to your majesty, that whatever is done by us in your service may be directed above all to your glory...

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

Prayer after Communion

MAY your Sacraments, O Lord, we pray, protect in us what lies within them, that what we now celebrate in signs we may one day possess in truth...

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



Thursday 1st November All Saints

Lights of hope

ALL Saints' is a holy day of obligation; yet many do not give the celebration the attention it deserves.

Let us pray that we may benefit from what we acclaim in the Apostles' Creed as 'the communion of saints'. The saints are 'the great cloud of witnesses' (Hebrews 12:1) 'too great to count', as today's first reading tells us.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has described life as 'a journey on the sea of history, often dark and stormy, a voyage in which we watch for the stars that indicate our route.'

Benedict continued: 'The true stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives. They are lights of hope. Certainly, Jesus Christ is the true light, the sun who has risen above all the shadows of history. But to reach him we also need lights close by - people who shine with his light, and so guide us along our way.'

The saints are our guides and our friends. They pray with us, and they pray for us. Let us ask the Lord that we will one day, by his mercy and grace, join them. *See page 6*

Collect

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, by whose gift we venerate in one celebration the merits of all the Saints, bestow on us, we pray, by the merits of so many intercessors, an abundance of the reconciliation with you for which we earnestly long...

Readings: Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14. Psalm 23:1-6. Response: Such are the men who seek your face, O Lord. 1 John 3:1-3.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest, says the Lord...

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12.

Prayer over the Offerings

MAY these offerings we bring in honour of all the Saints be pleasing to you, O Lord, and grant that, just as we believe the Saints to be already assured of immortality, so we may experience their concern for our salvation...

Preface

...for today by your gift we celebrate the festival of your city, the heavenly Jerusalem, our mother, where the great army of our brothers and sisters already gives you eternal praise. Towards her we eagerly hasten as pilgrims advancing by faith, rejoicing in the glory bestowed upon those exalted members of the Church, through whom you give us, in our frailty, both strength and good example...

Prayer after Communion

AS we adore you, O God, who alone are holy and wonderful in all your Saints, we implore your grace, so that, coming to perfect holiness in the fullness of your love, we may pass from this pilgrim table to the banquet of our heavenly homeland...



Friday 2nd November: Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed

See page 17

Please note: The Church provides several Masses for All Souls Day. The Mass below is an example. The priest may use other texts.

Collect

O GOD, who willed that your Only Begotten Son, having conquered death, should pass over into the realm of heaven, grant, we pray, to your departed servants that, with the mortality of this life overcome, they may gaze eternally on you, their Creator and Redeemer...

Readings: Isaiah 25:6-9. Psalm 26:1-4,7-9,13-14. Response: The Lord is my light and my help. Romans 5:5-11.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... It is my Father's will, says the Lord, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given to me, and that I should raise it up on the last day...

Gospel: Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6.

Prayer over the Offerings

RECEIVE, O Lord, in your kindness, the sacrificial offering we make for all your servants who sleep in Christ, that, set free from the bonds of death by this singular sacrifice, they may merit eternal life...

Preface

For even though by our own fault we perish, yet by your compassion and your grace, when seized by death according to our sins, we are redeemed through Christ's great victory, and with him called back into life...

Prayer after Communion

THROUGH the sacrificial gifts which we have received, O Lord, bestow on your departed servants your great mercy, and, to those you have endowed the grace of Baptism, grant also the fullness of eternal joy...

4th November 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

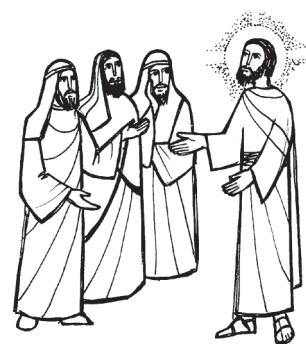
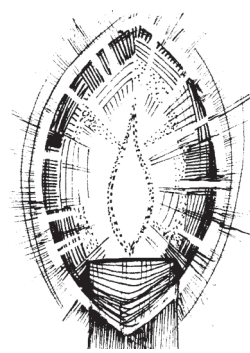
In fulfilment of the Scriptures

THE FIRST of today's readings comes from Deuteronomy, the book of Jewish law most often quoted in the New Testament.

Deuteronomy is notable for laws which are merciful and compassionate, and the part of Deuteronomy known as the Deuteronomic Code has been called the finest essence of the Jewish faith.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told the crowds: 'Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil.' (Matthew 5:17).

Thus it was, as related in today's Gospel reading, that Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy the solemn commandment that the Jewish people must love God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength. He went on to quote the Old Testament Book of Leviticus: that God's people must love their neighbour as much as they love themselves. (Leviticus 19:18). Some of the



teaching of the prophets in its finest form is enshrined in Leviticus 19 with its concern for the poor, the blind, the deaf, the old and the stranger.

All mankind's deepest yearnings for truth and goodness, so often recorded in the Old Testament, are summed up in Jesus - in his teaching and in his unsurpassable love.

Today's Gospel tells how Jesus told a scribe who sought moral guidance that he should love God and his neighbour. That is Jesus Christ's advice to us all. If, like the scribe, we seek to be 'not far from the kingdom of heaven', we don't need complex rules: we need only, before all else, to love God and love our neighbour.

Easier said than done. Let us ask God for courage and grace.

Collect

ALMIGHTY and merciful God, by whose gift your faithful offer you right and praiseworthy service, grant, we pray, that we may hasten without stumbling to receive the things you have promised...

Readings: Deuteronomy 6:2-6. Psalm 37:2-4,47,51. Response: I love you, Lord, my strength. Hebrews 7:23-28.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life: you have the message of eternal life...

Gospel: Mark 12:28-34

Prayer over the Offerings

May these sacrificial offerings, O Lord, become for you a pure oblation, and for us a holy outpouring of your mercy...

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

Prayer after Communion

May the working of your power, O Lord, increase in us, we pray, so that, renewed by these heavenly Sacraments, we may be prepared by your gift for receiving what they promise...

11th November 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Service and sacrifice

CHRISTIANITY began as a religion of the poor, the despised and the persecuted. Then, in the 4th century, the Emperor Constantine became a convert, and Christianity became the official religion.

A good thing, you may say. A wonderful thing. Yes - but one result was that in some circles being Christian became respectable, prestigious, something to be proud of in the wrong way.

Some Christians came to resemble the Pharisees of Jesus' time, fussy and proud about external observance. Yet, in contrast, our religion is one of service and sacrifice. The poor widow in today's Gospel put only a small sum into the Temple collection-box. But to her it was a huge amount - she was making a great sacrifice.

The rich who parade their religion and culture as though everyone and everything else is inferior: what are they offering to God and man? A religious façade; an outward show.

Let us, in humility, be sincere in all we say and do.



Collect

ALMIGHTY and merciful God, graciously keep us from all adversity, so that, unhindered in mind and body alike, we may pursue in freedom of heart the things that are yours...

Readings: 1 Kings 17:10-16. Psalm 145:7-10. Response: My soul, give praise to the Lord. Hebrews 9:24-28.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Even if you have to die, says the Lord, keep faithful, and I will give you the crown of life...

Gospel: Mark 12:38-44.

Prayer over the Offerings

LOOK with favour, we pray, O Lord, upon the sacrificial gifts offered here, that, celebrating in mystery the Passion of your Son, we may honour it with loving devotion...

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

Prayer after Communion

NOURISHED by this sacred gift, O Lord, we give you thanks and beseech your mercy, that, by the pouring forth of your Spirit, the grace of integrity may endure in those your heavenly power has entered...

Today is observed as Remembrance Sunday, when we commemorate those who died in the two World Wars (1914-18 and 1939-45), and other conflicts. See pages 4 and 9.

18th November 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The last days

WE'RE almost at the end of the Church's year. Appropriately, today's readings from near the end of St Mark's Gospel contain Christ's teaching on the 'last days'.

The early Christians believed that the last days were at hand. But two thousand years have passed, and human life on Earth continues, with its achievements and failures. Christ himself tells us that no-one knows when the last hour will come, 'neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son; no one but the Father'.

We cannot know when or how our Earth itself will end. Yet we do know, each one of us, that our own time on Earth is limited. We need not fear: we believe that God's love for each of us, in Christ, is so great that it transcends time and space. On earth and in the life to come, his love embraces us.

But what if we reject or ignore God's love?

Our response to God in this life may determine what becomes of us after death. We need not fear, if only we seek to live this present life as Christ himself wishes.

Collect

GRANT us, we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being devoted to you, for it is full and lasting happiness to serve with constancy the author of all that is good...

Readings: Daniel 12:1-3. Psalm 15:5,8-11. Response: Preserve me, God; I take refuge in you; Hebrews 10:11-14,18.



Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Stand awake and stand ready, because you do not know the hour when the Son of Man is coming...

Gospel: Mark 13:24-32

Prayer over the Offerings

GRANT, O Lord, we pray, that what we offer in the sight of your majesty may obtain for us the grace of being devoted to you, and gain us the prize of everlasting happiness...

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

Prayer after Communion

WE have partaken of the gifts of this sacred mystery, humbling imploring, O Lord, that what your Son commanded us to do in memory of him may bring us growth in him...

Sunday 25th November
Jesus Christ,
Universal King

Unique kingship

THERE aren't many monarchs in today's world, but we continue to be fascinated to some degree by the mystique of monarchy: the king or queen in a grand palace, amidst power and pomp, expecting loyalty and obedience. Then, in our own age of pop 'celebrities', there are other kinds of 'king': the adulated stars of sport and entertainment.



What a contrast, all this, to the state of Jesus!

The Jewish religious authorities wanted to get rid of Jesus. Under Roman rule they weren't allowed to claim his life on religious grounds, so they dragged him before Pilate, the Roman Governor, on the grounds that Jesus was seeking to subvert Roman rule and become 'King of the Jews'.

It was a gross lie. But the governor felt obliged to ask Jesus, 'Are you the king of the Jews?'

Jesus told Pilate that he was indeed a king - but 'My kingdom is not of this world.'

Christ's birth, his teaching and healing, his death and resurrection, are God the Father's way of showing us his kingdom: a kingdom that embraces time past, time present, time to come - the destiny of everyone. For this kingdom,

Christ offered his life.

All we've read in Scripture since last Advent - the Old Testament and the New, the Epistles and the Gospels - amounts to this: that there is not, and never can be, any other king remotely like our Lord Jesus Christ. As the Preface for today puts it, he redeemed the human race so that 'he might present to the immensity of your majesty an eternal and universal kingdom, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, peace and love...'

Let us in thankfulness acknowledge that Jesus offers each of us a share in God's kingdom; and let us accept his gracious rule.

Collect

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, whose will it is to restore all things in your beloved Son, the King of the universe, grant, we pray, that the whole creation, set free from slavery, may render your majesty service and ceaselessly proclaim your praise...

Readings: Daniel 7:13-14. Psalm 92:1,2,5. Response: The Lord is king, with majesty enrobed. Revelation 1:5-8.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David!...

Gospel: John 18:33-37.

Prayer over the Offerings

AS we offer you, O Lord, the sacrifice by which the human race is reconciled to you, we humbly pray that your Son may bestow on all nations the gifts of unity and peace...

Preface

...For you anointed your Only Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, with the oil of gladness as Eternal Priest and King of all creation, so that, by offering himself on the altar of the Cross as a spotless sacrifice to bring us peace, he might accomplish the mysteries of human redemption, and, making all created things subject to his rule, he might present to the immensity of your majesty an eternal and universal kingdom, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, peace and love...

Prayer after Communion

HAVING received the food of immortality, we ask, O Lord, that, glorifying in obedience to the commands of Christ, the King of the universe, we may live with him eternally in his heavenly kingdom...

In communion with the women saints, we pray:

LORD, through the women martyrs, strengthen your Church in time of trial.

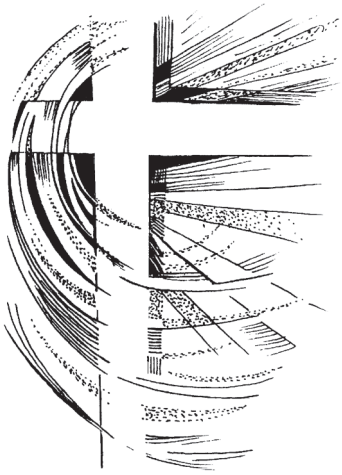
Through the married women who graced the lives of the human family, renew the Church in her apostolic mission.

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.





Achieving holiness

DOES the Church still teach the doctrine of purgatory? This is a question often asked, because in homilies Catholics may seldom hear any mention of the topic.

Yes - purgatory is very much part of the Faith.

Yet the doctrine may be considerably misunderstood by Protestants, and even by some Catholics.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church has only three, but very important, paragraphs on purgatory.

The first paragraph reads: 'All who die in God's grace and friendship, but are still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.' (1030)

Alien?

Many Protestants think of the concept of purgatory as alien. 'Find it in the Bible,' they say. And indeed, you won't find the word 'purgatory' in the Bible. But neither will you find 'Trinity' or 'Incarnation'.

Yet there is a scriptural basis for purgatory. The tradition of prayer for the dead (indicating that they are not in total union with God in heaven) is mentioned in the Old Testament Book of Maccabees: '[Judas Maccabeus] took up a collection among his soldiers which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for expiatory sacrifice. In doing this, he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless to pray for them in death.' (2 Maccabees 12:43)

Consider, too, these words of Jesus: 'People will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against

the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.' (Matthew 12:31-32). St Gregory wrote, 'From this sentence we understand that certain offences can be forgiven in this age, and certain others in the age to come' - that is, after death.

Why is the doctrine necessary?

Purgatory is an important teaching because it helps us understand, as clearly as humanly possible, what it means to have a relationship with God and how the consequences of our sins detract from the perfect relationship with God in heaven.

Some Christian denominations struggle with this doctrine of purification. They believe that Jesus died for all sin, and that if you accept Jesus' saving death your sins are covered. With this, you simply go to heaven. And for some Christians, the belief is that once you are saved, you cannot lose salvation - no matter what you do. According to such beliefs, there is no middle ground, and no purgatory.

But our Catholic faith insists that the middle ground - purgatory - is essential because as free human beings, wounded as we are, we are personally responsible and answerable for our sins. We must understand what sin really means, and this can be accomplished after death.

Perfect union

It is not that Jesus' death is not sufficient for us. It is. But we are partners with Jesus in allowing a perfect union with God to take place. It is sin on our part that prevents perfect union, and that is what purgatory is about: healing the unforgiven sin in our souls.

Heaven is our perfect union with God, which is what heaven is: 'Be perfect, just as your heavenly father is perfect.' (Matthew 5:38).

It is important to understand that those who die without mortal sin are truly saved. They know it. They are ecstatic about that knowledge, and it can never be taken away from them. They are saved and are already in union with God by sanctifying grace, though it is not yet perfect or complete.

Essential component in Christian hope

JOHN Polkinghorne, an Anglican priest and former Cambridge professor of mathematical physics, wrote in his book, 'Living with Hope':

'A process of purgation will surely be an indispensable preliminary before we are allowed to approach nearer to the holy reality of God... The idea of purification, and the concept of purgatory that goes with it, are essential components in the Christian hope for the life of the world to come.'

Polkinghorne quotes St Paul: 'For no one can lay any foundation than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. Now if any one builds on that foundation ... the work of that builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. If the work is burned, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire.' (1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

Kaadu Dunda Gi - the Living Word

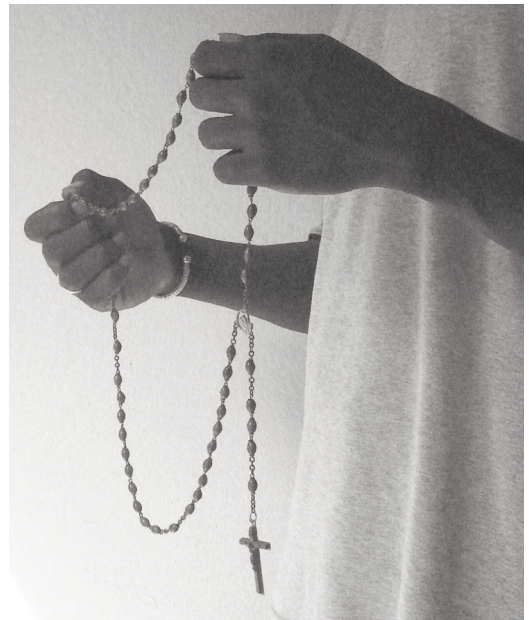
Every Sunday at 1pm, GRTS

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The Rosary

Our daily discourse with Jesus and Mary



FOR centuries, countless Catholics have found that saying the rosary regularly greatly nourishes their faith.

OCTOBER is the Month of the Rosary. But we should say the rosary throughout the year: daily, in fact.

The term 'rosary' comes from Latin. It refers to a garland of roses, the rose being one of the flowers that symbolise the Virgin Mary.

The rosary is a biblical form of devotion, because the prayers that comprise it come mainly from the Bible.



HOW TO SAY THE ROSARY

The rosary consists of a set number of specific prayers. We use rosary beads to help us say the prayers in order.

First come the introductory prayers: the Apostles' Creed, the Our Father, three Hail Marys and the Glory be.

Between the introductory prayers and the two concluding prayers is the substance of the rosary: the decades.

The decades

Each decade has thirteen prayers: ten Hail Marys followed by Our Father, Glory be and the short prayer, 'O my Jesus'.

Each decade is devoted to a mystery (a truth of the faith) in the life of Christ or his mother.

The twenty decades of the rosary are divided into four groups of five:

- the joyful mysteries
- the sorrowful mysteries
- the glorious mysteries
- the luminous mysteries.

When people speak of 'saying the rosary' they usually mean saying one set of five mysteries each day (joyful, luminous, sorrowful or glorious).

This takes about fifteen minutes.

To say all twenty mysteries would take about an hour.

If you say the rosary every day, you may divide each set of five mysteries as follows:

Monday and Saturday: the joyful mysteries

- The annunciation of Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:26-38)
- The visitation of Mary to Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56)
- The birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-21)
- The presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:22-38)
- The finding of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)

Thursday: the luminous mysteries

- The baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13-16)
- The wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11)
- The proclamation of the Kingdom (Mark 1:14-15)
- The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8)
- The Last Supper (Matthew 26:36-56)

Friday: the sorrowful mysteries

- The agony in the garden (Luke 22:39-46)
- The scourging at the pillar (Matthew 27:31)
- The crowning with thorns (Matthew 27:31)
- The carrying of the cross (Matthew 27:32)
- The crucifixion (Matthew 27:33-56)

Wednesday and Sunday: the glorious mysteries

- The resurrection (John 20:1-29)
- The ascension (Luke 24: 36-53)
- The descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 1-41)
- The assumption of Mary
- The coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven

During Advent, Lent and Eastertide a different daily pattern of the mysteries may be adopted.



The PRAYERS of the ROSARY

The Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed was not composed by the apostles themselves, but it expresses their teaching. The original form of the creed came into use about AD125.

I BELIEVE in God the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Our Father (*Pater noster*; the Lord's Prayer)

The next prayer of the rosary, the Our Father (*Pater noster*) is given in the New Testament in two versions (Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4).

The version in Matthew is the one we use.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

The Hail Mary (*Ave Maria*)

HAIL Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Hail Mary is the prayer at the heart of the rosary.

It begins, 'Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.' This is the greeting that the angel Gabriel gives Mary in Luke 1:28.

It continues, 'Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.' This is what Mary's cousin Elizabeth says to her in Luke 1:42.

The only thing that has been added to these two verses are the names 'Jesus' and 'Mary', to make clear who is being referred to. So the first part of the Hail Mary is entirely biblical.

The second part of the Hail Mary is not taken straight from Scripture, but is biblical in the thoughts it expresses. It reads, 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.'

Mary was the first to accept Jesus (Luke 1:45). The title 'Mother of God' means that her Son Jesus is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, truly God and truly man.

Some non-Catholic Christians may feel uneasy about the petition, 'Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.' They consider that such a prayer contradicts St Paul's teaching in 1 Timothy 2:5: 'For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.'

But in the preceding four verses (1 Timothy 2:1-4) Paul instructs Christians to pray for each other, meaning that it

doesn't interfere with Christ's mediation. 'I urge that prayers, supplications, petitions and thanksgivings be made for everyone ... This is good and pleasing to God our Saviour.'

We know that this exhortation to others applies to the saints in heaven. As Revelation 5:8 reveals, the saints intercede for us by offering our prayers to God: 'The twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.'

Glory be (*Gloria Patri*)

The fourth prayer in the rosary is the Glory be. This short hymn of thanksgiving has been used since the fourth century (though its present form is from the seventh century). It is recited at the end of each psalm in the Divine Office.

GLORY be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

O my Jesus

After the Glory be, throughout the five decades, comes the short prayer, O my Jesus.

O MY Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of thy mercy. Amen

Hail, holy Queen (*Salve Regina*)

At the end of the five decades we usually recite the Hail, holy Queen. It's the most commonly-recited prayer in praise of Mary after the Hail Mary itself. It was composed at the end of the eleventh century.

HAIL holy Queen, mother of mercy; our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thy eyes of mercy towards us. And after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Final prayer

To conclude the rosary, we add a final prayer:

O GOD, whose only-begotten Son by his life, death and resurrection has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant, we beseech thee, that by meditating on these mysteries of the most holy rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



Our faith tells us that Christ is as really present today as he was to his mother and his disciples.

**With the rosary we sit at the school of Mary,
and are led to contemplate the beauty of Christ,
and to experience the depth of his love.**



**Fr Thomas Jobe in 1933,
newly ordained**

Gambian Christian Anniversaries October & November

EIGHTY-FIVE YEARS AGO: On 1st October 1933 in Paris, Bishop Louis Le Hunsec ordained Fr Thomas Jobe, who 11 years before had left The Gambia to train for the priesthood.

Thomas Gregory Jobe was born in Banjul in September 1906. In 1922 he won a scholarship to the newly-established Methodist Boy's High School, but declined it, and taught for three years at St Augustine's School. From 1925 to 1926 he studied at an institute in Dakar run by Holy Ghost Fathers (where one of his closest friends was Léopold Senghor, later President of Senegal). He then went to

the junior seminary at Allex, in the Department of Drôme, south-eastern France. From 1929 to 1934 he studied at the Holy Spirit seminary in Paris, and in October 1934 returned as a priest to The Gambia, where the Catholic Mission was headed by Fr John Meehan. Fr Jobe celebrated his first Mass in The Gambia on 15th October 1934, when Fr Harold Whiteside said, 'Receive him with joy into your midst. He is of your soil, of your race, he understands your mentality, your language, your customs, better than any European priest can ever do.'

In addition to his pastoral duties, Fr Jobe was organist and choirmaster of the St Cecilia Choir at the Hagan Street church (not yet a cathedral), and taught Latin, French and English. But relations with his Irish colleagues were unhappy, and in 1944 he left without saying goodbye. Fr Jobe became Director of the Junior Seminary at Carabanne in Casamance. Continuing difficulties with other priests in The Gambia led to the discontinuation of his priestly functions.

In Paris Fr Jobe worked for the publisher, *Présence Africaine*. Then, in 1960, following Senegalese Independence, President Senghor offered Fr Jobe Senegalese citizenship, and appointed him Representative to Unesco. Fr Jobe subsequently served as Senegalese Ambassador to Ghana and to Italy. In 1968 he retired to Côte d'Ivoire. He returned finally to The Gambia in 1975, where he lived quietly in Banjul and was much respected. He died in 1995.

8th October 1878 (140 years ago): Death of the Superior of the Mission, Fr Renoux, who had arrived only six months earlier, on 11th April.

15th October 1884: Opening of Bethel Methodist Church in Stanley Street, Banjul.

26th October 1905: Fr John Meehan CSSp, who had been ordained in Paris the previous year, arrived in The Gambia. His three fellow priests in Banjul at that time were Fr Pierre Wieder and Fr Miesterman, Holy Ghost Fathers from Alsace, northern France, and a Senegambian priest, Fr Gabriel Sanneh, who was Vicaire de la Paroisse.

28th October 1932: Arrival of Fr McEnnis to take over the management of the schools. But in April the following year he was diagnosed as suffering from tuberculosis and invalided back to Ireland, never to return.

21st November 1936: Fr Joseph Charles Mendy arrived from a retreat in Dakar, bringing with him an English priest, Fr Harold Whiteside.

27th October 1938 (80 years ago): Arrival of Fr Michael Moloney (later Bishop Moloney).

10th October 1945: Arrival of Fr James White, who died in The Gambia in February 1996.

1st November 1948 (70 years ago): Opening of St Therese's Elementary School, with 114 pupils.

30th November 1949: The Methodist Church at Cape St Mary was licensed for marriages.

30th November 1951: Fr Moloney was named Prefect of the Banjul Mission, which had been designated a Prefecture Apostolic on 15th April that year.

16th October 1952: Arrival of Fr William Costelloe and Fr Reginald Gillooly (the latter now living in retirement in Dublin).

26th October 1958 (Christ the King; 60 years ago): Enthronement of Bishop Moloney (right) as first Bishop of Banjul, the Hagan Street Church having become his Cathedral.



3rd October 1959: Building began in Bakau of Stella Maris Church (Star of the Sea).

17th November 1961: Publication of a Government Bill establishing the Common Entrance Examination for all publicly-funded secondary schools.

17th October 1962: Founding of Pioneer Total Abstinence Association.

17th October 1966: Arrival of Fr John Hogan.

3rd October 1967: Arrival of Fr Michael Casey (right).

28th October 1968 (50 years ago): Arrival of the first Presentation Sisters, Sr Cecilia and Sr Margaret.

12th November 1968 (50 years ago): Arrival of Br Liam Sheridan and Br Benedict Stapleton to begin a new technical school in Lamin.

27th October 1970: Arrival of Fr Robert Ellison (later, Bishop Ellison). PIX

11th October 1972: Fr John Sharpe moved to Kunkujang to found a mission station.

12th November 1972: Blessing by Bishop Moloney of the Junior Seminary at Fajara, in the building which is now the Ecôle Française. The first Director was Fr Pierre Sagna (later, Bishop Sagna). Among the 19 seminarians were Fr Anthony Gabisi and Fr Peter Gomez. PIX Sagna

4th November 1976: First meeting of all Mission personnel to work out a pastoral plan for the diocese.

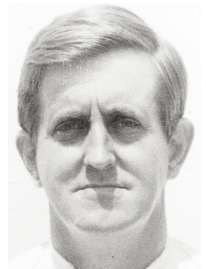
29th October 1977: Death of James Ndow, first Gambian Principal of Gambia High School.

31st October 1981: Departure of Fr Michael Murray, owing to ill-health.

23rd November 1983 (35 years ago): Death in Ireland of Fr Francis Farrell.

23rd November 1984: Arrival of Fr Peter Conaty.

28th October 1988 (30 years ago): Arrival of Fr Philip Crowe, who had been ordained in Ireland four months earlier by Bishop Michael Moloney.



18th November 1999: Funeral in Banjul of Tony Blain, former Director of Education, who had died in the USA.

6th November 2000: President Yahya Jammeh appointed Bishop Michael Cleary an honorary Commander of the Order of the Republic of The Gambia (CRG).

13th November 2000: Death of Rachel Palmer, former Head of the School of Nursing, Banjul.

13th October 2002: Death in Ireland of Fr Vincent Comer, former Principal of St Peter's Technical High School Lamin, and Vicar-General of the diocese. He had first arrived in The Gambia over 40 years previously, in January 1962.

26th November 2004: Opening of St Vincent de Paul Amdalai.

6th October 2005: Death in Ireland of Sr Benigna Kearney (*right*), who had taught in The Gambia for more than 50 years.



24th November 2007: Archbishop Theodore-Adrien Sarr of Dakar was among 23 new cardinals created by Pope Benedict XVI.

17th October 2008 (10 years ago): Death in the USA of Arthur K. Carrol, Methodist who after retirement as head of the Gambia Public Transport Corporation worked for the Catholic charity, Caritas. Mr Carrol's funeral was held at Wesley Methodist Church Banjul on 7th November.

10th-18th November 2008 (10 years ago): A former Director of GPI, Fr Peter Conaty, returned to The Gambia after 20 years to lead a workshop on the liturgy for priests, religious and choir leaders. PIX

21st November 2008 (10 years ago): Fr John Mendy was ordained at Farafenni by Bishop Ellison.

29th November 2008 (10 years ago): At the Kanifing Novitiate of the Cluny Sisters, Sr Vivian Aduni, Sr Benedicta Peligabase, Ghanaians, and Sr Marie Sylva, Gambian, made their first profession.

1st October 2009: Death in Ireland of Fr Andrew Carroll.

2nd-23rd October 2009: Bishop Ellison was among the 244 bishops who took part in the Synod for Africa in Rome.

5th October 2009: Death in Banjul aged 98 of Matilda Ann Faal, who had attended Holy Spirit Banjul every day since its opening.

14th November 2009: At Brikama, Bishop Ellison ordained Fr Yenes Manneh.

1st-10th October 2010: Sr Calixte Thomas, Sr Josephine Kamada, Sr Teresa Mundow and Sr Jeanne-Therese Ndey joined Cluny Sisters from all over Africa at a synod at Dakar which considered the implementation of the 2009 Synod of African Bishops in Rome.

During November 2010: Death of Sang Gomez, catechist in St Peter's Parish, Lamin, particularly associated with Holy Rosary Church.

20th November 2010: President Yahya Jammeh launched 'From Jerusalem to Calvary', by George Gomez .

29th October 2011: Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral for the 50th anniversary as a reverend sister of Sr Jeanne-Thérèse Ndeye, first Gambian Sister of St Joseph of Cluny.

10th November 2012: At Lamin, Bishop Ellison ordained Fr Aimé Joseph Colley and Fr Matthew M. Mendy.

17th November 2012: Sr Barbara Kumangtum from Ghana, Sr Rahel Matandala from Kenya, and Sr Victoria Tholley from Sierra Leone made their first profession at the Novitiate of St Joseph of Cluny at Kanifing.

4th November 2013 (5 years ago): The Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Miroslaw Adamczyk, presented his letters of credence to President Jammeh.

9th November 2013 (5 years ago): At Brikama, Bishop Ellison ordained Fr Victor Ndecky (*right*).



21st October 2015: Marie Gibba and Marie Louise Moussa took their first vows as novices of the Presentation of Mary.

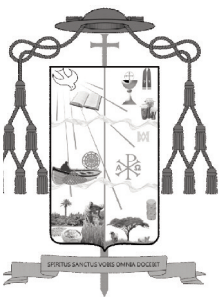
1st October 2016: Ellen B. Mendy and Harriet B. Mendy made their first profession as Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.

19th October 2016: At Bakau Stadium the Gambian Christian Council held an ecumenical gathering to pray for 'the recognition of rights, security, peace and the religious freedom of all - especially Christians - in The Gambia'.

21st October 2016: Catholics throughout the diocese observed this and the week leading up to it as days of fasting and prayer for freedom in The Gambia.

7th October 2017: Sr Dawida Krzempek of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) celebrated the Silver Jubilee of her religious profession, having spent seven of her 25 years as a reverend sister in The Gambia.

The Diocesan Prayer



GOD our Father, renew by the light of the Gospel the Church in the Diocese of Banjul. Strengthen the bonds of unity between the faithful, the religious, the priests and the Bishop, so that together your chosen people may shine forth as a sign of unity and peace in a world torn by discord and strife.

Bless and sustain all our efforts to establish a dynamic, self-reliant church. Open our eyes and ears to the needs of all, and especially of our own brothers and sisters in Christ who are less fortunate than others, so that in a spirit of solidarity and compassion we may faithfully proclaim the good news of salvation and advance together on the way to your Kingdom.


Through Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen



Do
you
know?

- 1 What is the title of the Parish Church at Njongon?
- 2 What is Hallowe'en?
- 3 Who, as an infant, was placed in a water-proof basket and left on the bank of the River Nile?
- 4 Who interpreted dreams for King Nebuchadnezzar?
- 5 Which of St Paul's letters comes first in the New Testament?
- 6 Who was the Principal Consecrator - pictured right - at the Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Gabriel Mendy?





from beyond the diocese

Kenyan bishops back efforts against corruption

THE CATHOLIC Church in Kenya has strongly backed government efforts to fight corruption, which threatens to cripple the economy and stifle development.

Over the past months the government has been accelerating a war on corruption and impunity, arresting senior government officials, business people and ordinary citizens linked to corrupt deals. Some of these deals are valued at billions of Kenyan shillings and involve government departments and ministries.

Following an extraordinary meeting of the Kenyan Bishops' Conference in Nairobi on 17th August, the Bishop of Homa Bay, Philip Anyolo (*right*), said, 'The ongoing effort to rid the country of corruption is commendable. We encourage the President and all these agencies involved in the war... not to relent.'



Last year, Transparency International ranked Kenya in 143rd place out of 180 countries in its corruption index, estimating that 30 per cent of resources for the procurement of goods and services were being stolen through corruption.

According to Transparency International, the government loses about a third of its budget of 608 billion Kenyan shillings (D282 billion) to corruption every year.

* There are an estimated 7.5 million Catholics in Kenya, about a third of the population. There are four metropolitan dioceses and 20 dioceses.

African priests 'disappearing' in Europe

WHEN Fr Joseph Longo arrived in France from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2003, he planned to stay just a few months to complete a doctorate in philosophy. Today, having run large parish 'clusters' in different dioceses, he has become one of many resident African priests helping to sustain the French Church.

It was hardly surprising that Fr Longo was prevailed upon to stay. Over the last half century the number of priests in France has been reduced by three-quarters. Within six months of studying at Toulouse University's Catholic faculty, Fr Longo had been asked to take over St Barthelemy's Church at nearby Lauzerte, which also involved looking after 18 other parishes.

He is one of 1,800 foreign priests officially ministering in France, mostly from former colonies in Africa. The figure is nearly a fifth of the total number of diocesan clergy: 11,500. An unknown number of priests are also in France without authorisation.

And recently there have been signs of discontent at what some African bishops see as a new 'ecclesiastical migration'.

In May, the Bishops' Conference of Côte d'Ivoire complained that more and more priests were going missing in Europe and ignoring instructions to return after completing study and pastoral assignments. (It's not just France: in Italy, for instance, up to 40 per cent of parishes are run by foreign-born clergy.)

'We have to speak out'

'The situation is worsening. and we have to speak out and take a common stand, so the dioceses hosting our priests will understand our position,' Bishop Ignace Bessi Dogbo of Katiola (*right*) President of the bishops' conference, told the French Catholic daily, *La Croix*. 'Once a priest is on mission, the host bishop needs to ensure he was genuinely sent by his own diocese and didn't get there by some other means... If we're to work together for the evangelisation of our respective countries, we must respect each other's rights.'



Bishop Dogbo said he was not sure how many Ivoirien clergy had absconded. But some dioceses, he said, were missing up to a third of their priests who had 'made excuses' not to come home.

'Problems are growing'

Some European Church leaders are sympathetic to these concerns. Archbishop Dominique Lebrun of Rouen, who led a working group for 'priests coming from abroad', admitted the problems were growing as priests resist calls to return to their countries of origin - citing study needs, personality clashes or political anxieties.

'Whatever the circumstances, the non-return of a priest harms his fundamental relationship with his diocese and his pastor-bishop,' the archbishop told *La Croix*. 'If it isn't planned and done with obedience, it should be condemned.'

Archbishop Lebrun said he was sensitive to priestly needs. Some clergy arrive in Europe without proper papers, having suffered hardships at home.

Many priests have counted on staying to support poor family members, or become dependent on medicines unobtainable at home, and clearly need help when preparing to go back.

But co-operation must be maintained between the bishops affected, the archbishop said, in line with canon law and Catholic collegiality rules. There could be no question of rich dioceses poaching clergy from poorer ones, or of European parishes undermining the authority of African bishops by offering sanctuary to their priests.

In July Bishop Dogbo discussed the situation with his French counterpart, Archbishop Georges Pontier of Marseille, and a French Church delegation is expected to continue talks in Abidjan.

Bishop Dogbo admitted that the African Church has a problem with obedience anyway, especially among younger clergy. But, however urgently Europe's bishops need priests, he said, they must always check where they are from, what they are doing and whether they are needed at home. Even those who acquire European citizenship remain attached to their dioceses of origin.

Unlikely to be returning soon

After 15 years in France, Fr Longo now leads a parish at Châteauneuf in Brittany, and is unlikely to be returning any time soon to the conflict-torn DRC.

Aged 57, Fr Longo admits he has faced problems adapting to the French secular lifestyle, but is confident his presence is helping the local Church.

This year alone, the Bishop of his former Montauban diocese, Bernard Ginoux, has appointed priests from the DRC, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Burkina Faso and Senegal to lead parishes, noting in a July communiqué that all came 'with authorisation from their bishops' and were essential to his Church's 'mission of evangelisation'.

'My own country was evangelised by French missionaries, and their work is bearing fruit now as we bring the faith back to France, Fr Longo told *The Catholic Herald*. 'As an African, I'm surprised at the indifference towards religion here. But there's still plenty of goodwill, and I've had no difficulty being accepted.'

Pope Francis in Ireland

POPE Francis paid a two-day visit to the Republic of Ireland on Saturday and Sunday 25th and 26th August.

He met the Irish President, the Prime Minister, Church leaders, Northern Ireland political party leaders and members of the judiciary. He visited St Mary's Pro-Cathedral in Dublin and the Capuchin Fathers' day centre for homeless families.

The Pope addressed the Festival of Families - a celebration of the role of the family established by Pope John Paul II in 1994 and held in various cities around the world every three years.

On Sunday 25th the Pope flew from Dublin to the Marian shrine at Knock, western Ireland, where 45,000 devotees joined with him in the Angelus. Back in Dublin's Phoenix Park, he celebrated a Mass attended by half a million. Then he addressed the Irish bishops before flying back to Rome.

It was not an official State visit, but many in the Church hoped that the Pope's frank admission of the Church's failure to tackle sexual abuse scandals would help heal some of the wounds in Ireland caused by scandals in recent years.

Ireland has changed dramatically since the late 1970s. The Church has been damaged by scandal, and there has been a substantial shift towards secularism. Church attendance and priest numbers are dwindling.

On 29th September 1979, the first day of St John Paul II's visit, more than a million people gathered for the Mass in Phoenix Park - about a third of the population at the time, and said to be the largest gathering of Irish people in history. This time around there were fewer than half that number - about a tenth of the population. But it was still the biggest gathering in the country since the last papal visit.

Pope convokes world-wide meeting of bishops on abuse crisis

THE POPE has called for all the presidents of the Catholic bishops' conferences of the world to meet at the Vatican in February to discuss the issue of sexual abuse of minors.

The Pope's Cardinal Advisory Board issued a statement on 12th September: 'The Holy Father Francis, hearing

the Council of Cardinals, decided to convene a meeting with the Presidents of the Bishops Conferences of the Catholic Church on the theme of 'the protection of minors'.

The summit will take place at the Vatican from 21st to 24th February 2019.

There are 114 Conferences of Bishops and 21 Eastern-rite Patriarchal Synods, Councils of Churches and Assemblies of Ordinaries.

The announcement followed a three-day session of Pope Francis' Council of Cardinals, commonly called the 'C9', which he created in 2013 to advise him on the governance and reform of the Roman Curia.

A major task of the nine cardinals has been revising the 1988 apostolic constitution, *Pastor bonus*, which regulates the government of the Curia.

In their September session, the Council made final adjustments to the draft of the new constitution, tentatively entitled *Praedicate evangelium*, before delivering it to the Pope. It will undergo a stylistic revision and review of the canonical elements before being published, the Vatican said.

Indian priest thanks Muslims for help

A CATHOLIC priest has thanked a Muslim congregation for bringing food, water and medicines for more than 500 people who had sought shelter in his church amid devastating flooding in Kerala, south-western India.

In August, severe rains led to flash floods and landslides, with some 400 people killed and over a million displaced from their homes.

More than 580 people took refuge at St Antony's Church, which soon ran out of food and water.

'I straightaway went to the Masjid and requested help. After the day's prayers, Muslim brothers came to the church with a large quantity of food and water,' said the Parish Priest, Fr Sanu Puthussery.

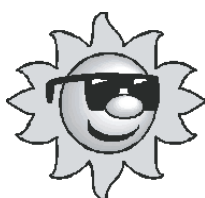
'Build bridges, not walls'

On 31st August Fr Puthussery addressed 250 Muslims at the Juma Masjid in Vechoor, during Friday prayers: 'Pope Francis has said, "build bridges, not walls". The devastating floods have given us an opportunity to destroy the walls and build the bridges of togetherness. I cannot express my gratitude in words for the help and support they extended during the time of difficulties.'

Fr Puthussery said he had gone to thank the Muslim leaders personally, but 'they invited me to their prayer hall and offered me their platform to speak. It was a rare gesture of togetherness.'

Those returning to their flooded homes in Kerala are encountering snakes and insects, contaminated water and ruined crops.

* There are over 19.9 million Catholics in India, which represents around 1.55 per cent of the total population, and the Catholic Church is the largest Christian church in India. There are 174 dioceses, organised into 30 provinces. Of these, 132 are the Latin Catholic Church, 31 Syro-Malabar Catholic Church and 11 Syro-Malankara Catholic Church dioceses. Despite the small percentage, India has the second largest Catholic population in Asia after the Philippines, due to India's huge population.



Fee moi Gambia

The place to be?

IT will soon be November. Month of the dead, some call it. But I don't find cemeteries particularly gloomy, apart from the dusty-looking casuarina trees which border several of them.

I know a man who, whenever he visits somewhere he hasn't been before, goes straight to the cemetery. He says that if you're interested in local history there's nothing like a cemetery for gleaning out-of-the way information!

Memorable words

A COUPLE of readers have commented on my remarks, in the August edition of this *Newsletter*, about the 'unEnglish' sermon delivered by an American Episcopalian - ie, Anglican - bishop at the wedding of Prince Harry and his American bride. The colourful proceedings were watched on television by many millions world-wide.

I have since watched a DVD of the even grander wedding on 29th April 2011 of the Queen's grandson and eventual heir, Prince William, to Katherine Middleton (now formally known as the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge).

The sermon was given by a very English prelate, the Bishop of London. I don't think the British media took much notice of the bishop's sermon: in secular Britain they're not at all interested in church matters - unless, of course, there's something scandalous to report on.

But I found the bishop's sermon exactly suited to the occasion. It was the feast day of St Catherine of Siena, and the bishop quoted her as declaring, 'Be who God meant you to be, and you will set the world on fire.' He said that marriage is intended to be a way in which man and woman help each other to become their deepest and truest selves; every marriage is in a sense a royal occasion, with the bridegroom and bride the king and queen of creation, making a new life together, so that life can flow through them into the future. Then, in clear, measured tones, the bishop pointed out the generosity of God in giving himself to mankind in Jesus Christ. He said that the more husband and wife, without mutual coercion, give of themselves to each other, the more they enter into fuller life, the life of the spirit. And so it went on: a sermon well-delivered, well-worth pondering.

Take care

AN ITEM in August on RFI (Radio Française Internationale) commented on around 40 deaths by accidental drowning since June this year on beaches around Dakar. The average age of those who lost their lives was 16.

Most of the deaths occurred on a Sunday, when young people, particularly from the poorer parts of the fast-growing city, like to enjoy themselves by the sea. Unfortunately, tides can be dangerously strong, and many people cannot swim.

Conditions on our own beaches are in many respects different. Yet similar tragic drownings are sometimes reported

here - when, for example, youngsters arrange for a carefree get-together on a beach.

The young like to enjoy themselves - even to take risks. That's what makes their off-beat games and quirky activities so much fun. But rushing impulsively across a busy road, or dashing into the sea, can in a split second turn excitement and laughter into tragedy and grief.

Enjoy yourself - but take care.

Tongue-tied?

BACK to school. When the youngsters in your family get back home each day, a good question is, 'What have you learnt today?'

Alas, some children are at a loss to reply!

Not much light!

MOST of us, if we use our eyes, can't be proud of the state of our litter-strewn streets. We assume that in 'advanced' countries higher standards prevail. Yet from Paris comes a report that the one of the world's best-known cities is dirty, to the chagrin of tourists and residents alike.

The 'City of Light', as Paris likes to be known, is said to be grubby, and littered with cigarette butts.

In Paris you can be fined (I forget how much, but it's a big sum) for throwing down a cigarette butt; but this doesn't seem to deter the many smokers in the city, who behave as a law unto themselves. Nor do many people use the litter bins.

From church to mosque to museum

A FEW years ago I learnt a lot on a fortnight's tour of Turkey, from Istanbul to the heart of the country: Cappadocia.

Turkey is considerably more up-to-date in its infrastructure, and in its ways generally, than I had supposed. But what makes a visit to Turkey memorable is its historic sights: Antioch and Ephesus, for example, with echoes of St Paul. Indeed, you can stand in the very stadium in which Paul preached.

There are many ancient Christian churches, some dating back to the 7th century, with wall-paintings still visible. Istanbul was a great imperial capital, first of the Byzantine empire, then of the Ottoman sultans. In Istanbul (once known as Byzantium, then as Constantinople) is one of the world's most awe-inspiring buildings: *Hagia Sophia* - the Church of the Holy Wisdom. It was built in the 6th century, over 1,400 years ago. In the 15th century the Ottomans converted it to a mosque; and in the 1920s the modernising ruler, Kemal Attaturk, made it a museum.

I'm reminded of my fascinating visit to Turkey by a recent news item: that Turkey's Supreme Court has rejected a plea that the magnificent *Hagia Sophia* be used once more as a mosque. I don't think anyone will suggest it become a church again!

International

The other day, feeling bored as a passenger in a car, I made a note of slogans on the back of taxis and buses.

Some slogans were amusing, some challenging, some quizzical. But I noticed that such slogans were outnumbered by information, much of it in foreign languages, from the days when the vehicles were in service in Europe.

One way of showing how international we are, these days!



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 21

- 1 St Michael's
- 2 The evening before All Saints' Day - which used to be known as 'All Hallows'.
- 3 Moses: Exodus 2:2-10.
- 4 Daniel: see the Book of Daniel, chapter 2
- 5 Romans
- 6 The Most Revd Edward Tamba Charles, Archbishop of Freetown.

**'Let us empty
Purgatory with our
prayers'.**

Padre Pio



Some weekday celebrations in October & November

Monday 1st October: St Therese of Lisieux *doctor of the Church*

THERESE was born in 1873 in Alençon, France, the youngest of nine children. When she was four, her mother died; and her father, a watch-maker, moved to Lisieux. She wanted to follow two of her sisters in the religious life, but was told she was too young. She persisted, and in 1888 was admitted as a Carmelite nun. Therese is known for her 'Little Way', which asserts that it is not necessary to achieve 'great deeds' to become holy. 'I see that it is enough to realise one's nothingness and give oneself wholly, like a child, into the arms of the loving God.' Therese suffered from tuberculosis, and died aged only 24 on 30th September 1887. Her autobiography, *L'histoire d'une âme* ('The story of a soul') was edited by her sister Pauline and published after Therese's death. It became a best-seller. Therese was canonised in 1925. *In this diocese we pray especially today for the priest and people of the Parish of St Therese, Kanifing.*



Tuesday 9th October: Blessed John Henry Newman *priest*



JOHN Henry Newman (1801-1890) was an Anglican priest who became a leader of the Oxford Movement, a group of Anglicans who wished to return the Church of England to Catholic beliefs and practices. In 1845 he left the Church of England and was received into the Roman Catholic Church, where he was eventually made a Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII. Newman was instrumental in founding the Catholic University of Ireland, which evolved into University College Dublin, where the Irish Spiritan priests who have served in The Gambia were educated. Newman was beatified by Benedict XVI in September 2010 during his visit to the United Kingdom. Newman's writings include his autobiography *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* ('A defence of my life'). He wrote the popular hymns 'Lead, Kindly Light', 'Praise to the Holiest in the Height' and 'Firmly I believe and truly'.

Newman is the patron of the English Ordinariate, set up by Benedict XVI for former Anglicans who are in full communion with Rome while retaining Anglican forms of worship.

Thursday 11th October: St John XXIII *Pope*

JOHN XXII was born Angelo Roncalli, fourth child of 14 children born to poor share-croppers in Lombardy, Italy, in 1881. He was ordained priest in 1904, and spent almost his entire career in the diplomatic service, for example in Bulgaria and Turkey. In 1944, following the liberation of France, he became Papal Nuncio in Paris. He was named a cardinal in 1953. At the time of his election as Pope in 1958, Cardinal Roncalli was Patriarch of Venice. He is now mostly remembered for his unexpectedly bold move in convening the Second Vatican Council, which brought about great changes in the Church's perception of herself and her relations with the modern world and other religions. John XIII died in 1963, while the council was still in session. The task of leading the council was taken up by his successor, Paul VI.



Saturday 13th October: St Edward *confessor*

EDWARD (1004-66), King of England, was renowned for generosity to the poor. He founded Westminster Abbey, the best-known church in England. The title 'confessor' is given to an outstanding witness to the Gospel. It was conferred on Edward in his lifetime by Pope Alexander II. Edward's tomb at Westminster Abbey was a place of pilgrimage until the Reformation, as it has become again in modern times. Pope Benedict XVI prayed there in September 2010 with the Archbishop of Canterbury. *In this diocese, the school at Bwiam is named in St Edward's honour, and today we pray for past and present teachers and pupils of that school.*

Wednesday 17th October: St Ignatius of Antioch *martyr*

IGNATIUS succeeded the Apostle Peter as second Bishop of Antioch (in present-day Turkey). During the reign of the Roman Emperor Trajan he was arrested and sent to Rome. On his way to execution, he wrote letters encouraging fellow-Christians to remain faithful despite persecution. He met his death by being thrown to wild animals.

Friday 19th October: St Jean de Brébeuf & his companions *martyrs*



JEAN de Brébeuf was born in Normandy, France, in 1593, and ordained as a Jesuit priest in 1622. Three years later he went with others to Quebec, in Canada, as a missionary. The Huron Indians were awed by his height and strength, but he made few converts except among the dying - particularly during a smallpox epidemic in 1636. During a war between the French and British, de Brébeuf had to return to France for two years. In 1648 he was captured by a rival tribe, tortured and forced to run naked through the snow. Red-hot blades were thrust down his throat. His nose was cut off and boiling water was poured over him in mockery of Christian baptism. Then he was scalped and his heart torn from his body. Seven other missionaries were similarly martyred.

Monday 23rd October: St John Paul II Pope

JOHN PAUL was born Kerek Wajtyla in Wadowice, Poland, in 1920. During the Second World War he studied in an underground seminary in Krakow, and was ordained priest in 1946. He became Archbishop of Krakow in 1964, and was named cardinal in 1967. Elected Pope in 1978, he soon became known for his energy, charisma and intellect. In 1981 John Paul was shot in St Peter's Square, but he recovered and forgave his would-be assassin.

John Paul's trips abroad attracted the largest crowds in history. His non-violent anti-communism contributed to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1988. He championed economic and political justice. In naming 44 cardinals from all five continents he reached out to cultures throughout the world. John Paul II canonised more saints than any previous Pope. His ecumenical efforts included meetings with Orthodox, Jewish and Muslim leaders. Although afflicted with Parkinson's Disease since the early 1980s, John Paul remained active. He was the most travelled Pope in history. John Paul designated the Second Sunday in Easter Time as 'Divine Mercy Sunday', and it was the day after Divine Mercy Sunday in 2004 that he died, to be succeeded by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.



Friday 9th November: Dedication of St John Lateran

THE POPE'S cathedral as Bishop of Rome is not St Peter's Basilica, but the Basilica of St John Lateran, dedicated in 324. At first, this feast was celebrated only in Rome, but later it became universal. St John Lateran is known as the 'mother of all churches in the city and the world'. Today's feast celebrates Catholic unity and our regard for the See of Rome.

Saturday 10th November: St Leo the Great Pope

LEO was born towards the end of the 4th century in Tuscany (part of present-day Italy). As Pope from 440 to 451 he championed orthodoxy. When the monk Eutyches of Constantinople asserted that Christ had only a divine nature, Leo wrote his 'tome' insisting that Christ was true God and true man. Leo's teachings as the 'voice of Peter' were embraced by the Council of Chalcedon, and his example, letters and sermons contributed to the growth of papal authority.

Wednesday 21st November: Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

TODAY commemorates the dedication in 543 of the Church of Our Lady in Jerusalem. We honour Mary's dedication of herself to God from her childhood by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who filled her with grace at her Immaculate Conception. *We give especial thanks on this day for the prayers and work in The Gambia since 1964 of the Presentation Sisters.*

Saturday 24th November: St Andrew Dung-Lac & companions martyrs

BORN in 1839, Andrew was a priest in Vietnam, his homeland. In 1839 he was arrested and beheaded. Between 1820 and 1862, 117 Christians in Vietnam were similarly martyred. In 1988 they were canonised by St John Paul II.

Friday 30th November: St Andrew apostle

ANDREW was born in the village of Bethsaida by the Lake of Galilee. He and his brother Simon Peter were fishermen, and Jesus called them to be his disciples by saying that he would make them 'fishers of men'. In the Gospels, Andrew is referred to as one of the disciples closely attached to Jesus. Andrew told Jesus about the boy with the loaves and fishes (John 6:8), and when Philip wanted to tell Jesus about certain Greeks seeking him, he told Andrew first (John 12:20-22). Andrew was one of the four disciples who came to Jesus on the Mount of Olives to ask about the signs of Jesus' return at the 'end of the age'. Andrew is the patron saint of several countries, including Russia, Scotland, Barbados, Romania and Ukraine.

Proclaiming Mark's Gospel

IN Ordinary Time this year, the Gospel readings for most Sundays have come from the Gospel according to St Mark. Mark's Gospel is the shortest of all the four gospels, and probably the first to have been written.

The Gospel is written in the common Greek of ordinary people. It is a basic handbook of the Christian faith, to teach believers about the Lord.

Mark recounts what Jesus did in a vivid style. He stresses Jesus' message about the kingdom of God breaking into human life as good news (1:14-15) and Jesus himself as the Gospel of God (1:1;8 & 35;10:29). Jesus is the Son whom God has sent to rescue humanity by serving and by sacrificing his life (10:45).

Mark relates how Jesus, after calling the first disciples, engages in teaching, preaching, healing, and exorcising demons. Jesus' teaching is chiefly in parables about the kingdom. Jesus exalts the word of God over 'the tradition of the elders' and sees defilement as a matter of the heart, not of unclean food. His kinship is with those who do the will of God - not even with mother, brothers or sisters by blood ties. Often his own disciples do not understand him.

A break-through comes with Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ - the Messiah. Jesus is glimpsed in his true identity when he is transfigured before three of the disciples, but by and large Jesus is depicted in Mark as moving obediently along the way to his cross in Jerusalem.

Daily Mass Readings



Sunday readings Year B Weekday readings Year 2

October & November

Celebrations in brackets () are optional

October is the Month of the Holy Rosary

Mon 1st Oct	Job 1:6-22. Psalm 16:1-3,6-7. Luke 9:46-50	St Therese of Lisieux
Tue 2nd	Exodus 23:20-23. Psalm 90:1-6,10-11. Matthew 18:1-5,10.	Holy Guardian Angels
Wed 3rd	Job 9:1-16. Psalm 87:10-15. Luke 9:57-62	
Thu 4th	Job 19:21-27. Psalm 26:7-9,13-14. Luke 10:1-12	St Francis of Assisi
Fri 5th	Job 38:1,12-21; 40:3-5. Psalm 138:1-3,7-10, 13-14. Luke 10:13-16	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 6th	Job 42:1-3,5-6,12-17. Psalm 118:66,71,75,91,125,130. Luke 10:17-24	(St Bruno <i>or</i> the BVM)
Sun 7th	Genesis 2:18-24. Psalm 127. Hebrews 2: 9-11. Mark 10:2-16.	27th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
Mon 8th	Galatians 1:6-12. Psalm 110:1-2,7-10. Luke 10:25-37	
Tue 9th	Galatians 1:13-24. Psalm 138:1-3,13-15. Luke 10:38-42 (St Denis <i>or</i> St John Leonardi <i>or</i> Bl. John Henry Newman)	
Wed 10th	Galatians 2:1-2,7-14. Psalm 116. Luke 11:1-4	(St John XXIII)
Thu 11th	Galatians 3:1-5. Psalm Luke 1:69-75. Luke 11:5-13	<i>abstinence</i>
Fri 12th	Galatians 3:7-14. Psalm 110:1-6. Luke 11:15-26	(the BVM)
Sat 13th	Galatians 3:22-29. Psalm 104:2-7. Luke 11:27-28	
Sun 14th	Wisdom 7:7-11. Psalm 89:12-17. Hebrews 4:12-13. Mark 10:17-30	28th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
Mon 15th	Galatians 4:22-24,26-27,31 – 5:1. Psalm 112:1-7. Luke 11:29-32	St Teresa of Jesus
Tue 16th	Galatians 5:1-6. Psalm 118:42,43-45,47-48. Luke 11:37-41	(St Hedwig <i>or</i> St Margaret Mary Alacoque)
Wed 17th	Galatians 5:18-25. Psalm 1:1-4,6. Luke 11:42-46	St Ignatius of Antioch
Thu 18th	2 Timothy 4:10-17. Psalm 145? Luke 10:1-9.	St LUKE
Fri 19th	Ephesians 1:11-14. Psalm 32:1-2,4-5,12-13. Luke 12:1-7	(St John de Brebeuf <i>or</i> St Paul of the Cross) <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 20th	Ephesians 1:15-23. Psalm 8:3-7. Luke 12:8-12	(the BVM)
Sun 21st	Isaiah 53:10-11. Psalm 32:4-5,18-20,22. Hebrews 4:14-16. Mark 10:35-45.	29th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
Mon 22nd	Ephesians 2:1-10. Psalm 99. Luke 12:13-21	(St John Paul II)
Tue 23rd	Ephesians 2:12-22. Psalm 84:9-14. Luke 12:35-38	(St John of Capestrano)
Wed 24th	Ephesians 3:2-12. Psalm Isaiah 12:2-6. Luke 12:39-48	(St Anthony Mary Claret)
Thu 25th	Ephesians 3:14-21. Psalm 32:1-2,4-5,11-12,18-19. Luke 12:49-53	
Fri 26th	Ephesians 4:1-6. Psalm 23:1-6. Luke 12:54-59	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 27th	Ephesians 4:7-16. Psalm 121:1-5, Luke 13:1-9	(the BVM)
Sun 28th	Jeremiah 31:7-9. Psalm 125. Hebrews 5:1-6. Mark 10:46-52	30th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
Mon 29th	Ephesians 4:32 – 5:8. Psalm 1:1-4,6. Luke 13:10-17	
Tue 30th	Ephesians 5:21-33. Psalm 127:1-5. Luke 13:18-21	
Wed 31st	Ephesians 6:1-9. Psalm 144:10-14. Luke 13:22-30	
Thu 1st Nov	Revelation 7:2-4,9-14. Psalm 23: 1-6. 1 John 3:1-3. Matthew 5:1-12	ALL SAINTS
Fri 2nd	<i>The Church provides a variety of readings for this day.</i>	ALL SOULS <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 3rd	Philippians 1:18-26. Psalm 41:2-3,5. Luke 14:1,7-11	(St Martin de Porres <i>or</i> the BVM)
Sun 4th	Deuteronomy 6:2-6. Psalm 17:2-4,47,51. Hebrews 7:23-28. Mark 12:28-34.	31st SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
Mon 5th	Philippians 2:1-4. Psalm 130. Luke 14:12-14	
Tue 6th	Philippians 2:5-11. Psalm 21:26-32. Luke 14:15-24	
Wed 7th	Philippians 2:12-15. Psalm 16:1,4,13-14. Luke 14:25-33	
Thu 8th	Philippians 3:3-8. Psalm 104:2-7. Luke 15:1-10	
Fri 9th	Ezekiel 47:1-2,8-9,12 <i>or</i> I Corinthians 3:9-11,16-17. Psalm 45:2-3,5-6,8-9. John 2:13-22. St JOHN LATERAN	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 10th	Philippians 4:10-19. Psalm 111:1-2,5-6,8,9. Luke 16:9-15.	St Leo the Great
Sun 11th	1 Kings 17:10-16. Psalm 145:7-15. Hebrews 9:24-28. Mark 12:(38-40)41-44	32nd SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
Mon 12th	Titus 1:1-9. Psalm 23:1-6. Luke 17:1-6	St Josaphat
Tue 13th	Titus 2:1-8,11-14. Psalm 36:3-4,18,23,27,29. Luke 17:7-10	
Wed 14th	Titus 3:1-7. Psalm 22. Luke 17:11-19	
Thu 15th	Philemon 7-20. Psalm 145:7-10. Luke 17:20-25	(St Albert the Great)
Fri 16th	2 John 4-9. Psalm 118:1-2,10-11,17-18. Luke 17:26-37.	(St Margaret of Scotland <i>or</i> St Gertrude) <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 17th	3 John 5-8. Psalm 111:1-6. Luke 18:1-8	(St Elizabeth of Hungary <i>or</i> the BVM)
Sun 18th	Daniel 12:1-13. Psalm 15:5,8-11. Hebrews 10:11-14,18. Mark 13:24-32	33rd SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
Mon 19th	Revelation 1:14; 2:1-5. Psalm 1:1-4,6. Luke 18:35-43	
Tue 20th	Revelation 3:1-6,14-22. Psalm 14:2-5. Luke 19:1-10	
Wed 21st	Zechariah 2:14-17. Psalm Luke 1:46-55. Matthew 12:46-50	Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Thu 22nd	Revelation 5:1-10. Psalm 149:1-6,9. Luke 19:41-44	St Cecilia
Fri 23rd	Revelation 10:8-11, Psalm 118:14,24. Luke 20:27-40	(St Clement I or St Columban) <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 24th	Revelation 11:4-12. Psalm 143:1-2,9-10. Luke 20:27-40	St Andrew Dung-Lac
Sun 25th	Daniel 7:13-14. Psalm 92:1-2,5. Revelation 1:5-8. John 18:33-37	CHRIST the KING
Mon 26th	Revelation 14:1-5. Psalm 149:1-6,9. Luke 19:41-44	
Tue 27th	Revelation 14:14-19. Psalm 95:10-19. Luke 21:5-11	
Wed 28th	Revelation 15:1-4. Psalm 97:1-3,7-9. Luke 21:12-19	
Thu 29th	Revelation 18:1-2,21-23 & 19:1-3,9. Psalm 99:2-5. Luke 21:12-19	
Fri 30th	Romans 10:9-18. Psalm 18:2-5. Luke 4:18-22	St ANDREW <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 1st Dec	Revelation 22:1-7. Psalm 94:1-7. Luke 21:34-36	

The new liturgical year (Sunday readings, Year C, weekday readings, Year I) begins on the First Sunday in Advent, 2nd December.

'He has spoken to us by a Son'

For six Sundays, from 27th to 33rd Sundays in Ordinary Time (7th October to 18th October) the Second Reading at Sunday Mass is taken from the *Letter to the Hebrews*

THE LETTER to the Hebrews was written for a second generation of Christians between the persecution of Nero in 64 AD and the persecution of Domitian about 85 AD. It was probably written around 80 AD.

We do not know who the author is. Origen, the great biblical scholar who lived between 185 and 254 AD, remarked: 'Who wrote the Letter to the Hebrews, only God knows for certain.'

The letter was written to a well-established church (Hebrews 5:12) which had suffered persecution (Hebrews 10:32-34), but not to a church founded by the apostles (Hebrews 2:3).

Hebrews was probably intended for a group of Christians who were well-versed in the Old Testament.

It may have been directed to Christians who were preparing to become teachers (Hebrews 5:12). The author writes as a teacher who has been separated from the group and is concerned about their drifting away from the faith. He calls his letter 'a word of exhortation' (Hebrews 13:22).

The idea that dominates the Letter to the Hebrews is that from age to age, the prophets, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have spoken the word of God. Now God has spoken through his only-begotten Son. Jesus Christ alone brings to us the full revelation of God, and he alone enables us to enter into the very presence of God.

The Lord Jesus has opened the door to the living presence of God. We now have access to God.

Themes in Hebrews

* Jesus, Son of God, is above angels, priests, Old Testament leaders, or any religion. By dying on the cross and rising from the dead, he guarantees believers' salvation and eternal life.

* Jesus is mankind's Mediator with the Father.

* All the laws, rituals and animal sacrifices of the Old Testament pointed toward Jesus, whose sacrifice for sins was perfect and complete.

* Our Christian journey is not easy. We will know temptation. But by depending on Jesus for help we can grow stronger and bring glory to God.

• Faith is pleasing to God. We express our faith through obedience to God.

* We are called to persevere. Despite temptations, trials and backsliding, we can endure. God is faithful and has prepared a heavenly home for us.



Key verses

4:12 INDEED, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of heart.

5:8-10 ALTHOUGH he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered, and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

11:1 NOW faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.



The Pope's Prayer Intentions

October

That consecrated religious men and women may bestir themselves, and be present among the poor, the marginalised, and those who have no voice.

November

That the language of love and dialogue may always prevail over the language of conflict.

End-piece

Is the Catholic Church truly 'holy'?



by Father JULIAN LARGE

EVERY time we say the Creed, we profess our faith in a Church which is 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic'.

To modern ears, the description of our Church as 'holy' might not sound entirely convincing. So how can we profess belief in a Catholic Church that is 'holy', without crossing our fingers when we say the Creed?

The answer, of course, is that the Church is holy in so far as she is the Mystical Body of Christ; and as St Paul tells us, Christ is the Head of this Body of which we are made members through baptism. So the holiness that is in the Church flows from Christ into the Body: a Body of which he is the Head and into which we have been incorporated.

One part of the Church is very holy indeed. The saints in heaven form that part of the Mystical Body of Christ which we call the Church Triumphant. They are very close to the Head of this Body who is Christ, and they worship him and intercede for us at his throne.

The holy souls in Purgatory, meanwhile, are also genuinely holy. They died in a state of grace and are being purified in the refining furnace of divine love so that they too will be able to enter heaven as saints.

Saints and sinners

It is only on earth that we find the Church is full of a mixture of saints and sinners, including those of us who might be trying to be saints but only half-heartedly, so that we keep finding ourselves sliding into sin. The Church, like a good

hospital, keeps the apparatus that will bind up our injuries and heal us when we sin, especially in the great sacrament of penance, in which we are lifted from the death of sin and restored to the supernatural life given in baptism.

We can also reflect on what it is to be Catholic, and renew our zeal for Catholic devotions which might have fallen into neglect. We should redouble our devotion to the saints, and especially to the Blessed Virgin.

A body is only as healthy as its individual cells, organs and limbs. Likewise with the Church. If we look at the Bride of Christ on earth and we see that there is so much that is unholy - so much politicking and posturing, and sometimes prevarication and obfuscation about Our Lord's clear doctrine on faith and morals - then we first of all have to look at ourselves.

If the Body of Christ on earth is not as healthy as we might hope, is it that we are not quite as holy as we should be?

If that is the case, we can certainly do something to address and remedy the malaise. When we come to that part in the Creed when we profess our belief in a Catholic Church which is holy, let us say that with great conviction, trusting in the intercession of Our Lady and the saints to make us holy like them.

Fr Large is Provost of the London Oratory, from whose magazine this article is abridged.



Who were the Scribes?

IN ancient Israel, scribes were learned men who studied the Law of Moses, transcribed it, and wrote commentaries on it. They were employed when the need for a written document arose or when an interpretation of a legal point was needed. Ezra, 'a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses', was a scribe (Ezra 7:6).

The scribes took their job of preserving Scripture very seriously; they would re-copy the Bible meticulously, even counting letters and spaces to ensure each copy was correct.

We can thank the Jewish scribes for preserving the Old Testament portion of our Bibles.

'The People of the Book'

Jews became increasingly known as 'the people of the Book' because of their study of Scripture, particularly the Law and how it should be followed. In New Testament times, scribes were often associated with the sect of the Pharisees, although not all Pharisees were scribes (Matthew 5:20, 12:38). They were teachers of the people (Mark 1:22) and interpreters of the Law. They were widely respected because of their knowledge, dedication and outward appearance of Law-keeping.

But the scribes went beyond the interpretation of Scripture, and added many man-made traditions to the Law. All too often they spelt out the letter of the Law while ignoring the spirit behind it. Some of the regulations the scribes added to the Law came to be considered more important than the Law itself. This led to confrontations between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus shocked many people by declaring that the righteousness of the scribes was not enough to get anyone to heaven (Matthew 5:20). He spoke of the difference between what was taught by the scribes and what God actually wanted (Matthew 5:21-48). Toward the end of his ministry, Jesus condemned the scribes for their hypocrisy (Matthew 23). They knew the Law, and they taught it to others, but they did not themselves obey it.

The Jews, after surviving centuries of persecution, clung proudly to keeping the Law and how it marked them as God's chosen people. In Jesus' day they had an attitude of superiority (John 7:49), which Jesus opposed (Matthew 9:12). The bigger problem was that the scribes were hypocrites, more interested in appearing good to men than they were in pleasing God. Eventually, it was the same scribes who played a part in having Jesus arrested and crucified (Matthew 26:57; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:1-2).

The lesson Christians can learn from the hypocrisy of the scribes is that God wants from us more than outward acts of righteousness. He wants a change of heart, constantly yielding in love and obedience to Christ.



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The poor widow

As Jesus taught, he said, 'Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honour at banquets. They devour widows' houses, and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greatest condemnation.'

He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny.

Then he called his disciples and said to them, 'Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything that she had, all she had to live on.'

Mark 12:38-44: Gospel reading for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, 11th November

Collect

ALMIGHTY and merciful God, graciously keep us from all adversity, so that, unhindered in mind and body alike, we may pursue in freedom of heart the things that are yours.

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

The Collect for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time.