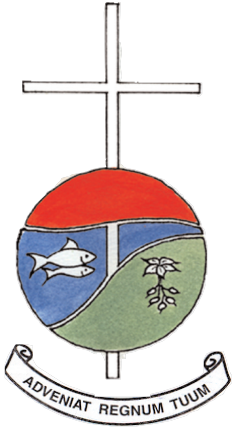




*In memoriam*  
Father Matthias Murphy CSSp



Volume 39 No 3

JUNE / JULY 2015

D50

*Diocese of Banjul*  
**NEWSLETTER**

*Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter*



How can we encourage  
our young people  
who are taking  
First Communion?



*Saying goodbye:  
our Bishop Emeritus  
leaves the land  
he loves*



From 1985  
to 2015  
Thirty years  
in the  
Priesthood

*Fr Anthony Gabisi  
Fr Peter Gomez*



# embrace the digital explosion with speed



EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE



Your National 3G Operator

## YAA Y BOROM

[www.gamcel.gm](http://www.gamcel.gm)

By way of introduction

## 'Go and make disciples in my name'



OVER the past ten months the Gambia Pastoral Institute has been involved in a series of training programmes.

We began last October with an evangelisation training programme aimed at equipping the lay faithful to evangelise through personal testimony, sharing the Gospel and lifestyle evangelisation.

Sixty-five participants enrolled for the course, and they completed it recently at a colourful ceremony attended by Bishop Robert Ellison. The programme encapsulated GPI's mission to provide on-going formation for everyone in the diocese involved in evangelisation.

During recent in-house training for GPI staff, the facilitator asked why GPI had been established. The answer is that GPI works for the human, pastoral and spiritual growth of the Catholic Church in The Gambia. It is therefore incumbent on everyone working at GPI and our numerous volunteers to see to that the aim for which GPI was established over 30 years ago is being accomplished.

In line with GPI's mission, we recently started a training programme on 'Christians and Muslims in The Gambia: A Sign to the World'. This group – smaller than those registered for the evangelisation training programme – aims to help Christians realise that witnessing to their faith is a privilege to be undertaken with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15). On completion of the course, participants will have a basic understanding of the principles of Islam and will have reflected on some world conflicts.

The aim is to nourish a harmonious and positive relationship with our Muslim brothers and sisters, in the

knowledge that before meaningful dialogue can take place, each side must have some idea of the other.

Next month we shall embark on a GPI pastoral visit to some parishes in the provinces to meet catechists, their supervisors, teachers of Christian Religious Education, and the lay faithful. Once a year the team visits all parishes and out-stations, especially those up-country. This keeps us in touch with the realities of the lives of our Catholic people and enables us to give talks, arrange retreats or show a video.

It is important that once in a while we remind ourselves that the GPI, its staff and volunteers provide support to parishes, Catholic groups and movements in the diocese, mainly by providing information and training.

I cannot end without mentioning the Communications Office, which serves the Bishop, priests, lay faithful, and parishes and agencies in the Diocese of Banjul.

The Communications Office focuses on communicating the work of the diocese to the parishes, the faithful and the general public in its mission to build a Christ-like community grounded in love, peace and reconciliation.

I end with the words of Pope Francis on the 48th World Communications Day, Sunday 1st June 2014:

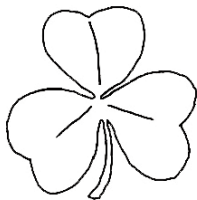
*The Church needs to be concerned for, and present in, the world of communication, in order to dialogue with people today and to help them encounter Christ.*

GPI needs to keep up with the times, so that we don't become irrelevant in the future.

Fr Peter S. Lopez

Pray for rain  
- but be careful when  
it comes!

page 10



Ireland and The Gambia  
- the Spiritan contribution

page 27



Diocese of Banjul NEWSLETTER

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

JUNE / JULY 2015 Volume 39 No. 3

Published by The Gambia Pastoral Institute

33 Kairaba Avenue

PMB 296 Serrekunda, The Gambia, West Africa

Telephone 4394847 Email [info@gpi.gm](mailto:info@gpi.gm)

Editor Fr Peter S. Lopez Editorial Consultant David Somers

Layout Betty Quacco

Production Monday Tofe, Henry Gomez, Frédéric Diatta

## IN THIS ISSUE

4 More than a great family day: *First Communion*

5 Corpus Christi: *pledge of God's love*

Peter's Pence: *the Pope's annual charity campaign*

6 Here & There: *Sr Rosine takes her final vows*

8 Obituary: *Arnold Edwin Gabbidon; Renneh Thorp*

9 Fee moi Gambia

10 Family Circle: *pray for rain!*

11 Question Box: *talking to friends about my religion*

12 Saying goodbye: *Bishop Michael Cleary's farewell*

15 Lucina, Francisco, Jacinta and Our Lady of Fatima

16 Sunday Reflections: *Thinity to 17th Sunday of the Year*

21 From Beyond the Diocese: *Syrian Christians lose hope*

24 In memoriam: *Fr Matthias Murphy CSSp*

27 Ireland & The Gambia: *the Spiritan contribution*

Do you know? *quiz*

28 Bishop Robert Ellison: *Easter Message 2015*

29 Pious Practices: *Wearing crosses and holy medals*

The Pope's Prayer Intentions for June & July

30 Gambian Christian Anniversaries: *Anglicans celebrate*

31 Mass readings for June & July 2015

32 Solemnities in June *and other weekday commemorations*

34 End piece: *The Church's unity in the Holy Spirit*

36 The gale on the lake: *Gospel and illustration for 21st June*



## More than a great day for the family

**FIRST** Holy Communion. A great day for the family, to which they've looked eagerly forward for months.

The young candidate has been carefully prepared by the Church so that he or she understands what receiving the Lord in Holy Communion means.

As the day nears, other preparations include the making of beautiful white clothing and arrangements for a family celebration: festive food and drink and lots of party music. Yes, it's a big day: what the French call a *rite de passage*, a day which the family wants recorded in photographs and on video.

Almost everyone enjoys a party. Hardly any family needs advice on the party side of First Communion, just as no one needs advice about the party side of a baptism or Christmas. But the essence of Christmas is not food, drink, music and gifts. It's the birthday of the world's Redeemer. Similarly, the essence of First Communion is not the family party, but the solemn and joyous moment when for the first time a young child receives the world's Redeemer in Holy Communion.

Throughout the Catholic world, each diocese lays down the conditions for First Communion.

The child must have reached the age of reason, and must understand the difference between ordinary bread and the Bread of the Eucharist – understand, in other words, the meaning of 'transubstantiation'. The child must also understand the supreme role that Jesus Christ plays in the life of the Church and the individual.

Fortunate indeed is the child whose parents regularly attend Sunday Mass and receive Holy Communion with devotion and thankfulness. But by no means all candidates for First Communion enjoy a family background of practising Christianity.

How can we help a boy or girl who is receiving Holy Communion for the first time to look forward to getting to know and love Christ more and more in every Holy Communion and in their daily life?

As well as being a great event for the family, First Communion is a great event for the larger family of the Church. Everyone who attends Mass, Sunday by Sunday, can help the new young communicants by making every Mass an occasion of memorable reverence and joy. In this way, receiving Holy Communion is always, for everyone, a devout and happy experience: never casual, never taken for granted, but always felt as a privilege and a responsibility. That's a challenge and opportunity for all of us!

We should express our thanks to the priests, reverend sisters and laymen and women who have painstakingly prepared our young people for their First Communion.

**LORD** God, we pray for those children in our Catholic family of The Gambia who are about to make their First Communion. Nurture in them and in their families a love of Christ in the Mass and Holy Communion, so that all may serve Our Lord with growing devotion, and proclaim their love for Jesus to others...

### A word from our Bishop...

WHEN we celebrate the mystery of the Eucharist, we share together in the most sacred act of worship that could ever be offered to God by any believer.

Just after the consecration at the Mass we proclaim the mystery of our faith: the Paschal Mystery.

This mystery is explained in various ways; but it always includes three elements: the death, the resurrection and the second coming of Christ.

In the resurrection of Christ from the dead, God the Father has assured us that his Son Jesus Christ has conquered sin, evil and death itself. In Holy Communion we receive the living Body and Blood of the risen Lord as spiritual food for our journey through life.

In our Catholic tradition we have always believed in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. In other words, even when the Mass is ended, we believe that Christ is truly present - Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity - in the consecrated Hosts which are placed in the tabernacles of our churches.

As long as I remember here in The Gambia, I have always been conscious of the powerful spirit of reverence and devotion with which the faithful in all parts of our diocese have celebrated the Eucharist.

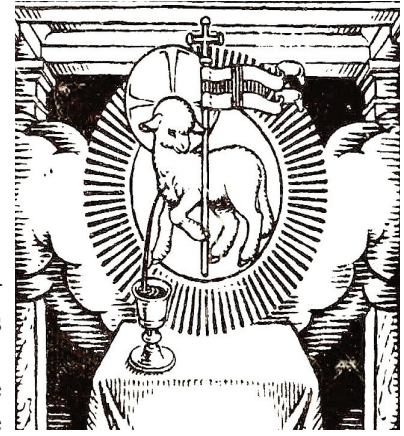
I appeal to all concerned, and especially to priests – who have a particular responsibility in such matters – to safeguard the sacred character of the Mass.



*Fom Bishop Robert Ellison's Lenten Pastoral Letter, 2010*

# The feast of Corpus Christi

## – pledge of God's love and redemption



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

We celebrate the institution of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday; but our thoughts during Holy Week are focused principally on Christ's passion and death. For this reason, Aquinas proposed a particular feast day when the faithful could learn more about the Blessed Sacrament and increase their devotion to it.

It was Aquinas who composed the texts and poems we use at Corpus Christi. One, often sung at Benediction, is *O Salutaris Hostia* ('O Saving Victim'). Another hymn at Benediction consists of the two final verses of *Pange Lingua*, known as *Tantum Ergo* ('Therefore, we before him bending...')

These hymns offer adoration to Jesus in his Eucharistic presence.

In adoring Christ in the Blessed Sacrament we give thanks for his gift of himself for our salvation.

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

Through the Eucharist Jesus is present to us. We owe Jesus adoration and love. He is God - always was, and always will be; and our faith is best expressed by our realisation that he is the focus of our worship, and his sacramental presence in our churches should always be accorded the greatest respect.

### *Tantum ergo*

*Tantum ergo Sacramentum,  
Veneremur cernui:  
Et antiquum documentum,  
Novo cedat rutui:  
Praestet fides supplementum  
Sensuum defectui.*

*Genitori, Genitoque,  
Laus et jubilatio:  
Salus, honor, virtus quoque,  
Sit et benedictio:  
Procedenti ab utroque  
Compar sit laudatio.  
Amen.*

Come, adore this wondrous presence;  
Bow to Christ, the source of grace.  
Here is kept the ancient promise  
Of God's earthly dwelling place.  
Sight is blind before God's glory,  
Faith alone may see his face.

Glory be to God the Father,  
Praise to his co-equal Son,  
Adoration to the Spirit,  
Bond of love, in Godhead One.  
Bless'd be God by all creation,  
Joyously while ages run. Amen.

*There are several English translations of Tantum Ergo*

## Peter's Pence

### The Pope's annual charity campaign



ON Sunday 28th June many parishes throughout the world will take part in the Pope's charity campaign - the Peter's Pence collection.

Peter's Pence distributes aid to those most in need.

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

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

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

The United States contributes the largest percentage of the campaign's funds (28 per cent), followed by Italy (13 per cent) and Germany (6 per cent).

Peter's Pence helps regions affected by natural disasters and people afflicted by violence. Funds are allocated to farmers and indigenous peoples in Latin America through the Populorum Progressio Foundation.

Peter's Pence also supports development projects in sub-Saharan Africa through the John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel, and the Nazareth Boys' Town in Mbare, Rwanda, to name just a few.

# Here & there

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE

### Bishop Emeritus Michael Cleary bids farewell



Bishop Cleary in 2006

BISHOP-Emeritus Michael Joseph Cleary quietly said goodbye to The Gambia when on Saturday 14th March he left for Ireland having spent nearly sixty-two years here as teacher, Principal, Vicar-General, Education Secretary, and (from 1981 to 2006) Bishop of Banjul.

In a brief statement, Bishop Cleary said, ‘...in my 90th year, I feel I should live nearer hospital and nursing care and not be a burden here.

‘So I wish to sincerely thank you for the best years of my life. I now ask the Almighty to guide and protect you and your friends and families.

‘You will always be in my thoughts and prayers.

‘God love and bless you all.’

#### Farewell Mass

The evening before his departure, Bishop Cleary took part in a Mass with Bishop Ellison and the priests of the diocese at St Therese’s Kanifing, when many moving tributes were paid to him.

Bishop Cleary first came to this country as a newly-ordained missionary priest in 1953, and after some years teaching at St Augustine’s High School was in 1960 appointed Principal. He became Bishop Moloney’s Vicar-General in 1975, and in 1978 left St Augustine’s to become diocesan Education Secretary. He led the diocese as Bishop from 1981 until 2006, when he retired at the age of 80.

Afterwards, as Bishop Emeritus, he spent a good part of each year in The Gambia, residing in Fajara.

*Saying goodbye: page 12  
Ireland and The Gambia: page 27*

#### GPI - at the service of all the Diocese and beyond

GPI works for the human, pastoral and spiritual growth of the Catholic Church in The Gambia, providing formation and hospitality for catechists, communicating information and instruction through radio, television and its *Newsletter*, and reaching outwards through the Holy Spirit

**The GPI COMMUNICATIONS UNIT** offers digital video production, DVDs and VCDs, documentaries, dramas, weddings, funerals, special occasions, camera-hire, digital editing (video & audio). Telephone **4394847**

**GPI also offers an air-conditioned conference hall, guest rooms and a catering service**

### Death of Fr Matthias Murphy

THE DEATH occurred in Dublin on Sunday 26th April of Fr Matthias Murphy CSSp, who was Parish Priest at Holy Spirit Church Banjul from 1975 to 2010, and who taught at St Augustine’s Senior Secondary School for almost as many years.

*A death notice in the Irish press read as follows:*

Fr MATTHIAS (‘Mattie’) MURPHY CSSp (Kimmage Manor, late of Bandon and Tralee) - 26th April 2015, Missionary in Nigeria and The Gambia, aged 82, in the loving care of his community and the medical staff of Marian House; deeply regretted by his sisters Betty and Kitty (Texas), his brother Peter (England), nephews and nieces, extended family and Spiritan confrères. Rest in Peace. Reposing in the Mission House, Kimmage Manor, from 2 o’clock today (Tuesday 28th). Prayers at 10.30 o’clock tomorrow (Wednesday 29th) followed by removal to the Church of the Holy Spirit, Kimmage, for Funeral Mass at 11 o’clock, followed by burial in Dardistown Cemetery. *Go dtuga Dia suaineas siorai do.*

Bishop Robert Ellison, assisted by most of the priests of the diocese, celebrated a Requiem Mass for Fr Murphy at Holy Spirit Banjul on Tuesday 28th April.

*Bishop Ellison’s homily, Victor Carvalho’s eulogy and tribute: pages 24-27*



Fr Murphy welcomes St John Paul II to Holy Spirit Church, February 2002

### Giving thanks at Bwiam

THE PARISH of Our Lady of Fatima, Bwiam, held its annual parish feast on Saturday 11th May. The celebrant at Mass was Fr Yenes Manneh.

The occasion attracted many Catholics from the Kombos, including parishioners from St Kizito’s, Bakoteh, where Fr Sean Devereux, Parish Priest at Bwiam, was once based.



## Help for poor communities



**Bishop Ellison with sisters and members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul and CaDO after Mass, October 2014**

RESPONDING last year to the Pope's call for participation in the Caritas Internationalis Anti-poverty Global Campaign, Bishop Robert Ellison asked the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) to work with the Catholic Development Office (CaDO) to spearhead a campaign in The Gambia.

Last August SSVP and CaDO identified three needy rural parishes to benefit from funds set aside by the Bishop for small food-projects.

Bishop Ellison, CaDO's Director and the SSVP's Secretary-General, took part in a television programme on the campaign.

Last October the Bishop presided at a Mass attended by reverend sisters, CaDO staff, representatives of SSVP and other diocesan units. He spoke about Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* and its focus on the poor, adding that the Society of St Vincent de Paul and the Sisters of the Missionaries of Charity are active in listening to and sharing with the poor. A collection was taken, and gifts of locally-produced food were presented to the sisters.

### The Jalokoto appeal

Last December, during the pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady Queen of Peace, Bishop Ellison launched an appeal for another community - Jalokoto, in the Central River Region - and for other communities suffering drought, poor harvests and hunger.

The appeal attracted a good response from both Catholic and non-Catholic individuals and companies.

In February this year the Bishop approved a grant of D50,000 (about €1,100) for the Parish of the Sacred Heart in the Central River Region to stimulate rice growing, thus increasing harvests, reducing hunger, creating savings and helping other communities to benefit.

## **WE EXTEND TO ALL OUR MUSLIM BROTHERS AND SISTERS BEST WISHES FOR THE HOLY SEASON OF RAMADAN AND THE CELEBRATION OF KORITEH**

Approximate dates: Ramadan begins Thursday 18th June  
Lailat-al-Qadr ('Night of Power') Monday 13th July  
Eid-al-Fitr (Koriteh) Friday 17th July

## Methodist and Catholic choirs in concert

ADVERTISED as the 'First Joint Choir Jamboree', an innovative concert at the Jaama Hall, Kairaba Beach Hotel on Friday 8th May featured the Methodist Conventional Choir and the Catholic choirs of Blessed Sacrament Church Kanifing, and Holy Rosary Lamin, as well as Gospel artists.

Blessed Sacrament and the Methodist choir each presented four items, including (by the Methodists) two Ghanaian chants.

After the interval, Holy Rosary's contribution included two Congolese chants and a song in Serer – so that, with Gospel songs by singers Harriet and Rose, and songs in Wolof and English, it was a particularly varied evening.

The concert, in aid of continuing development at Kunkujang Mariama, was organised by GPI and the Bogboo Youth Group.

Bogboo was established over a decade ago. It has 26 members, drawn from throughout the diocese, with some living abroad. The group works in line with the diocesan goal of self-reliance to contribute to the local Church and communities.

## Bishop Ellison in Rome

FROM 11th to 22nd May, Bishop Robert Ellison attended the meeting in Rome of Caritas Internationalis.

The meeting elected as Caritas President Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila, the first Asian to hold the post.

Following his election, the cardinal, nicknamed the 'Asian Francis', said: 'Let us together strengthen the Church of the poor so that our witness can help guide us to a world of understanding, justice, true freedom and peace.'

Caritas Internationalis is a confederation of 165 Catholic relief, development and social service organisations operating in over 200 countries and territories worldwide.

Staff and volunteers at these organisations number about one million.

## GPI staff training

FROM Tuesday 5th to Wednesday 14th May, staff of the GPI met for consideration of their aims, routines and co-operative efforts. Margaret Keita, an auditor, was the facilitator.

## St Edward's on top

THE ANNUAL Bible-story competition for Catholic schools in Regions 1-3, held at GPI was won by St Edward's Bwiam (34 points) followed jointly by St Peter's Lamin and St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda (33 points), with St Francis Kunkujang coming third (30 points).

**Don't forget  
KADU-DUNGA GI - the Living Word  
1pm every Sunday on GRTS**



## Sister Rosine makes her final vows



THE SISTERS of the Presentation of Mary rejoiced on Saturday 18th April at St Charles Lwanga Church, Fajikunda, when Sister Rosine Sanyang made her final vows.

Sr Rosine was born in 1985 at Bakau New Town, daughter of Alexander Sanyang and Bertha Manga Sanyang. She was

baptised and confirmed at the Church of St Charles Lwanga, Fajikunda. From the Lower Basic School there, she went to Brikama Upper Basic School and then to Rose Kali Senior Secondary School.

Sr Rosine comes from a devoted Catholic family. At an early age she felt a desire for the religious life, and was encouraged by the Marist Sisters. Then she came to know Sr Bibian Flora Sambou and the Presentation Sisters, and was accepted at Rivier House.

After completing grade 12 she began her formation proper, and was sent to various communities for mission experience. As a pre-postulant she lived in Serrekunda, then undertook her postulancy in Brikama, and as a novice lived in Banjul. She made her first profession in September 2008 at the Church of the Holy Family Fajara. From 2009 to 2013 she gained experience in administration at the Presentation of Mary Nursery School and worked as co-ordinator with the Missionary Childhood of the Diocese of Banjul.

From September 2012 Sr Rosine studied management and finance at MDI. In February last year she went to Italy and France for a period of renewal in preparation for making perpetual vows.



**CaDO has presented substantial quantities of medicines and medical equipment to the Sisters of the Cœur de Marie at Darsilami for their mobile clinic**



## OBITUARY

### Friend to many

THE DEATH occurred on Sunday 10th May at the age of 77 of 'Gabbi' - Peter Gabbidon - whose career encompassed both school teaching and management positions with the Shell company.



Peter Arnold Edwin Gabbidon was born in August 1937, a son of Edwin Gabbidon and Menseh Sagnia.

He attended St Augustine's School in Hagan Street, Banjul.

On leaving school, Gabbi - as he was known to friends and colleagues - opted to become a teacher.

He spent two years at Yundum College, completing his course in 1956. Between 1954 and 1963 he taught in Catholic primary schools in Basse-Mansajang, Kanifing, Basse, Fulabantang, Sambang and Banjul.

In 1964 Mr Gabbidon joined Shell as a supervisor at their main depot at Yundum Airport. He took training courses in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya and The Gambia, and was promoted as Aviation Foreman, then Aviation Manager.

Gabbi readily made friends of all ages, irrespective of tribe, class or status. He was at home in his native Creole, Wolof, Fula, Mandinka and other tongues, and was at his happiest among people others might shrug off.

Gabbi was an ardent Catholic, and like many of his generation, an enthusiast for the old Latin liturgy - the Tridentine rite. He often complained about the decision of the Second Vatican Council to allow local languages in the liturgy, and found it difficult to accept the council's sweeping liturgical changes.

In June 1967 Mr Gabbidon married the former Miss Tisbay, Mary Ellen Senghore. They had three girls and four boys.

Mr Gabbidon is survived by his wife and children, brothers and sisters, grandchildren, relations and a host of friends.

His funeral was held at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament Kanifing Estate on Wednesday 20th May, followed by interment at Old Jeshwang Cemetery.

### Life-long Catholic

THE DEATH occurred at his home in Lamin Wayoto on Sunday 15th March of Renneh Thorp, who before his retirement worked for some years at the Catholic Secretariat. He was 61.

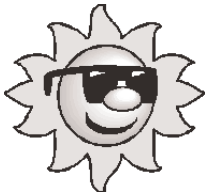


Mr Thorp was brought up in the family of the late Mary Aikins of Lancaster Street Banjul, afterwards of Kanifing. He worked as a prisons officer, then in the Field Force, and after a spell in England, as a teacher of French. Afterwards he worked at the Atlantic Hotel Banjul and at Banjul Breweries, where he was Assistant Sales Manager.

His last post was at the Catholic Secretariat, where he helped compile a record of diocesan assets.

Mr Thorp's funeral was held at Holy Rosary Church Lamin on Friday 20th March, before interment at Lamin Christian cemetery.





## Fee moi Gambia

### So that's what's wrong...

*Doctor:* Well, Mr Taal, I've examined you thoroughly, but I can't find the cause of your trouble.

*Patient:* Don't worry, Doctor. I'll come back when you're sober.'

### The women were first

WEDNESDAY 22nd July will be a significant day for Gambians: indeed, a national holiday. For Catholics and Anglicans, 22nd July each year is also the feast of St Mary Magdalene.

Just a moment, though: in the Catholic calendar, Mary isn't accorded a feast day. She's merely given a memorial: a lesser commemoration. Yet it was to Mary Magdalene - not to Peter and the other disciples - that the risen Jesus first appeared.

Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Mary the mother of James were among the women who followed Jesus during his ministry - no doubt controversial, in a society dominated by men. These good women followed Jesus even to Cavalry. They saw his mangled body taken down from the cross. They saw him laid in the tomb, and the stone rolled over the entrance. The women sought to serve the Lord even after his death, returning to the tomb to wash his body and anoint it with spices.

Mary and the others were vital witnesses to the Lord's resurrection. Luke tells us that these women were the first to spread the Good News. They were the first to 'tell it to the eleven and all the others', who were at first incredulous (Thomas wasn't the only disciple to doubt!)

Mary Magdalene: wasn't it a wondrous moment when the man you took to be a gardener greeted you with a single word - your name, 'Mary'? On 22nd July, as a lay person I shall privately say the *Gloria in Excelsis* - even though it won't be said at Mass.

### No cameras

THERE'S plenty - quite rightly - about Fr Murphy in this issue of the *Newsletter*. I'm told that the very day after his death, Gambians waiting in the departure lounge at London Heathrow airport, having heard the news, were reminiscing about him.

I found Fr Murphy's Requiem Mass at Holy Spirit moving. He would have approved the Latin elements, and appreciate that many in his congregation still know the words of Latin requiem chants by heart!

But he wouldn't have allowed photographers and television cameras into his church until the very end of the Mass - as many who have received First Communion, Confirmation or Marriage during the Murphy era will testify.

### End of an era?

I REJOICE, and I hope you do, too, that from 1st July the import of cheap, flimsy plastic bags will be prohibited. Let's hope that thereafter our streets will begin to be less littered.

Plastic bags aren't biodegradable - meaning that they're not

broken down by sunshine, wind or rain. They are a menace on land used for growing crops, an eyesore on the beach, unsightly and unhygienic on our streets.

But litter doesn't consist only of bags. Tins, bottles, discarded cloth and all manner of things carelessly thrown down disfigure the environment, especially in crowded urban areas. We need a sustained campaign to alert everybody that they are guardians not only of their own compounds but of the streets and paths and all places that we all share.

I'm so pleased that the President, stressing the positive side of preserving and improving the environment, has urged everyone to take the greatest care of palm trees - described some months ago by one of our readers as 'among the glories of The Gambia'.

### Mind-boggling

IT'S a small painting, measuring about 44 x 56 cm. Recently it was sold at auction in New York for - please believe me! - over \$179 million. I don't know how much that is in dalasis, but it's an enormous sum in any currency.

I'm talking about *Les Femmes d'Alger*, produced in 1955 by the most celebrated painter of the 20th century, Pablo Picasso. It had previously been sold in 1997 for \$31 million.

Whether this painting's been bought for display or for investment, its apparent commercial worth is mind-boggling. So is the price of diamonds, which are so valuable that smuggling them was a major factor in the catastrophic civil wars suffered in Liberia and Sierra Leone - and elsewhere. We humans, or at least the big-businessmen among us, have a questionable sense of values...

Which reminds me that though Picasso can command enormous sums, many - including connoisseurs - find his work, like much 'modern art', of limited or absolutely no appeal.

### Some hope!

*Overheard in a supermarket:*

The rain's really coming down outside. What about your prices? Are they coming down, too?

## Congratulations

**Fr Peter Steven Lopez**  
**Director of the Gambia Pastoral Institute**  
**celebrates the 15th anniversary of his**  
**Ordination**  
**on 15th July 2000**

**During June and July, six other priests in our diocese**  
**celebrate the anniversary of their Ordination**

Tuesday 23rd June	Fr Gabriel Secka 2001
Sunday 28th June	Fr Benedict Mba MSP 2003
Sunday 5th July	Fr John Sharpe CSSp 1964
Wednesday 8th July	Fr Michael Gomez CSSp 2005
	Fr Peter Jammeh CSSp 2005
Friday 10th July	Fr Pius Kwasi Gidi CSSp 2004

Together with two retired priests living in Dublin

Friday 3rd July	Fr Michael Casey CSSp 1968
Wednesday 15th July	Fr Reginald Gillooly CSSp 1961



## Pray for plenty of rain – but be careful when it comes!

*In a little while, the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. (1 Kings 18:45)*

BY July, the rainy season should be well underway. Many Gambians who live in the urban area regard some aspects of the rains as a nuisance. But we should all pray fervently with our farmers that this year's rains may be more abundant than last year's, when the rains were insufficient.

### ***When the rains do start....***

\* Don't forget to plant a tree or two, together with shrubs and bushes. There's no excuse not to, if you have the opportunity.

\* Wet road surfaces and muddy, clogged side-roads make driving more difficult and dangerous. Check your tyres. Check your brakes. Make sure your windscreen wipers can do their job. Above all: *drive with extra patience and consideration for others.*

\* The cost of corrugated roofing sheets escalates in the rainy season. Conduct a roof check-up as soon as possible: before the first downpour!

\* The rains bring more flies, mosquitoes and other unwelcome creatures. Keep your compound as clean as you can. If you don't already use impregnated bed-nets, consider whether you should do so.

\* Despite your precautions, malaria is most likely to strike at this time of year. Keep malaria treatment tablets in the house: they're especially valuable if malaria strikes during the night or if you can't readily get to a clinic or pharmacy.

\* Don't buy the cheapest of umbrellas – in strong wind they will turn inside-out!

\* Increased humidity causes mould. You can diminish it by leaving drawers and cupboard doors ajar. Keep your house and rooms well-aired.



\* If good leather shoes get wet and dirty, let them dry naturally. Don't dry them in front of a fire or any other source of heat: this will damage the leather.

### **Prayer for rain**

*from the Roman Missal*

O GOD, in whom we live and move and have our being, grant us sufficient rain; so that, being supplied with what sustains us in this present life, we may seek more confidently what sustains us for eternity...

## Faced with a form? Advice for younger readers looking for work



IF you're looking for a job, you may be sent application forms to fill and return.

You want to be among applicants who are selected for interview: so do make sure you submit the form in time, and completed fully, correctly and neatly. Applicants who present

messy forms, disfigured with crossings-out, are rarely selected for interview.

First of all, read through the whole form carefully.

If it's clear that your potential employer is asking for 'essential' qualifications or experience that you don't have, it's of little use to apply for the job. (But if you can almost supply what the employer is looking for, it may be worthwhile to apply; perhaps adding a covering note to explain why you think you should be considered.)

To ensure that you don't make any mistake on the application form, photocopy the form, and use the photocopy to make your application.

Make sure you understand everything on the form, and that you are supplying all the information required clearly and in good handwriting. If you commit mistakes, make a second photocopy and practise on that.

Don't write anything that is vague or untrue.

Only when you are satisfied that you have filled the photocopied form fully and correctly, should you fill the original form.

Don't be in a rush.

Keep the form clean and uncreased. Use a suitable pen, and write in your best, clearest handwriting.

If your application is among the clearest and neatest the employer receives, you're well on the way to being considered.

While we're on this topic, remember that you should keep certificates and documents relating to your education and work safe and clean.

If you want to show such certificates and documents to your family and friends, make photocopies to show them.

Keep your original certificates in prime condition!



## Seeking information – or something more?

If you're looking for information, try the internet: there are countless websites which can tell you more than you ever need to know – literally, every subject under the sun.

If you don't own a computer, look for an internet café, where charges are generally reasonable.

Take note that the internet is unregulated: anyone can set up a website. This means that some information on the internet is not reliable. Of course, many websites do provide impartial, objective and accurate information compiled and checked by competent, informed experts in their field. But other websites are run by commercial organisations to promote their own products or services. And some websites are run by pressure groups. They may contain accurate information, but be biased.

Some websites are plain dotty or malicious. The internet also caters for those who are addicted to pornography or hatred and abuse: something to make sure your children are guarded against.

### Search engines

You may already know where to find the website you want to visit. Otherwise, use a 'search engine'.

Google is popular. So are Yahoo and MSN.

Also much used are those offered by Internet Service Providers such as Tiscali and sites such as the BBC's [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

When you enter a search phrase, be as specific as you can. Be discriminating. If, for example, you are looking for medical information and advice, be wary of sites which want you to buy their products. Visit a site that is more reliable, such as [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

The internet is one of the great blessings of our age, providing free information and pleasure for billions worldwide. But it can become addictive. People with nothing better to do can waste hours 'browsing'.

Browsers don't learn much. They gather and promptly forget masses of so-called 'facts' that are of little use.

As with television, children who are fortunate enough to have access to the internet should not be encouraged to use it too often.

Remember the poet T.S. Eliot's 'Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?'

The internet can yield endless information. But much more valuable than mere information is knowledge. And the supreme value is wisdom.

We can only acquire wisdom through painstaking thought – and, the Christian would add, through prayer!

### How to see the Vatican from anywhere in the world

Pope John Paul II sent the first papal email. Pope Benedict XVI was the first Pope with a Twitter account. Pope Francis started *Scholas Labs*. The Vatican has been using the internet to connect with the Church's peripheries for years.

One of the lesser-known services it offers are webcams. The Holy See has set up cameras at key spots throughout Vatican City.

Views include

- The dome of St Peter's
- St Peter's Square
- The city of Rome seen from the dome of the basilica
- The tomb of St John Paul II
- The Governorate Palace.
- Castel Gandolfo, the Pope's summer residence.

*The webcams can be viewed at [vaticanstate.va](http://vaticanstate.va)*



### Question Box

**MOST of my friends aren't Christians. Even among those who are Christians, only a few talk about their religion, and the others don't go to Mass, nor to a non-Catholic church.**

**I know I'm supposed to witness to Christ, but how can I do so in company like this without feeling a bit silly, and perhaps losing some of my friends?**

There are probably more times than you realise when you can speak plainly about what you believe. But you are right that on many occasions making reference to religion won't help you or the Church. You do, however, have one clear duty: that is, to witness by the way you live.

If you always speak the truth, behave honourably, and try to be generous and helpful to others, you're living a Christian life. And it's likely that some of your friends, even if you don't often refer directly to your faith, will attribute your behaviour to the Christian religion you profess.

Pope Benedict put it like this: 'A Christian knows when it is time to speak of God, and when it is better to say nothing and let love alone speak. He knows that God's presence is felt at the very time when the only thing we do is to love.' (Pope Benedict's first encyclical letter, *Deus caritas est*)

This gives rise to another question: Is your behaviour to others more than simply 'correct'?

Can it in any sense be called 'loving'?

# Saying goodbye

## Bishop Cleary quietly departs after sixty-two years among us

*PERHAPS I am too emotional, but I have always dreaded parting from friends and saying goodbye...*

*Sixty-two years ago I came to The Gambia, and it is here I have spent all my priestly life. Later, as Bishop, I travelled throughout the country and got to know it well, and love its people. Otherwise, I would not have stayed.*

*I made many close friends here, both Muslim and Christian.*

*Now, in my 90th year, I feel I should live nearer hospital and nursing care and not be a burden here.*

*So I wish to sincerely thank you for the best years of my life. I now ask the Almighty to guide and protect you and your friends and families.*

*You will always be in my thoughts and prayers.*

*God love and bless you all.*

THUS, in typically simple fashion, in March this year, Bishop Emeritus Michael Cleary, Bishop of Banjul for 25 years, said farewell. He wanted to go quietly, but was present at a Mass of Thanksgiving at St Therese's Kanifing on Friday 13th March, just a day before he left for Ireland.

The departure of our Bishop Emeritus may be regarded as a milestone in a long period of expansion in the Catholic Church in The Gambia. When Michael Cleary arrived in October 1953 the small Catholic Mission - not then a diocese - was run by Irish missionaries. Now, at the time of his departure nearly 62 years later, the much more numerous Gambian faithful are led by Gambian priests, and the laity are more than ever engaged in the running of their Church: developments that Bishop Cleary always prayed for and helped to foster.



Young Michael (right) and his brother

### Irish origins

Michael Joseph Cleary was born in County Mayo, Ireland, in September 1925. He was the youngest of four children, with an elder brother and two sisters.

Eight days after his birth, his mother died, and four years later, his father. His father left two plots of land, one to each son (Bishop Cleary's nephew now owns and farms the land that he inherited.) Michael was brought up separately from his brother and sisters. He formed a great attachment to his devout grandmother.

### 'That's where I want to go'

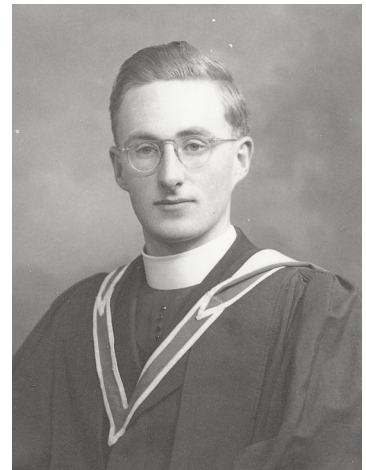
The Bishop remembers a visit to his secondary school of a Holy Ghost Father who showed a film made in missionary Africa. He decided: 'That's where I want to go.'

The Bishop's late sisters both entered religious orders. One was a Dominican in South Africa, and the other a contemplative sister in England and Ireland. His late brother

followed in his father's footsteps as a farmer.

Michael Cleary entered the novitiate of the Holy Ghost Fathers (now commonly known as the Spiritans) in 1943, then studied for an arts degree at University College Dublin. He spent two years practice-teachin at Blackrock College, the boys' school in Dublin run by the Holy Ghost Fathers.

He was ordained priest in 1952 by Dr John Charles McQuaid, Archbishop of Dublin.



### Arrival in The Gambia

It was to The Gambia that the young Fr Cleary was posted. This country was not generally considered an exciting place in which to serve as a missionary. Holy Ghost Fathers working in eastern Nigeria and in East Africa could boast of huge and growing congregations, whereas The Gambia was a Muslim country with only a few Christians, and a Catholic population of around 3,000.

When Fr Cleary arrived by sea on 29th October 1953 he fancied being sent to a missionary outpost such as Fulabantang. But his Superior, Mgr Michael Moloney, decreed that he should teach at St Augustine's High School, then in Hagan Street (Daniel Goddard Street) Banjul. In those days, priests did not question their superiors; and Bishop Cleary afterwards considered that the decision that he should serve as a teacher, not as a parish priest, was a wise one.

St Augustine's was then staffed by Irish priests, local staff, and VSOs (British volunteers). Fr Cleary taught mathematics and history.

He was to spend 25 years at the school, 17 as Principal.

The Bishop has many memories of his Holy Ghost confrères, who are well-remembered even today by their former pupils. Over the years St Augustine's teachers included Fr Seán Little, who taught English and geography; Fr Brian Darcy, English, who later went to Nigeria ('a very well-read man', says Bishop Cleary); Fr Tom Tarmey, Latin; Fr John Hogan, science; and Fr Vincent Comer, science.

Every other Sunday Fr Cleary went to Brikama to say Mass. In those days the school year ran from January to November, and during the long school holiday Fr Cleary would replace an up-river priest who was on leave; for example, at Basse - where rural night sounds unknown in Banjul caused him some unease.

The Bishop describes the Principal of his first years, Fr Michael Frawley, who had come especially from Nigeria to build up St Augustine's, as a 'born-teacher'. Fr Frawley opened the school in the evenings for study, and introduced the writing of essays on Saturday mornings.

### St Augustine's on the move

When Fr Frawley returned to Nigeria in March 1960, Fr Cleary became Principal. His staff included Fr Michael Flynn, Fr Pat Twohig, Fr Tom Tarmey, Fr Seán Little and Fr Reginald Gillooly.

Funds were raised for the relocation of the school to new premises in Campama. In addition to a £50,000 grant by the Commonwealth Development Fund and \$75,000 donated by Cardinal Cushing of Boston, USA, contributions were collected through bazaars, raffles and dances. The official opening of the new buildings took place on 1st September 1968.

In Fr Cleary's early years, Banjul (then known as Bathurst) was a closer-knit community than today. The principal Sunday services at the Cathedral (then the Parish Church) were High Mass, with Solemn Latin Vespers and Benediction in the evening. Later, changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council led to today's simplified Order of Mass, with greater participation by the laity, and celebrated in English or a local language.

### Vicar-General

In 1975 Fr Cleary became Vicar-General - Bishop Moloney's deputy. Then, in 1978, he gave up the headship of St Augustine's to become Diocesan Educational Secretary.



**Bishop Moloney with his priests**  
- Fr Cleary back row, 3rd from left

Fr Michael Moloney, first Bishop of Banjul, had arrived in The Gambia in 1938, and almost at once went up to Basse. He established himself at Mansajang, and became close to the local people, spending 13 years among them, learning Fula and opening a school at Fulabantang. In 1951 the Mission was upgraded to a 'Prefecture Apostolic' (not far short of a diocese) and Mgr Moloney was appointed Prefect Apostolic. In 1957 the mission became a diocese, and the following year Mgr Moloney became Bishop: a role he fulfilled for almost 22 years - until 1980, when he resigned owing to ill-health.

### Gambia's second Catholic Bishop

Michael Cleary remembers being summoned to Monrovia, Liberia, in January 1981, where the Papal Nuncio, a German, told him that of the three names submitted to the Vatican (the usual practice then, as now, in the selection of a bishop) his had been chosen.

Fr Cleary says he hardly saw himself as bishop. But the tradition of obedience to which he subscribed led him to accept.



The Bishop-elect made history by being episcopally ordained in the grounds of St Augustine's High School.

Over 3,000 attended the Mass celebrated by the Nuncio, Archbishop Johannes Dyba. The Nuncio was assisted by Bishop Moloney; Archbishop Joseph Ganda of Freetown and Bo; Bishop Robert de Chevigny of Nouakchot; Bishop Michael Francis of Monrovia; and the Very Revd John O'Riordan, Apostolic Administrator of Kenema.

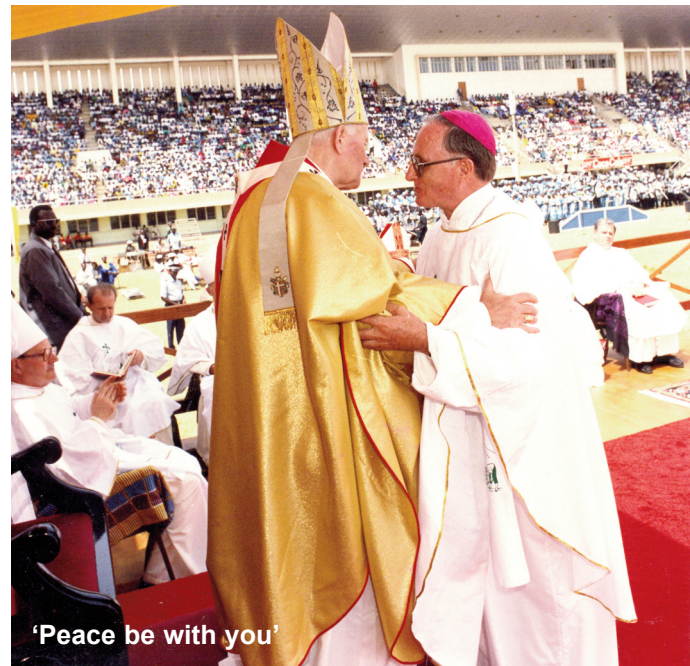
Present were the Anglican Bishop of Gambia, the Rt Revd Jean-Regal Elisée; the Chairman of the Methodist Mission, the Revd Ian Roach; and leading Muslim dignitaries. The Government was represented by the Vice President, Assan Musa Camara, the President being out of the country.

### Twenty-five years at the helm

Bishop Cleary headed the diocese for almost 25 years, until 25th February 2006.

All Christians, and indeed all Gambians, rejoiced at the resounding success of the visit in February 1992 of Pope John Paul II.

Bishop Cleary is modest about his achievements. But he presided over a steadily-growing flock and opened more churches than he can recall: in fact, by the time he retired there



'Peace be with you'



# BENDAVIA TRAVEL AGENCY LTD.

WE MAKE TRAVEL EASIER FOR YOU

CONTACT US AT OUR ULTRA-MODERN OFFICE COMPLEX  
AND BEGIN YOUR FLIGHT IN STYLE

*FOR ALL YOUR HOLIDAY AND BUSINESS TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS*

**\*\* ALL AIR TICKETS    \*\* WORLDWIDE TRAVEL / CONNECTIONS  
\*\* HOTELS WORLDWIDE    \*\* CAR HIRE    \*\* TRAVEL INSURANCE**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Please Call Telephone: (220) 4495358 / 4495359 . Mobile : 7237046 / 9794110 / 6458435

Email: [bendaviatravel@yahoo.com](mailto:bendaviatravel@yahoo.com), [bendavia@qanet.gm](mailto:bendavia@qanet.gm)

website:[www.bendaviatravelagency.com](http://www.bendaviatravelagency.com)

**TALENT HOUSE**

Do you want to sing, dance or learn how to play a musical instrument of your choice?  
Are you looking for a place where you could do your recordings on CD/DVD clips and  
make your adverts? Are you interested in creative bead-making, wirework jewellery,  
event-planning & decoration, interior design, gift-packaging & souvenirs,  
exquisite bridal-packaging, hat design and bridal make-over?

Visit us at TALENT HOUSE, Multimedia & Recording Studio (a subsidiary)  
Senegambia, Kololi, opposite Sarge's Hotel.

Telephone/Fax: (220) 4465773 /9200607/9308389/7489207/3997880

Email: [talenthouse2007@yahoo.com](mailto:talenthouse2007@yahoo.com)

Website: [exclusivehandmadebeadsandjewelries.blogspot.com](http://exclusivehandmadebeadsandjewelries.blogspot.com)

**HOT FM RADIO 104.3**

**Partners with Deutsche Welle (DW) Bonn Germany.**

Garba Jahumpa Road

Bakau New Town



*Enlightening Your World*

*Motto: Nil Desperandum*

Tel: 9278090 / 7654093/ 6126124 / 3486035

Email: [info@hotfmgambia.gm](mailto:info@hotfmgambia.gm) / [hotfmgambia@gmail.com](mailto:hotfmgambia@gmail.com) / [www.hotfmgambia.gm](http://www.hotfmgambia.gm)

[www.hotfmgambia.com](http://www.hotfmgambia.com)

were 64 churches run by 15 parishes; and 22 priests, as opposed to 14 when he took over.

Bishop Cleary took care to foster the work of catechists, and he furthered the role of the laity, both in the liturgy and in parish.

Since the early 20th century, the Catholic mission in The Gambia had been served by the Irish Province of the Holy Ghost Fathers. Even after the mission became a diocese and the official link was ended, the order continued to send priests, including Fr William Cleary, Fr Peter Conaty, Fr Philip Crowe



and Fr Matthew Chukwuelobe of Nigeria.

Bishop Cleary's prayer was for priests from The Gambia itself. Four years into his oversight of the Diocese of Banjul he had the great joy of ordaining at the Independence Stadium Fr Anthony Gabisi and Fr Peter Gomez.

At the same Mass he ordained David Jimoh Jarju and Edward Gomez as deacons; and the following year Fr Edward Gomez was made priest in Banjul, and Fr Jarju in Kartong.

By the time of his retirement, Bishop Cleary had ordained fourteen Gambians to the priesthood.

In October 2004 President Yahya Jammeh made Bishop Cleary an honorary Commander of the Order of the Republic of The Gambia.

#### Asked to stay on

When Bishop Cleary reached the age of 75 he was asked to stay on as leader of The Gambia's Catholics, and not until he reached the age of 80 did he retire: in February 2006.

Such was the Bishop's attachment to The Gambia and all its people that he thenceforth spent the greater part of the year as Bishop Emeritus in a house provided in Fajara - going to Ireland only during the humid season.

Bishop Cleary said his quiet goodbye to The Gambia on Saturday 15th March this year.

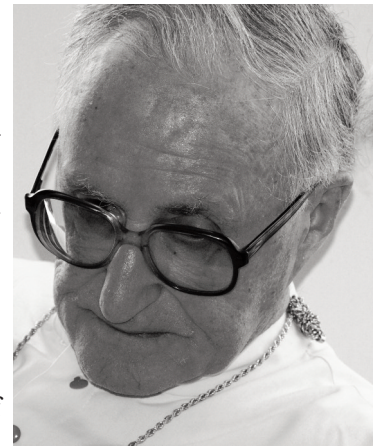
#### Priorities

At the time of his retirement, Bishop Michael Cleary was asked what his priorities had been as leader of The Gambia's Catholics.

He stressed what he had emphasised at his episcopal ordination: respect and co-operation between Muslims and Christians. In a message to Muslims at Koriteh the year he retired, he spoke of 'esteem and friendship on the part of the Catholic Church', and of the 'lasting values of peace and justice, of unity and love, of co-operation and fraternity'. He asked: 'Can we not work together to protect the most important human values?'

Another priority was acquiring funds to run the parishes, only one of which was self-supporting. The late Fr Vincent Comer was Bishop Cleary's right hand in helping build up diocesan reserves and investments - an endeavour notably taken over by our present Bishop, Robert Ellison.

Bishop Cleary regarded the enlarging of the role of the laity as 'providential'. He was exercised by the need to extend the training of teachers to serve in Catholic schools as well as the training of catechists. He was concerned that Catholic schools should continue the tradition of helping to mature individual children and help foster national development.



#### Respected and loved

Gambian Catholics and Gambians in general hold Bishop Emeritus Cleary in high regard. His quiet determination, his openness, his ability to listen and to relate to people of varying temperaments and backgrounds, are remarkable. Above all, he was and is respected and loved for his integrity and for his great affection for The Gambia, a country and people he has made his own.

Bishop Emeritus Michael Cleary epitomises what Church and people expect of their leaders: a firm faith allied to love, concern and care for the flock.

## Lucia, Francisco, Jacinta and Our Lady of Fatima

IN 1917, in a mountainous region in Portugal, the Virgin Mary appeared six times to three children. Elsewhere in Europe, the 'Great War' raged. It was to cost over 37 million lives.

Besides sending its sons to fight in France and North Africa, Portugal was in political chaos at home. There had been a succession of governments following a revolution in 1910. The monarchy had become a republic with a constitution separating Church from state.

Government officials were not sympathetic to Christianity. But the Catholic faith was the air the people breathed, as in the village of Aljustrel, a collection of white-washed houses on a dusty road in the parish of Fatima. There, Lucia Santos, Francisco Marto and Jacinta Marto were born. They were brought up in homes where the catechism was their daily bread, stories from the Bible were their recreation, and the word of the village priest was law.

Lucia de Jesus Santos was born, the youngest of seven children, to Antonio and Maria Rosa Santos, on 22nd March 1907.

She was a plain child with sparkling eyes and a magnetic personality, a natural leader to whom other children looked with confident affection. Blest with an excellent memory, Lucia was able to learn her catechism and make her First Communion and Confession when she was only six. She became a catechist at the age of nine.

Lucia was to be the constant guide and companion to her first cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto through the trials that accompanied the apparitions of the Virgin Mary.

From May to October 1917 the three children reported a vision of a woman who identified herself as the Lady of the Rosary. On 13th October a crowd of about 70,000 witnessed an amazing solar phenomenon, just after the children had seen their vision.

The first national pilgrimage to the site was held in 1927. The construction of a basilica began in 1928.

There have been several Gambian pilgrimages to Fatima.



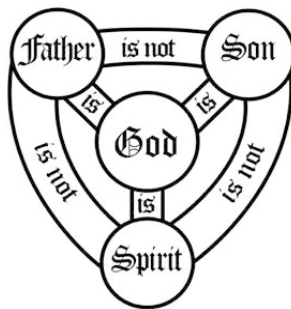
*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*  
*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord*



# Sunday Reflections

Reflections, readings and prayers at Mass from Trinity Sunday  
 until the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## *Sunday 31st May* **The Most Holy Trinity** *One God, one Lord*



CHRISTIANS of various denominations do differ in doctrine, but the majority proclaim that Almighty God has revealed himself through Jesus Christ and Christian experience as Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Three Persons and one God, the Most Holy Trinity.

The creeds are basic affirmations of our faith in the Holy Trinity. We Catholics begin our prayers 'In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.' We glorify the Almighty by exclaiming, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.'

But what do we understand by the Trinity?

And how do we explain this fundamental Christian belief to those who are not Christian?

We believe that God has revealed himself to mankind since time immemorial. In the Old Testament we are told that God showed himself to Moses and the prophets as One God, eternal and merciful, steadfast in his love.

Then, the New Testament shows that Christ, in his teaching and every act, showed us God as Father-Creator. He showed us himself as God the Son, human and divine, the link between time and eternity, the sacrificial Saviour. He showed us the Holy Spirit, living in all that lives. These teachings were codified in the early Church under the unfailing guidance, we believe, of the Holy Spirit. In this Trinitarian faith we adore God and seek to serve him and our neighbour. Today's Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity sums up all that we have celebrated in the liturgy since the beginning of the year, in Advent.

### **Collect**

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

**Readings:** Deuteronomy 4:32-34,39-40. Psalm 32: 4-6,9,18-20. Response: Happy the people the Lord has chosen as his own. Romans 8:14-17.

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

**Gospel:** Matthew 28:16-20

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

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

### **Preface**

...for with your Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit you are one God, one Lord: not in the unity of a single Person, but in a Trinity of one substance.

For what you have revealed to us of your glory we believe equally of your Son and of the Holy Spirit, so that, in the confessing of the true and eternal Godhead, you might be adored in what is proper to each Person, their unity in substance and their equality in majesty...

### **Prayer after Communion**

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

## *Sunday 7th June* **The Most Holy Body & Blood of Christ** *(Corpus Christi)* *The Sacrament of the New Covenant*

THE FIRST part of the Christian year has proclaimed our salvation through Jesus Christ. We have celebrated his incarnation, his ministry of teaching and healing, his death, resurrection and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Then, last Sunday, we gave thanks for this revelation of God's love in the feast of the Most Holy Trinity.

Today we rejoice that Jesus in heaven lives within us through his Spirit, and comes especially to us in the Mass. The old Covenant of God with his people, proclaimed in the Old Testament, has become the New Covenant of the Body and Blood of Christ, our eternal High Priest.

The sacrament that Christ gave his disciples at the Last Supper he gives to the whole Church. It is our spiritual food. Let us never take the Mass and Holy Communion for granted. Rather, let us thank God that he provides for us a way of worship and spiritual growth that leads us to heaven.





**Collect**

O GOD, who in this most 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 within ourselves the fruits of your redemption...

**Readings:** Exodus 24:3-8. Psalm 115:12-13,15-18.

**Response:** The cup of salvation I will raise; I will call on the Lord's name *or* Alleluia! Hebrews 9:11-15.

*The sequence hymn Pange lingua may be sung or said.*

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

**Gospel:** Mark 14:12-16,22-26

**Prayer over the Offerings**

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

**Preface**

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

*or...* for at the Last Supper with his Apostles, establishing for ages to come the memorial of the Cross, he offered himself to you as the unblemished Lamb, the acceptable gift of perfect praise. Nourishing your faithful by this sacred mystery, you make them holy, so that the human race, bounded by one world, may be enlightened by one faith, and united by one bond of charity. And so, we approach the table of this wondrous Sacrament, so that, bathed in the sweetness of your grace, we may pass over to the heavenly realities here foreshadowed...

**Prayer after Communion**

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

**NB Friday 12th June is a major feast:**

**The Solemnity of the MOST SACRED HEART of JESUS**

*p.32*

**Reminder**

MANY Catholics who have been careless about regular attendance at Sunday Mass may wish to make a fresh start.

*For them, and for others, here's a reminder.*

To remain in good standing in the Church, all Catholics should take part in the Mass every Sunday and on all Holydays of Obligation.

Everyone - Catholic or otherwise - is welcome to attend Mass. But Holy Communion may be received only by Catholics, and they must be in a state of grace - that is, free of serious sin.

If you are aware of any grave sin you must make confession before a priest and receive absolution. Then you may receive Holy Communion in good faith and with joy.

*14th June*  
**Eleventh Sunday in  
 Ordinary Time**  
*NaSar Ngùr Dika*



'ORDINARY time' doesn't mean that after the high seasons of Lent and Easter we in the Church can settle down to a quiet, unadventurous life.

'Ordinary Time' is, in fact, the 'green season'. The colour at the altar is green - the colour of growth, the colour of development.

The year's Sunday Liturgy, so far, has proclaimed God's extraordinary love for us in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his ministry of teaching and healing, in his death and resurrection, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Church he founded to carry on his saving work. Now, in this 'green season', Jesus invites our response.

The motto of Bishop Robert Ellison, and thus the motto of the diocese he leads, is 'Thy kingdom come'.

What is this kingdom - the kingdom we're praying for?

Jesus often spoke of the kingdom. In today's Gospel Reading he tells of the farmer who doesn't understand how the seeds develop - yet the resultant harvest is spectacular. Similarly, a tiny mustard seed grows into a great tree. So the kingdom, however obscure and humble its origins, is capable of great, mysterious, even unexpected growth.

We are part of God's kingdom. Within it, we have a part to play. We should not underestimate what we and our fellow Christians - here and now, in The Gambia - are capable of. It's the green season - time for growth and expansion. With God's grace, which we must daily pray for, we can 'move mountains'. The world needs God's peace and salvation. Let us be his joyful agents.

**Collect**

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

**Readings:** Ezekiel 17:22-24. Psalm 91:2-2,13-16.  
 Response: It is good to give you thanks, O Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:6-10

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

**Gospel:** Mark 4:26-34

**Prayer over the Offerings**

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

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

**Prayer after Communion**

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



21st June

## Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Who IS this man?*

MANY Gambians live not far from the Atlantic Ocean, and know that an expanse of water can be awesome and scaring. Today's Gospel Reading tells of Jesus and his disciples crossing a lake. Fierce winds and waves threatened to sink their boat. The disciples were afraid they might drown (as we, too, would be scared in such circumstances!) The disciples woke Jesus up, and he calmed the threatening waves, saying in effect to them, 'Where is your faith?' Then the disciples experienced a different sort of fear. They were awe-struck. Who IS this man who can control the wind and the waves?

Like the disciples on the lake during a storm, we may be apprehensive. Our journey on the sea of faith can be frightening. Where will it lead us? Shall we arrive safely? Wouldn't it be better to stay on the shore, on the margins of life, clinging to merely human institutions and friendships?

But Jesus is no sleeping partner. He will uphold us. When we recognise him for what he is - the Son of God - we are filled with awe. But it is not the awe akin to fear, it is the awe which is wonder. The wonder leads to trust and gratitude, and, by his grace, to eternal partnership with him. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. As Paul reminds us in today's Second Reading: 'In Christ, there is a new creation.'

### Collect

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

**Readings:** Job 38:1,8-11. Psalm 106:23-26,28-31. Response: O give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures for ever. 2 Corinthians 5:14-17.

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

**Gospel:** Mark 4:35-41

### Prayer over the Offerings

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

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

### Prayer after Communion

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

**NB Wednesday 24th June is a major feast:**

**Solemnity of The NATIVITY of St JOHN the BAPTIST p.32**

28th June

## Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Faith and new life*

THE GOSPELS tell of innumerable people coming to Jesus for healing. Sometimes it was the sufferers themselves, sometimes members of their family, or their friends. All these people had heard a lot about Jesus - and they hoped for his help. Some had great faith in him. The woman who'd suffered so long from a haemorrhage (bleeding) was sure that even if she couldn't talk to Jesus, just touching his clothing would heal her. And so it was. Jesus told her, 'Your faith has restored you.'



When the official from the synagogue who begged Jesus to save his daughter's life learnt that she was already dead, Jesus said to him, 'Have faith.'

What kind of faith was Jesus calling for, when the father had just had such catastrophic news? Yet evidently he did have faith, and Jesus went on to raise his daughter from the dead.

There's a message for us here: faith in Jesus brings new life. As Wisdom tells us: 'God takes no pleasure in the extinction of the living'. So we should pray for an increase in faith - faith that will also spur us to be generous to others, as Paul advises us in today's Second Reading.

### Collect

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

**Readings:** Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24. Psalm 29:2,4-6,11-13. Response: I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me. 2 Corinthians 8:7,9,13-15

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

**Gospel:** Mark 5: 21-43

### Prayer over the Offerings

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

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

### Prayer after Communion

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

*If there is an evening Mass this Sunday, it is the Vigil Mass for St Peter & St Paul, for which there are special prayers and readings(not given here).*

**NB Monday 29th June is a major feast:  
Solemnity of St PETER & St PAUL p.32  
6th July**

## Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Authority  
unrecognised*

DURING his short ministry, Jesus attracted great and enthusiastic crowds.

But in his home town in Galilee, despite



Our Lord's powerful teaching in the local synagogue, the people weren't that attracted to him: they thought of Jesus simply as 'the carpenter's son'.

Today, many millions are ignorant of Jesus, or indifferent or hostile to him.

Some members of the Church, even, take Jesus for granted. For them, Jesus' message doesn't have particular daily relevance.

Yet there's nothing commonplace about Jesus. Whether or not we heed his message, he is the most authoritative of all prophets: the teacher for all ages and all peoples, 'yesterday, today and for ever' (Hebrews 13:8).

### Collect

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

**Readings:** Ezekiel 2:2-5. Psalm 122. Response: Our eyes are on the Lord till he shows us his mercy. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

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

**Gospel:** Mark 6:1-6

### Prayer over the Offerings

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

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

### Prayer after Communion

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

*12th July*

## Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Not everywhere is the message welcome*

AMOS was a humble shepherd. During the prosperous reign of King Jeroboam II (786-746 BC), he courageously denounced injustice and immorality. His message wasn't at all welcome, and he was ejected from the King's court.

Rejection is often the fate of God's servants.

Like brave Amos, Jesus' disciples were humble people. In today's Gospel Reading we learn how Jesus sent them out to preach, carrying almost nothing. He and they knew full well that they wouldn't be welcome everywhere, and that some people wouldn't listen to them. Yet in Jesus' name his disciples, working in pairs, did perform some works of healing.

Now, in 2015, in our own Christian ministry, we must be prepared to be sometimes misunderstood, ignored or rejected: even laughed at. But, as Paul told Timothy, we should preach Christ 'whether the time is right, or not' (2 Timothy 4:2).



### Collect

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

**Readings:** Amos 7:12-16. Psalm 84:9-14. Response: Let us see, O Lord, your mercy, and give us your saving help. Ephesians 1:3-14.

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

**Gospel:** Mark 6:7-13

### Prayer over the Offerings

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

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

### Prayer after Communion

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

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



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

19th July

**Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time***Leading and feeding the flock*

CHRIST brings people together: that is the message of St Paul in today's Second Reading.

In the Gospel we are told that despite the need of Jesus and his disciples for rest, they were followed by an eager crowd; and Jesus began to teach them because they were 'like sheep without a shepherd'. Elsewhere, we remember, Jesus described himself as 'the Good Shepherd' (John 10:11-14).

The strongest Biblical metaphor for a leader is that of the shepherd. The shepherd leads and feeds his flock. He knows them as individuals.

In Jewish history, many shepherds (the leaders of the Jews) let their people down. They lacked vision. They lacked a sense of direction. They lacked courage. They lacked staying-power. Some even led their people astray.

These failings are referred to in today's First Reading. But our Lord Jesus is pre-eminently the 'good' shepherd. Thinking of him as a shepherd may not mean as much to us as it did for his Jewish hearers, who were more used to shepherds and their work than we are. But it still helps us understand and appreciate Jesus as our leader and our guide, who knows each of us as an individual, and is ready to give his life for us.



26th July

**Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time***Compassion and generosity*

ON Sundays throughout this liturgical year ('Year B') most of the Gospel readings outside Easter Time are from the Gospel of St Mark.

Mark's is the shortest of the four Gospels. This is one reason why, for the next four Sundays, our Gospel reading comes from the Gospel of St John. These readings relate to Christ as the 'bread from heaven' who nourishes the life of each one of us and feeds the entire Church.

A most important lesson that the Church derives from accounts of Jesus' miraculous feeding of a vast crowd (as in today's Gospel Reading) is that he is deeply compassionate and vastly generous to all who follow him, and that we his followers need him and depend on him.

This common need should unite us all. As St Paul reminds us in the Second Reading, there is one Lord, one faith, and one Father of us all.

**Collect**

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

**Readings:** Jeremiah 23:1-6. Psalm 22. Response: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Ephesians 2:13-18

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

**Gospel:** Mark 6:30-34

**Prayer over the Offerings**

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

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

**Prayer after Communion**

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

**Collect**

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

**Readings:** 2 Kings 4:42-44. Psalm 144:10-11,15-18. Response: You open wide your hand, O Lord, and grant all our desires. Ephesians 4:1-6

**Gospel acclamation:** Alleluia...Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life...

**Gospel:** John 6:1-15

**Prayer over the Offerings**

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

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

**Prayer after Communion**

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

*Lord Jesus, may we, in faith and love, seek and find you in the Mass and in Holy Communion*

## from beyond the diocese

### 'Missionaries of mercy' to be sent out across the world for the Holy Year

DURING the forthcoming Holy Year of Mercy, Pope Francis wants to show the Church's 'motherly care' by sending 'missionaries of mercy' throughout the world to forgive even the most serious of sins.

The specially- and carefully-selected missionaries of mercy will be priests who have been granted authority to pardon even those sins reserved to the Holy See.

The priests will be chosen for their preaching ability, especially on the theme of mercy, and as 'good confessors' - able to express God's love, and not make the confessional, as Pope Francis has said, like 'a torture chamber'.

Bishops can recommend priests from their own dioceses to serve as missionaries of mercy, and priests themselves can submit a request to serve. When a priest volunteers, the organisers of the Year of Mercy will confer with his bishop to make sure he would be suitable, and has the bishop's approval to serve temporarily as a missionary of mercy.

Over a dozen individual jubilee celebrations will be held during the Year of Mercy, including a jubilee for consecrated men and women on 2nd February to close the Year of Consecrated Life; a jubilee for the Roman Curia on 22nd February; a jubilee for those devoted to the spirituality of Divine Mercy on Divine Mercy Sunday, 3rd April; and jubilees for teenagers, deacons, priests, the sick and disabled, and catechists.

A jubilee for 'workers and volunteers of mercy' will be celebrated on the memorial of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, 5th September, and a jubilee for prisoners on 6th November. The Pope would like the jubilee for prisoners to be celebrated not only in prisons but also with him in St Peter's Basilica. The Vatican is asking bishops and priests around the world to conduct 'symbolic gestures of communion with Pope Francis' and his vision of reaching out to those on the margins.

The logo for the Holy Year shows Jesus the Good Shepherd taking 'the lost soul on his shoulders, demonstrating that it is the love of Christ that brings to completion the mystery of his incarnation culminating in redemption'.

The logo was created by a Jesuit, Fr Marko Rupnik. It shows one of Jesus' eyes merged with the man's to show how 'Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ.'

The Holy Year of Mercy has an official website in seven languages at [www.im.va](http://www.im.va); a Twitter handle (@Jubilee\_va); a Facebook page; and accounts on Instagram, Flicker and Google+.



### 'Christians in Aleppo are losing hope'

THE CHALDEAN Bishop of Aleppo, in Syria, says that people there are losing all hope for an end to the war and the beginning of reconciliation.

Bishop Antoine Audo says that he used to talk about hope. 'But now I try to maintain myself in my faith as a Christian to continue day by day, hour by hour.'

When the fighting first began in 2011, said the bishop, the people of Aleppo held up well because the danger zones were far away. But now, almost everyone would leave if they could.

'Now we are without electricity, without running water. Eighty per cent of the people are without jobs. So they don't have any money to survive. We have everyday bombings. I can have a bomb on my street, my cathedral, my bishopric, on schools...it happens every day.'

Bishop Audo said that Christians in Aleppo are trying desperately to leave for the West. 'This is sad, since Christians have been present in Syria since the time of the apostles.'

The bishop stressed that the war is not between Christians and Muslims, but is a struggle between the Sunni majority and the 'minority of Alawites who had the power in Syria'.

Sister Annie Demerjian, an Armenian Catholic member of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary, described how shells fired by rebels killed two sons and their mother. 'The explosion flung one of the sons out of their house, leaving him dead, hanging on the power cables. His mother and brother were blown to bits by the bombs. Their relatives are still finding parts of the bodies among the rubble and burying them.'

The son blasted onto the power cables was identified as Michel, 18, and the second son as Annor, in his early 20s. The family lived in a Christian area of Aleppo, focus of months of heavy fighting between the forces of President Bashar Assad and the factions opposed to him.

The Christian quarter of the city has 'noticeably emptied out', said Sr Annie, with many residents grabbing whatever possessions they could carry and fleeing to the comparatively safer coastal regions or to predominantly Christian areas around Homs.

'Pray for Aleppo. People are fearful as never before,' said Sister Annie. 'Thousands have already left the city, both Christian and Muslim. We are preparing for the worst. May God enlighten the hearts of those in power so that they can find a way to peace. Otherwise, I do not know how long the people can continue to endure it all.'



Clearing up in an Aleppo street after shelling

## Pope Francis tells Coptic Pope: 'An ecumenism of blood unites us'



POPE Francis sent a message on Sunday 10th May to the Coptic Patriarch to mark the 'day of friendship' between the Coptic Orthodox and Catholic churches.

Francis wrote: 'Today more than ever we are united by the ecumenism of blood, which further encourages us on the path toward peace and reconciliation.'

'I assure you and the Christian community in Egypt and throughout the Middle East of my unceasing prayer, and I remember in particular the Coptic faithful recently martyred for their Christian faith. May the Lord welcome them into his kingdom.'

At morning Mass on Monday 7th May, Pope Francis spoke of a telephone conversation he had with Pope Tawadros. 'I remembered his faithful whose throats were slit on the beach [in Libya in February] because they were Christians. By the strength the Holy Spirit gave them, these Christians were not scandalised. They died with the name of Jesus on their lips. It was the strength of the Holy Spirit.'

## Catholic aid groups criticise EU over migrant crisis

AS the European Union announces tough measures to curb the flow of migrants and refugees across the Mediterranean, Catholic aid groups have urged a more humanitarian response.

'We're disappointed by the EU's proposals: although changes have been promised to stop people dying on our borders, these policies are insufficient,' said Karolina Babicka of Caritas Europe. She asserted that EU governments are at least partly responsible for conditions in Libya and other countries because of past interventions, and should be doing more to deter refugee flights by promoting stable development.

She went on: 'The problem is worsening, and major states aren't doing enough to combat it... If you start destroying boats, as the EU has tried to do with pirates off Somalia, it's likely you'll destroy the people in them too, and this raises legal and moral questions. The smugglers are there because there's a demand from desperate people who've no other way to reach safety. If you sink them, other even more dangerous routes will be found instead.'

In April Caritas reported that so far this year more than 1,500 people had drowned in the Mediterranean. During just one day in May, more than 3,600 migrants were rescued at sea in 17 different operations. The number of migrants attempting the crossing to Europe has increased sharply with

growing violence in the Middle East and North Africa.

The World Council of Churches has urged the EU to take collective responsibility rather than leaving the problem to border services in Greece, Italy and Malta, and to recognise the need to tackle poverty, social instability and conflicts in the migrants' countries of origin.

## Boko Haram kills 5,000 Catholics in one Nigerian diocese alone

AID to the Church in Need, a Catholic charity, has reported that 5,000 Catholics have been killed in one Nigerian diocese alone.

A further 100,000 Catholics in the Diocese of Maiduguri, in the north-east of the country, have been displaced by the six-year campaign of violence conducted by the Boko Haram militant group, according to the 'Situation Report on the Activities of Boko Haram in the Catholic Diocese of Maiduguri'.

The diocese includes the entire states of Borno and Yobe and part of Adamawa state. More than 350 churches in the diocese have been the targets of terror attacks with 'a good number of them destroyed more than once', the report says.



Bama market after a terrorist attack

There are now about 7,000 widows in the diocese and nearly 10,000 orphaned children. Among the diocese's displaced are 26 out of 46 priests, 200 catechists and 20 religious sisters. Twenty-two of the diocese's 40 parish centres and chaplaincies have been deserted by Catholics. Boko Haram controls about three-quarters of the territory of the diocese. Thirty-two of the 40 church-run primary schools have been deserted, and four of the diocese's five convents are closed.

## Francis receives President of Cuba

RAUL Castro, President of Cuba, has praised the Pope for brokering the restoration of relations between Cuba and the US - announced last December after secret negotiations in the Vatican to end over 50 years of hostilities

Mr Castro said: 'I am very happy. I have come here to thank him for what he has done to begin solving the problems of the United States and Cuba... I will resume praying, and turn to the Church again if the Pope continues in this vein!'

The Church has maintained ties with Cuba since the 1959 revolution. As a Latin American himself, Pope Francis has been able to maintain good ties with leaders from both the left and the right. He has repeatedly called for the US trade embargo on Cuba to be lifted.



## ALL BRANCHES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC NOW

OPEN FROM MONDAYS TO SATURDAYS: 8:30am to 8:00pm

50 KAIRABA AVENUE - Telephone: 4399144, 4378489

### LIST OF BRANCHES & IMPLANTS

1. Baka u New Town	6868820	20. Kairaba Avenue	6868801
2. Bakoteh	6868816	21. Kaw Junction L/ Kunda	6868861
3. Barra, North Bank Region	6868858	22. Kololi Highway	6868832
4. Banjul Leman Street	6868806	23. Lamin Village Opp Galp	6868815
5. Bansa ng	6969915	24. Latrikunda Sabiji	6868847
6. Basse Santa Su	6868839	25. London Corner	6868807
7. Basse Highway	6969865	26. Old Jeshwang	6868831
8. Brikama Nyambaï	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. Serrekunda Mosque Road	6868814
13. Busumballa	6868827	32. Soma	6868837
14. Churchill's Town	6868817	33. Sukuta	6868895
15. Cooperative	6868822	34. Talbokoto	6868813
16. Dippa kunda	6868812	35. Tallindling	6868809
17. Fajara	6868825	36. Westfield Opp. World Mobile	6868910
18. Farafenni	6868838	37. Westfield Next to Church	6868864
19. Kanifing Estate	6868842		



# Fr Matthias Murphy

## *Unforgettable priest and teacher*

FIVE years ago, on Corpus Christi Sunday - 6th June 2010 - Father Matthias Murphy announced to his congregation at Holy Spirit Banjul that after more than thirty years as their Parish Priest he was about to retire, just as three years earlier, he had retired from teaching at St Augustine's School.

'I can't believe it,' was the comment of one long-standing regular at Holy Spirit. 'When I think of this church I think of Fr Murphy. He's always been here.'

Not quite. The first Parish Priest at Holy Spirit when it was opened in 1968 was Fr John Hogan, who was succeeded by Fr Michael Murray and Fr Frank Leahy.

It was in 1975 that Fr Murphy became Parish Priest. He was to serve the church and parish for almost three-quarters of its history.

### The preacher

Fr Murphy was known for his forthright views on almost every subject – but above all on the Catholic Church and on education. As an extempore preacher he knew how to grab attention with his opening words:

'Some people will tell you that Jesus Christ was a Jew. I say he was not a Jew – no, he wasn't a Jew... His mother was Jewish; but his Father was God: so he was only half a Jew!

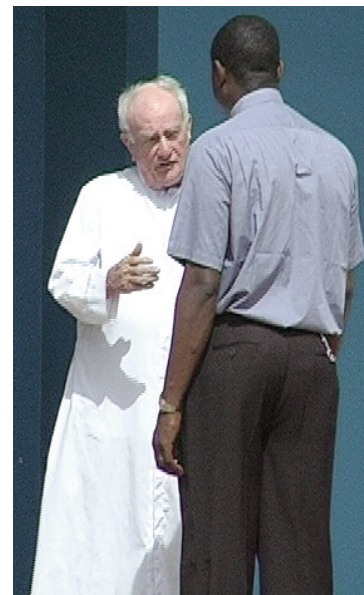
What followed would be abundant in Biblical allusions – the Old Testament as well as the New (Fr Murphy taught Bible Knowledge in school). Often abundant, too, in Fr Murphy's personal recollections of his seminary training many years earlier, or of the civil war in Nigeria. There would be humour. There would be trenchant comments on the ignorance or lack of get-up-and-go among some Christians. ('They can trot out the names of the Manchester United football team; but don't ask them to name the twelve apostles!')

More than many preachers, Fr Murphy usually gave his congregation something to talk about, or even argue about, after Mass.



That was always his aim: to stimulate and energise his hearers into thought and action.

Generations of pupils at St Augustine's remember Fr Murphy as a challenging teacher who used the same techniques as in his church sermons to keep them awake and responsive in the classroom.



### Sunday Mass at Holy Spirit

Fr Murphy ensured that Sunday Mass at Holy Spirit was dignified by such traditional practices as the creed and preface in Latin and several Latin settings of the Mass (though the ever-lively Baati Lingere choir had - and has - a wide repertoire, including several Masses in local languages).

In the late 1960s, when Holy Spirit was opened to complement the provision at the Cathedral, the Catholic population of Banjul was growing. In subsequent years it fell off as many Catholic families moved away to Fajara and elsewhere ('beyond Denton Bridge', as Fr Murphy put it).

But the Church of the Holy Spirit, notable for Fr Murphy's preaching and its musical tradition, continued to attract Catholics who made an effort to travel to Banjul for Sunday Mass. That tradition is being well maintained by the present Parish Priest, Fr Benedict Mba, and Baati Lingere.

### A large family

Matthias Murphy was born in January 1933 in County Cork, Ireland, and brought up in County Kerry.

There were seven boys and seven girls in his family. Some died young. Two sisters and a brother survive him.

Among the family, only Matthias was to become a priest.

After ordination in 1961, Fr Murphy began what was to be long and devoted service as a missionary priest of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritans).

He worked for a while in the Caribbean, and then was sent to south-eastern Nigeria.

This part of Nigeria had long been a powerhouse of Catholic missionary activity. (South-western Nigeria is more markedly Protestant, and the great north of Nigeria is predominantly Muslim, although parts of the north have substantial Christian minorities.)

From 1966 to 1970 Nigeria suffered a traumatic civil war as elements in the south-east sought to secede from the Federal Republic of Nigeria to establish the Republic of Biafra.

Following Biafra's defeat, many Spiritan priests were expelled from Nigeria.

Four of them were transferred to The Gambia.

Fr William Fitzpatrick and Fr Patrick O'Connor arrived in November 1970, and Fr Murphy and Fr Michael Frawley in January 1971.



### Beginning in Basse...

Fr Murphy first served in Basse and Fullabantang before taking up teaching at St Augustine's and becoming Parish Priest at Holy Spirit.

When Fr Murphy began teaching at St Augustine's, the Principal was Fr Michael Cleary (now Bishop Emeritus), whose successors were Fr Joseph Gough, Sam Njie, Elizabeth Renner (who later served as Speaker of the National Assembly), Charles Mendy and Martin Gomez. All benefitted from Fr Murphy's experience and advice.

Over the years, many St Augustine's boys taught by Fr Murphy have risen to prominence in government, public administration, business and the professions. The respect with which many Muslims regard the Catholic Church and its role in Gambian society stems from their time at St Augustine's. They have many memories of the particular impact of Fr Murphy.

Fr Murphy ceased teaching at the school in 2007.

In April 2010 Fr Murphy and Fr Michael Casey were honoured by President Yahya Jammeh with membership of the Order of the Republic of The Gambia (MRG).

### Leaving for Lamin

When he retired as Parish Priest, Fr Murphy went to live in Lamin. Though he assisted in the parish there, he declared: 'I want no plaudits. I intend to be anonymous.'

On 16th July 2011, while on a visit to Dublin, Fr Murphy celebrated with eleven other Spiritan priests the golden jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood.

### By the end of a long, faithful career...

When Fr Murphy finally left The Gambia, the local Catholic Church had grown considerably since his arrival back in 1971, when no Gambian priest was serving in this country.

In the end Fr Murphy could give thanks that Irish missionary efforts over many years had led to the growth of Gambian vocations to the priesthood, many of them stemming from his tutelage at St Augustine's.

Growing ill health led to Fr Murphy returning with reluctance to Ireland for medical treatment.

Fr Matthias Murphy died on 31st April 2015 – which was, appropriately Good Shepherd or Vocations Sunday.

## Well done, good and faithful servant

### A homily of Bishop ROBERT ELLISON CSSp at the Requiem Mass for Fr Matthias Murphy

WE are half-way through the Easter Season and reading the history of the very early Church as told by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles.

Today's reading spans two major parts of that story.

Part One ends with a summary: 'The Word of God continued to spread and to gain followers.' Jesus had told his apostles: 'Go first to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.'

This was the mission of St Peter and other disciples in and around Jerusalem. The focus was on the Jewish people - the circumcised. And it began to flourish in spite of the opposition of the Jewish elders.

Barnabas and Saul had returned to Antioch from their visit to Jerusalem. They had gone there to get the full approval of Peter for their mission to the Gentiles.

Antioch was the headquarters of the mission of Barnabas and Paul after his conversion. It was also the place where the disciples were first called 'Christians'.

One day they were praying and fasting when the Holy Spirit said to them: 'I want Barnabas and Paul set apart for the work for which I have called them.' They wasted no time in heading for Asia Minor, where they initially proclaimed the Word to the Jewish synagogues.

Where this failed, Paul and Barnabas turned to the Gentiles. Thus began the second part of the story of the mission to 'the ends of the earth' - the known world at that time, or Rome; Palestine was a colony of the Roman Empire.

### 'To the ends of the earth'

Before his Ascension into heaven, Jesus told his disciples: 'You shall be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem, but also in Judea and Samaria and the ends of the earth.' It took some time before the apostles began to move away from their mission to the people of Jerusalem. It happened not as a deliberate decision on their part, but rather as an outside intervention.



One of the deacons, called Stephen, was put to death by the Jewish elders. As a result, Luke tells us that on that day a bitter persecution broke out against the Church in Jerusalem. And a young man named Saul worked for the total destruction of the Church there.

The disciples of Jesus fled to Judea and Samaria.

One of the other seven deacons, Philip, began to preach the Gospel message. The people were united and welcomed Philip. And there was great rejoicing.

In this way, the first persecution gave birth to a new growth in the mission of the early Church in line with the words of Jesus: 'You will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but also in Samaria.'

At the same time, Saul - who had worked for the total destruction of the Church in Jerusalem - would become God's chosen instrument to preach the Gospel to the Gentile world.

If there had been no persecution, what would have happened? How long would the apostles have remained in Jerusalem?

### From persecution to development

In the history of our Church there are many examples of persecution in one place leading to a new development in the mission of our Church in another. *Sanguis martyrorum, semen Christianorum*: the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.

Here is a small example in our own time. During the civil war in Biafra and Nigeria (1966-1970), three hundred Irish Spiritans were expelled from Biafra (south-east Nigeria). One of these was Fr Mattie Murphy. He went home for a break, and was eventually redeployed to The Gambia in the year 1971. He left a war-torn country to serve a new field of mission.

Mission in Nigeria in those days had been a great success. Mission in The Gambia was regarded as slow and tedious; it was a mainly Muslim country.

### 'My church'

After a brief taste of mission in the Upper River Region, Fr Murphy spent the rest of his ministry - 42 years - right here in Holy Spirit Parish ('my church' as he called it) and St Augustine's High School.

The story of his life before he came here is just one tiny part of the ongoing story of the history of the Church as we

read in the Acts of the Apostles. He had to leave his original mission to take up an entirely different kind of mission.

One man plants, another waters and God gives the increase. Each one of us has been given a gift to be used for building up the Body of Christ. Nobody else can replace that gift I must answer for when the day comes.

This evening we celebrate this Eucharist in thanksgiving and joy for the life and ministry of Fr Mattie.

'Bloom where you were planted': Fr Mattie was taken from Nigeria and planted right here in Banjul.

In fact, the mission in south-east Nigeria was almost completed. There was no further need for missionaries, because the local Church had taken roots.

The reading from the Acts this evening and the burial Mass of Fr Murphy is quite a coincidence: he was very committed to the vocation he wished to live as a religious, a priest and a missionary.

He could be difficult at times. He always had an answer to everything and everybody.

I hope he does not argue with St Peter at the gate of Heaven!

*Well done, faithful servant: enter into the kingdom prepared for you. Amen*

## Man of unwavering faith who never minced his words

### Eulogy delivered by VICTOR CARVALHO at the Requiem Mass for Fr Matthias Murphy

WE are gathered here to celebrate the life and work of a great singer, a traditionalist who cherished his Latin, a teacher and preacher whose sermons were as inspiring as they were relevant: simple for all to understand, and spiced with typical Irish humour.

Born in County Cork, Republic of Ireland, on 13th January 1933, Fr Matthias Finbarr Murphy was a man of unwavering faith who never minced his words. The bold, fearless preacher had frequent brushes with death, particularly during the civil war in Nigeria. I guess he was one of the few Holy Ghost Fathers who left that country unscathed.

Fr Murphy came to The Gambia in 1971, and besides stints in Basse and Fulabantang, acted as stand-in at the Cathedral before settling in Campama for 33 years.

### A league of his own

As a preacher, Fr Murphy was in a league of his own. The Cathedral was always filled to capacity for Sunday evening Mass. The occasional cackle in church was something new, thanks to Fr Murphy relieving the congregation of stress while feeding them with the Word of God.

Preaching against the practice of Catholics wearing amulets or *téré*, I can vividly recall Fr Murphy asking rhetorically, 'Can a piece of leather tied around your waist take you to heaven? 'Can a piece of leather tied around your waist die for you on a cross?' 'Can a piece of leather tied around your waist say Mass for you?'

Such was the power of his sermons!

Like everyone else, Fr Matthias Murphy had his do's and don'ts. For example, he would avoid all mention of money when at the

lectern, and restricted the movement of cameramen in church.

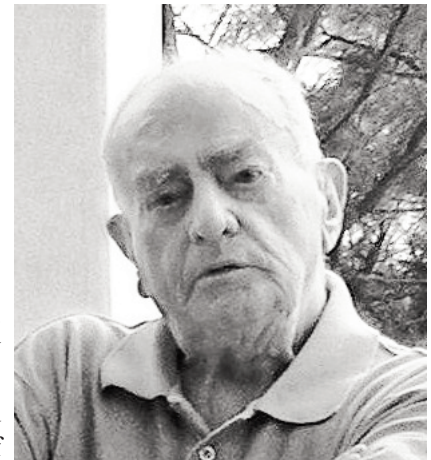
But he was the only priest I know who didn't mind you receiving a mobile call in church, provided you came to the front of the altar!

His knowledge spanned different fields: sport, music, journalism – you name it. His stance on highly-contentious issues was never compromising. He strove to inculcate young people in particular with a sense of discipline and respect for God's laws.

For those who didn't know him (and sadly there were quite a good number) Fr Murphy was the epitome of fear, strictness and candour. However, for the few who knew him well, Fr Murphy stood for nothing but what was right. He stood for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

He was a firm believer in the Latin dictum, *veritas liberabit vos* - the truth will set you free.

One of his admirable traits was his humility in accepting his mistakes.



### Admiration for The Gambia

Fr Murphy was a great advocate of 'inculturation'. When Baati Linguere was still in its infancy and without a home base, he made the choristers welcome at Holy Spirit.

No wonder he continued to be a crowd-puller, especially on feast days, up until his retirement in 2010.

Admiring The Gambia for its religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence, Fr Murphy once quipped, 'In what other Muslim country would you find a public holiday to honour the Assumption, with a public procession through the streets of the capital city? Where else would the Imam - the Muslim parish priest - send around a leg of mutton to the Parish Priest - the Catholic imam - on the occasion of a Muslim feast, in return for a similar gift sent at Christmas or Easter?'

A staunch supporter of local vocations, Fr Murphy had always insisted that a Church is never truly established unless it is founded on its own priests and religious.

In a commentary on the happy occasion of the ordination to the priesthood of Fr Peter Gomez and Anthony Gabisi on 13th April 1985, Fr Murphy remarked, 'The missionary's job is to make himself redundant. Missionaries are not meant to be a feature of permanence in any place.'

Twenty-eight years later, in 2013, with the number of Gambian priests and sisters in double figures, and still counting, it was mission accomplished.

Fr Murphy's health deteriorated rapidly and he had to return to Ireland, much against his wish. He passed away on Vocations Sunday, 26th April 2015.

He has laboured in this remote corner of the Lord's

vineyard. He will be counted among the priests, nuns and brothers who ploughed this lonely furrow.

The labour has been tough. The cost in blood, tears, toil and sweat has been enormous, but well spent. We salute their valour, as we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Spiritans.

### Thank you, Father

We at Holy Spirit owe so much to one man's commitment, devotion, sincerity, consistency and reverence. Fr Matthias Finbar Murphy - thank you for your dedication to Holy Spirit Parish.

May St John Paul II, whom you warmly welcomed to Holy Spirit Church as Pope back in February 1992, be there to receive you.

May the countless holy men and women whom you tirelessly served in Trinidad, Nigeria, England, The Gambia and your native Ireland, intercede for you.

You have fought the good fight, and run the race to the finish.

May you inherit the crown of eternal life. Amen.

*In paradisum deducant te angeli. In tuo adventu suscipiant te martyres et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem. Chorus angelorum suscipiat et cum Lazaru quondam paupere aeternam habeas requiem.*

*Mr Carvalho is a former altar-server and has been a devoted member of Holy Spirit Parish for many years*

## Ireland and The Gambia

### The pioneering Spiritans

THE REVEREND Father Matthias Murphy CSSp MRG, to give him his full title, was a missionary priest of the Irish Province of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, one of many who since the early 20th century have served the Catholic Mission in The Gambia.

Since its foundation in France in 1703, the missionary work of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit has spread throughout the world. It now has about 3,000 members: fathers, brothers and lay affiliates. Known traditionally as 'Holy Ghost Fathers', priests of the Congregation now prefer to be known as 'Spiritans'.

Until recent years the Irish Province of the Spiritans was the backbone of the Catholic Mission in The Gambia.

Since 1908 the local Catholic Church has been led by five Irish Spiritans. The first was Fr John Meehan, Superior from 1908 until 1946. He was succeeded by Fr Matthew Farelly.

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

Bishop Moloney's successor, Bishop Michael Cleary, took over in 1981, and our present Bishop, Robert Ellison, succeeded him in 2006.

With the departure of Bishop Emeritus Cleary, three Irish Spiritans remain in The Gambia. Apart from Bishop Ellison, they are Fr John Sharpe, living in retirement at Kunkujiang Mariama, and Fr Peter Suttle, a retired Spiritan who served for many years in East Africa.

Also from Ireland is Fr Sean Devereux, Parish Priest at Bwiam, who is a priest of the Diocese of Ferns in his home country.

Seven West African Spiritans are serving in the diocese. They are Fr Louis Mendy, Fr Michael Gomez and Fr Peter Jammeh (Gambians) and Fr Frederic Agame, Fr Joseph K. Fynn, Fr Pius Gidi and Fr Kwesi Job (Ghanaians).

On 1st June Fr Michael Gomez succeeds Fr Louis Mendy as Superior of the Spiritans serving in The Gambia.

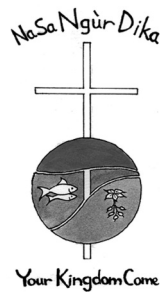


Do  
you  
know?

- 1 What are the first three words in the Bible and the last three words?
- 2 What do the letters SJC stand for, after a person's name?
- 3 Name the leader of the Methodist Church in The Gambia.
- 4 In what language were the Gospels originally written?
- 5 Name the piece of church furniture shown on the right.

**Answers on page 34**





## THE BISHOP OF BANJUL'S EASTER LETTER

# Christ's message and mandate: 'Trust in God, and trust in me'

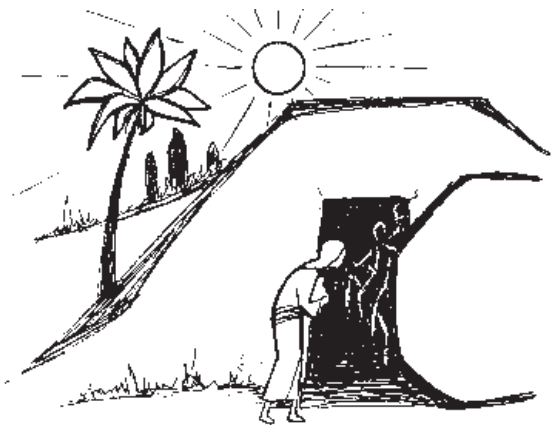
*May Christ, the morning star who came back from the dead, shed his peaceful light on all mankind*

THE FOUR Gospel writers mention the same basic details when they report the death, the burial and the resurrection of Jesus.

St Mark was probably the first to write a Gospel. St Matthew followed up in a similar way on Mark's account of the resurrection of Jesus. However, Matthew added some extra stories in the last chapter of his Gospel (28:1-20).

In all, there are five sections in this chapter of Matthew: the coming of two women to the tomb of Jesus; the descent of an angel; the appearance of Christ; the bribing of the guards; and the great commission to proclaim the Gospel message to the whole world.

### The start of dawn



Matthew tells us that after the Sabbath, and at the start of dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary set out to visit the tomb of Jesus.

The reference to the 'start of dawn' on that first Easter Sunday morning takes us back to the very beginning of Jesus' ministry. He used the words of the prophet Isaiah to highlight his mission: 'The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light; and for those who sat in the shadow of death, a light has dawned.' These words of Isaiah are also proclaimed in the first reading at the Midnight Mass for Christmas.

And now, on that first Easter Sunday morning, Matthew tells us that Mary of Magdala and the other Mary were approaching the tomb of Jesus, as the first day of the week was dawning.

Without knowing it, these two women were walking into a day on which the light of Christ would never set. This is the great mystery that we celebrate at the very start of our Easter

Vigil. The Service of Light, as we call it, includes: the preparation and lighting of the candle with the prayer, 'May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.' Then follows the Procession, and finally the joyful proclamation of the Easter mystery is sung: the *Exultet*.

### No idea

When Mary of Magdala and the other Mary set out for the tomb at dawn they had no idea about what was about to happen. They simply wanted to visit the tomb. Just as they had stood at the foot of the Cross on Calvary, so now they went to mourn the death of their Christ.

When they arrived at Jesus' tomb, they were present to witness a great earthquake and, at the same time, an angel descending from heaven to roll away the huge stone blocking the entrance to the tomb.

The angel spoke to them: 'No need to be afraid; he is not here, for he has risen. Come and see the place where he was laid. Then go quickly and tell his disciples to meet him in Galilee.'

### Great joy

The two women ran from the tomb with 'fear and great joy' as told by the angel. As they went their way to announce the news of the Risen Lord to the male disciples, Jesus himself appeared to the two Marys.

The angel had already told them, 'He has risen' and they have seen for themselves the empty tomb. Now, the Risen Lord appears openly to them, confirms what they know and tells them: 'Go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee. They will see me there'.

Note the use of the word 'brothers': the disciples are no longer mere 'friends' of Jesus. as he'd addressed them at the Last Supper. They are now 'my brothers and sisters' in the new family of God.

### The bribing of the soldiers

Not content with putting Christ to death, the religious leaders wanted to ensure that his disciples would not attempt to steal his body. So they posted soldiers to watch over the tomb of the dead Jesus during the night. Then, terrified by the noise of a loud earthquake and the appearance of an angel of the Lord, they fell to the ground like dead men.

So, while the women had gone to tell the disciples what they had seen and heard, the soldiers went into the city to report to the chief priests all that they had seen and heard. The chief priests decided to bribe the soldiers with a large sum of money. They told them to spread the false story that the disciples had come by night and stolen the body while they slept. A rather strange way of rewarding soldiers on duty for their failure to prevent the dead body from being stolen!

The chief priests also promised the soldiers that they would 'put things right' if the governor - Pilate - came to hear of what had happened. In that way, they would not get into trouble. Both religious and civil authorities failed to achieve in their efforts to spread their false propaganda.

**The great commission**

Jesus' great commission to evangelise the world: 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations; and remember: I am with you always, to the end of time'.

Matthew concludes his account of the resurrection of Jesus by linking it to our responsibility now to spread the good news of the Risen Lord throughout the whole world.

Jesus has fulfilled his mission. 'As the Father sent me, so now I am sending you,' is how the evangelist John records this 'hand-over' of Jesus mission to his disciples.

'May Christ that morning star who came back from the dead, shed his peaceful light on all mankind'.

During those forty days when Jesus appeared and disappeared to his disciples, he did so in a very random or unorganised way! However, in most cases, his message was simple: 'Do not be afraid; peace be with you'.

It was the same message that the angel had spoken to Mary at the Annunciation. Jesus had told the disciples the same

when he had fallen asleep in the boat on the lake. He had done so again at the Last Supper: 'Let not your hearts be troubled: trust in God and trust in me.' And he renewed that message over and over again after his resurrection.

Whenever he appeared, the people Jesus took by surprise were doing ordinary things. Mary of Magdala was returning from the empty tomb with the other Mary, where both of them had gone to share their grief. The apostles were probably doing the same thing in the Upper Room in Jerusalem while at the same time hiding from the religious and civil authorities. Jesus' words of peace to them must have touched and brought healing to many broken hearts for having abandoned him in the garden where he had been arrested.

**What will he appear to me?**

When can I expect Jesus to appear to me? Or what can I expect?

No more or no less than what he said to his first disciples, and the mandate he has given us all: to shed his peaceful light on all mankind. The world all around us today is clamouring for this peace. And that world begins with my neighbour.

+ R. Ezzamel  
Bishop of Banjul

Pious practices



MANY Catholics and other Christians habitually wear a cross, crucifix or 'holy medal'. Unlike other necklaces or brooches, they are more than mere decorations.

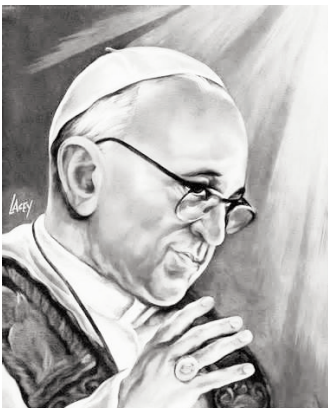
Crosses, crucifixes and medals are badges of the Christian faith. Many have been blessed by a priest. The wearing of them should recall the wearer to his or her discipleship as an ambassador of Jesus Christ.



But crosses, crucifixes and medals do not have magical properties. To think that they do is superstitious.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says: 'To attribute the efficacy of prayers or of sacramental signs to their mere external appearance, apart from the internal disposition that they demand, is to fall into superstition.' (2111)

No Catholic, apart from those in certain religious orders, is obliged to wear a cross, crucifix or religious medallion. It is entirely a personal matter. Those who do choose to wear them should remember never to say or do anything that profanes or degrades what these outward signs represent: namely, faith in Christ and membership of his Church.



**The Pope's Prayer Intentions**

**June**

- That immigrants and refugees may find welcome and respect in the countries to which they come.
- That the personal encounter with Jesus may arouse in many young people the desire to offer their own lives in priesthood or consecrated life.

**July**

- That political responsibility may be lived at all levels as a high form of charity.
- That, amid social inequalities, Latin-American Christians may bear witness to love for the poor, and contribute to a more fraternal society.

# Gambian Christian anniversaries

June and July

**FIVE YEARS AGO:** On 13th May 2010 (Ascension Day), the late Bishop Tilewa Johnson (later to become Archbishop of the Anglican Province of West Africa) presided at a celebration of the 75th anniversary of the creation of the Anglican Diocese of Gambia.

The Anglican Mission in this country began in 1821. During frequent vacancies in the post of chaplain due to illness or death, the duty was supplied by the Methodist Mission. For many years there was no settled Anglican congregation or place of worship. In 1869 a church school was established, and in 1890 the Government provided a site for a church - the present Cathedral. The 400-seat building was consecrated in 1901.

The Anglican mission in The Gambia was part of the Diocese of Sierra Leone, created in 1852. In 1935 the present Diocese of Gambia was constituted. The first Bishop (1935-51) was the Rt Revd John Daly. His successors were Bishop 'Roddy' Coote (1951-57), Bishop St John Pike (1960-63), Bishop Timothy Olufosoye (1965-70), Bishop Jean- Rigal Ellisée (1972-86) and Bishop Tilewa Johnson.



**21st June 1900:** Death aged 44 of Fr Charles Amman CSSp, Superior of the Catholic Mission since 1889.

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

**22nd June 1924 (Corpus Christi):** Ordination by Bishop Le Hunsec of Dakar in the church at Banjul of a local citizen, Fr Joseph Charles Mendy.

**13th July 1932:** Death in Banjul of Fr Joseph Charles Mendy, regarded by many Christians and Muslims as a saint.

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

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

**15th July 1951:** Ordination in Dublin of Fr Reginald Gillooly CSSp. He arrived in The Gambia the following year, and left in 2006 after 54 years' service.

**1st July 1956:** Ordination in Dublin of Fr Myles Fay CSSp, who served in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, the US, Italy and The Gambia. He died in Dublin on 2nd February 2006.

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

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

**27th July 1973:** Departure of Fr Seamus Fleming CSSp who since arriving in 1963 had mainly worked around Basse and Bwiam.

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

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

**15th June 1985 (30 years ago):** St Vincent de Paul Society, founded in Gambia in 1968, formed a national council.

**25th June 1995 (20 years ago):** Opening of St John the Baptist Church Tenene.

**8th June 1996:** Death of Justice Solomon Njie.

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

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

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

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

**8th July 2000 (15 years ago):** Death in Zimbabwe of the Rt Revd Roderick Coote, who served in The Gambia from 1941. He was Anglican Bishop of Gambia from 1951 to 1957.

**25th July 2000 (15 years ago):** Death of Archbishop Johannes Dyba (*right*), first Papal Nuncio to The Gambia.



**18th July 2001:** Death in Banjul aged 90 of Sr Albert Byrne, who had served in The Gambia since 1935.

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

**2nd July 2006:** Death of Cecilia Cole, teacher, magistrate, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, and Methodist.

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

**9th July 2006:** Fr Joseph Boafo CSSp bade farewell to Bakau Parish, where he had spent 10 years as Parish Priest.

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

**5th July 2007:** Death of Edward Mansal, retired Principal of St Edward's Senior Secondary School.

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

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

**11th June 2009:** 'Open Day' at GPI to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel.

**13th June 2009:** At St Paul's Makumbaya Bishop Ellison and ten priests celebrated the end of the Year of St Paul.

**15th May 2010:** At a fund-raising dinner Bishop Ellison presented awards to the Revd Norman Grigg, Methodist Bishop; T.G.G. Senghore, Catholic layman; and Christine Faye, the longest-serving employee of the diocese.

**13th June 2011:** Professor William Peter Stephens was installed as leader of the Methodist Church in The Gambia, succeeding the Revd Norman Grigg.

**During June 2011:** Fr Sean Devereux of St Kizito's Bakoteh and Fr Jean-François Diagne of Sacred Heart Bansang left the diocese, Fr Sean to Ireland and Fr Jean-François to Senegal.

# Daily Mass Readings



Sunday readings Year B Weekday readings Year 1

Mon 1st	June Tobit 1:3; 2:1-8. Psalm 112:1-6. Mark 12: 1-12
Tue 2nd	Tobit 2: 9-14. Psalm 112:1-2,7-9. Mark 12:13-17
Wed 3rd	Tobit 3:1-11, 16-17. Psalm 25:2-9. Mark 12:18-27
Thu 4th	Tobit: 6:10-11; 7:1,9-17; 8:3-9. Psalm 128:1-5. Mark 12:28-34
Fri 5th	Tobit 11:5-17. Psalm 146:1-2,6-9. Mark 12:35-37
Sat 6th	Tobit 12:5-15,30. Psalm Tobit 13:2, 6-8. Mark 12:38-44
<b>SUN 7th</b>	Exodus 24:3-8. Psalm 116:12-13,16-18. Hebrews 9:11-15. Mark 14:12-16,22-26
Mon 8th	2 Corinthians 1:1-7. Psalm 34:2-9. Matthew 5:1-12
Tue 9th	2 Corinthians 1:18-22. Psalm 119:129-133,135. Matthew 5:13-16
Wed 10th	2 Corinthians 3:4-11. Psalm 99:5-9. Matthew 5:17-19
Thu 11th	Acts 11:21-26 & 13:1-3. Psalm 98: 1-6. Matthew 10:7-13
<b>FRI 12th</b>	Hosea 11:1,3-4,8-9. Psalm Isaiah 12:2-6. Ephesians 3:8-12,14-19. John 19:21-37
Sat 13th	2 Corinthians 5:14-21. Psalm 103:1-4,9-12. Matthew 5:33-37 or Isaiah 61:9-11. Psalm 1 Samuel 3: 1,4-8. Luke 2:41-51
<b>SUN 14th</b>	Ezekiel 17:22-24. Psalm 92:2-3,13-16. 2 Corinthians 5:6-10. Mark 4:26-34
Mon 15th	2 Corinthians 6:1-10. Psalm 98:1-4. Matthew 5:38-42
Tue 16th	2 Corinthians 8:1-9. Psalm 146:2,5-9. Matthew 5:43-48
Wed 17th	2 Corinthians 6-1. Psalm 112:1-4,9. Matthew 6:1-6,16-18
Thu 18th	2 Corinthians 11:1-11. Psalm 111. Matthew 6:7-15
Fri 19th	2 Corinthians 11:18,21-30. Psalm 34:1-6. Matthew 6:19-23
Sat 20th	2 Corinthians 12:1-10. Psalm 89:20-33. Matthew 6:24-34
<b>SUN 21st</b>	Job 38:1,8-11. Psalm 107:23-26,28-31. 2 Corinthians 5:14-17. Mark 4:35-41
Mon 22nd	Genesis 12:1-9. Psalm 33:12-13,18-20,22. Matthew 7:15
Tue 23rd	Genesis 13:2,5-18. Psalm 15:2-5. Matthew 7:1-5 <i>Evening Vigil Mass of John Baptist: Jeremiah 1:4-10. Psalm 71:1-6,15,17. 1 Peter 1:8-12. Luke 1:5-17</i>
<b>WED 24th</b>	Isaiah 49:1-6. Psalm 139:1-3,13-15. Acts 13:22-26. Luke 1:57-66,80
Thu 25th	25th Genesis 15:1-12,15-16. Psalm 106:1-5. Matthew 7:21-29
Fri 26th	Genesis 17:1,9-10,13-22. Psalm 128:1-5. Matthew 8:1-4
Sat 27th	Genesis 18:1-15. Psalm Luke 46-50,53. Matthew 8:5-17
<b>SUN 28th</b>	Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24. Psalm 30: 2,4-6, 11-13. 2 Corinthians 8:7,9,13-15. Mark 5:21-43
<b>MON 29th</b>	<i>Evening Vigil Mass of Peter &amp; Paul: Acts 3: 1-10. Psalm 19:2-5. Galatians 1:11-20. John 21:15-19</i>
Tue 30th	Acts 12:1-11. Psalm 34:2-9. 2 Timothy 4:6-8. Matthew 16:13-19
Wed 1st July	Genesis 19:15-29. Psalm 26:2-3,9-12. Matthew 8:23-27
Thu 2nd	Genesis 21:5,8-20. Psalm 34:7-8,10-13. Matthew 8:28-34
Fri 3rd	Genesis 22:1-19. Psalm 115:1-6,8-9. Matthew 9:1-8
Sat 4th	Ephesians 2:19-22. Psalm 117:1-2. John 20:24-29 Genesis 27:1-5. Psalm 135:1-6. Matthew 9:14-17
<b>SUN 5th</b>	Exodus 2:2-5. Psalm 123:1-4. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Mark 6:1-6
Mon 6th	Genesis 28:10-22. Psalm 91:1-4,14-15. Matthew 9:18-26.
Tue 7th	Genesis 32:22-33. Psalm 17:1-3,6-8,15-17? Matthew 9:32-38
Wed 8th	Genesis 41:55-57; 42:5-7. Psalm 17:1-3,6-8,15. Matthew 9:32-38
Thu 9th	Genesis 44:18-21,23-29; 45:1-5. Psalm 105: 16-21. Matthew 10:7-15
Fri 10th	Genesis 46:1-7,28-30. Psalm 37:3-4,18-19,27-28,39-40. Matthew 10:16-23
Sat 11th	Genesis 49:29-32; 50:15-26. Psalm 105:1-4,6-7. Matthew 10:24-33
<b>Sun 12th</b>	Amos 7:12-15. Psalm 85:9-14. Ephesians 1:3-14. Mark 6:7-13
Mon 13th	Exodus 1:8-14,22. Psalm 124:1-8. Matthew 10:34 - 11:1
Tue 14th	Exodus 2:1-15. Psalm 69:1-2,31-36. Matthew 11:20-24
Wed 15th	Exodus 3:1-6,9-12. Psalm 103:1-4,6-7. Matthew 11:25-27
Thu 16th	Exodus 3:13-20. Psalm 105:1,5,8-9,24-27. Matthew 11:28-30 or for Mount Carmel: Zechariah 2:10-13. Psalm Luke 1:46-55. Matthew 12:46-50
Fri 17th	Exodus 11:10-12,14. Psalm 116:12-13,15-16. Matthew 12:18
Sat 18th	Exodus 12:17-42. Psalm 136:1-4,10-15. Matthew 12:14-21
<b>Sun 19th</b>	Jeremiah 23:1-6. Psalm 23:1-6. Ephesians 2:13-18. Mark 6: 30-34
Mon 20th	Exodus 4:5-18. Psalm Exodus 15:1-6. Matthew 12:38-42
Tue 21st	Exodus 14:21-15:1. Psalm Exodus 15:8-10,12,17. Matthew 12:46-50
Wed 22nd	Song of Songs 3:1-4 or 2 Corinthians 5:14-17. Psalm 63. John 20:1-2,11-18
Thu 23rd	Exodus 19:1-2,9-11,16-20. Psalm Daniel 3:52-56. Matthew 13:10-17
Fri 24th	Exodus 20:1-17. Psalm 19:8-11. Matthew 13:18-23
Sat 25th	2 Corinthians 4:7-15. Psalm 126:1-6. Matthew 15-18
<b>Sun 26th</b>	2 Kings 4:42-44. Psalm 145:10-11,15-18. Ephesians 4:1-6. John 6:1-15
Mon 27th	Exodus 32:15-24,30-34. Psalm 106:19-23. Matthew 13:31-35
Tue 28th	Exodus 33:7-11; 34:5-9,28. Psalm 103:6-6-13. Matthew Matthew 13:36-43
Wed 29th	John 4:7-16. Psalm 99. John 11:19-27 or Luke 20:10:38-42
Thu 30th	Exodus 40:16-21,34-38. Psalm 84:3-6,8. Matthew 13:47-53
Fri 31st	Leviticus 23:1,4-11,15=16,27,34-37. Psalm 81:3-6,10-11. Matthew 13:54-58

## June & July 2015

Memorials in brackets are optional

St Justin  
(St Marcellinus & St Peter)  
St Charles Lwanga

St Boniface *abstinence*  
(St Norbert)

### CORPUS CHRISTI

(St Ephraem)

St Barnabas  
**SACRED HEART** *abstinence*  
(St Anthony of Padua)  
(Immaculate Heart of Mary)

### 11th SUNDAY of YEAR

(St Romuald) *abstinence*  
(of the BVM)

### 12th SUNDAY of YEAR

(St Paulinus or St John Fisher & St Thomas More)

### NATIVITY of St JOHN BAPTIST

*abstinence*  
(St Cyril of Alexandria or of the BVM)

### 13th SUNDAY of YEAR

**St PETER & St PAUL**  
(First Martyrs of the Roman Church)

St THOMAS *abstinence*  
(of the BVM)

### 14th SUNDAY of YEAR

(St Maria Goretti)

(St Augustine Zhao Rong)  
*abstinence*  
St Benedict

### 15th SUNDAY of YEAR

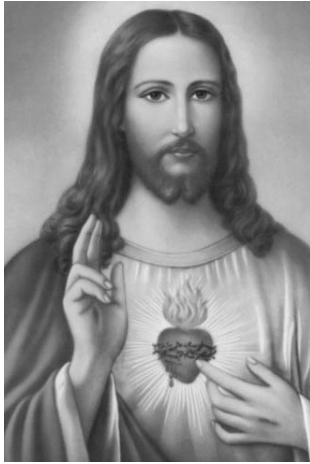
(St Henry)  
St Camillus de Lellis  
St Bonaventure or St Swithun  
(Our Lady of Mount Carmel)  
*abstinence*  
(of the BVM)

### 16th SUNDAY of YEAR

(St Apollinaris or St Margaret)  
(St Lawrence of Brindisi)  
St Mary Magdalene  
St Bridget  
(St Sharbel Makhlof) *abstinence*  
St JAMES

### 17th SUNDAY of YEAR

St Martha  
(St Peter Chrysologus)  
St Ignatius Loyola



## The three solemnities in June

Three major feasts of the Church occur on weekdays during June:

- **The Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**
- **The Solemnity of the Nativity of John the Baptist**
- \* **The Solemnity of St Peter and St Paul, apostles**

### Friday 12th June: Sacred Heart

THE SACRED Heart is a devotion to the heart of Jesus as representing his love for all humanity. It derives from a 17th-century French sister, Marguerite Marie Alacoque, who learnt the devotion in visions.

The Sacred Heart has been celebrated as a Solemnity since 1856. It is observed 19 days after Pentecost, and falls always on a Friday. In his encyclical *Miserentissimus Redemptor* (1928) Pope Pius XI affirmed that Jesus had promised St Marguerite Marie ‘that all those who rendered this honour to his heart would be endowed with an abundance of heavenly graces’.

‘Sacred Heart’ is widely used as a name for Catholic churches, schools, hospitals and religious orders.

A statue or picture of the Sacred Heart is displayed in many Catholic homes.

### Wednesday 24th June: Nativity of John the Baptist

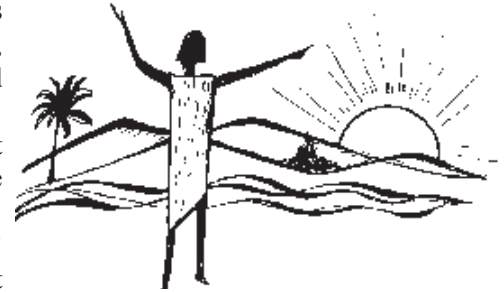
JOHN the Baptist, Jesus’ cousin, was born before him, and the feast of John’s birth is celebrated six months before Christmas. In mediæval Europe, this feast, which coincides with the summer solstice, was celebrated with feasting and dancing.

John was ‘the new Elijah’, the forerunner of Jesus. He was the last and greatest of the many prophets who had foretold the coming of Christ, because he was the only one to see and acknowledge the Saviour in the flesh.

Well might John recall Isaiah’s words, ‘He has sent me to bring good news.’ Well might he identify himself with the voice in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord!’

John hailed Jesus as the Lamb of God. And Jesus said of John, ‘No man born of woman is greater than John the Baptist’. John proclaimed the imminence of the kingdom and urged repentance, gathering disciples to whom he delegated some of his work. John taught that repentance is like a tree known by its fruit; the penitent, forgiven by God, should be generous (‘He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none’ Luke 3:11). Not everyone flocked to John. The Pharisees denounced him, as they were later to denounce Jesus. John’s radical message was that the only way to enter the kingdom is the way of goodness. Nothing else counts, not even direct descent from Abraham, which the Pharisees made so much of.

We should not forget John’s message. Making straight the way of the Lord is in once sense simple: we don’t need material possessions, just a clean heart and a love of others. But in another way it is dauntingly hard: we are to put Christ, his coming into the world, his birth and presence in our hearts, at the centre of our lives.



### Monday 29th June: St Peter & St Paul apostles

PETER played the leading part in Jesus’ ministry and in the life of the first Christian communities in Jerusalem and Rome. He and his brother Andrew were the sons of Jonah, Galilean fisherman of Bethsaida (John 1:44) and Capernaum (Mark 1:21). Jesus summoned them to be ‘fishers of men’.

Peter took his wife with him on his missionary journeys (1 Corinthians 9:5). His name had been Simon, but Jesus called him ‘Peter’, saying, ‘You are Peter [Greek *petros*], and upon this rock [*petra*] I will build my church (Matthew 16:18). The Church teaches that the Popes as Peter’s successors are the leaders on earth of all Christians. Although there is no Bible reference to Peter living in Rome, testimony from the 2nd century associates him with that city.

PAUL, first known as Saul, was born at Tarsus in Cilicia, and was thus ‘a citizen of no mean city’ (Acts 21:39). His Jewish parents were Roman citizens, which would later give him the right to be sent to Rome for trial. He was brought up a strict Pharisee, and his hatred of the new Christian sect led him to taking part in the stoning of the deacon Stephen (Acts 8:1-3). Saul heard Stephen pray for his executioners, and this led to the great event in his life, his conversion on the way to Damascus, where he was blinded and heard the voice of Jesus. Saul was cured of blindness, was baptised, and took the name Paul. He began to preach Christ with the same vigour with which he had previously attacked Christians. Strict Jews ‘took counsel to kill him’, but friends helped Paul escape, and he went to Jerusalem, where Barnabas had to vouch for him because the apostles could not believe that Paul was the same man who had previously attacked them (Acts 9:1-31).

Paul’s preached among the gentiles. He disagreed with Peter at Antioch over the circumcision of gentile converts, which the Church in Jerusalem insisted on. The question was finally resolved in Paul’s favour (Galatians 2:11-14). The account of Paul’s missionary journeys in Acts ends with his preaching the Gospel in Rome for two years while awaiting his trial.

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



## Some other weekday celebrations in June and July

### Thursday 4th June: St Charles Lwanga & his companions *martyrs*

CHARLES (born 1865) was employed at the court of King Mwanga II of Buganda in southern Uganda. The king forced himself immorally on the boys and young men who served him. In 1886 he insisted that Catholics and other Christians should abandon their faith. They refused, and were martyred.

Also among the victims was St Kizito, patron of the church at Bakoteh.

*We pray today for the priest and people of St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda, and the priest and people of St Kizito's Bakoteh.*



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

JOHN Fisher was an elderly Catholic bishop who at the reformation in England refused to take the oath of allegiance to King Henry VIII as head of the Church of England.

Thomas More, a learned man who as Chancellor of England had been very close to the king, also refused.

Both men were beheaded in 1535.

### Friday 3rd July: St Thomas *apostle*

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

Tradition says that Thomas established Christian communities in India.

### Saturday 11th July: St Benedict *abbot*

BENEDICT - the 'Father of Western Monasticism' - was born into a noble family around 480. While studying in Rome he was much influenced by the teachings of St Jerome and St Augustine. He retired to live a hermit's life, and his sanctity attracted other solitaries. Benedict eventually established 12 monastic communities. At Mount Cassino, where he became Abbot, he established a wise and humane 'Rule' based on vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, which is followed by Benedictine and other communities today.

### Wednesday 22nd July: St Mary Magdalene

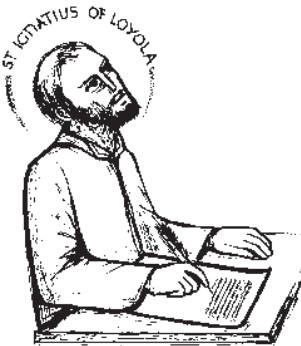
MARY came from Magdala, a village in Galilee. Jesus rescued her from possession by seven devils (Luke 8:2). Mary watched from afar when Jesus was crucified (Mark 15:10). Weeping at his tomb, she asked the risen Christ (whom she took to be the gardener) what had happened to the body of her Lord. Jesus said, 'Mary,' and she at once recognised him (John 20: 11-18).

Mary has been identified with the sister of Lazarus and as the unnamed sinner who anointed Jesus' feet; but this is not stated in the Gospels.

### Saturday 25th July: St James *apostle*

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

*The Catholic school at Kity 2 is named in honour of St James.*



### Saturday 31st July: St Ignatius Loyola

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

*Omnes Sancti et Sanctæ Dei, intercedite pro nobis*

All holy men and women of God, intercede for us



## Without the Holy Spirit, Christ stays in the past With the Holy Spirit, the risen Christ is here, the Gospel is the power of life

ARE Christian churches becoming less distant from one another and improving the way they talk to each other? Yes, they are, according to Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household.

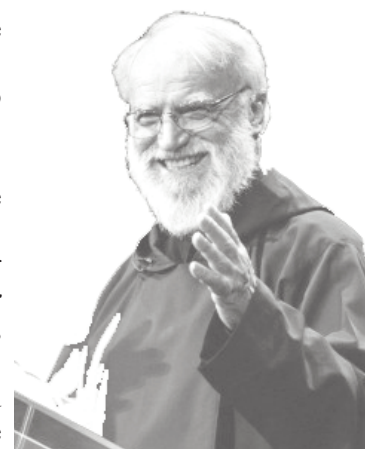
Speaking in May at a conference in London, Fr Cantalamessa said that Christians who were once distant and without communication are coming together again.

He added that Pope Francis is 'resolutely leading Catholics' in the direction of unity.

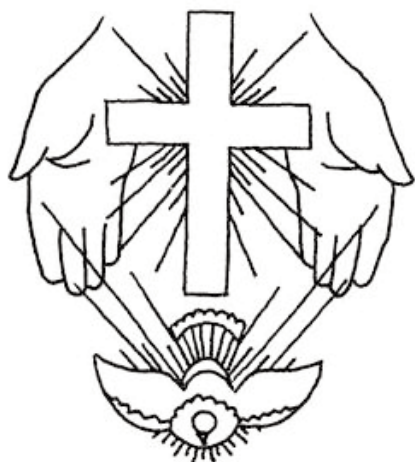
Fr Cantalamessa said that St Augustine's most novel insight about the Church was to have identified her unity in the Holy Spirit.

He explained that before Augustine, the unity of the Church was seen as something exterior and visible - the communion of all the bishops. But Augustine saw unity in something *interior* - the Holy Spirit. 'The unity of the Church is brought about by the same One who brings about unity in the Trinity.'

Fr Cantalamessa said that the most concrete steps toward unity are not those made round a table or in joint declarations (though these are all important and indispensable). They are those made when believers, and especially leaders of different denominations, meet together in spite of their differences to proclaim the Lordship of Jesus, share their charisms and recognise each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.



Fr Cantalamessa quoted a Metropolitan Orthodox bishop:



*Without the Holy Spirit:  
God is far away,  
Christ stays in the past,  
the Gospel is a dead letter,  
the Church is simply an organisation,  
authority a matter of domination,  
mission a matter of propaganda,  
liturgy no more than an evocation,  
Christian living a slave morality.*

*But with the Holy Spirit:  
the cosmos is resurrected and groans with the  
birth-pangs of the Kingdom,  
the risen Christ is here,  
the Gospel is the power of life,  
the Church shows forth the life of the Trinity,  
authority is a liberating service,  
mission is a Pentecost,  
the liturgy is both memorial and anticipation,  
human action is deified.*

### Answers to 'Do you know?' (page 27)

1. In most English translations, Genesis (the first book of the Bible) begins: 'In the beginning...'  
Revelation, or the Apocalypse (the last book of the Bible) ends, 'Come, Lord Jesus.'
2. Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny
3. Hannah Faal-Heim (*pictured right*)
4. Greek
5. Lectern, or reading desk, used for the proclamation of the Scriptures. In most Gambian churches it is also used for the homily - and, less officially, for announcements and notices.



*Keep up-to-date with your Diocese!*

Visit [www.banjuldiocese.gm](http://www.banjuldiocese.gm)



- ✓ **3 TO 5 YEARS OF SAVING MAKES YOU HAVE ENOUGH BLOCKS FOR YOUR HOME.**
- ✓ **HIGH QUALITY BLOCKS GUARANTEED.**
- ✓ **INTEREST PAID IN BLOCKS WHEN YOU SAVE FOR 12 MONTHS**
- ✓ **WE SEND OUT MONTHLY STATEMENTS OF BLOCKS SAVED.**

## **“Start Saving Blocks Towards your House on a Monthly Basis”**



**GAMBIA'S FIRST CEMENT BLOCK SAVING SCHEME**

**START BUILDING YOUR HOME FOR AS LOW AS D500 TO D5,000 A MONTH**



Info@amiscus.gm - [www.amiscus.gm](http://www.amiscus.gm) - 9901813, 7051233, 3908784  
Centenary House (Opposite Castle Petrol Station-Westfield) 3rd Floor, Westfield,KSMD, **The Gambia.**



## The gale on the lake

**O**N that day, when evening had come, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us go across to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him.

A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?'

He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the gale, 'Peace! Be still!'

Then the wind ceased, and there was dead calm.

He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?'

And they were filled with great awe, and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

*Mark 4: 35-41*

*The Gospel for the 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 21st June*