

### Journey together in hope

**IN HIS MESSAGE** for Lent 2025, Pope Francis invites the faithful to “journey together in hope,” and to take the opportunity of the Season of Lent to ask ourselves whether we are truly ready and willing to heed God’s call to change our lives.

The central theme of his Lenten Message is encapsulated in the phrase “Let us journey together in hope,” which ties into the broader theme of the Jubilee Year - “Pilgrims of Hope.”

The Pope’s reflection focuses on conversion and unfolds in three key dimensions: the importance of journeying, journeying together and journeying with hope.

Recalling the biblical Exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land, the Pope reminds us that our lives too are a journey — one that should be directed toward God.

This journey is not merely a metaphorical one, but involves a constant call to conversion, “to leave behind the occasions of sin” and situations that degrade our human dignity.

Pope Francis reminds us that “The Holy Spirit impels us not to remain self-absorbed, but to keep walking towards God and our brothers and sisters.”

“Journeying together,” he writes, “means consolidating the unity grounded in our common dignity as children of God (...) without letting anyone be left behind or excluded.”

Pope Francis, therefore, urges the faithful during this Lenten Season to examine their own lives: are they actively progressing on the path of spiritual renewal or are they held back by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of their comfort zone?


He also invites us to examine whether we truly trust in God’s mercy.



Do we believe in His forgiveness, or do we fall into the trap of self-reliance? And do we really experience the hope that inspires in us “a commitment to justice and fraternity, to care for our common home and in such a way that no one feels excluded?”

Referencing Saint Teresa of Avila, the message urges the faithful to remain watchful and patient, understanding that God’s promises will be fulfilled in His time.

“This was the prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila: ‘Hope, O my soul, hope. You know neither the day nor the hour. Watch carefully, for everything passes quickly, even though your impatience makes doubtful what is certain, and turns a very short time into a long one.’ ”

Pope Francis concludes by entrusting this journey of hope to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, “Mother of Hope,” praying that she may accompany the faithful as we prepare to celebrate the joy of Easter. 

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## New faces

**W**ELCOME TO the Lent issue of the *Ordinariate Scotland Review*. As well as a round-up of all that is happening Ordinariate-wise north of the border we are delighted to welcome these people who have kindly agreed to become regular contributors to our quarterly review. They are:

**Dr Shelagh Noden**, who is Director of Music at St Mary's Cathedral in Aberdeen and who wrote a doctoral thesis in 2014 on *The revival of music in the worship of the Catholic Church in Scotland, 1789-1829*. She is a regular contributor to the *Light of the North*, the quarterly magazine of the Diocese of Aberdeen and comes from an old Catholic family in Lancaster. Her brother, Paul Swarbrick, is the Bishop of Lancaster.



Dr Shelagh Noden



David Chapman



Dr Simon Cotton

**David Chapman**, who lives in Enfield, north of London, is well known to the Ordinariate in Scotland and has links with many Catholic societies in England. He is a regular contributor to *The Portal* and has served on the Editorial Board from its beginning, as well as being proof reader. He has been with us at our last two Pluscarden conferences and will be with us again this July. He will be our 'eye' on what is happening in the Ordinariate south of the border.

**Dr Simon Cotton** is Honorary Senior Lecturer in

Chemistry at Birmingham University and is author of numerous books on the subject. He is a member of the Ordinariate and also writes extensively on historic churches in England and the Continent. He has been a regular contributor to *New Directions* and *The Portal* for many years.

We are most grateful to them for agreeing to be regular contributors. Comments and suggestions for future issues are always welcome at [info@ordinariate.scot](mailto:info@ordinariate.scot)



## Church music in Lent

### Dr Shelagh Noden

**‘W**HAT ARE you giving up for Lent?’ is a traditional question at this time of year. Alcohol? Sugar in tea? Watching television? A period of fasting before Easter is an ancient Christian tradition, though in the early years of the Church there was no agreement on the length of the fasting period or how severe it should be. The first mention of 40 days is thought to be found in the Canons of Nicaea, c. 325, following the example of periods of fasting by Moses, Elijah, and Jesus himself.

Catholic church musicians are certainly aware of what they need to give up. *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*

clearly states: ‘In Lent the playing of the organ and other musical instruments is allowed only to support the singing.’ This can be seen as a real penance, because it excludes a wealth of Lenten instrumental music which could be seen as an aid to devotion. Such repertoire could form part of a Lenten organ recital or concert, but it should not be heard at Mass.

Yet this restricted approach to music can be seen in a positive light. It is an integral part of the season, like the purple vestments, the lack of flowers around and at the altar, the veiling of statues and images from the 5th week of Lent. The



pared down music is fulfilling the same function, that of creating a period of repentance and preparation for the triumph of Easter. It is crucial that Lent should appear different, right from Ash Wednesday onwards.

Sadly, it can be disturbing to see how often this instruction is disregarded. A contemporary Catholic music website recently suggested having some quiet guitar music played during the Offertory. Some books of music for Holy Week include →

songs with instrumental accompaniment, even for Good Friday when the rubrics state that all singing should be unaccompanied. Experienced choirs can cope with this. Listening to the singing of Allegri's famous *Miserere* or Palestrina's setting of the *Reproaches on Good Friday* can be a powerful experience for a congregation. But how do small congregations approach the music for Lent and Holy Week?

The focus of any Catholic choir or music group must be on singing the Mass. Lent is an ideal time to use the simple ICEL chant Mass, which is easy to learn, and lends itself well to unaccompanied singing. It can be sung in Latin (Greek for *Kyrie*) or English. It is available to download free of charge at [www.bit.ly/welcome-icel](http://www.bit.ly/welcome-icel)

The *Kyrie*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* are found on this website under the heading *Order of Mass*. An accompaniment is provided if required. With preparation,

for which there are numerous online sources, this Mass is achievable even by a modest choir, and when sung confidently the congregation will soon join in, as experience shows.

There is plenty of choice of hymns, in the various editions of the English Hymnal, amongst other sources, and these can be accompanied, or if well known, sung *a capella* (without accompaniment). But what about something for small groups who would nevertheless like to provide some meditative Lenten choral music?

*Taizé chants* can be useful here. With their simple harmonies and repetitive nature they can be very effective even with just a small group. Examples include 'Bless the Lord, my soul', 'O Lord, hear my prayer', and, particularly prayerful at the end of a Good Friday service 'Jesus, remember me'. There are canons too, which can be particularly effective, such as 'Salvator mundi, salva nos' (*Saviour of the world, save us*).

The RSCM publication *Sunday by Sunday* gives suggestions for unison or two-part choir pieces. Also recommended is the *Oxford Easy Flexible Anthems* book, containing material which can easily be adapted to various combinations of voices, including all singing the melody.

Music can be expensive. So a final thought: *Google CPDL*, for a website of completely free vocal music to download. *One warning; it can be compulsive!* 🎵

## Palm Sunday in St Patrick's Edinburgh

Palm Sunday Mass will begin at 11am with a Grand Procession which will go out the side door, down South Gray Close, along the Cowgate, past the Holiday Inn and then left into the front garden and in through the main portico of the church. The full choral setting of the Passion will also be sung.

**For this reason there will be no Ordinariate Mass in St Patrick's in April.**



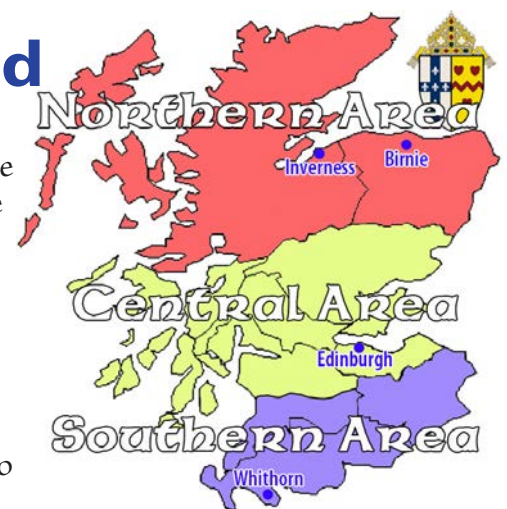
## The Ordinariate in Scotland

**F**OLLOWING A recent meeting with Bishop David Waller a number of changes were agreed to the structure of the Ordinariate in Scotland from 1st April 2025. Bishop David plans to appoint an Ordinariate Dean for Scotland and divide Scotland into three separate areas - Central, North and South.

It is also Bishop David's long term plan to appoint an Ordinariate priest for Edinburgh with responsibility for Central Scotland. This is excellent news for the Ordinariate in Scotland.

One consequence of these changes is that the Ordinariate in Scotland will in future have three separate bank accounts which will affect those people who have Standing Orders. Those living in the north need do nothing but others with Standing Orders will be contacted with details of how to change their Standing Order.

The current pattern of when and where Ordinariate Mass is offered will not change and Fr Len and Fr Simon will continue to alternate being present at the Ordinariate Mass in St Patrick's, Edinburgh.



Other than the bank account changes, everything else will remain the same for the foreseeable future. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask in person or email: [info@ordinariate.scot](mailto:info@ordinariate.scot) 🎵

## 2025 Pilgrimage and Conference

**THE 2025** Pilgrimage and Conference will begin on Friday 4th July at 4.30pm and continue until Monday 7th July and will again be held at Pluscarden Abbey near Elgin, the only medieval British monastery still being used for its original purpose today.

Accommodation will be in St Benedict's Guest House, the new St Joseph's Guest House and St Scholastica's Retreat, the guest house by the entrance to the Abbey and where we will eat and have our meetings and Offices, all of which will be according to *Divine Worship*. Holy Mass on both Saturday and Sunday will be in Birnie Kirk. On Monday morning we will join the Monks at the Conventual Mass in the Abbey church. Day Visitors are welcome to join us at all events and for meals but should book in advance.

We are delighted to have as our main speaker, the distinguished academic, **Professor Jacob Phillips**, Professor of Systematic Theology at St Mary's University, Twickenham. He has published numerous works on John Henry Newman, Joseph Ratzinger, and others, and he will speak to us on the Anglican Divines and how they are reflected in Anglican Patrimony within the Ordinariate. We also hope that **Bishop David Waller**, our new Ordinary, will be able to be with us.

On Friday evening we will hear about how the Ordinariate is working with Birnie Kirk and local Catholics to ensure almost 900 of unbroken Christian Worship continues there.

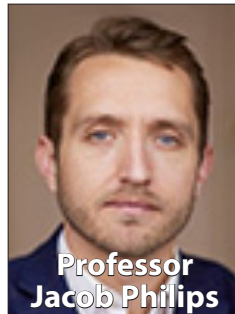
On Saturday evening, our own **Jamie Baillie** will reflect on the events to mark the

1700th

anniversary of the Council of Nicaea held at the *Angelicum*, the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas, in Rome in April. Jamie is at present studying for a Doctorate Degree on the Theology of St Thomas Aquinas at the Angelicum. On the Sunday evening we hope to have an informal *Evening with Bishop David* where we will hear from him and have the opportunity to ask him questions.

**Day visitors** are most welcome for the talks and to join us for lunch and dinner. Full details and a Booking Form will be found on our website. The total cost of our weekend, is Adults: £95, Students/under 18s/unemployed: £55. A deposit of £30 (non-returnable) is required when booking. For Day Visitors the cost for meals is Lunch: £8 - Dinner: £16 and bookings should be made in advance using the on-line booking form.

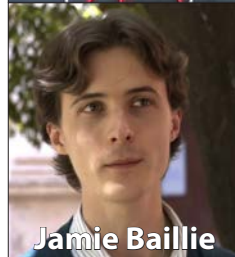
We have kept the cost of our weekend low because all meals will be prepared by our own *In-house Team* - Sammy Stewart, Fiona Mitchel, Brian Robertson and Bryan Miller. The custom of the Abbey is not to charge guests who stay at the Abbey, but those who wish, may make a donation, which will be gratefully received. 🙏



Professor  
Jacob Phillips



Bishop  
David Waller



Jamie Baillie

**BOOKINGS NOW OPEN** at [www.ordinariate.scot](http://www.ordinariate.scot)



## In the event of my death ... Planning ahead

**A REQUEST WAS** recently made to Fr Len from a member of the Ordinariate in Scotland *who is in the best of health*, but had just returned from the funeral of a good friend, seeking advice on planning ahead, so that his family were in no doubt what his wishes are.

It is indeed sensible to make your wishes known while you are in good health and to write them down. A copy should be left in a sealed envelope with your family, and a copy (*again in a sealed envelope*) should be given to your Ordinariate priest, assuming you wish to avail yourself of the Ordinariate

Funeral Rites.

By making these arrangements in advance, you express love for your family, uphold your faith, and ensure that your departure is a moment of grace and prayer. Making advance funeral wishes is an important way for Catholics to express their faith,



ease the burden on loved ones, and ensure that their funeral aligns with Church teachings. Here are some suggestions:

- Approach this with Faith and Hope: Remember that planning your funeral is an act of faith, trusting in God's promise of eternal life. You should reflect on the Catholic understanding of death as a passage to eternal life, not an end.
- Specify a Catholic Funeral Rite - the Ordinariate Rite, if you so wish. Outline your preferences as to where the funeral should take place. An Ordinariate priest can assist you and your family in having the funeral in any Catholic Church but it is important that you specify your wish for a proper Catholic funeral, which includes (if you wish):
- A Vigil the night before, when the coffin is received into the church - a time for prayer, scripture readings, and remembrance; the **Funeral Mass** (Requiem Mass), the most important part, offering the Holy Sacrifice for the repose of the soul. **The Committal** (Burial or



Fr Stanley Bennie's Requiem Mass


Interment of Ashes). If it is to be a Cremation you should specify that your Ashes should be buried in consecrated ground and not 'scattered' elsewhere.

- As part of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, we will ensure that, if at all possible, an Ordinariate priest will be present to carry out your final wishes. If that is not possible, any Catholic priest may use the Ordinariate Rites to conduct the Funeral Rites, should that be your wish.
- The Catholic Church does not permit Eulogies to be given by members of the family or

others during the Requiem Mass. The Homily will always be given by a Catholic priest or deacon.

- You should put your wishes in writing - "To be opened after my death" - outlining your preferences and informing family members (and the Ordinariate). These should include details such as: the priest or parish you'd like involved; Scripture readings, hymns and intentions, as well as whether you prefer a traditional casket burial or cremation (if cremated, you may wish to request that burial of the ashes be in consecrated ground).

Offer these preparations as an Act of Charity to your family and to all you leave behind. You may wish to consider leaving a bequest to the Ordinariate in Scotland or a Catholic charity and also you may wish to specify a request that any donations in your memory should go to causes that reflect your Catholic faith.

Please feel free to discuss this with any of your priests . . . as well as leaving a sealed copy of your wishes with him. 

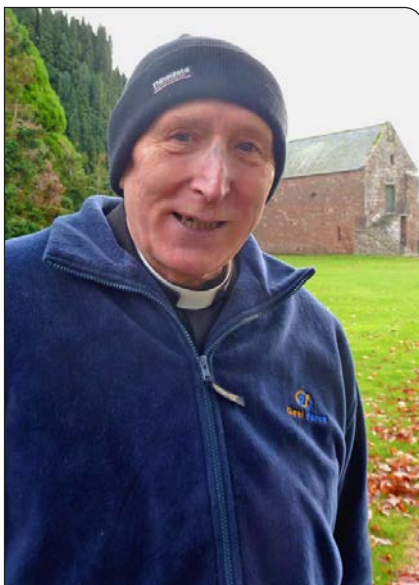


## Fr Stanley's Bequest

**FR STANLEY BENNIE**, who died on the 24th October 2022, left in his will his two houses - one in Stornoway and one in Inverness (which had been the family home) as well as a small sum of money to the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham.

It has taken a long time, but his estate has now been settled. He left his Inverness house to be split three ways 1/3rd each to his two God-daughters and the Ordinariate Central Fund and his Stornoway house for the benefit of the Ordinariate in Scotland. The Ordinariate centrally has received £33,485.26 and the Ordinariate in Scotland £96,399.33, held centrally to support the Ordinariate in Scotland.

We are most grateful to Fr Stanley for remembering the Ordinariate in his will. *May he rest in peace.* 



# St Mary, Houghton-on-the Hill, Norfolk

Dr Simon Cotton begins his exploration for us of ancient churches

**ONE THOUSAND** years ago, Norfolk was one of the most populous parts of England, containing hundreds of small parishes, each with its own little church.

Houghton-on-the-Hill was one of these, close by Peddar's Way, an older road that the Romans developed; the community built a sizable flint church during the 11th century, reusing some Roman brick.

The simple chancel arch was flanked by alcoves for altars. The building continued to develop, with a south aisle added in the 12th c. and a square 14th c. west tower. From that point, the settlement and its church declined.

In 1760 a faculty was given to reduce the size of the chancel. The aisle had already been demolished. Farms got smaller and people moved away; during World War I a passing Zeppelin discarded bombs over the churchyard.

The last wedding was celebrated in 1925 and the last baptism in 1933; around the end of World War II the church was left to gently decay, becoming an ivy-clad ruin by the 1970s, until Bob and Gloria Davey moved into the parish, Bob becoming churchwarden of North Pickenham, in whose parish Houghton now fell.

On a WI ramble in 1992, Gloria spotted signs of Satanic worship in the ruins; her horrified husband organised night patrols to deter this and started to organise repairs. Houghton-on-the Hill church became Bob Davey's life's mission.

The church was put on the Buildings at Risk register and new roofs were constructed. It was then, in 1996, that the restorers discovered the



remarkable 11th century wall paintings, which are still being restored.

There's a Last Judgment on the east wall, a Wheel of Fortune on the south wall and the Creation on the north wall; they are of international significance as the earliest surviving extensive scheme of medieval wall painting in Britain.

Brought back from the dead, Houghton church now has a future, looked after by a group of volunteers, the Friends of St Mary's. Bob Davey died in 2021 at the age of 91. *Well done, thou good and faithful servant.* 🙏



# On the third anniversary...

**David Chapman**

**THREE YEARS** ago we heard of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces. We thought it would be but a short time before the situation was resolved and Ukraine could enjoy peace once more. No-one thought that, three years on, the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Family in Exile, just off London's Oxford Street, would be filled to capacity with people of many nationalities and faiths, together with faith leaders and political representatives, gathered to pray again, most urgently, for peace and justice.

This 'Interfaith Prayer Service' was a moving and dignified occasion, presided over with his usual warmth by Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski. After he had called the large and vociferous congregation to prayer, Bishop Kenneth spoke movingly of the shock and sadness he experienced when war broke out – feelings that, sadly, persist to this day. He spoke also with immense gratitude for the support and friendship the Ukrainians experienced from the British people.

Three candles were brought forward, representing the three years of warfare. The children of St Mary's Ukrainian School then sang a song in English:

*This is what we want.  
This is what we need.  
Together we strive for peace.*

Fr Taras Mykhalchuk,



Photographs: © Basil Youdell

Pastor of Ss. Peter & Paul's Garrison Church in Lviv, spoke of his ministry there – including funerals every day. He impressed on us the need to pray, to hope and to love and these themes were repeated throughout the service. It was most noticeable that there was no bitterness or anger expressed – as well there might have been – but that there should



be prayer that justice and peace should prevail.

Prayers were offered by The Right Revd Dame Sarah Mullally, Bishop of London from the Church of England; by Archbishop Nikitas Loulias, of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain; by Archbishop Anba Angaelos OBE of the Coptic Orthodox Church and by Bishop James Curry of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster. Each of these urged, in their own styles, prayer for the people of Ukraine and for peace. Perhaps the most powerful prayer was that offered by Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg of the New London Synagogue and Senior Rabbi of Masorti Judaism.

General Valerii Zaluzhnyi from the Ukrainian Embassy to the UK told the congregation that for three years the people of Ukraine have been fighting for not just their land, but for their freedom and justice.

“Ukraine did not choose this war, but we choose to fight to defend our cause, our families and our future.” He said that Ukraine was “deeply grateful” to the UK. “Your support gives us strength and hope.”

Mere words cannot convey the beauty and poignancy of the music which was part of this service. The VIVO →

Quartet, the Modus String Trio and the Cathedral Choir contributed greatly to the prayerful atmosphere. After the closing prayer by the Very Revd Fr Bohdan Matwijczuk of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church there were two anthems. The final one was our National Anthem, the tune of which is sometimes criticised as being banal. Not so on this occasion – it was most beautifully sung and

accompanied by the musicians and became a real prayer, signifying the gratitude of the Ukraine to this country – its King, its leaders and its people. Before that was the Spiritual Anthem of Ukraine, and although the translation is hardly as poetic as the original, a couple of verses will be a fitting end to this article:

Lord, O the Great  
and Almighty

protect our beloved Ukraine.  
Bless her with the  
freedom and light  
of your holy rays.  
Bless us with freedom.  
Bless us with wisdom.  
Guide us into a kind world.  
Bless us, O Lord  
with good fortune  
or ever and evermore.

To which let us all offer a fervent AMEN. 🙏

*This article first appeared in The Portal*



## The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin

### A meditation on the Annunciation (25th March) Pope Benedict XVI

**T**HE ANNUNCIATION, recounted at the beginning of St Luke's Gospel, is a humble, hidden event - no one saw it, no one except Mary knew of it, but at the same time it was crucial to the history of humanity.

When the Virgin said her "yes" to the Angel's announcement, Jesus was conceived and with him began the new era of history that was to be ratified in Easter as the "new and eternal Covenant".

In fact, Mary's "yes" perfectly mirrors that of Christ himself when he entered the world, as the Letter to the Hebrews says, interpreting Psalm 40[39]: "As is written of me in the book, I have come to do your will, O God" (Hebrews 10: 7).

The Son's obedience was reflected in that of the Mother and thus, through the encounter of these two "yesses", God was able to take on a human face.

This is why the Annunciation



is a Christological feast as well, because it celebrates a central mystery of Christ: the Incarnation.

"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your Word". Mary's reply to the Angel is extended in the Church, which is called to make Christ present in history, offering her own availability so that God may continue to visit humanity with his mercy.

The "yes" of Jesus and Mary is thus renewed in the "yes" of the saints, especially martyrs who are killed because of the Gospel.

I stress this because on the 24th March, the anniversary of

the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador, we celebrated the Day of Prayer and Fasting for Missionary Martyrs: bishops, priests, religious and lay people struck down while carrying out their mission of evangelisation and human promotion.

These missionary martyrs are the "hope of the world", because they bear witness that Christ's love is stronger than violence and hatred. They did not seek martyrdom, but they were ready to give their lives in order to remain faithful to the Gospel. Christian martyrdom is justified only when it is a supreme act of love for God and our brethren.

In this Lenten Season we often contemplate Our Lady, who on Calvary sealed the "yes" she pronounced at Nazareth. United to Christ, witness of the Father's love, Mary lived martyrdom of the soul.

Let us call on her intercession with confidence, so that the Church, faithful to her mission, may offer to the whole world a courageous witness of God's love. 🙏



# Bishop Hugh at Birnie

**I**N FEBRUARY, Bishop Hugh Gilbert, Bishop of Aberdeen, brought the Religious of the Diocese, monks and nuns, to visit Birnie Kirk. They started off with refreshments in the hall which Gill arranged. Fr Len gave a presentation on the history of Birnie Kirk Past and Present



The group then walked up the Glebe to the Kirk to explore the ancient church. which was followed by Benediction of the Blessed



Sacrament before they all walked back over the Cloddach bridge to Pluscarden Abbey. Following the visit Bishop Hugh sent a generous gift to Fr Len to support the work of the Ordinariate at Birnie.



# Chalk, Candles, Tractors and Daffodils at Birnie

**F**OLLOWING AN excellent Advent and Christmas at Birnie Kirk, the new year got off to flying start with an Epiphany Mass which included the blessing of Epiphany Chalk. Many door-posts in and around Birnie were, for the first time, marked with the initials of the Wise Men, C+M+B for Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar.



Candlemass



Blessing the candles

Fr Len's broken ankle still did not hold him back from celebrating Candlemas at Birnie with the Blessing of Candles during the Mass, nor for the Procession down the Glebe from the church to the hall - he took to his little scooter for the procession! The purpose of this was to ask God's blessing on the land for a good harvest which



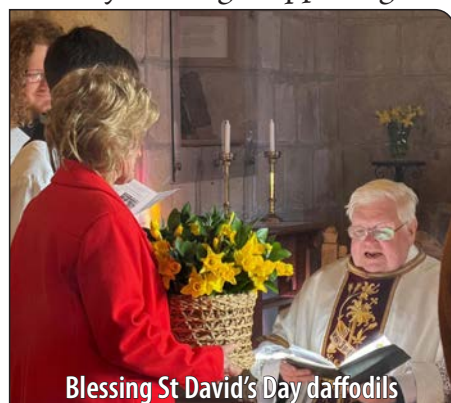
The Procession - Kirk to tractor

we did by blessing a tractor and plough belonging to farmer, Gordon Smith, who farms at nearby Trochail Farm. It was a splendid occasion ... and what an enormous tractor.

As the March Saturday Mass fell on St David's Day, Gill Garrow had prepared small bunches of St David's Day Daffodils which were blessed at the end of Mass and distributed by Gill to everyone present. With so many blessings happening at Birnie it was decided



Blessing the land and Farmer Gordon's tractor



Blessing St David's Day daffodils

that Bishop Hugh Gilbert's kind gift following his visit with the Religious of the Diocese should be put towards the purchase of a Holy Water nicked hammered brass pot and sprinkler with brush for use at Birnie. Our April Mass at Birnie will be for the Saturday in the Fourth Week in Lent ... *with nothing to bless* ... but wait until next month on Saturday 3rd May, the Feast of Saint Philip and Saint James!



## Newman: a perfect companion for Holy Week

A reflection by Fr Raymond J de Souza

**O**N GOOD Friday, as Catholics piously walk the *Via Crucis*, many will pray the meditations of John Henry Newman. They are a rare combination of theological depth, spiritual intensity and literary quality – much like the man himself.

“The relief which a Mother’s tenderness secured is not yet all she did,” Newman writes of Mary’s role on the *via Dolorosa*. “Her prayers sent Veronica as well as Simon – Simon to do a man’s work, Veronica to do the part of a woman. The devout servant of Jesus did what she could. As Magdalen had poured the ointment at the Feast, so Veronica now offered Him this napkin in His passion. ‘Ah,’ she said, ‘would I could do more! Why have I not the strength of Simon, to take part in the burden of the Cross? But men only can serve the Great High Priest, now that He is celebrating the solemn act of sacrifice.’ O Jesus! let us one and all minister to Thee according to our places and powers.”

At the Eleventh Station, when Jesus is nailed to the Cross: “When he reached the projection where His sacred feet were to be, He turned round with sweet modesty and gentleness towards the fierce rabble, stretching out His arms, as if He would embrace them,” Newman writes. “There He hung, a perplexity to the multitude, a terror to evil spirits, the wonder, the awe, yet the joy, the adoration of the Holy Angels.”

It was that word “perplexity” that I noticed. Pray daily

Newman’s prayer, sometimes called “The Mission of My Life.” “Perplexity” appears there too: “God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work ... Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about ...”

For many years praying that prayer, I thought that perplexity was related to the search for truth, of seeking for reality amid the shadows and imaginings of this world, and of the human mind. It was an intellectual project, to move from perplexity to clarity, from confusion to understanding, from darkness to light.

But the multitude at the foot of the Cross, beholding the man, were not on an intellectual search. They were confronted by the one they thought – just days earlier – was the Anointed One, the Christ. And now, they recall that the one who hangs from the tree is cursed (cf. Deuteronomy 21:22-23, Galatians 3:13). The anointed is the cursed? It is an impossibility, a contradiction, a perplexity.

It is not a perplexity amenable to resolution by reason. For




the perplexity is not about the truth of one or another aspect of reality, but about God’s plan, His purposes, His providence. It was this perplexity – How can this be God’s will? – that the crowd had to work out.

It is this perplexity that the disciple faces in every age; more than the search for truth in itself, we struggle to understand God’s providential purposes for ourselves. What does this suffering mean for me? What does this fracture mean for my marriage? What does this division mean for my parish? What does this folly mean in the life of nations? What does this iniquity mean in the life of the Church? What is God saying here? Does He really know what He is about?

In this vale we are perplexed. To contend with God’s purposes is a perplexity that serves Him, for His purposes then occupy our minds and hearts.

It is not the perplexity of the researcher in the library. It is the perplexity of the rabble at Calvary. And for the rabble of every age, the answer remains the same:

“We adore Thee O Christ and we praise Thee; Because by Thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world.” 

from the Catholic Herald, 18 April 2019

## A life on the ocean wave!

**FR CAMERON MACDONALD** will not be with us during Holy Week and Easter as he is off on two cruises with P&O Cruises, to southern Norway and the Fjords, starting in Southampton and visiting Stavanger, Olden, Innvikfjorden (cruise-by), Nordfjord (cruise-by), Alesund, Haugesund and returning again to Southampton.

He will be on the same cruise twice to cover both Holy Week and Easter week. The cruises chaplaincy is organised by Stella Maris, the largest ship-visiting network in the world, and the official maritime charity of the Catholic Church.

The ship he will be on is the MS Iona which has 15 guest decks and is 344.5 metres (1,130 ft) long. There are 30 bars and restaurants, 10 entertainment venues, and 4 swimming pools. It can carry 5,206 guests and 1,762 crew. The ship's maiden voyage was in 2021 along the Inner Hebrides.

As Fr Cameron explains, "The main purpose is to minister to the crew and to allow them to keep the feasts. Chaplains go on board at Christmas and for Holy Week and Easter for that purpose.



I will preside at two Masses each day for passengers and Crew, 8.30am for passengers and 11.30pm for the crew. In Holy Week, on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Saturday Vigil Mass will be one service each day for both crew and passengers."

This has become a regular pattern for Fr Cameron for the past few years at Christmas and Holy Week and Easter and something he values as an important part of his ministry. On this occasion, Elaine will be with him for the two cruises to Norway and the Fjords. 🇬🇧

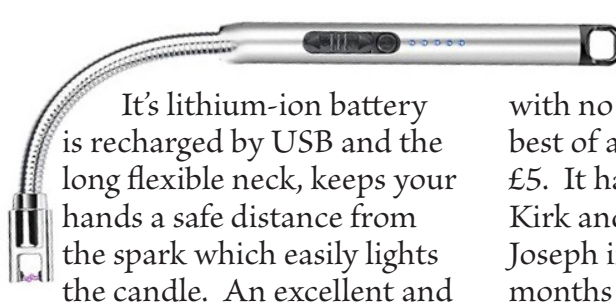
## What is happiness?

"Happiness is our human vocation, a goal to which all aspire. But what is happiness? What is the happiness that we await and desire? Not some fleeting pleasure, a momentary satisfaction that, once experienced, keeps us longing for more, in a desperate quest that leaves our hearts unsated and increasingly empty. We aspire to a happiness that is definitively found in the one thing that can bring us fulfilment, which is love. Thus, we will be able to say even now: I am loved, therefore I exist; and I will live forever in the love that does not disappoint, the love from which nothing can ever separate me. Let us listen once more to the words of the Apostle: 'I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8:38-39)."

Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit* 21

## Long Reach Electric Lighter - an amazing find!

**I HAVE ALWAYS** struggled to re-fill gas lighters used for lighting candles in church or at home, but now I have found the perfect solution. In a recent search on Amazon (for something else) I came across the Long Reach Electric Lighter.



Its lithium-ion battery is recharged by USB and the long flexible neck, keeps your hands a safe distance from the spark which easily lights the candle. An excellent and

safe, replacement for traditional lighters

with no smell and no fuel, and best of all, it only costs around £5. It has been in use at Birnie Kirk and in the Oratory of Saint Joseph in Inverness for several months now. 🇬🇧

# Christ is risen!

## An Easter meditation Pope Benedict XVI

**T**HE SOLEMN celebrations of Easter truly bring to believers' hearts the spiritual joy to proclaim "Christ is risen!" The liturgy devotes to this immense mystery not only a day - it would be too little for such joy - but at least 50 days, that is, the entire Easter Season, which ends with Pentecost.

Easter Sunday, moreover, is an absolutely special day which extends for the whole of this week until next Sunday and forms the Octave of Easter.

In the atmosphere of Paschal joy, St Matthew takes us back to the sepulchre where, impelled by their love for Him, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to "visit" Jesus' tomb. The Evangelist tells us that he comes to meet them and says: "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me" (Mt 28: 10). The joy they felt at seeing their Lord was truly indescribable and, filled with enthusiasm, they ran to tell the disciples.

The Risen One also repeats to us, as to these women who stayed by Jesus during



the Passion, not to be afraid to become messengers of the proclamation of his Resurrection. Those who encounter the Risen Jesus and entrust themselves docilely to him have nothing to fear. This is the message that Christians are called to spread to the very ends of the earth.


The Christian faith, as we know, is not born from the acceptance of a doctrine but from an encounter with a Person, with Christ, dead and risen.

In our daily lives, dear friends, there are so many opportunities to proclaim this faith of ours to others simply and with conviction, so that from our encounter their faith can grow.

And it is more urgent than ever that the men and women

of our age know and encounter Jesus and, also thanks to our example, allow themselves to be won over by him.

The Gospel says nothing about the Mother of the Lord, of Mary, but Christian tradition rightly likes to contemplate her while with joy greater than anyone else's she embraces her divine Son, whom she had held close when he was taken down from the Cross. Now, after the Resurrection, the Mother of the Redeemer rejoices with Jesus' "friends," who constitute the newborn Church.

Invoke her, the *Regina Caeli*, Queen of Heaven, so that she may keep alive in each one of us faith in the Resurrection and may make us messengers of the hope and love of Jesus Christ. 

## The Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham in Scotland



**Inverness**



**Whithorn**



**Edinburgh**



**Birnie**

**MASS TIMES IN SCOTLAND - INVERNESS:** Sunday at 11am and mid-week in the Oratory of Saint Joseph, 49 Laurel Avenue, Inverness IV3 5RR

**WHITHORN:** 1st Sunday at 11am in Stonehouse Mill, Sorbie DG8 8AN and Wednesday at 10.30am in St Martin and St Ninian, George Street, Whithorn DG8 8PZ

**EDINBURGH:** 2nd Sunday at 12.30pm in St Patrick's, Cowgate, Old Edinburgh EH1 1TQ **NAIRN:** 1st Monday at 10am in St Mary, 7 Academy Street, Nairn IV12 4RJ

**BIRNIE (by Elgin):** 1st Saturday at 12 noon - Evensong on Wednesday at 7pm in Birnie Kirk, Birnie, by Elgin IV30 8SU

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