

# DUNKELD NEWS

Diocesan Newsletter of the Bishop of Dunkeld

No. 17 August 2019

First Communion and Confirmation photos - pp 10-11; Bishop Stephen's 40th Anniversary Mass - pp 12-15

## “Intense but fruitful” week for Charis in Rome



**Dunkeld's Charis McCrosson was invited by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland to represent her country's youth at the 11th International Youth Forum in Rome**

From 19-22 June 2019, the Vatican Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life hosted the 11th International Youth Forum in Sassone di Ciampino, Rome. This was in response to the Synod on Youth which took place in October 2018, and to the Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*, written by Pope Francis to reflect the conclusions of the Synod. The theme of the forum was *Youth in Action in a Synodal Church*, and its main goal was to “keep the flame of the Pentecost of the Synod alive and burning”.

250 delegates from over 100 countries and 40 organisations were present, and over three days they discussed the Synod and the document, shared their experiences of youth pastoral ministry and proposed ideas for a way forward for the Church, following the words of Pope Francis: “The young people are not an important part of the Church; they ARE the Church”.

Charis was appointed to attend along with Ciaràn McGonigle from the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh. Charis was also a representative of the Scottish

Catholic Youth Service. The first day focused on ‘The synodal journey and its impact at the local Church level’.

The young auditors who were present at the Synod gave an insight into their experience, which “gave [them] a feeling of being truly a part of a Church who calls young people by name”. They outlined the three elements which they felt characterised the Synod experience: Listening, Discernment and Spirituality.

*continued on p2*



Scottish representative - Charis McCrosson



The Rt. Rev. Stephen Robson



### My Dear People,

We are really excited about the forthcoming visit to Scotland of the relics of St Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower and a popular Saint in Scotland. Therese died of tuberculosis as a young Carmelite nun in 1897 and was canonised in 1925.

Scotland was one of the first countries to develop a deep devotion to ‘The Little Flower’. She is Protectress of Priests and Patroness of the Missions. What a wonderful preparation to celebrate and prepare for the Extraordinary month of mission announced from Rome for the month of October!

The relics will arrive in Scotland at Carfin on Friday, 30th August and leave on Thursday 19th September, 2019. They will arrive in our Cathedral in Dundee on the evening of Wednesday, 4th September and leave the Cathedral in the late afternoon of Saturday 7th September, 2019.

I have asked Canon John Udris of Oscott College who is an expert on the life and spirituality of the Little Flower to conduct a retreat for all who wish to come during this time.

This Visit of St Therese is an important opportunity to re-evangelise our people and, especially true of the lapsed, to put them back in contact with their Catholic Faith through the closeness to us of this wonderful Saint.

The Cathedral will be open all day every day during the visit with an overnight Vigil on the night of Thursday 5th September. There will be exposition of the Blessed Sacrament all day every day and, outwith Mass and special Liturgies, there will be opportunities to venerate the very large relic of St Therese beneath a glass coffin approximately 2.5 metres by 1.75 metres in size which will be situated at the foot of the Sanctuary steps. I hope that Confessions will be freely available throughout St Therese's time with us.

+ Bishop Stephen Robson

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE: News, views and coming events from around the diocese**



*Some of the young delegates from across the world*

The second day took a deeper look at the Christus Vivit document, 'The culmination of the Synod on youth'. There was a particular focus on Chapter 4: 'A great message for all young people'. It talks about God's love for young people and His longing for a relationship with all of us.

It reminds us of three important truths: God loves you; Christ is your Saviour; He is alive. A delegate from Switzerland commented, "Christus Vivit is received as a gift from a grandfather to his grandfather to his grandchildren. It is like being spoken to directly." This was a sentiment shared by many.

"The Synod is not an event; it's a journey and a dialogue. We have a responsibility to do more and create the experience of synodality and dialogue around this document. Christus Vivit is the most important document for today's Church. It lays a pathway for us in the future. We must take time to reflect deeper and have more understanding of the document and what it means for us. It is our responsibility not just to find a place for ourselves, but for every young person who comes after us." – Australian Youth Director

The third day explored the theme of 'Youth in action in a synodal Church: our contribution'. Fr Rossano Sala, Special Secretary at the Synod on Youth, and Fr Alexandre Awi Mello, Secretary for the Dicastery, spoke about the importance of vocations, discernment and accompaniment of young people. This last element was underlined as fundamental to youth pastoral ministry. Another fundamental element was identified as collaboration – between Bishops and youth ministers, clergy and laity, countries/regions and organisations. Fr Awi Mello commented, "We cannot live alone, isolated from others. Seek out the support of people who have received specific formation – remember lay people can support also."

"There was a moment during the Synod where we experienced a moment of conversion – we realised the problem was no longer the young people, but the adults. This was the turning point. We must have humility in synodality," said Fr Sala.

Throughout the forum there were many opportunities for delegates to join the discussion and share their own thoughts and experiences, or to ask questions of the various panellists. This gave a great insight into the many cultures and situations that are faced by youth ministers across the globe.

Charis said, "It was striking how similar many of our situations were. Countries across the world are facing the same struggles with communication and lack of support between clergy and laity, with lack of engagement of the young people they serve, and with access to resources or venues. It was encouraging to know that we are not alone on our journey. One of the most prevalent issues was the accessibility of the Synod documents, as many coun-

tries do not have them translated to their language or have not been able to circulate them widely. This means that many young people, laity and even clergy have not read or even heard of the Synod or Christus Vivit. The importance of creating a more accessible Church was stressed by many of the delegates.

Speaking of her experience at the Forum, Charis said; "This week has been a wonderful experience and moment of formation for me. To be surrounded by young youth ministers from all over the world and hear their thoughts, their struggles and their hopes was incredibly inspiring. To have received encouragement and advice from those much more experienced in youth ministry than I has been invaluable. What struck me most about the whole experience was how remarkable and what a true reflection of the 'universal Church' it was to see all these people gathered together and in communion with one another, regardless of political situations in their countries, past or current conflicts between countries etc. There were no majorities or minorities – it felt like we were all the same. This is how God intended us to be, and it exemplifies the Pope's message: we are one in Christ; we are the Church. I hope that the fruits of this forum will flourish and that we will see a positive impact on our Church in Scotland. I ask for prayer for all of us who are dedicated to this mission."

The Forum concluded with a trip to the Vatican for Mass in St Peter's Basilica followed by an audience with Pope Francis. He addressed the delegates with thanks and a reminder that "the Church needs [young people], so that she can be fully herself." Before he left, he personally greeted each one of them.



*Charis meets Pope Francis as the Forum ends*



# Corpus Christi Procession

*This year's annual Procession of the Blessed Sacrament, on the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, took place in the grounds of the Diocesan Centre at Lawside, Dundee. Bishop Stephen was supported by Deacons Kris Jablonski and Arthur Grant during a service of Adoration in St Joseph's Chapel before the accompanying priests, religious and laity set off in procession around the beautifully kept grounds of the centre.*

PHOTOS by Eddie Mahoney



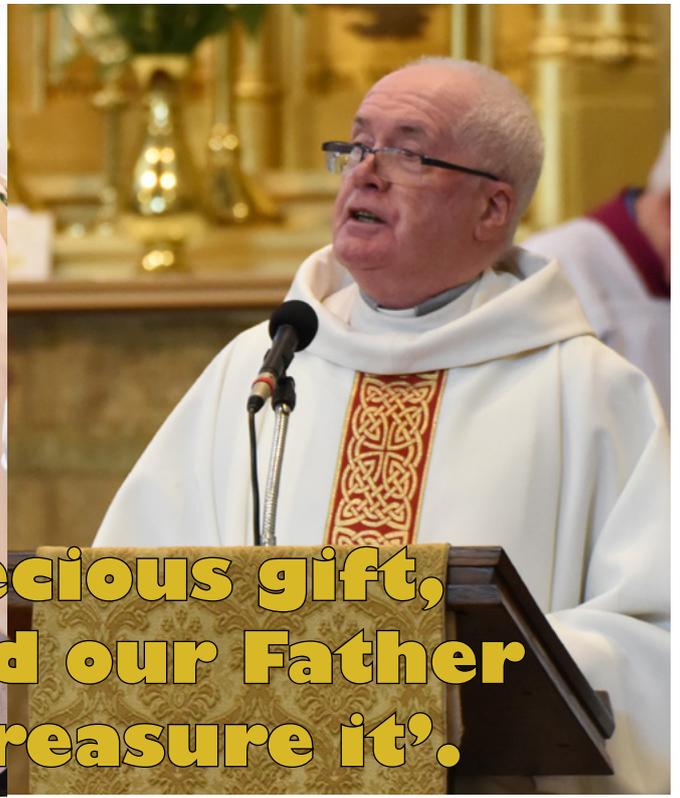
## Garden opening at St Mary's Care Home in Monifieth

St Mary's Care Home, Monifieth, were pleased to welcome Mgr Aldo Angelosanto as he officially opened their new garden.

The garden has been created in a secluded area at the back of St Mary's. Residents helped with the design and the type of planting that they wanted. It is the culmination of a years work starting with the hard landscaping including raised beds and mono blocked seating areas.

A pergola has been built which when plants grow over, will provide shade. Volunteers are maintaining the garden and have planted vegetables which are now in use in the kitchen. Herbs and annuals have been planted along with shrubs with an emphasis on bright colours for our residents to enjoy.





**‘Life is a very precious gift, given to us by God our Father and so we must treasure it’.**

**Mgr Ken McCaffrey addressed pupils and teachers at the Annual Diocesan Mass in St Andrew’s Cathedral, Dundee, on Thursday 6th June, 2019. The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Stephen Robson with priests and chaplains from across the diocese and hosted by pupils from Dundee’s St John’s High School.**

Preaching during the Mass, Mgr Ken McCaffrey, said:

“Our annual Education Mass once again brings us together to this great Cathedral, the mother Church of our wonderful Diocese of Dunkeld, dedicated to St Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. Here in this place, Bishop Stephen, our shepherd, has his cathedra, his seat, where he, appointed by Pope Francis, has been given authority to preach, to teach and to lead us forward in faith, to inspire us all, to strive to be the best we can be.”

“The Diocese of Dunkeld, stretching from Montrose and Brechin in the north, down through Dundee, west to Perth and Crieff, across through Fife, south to the ancient cathedral city of Dunblane and to the county of Clackmannanshire is the oldest in Scotland, and our patron, St Columba, came from Ireland to Iona, and was one of the first great preachers of the values of the gospel to the people of this land.”

“What are those values that inspire us, what are those gifts we have been given, and that we thank God for? Firstly, we thank God for the gift of life, which the Church has been speaking about much

this week and last Friday, the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth, we celebrated a Day for Life, where we learned that everyone must be valued for as long as they live.”

“Life is a very precious gift, given to us by God our Father and so we must treasure it. Our parents brought us in love into the world and so we thank them for giving us this great gift of life and we give thanks for all they do for us.

“Our teachers, each and every day, in school share their faith with us; they inspire us to follow the way of Jesus, give us good example, so that we can, with their help, realise our potential and be the best we can be. We know that God created us with our own abilities and capacities and with the potential to do well. We pray for that gift tonight, and every day.”

#### **Marist roots**

“Today, St John’s High School hosts our Mass on this feast of St Marcellin Champagnat, founder of the Marist Brothers who made an important contribution to Education here in our Diocese, teaching in rooms under this very cathedral, just 20 years after St Marcellin died in 1840, the first Catholic school in our Diocese.”

“St Marcellin had a vision for education and that was to make Jesus known and loved. I know in all our schools throughout this diocese our teachers do just that – they share their faith with you, they love you and in the words of St Marcellin, they love you all equally.

“St Marcellin had special values that he shared with those in his care; we make that presence felt through how we treat one another.

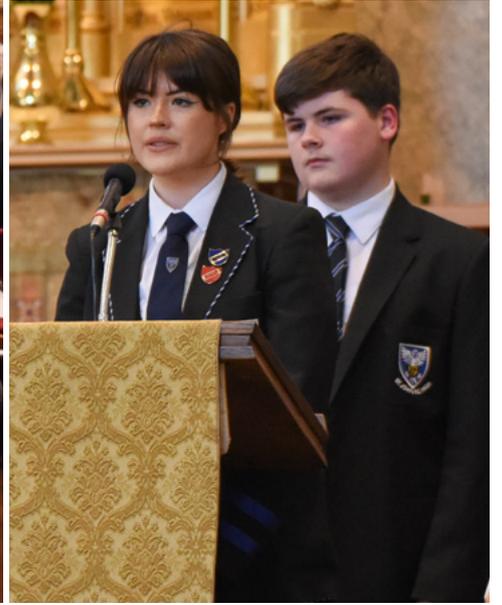
“Our goal in life is to reach heaven, by developing our God given talents and gifts for the good of the whole community.

“We follow the example of Mary by saying ‘Yes’ when God calls us, ‘Yes’ to loving our neighbours, and ‘Yes’ to caring for those in need through all our charitable works.

“We know that all, of us have been given special gifts from God and the greatest of all the gifts is the gift of love. Love, is a precious gift. We are called to Love, we are part of God’s Loving Plan for each of us and we are special, created by God, with unique talents. God wants only the best for us. We are loved by God and God’s plan for us is to love others as he loves us.

“God has given us life, God delights in us; he made each one of us and has given us special gifts and talents that we have to put to good use, for ourselves and for all the people we will meet in the years ahead as we journey through school and through life.

“As the school year, another year in our lives, draws to a close and we look forward to the holidays let us thank those who have inspired us this year, especially our teachers, for sharing their gifts with us. Let us pray that we will use all the great gifts that God has given us to make our world a better place.”



# St John's Perth Union of Catholic Mothers visit to Newport



"Drop in anytime!" was Mgr Martin Drysdale's farewell message to his Perth parish. It was heeded by the Union of Catholic Mothers when they visited for Mass in his new parish at St Fillan's, Newport.

After leaving the Fair City of Perth, Mgr Martin has spent several months camp-

ing out in various church houses while the somewhat decaying presbytery at Newport was made fit for habitation.

30 members of his former parish's UCM packed into St Fillan's, the tiny 'Tin Chapel', for Mass with Mgr Martin and Mgr Hendry parish priest St Mary Magdalene's, Perth.

"It was lovely to meet Mgr Martin again and share all our news with him," said Rosanna James, UCM President. "We had a most enjoyable evening and all rounded off with some delicious fish suppers."

PHOTO by a staff photographer

## Dunkeld's shows support for Project Gambia

**Bishop Stephen recently welcomed two young charity workers who visited the diocese from Project Gambia. He presented them a cheque for with £500 to assist their work.**

Project Gambia was set up seven years ago having realised that The Gambia, a small country in West Africa, was not getting the support that some of the other African countries were receiving. After visiting schools in The Gambia, members of the charity came across St John's School for the Deaf in the Catholic Diocese of Banjul. Being one of the only special needs schools in one of Africa's poorest countries, it seemed like a logical place for them to start.

Project Gambia's Rebecca Lafferty said that "after touring the school, we were taken into the store room, where we were shocked to find that the only food they had for at the time 200 children was a bag of rice and a bag of onions. After seeing that and meeting the children, we decided there and then that we had to do something to help them and make their lives at least a little bit easier". Having set up a fully functioning feeding programme at the school 4 years ago, as well as providing the children with school bags, learning materials and school uniforms, the attendance now sits at over 350 children. The transformation of the attendance has only been one of the benefits they have noticed.

Another spokesperson for the Project,

Aidan Curivan, said that "the children are now coming to school more focused, more concentrated, more energetic and are doing better in their exams than ever before".

Although St John's was the initial focus of the charity, they have recently expanded their efforts to St Patrick's Lower Basic School and St Joseph's Nursery School in The Gambia - taking their feeding programme to over 1,000 children between the three schools. Mother Teresa summed up their mission perfectly when she said that "if you can't feed 100 children, then just feed one". Thanks to the support of the Catholic community in Scotland, they are now able to feed more than 1,000 children every day.

One accomplishment their volunteers are particularly proud of is that they were able to secure a visa for a young pupil of St John's, Alieu (Muhammed Cham) to come to Scotland earlier this year. Alieu was born without ears, but the type of Deafness he had was entirely treatable. Through a partnership with the NHS and ENT Surgeon Mr Iyer, Alieu was able to hear for the first time in his entire life. Since this life-changing surgery, he has also learned how to speak and is now attending a mainstream school in The Gambia. During his time here in February and March of this year, he was able to meet and thank bishops, parish priests and parishioners who had so faithfully supported his school over the past years.



The charity volunteers, fuelled by their faith and education, fund raise by visiting different parishes across Scotland each weekend. As they now expand their efforts into the Diocese of Dunkeld, many of you will be meeting them and hearing more about their story in the months ahead.

Rebecca said that "We would all like to thank Bishop Robson for his support, which included a very generous donation of £500 from the diocese. St Therese said that 'the Church has a Heart and this Heart is burning with love'. This has been precisely our experience of our Church here in Scotland. It is this heart of the Catholic Church, beating full of life, that makes our work in transforming the lives of over 1,000 children every day possible. To all the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Dunkeld, we assure you of our continued prayers - and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts".

# Clergy changes in Dunkeld Diocese

Bishop Stephen has announced, as a first step in clergy moves this year, the following clergy appointments:

**Fr Leszek Wieczaszek SAC** of St Joseph's parish to move from St Joseph's Dundee, to St Fillan and Alphonsus, Doune and St Joseph's Callander as parish priest. Fr Leszek will also be in charge of the Polish Mission in Scotland based in Glasgow taking over from Fr Mariusz Lekawa.

**Fr Gregory Murphy OP** to transfer from St Pius X, Douglas, Dundee to become parish priest in St Joseph's, Willkie's Lane, Dundee. Fr Gregory will continue also as Chaplain to HMP Castle Huntly and Chaplain to the Universities of Dundee and Abertay. The parish of St Joseph is adjacent to the university and Fr Gregory will be able to develop much more fully and conveniently the University Catholic Chaplaincy at St Joseph's.

**Fr Ninian Doohan** to transfer from

Assistant priest in Our Lady of Victories, Hilltown and St Patrick's, to become Parish Priest of St Pius X, Douglas. Fr Ninian will remain also as Chaplain to the Sacred Heart Traditional Latin Mass Community in Dundee and will still be involved as a co-ordinator in the Ninewells Group hospital chaplaincy.

*These changes to take place during the week after Sunday 11th August.*

Bishop Stephen also welcomed Fr Alexander to the diocese towards the end of July. Fr Alexander is from the same part of Nigeria as our own priests and sisters. He has already worked as parish priest and missionary in the USA for 8 years and then in Tasmania in Australasia for the past 8 years.

We welcome Fr Alexander into our diocese and pray he will be very happy among us. He will reside at St Mary's Lochee with Fr Mark Cassidy for a short while before he is appointed to a parish.

## St Ninian's Primary in Dundee help to foster Scottish/Malawi Partnership



Dundee pupils from the St Ninian's Primary took part in an event at Ninewells Hospital planting the first seeds in the garden and learn more about their new school partnerships. The idea to create the new patch was developed by students from the University of Dundee and staff from NHS Tayside. At the celebration event, garden guests were able to sample traditional Malawian food, play drums, dance to music

and hear stories from health professionals about how this partnership has shaped lives and influenced health and education services in both countries.

Funding was awarded by the Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP) earlier this year, following a Youth Event Competition which was supported by the National Lottery Year of Young People fund.

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# Syrian Christian talks to Catenians as missiles are fired on her home town

Mrs Zabieh Alsamaan addressed members of the Dundee and Perth Circle of the Catenian Association earlier this year at the Queens Hotel in Perth. Mrs Alsamaan, a Greek Orthodox Christian from Al-Skeilbyeh in Syria, spoke at her sadness and anger about the war in her homeland. Zabieh Shihada Alsamaan and her husband, Moyassar, a doctor of philosophy, have been in Scotland for the past 12 years. Their daughters, Lina, 12, and Katie, 10, were born in Scotland and they are well settled in Perth.

Zabieh spoke passionately about Syria's beauty and proud history but the conflict in Syria was uppermost in her mind as Zabieh has a sister, two brothers, step-brothers and step-sisters still in Al-skeilbyeh in Hama,

her hometown in Syria.

Even as she was speaking Syrian government forces were attacking the last remnants of ISIL in a corner of her home town. The area has already been hit by missiles and she fears that if terror group, Islamic State, enter her home town of Al-skeilbyeh her family will be murdered.

She said: "When I phone my sister in Al-skeilbyeh I can hear the missiles and my sister says to me 'I have to go'. The bombing of Al-skeilbyeh by Isis has been indiscriminate and people in my town have been killed. And my family and many others are living without water and electricity. They are trying to get on as normally as they can but every day brings increased danger. And

their salaries are only lasting for two weeks because the price of things is so high now. Due to the fighting, prices have rocketed as the economy has been seriously hit."

"People used to come from Jordan and Lebanon to buy items in Syria as they were much cheaper than in their countries but not now. My nephews and nieces still go to school to keep things as normal as possible but every day they are in danger. The children have nightmares. It is a terrible situation. These children are being brought up in a war zone."

Sheriff Kevin Veal, thanked Mrs Alsamaan for her very personal insight, behind the news, and led members in prayers for her family and for the people of Syria.



## Catenian bursary awards for Lourdes helpers

Four of the young people who took part in this year's Dunkeld Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes received a welcome boost to their personal pilgrimage funding. Encouraged by their individual parish priests, the four had applied for support from the Catenian Association and were delighted with the news that they were successful.

Sheriff Kevin Veal, acting-president of Dundee and Perth's Catenians, presented the cheques following a Mass attended all the pilgrims, celebrated in Dundee's Ss Leonard and Fergus Church by Bishop Stephen Robson.



Mr Archie MacLellan, the Catenian Association's National President was also in attendance.

Mr MacLellan said, "The Catenians is an international association for Catholic men, and their families, who wish to share their faith and to meet socially. We received many applications for support from our Bursary Fund and it is a great pleasure

to be able to offer our support to these young Lourdes Pilgrims."

(L-R) Dunkeld's Lourdes Youth Director, Mgr Neil Gallagher, with Andrew Kelly, Lucie Kelly, Kirsten Friedman, Sheriff Kevin Veal, Acting-President of the Dundee and Perth Circle, with Marie Clarke – and the Catenian's Scottish President, Mr Archie MacLellan.

## The Spirit of Pilgrimage

# Sharing food for the Journey



**T**he spirit of pilgrimage has been very much in my mind and heart over the last year. The challenge of recent ill-health reminded me that in life's journey we cannot always rely on being strong or well or energetic – and acceptance of this weakness is part of the journey to recovery and restoration. A bit like being foot-sore on a long walk and being required to slow down, reflect and repair – in order to continue with the journey.

In May of this year, I had the great privilege of accompanying the pupils and staff of St Stephen's Primary Blairgowrie on their biennial pilgrimage to Iona, under the leadership of Simon McKell, headteacher, and the spiritual care of Mgr Martin Drysdale, our pilgrimage chaplain.

There is something about the enthusiasm and openness of the young that refreshes the heart and leads to a sense of hope in the future.

Together we explored the island, prayed together, celebrated Mass in the Catholic House of Prayer and in the ancient Chapel of St Michael, walked along beaches, sought and found Columba's tears, small green stones symbolising his repentance and gratitude at the mercy of God; we petted new lambs and saw gradually the mysterious and consoling development of community in the steady rhythms of shared chores and mealtimes. The charcoal fire on the beach was very evocative and the young people embraced this experience of the creation, each other and prayer in a wholly spontaneous and joyful fashion.

The timeless quality to our days, in tune with the wind and the weather, the rocks and shells, drew us gently into God's time, a patient, loving unhurried sense of presence, comfortable and consoling; and despite our long walks and climbs, somehow effortless and without complaint. One pupil marvelled at how much fun there was to be had with no money and no phone!

As ever, our young charges were excited about the visit to the gift shop, but we encouraged the young people to see that not every gift or grace can be purchased, and that gathering the graces of friendship, community, being close to creation in a

prayerful way were things that would ripple through their hearts long after their keepsakes had been lost or mislaid.

Savouring the tour of the Abbey and grounds and after our closing Mass, we all paused, pupils and adults to reflect on the gifts and graces of our pilgrimage. That moment of stillness took me aback as the young people rested in an easy contemplative silence, at once brimming with a sense of peace and joy.

Conversation, companionship and sharing of time in that "thin place" where so many before us have found peace and the hospitality of God was a great grace.

The happy babble on the voyages back to Mull and Oban, were full of harmony and memories. Witness to the graces of the heart in pilgrimage.

In many ways, this experience of a deep need to journey together, sharing joys and sorrows, hopes and disappointments, occasional discomforts or sorrows and glittering moments of joy helps us understand why the Second Vatican Council describes the Church as a Pilgrim People.

All of us long to flourish, to find purpose and meaning, and rest and refreshment for our hearts. It seems to me that this desire is from God, who accompanies us on our life's journey and patiently waits for us to notice and enter into a relationship of trust, faith and love.

by **Mary O'Duffin**  
*Dunkeld's Pastoral  
Education Development Officer*

Whether it is in a pilgrimage to Iona, or exploring the newly rediscovered Pilgrimage walk to St Andrews or Whithorn; or perhaps venturing further afield to Walsingham, Lourdes, Rome or Santiago de Compostela, perhaps each of us can kindle the desire to experience this gift of sacred time from God where we can truly discover ourselves in the light of grace.

Some pilgrimages are not in place but in time. The journey of growing up, experiencing family life, changes in life or work and the inevitable journey of aging can be a pilgrimage of sorts.

Let us journey together, travelling as lightly as we can, with hope and expectation of arriving safely at our destinations; in the kind company of others; sharing chores and meals together in a spirit of community.

This is what it means to be the Church, sharing our food for the journey, the Eucharist, forgiving and consoling in word and deed, and in Sacrament. Strengthened for the challenges and surprises that lie ahead in the next bend of the road.

## Buen Camino!



St Stephen's Primary, Blairgowrie on their Pilgrimage to Iona

# CELEBRATIONS FROM A



Confirmation Mass with Bishop Stephen and staff from Ss Leonard & Fergus, Dundee



First Holy Communion with



(Above) Confirmation Mass at St Fergus, Forfar with Bishop Stephen and Fr Tobias Okorro



St Andrew's Primary School, Dundee, for their



First Holy Communion at St James', Kinross - Lily and Jan are pictured above with Fr Martin Pletts



First Holy Communion with Fr Joseph Jan



Bishop Stephen with Fr Michael Carrie (pa children from St Mary's, Forebank, Du

# AROUND OUR DIOCESE



Mgr Aldo - St Bride's, Monifieth



Confirmation Mass at Ss Leonard & Fergus



Confirmation Mass and school staff - St Thomas', Arbroath



Confirmation Mass (with parish priest) and Fr Ninian Doohan with the children after Confirmations in the parish



Bishop Robson after Mass at St Bride's, Pitlochry with (left) James Steuart Fotheringham, who was Confirmed, and (right) Mateusz and Julia Banat, who received first Holy Communion



First Holy Communion with Fr Gregory Umunna at St Stephen's, Blairgowrie



First Holy Communion with Fr Johny Rafael at St Clement's, Dundee



*Bishop Stephen celebrates the 40th anniversary of his priesthood*

**“This is a day to give thanks to God for all his gifts”**



# *Mgr Aldo reflects on the past 40 years and a lifetime of service in the priesthood*

**“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...”**

Permit me to borrow these immortal words of Charles Dickens to introduce the year of our Lord 1979 to remind ourselves that no historical period is without its graces and its deficiencies, its high points and its low points, its zenith and nadir.

In the Year of Our Lord 1979 Stephen Robson was ordained Priest on March 17th. It was his need to undergo surgery for an old painful ankle injury, and his need for convalescence, which caused us to postpone the joyful celebrations we had planned for his 40th Anniversary earlier this year. But it is never too late to do the right thing and here we are this evening rejoicing in the graces and blessedness God bestows on an open and faithful heart.

So I thought I would begin with a short historical reminiscence of that year of 1979.

Peanuts, he worked for peanuts, that is the American President, Jimmy Carter who made his fortune in peanuts and nearly went nuts himself when the Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran from exile and the American Embassy in Tehran was overrun. Its staff were held as hostages, sending shock waves around the Western world. He did not serve a second term after that.

In the UK, Margaret Thatcher was the first woman to be elected Prime Minister and she ruled for 11 years. They called her the Iron Lady.

The notorious dictator Idi Amin, was overthrown in Uganda and fled to Saudi Arabia and Lord Mountbatten was assassinated in Ireland in August.

And now for the season of Light: since October 1978, the first non-Italian Pope since 1523, the great Pope, John Paul II sat on the throne of St Peter and was soon to make his first visit back home to his native Poland, sending shock waves into the Communist Eastern Bloc. Today Pope John Paul II is widely recognised as helping to end Communist rule in Poland and eventually in all of Europe. And in the early months of this great Pope's Pontificate, on March 17 1979, the Feast of St Patrick of Ireland, a young Stephen Robson dedicated his life to the preaching of the Gospel, responding to the call he felt deep in his heart and an-

swering the articulation of that call with a solemn 'ADSUM' (*Present*) to the Church and to Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal High Priest, at his ordination, in his native Carlisle, at the hands of Cardinal Gordon Joseph Gray.

It was on the Maundy Thursday of that year 1979 that Pope John Paul II issued the first of his Letters to all Priests throughout the world. What an inspiration it must have been to the new priest Stephen Robson, celebrating the Holy Week and Easter Liturgies so soon after his ordination. In that Letter the Pope described a moving custom during the harsh days of Nazism and Communism in Poland, a very inspirational and beautiful description of the depth of Priesthood which we need to rediscover today. He wrote that the worth of a priest is not to be found in social achievement but in speaking and acting in the Person of Jesus Christ.

The Pope described those days when tyranny had removed priests from the scene. “Think of the places where people anxiously await a Priest and where for many years, feeling the lack of such a Priest they do not cease to hope for his presence. And sometimes it would happen that they meet in an abandoned shrine and place on the altar a stole, which they still keep, and recite all the prayers of the Eucharistic Liturgy and at the moment of consecration a deep silence comes down upon them, a silence sometimes broken by sobs, so ardently they desire to hear the words that only the lips of a Priest can efficaciously utter. How they long to hear the divine words of pardon which only the ministry of the Priest could bring “Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis”. The lesson is, if any of you doubts the meaning of his priesthood, if he thinks it is socially fruitless or useless, let him reflect on this great mystery.

On this the 40th anniversary of the gift of your Priestly ordination, Bishop Stephen, you give us all an opportunity to reflect on the mystery of sharing in the Priesthood of Jesus Christ and for us Priests an encouragement to be converted everyday to rediscover, even in these difficult days, the joy and strength, that God's grace confers in the Sacrament of Orders and to reflect constantly on the great mission of our vocation in bringing Christ to others.

In his sermon at the Mass of Chrism in 1979, the then Archbishop of Munich and Friesing, Joseph Ratzinger commented on the Pope's Letter and the great need of the People of God to hear the “I” of Christ (I absolve you from your sins, This is MY



Body) in the words of the Priest and when they are no longer spoken, the daily bread goes stale, and social achievements become empty. So, Archbishop Ratzinger points out 'this is the most profound and at the same time the most exciting gift of the priestly ministry, which only the Lord Himself can give: not only to relate His words as words of the past, but to speak here and now with His "I", to act, 'in persona Christi' that is to represent Christ's person as the Liturgy expresses it.' This is truly awesome .... on one hand it is not my power or my holiness at work here and on the other hand, even if a priest contradicts these words with his life, they are still effective because it is the 'I' of Jesus Christ which matters here, not the ego of the man. But it is also abundantly clear that we cannot say such words without them making demands on our own life and they urgently require a correspond-



ence deep down in our heart. The priest must therefore, Archbishop Ratzinger emphasised, first and foremost BE a man who believes.

Contemplating these thoughts of a Polish Pope and a later German Pope who both experienced the rigours of war and the post-war period, it is not surprising that both highlight the inextricable link between the mystery of the Cross and the Holy Eucharist. We can never afford to forget those majestic and demanding words the bishop addressed to us on the day of our ordination "Agnosce quad agis, imitare quad tractabis, et vitam tuam mysteria damenicæ crucis canfarma" (Know what you are doing, and imitate the mystery you celebrate, model your life on the mystery of the Lord's Cross.). To be truly priests after the manner of our Lord Jesus Christ we should also be ready to offer ourselves as victims for sin as Christ did. In the Holy Mass we are called to relive those dark mysterious hours when Christ dying on the Cross cried out "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" Pope John Paul II in his Holy Thursday Letter of 1999 reminds us that these words speak of our living and dying and resonate with those other words of the Liturgy of the Hours which we pray at the end of every day "Into your hands O Lord I commend my spirit", to prepare ourselves for our own personal exodus.

The then Cardinal Ratzinger in a volume of his meditations on priestly spirituality wrote also of the bread of the Eucharist as being for us at once the sign of the Cross and the sign of God's great and joyful harvest. He continues "It is the priest's finest and most sublime ministry that he can be the servant of this holy meal, that he may transform and distribute this bread of unity. For him too this bread will have a double meaning. It will to start with remind him

too of the Cross. At the end, the priest too must somehow be God's grain of wheat. He cannot be content with giving only words and external actions, he must add a piece of his heart's blood... himself. And in such a way the priest, among all the faithful, is especially called to identify himself mystically as well as sacramentally with Christ in order to be in some way SACERDOS ET HOSTIA both priest and victim, according to the beautiful expression of St Thomas Aquinas, who himself echoes the words of the great Bishop of Ravenna, St Peter Chrysologus, 'How unique is the duty of the Christian Priesthood! For there a man is himself sacrifice as well as priest' and he concludes, 'Since you are a human being, be God's sacrifice and priest'.

This is a day to give thanks to God for all the gifts He has given to you Bishop Stephen, for all is grace, all is God's goodness and the gifts He bestows on us is not for our self-glory but for the benefit of the whole Body of Christ.

On the occasion of the sad loss of your dear father, we glimpsed the loving depths of your family life, your devoted love for your father and the caring love you constantly lavish on your aging mother. We see too the share you have in the Cross of Jesus Christ, our self-sacrificing great High Priest. That family background and the journey of faith you made into the Catholic Church and then into the Priesthood, moulded you into the "people person" that you are ..... you open your heart to all who come in contact with you and in that way

you bring Christ to them. What light comes into your eyes and what a beaming smile fills your face when parents bring their tiny tots for you to bless ... what joy you bring to young children by your kindness and openness to them. It's great to hear children talking well of you and delighting innocently, in your company.... You go out of your way to nurture youth and expend your energies encouraging them, listening to their problems, applauding their achievements and are always on the lookout too for new vocations for the Priesthood and Religious life... you give tremendous support to families and promote energetically the Gospel values of family life which the world denigrates and are not shy to give public witness to your beliefs... and how tenderly you engage with the frail and elderly when you visit them in Residential care.

You notice when the staff in the curial offices work late beyond usual hours or are overwhelmed with work and you care for them seeking workable and healthy solutions. You show yourself also as a Father to your Priests, always ready to listen and give time and they respond to you with confidence and trust. Let me here adapt, with apologies, the words of St Augustine "With us you are Priest, for us you are Bishop".

Today we share with you the awesome joy of that day of ordination 40 years ago when you became a Priest of Jesus Christ. Today's world needs holy Priests. Only a holy Priest can become in an increasingly secularised world, a truly resounding witness to Jesus Christ and His Gospel.

Only a Holy Priest can become an authentic guide for men and women and a teacher of holiness especially to the young. We thank God you said 'Yes! ADSUM' to the call of priesthood. We thank God for the gifts He bestowed upon you of being generous in giving your life to Him. May He let grow in you the desire for great and noble projects for the more you are ready to give yourself to God and to others, the more you will discover the authentic meaning of life. We pray for you at every Mass we celebrate: May God our loving Father hear our prayers and bless and protect you always.

## Bishop Stephen .... ad Multos Annos

*I would like to thank all of our priests, deacons, religious and faithful for your kind prayers and thoughts on the occasion of my Ruby Jubilee in the priesthood. The actual date was St Patrick's day but, as you know, because of my foot and ankle surgery it was delayed.*

*Thank you to all for your kindness in sending the cards and gifts which were presented at the Jubilee Mass.*

*I am most grateful to you all.*

*+ Stephen Robson*



Parish Priest Father Johney Raphael together with the lovely children from St Clement's, Dundee, who attend Children's Liturgy



## Confirmation Day at Ss Peter & Paul's, Dundee

*The children of Ss Peter and Paul's received their Confirmation Day certificates from Bishop Stephen after a beautiful Mass in their parish church.*

## Dunkeld Lourdes Pilgrims' Mass



*Over 130 Dunkeld's Lourdes Pilgrims from across the diocese gathered for Mass in Ss Leonard & Fergus, Dundee. Bishop Stephen celebrate Mass with Fr Brian McLean (an Honorary Canon of Lourdes), Mgr Neil Gallagher, Fr Gregory Murphy, Fr Michael Carrie and Fr Mike Freyne.*

## Ss Peter and Paul's, Dundee honours links between school and parish...

The Cleary Cup is awarded to pupils in Ss Peter and Paul's Primary, Dundee, who give most support to links between school and parish. Mrs Nessie Cleary is pictured with the two winners this year who are Lydia Cuthill and Ellis Christie.



# Lawside Reunion plan

Following last year's appeal in Dunkeld News, and other local papers, former Lawside pupil, Elisabeth Kerr is delighted to announce a Reunion weekend for ex-pupils of Lawside Academy (specifically, those who started at Lawside between the years of 1960/61 and 1965). Indeed, anyone who transferred from either of the split sites to the new school in School Road, Dundee.

Elisabeth writes, "Dunkeld News very kindly included an article and it did bear fruit. I am incredibly grateful for your help. The Reunion is booked to last over the weekend of Friday 13th - Sunday 15th September 2019. There are two evening Reunion Events plus suggested visits and other get-togethers. Fr Michael Carrie will celebrate Mass for our Group at the Lawside Convent Chapel. We wanted it to be in that venue to acknowledge that so many of us attended the Main School adjoining the Convent (now the Diocesan Centre).

"There are people travelling from Canada, Washington, California, Australia, Cyprus, France and from all around the UK. The sheer commitment that people have made in time, in cost and in travel meant that one evening just wouldn't respect that."

## Silver Wedding



Dunkeld News photographer - Eddie Mahoney and his wife Ann, parishioners at St Bride's, Monifieth, are celebrating their 25th Wedding anniversary this year - with a Papal Blessing too. A good opportunity to snap the snapper!

*Congratulations to them both*

# Council of Priests addressed by key issues facing the Church

Dunkeld's Council of Priests gathered at Kenmore to be addressed by Fr Dominic Robinson SJ and his team of presenters, Margaret Johnston and Christine Pace Balzan. They explored the Catholic Returners' Programme 'Landings' and showed what a wonderful tool it could be to gently, and with 'compassionate listening', welcome back those of our Faithful who are presently estranged from the Faith or who have, for one reason or another, ceased practising their Faith.

There was also an enlightening talk from Professor David Jones, the Director of the Bishops Conferences of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland's Bioethics research Centre in Oxford, on the challenges the Transgender Debate is bringing to our schools and Catholic Community. It was followed by sharing and questions on the subject.



*Christine Pace Balzan, Margaret Johnston and Fr Dominic Robinson SJ at the Council of Priests in Kenmore*  
PHOTO by staff photographer

# 'Same mission as before' for new St Bernadette's, Tullibody



*The women of the parish presented the new school with a crucifix*



Bishop Stephen celebrated the Mass of St Bernadette with pupils, staff and chaplains to mark the closure of the old St Bernadette's Primary, Tullibody, prior to its move to the new building in August.

Fr Mike Freyne said, "While some may think that the moving out of the actual building is not worthy of a celebration, we should remember we have to be thankful

for the years of service of past and present teachers and staff; remember all those who were educated and went on to greater things and probably begun their own families"

"We must constantly keep in mind and explain to others this is not the closing of St Bernadette's school but transferring to a new, far more modern building fit for 21st century education. There will be shared

spaces in the new campus building, shared with Abercorn Primary and Tulach Nursery, but we are still St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School with the same mission and its own identity. So a lot to be thankful for."

The Mass was attended by former head-teachers, teachers, former pupils and former chaplains, parish priests and parents past and present.

# *Learning lessons that will last a lifetime*

## Oscar's eye-opening experience

For five weeks during the schools summer holidays Primary Teacher, Oscar Chamberlain from St John's Academy teacher, Mr Oscar Chamberlain, was working in a classroom Much of Oscar's summer 'holiday' was spent on a five week trip to Africa, split between two and a half weeks in Uganda and two and a half weeks in Rwanda, where he was on a programme supporting local teachers with in their professional development.

Oscar (27), who's been on the staff at St John's Academy for four years, went with Global Learning Partnerships Scotland (GLP). His journey to Uganda was a 20 hour door-to-door-trip. Working first of all in the Masindi District, visiting St Joseph's School.

Oscar said: "After about a week into our trip with GLP Scotland to help share Scottish teaching styles with Ugandan and Rwandan teachers, we have been overwhelmed with how welcoming everyone is, and how they have helped us settle into a very different lifestyle.

"It has already been a hugely eye-opening experience, and has made my understanding of extreme poverty much more personal.

"I hope to support these teachers to provide better futures for their classes, and I am looking forward to sharing what I have learned about learning for sustainability back in Perth with the children of St John's."

Before he set off, Oscar said: "This will further my own skills as a teacher, challenge me and give me the opportunity to explore new countries."

"Whilst working with St Joseph's Primary School in Kibibira, where much of the community is Catholic, though they worship in a very different style than I have experienced in Scotland. The music is much more active, with dancing being a common feature of the Mass. However, it was great to see that some hymns, such as "Bind Us Together" are shared by both countries!

The congregation at St Joseph's has been very welcoming, particularly Fr Grasiano who invited me to join the Mass, and Emilio who took the time to translate the priest's words for me.

Part of the Mass here involves new-



comers or returning parishioners sharing their reasons for attending. When it was my turn the congregation was very enthusiastic to hear I was supporting their local teachers and several members were keen to greet me personally and wish me luck with my work!

During our downtime I was able to visit a church, Our Lady Queen of Poland, in Nyabyeya near Masindi, built by Polish refugees during World War Two. The Polish community stayed here for several years, across a few villages, eventually travelling to settle in the UK.

Our guide, Francis, showed us a nearby grave belonging to the aunt of Pope John Paul II. It was fascinating to me to come across this unexpected piece of Polish history so far away from Europe, particularly considering I work closely with members of the Polish community in Perth.

I am hugely grateful to the people who have supported me in travelling to Uganda and Rwanda. I know it is an experience that will stay with me for the rest of my life and have an impact on the

way I teach global issues to all my future classes!

"It has been a hugely eye-opening experience, and has made my understanding of extreme poverty much more personal. I hope to support these teachers to provide better futures for their classes, and I am looking forward to sharing what I have learned about Learning For Sustainability with the children in my own school back home in my own school in Perth."

To prepare for the trip he met up with other secondary school teachers from across Scotland who were also going to Africa with GLP. He participated in a series of training weekends - one of which was conveniently close by, at Willowgate Activity Centre on the banks of the River Tay in Perth.

And while in the east African region, he thought he would just finish off his trip with a climb up Mount Kilimanjaro. Oscar, originally from Manchester, turned to friends living close to his home in Craigie to turn his climbing dream into reality. He held a fundraising quiz



*Our Lady Queen of Poland Catholic Church, in Nyabyeya, near Masindi was built between 1943-1945 by Polish refugees living there, at the foot of the mountain called Wanda Mountain. On the building there is inscription in four languages (Pol-*

*ish, English, Latin and Swahili): This church is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Polish Crown, built by Polish exiles while wandering to the free Fatherland, above the entrance there is the Polish coat of arms and the inscription: Poloniae semper*



*Fidelis. In the interior of the church there is an icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa and Stations of the Cross have subtitles in Polish. The church served Poles living there until the closing of the refugee camp in 1948.*



evening at Perth's Abbotsford Lounge to raise extra cash as the mountain challenge is separate to his posting and with its medical costs, equipment and extra travel, is to a large degree at his own expense.

Following the quiz event Oscar said: "A huge thank you to my friends and friends of friends who came out to sup-

port me and to those who helped by donating raffle prizes. I'm extremely grateful and very humbled to have so many generous people in my life.

"I love climbing Scottish mountains, but I'm ready for something a little more challenging, so after my GLP work has been completed, I plan to climb nearby Kilimanjaro."

***It's not too late to help Oscar on his climb, visit:***

***[www.gofundme.com/oscar039s-glp-volunteering-and-kilimanjaro-climb](http://www.gofundme.com/oscar039s-glp-volunteering-and-kilimanjaro-climb)***

# Looking back to the future at St Mary's Monifieth



Residents at St Mary's Care Home in Monifieth were given the chance to look back on a lifetime of memories to pick out the best scenes for next year's Calendar.

They have created a calendar, for sale at £6 each, as part of their resident fund raising campaign.

Maureen Petrie reports: "St Mary's residents provided the inspiration for the calendar. As part of the Participation Policy at St Mary's we asked them

if they had a favourite place in Scotland or where they went on holiday, a favourite castle, bird or animal.

The pictures in the calendar reflect their wishes. St Mary's also thanked 12 of their main suppliers who have each sponsored a page on the calendar."

The calendars can be bought at St Mary's in Monifieth or the Diocesan Office, 24-28 Lawside Road, Dundee, DD3 6XY.

## St Paul's Academy, Dundee, Ullswater experience



The Outward Bound course is something all pupils should be proud to be a part of. It's hard to explain what you are taught while you're on the residential but you are given activities to encourage both your independence and leadership skills. Activities like packing for expedition takes teamwork to complete it as efficiently as possible so you can be ready for something like gorge walking.

Before we left Dundee, we were feeling nervous and anxious but as soon as we got stuck into it, it was fun and exciting, especially working together in a group to achieve a goal.

By the time of our return home, just five days later, our confidence was boosted and we'd learned lots about how to be a good leader by listening to everyone's opinion and putting others rather than yourself first.

A similar message came from S3 pupil, C. Lyons, who told us, "I loved being on the Duke of Edinburgh expedition. It was really hard and challenging at points but it still turned out to be one of the most fun and engaging experience I've ever had.

"I enjoyed making my own dinner from scratch but we made sure we took all our waste away - I don't think I saw one piece of rubbish the entire time I was there. The endless walks were hard but I think it was one of the most eye-opening and beneficial moments of my life."

*St Paul's Academy's S1 Reporters*

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All are welcome - especially those who are joining the Church at Easter - indeed everyone who is searching to gain a deeper insight into scriptures and the liturgy. The talks will often draw on Scripture readings for Sunday Masses and so will be helpful to readers and cantors wishing to enrich their ministry

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