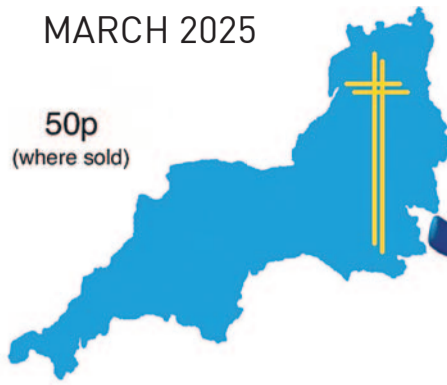


MARCH 2025

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Catholic South West

Serving the Church in the South West



Inside



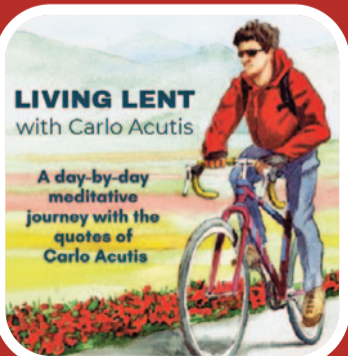
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Catholic South West is a monthly newspaper for Catholics in the Plymouth, Clifton and Portsmouth Dioceses. It is published by Bellcourt Ltd

AIMS

To build community in the South West by sharing stories relating to Catholic life around the South West.

To encourage readers to get more involved in - or start - projects and initiatives in the local area.

To provide thought-provoking articles to help readers deepen their Faith.

GET INVOLVED

We need your help!

Articles: We need your local articles - we can only include what we get. So if you have an article or just a photo with a short description - please send it in.

Ideas: We need your ideas for the paper and we need your ideas in the paper. If you have any thoughts on what we should include - or if you are thinking about starting a new initiative - get in touch - we'd love to support it!

Readers: If you can encourage other readers in your parish please do so.

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DATES

Catholic South West goes to parishes on the last full weekend of the month. It is printed around the middle of the month - so if you would like to advertise or send in editorial please do it as early as possible.

Wanted Parish Correspondents

The Catholic South West is looking for a Parish Correspondent in your parish to send in local news for publication in this newspaper.

All items to be emailed to csw@cathcom.org before 10th of the month

Pilgrims Of Hope Plymouth: Connection and Evangelisation



Warmest thanks to Pippa Worth from our Evangelisation team for sharing the following reflection:

'Thank you to Fr Jon who drove all the way up from Plymouth to inspire us with his presentation 'Simple Proclamation'. Since the talk, things keep coming to mind and I have also received some great feedback - his enthusiasm was infectious and we were all grateful to him for using Scripture to flesh out the bones of our understanding, to help us see the importance of the words he left us with. Words that everyone has the right to hear!

God is REAL
God is PERSONAL
God wants to CONNECT with us
God TRANSFORMS

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the fact the Jesus always uses others to help with his work, for example in the feeding of the 5,000, he used the gift of a young boy's packed lunch and the disciples to distribute it. In our Mass, we offer gifts that have been given to us, we offer them back and Our Lord feeds us - what participation! When Lazarus came out of the tomb, Jesus said to those nearby 'Unbind him'! Jesus saves - he has done his part and now, he has breathed on us - well that is how it is! A few are interested in participating in the next Mission Made Possible course that Fr Jon advertised. He left a helpful handout.

If anyone else is interested in joining this course from anywhere in the diocese, then contact:

michele.thompson@prcdtr.org.uk or
Julia.beacroft@prcdtr.org.uk or, for Dorset, pippa.worth@prcdtr.org.uk

Finally, a little feedback from a Dorset Deanery participant who was very thankful for the opportunity to discuss their faith and to listen to Fr Jon: - "The morning was inspirational and enlivening... every parish could do with an evangelisation team so that everyone has the opportunity to share their faith. Having events that allow people a safe space to discuss/ask questions is important for all. I reflected on how Jesus connects us with God and with one another and how the Spirit transforms us."

Thank you, Fr Jon for coming to Dorset and thank you to all 48 participants (who represented six parishes)! May our time together bear fruit in the salvation of souls.'

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

1) **Think of the readers:** If you are writing about an event, think about the readers that don't know anything about it. Outline what happened, but focus on why people go, why it is important to them, or some teaching that was given. Make sure readers learn something from your article - they don't just want

to know who was there and what snacks were available!

2) **Keep it brief:** Make sure you make your point - but keep it brief and punchy.

3) **Pictures:** Send pictures as they are - even if they are very big to email. Don't reduce them in size or put them inside a Word document. They look fine on the screen but terrible in the paper!

LEGAL INFORMATION

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A story of Hope: Welcoming the Stranger

“Make hospitality your special care.” Romans 12:13



The Lampedusa Cross in front of the altar is made with wood salvaged from a shipwrecked boat in the Mediterranean Sea carrying people seeking asylum.

The theme of the Jubilee Year is ‘Pilgrims of Hope’. Throughout this year, Caritas will be sharing positive stories of hope from our parishes and schools. Our first story is about a mother seeking asylum in the UK, and the welcome and friendship she found at Plymouth Cathedral.

Marie* from Cameroon, along with her three-month old baby, was sent to Plymouth as an asylum seeker by the Home Office. She knew no-one there and felt completely isolated and frightened. Support agencies were able to help with some practical issues, but what proved to be the most beneficial support came from the welcome and fellowship she found at Plymouth Cathedral. Marie was granted refugee status and wanted to give back to a country that had granted her safety, so she gained confidence from doing readings in the Cathedral, volunteered with support agencies and then went on to qualify from Plymouth University as an occupational therapist and now works in Plymouth for the NHS. Her daughter received her first Holy Communion at the Cathedral last year.

Marie told us about her experience and gave some ideas on how to support people seeking asylum and those with refugee status, who we may meet in our churches:

“As an asylum seeker you need a family, someone to speak to you compassionately, you need to be invited to activities, and when these things are done it tends to build trust in people and help them to forget some of the traumatic experiences they’ve been through before. It makes them feel at home and then confident, and it brings out the potential that they need to be able to forge ahead in life.

It’s not easy as an asylum seeker. I was fortunate that I had a Catholic back-

ground, and I had my daughter with me, who was three months old. It was very difficult for me even to leave the house, but I thought I will go out and look for a Catholic church and I found the Cathedral. I went to the Cathedral at just the right time, because they were carrying out the Novena of Mary, who unties knots, and I know I had a big knot. I couldn’t stay at home to untie this knot, so I joined the Novena and I got in touch with people in church who supported me, we prayed together and thankfully that knot was untied.

When you speak to people who come from diverse cultures, especially asylum seekers, some are very shy and some are not very bold to speak up. People are frightened and very isolated. I could speak English but I was still finding it really hard, so consider someone who does not have English as their first language: if you are not compassionate in the way that you speak to that person, if you don’t invite them to activities, then they are left alone in their own loop and the hopelessness becomes really much and you find people going into depression.

I have a whole family in the Cathedral now. That is the importance with being with people who also support you in your faith, in what you do and give you advice and signpost you.”

The image above of the Lampedusa Cross on the Cathedral altar, is a poignant reminder of the desperate plight of people fleeing persecution and poverty in their homelands to seek a place of sanctuary. During this Year of Jubilee, we are all invited to consider how the Gospel imperative to ‘Welcome the Stranger’ can be translated into practical action.

*name changed to protect confidentiality

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JUBILEE 2025

Telling Stories of Hope: A Jubilee of Communications

From January 24 to 26, the Eternal City became the gathering place for journalists, writers, filmmakers, and communicators from all corners of the world, drawn together by a simple but profound call: to tell stories of hope. This Jubilee of Communications underscored the Church's vital role in fostering ethical, hope-filled dialogue, particularly in our digital age, where messages can shape societies for better or worse. Pope Francis has fully embraced technology and social media to extend his pastoral reach with his messages of faith and hope. With over 52 million followers worldwide on X (formerly Twitter), under @Pontifex, he is the most-followed Pope in history.

In an era marked by disinformation, polarization, and digital manipulation, the role of communicators has never been more crucial. The ability to shape narratives, influence perceptions, and inspire action carries a profound responsibility. This Jubilee event served as a call to reclaim communication as a force for good, ensuring that truth, integrity, and hope remain at the heart of every message. At a time when media can be used to divide, this gathering reinforced the Church's mission to build bridges, foster understanding, and promote a culture of dialogue. By bringing together communicators from diverse backgrounds, the event emphasized the power of storytelling to uplift, heal, and transform society.

The Jubilee event began with a penitential liturgy at the majestic Basilica of St. John Lateran, presided over by Cardinal Baldo Reina, vicar general for the Diocese of Rome followed by an International Holy Mass on the Feast of Saint Francis de Sales, an especially fitting occasion for this first Jubilee event of Communications, as he is the Patron Saint of Journalists. In the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Saint Francis de Sales pioneered the use of printed pamphlets to spread the faith, slipping them under doors and leaving them in public places to reach people who would otherwise never hear the message of the Gospel. His efforts led to the

conversion of an estimated 40,000 people. Now, centuries later, we too are called to use the tools of modern media to spread messages of truth and hope.

The following morning, we set out on a pilgrimage along the Via della Conciliazione, walking together in prayer and reflection toward St. Peter's Basilica. As we approached, the atmosphere was one of reverence and anticipation. Passing through the Holy Door, a profound symbol of God's mercy and invitation to renewal, felt like a spiritual crossing, a moment to embrace grace and transformation.

From there, we gathered in Paul VI Hall for a special session titled 'Communication and Hope', organised by the Dicastery for Communication. The event served as a powerful space for dialogue and reflection on the role of ethical and hope-filled storytelling in today's world. The morning culminated in a highly anticipated audience with the Holy Father, where Pope Francis shared his wisdom and encouragement for communicators committed to truth, unity, and the spread of hope.

Nobel Peace Prize laureate (2021), Maria Ressa, took the stage with a powerful and urgent message, warning us of the growing crisis facing democracy, one increasingly threatened by the manipulation of information through artificial intelligence in ways never seen before. Her words were both challenging and direct, a call to action for all present.

"Collaborate and seek the truth with moral clarity. Because silence in the face of injustice is complicity. Protect the most vulnerable and recognize your power. Remember that hope is not passive."

Her speech resonated deeply, drawing an emotional standing ovation from the audience. Renowned Irish writer Colum McCann then spoke passionately about the power of storytelling in times of rupture and its ability to heal, connect, and inspire renewal. He said: "If we live in times of



rupture, then the new theme must be repair. Among the 'pilgrims of hope' we honour here today are our journalists and communicators, who are in a privileged position to tell the stories of others. They know that for a story to be told, it must first be listened to carefully."

After these inspiring talks, Pope Francis arrived. His words were simple yet with an immeasurable depth:

"Communicating means going out of myself a little bit to give something of myself to the other. And communication is not only the transmission of news, but also the encounter with the other person. Knowing how to communicate is great wisdom, great wisdom! Your work is a work that builds ... it builds up society, it builds up the Church, it makes everyone move forward, as long as it is true. Communicating is what God does with His Son, and God's communication with the Son is the Holy Spirit. Communicating something divine. Thank you for what you do."

The Jubilee of Communications concluded on January 26, the Sunday of the Word of God, with a beautiful Mass at St. Peter's Basilica, presided over by Pope Francis. As we gathered in that sacred space, he spoke of the living power of the Word of God, reminding us that God Himself is the ultimate communicator, revealing His love through

Scripture, through Christ, and through us as His messengers.

"On the Sunday of the Word of God, at the beginning of this Jubilee Year, we proclaim this page of Luke's Gospel, in which Jesus reveals himself as the Messiah, "anointed" (v. 18) and sent to "proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (v. 19)! Jesus is the living Word in whom all the Scriptures find their fulfilment."

"The Word of God is alive: down the centuries, it accompanies us and by the power of the Holy Spirit, it is at work in every age. For the Lord is always faithful to his promise, which, in his love for humanity, he always keeps. This is exactly what Jesus says in the synagogue in Nazareth: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21).

Finally, in his message for the 59th World Day of Social Communications, Pope Francis has given us an instruction manual with clear guidance for our calling as communicators. The Holy Father reminds us that, with God's grace, we are all capable of fulfilling this mission.

- A good communicator ensures that those who listen, read or watch can be involved, can draw close, can get in touch with the best part of themselves and enter with



these attitudes into the stories told. Communicating in this way helps us to become "pilgrims of hope", which is the motto of the present Jubilee.

- Do not allow instinctive reactions to guide your communication.
- Always spread hope, even when it is difficult, even when it costs, even when it seems not to bear fruit.
- Try to promote a communication that can heal the wounds of our humanity.
- Be witnesses and promoters of a non-aggressive communication; help to spread a culture of care, build bridges and break down the visible and invisible barriers of the present time.

- Tell stories steeped in hope, be concerned about our common destiny and strive to write together the history of our future.

This Jubilee was more than just an event, it was a call for change. Communications is not purely reserved for journalists. It is for all of us, in how we speak to our families and neighbours. We are called to inspire, heal, and build. To communicate is to serve, and in that service, we truly become pilgrims of hope.

Gwen Wiseman





Pilgrims Of Hope Plymouth: Celebrating Creativity and A Ring Of Prayer

The Jubilee Of Artists begins tomorrow and we are delighted to share a story of hope from talented artist and Caritas Plymouth team member Teresa Maguire.

'In June 2023 I joined Russ Fairman as he sailed a Ring of Prayer around Great Britain to celebrate the Centenary of Stella Maris.

I was fortunate enough to start from Milford Haven, sailing in one leg to St Ives, followed by Penzance, Falmouth, Plymouth and lastly Teignmouth. In the last three ports services were held in the churches or for Teignmouth on the beach. It was here that I gave Russ the crucifix that I had made as a thank-you for an amazing trip.

In many ways it was a pilgrimage for us on board. During the trip Russ shared with us his dream of continuing the prayer journey after the voyage ended.

He had a vision, a spiritual picture, which was confirmed for him later on the voyage that this needed to happen.

He wanted the rosary to be shared in the ports we moored in. As a woodturner, I felt called to offer to turn a rosary and crown on the lathe.

All the wood was sourced locally for the rosary, one piece came from a beach find near Falmouth, others from Dartmoor and Cerne Abbas-the three counties of the Diocese. The crucifix was my late



mothers. The woods used, are Oak, Walnut, Apple, Beech and my favourite Cherry.'

Ring of Prayer will be in Teignmouth from 24th February to 2nd March.

The Ring of Prayer is now on its last few weeks of this journey, finishing in Southampton.

<https://stellamaris.org.uk/.../Ring-of-Prayer-Prayer...>



To Mary, Mother of Mercy and Health of the Infirm, we entrust the sick, healthcare workers and all those who generously assist our suffering brothers and sisters.

From the Grotto of Lourdes and her many other shrines throughout the world, may she sustain our faith and hope, and help us care for one another with fraternal love.

WORLD DAY OF THE SICK



CBEW.ORG.UK



St Catherine's welcomed Julia Beacroft to our Parish for some spiritual time out!

Originally for Ministers of the Eucharist and Readers but extended to all Ministries: we are grateful to Julia for travelling up from Torquay to nourish us with the Word and thank you to everyone who came to our time of reflection.

What I learned from our Day of Reflection...

Our day was all about journeying with three meditations. What I took away from the first two, were ('No Maps' and 'Trailmaking') :-

- How serving one another we are made all the richer.
- That our way (my) way is not necessarily the right way and that setbacks are a time of learning, growth and perhaps a strengthening of faith and a time for humble re-assessment because God is always in control – not us!
- To remember that every journey is unique – to be open to opportunities along the way.
- That rules and regulations are good as we set out (our map) rather like a child starting school but not to get stuck... to use the gift of reason and be open to change.
- Our journeys are unique and there is usually someone to help just when we need it, so we must not worry.
- A significant point in the Trailmaking text was "My task is not to manufacture an acceptable parcel [my life] but to avoid blocking the flow of the Holy Spirit."

Unfortunately, we had an issue with the heating (or lack of it) but that too was part of our 'journey' and how we reacted! We had helpful suggestions, perseverance, a kindness, flexibility and Julia admirably adapted to suit the challenge.

The third reflection was over lunch in the small hall with the last part of 'the journey' again taken from the book called 'Soul Journey' by Margaret Silf.

The reflection started with Scripture: 'Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path' which tends to speak for itself in that "all we need is light on the next step" and to trust that our providential, fatherly God will help us proceed. The final reflection helped us to see that there are simple ways to get the most out of wording in Scripture – as that is the lamp for our feet eg: -

- The practice of Lectio Divina – a prayerful way of 'chewing' on the word of God in such a way that our meditation takes us to where we can extract every bit of flavour – and act on it.
- Using Ignatian practice of imagining ourselves in Biblical scenes – so much so that we are aware of sights, sounds and smells and taking note of our feelings while asking for the grace to know how such a scene may be helpful in our own lives.

It is always good to ask for teaching points – indeed to



ask for anything of Our Lord, as we were reminded at the beginning. By asking we put ourselves in a vulnerable position and in right relationship with God. We saw this with the Samaritan woman and the Prodigal Son (Scripture we had thought about earlier) their asking and vulnerability enabled both characters to better receive. It is hard to trust but that was another message from the day.

When we take Holy Communion to others, we give and we receive. When we share the Word with each other, we are enlivened with the Holy Spirit. When we pray with and serve others, we share the love of God. A good point to finish on and to ponder is one of Julia's slides: "Deus Caritas Est": God is love!

NB: At the end of Margaret Silf's book, there are short guides to both prayerful techniques mentioned above at i. and ii.

Thank you, again, to Julia and to all who came to St Catherine's, Wimborne!

Simple Proclamation with Fr Jon Bielawski at St Catherine's, Wimborne

"A Simple Proclamation" has been prepared in order that people have a clear and concise way to introduce Jesus to others in a world where most have a vague and varied understanding of "god". The explicit goal of our vicariate is to form Missionary Disciples. Everything we do is geared to catalyse proactive proclamation of the Gospel and to invite people onto Mission Made Possible.

Thank you to Fr Jon, from the Vicariate of Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth, who drove all the way up from Plymouth to inspire us with his presentation 'Simple Proclamation'. Since the talk, things keep coming to mind and I have also received some great feedback – his enthusiasm was infectious and we were all grateful to him for using Scripture to flesh out the bones of our understanding, to help us see the importance of the words he left us with. Words that everyone has the right to hear!

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An additional word that our small break out group spoke of was PARTICIPATION – the fact the Jesus always uses others to help with his work, for example in the feeding of the 5,000, he used the gift of a young boy's packed lunch and the disciples to distribute it. In our Mass, we offer gifts that have been given to us, we offer them back and Our Lord feeds us – what participation! When Lazarus came out of the tomb, Jesus said to those nearby 'Unbind him'! Jesus saves – he has done his part and now, he has breathed on us – well that is how it is!



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Thank you, Fr Jon for coming to Dorset and thank you to all 48 participants (who represented six parishes)! May our time together bear fruit in the salvation of souls.

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A call to action for debt cancellation



At the start of this year, Pope Francis made a heartfelt plea for urgent action on the global debt crisis facing low and middle-income countries. Over the last 14 years, debts in low and middle-income countries have shot up by 150%, widening the wealth distribution gap between nations of the world. While wealthier nations continue to thrive, poorer countries are struggling under the weight of their debts, sometimes paying back as much as 35% of their revenue in places like Sri Lanka, and even 45% in parts of

Africa. This heavy burden means they have less money for essential sectors of the economy like healthcare, education, and infrastructure that their communities really need.

In terms of climate crisis, the financial strain has also stifled the governments' ability to put in place the necessary measures to protect their people and their environment from being devastated by these disasters, which hits them the hardest, even though they have

contributed the least to it. Hence, Debt cancellation is vital for enabling poorer countries tackle climate crisis.

What has this got to do with the UK and what role can the government play in this, you might ask. It is essential to note that many loans from big banks are based on English law, thus, the UK government has a chance to step in and help by pushing lenders to pause payments from these struggling nations.

Recently, the great parishioners at St Cuthbert Mayne, Launceston heeded to the call of Pope Francis to be "pilgrims of hope" by welcoming and meeting with their new MP for North Cornwall, Ben Maguire. Their commitment to being "pilgrims of hope" and engaging with someone who holds influence is such a powerful example of community action. It is heartening to know that their voices are being heard and that they are making strides to ensure the message of the Jubilee Year reaches those who can effect real change.

This Jubilee year calls on all of us to unite in solidarity, especially in addressing the global debt crisis that weighs heavily on poorer nations. The work done by the parishioners of St Cuthbert Mayne, Launceston is a reminder that we too can be agents of hope and change. By joining forces to campaign with CAFOD and reaching out to our local MPs, we have the chance to be advocates for those who often feel voiceless. Let us take this opportunity to embody the compassion and justice that Jesus taught us. Together, we can make a difference in our communities and beyond by standing up for those in need.

Pope Francis has called us to be "tangible signs of hope" this jubilee year, St Cuthbert Mayne Parish's action is an inspirational example of responding to this great call. Join CAFOD to call for debt justice, and why not write to your MP or arrange for them to meet you and representatives from your parish to call for their action on debt and the creation of a fairer more sustainable global system this jubilee year.

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View from the Pew

By Dr Jay Kettle-Williams



Mysticism, Symbolism ... and Chocolate

Avila, a city northwest of Madrid and capital of the Spanish province bearing its name in the autonomous community of Castilla y León⁽¹⁾, is well known for its medieval city walls, intact to this day, running between more than eighty crenelated, semicircular towers and nine gates. Avila holds world-wide renown for being the birthplace of St Teresa (March 28, 1515 - October 4, 1582), a Spanish Carmelite nun who was beatified in 1614 and canonized in 1622, celebrated as an author of spiritual classics and widely regarded as one of the greatest mystics, often identified with the symbols of a book, a heart and an arrow.

The mystics, the Spanish mystics being perhaps those paramount amongst their kind, endeavoured to put into plain, simple words their experience of a mystical communion with Christ. My own religiosity doesn't take me to the heights of mysticism nor anywhere near. I'm only conversant with what some might see as the mundane level of language.

The language of the mystics in their evangelist approach to the laity in their midst was to associate religious concepts with those everyday matters and objects well known to and easily recognised by their audiences. Everyday objects and images with which the hoi polloi of the day would be well aware and would readily recognise were taken as emblematic. Your soul, for instance, would be referred to as the personal and private 'castle' within yourself. St Teresa herself employs that very symbolism of the 'castle' within yourself in Castillo Interior (Interior Castle) which she wrote in 1577 as a guide for spiritual development through service and prayer, inspired by her vision of the soul, the castle within yourself, as a crystal globe in the shape of a castle containing seven mansions.

In 1614 Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) completed an oil on panel painting of Saint Teresa of Ávila's Vision of the Holy Spirit (visit <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/teresa-of-avilas-vision-of-the-dove-5630>) in which the Holy Spirit is represented as a dove. Admittedly, symbolism of this ilk existed long before the sixteenth century and even prior to the Christian era. However, in Christian iconography, a dove symbolizes and is otherwise compared with the Holy Spirit, as at the Baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:16 (JB) and Luke 3:22 (JB).



Rubens' painting is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, to which it was allocated by the UK Government in 1999 after being accepted in lieu of inheritance tax (visit <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/teresa-of-avilas-vision-of-the-dove-5630>). It is one of three versions Rubens produced of the subject, the others are in Rotterdam and in a private collection.

The symbolism of the dove in the Christian context is prefaced in the Old Testament (OT) with the story of Noah's ark: "In the evening, the dove came back to him and there it was with a new olive-branch in its beak" (Genesis 8:11 JB).

The symbolism of a dove and olive branch, derived from Greek thought, as symbolic of peace originated with the early Christians who portrayed the act of baptism accompanied by a dove with an olive branch in its beak.

Christianity, not unlike other faiths, often employs symbols. At this time of the year, as we approach Easter, Christian symbolism looms particularly and increasingly large giving opportunity for traders to boost their turnover and prompting those with a sweet tooth to drool at the thought of all that chocolate. But the symbol of an egg sits firmly at the centre of our faith, not for whatever significance it might have for our taste buds or the bottom line in business, but simply for the meaningful promise of resurrection that it holds.

(1) Castile's name is generally thought to derive from "land of castles" in reference to the castles built in the area to consolidate the Christian Reconquest from the Moors. Castella ('castles' in Latin) became Castiella under the umbrella of Classical Western



Romance, the Latin legacy after the fall of Rome in AD476 when the Western Roman Empire ended.

Castilla is the modern-day form. León takes its name from the Roman military camp Castra Legionis, once base for Legio VII (The Seventh Legion of Rome's imperial army).

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Dr J L Kettle-Williams is an experienced business communications consultant and wordsmith (tutor, writer, translator).

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Laudato Si' Week 24th-31st May 2025

10th Anniversary of Laudato Si' Encyclical

How far have we got in the last 10 years in response to Laudato Si'? What difference have the Laudato Si' Animators (Agents of the Laudato Si' Movement, LSM) made?

First of all, let's face facts. How many of the 2,800 Catholic parishes in the country, or 12,500 CofE parishes, have some form of active climate / environmental group? How many of the Diocese have any form of environmental policy or statement? How many of our church going congregations have adopted a simpler, more sustainable lifestyle?

The answer is that, yes, some do and there is some evidence of individual parishes engaging in environmental initiatives such as recycling programmes, energy conservation, community gardens, Eco Church, LiveSimply or Laudato Si Circle schemes. But, in reality one gets the impression that these are few and far between.

How can we make a difference? How can we, and especially those of us who are Laudato Si' Animators, 'up our game'.

Here are a few ideas:

- First, our Diocese: Each and every one of us to write to our own Bishop to ask that he uses Laudato Si' week to issue a Pastoral Letter urging everyone to respond to Laudato Si' and the more recent Apostolic Exhortation Laudate Deum (2023), to continue to address the urgent need for environmental stewardship and care for our common home.
- Also, to ask our Bishop to urge every one of his/her own parishes to adopt active participation in the Eco Church (previously Eco Congregations), LiveSimply, Laudato Si' Circles, or Laudato Si' Action Platform schemes and have a parish team to see that these are effective.
- And for the Diocese to adopt an Environmental Policy or Statement of Intent if there isn't one.
- Then, at our own Parish level, to pursue these objectives for ourselves. Have we got any form of climate and nature team or group and, if not, can we take the initiative? Let's do it, especially if we are Laudato Si' Animators. Laudato Si' week would be a good time to start one.

- Can we encourage our parish to establish a simple Environment Policy?
- If we do have a group, can we get in touch with our neighbouring parishes and offer to help them get started in one way or another?
- And if we are not a 'LS Animator', then we might consider becoming one by completing the Laudato Si' course run by the global Laudato Si' Movement (LSM), which will open April 28th, 2025. You can register for this by leaving your contact information in their interest form, for them to send the relevant information about the program at: www.laudatosianimators.org/the-program/ Unfortunately, this starts too late in order to finish in time to arrange something for Laudato Si' week, which is May 24 - 31st.
- Whether we do this or not, we can use material from LSM for Laudato Si' week, which you can find at: www.laudatosiweek.org/ Their celebration for the week covers day by day, ecological conversion, sustainable transportation, sustainable food, renewable energy, waste reduction, water

conservation, catechesis and integral ecology, reflection and commitment.

There is also a Social Media toolkit for you to download:

www.laudatosiweek.org/laudato-si-week-2024-resources/ (Note this is taken from last year's programme).

- The Laudato Si' Action Platform, set up by the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, invites us to "take concrete actions in the care of our common home", and to record those actions as a Plan in the Platform.

Let's do it! Let's make something happen! Brian Austin, Laudato Si' Animators UK Writing Group.

References:

Laudato Si' Action Platform:

www.laudatosiweek.org/laudato-si-week-2024-resources/

LiveSimply scheme:

www.cafod.org.uk/campaign/livesimply-award

Laudato Si' Circles:

www.laudatosimovement.org/laudato-si-circles/

Eco Church:

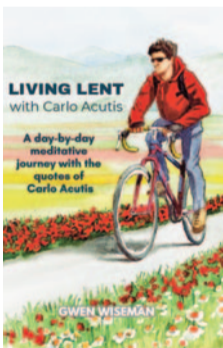
www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/

Book Review



Living Lent with Carlo Acutis: A meditative journey with the quotes of Carlo Acutis by Gwen Wiseman

The date is set for the canonisation of the first millennial saint, Carlo Acutis on 27th April, Divine Mercy Sunday. In *Living Lent with Carlo Acutis: A Meditative Journey with the Quotes of Carlo Acutis*, Gwen Wiseman offers a spiritual guide for those seeking to fully embrace Lent towards Easter and beyond to the Canonisation. This devotional weaves together daily Gospel reflections, Carlo's profound yet simple quotes, prayers, action steps, and journaling prompts to help readers grow in faith.



to heaven." Gwen Wiseman says "This book invites you to walk that highway with Him, drawing closer to Jesus in the Eucharist and embracing the call to sainthood." Covering the six weeks of Lent and leading up to Carlo's canonisation, this book is not just a meditation, it is an invitation to live Lent as a transformative experience.

In his preface of the book, Monsignor Anthony Figueiredo from the Sanctuary of the Renunciation where the tomb of Blessed Carlo resides in Assisi writes: Soon after his election, Pope Francis visited the very place where Saint Francis stripped himself of his clothes before his father, the bishop and the people of Assisi. The Holy Father pointed to that prophetic gesture as a magna carta for our spiritual journey as Christians: "The renunciation of Saint Francis tells us simply what the Gospel teaches: following Jesus means putting him in first place, stripping ourselves of the many things that we possess that suffocate our hearts, renouncing ourselves, taking up the cross and carrying it with Jesus" (4 October 2013).

800 years after that gesture of Saint Francis, Carlo Acutis, the first millennial saint, tells us the same: "Holiness is not

the process of adding, but subtracting: less of me to leave space for God." Like Francis, Carlo embraced this stripping in his life by renouncing himself, taking up the cross and carrying it with Jesus unto death at the tender age of 15. From Heaven, as our contemporary friend and interceding for us before Jesus, he does even greater things now as "God's influencer."

I heartily recommend you enter the journey of Lent with Carlo as your companion, following the daily itinerary that Gwen Wiseman sets out so beautifully in this book. Through it, you will encounter the deepest meaning of Lent, which, as Saint Paul teaches, is to relive our baptism: "We were buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Rom 6,4).

None of us like being stripped. It can scare us, shock us, and certainly humbles us. Like the altar that is stripped on Holy Thursday. The tabernacle empty and left open on Good Friday. Jesus not physically in our churches on Holy Saturday. Yet, that stripping will allow us to claim the Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Carlo assures us of that: "To love what awaits us

tomorrow is to give today the best of our fruit."

Highly recommended for anyone seeking a meaningful and enriching Lent.

Available to purchase as a paperback and Kindle edition on Amazon.co.uk. Check out Gwen's other devotional book available, *Pray the Rosary with Blessed Carlo Acutis*.

About the Author

For the past seven years, Gwen has lived in Assisi, Italy where she serves as the lead cantor for the English Mass at the Basilica of Saint Francis. Gwen also assists pilgrims by arranging itineraries, and helping visitors experience the deep spiritual richness of Assisi.

Her connection to Carlo Acutis began in 2019, when she first learned about his inspiring young life. Since then, she has dedicated herself to sharing his story and legacy. Today, Gwen accompanies the primary relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis on tours across the UK and Ireland, helping others encounter the young saint's powerful witness to holiness and the Eucharist. Her devotional books reflect her deep commitment to faith and guiding others in their spiritual journeys.

Set in Stone

Jay Kettle-Williams



St John

As you drive into Portsmouth (aka Pompey) and work your way across town from the bottom of the M25, perhaps on your way to Gunwharf Quays, you pass the Catholic Cathedral of St John, a mere stone's throw from Portsmouth & Southsea Rail Station. It's then, immediately on your left as you approach the lights at the corner of Victoria Park, that you see the piazza at the west end of the Cathedral with the 3-metre high, bronze statue of St John the Evangelist, one of the fishers of men, pointing resolutely to Heaven. St John the Evangelist is one of the two works in town by the internationally renowned sculptor Philip Jackson.



Philip Jackson

Scottish-born Philip Henry Christopher Jackson CVO DL (born 18 April 1944), one of the foremost, award-winning figurative sculptors in Britain today, is noted for his modern style and emphasis on form.

Being Royal Sculptor to Queen Elizabeth II, his work appears all across the UK as well as abroad. Football fans will be well aware of his bronze statue of Bobby Moore, standing 6 metres tall, at the main entrance to the new Wembley Stadium.



The Yomper

The other work by Jackson in Portsmouth is the Falklands War sculpture of a Royal Marine: The Yomper, bronze and twice lifesize, watching the shipping and keeping an eye on the many 'keep-fitters' exercising up and down the seafront at Eastney, not far along the beach from the WW2 Landing Craft LCT 7074 on display outside the D-Day Museum. It was the Royal Marines who popularised the word 'to yomp', meaning to carry full kit on a long-distance march. Having disembarked from ships at East Falkland on 21 May 1982, they yomped, each carrying 80-pound loads of equipment, 56 miles in three days en route to Port Stanley, the capital of the Falkland Islands, which had been occupied by Argentine military forces. The iconic photograph of the time shows a yomper with the union flag flying from his radio aerial.

To see other works by Philip Jackson visit <http://www.philipjacksonsculptures.co.uk>

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Dr J L Kettle-Williams is an experienced business communications consultant and wordsmith (tutor, writer, translator).

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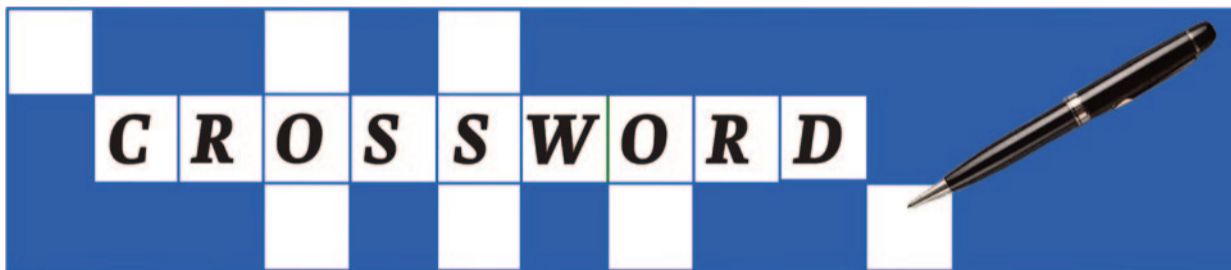
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You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same.

CRYPTIC Across

- 7 Judge what is good for Idaho with time (6)
- 8 He shone a light on voting in Aleppo's fringe areas (6)
- 9 They believe it's hot west of the river in India (6)
- 10 Variant doctrine is inadmissible in court, one conceded (6)
- 11 Lord reportedly seen in the dock... (4)
- 12 ...do a crime that's convoluted in relation to an OT book lady (8)
- 14 Statue in NT book spies during the war brought to America (8)
- 17 David hid here - there's nothing before hotel to the east (4)
- 19 Title of fellow, one being hugged an hour after midnight by a famous sister (6)
- 21 Chart from Ugandan's starting point to a port on the Indian Ocean (6)
- 22 Knowledge that is, about time, attributed to Jethro's folk (6)
- 23 Investing in land; but, in truth, I missed out (6)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 Resort in Italy and Rhode Island to putting on a short skirt (6)
- 2 Senior lecturer's interest in widespread erosion (6)
- 3 Runaway renegade Simeon brings you and me down (8)
- 4 Slippery oil removed from Philistine city in the OT (4)
- 5 Where to get French stock belonging to us during Mad Cow Disease (6)
- 6 Priest gets limitless headgear in support of prophet (6)
- 13 Repeated attack suppressed petrified

commanders-in-chief here (8)

- 15 Declared 'nail' is in the dictionary (6)
- 16 God appears very large to girl (6)
- 17 Job's friend's pub is in one of the 'cities of the plain' (6)
- 18 Delicate, initial pieces eaten - tea is taken, eventually (6)
- 20 Long-suffering patient? (4)

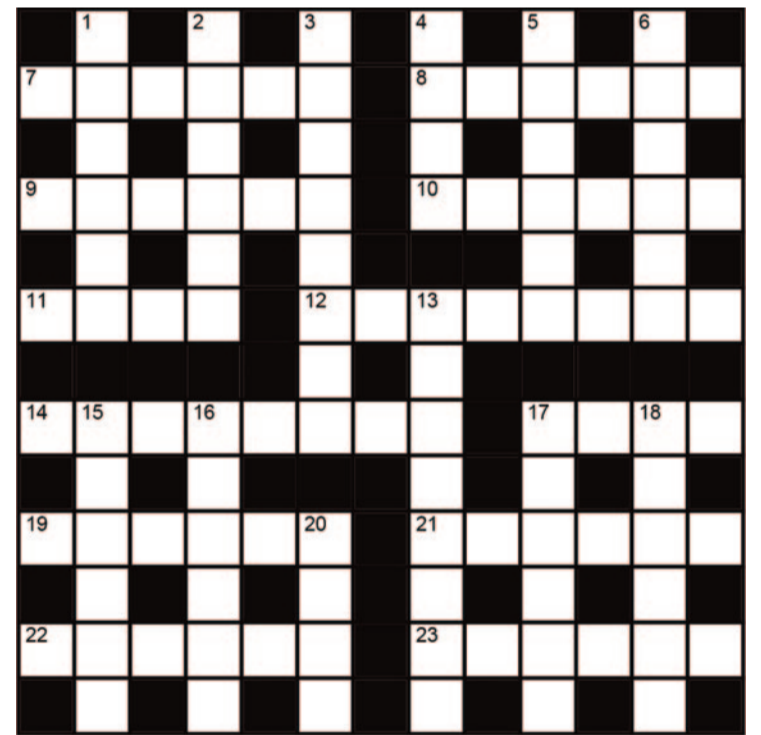
QUICK Across

- 7 Judge of the Hebrews whose name is said to mean 'Mighty Warrior' (6)
- 8 Greek god of light (6)
- 9 Adherents of a 5000 year-old religion (6)
- 10 Belief that rejects the orthodox tenets of a religion (6)
- 11 Dock: pillar (4)
- 12 Esther's uncle (8)
- 14 Behemoth; monster (8)
- 17 Desert where David hid from Saul (4)
- 19 Prophet who sang in praise to the Lord for the crossing of the Red Sea (6)

- 21 African capital, formerly Lorenço Marques (6)
- 22 Nationality of Heber, husband of Jael (6)
- 23 US investment option (6)

QUICK Down

- 1 Italian lido resort on the Adriatic (6)
- 2 Someone, often a lay person, who delivers the lessons in a church service (6)
- 3 Runaway slave owned by Philemon (8)
- 4 Where the Ark was taken after being stolen



- by the Philistines (4)
- 5 Paris Stock Exchange (6)
- 6 Hebrew prophet featured in both books of Kings (6)
- 13 One the Black Hills of South Dakota known for its giant relief carvings of four US presidents (8)
- 15 Conjectured (6)
- 16 The greatest of all the gods of ancient Egypt (6)
- 17 One of Job's three friends (6)
- 18 Small; dainty (6)
- 20 'Blessed are the ----, for they will inherit the earth' [Matt/KJV] (4)

SOLUTION

Across: 7 Gideon, 8 Apollo, 9 Hindus, 10 Heresy, 11 Pier, 12 Mordecai, 14 Colossus, 17 Ziph, 19 Miriam, 21 Maputo, 22 Kenite, 23 Realty, Down: 1 Rimini, 2 Reader, 3 Onesimus, 4 Gath, 5 Bourne, 6 Elisha, 13 Rushmore, 15 Opined, 16 Osiris, 17 Zophar, 18 Petite, 20 Meek.