

St. Clare's, Fulwood.

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TOWARDS ADVENT AND BEYOND

In Eliot's play: Murder in the Cathedral, there is a line that so describes this time of year, it runs, 'As golden October declined into sombre November...' Our autumn following, by and large, a good summer has, in itself, been quite beautiful.

Summer was a busy time. Although the schools closed activity still abounded for the parish and for our young people. You will read further on and account of the Bosnia Hodovo Project were 10 of our young people, well supported by adults, travelled to that country to maintain our association with the small group of people in the former refugee settlement. It was a busy time too, as we remembered the lovely feasts that punctuate the summer especially that most lovely feast, The Assumption of our Blessed Lady for which many of us gathered at St Mary's, Fernyhalgh to pray a rosary for our families and our parish. During this time too, we heard an appeal from the SMA Fathers for their work in missionary territories.

As the summer faded and autumn arrived Fr Loughran went to Bosnia with a threefold purpose in mind: to visit the Shrine of Medjugorje, to carry out some ministry with the young people of the Cenacolo Communities out there, and to visit the settlement at Hodovo.

This period saw, as it always does, the beginning of the new school year and the enrolment into the First Confession / Holy Communion Programme and the Confirmation Programme. Harvest came hot on the heels of all this with a celebration in church and then distribution of produce to the more elderly members of the parish. At the instigation of the SVP, a Mass for the Anointing of the Sick was celebrated followed by a lunch in the Parish Hall.

The beginning of November, the month of the Holy Souls, brought us to the annual Service for the Holy Souls and those who have been bereaved in the last 12 months.

And now we turn our face to Advent and beyond to Christmas. Of course, 'commercial Christmas' has been with us for a few weeks already!

The city too, has seen some changes in the Church sphere. Sadly, one of the lovely churches in town is to be closed: St Ignatius was built by the Jesuit Fathers and opened in the 1830s and has served the Catholic

population and become a much-loved place of worship. Of course, in the 1830s there were less and a handful of parishes in Preston. But since then the Catholic population has been on the move causing two more waves of church building to take place. So, the congregation having dwindled and there been far fewer priests to serve, St Ignatius is to close. Also, Sunday Mass will no longer be celebrated in the school at St Augustine's. The church closed some time ago.

But we must not forget that a new Order of priests has taken over the iconic landmark church of St Walburge. They will celebrate the liturgies there in what has become known as the 'Tradition Rite' i.e. the Latin Tridentine Rite!

Fr Draper has stepped down as dean of Preston and Fr Towers has taken on the mantle. Other similar news will be found further on in the Magazine. Also further on, in the section entitled 'From the Website,' there is a sort of diary of events dating from the last Magazine to now. It is just one way to catch up!

HODOVO PROJECT 2014

As school finished and July came to a close, I joined five adults and ten young people from the parish of St. Clare's to travel to Hodovo School in Bosnia in Herzegovina; our mission was to paint five of the classrooms and provide whiteboards for the school. Accommodation for the stay would be positioned in the heart of Medjugorje close to St. James' Parish Church where it was Annual Youth Festival week.

Travelling back to the school, and having the opportunity to stay in Medjugorje, lent itself to reflection and recollection of past involvement with the project. It conjured up the many events that our schools and parish have organised and so kindly supported to make these visits and the project possible. As we arrived in Medjugorje on the warm afternoon of July 31st I wondered about the present situation in the village school. Would things have improved since our last visit? Would our journey to improve the learning conditions actually make a difference for the children and staff of the school? Would we have enough time to complete the task?

As we approached the village school on Friday 1st August, it was evident, that little, if anything at all, had developed outside the building. In the

summer heat all was without definition as a pile of stones lay dormant outside the lower part of the school building. Unused piping remained strewn on the coarse grass and a plank of wood served as a stepping stone from a pavement to lower school grounds; two empty rooms in the lower part of the school building were in rubble.

Climbing the concrete steps to the school and following a very warm welcome from the caretaker, headteacher and a member of staff it was easy to see that nothing had changed in the school. Sparse equipment, few books and little paper was in sight; there was no evidence of art materials and the only access to water supply was housed in the two-toilet room. The long corridor did have a range of large green plants that gave colour and shape to the emptiness.

With greetings over and paint purchased, it was time to start the work we came to do. Rooms were emptied and made ready for the painting of the ceilings and upper part of the classroom walls. Floors were covered and masking tape was applied. Large tubs of white paint was thinned, and it was all hands on deck as brushes stroked and rollers rolled over the many metres of tired masonry. By early afternoon the classrooms looked fresher and cleaner. However, in one of the classrooms the ceiling was reluctant to dry white; instead it appeared dull and grey, due to a damaged roof in need of repair. Plaster was perished and absent around the recesses of steel window frames as a result of dampness.

The first day at Hodovo School was physical and productive. After the washing of tools, the group returned to Medjugorje for a well-earned evening meal. Later that night we gathered for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament outside the parish church where many thousands of youths and adults gathered in music, silence and in prayer.

Approaching Hodovo School the next day, in the hope that the paint applied the day before would be enough, we stopped to purchase mops, cloths, buckets and cleaning equipment for the day ahead; there was only one ineffective and ragged sponge mop in the caretaker's room and no soap or detergents to clean anything. The blue paint for the lower part of the walls sat ready and waiting as adults and young people teamed up to apply the finishing layers of paint in the classrooms. They worked extremely hard and by mid-afternoon the job was well underway.

A welcome lunch break punctuated the decorating. This was provided daily by the local café owners Vjecko and his wife Angelina. The food

was delicious and they proudly showed us photographs of the project when the team from Kendal was involved. Daria, their daughter, who spoke very good English helped with interpretation and supported the interaction between our young people and the youth from the village.

During the afternoon work I recognised one of Hodovo's pupils, Marietta, peering around the entrance to the school. Although she beamed a huge smile of recognition and expectation she then ran away, only shortly afterwards to return with her friend. The children had heard that St. Clare's had returned and they were excited and wanting to know what was going on. I showed the girls some of the classrooms and the work that was being done. They looked pleased at the walls but they were more interested in our young people and eventually asked if they would join them outside to play some football. Soon word had travelled through the village and more girls and boys arrived outside the school to spend time with our young group. Our young people were encouraged to finish their painting task before putting down their brushes. Without any language barrier the children from both schools communicated their eagerness to be together and played volley-ball and football. Satisfied that much effort was put into the task of painting the classrooms the group said goodbye and returned to accommodation at Medjugorje, with the intention of returning on Monday morning to fix the whiteboards and attempt to return furniture to the classrooms.

During the evening, the Youth Festival continued with an amazing gathering of all pilgrims and their national flags to participate in the procession of Our Lady's statue. In great joy, song and in prayer the atmosphere was certainly overwhelming and reminded us of our great togetherness in the family of God the Father, Mary the Mother of Jesus and our Mother. When we returned to the hotel it was time for rest. However, after lengthy chatter and reflection about the evening most of the young people lingered and were not ready to sleep. It was a moment of great peace when we prayed the rosary together that evening for the intentions of our families, our world family and for our priests. This was one of the most wonderful moments of this trip, to witness the love of Mary and Jesus present in our midst, through prayer and guiding us, in peace, on our way. The young people continued to request that the rosary was said each evening before bed. Mary was surely pleased and smiling!

On a very hot Sunday, our day of rest, English Mass was celebrated, and later that afternoon we travelled to Kravice Waterfalls. The weather, sultry and humid, finally gave way to a little rain as we watched the many people enjoy the wonders of nature. The evening event was one that we had all been looking forward to with great anticipation. A performance of 'Credo' was presented by the Cenacolo Community. The outdoor performance was truly amazing as music, dance, moving stage, dramatic lighting, costume and acting followed our prayer of faith which begins with God the Father who made us, the Nativity, the Passion and the Resurrection of Jesus. The final scenes were spectacular as white and gold lighting reminded us of the purity and majesty of Jesus. Our young people were again immersed in a growing and deepening awareness of their gift of faith through the events of this universal Youth Festival. After saying the rosary it was time once more to go to bed.

As a very hot Monday morning dawned, our thoughts, rested in the spirituality of the night before, turned to the practical thoughts of touching up any necessary areas of paint, replacing furniture and the fitting of the new whiteboards in the classrooms. The young people were looking forward to meeting their friends in Hodovo once again and strengthening the bond that had become so apparent. On arrival at the school, the head teacher, a class teacher, the caretaker and a local man were waiting to support the finishing touches at the school. The head teacher had brought refreshments for the group and the caretaker had prepared hot coffee for us. They were clearly delighted with the work that had been done and general discussion over coffee revealed that it was the basic and practical help that was still needed in this little school. Equipment for the classrooms and roof repairs were certainly necessary. I couldn't help but think that they would also benefit from further access to running water in the school building as the caretaker went to the toilet block to fill the kettle. The staff talked about how the school functioned before the war-torn days and shared their own experiences. It was most humbling.

As we looked at our painting it was evident that it certainly had made a difference to the school but it also highlighted how much more needed to be done. However the touch-up, clearing up and furniture removal started. Whiteboards were attached and floors mopped and disinfected. The windows were cleaned and some of the tables were polished. It was

pleasing to reach completion of the task and furthermore the knowing that it was not only the building that had improved but also the bonds of friendship and unity between the two communities. After lunch at the local café it was time to leave the school and have a guided tour of an ancient burial site and other national attractions.

The day ended at the shrine of Medjugorje where Holy Hour Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was attended once again by thousands of people. Overlooked by Apparition Hill and Cross Mountain and encircled by the hills the sky was clear and sprinkled with stars; the peace was tangible. In the surrounding areas of the shrine even more pilgrims queued and waited patiently and in silence for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our eventful Monday ended with a small group chat and the Rosary.

Tuesday, our last day in Medjugorje started bright and sunny as we walked through the vineyards to visit 'Blue Cross Mountain' at the base of Apparition Hill. This is a site where Our Lady appeared to the visionaries as they hid from communist police. As we crossed the vineyards the young people joined in praying the prayer of the rosary. I was filled with joy and peace as we shared this journey; how blessed we were to be together in such a special way. We ascended the small rocky path to the Blue Cross and there we sat under the olive trees and among the rocks, with others and in silence, praying for those intentions that we had brought with us to Mary our Mother and also remembering to pray for the things that Mary wants for the world.

After a careful descent we walked further along the narrow and busy road to visit the Cenacolo Community where two young men talked about their lives of drug addiction. Mingled with other pilgrims our group of sixteen was privileged to listen to their courageous testimonies. After dinner there was an opportunity to attend evening Mass and attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The evening came to a joyous and energetic conclusion in the closing event of the Festival, entitled, 'Mission'. Through singing and dancing the entire pilgrim population celebrated that we are all called to play our part in God's world. It was a wonderful closing event and one that you certainly felt the praise and glory of God. Still praising in song the young people danced their way back to the hotel. The prayer of the rosary was said and it was off to bed.

Next morning it was time to depart for Dubrovnik and travel (for six hours due to strict border control) to our overnight accommodation, in the Republic of Serbia, near the airport, so we could be in time for our flight back to Preston on Thursday.

In conclusion, this journey is one which I will always remember. It was not just a journey to Hodovo School to complete improvements. It was a journey underpinned by our faith and communities that have reached out to each other. It was physically and emotionally challenging as the team worked hard to complete the task and support the needs of each other at all times. Representing the parish in such a capacity takes with it the support, understanding and kindness of all those who help to make this project possible. The ten young people who travelled with the adults were exceptional throughout this journey. In their attitude, their work and in their prayer they oozed maturity, happiness and concern. It was a great gift and blessing to have been part of this experience in Hodovo and in Medjugorje and witness the work which our community of St. Clare's has made possible for our neighbours in Hodovo.

Eileen Cywinski

NEW PARISH SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE

In response to concerns about child abuse, the Catholic Church in England and Wales was among the first organisations in the country to introduce a comprehensive safeguarding strategy. As part of this strategy each parish is expected to have two parish safeguarding representatives. The representatives for St Clare's have been Mike Simpson and Bernard Unsworth. Bernard however moved parishes a little while ago and Brenda Scales has recently been appointed to replace him. Brenda taught at St Clare's primary school for a while before moving on, eventually becoming deputy Head at English Martyrs. She is one of the catechists for the Confirmation programme.

The parish representatives are appointed by the Bishop and report to a Diocesan Safeguarding co-ordinator. The co-ordinator in turn reports to a Diocesan Commission which is chaired by a person independent of the diocese. That person is a lay person with relevant professional expertise and not necessarily Catholic. Currently it is Charles Proctor who has

recently retired from a role in Children's Services for Cumbria County Council.

The role of the parish representative can perhaps be summarised under three headings.

The first is the most visible one and that is the vetting of people who volunteer for work in the parish in roles which would bring the person into contact with children or vulnerable adults. The parish representative has to guide the volunteer through the application process designed to try and establish that the person is a suitable person to work with children or vulnerable adults. This process includes the application to the national Disclosure and Barring System to establish that there is no prior record of problems.

The representatives should also work with the various groups involved with children and vulnerable adults to ensure that the groups follow best safeguarding practices in their work. The fact that a person has no past record is not a guarantee of future behaviour. The protection of children and vulnerable adults requires everyone in such groups to be alert for any behaviour which would give rise to concerns but also to follow best practices to protect themselves against the possibility of false accusations. Finally there is a need to promote awareness of the possibility of abuse outside of the parish activities themselves. It is disturbing to face up to it but the statistics on cases show that perhaps as many as 1 in 20 children are either the subject of abuse or a witness to it. While attracting less publicity, the abuse of vulnerable adults perhaps financially or through bullying or neglect is also widespread. By being alert to any signs of abuse, parish workers could help to reduce the suffering.

All that being said it is important to emphasise that it is not the aim to foster an atmosphere of suspicion and tale telling. The aim is that the Church can be seen to be following best practices so that its workers are above suspicion and indeed are leading the fight to stamp out abuse in whatever form. If there are concerns however these can be raised with the parish representatives who will ensure that the worry is directed to the right professional channels for investigation. Mike Simpson can be contacted on 01772 462436 and Brenda Scales by email at brendascales@btinternet.com

The Church wants very much to move from a defensive position over abuse to one where it is seen as a leader in the fight against abuse. While

the parish representatives have a role in the end this is a goal not just for the parish reps but for the whole parish.

FROM POPE FRANCIS – ON BRINGING GREATER JOY INTO ONE'S LIFE

In an interview published in part in the Argentine weekly "Viva" July 27, the pope listed his Top 10 tips for bringing greater joy to one's life:

1. "Live and let live." Everyone should be guided by this principle, he said, which has a similar expression in Rome with the saying, "Move forward and let others do the same." 2. "Be giving of yourself to others." People need to be open and generous toward others, he said, because "if you withdraw into yourself, you run the risk of becoming egocentric. And stagnant water becomes putrid." 3. "Proceed calmly" in life. The pope, who used to teach high school literature, used an image from an Argentine novel by Ricardo Güiraldes, in which the protagonist -- gaucho Don Segundo Sombra -- looks back on how he lived his life.

"He says that in his youth he was a stream full of rocks that he carried with him; as an adult, a rushing river; and in old age, he was still moving, but slowly, like a pool" of water, the pope said. He said he likes this latter image of a pool of water -- to have "the ability to move with kindness and humility, a calmness in life." 4. "A healthy sense of leisure." The pleasures of art, literature and playing together with children have been lost, he said. "Consumerism has brought us anxiety" and stress, causing people to lose a "healthy culture of leisure." Their time is "swallowed up" so people can't share it with anyone. Even though many parents work long hours, they must set aside time to play with their children; work schedules make it "complicated, but you must do it," he said. Families must also turn off the TV when they sit down to eat because, even though television is useful for keeping up with the news, having it on during mealtime "doesn't let you communicate" with each other, the pope said. 5. Sundays should be holidays. Workers should have Sundays off because "Sunday is for family," he said. 6. Find innovative ways to create dignified jobs for young people. "We need to be creative with young people. If they have no opportunities they will get into drugs" and be more vulnerable to suicide, he said. "It's not enough to give them food," he said. "Dignity is given to

you when you can bring food home" from one's own labour. 7. Respect and take care of nature. Environmental degradation "is one of the biggest challenges we have," he said. "I think a question that we're not asking ourselves is: 'Isn't humanity committing suicide with this indiscriminate and tyrannical use of nature?'" 8. Stop being negative. "Needing to talk badly about others indicates low self-esteem. That means, 'I feel so low that instead of picking myself up I have to cut others down,'" the pope said. "Letting go of negative things quickly is healthy." 9. Don't proselytize; respect others' beliefs. "We can inspire others through witness so that one grows together in communicating. But the worst thing of all is religious proselytism, which paralyzes: 'I am talking with you in order to persuade you,' No. Each person dialogues, starting with his and her own identity. The church grows by attraction, not proselytizing," the pope said. 10. Work for peace. "We are living in a time of many wars," he said, and "the call for peace must be shouted. Peace sometimes gives the impression of being quiet, but it is never quiet, peace is always proactive" and dynamic.

Pope Francis also talked about the importance of helping immigrants, praising Sweden's generosity in opening its doors to so many people, while noting anti-immigration policies show the rest of Europe "is afraid." He also fondly recalled the woman who helped his mother with the housework when he was growing up in Buenos Aires. Concepcion Maria Minuto was a Sicilian immigrant, a widow and mother of two boys, who went three times a week to help the pope's mother do laundry, since in those days it was all done by hand. He said this hard-working, dignified woman made a big impression on the 10-year-old future pope, as she would talk to him about World War II in Italy and how they farmed in Sicily. "She was as clever as a fox, she had every penny accounted for, she wouldn't be cheated. She had many great qualities," he said. Even though his family lost touch with her when they moved, the then-Jesuit Father Jorge Bergoglio later sought her out and visited her for the last 10 years of her life. "A few days before she died, she took this small medal out of her pocket, gave it to me and said: 'I want you to have it!' So every night, when I take it off and kiss it, and every morning when I put it back on, this woman comes to my mind." "She died happy, with a smile on her face and with the dignity of someone who worked. For that reason I am

very sympathetic toward housecleaners and domestic workers, whose rights, all of them, should be recognized" and protected, he said. "They must never be exploited or mistreated." Pope Francis' concern was underlined in his @Pontifex Twitter feed just a few days later, July 29, with the message: "May we be always more grateful for the help of domestic workers and caregivers; theirs is a precious service."

FIVE WAYS TO BLESS YOUR DAY

We all live busy lives, rushing to work, running errands, and navigating rush hour traffic. With all the busyness, it's hard to live a prayerful life and be mindful of God's presence, even if we want to. But ultimately, quietness comes from within, and incorporating holy habits into our lives can help us keep recollected in the midst of all the noise and chaos of the modern world.

Here are five simple ways to slow down and live a more peaceful and prayerful life.

1. Spend Time in Prayer in the Morning

Trust me, I know how hard it can be to drag yourself out of bed in the morning. The feeling of grogginess can be hard to shake. But is important to start the day with prayer. In my own experience, my day is productive and peaceful in direct proportion to my ability to get out of bed and spend time in prayer and spiritual reading. When I do this, I find myself more peaceful, more patient with others, and more recollected to God's presence throughout the day. But when I hit the snooze button, the rest of the day, including my interactions with others, seems to suffer.

I know it can be difficult to know what to do when you make time for prayer, so I will share my own morning routine in a future post.

2. Say A Hail Mary

When I sit down at the computer, my first impulse is to start anxiously checking emails and reading my favourite news websites. Instead of giving into this impulse, however, I have gotten in the habit of saying a Hail Mary before I do anything else—many times before I even turn on my computer. I ask Our Lady to bless my day and guide my priorities. My work day is inevitably less stressful and hurried when I start it in this way.

3. Say the Angelus

The Angelus is a beautiful, time-honoured prayer that reminds us of the miracle of the incarnation and the importance of conformity to the will of God. It is also a great way to pause, turn your heart to Our Lord, and take a deep breath, so to speak, in the middle of a hectic day. Traditionally, it is prayed at the noon hour, so maybe you could start your lunch break by praying it.

We don't all have jobs where we can pray the Angelus, but if you do, I would encourage you to set an alarm and pray it tomorrow.

4. Pray the Rosary

The rosary is one of the most popular and well known Catholic prayers, and for good reason. When prayed with concentration and devotion, it is one of the best prayers we can pray. Our Lady of Fatima asked all the faithful to pray the rosary daily, so it should be the one prayer we manage to pray, even if we can't make time for anything else.

Consider praying the rosary after dinner. It is a great way to spend time with Jesus in Mary at the end of your day. If you have a family, pray it as a family. If you can't find time during the day, try praying in the car on the way to work. Whatever you do, pray the rosary.

5. Examine Your Conscience Before Bed

Sin is a reality, and chances are, we are saying, thinking, and doing things that are displeasing to God throughout the day. If you don't think so, you are deceiving yourself. Go to bed with a clean conscience by examining yourself daily. Pause before bed, cast your mind's eye over your thoughts and interactions with others, and ask yourself if you've done anything displeasing to God. Then, think of Jesus crucified, full of love for you. Tell him you are sorry for your failings and resolve to do good by saying an act of contrition.

Conclusion

It is easy to get distracted and forget God's presence throughout the day. Reminding ourselves of God's presence often requires sanctifying our day with good daily habits.

JAMES FOLEY WHO WAS BEHEADED BY ISLAMIC STATE JIHADISTS WROTE THIS ABOUT HIS PREVIOUS ABDUCTION

In August the news broke that Islamic State jihadists executed freelance journalist James Foley and posted a video of his beheading. James wrote an article for the alumni magazine of Marquette University, his alma mater. The piece is about the time Foley spent imprisoned in Libya in 2011:

I began to pray the rosary. It was what my mother and grandmother would have prayed. I said 10 Hail Marys between each Our Father. It took a long time, almost an hour to count 100 Hail Marys off on my knuckles. And it helped to keep my mind focused.

Clare and I prayed together out loud. It felt energizing to speak our weaknesses and hopes together, as if in a conversation with God, rather than silently and alone. ...

One night, 18 days into our captivity, some guards brought me out of the cell. ... Upstairs in the warden's office, a distinguished man in a suit stood and said, "We felt you might want to call your families."

I said a final prayer and dialled the number. My mom answered the phone. "Mom, Mom, it's me, Jim."

"Jimmy, where are you?"

"I'm still in Libya, Mom. I'm sorry about this. So sorry." ...

"They're having a prayer vigil for you at Marquette. Don't you feel our prayers?" she asked.

"I do, Mom, I feel them," and I thought about this for a second. Maybe it was others' prayers strengthening me, keeping me afloat.

The official made a motion. I started to say goodbye. Mom started to cry. "Mom, I'm strong. I'm OK. I should be home by Katie's graduation," which was a month away.

"We love you, Jim!" she said. Then I hung up.

I replayed that call hundreds of times in my head — my mother's voice, the names of my friends, her knowledge of our situation, her absolute belief in the power of prayer. She told me my friends had gathered to do anything they could to help. I knew I wasn't alone.

My last night in Tripoli, I had my first Internet connection in 44 days and was able to listen to a speech Tom Durkin gave for me at the Marquette vigil. To a church full of friends, alums, priests, students and

faculty, I watched the best speech a brother could give for another. It felt like a best man speech and a eulogy in one. It showed tremendous heart and was just a glimpse of the efforts and prayers people were pouring forth. If nothing else, prayer was the glue that enabled my freedom, an inner freedom first and later the miracle of being released during a war in which the regime had no real incentive to free us. It didn't make sense, but faith did.

The Four Ends of Mass

From an article by Sam Guzman

After a talk I gave a while ago, a young man came to me with a question. "I think I'm a good Catholic," he began, "but I don't go to Mass. I hear it's a sin not to go, but I don't understand that. I guess I don't see the point. Can you give me any reasons why I should go?" His question was sincere, and it led to a long and healthy discussion of why being present at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is important in the life of a faithful Catholic.

But truth be told, many Catholics probably ask the same questions, even if they attend Mass faithfully. What's the point? Why should I bother? This confusion and apathy about the source and summit of the Catholic faith is due to an almost complete failure of teaching on what the Mass actually is.

To clear up some of this confusion, let's examine the nature and purposes of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

What is the mass?

Let's begin with what the Mass is not. The Mass is not a community meal designed to strengthen our unity and "gather us in." Feelings of unity and community can be strengthened at any number of events, including potlucks or Church picnics. At most, feeling unified with our brothers and sisters in Christ is a nice by-product of the mass, but it is certainly not its chief end.

Second, the Mass is not about you. It is not about having a wonderful "weekend experience," as one new parish based program claims. Nor is its purpose to make you feel good about yourself, to encourage you, to inspire you, or to make you feel included and welcomed. You simply aren't the audience—God is, and the mass is all about him.

So what is the Mass essentially? It is first and foremost a sacrifice. In fact, it is the once for all sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, that transcends time and space, made present for us again in an unbloody manner. It is the perfect sacrifice that all the Old Testament sacrifices prefigured (See Malachi 1:11). In it, Jesus Christ lovingly offers himself in an act of oblation to God the Father on our behalf. He adores God the Father, he atones for our sins, he offers thanks and praise, and he intercedes for our needs.

As Catholics, we have the privilege of attending this sacrifice, and uniting ourselves to Christ's self-offering. Put another way, we can imitate Christ by offering ourselves, souls and bodies, to God the Father as "living sacrifices," as St. Paul says. This is what participation in the Mass really means. In the prayer 'Pray brothers and sisters', the priest acknowledges this participation of the faithful when he prays, "Pray brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father."

The Four Ends of Mass

Now that we've discussed what the mass is, let's briefly look at its four ends or purposes.

1. Adoration - The Holy Mass is first and foremost an act of loving adoration. It is worship of God our Father. Why? Because he deserves it. Almighty God is the most perfect of all Beings, the self-existing one, and all that exists owes its existence to him. He is the Supreme Good, the Good from which all other goods receive their meaning. He is the Supreme Beauty, the sole standard by which we can recognize and understand that which is beautiful. And he is Love itself, giving of himself from all eternity. He alone is worthy of our awe-struck adoration.

"Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for thou didst create all things, and by thy will they existed and were created," the saints and angels cry in the book of Revelation, and the mass is participation in this heavenly worship.

2. Thanksgiving - All that we are and have comes from God's generous hand. Every good, every blessing finds its source in God alone, and our very existence is dependent on his will. In response to God's endless generosity, which we often don't even notice, thanksgiving is the only acceptable response. And guess what? True gratitude is one of the most joyful feelings we can have. "I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought," said G.K. Chesterton, "and that gratitude is happiness

doubled by wonder.” That is exactly what Holy Mass should be—an experience of happiness doubled by wonder.

3. Atonement - We are all sinners, and while we do our best to rationalize and minimize it, all sin is a grave offense against God, incurring his just wrath. But while we all deserve hell, we are not without hope. On the cross, Jesus Christ atoned for our sins totally and completely, and we have the assurance that if we turn to him in repentance and faith, we can find forgiveness and healing.

The sacrifice of Christ on the holy cross is our certain hope, and the Holy Mass is the re-presentation of this sacrifice. Therefore, the third end of the mass is atonement for our sins. The book of Revelation describes Christ appearing as a “Lamb as if it had been slain.” In heaven, Jesus stands before God’s throne, offering God the Father his once for all sacrifice in continual atonement for our sins and the sins of the whole world. This reality is made present at every Mass.

4. Petition - The Mass is a powerful form of prayer. In fact, it is the most powerful prayer the Church possesses. St. Jerome once said, “Without doubt, the Lord grants all favours which are asked of Him in Mass, provided they be fitting for us.” Many of the saints tell us that bringing our requests before Our Lord after the consecration is one of the most effective ways to obtain all that we need spiritually and physically. I would encourage you to pray in this way, knowing that Jesus is on the altar interceding for you as well.

Go to Mass

In every Mass, Jesus Christ descends upon the altar in the fullness of his body, blood, soul, and Divinity. He is truly present, giving himself to us completely in the Holy Eucharist. It is truly the sacrifice of Calvary made present once again. What a beautiful and profound reality! As St. Padre Pio once said, “If we only knew how God regards this Sacrifice, we would risk our lives to be present at a single Mass.” Why would we miss Mass for anything?

THROUGH THE REGISTERS

We send our congratulations to the families of the following who were baptised in the parish recently: Caden Golinsu, Theo Clucas, Emilia Kerrigan-Kelly, Freddie Monks, Joshua Chesworth, Anthony Soko, May

Farrer & Poppy Gaskell. We offer our condolences to the families of Joyce Wilcox, Teresa Hodges, Maureen Masters, Anne Lawson, Ted Bateson, Robert Potts & Fred Newsham whose funerals have been recently conducted by the parish clergy. Best wishes to: Daniel Wilkinson & Rebecca McGeoghan, Liam Nuttall & Lindsey Dawson and Martin Rooney & Josephine Angus whose weddings have been celebrated here in the last months.

FROM THE DIOCESE AND OTHER SOURCES

APPOINTMENTS: Father Simon Hawksworth period of sabbatical. Father Francis Olaseni MSP: Parochial Administrator at Sacred Heart & St Walburge's and St Edmund Campion parishes. Father Stewart Keeley Transfers to the diocese of Westminster. Father Andrew Dawson: Assistant Priest at the Cathedral Parish of St Peter & St Thomas More, Lancaster. Father Michael Lakeland retires as Parish Priest of St Francis, Hill Chapel to reside at the Jeanne Jugan residence (Little Sisters of the Poor). Father Philip Smith: to become Parochial Administrator of St Francis, Hill Chapel as well as continuing his work as Chaplain at the Little Sisters of the Poor. Father Adrian Towers has been appointed Dean of Preston. Father John Millar is to be the new Diocesan (Liturgical) Master of Ceremonies. **NEW CANONS:** Fathers Paul Swarbrick, Paul Embery, Adrian Towers, Peter Hart & Peter Draper. Honorary Canon: Father Anthony Walsh. Diocesan Youth Management Group: Father Peter Hart: Chair, Father John Millar, Father Paul Embery, Michael Merrick, Joanne Nicholson. Permanent Diaconate Formation: Deacon George Bissett, Vocations Director for the Permanent Diaconate & Director of Formation, Sister Mary Pierre Jean Wilson R.S.M: Associate Vocations Director for the Permanent Diaconate & Associate Director of Formation: Diocesan Pilgrimage Trust: Father Paul Embery, Father Philip Smith, Catherine Parkinson, Ernest Gilleade. **NEW RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES:** welcome to the Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma and the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, at St Walburge's. The Holy Family Sisters of the Needy will be coming to Maryport in January.

FROM THE PARISH WEBSITE

Summer Fair: 'Winds light to moderate' (with precipitation) was the way the Shipping Forecast described the Irish Sea [our nearest coast] and it was accurate, AND it was the evening of our Summer Fair! Did it dampen our spirits? Well, it caused us to alter our plans somewhat. But folk turned out as ever, and there were a great many stalls, events and attractions still available. As usual, it was a joint venture - school & parish - and the proceeds will be split 50/50. The parish half will go towards extending and refurbishing our church porch. The PTFA have their own plans!

Quarant Ore: O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment thine!

This weekend, according to the schedule in the Diocesan Directory, is the turn of this Parish to hold Solemn Prolonged Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. This used to be called 'Quarant Ore' - the Latin for 40 hours - for in days gone by, there would be a continuous exposition throughout the day and night (this still happens in some places).

The idea behind **Messy Church** is to allow young children and parents to work together with art materials whilst engaging with a scriptural theme. As you would have seen from the accompanying pictures, it is far from 'heavy' with the children and parents having time to play together and gently make deeper in-roads into their faith.

The Pope has called for prayer and the **Cenacolo Community** has made a definitive response to that call by holding Thursday 14th August as a day of prayer in all Cenacolo Houses throughout the world. The request was that in every House Holy Mass should be celebrated and then, where possible, a visit to a Shrine should be undertaken for a further period of prayer. Ladyewell at Fernyhalgh was where the British Fraternity gathered for a period of adoration and prayer at the statue of Mary. Cenacolo has 60 Houses on 3 continents, each have prayed at Mass for a cessation of violence in the Middle East, particularly in Gaza and especially for the Christian minority in Iraq who have been under constant attack for week by militant Islamists. They prayed too, for the continent of Africa suffering the Ebola outbreak remembering in a special way the Cenacolo House in Liberia.

Brazil in Fulwood - well not quite although the sun did shine. It may not have had the razzamatazz of the world cup but there was excitement in plenty for the Deanery Football Tournament organised by Fr Carden at Corpus Christi High School. Six teams were fielded and in a knockout style competition and were well supported by family, friends and clergy. Great fun (though serious fun!) was had by all and a special thanks goes to those who acted as officials giving up their time to help with this event.

Hodovo Cycle Event: Blessed once again by glorious blue skies and the heat of the morning sun, wheels truly went into motion to raise funds for Hodovo on Saturday morning as grandparents, parents, children and teachers from St. Clare's Church and School turned up at Cottam Arena to participate in the 'Big Ride' event. Over 50 cyclists took part to pedal away the hours. Not only did the pedal power crew raise funds but they created a truly joyful and spirit-filled community link as they travelled a grand total of 684 miles!!! Thank you to everyone who supported this very happy event.

Family Fun Day: With the end of term having overtaken some schools and with it looming in our own, it was time to begin to wind down and relax. So the parish organised a 'family fun day' where parishioners young and old could get together to do fun (silly) things. A treasure hunt was organised within the grounds of the church and school followed by a mini bingo. After a shared lunch and a simple quiz the boules competition was completed. And generally throughout the time, games were available on the field. A good old raffle took place and any funds raised went to our Hodovo Project.

End of Term: The Last Round Up - well, for this school year, anyway, to mark the end of the academic year. And so it was that the boys and girls from St Clare's school gathered in church for their end of term / year Mass. They were well supported by parents, governors and friends of the school. The Mass, as usual, was a votive Mass of St Clare - her feast falling, as it does, during the school holidays. The theme permeating the Mass was one of Thanksgiving. The music was lively and reverent and the children sang with great gusto, as they customarily do. At the conclusion of the Mass before the general blessing, the

whole congregation 'sang' a blessing over the girls and boys in Year 6 who depart the school for pastures new this year.

New Statue: 'The Beginning' referred to in the title, was the inauguration of a statue of our Blessed Lady. This statue of our Lady of Lourdes had been refurbished by Hilary Deane and the arbour in which she sits had been constructed by Peter Read & Rob Leigh - Janet & Sue provided the floral display. At the end of Mass the boys and girls et al processed behind the clergy to the new grotto where they prayed for their parents, the school and the parish. The statue was then blessed and now a place for prayer is available for the children.

Parish at Prayer: All generations will call me blessed,' so said our Blessed Lady in St Luke's Magnificat. And it was all generations who gathered at St Mary's church, Fernyhalgh (attached to Ladyewell Shrine www.ladyewellshrine.co.uk) on the nearest Sunday to the Solemnity of The Assumption. There young and old, male and female, able and less able, laity & clergy from St Clare's parish came together to pray the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary for families and parish.

This weekend (Friday, Saturday & Sunday) the members of the **Neo Catechumenal Way** met from various parts of the country in Preston. Friday afternoon many of them members, young & old, gave public witness in the centre of Preston: singing, dancing and giving testimony. It was invigorating and, as one passer-by said, 'This is not usually what Catholics do.' In the evening many of them adjourned to St Clare's to celebrate the Eucharist. Saturday morning brought 160 members of 'The Way' together at Corpus Christi High School. After the welcoming of the various communities Lauds (Morning Prayer) was celebrated and a 2 part catechism on the Lancashire Martyrs was given. David gave the historical context and Fr Darren gave a very powerful catechism on contemporary martyrdom in our society. And then to a BBQ lunch. Lancaster was the next venue where Mass was celebrated with the communities in the Cathedral by the Bishop of Lancaster and a visit took place to the Shrine of the Martyrs who were executed in Lancaster just beyond the cathedral. A very busy but rewarding day.

Thence to foreign territory – Scotland! And to the National Shrine of our Lady at Carfin for a Mass with the Bishop of Motherwell and a vocations call.

School Mass: The whining schoolboy with his satchel and shining morning face, creeping like snail unwillingly to school." Well, Shakespeare had it half right. The boys and girls who attended the Beginning of Term Mass certainly had 'shining faces' but there was little evidence of 'unwillingness' or 'snail-like' creeping to school. On the contrary 'skipping' was the order of the day. The girls and boys gathered for their usual start of term Mass and they were reminded how precious they are to Jesus, this signalled by the Gospel where Jesus upbraids the Apostles for turning away the children. They prayed for a good year, and the ability to 'do their best.' May that prayer be answered in excelsis!

Baptism Mass: On Sunday was our now annual Mass for all those who have been baptised in the last year. In the last 12 months 23 children had been baptised here at St. Clare's many of those children and their parents came to the 930am Mass. After Fr. Darren's homily the Baptismal Catechists came forward to renew their commitment to their ministry. The Baptismal Catechists were surrounded by the families of the children who had been baptised in the last year who all received the family blessing. Together we all professed our faith under the form of the Renewal of Baptismal promises after which each of the children were given a medal of the child of Prague. To round off this special occasion bacon butties were served in the parish hall. Please keep these families in your prayers.

Hodovo Presentation: Those familiar with the Parish/School Hodovo Project will know that for some years we have been supporting this little former refugee settlement in Bosnia Herzegovina. This summer 10 of our young people together with 6 adults travelled to the Settlement school to paint it and make it a brighter environment for learning. On Thursday evening the group presented to the parish on their project and were well received by the parishioners who came to hear the boys and girls give an account of their work in the school and

also of the Youth Festival at Medjugorje in which they joined each evening - as that is where they were staying. Thursday was also the day Fr Loughran returned from a visit to the Settlement (made during his pilgrimage to Medjugorje) and was able to say how well received our young people had been by the local people in Hodovo. Whilst there he made a visit to the Settlement, the school, the local cafe where the boys and girls had eaten lunch each day; he also handed over £1,000 for winter fuel requirements.

Those au fait with the game of **Bingo** will have immediately have 'got' the inference of the title: Two Little Ducks. A goodly number of parishioners turned out for the Prize Bingo held in the Parish Hall. We have started our fund raising efforts for next year's Youth Pilgrimages. This year we sent some of our young people as helpers to Lourdes and, as part of our Bosnia (Hodovo) Project, ten of our young people joined in the Youth Festival at Medjugorje. So we are once again making preparations for our youngsters to experience the universality of the Church in an international gathering in one of the great Shrines of the Catholic world. Fr Darren led proceedings as the Bingo Caller ably assisted by members of the Social Group. For the children's Bingo, Henry took on the role of Caller!

'I must speak out' was the theme chosen by the speaker at the latest North West **Day of Renewal**. Gary Stephens gave a session in the morning and in the afternoon on the New Evangelisation and was very well received by the 60 or so people who attended. The day began with prayer and praise and following Gary's first talk, the group adjourned to the church for Holy Mass which included the Novena of the Miraculous Medal (as it the case every first Saturday). Following lunch a second input was given and then, once again, to the church for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the opportunity for prayer ministry.

On Sunday evening at the 6pm Mass the boys and girls who had registered for the **Confirmation Course** enrolled in the Programme. They came forward to receive the certificates that they had signed which said that they would do their very best to enjoin the course. The

certificates were also signed by Mrs Cywinski and Fr Loughran to say that both catechists and parish would support the girls and boys in this special time. Please keep these children in your prayers.

Harvest Thanksgiving: Once again this year, the boys and girls from St Clare's School led us in a Service of thanksgiving for the blessings of the harvest. All the children took part, even the little ones who had only entered Reception Class a few weeks before. There was choral speaking, prayer, art work, glorious singing and a complete atmosphere of joy. The children time and again reminded us of the blessing that we have and that therefore, it is incumbent upon us, in their words to, 'share, share, share.' The gifts which the families and the school gardening club presented will be taken to some of the sick and elderly parishioners.

As everyone knows, **October is the month of the Rosary.** This year's Marian Devotion had a slight twist to it, in that it was led by some of the young people who in the summer participated in the Medjugorje Youth Festival as part of their Bosnia Project in Hodovo. In Medjugorje they entered into the evening sessions of the youth festival and created a rosary group. These young people led the Rosary Devotions today with music & song, with reflections on their time in Medjugorje, with scripture, prayer and silence.

Nearly 30 boys and girls whose parent's had registered them for the **First Confession Course**, enrolled in the programme on Sunday at the morning Mass. Just prior to Mass each child with mum or dad went to the side chapel and there signed their name to the enrolment certificate saying that they would 'do their very best.' The certificate was then signed by the parent thus pledging the support for the programme from Home. Two further signatures were appended: the lead catechist and the parish priest. The boys and girls came forward at the beginning of Mass to receive their certificates and were then prayed over by the whole congregation and a sign of love and support.

Mass of Anointing: 'Let the Priests pray over them,' is taken from the Epistle of St James where he is giving instruction to the young Church

in Jerusalem about praying with those members of the Church who were sick. The Church uses this passage in the introduction to the Rite of Anointing the Sick. And that is what was going on in our church on the Feast of SS Simon & Jude when a goodly number of sick and elderly parishioners came (or were brought) to church to celebrate this Sacrament.

The Parish Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society were key players not only in organising transport for those who needed it, but also by cooking and serving lunch in the Parish Hall after Mass. The celebration of the Sacrament and the shared lunch complimented each other and raised the spirits of all involved.

November, the month of the Holy Souls, always is marked by in the parish by a Service for the Holy Souls and the Bereaved on the first Sunday of the Month. This first Sunday was also the Solemnity of All saints transferring All Souls Day to Monday. For the Service, as usual, all those who had been bereaved in the last 12 months and whose loved one's funerals had been conducted by St Clare's Clergy, were sent an invitation. Many were present and others besides. A 'roll call' for the last twelve months featured, as did the placing of the crucifix, the Word of God and the lighting of memorial candles. After a period of silence prayers were said and the congregation invited into the Parish Hall for light refreshments.

A LITTLE LIGHT RELIEF

Quotes from politician, celebrities & sportspeople:

"Smoking kills. If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life."

"I've never had major knee surgery on any other part of my body,"

"Half this game is ninety per cent mental."

"The word "genius" isn't applicable in football. A genius is a guy like Norman Einstein."

"We don't necessarily discriminate. We simply exclude certain types of people."

"Your food stamps will be stopped effective March 1992 because we received notice that you passed away. May God bless you. You may reapply if there is a change in your circumstances."

"Traditionally, most of Australia's imports come from overseas."

FROM THE ORDO

November: We recall All Saints, and then All Souls, for who we pray throughout the month. Charles Borromeo that Reformation Archbishop of Milan who aided so many of our English Martyr's is recalled on the 4th and then, in quick succession: St John Lateran, St. Leo the Great, St. Martin of Tours & St. Josaphat. These point us to the last Sunday of the Church's year and the Feast of Christ the King. The Liturgical Year is rounded off by the celebrations of: The Presentation of our Lady, St Cecilia and the Vietnamese Martyr's. And so to Advent. The season is relatively free of feast days, that is so as to concentrate on the holy season itself. However, some saints are observed during this time: St Lucy, St John of the Cross to mention but a couple. But the Christmas feast ushers in a whole plethora of feast days. The octave of Christmas is a bit of a hybrid; saints are celebrated by the Evening Prayer of the Church is usually of Christmas. St Stephen, St John, the Holy Innocents and St Thomas Becket are all remembered in the Christmas week.

At the gate of a New Year stand the figure of Mary, the Mother of God. Also in that week there is the newly restored commemoration of the Holy Name of Jesus which leads up to the Solemnity of the Epiphany. The usual feasts of January are placed before us commencing with the Baptism of Our Lord: St Antony, St Agnes, St Francis de Sales, The Conversion of St Paul, SS Timothy & Titus, St Thomas Aquinas and ending with the feast of St. John Bosco.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

Advent begins on Sunday 30th November, it marks the beginning of the Church's Year. The 'cycles' for the Sunday and weekday readings change. Sunday 'Year 'B'' and, weekdays 'Year '1''.

Advent is also that special time of preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord. Although the church is open all year round from 7am for private prayer, during Advent Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be held daily, Monday to Friday 7am – 8am with Morning Prayer at 7.45am.

This year's Carol Service by Candlelight will be held on *Thursday* 18th December at 7pm followed by 'seasonal refreshments' in the Parish Hall.

The Mass times for Christmas are:

Christmas Eve 6pm Vigil Mass

11.30pm: Carols & Readings

Christmas Day: Midnight: Solemn Mass of Christmas

10am Christmas Morning Mass

St Stephen's Day (Dec 26th) [Special Mass for all Altar Servers]

10am Mass

Sunday 28th December: Feast of the Holy Family – usual Mass Times:

Sat 6pm (Vigil); Sun 9.30am & 6pm.

New Year's Day: Mass to begin the year well and to seek God's Blessing: 12 Noon!

