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Contents

Page

A Fond Farewell	Father Peter	8
Fr Peter's Presentation Evening		9
Kellie O'Farrell		10
LOL	L Church	14
Coffee Morning Group	Bridget	16
Why Should I Write A Will		
16Easter With HCPT Group 737	Leanne Massey	17
A Smile		21
The Composer Of Danny Boy	John D Vose	22
Tongwynlais Temperance Band		29
Newsletter From Albania	Sister Imelda	31
L'Osservatore Romano		35
Lament Of An Elderly Altar Server	Rita Daughton	39
Deaths & Marriages		40
Christenings		41
Summer Concert		42
Christmas Services		44
Take A Break With God	Teresa O'Driscoll	46

Advertisers

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Editorial

Well, Advent seems to come around quicker every year. A lot has happened since Advent last year, we now have a new Archbishop, George Stack who was installed as the 7th Archbishop of Cardiff at St David's Cathedral on the 20th June this year.

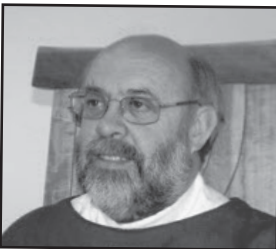
Father Peter has sadly left us and we all hope he has a wonderful retirement with his family in Taunton.

Wales unluckily knocked out in the semi-finals of the Rugby world Cup and who knows what might have happened if it wasn't for that sending off (I may get over it one day!).

I would like to thank all the contributors for their articles and all the advertisers for their support and would ask the parish to support them as most are parishioners of St Teilo's and deserve our support.

The Focus Group would like to wish all parishioners and advertisers a Joyful and Peaceful Christmas

GL (Ed)



I welcome the Advent edition of the Focus Magazine. Just as memory is a significant aspect of our faith so the Focus Magazine in its recollection of parish events, and in sharing news and ideas is significant in our parish life.

My grateful thanks to the editorial team and to our contributors and advertisers who make all this possible. May I wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

Canon Eddie

A FOND FAREWELL

As Carole and I set off for Taunton we would like to thank everyone in the parish for making our four and a half years with you such a happy time.

We already had some experience of Wales and looked forward to renewing our acquaintance with the fabulous hills, rivers and coastline.

We didn't achieve as much exploration as we had hoped though in the weeks before leaving but did at least climb the Garth !



We did though find a great welcome at Our Lady of Lourdes and St Teilo's .You all made it easy to work with you and to be involved in so many important areas of your lives. It's been a great privilege to celebrate the sacraments with you and to be given the opportunity of attempting to proclaim the Word. I hope the Lord continues to bless and encourage you as you continue to build up the life of the Church here.

We would like too to thank you for your generosity to us in so many small and large ways as we came to leave. We much enjoyed the party at Our Lady of Lourdes and it was great to see so many people from both churches present. The gifts have been heart warming and chosen with such careful thought. The cards are lovely and will go up in the kitchen of our house in Taunton to help make the place feel like home.

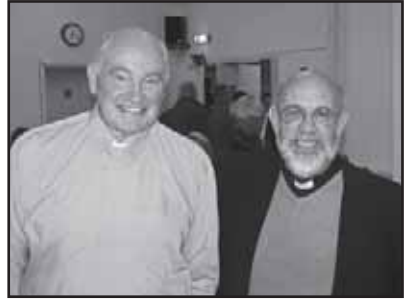
As we say goodbye do remember us in your prayers and keep in contact. Canon Eddie has our address and phone number. It's not far over the bridge and I am sure we shall be back to visit in the not too distant future.

Fr Peter and Carole

Father Peter's Presentation Evening



Fr Peter receiving a presentation from Mrs O'Keefe (103yrs)



The congregation enjoying A buffet after Mass



Fr Peter receiving a book from the Muslim Community



The congregation with Fr Peter after Mass



Kellie O'Farrell - Facing Up To A Brave Future

Kellie O'Farrell was just two years old when she was horribly burned – as a result, her face is severely disfigured. But, far from giving up, Kellie – who says her Catholic faith has sustained her – just can't help taking on new challenges. Faith Today met her. 'I'll have the eggs,' says Kellie O'Farrell; but when she looks up at the waiter he freezes, shocked by the sight of her heavily-scarred face. He recovers quickly, but then as she hands him her menu, he is taken aback again when he sees her hands with their stumps where the fingers ought to be.



We are having breakfast in a London restaurant; and Kellie, who's 23 and has just finished a master's degree, is used to people being surprised by her appearance. 'It's absolutely fine,' she says breezily, when the waiter has moved away. 'Everywhere I go I'm looked at and stared at; I expect it, I'm completely used to it. It's always going to be that way, all my life. What makes me angry, though, are the people who talk about me loudly as though I couldn't hear, or the youngsters who point and laugh and then run away. That's a bit depressing, really.'

'They relied very heavily on their faith; we've always been a strongly Catholic family, and their prayers and their belief in God were never more important than in those days.' But most of the time, says Kellie, people take their cue from her – so if she is confident and upbeat and cheery (as she seems to unfailingly be), then they, too, tend to do as she does, and underplay her disfigurement.

That's important to Kellie. Because more than anything else she doesn't want to be defined by the damage that was done, more than 20 years ago now, to her face and hands. And yet it's complicated – because she herself is the first to acknowledge that she is who she is because of what happened to her. It's impossible, she says, to imagine what the 'other Kellie' – the Kellie who wasn't horribly scarred in an accident when she was two – might have grown up to be like.

The accident that changed Kellie's life happened in Ireland, at her family home. It was a weekday afternoon; Kellie was playing in her parents' car, which was parked on the drive outside their house. 'My mum was checking on me every couple of minutes from the house,' says Kellie. 'But I managed to lock all the car doors from the inside; and then, I took out the cigarette lighter...and I let it fall on the car seat...'

Within minutes, the car was ablaze. Kellie's mum, Caroline, realised almost straight away that disaster was unfolding – but because Kellie had locked herself into the car, she had to get a stool from the kitchen to break one of the car windows. By the time she reached her daughter, the burning ceiling of the car interior had fallen in. 'She saved my life, because if I'd been in there for a few more seconds I'd have died,' says Kellie. 'But by the time she got to me, I was unrecognisable.'

She was rushed to hospital in Dublin, where doctors told her parents that she had a less than 50:50 chance of surviving. 'For many days, that's how it was – my mum and dad didn't know whether I would make it or not,' she says. It's hard to imagine the torment they must have been going through. 'It was very, very hard for them,' says Kellie. 'They relied very heavily on their faith; we've always been a strongly Catholic family, and their prayers and their belief in God were never more important than in those days.'

'In many ways, I had to grow up at two,' she says. 'I realised that a lot of what happened next was going to be down to me – that I had to be very strong and very determined.'

Even when they knew their daughter was out of danger, the agony continued – because their gorgeous little girl's appearance had changed out of all recognition. 'That was so tough for them – it's been a lot

tougher for them than for me,' says Kellie. 'Because I was so young, and I don't remember a time before I was scarred – whereas for them, there was always the memory of how I looked before. 'It took a long, long time for them to be able to accept the way things were – and it was their faith, and our strong family, that got them through.'

Caroline and her husband, Pat, also had to stay strong for their daughter – because being out of danger didn't mean being out of hospital. Up till the age of 13, says Kellie, there were very frequent operations – there have been fewer since, but the treatment will continue all her life.

As she got older, Kellie says, she became very outgoing and gregarious – her way, she says, of coping with her disfigurement. 'In many ways, I had to grow up at two,' she says. 'I realised that a lot of what happened next was going to be down to me – that I had to be very strong and very determined, because everything was going to be much harder for me than for other people.'

Catholicism, she says, has been an important part of her life, just as it is of her parents' life. 'I come from the sort of Irish family where my grandparents would go to daily Mass, and in my family we'd never miss Sunday Mass. After my accident, Catholicism became more important to my parents – because they had a lot of worries for my future, and they could take their worries to God.

'As I got older I, too, realised the power of prayer. And Lourdes has been especially important in my life – I've been there twice now, and I think it's the most peaceful place I've ever visited. I love the fact that you can say a few prayers and then sit outside a cafe and enjoy an ice cream. And also, for me, it was such an easy place to be – because there are so many people who look a bit different in Lourdes, and I didn't get stared at once!'

What it's all about is wanting society to realise that we are all equal, and we should all be given equal chances. I want people to judge me by my personality and talents, not by my face'. One thing she is determined about, explains Kellie, is that she wasn't going to compromise her future because of her accident: she wasn't going to accept a way ahead

that was second-best. As she talks, it's impossible not to be impressed with her overwhelming positivity and her extraordinary 'can do' spirit. She doesn't want anyone to make allowances for her, she says, because of her disfigurement – but nor does she feel that anything should be ruled out for her, simply because of the way she looks.

Which brings us to the bravest thing of all that Kellie is now attempting: she wants to be a TV reporter. Or, possibly, a film-maker. Her master's degree is in journalism; at first, she says, her parents were dubious about whether it was the right way ahead, and asked her to rethink trying to make a future in an industry where appearance is so often the number one criteria – especially for women. 'I knew why they wanted me to 'rethink,' says Kellie. 'But I like a challenge. I think I'm a good journalist; I honestly believe this is the career for me.'

She's had a lot of experience, she explains, through her voluntary media work for the charity Changing Faces. 'What it's all about is wanting society to realise that we are all equal, and we should all be given equal chances. I want people to judge me by my personality and talents, not by my face.'

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Being the mother of 3 children- now heading for those teenage years, it never ceases to amaze me how easily young people today are able to pick up computer skills.

‘Have you done your homework?’ I say.

‘Yes, Mum. I looked up on noodle, downloaded the information, completed my homework using movie maker and saved it on a memory stick’.

‘Ah- well done!’ I reply, and even though I try to hide it, I know that my eyes have that glazed over look that my mother used to sport when I used to set the video recorder for her like a whip hand in about 1987. I am a computer Neanderthal. ‘Twitter’ remains uncharted waters .However- I have mastered ‘Facebook’

Even though we are warned that we must be careful not to post anything that will cause offence, and that employers are constantly looking at our profile to search for any compromising photo’s,(luckily for me- contemporaries from my youth have yet to discover that a digital scanner is not reading along the page of a book with your finger) I have to admit I have enjoyed the opportunity to link with friends, some I have not seen for many years, and it’s great to keep up with the latest news, where as previously I might only have had a few lines in a Christmas card- I now get the minutia of family life- with colour photo’s! (If the kids are around to help)

Yes technology is wonderful, and with the advent of smart phones,

technology and the opportunity to engage in social media is now 'anytime, anyplace, anywhere'. Even a small time sat in a coffee shop you will spot a pair of friends furiously tapping away on their phones without saying a word to each other. If there appears to be a lull in the conversation- the young (and the not so young) reach for their phones to check in. The art of small talk seems to be as forgotten as the 1970's Martini advert.

With modern technology seemingly constantly begging for my attention, I have to remind myself that as with most things in life- it's all about striking a healthy balance. Yes- it's great that I can link up with my friends in all corners of the world, but how about spending a little more time personally engaging with my friends here? Giving to my favourite charities online is so accessible now- but volunteering in my local community means more to me, and hopefully to the people I engage with through my volunteering.

Even though I enjoy looking at Facebook, it can leave me feeling as though something is missing- it can leave me feeling empty and unfulfilled- almost as if I am expecting something from it that it cannot provide. I don't get this feeling if I have a meet with a friend or family member over coffee, or if I have a conversation with a stranger at the bus stop, or the park. I guess this is because nothing can really replace that human connection.

When I am with someone face to face, I suppose I must also give something of myself.

Thank you, Dear Reader for indulging my wittering- and yes I did spend all evening writing this article on the computer instead of engaging with my family!

L.C.

Coffee Morning Group

Father Robbie MacCabe visited for many years before we as a group decided with Canon Eddie's approval and encouragement to help support him in his work in the Turkana Desert, Kenya.

We raised funds through coffee mornings, raffles and donations and received great support from the Parish. Father Robbie purchased medicines and vaccines during his yearly visit, to take back to help treat his flock. We shall miss his visits.

May he rest in peace.

Sister Imelda paid a fleeting visit to the Parish in August. We held a Coffee Morning etc. to raise funds for her in October and sent a cheque for £300.00 to help with her work for the poor and disadvantaged in Albania.

Sister Mary Andrew has not been home this year as she is very involved in her work in Tanzania having taken on extra responsibilities this year. We will continue to support her in the New Year.

Bridget

WHY SHOULD I WRITE A WILL?

Making a Will gives you full control over your money and assets to ensure they go to the people and causes you care about most.

If you die intestate (without making a Will), the laws of intestacy may decide how your estate is divided up, which may not take your intentions into account.

Your estate may not be necessarily pass automatically to your spouse in all cases, depending on its value and whether you have children or other relatives.

In some circumstances your assets might even pass to the government. Once you have provided for your family you may wish to consider expressing your support to your local Parish church by leaving a legacy.

Easter With HCPT Group 737

For Easter 2011 I travelled to Lourdes as part of HCPT The Pilgrimage Trust. The group I travelled with was the Welsh Introductory Group, known as 737. HCPT, the Pilgrimage Trust is a charitable organisation that takes disabled and disadvantaged children and adults on a 'holiday with Our Lady'. This holiday takes place every year at Easter and can involve over 5,000 people from all over the world. Most of those travelling are in family groups, mainly from the UK, with helpers, nurses, doctors and a priest as part of the 'family for a week'.

The aim of the Welsh Introductory Group (737) is to help young students gain an understanding of what HCPT is all about. There were 16 youth (aged 16-18) and 8 adults in Group 737 and we travelled at the same time as the other pilgrims but we did not have anyone to look after. We were invited to join the Welsh groups each day to experience what it is like to be in Lourdes, at Easter, with HCPT.



Group 737 at the Trust Mass in the Underground Basilica

We arrived on Easter Sunday and had the opportunity to go to the Grotto with our group leaders Fr Kevin Payne and Mary Garland on our first evening. At night the Grotto is very quiet and peaceful and we all found this to be a wonderful introduction to Lourdes.

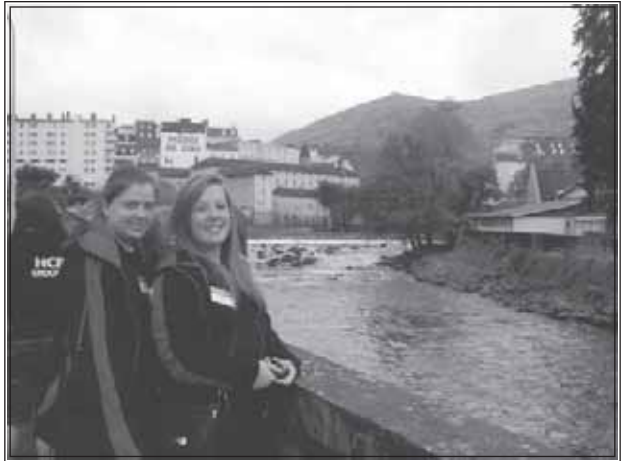
On Monday a party was being held to celebrate 40 years of the Welsh region travelling to Lourdes with HCPT. As a group, 737 were organising the games at the party, which was a great way to introduce us to the Welsh groups who had travelled to Lourdes.

On Tuesday I went to spend some time with group 105 (a Cardiff

group) to help them during the day. We went to Gavarnie, which is a village in the Pyrenean mountains not far from Lourdes. Here we heard Mass and then spent some time playing with the children in the fields. All the helpers were great with the children, playing games, making sure that everyone was involved at some point whatever their physical capabilities were.

Wednesday was the day of the Welsh Mass, a special occasion when all the groups who travelled to Lourdes from Wales get together to celebrate being in Lourdes. The joy and fun that everyone had was great.

On Thursday the HCPT Mass was held in the underground Basilica. This was the first time that I could see how many people were in Lourdes with HCPT. The whole Basilica was full of people who were there to help others enjoy themselves. It was very noisy but also very Christian.



Leanne Massey and Jade King in Lourdes with Group 737

As we walked around Lourdes during the week it was great to see everyone helping each other, even if you did not know them, people would smile and say ‘hello’ as we walked past. The atmosphere was very happy and even the people of Lourdes were happy to see everyone.

We spent time with other groups during the week so we could see how each group worked to give each of their pilgrims a memorable week. We attended the torchlight procession at which, once during the week, HCPT are the leaders in the singing and the prayers. The sight of so many people carrying candles and praying together was very moving.

As a group, we had time to get to know each other and how HCPT

works during our week in Lourdes. I enjoyed it so much that I am going back next year, but this time as a helper in one of the Welsh groups. I think that group 737 is a wonderful opportunity for young people to experience the atmosphere of a Pilgrimage to Lourdes, without the worry of looking after someone and could encourage us to join a family group for further pilgrimages.

I would like to thank the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Teilo's parishes for your generosity when I made an appeal for funds for Group 737 in March 2011.

If anyone is interested in going to Lourdes with HCPT Group 737 you can contact me on 02920625978 or email Mary Garland, Group leader on mary_garland@talk21.com . Mary would be happy to answer any queries.

Leanne Massey



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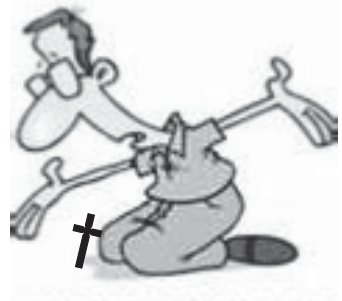
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Two Beggars

Two beggars were sitting side-by-side on a street in Rome. One has a cross in front of him; the other one, the Star of David. Many people go by and look at both beggars, but put money only in the hat of the beggar sitting behind the cross.

The Pope comes by, stops and watches throngs of people giving money to the beggar behind the cross, but giving none to the beggar sitting behind the Star of David.



Finally, the Pope goes over to the beggar behind the Star of David and says, "My poor fellow, don't you understand? This is a Catholic country; this City is the seat of Catholicism. People aren't going to give money if you sit there with a Star of David in front of you, especially when you're sitting beside a beggar who has a cross in front of him. In fact, they would probably give money to him just out of spite."



The beggar behind the Star of David listened to the Pope, turned to the other beggar with the cross and said, "Moishe, look who's trying to teach the Goldstein brothers about marketing."

(Seen on the wall of a pub in Ireland)

A Smile

A smile costs nothing,
but gives much. It enriches those
who receive without making poorer those
who give. It takes but a moment, but
the memory of it sometimes lasts forever.
None is so rich or mighty that he can
get along without it, and none is so poor
but that he can be made rich by it.
A smile creates happiness in the home,
fosters goodwill in business, and is the
countersign of friendship. It brings
rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged,
sunshine to the sad, and it is nature's
best antidote for trouble. Yet it cannot
be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen,
for it is something that is of no value
to anyone until it is given away.
Some people are too tired to give you a
smile. Give them one of yours, as none
needs a smile so much as he who has
no more to give.

Anon

The Composer of.....Danny Boy

By John D. Vose

Fred Weatherly was born in Portishead, Surrey, in 1849, and spent many of his schooldays at Hereford Cathedral School. He went on to study law at Brasenose College, Oxford, after which he became a leading lawyer.



Fred Weatherly

A bright career lay ahead. The only drawback was that Fred's mind was usually dwelling on a song he was composing. Writing was his hobby, but early success with a published song pointed him in the direction of becoming a full time lyricist.

An incredible 3,000 songs was the result with many of his compositions still well-known today.

They include Nirvana, The Star of Bethlehem, Friend o' Mine, Green Hills o' Somerset, The Holy City and Roses o' Picardy (a huge hit in the First World War).

Among them were many stirring ballads of the type loved by Victorian concert audiences - songs of war, the sea, and the open road. But , of all of them, it is Danny Boy that has stood the passage of time best of all.

So how did Fred Weatherly, an Englishman, come to write such a famous Irish song as Danny Boy? The story - as I know it - is as follows, but I am open to correction....

Ireland has always had its share of excellent blind musicians, fiddlers, harpists and accordionists in the main. As a music representative, I met several blind accordionists while travelling in Ireland. Malachy McCourt, author of a book about the song, claims the tune was written by a blind harpist, named Dall O'Cahan, in the mid-16th century, who was a well-known composer of harp tunes and frequented the homes of the gentry in order to entertain guests.

'Blind Rory' as he was known died while visiting the Isle of Skye. Romantic legend has it that he was so enraged by the confiscation of his

family's lands that he was driven to write a lament of pain and passion, called O'Cahan's lament.

One night, so the legend says, Rory was so saddened by his family's ill-fortune that he got very drunk. As he sobered up he heard fairies playing a haunting melody on his harp. Having a wonderfully retentive memory for a tune, he was able to play it at an engagement the same night.

Another blind harpist, Denis O'Hampsey, who lived to the amazing age of 112, still playing well past his century of years, had connections with the haunting air and regularly played it on his travels in Ireland and Scotland.

In fact, the tune was often played by harpists and fiddlers who played at fair days, including Peter Cunningham-Grattan, a man from a prosperous family, who opted to tramp around Ireland as the Roving Bard, playing his fiddle at fair days - which brings us to the town of Limavaddy, in County Derry, and a certain Miss Jane Ross, who lived there.

A member of the gentry, it would have been out of character if she had deliberately listened to itinerant musicians busking on market day. But listen she did, to a tune played by blind fiddler, Jimmy McCurry. Miss Ross was a collector of traditional tunes and asked Jimmy to play it again, so she could write down the notes. For this she gave him a florin, and took the tune to Dr George Petrie, of Dublin, who collected ancient Irish airs. The tune was put into his collection for publication, travelling far and wide. Another version of the story is that Miss Ross heard it played by a street fiddler, named McCormack, who had a concert party called McCormack's Wee show, which played at seaside venues.

Whatever the truth, we are certain that Weatherly wrote the words to Danny Boy - 'An English Ballad', in 1910. It had no connection to Ireland and the composer never visited the country. In fact, it was one of Fred's flops. Fortunately, he had lent a copy to his sister-in-law, in the USA. A keen concert-goer, she heard the Derry Air - to give it its preferred name - and was so taken by it she bought the sheet music for Fred. The song took off in its new form and, as the man said, the rest is history.

Although during the First World War it never ranked alongside Keep The

Home Fires Burning, it was nevertheless extremely popular and the d'Oyly Carte soprano, Elsie Griffin, regularly featured it in her troop concerts.

It seems absurd that a German singer, Madame Schumann-Heink, first recorded this English ballad, adopted by Ireland. The floodgates of recording studios opened, as countless singers recorded the song and it is still featured on albums today.

The tune was put to other lyrics, including a song recorded by John McCormack, 'Would God I Were a Tender Apple Blossom'. The tenor also composed words to the tune for 'O Mary Dear'. Tenor, Tom Burke featured this version in the film 'My Irish Molly' in 1938, which gave Maureen O'Hara her first film part.



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Our Lady of Lourdes Concert

With The Tongwynlais Temperance Band

On Thursday, 7th July the Tongwynlais Temperance Band gave a free concert in Our Lady of Lourdes as they use the church hall for rehearsing and it was a way of saying a thank you to the parish. For those that attended it was an excellent evening's entertainment and it was just a shame that there wasn't a larger audience.

The Band was founded in 1888 by a few enthusiasts meeting at the Tongwynlais home of a Mr. Ted Rowlands – a cornet player with the band attached to the Melingriffith works, known as the Brooker's Band. Mr. Rowlands as a conductor, aided by Mr. Albert Arnold, encouraged more interest from villagers as an alternative to the seven local public houses and taught each of them to play on a solitary cornet.

Band fever rapidly spread around the village of Tongwynlais which was also home to a thriving Temperance movement. So with numerous donations by the local gentry in Tongwynlais, Radyr, Whitchurch and Taffs Well, The Tongwynlais Temperance Silver Band was born. The late Colonel Henry Lewis of Greenmeadow kindly purchased a set of instruments and, in his role as president, with the dedicated assistance of Mr. Steve Evans, secured the immediate future of this newly formed band. Rehearsals were held at the Tongwynlais Infants School and in the long room of the Lewis Arms public house until 1925 when the first band hall was built on Castle Road on ground donated by Col. Lewis. It was a wooden construction which was replaced in 1953 by a concrete building on adjacent ground. The third and current band hall grounds were provided by the builder of Castle View which passes through what was the second band hall.

Since its foundation and often against formidable odds, the band has achieved a position within the brass band fraternity of which its members and supporters can be justly proud. The activities of the band were suspended for the duration of the 1914-18 war; but struggled through the second world war despite the enlistment of some 18 of the 33 band members, by allowing ladies to play for the first time.

The Tongwynlais Band at Our Lady of Lourdes



The best remembered conductor of the Band was the late Mr. Harold Morgan who was appointed in 1948 and who led the Band to many contest victories. Mr. Morgan, a prolific composer of Brass Band marches, dedicated one “ Belle Vue”, following the Band’s success at a National Competition at Belle Vue in Manchester

At this time, all but 3 members of the Band lived outside the village. Nowadays, the situation has reversed with the Majority of the Members being drawn from around the Cardiff area.

The band currently competes in the Championship Section, and over the past few years has achieved notable successes at Butlins Mineworkers, Grand Shield and Pontins.

Tongwynlais Temperance has just been crowned National First Section Champions and Pontins Champions 2009 as well as Welsh League Champions 2008.

2010 turned out to be a momentous year for Tongwynlais Temperance Band. The band have gained promotion to the British Open Brass Band Championships at the Birmingham Symphony Hall after coming second in the Grand Shield in May. Also qualification was gained to the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain to be held in the Royal Albert Hall after coming third in the Welsh Regional Championship in Swansea.

GL

Newsletter from Albania October 2011

Life is a sacred journey. We are on the path... exactly where we are meant to be right now...shaping our life story into a tale of healing, of courage, of beauty, of wisdom, of power, of dignity, and of love. A labyrinth is an ancient symbol that relates to wholeness. It combines the imagery of the circle and the spiral into a meandering but purposeful path. The Labyrinth represents a journey to our own centre and back again out into the world. Labyrinths have long been used as meditation and prayer tools. Since the last newsletter in May I have been invited to walk many labyrinths in the midst of the work and so it is with this image that I decided to begin this letter to you. At a Congregation Meeting in Toronto in June, I was invited to walk the labyrinth in this beautiful setting. It was in that walk, at that moment, that I had a sense of bringing the whole of my life into this experience. You were with me in that time and place, as were all the people here in Albania.



*The Labyrinth at
Loreto Retreat Centre, Toronto*

Walking the Labyrinth

Over the last few, hot summer months in Albania, the roma children, still scattered in many parts of Tirana, were able to enjoy a summer camp for a week through extra funding from you and other donators. They had such a happy time away from all the cares and troubles of coping with survival. The emergency project is now in full swing and we have employed an extra teacher, doctor and social operator to guarantee that these families and their children are cared for until they are housed in promised,



At the Summer Camp



Little Angels Centre



Near their homes



A Sick Mother

new accommodation, on the periphery of Tirana. We hope that this will be by Christmas. The children are still fed regularly and now, many more of the children are being registered in public school and come to the centre as a support and back up network.

133 visits have been made by the centre doctor, over the last three months, to the families and 31 to the children at the centre during the last four months and this is the analysis he has made. In all the visits there were 48% with respiratory disease, 2.2% I hope that these pictures help you to see both the pain and the joy of this work. with gastro intestinal tract diseases, 2.3% with cardio vascular disease, 2.3% with urinary tract disease, 2.4% with rheumatism, 7.3% with skin disease, and 35.7% needing prescriptions or repeat prescriptions. You can see from this how their living conditions affect their health.

The WRAJFT (Women's project) goes from strength to strength. The factory at Kelmet opens this week employing 20 of the women from Lac and Kelmet. They have



The women on the Hill with Elona



Training in Burrell

been trained in tailoring over the last six months, through employed specialists working for the WRAJFT project. Soon we will go to Vermosh, on the border of Montenegro, to a training session on Mother/child relationships, with a new group of women who expressed their needs for development in this isolated region. Last week we were in Fier, a troubled town in the south of Albania where sadly, the women suffer from domestic violence and where there is a real depression amongst the people. The poverty is terrible to see and we felt very sad as we came away from this place. We now have a new worker on the team, who is developing the web site, a new film is being produced and she is also working on the materials needed by the project for marketing both the project and all the crafts being made by the women in various other groups up and down the country. We are also deliberating on employing a social operator to work with the women of



Training in Kelmet

Hot I Ri where there are many difficulties to be faced by so many of the families. Please pray for all of this work. Hot I Ri where there are many difficulties to be faced



The Network of RENATE in Trzebinia, Poland



The Albanian speaking group in Trzebinia

by so many of the families. Please pray for all of this work. As you know IBVM(Loreto) was called to the work of anti trafficking and all of our work is linked to this mission. I continue to go each week to the shelter for Albanian trafficked victims and URAT (Albanian Religious Network), continues to develop the work in this field. In August our original group of religious in Europe launched RENATE (Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation), at a conference for developing this network in Trzebenia near to Krakow in Poland. The 72 participants came from 17 countries: Albania, Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal,

Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. Those invited had demonstrated their commitment to the work of human trafficking and to helping survivors. Together they sought ways of both sharing their experience and coordinating their work into the future. Being of one voice, one heart and one passion enables the group to work not only in solidarity but also to think together strategically. This is the way that the Mission of RENATE is evolving. It has made a commitment to work not only with the victims but to study the roots of the problem and to forward the mission of RENATE in the light of these insights.

I hope this brief summary enables you to be more aware of the help which your funding is giving to the work. Your donations, in particular, help the medical programme this year, in both the Little Angels project and also the women's project. You will be aware that this work is both preventative through health education given by our doctor employed by this project but also through direct health care to both children and families. Thank You for making such a difference. Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and God's blessing on all of your families and friends as we approach the New Year.

Imelda (Poole) IBVM - Loreto



Getting Married

Jack, age 92, and Mary, age 89, living in Nelson, Lancs, are all excited about their decision to get married.

They go for a stroll to discuss the wedding, and on the way they pass a chemist shop and Jack suggests they go in.

Jack addresses the man behind the counter: "Are you the owner?"

The pharmacist answers, "Yes."

Jack: "We're about to get married. Do you sell heart medication?"

Pharmacist:..... "Of course we do."

Jack: "How about medicine for circulation?"

Pharmacist:..... "All kinds "

Jack:..... "Medicine for rheumatism?"

Pharmacist:..... "Definitely."

Jack:..... "How about suppositories?"

Pharmacist:..... "You bet!"

Jack:..... "Medicine for memory problems, arthritis, and Alzheimer's?"

Pharmacist:..... "Yes, a large variety. The works.."

Jack:..... "What about vitamins, sleeping pills, antidotes for Parkinson's disease?"

Pharmacist:..... "Absolutely.."

Jack:..... "Everything for heartburn and indigestion?"

Pharmacist:..... "We sure do..."

Jack:..... "You sell wheelchairs and walkers and canes?"

Pharmacist:..... "All speeds and sizes."

Jack:..... "Adult incontinence pants?"

Pharmacist:..... "Sure."

Jack: "Then we'd like to use this store for our wedding presents list...."

L'Osservatore Romano

The Pope's Window on the World

It's not every day that the Pope pays a visit to your newspaper office - even if your newspaper is L'Osservatore Romano, the official newspaper of the Holy See.

In fact, when Pope Benedict XVI came to see the staff and their newsroom recently, it was the first time a Pontiff had been to the paper's offices - which are within the Vatican city - for 20 years. The last to make a call was Pope John Paul II.

The latest visit coincided with a special event at L'Osservatore - its 150th anniversary. It was first published on 1 July 1861, a few months after the kingdom of Italy was proclaimed - and its original ambition, which continues to be its ambition to this day, is to defend the point of view and outlook of the Pope - a view which, as its editor agrees, isn't always that taken by most media-players around the world. 'We make very clear, and quite unusual, choices,' he explains. 'Other newspapers deal with sex and violence, but the Pope says he reads L'Osservatore because it doesn't do that, because it gives the good news. And not only the good news but the news that other papers don't think is important.' What he means by this is news from developing countries that tend to be edged out on most western newspapers, but which in L'Osservatore are given prominence.



Prof. Giovanni Maria Vian

During his visit to the newspaper's offices, Pope Benedict praised this standpoint - he said L'Osservatore was put together 'with human and Christian enthusiasm and with professionalism'. He also said he'd been 'truly curious' to see how a newspaper is produced today, and that he

had enjoyed seeing how changed the process had become since the advent of computerised production.

One of the things he most valued about the paper was that it offered a truly universal perspective, viewing the whole world and not just part of it. It was also a valuable cultural journal. ‘I admire the fact,’ said the Pontiff, ‘that it is possible every day to make important contributions that help us understand better the human being, the roots from which things come and how they should be understood, brought about and transformed.’

Of course a visit to the newspaper’s offices isn’t the only contact the Pontiff has with his newspaper - Prof Vian has meetings with him every month or two to discuss the running of the paper, and its general ‘line’. But it wouldn’t be exactly true, he says, to say - as some do - that L’Osservatore is simply the Pope’s mouthpiece. ‘It’s a difficult balance to determine,’ he explains. ‘In fact it’s good for us, and an advantage for us, that there’s this uncertainty [about the exact status of some of its pronouncements] because only some parts of the newspaper are official. This is the only official newspaper of the Holy See, but it’s too much to say that we express what the Holy See thinks on everything.’



For example, he says with a smile, the paper recently carried a piece about the Beatles - and that didn’t mean Pope Benedict was necessarily a Beatles fan. And in the current issue, he explains, there’s a review of the latest Harry Potter film - but it’s not the view of the Pope on the movie.

‘Underlying its entire ethos is a set of values that’s quite different from the values at so many other newspapers and media organisations’. There are plenty of other examples of articles that you might not have imagined in the Pope’s newspaper - for example, says Prof Vian, contributors over the last few years have included Gordon Brown and

Ed Miliband, and L'Osservatore also carried an interview with Tony Blair. 'We hope to have a piece by David Cameron before too long,' he says with a smile.

Prof Vian says modestly that his is 'just a small newspaper' (it's not really true - it is read across the globe, and has weekly editions in eight languages including English, Spanish, German and Malayalam as well as a daily edition in Italian), 'although we have an owner who happens to be the most important owner anywhere in the world!'

Giovanni Maria Vian was appointed editor soon after Pope Benedict's election - the tradition at L'Osservatore is for incoming pontiffs to bring in their own editor. And, yes, he is trusted to get the line right - just as newspaper editors around the world are trusted by their paper's proprietors to get the line right. 'I've been here for four years,' he says, 'and we've not had any big mistakes! So yes, the Pope trusts me.'

Prof Vian says he knew the Pope a little when he was Cardinal Ratzinger: like Benedict himself, he comes from the world of academia, having specialised in his university role in ancient Christian philology which is the study of ancient texts (his area of expertise overlaps very much with the specialisms of Cardinal John Henry Newman, whose books Prof Vian has on the shelf behind his desk in his office). In fact, says Prof Vian (who in his academic life is a professor) he sent his books to Cardinal Ratzinger when they were published - and one of them was even reviewed by him in a journal. But he combined academia with journalism, and has written for newspapers since the early 1970s.

'Other newspapers deal with sex and violence, but the Pope says he reads L'Osservatore because it doesn't do that, because it gives the good news' Today, with his chief sub hovering with page-proofs as we are chatting, it's clear that in many ways L'Osservatore is like any other newspaper, a place where an overriding priority is to get the paper out on time. As on any other newspaper, there are stories to discuss, and queries over how to treat tricky subjects... but underlying its entire ethos is a set of values that's quite different from the values at so many other newspapers and media organisations.

When he was appointed, says Prof Vian, one of the Pope's priorities for the paper was that it should allow women a greater role. And this has happened - of the paper's 40 journalists, an increasing number are female - and Prof Vian has also appointed more women columnists, including Lucetta Scaraffia, who writes on bioethics and history for the paper. The team that puts together the weekly English edition of L'Osservatore is now, Prof Vian says proudly, an all-female team; and the German edition is edited by a woman.

Another of Benedict's ambitions for the paper under his pontificate was that it should expand its readership around the world - and that is also happening, Prof Vian explains. The newspaper is now distributed in 129 countries, earlier this year a new website was launched - and there is now a new news portal, news.va, which gives access to the whole Vatican media (in addition to L'Osservatore, there is Vatican Radio, a station that broadcasts in 47 languages).

There are plans afoot to print L'Osservatore in the UK, and Alive Publishing - the company that publishes Faith Today - recently signed an agreement to distribute the newspaper in Britain. 'We welcome this very much,' says Prof Vian.

*Printed with kind permission
of Faith Today*

Lament of an elderly Altar Server

The hips they creak,
the ankles squeak,
the knees begin to falter;
The people fear and dread to hear,
The groaning on the Altar.

As Father prays,
the Missal sways,
the elbows are at fault 'ere;
Loud and clear for all to hear,
The groaning on the Altar.

The knuckles ache,
the fingers shake,
beware the wine and water!
Lavabo done, there still goes on,
The groaning on the Altar.

The clapper swings,
the small bell rings,
the verse read from the Psalter,
But still you hear, both far and near,
The groaning on the Altar.

The Mass is ended,
Go in Peace and give God thanks,
For now will cease,
The groaning on the Altar.

R.M Daughton



Deaths

Sally Andrews	31st	May	2011
Fay Tawton	13th	June	2011
Eileen Parker	27th	June	2011
Maureen Helen Maisey	29th	June	2011
Frank Lane	30th	July	2011
Maureen James	30th	August	2011
Patrick John Sullivan	7th	September	2011
Roy Day	16th	October	2011
Beryl Horwood	22nd	October	2011

Marriages



Katherine Nash	-	Sean Powell	4th	June	2011
Rian Bonello	-	Gareth Evans	12th	August	2011
Francesca Sidoli	-	Simon Anthony	1st	October	2011
Emily Diamond	-	James Marshall	8th	October	2011

Baptisms

Liam Thomas Driscoll	5th June	2011
Alfie Bowen	5th June	2011
Samuel Francis Pickthall	11th June	2011
Charlotte Grace Daniel	26th June	2011
Ben William Richards	3rd July	2011
Sofia Jordan	3rd July	2011
Elis Joseph Ball	16th July	2011
Joshua Carter Stewart	6th August	2011
Matthew Thomas	20th August	2011
Connor Skinner	27th August	2011
Finlay Minton Hughes	27th August	2011
Cobie Butcher	11th September	2011
Charlie Welsh	25th September	2011
George Welsh	25th September	2011
Sophia Malfatti	9th October	2011

Summer Concert
St Teilo's Church
Featuring
Castell Coch Choral Society
&
The Marie Therese Vassallo Voice Studio

On Thursday 14th July there was a concert in St Teilo's given by the Castell Coch Choral Society and the Marie Therese Vassallo Voice Studio from Malta who were being hosted during their stay by the Castell Coch Choral Society who were established in 1977. A mixed choir numbering up to 70, they perform a variety of music throughout the year to suit all ages and tastes. The choir was founded by their musical director, Linda Morgan and their aim is to help those less fortunate than themselves by raising money for charity each year while they enjoy their singing.

The choir promote five main concerts a year, one at Easter, two in the summer and two at Christmas, with a major work in the Easter and Christmas concerts; proceeds going to their chosen charities for the year. In addition to these, they perform at other venues such as nursing homes and churches. In its 35 years, the choir has appeared at numerous events for charity and has given over £50,000+ to its nominated charities, which change every year.

The Voice Studio (Malta)

The Marie Therese Vassallo Voice Studio has been functioning since 1987, when Ms.Vassallo responded to several requests from various singers for help with their singing problems. The Studio caters for young and more mature singers of different genres of music, who are accepted after an audition to assess their vocal potential and general musicality. Occasionally Ms.Vassallo accepts also younger children who show outstanding vocal ability.

Marie Therese Vassallo works with her students on an individual and personal basis and insists that each student should be under her own direct tuition. Each student is guided to recognise his own natural capabilities and to develop them without producing stereotypes of the same voice. Lessons consist of vocal technique, theory of music, sight singing, repertoire in various genres of music and in different languages and

Ensemble Work. Students are also encouraged to study another musical instrument. Once the students are making steady progress, they are encouraged to perform as much as possible under the supervision of Ms.Vassallo, who insists that they only sing the repertoire that is suitable to their voices. Students who wish to take singing exams of various established universities and boards are prepared in all the requirements of the chosen grade and all those presented have been highly successful.



Ms.Vassallo organises concerts in distinguished venues all over the Maltese Islands, thus creating opportunities for her students to perform both as soloists and in ensemble work. Such activities promote and give opportunities to new, as well as established singers to perform , learn from each other, and enjoy themselves at the same time. Several of her advanced Students are now establishing themselves as some of the leading singers on our Islands and have even had opportunities to sing abroad.

The Voice Studio was set up by Marie Therese Vassallo over ten years ago. Originally it was made up of singers who aspired to become soloists. However, Ms. Vassallo trained them also in ensemble work. Since 1998, the group has grown and has been invited to sing for many important occasions, including a number of concerts of the Malta Cultural Institute.

GL



Christmas Services

Christmas Eve - Saturday 24th December

O.L.O.L.	- Carol Service	6.30pm
	First Mass of Christmas	7.00pm
St. Teilo's	- Carol Service	8.30pm
	Christmas Mass	9.00pm

Christmas Day - Sunday 25th December

St. Teilo's	- Dawn Mass	9.00am
St. Teilo's	- Family Mass	10.30am

You lovers of the English language might enjoy this.

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meanings than any other two-letter word, and that is 'UP'

It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP ? At a meeting, why does a topic come UP ? Why do we speak UP and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report ?

We call UP our friends. And we use it to brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver; we warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen. We lock UP the house and some guys fix UP the old car. At other times the little word has real special meaning. People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses.. To be dressed is one thing, but to be dressed UP is special.

And this UP is confusing: A drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP. We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night.

We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP. To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look the word UP in the dictionary. In a desk-sized dictionary, it takes UP almost 1/4th of the page and can add UP to about thirty definitions. If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used. It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don't give UP, you may wind UP with a hundred or more. When it threatens to rain , we say it is clouding UP .. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP ...

When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things UP.

When it doesn't rain for awhile, things dry UP.

One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP , for now my time is UP , so.....it is time to shut UP !

TAKE A BREAK WITH GOD

By Teresa O'Driscoll

Email: teresa@teresaodriscoll.co.uk

When was the last time you spent real quality time, a few hours or more, in God's company? Many people focus on keeping their body healthy, yet simultaneously neglect the eternal parts of self, the spirit and soul, to the detriment of their whole being. If we don't actively spiritually develop we can be caught out when our testing time inevitably rolls around, becoming overwhelmed instead of enduring and growing in love. Perhaps you are currently in *your* testing time and identify with that negative description. Or, maybe you are at a crossroads in your life; or are trying to find answers to a dilemma; or feel stressed by fear or routine hassles. On the other hand you could feel absolutely fine right now, which is great! However, in good times, and in bad, staying as close as possible to God is the very best way to live.

Having recognised our need to be with God more is the first step towards a healthier spirituality. But, carrying out our intention is not always easy. We can be hampered by the fast pace of life, heavy responsibilities, and many other calls upon our time. Add into that mix the noise and distractions that we often use to keep problems at bay such as television, computers or phones. Not to mention the inadvertent din of other people's distractions that we find ourselves prey to. We can do no better than follow the example of Jesus, who took time out from a very busy workload in order to commune with His Heavenly Father in a place of solitude. [Mark 1:35]

This stretch of time away from daily routine is traditionally called a Retreat. A retreat can take place anywhere you like, even at home alone. You may prefer to join a parish retreat in a local venue, such as a church hall. Sometimes parishes make a block booking in a retreat centre which you could participate in. A growing trend is to retreat with a small group of like-minded friends and become a house-party sharing Christian communal living.

Then again, you may want a solo retreat.

Any of the above retreats can be immensely enjoyable and beneficial. Sometimes though, a retreat centre does have the edge because even a short change of scenery (often inspiring country scenery) in a quiet location, can, of itself, be a real spiritual tonic!

DIFFERENT KINDS OF RETREATS

There is a good choice of Christian retreat venues throughout the country - some Catholic, some not - hosting a wide variety of programmes. Commonly retreats are: prayerful; open to all - including Christians, seekers, those of any other faith or none; and include elements of silence and reflection. These venues often also offer workshops and courses which create a better understanding of self and interaction with others, leading to a deeper relationship with God. The retreats themselves generally fall into two groups: day retreats or residential retreats. Day retreats are often called Quiet Days. The day may have a theme, such as forgiveness, and be lightly spiritually guided with lots of time for lone contemplation and prayer. Some quiet days though are more structured, use activities like painting, writing and walking as a vehicle for spiritual development, and are called Creative Quiet Days. You might like to try both types and will doubtless reap benefits from each. After enjoying a day retreat you may decide that you want to spend even more time with God in a conducive atmosphere, and so take a residential retreat. These can last for a weekend, a week, a month, or longer – depending on your needs.

Retreat houses come in all shapes and sizes. They could be just a single room in someone's home in a pretty rural location. At the other end of the spectrum are large conference centres in acres of grounds. The middle road may be a terraced house offering a quiet oasis smack bang in the centre of a busy city.

Residential retreats can be tailored to your specific needs, with as much or as little spiritual guidance as you want. This personal preference could apply whether you decide to stay in, say, an abbey living alongside monks, or in a small informal house. Don't be surprised if the very simplicity of a retreat may be the best part of it. Even, say, a slow walk in nature while praising the Lord for His creations can take your relationship with Him forward in leaps and bounds!

For further info on Catholic retreats in Wales visit: www.rcadc.co.uk

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**SALES LETTINGS IN RESIDENTIAL
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*A member of the parish at the service of the
people of the parish*

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