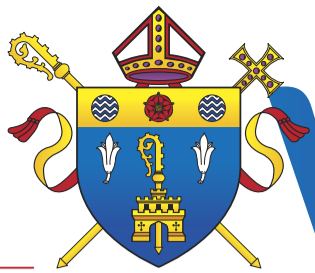


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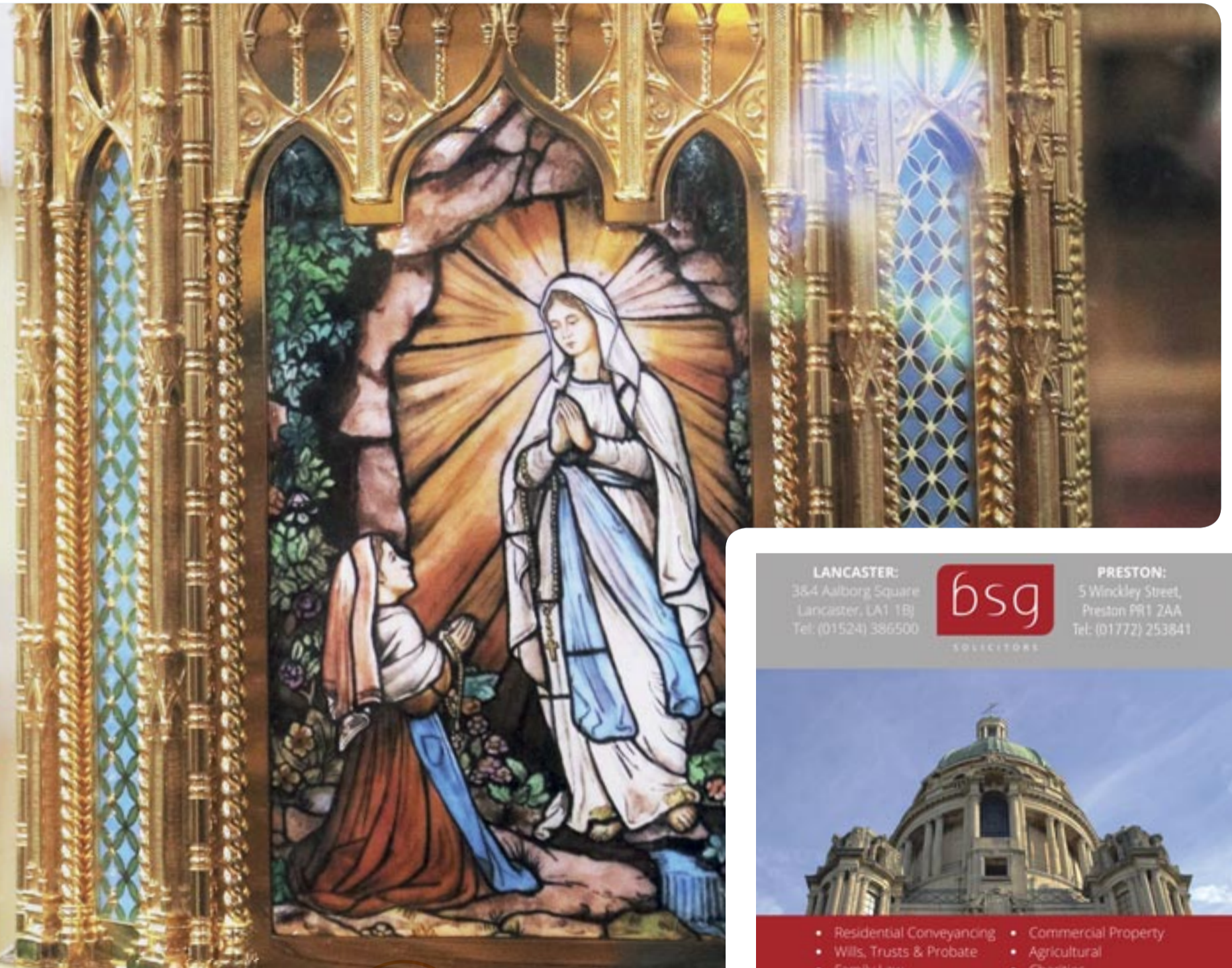
Issue 344 + November '22

INSIDE: pg14

Hang High the Cross



Photograph courtesy of Mike March Pilgrim Photography



SAINT BERNADETTE RELIC TOUR 2022



The Diocese of Lancaster welcomed the Relics of St Bernadette in September as part of their UK tour. Hundreds came together either for the special 24/7 services held in Lancaster and Carlisle or to spend time in quiet contemplative prayer. It could almost have been described as a mini Lourdes pilgrimage. [Read more about the experience on pages 8, 9 and 10 >>](#)



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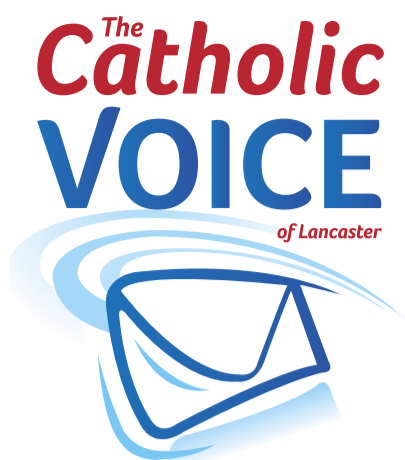
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Our Lady and St Edward Preston Creation Mass

*“Whatever we value,
we seek to protect”*



Pope Francis has been very clear on his views about our responsibility towards the planet:

“I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all.” Pope Francis, Laudato ‘si

On a beautiful sunny Autumn morning, parishioners of Our Lady and St Edward’s gathered for the celebration of their Creation Mass recognising that our Christian responsibility for the planet begins with appreciation of the goodness of all of God’s creation:

“God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good” (Gen 1:31).

Our fulfillment as people, as Catholics, and as Christians, depends on the relationship of care that we establish with the world. So, the commitment to our common home is not optional; we are all called by God to be caretakers of creation. As we move towards the UN Climate change conference (COP27) on 6-18th November 2022 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, this responsibility comes sharply in to focus.

At the start of Mass, young people read selected quotes from Laudato Si. Fr Ernest then invited parishioners to read the Entrance Antiphon together: *“O Lord, you have given everything its place in the world and no one can make it otherwise. For it is your creation: the heavens and the earth and the stars: you are the Lord of all”* which was so appropriate.

Fr Ernest’s homily focused on increasing our Faith. He referred to the virtues of knowledge and understanding, making particular reference to understanding the beauty of the gift of Creation; of the threats to it and the need to protect it. Parishioners were invited to bring donations for the food bank in the spirit of sharing our abundance. A selection was brought forward in the offertory procession.

We ended with the CAFOD Harvest Family Fast Day appeal. Prayer, fasting and almsgiving have always been important parts of our Catholic life, and this year can help CAFOD’s local

experts in East Africa work with families there to survive food shortages and severe drought. Over the years, our parishioners have been very generous in response to the CAFOD Lent and Harvest appeals and we are so grateful.

The Mass was punctuated by live music from our choir, including *“Morning has Broken”, “Joy is like the Rain”* and *“O Lord my God, when I in Awesome Wonder”*. The involvement of the young people was inspirational. The mass was a great team effort involving numerous parishioners and Sr Maria Dee who made the wonderful displays you can see in the photographs.

In the article *“Guardians of God’s creation”* The Bishops conference of England and Wales make this positive reflection about what we can do about the challenge we face:

“It is possible to change course. Scientific research gives us an insight into what our future earth may look like. But all projections depend on the actions that we take today. We must take action urgently. We are aware of the common but differentiated responsibilities, with greater attention given to “the needs of the poor, the weak and the vulnerable, in a debate often dominated by more powerful interests.” We must face this challenge with confidence in the knowledge that the worst effects of this ecological crisis can still be avoided. As Bishops, we will review the ‘Call of Creation’ to reflect on our present situation and to promote good practice for diocese, parishes, schools, families and individuals. We need a more considered relationship with our God, our neighbour and the earth through the way we manage our resources as a Church”.

*Jane Tudor,
Head of School Visual Performing Arts and Digital, Preston College*

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/guardians-of-gods-creation/>
<https://laudatosimovement.org/news/caring-for-god-creation-en-news/>



Parishioners when reflecting on the Mass made the following comments:

Emma McGrath - "What made the service meaningful to me was witnessing our young readers making a plea for the planet that they are going to inherit."

Valerie - "It was a wonderful peaceful Mass on a beautiful morning that really made me think about God's wonderful creation. Our young people's obvious passion for the environment was really inspiring, and the lovely music was appropriate and reflective."

Sr Shienrose - "Thanks be to God! God is so generous in bestowing on us the grandeur of creation. Indeed, his creation is a reflection of his unconditional love to us. I couldn't complain how the Lord enveloped me with his assuring presence through the beauty of his creation. Deo Gratias!"

Stephen - "We celebrated Creation on the Sunday closest to the Feast of St Francis of Assisi. There was a happy co-incidence with the appeal for the CAFOD Harvest Family Fast Day when we were invited to share with others God's incredible generosity."



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YOUTH SERVICE UPDATE



Meet the New Team

You know what they say... new year, new team at Castlerigg! Actually, nobody really says that, and to be honest some of the team aren't new, but some of them definitely are so it's a good chance to run through who we've got and where they're all from.

In the summer, we said goodbye to Trish, Alex, Megan, Mel, Ellie, Beth, and Rachel. Jack, Paddie, Joe and Rachel stayed with us and we were joined by Dom, Katie, and Sarah. Since then, we've also been joined by Amelie and Kylie, with another Katie joining us at the start of November. Here's the team sheet:

RACHEL *Known as: Mack*

Age: 23
Role: Experienced Volunteer

Mack is in her second year at Castlerigg having previously worked at Alton Castle – a retreat centre in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Mack is a watersports enthusiast and, remarkably, also a fully qualified nurse, who keeps up her qualifications by working the occasional shift around her work at Castlerigg. She is also allowed to drive ambulances, but not with the blue lights on! She comes from Newcastle and also, sort of, from Brampton.

Totally untrue fact: Mack can say 'two lagers and a white wine please' in more than twenty languages.

PATRICK *Known as: Paddie*

Age: Older than the volunteers but nowhere near as old as Jack
Role: Deputy Director

Paddie is now in his second year as Deputy Director having previously spent a year as trainee retreat leader. He comes from a small place in Northumberland called Scotland gate and has worked at two other retreat centres and with a host of other youth ministry projects before landing at Castlerigg. Paddie is a member of the Cor et Lumen Christi Community.

Totally untrue fact: Paddie's favourite movie is the original Top Gun. He can quote every line and asks young people on retreat to call him 'Ice man'.

JACK *Known as: Jack*

Age: Very old. More than double some of the volunteers!
Role: Director

Jack has been working with young people since literally the last century and has been at Castlerigg since May 2020, having worked here for a few years back in the noughties. He is married with two very young children and is married to a lady called Gillian, meaning that they are almost Jack and Gill. Jack is from Germany originally and has lived pretty much everywhere.

Totally untrue fact: Jack once challenged the red telly-tubby to an arm wrestle

JOSEPH *Known as: Joe*

Age: 23
Role: Trainee Retreat Leader

Joe is from West Sussex and studied physics at Lancaster University before doing a gap year at Castlerigg last year. This year he joins the leadership team as our Trainee Retreat Leader and is currently getting used to the ropes in leading programmes in the Youth Service.

Totally untrue fact: Joe bears a striking resemblance to Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson and often enters lookalike contests.

KYLIE *Known as: Kylie*

Age: 23
Role: Experienced Volunteer

Kylie is the most recent addition to the Castlerigg team. She has only been with us two weeks, but she's settled in really well and already got used to the work – probably something to do with the fact that she has done a lot of retreat work before with the Archdiocese of

Birmingham. Talking of Birmingham, that's where she's from, but she's not new to Cumbria. In fact, she's just finished a degree in dance at Cumbria university.

Totally untrue fact: Kylie is fluent in Spanish – she learned it so she could better understand the Macarena and the Ketchup song in their original language.

KATIE W *Known as: Katie*

Age: 18
Role: Volunteer

Katie is from Staffordshire and first came to Castlerigg with her school on retreat in Year 8. She has just finished her A-levels and is hoping to go to uni after Castlerigg.

Totally untrue fact: Katie is a huge fan of darts and has put up pictures of Eric Bristow all over the staff lounge. Every time something good happens, she shouts 'one hundred and eiiiiiiiiighty' at the top of her voice!

SARAH *Known as: Sarah*

Age: 18
Role: Volunteer

Sarah is from Bury and, like the other volunteers, got interested in Castlerigg after coming on retreat with her school – in her case, in Year 10. Sarah has just finished her A-levels and is a keen Ukulele player. Every few weeks a parcel turns up for Sarah and it's usually something ukulele related! Until she started at Castlerigg, Sarah had never been to KFC, MacDonaldis, or Burger King. Don't worry though – she has now!

Totally untrue fact: When she's not working, Sarah likes to go into the Garden at Castlerigg and talk to the Squirrels.

DOMINIC *Known as: Dom*

Age: 18
Role: Volunteer

Dominic has just finished his A-levels

having previously attended Keswick School, so he knows the town well already, although he's actually from Workington, where he is an altar server in the parish. So, of all the team members, Dom is closest to home! He is also active in a drama group and wants to pursue acting when he's older.

Totally untrue fact: Dom bears absolutely no resemblance whatsoever to 'Sideshow Bob' from the Simpsons and Jack has never ever pointed this out.

KATIE F *Known as: Katie*

Age: Actually, we're not sure!
Role: Programme Leader

Katie hasn't actually started yet, and will join us right around the time this edition hits the streets. So, actually she has started – if that works? Anyway, Katie is from Wakefield and has been in Youth Ministry for a few years. She even once worked with Paddie! For the last few years, she has been a parish youth worker in Durham and she has a degree in Art!

Totally untrue fact: Katie is a lego fanatic and is working on a model of Castlerigg.

AMELIE *Known as: Amelie*

Age: 19
Role: Volunteer

Amelie is from Dunoon in Scotland. Except that, when she starts talking it becomes pretty obvious that she's not, and a bit of digging soon reveals that she's actually from Oxford. Amelie is in her first year as a volunteer at Castlerigg and is part of Youth 2000 where she recently completed the Worship School. She has also been involved with Craig Lodge in the past – a retreat centre up in Scotland. Like Sarah, Amelie is a keen Ukulele player.

Totally untrue fact: Amelie can walk on water and is often used by Amazon for delivering parcels to that house on the island in the middle of Derwentwater.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING LATELY?

It feels like a while since we've done one of these, and the Youth Service has been pretty busy lately. We've got a load of new schools visiting this year, we're continuing to renovate the building and our new programme is going from strength to strength. We've also got a lovely new team, but more of that at the end.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

December 9-11 // Advent Retreat // A chance for young people (Year 10 upwards) to visit Castlerigg for our first open retreat of the year. Journey through Advent, make some friends, and explore your faith.

December 17 // Christmas Fayre // A chance for the diocese to visit Castlerigg and have a bit of fun. This is our first open day since Covid and we're hoping for a good crowd.

World Youth Day //
July 31 – Aug 6 //
Sign up for the Diocesan trip to Lisbon!

Check out our website for details of all of the above.



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Supporting abandoned seafarers



During the Covid-19 pandemic, many seafarers found themselves stranded on ships far from home. Peter Morgan, port chaplain in Bristol for Catholic charity Stella Maris (formerly called *Apostleship of the Sea*), learned just how difficult this could be when he supported the crew of the cruise ship Marco Polo.

The Marco Polo had arrived in Avonmouth Docks in March 2020, at the beginning of the pandemic. Not long after that, its owners went out of business and the ship was detained by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, which found a number of expired and invalid Seafarers Employment Agreements, late payment of wages and seafarers who had been on board for over 12 months.

"At the start of the pandemic, ship visiting was very limited," said Peter. "I would go to the bottom of the ramp every day to ask if I could assist with anything. I would run errands and do shopping for the crew, as they weren't able to leave the ship."

Initially there was a crew of 200 on the Marco Polo, but, as the weeks went by, this reduced to around 40. Most were from the Philippines.

Peter visited the ship most days to ask if there was anything he could do to help. He would go to the local shops to buy groceries, toiletries and other items, including birthday cakes. He organised appointments with GPs, collected prescriptions, and liaised with the consulates.

"The crew were very concerned about whether they would get paid or not and how they were going to get home, as flights to most countries were grounded back then," said Peter.

"I spent a lot of time with individual seafarers or sometimes a small group. I listened to their concerns and tried to reassure them that everything would be okay. Inevitably there were interpersonal issues on board, as with any large group of people stuck in a metal box for such a long time.

"I sometimes spent eight or nine hours on the ship when this was allowed under the restrictions. I was very concerned about limiting anxieties and just being there to talk. I would sometimes go on the rounds with the engineers or security, or spend time in the crew mess. This brought up many conversations that I don't normally have the time or familiarity to have."

For the nine months that the Marco Polo was in Avonmouth, Peter was a lifeline for the crew.

Margaret Masibo, the Stella Maris port chaplain in Mombasa, Kenya, also became a lifeline, for the crew of an abandoned fishing vessel in September last year.

"It was inhumane, what I saw when I boarded the FV Ra-Horakhty," she said. "Men were crying, others were shouting, some had withdrawn into silence. For several days, they'd had no food or fresh water. They were starving to death. Since the ship had been abandoned, not a single person had stepped on board to help - until I did.

"The men had no money and couldn't disembark because they didn't have papers to be in Kenya. It was a terrible, heart-breaking sight to see people abandoned so carelessly."

Margaret cooked the crew a meal and gave them a week's supply of food and she arranged for drinking water to be delivered to the ship regularly. She also provided Wi-Fi units so the crew could video call their families, whom they hadn't spoken to for four months.

"When one of the crew made a video call, he saw his baby daughter for the first time. It was a truly special moment," said Margaret.

She also put pressure on the shipping company to provide support for the crew, helped find legal representation for the men, and liaised with relevant embassies to get them home.

"Cases of ship abandonment are at record levels, leaving seafarers or fishers stranded in perilous situations - often completely on their own. But nothing prepared me for what I discovered on board the FV Ra-Horakhty. I can't forget the words of the captain. 'Without your support, we would have jumped into the ocean,' he said. 'We would not be alive today.'

"Tragically, these situations are becoming all too common. Some unscrupulous ship owners don't care about the human cost of their actions. The latest figures show more than 3,500 seafarers are currently stranded on abandoned vessels around the world. On average, they're on board for seven months before they go home - but I've known cases to last years. Desperate seafarers and fishers often depend on the support of Stella Maris."

It's only through the generosity of its supporters that Stella Maris can provide vital help to seafarers, whom we all rely on to bring us so many of the things we need.

Gregg Watts

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 - Amend or shorten letters or to refuse to publish them (no correspondence to discuss decisions taken will be entered into)
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Dear Editor,

I was working in a church garden some years ago when a couple passed me on their way to visit the parish priest. When he saw me the man exclaimed loudly and almost angrily, "what's he doing here?" I may be wrong but I put this down to the possibility that the man had never seen a Catholic brown man before. Is this possible?

The danger with stereotyping is that it takes away a person's individuality and lumps people together on the basis of colour. No attempt is made to differentiate people by country of origin, dress, religion or occupation.

I feel very strongly that this should definitely not happen in the Christian community and that people may claim that their church or school is "all-inclusive or totally integrated" but if they still use stereotypes then they still have a long way to go!

Yours sincerely
Austin D'Souza, Lytham St Annes

Reflection: Revelation 7:9 >

Dear Lord, Your Word reveals to us that in Your kingdom there is an immeasurable amount of people from every nation, from all tribes and people; and from all languages. This diverse multitude are all worshipers of You who stand before the throne and before the lamb clothed in white robes crying out that salvation belongs to You. In heaven, there is diversity and inclusion, so let this be my mind-set here on earth too, Amen.



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SAINT

BERNADETTE

RELIC TOUR 2022



Photographs courtesy of Mike March Pilgrim Photography



Around fifteen hundred pilgrims from across Cumbria visited Our Lady and St Joseph's in Carlisle as the Parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help played host to the Relics of St Bernadette.

The event, though a short twenty-four-hour period (Friday 23rd September to Saturday 24th), was part of the special pilgrimage from Lourdes to cathedrals and churches across England, Scotland and Wales.

The day began at 8am on the Friday with a Mass of Welcome. Throughout the morning, many visitors, including parties of school pupils, were able to come in procession to the church, to venerate the Relics and take part in public recitations of the Rosary.

Bishop Paul Swarbrick celebrated Mass at 12 Noon, with a Eucharistic Procession and Blessing of the Sick, very much in the style of the afternoon Eucharistic processions in Lourdes. There was also two further Masses in the evening, culminating in a wonderful Torchlight Procession around the local streets. Confessions were heard in the midst of the busyness of the day and in the quiet of the night, during the night Vigil led by members of our Diocesan Youth Team based at Castlerigg Manor. Finally Mass early on Saturday morning was celebrated to give thanks and to send St Bernadette on her way, this seemed to come all too quickly.

Concelebrants at the Masses included Canon Luiz Ruscillo, Fr Paul Harrison, also of the parish, and Fr Norman Johnston, a

retired priest of the diocese.

Singing was led by choirs made up of volunteers from across the parish, while many other volunteers, including The Knights of St Columba, assisted visitors with parking, admission and refreshments.

"It was a bringing together of various former communities to a comparatively new parish, with shared work for the day," said coordinator Fr Daniel Etienne.

"Over five hundred children came from different parts of Cumbria, representing their schools. There had been preparation for them before the day, and then at church they were able to meet people who'd been to Lourdes and were able to share the message of St Bernadette," he added.

Fr Etienne said it had been a particularly significant event because Our Lady of Lourdes is the Patron of the Diocese of Lancaster. *"It meant we had Lourdes for a day with us,"* he said, *"so we were able to pray for our Bishop and for our Diocese."*

Canon Ruscillo said, *"It was a privilege for our parish to host St Bernadette's relics and welcome so many pilgrims. I was moved by the generous response of scores of parishioners who gave their time and commitment to making the event such a success."*

"But most of all, everyone who joined us was able to express their love for Mary and confidence that she accompanies us on our spiritual pilgrimage following her son. It was a tremendous blessing for us all."

Jack Johnstone



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A small group of Year 6 children travelled to Lancaster from Windermere to visit the relics of St. Bernadette, which were on view at St Peters Cathedral.

Father Michael Docherty spoke to us first and we shared all the information and facts we had learnt about St. Bernadette with him. He was very impressed!

We presented a St. Cuthbert's candle and some special offerings to leave at the Cathedral, as well as prayers written by the children. The children left:

- a burning candle for light
- a living succulent plant to represent St. Bernadette living amongst us
- a shiny love heart to show our love and devotion to her

- and some dried flowers, to show that although she has died, we will always remember her and that her memory will last forever

The children also wrote prayers of dedication to St. Bernadette. The whole of KS2 have studied the life of St. Bernadette and some felt a great connection to her.

In class the children also re-enacted part of Bernadette's life using drama.

This very special experience will stay with the children and staff for a very long time. It was truly magical.

'help one another, this is what we do with all our hearts...' Children of St. Cuthbert's
Mrs Lucy Bone, Acting Head teacher

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Blackpool on Pilgrimage



The excitement was almost palpable
 as both young and old alike boarded
 the coach of Guardian Angels, destined
 to meet with the relics of St Bernadette.

The weather, as ever was dismal and wet,
 but this was not enough to dampen the
 spirits of the newly formed parish. Over
 50 parishioners boarded the coach and
 set out to pray, to contemplate or simply
 to be close to the relics of St. Bernadette.
 Especially since, the patroness of our
 diocese is Our Lady of Lourdes.

Louise Lavery



Join us in Lourdes 2023



We will, as a diocese led by Bishop Paul, be going on
 pilgrimage to Lourdes from 21 – 28 July 2023. The
 pastoral theme will be the word's that Mary, the Mother of
 God, entrusted to Bernadette Soubirous on 2 March 1858:
 "Go tell the priests to build a chapel here and that people should
 come in procession".

The visit of the Relics of St Bernadette to the UK inspired many
 first time pilgrims to join us on our 2022 Pilgrimage. We look
 forward to welcoming new and past pilgrims. New faces, new life
 and new targets are essential each year if the pilgrimage is to
 continue to grow. So please think about coming along.

Medical and Brancardier Teams are totally reliant on volunteer
 helpers and care for our sick pilgrims, their service being second
 to none. We therefore appeal for nurses and Carers throughout
 the diocese.

If you or anyone you know are willing to be part of the Medical
 team then please contact: chiefnurse@lancasterlourdes.co.uk

Many of you will know what a rewarding, wonderful experience
 working at the service of the sick pilgrims in Lourdes is.

If you would like to join our Brancardier Team (male 23+) then
 please contact: chiefbrancardier@lancasterlourdes.co.uk

Youth Teams Director of Youth will be Katie O Donnell. Katie
 will be supported by Team leaders who will ensure the young
 people have a spiritual and uplifting week. If you are 15+ please
 consider coming on pilgrimage with us. You will be given all the
 preparation, support and training you need. Many young people
 make decisions about future careers whilst in Lourdes. Find
 time to explore your faith, to learn about yourself and to make
 friends you will have for life. It is often said "you don't 'go' to
 Lourdes, you are 'called'". Please answer the call in 2023!

All young people are asked to registered as soon as possible.
 Forms are available through Joe Walsh Tours or contact:
youth@lancasterlourdes.co.uk

Posters and information will be available to all parishes by
 the end of November but in the meantime please feel free to
 contact Joe Walsh Tours:

www.joewalstours.co.uk/pilgrimages
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Linda Wisdom, Director of Operations

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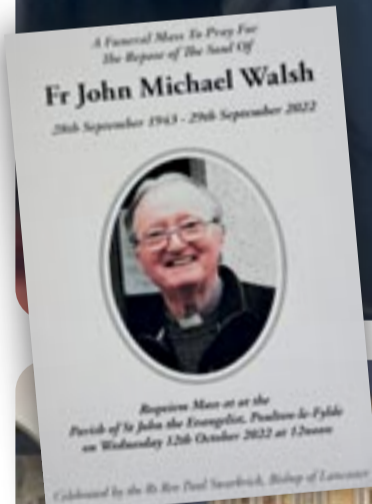
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St John the Evangelist in Poulton-le-Fylde was where Requiem Mass was celebrated by Bishop Paul Swarbrick for the repose of the soul of Fr John Walsh who celebrated 40 years of priestly ministry earlier this year surrounded by his family, brother priests and parishioners. Many priests of the diocese concelebrated the Mass with the Bishop ahead of his return to Ireland for a funeral Mass at St John the Evangelist in Tubercurry, County Sligo.

Rev. Fr John Walsh was born in Listowel, County Kerry, on 28th September 1943 and was the eldest of 13 children. He was a Seminarian at the Beda College, Rome from 1979 and was ordained to the Priesthood at St Walburge's, Preston in 1982 by Bishop Pearson.

After serving as curate in Blackpool and Kendal he had two tours as a missionary in Zambia, warm memories of their time together serving in the diocese of Monze were shared by Bishop Paul at the Requiem Mass and the gathering with family and friends afterwards. Fr John returned to the diocese in 1993 where he served as Parish Priest in Preston, Carlisle, Morecambe and English Martyrs and St John the Evangelist parishes in Poulton. He later moved to St Winefride's House in Bispham in his retirement. He died one day after his 79th birthday.

*May he rest in peace
Eternal rest grant unto Fr John O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him, may he rest in peace Amen.*



Photographs courtesy of Mike March Pilgrim Photography

Remembrance



'I will remember you.....' 'we will remember you.....' these are such huge commitments and responsibilities said in one or two small sentences ...

What does it mean to remember? And why do we remember?

To remember someone can be simple, a task or a place or situation can bring them to mind, the favourite armchair, 'their place' can bring them to mind. Their memories can be joyful, painful or even haunting, depending on the experience of them and their time.

If I consider my English grandparents. I will remember my Nana each time I pick up a mop bucket. I remember for two reasons: Firstly because her saying was always 'what's a job worth doing unless it's done properly' when all I wanted to do was cut the corner of scrubbing and cleaning down the front pavement outside her terrace house (with water and bleach) and go out and play with my cousins. I'll also remember because there is a great story that our family's women handle childbirth well, and that Nana was mopping the floor, got a pang and then apparently dropped my mum out, delivering her into that mop bucket!

My granddad was born in Williamson's Park, Lancaster, the son of the Head Gardener. So, again with him there are memories not only of chasing him around the kitchen to put whipped cream on his nose, a game we played in his latter years when he could barely run! But, also the park itself and of course gardening. His love of the soil ensured our passions

of muck and plants were evenly shared! Even now, as I plant my onions 'his way' or scout the fields for sheep droppings to place in a bag in my water butt (yes, I'm not joking!), or the stench that comes out of said water butt when I feed the tomatoes with it, I remember him.

In my memories of remembering my 'not Indian-Indian' Nana, I am reminded of the gifts of faith, of service, of duty; not to mention anything about my Indian cooking skills or the love of making homemade fudge each Christmas! The Blessed Sacrament or the kitchen stove bring me straight into her presence and soothes life's challenges!

All these memories fill me with warmth of the by-gone days. In remembering these I feel hope in my heart and know that they have provided me with a model and taught me how to be a grandparent to my next generation. So much of what they've shown me, I have already been doing with my now grown children and my grandchild.

Yet Remembrance in this November's sense isn't about the nicer heart-warming fluffy bits. Remembering here is about those lost in the trauma of war. And it is also a time to remember those who are still fighting for life and freedom, for all.

The traumas of the Great War and

the later World War 2 aren't that far away. They had a huge impact on my grandparents lives. As a farmer my granddad had to provide food for rationing and my nana worked as a factory girl. Even my 'not so' Indian family were caught up with a front row seat, witnessing the Partition in Indian. They whose lives and emigration depended on their 'English' 'not Indian' roots. We cannot even begin to imagine what any of these lived through, or how they survived, but through the grace of God they did. Meanwhile, their friends and family around them fought too, and died in the trenches or on the front line or the streets and houses about them. Their traumas are passed down to us in time. Not as a whip or a beating stick, but as a compassionate heart beating. Their memories and memoirs are spoken to remind us of the horror humanity can cause one another and to show us the preciousness of life and freedom and how love endures. We remember in the hope that this doesn't happen again... That these lives were lost for a reason, one that matters.

As I write I ponder if history is indeed destined to repeat.

As the Ukraine -Russia war rumbles on and shock waves pass out to the wider world; conflict between nations remains but this time with more damaging and planet ending weaponry.

And therefore we must do what every human is called to do from the beginning of our existence. To fill the void of yearning or hurt, and with a compassionate heart filled with love and pray for peace.

Conflict is the way of humanity and as we read the Old Testament, the great books of remembering we see it is as old as mankind. Yet our spiritual yearning and need for prayer and mercy is too. Just as the prophets of old, and the chosen people who went astray, and those who condemned Jesus, we are not asked to retaliate with aggression but with peace.

Even in his last moments Jesus intervenes for us "Father forgive them for they do not know what they do". (Luke 23:34).

Remembrance is hard. It can be filled with anguish, frustration, anger at the loss, but it can also be filled with thankfulness and peace.

Let us today remember the love, the lessons those gone have to teach us, and the honour of knowing them, or being able to remember. Let us also today pray for peace in our hearts, peace in our homes and families and countries, and peace for all in our world. Peace granted not by our human made up means but instead peace given by the grace of God 'Dona nobis pacem'.

Lisa Vallente-Osborne, Lancaster



Plastics are extraordinary materials. They are flexible, colourful, light, abundant and almost indestructible. These are the very properties which make them so useful, but also make it so problematical when they escape into the environment. It is fairly certain that everyone who is reading this article would say they are not a 'litterbug', they recycle as much as they can, and they don't eat plastic. So how does plastic escape?

'Turning the Tide on Plastic' is the title of a book written by Lucy Siegle, published in 2018.* One would hope that the situation on plastic pollution has changed in four years but alas the more we know about the problem the worse it appears to become.

Worldwide the plastic which we throw away, in a single year, could circle the earth four times. Out of the 320 million metric tonnes of new plastic mass produced each year, eight million tonnes leaks into the world's oceans and waterways. By 2050 we shall have more plastic in the sea than fish.*

Plastic is often light so it is easily blown away. How many pieces of plastic are in our streets? Multiply that by the number of roads in your area. How many bins are overflowing in local parks, outside shops? Wrappers, our kiddies' toys and other inadvertent dropping of plastic by mistake, happens. There can be sauce pouches, biscuit wrappers, plastic stirrers etc. dropped on the ground outside cafés. Maybe we don't want to dirty our hands to pick them up, they're blown away, maybe a bird eats them along with the food they find, the owner of the café may sweep them up and put them in a rubbish bin, as it is too messy, or it is too time consuming to recycle.

Recycling Plastic – the reality in 2018

Does your local authority have a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF, pronounced MURF)? At £6 million a pop, councils are reluctant to invest in loads of MRFs to sort their waste. Instead, they are often owned by Waste Giants who must generate a profit to satisfy their shareholders. MRFs have ballistic separators which bounce and vibrate waste along a belt. Pumped air separates lightweight plastics from heavier glass and metals. An infra-red beam might be fired into a piece of rubbish to 'see' what kind of resin the item is made from. Clever? The truth is that a lot of plastic is not recognized or too difficult to separate and therefore is rubbished. We get through five million tonnes of plastic packaging a year, (remember plastic is very light) but according to industry insiders, we only have the capacity to

recycle 350,000 tonnes a year – only 7% of what we use. Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) says only 10 – 15% of mixed plastic is recycled. In 2022 Greenpeace carried out The Big Plastic Count. From the results they estimated that only 12% of our household plastic packaging waste is actually recycled in the UK. ***

Councils want to empty our bins and keep residents happy; The public is happy to recycle as they feel they are 'doing their bit'; Politicians want the economy to grow so are not generally inclined to curb plastic production.

Plastic is made from oil: oil that is pumped from the ground beneath oceans, fields, countryside and precious wilderness. Boycotting single use plastic cuts the amount of fugitive plastic and takes a stand against new oil exploitation and extraction. A double high five for the planet.

What shall we do?

Can we reinvent our relationship with single use plastic to eliminate, replace and recycle plastics faster and more effectively? Plastic production, already rampant, is ramping up massively through what industry terms as 'the public demand for it.'

If we cease to demand single use plastic, industry will respond either by 'plastic washing' our brains into thinking we can't do without it or facing their responsibility to embrace a Circular Economy. **

Could we:

- 1 Always take own mug and a bottle of tap water with us wherever we go?
- 2 Assess a week's plastic waste in our households and look at the 90% which won't be recycled
- 3 Aim to reduce that plastic waste by half and repeat the assessment in a month's time?
- 4 Talk to everyone about what we are doing?
- 5 Encourage community groups, work places, businesses to reduce plastic production and/or use?
- 6 Lobby politicians, especially our own MP

* 'Turning the Tide on Plastic' by Lucy Siegle ISBN 978 1 409 18299 3

Twitter@Lucysiegle and Instagram@the seagull

** www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org

*** The Big Plastic Count:

www.thebigplasticcount.com

**** LGA: www.local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-over-half-million-tonnes-recycling-rejected-point-sorting

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Hang High the Cross

Earlier this year Cardinal Newman College Preston launched a competition for students in their feeder Catholic high schools to design and make a crucifix to be displayed in some of the new and remodelled buildings at the college. They received over 150 entries and were absolutely blown away by the standard of the entries and the effort that went into the design and production of the artefacts. The entries included crucifixes which had been 3D printed, welded and painted and made

from ceramic, plaster, wire, wood and even wool. The principal, Nick Burnham, had an unenviable task to choose the winners!

Many of the entries will be displayed around the college and hopefully their designers will be able to see them when they come to study at Cardinal Newman in the future. Many students received a Highly Commended certificate and a sweet treat and our three winners chose a shopping voucher as their prize.

All those who took part should be extremely proud of their efforts.

Highly commended ++++++

Brownedge St. Mary's Catholic High School, Preston – Jessica Berrill, Ayriya Dapour, Gabriela Slomiana, Kyra Dawson, Ryan Counsell and Suzie Catterall.

St. Bede's Catholic High School, Lytham – Jacob Fox, Jason Sandford Jones, Edie Bridgeman and Thomas Massey.

Our Lady's Catholic High School, Preston – Abigail, Leo, Phoebe, Maya, Adyan, JW, Jack, Theo, Sam and Oliver.

St. Augustine's RC High School, Billington – Chloe Bramwell, George Whitehead and Jude Etough.

Holy Cross Catholic High School, Chorley – Charlotte, Amelia, Lee, Mia, Brogan, Lily Mae, Amber, Anthony, Ben, Alfie and Jurand.

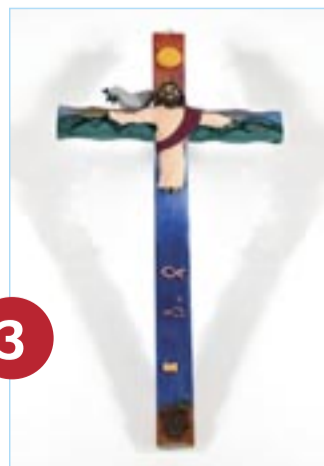
+++++ Well done!

The winners:

1st Prize
KENZIE NODWELL
St. Bede's Catholic High School, Lytham

2nd Prize
EVA
Our Lady's Catholic High School, Preston

3rd Prize
MIA
Holy Cross Catholic High School, Chorley



Onward Christian Soldiers ...

Sadly, conflict has been a part of life from the earliest of times and inevitably religion has become involved. The Old Testament makes regular reference to tribal war and in Psalms 35 and 64 David pleads “O Lord..... fight against those who fight against me.” & “Preserve my life from the dread enemy”. In the early 1500’s Pope Julius II was known as the “Warrior Pope”, and St. Paul writes to the Ephesians of “putting on the whole armour of God”, and in his letter to Timothy of “fighting the good fight!” St Augustine of Hippo’s philosophy became the source of Christian theory of military ethics and of a ‘Just War’.

It was in Victorian England that many church priests and ministers attempted to help relieve the depredation and squalor the working classes found themselves in. In 1865 the Salvation Army was formed using titles derived from military ranks for their leaders. Hymns written about this time “Fight the good fight” by John S B Monsell in 1864, and “Onward Christian soldiers” by Sabine Baring-Gould in 1871 took a military theme.

The expansionist ambitions of European countries would inevitably lead to the huge conflict which erupted in August 1914 with devastating consequences for millions of lives. As the war progressed tales of supernatural and spiritual phenomenon, and of ‘Divine Intervention’ would spread. The first was “The Angel of Mons” written by Arthur Machen which would go on to appear in Parish Magazines across the country. In the first few weeks of the war the destruction by the German army of the Cathedral at Reims, and months later the shelling of the Basilica in Albert leaving the golden statue of Mary and Baby Jesus hanging at a precarious angle became of great significance. As the war progressed other events of ‘Divine Providence’ emerged.

I have recently read a book titled “Stronger than Steel”. There is no narrative but it is a small volume containing a selection of the hundreds of moving testimonies and letters written by, mainly French, soldiers to the Carmel of Lisieux telling of their miraculous escapes and survival during WW1 by having invoked the protection of St. Therese.

St. Therese had died 17 years before the

outbreak of WW1, and there is a picture of her dressed as ‘Joan of Arc’ for a play she had written performed for the nuns. It is also reported that St Therese had said, “I will die with my weapons in my hands” shortly before her death.

The letters, printed in chronological order, are of various lengths written by men of all ranks, some very brief, but others that go into events in great detail. In each the writer’s survival, of circumstances we can never even begin to imagine, are of them carrying on their person, medals, and pictures and of them invoking the protection of the “Little Flower”.

The first letter is written just one month into the war during what became known as the ‘First battle of the Marne’ when the German forces were just 30 miles from Paris and led to the realisation that the conflict would “not be over by Christmas”. The officer relates in some detail the events that took place as his section were swept by German machine guns, and in his final paragraph states that he owes his life to the protection of the “Little Sister!” (It was also during this battle that the French poet Lieutenant Charles Peguy had been killed having prophetically written “Blessed are those who died in a just war, stretched out on the ground in the face of God.” (Hereux ceux qui sont morts)

In February 1915 a Corporal writes of how he and some men in his company, each with a medallion of St Therese sewn in their great coats, had survived a terrible onslaught and how they feel protection from above. Another writes, “On October 14 at about half past three in the morning I was standing in my usual place when I was dazzled by a great silver brightness and much to my astonishment, before my eyes I saw Sister Therese like an angel. She was walking left and right holding in her hand a very short sabre.” Reflecting back in 1919 another survivor wrote, “In truth I have always trusted in St Therese and it was her protection that saved me!”

By way of contrast Max Arthur’s book, “Forgotten Voices of the Great War” contains more graphic accounts of ‘time at the front’, and of men witnessing the dying of brothers and friends. Whilst all contributors, Allied forces and some German, also survived they provide more brutal details of their harsh indescribable experiences that many refer to as hell!

A young private in the medical corps states, “neither John the Baptist or Our Lord ever said anything about a soldier,.... building confidence in me that if wrong was to be resisted a Christian should be right in amongst it!” A sailor serving in a ship standing off Gallipoli recalled Sunday Services when they would sing hymns that could be heard on land by the soldiers fighting the Turks. “We sang as loudly we could hymns to inspire them like “Onward Christian Soldiers and Fight the Good Fight.”

A Royal Artillery private speaks of having no doubt that praying to God would save his life, and in the Somme, waiting to go “over the top”, of sitting thinking deeply of God and feeling perfectly certain that

He existed. These men were able to tell their story when many men, including my grandad, who had been at Gallipoli and the Somme, could not. Robert Burns in 1784 observed that, “Man’s inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn”, and sadly even today the lesson has still not been learnt! *Dave Yates, Ansdell*

**The guns stop
Everyone falls silent
All heads lower
Everyone is quiet for two minutes
We think about the soldiers
and all who died
for us to have a peaceful future.**

Malachy Dacre (age 8) Our Lady of the Assumption Primary School – Blackpool



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Sister Mary Lucy R.I.P.

The Bernardine Cistercian community asks your prayers for Sister Mary Lucy, whom the Lord called to Himself early on Saturday morning, 1st October. S Mary's Lucy's health changed dramatically in the early hours of Thursday 29th September, the feast of the Archangels and she simply 'slid' very gently and peacefully into His eternal Love, surrounded by all the Brownhill Community, Sr. Elizabeth Mary and two of our French Sisters, one of whom was her sister of Profession.

Please pray for S M Lucy, for her family, for the Community of the Monastery of Our Lady and St. Bernard and for our Bernardine Cistercian Order, which she served generously and faithfully over so many years. She will surely be praying for us all!

S Mary Lucy's Requiem Mass took place at Brownhill Monastery before committal at the Monastery of Our Lady of Hyning on Friday 21 October.

Eternal rest grant unto S Mary Lucy O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her, may she rest in peace. Amen

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