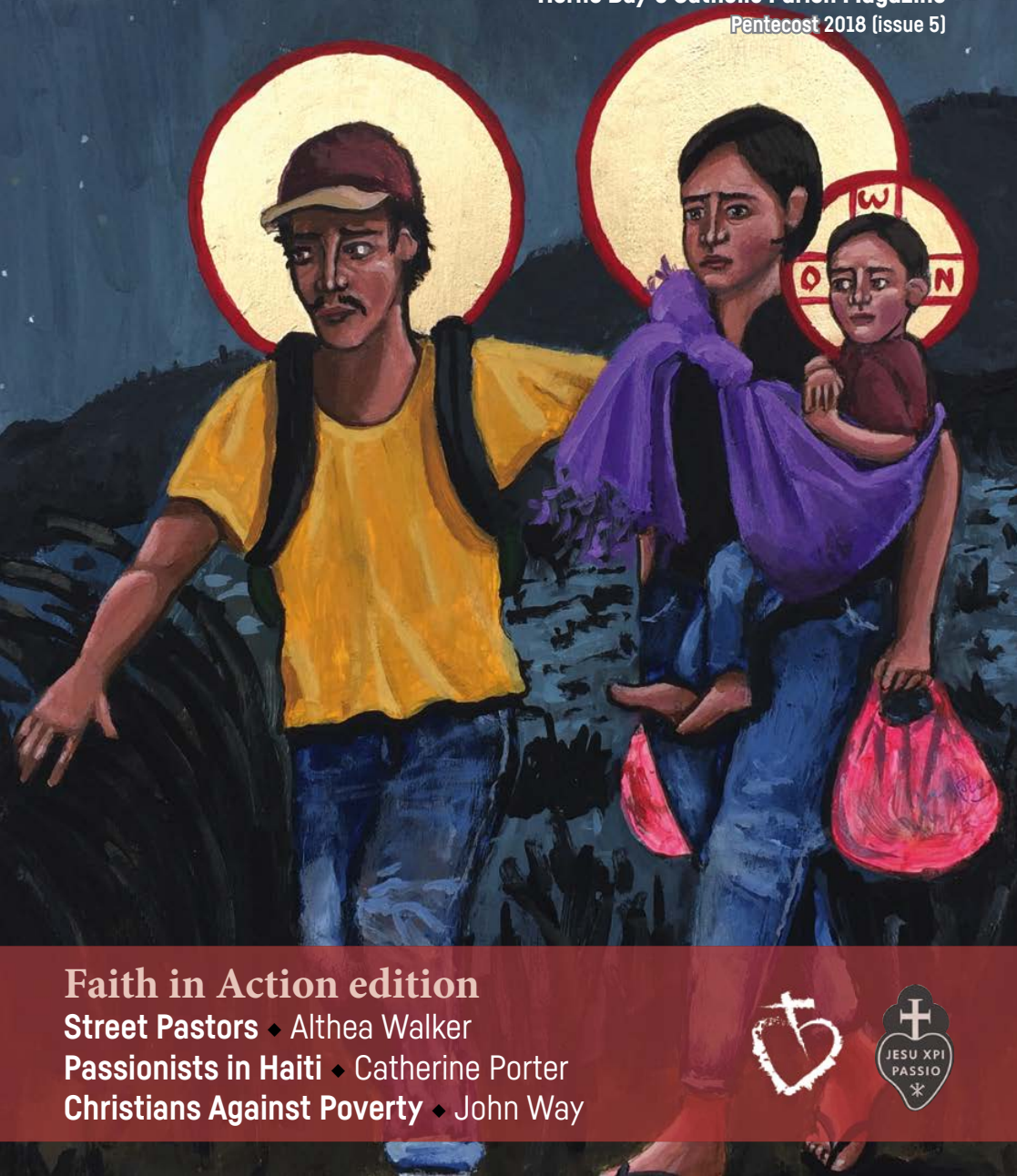


PLATEA

Herne Bay's Catholic Parish Magazine

Pentecost 2018 (issue 5)



Faith in Action edition

Street Pastors ♦ Althea Walker

Passionists in Haiti ♦ Catherine Porter

Christians Against Poverty ♦ John Way





“Don’t Call Me a Saint” Dorothy Day with Homeless Christ by Kelly Latimore [2016]

Dorothy Day was an American journalist, social activist, and Catholic convert. Day initially lived a bohemian lifestyle before gaining fame as a social activist after her conversion. She later became a key figure in the Catholic Worker Movement and earned a national reputation as a political radical. In this ‘icon’ written by Kelly Latimore, she is shown providing comfort and nourishment to Jesus Christ, depicted as a homeless man in contemporary clothing. When commenting that “all men are brothers,” she asserts the need for Catholics to find humanity in everyone we meet; sentiments echoed by Pope Francis “The Body of Christ, broken in the sacred liturgy, can be seen, through charity and sharing, in the faces and persons of the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters” (World Day for the Poor, 2017).

Kelly started painting icons in 2011, embracing traditional forms but in many cases re-shaping, re-imagining, and re-wondering. He was not taught by a traditional iconographer and ‘breaks many rules’ but helps the viewer to contemplate those depicted, and their stories, with fresh eyes. His ‘icon’ of the Holy Family, shown as refugees, can be found on the front cover. Thanks to Kelly for his permission to include these thought-provoking paintings.

In this Issue of **PLATEA**

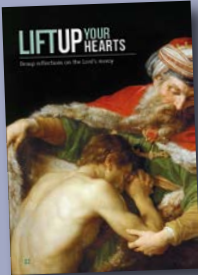
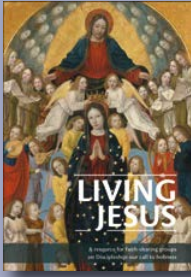
Highlights



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PLATEA

Herne Bay's Catholic Parish Magazine

www.ourladyhernebay.co.uk/magazine

PLATEA features original stories and other articles, ideas and creative content intended to inspire the Catholic parish in Herne Bay to ever deeper discipleship of Jesus Christ.

PLATEA includes contributions that we believe are worthy of our readers' consideration, whether or not we fully agree with them. Views expressed by our contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial position of **PLATEA** or of the parish community. Adverts are not necessarily endorsements of the businesses featured.

Editorial team: Annette Ballard, Connie Caira, Richard Carr, Gabrielle Davis, Marian Green, Mark Nash, Rachel Nash, Deacon Barry Walker and Fr Mark White (if you would like join in, get in touch)
Contributions to be sent to: plateamag@gmail.com or by post: The Retreat, 3 Sea St, Herne Bay, CT6 8SP

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Cover: Refugees: La Sagrada Familia by Kelly Latimore (2017)

Welcome to **PLATEA**

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the fifth edition of **PLATEA**, the parish magazine of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Herne Bay.

Once more we see a great variety of articles which should mean that everyone will find something herein that interests them. We have a couple of 'firsts' in this Pentecost edition which has been themed as a *Faith in Action* edition including, as it does, an article on Street Pastors, the work of the Passionist Order in Haiti and an article written for us by John Way from the Beacon Church on Christians Against Poverty. In this vein, we also have a pair of contemporary 'icons' by Kelly Latimore, an American icon painter, one of Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker movement and the other of the Holy Family, depicted as refugees. These articles and images should prove both stimulating and thought-provoking. If you want to find out ways of getting involved in social justice, contact the parish.

This edition, we feature the first *Parish Beginnings* article, based in part on the research from the late Deacon James Foley - there is much to be written on the life of our parish. Another first, is the first *My Faith Journey* submitted by Peter Green. Testimonies about a life of faith or journey to faith are very helpful to us all - helping us to realise the stories that our community contains and fosters. We aim to have a different person's story in each future edition. If you want to submit yours, get in touch.

I hope that you enjoy all of the articles in this Pentecost edition of **PLATEA**. Thanks to all who contributed. We look forward to receiving your contributions for future editions, in the form of letters, questions, articles, photos and, of course, your stories of faith. Please note, also, the notice for the summer Parish Bible Weekend on 22-24 June 2018 (on page 6).

With an assurance of my prayers and best wishes,

Fr Mark White CP
Parish Priest



“It would be beneficial if every Christian community, on one Sunday of the liturgical year, could renew its efforts to make the Sacred Scriptures better known.”

Pope Francis,

Misericordia et Misera, November 2017



Bible Weekend

Catholic
Bible
School



A mission weekend for the whole parish to come together to share food for body and soul.



Activities for all ages, lively and dramatic presentations, interesting workshops, reflective prayer times, opportunities to get to know each other better, fulfilling and satisfying food and input.



Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Clarence Road

22-24 June 2018

For the programme and more information:

www.ourladyhernebay.co.uk/bible-weekend-2018

Parish in Review

Fr Patrick (80th) and Fr Mark (70th) Birthday Celebration 7.4.18



If you wish to share a short reflection on something that has happened in the parish or have a photo of a recent event please either email: plateamag@gmail.com or write to Platea, 3 Sea Street, Herne Bay.



© Hannah Maple

An article with more photos of this joyous parish celebration will appear in the next edition of **PLATEA**, with thanks to the SVP

by Fr Mark White CP

Parish Beginnings

A question that probably never occurs to us to ask is: how do we come to have a Catholic parish in Herne Bay?

We take it for granted that each town will have its own church but there is often history behind it.

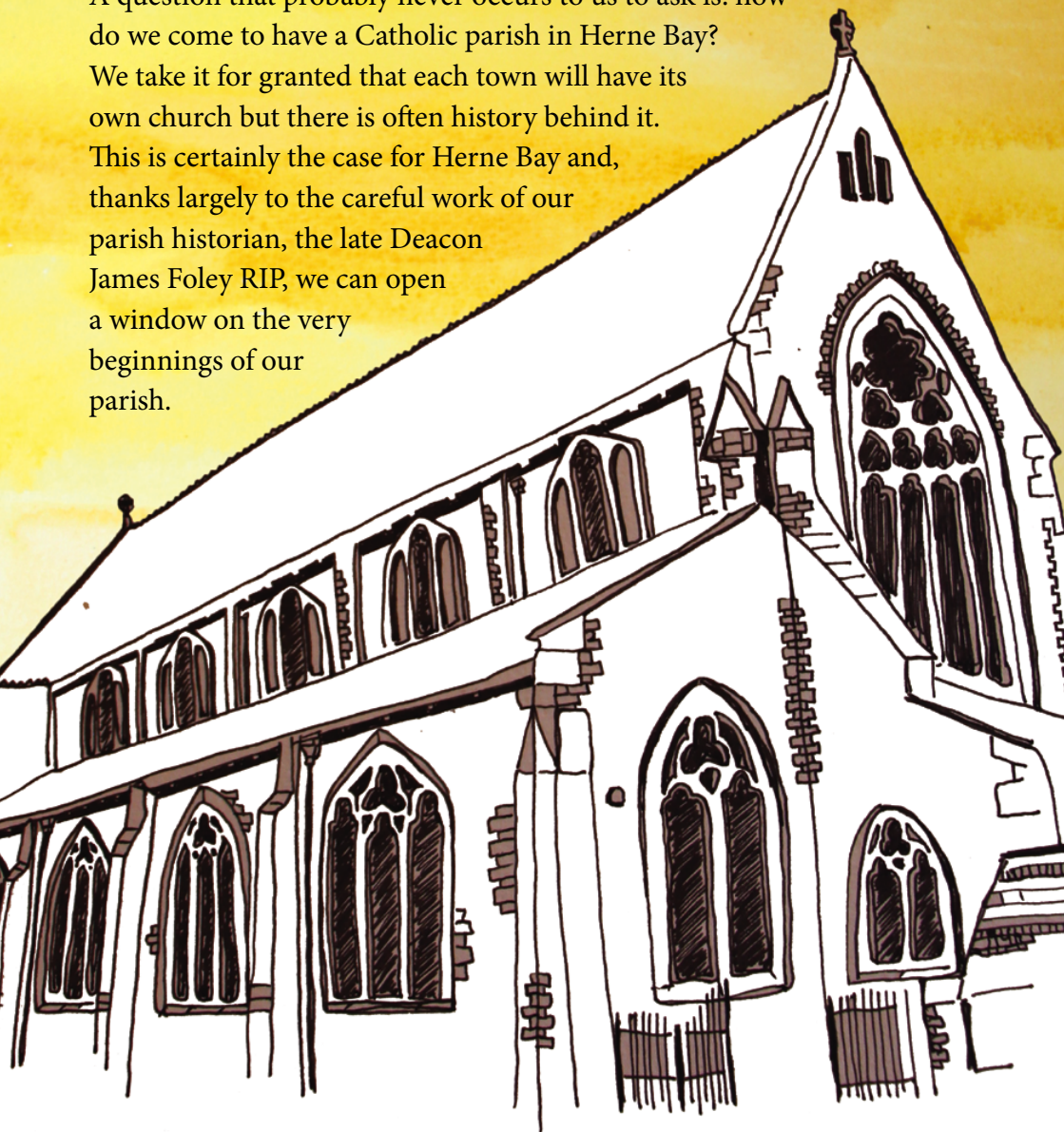
This is certainly the case for Herne Bay and, thanks largely to the careful work of our parish historian, the late Deacon

James Foley RIP, we can open

a window on the very

beginnings of our

parish.



TO TRACE THE ORIGINS of the parish of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, we need to go back to a meeting in Brighton in the 1880's between a Passionist from Highgate, London, Fr Martin CP and an Irish businessman, originally from Co Mayo, Mr Denis Broderick. Mr Broderick and his wife Catherine had a great love for the Passionists and they wanted, as they said, to help establish a "colony of Passionists in Brighton." The Passionists were hoping to found a monastery south of the Thames but it was felt that Brighton was a bit too far from London. Several possible sites were considered and eventually both parties agreed on the small coastal town of Herne Bay. Mr Broderick bought a beautiful house, known then as Belmore Hall, and gave it to the Passionists as their monastery: this house is now known as The Retreat and it currently provides the living quarters of the Passionist Community serving the parish, as well as the parish office and meeting rooms. Possession of the house was taken in May 1888 and the first Mass offered in the house on 5 May.

A group of young Passionist deacons from Mt Argus in Dublin formed the first community. They set about converting a stable block into a temporary church (on the site of the present Retreat Hall and Social Club). On 11 June 1889 the foundation stone was laid for the church: that very morning the deacons were ordained as priests. A busy day!! And barely a year later, on 25 June 1890 the church was completed. It was consecrated by the

same Bishop of Southwark, Bishop Butt, who had laid the foundation stone the previous year. On the following day it opened for public worship.

The name of the church is a little unusual: it reflects the fact that the Brodericks wanted a church dedicated to Our Lady, and the Passionists had in mind the title of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Both wishes were united and the happy combination of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart pleased both parties. You can find the names of the Brodericks on the plaque above the holy water stoop as you enter the church. Mr Broderick's first name, Denis, is given in the Latin form: Dionysius.



At this time there was a Catholic church in Margate and also one in Canterbury. Herne Bay was a relatively new town and it was difficult to know what the Catholic population might have been. The congregation was very small: the Easter of 1889 saw a congregation in the temporary church of six: "a coastguard and his family, two wives of coastguards and a governess." All but the governess were Irish and the governess herself was French – so the parish beginnings were quite international!

continued on page 10

On the subject of our church's name, it is interesting to note that, as of 2017, we now have a statue to "Our Lady of the Sacred Heart". It came to us after the closure of the Franciscan Study Centre in Canterbury where it had been for several years. There is an inscription on the statue which states that devotion to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart was approved by Rome in 1875 so the choice of this name for the church was clearly influenced by recent events in Rome also.



The foundation stone, (pictured above) visible on the right side of the church door reads:

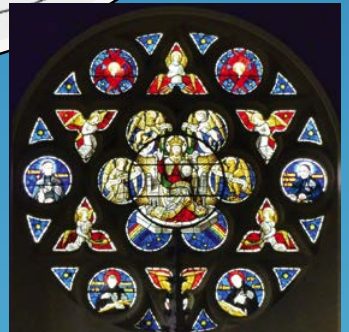
IXP: The passion of Jesus Christ. To the glory of God and in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus, on 3 June 1989 the foundation stone of this church was laid by Rev J Butt, Bishop of Southwark, Leo XIII being Pope and Victoria, Queen of England; Vincent Grogan being Passionist Provincial; the architectural work by A Vicars and ETJ Adams the builder. Denis Broderick provided the funds. On 6 July 1890 it was solemnly dedicated by Rev J Butt.

More on 'Parish Beginnings' will be featured in future editions of **PLATEA**. You are welcome to share photos and stories.

THE ROSE WINDOW



The Rose Window in our church depicts Jesus as a Mighty King surrounded by Angels, Passionist Saints and the Four Evangelists (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Have a look at the window in church and colour this in or try to match the colours from the thumbnail picture to the right.





A QUICK EXIT

When the Church first kicked off in Jerusalem a couple of thousand years ago, it seemed like everyone was doing awesome things in God's power.

The guy in this Bible story (Philip) was part of a team who made sure that anyone who was hard up didn't go hungry. OK, so Philip might have worked in the food distribution department, but that didn't stop him telling people about Jesus and doing miracles.

One day Philip had a heads-up from an angel of God to make tracks for the desert road that led out of Jerusalem, so off he went. On his way Philip met a top bod who worked for the queen of faraway Ethiopia. The official (who was travelling in a chariot) happened to be checking out some stuff from the Jewish Scriptures but was a bit puzzled as to what it all meant.

At a word from God, Philip raced after the chariot and then jogged beside it. Philip asked the chap if he had any idea what he was reading. He hadn't a clue. So, without further ado (and probably before he ran out of puff) Philip climbed up into the chariot. Philip explained that the book was all about Jesus and how He'd made it possible for everyone (that includes us today) to be friends with God.

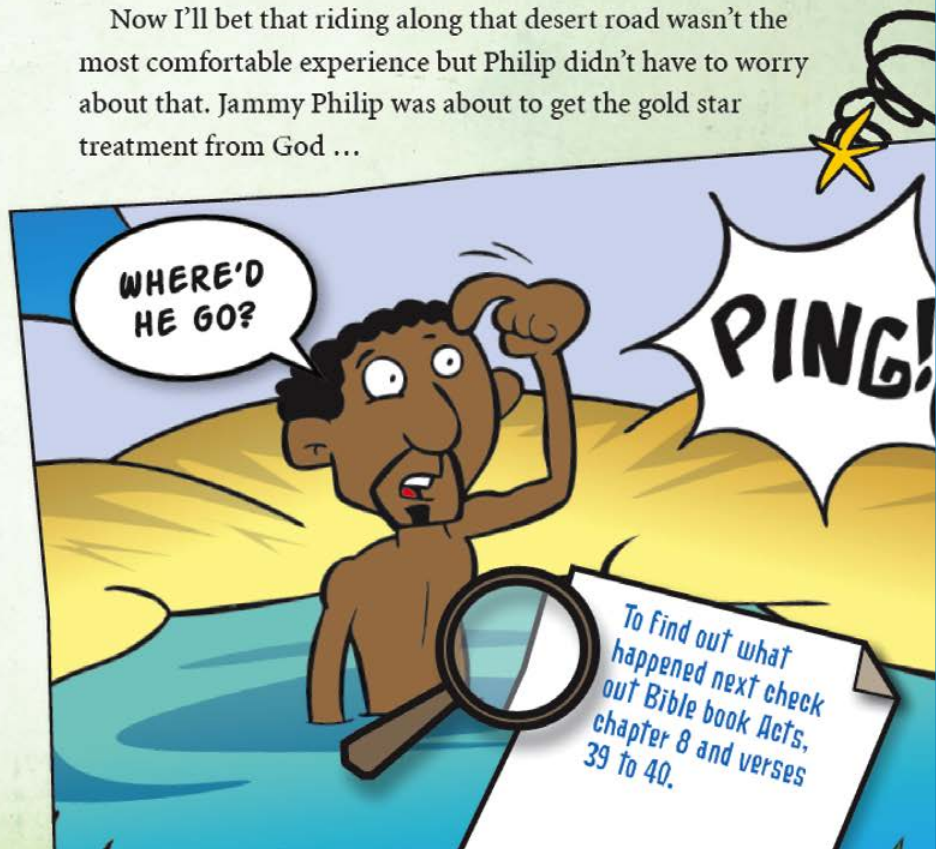
The Ethiopian didn't need much persuading and made his

mind up there and then to become a follower of Jesus. To seal the deal he asked Philip if he could be baptised. What's that when it's at home?

I'll tell you. To demonstrate to God and others that you've turned your back on living life for yourself and are now living one hundred per cent for God, you can be baptised by the Church. It simply means being submerged in water and then lifted back up again (a bit like when in some churches, babies are baptised – but in this case *you're* making the decision, not your parents).

So that's what they did. Finding some water, Philip baptised the Ethiopian.

Now I'll bet that riding along that desert road wasn't the most comfortable experience but Philip didn't have to worry about that. Jammy Philip was about to get the gold star treatment from God ...





Caring ♦ Listening ♦ Helping

Street Pastors, an initiative of the Ascension Trust, was founded in 2003 and has been a part of Herne Bay's night life since 2014. **ALTHEA WALKER**, one of our parish's participants shares her thoughts on this work and invites you to consider joining up.

Street Pastors started in London in January 2003 by Rev. Les Isaac, Director of the Ascension Trust. There are over 200 projects across the UK with over 11,000 trained Street Pastors. It has gone global too, from USA, Europe, Australia. In February 2015, whilst on holiday in Kingston, Jamaica, I visited the Street Pastor office and met coordinator Bruce Fletcher and his team.

The Herne Bay Street Pastors project was facilitated in 2014 by Churches Together in Herne Bay through Christchurch, Herne Bay Baptist, The Beacon and Our Lady

of the Sacred Heart. After professional training, 24 Herne Bay Street Pastors were commissioned at Christchurch on 4 July 2014. We received our caps from MP Sir Roger Gale. Also present at the service were the Bishop of Dover, the Rt. Rev. Trevor Wilmott, Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Cllr Ann Taylor (a Herne Bay Street Pastor), Cllr Andrew Cook, Fr Mark White and Canterbury Division Commander Chief Inspector Mark Arnold (now retired and is the Whitstable Street Pastor Coordinator). Our coordinator is Paul Chaundler and we are all volunteers.

We are based at the Baptist Church Friendship Centre and meet on Friday evening from 7pm to 12midnight, patrolling the streets of Herne Bay town centre. This is just one night every 4-6 weeks. A team of 4 with a leader, from different churches, ages, backgrounds and genders avail ourselves to care, listen and offer practical help to whoever we meet, especially young people. It hasn't taken long for youngsters in the park or on the seafront, drinkers in the many pubs or dog walkers to appreciate



the unending supply of lollipops – an amusing start to a conversation that often leads to them talking about their personal situation or religious beliefs.

We talk with people of all faiths and none. Street Pastors are not about preaching but offer a practical expression of the love of God working through us. We also carry water bottles, flip-flops, space blankets plasters and a small dustpan and brush to sweep up any broken bottles or glass splinters to prevent injuries.

At the World Youth Day in Brazil 2013, Pope Francis said, “I encourage you to shake up the comfort of a Church closed in on itself. The Church must be taken into the streets; if not, it becomes and NGO.”

I feel strengthened by putting my Catholic Faith into action, by being part of the Herne Bay Street Pastors Team. Interested in joining? Please come as an observer or discuss with a Street Pastor from our parish (Deacon Barry Walker, Sr. Angela Burke, Christine Tedder, Olive Dawson and Althea Walker). God Bless. [Email:hernebay@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:hernebay@streetpastors.org.uk)





PRAYER PASTORS + ANNETTE BALLARD

I really enjoyed hearing the talk given in February 2014 about street pastors in our church. I had already met someone who had committed to this good work and to find out that this venture was going to take place in Herne Bay was very exciting indeed. I was reluctant to take part initially, for many various reasons. However, eventually I decided to become a Prayer Pastor.

Initially I was very anxious thinking how could I stay awake all that time and pray. I would be like the disciples in Gethsemane and fall asleep, finding it impossible to stay awake. I would not know the other street pastors or find the right words to pray. I need not have worried about any of these things. I was warmly welcomed and encouraged, supported and guided.

It is a wonderful experience partaking in an ecumenical group and praying together for the common good of our town. It is a vital role and as important

as those going out on the street. A great camaraderie is built up and it is interesting learning about the other churches in our town. I have also been out on the street and hope to train and become a Street Pastor.

We sing, listen to music, share scripture, pray from the heart or read prayers already written, share topics of interest about our faith and beliefs and pray in real time for events that are occurring on the street that our street pastors are dealing with. We support the Street Pastors with prayers, hot drinks and edible goodies at their break intervals. It is a real privilege to be part of the team and I would also like to thank Rose for her hard work in organising our prayer rota. We need new Prayer and Street Pastors and if you feel this could be for you, please come and join us. (Prayer Pastors: Sr. Angela Burke; Bill Phillips; Christine Tedder and Annette Ballard)





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A 'Heavenly' Banquet

OUR LUNCH CLUB has been running now for about eighteen months and was started as a result of some parishioner's dreams and conversations of doing something for those more vulnerable in our community. Samantha says: "For me, lunch club has been a truly amazing experience and heaven sent. I've enjoyed every moment of its formation, from the first thoughts of creating it to the serving of every meal.



Great company, delicious food

It's important to me as an Occupational Therapist to reduce isolation and loneliness. Eating can be a very solitary and lonely activity, especially if you live on your own. As Mother Teresa said. "The most terrible poverty is loneliness".

The volunteers are a fantastic group of people coming from all sorts of backgrounds. All are focused on serving good food in a friendly environment.

We have an array of people who come and share a meal with others. These

include couples, single people, young, old, Catholics and non-Catholics. The atmosphere in the hall is always inviting.

I see lunch club as an extension of our faith. We encourage everyone to come, welcoming them, giving them time to chat and nourishing them with wonderfully homemade dinners and companionship. It always reminds me of the quote 'When 2 or 3 are gathered, there am I in their midst'.

We recently had an Environmental Health check (we got 5 stars again). The officer commented on the wonderful atmosphere in the hall and she has since offered valuable advice and help."

The helpers, most of whom have passed a food handling course work with professionalism, always trying to improve whatever they do. One of the helpers, Ella, who has joined us while between jobs says: "What a wonderful band of helpers. I absolutely love helping

A Sample Menu

Chicken & Vegetable Pie,
Mashed Potatoes &
Greens

Eton Mess

Coffee

Good conversation!

All for just £3

out and coming here and the people that come to the lunch seem to love it too. Really tasty food and healthy - just wonderful."

For another helper, involvement with the lunch club came at just the right time. She had lost a close family member due to illness and says it got her thinking of something else. "I enjoy doing lunch club because I like the people that get involved. Having the club has been good for everyone-those that do the work and those that come to eat. There's been lots of friendships come from it. I have personally felt supported by some of the older members and have enjoyed getting to know them and finding out what they get up to in between times. Has it touched me? Yes, it was there when I needed something in a low time in my life. It is also helping me get my self-worth back, which I had lost over time." (Anon)

Every month we provide tea, coffee and a home-cooked two course meal, which always goes down well. "Would love to see it weekly." says Brian. "We keep the date free and have cancelled other events for it. The staff work extremely hard." And Monica and Peter James think similarly: "We look forward

to the meal with friends, good food and cheerfulness. It would have to be a very good reason not to come!!" Meeting people is definitely a key element for most, whether it's a chance to gather with friends or to meet new people. "I like



Christmas Lunch at the Retreat Hall

coming to meet more people in such a nice parish and I enjoy a good meal" says Paddy Mulvey. "Meet nice people and always enjoy the meals" (Anon)

At Christmas we do things a little differently. For one lady, who doesn't want to be named, our Christmas dinner had a great impact on her: "I wasn't really sure I wanted to go, I find it so difficult now. But I did go and you know what, it was just amazing. They'd gone to so much trouble for us - gorgeous dinner, wine, carol singing, crackers to pull and even cards and a present. I felt really emotional and spoilt and I didn't open the present till later when I was in the quiet of my own home. I just cried, not because of the gift but because of the love of the people who'd thought of it. It really made my Christmas." Then there was our trip to Minster Abbey. From Sam: "Our trip in September to Minster Abbey was

continued on page 20



Cooking up a storm!

wonderful. The sun shone, the gardens were in full bloom, the cafe food was plentiful and Sister Nicola's guided tour was very informative.

One diner commented that this was their first outing since the death of their partner over a year before. And although they had been anxious, they had really enjoyed it". And from Sarah: "I really enjoyed going to the Abbey on the outing. We went off in two small coaches and everybody had such a fun

day. I hadn't been there before and would definitely go again. I just love lunch club. Everyone is so friendly." Well, we certainly hope to have more outings in the future.

It's all these "little" details that make the difference and all for just £3 a time. One gentleman thinks that's not enough, "I always throw in a fiver. I mean, you can hardly get a coffee and piece of cake for £3! And it's worth much more than that"

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PENTECOST SUNDAY SEQUENCE

Holy Spirit, Lord of Light, From the clear celestial height,
Thy pure beaming radiance give.

Come, thou Father of the poor, Come with treasures which
endure. Come, thou light of all that live!

Thou, of all consolers best, Thou, the soul's delightful guest,
Dost refreshing peace bestow

Thou in toil art comfort sweet. Pleasant coolness in the heat.
Solace in the midst of woe.

Light immortal, light divine, Visit thou these hearts of thine,
And our inmost being fill:

If thou take thy grace away, Nothing pure in man will stay.
All his good is turned to ill.

Heal our wounds, our strength renew. On our dryness pour thy
dew. Wash the stains of guilt away:

Bend the stubborn heart and will, Melt the frozen, warm the
chill. Guide the steps that go astray.

Thou, on us who evermore, Thee confess and thee adore,
With thy sevenfold gifts descend:

Give us comfort when we die, Give us life with thee on high,
Give us joys that never end.

Image: Pentecost stained glass
St Aloysius, Somers Town
by Fr Lawrence Lew OP

CAP

despite the UK being one of the richest countries in the world and yet the rates of poverty are rising. It is estimated that a third of people have experienced poverty in their lifetime, with over 10% at risk of persistent poverty. Unsecured consumer debt has almost tripled in the last twenty years to nearly £160 billion, which works out at around £3,200 per household. Poorer people who don't qualify for loans from a bank are turning to doorstep loans, payday loans and worst of all, to illegal loan sharks, who are a scourge on our society, where people are often forced to pay back over double what they borrowed. Many are subjected to threats, violence and other enforcement methods.

So, debt is a huge problem in our nation and it is likely to get worse as the government welfare reforms continue to be rolled out. Literally millions of people are struggling with debt, with an alarming number having considered or attempted suicide as a way out. The relentless wave of bills and demands that just can't be met; living in fear of every knock at the door and every phone call

and every letter. Many are going without food themselves so that at least the children get to eat. The pressures of debt are immense, causing panic, anxiety and a sense of utter hopelessness. Spiralling debt is one of the causes of mental illness, something which received a lot of attention last year with various campaigns to raise awareness.

CAP was started twenty years ago by John Kirkby who, having been trapped in crippling debt, became a Christian and felt God call him to start the charity. Since then CAP has grown into a movement of thousands of Christians and hundreds of churches that are passionate about releasing people from a life sentence of debt, poverty and their causes. There are approaching 300 centres like ours across the country and last year 2,828 people became debt free and hundreds made first time commitments to follow Jesus.

The Bible says: 'Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy' (Proverbs 31:8-9).



We speak up for clients by negotiating with creditors to get unfair interest and charges stopped and affordable repayment offers set up. Once a client is working with CAP, the endless demands stop. This is such a powerful combination of the love, compassion and practical help of the local church, with CAP's professional debt counsellors at head office, to support thousands of people through life's ups and downs until they become debt free.

and it really works!

Not only do people become debt free – they stay debt free! CAP recently contacted their debt free clients and found that 93% of them stayed debt free and 82% still use the budget, which is an essential part of the process, to stay in

control of their money. This why Martin Lewis, ITV's money expert, cannot sing CAP's praises enough, saying they are, "unsurpassed when it comes to debt help." This debt counselling ministry is unique in that it meets people in their homes and it is free and there is always a solution for getting people out of debt. For some it will be a repayment plan administered by CAP head office. For others it will be insolvency, either a Debt Relief Order (DRO), or bankruptcy where CAP prepare all the necessary paperwork and support the client through the process.

It is almost two years since we partnered with Christians Against Poverty to open a Debt Centre in Herne Bay, which is sponsored by three churches. The take up of people



624

CAP Services run in partnership with a local church

93

CAP Life Skills groups run in partnership with local churches

296

CAP Debt Centres run in partnership with local churches

30,855

Calls were made to our freephone helpline last year

1,312

People have found work through CAP Job Clubs

8,115

Families were visited by a CAP Debt Coach last year

Statistics from the CAP website (capuk.org)

engaging with the service was slow at first, but now we are almost up to capacity. Being able to pray with people in their homes and lift the burden of debt in the name of Jesus is such a privilege. Thanks to those who have supported clients as befrienders as we have visited their homes and those who have prayed. Sadly, for various reasons, not all clients complete the process, but for those who do, it is wonderful to be able to tell them that they are debt free. At the end of last year, I asked a lady here in Herne Bay, who had recently become debt free, how she was feeling. She said, "I am absolutely over the moon." Also, I know of two people who have started attending church for the first time.

If you need help call 0800 328 0006 or if you wish to help others through CAP get in touch with the parish office

Many of our clients have come to us as a result of information they have picked up in the local Council Offices and Job Centre Plus. Although there are lots of other places where we advertise the service, with the Council Offices now closed and the Job Centre about to close it is going to be harder to make the service known. If you know someone who could do with our help, please get them to phone the free phone number 0800 328 0006, which will put them through to CAP head office, who will in turn make an appointment with me, or if they are outside of Herne Bay, with their nearest debt coach. Locally we have centres in Canterbury, Whitstable and Thanet.

John Way, Herne Bay CAP Debt Centre debt coach & manager

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Whatever happened to Ecumenism?

by Michael E. Norman



THE DIVISION OF CHRISTIANITY

into many confessions and institutions is a reality which is permanently lamented but rarely addressed. In conventional interpretation, Christian adherents in England have little understanding as to why divisions exist. Protestants wrongly regard their separation from Roman Catholicism as a matter of ritual. And despite the secularisation of modern English culture, the anti-Catholic propaganda of half a millennium is still surprisingly enduring.

Indeed such ecumenical inclinations as are current today suggest a reaction to decline: surviving Church attenders huddling together against the chilling atmosphere of modern indifference. Prayers offered or Christian are all about a kind of vague spiritual camaraderie, a sort of religious globalization. What separates the Churches, however – and which never seems to be recognized – is the Doctrine of the Church itself: the institutional means by which truth is authenticated.

There is a degree of recognition that a ‘deposit of faith’ exists: that there are certain core beliefs which are conceived to be a preservation of pristine Christian teaching, handed down from the Early Church. In practice, the ‘deposit’ may itself be interpreted in diverse ways, and its application in the various ecclesiastical institution is what usually outlines the map of division. There is agreement that eternal truths exist but the authority at whose hands they are delivered is controverted. Catholicism points to a hierarchy of truths – all equally valid yet some more applicable than others according to the

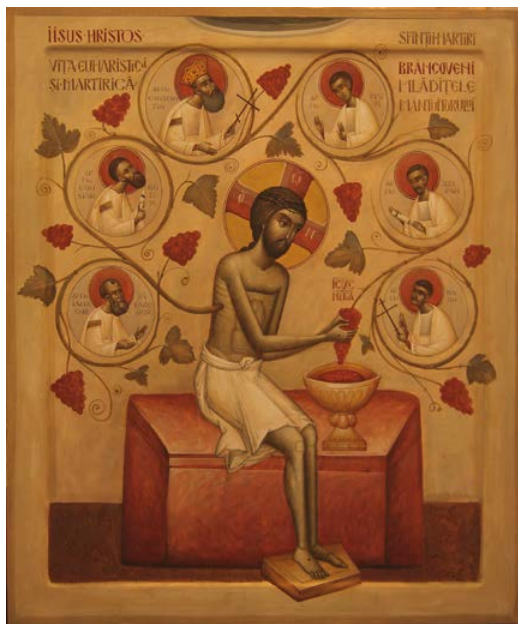
place and culture in which they are set. Catholicism, like Orthodoxy, does have a coherent Doctrine of the Church. It consists in a tradition of believers whose authority derives from successive ages of Apostolic faithfulness to the teaching of Christ. The Saviour, that is to say, did not entrust his message to written texts, or to a philosophical system, but to a body of followers – the Church, the living presence of Christ in the world today. As such his teaching is their teaching, universally true, and received on the authority of St Peter the Apostle and his successors and on the definitions of General Councils. The Church of England, in contrast (faithful though it is in many things), declares in its Articles that General Councils may ‘err’. Anyway, it has no means of attending one. Instead, its teaching authority derives from Acts of Parliament, and its doctrines were determined for centuries by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Reality suggests that there can be no such thing as a ‘National Church.’ As St Augustine pointed out, the truth entrusted by Christ is what is acknowledged everywhere and so is by definition universal.



Images: (left) Arrow Tree by neadameansnothing; (right) St. Augustine of Hippo by Antonello da Messina [1473]

THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM in modern England is that despite the anomalous survival of a 'National' Church there is no real link between government and a religious (or any) acknowledged moral basis. What is the identity of the ethical system on which the authority of government rests? There is no clear answer, just a verbal catalogue of what are claimed as human 'rights.' It is plain, however, that modern issues posit extensive powers for the State, and that these are sometimes antipathetic to traditional Christian teaching (the abortion, adoption and divorce laws are examples.) The ethical basis of such legislation would appear to be an undefined secular Humanism. The Christian Churches, for their part, are divided on these issues, and although this does not seem to worry them as much as it should it adds to the difficulties which ecumenism will in due time have to encounter very directly.

There is, furthermore, the emergence of public policy defined in relation to the development and extension of cultural and religious pluralism in society. This is in some measure due to social mobility, but probably even more to changes within an existing class society, and to the rapid collapse of traditional sexual morality. The government elites have assisted the cultural uniformity, and replacing it with a cultural multiplicity. In reality this is rather specious, since the acceptable cultural differences are ignored when the modern liberal State legislated – and imposes its own compulsions in all manner of 'ethical' issues. 'Diversity' has acquired the status of political correctness, and so is now



questioned at peril by the individual who objects. Yet, astonishingly, the Churches appear to have embraced the 'celebration of Diversity' with some enthusiasm.

The social Establishment, as the prevailing elites and characterized, constitutes campaigning moralist of all kinds, their effectiveness hugely assisted by the organization of opinion through the Internet. Propaganda for cultural 'Diversity' is what is taught in the schools, broadcast by the media, and now declaimed from the pulpits as well. It has indeed become shameful not to embrace 'Diversity'. Equality laws now amount to secular Biblical Commandments, tablets handed down from the heights of liberal opinion. Just occasionally – as in the Referendum on the European Union – a majority are able to express their doubts. The

existence of cultural 'Diversity' is often confused with race, and is attributed to the arrival of an immigrant population, but this is not as obviously significant as it has been made to seem. It is probably only quite a small section of immigrated who seek a 'celebration of Diversity' – for most came here to integrate with existing society, and are likely to be better informed about British values than the native population.

It is the adhesion of the Churches to the ideal of 'Diversity' which is disturbing. Cultural diversity, as a model for society, will draw them into the relativity of values to which the entire enterprise is by logical implication leading. Tired of the lack of progress in Christian unification the Churches are now increasingly enthusiastic about 'Inter-Faith' dialogue.' This, however, is not merely an agreeable excursion

into courtesies between the major world religions but an enlargement of the concept of cultural relativity. Christianity, on the other hand, is by nature exclusive, since it is the teaching of God himself when he was physically in the world – a direct Divine Revelation.

The exponents of 'Diversity' are highly selective: they are dogmatic about their prescribed teachings on – for example – race or gender or democracy. No diversity is allowed here. It is genuine choice to which they are opposed, and to the uncensored Freedom of Speech in which it is expressed. When one religion or culture is thought to be as good as any other the very foundations of ordered society begin to fragment. And drawing attention to social and cultural diversity by 'celebrating' it probably merely promotes what is, after all, a very poor incentive for social cohesion.

Do you have strong opinions on the themes raised by this article? If so, please write in to us.

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MY FAITH JOURNEY

Peter Green

Each one of us is on a faith journey - sometimes moving towards God, sometimes backing away. Ordinary people, people like you and me, sharing their stories of encounter with Jesus; this Good News speaks to the heart and can change lives. Talking about Jesus's love for us and our love for him is the essence of the New Evangelisation. In each future issue we will aim to include one such story. If you want to share yours, email: plateamag@gmail.com with it already written or ask for a chat and we'll write it up.

Where do you start with a topic of this nature? We all have a story to tell of how and why we believe in Jesus. For me it begins in youth, my dad insisted that my sister and I should go to Sunday School in Aylesbury but we weren't really keen, so if we could bunk off and get away with it we did. I suppose the real beginning was with the Baptist Youth Club. I wanted to go so you had to play by their rules "No Sunday, no youth club". Strangely, I won a bible for remembering scriptures; the only prize I have ever won.

Like most young people I started work and drifted away from the youth club and Jesus. When I was an apprentice I worked on two churches, rewiring them, an Anglican and a Catholic one. I spent a long time at the Catholic one as it was also a residence for priests. I was 16 at this time and became friends with Father Walker who was also an artist and was painting a series called the Stations of the Cross. I had a keen



interest in drawing so we would chat and I would watch him and check up on their progress. They are in a different church now and I have been to see them on occasions. I had a Aunty who had become a Catholic and was a friend of Father Walker.

This connection was to prove fortuitous later as I was to get married in the same church, St Joseph's, to my wife of 46 years, Marian. As a non-Catholic, I had to do some classes to understand the responsibilities and the commitment of marrying a Catholic. At the time I did not understand the full commitment really but I gave my word, so that was that. We moved to Northampton, just behind the Cathedral, with two Children now. Marian would go to church on occasions but I would not go; I didn't make it easy. We later moved back to Aylesbury and ended up in a small terraced house not far from the local church, Our Lady of Lourdes, and the local Catholic school. Marian decided to start going back to church and asked if the children could go to the Catholic school. I, of course, said yes because I had given my word that I would do so and, of course, as my nature is to be involved I began helping out at the church and the school. I remember that St John Paul II came to England in 1982 and we went to see him at Wembley - that is Marian, who was carry our third child Kate, James and Emma; I was quite taken with the event. Marian had made friends at the church and was going to 'Recollections' in Oxford at an Opus Dei Centre. I became friends with the parish priest, Father Bennie Noonan, who

would get me to do jobs at the church; this led to me forming a friendship with him and Jim Mulhall. Our Lady played a major part in my conversion. Unknown to me, the children and mum were praying the Rosary for me to convert and Father Bennie had me build an internal replica of niche of the grotto of Lourdes. I did a sponsored walk along the Ridgeway Path with my nine year old son for the local Life group, he taught me the Rosary on that walk. My friend Jim was a supernumerary member of Opus Dei I ended up going to Recollections with Jim and another friend Mike Phillips to Oxford. These guys lead me to take classes with Father Bennie. Unfortunately, I was trying to understand and get my head around the mysteries of church which of course you can not do, this set me back. I remember Father Bennie patiently talking to me and he then told me about his mother, how she went to daily mass and didn't need to know how to explain all the mysteries of the church - "she just has Faith". This was 1986 and at last the penny had dropped. Faith is a gift from God, you have to accept you will never know all the answers; it is beyond human understanding. I also became a cooperator of Opus Dei in the same year. When I look back at the twists and turns of my journey I am so glad that I listened to the Holy Spirit. I am still praying for a stronger faith and for a guiding hand to keep me on the path to heaven. With all the help I get, I still fall down. It's a wonder Our Lord puts up with me. As a father I understand that love knows no bounds, so it is with God.

Crucifix on the Landing

This lovely poem was given to me by Mr. A. Norfolk, a parishioner of St. Theodore's church in Cranbrook. I love it and read it often, none more so than when we are on our annual retreat/holiday at Minsteracres where there hangs a 'crucifix on the landing'. This crucifix is in loving memory of Dick Smitherman who fell from this landing to the ground. It happened on Friday morning as we were preparing for our morning lecture. Everyone was in shock, and our prayers were with Dick the whole time. It was a sombre group who boarded the coach the following morning for our return journey back to Herne Bay. Again, Dick was very much in our thoughts and prayers during the journey. The following day during Sunday morning mass, a message came through from Minsteracres that Dick had sadly died. May he rest in peace. Hence 'The Crucifix on the Landing'. My sincere thanks and prayers to Mr Norfolk for permitting me to share his beautiful poem with the parishioners of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart church here in Herne Bay. My sincere thanks also to Peter Smitherman for his encouragement in my mention of Dick.

Prim Wyatt

WHY do I ignore you
As I walk past every day?
Why do I not let your memory
Guide my every way?

HOW can I forget the pain
On my behalf you bore?
Why do I repeat the sins
Which caused it, more and more?

WHY do I not stop and see
The love you have for me?
Why do I not stop and say
A quiet word to thee?

I NEED to be reminded
As I rush from place to place
Only with your help and grace



IS the world a better place
So dear Jesus on the cross
Stop me as I pass
So I might be reminded that
You are with me to the last.

PILGRIMAGE

BY M DELFANNE

Courage, sang my soul to me.
Come! make life's longest journey -
from the head down to the heart.
Your inner footsteps none shall see
for I bear you on my shoulders
down the way that leads to me.
Come, my lamb and follow me.

If, you would like your poetry or
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PRIEST DOCTOR HANDYMAN

This story about Fr Rick Frechette first appeared in the NY Times. It tells of some of the work undertaken by Passionists around the world, in places of extreme need and poverty.

The grounds that are home to St. Luke's, across town in the suburb of Tabarre, are an oasis from the city's dust and misery.

Pass through the tall gates and beyond the guard hut, and you might wonder if you've arrived at an idyllic hacienda. Yellow weaverbirds build their basket-like nests in the tall trees. Dairy cows lounge in the shade. Out back, there are bubbling tilapia pools and banana trees.

The foundation is located inside the St. Damien children's hospital, a two-story white cement block building. Metal giraffes and horses line the second-story balcony, welcoming sick babies looking up from their parents' arms.

Far more children die before they reach age 5 in Haiti than anywhere else in the Americas. But at St. Damien, they receive treatment normally reserved for the country's small elite — chemotherapy, neonatal intensive care, heart surgery. For all of this, the hospital charges \$15 per week.

Father Rick Frechette is the hospital's founder. He is also the visionary behind

a neighbouring adult hospital, a school for disabled children, the cluster of nearby factories churning out bread, pasta, cement and school uniforms, and a dizzying array of social enterprises, among the latest of which are four industrial-size chicken coops.

Father Frechette came to Haiti 30 years ago and never left. Now 64, he seems like seven people in one — each divergent skill emerging from necessity because there was no one else to do it.

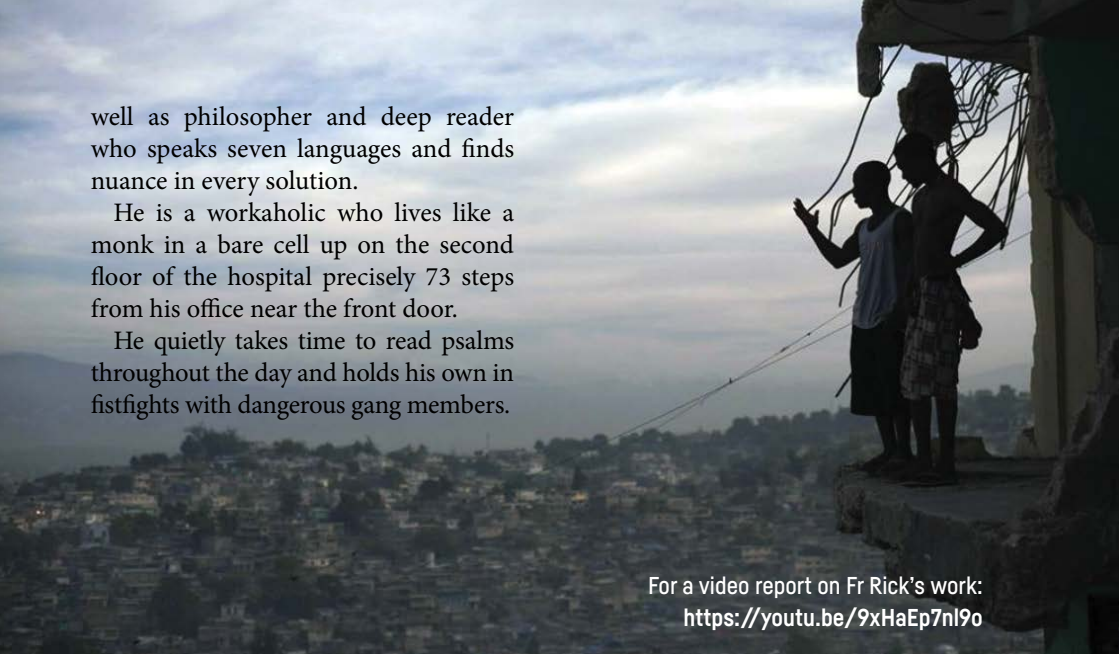
He is a handyman and entrepreneur who sees a fix to every problem, as



well as philosopher and deep reader who speaks seven languages and finds nuance in every solution.

He is a workaholic who lives like a monk in a bare cell up on the second floor of the hospital precisely 73 steps from his office near the front door.

He quietly takes time to read psalms throughout the day and holds his own in fistfights with dangerous gang members.



For a video report on Fr Rick's work:
<https://youtu.be/9xHaEp7nl9o>

Most mornings, after the 7 o'clock Mass he leads in a stone chapel on the hospital grounds, his team drifts in and out of his office to hear his stories and plan out the day over coffee.

Father Frechette grew up in a middle-class family in West Hartford, Conn., and chose to join the local Passionist order at age 20. His first international mission was to Mexico, where he worked at an orphanage, followed by Honduras. He arrived in Haiti in 1987, the year after the ruthless father-son Duvalier dictatorship was finally overthrown.

His orders were to establish another orphanage for the Christian charity Nuestrros Pequiños Hermanos. But because so many orphans were ill, he also bought an old hotel and transformed it into a children's hospital. For all its good intentions, the place resembled a hospice in those early years. In the evening Father Frechette would rush

in children from a malnutrition centre, and return with their dead bodies in the morning.

Haiti had already held the hemisphere's record for poverty for more than a decade by then. Things worsened, unimaginably, after a 1991 coup, when the newly elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown by soldiers.

"I couldn't find anyone to treat them. We couldn't find gauze," says Father Frechette. "I swore I wouldn't be in that situation again."

He decided to get a medical degree, studying for the entrance exams by candlelight each night. At 40, he began his first year at the College of Osteopathic Medicine at the New York Institute of Technology.

It was the grown-up orphans who came up with the idea for the St. Luke Foundation, he says. Once he returned



to Haiti with his medical license, many of them would accompany him on his rounds through the city's poorest slums, towing an X-ray machine and lugging medicine. They noticed all the children picking through garbage and proposed starting basic schools, teaching children themselves under tarps. Since then, the foundation has built and runs 34 schools.

Each step of progress was buffeted by political upheaval. The worst times came after President Aristide was deposed again, in 2004. The violence got so bad, the United Nations sent in a peacekeeping mission.



Father Frechette and his team found themselves taking on another unexpected job, negotiating with kidnapers.

"I said: 'You are a coward. Go ahead and kill me,'" says Father Frechette, his green eyes twinkling as he recounts the story of arguing with a notorious kidnapper and gang leader. "I knew he wouldn't, because they'd all kill him in 10 minutes. All of the bandits — I have treated their mothers for TB and their children for tonsillitis."

These terrifying situations are regular fare for the father.



He and Mr. Louigene figure they have brokered the release of 80 victims. In the last three years, nine of their colleagues were shot by robbers; eight died. Most of the workers grew up poor.

Even the most harrowing stories Father Frechette draws out, revelling in their darkly comical moments. Together with prayer, gallows humour is his antidote to post-traumatic stress disorder and cynicism.

"I'm a priest," he recounts telling another murderer he confronted, "but



my altar boys don't miss a shot."

Early in the morning of Feb. 2, 2007, Father Frechette was awakened by a panicked phone call. During a firefight between United Nations troops and a gang in Cité Soleil, bullets ripped through the corrugated tin walls of a family's shack. The mother and father were wounded. Both their young daughters were killed by bullets to the head.

The next day, Father Frechette visited the grieving mother in the hospital. She begged him to retrieve her daughters' bodies and bury them.

Together with Mr. Louigene and other staff members, he ventured to the city's general morgue.

Bodies overflowed from their racks.

The electricity wasn't working again. The smell of rotting death was overpowering. They scanned the room with flashlights until they found the girls.

As they carried them out, Father Frechette sensed the remaining bodies calling to him. Their words echoed in his mind: "What about us? Will you leave us here? Are we nothing to you? Nothing to anyone?" He has no doubt it was a message from God.

While most of his efforts in Haiti had focused on helping children avoid death, he had come to see they needed help after death too.

Extracted from '[The Heroes of Burial Road](#)' by Catherine Porter
(New York Times, 13 December 2017)

PLATEA RECALLS NOV 2017-FEB 2018

BAPTISMS

By one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slave or free; and have all been made to drink of the one Spirit [1 Corinthians 12:13].

Bonnie Jessica Hossick	5 November
Amelia-Noelia Moronta-Jacobs	29 December
Henrietta Ivy Louise Risley	30 December
Hattie Mary Sturmey	28 January
Isabella Kingman	18 February
Fredrick(sic) Welney Shakour Crick	24 February

DEATHS

We are the Lord's. Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living [Romans 14:7-9].

Naomi Martha Marsh	13 Oct (funeral 12 Dec)
Ian Richard Bartlett	3 November
Gaetana KittyPsaila	11 November
Marie Oliver	14 November
Laura Catherine Love	17 November
Sylvia Fenech	21 November
Violet Mary Josephine Trout	23 November
Margaret Bounds	17 December
John Harris Gill	4 January
Teresa Post	12 January
Jacqueline Ann Suggett	13 January
Peter Paul Spiteri	14 January
Desmond O'Keefe	15 January
Maureen Ann Edmeades	16 January
Sarah Richards	17 January
Albert Frank Benjamin	1 February



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Mary Magdalene

12A/2hrs/Dir: Gareth Davis

There was very little dialogue in this film with the occasional subtitle. Unknown characters lead us to believe that Mary of Magdala was headstrong and defied her family. She meets Jesus and is baptised.

I suppose I shouldn't be surprised that film makers rewrite history but that is what I feel was wrong with the film, Mary Magdalene, which I went to see recently.

We cannot know for sure how she lived her life, and there is not much in the Bible to inform us. That isn't my gripe. It is the assumption that any woman could manage to be so free as depicted in the film was unbelievable. At one point, she is shown making her way to Jerusalem unaccompanied by neither man nor woman, roughly

jostled by crowds of men.

Yes, she possibly was an apostle but never named. The men were named, just showing the status of women in those times and cultures. She was undoubtedly one of the women mentioned who supported Jesus in his mission.

I also thought Jesus was depicted as unsure and weak. The actor was OK if a little too old, but he lacked charisma, which I believe Jesus must have had. I know it was a film about Mary Magdalene but still HE was HER focus, and he lacked that.

At one point after Jesus was crucified she did say to the Disciples that Jesus had said His Kingdom was to be in their heart of hearts, and there was no talk of the Resurrection, although a long distance shot with no dialogue showed a white-dressed figure sitting, talking.

Although there was not a

lot of dialogue, what there was was mumbled. For instance, it was impossible to know who was who among the Apostles, except Judas. To my surprise he was portrayed as a young good looking husband and father, smiling and likeable, no suggestion of his dark character. There was, however, a long-distance shot showing him hanging.

Mary, Jesus' Mother, appears briefly and discusses Mary Magdalene's love for her son. She had little impact in the story, and was not our imagined perception of a beautiful woman, and seemed a trifle old.

The settings were very good and the costumes seemed authentic. For the reasons above my total enjoyment was spoilt. In writing about it and, since then, thinking about various parts of it, I would consider seeing it again.

CC



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Saturday	Adoration (10-11am); Rosary, said for the parish (10.45am); Mass (11.05am); Vigil Mass (6pm)
Sunday	Masses (9.30am and 11.15am)



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PLATEA

Pentecost 2018 issue 5