

Catholic People

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Marriage Preparation

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New priests joining our diocese – but they face a challenge!

At the Chrism Mass at St David's Metropolitan Cathedral on 12 April, Archbishop George gave an inspiring homily which highlighted the bright future the diocese faces with new priests joining us. But he also underlined the challenges these new priests will face. Here is his address:

On 22 July Daniel Stanton will be ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Cardiff having studied at St. Mary's Oscott for the last six years. On 29 July Peter McLaren will be ordained to the priesthood having served as a permanent Deacon for ten years. Robert James will be ordained a Deacon on 10 June and similarly Nicholas Williams on 24 June. We have two other seminarians in training for the priesthood and, hopefully, one new candidate starting in September.

It seems to me that we are not short of priests in this Diocese. The real shortage we face is shortage of people. Congregations are decreasing. Viability of parishes and schools will be an increasing challenge in the not too distant future. These new priests will have to minister in changing and challenging circumstances – not least in an age and culture which at times tries to airbrush faith out of the picture and at other times is hostile to the implications of religion.

We can hardly be surprised at the complex world in which we live, not least as we celebrate Holy Week. The story of these final days of the earthly life of Jesus contains all sorts of complexities and conflicts, full of puzzling characters who behaved in unpredictable and sometimes cruel ways. The man with the pitcher of water who introduced the disciples to the equally anonymous owner of the house where the Last Supper would take place. How much do we owe for direction in our lives to

those whose names we do not know or can't remember? Think of the disciples trying to use swords to defend. Think of Pontius Pilate trapped by his so called authority as he washes his hands, denying responsibility, blaming others by this symbolic action. How common is the exercise of power without responsibility, not only in the public sphere but in our personal lives too.

*Sometimes they strew his way,
And his sweet praises sing;
Resounding all the day
Hosannas to their King.
Then 'Crucify!
Is all their breath,
And for his death
They thirst and cry.*

The story of Holy Week is our story, too, as we follow journey Jesus makes to Calvary - and beyond. Sometimes we try to speed up the process, get to the end, find a meaning for everything here and now. We want to avoid the meaning of the cross in our own lives expecting no suffering or pain or disappointment should come our way. But there is no resurrection to new life without Gethsemane and Calvary. We kiss the wood of the cross on Good Friday as a sign that we are embraced by Christ on the cross and we embrace the cross in our own lives as means of uniting our life and death to his.

The famous English novelist Agatha Christie wrote this paragraph in her autobiography: "Quite unexpectedly one day (I think in the middle of a maths lesson) the teacher suddenly launched forth on a speech on life and religion. All of you, she said, will pass through a time when you feel despair. If you never face despair you will never know the Christian life. To be a Christian you must face and accept the life that Christ faced and lived. You must enjoy things as he enjoyed things; be as happy as he was at the marriage



Pictured at the Chrism Mass – Dale Cutlon (applicant for priesthood training) Robert James (to be ordained deacon), Nicholas Williams (to be ordained deacon) and Bro Ambrose Jackson (Cardiff Oratory in formation).



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CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Marriage Care volunteers

"Pre-marriage courses are a special expression of preparation. And we see so many couples, who perhaps come to the course somewhat reluctant. But afterwards they are happy and grateful, because they have found there the opportunity – sometimes the only one – to reflect on their experience in non-trivial terms."

Pope Francis, Catechesis on Engagement, May 27th 2015

This year Marriage Care is marking Pentecost Sunday (June 4th) and Volunteers' Week (June 1st-7th) with a particularly important appeal for more volunteers to help us expand our services to couples.

At Marriage Care our goal is to radically increase the amount of marriage preparation courses we deliver whilst continuing to maintain our support for couples experiencing difficulties through our relationship counselling service. At present over 3000 couples a year experience either a Preparing Together day or a series of FOCCUS© sessions, around a third of all those marrying in the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

We want to double these figures by the end of 2019. Our interactive courses give couples an opportunity to take time to think about the great commitment they are entering into, as well as to learn the tools they will need to draw on in the future. The content of Preparing Together in particular draws on all we have learned from our experience of counselling couples in distress over the last 70 years.

Could you help us to do more for marriage, to reach more couples who are preparing for the sacrament? We are looking for Catholic volunteers who can commit to a three-day training course and thereafter to three days (usually Saturdays) a year delivering the Preparing Together day as part of a team. For every six new volunteers we can potentially reach an additional 100 couples a year.

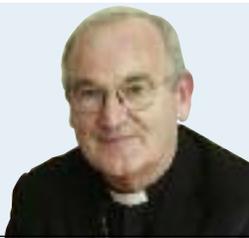
In the Cardiff Archdiocese our Marriage Care teams currently work from three Centres in Cardiff, Hereford and Newport. Two volunteers at our Cardiff centre, Mike and Margaret, told us this about their experiences: "We always enjoy delivering the Preparing Together course, although it is a demanding day for us. It is good to see couples embarking on married life and share their excitement and hopes for the future. We believe we can offer them something of value and make them think more about what the nature of their commitment to each other is, and why that is important. By being there, we can show them Catholicism in action, caring and reaching out, which many will not have experienced before."

To learn more about Marriage Care visit www.marriagecare.org.uk. To book a place on a marriage preparation course, or for counselling, call 0800 389 3801. For further information or to apply for any volunteer vacancies please contact your local Centre or volunteer@marriagecare.org.uk

See lead article on page 3 where Archbishop George seeks your views on marriage preparation.



ARCHBISHOP
GEORGE'S
ENGAGEMENTS



MAY 2017

Monday 1 May	Bishops Retreat in Rome
Thursday 4 May	Return from Rome
Friday 5 May	Confirmation Merthyr Tydfil 7pm
Saturday 6 May	Confirmation Holy Family Cardiff 6pm
Wednesday 10 May	Journalism Seminar BBC 11.30am
Thursday 11 May	St. Edmund's College Ware 11am
Friday 12 May	Confirmation St. Patrick's Grangetown 7pm
Saturday 13 May	Confirmation St. Joseph's Cardiff 6pm
Sunday 14 May	Confirmation St. David's Cathedral 11am
Wednesday 17 May	Confirmation St. Mary's Dinas Powys 7pm
Thursday 18 May	Patrimony Committee of the Bishops Conference, London. 1.00pm
Friday 19 May	Confirmation St. Alban's Cardiff 7pm
Saturday 20 May	Confirmation St. Helen's Barry 6pm
Sunday 21 May	National Pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Taper 2pm
Tuesday 23 May	Good Shepherd Service for Schools, St. David's Cathedral 11.30am
	Leavers Mass St. Mary's Lugwardine 2pm
Friday 26 May	Presents Prizes Stonyhurst College Lancashire

ARCHDIOCESAN DIARY OF EVENTS

Archesgobaeth Caerdydd

BEL – Belmont Abbey – The Retreats Secretary - email: retreats@belmontabbey.org.uk or tel: 07799 811 646. All retreats begin with Vespers at 6.00 pm – check-in at Hedley Lodge from mid afternoon
LL – Ty Croeso Centre, Llantarnam Abbey, Cwmbran tel: 01633 867317
PRC – Pastoral Resources Centre, 910 Newport Road, Rumney, Cardiff tel: 029 20360044
St.P – St Peter's Church, St Peter's Street, Cardiff CF24 3BA

- Friday 5 May** Concert at St David's Cathedral and Cornerstone. The Cathedral Choir will be joined by the Musart Choir, from Belgium. 7.30pm
- Saturday 6 May** Enthronement and Crowning of the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima. St David's Cathedral 10am
- Thursday 18 May** Training for Ministry of Consolation, Abergavenny and on 25 May at the Cornerstone, Cardiff.
- Thursday 18 May** An introduction to Amores Laetitia. See advert on this page.
- Sunday 21 May** Archbishop George will lead National Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of the Taper in Cardigan 2.30pm For more information contact Fr Philip Harries Tel 01239 612615.
- Tuesday 23 May** Good Shepherd Service for Schools St David's Cathedral 11.30am
- Sunday 4 June** St David's Cathedral. Mass for new Catholics, 5.30pm

To list Archdiocesan and Deanery Events in this Diary contact: Pastoral Resources Centre, 910 Newport Road, Rumney, Cardiff CF3 4LL Tel: (029) 2036 5963 Fax (029) 2079 3172 email: publications@rcadc.org

Appointment of June Osborne as Bishop of Llandaff

Speaking from Rome where he is currently attending a conference the Archbishop of Cardiff, the Most Rev. George Stack, on hearing of the appointment of the new Bishop of Llandaff said:

"I send my best wishes and prayers to Bishop Designate June Osborne on her appointment to the See of Llandaff in the Church in Wales. I am sure she will experience a warm Welsh welcome as she assumes her new responsibilities; and will be uplifted in her new ministry by the faith, history and culture of the beautiful part of God's vineyard."

FAMILIAS FRIENDS' EVENTS 2017



THE JOY OF LOVE:

The Challenge of Amoris Laetitia in the Home, Parish and School



Fr Chris Thomas will offer an introduction to Amoris Laetitia Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation on marriage and the family as an aid to reflection, dialogue and pastoral practice through the lens of the home, parish, school partnership.

Fr Chris Thomas has been a full-time youth chaplain, university chaplain, parish priest and is now director of the Innocent Project. Fr Chris has spoken at conferences in England, Ireland and mainland Europe and is a member of the National Service Team for Charismatic Renewal and a regular contributor to Good News magazine.

Entry: £10 for FAMILIAS Members, Associates and Friends; £20 for all others
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Contact: Nikoleen O'Brien T: 0151 523 1068 Email: n.obrien@lvce.co.uk	Contact: Anne-Marie Sparrow T: 01275 460288 Email: anne.marie.sparrow@stthomas.org.uk	Contact: Joanna White T: 02920 365964 Email: joanna@stcivilians.org	Contact: Charlotte McWierlin T: 0207 931 6064 Email: twilly@stcivilians.org.uk

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Marriage preparation: Your views invited on future practice



The Pope greets newly-wedded couples at an audience in the Vatican

By Joanne White

How can the Church help couples to sustain a loving and lasting marriage? Archbishop George is asking for YOUR views.

Engaged couples today spend months if not years planning the perfect wedding with no expense spared for the big day. The clothes, the cars, the photos, the fireworks, the parties, the presents are all organised in advance. The average cost is £24,000. And yet often something is missing: preparation for the marriage itself.

While weddings in our Church are wonderful, they're just the start of a marriage, a marvellous lifelong partnership out of the spotlight and with more rewards - and challenges! - than any nuptials. This is the background to the Apostolic Exhortation in 2016, *Amoris Laetitia*; The Joy of Love (AL) Marriage Preparation is a process rather than an event and gives couples who want to marry in the Catholic Church an opportunity to reflect on what marriage means to them and to the Church and to look at the commitment and sacramental implications involved.

Just as a wedding planner provides a blueprint for the celebrations, the Church can provide a slid template for the marriage preparations, *Amoris Laetitia* was the Pope's response to the 2014-15 Extraordinary Synod on the Family which was followed in 2016 by the publication of the long awaited CBCEW New Marriage Preparation Guidelines (as reported in last month's edition of this paper). This prompted discussions within OUR Archdiocese around family ministry, and in particular current marriage preparation provision which appeared to vary across the diocese. Subsequently, the Archbishop requested a comprehensive review of current practice and the development of an Archdiocesan Policy to ensure that all couples wishing to marry in one of our churches are given the same and appropriate support during their preparation; allowing for a truly reflective period.

The dignity and beauty of marriage

Pope Francis tells us:

'...we need to help young people discover the dignity and beauty of marriage. The complexity of today's society and the challenges faced by the family require a greater effort on the part of the whole Christian community in preparing those who are about to be married..' AL # 205-6

The overarching principle upon which our policy is to be based is that marriage preparation is a process rather than an event limited to the planning of a liturgy or the completion of obligatory paperwork. Couples wishing to marry in the Catholic Church and attending marriage preparation should be encouraged to view this experience as an opportunity for them to take the time to truly reflect on their call to the married vocation and discernment of the commitment and sacramental implications involved.

Marriage Preparation is a gradual, continuous, life-long endeavour, which follows a three stage process of:

Remote; beginning in infancy, through to adolescence,

Proximate; catechesis for young people, through relational, moral and spiritual formation, presenting the sacrament of marriage, and immediate preparation, as defined in *Familiaris Consortio* #66 and by the Pontifical Council for the Family.

'Marriage preparation should be a kind of "initiation" to the sacrament of matrimony, providing couples with the help they need to receive the sacrament worthily and to make a solid beginning of life as a family' AL # 207 The 'Marriage Preparation Policy' will set out the desired guidelines for immediate Marriage Preparation in the Archdiocese of Cardiff and aims to:

Further develop a proper appreciation of the need for and benefits of good marriage preparation.

Provide a framework for those charged with the delivery of marriage preparation, identifying those elements specific to the role of clergy and those appropriate to lay providers.

Provide a basic template for the marriage preparation process.

Place the marriage preparation within the wider context, reflecting the community's commitment to nurturing vocation.

Acknowledge the need for continuing support during the couples' lifelong commitment to their marriage.

Marriage preparation and practice

The Archdiocesan Family Life Worker, Joanne White, and the Family Life Commission, led by Ansti Corellis, have been working on this process for several months now; surveying the clergy to determine the current marriage preparation provision and practice. Both have met with representatives from Marriage Care Centres across the archdiocese and reviewing how other dioceses deliver their Marriage



A loving and lasting marriage

...and how this can be achieved?

Your views are asked for by Archbishop George following the issue of *Amoris Laetitia*: The Joy of Love, by Pope Francis.

The Holy Father said "We need to help young people discover the dignity and beauty of marriage" bearing in mind the complexity of today's society and the challenges faced by the family.

And this will require a greater effort on the part of the whole Christian community in preparing those who are about to be married.

Discussions to this effect have been taking place in the archdiocese and Archbishop George has requested a comprehensive review of current practice.

In asking for your views, the Archbishop's aim is to ensure that all couples wishing to marry in our churches are given the same and appropriate support during their preparation.

Please respond to his request.

Your Catholic People...

Editorial Dr James Campbell - Editor, Pastoral Resources Centre, 910 Newport Road, Rumney, Cardiff CF3 4LL

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Articles to be received by 15th of the month for inclusion in the following month. Please use Microsoft Word for all documents.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR

New priests joining our diocese – but they face a challenge!

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

of Cana; know the peace and happiness that it means to be in harmony with God and God's will. But you must also know, as he did, what it means to be alone in the Garden of Gethsemane, to feel all your friends have forsaken you, that those you love and trust have turned away from you, and that God himself has forsaken you. Hold on then to the belief that this is not the end. If you love, you will suffer, and if you do not love, you do not know the meaning of the Christian life. She then returned to the problems of compound interest and fractions with her usual vigour".

Our new young priests will learn that their ministry is both untidy and glorious, painful and exhilarating, transcendent and frightening. There will be times of agony and ecstasy, of the cross and resurrection. Those of us who have been priests a long time will say to them "Hold on, this is not the end". You will be strengthened and supported and inspired by the hidden lives and heroic dedication of so many of the people you serve as a priest. And you in turn will be able to inspire, strengthen and heal them not least with the Holy Oils that we bless today. The Oil of Baptism reminding us that life is brought to its fullness in union with Christ through Baptism. The Oil of the Sick which through which the hand of Christ and the prayer of the Church reaches out to heal broken body and spirit. The Oil of Chrism which signifies that each member of God's People is anointed to be prophet, priest and king with all that means.

As our new priests prepare to make vows of service at their forthcoming ordinations, those of us who will welcome them into the presbyterate in the next few months will now be asked to renew the vows we made at our own ordination for the glory of God and for the service of you, God's people. "Hold on, this is not the end".



Deacon Daniel Stanton, due to be ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Cardiff on 22 July

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Marriage preparation: Your views invited on future practice

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

Preparation whilst using the CBCEW Guidelines and Amoris Laetitia to guide the development of our policy. The parish survey, carried out in November 2016, highlighted several examples of the excellent use of the wide variety materials available for preparation and these are often developed by the clergy as they deliver them, in order to personalise them and adapt them to individual styles. The Bishops Conference document clearly sets out the expectations of the content of any course and it is to be our recommendation that a minimum of four sessions are held with the couple, alongside initial & administrative meetings with the clergy, to support couples in the discernment process. It is also envisaged, as is already the case in the majority of our parishes, that couples would be referred to a lay-led course alongside sessions with the clergy. It is here that Marriage Care play, and has do All Marriage Care sessions are delivered by trained volunteers: their recruitment article contains more information. This arrangement with Marriage Care is supported by the Archbishop and future plans include the

retention and development of this relationship. The draft policy will be available for viewing via the Archdiocesan website <http://rcadc.org/> (from May 12th) and Archbishop George Stack invites you ALL, clergy & laity, to read the draft policy and welcomes your comments and reflections of it; Please send these by email to Joanne White parenting@rcadc.org or contact her for further details. It is intended that the collective clergy, together with the Archbishop, will review and discuss the policy during the Archdiocesan clergy conference in June (21-23), when it will be finalised in readiness for implementation in the latter part of this year. Please use the following the links below to find out more about the Apostolic Exhortation; Amoris Laetitia including to download a copy, <http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/amorislaetitia> CBCEW Guidelines <http://www.cbcew.org.uk/CBCEW-Home/Publications/Marriage-Preparation> - hard copies of this document can be purchased via the link or by contacting Joanne White as above.

All parishes gather for the Chrism Mass

The Chrism Mass is the celebration of the year that gathers together the entire archdiocese.

At this Mass, held at St David's Metropolitan Cathedral on Wednesday 12 April, Archbishop George blessed the Oils for the Sick, the Catechumens and the Oil of Chrism, all three of which will form an important part of the sacramental life of our communities during the year. Some of the pictures taken at the Mass are featured here.



The Liturgy of the Eucharist was celebrated to a full cathedral



Papal Knights joined in the Mass with representatives from all the parishes in the Archdiocese



Priests from all over the Archdiocese gathered for the Chrism Mass



The renewal of Priestly Commitment for the priests of the diocese who gathered to concelebrate the Mass with Archbishop George

WEEK OF PRAYER AND AWARENESS FOR DEMENTIA

The National Week of Prayer and Awareness for Dementia takes place between the 12th and 19th March each year. This year, the Cardiff Archdiocese celebrated the Annual Mass for Dementia sufferers, carers and friends on Saturday 18th March at 2.30 p.m. at Llantarnam Abbey, Cwmbran.

The Mass was celebrated by Monsignor Canon Robert Reardon and he was assisted by Canon John Griffiths for the Celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick. Joining the Sisters of St. Joseph were people from various parishes and it was encouraging to see so many people coming together in prayerful support. Many of those present commented on the peaceful, spirit filled atmosphere enhanced by the hymns and music accompanied by Ann Thomas on the organ.

Monsignor Reardon's reflection on the Gospel of the Woman at the Well directed the

hearts and minds of those present on "barriers" that are created in people's lives. Barriers based on differences; gender, nationality, lifestyle, religion or illness.

In Christ's meeting with the Samaritan woman at the well, He broke through a number of barriers. He saw a person first and foremost and reached out in love.

Monsignor Reardon concluded by saying, "someone recently wrote, on being told that his wife had been diagnosed Alzheimer's: 'My first reaction was to fight the disease but then I decided to embrace it.' Another barrier overcome." Let us embrace the "barriers" in our life with love and prayer.

A remembrance of those who had died from dementia during the past year was made at the end of Mass by the lighting of candles and a time of quiet.

After Mass tea was served in the Ty Croeso Centre and great conversation took place.



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"We seek a future together united in mercy and peace"

- Pope Francis

His Holiness Pope Francis welcomed four Muslim leaders who came with Cardinal Nichols for a private meeting in the Vatican to promote dialogue and close collaboration on social action in the United Kingdom.

Pope Francis told the delegation that listening to each other was essential for the common future of humanity as we walk together in our shared lives. This ability to be attentive and to listen to each other is vital as we all seek a future together united in mercy and peace.

The delegation was led by Cardinal Nichols and made up of Moulana Muhammad Shahid Raza, Moulana Ali Raza Rizvi, Moulana Sayed Ali Abbas Razawi and Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra. Cardinal Nichols has engaged in dialogue with a number of Muslim leaders over the past few years and brought the delegation to Rome for the Papal Audience and

meetings with Cardinal Tauran at the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue.

Cardinal Nichols said: "We are deeply moved to meet Pope Francis and we draw great inspiration from his leadership and his encouragement to walk together on the road of profound spiritual dialogue. I also hope that this moment will help the voice of authentic Islam to be heard clearly. We look forward to our continuing promotion of collaboration at a local level at the service of all in society."

Moulana Muhammad Shahid Raza said: "This is a historic moment when the two biggest religions in the world, Christians and Muslims, must come together in unity and solidarity for peace."

Moulana Sayed Ali Abbas Razawi said: "I was deeply moved by the audience with Pope Francis. I could see the sincerity and love in his eyes as he offered words of encouragement to all of us as we came together in



The Pope welcomes the UK Muslim delegation with Cardinal Nichols.

unity. This is an important meeting offering hope for everyone, regardless of religion. There is a common humanity to all of us. Some seek to divide people, religions, east versus west, but there is no east or west; there is just our common humanity as we seek a peaceful future for all based on justice and compassion."

Following the Papal Audience and the meetings in the Pontifical Council, the delegation visited the UK Embassy to the Holy See.

Nuncio appointed to Great Britain



His Holiness Pope Francis has appointed as Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain His Excellency Edward Joseph Adams, titular Archbishop of Scala until now, Apostolic Nuncio in Greece.

Cardinal Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster and president of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has offered Archbishop Adams his heartfelt congratulations on the appointment. He extended the warmest of welcomes to the incoming apostolic nuncio and gave him an assurance of prayers as he takes up his new office.

Archbishop Adams was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, on 24 August 1944. He attended St Joseph's Preparatory School, Villanova University, and Philadelphia's St Charles Theological Seminary. He was ordained a priest on 16 May 1970 by John Joseph Cardinal Krol, the Archbishop of Philadelphia.

After being assigned to advanced studies in Rome, he

graduated in 1976, from the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy. Since then, he served the Pope in Apostolic Nunciatures in various countries throughout the world.

Archbishop Adams was designated Apostolic Nuncio to Bangladesh and Titular Archbishop of Scala on 24 August 1996, and was consecrated on 23 October of that year by Angelo Cardinal Sodano, the Papal Secretary of State. His principal co-consecrators were Anthony Joseph Cardinal Bevilacqua and John Patrick Cardinal Foley

After six years as Papal Representative in Bangladesh, Archbishop Adams was named Apostolic Nuncio to Zimbabwe on 22 August 2002 and after serving five years in that country, on 3 September 2007, he was appointed Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines. He has served as Nuncio to Greece since 22 February 2011.

Catholic leaders in England united in prayer with the Coptic community after deadly explosions in two Coptic churches in Egypt

"It is with deep sorrow and sadness that we learned of the bombing of St George's Coptic church (Mar Girgis) in the city of Tanta in the Nile Delta, and the explosion outside St Mark's Coptic church in Alexandria. Both blasts took place during a Palm Sunday service, where traditionally palm branches are blessed as a symbol of peace. Nothing can justify these atrocious acts of terrorism.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families, His Holiness Pope Tawadros II and the Coptic community across the world and the people of Egypt.

"We have sent an assurance of our prayers and a message of support to Bishop Angaelos, the General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

Archbishop Bernard Longley and Archbishop Emeritus Kevin McDonald - Catholic Members of the Catholic-Oriental Orthodox Forum



St Mark's Coptic Church – bombed during Palm Sunday

Pope Francis calls for greater support for married couples

New Guidelines for the Preparation of Couples for Marriage were officially launched by the CBCEW Marriage & Family Life National Project Office during National Marriage Week this year (7-14th February) .

The press release issued on February 6th read; 'In a complex world where the reality is that not all marriages last, and on-going support is essential, Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia, asks for greater effort on the part of the whole Christian community in welcoming and preparing those who ask to be married in Church. By saying 'I do' the couple begin a journey that calls for great courage, generosity and commitment, and they need the welcome, and practical, relational and spiritual support of the community not only at the start, but throughout the seasons of married life, to help them live out their calling to a life-long, loving and fruitful commitment.

In response to the Pope's call in Amoris Laetitia, and as a fruit of several years' work, including a survey of marriage preparation providers and a conference hosted by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales in 2011, the Department for Christian Responsibility and Citizenship have published 'Guidelines for the Preparation of Couples for Marriage'. The process proposed in the Guidelines envisages a life-long pastoral accompaniment by the community – flexible and gradual, meeting each couple where they are, and walking alongside them in a Christ-like, loving, steady, reassuring way, in steps and stages, at all times being assured that the grace of God is at work. The Guidelines appreciate the engaged couples' need for preparation in both the relational and spiritual aspects of marriage, encouraging them and equipping them to make the best possible start, with the assurance that they do not make this journey alone – family, friends, the community of the Church, are there to support them in their 'life-long project'.

Bishop Peter Doyle, Chair of the Bishops' Conference Committee for Marriage and Family Life commented: "I am delighted that we are launching these guidelines in national Marriage Week. I hope they will support the good work going on in our communities to welcome, accompany and help young couples prepare for a lifelong, fruitful and happy marriage. As Pope Francis has said, often they are left to their own devices, but it's precisely at this time that they



Pope Francis: "Welcome those who ask to be married in church."

need our closeness and strong spiritual support. We have a great opportunity to rediscover together the beauty of marriage and family life according to God's plan."

The Guidelines encourage whole communities to develop their shared vision for marriage, and marriage preparation, as essential to the life and mission of the Church in their particular place. Everyone involved needs to be well trained and well informed, allowing for a flexibility of approaches in delivery and content.

The Guidelines, intended to be descriptive rather than prescriptive, suggest a range of actions for parishes and dioceses, including the development of marriage preparation 'teams' with clergy and lay people sharing together in accompaniment of marriage and family life.'

For further information please see the MFL Website at the CBCEW:

<http://www.catholicfamily.org.uk/what-we-do/marriage/marriage-preparation/guidelines-for-marriage-preparation>

See page 3 – Archbishop George's appeal for your views.

A Ministry of Consolation – appeal for volunteers

A Ministry? The Introduction to the Order of Christian Funerals states:

"When a member of Christ's Body dies, the faithful are called to a ministry of consolation ... the Church calls each member of Christ's Body to participate in the ministry of consolation: To care for the dying, to pray for the dead, to comfort those who mourn."

So the Priests of the Diocese have been asked to recruit and form parish teams for the Ministry of Funerals. Such a ministry is already established on the continent. In many of our own parishes as well as the Bereavement Groups there are more or less formally established teams who turn out to support bereaved families at funerals, both in preparing the funeral rites and in the celebration.

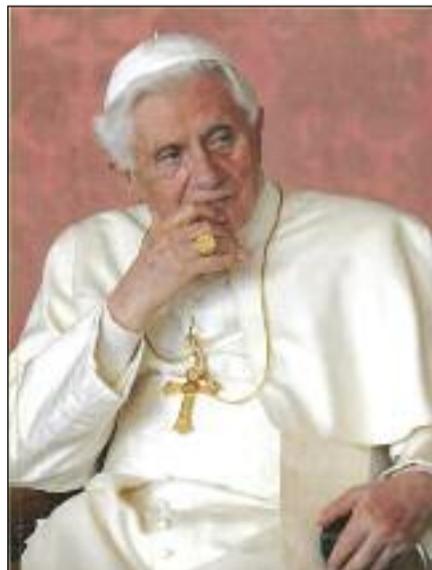
To help spread good practice and develop this work, this month the Diocese is holding initial training. Led by Father Allen Morris, a former secretary of the National Liturgy Commission, two dates and venues offered: On Thursday 18th May in Abergavenny, and on Thursday 25th May in the Cornerstone in Cardiff. Please pray for the success of this initiative.

Cardinal Nichols sends greetings to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on his 90th Birthday

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, sends birthday greetings to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, as he celebrates his ninetieth birthday this Easter Sunday. Cardinal Nichols sends wishes and prayers from all the Bishops, Clergy and People of England and Wales on this joyous occasion. Full Message Most Holy Father, Dear Pope Benedict, On the occasion of your 90th birthday I send this message on behalf of the Bishops, Clergy and People of England and Wales to offer our sincere good wishes and prayers for you on this happy occasion.

After Easter, the Bishops will come together for the Plenary Meeting of our Conference, in Palazzola, and we will celebrate Mass together for your intentions and those of our Holy Father, Pope Francis. Please be assured of our warmest greetings and prayers for you at this Easter time. May God continue to richly bless you in all that you do. Yours sincerely in the Risen Lord,

**Cardinal Vincent Nichols
Archbishop of Westminster**



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Ordinariate is welcomed at its new home

The Wales (South East) Mission of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham has recently 'moved home' from the Metropolitan Cathedral in Cardiff to the parish church of St Basil and St Gwladys, Rogerstone (within the parish of All Saints' Newport). This move now enables a weekly Sunday celebration of Mass. Due to time constraints and other logistical issues, we were only ever able to meet once a month at the Cathedral.

Our new 'host' church previously had no celebration of Mass on Sundays apart from the 6pm Vigil on Saturday evening, so this move is mutually beneficial. Mass in the Ordinariate Rite was offered for the first time at 11:30 on Sunday 19th February; we have brought our statue of Our Lady of Walsingham to the church and have since financed the purchase of a splendid two-manual digital organ, which greatly enhances our worship.

The people of the parish have been extremely warm and welcoming, and many have already taken advantage of the extra Mass times provided. On 26th March (Laetare Sunday) we were delighted to welcome our Ordinary, Monsignor Keith Newton, as Celebrant and Preacher.

In conclusion we are most grateful to Canon Peter Collins and the Chapter for our time at the Cathedral, and to Canon Michael Evans and the people of St Basil and St Gwladys Church for the welcome and hospitality extended to us since our arrival.

All Catholics are most welcome to join us for Mass in our new location. Further information on the Ordinariate can be obtained via our Group Pastor:

Fr Bernard Sixtus
Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham
(Wales South East Mission)
50, Richmond Road, Abergavenny, Gwent NP7 5RE
Tel: 02920-362599
Mob: 07720 272137
Email frbernard@gmx.com



(L to R) Fr Len Black (Ordinariate in Scotland), Fr Bernard Sixtus (Wales SE Group Pastor), Monsignor Keith Newton on Laetare Sunday, 26th March



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Solemn Mass of Laetare Sunday



Blessing of the new Organ: Passion Sunday, 2nd April