Welsh Catholic rugby coach admits he did not pray for a win
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New Catholics welcomed in Celebration of Election
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Catholic youth event fires missionary enthusiasm!

By Christian Mahoney

Flame 2019 was held at Wembley Arena on 2nd March. The event follows the great success of Flame 2017 and is the largest Catholic youth event in the UK and Ireland.

An amazing 8,000 young people gathered together to celebrate their faith and witness their love of the person of Jesus Christ. The theme of the event was ‘significance’. In a world where young people are judged according to Instagram likes and Facebook updates, the event proposed an entirely different way of thinking. The young people were invited to see themselves as the beloved of God with each young person having a uniquely ‘significant’ mission in life.

Inspirational talks were given by Jean Vanier of L’Arche, Archbishop Eamon Martin, Robert Madu, Emma Borquaye (creator of ‘Girl got Faith’) and Cardinal Vincent Nichols. Fantastic music was provided by artists such as Tim Hughes with songs such as ‘here I am to worship,’ and the rapper Guvna B.

The Archdiocese of Cardiff was represented by young people from throughout Newport, the schools of St Richard Gwyn and Cardinal Newman, St Mary’s Bridgend youth club and young people from throughout Cardiff. Over 60 young people plus volunteers participated from the Archdiocese.

The young people returned to their schools and parishes as the best missionaries as they share their experiences with their generation. Perhaps one of the most loved catchphrases of the day was provided by Robert Madu who invited the young people despite all the pressures to compare themselves to others to ‘stay in their own lane and keep their eyes on Jesus rather than constantly looking at other people in other lanes.’

In summary the event was an exhilarating experience for the young people and truly enflamed their hearts. By God’s grace many vocations will have been awakened particularly during the time of Adoration when over 8000 young people were still before the Eucharistic Lord.

More on Flame 2019 on Page 7
CAFDOD concert first for Belmont Abbey

A special concert will be taking place at Belmont Abbey on 11 April, with students from St Mary’s High School in Hereford playing there for the first time.

A fundraising performance usually takes place at the school each spring during Lent, with all proceeds in aid of CAFOD. However, this year, Abbot Paul Stonham has invited the school orchestra, ensembles and soloists to perform in the wonderful setting of the abbey. The performance will give the students a great opportunity to explore the acoustics of the building, as well as providing a musical feast for the audience. There will also be incidental music from renowned organist Robert Lucas. Entry is by donation on the door, and all are welcome to the concert, which begins at 7.30pm.

CES Education Adviser

(Wales) & Archdiocese of Cardiff

Education Officer

Cardiff, CF11 9HD

Salary: c £43K per annum for 35 hours per week

We are seeking to appoint to a joint position which combines working in a national Welsh role for the Catholic Education Service (0.6 FTE) with working in education for the Schools Commission of the Archdiocese of Cardiff (0.4 FTE).

The core purpose of the Education Adviser (Wales) role is to provide educational advice to the CES on Welsh education policy: to build good relationships with the Welsh Government, Welsh dioceses and other key stakeholders such as the Church in Wales. For the Education Officer (Cardiff) it is to lead and support the strategic review of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Cardiff, to provide advice and support to the Archdiocese on educational issues; to build good relationships with others involved in the provision of education in the Archdiocese.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE for both roles include:

- Committed to Catholic education, supportive of the teachings of the Catholic Church and its work in promoting the Common Good.
- Demonstrable, relevant and recent experience of Welsh education policy in general and the Catholic sector in particular.
- Understanding of issues facing schools with a religious character in Wales and in particular the Voluntary Aided sector.
- Good verbal and written skills.
- Ability to manage time effectively and to prioritise work.

The full job description is on the CES Website:

The role will be based in Cardiff but with some work required in other parts of Wales and occasionally in London and elsewhere. Applicants should forward a full CV and covering statement to: HR@cbcew.org.uk

Closing date for applications is Wednesday 3rd April 2019
Interviews will take place on Thursday 11th April 2019 in Cardiff

CHURCH TIMES

ARCHBISHOP GEORGE’S ENGAGEMENTS

APRIL 2019

Sunday 7
10.30 Lenten Retreat St. David’s College
Tuesday 2
Meeting of Diocesan Trustees ABH 9.30
Wednesday 3
Allen Hall, London 11.00
Thursday 4
Parish Visits am and pm
Friday 5
Lenten Lunch and Talk The Cornerstone 1.30
Saturday 6
First Confession St Philip Evens Parish Cardiff 4.00
Sunday 7
Mass at St Philip Evans Parish Cardiff 10.30
Lenten Retreat St. David’s College 12.00
Wednesday 10
Station Mass St. Alban’s Pontypool 7.00
Friday 12
Visit to Turin Shroud Exhibition 1.30
Tuesday 16
University Chaplaincy Dinner Newman Hall 6.00
Wednesday 17
Celebrates Mass of Chrsim St David’s Cathedral 11.30
Thursday 18
Mass of the Lord’s Supper St. David’s Cathedral 6.30
Friday 19
Liturgy of the Passion and Death of the Lord 3.00
Saturday 20
Easter Vigil and First Mass of Easter 8.30
Sunday 21
Mass of Easter Day Cardiff Cathedral 9.00
Saturday 27
Order of St Lazurus Investiture 10.00
Order of St Lazurus Dinner The Cornerstone 6.30
Sunday 28
Confirmation St. Helen’s Parish Barry 10.30

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CHURCH TIMES
Shaun Edwards talks faith on eve of Grand Slam decider for Wales

On Saturday 16 March, but the day before the Wales v Ireland game, Shaun Edwards talked a Catholic audience in Cardiff that he was not praying for a win.

He was talking to them on “Faith in a Competitive World”.

Shaun admitted that he felt faith did not oblige him to ask God for a winning game, but only for the chance to compete and survive injury. He said that his father, also a rugby league player, had to retire at the age of 24 with a career-ending injury.

A lifelong Catholic, on Friday, the day before the Wales v Ireland game, Shaun faced a barrage of questions from the 120-plus audience at The Cornerstone, a meeting place opposite St David’s Metropolitan Cathedral.

When asked why he regularly attended church he joked: “I was scared of my mam,” adding that while captaining the Wigan Rugby League team at the age of 21 he was still an altar boy. His mother’s brother was a priest and influenced him.

“The Church has always been a part of my life,” he said. “It has influenced me on how I do my job as a coach.”

When asked why he was not praying for a defensive coach, Shaun on Saturday, but Wales beat Ireland 25-7 as an intuitive coach rather than an organised one.

He also admitted that there were some things about the Catholic Church he would like changed but when challenged to give an example, he smiled, said nothing, and reverted to his position as Wales’ defence coach. You could see why he was successful in defence... as the Irish team found out to their cost!

George Stack, Archbishop of Cardiff, thanked Shaun for his talk adding that it was an inspirational one and that evening at 6.30pm celebrates a second St Patrick’s Day Mass followed by an Irish-themed dinner.

The Friday talk was one of a series of Lenten soup and bread lunches with donations going to fund several Syrian refugee families who are being housed and supported in empty diocesan properties in the diocese.

On Sunday after the Wales v Ireland game there was an 11am Mass at St David’s Metropolitan Cathedral in which the Cathedral Dean Canon Peter Collins warmly welcomed Irish people to the St Patrick’s Day Mass, although he had to say as a Welshman he welcomed the result. There was a figure of St Patrick, surrounded by appropriate greenery, placed in the Sanctuary.

At the conclusion of the Mass organist and Master of Choristers Jeffrey Howard played the Irish National Anthem heard at the start of the game as a tribute to Irish Catholics attending the Mass.

It emphasised the fact that sport is a unifying force... winners or losers.

Shaun Edwards talks faith on eve of Grand Slam decider for Wales

As the Welsh Rugby Squad made final preparations to take on Ireland at the Principality Stadium later today, assistant coach, Shaun Edwards, took a break from the training ground yesterday to pop by the Cornerstone and talk about his faith, life, and naturally the looming Grand Slam decision, writes Archbishop George.

Shaun gave the second of six Lenten talks whilst they enjoyed a Lenten lunch of soup and a bread roll. The Lenten lunches raise money for a charitable cause, which this year is going towards the Diocesan Refugee project. In the midst of the build up to the Grand Slam game, Shaun said he welcomed the opportunity to come and support the work of the Church in this and other areas of social need and deprivation.

Humility and honesty were the hallmarks of the Q&A session which was ably chaired by the Diocesan Rugby Pundit, Canon Michael Evans. Questions ranged from his personal outlook on life, on faith and on the challenges of being at the top level of professional sport. Most telling of all, perhaps, when asked did he pray for victory, he said his prayer was always to play fairly and well – and to avoid injury. It was a pleasure and a blessing to spend a thought provoking and stimulating lunch with an extraordinary man.

Canon Michael Evans – chaired the talk with humour and rugby knowledge

Christian persecution in Iraq

You can see on page 6 the sterling efforts of the Iraqi Christian community in Wales to raise funds for persecuted communities, not only in their own country but it other Middle East countries.

The Iraqi Christian Community in Wales (ICAW) held their annual Middle East Breakfast event which raised more than £2,500 to help fellow Christians in Iraq, where Christian persecution is rife in a country which was one of the early cradles of Christianity.

But there good causes will benefit, including a primary school in Jordan and a mission in Syria.

It was fitting that the event was held in Holy Family Church, Fairwater, where the Archdiocese is housing Syrian refugees.

Well done the Wales Iraqi community!

Winners and losers

You can see on this page an article in which the Wales defence coach, Shaun Edwards, spoke at a fund-raising Lenten soup and bread talk in The Cornerstone.

A humble man, Shaun spoke of his faith but surprised us with the revelation that he did not pray for a win against Ireland but, as in his career, he only asked God for a chance to compete and serve injury.

Wales may have won this game and Ireland were the losers.

However, the real winner was the great game of rugby as shown by the welcome given to Irish people attending the Mass at St David’s Metropolitan Cathedral the next day.

A great talk by Shaun, with the all donations going to the Archdiocese support for the Syrian refugee families we are hosting.
New Catholics welcomed

St David’s Metropolitan Cathedral welcomed people from all the parishes in the Archdiocese for the Celebration of Election.

Proud parents, godparents, children, brothers, sisters and other relatives looked on with pride as Archbishop George spoke to each individual wishing to enter our Church.

First there was the presentation of the Catechumens who had completed their period of preparation and were ready, after the celebration of the Scrutinies, to be allowed to participate in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist.

After affirmation by the godparents, Archbishop George said: Your own godparents and teachers have spoken in your favour. The Church, in the name of Christ, accepts their judgement and calls you to the Easter sacraments.

The Celebration of the Call to
The clergy process in to the Mass
Archbishop George personally greeted every candidate

Continuing Conversion followed for those to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

Archbishop asked the godparents to confirm that their godchildren had come to a deeper appreciation of their Baptism in which they were joined to Christ his Church and was answered by a resounding “They have”.

It was a great moment for all the who participated and for the Archdiocese to welcome so many people to the faith.

The Archbishop greeted each Catechumen and Candidate for Continuing Conversion and, after the service greeted all those streaming out of the cathedral.
St Mary’s celebrates 20th anniversary

On March 12, 1999, former Parish Priest of St Mary’s Catholic Church, Bridgend, Bishop Edwin Regan, returned to Bridgend to consecrate and bless the newly rebuilt parish church. Bishop Edwin was joined by Archbishop Stack to celebrate the 20th anniversary of that special day, it was a key moment in the parish’s calendar of events during 2019 to celebrate the anniversary.

The two Bishops were joined by priests who have ministered, and are ministering, in the parish and deanery, including former parish priest, Fr Isaac and Fr Carlito Reyes, from Swansea University Catholic Chaplaincy, who celebrates a monthly Mass for the Filipino community at St Mary’s, along with many invited guests and parishioners.

In his homily, Archbishop Stack drew attention to the design and art work of the church, and particularly the design concept of the Pelican, which was adopted to draw attention to the ancient links of the Church with Ewenny Priory and, with the ancient symbolism of the mother Pelican feeding her young from her own breast, even further back to the dawn of Christianity, when the symbol was applied to Jesus Christ because of the Christian belief that Jesus feeds us with His own flesh in Holy Communion.

In his introduction to the Mass, parish priest, Fr Tim McGrath, reminded us that St Mary’s Catholic Church is a sacred space where we encounter the living presence of Jesus Christ, our Lord. He writes, it is ‘where people gather to give thanks and praise to God, and to be strengthened for our mission to share the hope, love, and joy of knowing Jesus Christ with all those we meet. The quiet of silent prayer throughout each day as people come to the church to pray, the celebration of Mass and the other sacraments, the faith formation and social events held in the parish hall, and our outreach to the most vulnerable in our community, are a reminder of the love, peace, and joy of our Christian faith.’

The social event that followed was an opportunity to catch up with old friends, including Bishop Edwin, former parish priest Fr Isaac, the artist, Kevin Sinnott, and architect, Kevin Davies. The Mass and social event was a wonderful celebration of parish life and of the past the parish church plays in the community of Bridgend.

Archbishop Stack cuts the anniversary cake! Alongside Parish Priest, Fr Tim McGrath, Deacon Philip Manghan, former Parish Priests Fr Isaac and Bishop Regan, who consecrated the Church twenty years ago.

The Shroud of Turin exhibition

From the 6 – 20 April, throughout Holy Week there will be a unique opportunity to visit the Shroud of Turin Exhibition which is being held in the chapel at Nazareth House. Opening times are from 10.30 am until 5pm each day. On Sunday, the image of the shroud will be on display from Midday until 5pm. This will be a unique opportunity to see the only life size replica of the shroud in the UK.

Speaking of the shroud, Pope Francis said: “The icon of this love is the shroud that, even now, has attracted so many people to Turin. The shroud draws people to the tormented face and body of Jesus and, at the same time, directs people towards the face of every suffering and unjustly persecuted person.”

The Catholic Insurance Service Ltd has advised the Archdiocese that official email addresses should be provided to all clergy, staff and volunteers working in the Diocese.

Any member of the clergy who has not yet set up a ‘public’ email account ( address: firstname.lastname@ecdcd.org) please contact David Evans at Archbishop’s House. He will assist in this urgent and important responsibility.

Syrian refugee families project

The Diocese is now preparing to house its fourth refugee family, this time an Iraqi Christian family. This work is close to the heart of Pope Francis who encourages all dioceses and religious communities to ‘welcome the stranger’ into their midst by providing accommodation in surplus convents and presbyteries. It also brings to life the Bidding Prayers we say each week “For the homeless and innocent victims of war and violence”. The Lenten Alms this week are set aside “For the homeless and innocent victims of war and violence”.

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The CHRISM MASS will take place at St. David’s Cathedral on Wednesday 17 April at 11.30 am. This important occasion in the life of the Diocese is a witness to the service of the priesthood and the opportunity for priests to renew their priestly vows. This is even more important during this time when we have been under such scrutiny both within and outside the Church. The presence of so many of the lay faithful on this joyous occasion is indicative of how much they value the ministry of their priests. Lunch will be served in The Cornerstone following the Mass and all priests and deacons are invited to stay.

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The Cornerstone following the Mass and all priests and deacons are invited to stay.
“Something else is needed in the Church today...”

Rev. Daniel J. Stanton

Wembley Arena was recently host to the UK’s national Catholic youth event, Flame, which saw the gathering together of a crowd of over 8,000 young people to praise God, and, though a series of talks and dramas, to reflect upon an important theme which effects the lives of every single one of us - significance.

One of the key addresses was given by Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland. He used his recent experience of the Synod on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment, to speak with the young people gathered, their catechists and clergy, to reflect upon the calling to holiness, and the living out of this calling in holiness in building up the Body of Christ in the Church.

It is a good question, and a question which has been asked in different eras. Through events such as Flame and the World Youth Days, our people experience something of the Church, and, as a consequence, experience the calling of the Lord to mission. Our young people need the time and encouragement to be able to discern and identify what their own vocation is, and how they are called by the Lord Himself to build up the Body of Christ in their parishes, indeed, in the Archdiocese of Cardiff itself.

With a clear sense of mission which our young people can identify with and relate to, and the support of the community, our young people will become that “new Pentecost” for our Archdiocese, pouring in renewed fervour and insight for the faith. It is truly sad that for some of the young people who attended the World Youth Day in Krakow, for example, and also the many individuals who journey through the Confirmation classes, the faith which was awakened in those encounters has now been left to dampen and fizzle out, discouraged.

The disciples who were journeying to Emmaus, left immediately to share the encounter they had with the risen Lord. Our young people are challenged with one of the most difficult tasks, almost impossible, and that is navigating a secular world, devoid of God and devoid of the opportunity to encounter God. Our young people need a safe environment where the seed of faith is able to grow, be nurtured and cultivated so that it can bloom. In a like manner, their parents, as the primary teachers in the faith, so often need to be given the space to encounter Jesus for themselves, in the first instance, before they can take the next step and be able and confident to share their encounter with their children. Handing on the precious gift of our faith will only be authentic when heart speaks unto heart.

As our young people continue to share the experience of their encounter at Flame, let us pray that the graces which they received my continue to be poured out upon our diocese; that they may be encouraged in their faith, and given the space to let their faith grow; so that, ultimately, that our young people may “dare to say ‘yes’ to the calling of God”.

Wanted for the Missions

Large Statues (Even damaged ones), old vestments, pictures, church fittings, rosaries, prayer books, religious books, relics etc.

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Pope speaks on dialogue with Islam

During the flight bringing Pope Francis back to Rome after his two-day apostolic visit to Morocco, Francis spent over half an hour chatting to reporters and answering questions on different subjects. Asked what he thinks the consequences of this visit will be for world peace and dialogue between different cultures, Pope Francis said “I will say that now there are flowers, the fruits will come later”.

He expressed satisfaction for having been able to talk about peace, unity and fraternity during the visit to Morocco and also during the previous one to Abu Dhabi, during which he recalled the important Document on Human Fraternity that he signed together with the Grand Iman of Al-Azhar.

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Iraqi Christians in Wales raise funds for persecuted communities

By Dr Mazin Alfaham, Secretary
The IRAQI CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION IN WALES (ICAW)

The Iraqi Christian Association in Wales held a Middle Eastern Breakfast event in the Hall of the Holy Family Church at Fairwater on Saturday 23rd March 2019.

This was a traditional Middle Eastern breakfast. The aim was to get our community in South Wales together and at the same time to raise funds for our people in the Middle East.

Those people, at times of peace, would have normally be completely self-sufficient, most being trained and accomplished professionals such as civil servants, teachers, engineers, nurses, farmers, and other professions.

A wonderful event to raise funds

It was a wonderful event and we were pleased to be joined by members of the Coptic community in South Wales. We share with them many things but mostly our love of Christ and his Teachings; we always say, 'We are united in Christ'.

Several members from the local community attended the event and some who could not do so sent us donations. We are grateful for their support. It is wonderful to feel part of the bigger caring and civilised society.

The event raised more than £2500. There are no expenses. All food items were donated and meals were prepared by our members. Our main targets are orphanages in Iraq but we also help a primary school for deposed children in Jordan and a mission in Syria.

We continue to pray for Peace in the Middle East.

Dr Mazin Alfaham with organiser of the event Laith Khalaf

A delicious meal in aid of persecuted people in the Middle East

The Catholic patriarchs have issued a message urging their Catholic youth to remain in their homelands and help rebuild the region, hit by strife, persecution and emigration.

“Be the heart of your countries, the artisans of their history, whatever the cruelty of the times and of men.” This was the encouragement of the patriarchs of the Eastern Catholic Churches to their young people of the Middle East.

“We are a small number,” the patriarchs said, reminding them of Jesus who said they were “salt, light and yeast” and were a Church of martyrs.

“Believe and love as God loves all his creation,” they exhorted. “Be strong believers in your love and builders of your lands of origin with all your compatriots, sharing in their suffering and sacrifice, to ensure prosperity and life.”

The Catholic leaders admitted that the very existence of Christians in the region was under threat but the faithful continue to bear witness to the Lord Jesus amid a turbulent world interrupted by mighty waves.”