

Please pray for those who have gone before us:

Annie Maxwell, Valerie Harvey, Michael Pearce, Lady Rosemary Johnson-Ferguson and Claire Treneman.

and for those whose anniversaries occur in January

James Mackrell, Kathleen Stefano, Margaret McKeever, Shelagh Barber, Nichola James, Arnold Baxter, Clive Baxter, Lilly Irwin, Mary Scott, Jack MacDonald, Thomas William Bush, Mary Glasspool, Albert Glasspool, Adelee Romersa, John Townsend, Eleanor MacPherson, Patrick Campbell, Edward Collins, John O'Donnell, Jim Hand, Barbara Barton, John Heyes, Charlotte Kempster, Kevin Murray, Kathleen Sullivan, Ellen Philomena Shepherd, William Randall, Clare Jeans, Margaret Murrane, Joseph Blundell, Sheila Lewis, Brian Doherty, Mr Balzic, Maureen Mansfield, Ronald Talbut, Kamil Lassow, Bridget O'Haire, Dorothy Rimell, Pauline Myers, Annette Muerelli, Marion Butcher, Peter O'Reilly, George Watkins, Tom Saunders, Earnest Graham, William Thompson, Alexander Mutton, Fr Nico Alleman SMM, John Morgan, Hannah Day, Raymond Donovan, Margaret Chase, Victoria Laughler, John Smith, Robert Newth, Sandor Lazlo Zalavolgy, Michael Murray, Mary Corr, Ivor Sellors, Leslie Whewell, Marjorie Jones, Bernadette Thorpe, Louie Collins, Michael Fitzgibbon, Mary Ravenscroft, Patrick Adams, Edmund Smith, Marion Giddens, Tony Clemas, Patricia O'Hare, Ruth Parsloe, Kathleen Stafford, Kenneth Patterson, John Boyton, Rose Drugan, Edwin Bystranowski, Mary Comerford, Charles Holdway, Edward Waters, Walter Keen, Rudolf Biazio, Myrtle Hall, Thomas Lockyear, Thomas Davis, Jonathan Cronin, Gerard Denault, John Graham, Alan Ramsell, Miriam White, Dorothy Morton, Raymond Stevens, Archbishop Paul Verdzekov, Monique Regnier, Anna Samuels, Father Thomas Grundy, Bernadette Thorpe, Sandor Szereres, Teresa Johnson, Fr. Francis McAlindin, Fr. Colm Kelleher, Irene Coveney, Margaret Leach, Marjorie Pontet-Picolomini, Fr. Livinus Donohoe, Ivor Roach, Bernard Payne, Lettice Plowden, Carmen Suanes, Mary Sale, Archbishop Serge Miot, John Dunne, Mrs Pam Brown (Snr), Maria Borra, Margaret Mears, Esme Kelly, Eddie Flood, Christine Walton, Sheila Scott, Fr Peter Sprague, Ann Crozier, Kathleen Ayling, Sheila Allen, Christopher Kennelly, Ray Chase, Mieczslaw Satala and André Mussert, Penny Mussert, Lena Pietrzak, Bob Munnery, Joan Bruce, Paulette Jakob, Peter Mullaley, Andrew Ross, James Hayes, Fred Brasier, Jean Charlwood, Priscilla Evans, Margaret Fuller, John Parsons, Sheila Barber, Mary Smith, Nicholas Woodward, Rosa O'Reilly, Tim Sellors, Albert Bulloygh and Eve Cook

**During the month to come please remember
in your prayers the following who are sick:**

Patrick Pacini, Audrey Francis, Audrey Stephenson, Esmé Coveney, Doreen Burke, Rita Lane, Valerie Muir, Mary and Alan Daws, Debbie Smythe, Tom Wilkins, Mary Bullough, Sam Hearn, Margaret Williams, Patrick Arnold, Allan Wickens, Di Mussert, Lisa Ramage, Christine Budden, Diane Cooper, Barbara Long, John Mills, Sheila Muir, Jo Hibberd, Therese Ayres, Sheila Roberts, Mary Hathaway, Rachel McGarvie, Chris Kirby, Rosemary Gallagher, Eileen Dickie, Judith Everett -Heath, Christopher Brown, Antoinette Thomas, Jim Cullen and all those in need of our prayers.

If you know that anyone on this list is now happily recovered, or if you would like a name added to this list, please contact the editors.

PLEASE NOTE

Articles printed in *The JOURNAL* are printed in good faith and are not necessarily the views of the editors. Contributions must be accompanied by full name and address, which may be withheld on request. The editors reserve the right to amend all contributions. Please support our advertisers, they support us.

ENDPIECE

Many thanks to the various contributors to this month's *The JOURNAL*. The next edition will be week end 6th & 7th February. Contributions should be with the editors by Monday 1st February. Please leave contributions at the Presbytery or email them to: stjohnsjournal@googlemail.com



The JOURNAL

The newspaper of the Parish of
St John the Baptist, Andover.
Including: **St John Fisher, Whitchurch**

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Faith, Hope, and Charity

St Paul reminds us that our lives are deeply affected by Faith, Hope, and Charity, and over the Christmas season world leaders have touched on the importance of those three things in the messages they have sent out.

In his traditional Christmas message to the City and to the World, Pope Francis emphasised the message of Christ's birth, the Son of God born to all of us without divisions of borders, privileges or exclusions. God has made possible a fraternity that is grounded in genuine love by giving us his Son Jesus so we can all find the unity which we need and seek. That fraternity enables us to encounter others who are different, to feel compassion for their sufferings, to draw near to them and care for them irrespective of nationality, ethnic background or religion.

The Pope prayed that the Child of Bethlehem might help us to open our hearts to help the vulnerable, the sick, the unemployed, and those whose lives have been affected by the pandemic. He spoke about some of the many problems facing people in different parts of the world: children who are victims of war in Yemen, Syria and Iraq, and the Yazidis suffering in Iraq; instability in the Middle East, and the hope that Israelis and Palestinians might continue dialogue to overcome grievances; international efforts to bring peace to Ukraine and other areas where armed conflict continues to blight the lives of millions; the devastating effects of the pandemic and various natural disasters.

Despite all of that, Pope Francis noted that Christ's birth tells us that pain and evil do not have the final word, and that despite families not being able to come together due to the pandemic, Christmas might still help us to rediscover "the family as a cradle of life and faith, a place of acceptance and love, dialogue, forgiveness and a source of peace for all humanity". He called for nations to share the vaccine. He criticised "vaccine nationalism" which threatens to worsen the effects of the pandemic if poorer nations receive it last. The virus, he said, "knows no borders, we cannot erect walls. All of us are in the same boat."

In Westminster Cathedral, Cardinal Vincent Nichols spoke of the darkness which the pandemic had brought, yet there was also light that penetrates the present darkness; the acts of kindness, quiet heroism, selfless service, remarkable community efforts – all directed towards those most in need. He spoke of the inherent "spark of the divine within us, the sense of a life in essence never private but shared with others, with the whole of creation". That spark was the Light of Light, and in him lies the way to come out of present darkness and confusion, hope for a road to a brighter future. T

he Archbishop of Canterbury acknowledged the devastating effect which the pandemic has had, the widespread sickness, the thousands of deaths and the economic impact, all of which have exacerbated the inequalities in the world, with the poorest and most vulnerable most deeply affected. He spoke of a "year of anxiety", a year which had changed a cough and a fever into a genuine threat.

Fair Shares

In a joint paper released in December, the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the World Jewish Congress (WJC) have made clear that religious leaders and organizations have a critical role and responsibility to make their voices heard in policy discussions concerning Covid-19 vaccine distribution, since they are “fundamentally ethical in nature”.

According to the two organizations, "a key concern" is for global equity in the distribution of available vaccines, so that poorer countries are not excluded from access to these life-saving products.

The establishment of COVAX – a partnership between GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization), WHO (World Health Organization), and CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) - to address the issue is an important step towards international solidarity.

However, WCC and WJC are concerned about “vaccine nationalism”, through which higher income countries attain higher levels of vaccine supply, leaving less available for equitable global allocation. This issue has been also raised by Pope Francis and by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, as is mentioned in the article on page 1. The decision by the Oxford-AstraZeneca group to make their vaccine available at cost is a lead which one may hope other pharmaceutical companies will follow.

At the domestic level, frameworks for the allocation of the limited number of vaccines should be based on a clear and specific choice of the priority objectives most valued in the context of each country.

The paper lists these priorities as: bringing about the swiftest end to the pandemic; protecting the most vulnerable; ensuring that health workers are protected and that the public health system is not overwhelmed; avoiding general and long-term harm to the economy; education and future prospects of young people. These roughly correspond to the priorities outlined in the UK for vaccine distribution.

According to the WCC and the WJC, it is “of critical importance” that this choice, its moral justification and the process through which the choice is made “be communicated publicly and transparently”, and that it is “consistently applied, in a non-discriminatory manner.”

The paper draws attention to two fundamental principles that should guide states in deciding their priorities. The first principle is equity, by which available resources should be allocated without discrimination on grounds of race, ethnicity, colour, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious affiliation, nationality, social status or ability to pay. The second principle is the human right to health.

The WCC and WJC also urge religious leaders of all faiths to “consider confronting publicly the unsubstantiated rumours and conspiracy myths, promoted without evidence, that undermine public trust in health authorities and services and in tested and approved vaccines themselves – and that thereby threaten an effective public health response to the pandemic. In some cases, such conspiracy myths have an explicitly antisemitic basis which should in any event be denounced.”

Finally, regarding the controversial issue of making vaccination compulsory, or at least an essential precondition for access to certain public services or private facilities, the two organizations admit that “in the current exceptional context” of efforts to control the global pandemic, legitimate public health considerations “may justify measures that would otherwise be considered draconian”.

Formation for Mission Workshops

Formation for Readers

During the 2020 lockdown we have been able to form about 100 readers over two sets of online workshops in October and November, offering a reading practice to each one with a Diocesan Listener.

We will continue offering these workshops in 2021, Year of the Word in Portsmouth Diocese. The 2021 workshops will take place in February (6th and 13th) and in April (17th and 24th). Participants need to have attended both workshop 1 and workshop 2, and completed a reading practice to receive a Diocesan Recognition.

You can sign up for the workshops at: www.godwhospeaks.org/readers

Formation on the Mass

The Formation for Mission team invite us all to join them for a Back to Basics Course on the Mass in 6 sessions to refresh our understanding and deepen our love for the Mass.

After lockdown, some of our friends and family, and even ourselves, may find it difficult to return to the sacramental practice of our faith. Taking time to discover or rediscover what we believe in our faith, how this is celebrated in the Mass, and how we are called to live it may be just what we need at the beginning of the year, to re-ignite our love for the Mass and find the words to encourage others to practice.

Each session will end with a time of prayer. They will be led by Sr Hyacinthe and Angela Wood. This course will be especially helpful to catechists, readers and parents of First Holy Communion children, but it is open to everyone. It will be taking place on Monday evenings from 7.00pm to 9.00pm, from the 11th January to the 15th February. Sign up for the course with this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84451220000>

From the School, Continued from previous Page

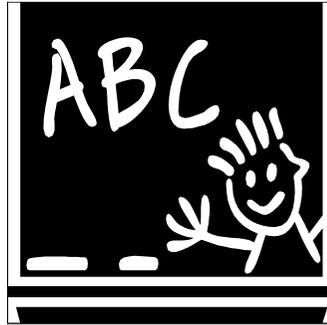
In the summer term, the current year 5's wrote poems which were submitted into the Premier League Primary stars writing competition. The school has now received a lovely selection of books for a job well done! St John the Baptist's pupils were some of over 34,000 students who signed up to the first National Youth Funday. This event, with 242 schools registered, was all about prayer, fun, games and inspiration with the apt theme of 'togetherness'. SJB received an email of thanks from the organisers who were overwhelmed with the support they received and are hoping to build on this for the future - here's to Youth Fun Day 2021!

During this half term, all classes have been participating in tasks that will count towards our school entry to the Virtual School Games. Each class has been taking part in a focused area of activity and completing challenges within that to work to achieve their personal best. We have been working together to cheer each other on and giving advice for how we could do even better next time. It is wonderful to see and hear how determined children are being to ensure that they achieve their best. Well done everyone and remember how good it feels to work hard towards a goal and better it... a skill to apply in all areas of life!

Mrs Catherine Whatley

From the School

At the beginning of September, I wasn't confident that we would make it to December without class closures so, despite the trials of this term, being able to keep all our classes open is worth celebrating. I wouldn't have been able to do this without the support of all our parents, wider family and friends and must thank you all for your patience, understanding and compliance with the many COVID protective measures we have put in place. Heartfelt thanks must also go to governors and all the staff of SJB: office, kitchen, classrooms, and cleaning team. They have worked incredibly hard this term and I couldn't be prouder or more grateful for their commitment and tenacity.



"Strength does not come from physical capacity, it comes from an indomitable will" (Mahatma Gandhi)

The indomitable will they have to bring learning, excitement, and the love of Christ to our children despite these challenging circumstances is incredible. The children have also shown an indomitable will - they have shown us how resilient, compassionate, and aspirational they truly are, adapting to the new routines and immersing themselves fully in their learning!

Unfortunately, this year Father is unable to come into school to enable the children to receive this special, refreshing sacrament. However, the children in KS2 still spent time reflecting on their choices, asking for forgiveness and preparing for this journey of Advent. The children took part in a virtual reconciliation service and spent some time in quiet reflection creating their own Advent promises, this year in the shape of angels, considering how they too can be 'An Advent People' bringing much needed hope to others this Advent. It has been a very strange term not being able to welcome family and friends into school to share the children's learning and join us in the many liturgies and celebrations this autumn - Advent, in particular, has not felt the same. If you haven't done so already, please do visit our Video Resource Centre to share some of the highlights of this term with your child and family.

In true 2020 style, this year's Nativity is a filmed production. Follow this link to watch our Key Stage 1 Nativity - <https://st-john-the-baptist-catholic-primary-school.primarysite.media/media/nativity-2020>.

Key Stage 1 have delighted us with their Nativity performances. The children have told the story of Our Saviour's birth so respectfully, joyfully and reverently. Year 2 told the story of the very first Christmas, when Jesus the Son of God was born in Bethlehem. The children in Year 2 did a wonderful job of learning their lines and delivering them with character and confidence. Year 2, Year 1 and Year R all showcased their musical talents by singing Christmas carols with big smiles and confidence.

Thank you to the KS1 boys and girls for all of the hard work they put into making our Nativity so wonderful. They should all be very proud of themselves, all the staff most certainly are. A MASSIVE thank you to everyone who has supported our Nativity!

Continued on next page

WISDOM CENTRE

Wisdom Centre in Romsey is looking forward to 2021 and to welcoming you to events on their spirituality programme. They have limited places due to Covid-19. If you wish to book please email reception@wisdomhouseromsey.co.uk with a phone number and they will make contact to get you booked in.

There are three provisional sessions planned:

Saturday 16th January 2021 Twelve Step - As a Contemplative Way of Life

Saturday 6th February 2021 Wisdom's Banquet - The image of the Banquet as a symbol of happiness and icon of the Kingdom.

Saturday 13th March 2021 Listen and your soul will live - Lenten Quiet Day

With the current restrictions, it is not possible to say whether these events will take place. More events will be added shortly. Please check the website, which you can find at <https://www.wisdomhouseromsey.org.uk>

Continued from Page 1.

Our Lord, he said, was born in our fallen world and it is in his birth, death and resurrection that we find hope. Christ came to a suffering world to bring healing, reconciliation and hope, and the Archbishop saw hope in the way people had reached out in love to those in need, a love that we celebrate at Christmas, a love that gets its hands dirty, that is open and generous, a love that makes a difference. The light of the world that shines in the darkest times.

Her Majesty the Queen in her Christmas message spoke of how she had been moved by the public's reaction to the crisis. She touched on the sadness felt by many, mourning the loss of those dear to them, missing friends and family members at a time when they wanted to be together. She assured them that they were not alone and that they were in her thoughts and prayers during this extraordinary year which has necessarily kept people apart and yet which in so many ways has brought people closer. People in this country and throughout the world had, she said, "risen magnificently to the challenges" and she was moved by this quiet, indomitable spirit. People of all faiths have been unable to gather as they would wish for their festivals, such as Passover, Easter, Eid and Vaisakhi but, she said, we need life to go on.

The Queen spoke of the debt of gratitude we owed to the frontline workers and scientists. "As with other nursing pioneers like Mary Seacole, Florence Nightingale shone a lamp of hope across the world. Today, our frontline services still shine that lamp for us – supported by the amazing achievements of modern science." Touching on her own deep faith, she said: "The teachings of Christ have served as my inner light, as has the sense of purpose we can find in coming together to worship. The Bible tells how a star appeared in the sky, its light guiding the shepherds and wise men to the scene of Jesus' birth. Let the light of Christmas – the spirit of selflessness, love and above all hope – guide us in the times ahead."

The latest National Hero, Captain Sir Tom Moore, who admitted that the virus was going to make this a very different Christmas for many people, held out his oft repeated message of hope: "But things will get better and next year we'll be all right."

Your editors (who make no claims to being world leaders) offer you our best wishes for a happy, blessed, and healthy 2021. Let's keep the faith, hope for better things to come, and continue to offer those little acts of kindness.

Year of St Joseph

To mark the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, Pope Francis has proclaimed a special year dedicated to St Joseph. He has issued an Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris Corde* (With a Father's Heart) in which he describes St. Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows. The pope has proclaimed



The Holy Father wrote *Patris corde* against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, which, he says, has helped us see more clearly the importance of “ordinary” people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble Saint Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence,” who nonetheless played “an incomparable role in the history of salvation.”

Pope Francis says that because of his role at “the crossroads between the Old and New Testament,” St Joseph “has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people”. In him, “Jesus saw the tender love of God, because it is through and despite our fears, our frailties, and our weakness that most divine designs are realized.

Joseph is also a father in obedience to God: with his “fiat” he protects Mary and Jesus and teaches his Son to “do the will of the Father.” Called by God to serve the mission of Jesus, he “cooperated... in the great mystery of Redemption,” as St John Paul II said, “and is truly a minister of salvation”.

At the same time, Joseph is “an accepting Father,” because he “accepted Mary unconditionally” — an important gesture even today, says Pope Francis, “in our world where psychological, verbal and physical violence towards women is so evident.” Joseph’s spiritual path “is not one that *explains* but *accepts*” — which does not mean that he is “resigned.” Instead, he is “courageously and firmly proactive.”

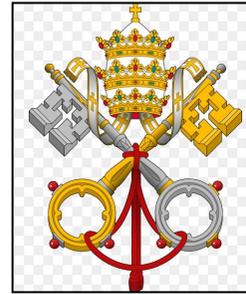
Patris corde highlights the creative courage of St. Joseph, which emerges especially in the way we deal with difficulties. “The carpenter of Nazareth,” explains the Pope, was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting in divine providence.” He had to deal with “the concrete problems” his Family faced, problems faced by other families in the world, and especially those of migrants.

In this sense, St. Joseph is “the special patron of all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty.” As the guardian of Jesus and Mary, Joseph cannot “be other than the guardian of the Church. Consequently, every poor, needy, suffering or dying person, every stranger, every prisoner, every infirm person is ‘the child’ whom Joseph continues to protect.”

Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family,” St Joseph also teaches us “the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one’s own labour”.

The special Year for St Joseph will run until December 8th of this year.

The Pope's Intentions



Each year, the Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month. You are invited to answer the Holy Father's request and to join with many people worldwide in praying for this intention each month. From time to time, the Holy Father may add a second prayer intention related to current events or urgent needs, like disaster relief. The second prayer request will help mobilize prayer and action related to the urgent situation.

The Pope's monthly prayer intentions alternate between prayers for Evangelization and prayers for a Universal theme. In this month of January his Intention is for Evangelization: – Human Fraternity:

May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

Reflection on The Pope's Prayer Intention

The holidays are a time for travel and celebration. Perhaps that means Christmas dinner at grandma's house or a party with old friends on New Year's Eve. These trips involve preparation and anticipation. We may need to prepare and pack a few things— maybe a gift and a bottle of wine. We also anticipate the joy and warmth we'll experience at these celebrations.

As we begin 2021, Pope Francis asks us to prepare our hearts for the days ahead. In the month of January, we pray for human fraternity. “May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.”

Jesus meets with people from many backgrounds in the Gospels: the Syro-Phoenician woman, Samaritans, and Roman soldiers. Jesus is drawn to others, and they are uniquely drawn to him. Like Christ, we are called to open our hearts to others in the world around us. We can look for ways to embrace them, pray for them, and work together—in particular, with those of other faiths.

In him, we can stand with those of other religions; with them, we can even love and serve those who are suffering from the cold, from poverty, or the effects of the pandemic. Together, let us prepare for, anticipate, and participate in this New Year with faith, hope, and love.

Father Joe Laramie SJ

NEW DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER

The Diocese has issued the first of the new quarterly Newsletters which can be viewed online as a pdf on the Diocesan website and our own website.

It promises that there will be plenty to read in it – and of course the diocesan Newsletter compilers will welcome feedback in order to improve the offering for future editions. This first Advent/Christmas edition incorporates a selection of news from around the Diocese, an update on various Caritas projects, a round-up of Christmas traditions in the various ethnic communities, a message from Guernsey and an account of the outreach a parish in Southampton has been doing during lockdown. The newsletter will also be available free online. Bishop Philip has expressed his gratitude to Chris Smith for his design and editorial work, Fr. PJ Smith for organising production and distribution, and to all who have contributed articles.

Gregory's Girl (1980)

In this bleak and grim midwinter we're all living through, this is a film to lighten the spirits and bring some cheer to our hearts. It's a combination of High School Romance/ First Love and (very slight) teenage angst but all done with a lightness of touch and much warmth by Scottish Director Bill Forsyth. It's set in the 1980s in a Scottish New Town where it's all clean and green and new.



The story mainly takes place in the Town's Secondary School where senior pupil John Gordon Sinclair is on the, not very successful, School Football Team. When female student Dee Hepburn joins the Team and proves she's better than all the rest, John GS is demoted from Striker to Goalkeeper. John becomes desperate to get a date with Dee Hepburn but all she seems to be concerned with is football.

Not put off, John involves his friends to help him and not really through their efforts or his, he secures a date with Dee. Now there's a twist to it all and the clues are there if you keep your eyes open as the film progresses. The date happens and it all turns out very well. In keeping with the tone of the film it's all very gentle and platonic and chaste and "home by Eleven, have to be", John GS escorts his lady home and leaves her at her door. The film ends with him on his bed smiling about the evening.

Written as well as directed by Bill Forsyth, this is the second in his quartet of films for which he is best known. Made from the late 1970s to the mid-1980s, each of his films deals with contemporary and modern Scotland and Scottish society. Together with *That Sinking Feeling*, *Local Hero* and *Comfort and Joy*, these films together give a sense of a Scottish Voice that feels real and authentic. Whilst each film in the quartet is essentially a comedy, each also has a serious edge buried within it. *Local Hero* deals with the effects of oil extraction on the environment whilst *Comfort and Joy* touches on the (real) wars between criminal gangs in Glasgow for control of the ice cream van trade.

Using this lens of comedy to look at modern Scottish society, Bill Forsyth is also – and importantly – sweeping away the legacy of the English-made films of the 1950s about Scotland. Mostly comedies, they mainly depicted Scotland as a romanticised Highlands cosily populated by simple and good-hearted folk and everybody happy with their lot. It's all about keeping the outside world out at all cost. In short, it's presented as the rural idyll. It's also, a social and cultural dead end.

Moving forward, in 1995, Mel Gibson's, *Braveheart* burst on the scene and is correctly believed to have achieved more for the case of Scottish Independence than decades of work by the SNP. True enough. Yet, it can be said that ten years prior to Mel Gibson's *Braveheart*, Bill Forsyth's film was a quieter prelude which kindled the flames to warm the Scottish desire for independence.

John Newland

Are Vaccines Morally Acceptable?

The short answer is yes. However, the realisation that some Corona Virus vaccines were being developed using cell lines derived from two fetuses aborted in the 1960s, has resulted in some people questioning the morality of accepting such vaccination.

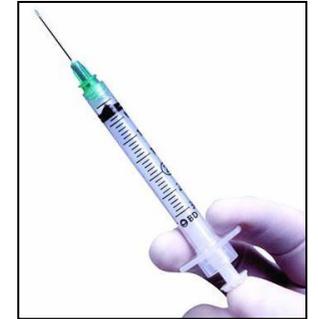
The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) has issued a note, approved by Pope Francis, which explains why such concerns need not prevent anyone accepting such a vaccine. The note, signed by the Prefect, Cardinal Luis Ladaria, and Secretary, Archbishop Giacomo Morandi, states that it is morally acceptable to receive Covid-19 vaccines that have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production processes. The note says that in the present crisis "all vaccines recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience with the certain knowledge that the use of such vaccines does not constitute formal cooperation with the abortion from which the cells used in production of the vaccine derive".

The note authoritatively intervenes to clarify doubts and questions which have emerged from several, sometimes contradictory, statements on the subject. The CDF makes it clear that it does not intend to judge the safety or efficacy of current vaccines against Covid-19 – that is for the biomedical researchers and drug agencies. It focuses on the moral aspects of receiving vaccines created in such a way. It recalls three earlier documents issued by the Pontifical Academy for Life and by CDF. The CDF Instruction *Dignitas Personae*, approved by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008, pointed out that "there exist differing degrees of responsibility", because "in organisations where cell lines of illicit origin are being utilised, the responsibility of those who make the decision to use them is not the same as that of those who have no choice in such a decision."

The note concludes that when ethically irreproachable Covid-19 vaccines are not available, it is morally acceptable to receive Covid-19 vaccines that have used illicit cells in their research, development and production. The reason for considering these vaccines morally licit is that the "kind of cooperation" in the evil method of their acquisition is "remote" on the part of those receiving the vaccine. Therefore, the "moral duty to avoid such passive material cooperation is not obligatory "since there exists a grave danger, in the form of an "uncontainable spread of a serious pathological agent."

Vaccination is not a moral obligation and, therefore, it must be voluntary, but one can readily see that refusing the vaccine can be a danger to oneself and to others. We all have a duty to protect our own health and to act in ways that promote the common good and protect the weakest and most vulnerable. Those who for reasons of conscience reject vaccines produced from cell lines from aborted fetuses must do their utmost to take every precaution to avoid becoming vehicles of transmission of the virus to others.

The note calls on pharmaceutical companies and government health agencies to strive to produce, approve and distribute ethically acceptable vaccines that do not create problems of conscience. The note also stresses the moral imperative to ensure that ethically acceptable vaccines are accessible to the "poorest countries in a manner that is not costly for them".



St Mutien-Marie

Saint Mutien-Marie (usually known in English as Mucian Mary Wiaux) was born in Mellet in the Belgian province of Hainaut in 1841. His father was a blacksmith and his mother ran a small inn. Baptised Louis Joseph, the boy grew up in a deeply devout family, and from an early age had the desire to devote his life to the service of God and His people. In 1856, Louis entered the noviciate of the De La Salle Brothers at Namur and took the name Mutien-Marie, after an obscure Roman martyr. He spent time in Chimay and Brussels before being sent to the order's college at Malonne where he was to spend the rest of his life.



At first, Mutien-Marie was not a great success as a teacher, and he tended to be given peripheral tasks, such as supervising the boys in the playground, ensuring dormitories were kept clean, organising walks and ringing the school bell. Rather like his Roman namesake, Brother Mutien lived an obscure life with apparently little to suggest he was a candidate for sainthood. When Pope John Paul II presided over Brother Mutien's canonization the Belgian bishops issued a pastoral letter to mark the occasion. The letter said "he had accomplished nothing out of the ordinary" and he had "left no theological or spiritual treatise, nothing to bring his name out of the shadows".

One may, then, ask why was he now a saint, someone whom Pope John Paul had described as "the light of Belgium and the glory of his Congregation"?

As the Belgian bishops went on to say, Brother Mutien "had the skill of bringing even the least gifted to the highest limits of their abilities", not by direct instruction in the classroom but by his encouragement. He was loved and admired by the pupils for his gentleness and for the evident holiness of his life, in which he was a quiet, unassuming, example to them all. The pupils knew him as the brother who is always praying.

Through his simple, gentle, prayerful life, Brother Mutien gave us all an example of what it is to be a saint. No acts of outstanding heroism, mortification, or theological brilliance are required, just an ordinary life lived in an ordinary but gentle and prayerful way. When he died in 1917 he was buried in the Brothers' plot in the cemetery of Malonne. His reputation for sanctity led to large numbers of pilgrims visiting his grave. The numbers grew until a decision was taken to make his remains more accessible to the public. In the 1920s the process of canonisation was begun and his remains were moved to the parish church in the centre of town.

Pope Paul VI beatified Brother Mutien in 1977 and following this his remains were removed to a white marble tomb within a shrine built to his honour. He was canonised on 10th December 1989 by Pope John Paul II, and his feast is celebrated on 30th January.

Stronger Than Death

Stronger Than Death, Rachel Pieh Jones' lively biography of innovative humanitarian aid worker Annalena Tonelli, is in many ways two books. On one level it is a journalistic investigation of one woman's radical and game-changing response to an international health crisis: the tuberculosis pandemic in the Horn of Africa. But on another level, it is a strongly Christian meditation on self-gift and Christlike love practiced in arduous and life-threatening circumstances. Annalena Tonelli is not a household name as, say, St Teresa of Calcutta is. Yet the depth of her commitment to radical service of the poor, commitment that ultimately cost Tonelli her life, rivals that of a canonised saint.

Tonelli is a complicated character, and Pieh Jones, a non-Catholic, does her best to explore the nuances of her subject matter with clarity and objectivity. Born in Italy in the 1940s, Tonelli moved to Kenya in her twenties to work as a teacher and to live, much as Teresa of Calcutta did, among the poor as one of the poor. There she became involved in the treatment of tuberculosis and developed a strategy for treating nomadic people with TB known as 'Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course,' which is now the World Health Organisation's recommended control strategy for treating tuberculosis. Her humanitarian work earned her suspicion, resentment and hatred, and she was shot dead outside one of her TB hospitals in 2003.

Tonelli's life was marked by difficulty and controversy – from her unconventional relationship to the Church, to competing claims over whether or not she invented the DOTS strategy, and her early complicity in Female Genital Mutilation, a crime which she later went on to forcefully condemn – and Pieh Jones does not always strike the balance between rightful admiration of Tonelli's virtues and clear-eyed assessment of her flaws. In particular her discussion of Tonelli's unorthodox Catholicism lacks a firm grasp of the theological issues at hand.

Nevertheless, *Stronger Than Death* is a fast-paced and engaging book marked by genuine passion for its subject. Readers will not need to be told the ways in which its lessons of radical love and transformative hope in times of crisis can be applied to our current situation.

Sr. Carino OP

