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"We must accept finite disappointment but never lose infinite hope." Martin Luther King, Jnr.



Army Roman Catholic Newsletter



Welcome

From

*The Revd. Fr. Stephen Sharkey CF
Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain (Army)*

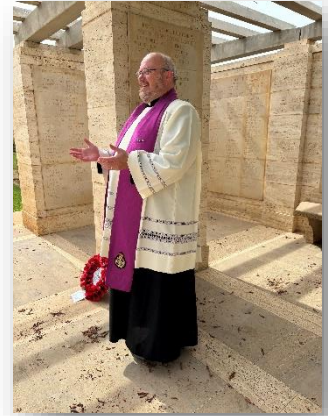


Welcome to Issue 40 of the Army Roman Catholic Newsletter.

As we move through the final weeks of October and into November, the rhythm of the liturgical year invites us to pause and reflect. The solemnity of All Saints' Day reminds us of the great communion of saints, known and unknown, who have gone before us in faith, serving as examples of courage, virtue, and unwavering trust in God. The following All Souls' Day, turns our hearts toward prayerful remembrance of all the faithful departed, especially those who may have no one to pray for them. For those of us in military life, remembrance carries deep significance. We recall not only the saints and souls of the Church but also our fellow service members who have given their lives in the line of duty. As Remembrance Day approaches, let us honour their sacrifice with gratitude and prayer, lifting up all who have served and now rest in God's peace.

Fr. Kevin's North African Campaign!

Written by Fr. Kevin Dow



Fr. Kevin Dow CF, Chaplain to the Royal Lancers (Queen Elizabeths' Own) recently returned from taking part with the regiment in a battlefield study of the role that the Lancers antecedent regiments took a major part in, during the North African Campaign, especially in Tunisia.



26 members from across the regiment travelled to Tunisia to look at the various battles and events that the 9th QRL, 12th, 16th/5th and the 17th/21st Lancers had an active part in, and to remember and commemorate those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

On the first day, as part of the acclimatisation, Fr. Kevin and a few others from the regiment went to visit the nearby ruins of ancient Carthage, where such well known saints such as Cyprian, Perpetua and Felicity are associated with the early Christian Church.



In the heat of the African sun, over the course of the week, the Lancers looked at both what events happened at the various sites, and also in their various syndicates working out how today, with the more modern equipment and tactics they would have approached the obstacles and enemy forces, be it a river crossing, desert plain or moving through the Fondouk Gap.

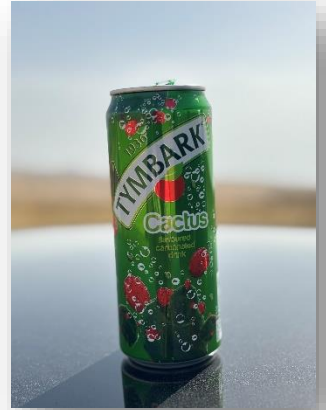
As chaplain, I was honoured to be asked to give a short reflection at the American cemetery, conduct an Act of Remembrance at Medjez-el-Bab GWCC, where there are both Lancers buried in the cemetery and a large number of names recorded on the memorial. One of the effects of being part of the Armoured Corps is that when the vehicles were hit and destroyed the intensity of the fire would mean sadly that no bodies were recoverable. As a means of remembering the fallen, research was carried out to get the names and details of all Lancers who died during this time, and a roll of honour was read out, 4 or 5 names at a time by the present-day Lancers. Our medics present also had the opportunity to recall the names of their fellow medics who gave the ultimate sacrifice.



Other services conducted were at the top of the cliff on the Fondouk Gap where many of the 17th/21st and 16th/5th were killed in action and lastly in St. George's Anglican Church in Tunis, which was affectionately known by the troops during the campaign as the "Westminster Abbey of North Africa". In this 'little piece of England' in a bustling African city, there are many memorials from the different regiments, battalions and corps that served there during WWII. One of the memorials was the reason for our visit to the church. Placed there *"To the Glory of God and in proud memory of the Officers, Non Commissioned Officers and men of the 9th Queen's Royal Lancers and the 12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's) who gave their lives for their country in the campaign in Tunisia March to May 1943"* After a bit of searching, Fr. Kevin and the OC found it behind the film screen, in amongst the drum kit and chimes.... The joys of modern worship in an ancient place of prayer..... The memorial was rededicated, and so was the commitment of the present-day Lancers to the pursuit of peace and justice.



53°C was the hottest recorded moment of the trip, and so time was given in the evening's to cooling down with a swim in the hotel pool, and a most memorable event occurred after our last stance, when being escorted by the local police and military, we were given a police escort with armoured cars, trucks of armed soldiers and so on, in our convoy to be taken down town in one of the cities to the seafront so that the troops could have an afternoon off at the beach! What the locals thought at this is anyone's guess...



Overall, the Battlefield Study was a great success for those who had the privilege of participating. Much to reflect upon, and much to give thanks to God for.



1st Battalion Irish Guards 'Mick 125' Visit to Northern Ireland and the Laying up of Old Colours

Written by Fr. David Burke CF



What a fantastic start to being the Chaplain to the 1st Battalion Irish Guards! On the second day of my tenure, 'the Micks' (and their new padre) stepped off to travel to Northern Ireland to continue their 125th year anniversary celebrations.

Following celebrations in and around Mons Barracks, it was now time to extend the commemorations by returning to the regiment's homeland, the Island of Ireland, and to participate in a series of high-profile community engagements.

Over the next ten days, the Irish Guards conducted a series of events including the **Beating of the Retreat** - a traditional military ceremony that originates from the practice of recalling soldiers to their camp at the end of the day - in both Carrickfergus and at Edenmore. Other festivities included a **Parade and Band Concert in Bangor** where the Regiment alongside the Irish Guard Association and Mini-Mick's ACF marched around the historic city centre of Bangor. **The Regimental Lieutenant Colonel** in turn **inspected his Mini-Micks detachment** at Palace Barracks. This latter parade showcased beautifully the closeknit nature of the Micks family as well as the preparedness, discipline, and overall performance of the cadets which the Irish Guards proudly call their 'Mini-Micks'.

The above events occurred each and every day, but they did not occur by magic. The celebrations were the climax of months of preparations and featured collaborations with the Irish Guards Association (IGA), Belfast City Council and Irish Guards Army Cadets. As well as celebrating the Micks the events gave a wonderful opportunity to foster wider connections with the local community while raising funds for the Irish Guards charity through prominent charitable activities.

To be part of these magnificent celebrations was a true privilege and an honour for me. As regimental inductions go, this has to be the best. There were many highlights during the Northern Ireland celebrations but if I had to name my personal ones of this celebratory period, I would have to say the following:

The Belfast Cenotaph Remembrance Service. This solemn event was held in Belfast to honour and commemorate the sacrifices made by the Irish Guards, particularly those who served and lost their lives in various conflicts. As Chaplain to the Micks, I had the privilege to lead this service which combined an act of remembrance, wreath laying, a two-minute silence, service and prayers.



And secondly, **the Laying up of Old Colours** of the 1st Battalion Irish Guards, which took place at St. Mark's Church, Dundela. This significant occasion not only honoured the rich history and traditions of the Regiment but also reinforced the enduring spirit of service and camaraderie that defines the Irish Guards. The ceremony of the Laying up of Colours was a poignant and significant event that honoured the heritage and tradition of our Regiment. The ceremony saw the Ninth set of colours being formally retired as Regimental Colours that had been presented to the Regiment in 2009, by her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The weather was poor on that day, but the church was standing room only with many lining the street to be part of the festivities.



Officiating Clergy

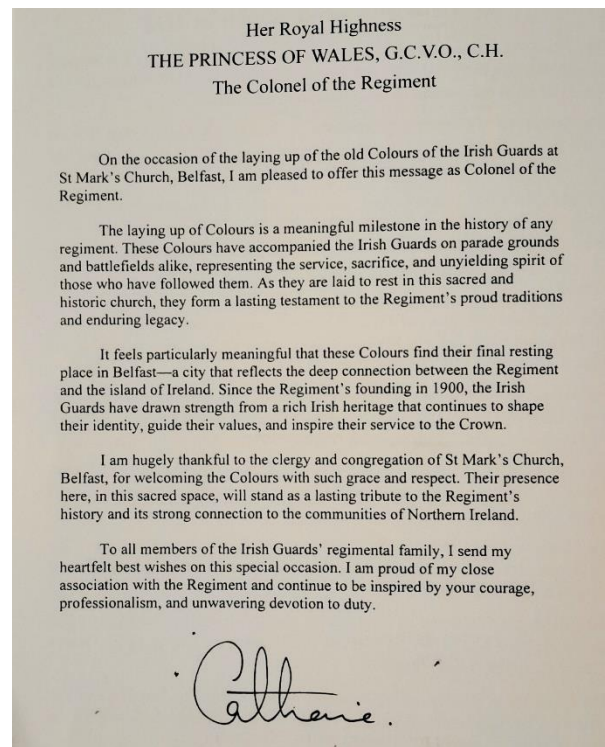
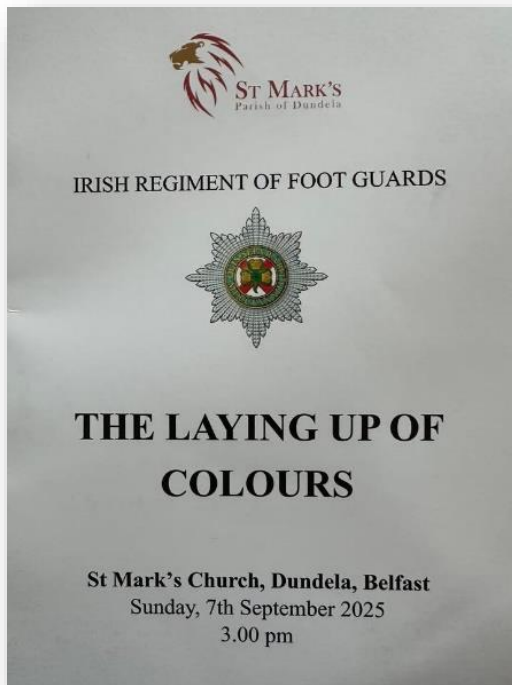
1st Battalion Irish Guards Chaplain:
The Reverend Father D. BURKE CF

Defence Forces Head Chaplain & former Battalion Padre
The Reverend Father P. J. HANRAHAN HCF

Former Battalion Padre:
The Reverend Canon A. J. TOTEN OBE

Rector of St Mark's, Dundela:
The Reverend Canon Doctor H. T. STEED





Through these events, the 1st Battalion Irish Guards engaged with their heritage, demonstrating their commitment to supporting their communities and yet, was looking to the future to inspire the future Micks. To quote the Regimental Motto: ***Quis Separabit*** - what shall separate us? From these celebrations, I do not think anything can or could.



The Regimental mascot for the 1st Battalion Irish Guards is an Irish Wolfhound named Seamus, whose official name is Turlough Mor. He is the Regimental mascot for the entire Irish Guards and serves in a ceremonial role, leading parades and participating in state occasions.

His duties are to lead the Regimental Band, to participate in state parades and ceremonial duties such as the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace and make appearances at events such as St. Patrick's Day parades.

An Irish Wolfhound has been the Regiment's mascot since 1902, after the Irish Wolfhound Club of Northern Ireland offered one. The current Seamus is named after an Irish King and is known for his playful and energetic personality.

Ukrainian Icon finds safe haven in Aldershot



A traditional icon, the first of its kind, has found safe haven in Aldershot, Hants, after a perilous journey through war-torn Ukraine.





Special Blessing Ceremony

The first ever Icon of Our Lady of Victories was installed and blessed yesterday at the Catholic Military Cathedral, bringing together Ukrainian and British communities in solidarity. The sacred artwork was commissioned by the Catholic Military Association (CMA), with support from Catholic Charities Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) and The Catenians.

Extraordinary Journey from Ukraine

Created using centuries-old techniques in a Lviv studio, the Icon survived an extraordinary journey secured by an unnamed Ukrainian soldier who risked bombardments to ensure its delivery to the UK.

Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski OBE and Bishop Paul Mason presided over the ceremony, with Major General Christopher Barry CBE reading a lesson. Ukrainian quartet The Vivo sang traditional Ukrainian hymns.



Symbol of Faith and Solidarity

Captain Francis Osborn, CMA Chairman, explained: *"We wanted something permanent as a foundation that our members could look to for solace and encouragement. An icon is a really ancient way of showing faith - its beauty speaks right to the soul. It means a tremendous amount that it has got a home in Aldershot and that it will be seen by a lot of people, and they can benefit from it."*

Bishop Mason remarked: *"For the people of Ukraine their faith is really important to them and for them to know that we are united with them, not just militarily and financially, but also in prayer and this icon signifies that, which I think that is a very important piece of the whole thing."*



Photo: Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski and Bishop Paul Mason, Catholic Bishop of the Forces. (Image: Marcin Mazur.)

Further information of this event can be found by following:

<https://thecatholicherald.com/article/ukrainian-icon-blessed-in-alder-shot-after-perilous-journey-out-of-conflict-zone>

Ref: [Ukrainian Icon finds safe haven in Aldershot | British Army](#)

Songs of Praise Aldershot Garrison

A few weeks ago, Aled Jones and the Songs of Praise team visited the three Garrison Churches, the Military cemetery and local units to film a very special Remembrance edition of Songs of Praise. It will be broadcast on BBC One on Sunday 9th November.

Here are some photos from the filming at the Cathedral Church of St. Michael & St. George.



A Celebration of Servant of God John R. Bradburne

Written by LCpl Arpan Bista 4RANGER



On Saturday, 13th September, I had the great privilege, together with my wife, and CMA Trustees Captains Osborn and Fisher, to attend a Mass at Westminster Cathedral. The Mass was offered in celebration of the life and witness of an extraordinary person, the Servant of God John Randal Bradburne, and to mark the 30th anniversary of the John Bradburne Memorial Society



John Randal Bradburne was a British lay missionary, poet, and devoted member of the Catholic Church. He was born in Cumbria the son of an Anglican vicar and served as an officer with the Gurkha Rifles in Burma during the Second World War. During that time, he and a small group evaded capture in the Malayan jungle. He caught cerebral malaria and had a religious experience while at death's door which changed his life. He became closer to God.

Soon after leaving military service, John dedicated his life to prayer, poetry and works of mercy, and was received into the Catholic Church. He travelled widely, and found his deepest calling in Zimbabwe, where he selflessly served lepers at a place called Mutemwa. There, he became known for his compassion, humility, and profound devotion. His life was soaked in prayer, and he wrote incredible poetry, daily, constantly, still holding the record for the most prolific poet in history.

During Rhodesian Civil War (Zimbabwe), John was captured and killed for his fidelity to Christ and his love for the people he served. The Catholic Military Association is blessed to have samples of earth from his grave site, as well as pieces of quartz from the rocky outcrop where he most liked to pray. These can be given to anyone with a particular devotion to the life and example of John Bradburne, requested via admin@catholicmilitaryassociation.org.uk.

John is recognised as a *Servant of God* by the Church, and his cause canonisation is progressing. His story continues to inspire, reminding us of the beauty of a life lived entirely for God and in the service of others.

General Assembly & Conference of the Apostolat Militaire International

Written by Capt. Francis Osborn, ETS



It was an enormous honour to represent His Majesty's Armed Forces at the 60th General Assembly & Conference of the Apostolat Militaire International, on behalf of the Catholic Military Association. The Conference was held in gorgeous Manila, the Philippines, and it was a pleasure to get to experience so much of the local culture whilst engaging in fruitful conversation with friends old and new from the other national delegations.

The theme of the conference for this year was "Strengthening Christian Values through Biblical Leadership, building bridges, ethical dilemma of AI and Modern Technology". We were heard talks on Catholic military ethics, Biblical leadership, peace support missions, and faith-based resilience. On the final day we were joined by Cardinal Tagle, who spoke on how to nurture faith amid the grave and even existential challenges of modernity.



The principal function of the event is the Working Groups. These are multi-national discussion groups who are tasked by the Holy See to resolve critical information requirements at the global level. These Working Groups comprise delegates from member nations and follow on from the Working Groups held in Kenya last year, and Belgium the year before. They were very interesting, evaluating the impact of Artificial Intelligence in modern warfare, how to best support the spiritual nourishment of spiritual families, and how to prevent dehumanisation of the enemy. The resulting recommendations will be communicated up to the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life.



Headed by their Military Bishop of the Philippines, the most Rev Oscar Florencio, the Philippines Armed Forces were generous hosts. We were able to visit Manila, witness the wide range of tribal and Spanish-influenced dance, and experience the full spectrum of cuisine, while gaining valuable operational insights from their successes in defeating the Islamic State in the Battle of Marawi, and their successful transition to peace support operations and the driving out of Islamist extremist groups in their southern region. The Philippines also has an astonishing number of priests, with more than twenty in seminary for the Military bishopric alone. It was truly impressive and inspiring to witness a more Catholic culture.



It was a pleasure to working with our partners in the Bishopric of the Forces and our sister organisations from the CMA-US and CMA of Canada. We are grateful for the support given by the Service Trusts and look forward to representing British military Catholics in Slovenia, Netherlands and Slovakia in the coming years.



Field Marshal Lord Charles Guthrie, Baron Guthrie of Craigiebank GCB GCVO OBE DL

17 November 1938 – 18 September 2025



Field Marshal Lord Charles Guthrie died on 18th September 2025, aged 86. He was one of the most outstanding and influential military officers of his generation. To commemorate this life of extraordinary service, a military funeral and Requiem Mass was held for the Field Marshal at Westminster Cathedral in London on 15th October.

Troopers from The Lifeguards lined the entrance of Westminster Cathedral and a Ceremonial Guard held the ground for the arrival of the coffin. Hailing from various operational domains from within the Royal Navy, including personnel from ships, submarines, training establishments, Naval air stations and Reserve Units; British Army Guardsmen from the London Central Garrison; and Royal Air Force Personnel from The King's Colour Squadron (63 Squadron RAF Regiment), the Guard reflected the breadth of experience and operational readiness that defines the services' contribution to the UK's national and international defence.

In keeping with tradition at military funerals of senior officers, a lone charger, a riderless horse with riding boots reversed in the stirrups, stood by. This was much loved 16yr old Household Cavalry mare Pretorian and was a touching reference to the fact that Lord Guthrie regularly rode with The Lifeguards regiment until 2019.





10 Welsh Guardsmen formed the coffin bearer party and eight of the armed forces' most senior military representatives were pall bearers accompanying the coffin.

800 distinguished guests attended the funeral, which included statesmen from across government and the wider establishment. The Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Roly Walker, attended as representative of His Majesty The King, and accompanied HRH The Duke of Kent. Other senior members of The Royal Family sent representatives.

There were mourners from across the breadth of Lord Guthrie's life as he had been an enthusiastic and active member of many august institutions and organisations. Before the service the Band of the Welsh Guards performed 'Hymn to Freedom', 'A Welsh Hymn', the 'Prelude from the 49th Parallel' by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 'Lux Aurumque', 'All through the night', 'I'll bring daffodils', and 'Amazing Grace'.

Lord Guthrie's Heraldic Banner which hung in the Henry VII chapel in Westminster Abbey, was placed at the entrance to the chancel, together with his painted, carved Knight's Crest, a lion rampant bearing a cross. As the coffin was brought into the cathedral it was sprinkled with Holy Water, Christian symbols of the Book of the Gospels and a Crucifix were placed beside his sword, cap and Field Marshal's baton, and prayers were said by the Bishop in the rite of reception. The coffin was processed to the head of the Nave, preceded by his Insignia borne on three velvet cushions by three of his former Aides de Camp as Psalm 121 was sung in Latin.



At the sound of the sacristy bell, the congregation stood to sing 'Guide me, oh thou great redeemer' and Cardinal Vincent Nichols began the introductory rites of the Requiem Mass. Lord Guthrie's son, David, read the Eulogy, and his other son, Andrew, read from the Book of Revelation 21:1:7.



After the Mass, a trumpeter from the Band of the Welsh Guards played the Last Post and Reveille on a 1915 bugle saved from The Somme battlefield.

In respect of Lord Guthrie's rank as Field Marshal, as his coffin was borne out from Westminster Cathedral and placed in a hearse following the Requiem Mass, The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery fired a 19 round Gun Salute from three First World War era Field Guns sited at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

His loss is deeply felt.

Reference: *The Army in London - HQ London District*



Obituary

Field Marshal Charles Ronald Llewelyn Guthrie

Baron Guthrie of Craigiebank

The former head of the UK's armed forces has died aged 86.

Field Marshal Charles Ronald Llewelyn Guthrie, Baron Guthrie of Craigiebank, GCB, GCVO, OBE, DL oversaw successful military interventions in the Balkans and Sierra Leone during Blair's premiership.

The deeply respected former SAS and Guards officer also claimed to be 'probably the last British officer to have had a spear thrown at him in anger'. The spear throwing incident occurred in 1980 when he led an Anglo-French force thwarting a political coup on the island of Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides.

He was also a crossbench member of the House of Lords and a successful British Army commander in Northern Ireland, Oman and East Africa.

Lord Guthrie was a senior officer of the British Army who served as Chief of the General Staff from 1994 to 1997 and Chief of the Defence Staff from 1997 until his retirement in 2001.

Guthrie's military career saw service with the Welsh Guards and the Special Air Service; he was closely involved in military operations in Northern Ireland and provided advice to the British Government during the Bosnian War and the Kosovo War.

Born in Chelsea, London into a Scottish landed family, on 17 November 1938, Guthrie was the elder son of Major Ronald Guthrie and Nina née Llewelyn. He was educated at Harrow School and the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.

He was commissioned into the Welsh Guards on 25 July 1959 and was promoted to lieutenant on 1 June 1961 and captain on 25 July 1965. In 1966 he became a troop commander with 22 Special Air Service Regiment serving in Aden, the Persian Gulf, Malaysia and East Africa and then in 1968 he became a squadron commander with 22 Special Air Service Regiment serving in the Persian Gulf and the United Kingdom.

He returned to the Welsh Guards in Münster in 1970 and, following his promotion to major on 31 December 1970, and was given command of a mechanised infantry company in the 1st Battalion. He became Military Assistant to the Chief of the General Staff in 1973 and, following a year as Second in Command of 1st Battalion Welsh Guards in London and Cyprus and having been promoted to lieutenant colonel on 31 December 1975, he became brigade major for the Household Division in 1976.

Guthrie was appointed commanding officer of 1st Battalion Welsh Guards in 1977 in which role he was deployed to Berlin. Promoted to colonel on 31 December 1979, he undertook a tour of duty in Northern Ireland in Spring 1980 for which he was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire.

After numerous assignments and further promotions, Guthrie went on to become Chief of the Defence Staff on 2 April 1997. In that position, he advised the British Government on the conduct of the Kosovo War. He also warned against a British invasion of Zimbabwe to undertake regime change against Robert Mugabe, saying "Hold hard, you'll make it worse."

After retiring from the British Army, he was created a life peer as Baron Guthrie of Craigiebank, of Craigiebank in the Dundee City council area, in June 2001. Lord Guthrie sat as a crossbencher in the House of Lords. He was one of several retired Chiefs of Defence Staff who spoke out in the House of Lords about the risk to servicemen facing liability for their actions before the International Criminal Court, particularly with respect to the invasion of Iraq.

A Roman Catholic convert, Guthrie became a Knight of Malta and was a Patron of the Catholic homeless charities Cardinal Hume Centre and Caritas Anchor House. He became Chancellor of Liverpool Hope University in July 2013.

In a candid and lengthy interview with the National Catholic Register, Lord Guthrie said that his conversion to Catholicism was a lengthy process.

"Well, it didn't happen like Saul on the road to Damascus," Guthrie told The Register.

"It took quite a long time. My father had become a Catholic when he was 68, and we were always that way inclined. We went to church and all that, and it seemed to me that I would probably end up there ... gradually, it got more and more obvious I should be a Catholic. I was influenced by various priests I knew, various army chaplains I knew. I was influenced by my wife. But I always think I'd probably have been a Catholic more quickly if I hadn't been married to her.

"She really is a good Catholic who does an awful lot of things for the Church, but the reason I say that is because I wanted to be absolutely sure that I did want to be a Catholic not just because it was convenient to be a Catholic — you know, with only one car, who's going to have it on Sunday, that sort of thing," he added.

"I also was a general in Yorkshire, very near to Ampleforth Abbey, and I had a great friend, who's still a great friend of mine, who's a monk there and three or four people who really influenced me."

Asked what aspect of the faith drew him to convert, Lord Guthrie explained that it was a spiritual awareness.

"Obviously, the Church does an awful lot of good, looking after the poor and the sick," said Lord Guthrie, "But that wasn't the reason. It was more of the spiritual side which drew me to the Church, and I look upon the work that people do as rather an extra, really.

"You can't become a Catholic because there are a lot of poor people sleeping outside Westminster Cathedral. You've got to have a better reason than that."

On relinquishing his appointment as Colonel of The Life Guards and Gold Stick-in-Waiting, The Queen appointed Lord Guthrie a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order on 7 June 2019. On 1 December 2020, he retired from the House of Lords

Lord Guthrie died from a cerebral aneurysm on 18 September 2025, at the age of 86. A devoted husband to Lady Guthrie, Catherine who predeceased him in 2022, he is survived by their sons David and Andrew, and two grandchildren.

Reference: [OBITUARY: Field Marshal Charles Ronald Llewelyn Guthrie, Baron Guthrie of Craigiebank - The Catholic Network](#)

Many of our Veteran Chaplains had served with Field Marshal Guthrie and a few have provided us with some words following his passing:



I spoke with Father Ian Evans, a former Army Chaplain, who remembers Field Marshal Guthrie from 1993 when he was first commissioned as a Chaplain and was posted to 1 BR Corps in Germany. Monsignor Kevin Vasey was the Senior Chaplain at that time. He remembers that Charles Guthrie was a lovely character, great fun, astute, kind, hospitable and generous as well as being a dear friend to the late Queen Elisabeth and the Last Field Marshal to be promoted to the rank in the British Army. He also mentioned that Charles Guthrie was very supportive to Catholic Chaplains and was a great ambassador for the International Military Pilgrimage in Lourdes, which he attended many times.



Monsignor Phelim Rowland KCHS Wrote:

It was shortly after I had retired from the Army and been appointed as Parish Priest of Saint Mary's in Hampstead, north west London that Kate and Charles Guthrie invited me to supper at their flat adjacent to Westminster Cathedral. Our delicious roast chicken meal was eaten on their kitchen table with a few glasses of wine and lots of questions about my new appointment. It was relaxed and informal with a couple who I had known over a number of years. They were the epitome of a happy, married couple, at ease in each other's company and genuinely interested in listening to my account of what it's like to be a new Parish Priest. It's a happy memory and I have rarely eaten roast chicken that tasted so good!

This week I attended the Requiem Mass for Charles Guthrie and heard of his very extraordinary life as a soldier, who had risen to the Highest Military rank in the army. His son spoke beautifully about his Father's many honours and achievements but he also spoke as a truly loving son representing a large grieving family. His Father's gifted military leadership superimposed by his Father's deep love for his family. Charles once told me he wasn't very bright but he was very shrewd! There's an understatement! He was without doubt a gifted military leader, a patriot and sound strategist. You don't get to 5 Star rank without those qualities. He was a gentleman with a patrician sense of giving something to your country because you feel it's your duty to do so. That is something more than self-aggrandisement.

He married Kate, a Catholic, and rather sensibly adopted her faith and was a tremendous supporter of Catholic Chaplains and ethos. They both attended the IMP to Lourdes very often, happy to lead the pilgrimage and more importantly to be pilgrims. He would chat and engage with the many senior officers who attended but equally at home chatting to soldiers, sailors and airmen, all put at their ease in his august presence.

Another memory was at the rededication of the Catholic chapel at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. During one of the hymns I noticed he had tears in his eyes. I don't know what prompted it but here was a great man displaying his emotions and unafraid to do so. Kate died a few years ago and I suspect something died in him with her. His honours go before him but my abiding memory will be of that simple supper around their kitchen table. They are now together in the eternal Kingdom of the God they loved and worshipped. The words of Charles Wolfe's poem 'The burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna' seem appropriate:

' But he lay like a warrior taking his rest, with his Marshal's cloak around him'.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phelim Rowland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.



Monsignor Stephen Alker MBE wrote:

I went for Christmas dinner with Monsignor Kevin Vasey and our two mothers when Charles Guthrie was Commander in Chief at Rheindahlen. He was a relaxed, humble, and astute gentleman and both our mothers were totally charmed by him! A delightful man, he and his wife (Kate) made a wonderful team.

Monsignor Vasey said that Lt Gen Sir Charles faithfully attended weekly Mass with Lady Guthrie (when he was 1(BR) Commander in Bielefeld) and that they nearly always sat halfway in the body of the church (in those days, senior officers would sit at the front). One Sunday, Sir Charles turned up for Holy Communion, the first time he had done so. Father Kevin said that General Charles explained after Mass, that he had secretly been taking instruction in the faith with the Farm Street Jesuits and had been received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church during that week!

Another time he came to visit COMBRITFOR in Bosnia when I was the first chaplain to go there with what was formerly 11 Armoured Brigade in Minden. I was sent back from theatre because it seems Roman Catholic Chaplains were not on the establishment of Brigades, but rather in the 'Pool of Chaplains' BAOR. The operation in Bosnia was being tightly budgeted and a two-star General, at LAND Command, deemed that my presence was not needed. When Kevin Vasey informed Charles, he was furious. He said that the Army would look foolish if a Catholic soldier was killed and there was no Roman Catholic Chaplain in theatre. The war in the Balkans had not fully ended and a few of our soldiers were killed in my time there.

The next day General Charles rang his counterpart Commander in Chief, General Sir John Waters and spoke to him. Consequently, the two star was carpeted by Waters and I was ordered back to theatre as soon as possible! When he visited Bosnia, it had been announced that he was to be appointed Chief of the General Staff. I attended a lunch in his honour in Vitez with the Cheshire Regiment. I was a CF3 (Major) in those days and low down the pecking order. Hence, I was seated way away from the top table. Near the end of the meal, I felt a tap on my shoulder and turned around. There was General Guthrie who had made the point of singling me out. I stood up and he gave me some very encouraging words. As has been said, he was very astute, and I have no doubt he let everyone know that he valued a Roman Catholic Chaplain being in theatre. I can assure our readers that my time from then on had no hitches with those in Command.

I took over from Monsignor Vasey in organising the Lourdes Pilgrimage for several years (with Fr. Tom Butler as my assistant). Sir Charles and Lady Guthrie gave us great support for many years, and their presence helped secure a British Army band to accompany us each year. This gave our Army great kudos amongst the European armies who took part in the Pilgrimages.

May the Lord welcome Charles into his Kingdom of peace and light where he is joined, once more, with his dearest Kate.

POPE Leo XIV Canonises 7 New Saints

19th October 2025

By Devin Watkins - Vatican News

Pope Leo XIV raised seven men and women to the honours of the altar on Sunday, as the Church celebrated World Mission Sunday.

During Mass in St. Peter's Square, the Pope proclaimed these seven Blesseds to be canonised Saints in the Catholic Church: Ignatius Choukrallah Maloyan, Peter To Rot, Vincenza Maria Poloni, Maria del Monte Carmelo Rendiles Martínez, Maria Troncatti, José Gregorio Hernández Cisneros, and Bartolo Longo.

In his homily, the Holy Father reflected on Jesus' question about whether the Son of Man would find faith on earth when He comes again. The Lord's question, said the Pope, reveals that faith is the precious bond of love between God and His people. "Today we have before us seven witnesses, the new Saints, who, with God's grace, kept the lamp of faith burning," he said. "Indeed, they themselves became lamps capable of spreading the light of Christ."

The Pope said the great "material, cultural, scientific, and artistic treasures" of our world are not to be undervalued but noted that their true meaning is lost without faith. A world without faith, added the Pope, would be filled with children without a father, who would have no desire for life since there would be no hope left in their hearts for salvation. For this reason, Jesus invites us to pray always, so that our bond of love with God may be sustained and our hearts may welcome His salvation. "Just as breathing sustains the life of the body, so prayer sustains the life of the soul," he said. "Faith, in fact, is expressed in prayer, and authentic prayer lives on faith."

Pope Leo XIV noted that Christians often face two temptations when we pray. One temptation is to let the scandal of evil overcome us and lead us to think that God does not care for our plight. At other times, we are tempted to treat prayer as a command to God, as we seek to make Him act justly according to our interpretation of reality. Jesus, said the Pope, frees us from both temptations through His prayer on the Cross asking that God's will be done. When we wonder where God is acting amid trials, he said, let us transform this doubt into prayer, recognizing that God is present wherever people suffer. "When we are 'crucified' by pain and violence, by hatred and war, Christ is already there, on the cross for us and with us," he said. "There is no cry that God does not console; there is no tear that is far from His heart." Returning to Jesus' question if He would find faith on earth, the Pope invited Christians to embrace faith in every aspect of life, since faith sustains our commitment to justice and our desire for God's love to save the world.

In conclusion, Pope Leo prayed that the seven new Saints will assist us in our vocation to holiness. "Faith on earth," he said, "thus sustains the hope for heaven."

Who are the 7 New Saints?



Bartolo Longo (1841-1926)

Bartolo Longo underwent one of the most dramatic conversions in recent Church history. He grew up in a Catholic household, but after studying law at a university in Naples, Italy, he went from being a practicing Catholic to taking part in anti-papal demonstrations to becoming an atheist, then a Satanist, and eventually being "ordained" to the Satanist priesthood.

Through the prayers of his family and the influence of devout friends, particularly Professor Vincenzo Pepe and Dominican priest Father Alberto Radente, Longo experienced a profound conversion, renouncing his past and returning wholeheartedly to the Catholic Church.

Following his conversion, Longo dedicated his life to promoting the rosary and the message of mercy and hope through the Virgin Mary. He settled in the poverty-stricken town of Pompeii where he began restoring a dilapidated church and tirelessly worked to build a Marian shrine dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. With support from benefactors and the local community, he transformed Pompeii into a thriving centre of Catholic devotion. His efforts culminated in the construction of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Pompeii, which continues to be a major pilgrimage site to this day.

In addition to his religious work, Longo was a tireless advocate for social justice. He founded schools, orphanages, and charitable institutions, especially for the children of prisoners, believing in the power of education and mercy to transform lives.

For the last 20 years of his life, Longo had constant health issues. He died on Oct. 5, 1926, and in 1980 was beatified by Pope John Paul II, who called him the "Apostle of the Rosary."



Ignatius Choukrallah Maloyan (Ottoman Empire, 1869–1915)

Ignatius Maloyan was an Armenian Catholic archbishop of Mardin in the Ottoman Empire who was executed during the Armenian genocide for refusing to convert to Islam and renounce his Christian faith.

At the age of 14, Maloyan was sent to the convent of Bzommar-Lebanon. In 1896, he was ordained a priest in the Church of Bzommar convent and took the name Ignatius in honour of the beloved martyr of Antioch.

From 1892 to 1910, Maloyan was a parish priest in Alexandria and Cairo, where his good reputation was widespread. On Oct. 22, 1911, he was named archbishop of Mardin.

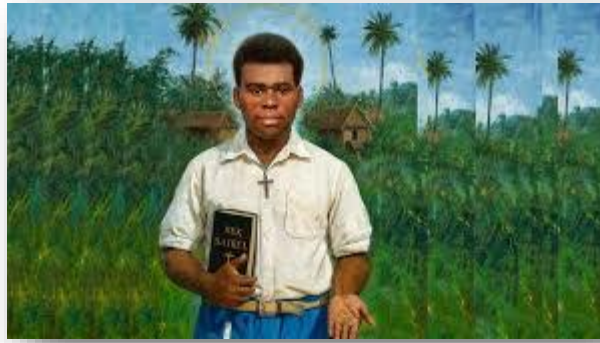
Soon after, the First World War broke out and Armenians in Turkey began to endure great suffering. On June 3, 1915, Turkish soldiers dragged Maloyan in chains to court with 27 other Armenian Catholic figures. During the trial, Mamdooh Bek, the chief of the police, asked Maloyan to convert to Islam. The archbishop answered that he would never betray Christ and his Church and was prepared to endure all types of punishments for his fidelity. He was imprisoned and frequently beaten.

On June 10, the Turkish soldiers gathered 447 Armenians and took them to a deserted area. During the ordeal, the archbishop encouraged those gathered to remain firm in their faith and prayed with them that they would accept martyrdom with courage.

After a two-hour walk, naked and chained, the prisoners were killed by the soldiers in front of Maloyan. Bek once again asked the archbishop to convert to Islam. He refused and was shot and killed by Bek on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Before he was killed, Maloyan said: "I consider the shedding of my blood for my faith to be the sweetest desire of my heart, because I know perfectly well that if I am tortured for the love of him who died for me, I will be among those who will have joy and bliss, and I will have obtained to see my Lord and my God up there."

He was beatified by Pope John Paul II on Oct. 7, 2001.

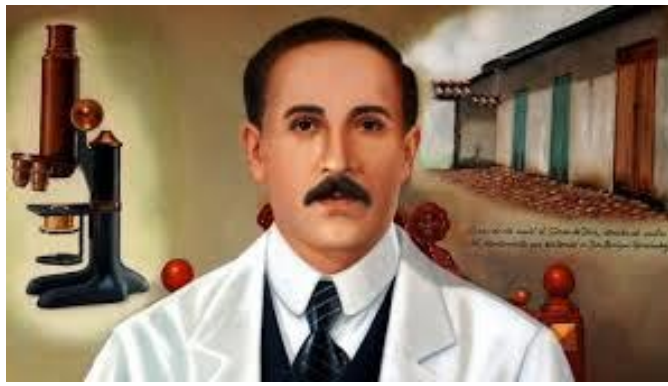


Peter To Rot (Papua New Guinea, 1912-1945)

Peter To Rot, a lay catechist in Papua New Guinea, was martyred during the Japanese occupation in World War II. When the Catholic priest in his village was taken to a Japanese labour camp, the priest left To Rot in charge of catechising the village and told him before he was taken: "Help them, so that they don't forget about God."

Despite Japanese oppression, To Rot worked in secret to keep the faith. He was a great defender of Christian marriage, working to defy Japanese law, which allowed men to take a second wife.

Toward the end of the war, the rules against religious freedom became even stricter, with any kind of prayer being forbidden. To Rot was arrested and sent to a manual labour camp in 1944 for his continual disobedience. In 1945 he was killed by lethal injection and is considered a martyr for the Catholic faith. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II on Jan. 17, 1995. He will be Papua New Guinea's first saint.



José Gregorio Hernández (Venezuela, 1864–1919)

José Gregorio Hernández, a Venezuelan physician, scientist, and layman, is revered as the "doctor of the poor."

Born on Oct. 26, 1864, in Isnotú in the Venezuelan state of Trujillo, he lost his mother at the age of 8.

He studied medicine in Caracas and received government funding to continue his studies in Paris in 1889 for two years. After returning to Venezuela, he became a professor at the Central University of Caracas, where he started each lesson with the sign of the cross.

Hernández attended daily Mass, brought medicine and care to the poor, and made a profession as a Third Order Franciscan. In 1908 he gave up his profession and entered a cloistered Carthusian monastery in Farneta, Italy. However, nine months later he fell ill, and his superior ordered him to return to Venezuela to recover.

After some time, Hernández concluded that it was God's will for him to remain a layman. He decided then to promote sanctification as an exemplary Catholic by being a doctor and giving glory to God by serving the sick. He devoted himself to academic research and deepened his dedication to serving the poor.

One day, as the doctor went to pick up medicine for an elderly poor woman, he was hit by a car. He died in the hospital on June 29, 1919. He was beatified by Pope Francis on April 30, 2021.



Maria Troncatti (Italy/Ecuador, 1883–1969)

Maria Troncatti, an Italian Salesian sister, spent nearly five decades as a missionary in Ecuador's Amazon rainforest among the Indigenous Shuar people.

Growing up in Italy, Troncatti showed an interest in religious life from a young age. She made her first profession as part of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, also known as the Salesian Sisters of Don Bosco, in 1908.

During World War I, Sister Maria trained in health care and worked as a Red Cross nurse in a military hospital. In 1925 she began her mission serving the Shuar Indians in the Amazon forest in the southeastern part of Ecuador. For 44 years, she was known as "Madrecita," or "little mother," by everyone in the village. Not only did she serve as a surgeon, dentist, nurse, orthopaedist, and anaesthesiologist, but she was also a faithful catechist sharing the Gospel with all those she served.

Sister Maria died at the age of 86 on Aug. 25, 1969, in a plane crash. She was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012.



María del Carmen Rendiles Martínez (Venezuela, 1903–1977)

Carmen Elena Rendiles Martínez was born in Caracas, Venezuela, without her left arm and was given a prosthetic arm that she used for her entire life.

In 1918, Martínez began to feel a call to religious life, but having a disability was considered a reason for rejection from some religious congregations at that time. Eventually, she joined the Servants of the Eucharist in 1927 and took the name María Carmen. She once said: "I want to be holy. I want to say like St. Paul: It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

When her religious community sought autonomy from its French motherhouse in 1965, she went on to found the Servants of Jesus in Caracas to continue its mission of Eucharistic devotion. She served as the superior general of the congregation from 1969 when she was appointed until her death in 1977 from influenza.

She was beatified by Pope Francis in 2018 and will become Venezuela's first female saint.



Vincenza Maria Poloni (Italy, 1802–1855)

Vincenza Maria Poloni, an Italian religious sister, founded the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of Verona to care for the poor, sick, and elderly.

Born the youngest of 12 siblings, she discerned her vocation under the guidance of Blessed Charles Steeb as she devoted her time to working with the poor, the elderly, and chronically ill.

In 1836, during the cholera epidemic of 1836, she worked tirelessly in the emergency wards, putting her own health at risk. In 1840 she devoted herself full time to the care of the sick and elderly and began to live a similar lifestyle to that of a religious sister, fervent prayer, strict schedules, and total service of charity toward others.

On Sept. 10, 1848, Poloni founded the Sisters of Mercy of Verona and took the name Vincenza Maria. Her motto, "Serving Christ in the Poor," became the foundation of her congregation, which can be found today on three continents. She died on Nov. 11, 1855, from a tumour that had spread throughout her body. She was beatified in 2008.

ROYAL ARMY CHAPLAINS' MUSEUM ANNUAL LECTURE

“ *The Lord of the Rings and a World at War* ”

Delivered by Tom Holland

4TH NOVEMBER 2025 | 1830 HRS



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Tickets available for FREE via Eventbrite www.eventbrite.co.uk
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Donations for this lecture can be made at the event



SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?

 Got Questions

Are you feeling stuck or not sure what to do next?

Spiritual direction is a special time where you can talk to someone about your thoughts, feelings, and faith. It's a bit like having a guide who helps you listen to God and notice how God is working in your life.

The person you talk to is called a *spiritual director*.

You can talk about anything, things that make you happy or sad, things that confuse you, or big questions about life and faith.

Please contact Karen - ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com for more details if this is something you would like to explore.



Bible Trivia

1. What is the first and last book in the Bible?
2. Which human author wrote the most books?
3. Which book did Jesus directly write?
4. What is the longest book in the Bible?
5. What is the shortest book in the Bible?
6. In what language was most of the Old Testament given?
7. In what language was most of the New Testament given?
8. Which human author wrote the most words in the Bible?
9. What was most likely the first of Paul's letters written?
10. What were men trying to do at the Tower of Babel?
11. Where did God give Moses the Ten Commandments?
12. With what did Samson kill 1000 Philistines?
13. How did Samson die?
14. Who was the enemy who took the Ark of the Covenant?
15. Who was the king of Israel anointed by Samuel after Saul?
16. How many of Jesus's brothers are named in the Bible?
17. How many of Jesus's sisters are named in the Bible?
18. Name two of Jesus's brothers.
19. Who was Jesus's most famous cousin?
20. Which member of the Jewish ruling counsel came to ask Jesus questions at night?

Answers to Newsletter Issue 40 will be published in Issue 41 or email Karen at: ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com Answers to Newsletter Issue 39: 1. Saul who was later called Paul, 2. Elymas, 3. 7, 4. The Israelites, 5. The water divided, 6. False (Galatians 3:5), 7. Moses, 8. 4 Days, 9. When Joshua defeated the Amorites, 10. False, Elijah went up in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11), 11. Luke, Song of Solomon, 12. Shrieking, 13. James, 14. Phillip, 15. The waters stopped flowing.

66th International Military Pilgrimage Lourdes 2026



The UK Contingent will depart for the International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes on Thursday 21st May 2025, returning Monday 25th May 2026.

Serving personnel may obtain details from their Military Chaplain or from the Pilgrimage Organiser: **Father Nick Gosnell**, Cathedral of St. Michael and St. George, Queens Avenue, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2BY. Tel: **01252 315042**

The Travel agents are Tangney Tours, Pilgrim House, Station Road, Borough Green, Kent TN15 8AF. Tel: 01732 886666

Bishopric of The Forces Retreats

Are you in need of stillness and sanctuary? The Bishopric of the Forces is offering 3 opportunities to go on a retreat in 2025. The retreats are open to all MOD personnel (Regular, Reserve and Civil Servant); immediate dependants will be considered dependent upon the availability of places. Applications from junior ranks are particularly encouraged.

For 2025, Ampleforth Abbey in North Yorkshire.

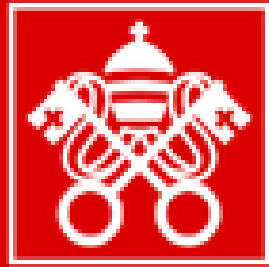


AMPLEFORTH ABBEY 10 - 13 Nov 25

The retreats are aimed at all levels of faith and knowledge, age groups, backgrounds, ranks and experiences. They will allow participants to challenge their preconceptions in a relaxed and non-judgmental environment. All venues offer a unique opportunity to take a fresh look at faith away from the pressures of everyday service life. The retreats aim to promote and foster spiritual and moral values from a faith perspective thus contributing to professional and personal development as well as serving to strengthen the moral component of the application of military force.

Further details can be found on the Defence Instructions and Notices: DIN 2025DIN01-011
Alternatively, please make contact to register your interest or to receive further information:

Wg Cdr (Retd) Jem Wynne, Pastoral Administrative Assistant to the RAF Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain. Tel: 07834609153 Email: Jeremy.Wynne109@mod.gov.uk



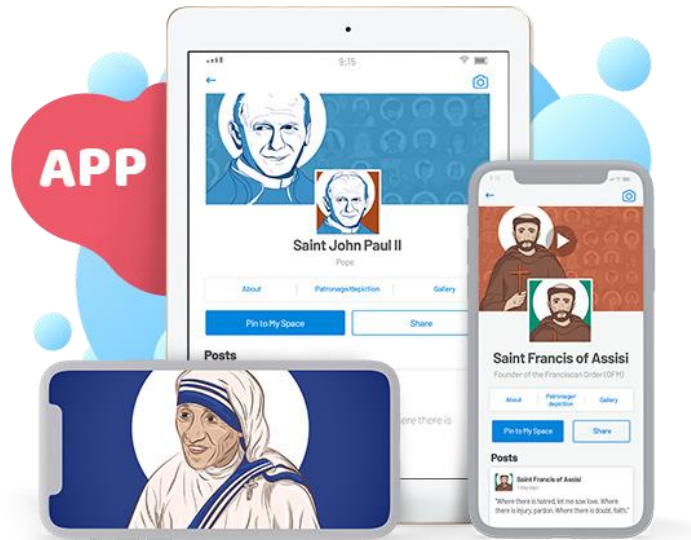
VATICAN NEWS

Vatican News is the portal for Vatican information where you can find the latest news on Pope Leo, the Holy See, the Church in the world, and international news.

Please follow the link to access the site: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en.html>



Online with Saints App



Online with Saints offers a virtual encounter with 100+ saints from all around the world. Women and Men, carpenters and scholars, mothers and popes, princes and paupers: their inspiring life stories are linked to real life modern questions. Be sure to check the social media profiles of the saints in the app.

Anyone can become a saint. Each saint is different, with their own unique personality and destiny. Each of them found their vocation in a different way - demonstrating that God has a special plan and vocation for each individual.

Download the FREE online with saints app on either [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)

Discover much more information about the saints:

- Social media profiles of the saints.
- Animated videos about their lives.
- Information on their history.
- Pray with the saints and find patron saints.

Access videos

Turn on the subtitles in YouTube

- Via the app: scan a saint in the book.
- Via the app: click on a saint's profile, play the video.
- Via the website [onlinewithsaints.com](#)
- Via the YouTube channel of *Online with Saints*

Catholic Military App is Live!



The [Apostolat Militaire International](#) and [Tweeting with GOD](#) have launched the FREE Catholic Military Connect App. See the launch video [here!](#) It's designed explicitly for military Catholics.

- ❖ It offers:
- ❖ Strong Catholic prayers, all downloaded so they can be accessed easily whilst on ship/ops/ex etc.
- ❖ Answers to 200+ questions about faith and the military.
- ❖ Prayers specifically for the military.
- ❖ Testimonies from serving Catholics.
- ❖ Inspiring military Saints and quotes.
- ❖ Guidance for preparing for Mass and Confession.
- ❖ Spiritual first aid.
- ❖ Contact details for the Military Chaplain and Association of whichever country the user is in.
- ❖ The facility to upload spiritual reading.

The CMC app is currently available in both the [Google Play](#) and [App stores](#), for smartphones and tablets, in 8 languages (English, Italian, French, Spanish, Croatian, German, Portuguese and Dutch). This is an excellent resource for your spiritual armoury.

The Holy See endorses CMC App



The Vatican's Secretary of State, Cardinal Parolin, sent a message for the launch of the CMC App to the International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes. In his words: "I believe that the app will be immensely helpful to all military personnel, and in a particular way to young men and women who, in this important sector of civil service, seek to grow in personal friendship with Jesus Christ." See the video.



Key Dates in Oct & Nov

Ss Simon and Jude, Apostles
(Feast) – 28th October

All Saints (Solemnity) – 2nd November

The Commemoration of All the Faithful
Departed (All Souls) – 3rd November

The Dedication of the Basilicas of the Ss
Peter and Paul, Apostles – 18th November

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
(Memorial) – 21st November

St Cecilia, Virgin, Martyr
(Memorial) – 22nd November

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe
(Solemnity) – 23rd November

1st Sunday of Advent – 30th November

Information.....

If you wish to know more about Roman Catholic matters within the Army Faith Community, please contact: **Mrs Karen Horn MBE** Pastoral Assistant (PA) to PRCC(A) at: ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com