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"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" Psalm 46:1



ARMY

## Army Roman Catholic Newsletter



Be  
Strong  
and Courageous  
For the  
Lord  
will be with you  
Always.  
Joshua 1:9

### Welcome

From  
The Revd. Fr. Ian Stevenson CF  
Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain  
(Army)



Welcome to Issue 16 of the Army Roman Catholic Newsletter. This issue is a 'bumper' edition, full of news. Our Chaplains and faith community have been very busy as usual. Hopefully, things will start to calm down a bit as we approach the season of Advent and prepare ourselves for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Advent is the time for reflective prayer. Try and take time out to participate in the calm and peace of prayer, especially in these recent times of struggle and hardship. 1 Peter 5:10, "after your season of suffering, God in all his Grace will restore, confirm, strengthen and establish you" reminds us to trust and believe that He will guide us through the hard times.

# Remembrance

(11<sup>th</sup> November)



Remembrance day is a commemorative day observed around the world, and is particularly poignant within the military environment. We remember military servicemen, servicewomen and civilians whom gave the ultimate sacrifice in the many conflicts and campaigns such as; World War I and II, Korea, Malaya, the Falklands War, Northern Ireland, the Balkans, the Gulf War, Afghanistan and Iraq. Remembrance day is a powerful tribute uniting people of all faiths, cultures and backgrounds but, it is also very personal too. Many war time poets, often through personal experience, have tried to express their's and others' emotional perspective through words. There are many excellent poets such as; Rupert Brooke, John McCrae, Wilfred Owen and Laurence Binyon to name a few. Indeed, we are very familiar with the words of Laurence Binyon in 'For the Fallen' as a verse from it is said at most Remembrance events throughout world.

## For the Fallen

*With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,  
England mourns for her dead across the sea.  
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,  
Fallen in the cause of the free.*

*Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal  
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,  
There is music in the midst of desolation  
And a glory that shines upon our tears.*

*They went with songs to the battle, they were young,  
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.  
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;  
They fell with their faces to the foe.*

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.*

*They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;  
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;  
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;  
They sleep beyond England's foam.*



*But where our desires are and our hopes profound,  
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,  
To the innermost heart of their own land they are  
known  
As the stars are known to the Night;*

*As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;  
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,  
To the end, to the end, they remain.*



*God of Compassion,  
When I feel helpless in my grief,  
Hold me to your heart.*

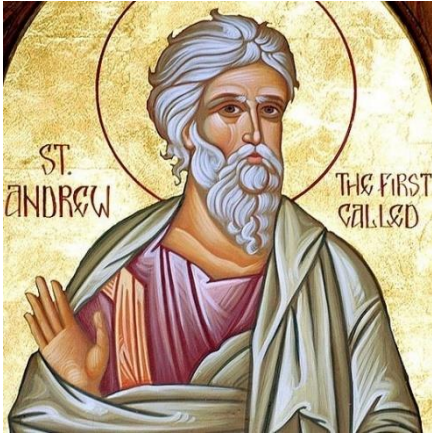
*God of gentleness,  
In those moments when life is dark,  
Keep me close to you.*

*God of comfort,  
When I am overcome with sadness,  
Shelter me under your wings.*

*Ever faithful God,  
Help me to find reassurance and hope  
In these words of hope to all your people -  
"Because you are precious to me,  
Because I love you,  
There is no need to be afraid,  
For I am with you." (Isaiah 43)  
Amen.*

# Saint Andrew, Apostle, Patron of Scotland

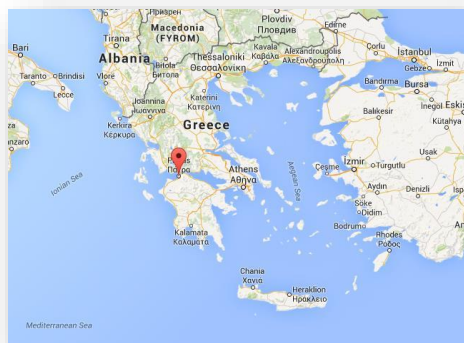
(Feast Day - 30<sup>th</sup> November)



St. Andrew, also known as Andrew the Apostle, was a Christian Apostle and the older brother to St. Peter. According to the New Testament, Andrew was born in the village of Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee during the early first century. Much like his younger brother, Simon Peter, Andrew was also a fisherman. Andrew's very name means strong and he was known for having good social skills.

In the Gospel of Matthew, it is said Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee and saw Andrew and Simon Peter fishing. It is then he asked the two to become disciples and "fishers of men." In the Gospel of Luke, Andrew is not initially named. It describes Jesus using a boat, believed to be solely Simon's, to preach to the multitudes and catch a large amount of fish on a night that originally was dry. Later, in Luke 5:7, it mentions Simon was not the only fisherman on the boat, but it is not until Luke 6:14 that there is talk of Andrew being Simon Peter's brother. However, the Gospel of John tells a separate story, stating Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. When Jesus walked by one day, John the Baptist stated, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" It is then that Andrew and another made the decision to follow Jesus.

Little else is said about Andrew in the Gospels, but it is believed Andrew was one of the closer disciples to Jesus. It was he who told Jesus about the boy with the loaves and fishes, according to John 6:8. When Philip wanted to speak to Jesus about Greeks seeking him, he spoke to Andrew first. Andrew was also present at the last supper. Per Christian tradition, Andrew went on to preach the Good News around the shores of the Black Sea and throughout what is now Greece and Turkey. Andrew was martyred by crucifixion in Patras. He was bound, rather than nailed, to a cross, as is described in the Acts of Andrew. He was crucified on a cross form known as "crux decussata," which is an X-shaped cross or a "saltire." Today this is commonly referred to as "St. Andrew's Cross." It is believed Andrew requested to be crucified this way, because he deemed himself "unworthy to be crucified on the same type of cross as Jesus."



Andrew's remains were originally preserved at Patras. However, some believe St. Regulus, who was a monk at Patras, received a vision telling him to hide some of Andrew's bones. Shortly after Regulus' dream, many of Andrew's relics were transferred to Constantinople by order of Roman emperor Constantius II around 357. Regulus later received orders in a second dream telling him to take the bones "to the ends of the earth." He was to build a shrine for them wherever he shipwrecked. He landed on the coast of Fife, Scotland.

In September 1964, Pope Paul VI had all of St. Andrew's relics that ended up in Vatican City sent back to Patras. Now, many of Andrew's relics and the cross on which he was martyred are kept in the Church of St. Andrew in Patras. St. Andrew is venerated in Georgia as the first preacher of Christianity in that territory and in Cyprus for having struck the rocks creating a gush of healing waters upon landing on the shore.

His saltire cross is featured on the flag of Scotland and is represented in much of his iconography. He is commonly portrayed as an old man with long white hair and a beard, often holding the Gospel book or a scroll.

St. Andrew is the patron saint of fishermen and singers. He is also the patron saint to several countries and cities including: Scotland, Romania, Russia, Ukraine and Patras and his feast day is celebrated on November 30th.



This article taken from: [https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=109](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=109) - accessed 22/10/22

## *St Andrew's Prayer*



O Glorious St. Andrew  
You were the first to recognise and follow the Son of God  
With your friend, St. John,  
You remained with Jesus, for your entire life, and now through eternity.

Just as you had led your brother, St. Peter, to Christ and many others after him,  
Draw us also to him. Teach us how to lead them, solely out of love for Jesus and dedication to His  
service.

Help us to learn the lesson of the Cross and carry our daily crosses without complaint, so that they  
may carry us to God the Almighty Father.

Amen.

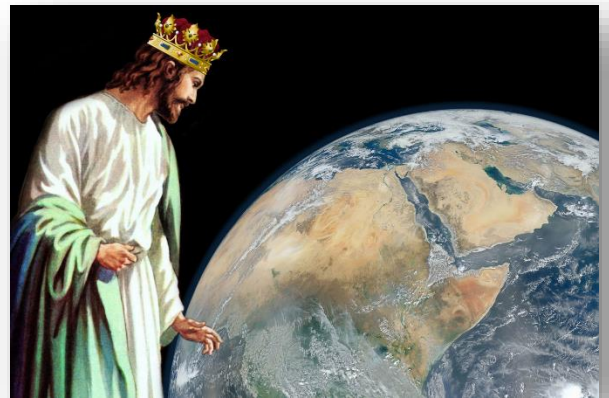


# *Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe*

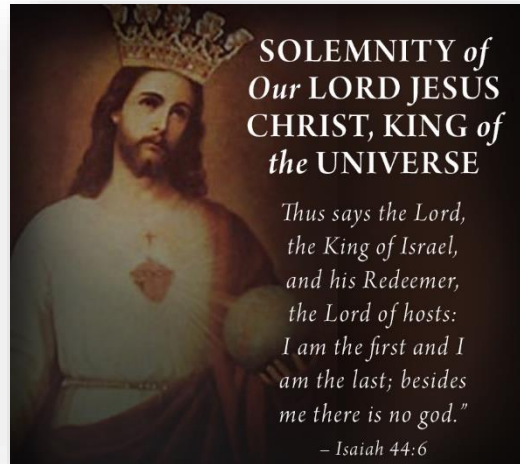
(Solemnity 20<sup>th</sup> November)

The last Sunday in Ordinary Time is dedicated to the very highest understanding of the nature, role, and purpose of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus is multifaceted, the deep hues and contours of his personality revealing themselves to different races and ages in different ways. Even inside of just one single life, a Christian can understand Jesus in more subtle and complex ways as that Christian matures. Carpenter, Miracle Worker, Son of Mary, Son of God, Prophet, Messiah, Son of David, Good Shepherd, Healer, Preacher, Logos, Lamb of God, etc. Yet all these titles and identities will give way as the world ends, time is fulfilled, and life with God becomes simply life itself. Jesus' identity will culminate in His Kingship. It will not be a transitional but a terminal identity. The dead will come nose to nose with King Jesus, feeling His hot breath on their cheeks, as He judges them at their life's end. And the saved will have King Jesus before them in Heaven forever as He renders homage to God the Father in the power of God the Holy Spirit.

The feast of "Christ the King" was first established in 1925, and Pope Saint Paul VI expanded its name to "King of the Universe" in 1969. Jesus is not just a King of Hearts. He is more than a Universal Coach, Teacher, or Consoler of mankind. By "King of the Universe" the Church is communicating Jesus' metaphysical scale, that God encompasses all of reality, not just man's reality. We say in the Nicene Creed that God created all things visible and invisible. So Jesus is King over all the planets, stars, black holes, quasars, and exploding suns in the blackest corners of remote space. He is King over the earth and all its waterfalls, rainforests, mountain peaks, desert plains, and dark sea floors. He lords over all creation because He is its source. Saint Thomas Aquinas taught correctly when he wrote that God is not the most perfect being inside of creation but Being itself. God is reality, not just the most impressive being inhabiting the reality bubble.



This feast is an antidote to the private, or compartmentalized, Jesus who impacts only those spaces in the Christian's life where He is allowed to enter. Jesus wants to reign in every sphere of our lives, at home, on the factory floor, in the yard, at the office, over drinks, on the sports field, in the car, at meals, on the phone, and on and on. His field of action has no borders. From one perspective, this is a challenging, and limiting, spirituality. Such an intrusive, all-encompassing God can make life feel like a cage, where self-expression is constrained by His rules. From another perspective, however, the total reign of God in our lives is freeing. It means that He is not found only in Church. Sunday Mass? Of course. But we need not have our fingers on the rosary to be close to God and Mary at all times. God is found inside of the daily duties that are the stuff of life. This is consoling. We are not distracted from the higher things as we manage a family, earn a living, exercise, raise the kids, or take care of the house. When the Lord is King of Everything, mundanities are not banalities. The world is richer and more alive when our life is an all-inclusive vocation. Jesus reigns and we are His subjects. "We" means our souls, minds, consciences, goals, loves, work, desires, disappointments, and all that makes up our lives. We should be glad to be subject to such a benevolent Monarch.



*Christ the King,  
Your sovereignty over all creation is not heavy.  
You order all reality toward Yourself and govern Your creatures with justice and  
humility.  
Help us to be faithful and subservient to what You desire,  
so that we can live one day in Your heavenly kingdom.*

# *Army Chaplain's Vocation Talk*

## *By*

### *Padre, Deacon John Power*



*Article written by Mr Younger, Head of RE, St. Joseph's Catholic Secondary School, Newcastle.*



On Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022, we were blessed to have Padre John Power from the Royal Army Chaplain's Department visit our school to give a vocations talk to our Year 7 and Year 13 (Philosophy and Ethics) students. We were also joined by our Governor Virginia who came to experience the vocation talk too.

Padre John Power is the first commissioned Chaplain in the British Army who is a Roman Catholic Deacon. Padre John told students how he had been a teacher for 15 years and following ordination he joined the British Army as a commissioned Chaplain. He explained about his faith, his training at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, his Padre's training, life at Catterick Garrison, the incarnational ministry of an Army Chaplain and the various exciting roles he plays for the soldiers he ministers too.

Students asked thought-provoking questions and we explored issues ranging from moral injury, PTSD, NATO, the impact on morale, the invaluable role that Haribo plays to soldiers on the frontlines for morale and questions of vocation. Students were hooked by Padre John Power's testimony and we would love to work closely with Padre John in the future with a possible trip to Catterick and the Army Church there in the very near future.





# Veterans Corner

## Retired Army RC Chaplains

In Veteran's Corner, this issue, we are thrilled that another one of our former military chaplains has agreed to write an article about himself and what he is doing now.

### Former Army Chaplain: Father Martin Caddell



Born in Scotland in 1959 my parents moved down to Wigan in 1965. My Father was a Sales rep for various food companies and my Mother was a teacher. I am the eldest of four children, I have a brother and two sisters. Thankfully, I had a happy childhood. I attended St Peters High School Orrell and St John Rigby Sixth Form College in Wigan Greater Manchester.

I took a gap year in Rhodesia 1977 to 1978.(we didn't call them gap years then!). Whilst in Africa I became involved with the Church in a place called Sinoia in northern Zimbabwe.

Inspired by the Priests and Religious Sisters I worked with I decided to apply to go to Seminary. Archbishop Derek Worlock sent me to Ushaw College Durham. I

enjoyed my training very much and was ordained Priest on the 15th July 1984. My first posting as a curate was St Joseph's Penkith Warrington. My second posting as a curate was to the Metropolitan Cathedral Liverpool in 1987.



I was asked to to join the Territorial Army as Chaplain to 208 Merseyside General Hospital. I realised I was destined to serve in the regular army as all former chaplains to 208 had done so. In 1991 I was posted to Fallingbostal in Germany to The Queens Royal Irish Hassars. My primary role was to look after the wives and families as the soldiers were in the Gulf liberating Kuwait. It was a huge culture shock and a learning curve but the Chaplains and military personnel helped me settle into military life in Germany.



My second posting was to 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in Bergen Belsen lived in the Officer's Mess and enjoyed the experience and still friends with the people I lived with today. During my time in the Army I did three operational tours. Op Grapple 2 (Balkans) with the United Nations and a tour with NATO in the late nineties. I also did a tour in Bessbrook in Northern Ireland during the troubles. My main postings were four years at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (12 Commissioning Parades!!!). Four years at the Military Corrective Centre in Colchester, probably my favourite posting. I also did nearly four years at The Army Foundation College Harrogate. I visited Cyprus several times on exercise and was sent to Brunei twice to give pastoral care to the Army personnel based there.

After twenty happy years in the Army I decided I wanted to return to my diocese to be a Parish priest. It was a difficult decision as I enjoyed Army life. But, truth be told I didn't like moving and I missed my family most of whom live in Greater Manchester. I resigned in 2011 and took a year's sabbatical. During this period, I returned to Africa and did supply work in the diocese.



In October 2012 I was appointed Parish priest of St Joseph's, Blundellsands. A vibrant parish on the coast in Crosby famous for Anthony Gormleys Iron men on the beach. In 2016 I was given a second parish in the town centre St Helens. They are both active vibrant communities and a joy to look after. As my mother is now eighty five and in the early stages of dementia I live in the house I grew up in as her carer. Thankfully, Archbishop Malcolm is happy with this arrangement so I commute the nineteen miles daily to work. Having not lived in a parish house since my days at the Cathedral it works for me.

Writing this has made me realise that my life has been very blessed. My service in the Army was an immense privilege and defines the person I am.



Photo Left:  
Fr Martin Caddell with the late Bishop Vincent Malone, Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Liverpool and Titular Bishop of Abora and Fr David Gamble at Fr Martin's installation at St Joseph's.



Photo Left:  
Fr Martin Caddell, his family and the late Bishop Vincent Malone.



Fr Martin Caddell and his mother, Pat.

# The Champion Society



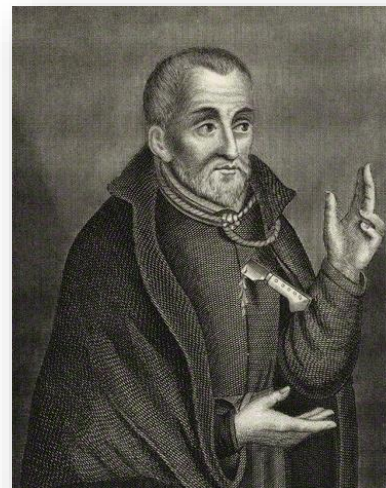
This year's Champion Society Dinner was held at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> October. Mass and Confirmation were celebrated in the Chapel of Christ the King at the Academy, followed by a drinks reception in the Grand Entrance and dinner in the Indian Army Memorial Room.



The Champion Society was formed shortly after the ending of the Second World War by the first resident Catholic Chaplain at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Father Sidney Lescher. Its primary purpose was to provide an identity for the Catholic community, and for many years it sponsored a number of activities, sporting and social as well as religious. In more recent times, mainly due to the shorter, more intensive training at RMAS, its primary purpose has been to sponsor the Annual Dinner Night with a distinguished guest speaker.

Saint Edmund Campion SJ (1540 - 1581), after whom the society is named, was one of Forty Martyrs of England and Wales canonised in St Peter's, Rome., by Pope Paul VI in 1970. In circumstances of great danger he had ministered to Catholic parishioners in London, established a secret printing press, and travelled in Lancashire, Yorkshire and the Midlands to celebrate the sacraments in disguise. His most famous work, the *Decem Rationes*, was a reasoned challenge to Protestants to debate with him the foundations of Catholicism.

After capture and trial, he was hung, drawn and quartered at Tyburn - professing his faith and his loyalty to Queen Elizabeth to the last. Saint Edmund Campion's feast day is 25<sup>th</sup> October.



This scene is depicted in a stained glass window in the refurbished chapel of Christ the King at RMAS. Membership of the Campion Society includes the RC Chaplain, RC permanent staff and Officer Cadets of RMAS.



The current Academy RC Chaplain is:  
The Revd Msgr Canon Robert Corrigan



*"You thought, perhaps, when learned Campion dies,  
His pen must cease, his sugared tongue be still.  
But you forget how loud his death it cries,  
How far beyond the sound of tongue or quill.  
You did not know how rare and great a good  
It was to write those precious gifts in blood."*

Henry Walpole SJ (1558 - 1595)

*"It is of God: it cannot be withstood"*

St Edmund Campion SJ (1540 - 1581)

# St Edward the Confessor Pirbright



Recruit Leon Nash, Recruit Dwane Bonsu,  
And Recruit Tristan Hollinshead with Fr. Pip Smith



Receiving the Sacraments from Fr. Pip Smith,  
Recruit Tristan Hollinshead, Recruit Leon Nash,  
and Recruit Dwane Bonsu

On Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> October, two receptions took place at Pirbright. Recruits Leon Nash and Tristan Hollingshead both received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Recruit Dwane Bonsu received the sacrament of Confirmation. All three recruits hope to join the RLC.

# Breaking News/Press Release:

*Father Willie Doyle Association*



## **Opening of the process to make famous WW1 chaplain a saint**

*Opening ceremony in Christ the King Cathedral Mullingar, November 20 at 5.00pm.*

27 October 2022.

*For immediate release.*

The Father Willie Doyle Association has warmly welcomed the decision of the Most Reverend Tom Deenihan, Bishop of Meath, to open the canonisation cause of World War 1 Jesuit chaplain Fr Willie Doyle.

Commenting on the Bishop's announcement, the President of the Association Patrick Kenny said: "The opening of Fr Willie's cause is a response to the wishes of many people, over many decades, who have wanted to see him recognised as a saint in the Catholic Church. We want to thank Bishop Deenihan for accepting our formal petition to open Fr Willie's canonisation process; we also want to thank the Society of Jesus for their support and encouragement.

"Fr Willie Doyle volunteered as a military chaplain in the First World War and served in this role from late 1915 until his death in August 1917. During his years as a chaplain he accompanied his men through the horrors of war and was awarded the Military Cross for his bravery at the Battle of the Somme. He was killed during the Battle of Passchendaele while rescuing two wounded Anglican soldiers from Ulster. His heroism during the war, as well as the holiness of his life in general, led to an outpouring of devotion to him in the years after his death. By the early 1930's over 50,000 letters testifying to devotion to him were received, over 6,000 of which alleged favours and healings through his intercession. The Association is privileged to take on the role of Actor for Fr Willie's Cause."

The Association also today announced the appointment of Fr John Hogan of the Diocese of Meath as diocesan postulator for the Cause. Speaking about Fr Willie's Cause, Fr Hogan said: "Only one Irish person – St Oliver Plunkett – has been canonised in the last 500 years. Ireland has many great candidates for sainthood, and Fr Willie Doyle is one of the most fascinating of all. His attractive personality, and his love for God and for others, shines through his writings. He is also a tremendously relevant figure for the Church today, especially in Ireland. By offering his life to save wounded Anglican soldiers he became an ecumenical martyr of charity and is an icon of reconciliation and unity in the midst of religious and political division. He explicitly offered his life to God in reparation for the sins of priests; this offering has a greater resonance with us now than it did at the time of his death. Willie Doyle also suffered a breakdown as a novice when he was caught up in a fire in his novitiate building. Yet, 20 years later, he was admired by all who met him as a rock of courage in the trenches of World War 1. His example is one of hope for many. I am privileged to act as postulator for Fr Willie's cause and look forward to helping to make him a new saint for the Jesuits and a new saint for Ireland."

## Notes:

For more information contact:

Patrick Kenny +353 86 8210 321 [info@williedoyle.org](mailto:info@williedoyle.org)

Fr John Hogan [postulator@williedoyle.org](mailto:postulator@williedoyle.org)

1. Willie Doyle was born in Dalkey, County Dublin in 1873, and entered the Jesuits in Rahan, Tullabeg, Co. Offaly in the Diocese of Meath in 1891. He served as chaplain in the 16<sup>th</sup> Irish Division of the British Army. Following today's announcement he is formally known as the Servant of God, Fr Willie Doyle SJ.
2. The beatification and canonisation cause for the Servant of God Fr Willie Doyle will be formally opened at Vespers in the Cathedral of Christ the King, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath on November 20<sup>th</sup> at 5pm. All are welcome to attend.
3. The Father Willie Doyle Association is a lay initiative working towards the canonisation of Fr Willie Doyle, with the approval of the Irish Jesuit Province and of the Diocese of Meath, where it has the status of a Private Association of the Faithful. The Association is the official Actor for the cause. The Actor for a cause is the one who formally petitions a bishop to open the cause and formally promotes and funds the process. It is the only Irish lay association established to promote a canonisation cause.
4. Patrick Kenny is the editor of *To Raise the Fallen: A selection of the war letters, prayers and spiritual writings of Fr Willie Doyle SJ*, published in Ireland by Veritas (2017) and in the United States by Ignatius Press (2018).
5. Fr John Hogan is a priest of the Diocese of Meath. He is the co-host of EWTN's series "Forgotten Heritage" and the author of a recent biography of St Thomas Becket.
6. The homepage of the Father Willie Doyle Association and the official website for the cause is [www.williedoyle.org](http://www.williedoyle.org) A full archive of resources and material on Fr Willie Doyle is available on this website.
7. The canonisation process can take many years. The first step is a diocesan investigation into the life and virtues of the Servant of God. If the process is approved by the diocesan tribunals it will proceed to the Roman phase where a panel of expert theologians will examine Fr Willie's life and virtues. If Fr Willie is found to have lived a life of heroic virtue he will then be granted the title Venerable, and can proceed to beatification and canonisation if the Vatican approves miracles following prayers through his intercession.



## BISHOP OF MEATH

### EDICT

I, Thomas Deenihan, Bishop of Meath, accepting the request of the Reverend Father John Hogan, legitimately constituted Postulator of the Father Willie Doyle Association, who on 25 January 2022, asked us with the *Supplex Libellus* to introduce the Cause for the Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God, Father William Doyle SJ (Dalkey, Co. Dublin 1873 – Frezenberg, Passchendaele, Belgium 1917), after having obtained the unanimous consent of the Irish Episcopal Conference and the granting of *Nihil Obstat* of the Sacred Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, hereby decree, according to *Normae servandae* n.11 b, and the Instruction *Sanctorum Mater* art. 43 §3, and inform the diocesan community of Meath, that we intend to introduce the

#### CAUSE OF BEATIFICATION AND CANONIZATION

OF

THE SERVANT OF GOD

**FATHER WILLIAM DOYLE**

*Professed Priest of the Society of Jesus.*

In accordance with the canonical provisions relating to the case, considering the serious responsibility that this decision entails, we formally invite all those who are aware of any matters relating to the reputation of holiness of the said Servant of God, even those which may be discordant, to submit it to us, the undersigned, or to the Postulator. All those who are in possession of writings (manuscripts, diaries, letters etc.) and any other document of Father William Doyle SJ, are invited to place them at the disposal of the Postulator of the Cause at the Episcopal Curia in Mullingar. If the owner of these documents and / or writings intends to keep the original, he will be able to show a duly authenticated copy.

This EDICT will remain posted for a period of one month in the Episcopal Curia of Mullingar, in the Cathedral of Christ the King, Mullingar, and in the churches of the Diocese of Meath.

Given at Mullingar, at the Episcopal See, on 25 October 2022.

✠ Thomas Deenihan  
Bishop of Meath

Reverend Father Paul Connell  
Chancellor of the Diocese

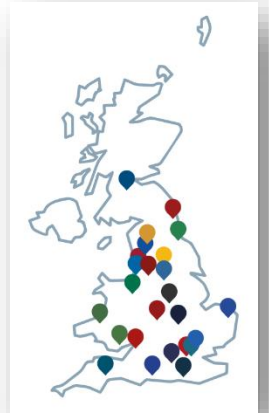




# Relic Tour of St. Bernadette - 2022

## (The Whole Story)

In September and October of this year, the relics of St. Bernadette journeyed on a pilgrimage to England, Scotland and Wales for the first time. This was a once in a lifetime event and provided the opportunity for people of all ages and backgrounds to experience the special gifts and charisms of Lourdes, in churches and cathedrals nearby.



### Who was St. Bernadette?

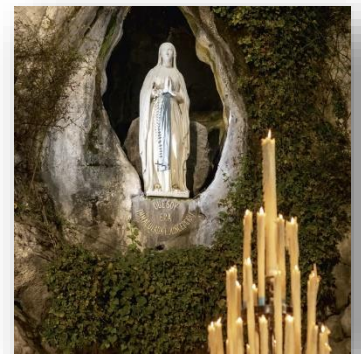
St Bernadette was born in 1844 in a small town in France. Bernadette Soubirous was one of eight children born into a very poor family. Although initially unremarkable, Bernadette's life was to inspire generations of people to journey in faith on pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Between 11 February and 16 July 1858, Bernadette saw the Virgin Mary eighteen times in a series of Apparitions that took place in cave on the outskirts of Lourdes, a place now known as the Grotto of Massabielle. In the course of these miraculous encounters, Bernadette, then aged just 14, became the friend and confidante of Our Lady, the mother of Jesus.

The Apparitions of Lourdes were authenticated in 1866 by the Bishop of Tarbes. In that same year, Bernadette left Lourdes to live out her religious vocation within the community of the Sisters of Charity of Nevers. She died in 1879, was proclaimed blessed in 1925, and became a saint in 1933.

### The Apparitions

The apparitions seen by St Bernadette took place over five months largely in silence. Despite this, over the course of time, an intimate relationship of trust, obedience, and love developed between Our Lady and Bernadette.



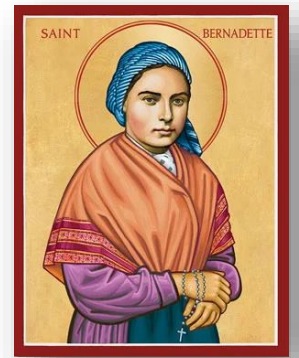
*The first seven apparitions mark a period of joyful discovery*

Bernadette was always deeply happy; this was reflected during the first seven apparitions with her face radiating joy and light.



## *Apparitions eight to twelve were penitential.*

At this point everything changed, Bernadette became sad, and sorrowful. Witnesses at the Grotto, who were growing in number every day, were deeply moved and experienced a range of emotions; some were converted to the Faith, others didn't understand Bernadette's behaviour and felt confusion or disdain.



## *The last six apparitions looked outwards, beginning with the missionary thirteenth apparition.*

During this Apparition, Mary spoke to Bernadette saying: "Tell the priests that people should come here in procession and build a chapel here." Chapels were later built to accommodate great numbers of pilgrims.

Today, the Catholic Church recognises 70 miracles as a result of the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes, with people across the world journeying in prayer with Our Lady and St Bernadette, on pilgrimage to the Sanctuary.

## *The Importance of Relics*

A Relic is a part of the physical remains of a saint after their death, or an object which has been in contact with their body. Relics are venerated to honour the holiness of God.

## *Why are St Bernadette's relics journeying to us?*

Travelling on pilgrimage enables us to enrich and renew ourselves spiritually, connecting ourselves to God by removing us from the routines of daily life. The Covid-19 pandemic made it difficult, if not impossible, for people to travel nationally and internationally, reducing the number of individuals and groups able to journey on pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Between September and October 2022 St Bernadette will journey to us, making the grace of pilgrimage available to people across England, Wales, and Scotland, and offering an important opportunity to those who might not have been able to travel on pilgrimage otherwise. We can expect many graces from this visit including healing, conversion and the wonderful discovery of vocation



## Why are relics important to Catholics?

The veneration of relics is found in many religions and is rooted in the natural human instinct to treat anything connected with those we love, who have died, with care and reverence.



From earliest times the bodies of martyrs were held in special veneration. The relics of St Polycarp, for example, were described as being 'more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold.'

In Rome, prayer services were held in the catacombs, and from the fourth century, the Eucharist was celebrated over the tombs of the martyrs. St Augustine explains this by highlighting that the bodies of saints and martyrs had enabled them to live as organs of the Holy Spirit. There are two principle reasons for venerating relics:

- God shows his approval of relics by granting healing, and other graces.
- Relics help us to feel close to a holy person, making the communion of saints more real and fostering in us a desire for holiness.

*Explaining the importance of relics, Pope Benedict XVI said:*

*“By inviting us to venerate the moral remains of the martyrs and saints, the church does not forget that, in the end, these are indeed just human bones, but they are bones that belonged to individuals touched by the transcendent power of God. The relics of the saints are traces of that invisible but real presence which sheds light upon the shadows of the world and reveals the Kingdom of Heaven in our midst”*

## Healing: The Charism of Lourdes

As we welcome the relics of St Bernadette to the United Kingdom we have an opportunity to reflect on what makes Lourdes so special. What is it that makes Lourdes so unique and such a popular pilgrimage destination? What is the central charism of Lourdes that makes it so appealing?

At the heart of the shrine today stands the Reconciliation Chapel, where pilgrims can find spiritual healing through the sacrament of Confession. In the past this building was used to house the sick who visited Lourdes. This building highlights the key charism of Lourdes being healing. On the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady to St Bernadette Pope Benedict XVI said:

*“Mary, appearing to St. Bernadette, opened a privileged place to encounter the divine love which heals and saves.”*

Lourdes is a place where we encounter God's love and where we can find healing - but not just the physical healing of the miracles that have famously taken place there. It is also a place of spiritual, emotional, and psychological healing.

## *Spiritual Healing*

On first encountering Mary, St Bernadette's first instinct was to pray the rosary. At first, she struggled, but with Mary's encouragement the words began to come.

Many pilgrims who travel to Lourdes already have great faith. They go in answer to Mary's call for people to come in procession and they seek to grow in strength in their faith by their visit. But for many others Lourdes is a place of spiritual healing. It is a place where those who are struggling with their faith can find it renewed, or where those who have visited merely out of curiosity, suddenly have their eyes opened to the love of God. In Lourdes many discover or rediscover prayer - whether in praying as part of the crowd attending one of the liturgies, or in solitude silently in front of the grotto, it is a place where we can all find the time to refocus on our relationship with God.

One of the key messages of Mary to St Bernadette was also our need to pray for the conversion of sinners and to be renewed by the spring of water. The very discovery of this spring, took place with St Bernadette on her knees scooping up a muddy puddle and putting it to her lips. This incredible act of humility and penance, opened up for us the healing waters which we now wash in, seeking to be renewed in our faith. Through the ministry that takes place in the Chapel of Reconciliation Lourdes is also a place where the Sacrament of Reconciliation - with its provision at the heart of the shrine each day.

## *Emotional Healing*

As news of St Bernadette's visions of Mary began to spread, people gathered around the grotto in growing numbers, hoping to get a glimpse of the mysterious lady that she saw.

For many people Lourdes is a place where they rediscover God working in humanity. Lourdes is a place of love. It is where people volunteer to serve and care for the sick and the most vulnerable of our society, just as the Lord commanded us to love our neighbour. It is a place of shared joy and of comfort. In living in this place, even for a few days, our eyes are opened to the way that the Lord wants the world to be, and the witness that is given in Lourdes inspires many to be healed from past occasions when they have not experienced love from their brothers and sisters. This emotional healing can also lead to the opening of our hearts to new callings linked to the service that we give - to the priesthood and religious life, to the medical or caring profession.

## *Psychological Healing*

On explaining the news of what she has seen St Bernadette was initially rejected by the priest and the elders of her community. She was seen as a nuisance and causing a disturbance to the peace of her small town.

Many of us need psychological healing, but many of us do not realise this until we arrive in Lourdes. We need healing from the things that have hurt us such as rejection or ridicule from those we love and trust. Many of us have also needed healing from loneliness and isolation. Despite so often being busy, Lourdes is a place that brings peace. Perhaps in our witness of the love around us, or in the community that we almost immediately become a part of, but certainly in the time we give to prayer in this holy place, we can discover a path away from those things that cause us hurt and towards a life of forgiveness and hope.

## *Physical Healing*

Just before the twelfth apparition in 1858, Catherine Latapie, who had paralysed two fingers in an accident two years before, met with St Bernadette and simply washed her hands in the newly found spring. Instantly her hand was healed. During the seventeenth apparition it is said that St Bernadette went into such a deep ecstasy that the flame of a candle burned on her fingers for 15 minutes without leaving a mark.

Lourdes is probably most famous for being a place of miraculous physical healings. From the earliest days, those who have travelled to Lourdes have witnessed incredible things. From those who are paralysed being able to walk, to the blind being able to see, there are many miracles associated with this place. To date, 70 confirmed miracles have taken place, but thousands more are under investigation by the Lourdes Medical Bureau using the most up-to-date of scientific research, with those with and without faith investigating whether there is a medical explanation for a healing that has taken place.

Throughout our lives we all need healing from something, but as a result of the events of the last couple of years this need for healing is even more evident. The visit of St Bernadette's relics to the U.K. in September and October 2022 are a chance for us to be reminded of the healing that can be found in Lourdes, which always brings hope and joy to those who visit.

## *A letter from Cardinal Vincent Nichols*



### *Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,*

In September and October this year, the relics of St Bernadette will undertake a very special pilgrimage, journeying from Lourdes in France to cathedrals and churches across England, Scotland, and Wales.

For many of us, the opportunity to enrich our faith through the experience of pilgrimage has been difficult or impossible over the last two years, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pilgrimage St Bernadette's relics will undertake this Autumn offers us a welcome opportunity to bear active witness to our Faith, joining with one another across our many communities to encounter God's love and find spiritual, emotional, and psychological healing and renewal.

As we welcome the relics of St Bernadette to the United Kingdom we are also reminded of the special significance of Lourdes as a place of pilgrimage and of love, where people of all ages serve and care for the sick and the most vulnerable in our society.

I would encourage those people who are able to, to consider continuing the journey begun by the relics of St Bernadette this Autumn, joining with people from their parishes and Dioceses to travel on pilgrimage to Lourdes in the weeks and months ahead.

We thank God for the faith of St Bernadette and for the many gifts and graces the relic tour will bring.

Yours devotedly,

✠ Cardinal Vincent Nichols  
Archbishop of Westminster

# A pictorial presentation of the visit of St Bernadette's Relics to the Cathedral of the Forces, St Michael & St George, Aldershot



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
BISHOPRIC OF THE  
FORCES

**Venue:**

Cathedral Church of St Michael &  
St George

**Arrive:**

07/09/2022  
10:00am

**Address:**

Aldershot, Queens Avenue,  
Hampshire  
GU11 2BY

**Depart:**

08/09/2022  
8:30am





Photos: Catholic Church England & Wales





## Patron Saints Quiz Number: 2

Name the Patron Saints of the following causes/occupations/vocations:

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Angina Sufferers   | 9. Hangovers              |
| 2. Archers            | 10. Doubters              |
| 3. Beekeepers         | 11. Maids                 |
| 4. Bell Makers        | 12. Lace Makers           |
| 5. Building Trade     | 13. Married Women         |
| 6. Warehouses         | 14. Leper                 |
| 7. Telecommunications | 15. Excluded People       |
| 8. Oaths              | 16. Haemorrhoid Sufferers |

Answers to Newsletter Issue 16 will be published in Issue 17 or email Karen at: [ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com](mailto:ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com)

Answers to Newsletter Issue 15: 1. St Matthew, 2. St Sebastian, 3. St Hedwig, 4. St Anthony, 5. St Dunstan, 6. St Cecilia, 7. St Peregrine, 8. St Vitus, 9. St Apollonius, 10. St Florian, 11. St Dymphna, 12. St John Capistrano, 13. St Clare, 14. St Vincent, 15. St Charles Borromeo, 16. St Michael

## 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

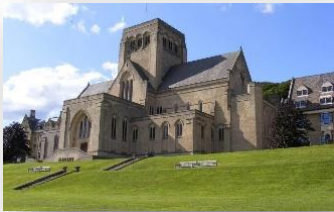
## *Bishopric of The Forces Retreats*

Are you in need of stillness and sanctuary? Scripture gives us many examples of our Lord Jesus withdrawing from noise and bustle to pray and to gain respite (Mark 3:7, Luke 5:16). Subject to Government restrictions, there is the opportunity to find that same peace at one of the Bishopric of the Forces Retreats planned for 2022:

To express an interest or to receive an application form, contact:

[rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com](mailto:rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com)

For further information see: DIN 2022DIN01-013



Ampleforth Abbey, North Yorkshire  
14 - 17 Nov 22

### *LATEST UPDATE*



The Cathedral of the Forces, St Michael and St George, was closed on 1<sup>st</sup> August for 3 months due to planned internal refurbishments.

Celebration of Mass and general liturgies

have been taking place at St Andrew's Church in Aldershot, whilst the building works have been in progress. However, as hoped activities will recommence in the Cathedral with the Act of Remembrance on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November. For Mass timings and other Cathedral information please refer to the Cathedral newsletters which can be found at:

<https://www.rcbishopricforces.org.uk/blank>



An RAF memorial crucifix is carried through the Cathedral Church of St Michael and St George, Aldershot, in preparation for Armistice Day. The crucifix is made from material from the parts of RAF aircraft from the 1930s to present day including a Spitfire and a Lancaster bomber  
TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER RICHARD POHLE



The Garrison Church of Our Lady, Queen of Peace is currently closed in Bulford due to structural difficulties. Work is very much ongoing as to determine the way forward regarding its repairs. The worshipping community are being accommodated at St Patrick's in Tidworth and a 2<sup>nd</sup> Mass is being celebrated to support both congregations. Mass times are 0900 hrs and 1030 hrs.

## Key Dates in November & December

Our Lord Jesus Christ King of the Universe

*(Solemnity) – 20<sup>th</sup> November*

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent – 27<sup>th</sup> November

St Andrew, Apostle, Patron of Scotland

*(Feast) – 30<sup>th</sup> November*

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent – 4<sup>th</sup> December

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin

Mary *(Solemnity) – 8<sup>th</sup> December*

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent – 11<sup>th</sup> December

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent – 18 December

The Nativity of the Lord *(Solemnity) 25<sup>th</sup> December*

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

*(Feast)- 30<sup>th</sup> December*



An excellent website with weekly reflections on all the upcoming Sunday readings can be found at:

<https://www.tarsus.ie/>

## CATHOLIC MILITARY ASSOCIATION the official network for Defence Catholics



We exist to support Catholics in the UK Armed Forces.

We are a lay association of the faithful whose members cooperate to support Catholicism in the UK

We strive to inspire one-another in the Faith, to grow through prayer and the sacraments, and to offer up our sufferings, persevering together in the universal call to holiness.

We are the official Defence Catholic Association, formally approved by the Right Reverend Paul Mason, Bishop of the Forces. We are a member of the Defence Christian Network.

We are serving personnel, helping others. Find us at: <https://www.catholicmilitaryassociation.org.uk/>

## Information.....

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