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"Be still and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10



Army Roman Catholic Newsletter



Welcome

From

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

*Life is a Journey
Not a Destination*



Welcome to Issue 22 of the Army Roman Catholic Newsletter.

As Autumn starts to emerge, spiritually, it is a time for acknowledging growth and expansion as a natural evolution of our organic being. Our lives go through cycles of growth, harvest, death and rebirth just as we see in nature. Ecclesiastes 3:1: "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens."

The Spiritual Significance of Autumn



As the nights start to draw in at this time of the year and the temperatures lower, we will begin to notice the changing colours of our surroundings and our senses will let us know that the energy of summer is ending. The Autumn Equinox is a meaningful period where many will express their gratitude for the harvest of the land. But, many will also be thankful for their efforts and intentions on life's journey. The changing seasons are significant points in the phases of life in nature, and within these phases many ancient cultures identified a robust innate message for humankind.

The Autumn Equinox starts on 23rd September 2023 officially marking the start of Autumn. The word Equinox comes from Latin and means 'equal night' referring to the approximate 12 hour day and 12 hour night that happens only on the two Equinox days of the year.



As we knowingly connect our awareness of the cycles of nature, our understanding of our own cycles begin to deepen. We may consciously want to think about our appreciation for what we have in life. Autumn is a good time of year to prepare spiritually for what lies ahead before the dormancy of winter. It is also a time of letting go and releasing things that have been burdensome.

Within the church there are many significant holy days during Autumn, we are presented with the saints who are models of dedicated lives, which achieves the fulfilment that we long for. There may not be bible verses about falling leaves but, there are certainly several readings that relate to 'Harvesting'. Jesus talks about a harvest, although he is not necessarily referring to crops but of the salvation of mankind, a returning of the hearts of people to their Lord and Creator.

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Matthew 9:37-38

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9



Polish Cadets Attend Perth Remembrance Service

Polish Cadets and local dignitaries attended a Remembrance Service at the Polish War Graves in Perth on 21st July 2023.



Eighteen Polish Cadets and two Adult Volunteers from LO CN-B High School Cichociemnych w Olsztynie in Bydgoska, Olsztyn visited the UK from 16th - 22nd July. During Exercise Sobieska, The Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force (ACF) hosted the group at their Garelochhead Camp in Helensburgh.

They attended the Polish War Graves to take part in a Remembrance Service for the Polish war heroes buried at Wellshill Cemetery. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for 570 war graves in Perth, including those of over 350 Polish military personnel of the Second World War. Wellshill is the largest Polish war grave site in the UK. There remain strong local links to Poland.



The Senior Chaplain Scotland 51st Infantry Brigade and HQ Scotland and Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain (Army) commenced the Remembrance Service. Reverend Father Ian Stevenson CF, said: "On this day, we commemorate the Polish heroes buried here in Perth, elsewhere in the United Kingdom and those who have no known grave. We give thanks for their part in achieving victory in the Second World War. We remember with sorrow all those who were killed and those whose lives were changed forever."

Then the Last Post was sounded, followed by a two-minute silence during which a piper played a lament to the fallen. After the Reveille was sounded, Reverend Father Stevenson CF read the Kohima Epitaph: "When you go home tell them of us and say, 'For your tomorrow, we gave our today'".

Civic and military representatives as well as the Polish delegation laid wreaths at the memorial, led by Deputy Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, Charles Gallagher Esquire DL. The Chaplain's final blessing was followed by the National Anthems of the UK and the Republic of Poland. The Polish Cadets stood to attention, saluted and sang along to their National Anthem, which concluded the ceremony.



51st Infantry Brigade and HQ Scotland's Cadet Music Adviser Second Lieutenant Callum Mellis, and The Black Watch Battalion ACF provided the music. The six talented musicians who played during the ceremony included a bugler and a piper.

After the ceremony, the Polish Cadets laid 20 Poppy Crosses on individual graves of the Polish war heroes.



In attendance were the Army Cadets Head of Wellbeing, Colonel Pat O'Meara; Head of Cultural Affairs for the Polish Consulate in Edinburgh, Mrs Sylvia Spooner; Deputy Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, Charles Gallagher Esquire DL; President of Legion Scotland and Poppyscotland, Vice Admiral Mark Beverstock; Armed Forces Champion for Perth and Kinross Council as well as HRFCA Eastern Area Committee Representative Member, Councillor Chris Ahern; Highland RFCA Chief Executive, Brigadier (Retired) Mark Dodson; Colonel Cadets of 51st Infantry Brigade and HQ Scotland as well as Army Cadet Charitable Trust (ACCT) Scotland Vice Chair and HRFCA Southern Area Committee member, Colonel Alex McNamee;

HRFCA's Community, Engagement and Outreach Committee Chair, Lieutenant Colonel Gillian Moncur; Chair of the Friends of Bydgoszcz (Perth's Polish sister city), Vice Chair of the Friends of Aschaffenburg (Perth's German twin town) and former Councillor for Perth and Kinross Council, Major Douglas Pover; the principal of the Polish school, Martyna Geszczyńska; Commonwealth War Graves Commission's UK and Northern Area Regional Manager, Iain Anderson; ACCT Scotland Secretary and Treasurer as well as Deputy Colonel Cadets and HRFCA Eastern Area Committee Associate Member, Lieutenant Colonel Martin Passmore; and The Black Watch Battalion's Public Relations Officer, Major Michael McCluskey.

During Exercise Sobieska, the Polish Cadets trained with 3 and 4 Star Cadets from The Black Watch Battalion. The programme included navigation, Communications and Information Systems (CIS) and fieldcraft. They also spent a day canoeing and gorge walking during Adventurous Training.

Brigadier Dodson met with the Battalion's Commandant, Lieutenant Colonel Alasdair Halford-MacLeod, as well as his senior team and Permanent Support Staff at the Garelochhead Camp on 19 July. HRFCA Deputy Chief Executive Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Andrew MacNaughton also visited the Camp on 21 July.

On the poignant Remembrance Service and the Polish War Graves, Cadet Mikołaj Mendalka said: "It's unbelievable how many people died away from their country in unknown land to them. It has been a shocking experience to see all the graves we did not know about, even though we had heard about Polish graves around the UK."



On Exercise Sobieska and the overall visit to Scotland, he said: "The Scottish Cadets have been really friendly, welcoming us with open arms. It has been a truly amazing experience. I'm hoping to come back again next year."

Seeing as it was their last day before their departure, the Polish Cadets had the opportunity to visit Edinburgh Castle. They spent a few hours exploring the Scottish National War Memorial and the Royal Regiment of Scotland Museum.





British Military Musicians Pay Tribute on Ukrainian Independence Day



British military musicians have paid tribute, on behalf of the UK military, to Ukraine on the country's Independence Day.

24th August marks the day Ukraine gained independence from the Soviet Union and The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland filmed a tribute performance at Edinburgh Castle.

The tributes also featured Regimental Mascot, Shetland Pony Corporal Cruachan IV.

The band played three tributes to Ukraine: *Lean on Me*, the Ukrainian National Anthem and 'Oi U Luzi Chervona Kalyna' - a Ukrainian folk song that is traditionally patriotic.

It became an anthem of hope and resistance after Russia invaded Ukraine, with local and international stars covering it.

There has also been an adaptation from Pink Floyd, with the lyrics sending a message of resistance and defiance: "And, hey-hey, we shall cheer up our glorious Ukraine!"

WORLD YOUTH DAY CELEBRATION LISBON-PORTUGAL

1ST AUGUST-7TH AUGUST 2023



World youth day is a global event for every catholic youth that takes place every three years. It is an event that helps the youth to encounter Jesus Christ through mass celebrations, networking, catechesis, and prayers with the Holy Father. It is estimated that, there was about 1.5 million young people from around the world that attended this year's world youth day celebration. The Forces were represented by 12 pilgrims from the Navy, Army and the RAF, including the Bishop of the forces Rt Rev Paul Mason and the Principal Army Chaplain Rev. Fr Ian Stevenson.

The forces pilgrims left the UK for Lisbon on the Monday 31st July at 1335hrs at London Heathrow and we landed in Lisbon at 1620hrs, where he we were met by the travel agency that organised the trip for the forces. We were driven to the hotel. We had to rest and prepare for the activities that would begin the next day.

There were a lot of activities that took place during the seven days programme. On the next morning of August 1st, we had a tour of the city of Lisbon by a tour guide which gave us the opportunity to see some historical sites within the city. We were lucky to have a knowledgeable tour guide who gave us useful information about the sites to help better our understanding of the history within Lisbon. We visited their famous square and the old city of Lisbon and some important buildings in the city.

During the evening of the 1st of August was the opening mass for the World Youth Day which kicked off the whole programme for the next seven days. The Mass celebration was held at the *Colina do Encontro* and was led by Cardinal D. Manuel Clemente, the Patriarch of Lisbon. The Mass was concelebrated by about 600 bishops and thousands of priests. The atmosphere at the Mass was electrifying. This was because everyone at the Mass everyone was really involved in a spirit filled celebration. At the end of the Mass there was time to interact with people and get to know where they have come from and establish some networking with the youth there.



On the 2nd of August there were Rise Up meetings dotted around the city of Lisbon in different languages which the youth could attend. These Rise Up meetings were about catechesis on different topics. While the catechesis was ongoing there was also youth festivals going on in the city at different places. The youth festival included music concerts, movies, theatre performances, conferences, religious encounters, exhibitions, and sports. These youth festivals were held throughout the whole programme from the 1st August to the 6th of August. It was a nice experience to have attended some of these activities.

The 3rd August was the opening ceremony with the Holy Father at the *Colina do Encontro*. This was held in the evening. But, before the opening ceremony there was various activities that was going on around the city that people could attend. There were youth festivals and Rise Up meetings going on and lots more activities at the City of Joy. These activities were, for example, confessions. There

were stands for different catholic organisations where people could talk and find out what they do, and people could apply to join them if they wanted to. There was a chapel where adoration was happening. There was a lot chanting and singing during the opening ceremony and people waving their nation's flag.



The opening ceremony started at 1745hrs with the Holy Father riding in his Pope mobile to greet the pilgrims at the park. It was a great moment to be able to witness that event. Seeing millions of youths at one place with the same purpose and aim was soul moving. There were lots of things going on at the opening ceremony. There were dancers

which were made up of people from around the world. There were letters read that were written by young people around the world for the Holy Father. At the end of the opening ceremony the Holy Father gave a speech in which he summarised by saying: 'we need to help one another to recognise that each one of us has been called by name and we need to help each other to see this fundamental reality: May these days be a vibrant echo of God's call of love.' He continued to say that 'a community of called is a not a community of best people; rather, we are all sinners, all called as we are, with our problems and limitations. We are a community of brothers and sisters of Jesus, sons, and daughters of the same Father.' At the conclusion of his speech, he said 'Don't be afraid, have courage, go forward knowing that we are loved.' The night was full of energy, which was clearly exhibited by the youth. They were waving their nation's flags and singing.

The next day on the 4th August, there was stations of the cross, this was held in the evening at the park with the Holy Father. The stations of the cross is a spiritual exercise which imitates the journey Jesus Christ went through before he was crucified. It is done in a prayerful way. It was great opportunity to pray with a lot of people and the atmosphere was filled with spirit.

On the 5th of August there was evening vigil at the camp of grace near the sea. The pilgrims had to walk to the place which was part of the programme. The vigil was held with the Holy Father and with the bishops and priests. We were led in prayers by the Holy Father in the presence of the Holy Eucharist for almost an hour. After the vigil the millions of pilgrims slept at the camp of grace for the night. For during the next day there would be a closing Mass.

The summary for the Holy Father's speech for the Vigil service was that 'God does not keep running score of all our mistakes; his love is not dependent on what we do or fail to do. God- Jesus tells us - is a Father, and when we fall along the way, He sees a son or daughter to be helped up, never a wrongdoer to be punished.'



The next day, 6th of August, the Holy Father led the closing Mass at the camp of grace. During the Mass the Pope gave a reflection and he said 'As young people, you have great dreams, but often you may fear they cannot come true. Sometimes you can think that you are not up to the challenge, and you may be tempted to lose heart, to think you fall short, or to disguise your pain with a smile. As young people, you want to change the world and work for justice and peace. You devote all your energy and creativity to this, yet it still seems insufficient. Yet the church and the world need you, the young, as much as the earth needs rain.' He continued to say 'Dear young people, I would like to look each of you in the eye and say: Do not be afraid! Now I will tell you something even more beautiful: Jesus himself is now looking at you. He knows you; he knows what is in your heart; he smiles at you and tells you once again that he loves you, always and infinitely. Always and infinitely. Do not be afraid! Courage, do not be afraid!'



At the end of the Mass celebration, the pope made the announcement that the next world youth day will be held in Seoul, South Korea in 2027.

There are a lot of things that I did pick up from this world youth day, one thing was that I saw the need to grow in my spiritual life and it gave me the opportunity to interact with people from around the world and moreover made some new friends. The atmosphere at the whole programme was great, we were people from different parts of the world but none of us saw that difference. We all saw ourselves as one people united in

one faith, solidarity, and a sense to be with one another. The experiences that I had from this world youth day will stay with me for the rest of my life. I wish it is an experience that every youth should experience especially if you are a catholic.

Thank you to Guardsman Alex Sabeng Poku who wrote this article.



St Patrick & St George's Tidworth



Hello, I am Signaller Mullis and I am from 15 Signal Regiment. I was a lifelong atheist but, on the 30th of July I was baptised and confirmed into the church. To give a quick summary, I come from a non-religious background, my whole life spent as an atheist until I rejoined the army in January of 2021. It was at this time I had an awakening to faith, a Damascus road moment. From here, I slowly grew in faith, exploring which way I was being drawn in. From research, I was largely torn between the

Orthodox and Catholic churches. In August of 2022, I took a trip to Rome, and I had the opportunity to explore the vast number of churches, church history and was able to attend Mass in St Peters Basilica. At this point I knew this was the church I wanted to be part of. Upon returning to England, I started attending Mass weekly in Tidworth. Around Christmas time I spoke with the padre, Fr David Burke about becoming Catholic, from here he helped me grow and explore my faith, then in July I was baptised and



confirmed, with family and friends. The fun did not stop there, the following day, I was part of a group from across the armed forces, travelling to Lisbon for World Youth Day. We were in Portugal for six days, in this time, we took a tour of Lisbon, we went to Fatima, in which we did the stations of the cross, got the full history of events of what took place and attended a Mass. We also had a night of sleeping out under the stars in order to take part in Mass celebrated by the Pope. I am glossing over a lot of details as I could ramble on for hours but, it was a truly beautiful experience and introduction into the church, getting to experience so much and having such tremendous people alongside my I learned an incredible amount, it was also a great opportunity to see so many other people of a similar age to me have the faith. To everyone in the church and of those I've interacted with directly, I thank you so much for the help, guidance and support you have given me and I look forward to returning it.

Thank you to Signaller Oliver Mullis who wrote this article

Arctic Winter Survival Course

29 Cdo, Regt, RA



Our Chaplains are often found in the most unusual places ministering to the troops. Father PJ O'Driscoll can be seen here spending some time with 29 Commando, Royal Artillery, on an Arctic Winter Survival Course in the North of Norway. Here are some photos of his trip away.



The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

(8th September)



The Catholic Church celebrates today the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary on its traditional fixed date of 8th September, nine months after the 8th December celebration of her Immaculate Conception as the child of Saints Joachim and Anne.

The circumstances of the Virgin Mary's infancy and early life are not directly recorded in the Bible, but other documents and traditions describing the circumstances of her birth are cited by some of the earliest Christian writers from the first centuries of the Church.

These accounts, although not considered authoritative in the same manner as the Bible, outline some of the Church's traditional beliefs about the birth of Mary.



The "Protoevangelium of James," which was probably put into its final written form in the early second century, describes Mary's father Joachim as a wealthy member of one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Joachim was deeply grieved, along with his wife Anne, by their childlessness. "He called to mind Abraham," the early Christian writing says, "that in the last day God gave him a son Isaac."

Joachim and Anne began to devote themselves extensively and rigorously to prayer and fasting, initially wondering whether their inability to conceive a child might signify God's displeasure with them.

As it turned out, however, the couple were to be blessed even more abundantly than Abraham and Sarah, as an angel revealed to Anne when he appeared to her and prophesied that all generations would honor their future child: "The Lord has heard your prayer, and you shall conceive, and shall bring forth, and your seed shall be spoken of in all the world."

After Mary's birth, according to the Protoevangelium of James, Anne "made a sanctuary" in the infant girl's room, and "allowed nothing common or unclean" on account of the special holiness of the child.

The same writing records that when she was one year old, her father "made a great feast, and invited the priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and all the people of Israel."

"And Joachim brought the child to the priests," the account continues, "and they blessed her, saying: 'O God of our fathers, bless this child, and give her an everlasting name to be named in all generations' . . . And he brought her to the chief priests, and they blessed her, saying: 'O God most high, look upon this child, and bless her with the utmost blessing, which shall be for ever.'"

The protoevangelium goes on to describe how Mary's parents, along with the temple priests, subsequently decided that she would be offered to God as a consecrated Virgin for the rest of her life, and enter a chaste marriage with the carpenter Joseph.



Saint Augustine described the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary as an event of cosmic and historic significance, and an appropriate prelude to the birth of Jesus Christ. "She is the flower of the field from whom bloomed the precious lily of the valley," he said.

The fourth-century bishop, whose theology profoundly shaped the Western Church's understanding of sin and human nature, affirmed that "through her birth, the nature inherited from our first parents is changed."

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

(14th September)



The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross celebrates two historical events: the discovery of the True Cross by Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, in 320 ad under the temple of Venus in Jerusalem, and the dedication in 335 ad of the basilica and shrine built on Calvary by Constantine, which mark the site of the Crucifixion.

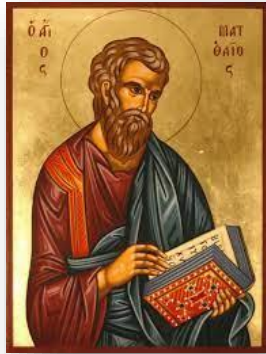
The basilica, named the Martyrium, and the shrine, named the Calvarium, were destroyed by the Persians in 614 ad. The Church of the Holy sepulcher which now stands on the site was built by the crusaders in 1149 ad.

However the feast, more than anything else, is a celebration and commemoration of God's greatest work: his salvific death on the Cross and His Resurrection, through which death was defeated and the doors to Heaven opened.

The entrance antiphon for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is: "We should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is our salvation, our life and our resurrection: through him we are saved and made free."

St Matthew, Apostle, evangelist

(21st September)



Saint Matthew, the first-century tax collector turned apostle who chronicled the life and ministry of Christ in his *Gospel*, is celebrated by the Church on 21st September. Although relatively little is known about the life of St. Matthew, the account he wrote of Christ's ministry - traditionally considered to be the first of the four *Gospels* - is of inestimable value to the Church, particularly in its verification of Jesus as the Messiah.



Eastern Catholics and the Orthodox churches celebrate St. Matthew on 16th November, along with St. Fulvianus, a prince who is recorded in some traditions as converting from paganism after Matthew's martyrdom.

The *Gospel* accounts of Mark and Luke, like Matthew's own, describe the encounter between Jesus and Matthew under the surprising circumstances of Matthew's tax-collecting duties. Jewish publicans, who collected taxes on behalf of the Roman rulers of first-century Judea, were objects of scorn and even hatred among their own communities, since they worked on behalf of the occupying power and often earned their living by collecting more than the state's due.

Jesus most likely first encountered Matthew near the house of Peter, in Capernaum near the Sea of Galilee. The meeting of the two was dramatic, as Matthew's third-person account in his *Gospel* captured: "As Jesus passed on," the ninth chapter recounts, "he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, 'Follow me'. And he got up and followed him."



Matthew's calling into Jesus' inner circle was a dramatic gesture of the Messiah's universal message and mission, causing some religious authorities of the Jewish community to wonder: "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus' significant response indicated a central purpose of his ministry: "I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."



A witness to Christ's resurrection after death, as well as his ascension into heaven and the events of Pentecost, Matthew also recorded Jesus' instruction for the apostles to "go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

Like 11 of the 12 apostles, St. Matthew is traditionally thought to have died as a martyr while preaching the Gospel. The Roman Martyrology describes his death as occurring in a territory near present-day Egypt.

Both the saint himself, and his Gospel narrative, have inspired important works of religious art, ranging from the ornate illuminated pages of the Book of Kells in the ninth century, to the Saint Matthew Passion of J.S. Bach.



Three famous paintings of Caravaggio, depicting St. Matthew's calling, inspiration and martyrdom, hang within the Contarelli Chapel in Rome's Church of St. Louis of the French.

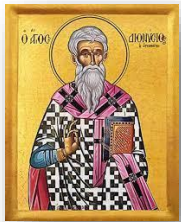


Reflecting on St. Matthew's calling, from the pursuit of dishonest financial gain to the heights of holiness and divine inspiration, Pope Benedict said in 2006 that "in the figure of Matthew, the Gospels present to us a true and proper paradox: those who seem to be the farthest from holiness can even become a model of the acceptance of God's mercy and offer a glimpse of its marvelous effects in their own lives."

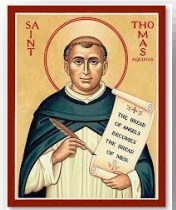
Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels

(29th September)

Patron Saints of soldiers, police, paramedics, and the sick and dying (Michael); messengers, postal workers, broadcasters, and expectant mothers (Gabriel); travelers, the blind, medical workers, and matchmakers (Raphael)



In the fifth or sixth century, an important Church theologian, given the name Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, used the many references in the Sacred Scriptures to clearly articulate what has become the traditional understanding of the hierarchy of angels. In the thirteenth century, Saint Thomas Aquinas built upon that teaching. Both taught that there are nine choirs in the hierarchy.



The nine choirs are further divided into three triads. The three highest, comprising the first triad (Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones), is devoted exclusively to the service of God, worshiping Him continuously. The second triad (Dominions, Virtues, and Powers) is tasked with the governance of the created world and the entire Universe. The third triad (Principalities, Archangels, and Angels) is closest to humanity, acting as mediators between God and man. It is the Archangels whom we honour today.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, there are numerous mentions of the heavenly spirits. In the Old Testament, they stood at the entrance to the Garden of Eden, directed Abraham, stayed his hand at the sacrifice of Isaac, destroyed Sodom and protected Lot, spoke to and wrestled with Jacob, went before Moses and the Israelites, and interacted with Israel's kings and prophets. In the New Testament, the Archangel Gabriel announced the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Jesus often spoke of the workings of angels in His preaching. They ministered to Him during His agony in the garden, were present at His Resurrection, and helped set Peter free from prison. Saint Paul spoke about the hierarchy of angels several times.



Saint Thomas Aquinas taught that every human being is assigned a guardian angel. The archangels are next in the hierarchy of angelic spirits and serve humanity directly, performing the most important tasks. The three Archangels we honour today are the only three mentioned in the Bible. However, earlier Jewish traditions name seven archangels, and some speculate that there might be a whole host of archangels whom God uses to assist with the most important aspects of our lives. Raphael describes himself as one of the seven who stand before God.



Michael, whose name means "Who is like God?", is mentioned several times in the Bible. The Book of Daniel speaks of him as the prince who stands up for the people of Israel in a protective way (Daniel 10:13, 10:21, and 12:1). The Letter of Jude speaks of Michael fighting against Satan in a dispute over the body of Moses, "Yet the archangel Michael, when he argued with the devil in a dispute over the body of Moses, did not venture to pronounce a reviling judgment upon him but said, 'May the Lord rebuke you!'" (Jude 1:9). The Book of Revelation also reveals Michael's battle with Satan, casting him from Heaven, "Then war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back, but they did not prevail and there was no longer any place for them in heaven" (Revelation 12:7-8). Based on these passages, Michael is seen as the great defender against Satan and his demons, the protector of the Church, and the Prince of the Angels. Though Saint Thomas assigns him

to the second lowest level of the hierarchy of the choirs of angels, others (Saints Basil, Robert Bellarmine, and Bonaventure) have speculated that he directs the entire host of angels, taking the former place of Lucifer, the light-bearer, who was a Seraphim of the highest realm. The prayer to Saint Michael, who defends us in battle, was written by Pope Leo XIII and was prayed thereafter at the end of every Mass until the reforms after Vatican II. Today, it is still prayed in many churches and widely in private devotion.

Gabriel, whose name means "God is my strength" or "Strong man of God," appears several times in the Bible. In the Book of Daniel, Gabriel appears to interpret Daniel's vision (Daniel 8:15-27; 9:20-27). In the New Testament, Gabriel appears to Zechariah in the Temple to reveal the birth of his son, John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-20), and to the Blessed Virgin Mary to announce the birth of the Messiah (Luke 1:26-38). It might have also been Gabriel who spoke to Saint Joseph in a dream, dispelling his fear about taking Mary as his wife (Matthew 1:18-25). For these reasons, Gabriel often appears in sacred art blowing a trumpet for his role in conveying divine messages, guiding prophets, and participating in significant events that shape human history.





Raphael, whose name means "God has healed," is mentioned by name only in the Book of Tobit. Tobit was a wealthy and devout Israelite who had been deported from his home to Nineveh by the Assyrian king. While in exile, he suffered from blindness and sent his son, Tobias, to his homeland to gather his money. On the way, Raphael appeared to Tobias in human form, using the name Azariah. Raphael protected him on the journey and led him to a woman named Sarah who lost seven husbands on the night of their weddings, due to a demon's attack. The archangel united them in marriage, expelled the demon, and accompanied them back to Tobit, whom he healed. He then revealed to them, "I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand and serve before the Glory of the Lord" (Tobit 12:15). It is speculated that Raphael is also one of the seven angels in the Book of Revelation who each receives one of the seven trumpets, "And I saw that the seven angels who stood before God were given seven trumpets" (Revelation 8:2).

Though great mystery surrounds the full nature and function of these glorious angelic spirits, what is abundantly clear is that God has used them throughout the course of salvation history. Today, we can confidently assert that God continues to pour forth His grace upon us through the mediation of the angels, especially Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. For some reason, God specifically revealed the names of these spirits to us, and that invites us to call upon their mediation. As mediators, they do more than pray for us. They are entrusted with the duty of implementing God's will.

As we honour these three archangels today, call upon their intercession, seek their mediation, and trust that they will accomplish the duties they are given. Through Michael, seek God's protection. Through Gabriel, seek God's revelation. And through Raphael, seek God's healing. They will not let you down.



Glorious Archangels Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, we entrust ourselves to your angelic mediation. Please set into motion God's plan for our lives, protect us from the evil one, deliver to us God's holy word, and heal us of our sins. We thank you for the glorious duties you fulfill in the divine mission and rely upon you in our lives. Saints Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, pray for us and mediate God's grace to us. Jesus, we trust in You.



Religions of the World



1. The city of Varanasi, in Northern India, is a pilgrimage destination for which religion?
2. Shinto is a religion that originates from what country?
3. Which Hindu deity is the god of destruction?
4. The Ganges River, considered sacred to Hindus, mainly flows through what country?
5. What country is Mecca, the holiest city in Islam, located?
6. The Great Pyramid of Giza is associated with which ancient Egyptian religious practice?
7. Jerusalem is considered a holy city for which three major monotheistic religions?
8. Which site, located in India, is one of the main pilgrimage destinations for Buddhists and is where Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment?
9. Who is the founder of Islam?
10. What is the main belief that Judaism, Christianity and Islam have in common?
11. What is the predominant religion in South America?
12. Who was the founder of Judaism?
13. What two religions make up more than 50% of the world's followers?
14. What religion is the oldest religion of the five major world religions?
15. What religion can be divided into Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox sects?

Answers to Newsletter Issue 22 will be published in Issue 23 or email Karen at: ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com

Answers to Newsletter Issue 21: 1. Saul, 2. Malta, 3. Salamis and Paphos, 4. The Ram, 5. Jerusalem, 6. Patmos, 7. Caesarea, 8. Samaria, 9. Egypt, 10. Lot and his family, 11. Because news that he had killed an Egyptian had started to spread, 12. The redeemed.

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.

Event >>>

International Military Pilgrimage Lourdes 2024



The UK Contingent will depart for the International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes on Thursday 23rd May 2024, returning Monday 27th May 2024.

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 Tangley Tours, Pilgrim House, Station Road, Borough Green, Kent TN15 8AF. Tel: 01732 886666

Event >>>

Annual Mass for Deceased Chaplains Westminster Cathedral

1st May 2024



Bishopric of The Forces Retreats

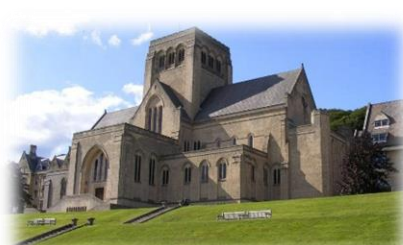
"His reputation continued to grow, and large crowds would gather to hear him and to have their sickness cured, but he would always go off to some place where he could be alone and pray". Luke 5: 15-16.

Are you in need of stillness and sanctuary? The Bishopric of the Forces is offering 3 opportunities to go on a retreat in 2023. 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.

Once again, for 2023, Worth Abbey in West Sussex and Ampleforth Abbey in North Yorkshire will be used. Both retreat locations are Benedictine Abbeys. Those attending the retreats will gain insight into Benedictine spirituality which is centred on the core values of silence, prayer, obedience, stewardship, listening, humility, peace, work, living in community and hospitality. Through led sessions, periods for prayer and reflection, and with the opportunity to join with the monastic community in the Abbey Church in praying the Daily Office, retreat participants will be refreshed and reinvigorated in the exploration and renewal of their faith.



WORTH ABBEY 18 - 21 SEP 23



AMPLEFORTH ABBEY 30 OCT - 2 NOV 23

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 once it is published. Alternatively, please contact to register your interest or to receive further information:

Wg Cdr (rtd) Jem Wynne, Pastoral Administrative Assistant to the RAF Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain. Tel: 07834609153 Email: rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com

Sgt Caroline Routledge, Dep Retreats Coordinator, SNCO System Coordinator, Mission Support, Centre, RAF Coningsby, Lincolnshire, LN4 4SY. Tel: 95721 8075 Email: caroline.routledge475@mod.gov.uk



Key Dates in September

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
(Feast) – 8th September

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
(Feast) – 14th September

St Matthew, Apostle, Evangelist
(Feast) – 21st September

Ss Michael, Gabriel & Raphael, Archangels
(Feast) – 29th September

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 Armed Forces.

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 Assistant (PA) to PRCC(A) at: ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com