



**Vicariate of Evangelisation & Catechesis**  
**Incorporating Marriage, Family Life & Youth**  
**Making Disciples—Speaking The Truth In Love**

**A CHURCH ON FIRE - A PRESENTATION TO THE DIOCESE  
ON MISSIONARY DISCIPLES**

WHAT A GREAT day the 1<sup>st</sup> May turned out to be as over 200 people joined us for our clergy/laity day on making missionary disciples to spearhead our parishes becoming more missionary in attitude and activity. The gathering on Zoom was led by Michael Dopp, international speaker and founder of Mission of the Redeemer Ministries, based in Ottawa.

Bishop Mark began this powerful day with prayer and shared with us his own thoughts on how this topic was central to the diocesan document, '*A Precious Place of God's Grace*', as we endeavour to develop our parishes into communities of disciple-making disciples and foster an even greater collaboration and co-responsibility between priests and laity.

Michael's presentation was given under the general title of, 'A Church on fire', which captured the twofold nature of a Church in crisis and the Church embracing opportunity in the face of declining numbers and resources. Only when we do a "fearless inventory", of ourselves and where God has us at this moment, can we then be open to the Holy Spirit who, just like in the early church, which had no supporting structures but only the Good News, empowers the Church to be, "bold in action because it was coming from a place of weakness". This is what will enable us to grasp the essence of, '*A Precious Place of God's Grace*', actualise it and make it real.

In making mission real, the Holy Spirit will challenge us to, 'commit all the Church's energies to evangelisation' (RM, 3) because it is the core of our being and, 'the Church exists to evangelise' (EN, 5). Michael reminded us that, first and foremost, this is not about structural change but a personal call from the Lord to each and every one of us to embrace the, 'call to holiness and the call to mission', which was powerfully exhorted by the Second Vatican Council. Only then do we move to the concrete reality of becoming missionary disciples.



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## A CHURCH ON FIRE - A PRESENTATION TO THE DIOCESE ON MISSIONARY DISCIPLES (cont)



### ***Mission Made Possible...***

**You can read more in the testimonial on page 8.**

**To join the waiting list for September, please contact a member of the team.**



### **Reflection :-**

***'The Holy Spirit surely initiated this...'***

Jesus' own words, "Go therefore, make disciples of all nations.." (Mtt 28) tells us that the Church's mission is not complicated. If we do not have clarity on this then we have, "everything and nothing". This is the one plan that Jesus gave us and there is no plan B. From the directness of Jesus' own words we are called to propose and invite people to accept his offer of salvation and be, "set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness". (EG,1). This is the goal of evangelisation by which someone accepts by a personal decision the sovereignty of Christ and becomes his disciple'. (RM,46). This is the very nature of conversion, and, 'the Church evangelises when she seeks to convert'. (EN,49)

In the second half of his presentation, Michael encourages us to, "Dream big". What could God want to do in our diocese? In the renewal we all called to undertake, Michael advised us to focus on three fundamental principles: 1. Recognising our baptismal vocation and deeply appropriating it into our lives. 2. Parish is our mission territory. It is here - we do not have to look far. 3. The priority; the Salvation of Souls. This one priority must not be lost amongst numerous, "other" priorities. (A recording of the entire talk is available on the diocesan website)

The next step is to offer every parishioner formation in missionary discipleship so that each of us is equipped to do our part. More than 80 people across the diocese have already engaged in '***Mission Made Possible***' and the next round of sessions is due to begin in September. Small groups of five at a time are hosted personally on a weekly Zoom call for 90 minutes, over a seven week period. The sessions are described as a spiritual journey which takes pilgrims to the heart of their discipleship, encouraging them to trust in Holy Scripture and become responsive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, who will provide opportunities to engage with others and share the faith sensitively and appropriately. Pilgrims learn the art of Soul Listening and how to have deep, meaningful conversations without fear or any kind of conflict. This learning is invaluable, and it is suitable for everyone.

### **Walking with the Lord**

WALKING UP A steep hill as I returned home one day, I fell into step with a young woman who was walking quite slowly. I asked her if she was okay and she replied that she was just tired. The Holy Spirit surely initiated this encounter because although I easily 'overtook' her on the road, I had to stop and deal with a message on my phone which meant that she drew level with me just as I finished.

We fell into conversation quite quickly as she asked if and why I went up and down the hill regularly. I explained that I did as I was involved with my church on a daily basis and this led the conversation into matters of faith. It turned out that she herself didn't have any. I told her I would like to pray for her and she eagerly asked me to pray that her relationship with her father would be healed. Sadly, he had had nothing to do with his daughter for some years.

"I have something to tell you which will really help you", I said. I proceeded to explain to her about the Good News of Jesus Christ and said that if she prayed to him, he would be with her and heal both her and her father.

As we were about to go our separate ways I decided I could do even better. I asked her if she would like me to pray with her there and then, (the street was quiet!). I prayed specifically for her situation and afterwards she told me:

"There's always hope, isn't there?"

"Yes, in Jesus Christ", I answered.

## St Joseph!



IN THE SHOP the butcher noticed my cross and miraculous medal around my neck and asked if I were religious? From his name badge I could see that he had the name of one of my favourite saints. So the conversation ensued – for several weeks, as

each time I went for my weekly shop, we quite naturally picked up the conversation where we had left off. I shared how St Joseph had found us our home when I was heavily pregnant and that I knew he had had a hand in it

***‘I said that I would pray for him...’***

because we had found ourselves in St Joseph’s parish! I learnt a lot about my new friend and how he had been brought up in the Catholic faith but had now stepped away. He was wondering what to do with his life and I said that I would pray for him and invited him back to church, “maybe one day”.

Many weeks later, I found out that he had got a place at university and was excited about his change of direction. Thank you St Joseph for helping your namesake! I’m still praying for the “maybe one day”. In the meantime, he’ll be in safe hands!



**GOOD NEWS!  
GOOD NEWS!  
GOOD NEWS! GOOD  
NEWS! GOOD NEWS!  
GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS! GOOD  
NEWS! GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!**

### **LOCALLY...**

**Our first group of clergy have engaged in the Mission Made Possible formation. *Come Holy Spirit!***

### **NATIONALLY...**

**We are joining forces with the Diocese of Northampton, whose Bishop — David Oakley — has signed up with his senior leadership team to engage in Mission Made Possible — starting this month!**

### **INTERNATIONALLY...**

**We have been training Priests in Canada and the USA. There seems to be an incredible movement of the Holy Spirit and we are now training new leaders to work locally there in order to meet demand!**



***“It’s a great idea to wear a visible sign of faith like a crucifix or even a key fob as they can be great conversation starters. I am vigilant also for “Wassat?” opportunities to start conversations with others, holy or otherwise. “Wassats” usually have a story for the wearer, can be great points to connect and with a silent prayer to the Holy Spirit can plant many a seed, (step 1, 2 & 3 of the Genesis Model).”***

## The 'missing link' of the New Evangelisation

**We received this testimonial from Fr. Bernard Sixtus of the Archdiocese of Cardiff who, with members of his parish evangelisation team has recently graduated the 'Mission Made Possible' formation...**

### **Quote from Pope Francis**

*Don't let lack of training stop you from evangelizing...*

*"...each of us should find ways to communicate Jesus wherever we are."  
(EG 121)*

News says, when you give blood, you save 3 lives. I know a man who gave His blood and it was powerful enough to save the world.

Do you know Him too?

Not sure about you, but for quite a while I had been thinking and praying about how to actually 'do' the New Evangelisation: is it a parish course I need, (and if so, which?), a particular structure or group in the parish, affiliation to a particular network, certain initiatives or programmes... or what?

I tried some of the above and continue to think very highly of many initiatives, such as the Sycamore course, for example, or the Divine Renovation network. But something seemed to be missing, some practical way of making all these good things really "work" and connect to people.

And I now think 'Genesis' is it. Having just done the course myself with some parishioners here, I can see what difference it has already made both to my personal sharing of the Gospel and to that of my parishioners, all of us 'ordinary' people just going about our daily tasks and life. Suddenly, there is a new listening and looking both for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and for real, meaningful encounters with the people one just happens to meet - and to see where these meetings can be taken. Turns out that quite often, just by real prayerful intentional listening, they can be taken to a place where the Gospel can be shared and prayer offered, in a 'natural' welcome, 'non-creaky', life-giving way.

I recommend it wholeheartedly. It will not replace the initiatives our parish runs here, (from occasional courses to film nights and a food kitchen) - but it will fill them with greater purpose and in turn view them as providing - among other things - great 'occasions' for meaningful personal encounters which will allow us to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am deeply grateful to those who pointed me to Genesis and arranged for it to be run - and hope many others will be who are yet to take part.

*Fr Bernard Sixtus, Sts David Lewis & Francis Xavier, Usk (Cardiff)*

# Forgiveness Prevails after Contrition

IN THE LAST few days I have been reminded about an episode long ago...

I had an unexpected phone call from an old friend. He is very evangelical these days, bursting with the 'Good News' of Jesus. He is so full of life!

It must have been twenty-five years since we sat together in the interview room at Manchester Crown Court where he faced serious charges that risked a lengthy custodial sentence. He shared with me, in confidence, that he was guilty, but was confident his brief could "get him off". Without taking any moral high ground, (on which I have no right to stand!) I discussed with him the importance of being truthful even when we will suffer the consequences. How he could save the victim the ordeal of testifying as he asked for forgiveness for what he had done. He bravely pleaded guilty despite his barrister's arguments to the contrary and placed himself at the mercy of the Court. The judge was impressed by his honesty and handed down a much reduced sentence at the lower end of the scale.

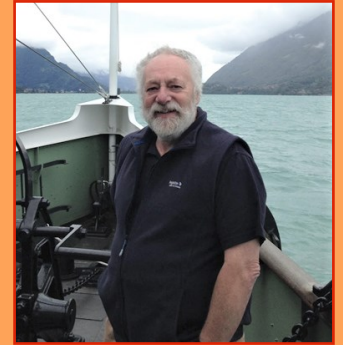
Over the years he was in prison we kept in contact and fortunately as I had a National Prison Pass I could visit him and chat on the Wings of various establishments. Despite the toxic environment he became more relaxed and accepting as his love of Jesus developed.

That 'conversion' has remained with him in the twenty years that have followed. I will never forget the pleasure in his mother's eyes as we sat down for a genuine home cooked West Indian meal in her terraced house in Moss Side a few years ago before she died. She was so proud of her son who had finally found Jesus in such adversity.

Jesus really shines through this man now in such a manner that puts me to shame. The mercy of God and that constant willingness to forgive us sinners is so evident in this case.



Mission is a constant stimulus not to remain mired in mediocrity but to continue growing.



## Reflection:

**"We just need to be willing to take that first step ourselves and trust in the Holy Spirit like he did"**

**"Please pray for the Genesis Mission"**



## Good Friday Graces



***‘Be the Gospel for someone’.***

**If you want to know how to share your faith with friends, family or to whomever God sends to you, please get in touch with the team.**

I ALWAYS THINK there are extra graces around on Good Friday and despite the restrictions, this year was no exception.

Like last year, the traditional Walk of Witness was not possible, but a number of the faithful across the diocese, set out alone or in pairs, with a Cross, to make this important pilgrimage.

My companion and I set off with a prayer and a sturdy life size Cross heading for Plymouth City Centre. We encountered much support along the way as we stopped frequently, honouring Jesus’s walk to Calvary.

Once arrived, I quickly got talking to a young couple who were curious to know what we were about. It was wonderful to be able to explain the Easter story and it was clear that the young woman who was in her mid-twenties had very little notion or knowledge about God.

“So it was Jesus on the Cross?” she said. Yes I explained and he did that because he loves us so very much. He loves you Bryony, particularly you, and we don’t have to wonder what God is like because Jesus came to show us that we can know God by knowing Him. He wants the absolute best for you and he wants you in heaven with him when the time comes.

“But some terrible things have happened to me, I don’t think God wants the best for me” At this point her friend piped up.

“Well” he said “God has been amazing to me. He has given me this wonderful woman and I love her with all my heart. God has given me a new start and someone to spend the rest of my life with”

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***‘He longs for us to reach out to Him...’***

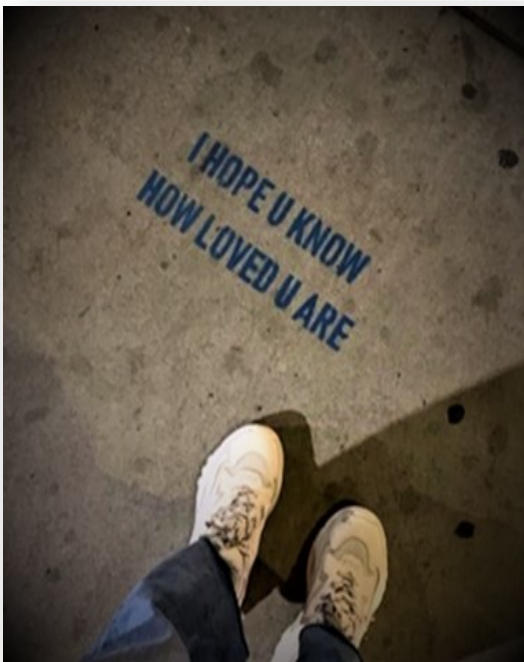
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I looked back at Bryony who was gazing dreamily at Mike.

“Bryony” I said gently “I can understand how when bad things happen we might think God doesn’t care about us, but in fact the opposite is true, He longs for us to reach out to Him so that He can console us. Look how good He has been to you, He has brought you this man who has just said he will love you forever - what a gift that is. Bryony, did you ever think to ask Jesus to help you when you were troubled? Bryony was quiet for more than a few seconds and I knew she was thinking back over her journey. I prayed silently to the Holy Spirit; I knew something was stirring. “No” she said and the tone in her voice suggested surprise “I never thought to do that” “Would you like to pray for that now?” “Yes, I would” she replied. We prayed and afterwards I encouraged them to pray together every day.

Bryony may never have heard the Gospel.

***There are many, many people like Bryony.***





## Youth Events

YOUTH EVENTS HAVE spent most of the last year trying to connect young people through online events. It's aim is to create a sense of fraternity amongst the young people in our communities. I am delighted to announce that there are three events planned in July. All will be run at St Rita's in Honiton. (This is making the assumption that the nation continues to follow the Governments proposed road map):

3<sup>rd</sup> July - a Social Justice event for all young people twelve plus years. Although the finer details of the day are to be planned, the day will give them a chance to explore a Social Justice theme. This will enable them to form their own opinions on the topic and they will then get the chance to consider what action they could take, if they choose to fight this campaign. Last term a group of ten young people explored the Social Justice topics of Refugee and Asylum Seekers and the Environment.

**'Jesus walks with us'** - a conference that will also be held at St Rita's in Honiton. This event will be run twice; 9<sup>th</sup> July for our diocesan schools and 10<sup>th</sup> July for any young person year Six upwards who lives in the diocese, (you do not have to be Catholic to attend). I am really excited to have the chance to work with 'By Design Theatre' and 'Rise Theatre', along with the De Krester family of musicians to run this day. Young people will have the chance to explore the Emmaus walk scripture, through drama, dance, art and meditation. I feel it is important that young people recognise that God is always with us, no matter what we do, whether we are having fun or sad times. The last year has been a testing time for many of us, in many different ways. The hope is that this event will give young people a chance to explore different ways to express their anxieties and frustrations and offer them to God.

I am always on the lookout for people with skills and talents to share with groups of young people. If you feel that you could share a skill or would simply like the chance to support young people along their spiritual journey, please get in touch: Saskia Hogbin  
[youth@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:youth@prcdtr.org.uk)

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### FOR THOSE WHO TAKE A GRANDPARENTAL ROLE...

Pope Francis has decided to institute a Church-wide celebration of a World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, Starting this year, it will be held on the fourth Sunday of July (25th):

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-01/pope-establishes-world-day-for-grandparents-and-the-elderly.html>

Information will be sent to parishes but in the meantime why not consider forming a group of Catholic Grandparents? Find information on the Association of Catholic Grandparents here:

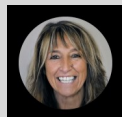
<http://www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org>

**Please make contact for more information about anything in this newsletter and please pray for all concerned.**

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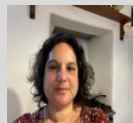
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## FRANCISCAN AT HOME

*Online learning at your convenience*

This month a group of new learners in Truro plan to begin undertaking 'Franciscan at Home' workshops. These are taken individually or as a small group. They are a parish based group but now that we can meet online some groups comprise members from across the Diocese. Get in touch with us to find out more about undertaking these enriching courses either individually with a mentor or in one of the groups.

Graduates of three of the groups have completed several catechetical 'tracks' and workshops and contributed to parish catechesis. Since February, some members have put together presentations and (almost) delivered a fifteen session online and live confirmation programme (details available on request), while others provided the vital intercessory prayer support.

## Marriage Preparation and support

Weddings are being planned again and SmartLoving have an online course for engaged couples which comes highly recommended by recent graduates and sponsors. Get in touch to find out more about this enjoyable preparation programme if you are planning to marry or if you would like to become a sponsor couple, helping others to prepare for marriage. SmartLoving also provide marriage enrichment, fertility awareness and help for couples experiencing difficulty in their Breakthrough programme.

For a real live marriage retreat there is a 'Cana week' running this Summer at Sclerder in Cornwall. For details see:

<https://www.chemin-neuf.org.uk/event/cana-week-summer-2021/>

Help is available too, even for marriages which are in serious difficulty, from Retrouvaille,

[www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk) (who are part of the Alliance of Catholic Marriage Organisations)

<http://www.allianceofcatholicmarriageorganisations.org.uk>

with Marriage Care - [www.marriagecare.org.uk](http://www.marriagecare.org.uk)

Equipes Notre-Dame,

[teams-transatlantic.org](http://teams-transatlantic.org)

Worldwide Marriage Encounter,

Engaged Encounter [www.wvme.org.uk](http://www.wvme.org.uk)

and Two in One Flesh (TIOF). [www.twainoneflesh.org.uk](http://www.twainoneflesh.org.uk)



## Children's Sunday readings films

Easter saw the completion of the first year of Sunday (and Christmas and Easter) readings from Leo Productions on YouTube. (In two more years we may have the set!) You can view the films here:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC43uyAo-ccWgOMODVlaoB\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC43uyAo-ccWgOMODVlaoB_Q)

**Family Prayer Boxes** - We now have more contents for the boxes, thanks to the Bookshop at Buckfast Abbey. As the time for giving parish gifts to support family prayer approaches, please get in contact if you want to order these. Thanks to the generosity of our donors we only ask for a contribution of £15 towards the box and contents.