

# Hallam Bridge



ISSUE 36  
February 2026

A Community called to love one another as Christ loves us.

## Doncaster Primary School Children meet Energy and Net Zero Secretary

See page 6



## Hallam Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2026



Find out more on  
page 4

## LENTEN DAY OF RECOLLECTION

*Everything is connected —  
how do we care for our  
common home?*

Saturday 21 March at  
St Vincent's Church,  
Pickmere Road, Sheffield  
S10 1GY  
11:00 – 3:00pm

**Bishop John Arnold**

Bishop of Salford,  
spokesperson for the  
Bishops Conference on  
the Environment,  
President of Pax Christi



**Dr Maria Exall**

Honorary Fellow of the  
Centre for Catholic  
Social Thought and  
Practice Durham  
University



Find out more info and book your ticket at:  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hallam-formation-and-mission-16212155133>  
or scan the QR code

Tea/coffee  
served from  
10:30 am

Bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee provided



## Upcoming Events

**28 February, 7 March** CCRS Pastoral Centre  
**21 March** Lenten Recollection, St Vincents, Crookes  
**5 April Easter Sunday**  
**17 April** Fr Casey Cole OFM St Francis, Sheffield

## Welcome to the February edition of the Hallam Bridge





Spring is springing, despite the heavy and sometimes icy rain and occasional frost. A time to give thanks for the fecundity of life and the joy and blessing of those crisp blue-sky days of February.

At the Hallam Pastoral Centre, efforts are ongoing to spring clean the Hallam Diocese website of the hundreds of pages of old news. As we tidy up the website, we will be advertising for a web manager to take on the task of keeping the website user-friendly and accessible. If you are interested, do get in touch at [communications@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:communications@hallam-diocese.com). All parishes and organisations are also being invited to tidy up their web presence, check links are working and to think about how they can ensure that information from the diocese is included in parish news. Many thanks to the parish newsletter writers/producers who are so reliable about sharing information sent for you.

Synod information seems sometimes to be out of date on some parish websites and it would be useful if the ongoing invitations from Pope Leo to get involved in the Implementation Stage of the Synod were more widely publicised and followed up. The summary reports from across the world are included in this edition of Hallam Bridge, which may help to inspire you. (Page 3)

More sources of inspiration may come from hearing how other parishes are developing synodal methods into parish council meetings and welcoming opportunities to spread the gospel outwards. St Francis are welcoming Franciscan friends from USA on 17 April 2026, to share their vision of faith and mission. St Vincent's are hosting a Day of Reflection on 21 March, welcoming Dr Maria Exall and Bishop John Arnold to lead sessions on Caring for Creation. Book on Eventbrite using this link <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hallam-formation-and-mission-46212155433> and watch out for reports on these events in the next edition of Hallam Bridge.

Follow all the Hallam news and stories on:

-  Diocese of Hallam
-  @HallamDioceseCC, @SynodHallam1
-  Hallam Diocese
-  @HallamDiocese

This is a publication by Hallam Diocese.  
 Please send your articles or Feedback to [communications@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:communications@hallam-diocese.com) or to Hallam Pastoral Centre  
 St Charles St, Sheffield  
 S9 9WU

**CONTACT**

Padley Chapel is in the news, reporting a bumper year for pilgrim visitors to the shrine last year. If you are interested in volunteering to assist in the sterling work of the Friends of Padley, you would be welcome; contact [friendsofpadley@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:friendsofpadley@hallam-diocese.com).

A lovely picture from the visit of the energy secretary Ed Miliband to Our Lady of Perpetual Help Primary School celebrates their Care for Creation group and there is a link to the Lenten Resources offered by CAFOD, to help us attend to three aspects of Lent: Prayer, Abstinence and Generosity. Details of how to Carbon Fast for Lent are included on Page 9.

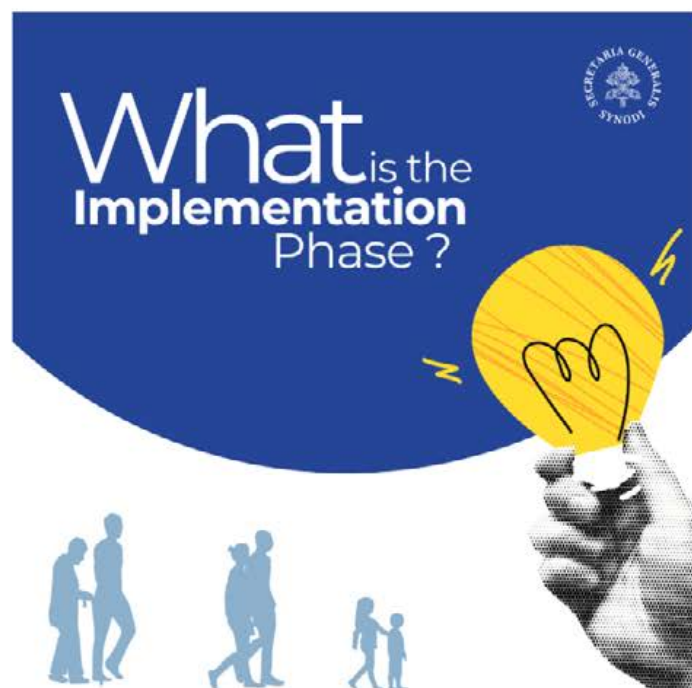
Other Lenten ideas come from St Mary's, Penistone which is again hosting the popular Lenten breakfast series of talks (Page 9).

The service for World Day of Prayer, "Come closer and rest in God", to be held on Friday 6 March has this year been written by the women of Nigeria. Services are being held at various places including: Sacred Heart, Goldthorpe, St Mary Magdalene's, Cudworth and All Saints CofE Church, Ringinglow Road. Blessed Trinity, Wickersley is hosting Mgr John Ryan giving a series of talks during Lent on "Characters in the Hebrew Bible", on Tuesdays at 6:30. Hear about Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Elijah and Elisha.

Looking further ahead, there are events for the family at Castlerigg Manor, and a Spring and Bloom Banquet for St Vincent's Furniture Project. Do let us know about future events and inspire others with stories about the life of your parish. Send your articles, pictures and poems to [communications@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:communications@hallam-diocese.com).

Blessings on your month ahead

Editor



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## Synod -Overarching Themes Across the Six Reports



Jubilee of Synodal Teams Rome  
October 25th 2025

### 1. Synodality as Spiritual and Structural Conversion

All regions emphasise that synodality is not merely a new technique or organisational reform, but a deep spiritual conversion. It involves a renewed commitment to walking together, listening to the Holy Spirit, and fostering communal discernment. Training and formation in synodality—especially through methods like “Conversation in the Spirit”—are central, with tailored programmes for clergy, laity, and Church leaders.

### 2. Inclusive Participation and Co-responsibility

A strong focus is placed on broadening participation in Church life. This includes empowering laypeople, women, youth, and marginalised groups. Many regions report efforts to make decision-making more participatory, moving away from clericalism and hierarchical concentration of authority. There is a call for genuine co-responsibility, with the Church seen as a family walking together.

### 3. Contextual Adaptation and Local Implementation

Each continent stresses the importance of adapting synodal principles to local realities—whether through translation of documents, contextualised pastoral planning, or region-specific training. The reports highlight the need for structural renewal at parish, diocesan, and national levels, with attention to the unique challenges and opportunities in each context.

### 4. Dialogue—Ecumenical, Interreligious, and Societal

Dialogue is a recurring theme, especially in regions marked by religious pluralism or social tension. Synodality is seen as a catalyst for deeper engagement with other Christian denominations, other faiths, and civil society. This dialogue is both a means of peacebuilding and a way to make the Church’s witness more credible and relevant.

### 5. Formation and Capacity Building

All reports stress the need for ongoing formation—training facilitators, educating clergy and laity, and embedding synodality in seminaries, schools, and pastoral programmes. Formation is viewed as the foundation for lasting change, with the conviction that hearts must change before structures can.

### 6. Transparency, Accountability, and Evaluation

Some regions, notably Latin America, highlight the importance of transparency and accountability in pastoral processes. There is a growing awareness that synodality requires not only participation but also clear mechanisms for evaluation and responsible leadership.

### 7. Mission, Evangelisation, and Social Engagement

Synodality is closely linked to the Church’s mission—renewing evangelisation, integrating cultural diversity, and engaging with social issues such as peace, justice, and care for creation. The reports describe how synodal processes are revitalising the Church’s outreach and witness in society.

#### Regional Highlights

##### Eastern Patriarchs:

Focus on justice for the oppressed, training in synodality, and adapting the Final Document for local use. Emphasis on formation at all levels and ecumenical/interreligious action.

##### Latin America:

Strong emphasis on convergence with previous ecclesial assemblies, formation, transparency, and the creation of networks for sharing synodal experiences. The “Together” initiative and digital outreach are notable.

##### Europe:

Unique challenges of secularisation, diversity of local Church experiences, and the question of



women's participation. The legacy of authoritarianism and the need for authentic co-responsibility are discussed.

#### **Oceania:**

Diversity in pace and structure of synodal implementation, with notable experiences in Fiji and Australia. Focus on formation, inclusion (especially indigenous and disabled), and mission renewal.

#### **Africa:**

Synodality as a growing culture, with emphasis on practical implementation, accompaniment, and formation. The Church's role in peacebuilding and dialogue with society is highlighted.

#### **Asia:**

Synodality as a gift and a challenge, with special attention to dialogue, empowerment of laity, and digital engagement. Challenges include conceptual ambiguity, resistance to change, and structural limitations.

Long article

the full article is available on our website

## **Hallam Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes**



26 June- 2 July 2026

The annual pilgrimage to Lourdes is the highlight of the year for many of those who are regular pilgrims. This year I would like to invite you to consider joining us. The story of Lourdes – the place where miraculous cures happen- is well known. The latest, the seventy second, was recognized in 2025. Perhaps less well known are the many small miracles that occur. People find comfort and consolation, a renewal of their faith, and inner strength despite not receiving the grace of a complete, instantaneous cure. I have witnessed this many times when I

accompanied pilgrims as a doctor on the pilgrimage.

Our Lady, the Blessed Mother, leads us to her Son, the fount of every blessing. At Lourdes we meet as a diocese with our Bishop and clergy, with old friends, and new ones, and worship, celebrate, and socialise together.

Each year a team of doctors, nurses, male and female helpers, aided by the wonderful young people of the Hallam Youth Pilgrimage have the privilege of accompanying our assisted pilgrims on what many find to be a life changing experience. Perhaps this year you could come as a helper? Or maybe you are wondering if could be an assisted pilgrim, and unsure whether the pilgrimage is suitable for you? In either case you could get more information by a calling...01302 247910 or emailing...lourdesoffice@hallam-diocese.com Bookings at [www.tangney-tours.com/hallam](http://www.tangney-tours.com/hallam) The cost is £1010, for flights from Leeds Bradford, full board, six nights, travel insurance and transfers in Lourdes included. Dr

**Russell Brynes** KSS Hallam Lourdes Pilgrimage Director

## **Padley Chapel Welcomes Record-Breaking Visitor Numbers in 2025**



Padley Chapel, the historic medieval site on the edge of the Peak District, has enjoyed a remarkable surge in interest, welcoming more than 3,000 visitors over the course of 2025 — a



36% increase on 2024 numbers. Nestled near Grindleford, Padley Chapel is closely associated with the Catholic martyrs Blessed Nicholas Garlick and Blessed Robert Ludlam, and has long been a place of pilgrimage and quiet reflection.

2025 saw renewed interest in the chapel, mainly due to the declaration by Pope Francis that 2025 would be a Jubilee Year of Hope. This signified a special year for spiritual renewal, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

Padley saw a large increase in the number of pilgrims, with over 1,100 people attending 20 different pilgrimages during the summer months.. These included the annual Padley Pilgrimage, which is held jointly with the Dioceses of Hallam and Nottingham and continues to attract pilgrims from the local area and beyond. In September, we welcomed pilgrims from the National Pilgrimage of Hope on their journey from Leeds to Nottingham.

Overall, Padley Chapel welcomed over 3,000 visitors in 2025. This figure marks one of the busiest years in the chapel's recent history and reflects a growing appreciation for its spiritual, historical, and cultural significance.

During the year, there were booked visits from a wide variety of groups, including educational visits by schoolchildren, Sheffield Chamber Choir, Broomhall Open Kitchen, HF Holidays, Christian CND, and an Art Trail event, to name but a few. The chapel was also opened on numerous occasions for private events and Mass. Holy Mass was celebrated in the chapel 25 times during the year.

However, 1,100 of our visitors arrived unplanned on the Sundays when the chapel was opened to the public. These Sunday openings are particularly popular with walkers and passers-by, many of whom are delighted to find the chapel open. Families, walkers, pilgrims, and history enthusiasts came through the doors, with many discovering the chapel for the first time and others returning again and again.

Visitors have praised the chapel's peaceful

atmosphere and its unique woodland setting. Many noted that the site offers a rare opportunity to step away from modern life and connect with centuries of local history.

As the 2026 season approaches, those involved with Padley Chapel see this milestone as a positive sign for the future. The chapel has stood for hundreds of years, and welcoming over 3,000 people in a single year shows that its story and religious significance still matter today.

We always welcome new volunteers to join our Friends of Padley group to help with opening the chapel. New welcomers will receive a warm welcome, along with full training and support. Please email [friendsofpadley@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:friendsofpadley@hallam-diocese.com) and leave your name and contact details.

Photo attached-The 14th Century Altar at Padley Chapel (courtesy of Andy Scott)

For enquiries about booking Padley Chapel for a private visit or group pilgrimage in 2026, please contact [friendsofpadley@hallam-diocese.com](mailto:friendsofpadley@hallam-diocese.com).

**Sheila Reynolds**

## Service for the World Day of Prayer



There will be a Service for the World Day of Prayer on 6th March at 2pm at Sacred Heart church, Lockwood Road, Goldthorpe (one of the three churches of the Corpus Christi Dearne Valley parish).

**Amanda Campbell**

## Doncaster Primary School Children meet Energy and Net Zero Secretary



Today, Ed Miliband MP, the Energy and Net Zero Secretary, visited children from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Primary School in Doncaster to hear about an exciting project. Inspired by Catholic social teaching, students have set up a 'Care for Creation' group to protect the local environment and beyond.

Over the last two years, they have demonstrated their commitment to environmental stewardship through various initiatives, such as recycling drives, community clean-up events, and educational campaigns about energy conservation.

During his visit, Mr Miliband was shown several projects led by the students and took part in a litter pick in the local area. The pupils were also given the chance to ask Mr Miliband questions about his responsibilities as Energy and Net Zero Secretary and the UK's role in tackling the global climate crisis.

Sharon Matthews from Catholic aid agency CAFOD, who led the care for creation workshops, said that the visit was 'a reminder of the critical role the next generation play in building a sustainable world'.

Alison McMahon, Care for Creation school leader, said: "The children have exceeded all expectations by showing hard work and commitment to make sure not only our school, but also our community, care for each other and God's creation. I am proud of each and every one of them."

Ed Miliband MP said: "It was wonderful to visit

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Primary School and see first-hand the impressive work being done through their 'Care for Creation' project.

"Climate change is the biggest global long-term challenge we face, and I am constantly inspired by the next generation who are looking at proactive measures to help our communities and our planet.

"The pupils asked some truly important questions about my role as their MP, my work in government, and the challenges of tackling the climate crisis. Their engagement in these issues gives me great hope for the future."

**Melissa Nethersole**

## How good is your church magazine?



The search is on for Britain's best church magazine. Entries are now invited for the annual competition run by the Association for Church Editors (ACE), which is an Ecumenical, not for profit Christian organisation.

"In a world of uncertainty, church magazines can bring Christian hope and love to the community and be an uplifting read" says Sally Churchus, Chair of the national organisation, "so we are keen to encourage church magazine editors everywhere".

For the 2026 competition, awards will be made for any size of magazine using colour printing, even if it is just on the cover. The Gold Award winner will receive the John King Trophy - a silver baptismal shell to be held for one year - while Silver and Bronze Award winners will receive an inscribed trophy to keep, together with a Certificate of Excellence for display.



A panel of judges assesses each magazine, giving points for various aspects including clarity of the Christian message, cover design, headlines, overall layout and structure, use of graphics and appeal to intended readership. The prize-giving will take place at our annual meeting on 26th September in London. This is open to everyone and includes talks about how to improve church magazines.

The close date for entries is Thursday 2nd April, 2026. Please submit your entry form with two copies each of two different editions produced in the last 12 months.

Photo of ACE Awards Winner 2025 – Robin Stevens from Chelmsford with Sally Churchus, Chair of ACE. [www.churchmag.uk](http://www.churchmag.uk)  
Rev **Biddy Wigley**, Swansea

## Catholic Young Artist Award



The Catholic Union Charitable Trust is delighted to announce the Catholic Young Artist Award. Open to primary school aged children, the theme will be Forgiveness. The Award will be judged by Margaret Mizen, Founder of the Mizen Foundation.

Professor Peter Hindmarsh, Chair of the Catholic Union Charitable Trust says: "I am delighted that the Catholic Union Charitable Trust is supporting this newly established Catholic Young Artist Award. I hope that many children will take part and show us how best to depict forgiveness. My thanks to Margaret Mizen for judging the Award, Margaret is an ambassador for forgiveness, peace and hope and works tirelessly in schools

and the community to spread this very important message".

Launched this year, the Catholic Young Artist Award is sponsored by the Catholic Union Charitable Trust. The winner, to be announced before the end of the academic year, will receive a cash prize and runners up will be recognised too. This Award runs in tandem with the Catholic Young Writer Award which is open to Catholic pupils of secondary school age focusing on the question 'why do we go to confession'.

Margaret Mizen MBE, Founder of the Mizen Foundation, says: "It is an honour to be the judge for the Catholic Young Artist Award. I look forward to seeing all the pictures. Art is a great way to express our emotions and communicate such vitally important messages including those of forgiveness".

Parents, guardians or teachers of primary school aged children wishing to submit an entry should complete the application form and scan pictures to [info@catholicunion.org.uk](mailto:info@catholicunion.org.uk) with the title: Catholic Young Artist Award by 22 May 2026. Please could you indicate the school and/or parish that you belong to as well as first name and school year of the child.

**Louisa Collyer-Hamlin**

## Lent: a spiritual springtime



The word Lent finds its roots in the Old English word *lencten*, meaning "spring." It describes that quiet, persistent season when the days begin to lengthen and the earth slowly wakes from its winter sleep.

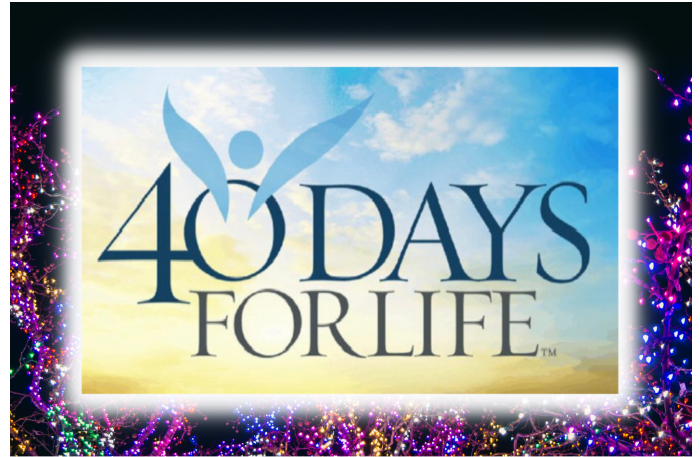
We began this journey with a stark reminder: "Remember that you are dust." While these words can feel bleak, they contain an invitation to wonder. We are intimately connected with the earth and everything on it – we are all members of one human family sharing one common home, all beloved creations of God. As we acknowledge our interconnectedness and reliance on God, we create space for new growth.

In the field and garden, this is a vulnerable, expectant time. Seeds are sown in an act of quiet trust—that a tiny grain, buried in the cold, dark earth, carries within it the potential for new life. Our Lent springtime calls us to such faith: that the seeds of hope and love that we plant even in the hardest soil will take root and blossom.

Across the world our neighbours are also planting seeds. Yet climate change is making it harder for them to grow enough to eat. In parts of Zimbabwe there is too little rain. In parts of Bangladesh and South Sudan, there is too much. The result is the same – seeds fail to grow, plants die, and families go hungry.

Our fasting, giving and prayer in this season remind us of our dependence on God and our longing for a world in which all people flourish. This Lent, as the light lengthens, may we stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers throughout the world, knowing that God can work through us to bring new life.

*Find out more about CAFOD's Lent appeal is helping our global neighbours grow food in climate-resilient gardens:* <https://cafod.org.uk/lent>  
**Angela Powell**



Please join us in a peaceful and prayerful vigil against the injustice of abortion from 18 February to 29 March.

Through prayer and fasting, and community outreach, 40 Days for Life wants to spread hope while also bringing to the forefront the true consequences of abortion—both for the unborn child and the woman and her family. With God all things are possible. As we stand witness, we pray. And through our prayers, we allow ourselves to be God's instruments for change. Thousands of babies have been saved worldwide thanks to the 40 Days for Life prayer vigils. Until abortion is no more, we will continue to be a presence of love and mercy to the women and their unborn children.

Sign ups have begun, so please join us as a prayerful witness to those most in need. Rachel: 07368297872 or [40dforlsheffield@gmail.com](mailto:40dforlsheffield@gmail.com)

**Rachel Wood**



This retreat is offered for anyone wanting time out with God, whether you've been on a retreat before or would like to try one out for the first time. The retreat house and its surroundings offer us a beautiful and relaxing space for prayer and reflection. Please contact Suzanna Upperdine on (01709) 309147 or at [suzanna.upperdine@sheffield.anglican.org](mailto:suzanna.upperdine@sheffield.anglican.org)



## Diocesan Jubilee Mass Celebrating Volunteers and Service



On 15th November 2025 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Herringthorpe in the Diocese of Hallam, the Jubilee mass was celebrated by Bishop Ralph Heskett and Monsignor Desmond Sexton.

This was the Jubilee celebration for volunteers together with parishioners from across the Diocese organisations such as CAFOD, UCM, SVP and CARITAS.

The National Icon, commissioned by CAFOD was first unveiled at the Adoremus event; the Ethiopian artist is Mulugeta Araya. Jesus is depicted reading from the scroll of Isaiah as told by Luke chapter 4 v.16-21. The message tells us that Jesus' ways are how we should live our lives in order to serve God and bring good news, liberty and healing to others. In the summer we gathered for Mass at Padley Chapel and for the Jubilee celebration in November for volunteers brought together parishioners from across the Diocese. There was an opportunity to view the National Jubilee Icon (pictured here) and afterwards we enjoyed teas and delicious cakes made by the parishioners at the parish of the Immaculate Conception.

**Dorothy Anderson**



## Carbon Fast

for Lent

In the Bible, caring for creation is God's first instruction to humans. This Lent, a time when Christians traditionally fast and focus on God, we encourage you to take up our Lent challenge—living more simply and finding new ways to cut your carbon footprint.

### How the Carbon Fast works

Each week will feature a different theme designed to help us take climate action. Sign up below and beginning on 18th February, you will receive a weekly email containing some key facts, suggestions for how you could reduce your carbon footprint, and a reflection. If you signed up for the 2025 Carbon Fast and would like to take part again this year, please sign up again so we can update our records.

### Materials for Churches

We are preparing the 2026 Carbon Fast now and will make the full set of materials available for churches ahead of time. Please get in touch at [info@climatestewards.org](mailto:info@climatestewards.org) if you would like to receive those materials as soon as they are ready. Sign up here: <https://climatestewards.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d8708aadbd21b9b1ccbf5a5fa&iid=7c1662a09d&e=cc52964608>

**Columba Timmins**

## Saturday Lent Breakfasts at St Mary's Penistone, Talbot Road, Penistone S36 9ED

Saturday Lent Breakfasts  
at St Mary's Penistone, Talbot Road, Penistone S36 9ED  
Organised by Churches Together in Penistone

Start at 9.30 am with a provided Breakfast followed by a talk at 10am - concluded by 11a.m. Time for Q&A and chat.

Sat March 7th Rev Jamie Kissack, Moderator URC Yorkshire Synod.  
Sat March 14th Rev Kerry Tankard, Chair Yorkshire West Yorkshire Methodist District.  
Sat March 21st Professor Frances Young, Methodist Preacher and Author.  
Sat March 28th Revd Dr, Ian Wallis, Theologian, St Marks, Broomhill, Sheffield.

Further details from Chris Wood [drcbw@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:drcbw@hotmail.co.uk)

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Sat March 28 Rev Dr Ian Wallis, Theologian, St Marks, Broomhill, Sheffield.

Further details from Chris Wood

[drcbw@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:drcbw@hotmail.co.uk) **Chris Wood**



Everything is connected - how do we care for our common home?

At St Vincent's Church, 40 Pickmere Road, Crookes, Sheffield, S10 1GY

Saturday 21 March, 11:00am-3:00pm. Tea/coffee from 10:30am

**Speakers:** Bishop John Arnold, Bishop of Salford, spokesperson for the Bishops Conference on the Environment, and President of Pax Christi. Dr Maria Exall, Honorary Fellow at the Centre for Catholic Social Thought and Practice in the Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University.

The event is free. Please bring your own packed lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hallam-formation-and-mission-46212155433>

## CAFOD Lent Appeal: help families put food on the table



This Lent, as we deepen and enliven our faith, we can reflect on Jesus' call to "love your neighbour as yourself" pray that we can give more help to families facing hunger today due to floods and droughts.

Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD says: "Last year I travelled to South Sudan. I would like to tell you about one person our local experts have been working with there, a young mother named Rejoice. Rejoice fled conflict twice to protect her children. Imagine losing everything and starting from scratch, only to be forced to do it all again. Then, after all she'd been through, Rejoice's new home was hit by severe flooding."

"The farmlands were submerged underwater," Rejoice told us. "Everything including livestock was completely destroyed."

With support from our local experts, Rejoice and her community created floating gardens. These are simple beds that rise above floodwaters, so amazingly, they can grow food even when the land is underwater.

Whether there is too much rain, or too little, crops around the world are being destroyed. In Zimbabwe, drought left Shorai and Hamunyare with nothing. They told us how the solar-powered water pump, funded by donations from people like you, allowed their community to grow a thriving, drought-resistant eco-garden. Now they can feed their family year-round and share food with neighbours. Shorai reflected that, "A good neighbour is someone who can help me in periods of need."

By fasting and giving this Lent, you'll be a good neighbour helping families find ways to grow enough food to eat. Donate online at [cafod.org.uk](http://cafod.org.uk) or call 0303 303 3030 to help parents put food on the table today.

**Angela Powell**



## Mercy in Action: Faith, Water and Justice in the February Messenger



The redemptive and devotional role of water in the Christian life; how compassion, acts of mercy and the active pursuit of justice are doorways to the heart of God; the profound charity, mercy and dedication to justice of St Brigid and her contemporary counterpart, Sr Stan; a new book on a new pope – will his Augustinian charism guide Pope Leo XIV's pontificate? All this and more in the packed February Messenger. The cleansing power of water forms the basis for several articles in the February Messenger. Gerard Condon writes about the Sacrament of Baptism, the most dramatic demonstration of the importance of water for Christians; Kevin Hargaden observes that the almost 3,000 holy wells dotted around Ireland are sites of devotion and pilgrimage for many; and Brendan McManus SJ shares how he – and others around him – used the therapeutic medium of water in the form of swimming pools as the first step in rehabilitation following surgery.

Compassion and the pursuit of justice are doorways into the heart of God says Bishop Michael Router, writing about St Brigid, revered for her profound charity, mercy and dedication to justice; a contemporary example is Sr Stan, whose challenge to us today, writes John Scally in his tribute to her, is to remember that when we serve our brothers and sisters, we serve Jesus. And Andrea Hayes sees compassion and love in the small acts of kindness and support in the Accident and Emergency department of a hospital.

In an extract from our just-published book on Pope Leo XIV, author Brian Heffernan ponders whether Prevost's Augustinian consciousness may be a major thread running through his pontificate.

We read about The Red Chair Campaign, supporting school materials and supplies across Sudan, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda in Joe Munnelly from Irish Jesuits International's uplifting article.

Gerry O'Hanlon SJ contemplates next steps for the Irish synodal pathway.

And Peter McVerry SJ describes how the principle of restorative justice challenges the offender to understand the impact of his actions and take responsibility for them.

As the season approaches, Vincent Sherlock and Tom Cox write about Ash Wednesday and Lent, respectively, and we have our regular reflections, scripture, children's pages and some sweet treats in our cookery section. A packed issue to bring you through the remains of the dark days into Spring!

The Sacred Heart Messenger magazine

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St Paul's Church Cantley  
Presents  
**GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD**  
A lenten journey through the sorrowful mysteries  
An hour of hymns, silence, solemn reflection on the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ  
All are warmly invited to a prayerful hour of reflection during lent.  
Date: 8th March, 2026  
Time: 03:00pm  
St. Paul's Catholic Church,  
21 Goodison Boulevard,  
Doncaster DN4 6BT  
Host: Rev. Fr. Evangelist Ohaejesi  
RSVP: Martins Enuebuke: +44 7440 446095  
John-Paul Onyema: +44 7806 981965

FORMATION & MISSION  
AND ST FRANCIS PARISH  
INVITES YOU

## Sent To Share Faith



*An evening with three Franciscan Friars to think about Evangelisation today.  
Followed by Bring & Share Supper & Q&A*



17 APRIL 2026 6:00 PM

Book on our  
Eventbrite page



ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI, 277 SANDYGATE  
ROAD, SHEFFIELD. S10 5SD

Three Franciscan Friars, Fathers Casey Cole, Tito Serrano and Jason Damon will be visiting the Diocese of Hallam to help us to remember that we are all Sent to Share the Faith on 17 April 2026

The Three Friars have recently founded SEARCH (Seek, Encounter, Accompany, Renew, Convert, Heal) This is a bold new Franciscan ministry in the Diocese of Charlotte USA bringing the Gospel beyond church walls—meeting people on the streets, in coffee shops, and wherever real life happens.

Their mission is to reach young adults, spiritual seekers, and those disconnected from the Church through authentic presence, conversation, and compassion. Rooted in the spirit of St. Francis, SEARCH is about walking with others, sharing Christ's love, and inviting hearts to renewal and healing.

The evening will begin with the celebration of Mass followed by a Pot Luck Supper and Questions and Answers with the Friars For more information and booking visit the Formation & Mission Eventbrite page <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hallam-formation-and-mission-46212155433>

## Family Resources for Lent



Celebrate@ Home has landed a new CELEBRATE Family Activity Pack for Lent which includes creative ways to help families grow close to God during this season. There are engaging ways to count down the days in Lent, reflective prayer and discussion, craft, games, books and movies to help families draw close to God.

CELEBRATE has also created a Lent game this year - Journey to Easter Joy - which encourages children to focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving, in fun and interactive ways this Lent. <https://www.celebratetrust.org/>

**Claire Fernandes**

## SVP and CAFOD Work Experience

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

CAFOD and SVP are working together to offer **residential work experience for 20 young adults**.

Candidates must be in their **first or second year at university**.

**21st- 26th June 2026**

All accommodation costs, meals and travel to the Office throughout the week are covered.

**CAFOD National Office, Romero House, Waterloo, SE1 7JB**

For more information, please contact **• KeziaH@svp.org.uk**

**Closing date for applications: 6th April**

**SVP** St Vincent de Paul Society  
**CAFOD** Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

The St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 21st – 26th June in London. Candidates must be aged 18-25 years old, but priority will be given to those in their first or second year at university. Apply here Applications close on the 6th April. For any queries, please contact [KeziaH@svp.org.uk](mailto:KeziaH@svp.org.uk)

**Kezia Harrow**