



# Galloway Diocese NEWS

Christmas  
Edition

December  
2024

*In Advent we wait ...  
For the joy of Christmas*



***“With the angelic host proclaim:  
Christ is born in Bethlehem”***

*The team at the Galloway Diocese News wish all our readers  
a happy and holy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year*



# Bishop Frank wonders ...

*about good deeds and love and the saints,  
and how it all comes together at Christmas*



**Why** do we do good deeds? This was a question I reflected on in one of our high schools at their patronal feast. I asked the young people to think about why they might do acts of care and kindness.



And there can be a few reasons. When we are small, we do the right thing out of fear of punishment. Young children don't instinctively know right from wrong, so they are taught about consequences. They then learn about rewards: if you do the right things, you will be thanked, congratulated, maybe given something ("if you sit at peace in church, you'll get a treat"). Even as Christians, we use the language of reward and punishment: the good will be rewarded and the bad will be punished. So, we might do good because we want God to reward us. And on a basic human level, doing good can make us feel good ourselves.

But what the saints teach us is that doing good deeds does not need to come from a desire to avoid punishment or receive rewards. The saints do good out of instinct. They do good because they know how much God loves them. And because they are so profoundly in touch with God's love, it is bursting out of them. They don't do good to receive God's approval. They know they have it already.



They love because they are loved! It is learned behaviour. Just as a child learns to smile only if they see that smile on another first, so the saints are generous with their love because they know that God has loved them first.

The mystery of God's love is that what we do (good or bad) will not make Him love us any more, nor will it make Him love us any less. He has already loved us into existence and loves us with an infinite and unchangeable love. How do we know this? Because God loved the world so much that he sent us his only Son (John 3:16). This is what we celebrate at Christmas, the generosity of a God who came to save us, not because we deserve Him, but because we need Him.

The saints understand this. And because they are so immersed in the love of God, it is only natural that they love their neighbours in return. They are not doing it for a reward, because the reward has already been given, the victory won by Christ on the cross.

**So**, this Christmas, while you may find ourselves caught up in other things, take some time to reflect



on what God has done for you, how He loved you into existence, how he came to us in Bethlehem because He wanted to be near us, how He continues to love us no matter what. And if we enter into that mystery just a little bit more, maybe (like the saints) we will reflect that in our love for our neighbour. Let our good deeds flow from the simple knowledge that God is with us.

*You are loved.*

**Have you seen our new website? Check it**  
**Diocout today! way**  
 Proclaiming the Gospel in South West Scotland  
**www.rcdg.org.uk**

**Follow us online for**  
**all the latest news from**  
**across the Diocese!**

**@rcdgalloway**

## Keeping Touch

Do you have something happening in your parish? Please tag us –  
 @rcdgalloway or #rcdgparishes  
 or email us pictures and captions: communications@rcdg.org.uk.

**As** part of his commitment to promote what's happening within the diocese and to enable faithful from across the diocese to keep in touch, Bishop Frank has established a new Social Communications team. The team met for the first time on Tuesday 12th November and they look forward to working together to share news and events from across the diocese through our new Diocesan website, as well as our Diocesan social media channels @rcdgalloway on Facebook, X, and Instagram. So to keep up to date and be the first to hear the latest news from across the diocese please like and follow us online!



# Reflection

## Journeying towards Christmas

*Jim McKendrick reflects on the light Isaiah has promised and the light that brings true joy and true peace.*

### Invitation

Advent is a time filled with hope and anticipation, in which we have prepared ourselves to joyfully celebrate our encounter with our Saviour, Son of God and Son of Mary, born in the city of Bethlehem. The Season of Advent offered us an invitation to put aside any expression of despair, fear or anxiety, and reflect on a time of joy and peace which God desires for us. The prophet Isaiah describes that day when the Lord will invite us to come to his mountain. There he will teach us and, through his teaching, transform us, so that 'Nation will not lift sword against nation and there will be no more training for war'.

### Promise

However, this hope does not come from human wisdom: It comes from God. It is rooted in the promise that a Saviour will come, endowed with the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit that gives his wisdom and insight; his spirit of counsel and power, his spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord. And the Saviour, promised by the Lord, will bring about a world where every creature and every person will live in harmony. It will be a world in which all are citizens and brothers and sisters in the kingdom of God. All that is asked of humanity is that we open our hearts and our minds to the coming of the Saviour and that we allow his Spirit with his gifts to work within us and within our world.

### Warning

This Saviour is the Lord who comes. He comes to save. However, Isaiah issues a warning: 'The Lord who comes, the Son of God, God himself, who is a just God, a God of Vengeance and Retribution.' The hope which Advent offers requires the total cooperation and involvement of all humanity, beginning with our willingness to be reconciled with God.

On the fourth Sunday of Advent, we are promised that this Saviour for whom all have longed will come, and in the most unexpected way: 'The maiden is with

child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. With the birth of Emmanuel all our hopes, our longings will be fulfilled. With the birth of the Saviour, once again all of humanity and all of creation will come to coexist in harmony.



### Christmas

Advent is the season for hope and anticipation; Christmas is the season of joy and peace, and it is this joy that is heralded by Isaiah as we listen to his words spoken at the Christmas Night Mass. 'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light'.

Ours is so often perceived as a world in which humanity lives in the shadows cast by war and violence; by global warming; by people making perilous journeys for a better safer life, and made unwelcome. Yet, the Saviour born to us brings a light so great that it can disperse all shadows and overcome every sin and every injustice. This is the light Isaiah has promised and the light that brings true joy and true peace.



Christmas is a time when we turn our attention to our family and the people we love, and joy comes from spending time with them. At Christmas, we look beyond ourselves to those who – whatever their circumstances – are much less fortunate than we are and joy comes from reaching out in acts of kindness and generosity. The lasting and sustaining joy, however, comes from encountering Christ, the Saviour of all humanity and all creation. The Saviour who will restore all things and all people to that state of perfect harmony this is the Saviour – the Son of God – Son of Mary. When we come to truly encounter him, transformed and renewed by the weeks of Advent, we will come to know the profound and lasting peace that he alone can bring.

### Galloway Diocese News

*Deadline for the Lent edition  
7th March 2025*

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*RC Diocese of Galloway, charity number SC010576*



### Congratulations

*Congratulations to Sister Juliet Obiorah, IHM, who made her Solemn Profession as a sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on August 31st in Nigeria. She returned home in September to her community in Kilmarnock and was joined by parishioners from all three parishes in celebrating her profession.*



# Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh

## The gifts of the Epiphany

*Jim McKendrick thinks about the meaning of the feast and the gifts, and how they can be related to the modern world.*

How often nowadays do we Christians find ourselves dislocated from the modern culture around us? It might be secular apathy to God and believers or the frenetic pursuit of money. A good example of this is the seamless transition from Halloween merchandise to Christmas stock which occurs at the beginning of November. All Saints, All Souls and Jesus himself, are side-lined and barely visible among the countless items for sale to crowds of desperate people. To counter this, we need to commit ourselves fully the life of God's Kingdom. Like the Magi, we search for something greater – something "out of this world" – Advent, Christmas and the Epiphany. The showing forth of God in the Christ-child is the answer to every human longing but points us also to a fulfilment; to that life when at last we shall see God face to face.

The word 'Epiphany' means *appearance* or *manifestation*. The angels revealed Jesus to the shepherds, and, in the Western Church, the Feast of the Epiphany celebrates Jesus' first appearance to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi. In the Eastern Church, however, the feast is the commemoration of the baptism of Christ where the Father and the Holy Spirit gave combined testimony to Jesus' identity as Son of God. Later, in the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus revealed himself as the promised Messiah, and at Cana he revealed his Divinity by transforming water into wine. These multiple revelations are all suggested by the Feast of the Epiphany

Gold, frankincense and myrrh may be thought of as prophesying Jesus' future. Gold was a gift for Kings; frankincense (an ancient air purifier and perfume) was offered to God in Temple worship; and myrrh was used by the High Priest as anointing and to prepare bodies for burial. The shepherds offered the only gifts they had: wool garments or milk.

The Magi offered gold in recognition of Jesus as the King of the Jews; frankincense in acknowledgment that He was God, and myrrh as a symbol of His human nature. Let us worship Jesus at Mass with the gold of our love, the myrrh of our humility and the frankincense of our adoration. Let us become the Star, leading others to Jesus, as the star led the Magi to Him. Like the Magi and the shepherds let us offer Jesus our gifts on this feast of Epiphany.

### But, what do the gifts mean for us today?

St Gregory the Great was Pope in the late 500s and early 600s and offers us another way to view the gifts. Gregory challenges us to see that these are the gifts expected from us every day of our lives. The first gift might be friendship with God: after all, the whole point of Christmas is that God's Son became one of us to redeem us and call us friends. God wants our friendship in the form of wholehearted love and devotion. Another gift might be the gift of reconciliation. Finally the gift of peace: seeking God's peace in our own lives through prayer, the Sacramental life and daily meditation on the Word of God. It is out of humble gratitude that we give Him from the heart our gifts of worship, prayer, singing, possessions, and time.

**As** we give our insignificant, little gifts to God, the good news is that God accepts them! Like the Magi offering their gifts, we offer what we have, from the heart, in response to what that Child has given to us: Himself. Like many others, I often wonder "What can I give him, poor as I am?" I take heart in the carol 'The Little Drummer Boy'. He had no gift to bring; but made great use of the musical talent God had given him. He played his drum with approval from Jesus' mother. "I played my best for him" and "He smiled at me." The Drummer Boy made the most of his God-given talent and offered it back to Jesus. We should do the same.



## Dates for your Diary

### Opening Mass of the Holy Year of Jubilee

Sunday 29th December at 9.30 am  
St Margaret's Cathedral, Ayr

### Jubilee Year Day Conference on The Vatican II Constitution on Divine Revelation ("Dei Verbum")

Sunday 26th January (Sunday of the Word of God),  
time tbc  
To be hosted online by St Andrew's Deanery

### Ash Wednesday

Wednesday 5th March 2025

### Day of Prayer for Those who have Suffered Abuse

Friday 7th March 2025

### Jubilee Year Day Conference on The Vatican II Constitution on the Church ("Lumen gentium")

Saturday 29th March 2025, time tbc  
Hosted by St Joseph's Deanery at St Joseph's Church,  
Kilmarnock



# BICENTENARY MASS

— NEW ABBEY —  
1824-2024  
CELEBRANT: BISHOP DOUGAN

## *St Mary's, New Abbey* *celebrates two hundred years*

On Saturday 26th October Bishop Frank Dougan celebrated Mass in St Mary's, New Abbey, with Father Gerald Donnelly of St Andrews, Dumfries, Fathers Uchenna Odenigbo and Francis Dometiero and Deacon William Hiddleston, of St Teresa's and Fathers Gerry Briody and Joseph Tan, from the Salesian order. Father Briody had built up links with St Mary's and brought a number of the Salesian community to the celebration. There was also a strong ecumenical dimension with many of the local Church of Scotland parish attending along with their minister. After the

Mass there was a social dimension with a celebration buffet at the village hall.

In his homily the Bishop's theme was 'building on the past but not dwelling on it, encouraging the young not always complaining to or about them and going forward with Hope.'

It was such a joyous and uplifting occasion.



*St Mary's was founded in 1824, at a time when Catholics did not 'advertise' their presence and it is 'hidden' by the Chapel House which faces the main street. The small church has fine altarpiece and fine woodwork on the sanctuary. The church is no longer used for regular Masses but is not closed.*



## Farewell Masses for two much loved Priests

### *St Teresa's says goodbye to Father Dennis*

On Sunday 1st of September, Father Dennis Ortise-Yiye celebrated his last Mass here with us at St Teresa's. It was a uplifting celebration of both the Eucharist, and of course, Father Dennis. After Mass, we all joined as a family in the hall to show our appreciation for Father Dennis and to wish him well in his new venture. He will be missed, as will his tuneful homilies. He leaves us to begin his new missionary appointment on the Isle of Man. We wish him all the best as he undertakes his new role and remind him in the words of Father Uchenna "This will always be your home and you are always welcome here." The Isle of Man are lucky to be getting you.



### *St Quivox gives thanks for Father Stephen*

On Friday 15th November the parishes of St Quivox, Prestwick, and St Ann's, Mossblown, came together to give thanks for Father Stephen Latham who has been our parish priest for the past eight years. We gathered for Mass where Father Stephen emphasised how much he had enjoyed being our parish priest as well as the chaplain for Queen Margaret Academy and St Ninian's Primary School. We gathered in the hall where Father Stephen cut his thanksgiving cake and everyone was able to take home a 'Stephen on a Stick' as a souvenir.







# Catholic Education Week

## Pilgrims of Hope

16th – 30th November

Report by Amélie Davidson

*Glory Be to the Father  
and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the  
beginning is now and  
ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen*

Catholic Education Week took place in November. The week provided an opportunity to reflect on the distinctive nature of our Catholic schools, as places where faith and learning are intertwined. The week served as an important reminder of the value and significance of Catholic education in shaping both the minds and hearts of children, guiding them to live out their faith in all aspects of life.

Pupils in schools across the diocese marked the occasion by participating in a variety of activities that highlighted the

theme of the week: *Pilgrims of Hope*. This included prayer breakfasts, Mass, and special lessons that encouraged pupils to consider their role as “pilgrims” in the journey of life.

The theme, *Pilgrims of Hope*, was particularly significant this year as it prepared the school community for the upcoming Jubilee year, focusing on renewal and the future of Catholic education. It called on everyone – pupils, teachers, parents, and parishioners – to embrace their roles as pilgrims on a shared journey of faith.

### Mass for Those Involved in Education

On Tuesday 8th October, St Margaret’s Cathedral hosted the annual Mass for those involved in education, bringing together teachers from across the diocese. Celebrated by Bishop Dougan, the Mass highlighted the crucial role of Catholic teachers in shaping both the minds and hearts of their pupils.

In his homily, the bishop spoke about the importance of the *Glory Be* prayer, encouraging teachers to embrace its message in their daily lives. He reflected on its simplicity and depth, urging teachers to keep God at the centre of their work. The prayer, he noted, is a powerful reminder of God’s eternal presence and a source of strength in the challenges of teaching.

The liturgy included scripture readings, heartfelt hymns, and intercessory prayers for schools, staff, and pupils. Teachers participated in the offertory procession.

The Mass was a meaningful celebration, leaving teachers encouraged and spiritually renewed to continue their mission as Catholic educators.



Bishop Frank joined participants at the annual Catholic Deputies Scotland conference. This included deputy heads from primary and secondary schools across the country. The conference included Mass in St Margaret’s Cathedral celebrated by the bishop and Father Stephen Latham, RE Advisor for Galloway Diocese.





# Safeguarding In Galloway Diocese

*Thanks to our many volunteers who work hard throughout the diocese.*

*Tony Fisher is based in the Diocesan Office in Ayr.  
Contact him on 01292 266750 / 07542 947989 or by email  
safeguarding.adviser@gallowaydiocese.org.uk*



Various events have taken place that have heavily involved representatives from, and volunteers of, our Safeguarding Community including Safeguarding Trainers, Parish Safeguarding Coordinators, Administrators and Advisers. The Diocese of Galloway has been extremely well represented by a whole range of volunteers who carry out lay ministry in our diocese.

We are also very fortunate to have members of our team make themselves available to contribute to Working Groups throughout the year, including working behind the scenes arranging this year's Annual Conference.

Events that have taken place include the Continuous Professional Development Day held in October, the aforementioned National Safeguarding Annual Conference in November, attendance at various training sessions, attendance and contributions at Deanery Meetings, as well as the delivery of training itself carried out on request across the Diocese of Galloway.

Our particular thanks go to the trainers who have travelled far and wide ensuring that all of our volunteers continue to be safely recruited – this level of commitment is very much appreciated.

On a day to day basis we continue to be supported by our Diocesan Risk Assessment Management Team (DRAMT), our Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group (DSAG) and our Safeguarding Operational Core Team (SCOT) and we also continue to be led spiritually by Bishop Frank and Father William McFadden, who are always available to the Safeguarding Team for advice and discussion.

We look forward to 2025, when we will fully implement the actions that have been highlighted in the recent audit carried out by the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency which will be highlighted on the diocesan website along with details of up and coming Safeguarding training.

We are grateful to all of the new volunteers who have joined our Safeguarding Community in the last year and our warmest wishes also go to those who have left their respective ministries, some after many years' service, and finally, on a personal note, I would like to thank all of the volunteers who give up their time and energy to help make and keep the Diocese of Galloway safe. Thank you.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all in the Safeguarding Team.

***Last month Bishop Frank and several of the priests of the diocese joined Bishop Toal and a number of clergy from Motherwell on retreat at Schoenstatt.***

The retreat was led Father Tom Kilbride, Rector of the Royal Scots College, Spain, on the theme of Proclaiming and Preaching the New Lectionary. It was an opportunity to be reminded of the importance of the Word of God in our ministry, which, as Father Tom noted, should be considered as important as our sacramental ministry as we encounter Christ through his word in a particular way. He reminded those present that in order to help others come into contact with Christ through his word, we must necessarily be in contact with his word as well.



*In* October Bishop Frank appointed Father Kevin Rennie, currently Assistant Priest in St Joseph's, Kilmarnock, as the new Diocesan Youth Chaplain.



RC Diocese of Galloway

# Youth Office

Gather · Pray · Discuss · Socialise

Following the retirement of the majority of the existing youth team Father Kevin has been working to establish a new team. He is grateful for the support received with new and old leaders coming forward from across the diocese with lots of great ideas to contribute. As part of the changes, the Diocesan Youth Office is now based at St Joseph's and can be contacted by mail: Father Kevin Rennie, St Joseph's RC Church, 15A Hill Street, Kilmarnock, KA3 1HB; or by email: [youth@rcdg.org.uk](mailto:youth@rcdg.org.uk).

*There's lots happening in the Youth Office, and even more to come!*

## – Young Adults Evenings (18-30) –

Galloway Young Adults is a new group for Young Adults aged 18-30. They meet monthly on the first Sunday of every month from 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm (church and hall open from 5.30 pm) in St Joseph's Church. Each evening begins with Mass followed by a talk from a guest speaker and discussion with a view to growing in our faith and knowledge of Christ, ending with some social time and, for those who wish, a visit to a local pub.

We had a great first meeting on the 1st December and now we're working hard on the 2025 series of talks. Our next event is on Sunday 5th January where we'll all be enjoying a full Christmas Dinner! There's no charge, but please register in advance and come along to meet other young adults from across the diocese.

## – Youth Evenings (P7-S6) –

The Diocesan Youth Evenings will be resuming in February and run monthly in St Joseph's Church from 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm (church and hall open from 5.30 pm) on the third Sunday of each month. Each evening will begin with Mass followed by a short talk, activities (and of course, pizza) to encourage youth to grow in faith and friendship with one and other by giving them a change to meet and get to know each other.

If you're interested, please come along and join us on Sunday 16th February in St Joseph's.

RC Diocese of Galloway



## Young Adults

Gather · Pray · Discuss · Socialise

# Christmas Dinner

St Joseph's Church, Kilmarnock  
Sunday 5th January  
6.00 - 8.00 pm

Come and join with young adults (18-30) from across the Diocese for a festive Christmas dinner.

No charge but please register by scanning the QR code.



@youth@rcdg.org.uk ·    RC Diocese of Galloway Youth - @rcdgyouth

## – Youth Leaders Training Day –

Father Kevin, Louise, and Sean (two of the team from Dumfries) recently attended the Archdiocese of Glasgow's Evangelisation Day for youth and young adult leaders. They heard from leaders and youth in the Archdiocese about their experience and learnt about some of the resources available to help us in our own preparations for our own Youth and Young Adults evenings.



## – Keep up-to-date – Follow us online! –

– @rcdgyouth –

The Youth Office is active online, so to be the first to know what's happening as well as to receive interesting articles, videos and resources to help you explore and grow in your faith follow us on Facebook, X or Instagram: @rcdgyouth



## Dumfries Youth & Young Adults –

We're really excited to be starting events in Dumfries as well in the new year. Father Kevin recently met with Fathers Uchenna and Francis, the parish priest and assistant priest of St Teresa's, Dumfries, and they look forward to collaborating on expanding the Young Adults and Youth evenings to Dumfries in the new year.

### *St Teresa's Youth Ministry*

The newly formed youth ministry in St Teresa's, Dumfries have been working hard to launch our Youth Led Mass initiative to encourage and offer young people in the parish the opportunities to explore ministry and service to God together. Working with Father Uchenna the Youth Ministry Team have started to dedicate one Sunday Mass each month to being fully youth led, taking on roles from the procession with the gifts, to the readings, to the liturgy, to the music and everything in between.



We were also delighted to be joined by Bishop Frank for our second Youth Led Mass. It was a wonderful celebration of youth faith in action and Bishop Frank even encountered Scotland's youngest bishops as our children's liturgy group shared what they had been learning - and showed off some pretty impressive mitres! We are looking forward to growing our Youth Led Masses further as more of our young people get involved in celebrating the liturgy together.

To stay up to date with our Youth Ministry Team have a look at our website: <https://www.saintteresachurch.co.uk/youth>



### *St Teresa's All Saints Mass on the Move*

On the Feast day of All Saints the St Teresa's Youth Ministry Team hosted a 'Mass on the Move' for the young people of the parish. The young people had a great time celebrating Hallowe'en and the Feast of All Saints, they discussed where the tradition of Hallowe'en comes from, and listened to the day's readings and talked about how we are God's children. They



sang *When the Saints Go Marching in* as they marched to the church to celebrate the Eucharist together, held hands as they prayed together and sang their way back to the hall for some games and snacks. It was a really enjoyable evening for everyone!

### *Father Martin Chambers Cup*

The Father Martin Chambers Cup was established at St Joseph's Academy, Kilmarnock, in memory of Father Martin, who was deeply admired for his service to both the school and the community. Each year, the cup will be awarded to the pupil who has exemplified the values Father Martin cherished, including kindness, generosity, and a commitment to helping others. The inaugural recipient of the cup was former Head Boy Joseph Davidson, recognised for his outstanding efforts during the Caritas in S6. Joseph organised several fundraising events including a non-uniform day to support a local food bank and a raffle that raised £1,200. These funds were used to buy Christmas gifts for pupils in need.





# Travellers on the Highways and Byways with Hearts full of Hope

By Helen-Marie Bradley

We have been privileged to read the beautiful Pastoral Letter from Bishop Frank on the immanent Holy Year, the Jubilee Year: where we are all called by our Holy Father, Francis, to be Pilgrims of Hope. I have been the Galloway Delegate and part of the steering group preparing for this great pastoral event for the past year. Over the next few editions of the Galloway News I will share with you what is planned and some reflections about our faith communities on the 'Pilgrim Jubilee Way'. I thought I would start with my very early understanding of a 'jubilee'.

I was brought up in a mining village just outside of Airdrie. My primary school was a small rural one. Near the main road there was a garage and after our free dinners we all wanted to get this precious commodity called.... you guessed it... a JUBILEE! But these blocks of ice and sweet cola were very expensive – sixpence and hardly anybody in a mining village full of redundant, coughing, phlegm-producing miners and widows could afford a luxury like a 'jubilee'. Hardly anyone got pocket money but sometimes we would get 'ginger' bottle (fizzy juice) and get thrupence for them. When we were collectively rich with our bottle money on a hot day we would walk to the garage after school dinners and we would buy some 'jubilees'. We had to share, so we would each take a 'sook' and then pass the jubilee around for our next companion to take her sook of the gorgeous, ice-cool refreshing ice-lolly in a plastic box. Sometimes when we didn't have any gains from our ginger-bottle-hunting enterprises we would just go to the garage anyway and watch the exotic *orange walk children* who sometimes played with us, eat their jubilees...and to our delight and surprise these children would say 'do you want a wee sook?'

*Children who walk together on the same road, who share find joy, can find refreshment and hope.*

## This year of Jubilee

This year of Jubilee is a time to re-establish proper relationships with our loving God, with one another, and with all of creation.

All over the world the logo for the Holy Year will be displayed in Churches, and sites of spiritual importance. The logo was chosen by Pope Francis because it was the one which touched his heart the most. On it we see four stylised figures representing all the peoples of the earth, from the four 'corners' of the earth.

We are not called to be a single pilgrim journeying on our own, but a community on the road together: encouraging each other, supporting each other, healing and teaching each other as we walk (giving each other a 'wee sook' of the refreshing jubilee). We are called to move forward. The cross is not static but dynamic, certain and hope-filled.

The first figure is holding the cross aloft and below that an anchor is displayed among the choppy waves. Anchors are a metaphor for Hope. The waters are choppy which reminds us that our pilgrim journey in life will not always be smooth or easy. In the logo there is no boat on the sea we sail. But together...we are the boat with Christ as our vision and anchor. The motto *Peregrinantes in Spem* (Pilgrims of Hope) is printed in the colour of newness, life and joy – green.

## Becoming Signs, Signals and Makers of Hope

In this privileged year to come we are called to be signs of hope:

- ◆ To work and pray for peace in our fractured world
- ◆ To be open to life, to listen and generate the laughter of babies and children
- ◆ To think of those deprived of freedom, for whatever reason. Pope Francis will open a Holy Door in a prison as a sign of restoring confidence in them so that they may look brightly and changed into the future

- ◆ To consider the sick, housebound and all the wonderful people who minister to them and care for them – we are called to be part of a universal hopeful hymn of care and dignity for the most vulnerable
- ◆ To welcome migrants, exiles, displaced persons and refugees – 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me'
- ◆ To treasure the elderly and the little ones and the covenant between generations
- ◆ To combat the scandal of the experience of our sisters and brothers who experience the horrors of poverty. We are called never to blame and always remember them and act for them.

In a special way, Pope Francis reminds us of the North-South divide, commercial imbalance, injustice inflicted upon nations and our call to feed those who are actually hungry and starving.

## Galloway: Hope-Filled and Springs of Sparkling Water

Over the Jubilee year we will be invited to participate in a variety of activities. The four deaneries of the diocese will focus on one of the four principal constitutions of Vatican II. These opportunities for reflection and shared learning will be open to all the people of the diocese. The Jubilee calendar is on page 12.

St Andrew's	Dei Verbum - Word of God,
St Mary's	Gaudium et Spes – the Church in the Modern World
St Joseph's	Lumen Gentium - Light of the Nations
St Margaret's	Sacrosanctum Concilium - the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy



## Pilgrim journeys

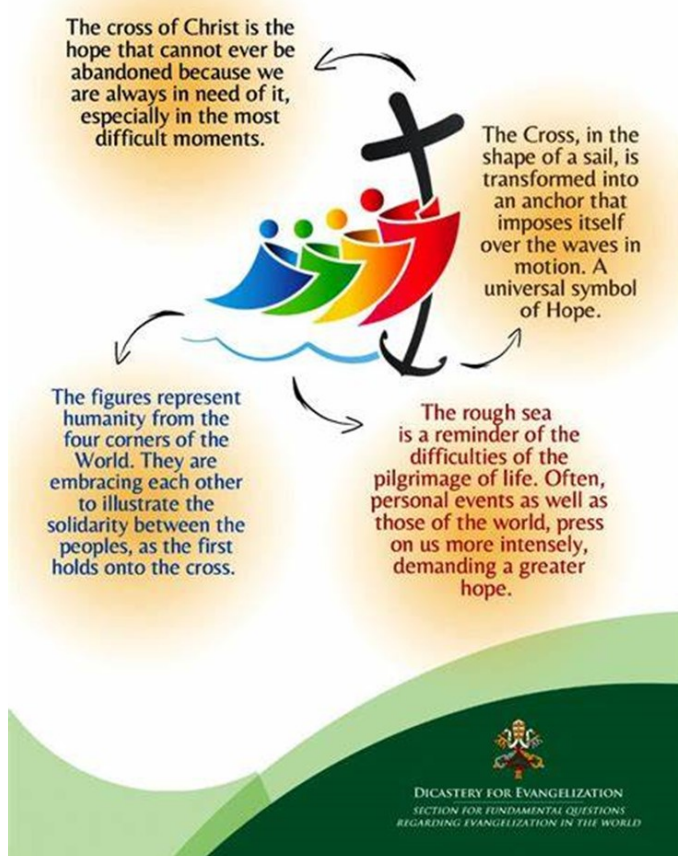
The diocese has no plans to organise a formal pilgrimage to Rome during the Jubilee Year. However, individuals, parishes or deaneries may wish to undertake pilgrim journeys. The annual diocesan pilgrimage to Whithorn, the seat of Christianity for Scotland, will also be a National Pilgrimage concelebrated by the Bishops of Scotland (*we are all starting a novena for better weather than last year*).

Our sisters and brothers of the Book, especially our Muslim pilgrims of good faith have an obligation to go on Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, once in their lifetime. If they cannot afford to do so, are infirm or unable for whatever reason to do so others will undertake to travel on their prayer-filled behalf. Those of us who are the disciples of Jesus who can undertake the prayer-filled, spiritual journey will, I trust, keep their Christian sisters and brothers who cannot in their prayer-filled hearts so that in the heart of the Lord, we will be together as one, where ever we are. A proper spiritual journey of hope.



If you do intend to go to Rome during this privileged time, apply for a Pilgrim's Card. It is a free digital pass bearing the name of the holder, which will be needed to take part in the

main Jubilee events. The card can only be obtained by signing up at the portal, which will be available on the website [register.iubilaeum2025.va/user](https://register.iubilaeum2025.va/user) or via the official Jubilee App for smartphones. After entering the required details, you, the pilgrim, will receive a unique QR code and a personalised account on the app.



## Meet Luce and her Friends

The Vatican has also taken a unique step of trying to engage our younger children through the use of an anime style character, Luce. This will be the first time that a Vatican Dicastery participates in a comic convention. Children and young people care about their future and the future of the world we live in. The Vatican are tapping into that freshness of hope and as the custodians of the young it will be part of our mission to fire the flames of the Spirit to encourage that hope.



Luce is dressed in a yellow raincoat, mud-stained boots, and a pilgrim's cross, Luce's mission is to guide young pilgrims toward hope and faith with her trusty dog Santino at her side. Shells glimmer in her eyes, recalling the scallop shell of the Camino de Santiago, an emblem of the pilgrimage journey. The shine from Luce's eyes is a symbol of hope of the heart.

Luce is not alone: she has some pilgrim friends to accompany her on her journey: Fe, Xin, and Sky, each outfitted in brightly coloured jackets.



*We are all God's children who will walk together on the same road, who, in this precious time, will be called to share, to find joy, to find refreshment and most of all be light and hope in our delicate, fragile world.*

**Glory Be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.**

**As it was in the beginning is now and ever  
shall be, world without end.**

**Amen**

## Websites

Iubilaeum25 is the official Jubilee 2025 App  
Facebook: Holy Year Scotland 2025



# JUBILEE 2025

## CALENDAR OF MAJOR EVENTS

### DECEMBER 2024

**24 December**

Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica



Photo Vatican Media

### JANUARY 2025

**24-26 January**

Jubilee of the World of Communications

### FEBRUARY 2025

**8-9 February**

Jubilee of Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel

**15-18 February**

Jubilee of Artists

**21-23 February**

Jubilee of Deacons

### MARCH 2025

**8-9 March**

Jubilee of the World of Volunteering

**28 March**

24 Hours for the Lord

**28-30 March**

Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy

### APRIL 2025

**5-6 April**

Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers

**25-27 April**

Jubilee of Teenagers

**28-29 April**

Jubilee of People with Disabilities

### MAY 2025

**1-4 May**

Jubilee of Workers

**4-5 May**

Jubilee of Entrepreneurs

**10-11 May**

Jubilee of Marching Bands

**12-14 May**

Jubilee of the Eastern Churches

**16-18 May**

Jubilee of Confraternities

**30 May - 1 June**

Jubilee of Families, Children, Grandparents and the Elderly



### JUNE 2025

**7-8 June**

Jubilee of Ecclesial Movements, Associations and New Communities

**9 June**

Jubilee of the Holy See

**14-15 June**

Jubilee of Sport

**20-22 June**

Jubilee of Governments

**23-24 June**

Jubilee of Seminarians

**25 June**

Jubilee of Bishops

**25-27 June**

Jubilee of Priests

### JULY 2025

**28 July - 3 August**

Jubilee of Youth

### SEPTEMBER 2025

**15 September**

Jubilee of Consolation

**20 September**

Jubilee of Justice

**26-28 September**

Jubilee of Catechists

### OCTOBER 2025

**4-5 October**

Jubilee of the Missions

**4-5 October**

Jubilee of Migrants

**8-9 October**

Jubilee of Consecrated Life

**11-12 October**

Jubilee of Marian Spirituality

**31 October - 2 November**

Jubilee of the World of Education



### NOVEMBER 2025

**16 November**

Jubilee of the Poor

**22-23 November**

Jubilee of Choirs

### DECEMBER 2025

**14 December**

Jubilee of Prisoners



# Reflections on the Synod on Synodality

by Father William R. McFadden



Perhaps the most lasting legacy of Pope Francis' papacy will be his contribution on the theme of synodality. As a word, it does not really do much to capture people's imagination, but as a concept it is integral to Francis' vision for reform and renewal in the Church. Synodality is about an attitude, or a mindset, rather than a programme or a strategy. It is about having a vision and being inspired, and not simply an organisational practicality or a specific procedure to be followed.

The Synod on Synodality process, which recently completed the second of the Roman Synods which brought together laity and clergy from throughout the world, was rooted in genuine listening. Beginning with a worldwide consultation exercise inviting all the baptised to listen to one another and so to discern the promptings of the Holy Spirit, a point has now been reached with the publication of a **Final Document** which Pope Francis himself has endorsed as a genuine and authoritative Church teaching, and one that he explicitly approves.

The document sets out an agenda for individuals, parishes and dioceses to engage with in their own particular pastoral circumstances. At its core is an affirmation that a "spirituality of listening" is foundational. From this basis, conversation, dialogue and an openness to change one's often entrenched viewpoints can lead to a genuine encounter with the Spirit leading us forward in faith.

As a diocese, we have already journeyed in synodality for many years. Examples can be found in our experiences of the Council of Priests, Parish Pastoral Councils, Parish Finance Committees, and Deanery Pastoral Councils. Yet, the **Final Document** challenges us to go further. Specifically, it speaks of the need for a wide participation in **all** parish and diocesan decisions; the need to expand the role of women in **all** decision-making in the Church; the need for transparency, accountability and evaluation at every level of Church governance; and the recommendation that diverse participatory councils, such as those mentioned above, be mandatory and not simply recommended. We therefore need to build on our existing experience of synodal working if we are to be a Church in Galloway of mission, participation and communion, the themes Pope Francis identified as decisive when the listening journey was initiated three years ago.

The **Final Document** issued from the Synod on Synodality is a vital contribution in establishing a less hierarchical Church. The contribution of lay women and lay men is recognised as indispensable. Mission and evangelisation require that the laity and the clergy work in co-operation and in complementarity, not as opponents or as competitors. The Church can only serve if all the baptised take their baptismal responsibilities seriously and work towards a synodal Church. We are at exciting point in the history of the Church, and here in the Diocese of Galloway we have a wonderful opportunity to maintain and build on Pope Francis' inspirational vision of what synodality really is.

## Caritas Students learn the meaning of Synodality

Over eighty Caritas students from St Matthews Academy accepted an invitation from St Mary's, Saltcoats and St John's, Stevenston Synod Group to attend an event in October in St John's Hall entitled '**Connecting with Synodality**'. The students, from parishes across the North Ayrshire Deanery, engaged in reflection, prayer and discussion about what Synodality means to them. Overwhelmingly, the students reported that they found the event interesting and a significant number felt optimistic that the church was beginning to listen to young people. St John's Soup and Chat group provided refreshments and lunch for the students. A report from the event will be published early in 2025.





# The Teaching of Pope Francis

by Father William McFadden

*As well as being actively involved in the Synod on Synodality in Rome, during recent months Pope Francis has travelled to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Singapore, as well as to Belgium and Luxembourg.*

The trip to Asia and Oceania, his 45th and longest ever papal visit, saw Pope Francis offer many homilies, speeches and off the cuff remarks promoting peace and inclusion. He also communicated this message by symbolic gestures. Perhaps his most powerful gesture was while he was in Indonesia, the world's

most populated Muslim country, where he joined the Grand Imam of Jakarta in blessing the "tunnel of fraternity". This tunnel is an underground walkway connecting Indonesia's largest mosque to the Catholic Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption. The tunnel is an expression of friendship among people of different faiths and being there allowed Pope Francis to highlight the importance of inter-religious dialogue, and the commonality between Christianity and Islam. His repeated message while in this part of the world was that men and women of different faiths, ethnicities, and cultures can and must exist together, respect one another, and collaborate. For Francis, our different faiths must dialogue, promote toleration, and oppose violent extremism: "I am grateful to those who work with the conviction that we can live in harmony and peace, and are aware of the need for a more fraternal world," he said.

In his various homilies, meetings with dignitaries, and meetings with local groups, Pope Francis enthusiastically



promoted encounter between religious traditions. He called for a vision where "religious experiences may be reference points for a fraternal and peaceful society and never reasons for close-mindedness or confrontation."

In Singapore Francis engaged in an inter-religious event with a group of young people. He encouraged their personal faith journey, and appealed for them to walk together, always conscious of working for the common good. He challenged them to be committed to dialogue and pointed out that the "first thing a dictatorship does is take away dialogue." All religions are paths to reach God," said Pope Francis. "They are – to make a comparison – like different languages, different dialects, to get there. But God is God for everyone." "If you start to fight, 'my religion is more important than yours, mine is true and yours isn't', where will that lead us?" he asked the young people. "There's only one God, and each of us has a language to arrive at God. Some are Sheik, Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and they are different paths."

In visiting Asia and Oceania, Pope Francis has grasped the opportunity of repeatedly promoting inter-religious dialogue, of focussing on the importance of courageous co-operation, and of highlighting the need for an ongoing commitment among religions to work for peace. On his return to Rome, as is his custom at the conclusion of a papal trip, he visited the Roman Basilica of St Mary Major to pray before the icon of *Maria Salus Populi Romani*, (below) to which he has great personal devotion. His prayer was one of gratitude for the journey undertaken and for the protection of Mary. We too can join in thanksgiving prayer for Pope Francis' witness in fostering and encouraging inter-religious dialogue, for his tolerance and respect for other faiths, and for his admiration and esteem for those who live their lives directed by their religious beliefs and convictions.



*Thousand of people came from all the municipalities and gathered in Dili to welcome Pope Francis during his apostolic journey to Asia and Oceania.*





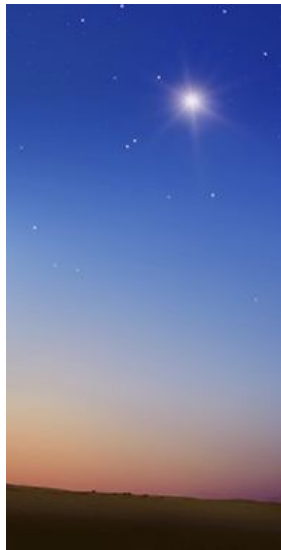
## The Student

*For everyone named in scripture involved in the life of Jesus there must have been hundreds more whose names are not recorded. This time, Mary Buckley imagines one aspect of the journey undertaken by the Magi.*

I thought I might have been the first to see it. For several days now our master had asked his students to look at the sky just before nightfall and consider what they could see. He often did this; sometimes in the daytime, sometimes in the dead of night, and then we would all gather and discuss our findings.

I am a student of a great man, a scholar, a teacher, a wise man who is respected and revered in the city and countryside. His lessons are fascinating: we learn about the stars and the moon and what their movements and appearance mean. We consult ancient texts; we look at the scrolls, look for auspicious signs and order in the apparent chaos of the sky. But on this day I was eager to tell him of the new star I was sure I had seen rising in the east. And I was astonished when the master embraced me and congratulated me on the observation. "We are living in a wonderful age" he told us, "an age of great significance and change. For I am sure that this star, the one you saw rising in the east, portends the birth of a great king, a messiah who will change the world. We are going on a journey" he said, "We are going to find the new king and pay him homage." When I asked where we were going and what route we would take he was matter of fact. "We will follow the star" he said, as if it was the most natural thing in the world. But the prophets had foretold of a great king to come from Judah, so it was to the west we would head.

The next days were full of activity. This would be a journey of many weeks, perhaps even months so there was a



We were joined very soon by a close friend of the master, a chieftain from the neighbouring city, also with a huge entourage. He too had seen the star and was bent on following it to the king. These were wealthy men and important, but they were like children in their excitement.

We settled quickly into a routine. We would travel in the early part of the morning, rest in the heat of the day and travel again for a short time in the early evening before making camp for the night. The days were not wasted: both masters used the journey to further our education.

One day we were surprised to meet yet another follower of the star. From his clothing and demeanour we knew he had come from the south. His language was hard to follow but it seemed as if he was a leader of his tribe - a king, I suppose. It made sense to travel on together and soon we knew we were nearing our destination, the great city of Jerusalem. Although we were all dressed in travelling clothes, and by this time we were travel stained and dusty, we looked like foreigners and we were aware of being watched somehow so we camped outside the walls and sought an audience the chief of the city, King Herod.



I didn't like him. Herod received us graciously; cold drinks and sweetmeats were prepared, hospitality was offered. He asked for what they searched and when they said they sought the one who has been born king of the Jews and that they saw his star in the east and had come to worship him, Herod seemed to me to be uneasy. We waited at the palace for a few days; he was obviously consulting his own scholars and priests then we were summoned. "The scribes say that the king will be born in 'Bethlehem in Judea'" he said. "Go in peace and when you find him, come back and tell me of him so that I too can worship him." As I say, I did not like him, and, it turned out, neither did the masters who immediately resolved never to set foot in the palace again!

So today we are travelling to Bethlehem. We are a small group. At its head, the masters are dressed on their ceremonial robes, fit to worship the king. They are carrying treasures to pay him homage. Three strangers, three foreigners; a king, a prince and a scholar; three wise men. I wonder if the meeting will be an auspicious one.



lot of preparation. Tents and carpets, bed coverings and vessels of all kinds, cooking utensils ... but eventually, with a retinue of servants and some of our students we set off.



# ‘Ask the Bishop’

*In the summer the pupils of St Patrick's Primary School, Troon, were asked what they would like to 'ask the bishop'. The children were very enthusiastic – they will make great quizmasters in the future – and here Bishop Frank sits in the hot seat to answer all their questions.*



**The children from P3 were first and they wanted to know all about being a priest, favourite church and, most importantly, favourite chocolate.**

*First they wanted to know the bishop's date of birth, his age, where was he born and any brothers and sisters.*

8th December (Feast of the Immaculate Conception) in Lanark. You have to work out the year from the next question. I have two older sisters and an older brother. I'm the baby.

*What age were you when you became a priest and did you have any jobs before you became a priest and what were they?*

I was 28 years old (so can you work out which year I was born in?). I had studied to be a lawyer. When I was in high school I worked in a supermarket. When I was at university I worked in a bookies!

*Why did you want to become a priest?*

That is a story that takes ages to tell because it's the story of my life. But the short answer is that I believe it is what God wanted me to become.

*What was the first service you ever delivered? Where was the first church you were the priest in? What was it called?*

The first time I celebrated Mass was in my home parish of St Aidan's, Wishaw (pictured). That was the day after I was ordained a priest, so 28th June 2001. The first parish I was appointed to was the Parish of Our Lady and St Anne in Hamilton. I was also appointed as a school chaplain to Holy Cross High School in Hamilton.



*What is your favourite church?*

I have lots. But I've really loved going to churches I've never been in before, like Our Lady and St Meddan's in Troon.

*What is your favourite place and why?*

My favourite place is the highlands of Scotland. I love the scenery and the mountains.

*Do you have a favourite prayer and if yes what is it?*

I like the Glory Be because it is nice and simple and just praises God.

*What is your favourite downtime activity?*

I like cooking Italian food (and eating it!).

*What is your favourite thing about moving to the Galloway Diocese?*

Everything!

*What is your favourite chocolate?*

My favourite chocolate bar is a Double Decker but I also like all chocolate!



**The young people of Primary 4/5 were keen to understand the role of bishop – and more favourites!**

*What is your favourite part about being a bishop? What do you do day to day as part of your role as bishop?*

My favourite part is meeting new people who all share the love of Jesus. No day is the same. I get to meet lots of people and go to lots of places.

*Why did you want to become a priest?*

I believe that is what God wanted me to become.



*What is your favourite hymn?*

Servant King and Shine Jesus Shine.

*What do you like to do in your spare time? Do you like to watch sports? If so, what sport? Do you have any side hobbies?*

I like to go walking in the mountains with my friends. I like to watch football. I like hill walking, cooking, watching football and I'm learning to play golf.

*What is your favourite meal?*

There's loads. I love all pastas, and steak and chips.

*What is your favourite colour?*

Blue (Our Lady's colour)

**Primary 5/6 were also keen to know about being a bishop.**

*How many countries have you visited on missions or for your job?*

So far I've been to Italy, Canada, Germany, France. But I'm looking forward to going to loads more.

*What was it like becoming a bishop? What is the process of becoming a bishop and how long have you been a bishop for?*

It was a huge surprise. And a bit scary, then I became excited about it. I got a phone call out of the blue to go and visit the Papal Nuncio in London. He is the Archbishop who represents the pope in Britain. He told me that the Holy Father was asking me to become Bishop of Galloway. All I had to do was to say yes. have been a bishop since 9th March 2024 (so not long!).

*Did you always want to be in the Galloway diocese?*

It's not a job you apply for. But I can say that since I came here, I would not want to be anywhere else.

*What inspired you to become a priest? How does it feel being a bishop?*

My Mum and Dad and some of the priests I knew when I was growing up. Being a bishop makes you feel very lucky because you get to see how God's goodness is present in so many people in the whole Diocese of Galloway.



*As a bishop, what advice do you give to children?*

Don't ever forget that God loves you very much. And don't let anyone tell you any different. You will always be precious to God. And remember, that is true of everybody else, so treat them with kindness.

## Youth for Lourdes (Galloway)

**Youth for Lourdes**  
RC Diocese of Galloway


Want to do something different next summer?  
Aged S4-23 (by 7th July 2025)?

**Join Youth for Lourdes!**  
and make a real difference in someone's life.

When is it? 7th-14th July 2025  
How much is it? £750  
(but we'll help you fundraise it)

Scan the QR code or click the link to register!

@ youthforlourdes@rcdg.org.uk Galloway youthto Youth for Lourdes (Galloway)



**Y**outh for Lourdes is back for 2025 and can't wait to go back to Lourdes next year and to bring you with us! Interested in being part of our team? Want to do something different next summer? Aged S4-23 by 7th July 2025? Join Youth for Lourdes and make a real difference in someone's life – sign up today!



## Father David's Advent Challenge 2024 for Friends of the Holy Land

Boyed by the success of last year's Advent Challenge, Father David Borland will again walk the 95 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem, completely within the town of Ayr – and, once again, no donkeys were allowed! From St Margaret's Cathedral, walking down South Harbour Street and along the promenade to the foot of the river at Doonfoot is exactly 2.5 miles, so there and back 19 times during Advent is 95 miles – and it is all on the flat! The challenge started on Saturday 30th November and there is still time to join him walking on the Saturdays. He will fit in the other 15 sessions where possible.

If you want to support Father David you can do so in two ways. By far the easiest way is by bank transfer to: David Borland, Sort Code 80-09-48, Account 01908460, or you can send a cheque payable to 'David Borland' to St Margaret's, 27 John Street, Ayr, KA8 0BS. Every penny raised will be gratefully received, and FHL will use it well.

Thank you to everyone who is able to contribute to this fundraiser during these difficult times and if you are not in a position to contribute financially please pray instead for peace and justice in the Holy Land. Prayers are just as important as money.



**Friends of the Holy Land animation**

Watch their brand new Christmas animation on YouTube : <https://bit.ly/3Ulu1Xi>



**Thank you to all the children who entered the art competition.**

We very much enjoyed looking at all the entries. They were all excellent but and it was very hard to pick a winner.

**Congratulations to Kleeona, aged 7, from Mount Carmel Primary, Kilmarnock, who wins the Art set.**







# Galloway Diocese Children's Liturgy

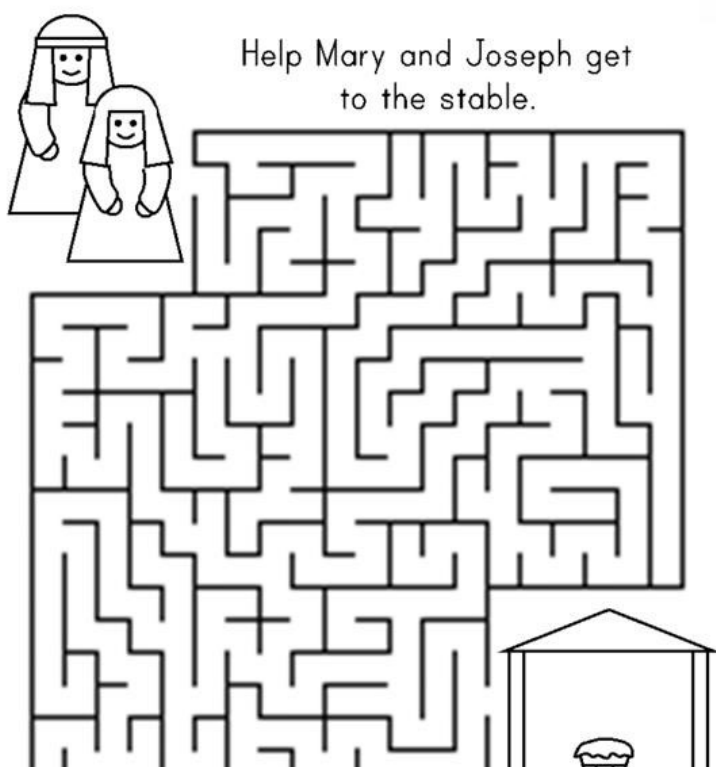


## Colouring Sheet

Christmas is a special time for celebrating the birth of Jesus, the light of the world. It is a time to reflect on the love and hope He brought to all people. Christmas calls us to pause and think about the true meaning of the season – not just the presents, but the gift of Jesus' love in our lives. Let us take a moment to reflect on how we can carry His love and light with us throughout the year.



Help Mary and Joseph get  
to the stable.



Write a prayer to God to  
thank Him for the gift of  
Jesus and all the good  
things in your life. Ask  
God to help you show love  
and kindness to others,  
just like Jesus did.

# REAL GIFTS

## THE GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING



### Some examples include



A water well – £300

Chickens – £15

Christmas cards,  
twin pack – £4.50



Emergency water supply – £45

Donation in their name – £10

And many more ...



### HOW IT WORKS



#### CHOOSE

Browse your favourite gifts  
and just click "Add to Cart".



#### SHARE

After your card arrives, make  
it special with a personal  
touch and share it



#### CHANGE

Your gift will make a big  
difference to the lives of  
people around the world!

go to <https://www.sciaf.org.uk>

**GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING**