

# THE PORTICO

## Lay Catechists: an "Ancient Ministry" made new



some of our parish catechists in recent years

Pope Francis announced great news for parish ministry last Wednesday morning in Rome: he is establishing an official lay ministry of Catechist. The Holy Father wants to officially sanction the role of the hardworking parishioners who help to pass on the faith, giving them an official responsibility and recognising their talents. Our parish catechists are in the frontline of supporting enquirers, families and children in their journey of faith.

This continues the recovery of an understanding that has existed in the church since the earliest times and that the "A Precious Place" project will try to restore: that true parish ministry is about collaboration and working as a team. Parish Catechists are a vital part of that team - their work, especially communion and confirmation classes, lies at the heart of sustaining a good parish. Catechists offer our young people a vision and view for the future, and are in a unique position to LISTEN to what our young people are saying to us.

It is wonderful to think that we will be able to come together as a community to witness our Catechists offer their services in the same way that our Lectors (Readers) and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion do.

As the Pope observed: "Being a catechist is a vocation ... and is a true and genuine ministry in the church" (20/09/2018)

The Pope's Apostolic Letter 'Antiquum Ministerium' (Ancient Ministry) is on the Vatican website: [HERE](#)

## Pentecost Novena: "The River Does Not Divide Us"



The Bishops Conference have issued a Pentecost Novena on the Care for Creation, and invite us all to respond in prayer and action to the urgent climate change issues that we all face. The novena, entitled "The River Does Not Divide Us" is a beautiful illustrated set of readings and prayers drawn from the Bible and recent Papal

## Prayers

for Bishop Christopher who has cancer and will undergo an important procedure on 26 May. Bishop Mark reports that "he was in remarkably good spirits and, you will not be surprised to hear, is approaching things in a very deep disposition of faith and with a great love for the Lord. ... I know he will be grateful for your prayer in this time leading up to that, on the day itself, and in the time afterwards, when he will need some ongoing treatment."

## Messages

Janet P and Jennie B send their best wishes to everyone

Thank you and Pete for your hard work on the Portico - so much appreciated by many people. *Molly*

Astonishingly relevant and fertile for the Gospel! Thank you so much, *Andrew*

Thanks for including what I wrote in this latest edition of the Portico. It's always good to see my contributions, among others of course. *Sam*

Bishop Mark's message was very interesting and clear. *Sam*

teaching, easily managed as a daily exercise at home.

It is available to see and to download on their website [here](#).

## Falmouth to host new refugee family

Fantastic news from Falmouth & Penryn Churches Together this week! The application to resettle a second refugee family from Syria has been approved. A house is fully furnished and ready, and thirty new volunteers have been recruited to support the incoming family.

This is particularly welcome, as the Catholic Church in the UK has just written to the government expressing its strong opposition to its proposed New Plan for Immigration (NPM), and calling for more support for community sponsorship schemes like the Falmouth one. The SVP in England has also written an open letter to the Home Secretary, co-signed by over 80 faith groups and leaders, warning that the NPM 'lacks humanity and respect for human dignity'.

The Pope, in a message on Migrants and Refugees 6 May, warns against "myopic and aggressive forms of nationalism" and points out that any dialogue resulting from our encounter with

the diversity of foreigners, migrants and refugees is an opportunity for us to grow as Church and to enrich one another.

## G7 Conference:



CAFOD, Christian Aid and Tearfund are asking churches in Cornwall to send a strong message to world leaders who will attend the G7 Conference in Cornwall next month, urging a response to the Climate Emergency.

They say, "We would like to start a 'Wave of Hope' across the County and ask all churches to make a display of HANDS outside each church in the fortnight ahead of the G7."

If you can display a waving **hand** at home, please send a photo to [theportico@icloud.com](mailto:theportico@icloud.com) for us to publicise more widely.

Hands from churches all over Cornwall will also form a Wave of

Hope display which will be put up on St Anta church in Carbis Bay for all G7 delegates to witness, several times a day! If anyone wants to lend us a 'hand' making a one to send representing Truro, let us know!

(For other ideas of actions to take, see the [Wave of Hope Supporters Guide](#) on The Portico website)

## SVP in India



With all the terrible news of the COVID-19 situation in India, let us not forget the SVP's St Nicholas Conference in Tharuvaikulam, India, with whom the Truro SVP is twinned.

Truro SVP has enquired about sending funds to our 'twins' to help and support them at this time. However, we appear to be prevented from doing so at present by government regulations. The SVP is trying to sort out the bureaucratic tangle, but your prayers are requested in the meanwhile.

## Reflection for Pentecost (From Francis M.)

The Pentecost reading from the Acts of the Apostles is most dramatic, the powerful wind from heaven and the parted tongues of fire on the head of each apostle; the visitors to Jerusalem from all over the Mediterranean world hearing the preaching of the apostles in his own language. Since Easter, the theme of the readings from Acts has been the inspiration of the Spirit.

Though we may not always think of it, the Holy Spirit is the constant power of our life in Christ, and when we switch off the Spirit, consequences follow.

The Gospel tells us that 'When the Advocate comes' 'you too will be my witnesses'. There has been heroic witness in the martyrs of our own country, of Japan, Korea, Uganda, Mexico and many countries in the past.

Few of us will get tongues of fire or the call to martyrdom, but now and again aren't there Spirit filled moments? - perhaps when we don't know what to say to the seriously ill, but the right words just come.

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