

Find time to enjoy God's gift to us



TIME is in my mind today, partly because I have been involved in centenary celebrations these last two weekends: for the Salford Branch of the CWL, and for the Catenian Association which was founded in Salford Diocese by my predecessor Bishop Casartelli in 1908.

Next weekend, I will be up in Ushaw College, Durham, to take part in the 200yrs celebration of the college's foundation. Each of these events is celebrated with a mass and a meal and speeches that look back over the history of the different occasions. In every age the needs of the day are challenged and addressed and provision is then made to improve the harsh realities. Every age has a link to our age.

Time is also on my mind because I live in a house that has a history going back 800 years and quite frequently my mind drifts off, as I think about the people who have lived here before me, their times, their joys their difficulties.

A simple thing like a walk in the garden brings to mind those who planted seeds that have literally grown into great trees and bushes: a copper beech, azaleas, splendid in all their array. The planter's vision, never seen, is my reality. They knew they would never see the fruits of their labours mature, but it was still important to them to think ahead to times still to come; to prepare for future generations; to pass on an inheritance of riches that will nurture the heart and soul of mankind.

Time is in my mind partly also because of the readings from the Book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes that are read at this time of the year during daily Mass. "There is a time for every occupation under Heaven, a time for living and a time for dying ... a time for knocking down and a time for building." And all our time is a gift from God.

When we understand that our time is given to us by God out of love, and is not ours to take for ourselves, then life becomes so much more radiant and exciting. Everything that happens is a means through which we can see the vision of God if we have the eyes to see and the ears to hear.

Hard things happen, like earthquakes, tidal waves, terrorism and war, famine and greed, and the world thinks that God is not there, or that God is impotent and cannot help. Good things happen like success and material growth, health and happiness, peace and brotherhood, sharing and the common good. And then it is so much easier to see the hand of God.

Yet even then, some will not allow that God is in their time: they have achieved what has been achieved solely by themselves. They cannot see the vision of the Planter.

Tracing time and history back through time will bring us to the beginning: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth ... God said, 'Let there be light' and there was light...Evening came and morning came: the first day."

God gave us seven days, and how often we say there are not enough hours in the day! And God gave us an eighth day- the day of Resurrection - which has changed our use of time.

If we are people of the Resurrection of the Lord, then our use of time is always for the glory of the Father: we have time enough to come to know and love him, and he then will share with us his Happiness for ever: yesterday, today and forever. Find time!

+ Terence J. Brain

Audio Version of the Catholic Mother Newspaper

THE audio version of *the Catholic Mother* is now available for any member who has difficulty in reading the written version. If you know of anyone who would like a copy of the tape please send the name and address of the member to me, Sheila Godley and I will ensure that a copy of the tape is sent to them.

On behalf of the members who will benefit from this service, I would like to thank all those who have assisted me in this task. Simon Brotherton from Gabriel Communications, Kevin Lonergan from Galloway's, our two volunteer UCM readers Margaret McNicholas and Carole McKenna and two ladies from Galloway's. My special thanks go to Pat Durrant who undertook this task for 18 years. Pat very kindly sent me her tapes, wallets for the tapes and most important the list of recipients, all of which helped me enormously. This was a team effort.

The recording of the paper is being organised by Galloway's Society for the Blind. Please note that this service is provided free of charge and Galloway's will be happy to provide an audio copy of *The Universe*, *Bible alive* and *the Mass*, their address and telephone number is below.

Sheila Godley,
National Media Officer

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Recording on Maundy Thursday, 20 March, 2008.
Left Margaret McNicholas, Right Carole McKenna,
Centre Volunteer from Galloways.

Independent Members

AN Independent Member is a member who is not part of a Foundation. This could be for the any number of reasons. Maybe she is living in an area where there is no convenient U.C.M. or perhaps the foundation to which she belongs is under threat of closure because no one is willing to take office.

In the majority of cases, when the members want to continue meeting as a group, then the only way out of this situation is for the members to become Independent.

(This is not ideal or practical, however if one Member of the group could take on the responsibility of being a contact to receive post, this ensures that the rest of the group are kept informed and updated with information. It is a way of keeping the group together, and hopefully in the future, members might be inspired to take up Office).

An Independent member has the same rights as a Member of a Foundation, and should receive the same paperwork and information that is sent to a Foundation. She is eligible to a vote in her Diocese should the situation arise, and to represent her Diocese as a Delegate at Study/Welfare Days and National Conference /AGM.

She should be actively encouraged to take part in Diocesan events.

Independent Members subscriptions should be sent direct to the Diocesan Treasurer.

The Linacre Centre for Health Care

THE Linacre Centre in North West London is the only Catholic institution of its kind, specialising in the field of health care ethics in Great Britain and Ireland. It provides a unique service, particularly to Catholics working in the field of health care. It also exists to assist the teaching authorities in the Church to address bio-ethical issues and to communicate and defend the Church's moral teaching in debates over public policy and legislation in the UK.

The co-operation of the Linacre Centre in publishing the CTS *Explanations* series of booklets (price £1.95) helps to provide clear Catholic teaching on issues such as abortion, cloning and stem cell research, euthanasia and homosexuality.

The Centre's spring newsletter includes an article on euthanasia by the Director, Dr. Helen Watt. She says that this is often presented as a personal choice and tends to involve a doctor's endorsement that someone's life is not worth living.

If we believe that death is a benefit to anyone with certain disabilities, why should not this "benefit" also be provided to those who are unable to request it? In fact non-voluntary euthanasia is a natural sequel to voluntary euthanasia.

In the Netherlands, where euthanasia has

been legally available for decades, results of a series of Government ordered surveys showed in particular that figures for non voluntary life termination was sometimes as many as 1,000 a year (and that excludes those killed by 'terminal sedation').

The authors of the survey suggest that non-voluntary life termination seems rather difficult to not prevent and that, if patients want to live, they should make it clear orally and in writing well in advance.

In Oregon, whose law permitting assisted suicide came into force in 1997, it appears that the State which funds assisted suicide is less ready to fund essential medical services for those who need them. Euthanasia and assisted suicide confirm the suicidal in their low estimate of the value of their lives. No doctor should agree with a patient that his or her life has no value.

The article concludes that those working in the medical field should lead the way in valuing the lives of all their patients, especially those in pain or distress who do not see their lives as worth while. Surely this is a message we should all proclaim.

Monica Scudder,
Public Service Officer

GIFT AID DECLARATION

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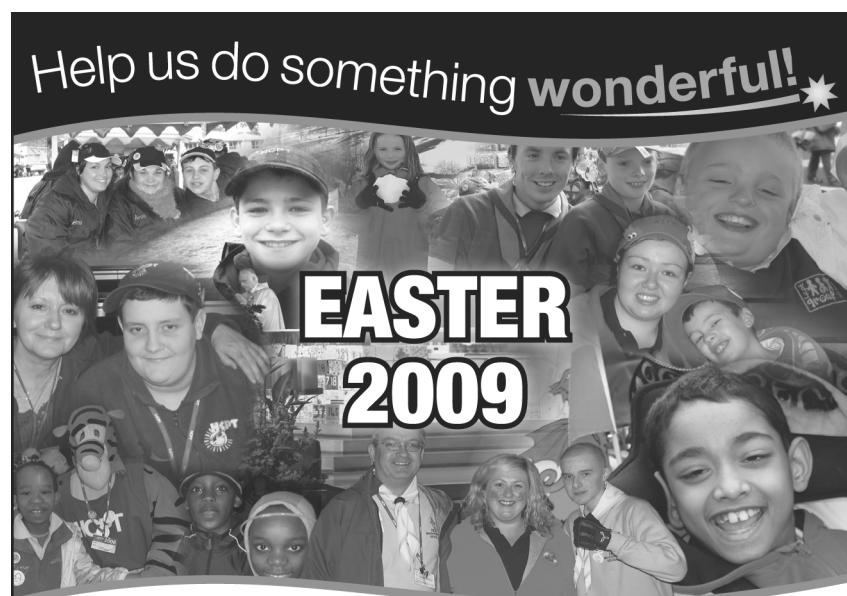
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