



## ***Letter from Langdon Street***

My dear people

Last Sunday Pope Francis, at the end of his apostolic journey to three African countries, was in the Central African Republic, one of the most dangerous places in the world today. He had placed himself into a place of danger and used the occasion to call upon Christians and Muslims to cease killing each other and to draw together in peace and respect. In one of his sermons he said: Advent is a time when we strive to open our hearts to receive the Saviour, who alone is just and the sole Judge able to give to each his or her due. Here as elsewhere, countless men and women thirst for respect, for justice, for equality, yet see no positive signs on the horizon. These are the ones to whom he comes to bring the gift of his justice. He comes to enrich our personal and collective histories, our dashed hopes and our sterile yearnings. And he sends us to proclaim, especially to those oppressed by the powerful of this world or weighed down by the burden of their sins. God is righteousness; God is justice. This, then, is why we Christians are called in the world to work for a peace founded on justice.

“The salvation of God which we await is also flavoured with love. In preparing for the mystery of Christmas, we relive the pilgrimage which prepared God’s people to receive the Son, who came to reveal that God is not only righteousness, but also and above all love. In every place, even and especially in those places where violence, hatred, injustice and persecution hold sway, Christians are called to give witness to this God who is love. In encouraging the priests, consecrated men and woman, and committed laity who, in this country live, at times heroically, the Christian virtues, I realize that the distance between this demanding ideal and our Christian witness is at times great. For this reason I echo the prayer of Saint Paul: “Brothers and sisters, may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all men and women” Thus what the pagans said of the early Christians will always remain before us like a beacon: “See how they love one another, how they truly love one another.”

To all those who make unjust use of the weapons of this world, I make this appeal: lay down these instruments of death! Arm yourselves instead with righteousness, with love and mercy, the authentic guarantors of peace. As followers of Christ, dear priests, religious and lay pastoral workers, here in this country, with its suggestive name, situated in the heart of Africa and called to discover the Lord as the true centre of all that is good, your vocation is to incarnate the very heart of God in the midst of your fellow citizens. May the Lord deign to “strengthen your hearts in holiness, that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Amen.”

Pope Francis disregarded the advice of people concerned for his safety and visited a very dangerous place. He has now returned safely to Rome and is preparing to open the Holy Door in St Peter’s to mark the beginning of the Jubilee Year of Mercy on Tuesday 8 December, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Next Sunday Cardinal Nichols is opening the Holy Door at the Cathedral at 3.30 pm. I would like us to have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from the end of the 10.30 Mass until 3.30 pm. I hope you will be able to spend time in the church. It would be good to see parents and children at the short service at 3.30 pm, uniting with all the people at the Cathedral.

Yours sincerely

*Vincent Berry*

Parish Priest

### **CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

The times of services during the Christmas season are to be found on the parish website which can be found on: <http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/tring>. We shall also be sending the poster by email to anyone who is on our parish register and who gave us their email address.

### **CHRISTMAS FLOWERS**

Each year we invite you to contribute to the cost of decorating the church with flowers for the Christmas celebrations. There will be a collection after mass on the weekends of 6 and 13 December.

Margaret & Heather have kindly agreed to hold a flowering arranging workshop to make a decoration for a Christmas Centre Piece. The workshop will be held on Friday 18th December at 7.30 pm in the Church. Please put your name & telephone number on the list at the back of the Church if you are interested in joining us. My contact number is 07736669019 and e-mail is [annabelle\\_halliday@hotmail.com](mailto:annabelle_halliday@hotmail.com).

### **PREPARING FOR OUR JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM**

We are preparing for this year’s Nativity Play which will be part of our Christmas Eve Mass for families which will bring together the children who are part of SPOG, the Sunday Children’s Liturgy Group and the First Communion Class. We hope other children will join in. We need to start planning for this as soon as possible.

### **SWEET SINGING IN THE CHOIR**

We would like to form a choir to sing the Christmas Midnight Mass. We already have a group of singers but we would like more members. If you would like to volunteer please send an email message to [tring@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:tring@rcdow.org.uk).

### **THE PLAYING OF THE MERRY ORGAN**

It is sad to say farewell to Barrie Maloney who has played the organ at mass Sunday after Sunday for nearly eight years. He has recently moved to North Yorkshire and will be sadly missed. We need to find a replacement. Jane Bird and Chris Howlings continue to play but their work commitments mean that they are often away at weekends. Please remember Christ and family in your prayers. His parents are both very ill. If you play the piano or keyboard you will be able to canon play the organ. Please come and try. We have music at the Saturday 6 pm mass and at the Sunday 10.30 mass. If anyone has trained to play the organ, so much the better. Please contact Canon Berry at [tring@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:tring@rcdow.org.uk)

### **THE ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

This will take place on Saturday 12 December, from 7 to 10 pm. This is an opportunity to prepare for Christmas with various local bands singing acoustic blues and jazzy music. Tickets cost £2. All are welcome. A tuck shop will be available. Please contact Dan for tickets.

### **CORPUS CHRISTI FRIENDSHIP GROUP**

We have formed a friendship group in our Parish. It meets on Monday mornings at 10.30 am in Anusia’s Coffee Shop in Tring High Street. Our aim is that we meet together and enjoy each other’s company. If you are interested, please phone Wendy on 01442 824369 or Simon on 01442 826681. Lifts can be provided if necessary.

### **REFUGEE VOLUNTEER EVENING**

We would like to invite you to the Refugee Volunteer Evening which we are holding on Tuesday 26 January in the Westminster Centre for Youth Ministry, 20 Phoenix Road, Euston, NW1 1TA. The evening will give you the chance to talk to organisations and projects working with migrants and

refugees in London and Hertfordshire, to find out about volunteering opportunities, and to get information on setting up your own project. All are welcome