

The Pope's Intentions for November (please remember these in your personal prayer)

General: That victims of drugs or of other dependence may, thanks to the support of the Christian community, find in the power of our Saving God strength for a radical life-change.

Missionary: That the Churches of Latin America may move ahead with the continent-wide mission proposed by their bishops, making it part of the universal missionary task of the People of God.

Institute of Irish Leadership, 20 The Diamond, Pomeroy – Enrolment for Courses Available:

Basic IT and Essential Skills in Numeracy and Literature.

For more info call (028) 8775 7800 or email kathleenburnsill@gmail.com

Parents Advice Centre – Helpline Volunteers: Men and women urgently required to train and work as Helpline volunteers. The preparation course is OCN accredited Level 2. For further information call (028) 7137 2006, call to the office City Factory Building, 100 Patrick Street or email marie@pachelp.org Parents Helpline Floor 2, City Factory Building, 100 Patrick Street, Derry BT48 7EL. Tel: (028) 7137 2006. parentsadvicecentre.org Parents Helpline Freephone: 0808 8010 722 Registered in N. Ireland No: N130087 Registered Office: Andras House, 60 Gt Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7BB A Charity: Inland Revenue No: X0492/80

ACCORD Marriage Preparation Courses 2010 (Omagh Pastoral Centre, Brook Street):

3rd and 4th December. Couples planning to marry should register for one of these courses 6 months before your wedding. Call (028) 8224 2439, e-mail accordomagh@bopenworld.com

Medjugorje Irish Centre: Every week for a year we are giving away one weeks free apartment accommodation for up to 4 people. Text the word PILGRIM followed by your name and county to 60777 or phone us and we can enter you into the draw for free. Special introductory offer €260 package. Website www.med-irishcentre.com Tel: (028) 8224 1888.

Children in Crossfire – Barcelona Half Marathon: Children in Crossfire are recruiting 20 runners for the Barcelona Half Marathon on 13th February, 2011. Contact Sarah on (028) 7126 9898 or e-mail events@childrenincrossfire.org for information.

Knock Marriage Introduction Bureau: The aim of the Bureau is to introduce people considering marriage to a suitable marriage partner. Over 800 marriages have taken place as a result of these introductions. If you are searching for a suitable partner, why not consider applying? For further information contact the Bureau at Knock, Co. Mayo. Phone 00353 94937 5960 or visit our website at www.knockmarriagebureau.com and read about the workings of the Bureau.

Foyle Hospice – Free Adult Counseling Service: Offered on Tuesdays to help support those with a life limiting illness and their families / carers. Counseling is also available for the bereaved and there is a children's bereavement support group. *For more info please contact the Hospice on (028) 7135 1010*

Family Care Society – Adoption: Could you make a child happy again after a difficult start in life? Family Care Society is presently seeking adoptive families who would be interested in parenting children aged between 3 and 8 years and who need the love and attention of a caring and understanding family. Could this be you? For more information contact Family Care Society on: (028) 9069 1133 (Belfast) or (028) 7136 8592 (Derry). email@familycaresociety.org www.familycaresociety.net

Broughderg First Responders Scheme: The role of a First Responder is to attend, when possible a patient who has collapsed and administer CPR and / or defibrillation whilst waiting for an ambulance crew to attend. The Broughderg First Responders are volunteers who live and work in the local area they are fully trained and are fully insured. When an appropriate 999 call is received from the area covered by the First Responder Scheme; the volunteers are notified and try to attend to provide whatever care is reasonable. First Responders will only attend when dispatched by Ambulance Control. They have no role in the diagnosis or management of illness apart from the collapsed patient. There will always be a 999 ambulance in attendance. Volunteers are clearly identifiable as they will have ID with them. They will provide whatever care is reasonable and will endeavour to assist either doctors or members of the Ambulance Service as appropriate. If you require any further information about the scheme please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Janet Shields (Dalriada Urgent Care) (028) 2566 3502

Tuesday's Child – Christmas Gala Ball: Tuesday's Child's Christmas Gala Ball is on Saturday 18th December in Belfast City Hall, hosted by the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Pat Convery. The MC for the evening is Paul Clark from UTV and Sean Crummey is after-dinner speaker.

Music is by Siobhán Pettit and her 9 piece swing band *Nightswing*. There is a pre-drinks reception with Christmas Carols by Louise Irvine and St. Malachy's Senior String Quartet and fabulous raffle prizes and auction items including some beautiful art pieces donated by artists north and south. Tickets are £60 and make an ideal Christmas gift, tables seat 10. All proceeds will go to Tuesday's Child projects for children living in extreme hardship in Gaza, India and Pakistan. We give 100% of proceeds.

For more info call (028) 9050 2725 or email info@tuesdayschild.org.uk or visit tuesdayschild.org.uk

This Week's Calendar of Feasts:

Sunday 21st November – Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King We celebrate Christ as the Universal King. Through his cross he has won a holy nation and a royal people. In his kingdom he has reconciled all things to himself and through himself. He is the true shepherd-king who leads his people to peace.

Monday 22nd November – St. Cecilia (virgin and martyr) The patroness of music and musicians, was a 2nd or 3rd century Roman Christian martyr. According to tradition, she refused to worship the Roman gods and was beheaded. Her association with music and the representations of her playing the organ probably grew from a misunderstanding of a 5th century account of her life.

Tuesday 23rd November – St. Columban (abbot and missionary) [543-615] Also known as Columbanus. Became a monk of Bangor and later principal teacher there. In 591, desiring to 'go on a pilgrimage for Christ' he set out with 12 companions and came to Burgundy. He established monasteries at Annegray, Luxeuil and Fontaine according to the severe Irish rule. Later he founded Bregenz in Austria and his greatest foundation at Bobbio, near Genoa, where he died. Remembered as one of the greatest of the Irish Missionary monks.

Wednesday 24th November – St. Andrew Dung-Lac (priest) and Companions (martyrs) In the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries in Vietnam many Christians suffered martyrdom. On 19th June, 1988 Pope John Paul II canonised 117 of these, 96 native Vietnamese men and women, 11 Dominican missionaries from Spain and 10 French missionaries.

Thursday 25th November – St. Catherine of Alexandria (virgin and martyr) Was martyred in 310 at Alexandria. Her body is venerated at the Monastery on Mt. Sinai.
St. Colman (bishop) Was born around 530, probably in West Cork. A bard by profession, he is reputed to have been influenced by St. Brendan to become a priest. His apostolate was to East Cork and his main foundation was at Cloyne.

Saturday 27th November – St. Fergal (Virgil) (bishop and missionary) Lived first in France and then in Bavaria, where he founded the monastery of Chiemsee. He was appointed bishop of Salzburg around 754 and died in 784, leaving a reputation for learning and holiness.

Seeing your life through the lens of the gospels – Luke 23:35-43:

1. Today's feast puts before us Jesus who never used power to his own advantage. Whom have you known who used power for the benefit of others rather than for their own self-interest? When have you used power in this way?
2. The power of God is shown in an unexpected way in the Crucifixion, not in a wonderful display of spectacular dominance, but in Jesus sharing our human weakness. When has the honesty of another sharing his/her human vulnerability with you had a powerful effect? When has your honesty in that way had a positive effect on another?
3. Jesus is an example of someone in apparent helplessness. It was his trust in the love of God with him that helped him through. It was only later with the hindsight of the resurrection that the moment of helplessness could be seen as one in which the power of God was present. Have you had experiences on which you can look back now and see that the power of God was at work in your moments of helplessness?
4. The scene also puts before us the liberating power of forgiveness. The forgiveness of Jesus brought new life to the criminal hanging on the cross with him. When have you found that forgiveness given, or received, was a source of new life for yourself or for others?

John Byrne OSA (john@orlagh.ie)

Questions people ask:

- Q. Jesus said to the repentant thief, 'I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise.' Doesn't that mean there is no purgatory?
- A. Hold on a second, it's not so simple. The text is not clear whether today refers to the day when the promise was made or to the time when the promise would be fulfilled. It depends on where the translator puts the comma. Then again, what does today mean? Scripture tells us that with the Lord a thousand years is like a single day. Furthermore, the promise made to one man does not necessarily refer to everybody, especially since not everybody is as repentant as that dying man beside Jesus on Calvary.

Fr. Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap (silvesteroflynn@gmail.com)

The Deep End – Go Cosmic for Christ:

Bye, bye 'ordinary' time. Welcome cosmic. The Church's liturgical year ends this week – and with a bang by celebrating Jesus Christ as King of the Universe. And what a universe it is! Its sheer size, astonishing age and confounding complexity are beyond anything our minds can grasp. The more we see of it through the Very Large Telescope in Chile, or the Hubble and Kepler space telescopes, the more awesome it appears. From data obtained 22,000 light years distant, astronomers have lit upon a new class of star so colossal it shatters current theoretical limits as to how large a star can be. Then, last June in just one download of information the Kepler telescope doubled the number of known planets outside our solar system to 700. Just as scientists realise through their impressive discoveries how little they know compared to what can be known, so too should we as people of faith realise the same as far as our faith is concerned. Dogmas don't close doors. They ensure that the right doors are opened. The door to the cosmic Christ is clearly marked in today's Second Reading (Col 1:12-20). There we have the risen Christ described as the one in whom 'all things in heaven and on earth were created' – even these newly discovered colossal stars, and all things as yet undetected by human technology.

There's more to faith than morals. There's the breathtaking, visionary, near cockeyed, mind-stretching promise of a fullness of life beyond death that no telescope could ever reveal. That's what faith is for. Happy New Year!

Fr. Tom Cahill SVD, Divine Word Missionaries, Donamon, Co Roscommon (tomcee@eircom.net)

Angelus – Pope Highlights Importance of Agriculture:

Vatican City (14th November, 2010) [VIS]

In his remarks prior to praying the Angelus this Sunday, the Holy Father spoke of the importance that work, especially agricultural work, has for human life.

Addressing the thousands of pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square, the Pope recalled how this question is highlighted in today's reading from St. Paul, and that in Italy the second Sunday of November is dedicated to thanking God for the end of the harvest. "Although I know that in other areas the farming seasons are different, I would like to draw from St. Paul's words to reflect particularly on agricultural work", he said.

"The current economic crisis, which was also examined during the recent meeting of the G20, must be faced in all its seriousness. It has many causes, and sends out a strong call for a profound revision in the model of global economic development. It is an acute symptom which must be added to other even more serious and already well-known symptoms such as the enduring imbalance between wealth and poverty, the scandal of hunger, the ecological emergency, and the now-widespread problem of unemployment. Faced with such a panorama, a strategic relaunch of agriculture is clearly vital. Indeed, the process of industrialisation has sometimes overshadowed the agricultural sector which, though it too has drawn benefit from modern technology, has nonetheless lost importance, bringing significant consequences also at a cultural level. I believe it is the moment to call for a re-evaluation of agriculture, not in nostalgic terms but as a vital resource for the future.

"In the current economic situation", the Pope added, "the temptation for the most dynamic economies is to seek advantageous agreements. However, this can turn out to be harmful to poorer States, prolonging the situation of extreme poverty suffered by vast numbers of men and women and using up the natural resources of the earth, which was - as Genesis says - entrusted by God the Creator to man for him to cultivate and protect". He went on: "For this reason it is vital to cultivate and spread a clear ethical awareness, one capable of meeting the most complex challenges of the present time, educating people in wiser and more responsible consumption patterns, promoting personal responsibility and the social dimension of rural activities founded on such perennial values as welcome, solidarity, and sharing the fatigue of work".

The Holy Father concluded: "Many young people have already chosen this path, and even a number of university graduates have chosen to dedicate themselves to agricultural business feeling that in this way they are responding, not only to a personal and family need, but also to a sign of the times, a concrete awareness of the common good".