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A Message from Bishop John on the Season of Creation

My dear brothers and sisters,

There is no doubt that we are becoming much more aware of the damage that we have done, and are continuing to inflict, on the Earth, our common home and the damage that is affecting the people most, in many of the poorest countries of the world, who have done least to cause it.

They are enduring the worst events of seasonal change where crops are ruined and agricultural land turned to desert.

We have done little to begin our work of repair but important progress has been made in understanding the present situation, the causes of the damage and the various means that are available to us to heal and to mend.

It is impossible to exaggerate the task that lies before us and the urgency to make progress before irreparable damage is done. It is clear that every one of us has a role to play, through simple adjustments to our daily lives, to a change in our routines and priorities.

Today, during the Season of Creation, we turn to prayer.

We must ask for the knowledge, the insight and understanding of the dangers we face. And we must ask for the Grace to make progress in uniting the determination of politicians, industry and science in caring for our brothers and sisters and our common home.

Let us pray together, on this Season of Care of Creation, that God will show us the way and give us the strength and determination to achieve all that He is asking of us in caring for our common home.

Stay with us, Lord, on our Journey

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John" with a small cross above the first letter.

[Find our Latest Updates and News Stories Here](#)

[Laudato Si Project: The Journey We Are On](#)



In the Diocese of Salford, responding to Laudato Si and Pope Francis' call for us all to care for our common home has been an important part of our faith journey. To mark the beginning of Lent over the last two years, Bishop John has written Pastoral Letters calling on schools and parishes in our diocese to take the environmental crisis more seriously and to make small changes in their day to day lives.

The Bishop didn't just ask others to make changes he has responded to his own challenge by beginning a major environmental project in the grounds of his residence, Wardley Hall.

Our goal is to make the Diocese of Salford a flagship for effective action on climate change and by launching this initiative, Bishop John is putting his words into action on his own doorstep.

Over the last few years progress has been made with the Laudato Si Project and this continues to be the case. Below you can see just some of the things that have gone on in the grounds of Wardley Hall.

Brick by Brick - Building the Walled Garden

As we approach 2021, we are refocussing our efforts on the walled garden and outdoor classroom as we hope to be able to welcome parish and school groups again. This will involve opportunities to visit but also resources that individuals, parishes and schools can use at home to transform some of their green spaces into a sustainable resource.

A Special Blessing

In May 2019, we welcomed Archbishop Edward Adams, the Apostolic Nuncio, to Wardley Hall for a special blessing of the walled garden, attended by CAFOD representatives from around the diocese.

Archbishop Adams ended the mass with a few words including a greeting from the Holy Father. He said: "The Pope reminds us it is our duty to love our neighbours and to share and protect our common home.

"Today by celebrating this new initiative we promise to do our part to love our neighbours and care for the common home. "

Help From Some Green-Fingered Pupils

In February 2020, more than 60 pupils from 10 Catholic primary schools around our diocese put on their gardening gloves and picked up their spades as they planted 20 fruit trees which will grow into an orchard in the years to come. [You can find out more about the orchard and the planting day here.](#)

Creating A Buzz

One year ago two bee-hives were installed in the Walled Garden at the Laudato Si project, and since then it has been a hive of activity! In just six months, 80 jars of honey were produced by the 20,000 Wardley bees - and the honey has since gone on to win awards at the Manchester and District Bee Keepers' AGM.

Now there are four hives and in July, a honey extractor was bought for the bees at the Laudato Si Centre, funded by Life for a Life.

A Space to Remember

The diocese partnered up with charity Life for a Life to open the Memorial Forest at Wardley Hall, with the hope that it will offer families the space to remember lost loved ones by creating a peaceful space that will flourish for years to come.

Over time, these trees will develop into a beautiful organised forest that everyone, of all faiths and none, can enjoy as well as nourishing the air we breathe for generations to come.

Next Steps

Much has been achieved since the publication of Laudato Si and the launch of our project but there is much more to be done, with urgency, if we are to provide a healthy environment for future generations.

As we refocus our efforts on the walled garden, we hope to be able to invite visitors when it is safe to do so.

We must never under-estimate the importance and power of prayer, asking God to guide us in the right way and for the strength to achieve our goals.

Education Sunday: Back to School



As children and young people have been taking the first steps in returning to schools around our diocese and we recognise Education Sunday on 13th September, we pray that this year will be an enjoyable and safe one.

We give thanks for the support of all the members of each school's community who make this possible.

Simon Smith, Director of Education, said: "At this time, the call to lead in our Catholic schools is louder and more compelling than ever.

"Communities have been deeply affected by the imposition of lockdowns and the severing of networks that have always held our learning communities together. But these challenging times provide a unique opportunity: to renew and refresh what we stand for, our values and ambitions for all our young people.

"The reawakening of our learning communities also provides excitement, and our teachers and support staff can now live out their vocation to teach; it is more important than ever to educate the whole person.

"We all have a role to play in Education, which begins at home, but continues around us, and in so many vibrant and exciting ways in all our schools."

Hope in the Future: God Who Speaks Talk Series Goes Online



HOPE IN THE FUTURE

In August, the Department for Formation was delighted to welcome Sr. Margaret Atkins, CRSA, to present a talk on The God who speaks through creation via Zoom. The talk was part of the series 'The God who speaks in the City' to celebrate The Year of the Word which was to be hosted at the Hidden Gem but postponed due to the pandemic.

Sister Margaret Atkins is a Canoness of St Augustine in the community at Boarbank Hall, Cumbria. She is a lecturer and author in Theology with special interest, amongst other things, in the ethics of the environment.

Over 60 attendees from around the diocese joined virtually. In her talk, Sister Margaret suggested that God is speaking through His creation but asked the question, 'are we listening carefully?' She reminded attendees of the beauty of God's creation and of our responsibility to care for it.

Quoting Pope Francis in his document on our Common Home, *Laudato si'*, Sr Margaret said we need to hear 'the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor'. She went on to say, 'although climate change is a real challenge for our world, we must not despair. God is

to be trusted and is capable of bringing good out of evil'. The talk finished with an opportunity for questions and answers.

**We have more talks on offer as part of our God who Speaks series.
Find out more by clicking here**

World Day of Migrants and Refugees



On 27th September we stand with Pope Francis to recognise the World Day of Migrants and Refugees. Over the last few months we have seen the pandemic described as the 'great leveller' but for migrants and refugees, these challenges have been multiplied - continuing to face long and dangerous journeys, poor hygiene in cramped camps or even the disruption of access to essential services once they do reach safety.

It is easy to read these stories in our newspapers and focus on the statistics. But what we

need to remember is that behind the news, the pictures and the statistics, there are people who have stories and plans for their families just like us.

Around the world millions of people are facing displacement due to war, natural disaster and persecution, being forced to flee their homes to reach safety.

Sometimes the fear of the unknown can paralyse us, preventing us from taking action to live openly and with kindness. It is then we have a choice to look inwards and decide to transform our fear into hope, we can embrace the new opportunities that people can bring.

Here in Manchester, many people have made this choice to live with hope and welcome the stranger by supporting local community projects working with refugees and migrants.

Even through the pandemic, volunteers from [Caritas Diocese of Salford](#) have continued to teach refugees and migrants in our city the English language, adapting their service to be online. This service is essential in helping to tackle the isolation felt in a new country.

Cornerstone, [as you can read in the Manchester Evening News here](#), changed the path of Musaab's life. He said: "Through the help of Caritas I have met some of my best friends here, people who are also from Sudan and speak the same language, which helps me feel less homesick.

"I went from being destitute and living in emergency accommodation to getting a qualification with Caritas and now succeeding on my university course.

"I'm not sure I'd be in uni or in any kind of safe accommodation if I hadn't found out about Cornerstone."

As we recognise this World Day of Migrants and Refugees, let us remember the person behind the headlines, rediscover our shared humanity and walk with our new neighbours on their journey.



Read Caritas Salford's Latest Updates in the September Beacon

Manchester's Mother Elizabeth Prout Moves Closer to Sainthood



An excerpt of a BBC News clip on Mother Elizabeth Prout

A Nun from Manchester is on course to become Britain's first female non-martyr saint in 800 years after the Vatican ruled she lived a life of 'heroic virtue'.

Mother Elizabeth Prout laboured in the slums of Victorian Manchester and towns of North West England until her death at 43 from tuberculosis.

The so-called "Mother Teresa of Manchester" opened a chain of schools for poor children and homes for destitute women across the industrialised region, and was ahead of her

time in teaching women crucial skills to earn their own livings.



Her sainthood cause was submitted to the Vatican in 2008 for scrutiny by theologians who have now concluded that she lived a life of “heroic virtue”.

The ruling means not only that there is nothing in her background that would disqualify her from sainthood but also that evidence of her sanctity has been proven.

A document on her life is due to be examined by top-ranking cardinals and bishops in Rome who will then ask Pope Francis to declare Mother Elizabeth as “Venerable”.

At that point, the search for two miracles will begin in earnest - one to declare her as Blessed and the other as a saint.

Her canonisation could mean she will become the first English female since Pope St Paul VI in 1970 included Ss Margaret Clitheroe, Anne Line and Margaret Ward among 40 canonised martyrs of England and Wales.

But she would be the first non-martyr English female saint since St Margaret of Wessex, an 11th century Anglo-Saxon princess who became Queen of Scotland after the Norman invasion of William the Conqueror, and who was canonised in 1250.

[Read more on the Diocese of Shrewsbury's Website](#)

Reflections on the Directory of Catechesis

Earlier this year the Holy See published the new Directory for Catechesis. In many parts it is not an easy read. But it does provide us with the opportunity to look at our catechetical endeavours in the light of changing times, demonstrated, of course, by the lockdown and the journey to a new and undetermined normal.

Over the next year Fr Paul Daly, Episcopal Vicar for Formation, will be summarising the Directory, with some suggested pointers for reflection. A summary is, by its nature, subjective. Fr Paul will try to include the sections that he feels has most to say to ourselves and our parishes and communities at this time.

Each week we will update our website with the next insert. Please feel free to share with parish catechists, sacramental programme coordinators, parish leadership team members; in fact anyone who wants them!

[Find the Reflections on Our Website](#)

[Diocesan Prayer for Our Common Home](#)

A PRAYER FOR OUR COMMON HOME

All powerful God,
you created all things,
and you are present throughout the universe
and in every creature,
You embrace with your tender love all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,
so that we may have the strength and courage
to protect all life and the beauty of our world,
preserving it from pollution and destruction.

Fill us with your peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one,
And caring for the Earth, our common home.

Teach us to discover the worth of every creature on this earth,
Let us protect those at risk and in danger,
Encourage us as we seek justice, love and peace.
Stay with us each day, with the power of your grace.

Through Christ our Lord
Amen

DIOCESE OF  SALFORD

Donate

We are receiving enquiries from parishioners who have asked us how you can continue giving to your parish during the pandemic. Parishes still greatly need your support, even more so with their weekly congregations and visitors affected.

We do recognise that many parishioners may be in a different financial position than they were previously or struggling financially, and there is no expectation to give where you are unable to do so.

If it is appropriate for you to consider now you can donate to your own parish by clicking the link below or at a later date via the diocesan website.

In the search function just search for your parish.

[Donate Now](#)

Thank you to all of you who have continued to donate to your parish and other agencies of faith at this time.

Our website will be continually updated over the coming weeks and months