

PAX

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

'Beneath the White Coat' was the racy title of the book the person on the next table, in a local coffee shop, was reading. As a child I was used to my grandmothers reading Mills & Boon, doctors and nurses, romances – could this be an updated version of the popular novelettes? The answer was NO! It was all about the mental health of GP's.

Mental health, in these troubled days, is a really important issue that affects us all. There have been some notable people admitting to struggling on this front: Adele, Beyoncé, Miley Cyrus, Carrie Fisher, J K Rowling, Zane Malik, Gwyneth Paltrow, Princess Diana, Prince Harry, Glen Close, and Katy Perry.¹ Low mood can be much more than just making life difficult. Many years ago when I was working in Central London, if life was getting difficult, we used to be able to call on our manager for a 'Tony Marshall Day'. This was a light hearted day of work, with a good lunch, a discussion of issues, and an early return home – usually in much better spirits! What I appreciated about those days was the joy of discovering that you can cope with matters. Discovering the many blessings which you have, and knowing that someone is there for you, is the greatest discovery one can make in life!

Not so long ago I had to take my car for its MOT and service. Due to Covid-19, it meant sitting in a garage longer than I really cared to spend. A little research revealed a little known abbey (to me) at Linkluden within easy cycling reach. So the idea for a mini pilgrimage was born!



It was all in the spirit of a 'Tony Marshall' day. With the car in the garage and a pack lunch stowed on the bike. I set off through little recognised countryside. The experience of cycling an unknown route was delightful, having nearly exhausted all the routes around Castle Douglas and Dalbeattie. The

¹ <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/celebrity/latest/g15159447/celebrities-depression-anxiety-mental-health/?slide=2>

Church itself was a total surprise. It was much more complete than I ever imagined. I became aware of a stillness and peace; a *Shalom*, as I started to explore the ruins. The masonry was very rich in detail. I later learnt that a master mason John Morrow (a Frenchman) was responsible for the stonework and that the abbey is one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture in Scotland. (The picture on the left shows the Sanctuary with the *Sedilia* on the right with the *Piscine* behind. There is also a memorial tomb to Princess Margaret of Galloway on the left who died in 1450.



The richness of the carving you can see

below.



The Collegiate Church began life as a nunnery but was closed down in 1389 due to moral decay – apparently the nuns had used their revenue to cloth their daughters “born in incest” in finery.² I did wonder what had happened to their sons, and whether there was any convenience in these facts!

My lunch was a peaceful affair, wondering how the buildings and area would have looked in their heyday. For all the purported carrying-on of the nuns, I found this an extraordinarily peaceful place, and ended my time there by saying the Office of None, from the Divine Office.

² <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/includen-collegiate-church/history/>

At College it was always impressed upon us to use our time well. I still follow the Principles advice of having four books on the go at a time: a novel, something factual, a spiritual book, and something fun! My time at Linkluden was deeply spiritual and a total surprise. Instead of sitting in a garage with my laptop (a possibly sad pursuit) I found a spiritual oasis. It had crossed my mind if the nuns had followed the Rule of St. Benedict and whether chapter 27 had been deployed with the errant ones before the nunnery was closed down. As you will read further on in the Newsletter... Chapter 27 is about compassion for the sick and those that have strayed. Christ had a healing ministry where the blind could see, the deaf hear and the lame walk. I like to think that healing is there too for the inner wounds of life. The wounds to the *psyche* would have not been all that different to those received today. Benedict's Rule allows for all forms of human weakness and inadequacy. So often unfortunate conditions are met with cynicism and pessimism. This is surely what it means to be human. It is at these moments of weakness that God's Grace is able to manifest itself and the paschal mystery flows into our lives bringing change and renewal. In the old days this was known as a 'Tony Marshall' day. Now, it is about allowing the Spirit of difference, to seep into our lives, changing our patterns of being, and outlook. We need to pray hard to see these outcrops of the Holy Spirit, during these dark days. It is perhaps not as easy as we might expect, but through God's Grace we are able to cope with the lows and difficulties of our daily lives. We must always seek His guidance to see the opportunities to be different!

Here is a prayer from the Office of Vigils that is particularly helpful:

Lord Jesus, happy will those servants be whom you find watching when you return. Grant that we may persevere in thanksgiving and in patience, through all the trials of life. We ask you this, Lord, who reign with the Father and Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

Yours in Christ

Christopher
Rector

Please continue to pray for:

Erle & Anne Gardner, Marion Gardner, Thelma Gemmell, Gill Piper & Francis Turnbull. Remember especially those who are struggling particularly at this time.

Sunday Services at St. Ninian's, Castle Douglas:

11am on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month.

4pm a service of Evensong or Compline on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

The disabled toilet, at St. Ninian's, will be available for emergency use on service days. We would ask that you wipe down with wipes and spray all the surfaces you have touched, in order to protect other users.

There are 'do not use' signs on the main Ladies and Gents toilets.

- Please book your seat in church in advance of your attendance with Sandra 01557 331 596 or mailto: sandrawalshkbt@btinternet.com
- Please take a note of your seat number

Christ Church, Dalbeattie will hold services at:

11am on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month

4pm on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays

- Please book your seat in church in advance of your attendance with Sue tel. 01556 612 863 or email suethomas2@btinternet.com
- Please take a note of your seat number

We would ask that you book your place by 6pm on Saturday evening. This is to ensure that there is a place for you on Sunday as our seating capacity has been severely restricted by the Covid-19 regulations.

Prayer Themes for Wc. 8th, November

Pentecost 22

For the NHS, our local surgeries, and all at DGRI.

For those affected by the Corona virus throughout the world. Pray particularly for all refugees. All who are persecuted. The people of the Yemen, Bangladesh, Lebanon, all who are experiencing 'Lockdown', and our own communities.

Monday:

For those in danger of losing their jobs and those sectors of industry which are not allowed to open. For those in financial difficulties.

Tuesday:

For University students & staff and all at school.

Wednesday:

We pray for our care homes and especially their

residents at Bothwell House, Hanover House, Carlingwark Care Home, Barlochan House Care Home, Munchies Park House, and Alma McFadyen

Care Centre. For those at home who are dependent on carers and those who look after them.

- Thursday: For our Governments and all in authority.
Friday: For the American people in the aftermath of their elections.
Saturday: For Guidance of the Holy Spirit in our churches' Mission as we live in times of great change.

Gospel Readings for the 32nd week of Ordinary Time (Proper 30)

Sunday	Remembrance Sunday	Jn 6: 37-end
Monday	George Forbes	Jn 10: 11-16
Tuesday	Leo the Great	Matt 16: 13-19
Wednesday	Martin of Tours	Matt 25: 31 - 40
Thursday	Machar Bp	Matt 11: 25-end
Friday	feria	Luke 17: 26-37
Saturday	Consecration of Samuel Seabury	Jn 21: 15 - 17

Rule of St. Benedict Chapter 27: Concern of the Abbot and the Prioress for the Excommunicated

The abbot and prioress must exercise the utmost care and concern for the wayward because "it is not the healthy who need a physician, but the sick (Matt. 9:12). Therefore they ought to use every skill of a wise physician and send in senpectae, that is, mature and wise members who, under the cloak of secrecy, may support the wavering sister or brother, urge them to be humble as a way of making satisfaction, and "console them least they be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow" (2 Cor. 2:7). Rather, as the apostle also says: "Let love be reaffirmed" (2 Cor. 2:8), and let all pray for the one who is excommunicated.

It is the responsibility of the abbot or prioress to have great concern and to act with all speed, discernment, and diligence in order not to lose any of the sheep entrusted to them. They should realise that they have undertaken care of the sick, not tyranny over the healthy. Let them also fear the threat of the prophet in which God says: "What you saw to be fat you claimed for yourselves, and what was weak you cast aside" (Ezek. 34:3-4). They are to imitate the loving example of Christ, the Good Shepherd, who left the ninety-nine sheep in the mountains and went in

search of the one sheep that had strayed. So great was Christ's compassion for its weaknesses that "he mercifully placed it on his sacred shoulders" and so carried it back to the whole flock (Luke 15:5).

A society shows its health in the way it takes care of its most vulnerable. It is the same in community. The vulnerable, the rebellious, the somehow 'different' must not be made scapegoats for others' inadequacies, ignorance, jealousy, anger, fear. Community is about growing in the compassionate life. Scapegoating is not compassionate. The Rule is always inclusive; if it were not then it would be undermining compassion. Without compassion the Rule would not be able to hold and support all the tensions of human relating. Grace works in this tension, compassion grows there. In the end, how a community is with the excommunicated says a lot about how its members live with inclusiveness, grace, and compassion.

During this time, for the excommunicated, *senpectae* are instruments of compassion for Christ and the whole community. In the absence of a practiced communion, *senpectae* act as agents of a practical wisdom and kindness now withdrawn. This is typical of the Rule, always working in differing ways and at different levels for the good of the whole community no matter where they might be on the journey. Compassion is always creative and active; in the economy of grace nothing is wasted.

Perhaps there is a 'dark sheep' in the family or someone at work that does not really fit in, or perhaps someone at school who is 'different'. There may be a *senpectae*, an uncle, aunt, teacher, or friend; or perhaps a work colleague who feels drawn to relate and help. Maybe, like the *senpectae* can be in the Rule, they are wise and discerning enough to relate in the sincere and gentle ways that Benedict encourages. In sincerity, gentleness, and wisdom, love is always affirmed and reaffirmed.

Humility assures, satisfies communal leadership that the God life is finding a way in the heart of the excommunicated. There can be no real remorse without humility; and with humility insight can be accepted. *Senpectae* stand with those who are being confronted with the option of humility.

While the Community Leader acts with all "speed, discernment, and diligence", here they have no direct contact with the excommunicated. Instead, the leader acts in the way the rest of the community is asked to act, being for them an example of non-association. They hold the

community while other members of the community be the compassion the leader would like to be for the one lost. There may come a time when they, like the father of the prodigal son, rush to the lost one who has come to their senses, embracing them with a compassion too long unexpressed.³

Amazon Smile Sign Up

<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/gp/chpf/homepage?orig=%2F>

Please note that St Ninians is now registered with Amazon Smile. This means that if you purchase through that site Amazon will make a gift of a percentage to the church. At the site you will be asked to identify the charity you wish to support . You should type St Ninians Church: Castle Douglas.

The church receives 0.5% of what you spend.

Fred Coulthard

Traidcraft Christmas Catalogue



Please contact Sue Beddows t. 01556 670286 for a catalogue and to place your order.

Stewartry Food Banks

Manager Sarah-Jane Allsopp. If you cannot attend tel: 07730 788 335 or email projects@castledouglas.info and they will deliver to your door.

Stewartry Food Bank, 198 King Street, Castle Douglas
Open 12noon to 2pm Monday to Friday

Stewartry Food Bank, 24 High Street, Dalbeattie.
If you need food, drop in Monday-Friday 12noon-2pm.

Useful Contacts:

National COVID-19 Helpline 0800 111 4000

For people who don't have family or existing community support and can't get online and who are over 70, disabled, require the support of mental health services, are pregnant or receive a flu jab for health reasons, will be directed to our dedicated local team who can offer essential assistance.

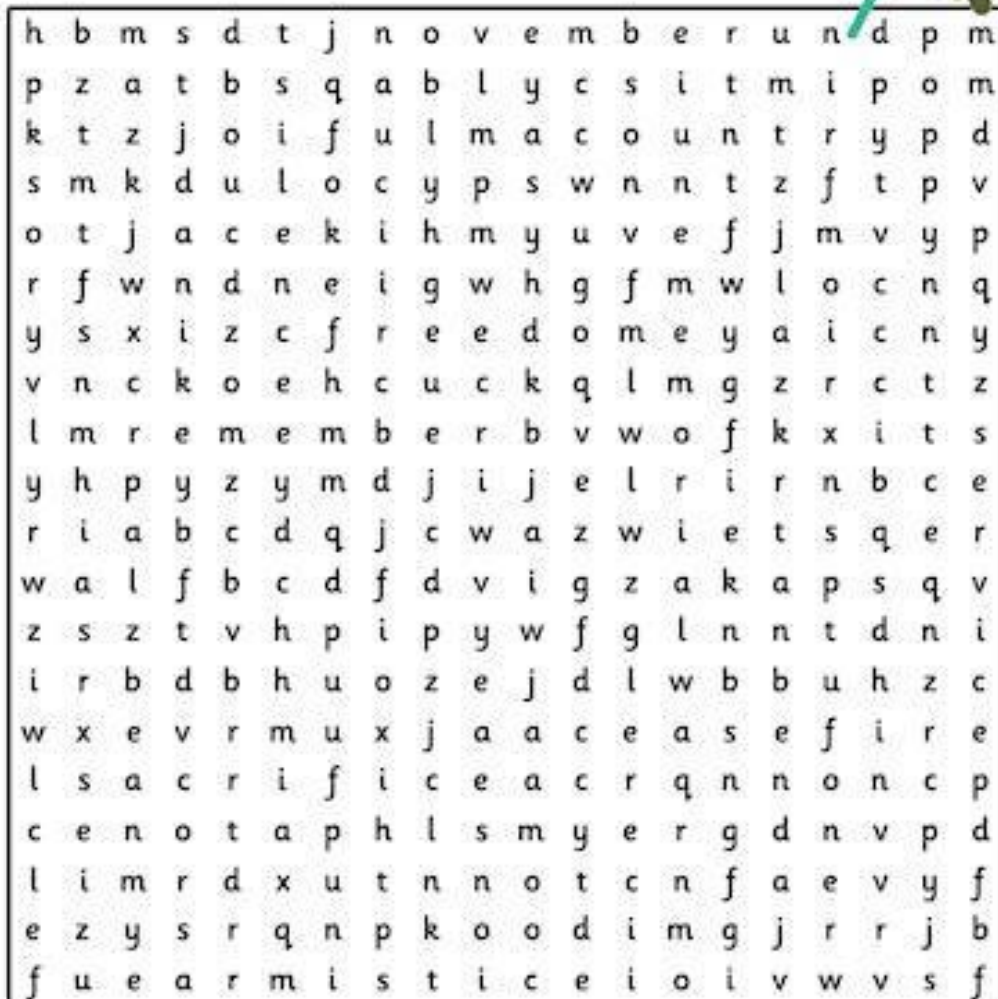
³ <https://theruleofbenedict.com/2020/05/14/chapter-27-the-concern-of-the-abbot-and-prioress-for-the-excommunicated/>

NHS24 111 www.nhsinform.scot
Emergency 999
Doctor Out of Hours 111
Dumfries and Galloway Council 030 33 33 3000
www.dumgal.gov.uk/SupportDG
Business Support Helpline 01387 260280 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 030 33 33 3001
Social Work Out of Hours 01387 273660
Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway 0300 303 8558
Dumfries and Galloway Citizens Advice Service 0300 303 4321
www.dagcas.org
Samaritans 116 123
SHOUT Text SHOUT to 85258 for free
Scotland's Domestic Abuse Helpline 0800 027 1234
Age Scotland 0800 12 44 222 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
Shelter Scotland 0808 800 444 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
LGBT Helpline Scotland 0300 123 2523
Childline 0800 1111

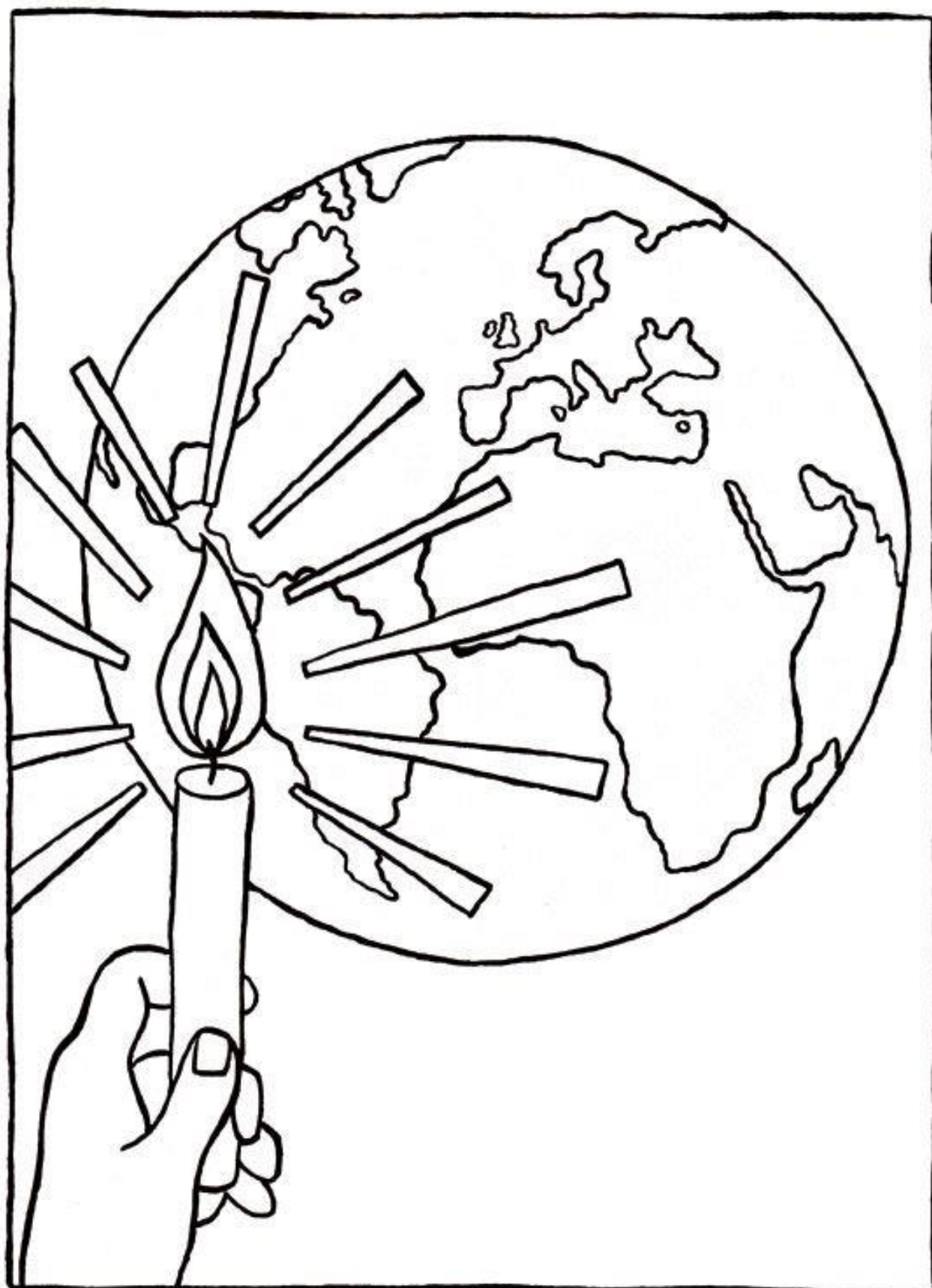
Dumfries & Galloway Community News

https://supportdg.dumgal.gov.uk/media/23699/Community-Bulletin-Edition-44/pdf/Community_Newsletter_6_November.pdf?m=63740249327357000

Remembrance Day Word Search



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|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| ceasefire | conflict | poppy | Flanders | wreath |
| remember | November | armistice | war | memorial |
| peace | sacrifice | freedom | service | country |
| silence | Cenotaph | | | |



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