

GAUDIUM EVANGELII—POPE FRANCIS' DREAM

I asked someone working in the Curia what it was like to be in Rome at the moment, and the reply came “It’s a white-knuckle ride”. That sense of thrill, of being on the threshold of great change, is crystallised in Pope Francis’ document *Evangelii Gaudium*, published this week. It is our first chance to see his programme (his earlier letter, *Lumen Fidei*, was largely the work of Pope Benedict). And it does not disappoint. The respected Vatican commentator, John Allen, compares it to Martin Luther King’s “I have a dream” speech. *Evangelii Gaudium* sets forth Pope Francis’ vision of a Church which is more missionary, more merciful, and which has the courage to change.

The document is written in Pope Francis’ easy style, with many of his now-familiar striking turns of phrase: Christians must not look “like someone who has just come back from a funeral”; the confessional “must not be a torture chamber, but an encounter with Christ’s mercy”. But at its heart, *Evangelii Gaudium* is a call for a missionary Church, a church that is outward-looking, with a special passion for the poor. He is not afraid to issue guidance and directives, that challenge every one of us in ways that have consequences for how we live our lives as Catholics. The Pope has especially strong words about the exclusion of the poor, and he forcefully criticizes economic systems that perpetuate injustice and waste: “The Pope loves everyone, rich and poor alike, but he is obliged to remind all in the name of Christ that the rich must help, respect and promote the poor”.

Another strong theme is that of change – the Church must be prepared to change, even the Papacy; old structures can be comforting, but they can also hinder the proclamation of the Gospel. Rather than be afraid of change, what we should fear is “remaining shut up within structures that give us a false sense of security, within rules that make us harsh judges” and “within habits that make us feel safe.” Catholics must not be afraid of new ways of proclaiming the gospel, and new ways of thinking about the Church.

There is so much more in this document— it is long, but unlike many another papal pronouncement it is a good read. Read it over the vacation. It is online at the Vatican website (Google *Evangelii Gaudium*) and the 26 November online Catholic Herald has a good summary of it.

Fr Mark



FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 1 December - 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

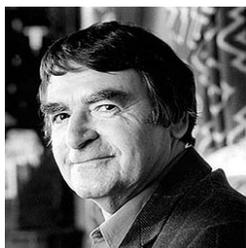
CALENDAR

Sunday 1	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
	8.00 Extraordinary Form (Tridentine)
	9.00 Sung Latin Mass
	11.00 Sung English Mass
Monday 2	12.30 Funeral Mass for Keith Bates
Tuesday 3	1.05 Mass St Francis Xavier
	7.00 CAFOD Advent Carol Service
Wednesday 4	1.05 Mass St John of Damascus
Thursday 5	1.05 Mass
Friday 6	1.05 Mass St Nicholas
Saturday 7	1.05 Mass St Ambrose
	6.00 Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday 8	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December	<i>No Extraordinary Form Mass</i>
	9.00 Sung Latin Mass
	11.00 Sung English Mass

KEITH BATES RIP

Keith has been a great friend of Fisher House for many years. His funeral takes place tomorrow, Monday 2 December, at 12.30pm, followed by a reception in the Fisher Room. Because of this, the usual lunch is cancelled, as is the Catholicism for the Curious discussion.

FISHER HOUSE LIBRARY



If you have any suggestions for Catholic novels, poetry or films for the library, write them in the folder that you

will find in the library, or email chaplain@fisherhouse.co.uk — donations also welcome!

SVP GIVING TREE

The SVP is organising a Giving Tree: you can pick from a selection of gift ideas (written on gift tags), buy a gift and leave it next to the Giving Tree in the Fisher Room. The presents will be delivered to the homeless residents of Jimmy's night shelter in late December. (It's probably best explained on the poster in the lobby!)

PRAYER FOR SYRIA

Pope Francis has asked us to pray especially for Syria on Wednesday, the Feast of St John Damascene.

OXFORD vs CAMBRIDGE CHAPLAINCY SOCCER

Our heroic team magnificently displayed extraordinary skills and stamina, overwhelming the opposition and dominating the entire play. The 6-0 score to Oxford is inexplicable.

SVP CAROL SINGING

Join us on Friday 6 December at 4.00pm—6.00pm in the Market Place for Carol Singing.



THE CHRISTMAS JOLLY!



Following the Carols on Friday, there will be a Christmas party in the Fisher Room. All Welcome.



CAFOD CHRISTMAS GIFT

We want to raise £127 for a beekeeper starter kit for a family in a developing country. Buy a “bee” for £1.00: information and collection basket in the lobby outside chapel.

SAINTS AND SCONES

Sr Ann leads a discussion on saints, over cream tea, on Sunday at 4.30pm in her study. Call at the door of (old) Fisher House.

FRIDAY EVENING MASS

Next term, we will introduce a Mass at 7.00pm on Friday. The music will have a more contemporary feel. Fisher House Bar will open afterwards at 8.00pm.

CATHOLIC GRADUATE SOCIETY

There will be talk at 6.00pm on Wednesday by Fr Alexander Lucie Smith, moral theologian and columnist for the Catholic Herald. All graduates welcome.

CATHOLICISM FOR THE CURIOUS

The meeting this week is cancelled—but the question posed last week remains: who first named the Three Wise Men as Melchior, Caspar and Balthasar? Answers by email to Fr Mark.

LECTIO DIVINA GROUP

We will meet on Friday at 6.00pm in the Chapel to pray with the Sunday Mass readings, followed by refreshments in the Fisher Room.

ROSARY LEGION OF MARY

The Rosary is prayed in the Chapel on Saturdays at 5:30pm (before the vigil Mass), Sundays after the 11am Mass, and Tuesdays after the 1:05pm Mass.
FisherHouseRosary@gmail.com

CAFOD ADVENT CAROLS

On Tuesday at 7.00pm, there will be a service of prayer and music, followed by refreshments.

AMPLEFORTH RETREAT

There will be a retreat at Ampleforth Monastery 8 to 11 December. Cost including travel £100. If you are interested, please contact Sister Ann on acs92.

POETRY, FORM AND FAITH

On Tuesday at 6.00pm in the Library, Sr Anna Mary discusses “Welcoming Christ”.

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

The last three issues of the Bulletin have featured a photograph of a Catholic literary figure. A bottle of wine for the first email to Fr Mark correctly identifying them.

*Fr Mark, Sr Ann, &
Fr Kevin wish you all
a blessed and happy
Christmas and a joyous
New Year.*