



CATENIANS

CHRISTMAS ISSUE
DECEMBER 2022



The Circle

PROVINCE 14 NEWSLETTER

Turn that switch back
ON again....



It is impossible to quantify the value of the support and encouragement provided by meeting with each other in person.

Two things happened recently that got me thinking. The first was listening to a daily reflection podcast from Angus Buchan, a lay Christian preacher in South Africa. He spoke about light and dark, about good and evil. How darkness doesn't, indeed cannot, exist in the presence of light and therefore how important it is to shine our Christian light to expel the darkness of evil in today's world.

The second thing was reading a newsletter explaining how and why the Feast of Christ the King came into being, and I quote: The Feast of Christ the King was instigated as recently as 1925 by Pope Pius XI, in response to the increase in secularism, communism and the public erosion of Christianity by the State. Doesn't that sound like we're still largely fighting the same battle?

The darkness of the Covid -19 lockdown seems to be dragging on for many Catholic parishes and from what we have seen, for some Circles and individuals too. Some of it is born out of genuine anxiety, and I respect and understand that; for others, and I include myself in this, there was the additional perverse incentive of an easier life, a life less stressful because I didn't have to make the effort to go out and meet with others. Summoning up the will and energy to do that has taken quite a mental effort at times. But now just look around you, really look around you, and you will see that the Church and the Catenian Association are crying out for action and it's time to roll up our sleeves and answer the call – always remembering that we should come from a place of Christian love.

Be A Shining Light

As members of our Association, we have been blessed over the years with deep and lasting friendships. We have found a place of relaxed social enjoyment where we can share and build on the Gospel values. We pray together, we can openly discuss and develop our understanding of our faith and support each other through the challenges modern life brings. We assist one another in times of need, whatever that need is, and we reach out and support our communities. In short, we are a light to each other and to our communities.

Yes, the Covid pandemic hit the "PAUSE" button for many of us in different ways, but that's all it was, a pause...we cannot allow it to become a permanent "OFF" and think our work is done. As long as we live and breathe, our work of mission of the Christ's church needs to continue, both individually and collectively and continue to make our Association the wonderful gift it is to us and to the Church.

It's time to turn our light on again, as individuals and collectively. Some Circles are flourishing, others are not quite there yet. For those who, like I needed to do, just need to take a deep breath and say, "let's do it", well let's do it! Let's get ourselves back to meeting in person – this is the core of what we do. For those who still don't feel ready, try to re-engage with your Circle in whatever way you can, baby steps if necessary: call a buddy in your Circle to see how they're doing, call someone from a Circle outside of yours, meet with them one to one if you're still concerned about larger groups. Because believe it or not, someone in your Circle and in your Province is missing your presence. It is impossible to quantify the value of the support and encouragement provided

by meeting with each other in person – so as we approach the celebration of the birth of the Light of the world, let's turn on our own light again; that just might be the greatest gift you could give to someone and to yourself this year.

Province 14 Provincial Weekend -Friday 26 - Sunday 28 May 2023

*Boeira Garden Hotel Porto Gaia, Curio
Collection by Hilton*

Our weekend sees us based at the serene Boeira Garden Hotel. It is a beautiful setting from which to enjoy all the city of Porto has to offer. There will be optional activities like a round of golf for those who wish to arrive a day earlier and also a visit to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima on the Monday after. For those staying on the Sunday, we are arranging a Port tasting experience at a local Port house.

The core programme for the weekend begins on Friday 26th with an informal drinks reception. After breakfast in the hotel on Saturday morning, guests have the morning at their leisure - activities can include a walk through the historic Port district, visiting the World of Wine, a visit to the World of Chocolate, leisurely shopping or even a self-guided walking tour of this historic city. There are also the usual hop-on, hop-off bustours.

The main event for the weekend will be the gala dinner on Saturday evening and to make it easy on travellers, this will be an informal smart casual affair. You should have received the booking form by now so please get that back to Bertie asap and get those flights booked! Any questions or problems please contact Bertie on bertienapiert1@gmail.com or 07944771160

*Bertie and Gillian Napier
(Provincial President)*

The English College – Rome

Fr Stephen Wang Rector of the College sent The Circle this update on the seminary.

“We have been on the same spot in Rome since 1362, and we are the oldest English institution that still exists outside England. We were founded as the English Hospice – a place of hospitality for pilgrims and a centre of English life and culture in this great city. In 1579 we became the Venerable English College, when Pope Gregory XIII established us as a seminary, and we have been forming men for the Catholic priesthood ever since then.



The current VEC community, beginning of year pilgrimage, October 2022

The visionary and co-founder of the College was Cardinal William Allen. In the difficult period of the Protestant reformation, when it became clear that there would not be a quick return to the Catholic faith in England and Wales, he saw the need to build seminaries abroad - where men could study and worship safely without fear of persecution. So we were founded as a missionary seminary which sent priests back home even when their lives were at risk simply for being Catholic priests. Forty priests from the College gave their lives in martyrdom. Our first martyr, St Ralph Sherwin, was executed at Tyburn Gallows in London on 1 Dec 1581, the same day as the Jesuit St Edmund Campion.

In many ways the life of the seminary has not changed very much over the centuries. We live and worship together as a community of brothers in the historic centre of Rome. We study philosophy and theology at the local universities. We enjoy the culture and food of the city, and the opportunity of meeting people from all over the world who are drawn together by our common faith. Rome is a relatively small city but a very big melting pot.

But in other ways there have been important developments in seminary formation, especially in the last thirty years or so. Pope St John Paul II wrote about

the four “dimensions” of formation, and how they need to be integrated. The seminarians need to have a human maturity and wisdom; they need to develop a deep spiritual life, a love for the Lord and a commitment to prayer; their intellectual formation involves their academic studies but also their personal faith and their ability to communicate that to others; and their pastoral formation gives them opportunities to experience parish life and other forms of ministry, and to develop the skills they need to work with others.

More recently, Pope Francis has said that we need to focus on the missionary aspect of priesthood, so that priests are willing to go beyond the boundaries of their parish communities and reach out to others. He wants us to be “missionary disciples”. We are very proud that this has been built into our DNA for the last 470 years.

Currently we have twenty seminarians in formation: the majority from England, and others from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Northern Ireland, Ireland and Canada. Please pray for us, and do take a look at our website and Facebook page to find out more about our life: <https://www.vecrome.org/>

Footnote: Fr Stephen is the son of Kin Wang, Past Provincial President, Province 14 Vocations Officer and brother of Luton Circle

Growing In Public

2023 Schools Public Speaking Competition, Friday 3rd March, Steve Britto reports....

The next 2023 Catenian 6th Form Public Speaking Competition will be bigger and better than ever as we encourage entries from twenty 6th Form Catholic Schools, in Province 14. Their involvement and commitment help make our young Catholic students aspire to be the best they can be in such a nerve racking yet challenging environment.

Oracy for Advocacy

The Headteacher of one of our Founding School said: “Here at Nicholas Breakspear School, we instil in our students the Catholic values that make them distinctively different: we are forming them to become the agents of positive social change. But their impact will be limited if no-one is willing to listen to them. How can we expect young Catholics to build the kingdom of God if they are unable or unwilling to argue their case? This is why we consider Oracy for

Advocacy so fundamentally important to the development of true leaders, and why NBS has been involved in the Catenians Public Speaking Competition from its conception. It gives our young adults an opportunity to speak from the heart, unfettered, to address a dauntingly well-educated audience in order to put their passion and skills of persuasion to the test:



Declan Linnane, Headteacher

Steve added “The panel of very high-profile judges have already been appointed; they are a Wing Commander of the RAF, the Head of North London’s CID and a political Parliamentary speech writer.

Catholics Welcome

George Jarzab of City of Westminster and Luton Circles reports on his experiences of St Albans Cathedral.

On Armistice Day, Friday 11th November, a large group of Catenians and families from Luton, Mid Herts and Southgate Circles attended the weekly 12 o’clock Mass at the Lady Chapel of St Albans Cathedral celebrated by Canon Michael Munnely. The Mass was offered for the deceased Brothers of our Circles and of the Catenian Association.

The first church on the current site is attributed to the Saxon Abbot Ulsinus in 948 and it housed a monastic school, which was attended by Nicholas Breakspear, the only British Pope, Adrian IV (1154 to 1159). Much of the current Cathedral dates back to Norman times and the Lady Chapel was completed in 1327. However, following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539, the building languished for over three hundred years but it remained a parish church and St Albans School was housed in the Lady Chapel, until the school moved in 1871 to the Abbey Gateway, which survived from 1365.

It was my first attendance at any service in the Cathedral, even though I attended St Albans School from 1962 to 1969, as Catholics were not expected to attend assemblies nor services at the Cathedral-instead we had daily prayers in one of the rooms in the Abbey Gateway.



The Lady Chapel

The Mass we attended -and Armistice Day commemoration-were therefore especially memorable occasions for me in particular and for all the Catenians, their families and congregation -and we adjourned to the Cathedral refectory and local restaurant to continue our discussions.

Footnote: In his book; 'Breakspear, The English Pope', author, R.A.J Waddingham (brother of Bernard of Bedford Circle) referenced Bishop Louis Castertelli an Edwardian biographer of Breakspear, he wrote; "It is not easy to account for the comparative neglect into which memory of this really great Englishman and great Pope has fallen against us. Bishop Castertelli, as the Bishop of Salford was of course instrumental in the formation of the Catenian Association. Pope Francis stated in his encyclical 'Laudato Si'- "Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth.".....Ed.

Around our Circles

Mid Herts Triple 90th

On the 11th October 2022 the Ladies and brothers of Mid Herts Circle along with the Province 14 president Bertie Napier and visiting Presidents, brothers, and their wives, celebrated the circle's 90th anniversary; the conversation flowed and evening was enjoyed by everyone. The evening coincided with two brothers celebrating their 90th birthdays, a triple celebration.



Province 14 president Bertie Napier and Mid Herts President Martin Moore Present brothers Peter Moss and John Jansen with 90th birthday cards.

Horse Play

A group of brothers, wives and friends from Bishop's Stortford, Broxbourne and Southgate Circles enjoyed a lively evening at the races in late September – dining in comfort in the Fairwood Brasserie to a generous carvery meal and watching the racing. The group were seated right by the winning post, unfortunately some had to wait some time before they saw their horse pass it. They consoled themselves with the thought they were helping out poor bookmakers in their hour of need. Others were less generous and took home more money than they had started with at the beginning of the evening, leading to much wailing and gnashing of teeth from the rest of the party.



Winners and losers at Bishop Stortford's day at Chelmsford Races September meeting

President's Sunday at Milton Keynes

Held on 18th September, with 11.00am Mass at All Saints Church, Bletchley, followed by a reception at Milton Keynes Irish Centre, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley



(L to R): Richard Golden (President), Harry Caswell, Isabella Caswell, Richard's daughter, Catherine and husband David.



(L to R): Fred Perry, Steve Clark, George Selormey, Alfred Vella and Peter Cywinski



(R to L): Denis Murphy (Province 14 Director, John Mulligan, Una Mulligan, Jackie Nally, Josephine Ballesty, Mal Nally, Jim Ballesty, Tony Ying and Frances Ying.

Autumn Walk In Mayfair

Thirteen brothers, friends & families from three Circles, gathered on the north side of Green Park Station in late October to be taken on a tour round "Magnificent" Mayfair by Sean Boyle – a guide very familiar to Southgate Circle. The weather was excellent.

We went north initially, Sean pointing out, in his Old Testament manner the many (in)famous residents (and courtesans) of the area, Oscar Wilde for example. Mayfair has a very strong American connection, Brown's Hotel especially.

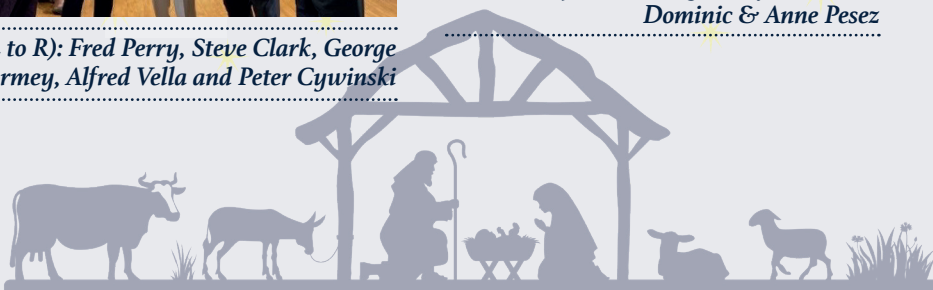


Guiding light, Sean pointing the way

On to New Bond Street. Our youngest participant sat on the bench with (statues of) Roosevelt & Churchill. Lovely. Berkeley Square Berkeley Square was next, plenty of trees, unfortunately no nightingales; but Ferraris, Porches & Rolls Royces aplenty for sale. No takers I'm afraid. Lord Lucan, Annabelle's and then west on to Shepherds Market where Sean had thoughtfully reserved a table in the busy pub Ye Grapes for our rest & relief.



Sitting in Exalted Company – Raphaelle, daughter of Luton Bro Dominic & Anne Pesez



Broxbourne's 5 Circles Christmas

In true Christmas spirit of bringing everyone together, Broxbourne's 'Michael Buble' Christmas Special on 5th December attracted 115 brothers, wives, families, and friends from 5 Circles in Province 14 including the Bishop of Hertfordshire Paul McAlleenan. A magnificent Christmas present of £820 was raised for the Teenage Cancer Trust, David Timson's President Charity.



Steve Britto being encouraged to get the evening started by Alfie Gattusol

Active and Attractive Letter

Dear Editor

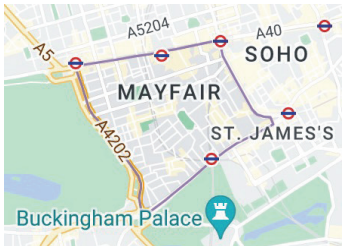
I have read The Circle for October 2022. I must congratulate you and your team for the wonderful content which is well worth reading by everybody and an inspiration to other Circles in Province 14 showing what can be done with the effort of a few in the Circle. Every Circle must be encouraged to send in a report of their activity. My comment has always been if a circle is "Active and Attractive" it will not fail to interest new members which is what we need in all Circles'

Fraternal greetings

John Fry, Past Grand President

We struck north again to Farm Street and the Church of the Immaculate Conception, the Jesuit Church. It was designed in the mid nineteenth century by architect John Scoles. Of all the many treasures to be seen I was most taken with the new altar which beautifully reflects & complements the original high altar designed by Pugin.

Grosvenor Square was next, now shorn of the American Embassy and its iconic Eagle. We uncovered the humble Memorial Garden to the 9/11 tragedy to the east of the square. Our final lap was along Duke Street where we pressed our noses against the glass doors of the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral – the priest in charge would have none of it and pressed us in turn to come inside and have a proper look! Very welcoming.



The complete tour took 2½ hours and afterwards most of us went, a little tired, to the nearest coffee bar to review what we had seen and had a Latte (or some such) and a delightfully illicit, obeying Oscar Wilde's familiar injunction, piece of carrot cake. We felt we deserved it. Sean did too, but he had gone straight home.

John Bucknall, Southgate Circle

Arundel Charity Mass Raises £2000

Dr Sandra Sedgwick, wife of Dr Peter Williams (pictured), formerly of Mid Herts & Luton Circles, organised a November charity Mass in the private chapel of Arundel Castle. Arundel is the ancestral home of the Dukes of Norfolk, the Premier Dukedom of England and a historic Catholic family. The Mass was held by kind permission of her Grace Geraldine, Duchess of Norfolk, who attended the Mass and reception afterwards.

Whilst most of those attending came from Arundel Circle and the neighbourhood, several members from Province 14 made the long journey to support this event. From the moment we entered the castle grounds as the autumn light was fading, we knew that we were in for something special. The path to the Castle entrance was lit by a string of low-level lights with the silhouette of the castle rising above us. The chapel was a most beautiful setting with the hymns, anthems and responses

led a carpella by choral scholars from Arundel Cathedral choir.

Following Mass there was a reception in the Great Hall where over 100 of us were surrounded by paintings of dukes, royalty



and magnificent landscapes. The purpose of the event was to support two charities, St Wilfred's Hospice and DePaul Ukraine, over £2,200 was raised.

Graham Jordan, Southgate Circle and Provincial Secretary

Wonderful Cake For Christmas

The cake baking skills of Sally DeMendonca wife of Paul of Westminster Circle were once again on display at the 1st December Christmas dinner, held at the Royal Airforce Club, in Piccadilly. Sally has been producing these baking masterpieces for a number of years, much to the delight of all who tasted her wonderful creation.

This year the guests were also treated to exceptional flamenco guitar playing by Ramon Ruiz and castanets accompaniment by the internationally renowned Ellie Worthington.

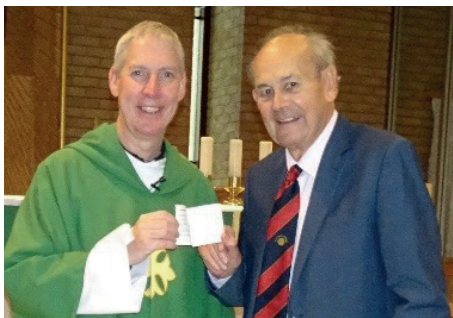


Mission Northampton

Luton Circle received the following appeal:-

Fr Simon wrote: "You may be aware that one of the mandates that Bishop David Oakley was given by the Papal Nuncio on his appointment as Bishop of Northampton was to ensure that there would be outreach to the new housing estates being built throughout the diocese. Mission Northampton - the diocesan office for evangelisation that he set up and of which I am a part - is aiming to trial this in Houghton Regis in October. This will involve practical evangelisation training followed by door to door visiting, with some projects that will hopefully capture the residents' imaginations e.g. free breakfast bacon butties, prayer on the streets, a parent and toddler group, a two day youth event. Inevitably this has a cost, so we are endeavouring to raise at least £2,000. Might this be something that the Luton Catenians might consider part funding? Is there any hope?"

The Answer to Hope



Fr. Simon of St Martin de Porres Catholic Church receives a £1000 cheque from John Fry, treasurer of Luton Circle"

Forthcoming Events

Bishop Stortford

Oidhche Losgadh Sona - 27th January
27th Burns Night, Great Hadham Golf Club Open to parishes and all Catenians.

Hail Glorious - St Patrick's Evening planned for March 2023 as a fundraiser for CAFOD but details will not be available until the end of November,

Positive Ramifications - Nick Meyer, Recruitment and Membership Officer (RAM), Bishop Stortford's Circle reports that they plan to enrol 5 new members at their February Circle meeting, bringing the total to 8 new members in the Catenian year. Support these wonderful efforts by booking your place at the meeting and dinner.



Potential Hat Trick for Milton Keynes

2nd January 2023 - *Robin and Marion Pantomime (A Sherwood Tale !)* On Monday 2nd January at The Venue Theatre in Milton Keynes

8th March 2023 - *Three-Way Beer and Skittles Evening*, The Horseshoe Pub, Lavendon. This is a joint event between Milton Keynes, Bedford and Northampton Circles and is hosted in 2023 by Milton Keynes Circle

Date Tbc - Milton Keynes Circle Coffee Morning. As a follow up to the pulpit presentations made by President Richard, which was so well received by the congregation and clergy as reported in The Circle's autumn issue. To reinforce the message with a view to bolstering membership, the Circle is arranging an after 11.00am Mass coffee morning at All Saints Church, Bletchley. Contact the Circle for more information.

Northern Heights On The Move...

The Circle is returning to its previous venue at North Middx. Golf Club on a permanent basis in January 2023 and are delighted to be returning to the club who are welcoming them back with open arms

...and Has All The Answers

13th January 2023 the Circle presents its annual Quiz, fish and chips evening at St Mary's Magdalen Hall 7.00 for 7-30pm with Quizmaster Peter Collins. Book your table, everyone welcome, at £15 pp. Licensed bar. Email Malcolm Cussell at malcolmbcussell@tiscali.co.uk either as an individual or to book your team.

We Will Remember Them

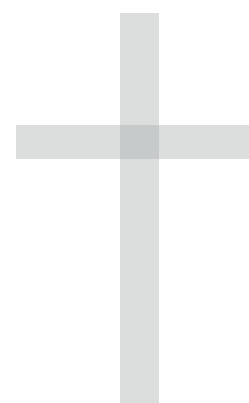
At this time of Christmas, we remember brothers and family members who have died in the past 12 months

Bernard Moger - Southgate
Bill Lethorn - Northern Heights
David Dobson - Southgate
David McErlean - Milton Keynes
Derek Smith - Bishop's Stortford
Donnacha O'Rourke - North London
Eamonn Sheridan - Highgate
Frances Reynolds - Charterhouse
Frank Howard - Southgate
George Aldridge - Charterhouse & Broxbourne
Joe Grady - Bedford
John Blackburn - Mid-Herts
Walter Giles - Luton and Mid Herts.
Walter Redmond - Luton

Family Members

Anne Smith - Broxbourne
Beryl Moger - Southgate
Dympna Sheehan - Charterhouse
Helen Blackmore - 2022 Southgate
Janet Moylan - Bishop's Stortford
Nora Murray - Bedford Circle

May they rest in peace



From the Director's Chair

As I sit here on the 1st Sunday of Advent... the start of the Ecclesiastical Year, composing my message I ponder why Advent doesn't get the ceremony that other periods of preparation do, such as Lent to Easter. To my mind Advent is a glorious time! We prepare for the celebration of the birth of Christ, in full knowledge of all that he will suffer and with the certainty that it will be endured for us and our sins.

Advent to me is a precious time, both now and historically. During Advent, at evening Vespers the "O Antiphons" are sung, there are 7 of these and they together form the basis of "O Great Antiphons" which we see in one of the truly great hymns, O Come Emmanuel... different melody, but beautiful! Tomorrow's (Monday) is the "O Oriens" or Dayspring, or Dawn in English! In Anglo-Saxon it is earendel, does this sound familiar? It is the seed of Tolkien's Middle-earth and relates to his poem called Earendel The Evening Star. The opening lines of the Anglo-Saxon Crist is: Hail Earendel brightest of angels, sent over Middle earth to men. I consider Advent a truly magical time, culminating in the birth of the Saviour and those weeks of Christmas a renewal for us all!

Last week we had the feast of Christ the Universal King and I read a text by our Parish Priest Fr. Julian which dealt with parallel Universes and the quest that many have for an explanation and experience of a Spiritual Reality... searching for the wonder of life between the theory of relativity and that of quantum mechanics only further clouds the issue and Black Holes are yet another curve ball. Yet St. Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, gives us the greatest revelation of all that exists, not a theory to satisfy our intellect but a defined substance of truth. The real Big Bang... Jesus is the image of the unseen God and in him we're all things created, both visible and invisible. All entities were created through him and for him. He has existed from Eternity and in him everything has its source and meaning and he alone can bring things which may seem disjointed into unity. At the heart of this amazing thought is the Cross of Christ which draws us all to itself... our own Black Hole, a real alternative and such is the gravitational pull of the cross that we have our own metaverse. Sins are forgiven and we are reconciled and given God's forgiveness. Celebrate the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ King of the Universe and Author of Meta. Bend the knee, Zuckerberg, Dawkins all of us.

I wish everyone of you, health and strength, a Joyous and Peaceful Christmas and a Holy and Happy New Year

Slainte mhor agus a h-uile beannachd duibh

*Denis Murphy KCHS
Director Province 14*



CATENIANS

AUTUMN ISSUE OCTOBER 2022

Footnote

Catenian membership offers deep and lasting friendship and support to Catholics at all stages of their adult lives. We share the Gospel values as transmitted and developed through Catholic Social Teaching, and through our association, belong to a universal network of like-minded people. Our meetings provide a time for relaxed social enjoyment among loyal and faithful friends where we find support and encouragement and can openly discuss and develop our understanding of our faith, assist one another whenever needed, care for the sick and the bereaved, strengthen our family life and work for the mission of the Catholic Church, both individually and collectively, in a multitude of ways.

Membership details can be obtained by contacting, Provincial Membership Officer, Sean Duff – seanduff@hotmail.com Editorial Team: John Bucknall, Southgate Circle. Dennis Cooper, Luton Circle, George Jarzab, Westminster & Luton Circles. Designer: Louise Allen.

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