

already the children of God, but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed, we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is." Let us all pray that we may come to see the face of the Father in Paradise!

From death into life – particularly the young, vibrant lives of our Parish! Our **Mothers and Toddlers Group** is not only thriving but growing, and there are positive signs for the future as more Mums (and Dads!), as well as grandparents, take this opportunity to come together, and have their children play and make friends in a safe, loving environment. We are blessed with many young families in this parish – let us always cherish our 'little souls', and do all we can to support them as they grow in their faith.

Growth in the faith is certainly in evidence throughout the Diocese, particularly with regard to our candidates for the Priesthood and the Permanent Diaconate. I recently met up with **Deacon Emmet O'Dowd and Deacon Rafal Sweda** in Rome; they are in good heart, enthusiastic, and very much looking forward to returning to the Diocese as priests. They will be ordained in Aberdeen Cathedral on Friday 6 July next year. This will surely be a wonderful day for the whole Diocese. The newly-ordained priests will subsequently celebrate Masses of Thanksgiving in their own parishes: Rafal in St Sylvester's, Elgin; and Emmet in St Mary's, Inverness. Please God, one (if not both!) of these excellent young men will be sent to the Highland Deanery as priests!

In addition to Emmet and Rafal, we also have **Christopher Doig**, who is in his second year of Theology with the Jesuit fathers at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome; meanwhile, **Dominic Nwaigwe** and **Malachy Eze** continue their theological and philosophical studies respectively at St Mary's College, Oscott, near Birmingham.

In addition to our 'Famous Five' above, Bishop Hugh has just accepted a **new student for priestly formation**; his name is **Aidan Matheson**, a 19-year-old parishioner of St Sylvester's, Elgin, who will embark on a six-month preparatory course in the Royal Scots College, in Salamanca, Spain, before beginning his formal seminary studies. Aidan has given me permission to mention his name – please pray for this young man, who has so generously

and courageously accepted the call of the Lord, and please pray for all those who are currently discerning a priestly vocation. Remember that each and every one of us is a 'Vocations Promoter' – it is our duty and obligation to pray for, and to promote, vocations to the Priesthood. In the words of St John Vianney, the Curé d'Ars, without the priest, we cannot have the celebration of Holy Mass, and without the Mass, Jesus is not truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. Please pray for our priests, and pray for more priests!!

I mentioned Rome earlier: 12 intrepid pilgrims, together with 'yours truly', travelled to **the Eternal City** for 5 days, from 8 to 12 October. It was an extremely successful pilgrimage: apart from taking in the obligatory sights, we celebrated Holy Mass in a variety of beautiful locations: at the Altar of St John Paul II, and in the Irish Chapel – both in St Peter's Basilica; in the Sistine Chapel of St Mary Major's; and in the Roman Catacombs of San Callisto. Early Christian Rome was contrasted by the modern Church, and the wonderful Wednesday Audience with Pope Francis in St Peter's Square. What more could one ask for?! Speaking of pilgrimages, we have 25 pilgrims signed up for **next year's trip to the Holy Land in November 2018**. We have reached our maximum number, and there is a reserve list in operation. This will surely be a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage, as part of our celebrations for the tenth anniversary of the dedication of our church. How else will we celebrate this wonderful milestone? Any ideas that you may have will be gratefully received! Bear in mind that initiatives can only happen if you get involved, and if you want it to happen! Please get your thinking caps on!

After our extremely well-received 6-week Scripture course in the Summer months – "From Genesis to Jesus" – our 'Living Faith' Adult Faith Formation Group is focusing on the lives of key saints who transformed the life of the Church, **the 'Pivotal Players'**. This is a second-stage course to 'Catholicism', which we looked at during Lent. 'Pivotal Players' takes place every Wednesday evening during November: our next meeting is 8 November at 7.00pm. Why not come along, and learn about St Thomas Aquinas, St Catherine of Siena, and other great figures from the history of the Church?!