

We have a vocation!

Some people from Galloway diocese share their thoughts on what it means to be called by God for some definite purpose. Thank you to them for telling us something about their call or vocation.

Gavin and Kay Duffy have been married for nearly 13 years and live in Cumnock with their daughter **Carla** and son **Paul**. They are aware of God's presence and influence in their family life and also recognise God's voice in leading them to and supporting them in their professions. They attend Mass at St John's in Cumnock where Kay has sung in the choir since she was little. Both Gavin and Kay were brought up as Catholics and attended church as children, although Gavin stopped going to Mass for a few years as a teenager but went back to Mass when he met Kay. They value the faith they received from their families, at church and at school, and encourage their own children by handing on the gift of faith.

Gavin is a Unit Manager with the Prison Service. His faith is a source of strength in his work because a person needs compassion to work in the Prison Service. He believes that his by using his God-given gifts in his work that he can make a difference to people's lives. Gavin has hope that people change their lives for the better and live in a new way. Having faith helps not to give up, especially when things seem tough.

Kay is a teacher in St Patrick's Primary, Auchinleck. She was attracted to teaching partly because of inspiring teachers who taught her. She also comes from a family of teachers and her home life was steeped in the Catholic faith. It is very important to her to teach in a Catholic school where she can openly share her faith with the children she teaches.

Gavin and Kay see their faith as an integral part of their life and their daily routines. It gives them strength in their marriage, especially when life is not easy, and helps them to keep going rather than give up. Carla and Paul love coming to church and always have news to share with the parishioners at the end of Mass.



Sister Catherine (left) was born in Dublin and joined the Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny when she was 19. She trained as a nurse and worked to provide health care for the most poor in Sierra Leone and Gambia for 30 years. As a teenager she was "searching and kicking" and met a Spiritan priest who introduced her to the St Joseph of Cluny Order, and there she found her vocational home.

Sister Bernadette (centre) was born in County Westmeath, Ireland and entered the order when she was 18. She spent 40 years in the Gambia (West Africa) working with the sick and in the parish and visiting surrounding villages helping people who were very poor. She also worked in Sierra Leone in a retreat centre for 11 years. Sister Bernadette was attracted to religious life because two of her own sisters had already joined the St Joseph of Cluny order, although she also had a desire and a sense of a call from God from a young age to be a religious sister.

Sister Ruth (right) was born in Girvan and became a religious sister at 21. She has spent most of her life in Glasgow, Ayr and Girvan working as a nursery nurse, a care assistant and in parish ministry. She also spent some time in the Gambia and in Stafford at a Nursing Home. Sister Ruth was influenced by the religious sisters who taught her in Sacred Heart Academy in Girvan—she admired their life and witness and wanted to follow in their footsteps.

The sisters now live in community in Girvan and are involved in the work of SPRED, the parish prayer group and in parish ministry. Throughout the world the sisters of the Order of St Joseph of Cluny are involved in teaching, nursing, parish and social work, and make a particular effort to visit those in need. You can find out more at www.sjc.ie or visit the sisters at St Joseph's Convent in Girvan. You can call them on 01465 713673.

"Purity of intention gives value to all our actions. It vivifies and ennobles them: the smallest becomes great by the greatness of the motive which directs them."

Anne Marie Javouhey, Foundress of the Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny

Father Mark Kelly was born in East Kilbride, and grew up in Prestwick attending St Ninian's Primary then Queen Margaret Academy, Ayr.

After graduating from Glasgow University of Glasgow, Fr Mark worked for Shell as a Petroleum Engineer based in the Netherlands.

While living abroad Mark encountered many people from different cultures and faiths. This led him to re-examine his own faith and he felt that perhaps God was asking him to share that faith by serving as a Priest.

After completing his training at Scotus College, Bearsden, Fr Mark was ordained in 2006 and has served in parishes in Saltcoats, Girvan, Kilmarnock, and, currently, in St Joseph's Stranraer.



GALLOWAY YOUTH OFFICE NEWSLETTER

Catholic Youth Ministry in Galloway Diocese

March 2011



DO YOU BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE?

Do you ever wonder what a young couple think and talk about before they take the step together to be married and give their lives for each other and their family?

Do you ever wonder why a man chooses to become a priest and give a life of service to God's people?

Why do some people choose to share their gifts with others while remaining single?

What makes a woman or man choose to live in a religious community of sisters or brothers in a convent or monastery?

Do your longings, gifts and ambitions attract you towards a particular career that serves humanity in a powerful way?

These are important questions that reflect on different life choices. All of these life choices are worthwhile. Very often people listen to the voice of God within them before making a commitment towards a particular way of life. God's voice brings direction and encourages believers to trust in God's help as they live life in commitment to another person or to a special kind of service.

Pope Benedict, when he visited us last September, spoke these words to young people: **"What God wants most of all for each one of you is that you should become holy. He loves you much more than you could ever imagine, and he wants the very best for you. And by far the best thing for you is to grow in holiness. When I invite you to become saints, I am asking you not to be content with second best."**



Holy people are not locked up in monasteries. Holy people are not strange. Holy people simply understand that God loves them more than they can imagine. Holy people share the gift of their life with and for others. You will know people who live life like this. Holy people are closer to us than we think. We can all be holy... and when we give our lives to God we will know the joy and beauty of holiness and we will find peace. What a treasure to have found!

Saint Augustine, who lived 1600 years ago, spent many of his young years looking for happiness in popularity, earthly pleasures, intellect, intimate relationships and worldly success. Eventually he surrendered himself to God because only God provided the happiness he was searching for. He summed up his discovery with the words, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you."

It is worth talking openly about the great choices we can make that help us pour out our lives in service to the world. Jesus' life on earth was always poured out in service to others.

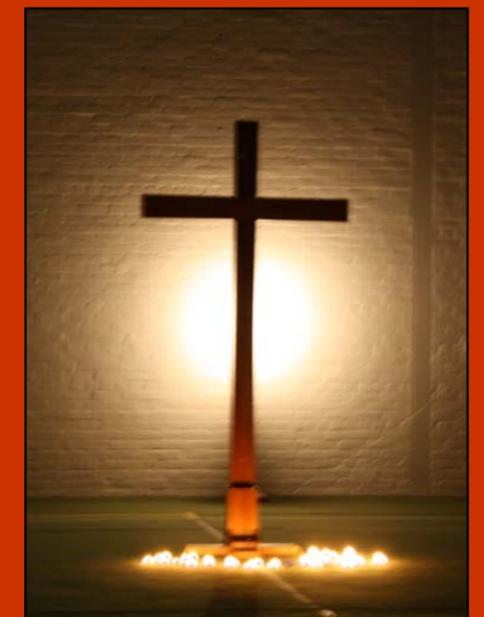
More than ever there is a need to pray for people to hear God's call to married, single, priestly and religious life. All of these life choices are good. All of these lifestyles have great potential to bring love, goodness and security to families and communities. And also... they will bring your heart to find rest.

An invitation for YOU!

The current situation regarding vocations to the priesthood gives cause for concern. As things stand, we have no "enquirers", no one on the 'Seminary Applicants Year', and no students in Seminary. That means that there will be no Ordinations for this Diocese until at least 2018. By then, only 15 of our priests will be less than 60 years old and only 3 will be under 50!

A 'Senior Schools Vocations Mass', has been arranged at St Margaret's Cathedral, Ayr, on Sunday 27th March at 4.00 pm, and it would be encouraging if as many people as possible were to take part.

The situation that we face needs everybody to accept responsibility for asking the question; "Is God calling you to priesthood?"



This newsletter will be distributed regularly to communicate youth events and to share the work of youth ministry in the Galloway Diocese. If you would like to be on the mailing list please send your postal or email address to Father Stephen McGrattan.

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EIGHT DELEGATES FROM GALLOWAY TAKE PART IN THE NATIONAL SCOTTISH YOUTH EVENT AT GARTMORE HOUSE



Pope Benedict's visit had inspired the young people from all over Scotland who took part in the National Youth Event, Gartmore (near Aberfoyle) at the beginning of November last year. This annual event is organised by the Catholic Youth Service of Scotland and brings young Catholics together for an overnight experience of faith and friendship.

The Galloway delegates are photographed with Cardinal O'Brien who talked about what it was like to receive Pope Benedict not only to Scotland but into his home for lunch before leaving for Bellahouston Park where Mass would be celebrated.

During the busy 24 hours together the participants shared their experiences of the Papal Visit, and spoke openly and articulately about what faith means in their life. The young delegates took part in workshops, talks and other activities, and prayer centred around the Scottish Youth Cross. But it was not all work - the groups relaxed with a quiz to test their general knowledge, and the Galloway group came third! Later that evening, in the darkness, the Galloway group invented a new sport in the pitch-black games hall—football floodlit only by the lights from mobile phones! Isn't it amazing how time passes when you're having fun?

DIOCESAN YOUTH FORUM



Each November senior pupils from the four Catholic secondary schools in Galloway diocese come together for the Diocesan Youth Forum. The Youth Forum provide an opportunity to discuss and ask questions about the Church and the Christian faith. The theme on 18th November 2010 was "The Church now belongs to you!" - words spoken by Pope Benedict to the young people of Scotland in Bellahouston Park on September 16th.

The day in Queen Margaret Academy, Ayr was led by Father Stephen McGrattan, Diocesan Youth Chaplain. The 88 senior pupils took part in a series of workshops. The first workshop was a discussion in groups on the meaning and relevance of the words spoken by Pope Benedict during his visit to Britain. The young people then used craft items to build and represent their vision of the Church and then explained their model to the others. The afternoon workshop focussed on the life of Saint Margaret and on the cross as a symbol of Christian faith and hope.

The day closed with a moving and silent time of prayer with lighting of candles which each person placed before the Scottish Youth Cross to represent the light their life brings to the world.

WORLD YOUTH DAY, MADRID—AUGUST 2011

38 young pilgrims from Galloway Diocese will participate in World Youth Day in Spain in August.

Their days in Spain begin in the University city of Salamanca where The Royal Scots College used for the training and formation of priests is based. In Salamanca they will be received by young people who live there and learn about their life, faith and culture. From Salamanca the group move to Madrid where faith will be shared through youth festivals, teaching sessions, prayer gatherings and fellowship together. The whole event culminates in an outdoor Mass celebrated by Pope Benedict and around 1.5 million young people and over 6,000 priests.

The next preparatory meetings for the World Youth Day group are on Sunday, 17th April at 3.00 pm (Paisley), and Sunday 17th June at 2.00 pm (Cumnock).



YOUTH FOR LOURDES—JULY 2011



The 46 Youth for Lourdes helpers and leaders who will join the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in July are looking forward to the pilgrimage at the Marian Shrine. They will be part of a team who will care for the sick pilgrims who travel to Lourdes, and without this important contribution of Youth for Lourdes it would be very difficult for the pilgrimage to go ahead as it does.

The team has been preparing through meetings and fundraising. Some of the group are pictured on the left at a quiz night in Dumfries. They would like to thank St Joseph's College and their supporters in Dumfries who help them raise over £1,000.

The next preparatory meetings will take place at St John's church hall, Cumnock on Sunday 6th March and again on Sunday 1st May, both from 1.30 pm - 4.00 pm