



Catholic Focus

"Promoting Whatever is Good, True, Right and Noble"

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WORLD YOUTH DAY PILGRIMS SHARE THEIR STORY

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**PHYSICALLY,
SPIRITUALLY
& MENTALLY
TAXING
But We Made It**



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Celina Marryshow
at the Jeronimos Monastery

GREETINGS and BLESSINGS to CATHOLIC GRENADA as Catholic Focus takes up again the challenge of evangelizing online and in print.

SHEPHERD'S VOICE

+Clyde Martin -
Bishop of St. George's-in-Grenada



Greetings to all Grenadians of good will as we live and work together as brothers and sisters in our common home.

This issue comes amid the hurricane season and in the aftermath of the World Youth Day pilgrimage. We remind all our parishes of the need to have a group in every parish community who will work together in the event of a disaster. They will seek, in the name of the Lord, to look after the needy and disadvantaged. They must make sure that all that may be needed in an emergency, is either readily available, or know how to source it. They must have the links with the government agencies so that we can truly collaborate in resolving problems. We Christians ought to bring our own unique perspective of selfless care for the other, even putting the other first.

WORLD YOUTH DAY (WYD) was both an adventure and a disaster. Every pilgrimage is an adventure. Every pilgrimage is a following in the footsteps of the Christ who guides our way and who often leads us to the Cross. In evaluating WYD, we seek especially, to see what lessons we can learn from what has been a very painful experience. We thank all those who worked to plan it, those who gave of themselves in executing it and those who helped to bring it to a positive conclusion.

As your bishop, I am very aware that the buck stops on my desk. I believed that the pilgrimage was being organized as a regional experience. It turned out that this was not true. A late decision to go, left us searching for the best way forward. I now understand, from experienced organizers, that what happened to us, happens on occasion and we can take nothing for granted in such circumstances. The Antilles Bishops Conference (AEC) to which Grenada belongs, is beginning a formal inquiry led by an archbishop and a retired Justice of Appeal to determine what went wrong, who can be held responsible for monies lost, whether compensation can be demanded and how our poor islands can better organize for such occasions.

Because of these events, the diocese is now in debt for over \$300,000EC to the government of Grenada and others who helped us bring our pilgrims, home. The Archdiocese has raised about \$80,000EC to assist us. We must find the rest ourselves. Being Church, is not only about praying together; it is about our unity as the Body of Christ in many varied, difficult circumstances. I pray that Grenadians will be even more generous than Trinidadians in helping us meet this challenge. Pray also that those who are responsible for the finances of the diocese will have the wisdom and

prudence to address these problems successfully.

My personal thanks to all those who have supported the Church and myself during the past weeks with your prayers and encouragement. May God richly bless each of you and your family.

In the loving kindness of the Lord,

Bishop Clyde.



It is with sadness and gratitude to God for her faithful service that we note the death of **ELSIA FERGUSON**, a stalwart of this diocese. May she enter rejoicing into God's loving embrace. She died in Trinidad. We await news of her funeral arrangements. Let us all pray for her at our parish masses.

Editorial

It is tempting to become despondent in today's world, given the fact that there is an apparent agenda to erase boundaries, disregard common sense, overturn common values, and even oppose natural law. Tempting as it may be however, we have a responsibility as Christians, to persevere in the formation of those who need it, to hold fast to our faith, to employ common sense, to abide by natural law, respect and love our fellow men without compromising that which is good, and life giving.

The recent Carnival in Grenada was held as the best in a long time. It was evident that the quality of our calypsos is admirable; our steelbands are producing top quality music, and many have expressed that they are pleased with the growing interest in: "traditional mas". All in all, the aforementioned areas were rated positively. However, the same can hardly be said about our "fancy mas" bands. In fact, some spectators cringed as they looked on. These spectators lament that so many of the fancy mas costumes, which are mostly narrow beaded strings, are hardly adequate to render the masqueraders decently clad. The question is when did common sense take leave of us. When did our notions of decency and modesty change so much? One might ask, are such costumes meant to cover the body which is the temple of the Lord? What is of a bigger concern is that there seems to be such great tolerance and validation for the scanty pieces. We must remember to make a difference, therefore rather than being pushed into a corner, we need to speak about it. In fact, for 2024 Carnival, it would be wonderful to have a mas band offering costumes which are beautiful, creative and adequate to cover people's nakedness. It would be quite commendable if we launched a band to show what constitutes decent costumes, to offer an alternative to the narrow beaded strings. While we may not be able to change the world, we may very well be effective in influencing our own little sphere, and then it will spread, thus we will do our part in denouncing what is inappropriate and promoting what is decent and appropriate. Additionally, a big concern is the agenda being pushed by the LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) community and its supporters; they seem to have very little respect for people who are not a part of their group and philosophy. We recall the situation where a U.S. diplomat and his male spouse were to be posted to Jamaica. It is a well-known fact that such a practice is not accepted, nor legal in Jamaica yet this

fact seems to have been disregarded. Furthermore, those who are outside of the LGBTQ philosophy are labelled as "archaic", "unprogressive" or "stupid"; this labelling seems to intimidate people, and some feel forced to tolerate what is a violation of natural law. We have to find the strength to condemn the sin, even as we love the sinner. It is only through reliance on God that we can find the strength to condemn the sin and show compassion to the sinner. We cannot be silenced into tolerating what we know is not to be tolerated, for fear of being ostracized.

It is quite alarming to note the dogged insistence that world powers make on other countries to accept varied unacceptable lifestyles, such as transgenderism. The agenda of that community seems to be loud and unrelenting in demanding that they be given certain rights. We would do well to read the Church's teaching on

these matters; We note that male and female – God made them. We cannot condone the practice which renders so many children and adults confused and regretful - there are significant sources which give the experiences of former transgendered people, telling of their regrets and confusion. It is time to stand firm for our beliefs, and for what is right. We cannot allow absurdity to force itself on us.

Because the agenda of these few appear to be so loud, it is easy to become despondent and to become intimidated, and even nonchalant; but we have an obligation to promote what is decent, life-giving and good, even while we love those who engage in questionable behaviour. The task is not easy, but we know that "those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength".



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professionals to fill
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60 years of Commitment to God

Sr. Mary Angela Mathlin SSM celebrates 60 years of religious profession

[Click here to view exclusive GNCC Interview with Sr. Angela Mathlin](#)



Sr Angela Mathlin, Investiture Ceremony, Barbados, 1961



1982 Holy Father Blesses Sister Angela Mathlin

No Pilgrimage without the Cross

By John Smith

World Youth Day takes place every 2-3 years, typically in the summer months. The international festival of faith in Portugal in August 2023 was a chance for pilgrims around the world to come together with young people from every continent to pray, worship, and celebrate the Catholic faith. This year the 37th World Youth Day was celebrated under the theme "Mary Arose and Went with Haste" (Lk 1:39).

Grenada's pilgrimage to Lisbon, Portugal met with many challenges which tested the mental fortitude and faith of our pilgrims. After months of successfully raising the required funds to undertake the journey, our pilgrims were faced with the reality of travel arrangement irregularities. Upon arriving at the airport in Trinidad and ready to board a flight to Panama to officially begin their pilgrimage, they were notified that there were issues with the booking and thus they would not be able to board the flight. What was supposed to be an overnight stay in Trinidad then turned into a 5-night stay until new flight arrangements could be made. Many individuals assisted financially and spiritually, and the pilgrims were off to Lisbon, Portugal, then came the time to return home and more challenges arose, because of the initial hiccups with flights; while on the airport in Portugal the pilgrims were notified that their return tickets were compromised and they would not be able to board the flight to return home. At this time, you would imagine all flights out of Portugal would be booked as thousands of pilgrims would be travelling at that time, and so our pilgrims were stranded once again, until new flight arrangements could be made.

Bishop Clyde Harvey met with the pilgrims upon their return and has encouraged the pilgrims to see God's Grace through it all. Speaking about the situation, Bishop Harvey said, "there is no pilgrimage without the Cross; through it all the pilgrims could see the hand of God working. The journey of spiritual formation has begun for them, and it is a journey that challenges the common



understanding of Christianity, that God is with us through it all" - (Bishop Harvey)

Thankfully with the efforts of many we were able to bring all our pilgrims home; Catholic Focus has given the pilgrims the opportunity to share their stories.

BREAST EXAM CLINIC

**SUNDAY
OCTOBER 15TH
G.S.S.E. SCHOOL
THE LIMES
GRAND ANSE
11AM-5PM**



Women in Medicine from St. George's University will be providing FREE breast exams and education for all persons. Regular breast exams are an important way to check for breast cancer.



**Join us as October is breast cancer awareness month!
EVERYONE IS WELCOME**

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION PROVIDED

At Home Breast Exams

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Menstruation/Periods

My World Youth Day Reflection

By Chad Welsh

I have chosen to think about the positive rather than the negative because virtue will always prevail over evil. It was an extremely traumatic but yet wonderful experience that none of us will EVER forget. Since the beginning of this journey, I have encountered God. God sent many different things throughout this entire pilgrimage!

I saw him in the little good deeds of the Trinidadian and Portuguese people. From the bus drivers to the volunteers to the Sisters. There were total strangers who didn't know us but were polite and gave us assistance with directions or water along most of our journey. After the vigil in Portugal, a young man I didn't know at all offered to assist me carry my guitar because I had plenty

of load. I realized that this was God demonstrating his countless acts of generosity to me, confirming that he is always there. The Sisters of Cluny in Trinidad hosted us for several nights (this exceeded the duration they had planned for initially). That was God working his many blessings through simple act of kindness through others.

I can state confidently that God was present through it all, paving a way and demonstrating to us that through prayer, anything is possible, despite all the difficulties we faced with the trip's disorganization. The disputes, and bad leadership were some of the things that produced a lot of friction throughout the group.

Sometimes, we tend to seek out the



enormous, imposing, magnificent, and overwhelming. We desire to be amazed! The Lord is still bringing forth His grand and wonderful plans for our salvation through the small, humble, and insignificant things of this world. The action is in the little things.

World Youth Day 2023 – Lisbon, Portugal

By Celina Marryshow



My World Youth Day experience, both within the group and within myself was very unique and special. To me, the experience started from the moment I took the first plane from Grenada to Trinidad, to the moment I took the last plane from Barbados to Grenada. The extra time spent in Trinidad and Porto, Portugal was an opportunity, I believe sent by God, for us the pilgrims to grow closer, pray together and have more experiences than if everything went according to plan.

Every single phase of the journey, in every single country had valuable lessons and exciting adventures. My mindset throughout the entire journey, throughout very big and small challenges we faced, was that it's all an adventure. Everything that was new, uncomfortable or foreign, I viewed it as an exciting adventure and reminded myself that this is all part of the pilgrimage, especially during the hours of walking, experiencing differences in food and culture, exhaustion from long days and short nights and adjusting to new situations.

I believe that my mindset allowed me to make the most of the harder parts of the journey and to have the best experience possible. Outside of the challenges, however, I loved being able to experience so much of Portugal and interact with so many people my age, both in a religious and social context. One of the things that left me in awe was the level of reverence that many of the young people had, which was really moving to me. I even made friends with a group of about 10 Portuguese young people, who I still talk to!

This journey has reminded me of the beauty of my Catholic faith and has left me more knowledgeable and more inspired to continue to grow closer to my God and contribute to my church community. Experiencing the global church has left an impression on me that I will forever cherish and I will strive to use that experience to build the church here in Grenada and wherever else I may go.

World Youth Day Lisbon 2023

Karilyn Kirton

World Youth Day Lisbon 2023 was a pilgrimage through and through. A journey filled with situations enabling spiritual growth, pushing of boundaries, seeing the work of God's hands throughout and realizing where there is good at play evil is never far behind.

This pilgrimage had many phases. Each Phase was filled with many life lessons some acknowledged, and some to be revealed through reflection and divine enlightenment.

This journey started with the fundraising process and preparation for the WYD Portugal experience. For some pilgrims we saw the church community be it through the support of our parish and well wishers and even other parishes stepping in where ours fell short.

Then it continued with travelling. Our first stop was Trinidad. We became stranded in Trinidad with what seemed like no way out. Trinidad was filled with many instances of prayer and worship because at that time 'God alone' that could have helped us. So, we the pilgrims rallied together and prayed like we never prayed before, we sang like we never sang before and we felt the holy spirit like we never felt him before.

In these little bubbles of prayer we bonded, grew closer and learnt to trust God, keep faith, never lose hope and let the spirit guide, comfort and use us. At the time we were acting on our behalf for our own sanity but in our acts of prayer we were motivation for those on retreat, comfort to the sisters who helped us and inspiration for those who visited. Through this phase we had two experiences three of us saw a 'light' while in deep prayer and

according to the agent who worked extremely hard to get us to Portugal the flights themselves were a miracle. So it was reaffirmed prayer works and God never lead you where he can't reach you.

When we arrived at Portugal our first stop was Beja for the Days in the Diocese. The churches were miraculously crafted with artistry, history and beauty. I was in awe when stepping into the churches and cathedrals. I enjoyed the sessions and activities. But one thing Beja thought me is that when the glory of God is present and strong the devil always find a way to slither through the cracks to cause destruction especially in the stronghold.

Then we continued to Lisbon for the main event. Lisbon was pace, pace, pace. We had the opportunity to experience different aspects of Roman Catholicism as well as embracing the varying cultures' impact on Roman Catholicism. We were able to visit Fatima which was a location I felt called to visit which I was very happy and grateful for. At both the opening and closing masses I was able to see the Pope.

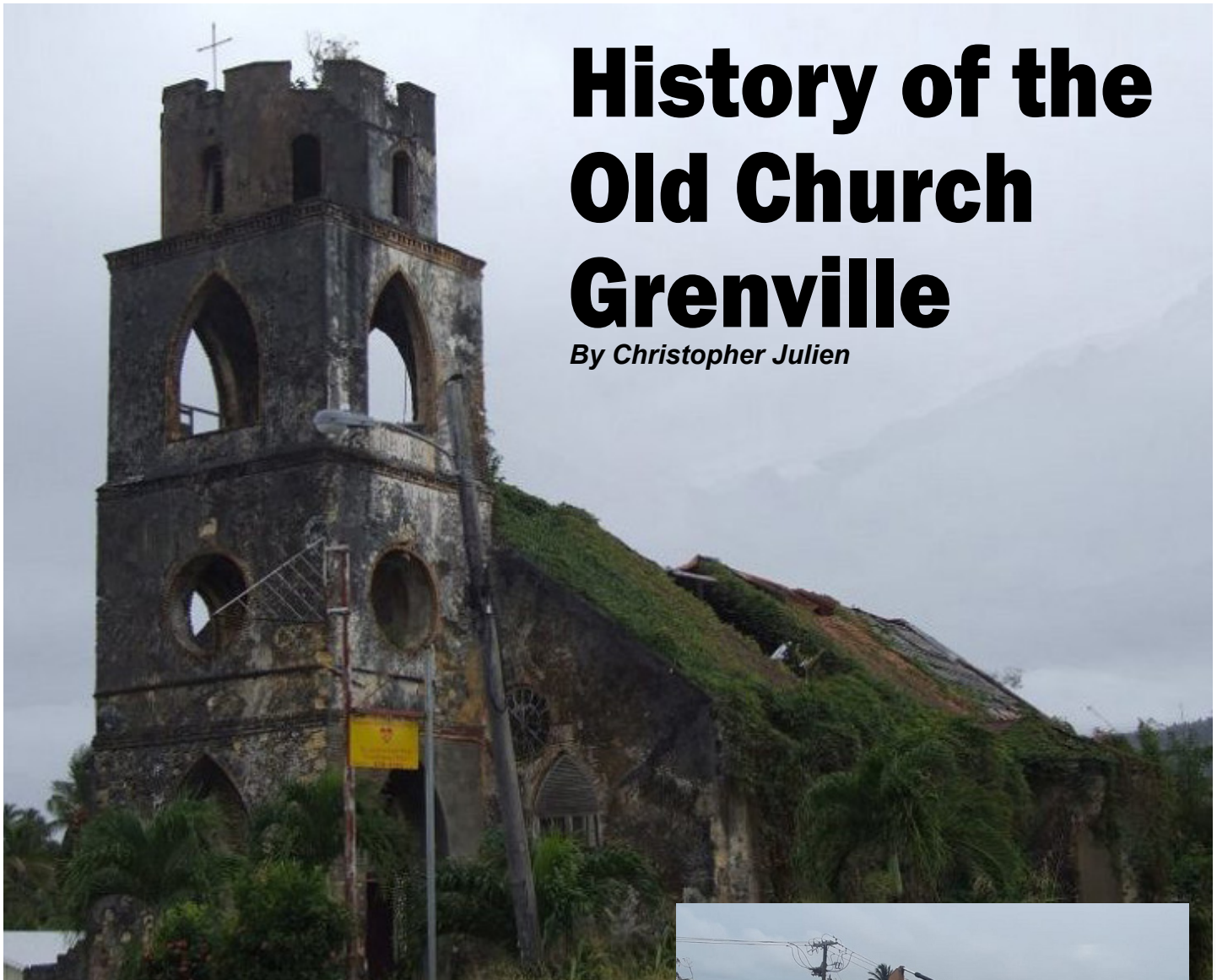
To return home, we became stranded again when passing through Porto. For many of us it was 'not like this thing again.' I call it Strandation part two. But unlike Trinidad the time period was not the same for all of us.

So yes, WYD LISBON 2023 was a pilgrimage. A journey rich in spiritual enlightenment, growth, attacks and perseverance. A journey filled with the voice of God and his messengers. A journeyed with an understanding that no matter your vocation, no matter your position and powers we are called God's children, filled with a



purpose which will be achieved. A journey acknowledging that no matter how hard the devil tries to interfere with the Glory of God, the most high will prevail. A journey highlighting the fact that no matter the degree of human interference what God has for you is for you and no one can take it from you. But most importantly no matter how hard the evil one might try to deter you, influence you and conquer you God will protect you and trust his instructions. When it says to Fear no one but God I can attest to the truthfulness of that statement but most importantly Trust God in his entirety because no matter where you land, he is with you and will keep you.

Thank you for your prayers, your support and check ins. This pilgrimage was physically, spiritual and mentally taxing but we made it. We are renewed in faith and willing to help our various parishes were and whenever we can.



History of the Old Church Grenville

By Christopher Julien

On Easter Monday 10th April 2023 an excited parishioner called me as I was preparing for a family outing, "Chris, de Old Church fall down!" Now I was not too surprised, because a few days prior, during Holy Week, part of the belfry had broken off causing some concern to the neighbourhood. Nonetheless, I was not expecting the collapse of the remainder of the ancient building to occur so soon

the church and abandoned it. (Remnants of that church can still be found at Marquis). During the Insurrection of 1793 - 95 (Fedon's Rebellion) the priest was killed and the church abandoned and in the early 1800's the building fell into ruin.



The "Old Grenville Catholic Church" has a history that must be told. The story begins in 1721 when the Catholic parish in St. Andrew's (le quartier du Grande Marquis) was founded under French governance. A church was built at present day Marquis on sixteen acres of land and dedicated to The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. During the persecution of the French Catholic population, the church was seized by the British and handed over to the Anglican clergy. They had little use for

The Old Church

The flock was scattered and went through turbulent testing for the next forty years. Priests would visit from George's to strengthen and encourage the faith of the Church in St. Andrew. In 1840 the parish was reformed, and Fr. Angelo Leoni became the first parish priest of the newly reformed parish. He did not attempt to rebuild the church at Marquis, as that town had been abandoned for the new town springing up, known as La Baye (present

day Grenville). Fr. Leoni's resolve was to build a new church close to the town of La Baye. Land was donated by one, Mr. Harford of L'Essterre Estate (Harford Village bears his name) on Sendall Street Grenville, for the construction of the new place of worship. The foundation stone was laid in 1841 by his Lordship titular Bishop of Agnus, Coadjutor of Archbishop of Port of Spain, Richard Patrick Smith. This event occurred on a Saturday morning and on Sunday the sacrament of Confirmation was conferred on 100 people.

History of the Old Church Grenville

Fr. Leoni was joined and assisted by Fr. Mc Donnell who raised enough funds to build the walls of the church. Catholics of the district contributed money to the construction. In 1842 the construction was well on the way. In 1843 Archbishop of Port of Spain, Daniel McDonnell came to administer confirmation and found that the structure had no roof. He later petitioned the Grenada legislature for assistance. The amount needed to complete the church was £841.00. The parishioners asked for £500.00 and this amount was granted; the legislature set up a board of trustees to see that the money was well spent. Fr. Leoni died November 6, 1846, after a long illness.

The "Old Church" was completed in the first quarter of 1858 and was blessed on May 2, 1858. The bells were blessed seven days later. The years following saw a succession of several parish priests. The parish administration and the rest of Grenada was handed over to the English Dominican province under the title of St. Louis Bertrand. By 1915 the site of the "Old Church" was deemed unfit for occupation, due to a heavy infestation of mosquitoes, and malaria fever was prevalent. This disease claimed the lives of several priests and parishioners; some of whom are buried in the church before the sanctuary steps, under the tower, behind the sanctuary area and the old cemetery, where the St. Andrew's Pre-School, and School for Special Needs are presently located. Some are also buried in another cemetery along the Cook Hill Road. Besides Malaria being the main impetus for moving from Sendall street, the area was overrun by grazing, noisy animals and additionally, the environment had become a place of ill repute, somewhat like Jamaica's Spanish town. It is also alleged, that some of the male parishioners would regularly patronise the bars after mass! According to local legend, when Monsieur l'Abbe (French for priest) set up his preaching box in the streets of Grenville and challenged the women of Blaize's Yard (the area opposite the "Old Church") to reform their ways, they got together and gave the priest a beating.

The New Church on the Hill

The present church, St Andrew The Apostle, was built on lands donated by Francis S. Noel on a promontory, over-

looking Grenville. He later donated the lands for the construction of St. Joseph's Convent Grenville, and purchased lands for establishing a church at Battle Hill.

The foundation stone for the present day



St. Andrew the Apostle Church, Grenville was laid by Archbishop John Dowling in May 1915. But that's another story!

The "Old Church" has been a site of social gatherings, harvest and tea parties. It later became the home of the St. Andrew's Roman Catholic Boys' School in the late 1950's and up to the mid 1970's. This school was renowned for its boys' choir, gymnastics and eminent scholars. The school authorities abandoned the building as the roof showed signs of caving in. The boys were housed for a period of time at St. Andrew the Apostle Church until the boys and girls schools were merged into St. Andrew's Roman Catholic School in 1976 making it a combined school.

The "Old Church" was later handed over to the St. Andrew's Development Organisation, for development in the mid 1980's, but this project never materialised. It also played home to the newly formed steelband, Rainbow City All Stars.

Eventually the edifice, after years of neglect and decay was returned to the Diocese of St. George's-in-Grenada. It served as gathering point for the start of the pilgrimages to the Marian Shrine at Battle Hill, and even after it demise, it still remains a point of focus.

I do hope that one day a new structure of meaning will rise from the rubble, to serve the people of Grenville and by extension St. Andrew's and Grenada.

Priests who served at St. Andrew the

Apostle from 1721 – 1915

Fr. De La Colombier reoccupied the church in 1789 at Marquis

Fr. Lapmsonie. 1793 -1795

Killed during the insurrection

Fr. Angelo Leoni 1840

- First parish priest lived and died 1846 at Mt. St. John, conducted Mass at his residence
- reformed the catholic community
- initiated the construction of the Old church

Fr. Mc Donnell worked along with Fr. Leoni.

Fr. Taafft

Fr. Fortnik - 1852

Fr. John Wall - 1858

- completed the church and built the bell tower
- Died November 21st 1865 is buried in the church

Canon Bond May 1st 1865

Fr. Grimes served up to 1892

- Succeeded Canon Bond and
- installed the Stations of the Cross which I suspect hangs in the present church

Fr. Espinosa 1892-98

- Imports the marble altar for the church and now is currently at the St. Andrew the Apostle.
- During his term of office, Mt. St. Ervans becomes the residence of the Priest.

Fr. LePrince

- Vicar General

Frs. Doyle and Ryan

Priests of the Dominican Order from 1901

- Fr. Wolsey OP Bought new bells for the church.
- Priory established at Mt. Ervans

Acknowledgements.

Mrs Margaret Granger

Sonny Mark (deceased) youtube video a history of Grenada episodes 3 and 4
Blog/Grenadaarchaeology.com

ACROSS THE DIOCESE

**DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 16, 2023
ST. JOSEPH'S CONVENT, ST. GEORGE**

The Diocesan Pastoral council met to chart the way forward for the Diocese in the areas of:

- Catholic Education
- Catechetics and Faith Formation
- Outreach



St. Joseph's Convent Grenville School's Environmental Club worked with Grenada Fund for Conservation, Inc. (GFC) and Sandals for the International Coastal Clean-Up Day to raise awareness on the problematic concern of marine litter.

You too can play your own part in the alleviation of this issue as the campaign ran from the 16th to the 24th of September 2023.





Fr. Gabriel Osang
Celebrates the Anniversary of his Priestly Ordination with students of the St. Martin Deporres R.C. School on September 14th 2023

Holy Cross Parish, First Communion Class September 2023



Nathan Paul, Alia Jones, Kellyn Noel, Kyra Sarah Williams, Allaine Noel, Micah Michael Paul and Dishon Desmond George



Diocese of St. George's-in-Grenada
Catechetical Office

Become a CATECHIST TODAY!

**LOVE GOD
SERVE OTHERS**

GROW YOUR GIFTS AND TALENTS

**BUILD COMMUNITY AND SPREAD
THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**

**GROW AND DEEPEN
YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

**BECOME A MISSIONARY
DISCIPLE**



For further info contact
your Parish Priest or the Catechetical Office -
1 (473) 440-2542 ext. 229
Email: stgdiocesecatechetics@gmail.com

**Catechists are people
who keep the memory of God
alive; they keep it alive in
themselves and they are able to
revive it in others.**

- Pope Francis



Catechists honoured on Catechetical Sunday



This year Catechetical Sunday was celebrated on September 17th 2023. The theme for 2023-2024 is: Catechists Agents of a Synodal Church. Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role of each catechist.

It is celebrated on the third Sunday of September to acknowledge and commission those who serve the Parish; it's a day on which to celebrate and pray for the Church's mission to teach the Gospel to all people.

What is a Synodal Church? It is a church Minister to all people and Creation.

Catechetical Sunday was an opportunity to thank all catechists for the work that they are doing; it is also an opportunity for catechists to reflect on their call to share and live out their faith.

On Catechetical Sunday, catechists were called to renew their commitment and were reintroduced to the Parish.

A Prayer for Catechists

Loving God, Creator of all things,
you call us to be in relationship with
you and others.

Thank you for calling me to be a catechist,
for the opportunity to share with others
what you have given to me.

May all those with whom I share the
gift of faith discover how you are
present in all things.

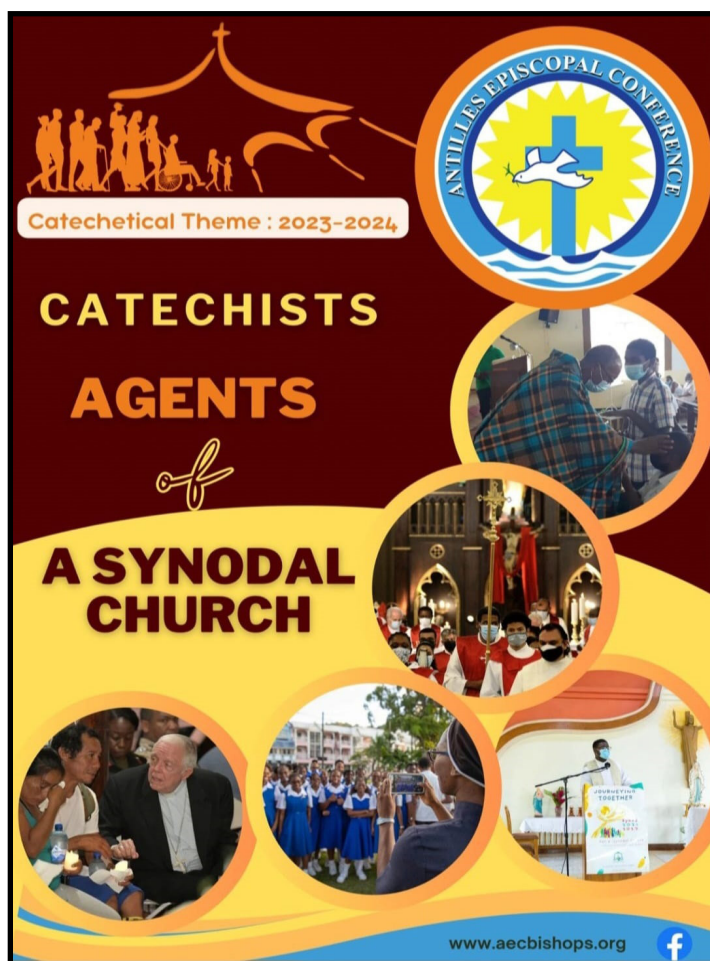
May they come to know you,
the one true God, and
Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

May the grace of the Holy Spirit guide
my heart and lips, so that I may
remain constant in loving
and praising you.

May I be a witness to the Gospel and
a minister of your truth.

May all my words and actions
reflect your love.

Amen.



HOLY CHURCH

By Fr. Sean Doggett



What is the church?

The word "CHURCH" has been much used and abused on some social media platforms recently.

The Church is a living organism made up of sinful human beings. It is always in need of reform. Like St. Peter, the Church blunders. But, without us understanding how, the Spirit guides her back because the Spirit is in her. That is a sense in which we say that the Church is HOLY.

Any group that grows big enough to be called an organisation has some kind of spirit within it that gives it life. Any organisation that grows beyond a certain point has the tendency to turn upon itself and eliminate its spirit. That is a kind of "sin against the spirit" and our Church is not immune to it.

Our modern economy is based on the provision of goods and services. For example. Grenlec makes electricity; I use it and I

pay for it. I don't need to know how electricity is produced. I buy my food in a shop. I choose only what I need, and I have very little interest in how the food is produced. I pay at the checkout, and I go.

The danger we face in the Church is similar. There is the "producing church" staffed by specialists - priests and religious. They provide a wide range of things from deliverance and comfort to religious knowledge; then there is the consuming Church - lay people who consume those goods and services.

In that situation we all lose out, especially lay people because they are no longer part of the Church. They can no longer say "WE" about the Church but only "it." I always feel frustrated when I hear Catholics say, "The Church should do this," as if they were not the Church.

As an external service supplier

of goodness, enlightenment or whatever, the Church loses all authority. A consumer expects to receive what he wants rather than what he needs. A supplier supplies what the consumer wants. There are always other suppliers if you don't like the one you've got.

Looking back over history the Church has got herself into many questionable states and situations, but rescue has always come from people and from the Holy Spirit. The one cure for a sick or dying Church is the life-giving power of the Spirit. The Spirit is in the church as a whole and it is in each of us. If we do our part, the Spirit works through all of us.

Just as my relationship with God must be an "I/thou" relationship so my relationship with the Church must be an "I/we" relationship. There is no other way.

We are all sinners, but together we are the Body of Christ, and the Body of Christ is HOLY.

Fr. Sean.

(NB. Adapted from the book "The Creed in Slow Motion" by Martin Kochanski)

Giving our Children the Advantage: Better Health this School Year and Beyond

By Dr. Sonia Nixon

Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD,...Ps 127:3

As our young Grenadians from pre-school to college have begun a new school year, we pray for their safety, for positive experiences and learning as well as for good health and wellness for each one. Preserving, enhancing and protecting the physical, emotional and social well-being of our children demand that parents, families, communities, schools and policy-makers, take the necessary collective steps.

During this school year, we should revive the positive and proven programmes and practices known to ensure physical and mental wellness, healthy and safe environment in the home and school, for all our nation's children. Our failure to prevent disease may lead to childhood obesity, chronic disease, premature death, and generally poor quality of life. There are several ways to enhance our children's wellness and strengthen their chances for long, healthy, happy and productive lives.

Preventing Communicable Diseases

Gratefully, the majority of Grenadian children are now protected from the vaccine preventable diseases like, polio, measles, mumps, pneumonia, tetanus which had contributed to severe illnesses and premature death decades ago. However, the success of our national vaccine programme depends of the commitment of parents and their collaboration with the programmes of the Ministry of Health. These vaccines are all required for all students to be accepted into schools. A recent trend among many parents is NOT to vaccinate

their children. However, failure to do so, would place our children at risk for contracting these deadly diseases. The younger the child, the greater the risk of disease and death. Vaccines are free and available at all the nation's public health centres.

Physical Activity

The World Health Organisation (WHO) reminds us that children are required to be physically active for at least 30 minutes daily. Even those with physical disability should be assisted in being active as much as they are able. Parents and families bear the responsibility to ensure that their children engage, especially in the home and community setting. Walking, playing yard games, swimming and football are among the activities that families may share and these are at no cost. Physical activity along with a healthy diet are known to be the best tools to fight obesity and the onset of chronic illnesses. We all feel happy, enjoy deep breathing and laughter, especially when playing traditional games like rounders, catchers, dodge ball or ring games. Limiting an inactive or sedentary lifestyle is of core importance. Limit watching television and playing electronic games to one hour daily. Besides, handheld devices are often left uncensored by adults, leaving children exposed to potentially violent and sexual content, and to predators.

Making Food Matter

Food is required by everyone for energy, growth and repair. Today, highly processed products form an integral part of our dietary consumption. Products like



cookies, bread, sweet drinks, salty snacks, pasta, especially ramen and cooked fast-foods are at the centre of the diet of many families, and sometimes just the children. They provide convenient, but poor nutritional choices for our children. Unhealthy diets are the leading cause of obesity among our population. Obesity is that stage when one surpasses his/her allowed weight for height (and age) by 35%. Whether we eat portions that are greater than our needs or consume large quantities of fats and carbohydrates we are equally aligned to become obese. Obesity contributes to all of the Non-Communicable Chronic Diseases like Hypertension and Diabetes, Cancers. These bring complications that negatively affect our quality of life and appear prematurely in our obese children, severely cutting their life expectancy. Sticking to a diet of local produce, fresh fruits and vegetables, letting water be our preferred beverage, and eating smaller portions, are some practical ways to enjoy a healthy diet. One country has banned the consumption of ramen noodles by their children because it contains unacceptable quantities of salt, bad fats and a highly processed starch. None of these offer the nutrient values stipulated by PAHO, for our children in this critical period of their development.

Continued on page 16

Giving our Children the Advantage: Better Health this School Year and Beyond

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

There is a Grenada School Nutrition Policy that guides the way we should feed our children at school. Hopefully this will be applied in all our schools soon and parents will understand that guidelines are being followed in the interest of our children's health and wellbeing.

Fostering Mental and Spiritual Wellness


There has been a lot of conversation about mental wellness recently. The COVID 19 pandemic highlighted and evoked the levels of stress and suffering our children, families and communities were experiencing before and how much worse it became after COVID19. Our mental health is just as crucial as our physical health and must be given attention. Yes, there may be times when embarrassment and stigma may try to

prevent us from seeking services, but every four persons out of every ten, may experience some form of illness during their lifetime. Imagine being able to eliminate all the suffering by seeking help. We all must learn tolerance for mental illness, while we support and encourage each other to seek assistance. Suicide has been a big problem among our young people who really need understanding, love and support to conquer the darkness, confusion and the painful outcome. Bullying must be exposed and eradicated forthwith from our homes, communities, schools and workplace. No form of abuse of our children must be tolerated. Sexual and physical violence against our children must be reported and dealt with, and perpetrators aptly punished.

Above all, families are encouraged to

place Christ at the centre of the home, where parents are living examples of the lives of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, our first family. Prayer, forgiveness, tolerance, respect, modesty, godliness and love of mankind are the values we will implant in their hearts. Activities to elevate each other; activities which encourage self-development, discipline, and healthy habits should be held daily.




This year we are giving our children tools for making successful, happy, holy and overall healthy people. This will be a great year, because with God, we surely can!!



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Mary Magdalene's thoughts of Jesus

By Margaret Granger

He is so different! The other men
made me feel dirty, worthless,
useless, used, no esteem.

But He, I could look at Him in the
eye I could listen to Him. He's like a
mirror; I see myself through Him.
I felt dirty but able to be cleansed. I

I love Him. That is love! Did I say
love? Yes, well that has to be love
Real love,

Pure love. Not using somebody as
the others did to me.

For the first time, I felt like
SOMEBODY.

With the other men
I felt like a thing that was used!
Confused! Abused! Cast away!
Head bowed down! Ashamed!!!
I enjoyed what I did with the others
Do forgive me Lord!!!

But, when I met that Man
It was over. That kind of fun was
over!!!

No more business as usual.
No more selling of my body. No
more!!!

That is love. I love Him. For the
first time, I am saying that with
meaning.

Yes love, clean love.
See me weeping at His feet, kissing
His feet, unafraid, unashamed and
misunderstood. I don't know how
to love Him.
Suddenly, I see my worth through



Him, I am Magdalene, I'm
Mary. Ha! Ha! Ha! Same
name with His mother!
Co-incidence?
Happen stance? Serendipity!
Whatever
I love Him; pure love, just
love.

I can love after all!!!
I feel small but BIG.
He made me know who I
really am. Hmmm! He did
talk about living water. I did
not drink it but I WANT it.

Give me some. What ever
that is. It did something
to me. I am a brand new
person, woman! I am Mary
Magdalene
I am!

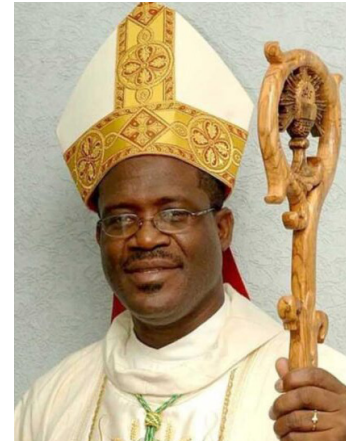
I am! Am I?
I want the whole world to
meet that man, especially
those who are still in the
trade that I was in, the sin I
was involved in.
O God make it happen,
Please???

Extracted from Archbishop Malzaire's Reflection on St. Lucia's 2023 Carnival

Now that the Carnival festivities are over, I invite us to spend some time in critical introspection. What can we say about ourselves after this national festivity, whether we participated or not? What measure would we use to evaluate first, the entire event and then specifically, the street parades? It is accepted by many that carnival and its attendant activities are graced with many positive attributes, such as: the unleashing of the creative genius of our Caribbean people expressed in the calypso compositions and their entertaining execution; the creative costumes portraying many wholesome aspects of our culture; as well as the creation of a viable avenue for collective catharsis, in other words, the release of emotional, physical, and psychological tensions created by the stresses of everyday life; etc. It also proves to be a natural avenue where our people can experience a sense of "freedom" for creative expression. However, Saint Paul, in his Letter to the Philippians, warns Christians about the use of such freedom. He says: "Brothers, you were called to be free; do not use your freedom as an opening for self-indulgence ... When self-indulgence is at work the results are obvious: sexual vice, impurity, and sensuality ..." (Gal 5:13, 19). Witnessing the fabulous display of Adrien Augier's Band: Tribe of Twel, portraying the theme: "For God So Love The World, was a glimmer of hope amid what seemed like a banalized performance of the Caribbean culture. By this I mean, the portrayal of the human attributes that left nothing to the imagination. Thus, was created, a great contrast between the Tribe of Twel and the 'tribes of no twel'. Is it surprising that the Tribe of Twel captured all the significant prizes of July 17th and 18th Parade of the Bands, namely: all four (4)

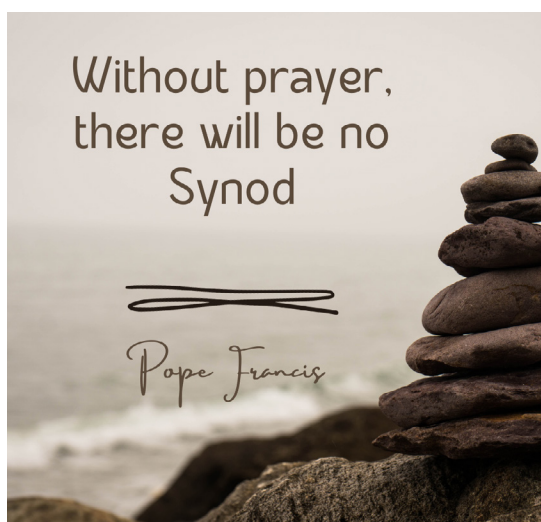
places in the category "Individual of the year"; first place in "Best Portrayal of the Theme", "Best Designed Band" and "Mass on the Move"; as well as Parade Band of the Year". They deserve our commendation and congratulations! No doubt, other bands had some honourable portrayals. However, I wish to comment on what I regard as the absolute vulgarity witnessed in many of the street bands, appropriately dubbed, the 'tribes of no twel' or 'practically no twel', behaviours that any civilized Christian society would denounce. I dare say, therefore, that if this is what we regard as our culture, I am afraid that we are in grave danger. The fact is, culture, by its very nature, must promote and enhance the dignity of the human person. Reflecting on the essential nature of the human person, the Church reminds us in its Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: *Gaudium et Spes*, that: "Man, though made of body and soul, is a unity. Through his very bodily condition he sums up in himself the elements of the material world. Through Him they are thus brought to their highest perfection and can raise their voice in praise freely given to the Creator. For this reason, man may not despise his bodily life. Rather he is obliged to regard it as good and to hold it in honour since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day ... His very dignity therefore requires that he should glorify God in his body, and not allow it to serve the evil inclinations of his heart" (GS. 14). These words are akin to those of Saint Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians, in which he reminds us: "Your body ... is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the

glory of God" (1 Cor 6:19-20). It means that anything which is demeaning to the dignity of the human person, is not worthy of public display. Carnival, therefore, or any human celebration should not be used as an excuse for any form of licentiousness. No wholesome culture can promote any human indecency; the two are incongruent! Whatever is dishonourable in the sanctuary, is also dishonourable in the public sphere. As a people, therefore, we need to be concerned about what we present to the present generation of youth, to prepare for the next. Whatever is accepted as moral norms, or the lack thereof in this generation, will spill over to the next with its increasing decadence. Any lack of moral checks and balances on the level of family, church or nation, spells doom. A drive up the Castries-Gros Islet Highway on Monday, July 17th, and a glimpse of the Television coverage of activities of Tuesday, July 18th made me very sad. I was appalled by what our ladies had reduced themselves to. The truth is, whatever we regard as permissible, whether in the context of Carnival when the guards of the people are down, or in the more controlled environment, only serves to erode the moral fibre of a society. Believe it or not, the novel phenomenon of the BamBam Wall, which is still part of the national landscape, will continue to have subliminal effects on the national psyche if not eliminated or exorcised. Moreover, it seems to me that our present less-than-honourable behaviour at Carnival is only a symptom of the bigger reality: the cycle of exploitation of women, which deserves some national discussion. We may ask ourselves: (1) Why is it that the question of nudity applies only to our women? We see the exploitation of women's bodies which began with slavery, continues in contemporary society



Most Rev. Archbishop Gabriel Malzaire

with the use of naked women to advertise cars, cigarettes, and any commodity in our consumer society. This is considered acceptable. (2) Many musical artistes, who are male, continue this exploitation by producing lyrics which "glorify" women "shaking their bumper", "whining down" etc., encouraging them to embrace the "marketing role" as whiners. (3) Many women who have been the victim of body "shaming" because of their physical appearance now use their "bambam" as protest in the "public space" to flaunt those who scorn their appearance in "officialdom", thus reflecting an intermingling of "catharsis" and "protest," as seen in the present version of carnival. Therefore, I am proposing the call for an open invitation of all stakeholders, to a national discussion on. Only in such a forum can we forge the appropriate answers to the questions: (1) what do we really want for our nation? (2) What will Carnival 2024 and beyond be like? (3) Will we continue to be copycats on the road to further moral and cultural decadence or are we going to set different standards towards a morally and spiritually healthy nation? The answer my friends must come from within, the answer must come from within!



Letter from the Cardinal Mario Grech to the Bishops of the World

Vatican, 15 September 2023

In a letter addressed to bishops and eparchs from all over the world, Cardinal Mario Grech, General Secretary of the General Secretariat of the Synod, invites the faithful from around the world to prayerfully participate in the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops that will open in the Vatican on 4 October.

With this letter, the General Secretary reminds everyone that the Synodal Assembly is above all a spiritual event, of prayer and listening to the Holy Spirit who is the true protagonist of the event. In order to facilitate participation and solicit the prayerful support of the members of the assembly from local communities, the General Secretariat of the Synod has prepared a "Solemn Blessing" to be recited, in particular, at the end of Sunday Masses together with intercessory prayers. The Latin original is attached (translations are only working documents to facilitate the local Churches).

Respecting the richness of the liturgical

tradition of the Oriental Catholic Churches *sui iuris*, the letter was also sent to the leaders of those Churches with a request to implement a similar blessing and intercessions in their Divine Liturgies.

Cardinal Grech's appeal is part of a series of initiatives aimed at recalling the eminently spiritual character of the synodal assembly and promoting the participation of the entire People of God through prayer, including:

- the creation, already in 2021, in collaboration with the World Pope's Prayer Network and the UISG (International Union of Superiors General), of a site

(www.prayforthesynod.va) that proposes a specific prayer time for the Synod every first Monday of the month;

- the Ecumenical Prayer Vigil (www.together2023.net) on 30 September on the eve of the Synod broadcast in live-streaming from 4.30 p.m. on Vatican News channels (vaticannews.va);

- a spiritual retreat for assembly members prior to the opening of the assembly (1-3 October 2023)

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