

THE SOCIETY OF CATHOLIC ARTISTS BULLETIN



Spring/Summer 2025

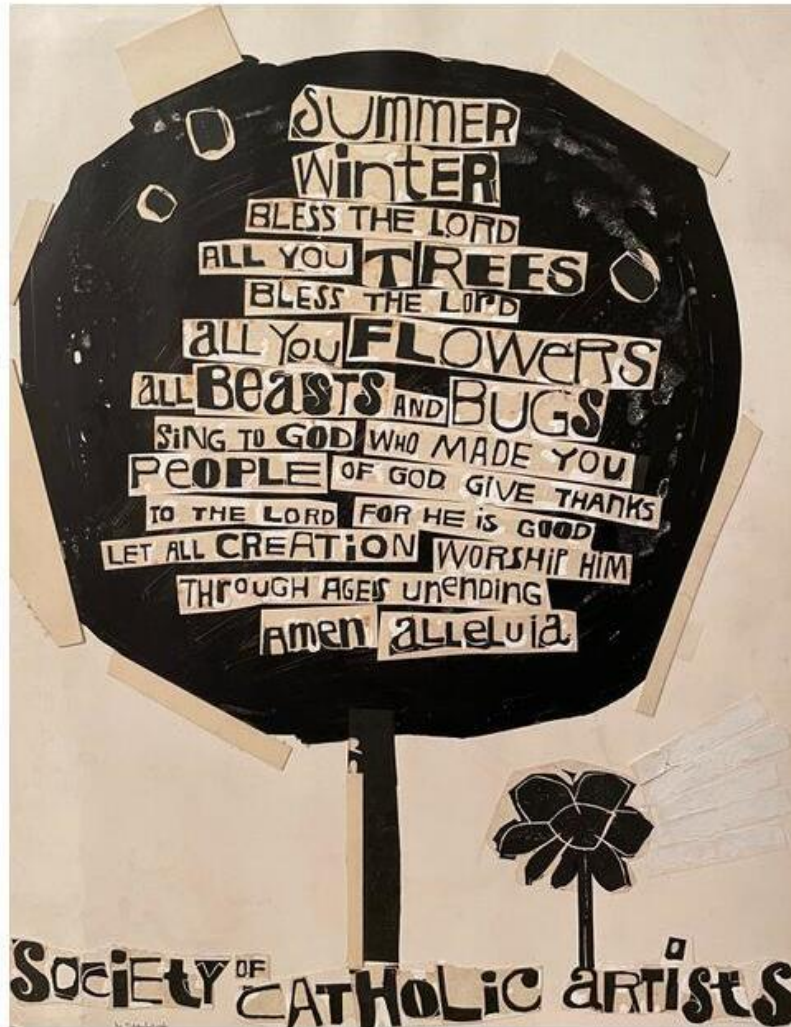


Image by Margaret Farley

Compiled by Mary Jean Donaghey

Edited and Produced by James Keay-Bright

The SCA Prayer

Oh Happy St Joseph, whose joy it was to labour with your hands for the Holy Child and His Blessed Mother, pray for us, that our work done same joyful spirit, may give glory to God in Heaven and service to Him on earth. Amen **(Fr. Martin D'Arcy SJ)**

CONTENT

1. EDITORIAL REPORT: NEWS AND REPORTS OF THE SOCIETY	p2
2. FR PATRICK VAN DER VORST OUR NEW PRESIDENT.	p3
3. MARGARET FARLEY RIP	p3
4. Dr MARIAN SPENCER RIP	p6
5. CHRISTINA (TINA) KOENIG RIP	p7
6. EDWARD – SARAH SHARPE	p10
7. IN RESPONSE TO SARAH'S ARTICLE ON EDWARD	p12
8. USING ART AS A CATHOLIC - JUDITH GAIT	p13
9. STATIONS OF THE CROSS – JUDITH TUTIN	p16
10. CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHER ARTISTS	p17
11. SCA OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE	p20

EDITORIAL REPORT

It is reported with delight that we welcome our new President, **Fr Patrick van der Vorst**. Fr **Patrick** is a priest in the Diocese of Westminster. He posts emails daily to subscribers of www.Christian.Art - 'A Daily Gospel Reading and Reflection' accompanied by a relevant image of a painting or sculpture, More on **Fr Patrick** after the Editorial.

In addition to a new president, we shall need a new vice president since **Margaret** died. I shall also be proposing **Irene Novelli** for Membership Officer and **James Keay-Bright** for Bulletin and hopefully the website, if he can use the website we have. Both have taken on work already. The acquirement of help has certainly boosted my hopes for the society's continuance. I feared it might die with me! **Judith Tutin** deserves many thanks for her very frequent Instagram posts of members' artworks. Search 'Society of Catholic Artists' on Instagram if you haven't seen it.

John Armstrong has suggested that we consider updating the society's constitution. I agree with him. We are in a different world now. It will be circulated soon by email and at the AGM for suggestions from members. These the committee can discuss with **John** involved afterwards. **Fr Patrick** saw the original logo on the constitution and preferred it to the later one. This can be considered by members and / or the committee for use on some, if not all, purposes.

Next, we have the AGM and then the exhibition. I shall be emailing more information, but the bulletin might be out before the AGM, if not the exhibition.

Mary Donaghey Chairman

FR PATRICK VAN DER VORST OUR NEW PRESIDENT.

Mostly copied from Fr Patrick's website for those without access to the internet.

Before being ordained to the priesthood in June 2023 Patrick was a former director of Sotheby's in London, working first in the Impressionist and Contemporary Art Departments before moving into the Furniture Department. He became auctioneer and Head of the Furniture Department. He is a specialist in 18th century French furniture.

In 2010 Fr Patrick left Sotheby's to set up his own online art valuation company, ValueMyStuff.com, often referred to in the press as the Antiques Roadshow online. He secured investment of £100,000 on BBC's Dragon's Den a year later. He sold the company in 2018 to the Barneby's Group, the world's leading search engine for art and antiques. During this time Patrick also did some television work for Belgian TV.

In September 2019, Patrick started seminary training at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome for the Diocese of Westminster, London. He launched the www.Christian.Art website after having left the artworld and before starting the seminary. In his daily reflections, Patrick combines his knowledge of the arts with the Gospel, along with his personal journey to the priesthood. Patrick was ordained to the Diaconate at the Basilica of St Paul's Outside the Walls in Rome in June 2022. He was ordained to the priesthood on 24th June 2023 at Westminster Cathedral in London by our Patron, Cardinal Vincent Nichols. Patrick has been appointed Assistant Priest at Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St George, Enfield, North London.

OBITUARIES

Margaret Farley

Born in Saltley, Birmingham on 11 March 1922.

In 1932, when Margaret was ten, her Methodist Minister father was posted to Rome. The move to Italy, where the family lived until 1938 in a flat opposite Castell Sant'Angelo, proved a formative time for Margaret. She found Italian spontaneity, food, language and light a revelation – all of this experienced against a background of Fascism and Mussolini. Importantly, for Margaret this period also brought into her life the Roman Catholic Church, St Peter's, and the Order of the Holy Child Jesus nuns.

Returning to England before the outbreak of war, Margaret started at Manchester Art School in 1939, gaining qualifications in drawing, illustration and book design. After art school and the end of the war, Margaret went on to become an art teacher, with her first job obtained partly through her links with the Order of the Holy Child. Throughout her working life, her teaching career ran side by side with her own practice as an artist and regular exhibitor. Before and during her marriage (in 1967 to Eric Farley) she travelled widely – visiting Canada, France, Italy, Russia and New Zealand among other places. These and the many trips she enjoyed with the SCA provided inspiration for several of Margaret's paintings. Alongside her painting, Margaret also enjoyed experimenting with printmaking and ceramics, undertaking adult education courses at London's Morley College and at Putney School of Art in the 1970s. Margaret's art always

held a strong graphic quality, embedded from her early days at Manchester Art School, and she often liked to combine text and image, especially in her more illustrative religious works.

Margaret was a committee member of the SCA and later became Vice-President. She died peacefully at home in her Wimbledon flat on 1 December 2024, aged 102.

Rebecca Farley

MARGARET FARLEY RIP

Margaret was first known to me as a committee member for the Society of Catholic Artists of many years already. She had been Chairman but wanted to devote more time to the bulletin and to SCA correspondence. I was to become Chairman instead. She appeared quite formal, very efficient and precise in all she did. She was only ever 'short' with one person whom she felt flippant, and anyone who did not adhere to her values, especially as an artist.

One day, I asked **Margaret** if she had ever had children. She replied that when she met Eric, her husband, she found these small, lost children whose mother had died. She said she knew she had to be there for them. Her expression had changed, and I saw a deeply caring side to Margaret, a person capable of great love.

Margaret's values and reactions to places she visited were very visible in her paintings which were distinctly recognisable as hers, 'Greenham Common', being one of them. The SCA had annual weekends away for some years. When we first stayed at St Cuthman's Retreat, **Margaret** and I went off together to paint the lake and overhanging trees. I watched her fluid application of the paint and saw her individual interpretation of the subject whilst feeling very inadequate myself!

We struck up a friendship over many years to come which extended beyond the committee work. Early on, she produced the bulletin for several years using printed out articles and photos, collaging them for the printer. I later joined her in producing the bulletin until she decided to hand it over to me although she continued to edit and write her editorials. In her 80s and early 90s, **Margaret** would march into central London, walking-stick in hand, to meet up for an exhibition. It demonstrated for me her determination to nurture and enjoy her interests in life and life itself. That **Margaret** was given such a long life was a gift to those who knew her.

Mary Jean Donaghey.

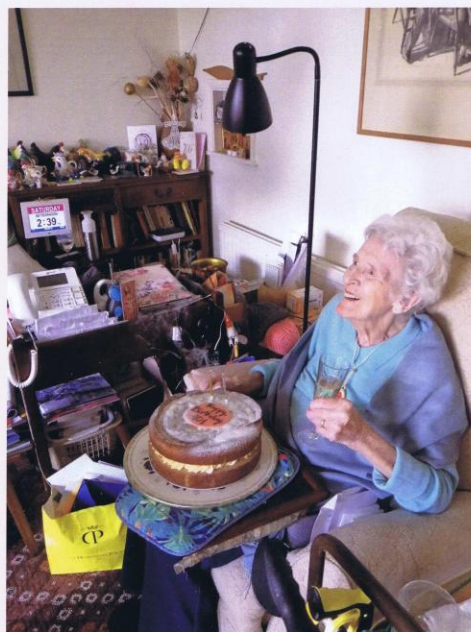


Margaret Farley Paintings: Left *St Cuthman's*; right *Piazza Navona, Rome*, top *Entry into Jerusalem*



Margaret Priscilla Farley

11th March 1922—1st December 2024



Dr Marian Spencer

Marian requested her family did not write an obituary. Hence, this can only be my personal experience with her as a committee member and someone I considered a friend.

Marian joined the committee so as to take over the post of treasurer after **John Field**, treasurer for quite some years and still a member, retired from the post.

Marian was not an artist, but a supporter of Catholic art. She was also a close friend and next-door neighbour of **Margaret Farley**, our former vice president. **Marian**, knew when to be serious but she was also fun. She was very wise. Her wisdom and worldiness were the result, I believe, of being a family doctor in Tower Hamlets, an area of diversity and sometimes extreme poverty.

Marian attended Notre Dame Grammar school in Bolton. She would give help readily to others when needed in true Notre Damian training. However, when she felt she was being ‘put upon’ her reply would be, “Oh no, I don’t want to do that”. It was a reply that I envied until I learnt from her and retrained my brain.

Marian and **Margaret** loved relating how, while waiting with another friend, all merry with laughter, at a bus stop, some friendly young lads asked them if they weren’t worried about going home so late at night. The respectable octo-nonagenarians replied that they were dropping off first to pick up some fish and chips for supper, too late to cook.

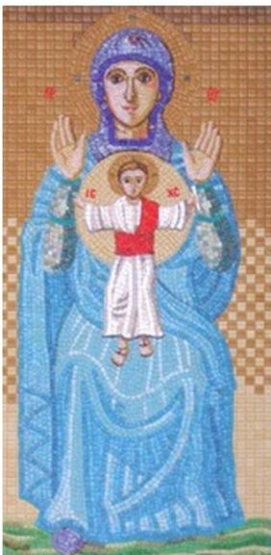
Marian developed Parkinson's disease. Sadly, for us, she had to move to a care home in the north to be near her daughter and family. Also, sadly for **Marian**, she moved away from her friends. I loved our committee meetings in those days, all members, **Margaret, Marian, Joy Laundry and Patrick Pike**, sadly missed by me. Our meetings were such fun.

Christina (Tina) Koenig

Tina was a very active member of SCA for many years as has been, and still is, **Peter**, her husband. **Peter** has our deepest sympathies. My first impression of both **Tina and Peter** on meeting them was that they were a very handsome couple indeed and looked so well-suited. They were both very energetic and both were very hospitable. Members were invited to their home on several occasions. Tea was laid on, cakes made by **Tina** and sandwiches made by **Peter**. It was also an opportunity to view **Peter's** latest paintings and **Tina's** developing or completed mosaics.

Both **Tina** and **Peter** attended every event we had. At our weekends away, **Tina** usually had a talk prepared on an interesting subject. Her last one at the now closed but loved St. Cuthman's Retreat was on the Ravenna mosaics. **She and Peter** had been on holiday in Ravenna. **Tina** had taken some wonderful photos, researching and using what she had learnt for her talk. **Tina** loved to learn, languages being one of her interests.

Tina was the second of 3 generations of family members of the SCA. **Tina's** mother, **Maria Millward**, had also been an active member of many years. She painted icons in her own style. She made metal covers herself to surround the image, ('revetment' or 'riza'), mostly from pewter but sometimes from other metals such as copper. Later, **Gaby, Tina and Peter's** daughter, joined the SCA. too. - **Mary Donaghey**



(Samples of Tina's Mosaics works Top left, *Magnificat* 6 top right *Desamparados*.

Below: Tina with Patrick



Below: Two poems from Gaby Koenig

"How long"

How long is death? Is
it the moment We
stop our breath? Or
all the moments
They are not there?
How long is grief?
Is it forever?
Or all the moments That
we have wept?
How long is memory?
How long will I know What her voice
sounded like, How our
conversations would go? How long
can I hold on To the things that we
did? When I have lost them
How do I get them back?
There is no getting you back. You
are still dead.
No more phone calls
No more meals to prepare
No more time spent together
I wish you were still here
Is everything over
When all's said and done
Am I not your daughter
When I don't have a Mum
Or is that all I am now
The girl whose Mum is dead
Treated with kid gloves

A mark on my forehead
I want to be your memory
Without becoming you
How do I do that
I don't even know
But here we are crying
Over a piece of bread

"Not getting married"

I am not getting married
I will never find 'the one'
I will never wear that white dress
And walk down the aisle I will
never be crushed by
responsibilities That should be
shared and halved
I may be judged incomplete
Thought immature and lonely But
that thought is yours and yours
alone I am one whole entire person
I am not alone
I can throw my own damn party
Make promises of my own I am
not selfish, heartless or
uncompassionate It seems like you
might be though If my experiences
seem incomprehensible
Maybe it is time for you to grow.

Edward by Sarah Sharp

I often wonder if I would have become an artist if it wasn't for Edward. Edward was born a healthy baby of nearly 11 lbs. It was a beautiful birth, but then at three weeks old he became gravely ill, a severe brain hemorrhage left him with severe learning difficulties and autism. And so, for the past 29 years, we have walked a path that has gifted us with utterly joyous moments, miracles and wonders, to the very opposite, a desolation that took me to the darkest of places...the belly of the whale. Extreme ups and downs are how I would describe it. Desolation and Consolation, as St Ignatius informs us.

For the past 20 years, I realise that my obsession with drawing, painting, creating, Mother and Child, often Mary and Christ, is because through Our Lady's story, I know that I am not alone, her story echoes so many mothers' stories. For many years Edward and I would share a large conservatory that had two rooms, one my art room, and the other where Edward found his love of water features. Water has been a constant soother in Edward's life and an outlet for his creativity, a careful balancing act of found objects, old sponges, wooden spoons, plant pots and all sort of things would suddenly be missing and invariably found in one of Edward's water sculptures.

There is something incredibly precious and at the same time very difficult about being the mother of an adult child who without the care of others would not survive. Edward's innocence makes him vulnerable in a harsh, unaccepting and destructive world. Those with learning disabilities are one of the most marginalised of groups where we deem it non-discriminatory to abort disabled babies up to term and something that we simply aren't allowed to talk about.

Edward moved to an intentional community called Esk Valley Camphill Community over three years ago, and so we too moved to North Yorkshire, which meant he could still come home every other weekend and holidays; we have balance. Living in community has allowed my son to grow and thrive in ways I never imagined possible. He is respected and valued for who he is, an individual who is part of something much larger than himself, and this spills out into our much smaller family life. I cannot begin to tell you how living within community has in all reality saved my son, they have breathed life into him, something our secular society was taking out of him, rapidly, so much so, that the future felt grim.

I am first and foremost Edward's mum, and secondly, a visual artist, and yet they now 'hum' together, again, there is balance. In the early years creating art was life and soul saving; there is now a less intense necessity to get what felt wordless into image.

When Edward comes back home, I tend to his feet. He loves this, so do I. It's a moment where my son allows bodily contact. I wash each foot in the warm soapy water, clean and cut his nails, and then I dry each foot, lingering as I do this. Edward is elated, he beams away and makes his special noises which quite clearly says, 'this is good', even though Edward has good verbal language, his gentle hums and rocking are also present, and my broken child who is actually so whole, holy, if only the world could truly see, always reduces me to quiet tears. I cry for all the broken, those who don't have someone tending to their needs in a tender way.

Edward has taken to the Latin Mass, I never expected to be a Latin Mass lover, but such is the mystery of life, so there we find ourselves. Immersed in sacrifice, submission, silence, beauty, music, and a poetic language that goes deep. We all breathe. A few weeks ago, someone said after Mass, your son is so happy, and he is, he can be himself, he is accepted.

I would like to share with you a little about the outstanding Esk Valley Camphill Community (EVCC) my son is a member of. It was born out of the ashes of the Camphill Community (CVT), Botton Village, founded in 1954 within the North York Moors; however, CVT changed beyond recognition nine years ago and so this place too was, in effect, 'broken'. And yet Esk Valley Camphill Community is carrying on the traditional ways of intentional community living, it is alive and the extraordinary selflessness of the community members, is astonishing, in a world that only seems to value a consumer ideology. It is a community of just over 90 people, including those with disability, co-workers and their children, and volunteers.

If anyone who reads this would like to know more about the community, please do get in touch with me. Good things are always under threat, and Esk Valley Camphill Community is not immune to this. Some things go deeper than money, deeper than contemporary values. I think the video and website I attach says it all.

I can't see my art changing, I used to think, oh I'll move on from this phase when things are better, easier, but of course, I won't, as the story of Christ, and the Mother of God is eternally within my being.

Sarah Sharpe

<https://www.eskvalleycamphill.org>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CTHpi6sxvo>

www.sarahsharpe-art.co.uk

Following: Four paintings by Sarah Sharpe: Top left, *Beloved* 2018; top right, *Pieta* 2024; bottom left, *Untitled* 2018; bottom right; *Blue Moon Waiting* 2018. More of Sarah's beautiful work is available (contact James Keay-Bright)



IN RESPONSE TO SARAH'S ARTICLE ON EDWARD

Reading Sarah's article about her son Edward, I was reminded of my three years working part time, one then two days a week, in an institute for adults with learning difficulties, a title which has since changed. The 'attendees' would arrive daily to work and to learn. The principal of the local college insisted on employing practising artists. A friend had been given the post but had booked to go to China for the first month. She asked me to fill-in for her. After my interview, I attended the institute briefly for an introduction prior to working there.

My reaction, I'm afraid to admit, was horror, accompanied by a quick decision that I could not work there. Wheelchairs had always disturbed me. I later realized that it was the unfortunate users of them. Also, I had never seen a person with Down's syndrome and I was confronted by a people with a variety of syndromes who came up far too close to greet me. Like GK Chesterton, I valued my 'personal space'. After 15 minutes, one person came to me and repeated the usual greeting, "Hello, my name is..... what's your name?". A voice in my head said, "You can learn from here. "I accepted.

And I did. I learnt about the strengths of communication, love and trust, both from the staff and from my students. The principal of the college showed insight. Two artists were amongst my students. Michael and John saw the classroom as their studio. They neither required nor wanted input from me other than to show me their latest work at the end of the day. However, I had five students needing to learn hand coordination. They wanted to draw flowers. We began with a circle with smaller circles, petals, surrounding it. Progress was slow but one person couldn't join the two ends of the line to make the circle.

The second week, she suddenly achieved this. The circle was very wobbly but the ends of the line were joined. I exclaimed in delight, "Julie, oh that's lovely!" I had grown up, with much criticism and suspicion about things I said and did. Suddenly I felt that my genuine comment would be considered false, hypocritical and felt I would lose the trust I had built up. But no, the most healing and remarkable thing for me happened. All seated around the table looked up at her drawing and said in unison, "Yes, Julie that's lovely"! Their affirmation of my comment and genuine pleasure at another's accomplishment, a form of love for each other, initiated a freedom within me and a confidence in who I was and what I gave.

I learnt from staff efficiency and the necessity of communication. Their dedication was admirable. I had great admiration for parents too; how their lives must have changed. I entered some students work for an exhibition near Tate Modern. On my day off, I took them to see their work. On the coach, I overheard two mothers who had volunteered to come exchanging their pleasure and relief at being able to enjoy a day out with their adult sons while someone else took charge.

Due to my friend obtaining an alternative post, I worked there for three years. I wept openly when I left to take up full-time work but armed with so much valuable experience.

Mary Donaghey

Below two samples of Sinclair Webster's work: Bottom left, *Bridge in Summer*; bottom right – *Blues and Royals*)



USING ART AS A CATHOLIC

Judith Gait

Matthew 4:19 “And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fish for people'” Reflecting on this Gospel passage and many others as a Catholic and a person trained in art, how can I put into practice what I have learned for the benefit of others? First of all, perhaps it is important to say that I trained in Fine Art and not art therapy which I suppose most persons think of when they consider using art to improve health outcomes. However, those whose training and practice is in Fine Art can also have a role in “fishing for persons”. Most of my working life has been spent teaching art and textiles to students in pupil referral units and those with chronic health difficulties particularly drug and alcohol addictions. I would like to show you some of their work...

“Teapots” This was a large mural which helped to brighten the quite barren church hall where I taught. Each section is approximately 12 X12 inches. It was painted in the detox section of the Addictions Unit, so the students were at this point just starting the recovery process. It was important that what they were learning and creating as a group would be something that was appropriate to their skill level and would help them have a sense of achievement. “Teapots” I thought would help remind them that there were other beverages than beer or cider! After completion of the mural greeting cards were made using this image and sold to help with funding. That others might want to buy an image of what they had created was a huge boost to their self esteem and confidence.

“Fern Housing Quilt” This was a project in the Jamaican Elders Community in Bristol. It was made as a commission for a local housing agency. This group also had a commission from the National Trust to produce a wall hanging for the Education Centre at Tynesfield, a large National Trust property near Bristol. Community integration, self confidence and justified pride in their achievements were some of the areas that an arts based project can help to improve a person's life, and I think this project and many others that the group worked on did give them a real sense of these goals.

“Maryna's Painting” Recently I have been offering some of my studio space to a young woman refugee from Ukraine. Originally, she was working as an accountant in Kiev and had no training in art. Through an introduction from a mutual friend from our local church, I suggested that perhaps a way of overcoming a bit of the stress she was feeling because of the invasion would be to learn to paint; have a go! This is her second oil painting: “Maryna's Painting”



Above left and right *Fern Housing quilt*



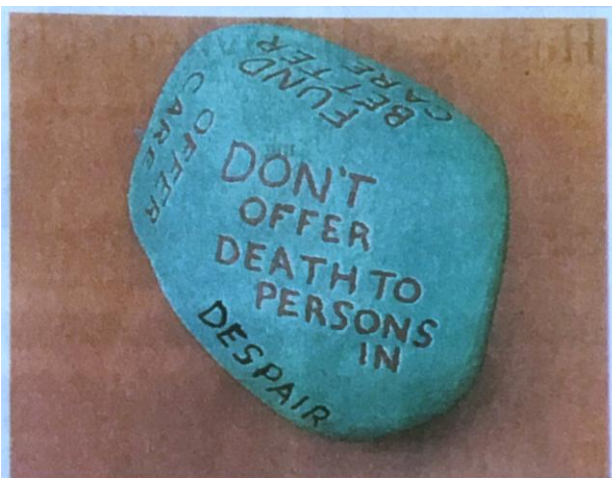
Above: *Maryana's painting*

I hope the above examples might, in a small way, help to promote the Gospel Message, and, I am very thankful to be both a Catholic and an artist. I was wondering if some of the members of SCA might find of interest this small performance art project in which I've been recently involved?

The idea really came from Luke's Gospel...19: 39-40. I'm paraphrasing...but Jesus has been teaching His disciples as He is on His way to Jerusalem and some Pharisees are trying to silence what is being proclaimed, to which Jesus replies. "...if these were silent, the stones would shout out!"

I was influenced by Adam Smith-Connor being arrested because of praying for his son. Also I have been quite concerned about silencing of opposition to Assisted Dying. My 'performance art' has been to paint a number of stones (like the stones in Luke that are shouting out). So if you want to put my thoughts and paintings in the Newsletter...I've included some images. They all go out onto the War Memorial in the Town Centre, and I feel this is a good place as those persons who are remembered died for the freedom of speech and thought.

Judith Gait



Artist's stone protest

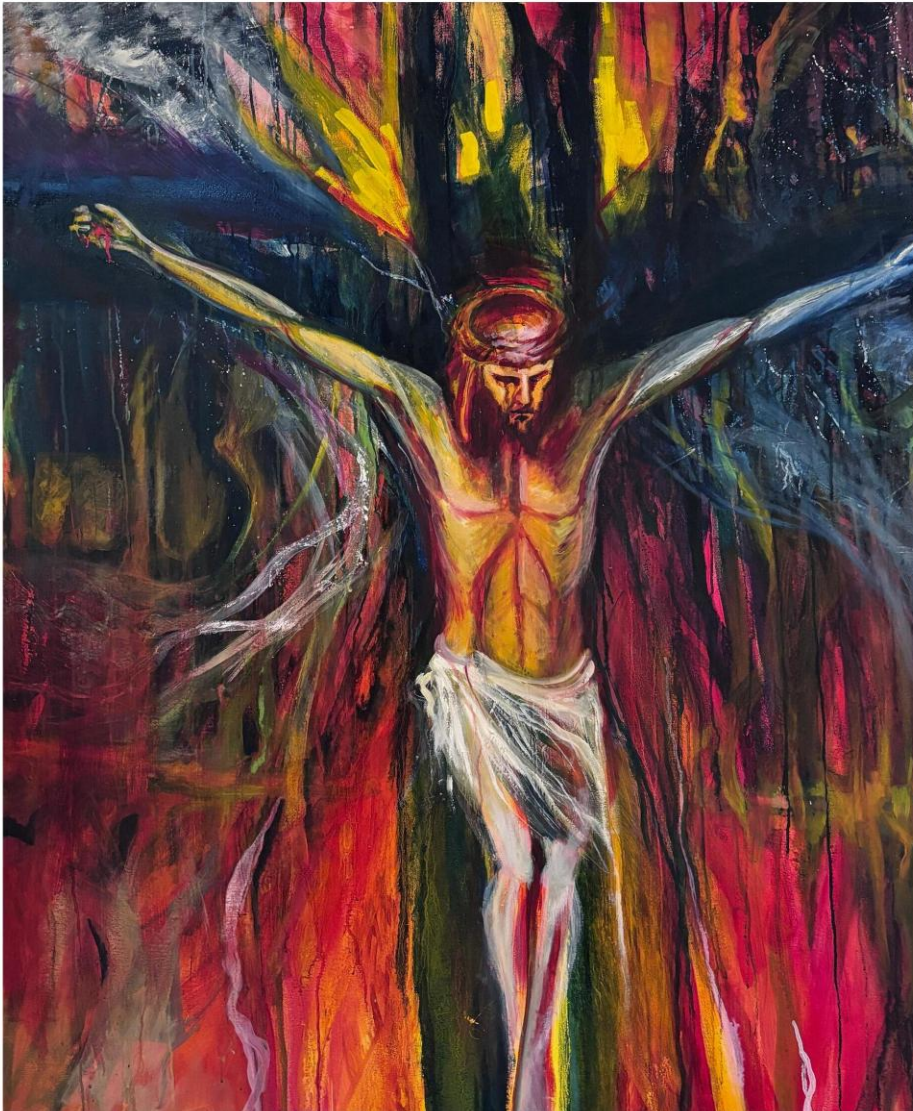
A Bridport artist has created a space at Bridport War Memorial for people to place painted stones reflecting their criticisms of the changes to the assisted dying bill which 'have insufficient protections for the vulnerable'.

Artist Judith Gait said: "I have made a bit of 'public art' about the bill, which I

for one find very difficult. "If you are a parent to a young adult who may be experiencing depression, or an eating disorder, under the bill which has been passed, this young person will have a right to request assisted dying. The parent will have no say in the matter as this would be seen as 'coercion'."

Judith Tutin

Below are images of Judith Tutin's work, the Stations of the Cross, on display in Truro Cathedral. Judith has a booklet with the full set of images and an explanation of her work which can be sent to you via email (contact: James Keay-Bright)

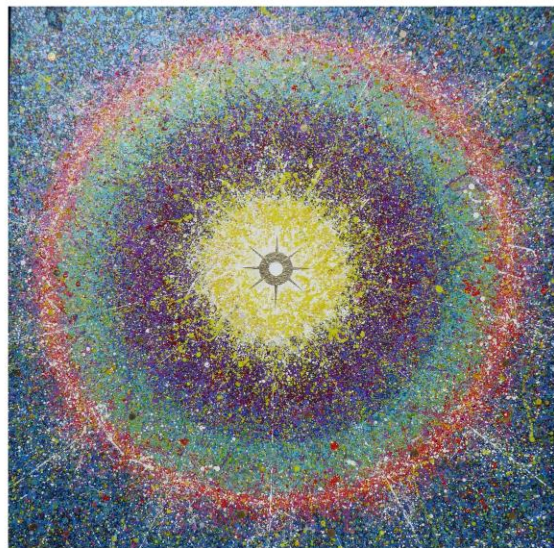
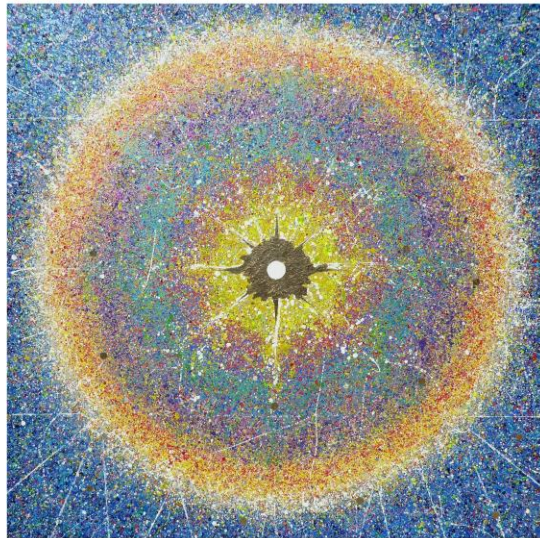


CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHER ARTISTS

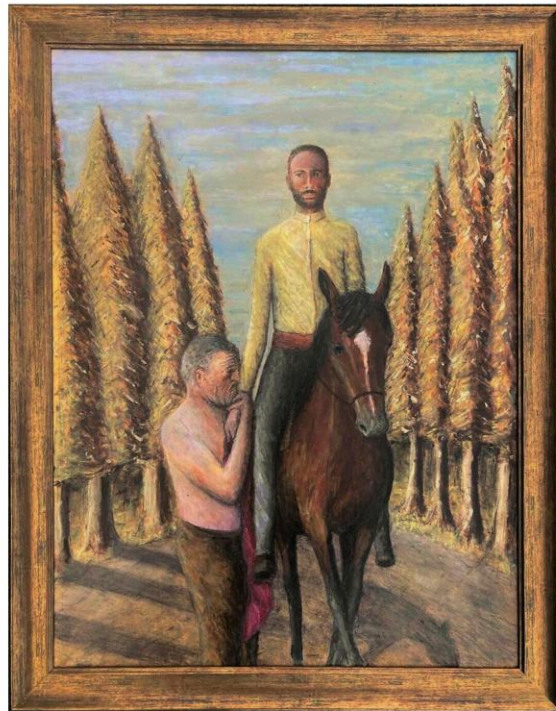
Below are samples of **Lucy Crabtree's** beautiful restoration work



Here are Nigel Groom's series of paintings titled: **Top**, *O Lux Creaturae*; **Bottom left**, *O Lux Laetitiae*; **Bottom right**, *O Lux Beatissima*



Finally, a series of recent paintings by **James Keay-Bright**: Top left *Be Not Afraid* (a version of the Annunciation); top right *St Martin of Tours – Learning to give, learning to receive*; bottom centre – *St. Francis and the Bear*, based on a legend of St Francis preventing a bear from entering the town of Lucca. The bear looks a bit crestfallen!



SCA OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

Principal Patron – the Archbishop of Westminster

President – Fr Patrick van der Vorst

Vice President (acting) – Mary Jean Donaghey

Chairman – Mary Jean Donaghey
maryjeandonaghey5@gmail.com
07727 698 793

Treasurer – Mary Jean Donaghey

Membership - Irene Novelli
irenenovelli@hotmail.com

Bulletin compiler – Mary Jean Donaghey

Exhibition Curator – Mary Jean Donaghey

Bulletin editor and producer– James Keay-Bright

Patrick Pike Fund - Lena Lim

Sub Committee

Events – Beatà Rock

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Payment by Standing Order: £19

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