

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

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The day Jack's Irish squad met the Pope

THIRTY YEARS ago, Mgr Liam Boyle flew to Sardinia to see Ireland's opening game against England in the 1990 World Cup. "I was just there as an ordinary punter," he told us this week. When he was asked to say Mass for the Irish squad at their hotel, he had to borrow vestments from the local church.

"Most of the team were Catholics. Jack stood a little to one side. He was very respectful. He was a very decent, generous, kind man. He joked that if Ireland got beaten, he would bring in a Church of England vicar for the next game."

In fact Ireland got through their group, and then defeated Romania in Genoa in a penalty shoot-out to reach the quarter finals, where they would play the hosts in Rome. Boyle recalls: "At dinner after the game against Romania, I was sitting in between Jack and the physio, Mick Byrne." Jack had promised Byrne that if Ireland got to Rome, he would meet the Pope. He asked Boyle if he could pull a few strings. "I knew Sean Brady, who was rector of the Irish College at the time, and he and Bishop Tony Farquhar made the



arrangements. There was no bother. We were the only team that had asked for an audience."

Famously, Pope John Paul II, a decent goalkeeper as a young man in Wadowice, talked tactics with the Irish keeper Packie Bonner. The next day, Bonner spilled a speculative shot from Roberto Donadoni, leaving the goal wide open for Salvatore Schillaci to poke the ball home, and Italy won 1-0. Ireland's fabulous World Cup adventure was over. In the dressing room afterwards, Jack lit a cigarette. "Packie," he said in his laconic Ashington drawl, "the Pope would have saved that."

Monsignor Boyle, who celebrated his ninetieth birthday two weeks ago, still says Mass every Sunday in the parish of Knockaderry, in the diocese of Limerick.

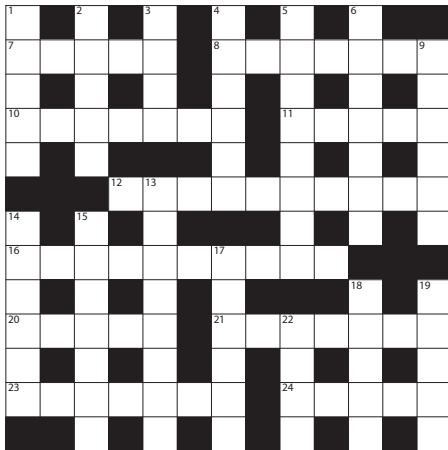
THE AUSTRALIAN historian Nick Brodie didn't miss a single Sunday Eucharist during the pandemic – having been behind the camera on the other side of the altar each week.

"Our first Mass was the digital equivalent of an underfunded field hospital," Nick tells us. "Fr Brian stood at the altar. I was at the altar too, standing close on the other side. With me was an old bookshelf, upon which was mounted a repurposed monitor arm with my old Nexus 7 tablet attached to it by every elastic band I possessed. Mum texted me afterwards to say it reminded her of the home Masses we had when I was a kid."

"We gained liturgical complexity over subsequent weeks," Nick, who belongs to the parish of Sandy Bay-Taroona in Tasmania, says. "Proximity to the microphone made me conscious of the need to say the people's parts for and with the whole Christian community, and heightened my sense of their being mysteriously present. And while feeling privileged and a bit unworthy to receive Communion in such times, I was acutely aware that it is always done for the sake of the world outside."

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 716 Alanus



Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 18 July, The Tablet, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY. Email: thetablet@thetablet.co.uk, with Crossword in the subject field. Please include your full name, telephone number and email address, and a mailing address. Three books – on Saints, Monasticism and Philosophy of Religion – from the OUP's Very Short Introduction series will go to the sender of the first correct entry drawn at random. **We cannot process entries or prizes at present. Please keep entering. Winners will be notified and prizes awarded as soon possible.**

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Across

- 7 Grandson of Levi, uncle of Moses and Aaron (5)
8 Major prophet and Book of the O.T. (7)
10 Start and one of the Propers of the Mass (7)
11 Port where gold for Solomon arrived (1 Kings) found in Masfield's "Cargoes" (5)
12 Members of order founded by St Robert of Molesme, et al (10)
16 Blessings (eight) pronounced by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (10)
20 Son of Nahor, father of Abraham (5)
21 Sacramental given by Our Lady via St Simon Stock worn over the shoulders (7)
23 Reference to vocation to the priesthood (3,4)

- 24 One of the twin founders of Rome in the mythological story (5)

Down

- 1 (& 14 Down): Affirmed statement in book that it is free from doctrinal error (5,6)
2 Greek letter used in mathematical representation (5)
3 River spanned in Florence by the Ponte Vecchio (4)
4 Piece by, e.g., Beethoven (Op. 20) or Saint-Saëns, for specific number of instruments (6)
5 "Pray for us who have ----- to thee", Marian Miraculous Medal (8)
6 Popular British dish from the oven, especially on Fridays (4,3)
9 Konrad, Nobel Prize-winning zoologist, author of *King Solomon's Ring* (6)

- 13 European national (8)
14 See 1 Down
15 Angel who appeared to "the handmaid of the Lord" (7)
17 Early martyr and patron saint of schoolgirls killed with her followers in Cologne (6)
18 The "----- di Firenze", the cathedral of Florence (5)
19 Goethe character who sells his soul to the Devil (5)
22 Place of crucial siege (1291) effectively ending the Crusades (4)

SUDOKU | Challenging

				1		5	2
			8			7	1
7				6	4		
	4					5	8
		8		7			2
1	9						
8			4				
	6		2		3		
		4	1			9	

Each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9.

Solution to the 27 June puzzle

6	1	3	9	7	4	2	5	8
9	2	4	8	1	5	6	3	7
8	7	5	2	3	6	4	9	1
5	4	6	7	8	9	3	1	2
1	3	9	5	4	2	7	8	6
7	8	2	1	6	3	9	4	5
2	5	8	3	9	7	1	6	4
3	6	7	4	5	1	8	2	9
4	9	1	6	2	8	5	7	3

Solution to the 27 June crossword No. 713

Across: 7 Diet Of; 8 Ararat; 10 Failure; 11 Verdi; 12 Chad; 13 Cinna; 17 Manet; 18 Anon; 22 Whoop; 23 Eyesore; 24 Semite; 25 Nutmeg.
Down: 1 Edifice; 2 Veritas; 3 Lotus; 4 Craving; 5 Truro; 6 Stair; 9 Delivered; 14 Carpets; 15 Informs; 16 Undergo; 19 Twist; 20 Worms; 21 Rebus.