

A world where hope springs from 'failure'

John
Battle



The great Irish 20th century poet Patrick Kavanagh – from a farming community in County Monaghan – had the great gift of what William Blake described as the capacity to see the whole world in a grain of sand.

But perhaps his best poetry deals with a great doubt about himself and his role in the world around him. One of his poems, *From Failure Up*, could serve as a leitmotif for the whole of the week of the Passion and that deep experience of 'failure' that Jesus went through right up to his death on the Cross as we ran-

Richard Dawkins got going and the progress of secularism moved in on popular commentaries but Kavanagh's concern seems to be with how a person survives in this climate.

Yes, there is experience of personal failure, magnificently summed up in the two lines about lying "face downwards and his nose in the rubble that was his achievements" but it is not a position of personal resignation and despair. Rather, Kavanagh insists that we should continue to struggle to reach to God and to look for Him by developing a resistant sense of "purpose" and "Meaning", (deliberately spelt with a capital "M"). But, crucially, Kavanagh knows where to turn in his search for purpose and meaning, as the final closing line of the poem makes clear in a prayer "O God give us purpose."

In our new predominantly

Anchor House wins new training accolade

Catholic homeless charity Anchor House won the prize for Training Excellence at the *Construction News Specialists Awards* ceremony.

In partnership with SDP Solutions, Anchor House provides workers for the Live Train project.

Live Train is a construction programme which gives residents of Anchor House – a life skills centre for homeless adults – and other unemployed people the skills and experience to start a career in construction.

The bespoke training course is carried out in a workshop in Anchor House as well as on site, currently Rydon's Ashmole estate in Lambeth, which provides the best opportunity to learn valuable trade skills.

Rebecca Evans, editor of *Construction News* magazine, called

Live Train "the best specialist contractors in the UK".

She said that it was well known that specialists are at the heart of the construction industry. "You provide the innovation that the country needs to survive."

Anchor House director Keith Fernet said: "In increasingly difficult times, Anchor House continues to respond flexibly and achieves above industry averages in finding housing and employment in collaboration with our residents and partners."

In 2010, Anchor House was recognised as a centre of National Excellence and was awarded five National Training Awards by the UK Skills Council, including the Head of Employment and Education, Aggie Chikiwa (a former resident), being awarded UK's Individual Trainer of the Year.

In 2009, two residents jointly won the City and East London Employment Partnership Award for Outstanding Individual Back to Work.

In 2007, one of Anchor House's residents was awarded National Apprentice of the Year by the National Apprenticeship Service.

Another example of innovation is the film, *The Truth About Stanley*, which was produced in association with Trademark Films and The Big Issue Foundation.

It is about friendship, loss, and the way in which people choose to deal with personal trauma.

The Truth About Stanley has been accepted for a film festival in Los Angeles, and was described by one critic as the "21st-century *Cathy Come Home*".