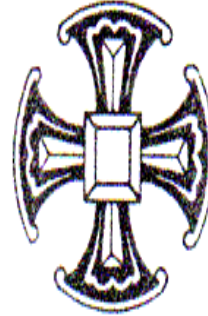


The Catholic Parish of Springfield

The Augustinian

St Augustine of Canterbury - **Springfield**
New Hall Chapel - **Boreham**
Church of Our Saviour - **Chelmer Village**
<http://www.staugustine-springfield.com/>



November 2009

Cost 50p

Father Frank Writes

My dear friends,

It gives me great pleasure to present another edition of The Augustinian. Many thanks to all our contributors and especially to our capable and enthusiastic editor, Nigel Gardener.

As always I hope there is something for everyone – but if you spot a gap, particularly if you can remedy it, do get in touch. It is, after all, your parish magazine, dependent on your contributions!

In this edition we can find out more about Fr Charles, our good friend from Uganda; we can discover more about the parish pilgrimages to Wales and the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. Stephen Bailey has written a piece about his own spiritual pilgrimage, one which has led him to embrace the Benedictine way of life at Worth Abbey. You may have already read this in the OLI magazine, but Stephen is one of us and we rightly celebrate his new way of life with him, as well as praying for him and his parents Terry and Mary. The article on Gregory the Great is informative and the one entitled ‘Colour Blind’ is most revealing and challenging. Rev Guy Goodall tells us how we can get more involved with ministry in our local hospital and, still on a medical theme, there is something about the wonderful Helen Rollason Charity. Liam fills us in with some more about our local pre-reformation churches and Chris discloses some more information about Japan.

There are, I am sure, many budding writers out there with a story to tell. Why not let us have something for the next edition. One omission this time is ‘Parish Peoples Pastimes’ – if you would like to contribute next time round, please let me know.

November is a month when we particularly focus on those who have gone before us. On 2nd we celebrated All Souls Day and on 8th we turn to Remembrance Sunday when we pray for all of those who have lost their lives as a result of warfare. Throughout the month the names of our departed loved ones, which we have placed in the brown ‘Month of Holy Souls’ envelopes are remembered at all Masses. At other times the names are placed on a silver dish before the tabernacle in St Augustine’s church.

Happy reading!

With my blessing.

Father Frank

Father Charles

It is always a pleasure to welcome Father Charles Kakooza to our Parish and we are extremely grateful for his help and support during his ministry in Springfield. Father Charles kindly agreed to an interview for the Augustinian and it is a real privilege to be able to put this information into an article.

Father Charles was ordained on 28th June 1987 and is celebrating 22 years in the Priesthood. During this time he has worked in seven parishes of Hoima diocese including St. Mary's Parish Kagadi where he is currently based. The Hoima diocese covers some 120 square miles and St. Mary's is actually one of the smaller parishes. There are 16 Mass centres in the Parish serving a population of over 16,000. One of Father Charles' three wishes, raised during our interview, was for every Mass Centre to have regular support from a Priest. The parish is predominantly rural in nature with the majority of people employed in some form of agriculture. Father Charles notes that over 50% of the population are Catholic and he, together with a second Priest, is responsible for the spiritual guidance of over 8,000 parishioners. A real source of concern is the widespread nature of the Parish with some parishioners only able to celebrate the Eucharist monthly. Father Charles speaks with pride about the vital role of the Eucharistic Ministers who support the work of the Church in the Parish.



Father Charles is passionate about the importance of education and is proud of the role the Church has fulfilled in providing schools throughout the country. In Uganda primary education is offered freely by the Government but lack of resources is a significant problem. There is a real concern that young people who should be entitled to a quality education are missing out on the opportunity because of class sizes of over 100 pupils to each teacher. This really puts in context some of the issues in UK schools where complaints of classes of over 35 continue to be raised by parents, Government ministers and teacher professional associations. Teacher motivation is also a concern with salaries needing to be subsidized by second jobs and staff often being unavailable for work for many months of the year. As a result the Church has stepped in to provide an improving primary education and a higher quality secondary school system. Each Parish has at least one primary school and he is keen to promote improved education opportunities for older children at a cost that is affordable. The second of Father Charles' three wishes was for every child to be able to go to a good school that cherishes their religious values and educational needs.

Father Charles sees his spiritual role as fundamental to his role as a Priest but is fully aware of the importance of providing for the physical and social well-being of his parishioners in St. Mary's. The Church, together with the local Health Centres and the security provided by the Police is crucial in ensuring that a safe and secure environment is maintained. He views good leadership in these areas as essential and providing a positive role model for everyone as fundamental. Father Charles' third wish was for political and economic stability throughout the world.

There are so many issues that he feels influence his role. One particular area of interest is the role of the orphanage where the Church's function is key. There are increasing numbers of children relying on this service and Father Charles is deeply worried by the large numbers of

widows due to a high male death rate. Father Charles is currently trying to raise the money to provide a 60,000 litre under-ground water tank for the orphanage. The total cost of this project is Euro 3140 – approximately £2, 743. The need for wealthier parishes such as our to continue to support the work of the Church in general, and Father Charles in particular, should not be under-estimated. We can make a real difference to the lives of so many people through our willingness to live our lives by Christian principles of love and charity.

The Parish is facing many challenges and the growing secularization amongst young people is worrying. Father Charles comments that “on Sunday the whole family used to come to Church together but now the young people say that are going to watch a video or see friends instead.” He really wants to develop the youth apostolate and talks passionately about his wish for Chaplains to work full-time with young people in the Parish. If we consider the excellent young our own young people do through diocesan services such as Walsingham House near Canvey Island we can see the evidence of such a policy’s success.

In conclusion, Father Charles comments

“It is possibly easy to become a priest, but a bit harder to stay and keep the priesthood safe and sound. It has not been an easy journey: many ups and downs, but what has kept me moving is the power of prayer. Prayer works not only for the priest, but for every vocation or lifestyle.

So, what I am telling you is that in times of stress or disappointments I have turned to my God and I assure you it works.”

The Parish Pilgrimage to Wales

September 2009

Twenty five parishioners recently returned from a most delightful pilgrimage to Wales, the seventh to be led by Fr Frank. Some of us previously knew little about Christianity in Wales and particularly Catholicism. Also, few if any, had visited the sites where we were able to celebrate Mass.

Our first destination was Glastonbury where we celebrated Mass in the church of Our Lady of

Glastonbury after visiting the historic Abbey. Legend says that Joseph of Arimathea built a wattle church when he came to these shores and whether it is true or not, it is a historical fact that there was a very early Christian settlement there. When the Saxons reached Glastonbury in A.D. 658, the “Old Church” as it was known, was already standing and dedicated to Our Lady. The church and the old statue of Our Lady was probably destroyed in the Great Fire of 1148. Although the church was subsequently rebuilt and re-dedicated to Our Lady, the Dissolution in 1539 saw the loss of the statue and a fading of the memory of the ancient shrine of Our Lady of Glastonbury.

In 1939 the foundations of a new church were laid and in 1955 the shrine of Our Lady of Glastonbury was canonically restored following the blessing of a statue bearing the ancient title, Our Lady St Mary of Glastonbury.



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We were joined at Mass and at dinner in our hotel later by Phil and Sue Harvey, previous parishioners known by many, who moved to Somerset four years ago. It was a very pleasant re-union.

The following morning, we visited Wells Cathedral before continuing into Wales. The Cathedral, rich in history and architecture, is one of the finest medieval cathedrals in the land with a spectacular west facade. On route to our destination Gwbert-on-Sea near Cardigan, we visited the church of Our Lady of Pen-Rhys, set in the heart of the mining area in the Rhondda. This is an ancient pilgrimage site which began after the miraculous formation of a statue following the lightening strike of a tree. The subsequently built church was destroyed, as was the statue, during the reformation. The shrine was restored as recently as during post-war years.

We were warmly welcomed at the church and provided with refreshments after Mass. The visit made us realise however how fortunate we are in England and in Chelmsford particularly to have such a vibrant community. The situation in Penrhys can only be described as perilous with a small Catholic population and a lower standard of living than the one most of us enjoy. In fact, it is likely that the church where we celebrated Mass could well close in the near future. It would be wonderful if more pilgrimages could be made like ours. By the time we left the church, the Welsh mist and drizzle had become established and our short trip to the shrine of Our Lady of Pen-rhys was virtually in the cloud due to the elevation. Fr Frank led us in The Angelus on the mountain top despite the weather! Unfortunately, we were not able to visit the Holy Well due to the prevailing conditions.



We then continued our journey to Gwbert-on-Sea where we checked into our hotels for three nights. On Wednesday, we went into nearby Cardigan to the church of Our Lady of the Taper and the National Shrine of Wales. The weather had now changed and we were to enjoy late summer sunshine from then on thus confounding the sceptics!

During the Middle - Ages there was a notable pilgrimage in honour of Our Lady of Cardigan. In fact, devotion to Mary was once universal in Wales. Many places are called Llanfair or Capel Mair (Mary's church, chapel) and dozens of flowers and plants bear her name. No girl was given the name Mair (Mary) as it was reserved for Our Lady.



There is a beautiful legend that describes how a statue of Mary was found on the shore of the River Teifi. Maybe it was something to do with Flemish merchants who settled in Cardigan and traded in Welsh wool out of the port. It is believed that the original shrine resembled an earlier one in the city of Arras which was

then in Flanders. In more recent times, the original statue proved not to be durable and a new one in bronze was commissioned. In 1970, the new church of Our Lady of the Taper was consecrated and the shrine established there. The symbolism is that Mary presents her Son to

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us as she did to the Wise Men to be adored and the taper (or candle) held in her right hand testifies that He is The Light of the World.

On Thursday, we journeyed to St David's and to St Non's chapel nearby. St Non was the mother of St David. The beautiful chapel is a relatively recent structure albeit in the style of an ancient chapel. The ruins of the original chapel are nearby. The chapel is part of the complex of a Retreat House administered by the Sisters of Mercy. The setting high on a cliff overlooking the bay is truly magnificent. Again, we were warmly welcomed and provided with relaxation and refreshments after Mass. We were reluctant to leave but we had planned to visit St David's



Cathedral and the ruins of the Bishops Palace as well as explore the City so we rejoined our coach for the short distance into the centre.

After leaving St David's, we headed back to our hotels calling in at Fishguard for a short break. We were also going to visit Aberporth but we were thwarted by a broken-down truck in a narrow lane which we had to negotiate so we had an earlier return to our hotels and some relaxation before dinner.

On Friday we left Gwbert-on-Sea to journey to St Asaph in North Wales. We broke our journey with a stop-over in Bala where we celebrated Mass in the church of Our Lady of Fatima. It is reputed to be the only church in the world to be dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima outside of Portugal. The history of the church is fascinating, the building having been many things including a barn in which cattle were kept. The establishment of the church was due to the dedication of one priest in particular. Again we were made to realise how fortunate we are since the known Catholic population in Bala is just 32 and average Mass attendance on Sunday is 22-24 adults and children. Needless to say, we were warmly welcomed and provided with refreshments after Mass with the added attraction of a tombola which we took advantage of with much enthusiasm and hilarity. One of our group actually won a pair of oven gloves to add to everyone's amusement!

We departed Bala for our final hotel, The Oriel, in St Asaph where we were to stay for one night. This was an excellent hotel with very friendly and helpful staff and a fine conservatory where we were able to relax for our last evening together.



We departed on Saturday morning for the relatively short distance to Holywell where we visited St Winefride's Well. According to legend, St Winefride's Well first erupted on the spot where her would-be suitor Caradog cut off her head with his sword.

[You do right when you offer faith to God]

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Restored to life at the prayers of her uncle, St Beuno, Winefride lived as a nun until her second death 22 years later. Winefride however was real rather than legendary and the extraordinary and enduring personality of this 7th century Welsh woman has meant that she has been venerated as a saint ever since her death. Since that time too, her Well has been a place of pilgrimage and healing – the only place in Britain with a continuous history of public pilgrimage for over 13 centuries. We then went to the nearby church of St Winefride where Mass was celebrated.

After Mass we began our journey back to Springfield, deviating only slightly to drop off our Tour Escort Paul Crossey from Liverpool who had been a mine of information and who had clearly done an enormous amount of research to help make our pilgrimage so memorable.

Our excellent coach driver Bob Hoy brought us safely back home (but then had to drive all the way back to his base in Haverfordwest – but needless to say, not until the following morning!).

Our overall impression of our ground-breaking pilgrimage to Wales – absolutely wonderful and with generally marvellous weather.

Brentwood Diocese Pilgrimage to Lourdes **20th to 26th July 2009**

On 20th July a group of ten parishioners from St. Augustine's joined with Bishop Thomas McMahon on the annual diocesan pilgrimage. We arrived at Stansted where the pilgrims meet to fly out to Lourdes. On arrival we were told our flight was to be delayed by one hour. That did not dampen our enthusiasm.

We managed to have some lunch a glass of wine as an appetizer. After we booked in with our luggage we said a prayer for a safe journey and pilgrimage in the airport chapel before processing to the flight departure. The flight was a safe one and we landed in Lourdes early Monday evening. A representative from Tangey Tours who was looking after us said 'that the day had been very hot and the heavy rain was on the way'. On arrival at our hotel Padoue we had our evening meal before given the keys to our rooms. Some of us, even though tired, made our first visit to the grotto despite the heavy rain. It is always advisable to have a packed mac in Lourdes!



Lourdes is known throughout the world as a place of prayer and healing where many miraculous cures have taken place. It all began when a fourteen year old Bernadette received a message for the entire world from the Blessed Virgin herself. She had seen 'a lovely lady' in one of the local caves and when a new spring began to flow at that place. This

year the theme was on the life of Bernadette. Bernadette had the courage to let the message of Lourdes be known despite much opposition. The first apparitions took place in February 1858

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on the 11th, 14th and 18th. Bernadette saw a beautiful girl dressed in white inviting her to come closer. Bernadette said "I found my rosary and I wanted to make the sign of the cross. The vision made the sign of the cross with me and then I said the rosary in the presence of this beautiful lady". Many pilgrims when they visit the Grotto prefer to go on the far side of flowing river Gave at first and simply gaze at the Immaculate Mary. Then you find yourself wanting to go closer to the grotto and kneel in prayer. You realize how powerful this place of prayer is with people lighting their candles and praying for the intentions you bring with you.

Our first Mass was at the Grotto on the Tuesday. We joined up with the Bishop of Lancaster, Rt. Rev. Michael Campbell, pilgrims from his diocese, along with Brentwood. The sick pilgrims always have a special place at Lourdes. They receive so much medical care and love from doctors, nurses and assistants who give up their services voluntary. Our diocese has a wonderful team who has been doing this for the last twenty years since our diocese began this annual pilgrimage.

The youth of our diocese who are fantastic met us at the hotel on the first day to take the sick down to the grotto as they pushed them in their wheelchairs. This year we had over 200 hundred youth all so full of energy, laughter and fun under the leadership of Fr. Dominic Howarth, Diocesan Youth Chaplain, Mrs. Sarah Beresford, Director and the young clergy. Among the youth



helping were Michael Barwick and Maria Webb from our parish. It makes you proud to see them working so hard and enjoying themselves. Another group on the pilgrimage with us was Fr. Bob Hamill who is the leader of the Catholic Handicapped Fellowship group. His group is totally absorbed in what is happening. At one of our Masses one of them comes running up the steps to the altar to greet Fr. Bob at the sign of the peace and run back. To see the smile on their faces make you realize we are all member of God's family, the Church.

During the course of the week we take part in the torchlight procession in the evening in the area around the Basilica with the rosary being said in so many languages. The evening ends with the 'Salve Regina'. On another day we take part in the Blessed Sacrament procession from the Tent to the underground basilica which pilgrims from all countries take part in.

Each day Bishop Thomas presided at Mass concelebrated with the priests of the diocese. Being the only deacon I was privileged to proclaim the Gospel. We had some very moving Masses. At one where the sacrament of the sick was given Monsignor Nix in his homily spoke about 'what a privilege it is for a priest to anoint the sick'. He told a story that when he was a young priest he administered the sacrament to an elderly parishioner. She said afterwards to him 'you must have a good woman looking after you'. He replied 'I am a priest and cannot marry'. The lady spoke with a twinkle in her eye 'we will see about that'.

As I have mentioned the youth were always helping out and at one Mass led us in the liturgy



which included the Song of Bernadette mimed. The mechanics did not function properly so at the end of Mass they did it again to the applause of everyone. Some of us took part in the Stations of the Cross on the Friday led by both Bishop Thomas and Monsignor David Manson. I managed to go to the Baths and as I said my 'Our father' I was gently laid down in the waters of Lourdes.

So much takes place during the week and every pilgrim has their own special moments to tell. An elderly priest spoke of how he was moved to hear the confession of the young people which went into the early hour of the morning. They had to leave the chapel after 11.00 p.m. and so confession took place outside.

You may be thinking it is all prayer and processions but we have time to sit at the wine bars, have ice cream, chat and even go up into the Pyrenees. Our small group visited the city of the poor one afternoon where people give up time voluntary to support those who cannot afford to stay in the hotels in Lourdes. To be at Lourdes you know you have witnessed thousands of miracles as you receive the grace of the Lord. For my part I went in thanksgiving for twenty years of ordination to the diaconate.

I would strongly recommend that if you have never been to Lourdes that you ask anyone who has been what it is that so inspirational to your faith.

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us. St. Bernadette, pray for us.

Rev. Kevin Lyons

BCYS Summer Lourdes 2009

What an amazing week I had on the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service (BCYS) summer pilgrimage to Lourdes. Over 200 young people aged 15-18 were packed on four coaches down to Lourdes and from that moment the friendships had already begun.

I was really excited about going back to Lourdes after my fantastic experience during HCPT Easter Lourdes. Working at Walsingham House also added to the excitement as over the last year I have met and worked with around 5000 young people. Just the thought that young



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people actually wanted to spend a week of their summer holiday helping other people and learning more about their faith is just heart warming.

As I was over 18 I was a Leader during my time in Lourdes. This meant that I would co-lead a group with another leader. We would be responsible for 7 young people during the week. Before going to Lourdes I met the group of young people and they were really excited and also very happy with the group they had been placed in. After this meeting we had a 3 week wait before we actually went to Lourdes and I have never wanted 3 weeks to pass so quickly!

When we got Lourdes the sun was shining and everyone was smiling. Never have I seen quite so many people excited about leaving a coach but I can't blame them as it was 26 hours long! With my small group we would help push wheelchairs for the sick and elderly pilgrims from the Brentwood Diocese. This gave the sick and elderly pilgrims a chance to meet young people and get to know them better. Young people are often highlighted in the newspapers with articles about gun crime, knife crime and general violence. This is the impression some of the pilgrims may have got from young people before meeting them and it gave pilgrims to realise that not all young people are like this and it is the minority of the population.

It was really special to see young people chatting away to the elderly and seeing all the smiles. To simply push a wheelchair for a morning made a difference to that pilgrim's time in Lourdes.

After the masses in the mornings with the pilgrims we would spend time together as a youth service. We visited Lac Vert which is a water park and also gave us a chance to soak up the rays. It felt like you were just on a normal holiday and gave us all chance to relax and to play games with friends.

We also visited Gavarnie which is located in the Pyrenees and it was simply beautiful. The scenery was stunning and for the first time pilgrims also came to Gavarnie. We found a café to sit in and it was fantastic to see young people pulling up chairs and talking to the pilgrims with conversations flowing.

During our week together we took part in the High Stations and this is located near the grotto. We would walk up a very steep and rocky path to follow the Stations of the Cross. It was another early morning and energy was lacking but I thought to myself, I'm not carrying a cross in the boiling heat with a large crowd jeering and throwing stones at me so it was the least I could do! It was really worth all the energy that I had left because the stations were something like I have never seen before. They were human size



statues depicting clearly and quite beautifully what happened at each station and sprayed gold.

I often hear about young people not interested in faith or bored with faith but witnessing 200 young people from the Brentwood Diocese shows that young people really care and want to be involved. This was such an amazing week and I have made so many friends so quickly. I now feel so much more part of the BCYS and this all happened because I went to Lourdes with complete strangers. Leaving Lourdes is something you dread by the end of the week and I am already excited about going back next year.



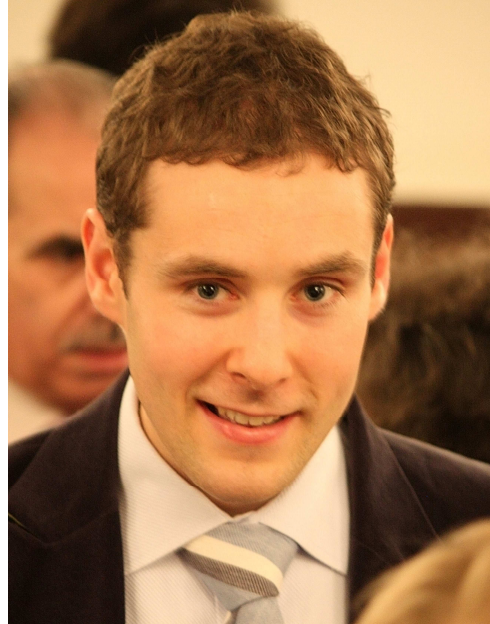
I can't do it justice by writing this article but all I can do is encourage each of you who read this to try and make it to Lourdes. If you're a young person then there is always a space for you in the BCYS and it can only get bigger. The next Youth Service event is the October Youth Gather in Mersea Island. It is a weekend full of outdoor activities. These activities include rock climbing, abseiling, aerial runaway, football, archery and much more. We end the weekend with a party and a youth mass. If you would like more information or want to know anything then please talk to me or visit our

website www.bcys.net

Michael Barwick

Vocation Journey – 'Deep calls to deep in the voice of your mighty waters' Psalm 42.7

Autumn marks a transitional point in the year when we (usually) prepare to move out of the comforts of the warm summer into the cycle of renewal in nature through the winter months. September marks the return to school and university for students, the end of summer vacations, the beginning of the new football season and the preparation to settle into the rhythm of the shorter days. For myself these have all marked the usual events of September. This year however, the month has particular significance as I shall be entering the Benedictine Community at Worth Abbey to try my vocation to religious life as a monk.



To attempt to recount the entirety of my personal journey would require many more words than is appropriate here. Suffice is to say that God really is a God of surprises who leads us gently if we respond to his loving promptings. It can often seem that our lives do not quite thread together as we search to find our place on the great tapestry of life. In rare moments however God gives us the clarity to catch a glimpse of the tapestry he is weaving and he offers us an invitation too great to turn down.

I believe God has been leading me to this step throughout my life, but now at the age of 25 I find myself at a threshold where I more fully wish to imitate Peter in 'walking to Jesus across the water' (Matthew 14:29).

From the age of six I grew up in Chelmsford having moved to the Parish of St. Augustine's and attended Our Lady Immaculate Primary School. I flourished in the school environment where faith was a very real and important part of education and faith was expressed in the fullness of the community life of the school. Closer to home my faith formation was deeply embedded in the Parish life of St. Augustine's and the Church of Our Saviour. I was prepared for my First Holy Communion, received my First Reconciliation and was enrolled in the Guild of St. Stephen as an altar server. I began my secondary education at King Edward VI Grammar School in 1995. This too was a wonderful experience of education, though I often found myself considering where faith fitted into my education and growing knowledge of the world. At the interior level I always had a sense that God might be calling me towards a religious vocation but more often than not this was too scary a proposition to really consider. I was somehow endeavouring to incubate this sense of calling in a hope that it would leave me alone.

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Nevertheless, I had lingering questions that perhaps I might be called to priesthood. For a long time though, I was not able to express these sentiments as it just seemed too out of the ordinary and contrary to the norms of contemporary life.

I commenced studying for a law degree at Downing College, University of Cambridge in 2003 and I graduated in 2007. Amidst my academic studies, there was real personal growth and discovery. I found myself in an environment where I was able to explore my faith much more fully, supported by the very strong University Catholic Chaplaincy at Fisher House. I met other young people who were considering a calling to priesthood or religious life and I was guided by some wise and learned mentors. During these years I discovered the Brentwood Catholic Youth Service and travelled with groups to Rome and Poland as well as becoming actively involved in the Diocese. In 2006 I spent six months working for CAFOD (Catholic Association for Overseas Development) in their headquarters in Brixton, London. This was a wonderfully formative experience, offering further insights into this dedicated agency of the Church. For some time I considered a more active vocation in which I could perhaps combine my legal studies with my desire to work in the Church. I continued to consider the possibility of Diocesan priesthood as well as life as a Franciscan friar. Beneath this level of inquiry, manifested in a deeper and stiller way in prayer, I had the sense that God was calling me to something different. He was asking me to come closer to Him in prayer, to be still, to listen and to seek.

After I graduated in 2007 I was directed towards spending a month at the Benedictine monastery of St. Andrew's Abbey in Valyermo, California which is located on the edge of the Mojave Desert. This experience affirmed my understanding that God was calling me towards life as a monk. Upon returning to the UK I worked for a year as a volunteer on the team at Walsingham House, the Brentwood Diocesan Youth Retreat Centre helping to lead retreats for young adults from across our Diocese. During this year I embarked on the *Compass Project* which is a vocation discernment project for young adults considering a call to religious life based at Worth Abbey, south of London near Gatwick Airport.

I was a pilgrim with the Youth Service to World Youth Day held in Sydney during July 2007 and over 70 young people from across the Diocese travelled to be with the Holy Father. We celebrated our Catholic faith with 350,000 young people from around the world in an experience of prayer, worship and cultural exchange. On returning from Australia I again worked for CAFOD and then for BT Global Services for a short period. Throughout this time I remained a frequent visitor to Worth Abbey and God was helping me to be patient and listen to his invitation. Shortly after Easter this year I wrote to Abbot Christopher Jamison stating that I wished to come and test my vocation as a Benedictine monk at Worth Abbey. Joyfully my request was accepted.

The Abbey is set in an area of outstanding natural beauty and at its heart is a community of 25 Catholic monks who follow the Rule of St Benedict, a Rule written 1,500 years ago but which still offers life-giving guidance to men and women



today. The monks of Worth have created a sanctuary where the Gospel of Christ is expressed through a community life of prayer and service. They take vows that involve sharing their possessions, living together without marrying and accepting the guidance of the community. They run a school, a parish and a retreat house, as well as offering more fluid responses to the changing needs of Church and society. Currently, these include working with young people, with life-limited children, with refugees and with the poor of Peru.

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Reflecting on the Rule of St. Benedict Pope Benedict XVI indicated that in the Rule nothing should be placed before Christ. "This encourages us to commit ourselves to building a society in which solidarity is expressed through tangible signs." In this context he recalled how Benedictine spirituality "suggests an evangelical programme summarised in the motto: '*ora et labora et lege*' (prayer, work and culture)". He explained: "In the first place, prayer, which is the greatest heritage St. Benedict left to his monks, ... is the silent path that leads directly to God's heart; it is the breath of the soul that restores peace to us amid the storms of life".



The Holy Father also mentioned the care Benedictines dedicate to culture and education in order "to arouse in everyone a strong determination to transmit to young people the irreplaceable values of our human and Christian heritage. In the cultural efforts being made today the Benedictine tradition, rightly intend(s) to emphasise attention to weak and fragile man, to the disabled and to immigrants".

Following St. Benedict's example, "monasteries have, over the course of the centuries, become lively centres of dialogue, of meeting and of beneficial fusion among different peoples, brought together by the evangelical culture of peace. Through work and example, the monks were able to teach the art of peace."

For myself, the postulancy (from the Latin *postulare* – to ask/ pray for) marks the next formal step in testing whether I am really called to this particular form of life. Thus for between 3 and 12 months, without having made a formal commitment I will live within the monastery and alongside the community. I will be immersed in the monastic life of prayer, study and work. For the Benedictine Order, as with other religious orders in the Church, the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience are observed. In addition a Benedictine monk promises to follow *conversatio morum* which means 'fidelity to monastic life'. This marks the monk's commitment to faithfully pursue the goal of observing the Rule, and to live by 'stability' in persevering with life in community. Obviously it will take me time (a lifetime!) to adjust to the reality of these commitments, particularly adapting from our modern form of life, but I trust that the wisdom and guidance of the community will be instrumental.

To find myself in a position where I am ready and willing to test my vocation more fully is exciting. I could not have arrived here without careful guidance from faithful priests and religious. Whilst I may be exploring a vocation as a monk, I believe that in this 'Year of the Priest' as designated by the Pope, it is of fundamental importance that we support young people in their journey to discover God's will for them. This may mean asking hard questions and responding with courage to the challenges. For many this will be a calling to married life but for some this will mean a calling to priesthood or religious life. God does not stop calling us, but we can become very good and switching off and failing to listen. In this most important of years, let us pray, support and encourage young people in their journey to faithfully discover God's will. 'Deep calls to deep' and God prompts us in moments of stillness. Together therefore, let us

cultivate moments of authentic stillness in which we can openly say to God through the words of His Son, 'thy will be done'.

To explore life at Worth Abbey more fully see; www.worthabbey.net/abbey/index.html
For young adults (20-35) considering a call to religious life and wishing to be guided in exploring related questions with others, see the *Compass Project* website; www.compass-points.org.uk/compass.html

For anyone who would like to know more, please e-mail; stephenjbailey@live.co.uk
Stephen Bailey

Gregory the Great

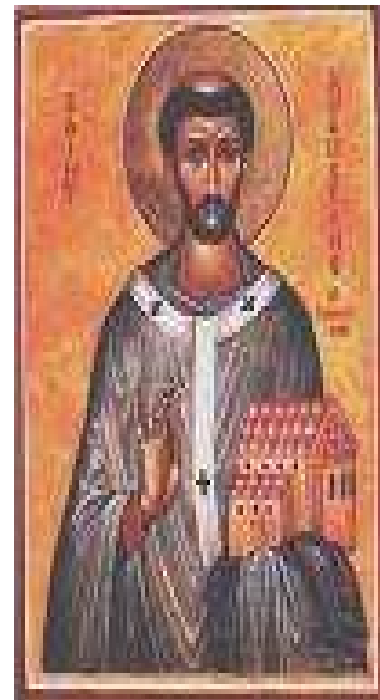
Only two popes, Leo I and Gregory I, have been given the popular title of "the Great." Both served during difficult times of barbarian invasions in Italy; and during Gregory's term of office, Rome was also faced with famine and epidemics.

Gregory was born around 540, of a politically influential family, and in 573 he became Prefect of Rome; but shortly afterwards he resigned his office and began to live as a monk. In 579 he was made apocrisiarius (representative of the Pope to the Patriarch of Constantinople). Shortly after his return home, the Pope died of the plague, and in 590 Gregory was elected Pope.

Like Leo before him, he became practical governor of central Italy, because the job needed to be done and there was no one else to do it. When the Lombards invaded, he organized the defence of Rome against them, and the eventual signing of a treaty with them. When there was a shortage of food, he organised the importation and distribution of grain from Sicily.

His influence on the forms of public worship throughout Western Europe was enormous. He founded a school for the training of church musicians, and Gregorian chant (plainchant) is named for him. The schedule of Scripture readings for the various Sundays of the year, and the accompanying prayers (many of them written by him), in use throughout most of Western Christendom for the next thirteen centuries, is largely due to his passion for organisation. His treatise, *On Pastoral Care* shows a dedication to duty and an understanding of what is required of a minister in charge of a Christian congregation. His sermons are still readable today, and it is not without reason that he is accounted (along with Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine of Hippo) as one of the Four Latin Doctors (=Teachers) of the Church.

British Christians will remember Gregory for sending a party of missionaries headed by Augustine of Canterbury to preach the Gospel to the pagan Anglo-Saxon tribes that had invaded England and largely conquered or displaced the Celtic Christians previously living there. Gregory had originally hoped to go to England as a missionary himself, but was pressed into service elsewhere, first as apocrisiarius and then as Bishop of Rome. He accordingly sent others, but took an active interest in their work, writing numerous letters both to Augustine and his monks and to their English converts.



Colour Blind

How many of us can say that our parents, grandparents and even our great grandparents originated from this country? Not as many as you may think. I have both Italian and Irish blood in me but consider myself English as this is where I was born and raised. I have never personally encountered any prejudice regarding my family's background but then that maybe because I am white.



Until I met and married a Nigerian man and gave birth to a beautiful girl I had not really consciously realised that this part of Essex is predominantly white. Why didn't I notice that before? I suppose unless you are personally involved then you simply don't think about it. I knew that when my daughter started nursery and then went onto school she would be attend a predominantly white school. This is England after all!! Little did I know how having a non-white parent could affect her first few years of education.

My daughter enjoyed going to her school and with the confidence she had gained from myself and her four adult brothers and sisters socialised well. However, all that changed when one day when one day I collected her from school and noticed that she seem rather subdued. Very unlike her! When we reached home she began to tell me what had happened at school and then asked 'Mummy,said that she couldn't play with me because I had brown skin'. My immediate reaction was extreme sadness for my little girl who at the age of 5 should not have had to hear such a hurtful comment. She then told me that this girl had made other comments about her hair and skin colour and some other class mates were copying the behaviour. I found it difficult to explain in simple language that there are some people who dislike others just because they look different to themselves. I told my daughter how beautiful she was and how everyone thought so too. The child who said those hurtful words was the same age as my daughter, 5, and obviously unaware of the consequences of her words but the sad part of it is that she had only copied what she heard at home. The child's parents whose ignorance was being inherited by their innocent children had resulted in causing pain to others. Do these parents expect their children to only socialise with white people? How sheltered and dull their lives would be! The hurtful words and actions continued for my daughter and it was even more disappointing as it this was happening in a well respected Catholic school where tolerance and love should have been paramount. My daughter had to learn at a very young age that she was going to try that much harder than other white children. Unfortunately, the head teacher of the school was not prepared to confront the parents of these particular children. He considered the remarks made to my daughter simply childish and innocent. So, with regret I had to withdraw my daughter and send her to another school where any incidents are dealt with promptly and in the correct manner.

We pray together regularly and praying for those who have hurt or upset her helps reduces the pain. It is important to teach children forgiveness and especially demonstrate it with our actions. We all make mistakes and assumptions about people but we need to acknowledge our own prejudices and correct them. Last Christmas I bought her a children's simplified version of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I wanted it to be another example of how important it is for everyone in the world to be treated fairly and to look after each other. The first Article mentions that we are all born free and equal and we should all be treated in the same way. It all sounds like common sense but needs everyone to make a greater effort to achieve.

As a parent I have taught my children to be fair, kind and respectful to everyone. They may not always remember all of the time but it has to be reinforced constantly! Children copy their parent's words and deeds good and bad. We all have our own opinions which have been formed by personal experiences or from what we hear from the media. However, judging someone by their skin colour is just ignorance and can never be justified. When children are young they are very impressionable and what they hear at home may later develop into prejudiced racial attitudes as adults. Teachers too have a very important influence on a child's idea about race. Unless children are taught correctly not to prejudge others on their race they could adopt full-fledged racial stereo-types. This could also include expressing a preference for light or dark coloured skin.

Statistics taken recently show that 1 in 10 children live in a mixed-race family however there is evidence of tension in some communities even though Britain is obviously moving towards a mixed race country. We have to admit that the world is changing and we should not judge people by their 'race' as we are all one big human 'race'. God didn't



create us all with white skin and he didn't restrict us to only marrying someone from our own country and culture. We should accept the changes and be positive about how our country is developing. My own parents who are in their 80s have never accepted who I married and for a short time after my marriage to a b.l.a.c.k (they could not even bring themselves to say the word but had to spell it out!) I was 'sent to Coventry'. I was told that I had brought shame on the family as I had dared to not only marry someone with dark brown skin but then produce a child who had inherited his African physical features. In my happiness in meeting and falling in love with this man I never thought that my parents would react the way they did. My Nigerian Mother-in-law and other newly acquired relations accepted me with open arms with their loud voices and colourful parties! They wanted to learn about my family background and upbringing and were always keen to show off their new china cups and tea making skills! We had so much to teach each other and it helped us to grow closer and more accepting of our differences. It would be very sad if the views of my parents' and of many others of their age and generation continues to the next generation as tolerance and acceptance is important for a country to progress.

I know that what I have written in this article seems to many very obvious and nothing new but I wanted to emphasise how our world is changing and we have to accept that our country has changed more than most. God is not racist and so neither should we be as we have all been created in the image of God. I pray that my daughter with her Afro hair and brown skin will grow up to be accepted and loved by everyone she encounters and that she will do the same in return.

Theresa Omokaro

"Other people are not rivals from whom we must defend ourselves but brothers and sisters to be supported. They are to be loved for their own sakes and they enrich us by their very presence."

(Pope John Paul II – taken from "In My Own Words")

Dear Friends

Some of you will have experienced a stay in Broomfield Hospital and hopefully it was a good experience sorting out the problem that brought you here. During your time on the ward I hope you met one of the team of chaplains and discovered that not only could they ensure you received Holy Communion on Sunday mornings, but also that we were available to offer you a wide range of support during the week.



This ministry has often prompted Christians to ask themselves if the pastoral or sacramental ministry in hospital was something they might consider. If you have ever considered this I am more than happy to meet you on a one to one basis here at Broomfield, or if you would like me to speak to a group of people at your church about the work we do, again please feel free to get in touch with me.

Ward Chaplains and Eucharistic Ministers are trained in the hospital over a 4 month period in the Autumn. In addition to theory there will be practical work with experienced chaplains on the wards to discover how we approach this ministry. The task is primarily offering pastoral and spiritual care to patients, relatives and staff across a range of denominations and faiths. Evangelism is not part of our job.

Training gives parties, chaplains and trainees, a chance to see if the work is appropriate and part of God's purpose for the trainees.

Ward Chaplains would be expected to visit a ward on a weekly basis spending either a morning or afternoon on site during the week. Eucharistic Ministers would be part of a team working on wards on Sunday mornings roughly once every five weeks taking Communion round or praying with staff and patients who have requested this ministry.

If working with a very happy and committed team in hospital ministry is something that interests you please give me a ring on 01245 514069 or 01245 515244 and we can arrange a time to meet and talk about the possibilities. If this ministry is not for you, may I encourage you to pray for us as week by week we meet hundreds of people at a very significant time in their life.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely
Rev Guy R Goodall

Lead Chaplain, Broomfield Hospital
Court Road, Chelmsford CM1 7ET

Helen Rollason Cancer Charity

2009 marks the 10th anniversary of the Helen Rollason Cancer Charity. The Charity was started by Helen Rollason and her oncologist Professor Neville Davidson. While being treated for cancer, Helen

Helen Rollason Cancer Charity

became aware of how little support was available to sufferers. Helen decided to give her name and image to help attract national and international support. Their vision was to provide better emotional and therapeutic support for cancer patients, which led to the foundation of two

The Catholic Parish of Springfield - The Augustinian

cancer care centres – one is in Springfield, Essex called Rochelle House. The Charity now funds one of the largest Cancer Research Clinical Drug Trial Programmes within the Essex Hospital Network. Since the Charity was founded, more than 800 cancer patients have participated in the Helen Rollason drug trials at centres in Essex and London.

Since 1999 a number of groups of volunteers have started, with their main aim to raise money and awareness of the Charity. As the Charity receives no Government or Lottery funding it is solely reliant on the money that these groups raise.

One of the largest and most active groups is the Springfield Fund Raising Group. The group was started in December 2002, initially with a handful of members. Their first event was a coffee morning held just before Christmas in 2002 which raised well over £200 and so from little acorns big oaks began to grow. Over the past 6 years the group has gone from strength to strength and now boasts over 18 active committee members and a large support network of volunteers who give their time freely to help out at the events they run. To date they are extremely proud to have raised in excess of £39,000.

The group holds three main events a year comprising of a Quiz Night, normally held in March, followed by a Summer Fete in June and a Christmas Bazaar in November.

To find out more about the Springfield Fund Raising Group and the Helen Rollason Cancer Charity go to their website www.helenrollason-sfrg.co.uk.

Little Baddow

The Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Little Baddow is most attractive. It is not, however, for its architecture which is typical of a 12th century rural Norman Church. It is its setting that delights. The Churchyard is large and shaded by trees. It slopes down to the valley of the Chelmer River providing a wonderful view. Perhaps my delight is, in part, due to the fact that in the gardens of the Manor, on the opposite side of the road you can buy raspberries, strawberries, plums, apples and comice pears! The tower, heavily buttressed, is 14th century. It has two early decorated windows and a west door with two niches. I wonder if they were for Holy Water?



Inside the nave is wide, but somewhat lop-sided because it is part Norman and, in part, modified in the 14th century. One wall was moved as if an aisle was considered. The south wall has a decorated two-light window. In the same wall, close to the sanctuary, are two wall recesses with pointed arches decorated with leaves. There are two oak figures of about 1300, of a man and a woman. He lies as if to attention – soldier like – she sweetly bent. They must have been the Lord and Lady of this place. In the Middle-ages, when most people could not read or write, church walls were painted with religious themes. In Puritan times, in many churches as is the case here, they were covered by plaster. On the north wall, now revealed, is a painting of St. Christopher bearing the child Jesus.

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There is a standing wall memorial to Henry Mildmay, 1639. He is shown resting on one elbow with his two wives kneeling below. He fought in Ireland in the reign of Elizabeth 1 and was

responsible for the elimination of the Earl of Desmond and family, my Munster Fitzgerald ancestors.

On a lighter note, the last time I visited this Church the pews had been graced by colourful embroidered kneelers, the work of local ladies.

Hatfield Peverel

St. Andrews Church in Hatfield Peverel is sited near open fields at the edge of the village. In the 12th century there was a beautiful Saxon princess called Ingelrica. After the Norman conquest William the Conqueror took her as his mistress and, when she became pregnant, he married her off to one of his knights named Ralph Peverel. She had a son who was named William. IN later years she founded a convent and joined the order. After her death William converted it into a Benedictine priory which lasted until the dissolution of the monasteries when most of the priory church was demolished.



The present church is only the nave of the priory with two aisles added at a later date. In the north windows there are small stained glass dating to the 14th and 15th centuries. On the sill of the north window can be found a badly preserved effigy of a figure holding its heart. Some say it is of Ingelrica whilst others suggest it may be a man, perhaps William.

Liam Fitzgerald

Big in Japan

In the last edition, Robert wrote about his trip to Japan with us and described his experience of the country and people, travelling with us. I want to say a little about some of the things he did not see and add a few comments of my own. Robert contends that our view that the Japanese are all a little mad is wrong; he is, of course, correct. But Japanese culture is very different to ours, and some things are definitely done in their own way. For example, while a beef stew with noodles boiled in a salty fish soup, or cold fish, cooked or not, make an excellent dinner, I find it a little difficult at breakfast; tofu with chocolate sauce on should continue to be regarded as a crime against humanity. On the other hand, the Japanese do like their pastries and do the second best coffee in the known universe.

A particularly distinctive feature of Japanese cities is that there are large numbers of shrines. Some are small, like the back street chapels found in some English cities. However, there are also many large shrines set in city centre grounds which are more like the city parks of British cities. Although these do have large temples in them, much of the area is open, so the comparison with a park is not accidental. An interesting feature to most non Japanese eyes is that most shrines have both Buddhist and Shinto temples* in the same site, and people seem to pray and make offerings at both. This partly reflects the belief system of many Japanese, which takes elements from both traditions. Even the smaller sites will usually have both Buddhist and Shintoist shrines*. The interesting feature of Shintoist shrines is that they always contain a bell; Shinto prayers start by the ringing of the bell to wake the god, and then a clap of the hands to get his attention before praying. This still seems odd to me; I am used to God being on line.

After Robert left, we carried on to Kyushu, the southernmost island, passing through Hiroshima and going on to Nagasaki. Both are, obviously, dominated by their history, but Nagasaki has a more diverse and international history. When foreigners were excluded, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, three ports were allowed to trade with Europeans and Nagasaki was one of these. The physical layout of the two cities is also different. Hiroshima is set in a broad basin and was extensively destroyed by the bomb, but Nagasaki is in a series of valleys into one of which the bomb was dropped. This means that large parts of the pre war city remain in Nagasaki, and this includes all of the nineteenth century European quarter, and the Dutch colony which was the port for the European trade allowed with Nagasaki. Both areas are open to visit and give quite an interestingly different perspective on Japan.

Even during the “Era of Exclusion”, when Christianity was persecuted in Japan, Nagasaki was a centre of Catholicism in Japan. There is now a new Catholic Cathedral in the city on a hilltop site which commands an excellent view of the city. It replaces a pre War Cathedral which was destroyed by the bomb, the ruins which have been used on site or reassembled elsewhere in the city as memorials. In a separate chapel in the new Cathedral is a remnant of a statue of Our Lady, the damaged head of which survived the bomb and has become a symbol of the survival of the city. It has been taken to other cities in order to promote peace and highlight the danger posed by nuclear weapons. Further details can be found on <http://campus.udayton.edu/mary/questions/yq/yq255.html>.

Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki have museums and gardens to remember the events of August 1945. Hiroshima has the atom bomb dome, which is internationally known, and iconic in the true sense of the word. Offshore is the island of Yumijima, on which is a well known coastal shrine and Mount Mizumi, supposed to be one of three classic Japanese landscapes (we did not see the other two). Nagasaki, on the other hand has a rather better focussed museum and is also a historically very interesting city and a remarkably attractive city. If you can only get to one of the two, it must be Nagasaki, which is worth a detour if you are anywhere east of the Rhine.

*Strictly, Buddhist centres are referred to as temples and Shinto centres as shrines
Chris Thompson

The School Intelligence Test!

The following excerpts are actual answers given on history tests and in school quizzes by children. They were collected over a period of three years by two teachers. Read carefully for grammar, misplaced modifiers, misinformation and, of course, spelling!

Ancient Egypt was old. It was inhabited by gypsies and mummies who all wrote in hydraulics. They lived in the Sarah Dessert. The climate of the Sarah is such that all the inhabitants have to live elsewhere.

Moses led the Hebrew slaves to the Red Sea where they made unleavened bread, which is bread made without any ingredients. Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten commandos. He died before he ever reached Canada but the commandos made it.

Solomon had three hundred wives and seven hundred porcupines. He was an actual hysterical figure as well as being in the bible. It sounds like he was sort of busy too.

The Greeks were a highly sculptured people, and without them we wouldn't have history. The Greeks also had myths. A myth is a young female moth.

Socrates was a famous old Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed

him. He later died from an overdose of wedlock which is apparently poisonous. After his death, his career suffered a dramatic decline.

Taken from the Catholic Cyberforum

http://s10.zetaboards.com/Catholic_CyberForum/topic/105148/28/

The Catholic Cyberforum is an on-line community for Catholics and those interested in the Catholic faith. It includes a number of active topics and encourages members – and visitors – to “post” items of interest. Topics range from Mass, Prayer, Liturgy and Sacraments to the “Parish Hall” section that contains jokes, book reviews and music choices. The site contents is updated daily and has many topics of genuine interest with members from all walks of life.

The following items come from the Parish Hall section!

AMEN: The only part of a prayer that everyone knows.

NEWSLETTER: Your receipt for attending Mass.

CHOIR: A group of people whose singing allows the rest of the Parish to lip-sync.

HOLY WATER: A liquid whose chemical formula is H2OLY.

HYMN: A song of praise usually sung in a key three octaves higher than that of the congregation's range.

RECESSIONAL HYMN: The last song at Mass often sung a little more quietly, since most of the people have already left.

INCENSE: Holy Smoke!

PROCESSION: The ceremonial formation at the beginning of Mass, consisting of altar servers, the celebrant, and late parishioners looking for seats.

RECESSIONAL: The ceremonial procession at the conclusion of Mass led by parishioners trying to beat the crowd to the car park.

One beautiful Sunday morning, a priest announced to his congregation:

"My good people, I have here in my hands four sermons... a £10 sermon that lasts five minutes, a £5 sermon that lasts fifteen minutes, a £1 sermon that lasts a full hour, and a 50p sermon that lasts till noon.

"Now, we'll take the collection to see which one you want."



NOW REMEMBER:
MIRROR, SIGNAL,
SIGN OF THE CROSS,
MANOEUVRE

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