

Fr Hoyal Writes

RUN THE GREAT RACE

As I write there is still a possibility that immigration and passport workers belonging to the PCS union will be striking as thousands fly in for the Olympic Games.

Following the debacle over the failure, both risible and alarming, of G4S to meet its security contract for the games, this graceless, and to my mind disgraceful, party pooping tactic only adds to our embarrassment as the Olympic host nation.

Hopefully, once things are under way we shall put all this behind us this typically British self-humiliation and just enjoy the games for what they are meant to be: an amazing and essentially friendly international celebration of sporting excellence.

The ancient games were held in honour of Zeus, king of the gods. Every four years from 776 BC to 393 AD without a break, athletes from all over the Greek world made the pilgrimage to Olympus to compete. The *raison d'être* was religious.

The games were hugely important. Rivalries were strong, and arduous training was the norm. As today, the honour of winning was what mattered, not the prize won. In a world just as dangerous and strife-riven as our own, the games provided an invaluable oasis for renewing tarnished ideals of honour and human fellowship.

Of course, gold, silver or bronze is a modern idea. The highest award a Greek could win in ancient times was the Olympic wreath of wild olive. The real prize, of course, was in the honour and the achievement.

Hopefully, the ancient ideals of excellence, honour and sportsmanship will continue to flourish in our modern games despite the vast commercial Olympic industry that now surrounds the games.

These ideals certainly inspired St Paul and other New Testament writers.

When St John the Divine wrote to the church in Smyrna: Be thou faithful unto death, and I shall give thee a crown/wreath of life (Rev 2.10), his metaphor was consciously taken from the world of the games.

St Paul, of course, famously, compares the Christian life to participation in the games (1 Cor 24,25). All compete in the race, he tells us, but only one wins the prize. In other words, salvation may be God's free gift; for Paul it is indeed so. But we cannot casually take our salvation for granted; it has to be worked for if we are to make it our own. Like a runner or a boxer, says Paul, we need to train hard and to discipline ourselves.

But this is worth it, for the prize is no perishable wreath and fading earthly honours. It is the imperishable crown of eternal life.

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews also looks to the games as he exhorts Christians to follow the example of Jesus himself (Heb 12.1,2) as we run the race of life that is set before us. Singlemindedness and commitment like Our Lord's are the pattern to follow as we strive to lay aside worldly temptations.

So we are to look to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith who, for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,

despising the shame, and is now crowned in glory at the Father's right hand.

Should we need further examples in this area we have the Letters to Timothy, where we are exhorted to fight the good fight of the faith, like wrestlers in the games (1 Tim 6.12).

But as we pray that the current games will be a great success in every way, let remember the essentially religious nature of the original games. In this regard let us take particular inspiration from these heartening words in 2 Tim 4.6-8:

I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Just the words we need on those days when our God is too small – or we are.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rosemary Bird', written in a cursive style.

Rosemary Frances Bird

30th April 1917- 4th July 2012

We are here to celebrate the long life of Rosemary Bird – born in Bristol on 30th April 1917 and one of 6 children. She was known to the multitudes as Rosemary Bird but to us, in the family, she will always be Grue. Wife to Boo and proud mother of Frances and more of a mother than a mother-in-law to David. From them she gained four grandchildren who in turn presented

her with 14 great-grandchildren and, believe it or not a fifth generation, a great-great-grandson, Hector, appeared 18 months ago. What a lot of greats for a great lady!

I was feeling apprehensive about the honour of speaking at Grue's funeral. I looked up the word *eulogy* and it comes from the classical Greek meaning "good words". It then became more difficult still as I had to decide which good words, from so many, to say about such a loving, kind, selfless, serving, funny, chatty lady. She seemed to know everyone, which was great for her but much more difficult for the rest of us when she would often say "I'm sure you know so and so..." and, of course, none of us had a clue!

My Grue was an amazing legend, a pillar of society and a key person in my life and the lives of so many others. She was born in Bristol and lived here all her life, except for a brief interlude during the war when she moved to Portsmouth to be near Boo's ship at Whale Island. She enjoyed telling the stories of driving ambulances during the war, before she became pregnant.

She was a truly Christian lady with a deep belief in God. As a small child I remember her Bible at her bedside and prayer cards with names of people, countries and their leaders that she prayed for. And it is fitting that we should be here in All Saints, the church she loved. One of the last people who remembered worshipping at All Saints before it was severely bomb damaged, the church was rebuilt, after the war, at the time when her husband was Church Warden. Servant hearted beyond belief, she would do anything for anyone if she could. You are all sitting on the pews she cleaned endlessly! She was President of the Mother's Union for the Bristol diocese and a good public speaker. Actually a good speaker generally - quiet chatty at all times!

Fantastic hospitality was her forte. A great entertainer, giving dinner parties and drinks parties for her many friends; she always enjoyed getting out all the china and silver, with flowers,

and making people feel truly loved and welcomed. Incidentally her cheese straws were divine and sadly unable to repeat! Fortunately, though, the marmalade mantle has been taken on by Nick! She was an elegant lady with the highest of standards. No table was properly laid without the butter knife!

She was there at all the key moments. She helped the nervous, first-time midwife at my birth, as Mum delivered me at home. Always prepared to drop everything and travel anywhere to help with the arrival of a new great-grandchild. She took me out from school, talked to me and listened. She gave me time. She had the amazing ability to stretch time for every one of us.

My earliest memories are of her house in Goldney Avenue when we were very small, Nick wasn't much more than a baby. Billa and I would play "dressing up" for hours, putting on all the beads and bangles that she had, and washing the dolls clothes in bowls on her balcony. She made bedroom curtains for the nursery which were bright pink and covered in animals. Grue relayed the story that, on our first night in the room, Billa thought that the badger looked really scary. Worrying that Nick and I would catch on, she launched into an impromptu story about how Mr. Badger drove the school bus and all the animals featured on the curtain had a part to play in the story and that became a regular event.

Here in this house were the first dolls' tea parties complete with miniscule sandwiches, cakes and biscuits and even real tea in the tiny tea pot. Here, also, the long running game of buses; played on the stairs with real bus tickets. Both of these she continued to the next generation, ensuring that her collection of old bus tickets came with her.

I remember that even her smell was safe and warm. She kept Bronnley's lemon soap, wrapped in wax paper, in a wooden container and Badedas bubbles.

I remember watching the SS Great Britain come up under the Clifton Suspension Bridge; a whole party of people in her

bedroom, drinking sherry, as the view was so good. That was Goldney Avenue for me.

Her moving to Pembroke Vale was the perfect location for us. We had to walk past the house every day to and from school. On our way home we always stopped outside, because Mum had forbidden us to go in unless Grue saw us. At first, we stood outside making a lot of noise, jumping up and down. She quickly caught on and, in the summer, used to wait at the window, invite us in and treat us with lime cordial and a scoop of ice cream.

Then she moved into Pembroke Road, to the flat above us, with the wonderful lift, a great escape from the turmoil and storms of life below.

She was thrilled when Roo arrived and busied herself with looking after him while we were at school. His birth, soon after Boo died, was a huge blessing for her.

She loved to cook for us; biscuits, cakes, puddings and, everybody's favourite meal for them when they saw her. Her biscuits were legendary, Emily Clare's Chocolate Shortbread, Frances Mary's (boring version without the chocolate!), Millionaire Squares and Easter Biscuits, not to mention cherry cake, lemon tartlets and her famous meringues, all of which would appear from an array of very old cake tins...the list goes on and on, which explains why some of us are the shape we are now.

She took an avid interest in the golf and cricket and would happily stay up 'til all hours to watch the Internationals on telly.

For me, the greatest gift she gave us all was Bunglehome, with mainly memories of her knitting Guernseys to handle the Welsh wind and rain!

There is much, much more I could say. I have never in my life met anybody like her. So full of energy and life and quite irreplaceable. If I were to sum up her legacy to us, she loved immeasurably and gave freely. She knew who she was. She belonged to God and would return home to Him. She was a gift.

A remarkable treasure for the family, her friends and all who knew her. So thank you God for giving us all Grue and thank you, Grue, for being you.

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ROSEMARY BIRD

Elsewhere we carry a moving family tribute to Rosemary, the excellent address given by her granddaughter Emily at Rosemary's funeral on 18 July.

Many longer-standing members of All Saints will have their own warm reminiscences of Rosemary, though few if any will have pre-war memories of her.

Rosemary came to All Saints through her husband Philip, whose family were strongly involved. But the couple were married - amid the wartime stringencies of 1939 - at Christ Church Clifton, for Rosemary's family home was the splendid Merchants' Hall in the Promenade and Christ Church was their parish church.

Philip was a naval officer, and during the war they were based in Southsea. After the war they, now with Frances their daughter, returned to Bristol and lived for some years in Goldney Avenue, near the Bishop's house.

Rosemary readily took to All Saints, and she came to play an increasingly important role, both supporting Philip, who was church warden in the demanding years that saw the eventual building of the new All Saints and its consecration in 1967, and

in her own right. Delightfully sociable, she was successively a member of the Young Wives, then a leader and diocesan representative.

When it was time to join the Mothers' Union at All Saints, much the same happened. For some while Rosemary was an official diocesan MU roving speaker – and apparently much in demand for her excellent talks on St Margaret of Scotland. But given her charm and her talents, it is no surprise that she was eventually made diocesan leader of the MU, a job she did with distinction.

Sadly, Philip died in 1971. After a while Rosemary came to occupy the top floor of David and Frances's ample family house in Pembroke Road. This brought her even nearer to All Saints, and she continued to make a great contribution to the life and fellowship of the church.

One important venture in which Rosemary was prominent was the formation of a mothers and toddlers' group at All Saints. This initiative more than proved its worth over the years, benefiting both local families and church fellowship.

Throughout, Rosemary was a wonderful host, and a generous provider for church occasions. Her cheese straws are still remembered with awe. And, of course, alongside all her church commitments Rosemary was the best of grandmothers and great-grandmothers. Children were her great forte, and she was always very ready to help with David and Frances's family whenever need arose.

In more recent years, following a stroke Rosemary lived at Stokeleigh Lodge overlooking the Downs in Westbury Park. But, health permitting, she stoutly continued to attend All Saints regularly until last year. Her 90th birthday party, held in her former home at Merchants' Hall, was a particularly memorable

occasion. Many church friends had the pleasure of joined with her extensive family for the great celebration.

Rosemary never forget what she learned from the much admired Fr Luetchford, vicar of All Saints in her younger days, and right to her last illness she continued a faithful penitent. It was always a privilege to bring her Holy Communion at those times when she was not well enough to attend church. Hers was a Christian life faithfully lived.

As the notice in a recent pewleaflet put it, we indeed give thanks for a lovely Christian woman - genteel, devout, full of fun - and we assure Frances and David and all the family of our love and prayers.

RDH

**Sermon Preached At All Saints' Dedication Festival Sunday
July 2012
by Fr Michael Freeman, Vicar of St John The Divine
Horninglow, Burton On Trent, Formerly Curate Of All Saints**

It's good to be back. Thank you for inviting me. I feel rather embarrassed today. (As Fr Richard has said) I was curate in this church from 1988 to 1992. I took my first tentative or maybe over-confident steps in ordained ministry here, and I am very conscious of my failings. I shared my misgivings with someone called Jean, licensed reader in the parish where I am now Vicar, someone with considerable experience of the Church of England. She has been a cathedral verger and has encountered many clergy in her time. "Don't worry," she said, "They've either forgotten what you were like, or they've forgiven you." That's just the sort of affirmation I need, I thought.

Anyway, nearly twenty years have passed since I last stood in this pulpit, or celebrated mass in this Christian community. I should like to place on record the gratitude I feel towards Fr Peter Cobb for his patience and wisdom as my training incumbent (may he rest in peace!), and to people at All Saints' at that time for the support I received. Many of you are still here, thank God, and long may you be so.

What's happened since then? Well, I spent 8½ years as Team Vicar of Elland – a small town between Huddersfield and Halifax in the West Yorkshire Diocese of Wakefield. There I met and married Rita – we happened to be playing in the same orchestra for a concert. We have three children. In 2001 I became Vicar of Horninglow, Diocese of Lichfield, a parish in the town of Burton upon Trent, close to where I grew up. For the last two years I have been Rural Dean. Oh yes, and I've put on a little weight. Middle age is defined as the time when youth's broadness of mind and narrowness of girth change places.

There have been changes here at All Saints' in the last twenty years; you know more about them than I do. And of course there have been changes in the wider church and society. I might refer to them near the end of this sermon. Today is the 45th anniversary to the day of the dedication of the rebuilt All Saints'. I must say that this is one of the best designed spaces for liturgical celebration that I have ever met: things like the placing of the choir, and an appropriate position for leading the Liturgy of the Word stand out.

Not surprisingly, the readings appointed for this dedication festival refer to stones. We hear how Jacob rests his head on a stone to sleep, and has a dream in which God appears to him. I doubt that Jacob is expecting a religious experience. He is on a journey for two reasons. First, he is looking for a wife, and his

mother Rebekah wants him to look amongst the family of her brother Laban. Second, he has recently cheated his older twin brother Esau out of the blessing their dying father Isaac intended to give his first born, and he thinks it best to make himself scarce. However, he has the vision, and on waking sets up the stone as a pillar, hallowing it with oil. If we read on after the passage set for today we find Jacob makes the undertaking, "If God looks after me, and if I return to my father's house in peace, the LORD shall be my God, and this stone shall be God's house." In centuries to come there would be a shrine at that place, Bethel, which means 'the house of God.' We are struck by the contrast between the moral ambivalence, the duplicity, of Jacob, and the faithfulness of God, who does indeed bless Jacob as he has promised.

In the second reading, from one of Peter's letters, Christ is described as a living stone. We too, like living stones, are to be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood. As we celebrate the anniversary of this building's dedication it is good to be reminded that the real church is the community. Today we are not celebrating bricks and mortar, but the many, many souls who make up and have made up the church that meets here. Then the image of Christ as the living stone is darkened. He is the stone that is a stumbling block, that is rejected by those who should have been building up God's people; yet it is through the act of rejection that he in fact becomes the cornerstone of something new: the Christian community, the Church. Death is followed by resurrection. I said a moment ago that we are celebrating not bricks but people. To be precise, we are celebrating the risen Christ's presence in his people who gather and have gathered in this place, and that is what makes a church's dedication festival fundamentally different from the anniversary celebrations of a club or a school or a corporation. We are celebrating something bigger than ourselves, something that takes us beyond ourselves, into the

heart of God's love for mankind, into his work of salvation. And there's an interesting link with the story of Jacob. He the wanderer hoped God would help him return to his father's house. A little later in the first letter of Peter we read '...you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.' A negotiating position for Jacob has become a reality of grace for the Christian. At its best, involvement with our church should be a homecoming, something that puts us in touch with who we are and where we come from.

Stones aren't mentioned in the gospel reading, but they are in the verses immediately following – in a different sense. 'The Jews took up stones again to stone Jesus.' Why? Because Jesus explains that the safety of his sheep is a consequence of his closeness to God his Father. The Father has given them to him. He is doing his Father's will. His opponents want to stone him because he is making himself God. It's a different sense of 'stone', but it's the same rejection we were thinking about earlier, a rejection which leads to the cross, but is not the end of the story.

So today we are celebrating the working out of God's purposes in the church which meets in this place. Here we have been met by our Lord Jesus Christ in word, in sacrament, and in each other, whether we expected it or not. Our conviction that he is among us is the foundation of our mission to those who do not yet know him. Undoubtedly we will encounter rejection, living stones sharing the experience of the cornerstone. Even if it is not opposition, we may find apathy and incomprehension, increasing year by year. We may be lumped together with the vocal fundamentalists. Society is changing, and growing away from its familiarity with the Christian message. I welcome the diversity and plurality of our country, but it does mean that belonging to a church has generally to be a much more

deliberate decision than it was a generation or two ago. We have to respond to the changes in society, and indeed take the initiative in proclaiming the gospel: in declaring how God has met us, as once he met Jacob. That meeting does not depend on our moral worth: it is the action of God in Christ who forms us into the living stones which make up his church of today.

I am convinced that the Church of England is a very good place in which to be a Catholic Christian today. Yes, there are the issues over which the church is tying itself in knots. But we witness to the inclusivity of God's love. We are developing, at All Saints', Clifton, or S. John's, Horninglow, or wherever, the appropriate ways of linking with our communities, so that we may rejoice in a people dedicated to God in Christ. Amen.

HOMILY

Sermon for Mass on the Feast of St Mary Magdalene at All Saints, Clifton

Mary went and told the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Mary of Magdala – what can I say about her in just 5-6 minutes?

Libraries of books and papers have been written about her over the centuries, some orthodox, some apocryphal and some just downright weird; songs and poems have been written about her. And here I think of the musical 'Jesus Christ, Superstar' which was around when I was young. The song, 'I just don't know how to love him' sums up her bewilderment in this new kind of love and the change it has brought about in her.

Traditions and devotions have grown up and the Gnostics have great devotion to her. She and John were the disciples closest to Jesus.

So who was Mary Magdalene? Well, the western Church has merged her with the sinful woman at the end of Luke chapter 7, and with Mary of Bethany, so making 3 separate women in to one. However, the Eastern Orthodox Church sees them as 3 separate women. She was a woman who had been healed by Jesus of seven demons.

This morning Fr Richard colourfully described her as like a comet coming in the distance and then blazing across the sky, he said she then disappeared.

What she was **not** was a prostitute! That is something that crept into tradition in the 6th century. But she has much to teach us. She had been a tortured soul before Jesus healed her. We are not told what those seven demons were, but as someone who over 45 years ago suffered a severe endogenous depression I would interpret her demons as some form of mental illness and I have empathy with her. I had my demons and that is what I called my condition.

She is dear to my heart, she comes over as a strong, passionate, feisty, generous woman. She was healed and became close to Jesus, loving him with all her heart, mind and soul, following him to the cross with his mother and John, and going to the tomb to complete the heartbreaking task of anointing his body.

Tradition has it that Mary went to France after the resurrection and preached the Good News to the people there. I have also recently heard of a tradition that she came to Glastonbury with Joseph of Arimethia, but that I think is a local tradition. Her

shrine is at Vezelay, where tradition says she was buried. She is the patron saint of preachers and the order of Dominicans venerate her – they are a preaching order.

But I digress. The readings at Mass this morning were the traditional ones from Song of Songs, 2 Corinthians and the Gospel of John.

In the second reading this evening, Mark mentions her twice by name, to emphasise that she was present at the Crucifixion; he also mentions her by name in the next 3 verses (of the longer version of Mark's gospel) as the witness to the crucifixion and says that she goes to tell the other disciples.

Jesus chose to appear to Mary first. One wonders why a woman should be the first witness to the resurrection at a time when women were regarded as unreliable witnesses to anything.

From the beautiful reading from the Song of Songs we hear,
All night long on my bed I looked for the one my heart loves; I looked for him but did not find him.'

And from the gospel reading,

*While it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb ...
Mary stood weeping outside the tomb.'*

She stood weeping, she had lost her Lord, the great love of her life, and she was thrown back into the bleak desolation of her earlier life. It must have seemed that everything she had come to believe in, all her hopes, her joys, her trust and her love had been snatched away from her – total darkness again. How could she go on?

But then she hears a beloved voice saying her name and she turns, turns to face the light and her Lord. Mary represents us all, she is vulnerable and in darkness and it is in this darkness that she meets the Lord and is healed, not once, but twice. First

of the seven demons, then of the loss of her, and of our, Beloved – the one whom her ‘soul loves’ to quote this morning’s first reading. She clings to the earthly picture of him, and he tells her not to cling to Him.

Our demons often cause us to make impossible demands on others, demands which trap them in our preconceived expectations of them and make them feel a failure when they cannot fulfil our demands. *Their* personal space becomes eroded, and *we* feel let down, hurt and rejected. The more whole we are in ourselves, the more space we can afford to give others but, ultimately ‘*God alone is free enough from wounds to offer us a fearless space*’^{1,2}.

She hears His voice say her name and she turns to the light and is healed and transformed by Love. She is told to go and tell his brothers that he is ascending to his Father and our Father, to His God and our God. Mary is the first witness to the resurrection, the first Apostle, Augustine called her ‘the Apostle to the Apostles’ and so she stands out for us today.

Her message is our message, like Mary we are healed from our demons and the darkness when we hear our lord call our name, we then turn to the Light, and as apostles we must take the Gospel out, to those who are in darkness and maybe do not know it, out to those who have not heard it.

George Appleton wrote a poem,
O Christ my Lord, again and again
I have said with Mary Magdalene,
‘They have taken away my Lord
And I know not where they have laid him’.

¹ NOUEN, Henri The House of the Lord

² MARGARET MAGDALEN, CSMV Transformed by Love: the way of Mary Magdalen

*I have been desolate and alone.
And thou hast found me again, and I know
That what has died is not thou, my Lord,
But only my idea of thee,
The image which I have made to preserve
What I have found, and to be my security.
I shall make another image, O Lord, better than the last.
That too must go, and all successive images,
Until I come to the blessed image of thyself,
O Christ, my Lord*

The darkness will come at intervals in our lives, but we have heard the Lord call our name and He will go on and on calling our name and we will experience that joy that Mary felt. The Lord calls us to share his resurrection joy telling us, 'Don't cling, but dance – I am the Lord of the dance.' Mary's desire, her love, her devotion were all harnessed as one energy directed to Jesus – so must ours be. I will end with a 13thC anonymous verse,
*Here you are, in tears, outside a tomb.
But my tomb is your heart, there I am not
Dead, but resting, and alive for all eternity. Your soul is my
garden, and you are right to
Suppose that I am the gardener. I am the new
Adam, and I both care for my paradise and protect it.*

May we allow the Risen Christ to be the Gardener of our hearts.
AMEN

THE EDINGTON MUSIC FESTIVAL 2012
SUNDAY AUGUST 19th - SUNDAY AUGUST 26th
FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

For one week in August every year since 1956, Edington, a small village on the edge of Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire, has hosted a festival of music and liturgy in its magnificent 14th century Priory Church.

Singers from many Cathedral and Collegiate churches gather to take part in the daily services throughout the week.

The Solemn Eucharist and Solemn Evensong are the principal daily services together with the offices of Matins and Compline sung to plainsong.

The theme of this year's festival will give the opportunity to explore the Christian Faith through the progression from Advent to Pentecost via Christmas & Epiphany, Lent, Passiontide, Easter and the Ascension.

As usual, many renowned composers will feature throughout the week among them Palestrina, Lotti, Stanford and Tavener. On Thursday 23rd at 8.00 pm The Stations of the Cross will include a setting of The Reproaches by John Sanders.

This is a wonderful opportunity to experience fine music in a liturgical setting and discover the beauty of the Wiltshire countryside.

Further details can be found at www.edingtonfestival.org. There is also a poster displayed in the porch.

Norman Drewett

**ASSUMPTION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

Wednesday 15 August

9.30 am Mass (said)

7.30 pm SOLEMN MASS

All most welcome - Refreshments afterwards



**ALL HALLOWS FESTIVAL - SATURDAY 8
SEPTEMBER**



**FEAST OF THE BIRTHDAY OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

All Hallows Church, Easton

All Hallows Road, Easton BS5 0HH

12 noon Concelebrated Festival Mass

Catered lunch afterwards

Guest Preacher **The Revd Fr Philip Corbett**

Chaplain of Pusey House Oxford

3.00 pm Festival Evensong,

Procession of Our Lady & Benediction

Followed by tea

This established All Hallows festival in honour of Our Lady's birthday is always a wonderful occasion, and we have the benefit of an excellent young priest from Pusey House as our guest preacher this year. Do let people know, and be sure to join us yourself.

LOOKING AHEAD

This year's Bristol **DOORS OPEN DAY** is Saturday 8 September. Once again we are hoping to welcome a good number of guests and visitors. We shall be grateful for helpers. Please make a note of the date and watch for details.

ADVANCE DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

SOMERSET CHURCH CRAWL

29 September

Details to be published in September magazine.

This will be a day event, so bring a packed lunch and we will stop for tea on the way home.

Academic Successes

Many congratulations to our three newest graduates.

Suzy Robinson has been awarded a BA (Hons) in German and Politics from the University of Birmingham.

Tanya Palmer has received her PhD in Law from the University of Bristol.

Hugh Hurst has gained his Professional Doctorate in Chiropractic from the University of Portsmouth.

Tanya and Hugh had the most exotic robes, each appearing in red and purple confections. Hugh's came with a Tudor bonnet,

but Tanya had found matching purple shoes and won the glamour stakes by a whisker.

Even further up the honours board, Professor **Gillian Clark** has been elected a Fellow of the British Academy, the national academy for the humanities and the social sciences. Gillian's research field is the relationship of inherited classical culture and late antique Christianity. She works especially on Augustine and on the late Platonist philosophers Porphyry and Iamblichus, and also has a longstanding interest in women's history and the history of gender.

She directs an international collaborative and interdisciplinary project, funded for its first five years by the AHRC, for a commentary on *Augustine City of God (De Civitate Dei)* to be published in print and electronic versions.

She is co-editor of the monograph series *Oxford Early Christian Studies*, *Oxford Early Christian Texts* and *Translated Texts for Historians 300-800* and is also on the editorial board of the *Journal of Roman Studies*.

