

**Father Hoyal writes**

## **BITS AND PIECES**

People often bring me prayers, poems and thought-provoking passages they've come across. If they appeal to me I tuck them away in my little collection.

I have to say I look through it rather infrequently. But a recent chance inspection brought the following diverse items to light. Some are well known. Some may speak to you, as they did me.

### **A prayer enclosed with Dee Cridland's funeral requests**

O God our Father, let us not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give us determination to make the right things happen. While time is running out, save us from the patience which is akin to cowardice. Give us courage to stand for something lest we fall for anything. Amen.

### **A husband's inscription on his wife's tomb in Otley Parish Church, Yorkshire (16<sup>th</sup> century)**

Here Leah's fruitfulness  
Here Rachel's beauty  
Here lyeth Rebecca's faith  
Here Sarah's duty

### **Prayer of a Reluctant Leader Joe Seremane 1987**

You asked for my hands that you might use them for your purpose.  
I gave them for a moment, then withdrew them for the work was hard.

You asked for my mouth to speak out against injustice.  
I gave you a whisper that I might not be accused.

You asked for my eyes to see the pain of poverty. I closed them for I did not want to see.

You asked for my life that you might work through me.  
I gave a small part that I might not get too involved.

Lord, forgive my calculated efforts to serve you  
only when it is convenient for me to do so,  
only in those places where it is safe to do so,  
and only with those who make it easy to do so.

Lord, forgive me. Renew me, send me out, as a usable instrument, that I might take seriously the meaning of your cross.  
Amen.

### **Prayer for the Day [not recommended]**

O God, grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway;  
The good fortune to run into the ones I do like;  
And the eyesight to know the difference.

### **Poem found at Nether Wasdale Church (Cumbria)**

Eglise  
Maison de Dieu  
Maison de tous  
Viens  
Que tu sois Chrétien ou non  
Que tu sois du pays ou de passage  
Entre  
En toute confiance  
C'est aussi ta maison

Car c'est la maison de Dieu


**The man with the bag of nails      John Ballard**

And then came man, with his hammer and his bag of nails.  
And he nailed the shining sun to the heavens, in case it should leave him cold.  
And he nailed the bright moon fast to the silent sky, for fear of being left in darkness.  
And he nailed the clouds to the shifting wind so they would not gather above him.  
And he nailed down the salt sea and each fish fast within it.  
And he nailed the bright birds to the empty air, and every creature that flew, or walked, or crawled, or slithered, he nailed hard in its allotted place.  
And then came a carpenter's son. And man, afraid, took him and nailed him tight to a tree,  
  
For this man's tongue could loosen nails.

**This Easter      David Scott**

This Easter I shall paint  
the walls a Jerusalem colour:  
the green hill, the cockerel's crimson throat,  
the purple pillar; and time will  
fall into hours, the third, the sixth,  
the ninth, into ethereal time.  
It could be any time as I walk through town,  
sensitive yet unbodied, feeling the weight of the lowering of Christ, and smelling  
the sacrificial hot-cross buns.

Why am I so keen to stay with death  
and sorrow, so cautious of the light,  
and all that yellowness? I am with the women,  
falling off the end of the Gospel, afraid. This year I may learn to fall and not fear, and find  
myself lifted  
to watch the face of forgiveness rise  
with such silence and uncanny grace,  
that with the thrush, high in the holly tree,  
I will sing, *unique... unique... unique.*



**DOORS OPEN DAY**

**Saturday 8 September 10 am – 4 pm**

Once again we are participating in Bristol Doors Open Day. It is always a splendid opportunity to meet people and welcome visitors to our church. Do encourage friends to join us, and be around if you can to support on the day.

**Saturday 8 September**

**ALL HALLOWS ANNUAL FESTIVAL IN HONOUR OF OUR LADY'S BIRTHDAY** All Hallows Easton  
BS5 0HH

**12 noon Festival Mass** – catered lunch afterwards

**Guest Preacher Fr Philip Corbett**, Chaplain, Pusey House Oxford

**3.00 pm Festival Evensong, Procession of Our Lady & Benediction**– followed by tea and cake (free!)

*Always a splendid occasion - do join us. To book in advance for lunch (just £5) please ring 0117 9706776*

**“START-BACK SUNDAY”** Warm thanks to kind volunteers distributing leaflets (bundles in atrium) to encourage worshippers to join us again following the summer break. There is a special “Start-Back” Family Service on 16 September.

**WINCHESTER DAY PILGRIMAGE** Saturday 22 September, visiting cathedral and John Keble’s Hursley. Midday Eucharist, afternoon tour of cathedral, Evensong at Hursley church. Own transport, or coach (£12.50) leaves 9 am, returning 7.30 pm. Cost: £7.50 – for church/cathedral donations and service booklet. Bring sandwiches or lunch locally. Details and booking: Keith Taplin 0117 9514509 or k.taplin@blueyonder.co.uk . There are also booking forms in the atrium. All most welcome. Organised by Bristol Church Union.

### **WALSINGHAM 2012**

*This year’s parish pilgrimage is Monday 8 to Friday 12 October. The beauty, holiness and fellowship of Walsingham make this a very special experience. You may still be in time to join us - for details and booking, please contact Garfield Griffiths 0117 9441035 without delay.*

### **A CALL TO ALMS**

Father Brendan Clover has pledged to make sure that by 6 December, the feast-day of St Nicholas, patron saint of children and of Woodard Schools, the task of raising £250,000 to building a secondary school for Gilgil in Kenya has been completed.

Father Brendan is Senior Provost of the Woodard Corporation, a daunting title for a daunting position. As Senior Provost he has overall chaplaincy responsibility for an association of 50 or so diverse schools with a definite Anglican character.

Gilgil is a needy town two hours north of Nairobi, and the new school is an anniversary Birthday Present from Woodard to young people who would otherwise have no access to secondary education.

Please pray for successful completion of fundraising and of the school buildings. Perhaps there are ways in which some of us could support this tremendously worthwhile initiative. Fr Brendan will be happy to provide further information.

### **‘Mary Assumed – Before the Second Coming’**

#### **The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin**

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the belief that at the end of her earthly life she was bodily taken up into heaven. Within the Roman Catholic Church this is a relatively recent infallible dogma. It does, of course, raise some questions, both theological and practical, about the end of Mary’s life. On the one hand there is the question of her freedom from original and personal sin and on the other the nature of her ‘end’, bodily death or falling asleep.

According to St Epiphanius of Salamis (AD 377) no one knew whether she had died or not, but apocryphal accounts had circulated since the fourth century. The earliest account we now have dates from about the fourth (perhaps late third) century, this is the *Liber Requiei Mariae* (the Book of Mary’s Repose). Latter apocryphal texts build on this (or use alternative sources) and during the sixth and seventh century there are

many and various accounts of the bodily assumption of Mary. The teaching became a widespread part of the Christian world, celebrated, venerated and dripping with meaning to Christians across the world. However, the belief climaxed in the 1950's when Pope Pius XII defined it as dogma.

This belief is not wholly Catholic. The Protestant reformer Bullinger expressed (in 1539) the clear understanding that Mary's sacrosanct body had been assumed into Heaven by angels. However, in more recent times, modern Protestants hold the Assumption as a lesser feast named "Mary, Mother of our Lord".

The essential aspect of the Catholic belief is that Mary, "having completed the course of her earthly life", left this world as a shining example to the human race. Her bodily assumption is the symbolic evidence of the gift offered by God to the whole human race.

### **The Assumptiontide Festival in Bristol**

This year the Festival of the Assumption was celebrated on the 18 August at Bristol Cathedral, in an event organized by the Bristol Catholic Societies. The occasion included a Procession of Our Lady and Solemn Concelebrated Mass at the Cathedral, followed by Exposition and Benediction in the Lord Mayor's Chapel.

Two important elements within the Festival were the procession of Our Lady of Glastonbury (on loan from the Glastonbury Pilgrimage Association) and the words of the Rt Revd Robert Ladds (Superior General of the Society of Mary). Our Lady drew our visual attention and prayers; and Bishop Robert our minds – in a spiritual and thoughtful homily dedicated to Mary.

As a participant, from the pews, the spiritual and worshipful aspects of the Festival were particularly significant. Amongst the ritual, and within the liturgy, there were moments of real depth and words of great meaning which will stay with me and allow longer consideration.

These events were well supported by the witnessing Catholic community of Bristol. And, of course, there were many familiar faces from our own parishes. This was great to see, within the congregation, and amongst the servers and priests present and active at both events. A very many thanks go out from us all to those who organised the Festival, to those who provided funding and encouragement, to those who provide the music, and to all who took part in so many ways.

*Mary Immaculate, star of the morning,  
Chosen before the creation began,  
Destined to bring, through the light of your dawning,  
Woe to the Serpent and rescue to man.*

Fr Charles Sutton  
22 August 2012

### **Homily preached at the recent Assumptiontide Festival at Bristol Cathedral**

As Curate, at a recent parish Staff Meeting, we were sorting out Masses and Preachments. My Vicar asked if I would preach the Homily at our celebration of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady. With a certain irony in his voice, "Just possible" he said "You may have a sermon on the Assumption tucked away that you might use!"

In fact, I have got just a few!

But what I find is that Homilies relating to Our Lady do not have a very long shelf-life. They don't "Warm up" for re-use very well. I think this is because Our Blessed Lady, reflects completely the glorious light of the

Gospel; She is like that Pearl of Great Price. The more it is turned and examined, the greater the beauty of truth is seen. Because Mary is the model and image of the Church, She is relevant to every changing need and moment

So this Homily (along with the one I wrote for the Parish) has not been road-tested. You are the experiment. While, I hope okay for the NOW, we shall need to continue to develop and understand Our Lady's part in every TOMORROW

The Mariology of John Henry Newman is deeply significant for those who love Our Lady. Discovering the significance of Mary for Christians of all time and in all places, led him "amid encircling gloom; o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent 'til the night was gone". And it can do the same for us. The content and the subtle theology, as well as the circumstances of Newman's perception of Our Lady, are important

To understand why the Newman's understanding of Our Lady is important for us today, Let's look at the Church and society of his day:

In the mid 18<sup>th</sup> Century the Church of England was in decline. The Weslian Holiness Movement of the 1750's looked for revival but the seekers were forced to leave the Church. By the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Church of England was moribund. Concern was being felt and expressed in all but the most entrenched parts of the Establishment. The Industrial Revolution had resulted in great social change and a new world order; the traditional place of religion and the Church brought into question. **Any sense of familiarity?**

In 1808 William Blake had written a poem as a Preface to his epic on Milton. This poem later became known and popular as "Jerusalem". Its reference to "those dark satanic mills" has been variously interpreted as referring to the Albion Flour Mill in London; the Oxbridge Colleges with their liberal Anglican dominance; to repressive ideologies; to the Church of England herself!! **Sound familiar?**

Of the around 10,000 parishes in England in the year 1820, about 6,600 had absentee Rectors (having parishes in rural England and a villa on Lake Como was not confined to fiction!). Patronage was used for purposes of power and influence. It was recorded that on Easter Day 1800, a total of 6 people had attended worship at St Paul's Cathedral. The Bishop of Winchester at that time had an income of £50,000 and had been to Winchester only for the occasion of his enthronement. **As we lose vocations, as we see succession, as we amalgamate parishes – notice any correspondence?**

We, in our time, cast a fearful eye over our Church, our society! Yes, of course, the facts and details and particular circumstances are very, very different on the Feast of the Assumption 2012. But are not the results and consequences; declines and disasters all too much the same?

Back then, the Reform Act of 1832 came, for some, to epitomise the crisis of religion and faith in public and national life. For some of us, the action of a Synod or the legislation of a Government might, could, result in just that same sense of division and fracture in the Church and between Church and State.

But it was to be that, on 14 July 1833, that John Keble, in Oxford, preached the Assize Sermon, which he entitled *National Apostasy*. It had an effect on the Church and the establishment not unlike a brick being thrown through a large antique, but corrupted mirror! Its image-shattering effect signalled the beginning of what became known as "The Oxford Movement". The seed of that Movement had been nurtured by the growth in understanding of the part of Our Lady in God's plan of Redemption and in the spiritual life of Christians. God, by His sufficient grace, saved the Church through to this day. It can happen again! It can happen again today!

In a Sermon of this era, preached at the University Church, Newman seems charged with a sense of urgency and vigour. He pleads "May the good Lord save His Church in this her hour of peril; when satan seeks to sap and corrupt where he dare not openly assault! May (God) raise up instruments of His grace". I would plead the Lord in the same words this day!

He believed only a recovery of her Catholic roots could save the Church. His life-long quest was to answer the question "Where can the Church be most truly found?" Because Mary is the image and model of the Church, finding Her was (is!) critical. Newman's Mariology was formed and developed as an outworking of this belief and cause – the Virgin Mary as that vital "instrument of God's grace". The story of that life that was "Full of Grace"

At Her Birth, Our Blessed Lady is our forerunner in Salvation. She receives, by God's Grace, in anticipation what is promise to us through the same Faith. In all this Newman is beginning to find his way to an understanding and an expression, through Scripture, of God's Grace given in Mary that was, those many years later, to be expressed in the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Most interestingly, in a recent Paper, the Bishop of Coventry has tentatively suggested that the Immaculate Conception might be considered a particular example of Pauline predestination. Consider the evangelical potential of such a concept!

In a similar logical but tender way, Newman considered all that Mary's Assumption means for us: "It was surely fitting, it was becoming, that (the Blessed Virgin Mary) should be taken up into heaven" for "all the works of God are in a beautiful harmony; they are carried on to the end as they begin". In this way "who can conceive that God should repay the debt, which He condescended to owe His Mother, for the elements of His human Body, as to allow the flesh and blood from which It was taken to moulder in the grave? She died, but her death was a mere **fact** not an **effect** ... she died in order to fulfil the debt of nature ... to subject herself to her condition, to glorify God, to do what her Son did ... but in order to finish her course and receive her crown":

It is, he concludes "befitting, (that) she is, soul and body, with her Son and God in heaven, and that we are enabled to celebrate not only her death, but her Assumption"

Mary's Assumption is the foretaste and promise of Heaven. It secures our Hope in Salvation

So it was, our forebears came to understand that Mary was the key to re-discover the Catholic roots of this Church. They understood Her Birth and self-giving purity to be the call to all Christians to discover a deepening spirituality and greater love of the Sacraments. They saw in the unflinching and consistent Love of God active in Mary's Assumption as revealing the Love of God in reality and action in the world day by day. They held Mary as the model for each one of us to emulate. They showed Mary to be the one first blessed with the joys of the Salvation that we, in due time, are to share

Towards the end of his long life, writing for the boys at the Birmingham Oratory School, Newman's concluding Paragraph of his Meditation for the month of May sums up both his journey and conclusion relating to the place of Mary in doctrine and devotion. Perhaps they hold value for us also:

*It is Mary's prerogative to be the Morning Star, which heralds in the Sun. She does not shine for herself, or from herself, but she is the reflection of her and our Redeemer, and she glorifies Him. When she appears in the darkness, we know that He is very close at hand*

My friends, may we be given sufficient grace in the Church, in the circumstances, of this very time; dark though the night is; to point to Mary, our Blessed Lady as the Morning Star. For She heralds the Sun. The Sun – Her Only Begotten Son – which is the Christ of God. Given to Her and to us as the Saviour of the Church, His Body, and of the world

*Fr Robert Ladds*

## Harvest Charity October 2012

All Saints joins USPG this Harvest in giving thanks for the good gifts of God by remembering those families around the world who are struggling to feed their families.

Our project is 'A garden in Malawi'

Leah writes:

'I'm standing in a pumpkin patch in Malawi. It looks a little dry at the moment because it's not the rainy season. But I'm told that, come the rains, the ground will be bursting with delicious vegetables.

Small vegetable plots are nothing unusual in Malawi. But this one is unusual because it's a demonstration garden set up by the USPG-supported St Luke's Hospital, in Malosa, in the Anglican Diocese of Upper Shire. The garden is part of the hospital's endeavours to tackle malnutrition in local communities.

The hospital is trying to combat the tendency to see healthcare in purely medical terms. In Malawi – as in most countries – medical success is measured in terms of access to medicine or medical institutions. This is important, but St Luke's wants to promote a more holistic approach with a focus on healthy living and prevention.'

### 'Vegetables are so good for our bodies'

I met Elizabeth, a nurse and community worker at St Luke's. She told me: 'This garden is used to train women so they can **care** for their own gardens at home. It is really helpful for them – vegetables are so good for our bodies.'

Elizabeth pointed at different areas of the large garden patch as she listed the different vegetables that are grown.

'We have radish. The women learn to grow radishes so they don't have to go to market to buy them, so they are also saving money. We also show them how to grow tomatoes, pumpkin and so many more. There is mustard and Chinese leaf. During the wet season, this garden looks so green, it's beautiful.'

The garden was set up in 2008. Women on the maternity ward are brought here to learn new gardening techniques, including how to make compost to feed the soil.

We teach them how they can improve their own gardens. Our hope is that we can help to reduce malnutrition,' said Elizabeth.

'Every woman is brought here and shown what we are doing. They plant the vegetables with us. We also go into the communities to give gardening and cooking demonstrations. And sometimes people come here to ask questions. So there is a lot of learning taking place.'

The demonstration garden is an example of how USPG-supported hospitals in Malawi are engaging with local communities.

**Please give generously this Harvest to support vital church work around the world.**

## LETTERS TO THE SAINTS

To the Apostle Matthew from a 21<sup>st</sup> century disciple

21<sup>st</sup> September 2012

Not a charismatic character exactly, were you, Matthew Levi? There you sat, a tax collector at the booth in Capernaum, contemptible collector of custom duties for the equally reviled Roman ruler Herod Antipas. In first century Palestine it would have been hard to find anyone more despised, hated and contemptuous than tax collectors like you. Not a job for anyone with any self respect, nor respect for anyone else for that matter. The men like you doing that job were appointed by the Romans from within the indigenous community and were notoriously amoral and self-serving. Yet the description in the gospel of Jesus's command to you and your immediate response is succinct, isn't it, and over in a flash: He said to you "Follow me" and you got up and followed him. The Son of God sees all the self-disgust, the loneliness, the friendlessness, the haplessness and hopelessness in your life and he chooses the *exact* psychological moment to speak, knowing what the response will be. You could do no other, could you, than to rise up and follow.

In a moment, all the greed and gross exploitation of your fellow countrymen, the awful, grasping self-centred life, dissipates into a longed-for release and freedom. You somehow understood that "Follow

me” meant imitating the pattern of Jesus’s life, and that it would be the complete antithesis of everything you’d known hitherto - the dishonest income that gave you your identity and distorted sense of security. The Venerable Bede described your conversion in a homily thus:

*“By an invisible, interior impulse flooding his mind with the light of grace, he instructed him to walk in his footsteps.”*

Such a great and unfathomable mystery! And what did you, the new friend of Jesus, do next? You looked outwards from yourself and invited your dubious friends round for a meal, co-operating in the Lord’s ministry with immediacy and generosity. The watching Pharisees needed an explanation from Jesus of what you had grasped in the twinkling of an eye. Amazing grace, eh?!

*“I have come to call not the righteous but sinners”.*

We can never ponder those words too often, can we? Salvation, eternal life, is not for the righteous, the good, the holy, the worthy and the noble, but for reviled outcasts, sinners who know their need; for all of us sick people who need the great Physician of souls; for those who know they are beyond redemption except through the Lord. As fellow sinners we must learn from you to be alert, listening to the voice of Jesus, so that like you we too can co-operate straightaway with God when opportunity comes knocking. It is a twofold opportunity and command from the Lord: It is following and taking risks, saying to Jesus in the words of the now beatified John Henry Newman *“Lead thou me on”*. It is also grasping the opportunity to bring others to Jesus, and even to attract attention from high-minded experts who suppose they have all the answers. *“You did not choose me. I chose you”*. Do we behave as if we were chosen? Somehow I think you did better than most of us on that one.

Most of us on the whole sit lightly to discipleship. Our great Christian heritage, handed down to us by you Apostles, is in jeopardy from what Pope Benedict called ‘aggressive secularism’. He is right. But do we let that happen by not taking our discipleship seriously enough? *‘In a society which has become increasingly indifferent or even hostile to the Christian message’*, the Pope said, *“we are all the more compelled to give a joyful and convincing account of the hope that is within us.”*

*Holy Matthew, help us and encourage us to follow in our Lord’s footsteps without hesitation and with joy and conviction. Amen*

## **SOMERSET CHURCH CRAWL**

The Education Committee are arranging a Church Crawl into deepest Somerset for Saturday 29 September, leaving All Saints at 10.00am.

We are hoping to hire a minibus and the cost for that will be £8-£12.50 per person, depending on how many people sign up. We would like a deposit of £5 per head, please. If, for any reason the trip has to be cancelled this will be returned.

The churches we aim to visit are – Isle Abbots, Huish Episcopi, Muchenley, Martock and Somerton. We hope to have tea in the restaurant at Wells Cathedral – cost of that to be notified later.

Please bring a packed lunch.

Further details from Liz Badman