



St. Patrick's Church

Broad Green/Cowley Drive Woodingdean BN2 6TB



Our Lady of Lourdes

Whiteway Lane Rottingdean

## St. Patrick's Newsletter

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**Welcome to the first "apart but together" e-newsletter 1.4.2020**

***"because where two or three have come together in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18***

This is a very unusual version of the newsletter as it has no news of upcoming events and no news of services. It is, however, a time when our prayer, togetherness and mutual support can shine a light for each other. We will try to mail this out every other week, please send us anything you would like us to include and if you know of someone who is not on email who would like us to post it, we can do that if you send us their details.

*If you have access to the internet, here is a link to services being streamed: <https://www.churchservices.tv/timetable/>*

**Stop press - mass from OLOL**  
**<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCc4VXBr3EOa43nCxxzB-Edw>**

**First mass will be 10.30 4th April and Fr Benny is keen to have feedback. Details of Holy Week services via OLOL website**

### Thoughts from the frontline: Barbara Bond

**I**n my place of work (St Wilfrid's Hospice) we have now lost the collective wisdom of a huge number of our volunteers, many of whom are currently doing great work providing phone support to our patients from the safety of their homes. Our Spiritual Support Lead is holding a daily "space" for us all – socially distanced of course!

However, despite the camaraderie, fear is now part of our daily life. It manifests in lots of different ways and pops up at different times, sometimes surprising you. I guess it is a gift to be able to understand in a very real sense how the families you work with must be feeling...

I have learned several important lessons in the past week or so. The first is about living in the moment and striving to give it your all without looking forward or back. The second is that compassion really does transcend boundaries.

*It is very poignant to reflect on the last mass that we all celebrated together when Fr Benny explained for us the theology of spiritual communion.*

#### **Spiritual Communion – Prayer of St Alphonsus**

My Jesus,  
I believe that you are present  
in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.  
I love you above all things  
and I passionately desire  
to receive you into my soul.  
Since I cannot now  
receive you sacramentally,  
come spiritually into my soul  
so that I may unite myself  
wholly to you  
now and forever.  
*Amen.*

*Please send me your short thoughts (200—300 words) about life under lockdown in this strange Lent. Next issue at Easter. Contributions before 10th April (Good Friday) to me at email: [bond\\_barbara@ymail.com](mailto:bond_barbara@ymail.com).*

## In a Time of Coronavirus: thoughts from Maureen James

**L**ight and dark have begun to mean a lot more to me recently. Although confined to the house, I can see quite a distance from my rear windows. And in the evenings light and dark are all I see: lighted windows, streetlights, the sudden flash of headlights. Ahead I can see the dark mass of the downs and the silhouettes of trees against the night sky. The bright planet Venus is moving across the western sky and on a clear night many other stars shine down in spite of light pollution.

To the right the most comforting sight of all is the large illuminated crucifix set into the wall of Holy Cross church which glows all night – over the fields, hedges and houses down towards Rottingdean and the sea. It used to be switched off at midnight and I would like to thank the vicar for leaving it to shine through the night, to touch people like me who wake at three in the morning and need reassurance.

The garden is another blessing where there is so much happening at this time of year. Yesterday I saw my first peacock butterfly of 2020. Bumble bees bumble into my lean-to. I have seen many more ladybirds than usual this year, and two or three worms with each spadeful of earth I dig. The green finches have returned to wheeze again in next door's garden and there is birdsong nearly all day long. Unfortunately the magpies have also returned to sit silently waiting in the trees for the newborns to appear. One day I saw nine in one tree! They made such a racket it would have warned birds for miles around. Years ago one or two together was a novelty.

At this strange time, there is so much good in the world which nobody hears of, from neighbours and strangers equally – so many lights among the shadows.

### Trip to New Zealand: Bernadette and Ted

**I**t was a secret Santa surprise trip for Ted's significant birthday. The signs were there... a volcano, a report of groups of Kiwis going out on rat hunts at the weekend, and now the virus. Our guardian angel has been working hard to get us back safely! Whilst we were there life was normal, but five days after we returned the place was in lock down. I think they suddenly realised they were connected to the rest of the world.

However, we had a very interesting three weeks holiday driving our hired cars from Auckland to Queenstown. Left hand driving and empty roads but what an unstable landscape. The job to be in is road maintenance! Rainfall brings landslides onto the roads and earth movement from tectonic activity frequently causes cracks. There are very few roads so little towns get completely cut off.

The landscape is beautiful like Scotland. We stayed on a farm for a few days and the farmer brought us around part of his acreage in a buggy accompanied by several sheep dogs: three huge animals for tracking the sheep on the hillsides and two collies for herding. Every field has had to be cleared of rocks and the introduced gorse, broom and guelder rose plus introduced pests of rats, rabbits and ferrets. Possums are a nuisance too and there is a tongue in cheek request for every visiting Aussie to take home a possum or two. Settlers haven't done any favours to the flora and fauna. The biggest surprise was that everything was more expensive than here. Being the beginning of Autumn the orchards were harvesting pears, apples, plums, apricots and avocados. Roadside stalls were in abundance but all their produce is cheaper here, also their wine. Apparently there is a tax of 15% on everything including food.

We saw the dolphins and did whale watching (well Ted did while I clutched a sick bag), saw geysers and boiling mud pools, kiwi sanctuaries and a Maori meal and show. We met many very kind, nice people.

We have 60 million more people in this country but it's still a great place to live. We're satisfied that the grass isn't greener on the other side of the world!

*From Psalm 35 (36)*

**To both man and beast you  
give protection. O Lord, how  
precious is your love.**

**My God, the sons of men find  
refuge in the shelter of your  
wings.**

**They feast on the riches of  
your house, they drink from  
the stream of your delight.**

**In you is the source of life, and  
in your light we see light.**

**You, O Lord, are my lamp, my God who lightens my darkness.**

*Psalm 17(18)*