



St. Patrick's Church

Broad Green/Cowley Drive Woodingdean BN2 6TB

St. Patrick's Newsletter



Our Lady of Lourdes

Whiteway Lane Rottingdean

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Churches are not, at present, open to the public: see <https://www.ololandstp.org/>
Fr Benny continues to say MASS which is streamed live from Our Lady of Lourdes : 09.30 each weekday, preceded by Adoration usually at 08.30; 18.30 Saturday evening and 10.30 Sunday.

Welcome to the twenty-second "apart but together" e-newsletter (30th January 2021)
"Because where two or three have come together in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18

On Hope

Barbara Bond

Faith has to do with things that are not seen, and hope with things that are not in hand St Thomas Aquinas

This week, on January 28th, we celebrated the feast of St Thomas Aquinas. As a Dominican his motto would have been *Contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere* – to contemplate, and give to others the fruits of contemplation. He was a philosopher and a mystic, pondering deep truths – many way beyond my understanding – but the message of contemplation and sharing is real and relevant.

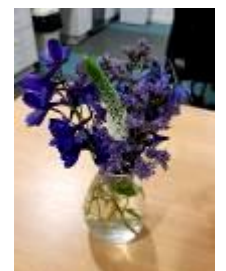
The green vestments of this time remind us of hope. We are in a time when hope is in pretty short supply – I certainly have run out of things that I have in my diary that I can look forward to (except perhaps a day off!). The other day I was walking a route that takes me through the ancient churchyard of St Pancras church in Kingston near Lewes. It's a place I love, nestled in the shadow of Kingston Ridge, always peaceful; somewhere to contemplate. Suddenly a shaft of sunlight fell on a cluster of previously unnoticed snowdrops.



We can be those snowdrops for each other. One of my work colleagues spent an hour on a very difficult

telephone call. It was a Saturday night, not much support was around, and whilst she dealt with the situation with all the professionalism and compassion you would expect – it's still tough.

She went off to have a break and when she returned someone had put a tiny posy of flowers on her desk.



**O, King of the Tree of Life,
The blossoms on the branches are your people,
The singing birds are your angels,
The whispering breeze is your Spirit.
O, King of the Tree of Life,
May the blossoms bring forth the sweetest fruit,
May the birds sing out the highest praise,
May your Spirit cover all with his gentle breath.**

Carmina Gadelica

The newsletter appears fortnightly. For the next issue, please send contributions by 12th February to Barbara Bond: bond_barbara@ymail.com

Voices from Lockdown



"My walks became mini-pilgrimages"

Audrey Nengare from Birmingham turned to walking during lockdown as a way to escape daily news reports.

"I started to take along my Rosary. My walks became mini-pilgrimages, daily prayer walks around the neighbourhood.

"In this unique situation, we must all be generous to our neighbours around the world. So with my parish, I'm part of a virtual pilgrimage to walk two million steps – here to Algeria!

"When all you can hear is the wind blowing through the trees, the leaves rustling and the birds chirruping, it's almost impossible to not feel God's presence and return home with a renewed sense of gratitude."



Keeping a community connected

Peter Towers from St. Anthony's parish in Preston organised a 5km sponsored event last summer.

"People from parishes all over the city soon took up the challenge, with friends from Salford, London, Milton Keynes and even Spain joining in too.

"It was a really exciting day which created a community spirit even though we were not physically together. Our oldest participant is in her nineties and pedalled for seven miles over three days on her exercise bike. She is an inspiration to us all."



Fundraising as a family

Amelie Kelly, aged 5, raised nearly £600 with her family by walking 26,000 steps in one day.

"It was a really big walk and I felt it was really hard, but I wanted to help others around the world by doing it and then I felt proud at the end."

Have you been inspired by these stories?

This Lent you can join our Walk for Water challenge. It's a chance for you to transform your life while changing someone else's. Do it your way: 10,000 steps a day, every day, for 40 days!

[Walk for Water this Lent](#)



**Racial Justice Sunday - 31st January
Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales**

This year's Racial Justice Sunday is more important than ever. The effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, the killing of George Floyd, and the powerful message on fraternity and equality by Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* speak of the need to actively oppose racism and pursue racial justice with renewed vigour. The theme this year is 'A Time to Act'. Racial issues and inequalities were identified nationally and internationally in 2020 generating awareness, emotion and outrage. Action is needed to further the cause of racial justice, but what can we do? Read a [reflection on the theme](#).

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"This is my prayer to you, my prayer for your favour. In your great love, answer me, O God, with your help that never fails: rescue me from sinking in the mud; save me from my foes." Ps 69: 14-15

Referring to my last contribution on the Haute Savoie, someone asked me if the dogs, Belmonoc and Ulrick, were always chained up and who fed them? These two large beasts (breed unknown) had alarmed me on arrival with their deafening barking. They jumped up and down, pulling on their chains, daring me to come near.

But Betty, my employer, loved them both and let them have the run of the house most of the time. The result being that they stretched themselves out on the floor to sleep wherever they fancied, usually the kitchen, and often in Betty's bedroom where one morning I found Ulrick sharing her bed. They ate fresh raw meat every day, a store of which hung in the 'game larder' on an outside wall. Betty sometimes gave them leftovers from her own meal which they nearly always refused.

The dogs were only chained up occasionally to prevent them terrorising unknown visitors – and often escaped. My diary from 16/12/89 :

"In morning heard fearful row downstairs with dogs. Looked out and saw Belmonoc and Ulrick high-tailing it to Vinzier, and Betty in a flap ordered me to get them back. At the same time Dominique (a neighbour) called round, and urged on by Betty raced off in her car to look for them, but they came back on their own 20 minutes later; were both chained up for their pains – then terrorized the postwoman with savage barking – she swore and shouted at them and didn't leave our post, much to my chagrin. As I went past Ulrick he sneezed all over my trousers."

Now and again, to please Betty and to get away from the chaotic atmosphere of the house, I would take Belmonoc, the quieter one, for a walk into the solitude of the hills. This was necessary as I only had one proper day off during my time working there and although I am not really a dog person Belmonoc and I reached a form of truce, often tested.

One 'night to remember', I was woken at 1.30 am by frantic loud barking from both dogs. I thought there must be someone prowling about but I could see nothing in the pitch darkness. Eventually I fell asleep only to be woken again at 7am by shattering thunder and lightning rolling round the hillsides, the rain beating down, and of course the dogs howling again. Not exactly Wuthering Heights but in my own imagination not far off sometimes...



Sled dogs in the Haute-Savoie
[https://
www.grandeodysee.com/en/](https://www.grandeodysee.com/en/)

Touched by Sue Addis

Bernadette Skinner

A few weeks ago there was the terrible news that Sue Addis had been murdered in her home. I didn't know her or ever go to her restaurant, but her charity did enter into our world. John Remers started the soup run with a rota of volunteers, taking it in turns to make huge quantities of soup and delivering it to the Fitzherbert kitchens, after collecting the keys from the convent next door. When John could no longer manage to run this charitable act, Sue took over and soup was made and delivered from her restaurant kitchens. She also assisted the St Anne's Day centre and provided a slap up Christmas meal. Ted happened to be delivering on 22nd December and saw all the effort St Anne's makes for their clients. Father Christmas was in a little grotto and had a present for everyone and Sue had provided full takeaway Christmas fare.

I'm sure many people will feel the loss of this kind, generous business woman.



"Lord, answer, for your love is kind; in your compassion, turn towards me. Do not hide your face from your servant; answer me quickly for I am in distress." Ps 69: 17-18

Community News

Maintenance — St Patrick's

Irene Green

We have had a very busy month of January updating our entries on the diocesan Health and Safety application called Safety Toolbox.

- With increased intensity of rainfall we can see from the news that sadly several parts of the country experience flooding. On a micro scale that is reflected domestically where building gutters, downpipes and soakaways can't cope with the volume of water in recent years. Work has been done on the church system, and is under way on the parish rented house soakaways (119 Cowley Drive).
- Anyone got a spare water butt to donate to the church?
- We are very appreciative of the help our letting agent John Hilton Estate Agent has provided in January on the rented property checklists, tenancy, fire safety, water hygiene questions which we could not answer for Safety Toolbox.
- There is an ongoing improvement on the property led by the letting agent, which is much appreciated by the tenant, partner and family of 4. Work includes several necessary plumbing repairs, new shower, staircase bannister replacement, two new fire doors in the kitchen.

Parish News

Ecumenical prayer group on Zoom, every month, evening meeting, contact tracy.stickland@gmail.com for next group meeting

Churches Together in Woodingdean meet on Zoom at present, first Saturday of the month at 9am, see the schedule on: <https://downsbaptistchurch.org/community/woodingdean-churches-together/>

It is St Patrick's turn on February 6th.

Lent 2021 begins on Wednesday February 17th and continues to Holy Week. Easter Sunday is April 4th

Diocesan Lent prayer and discussion - exciting development

You are invited - whether a church attender or not - to the Arundel and Brighton LENT programme called INVITED which provides electronic information to think about. You can discuss in a Thursday evening Zoom session – if you wish. Keep looking at the website, diocesan or St Patrick's Facebook page for the latest.

<https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/invited>

<https://www.facebook.com/ABDiocese>

<https://www.facebook.com/StPatricksWoodingdean>

<https://vimeo.com/499658716> for information session on INVITED

"All the ends of the earth shall remember and return to the Lord, all families of the nations worship before him, for the kingdom is the Lord's; he is ruler of the nations." Ps 22: 28-29

Food for Thought

Worship and Mission in the post Covid-19 Church: Opportunities

Notes from a Tablet webinar 20 Jan 2021, and searching other sources — Irene Green

- ◆ Church is too dependent on Mass and communion, liturgy is not enough, there is a **spiritual starvation** – we need to up our game.
- ◆ Anxieties abound, about who will return to the church building after Covid, who has lost faith. This is a new opportunity and challenge – we are not returning to the same times. In some places congregation has not decreased, but has gone the other way – increased 3-fold if services are online.
- ◆ If we are shut out of the church we must find own **sacred space** – as in houses – this happens in other religions. In the past, new forms of devotion evolved in strained times e.g. Stations of the Cross, Rosary.
- ◆ Post-Covid, who are we missing in church? Young families, how do we attract them? – Not with a candle and ‘sit still for a while and feel good about yourself! We need to challenge them.
- ◆ If you have a young family or grandchildren you will know how attached they are to their computer, iPad, or smartphones, and more or less have to be surgically removed from them by the end of the day.
- ◆ We are entering a new age of orality – **learning is taking place through listening and watching** – which is based not around the hearth, in the household, nor in the village church, but on the internet. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bj-8UyI BJlQ&list=PL52C4CE0B7593CFC8>
- ◆ We need to talk about theology – relationship with God. **All acts of meaning are theology.** Look at the *Why Study* series which is at a good level for public understanding: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuZazV6MyGM&list=PL52C4CE0B7593CFC8&index=109>
- ◆ **Listen to the natural world.**
- ◆ Democracy is in retreat in this country, need to save it, welcome the stranger, rethink science and public life; who knew that our existence, happiness, society, economic survival depended totally on science?

God and the Devil

Devil says: I've got you now, I've closed all the churches.

God says : No, I've opened thousands of domestic ones!

Live Simply, Sustainably – think plant pots!

The Royal Horticultural Society has produced 9 suggestions on how to reduce plastic waste.

There are about 500 million plastic pots in circulation

Only one third of rigid plastic is ever recycled

Plastic can only be recycled 7-9 times before it becomes too weak to reuse
Plastic plant pots take more than 400 years to break down

About a third of the 78 million tons of plastic packaging produced annually ends up in the ocean

Please let us recycle plastic plant pots, trays, tubs.

Consider biodegradable cardboard, wood or paper containers to grow seeds, seedlings, cuttings.

(There will be more on the RHS 9 suggestions in next newsletter.)

It isn't a problem using and reusing plastic. It is a problem disposing of it or acquiring new.

Know your plastics

Only **HDPE** and **PET** are easily and widely recycled:

Polyethylene terephthalate: fizzy drinks, water bottles and salad trays
PET

High-density polyethylene: milk bottles, bleach, detergents and some shampoo bottles **HDPE**

Polyvinyl chloride (vinyl): carpet backing, pipes, window and door frames
PVC

Low density polyethylene: bin liners, packaging film, squeezable bottles and carrier bags **LDPE**

Polypropylene: containers, food packaging eg margarine tubs, microwaveable meal trays **PP**

Polystyrene: packaging for food and electronic goods and toys **PS**

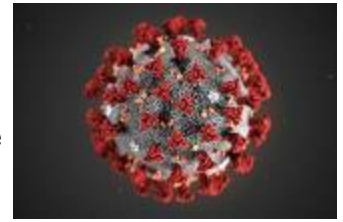
“The Good News is the power of God saving all who have faith, since this is what reveals the justice of God to us: it shows how faith leads to faith, or as scripture says: The upright man finds life through faith.”

Rom 1: 16b-17

Vaccines

If you have received a vaccine it doesn't matter which one, you will have some but not total protection from viral infection. *Behave as if you haven't been vaccinated.* There are seven times more positive cases now than in June-August. You might get infected and transmit the virus onwards.

Most of us are in the real time experiment of seeing whether a vaccine booster injection delay, beyond the time scale used in clinical studies, will prove efficacious in the months ahead. *There is good circumstantial evidence that it will be effective.*



Mourning more than 100,000 deaths from Covid

We read internationally about continents, countries, even US or Canadian states where life goes on normally, people eat out, go to concerts, theatre.

We didn't have to be where we are now.

Britain decided to do it "our way". See article from public health expert published on 15th March 2020

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/mar/15/britain-goes-it-alone-over-coronavirus-we-can-only-hope-the-gamble-pays-off>

The Inauguration of President Biden and the Timing of the Encyclical Fratelli tutti

Let's be political, Pope Francis deems it necessary!

The Presidential Inauguration has happened since our last St Patrick's newsletter, and was watched worldwide with some trepidation, followed by immense relief. It was a vital moment for the future of democracy and the restoration of responsible government in America. The former president (note, no name) had proved how you can be the fake, say anything you want, loudly and often enough, and people will believe you. For those who thought he espoused their cause – he did not, he had one interest – his vanity. His own family know he was utterly unfit for office.

Pope Francis and the Vatican rushed the final publication of the encyclical Fratelli tutti in October, in advance of the start of voting in the US presidential election: <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Fratelli-Tutti-explained>.

Fratelli Tutti is a radical challenge, offering a blueprint for a world after coronavirus. It turns the world upside down, placing human dignity at the centre.

It links back to the message of interconnectedness. We are challenged to turn outwards, to act as neighbours, and to reach out to all those who are in need.

Fratelli Tutti makes clear that politics is indispensable to the goal of "universal fraternity and social peace" (FT, 176).

The pope has pointed out specific threats to us:

- political nationalism
- racism
- trickle-down economics
- relativism and consumerist individualism

The Pope wanted US Catholics to read the encyclical prior to voting. People usually vote for systems which will advance their monetary and social status or that of their family, at the expense of others in society. History shows this leads to a very polarized and unhappy society.

See the newsletter of 12th December for previous article on the encyclical Fratelli tutti, which is considered to be the most important for over 50 years.

Famous quote from Brazilian Archbishop Helder Camara, died 2011:

"When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist".

For more about him <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/obituary-archbishop-helder-camara-1115091.html>

Irene Green

"God's justice that was made known through the Law and the Prophets has now been revealed outside the Law, since it is the same justice of God that comes through faith to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ."

Rom 3: 21-22a

Seeds

Pedalling Around Paradise (lockdown-style)

Barbara Bond



This February I will be embarking on the virtual trip of a lifetime without leaving my home town. I plan to cycle the distance of the Mauritius Coastline over 28 days (177 km) and raise much needed funds for St Peter & St James Hospice.



I am doing this in memory of my mother-in-law who died recently. Liseby Bond was born in Port Louis, capital of Mauritius, and came to the UK with her English husband more than 60 years ago. A much loved mother, grandmother and great grandmother, she brought a touch of paradise into her family.

St Peter & St James Hospice provide expert and compassionate hospice care to families in the local area. All their services are free of charge to patients and their loved ones. They rely on our local community for over 80% of their funds and have to raise more than £2.6 million every year through fundraising. That's £8,000 every single day.

My route 'on the ground' in Mauritius (if I were there, and not cycling from Lewes to Plumpton and back) would comprise:

- Port Louis to Grand Baie: 27 km
- Grand Baie to Belle Mare: 38 km
- Belle Mare to Blue Bay: 47 km
- Blue Bay to Gris Gris: 38 km
- Gris Gris to Le Morne: 31 km
- Le Morne to Black River to Flic en Flac: 30 km
- Flic en Flac to Port Louis: 22 km



Flic en Flac Beach

If you would like to make a donation, please check <https://stpjhospice.enthuse.com/pf/barbara-bond>



Cycling near Plumpton... Not so bad on a nice day, in summer...



Plumpton signal box and level crossing, February evening

"I am most happy, then, to be proud of my weaknesses, in order to feel the protection of Christ's power over me. I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." 2 Cor 12: 9b-10

Afterthoughts

Lightening the Darkness

Patrick Bond

January has seemed endless, the dark days lightening with interminable slowness – and yet, with a funeral to arrange in the midst of a pandemic, there is a flood of things to do, and no time to do it! Strange times!

In amongst my general impression of dismal and wet days, I remind myself that there has been at least one day of astonishing, sunlit beauty. Sunday 10th January, here in Lewes, saw the sun rise on deep hoar frost on trees, bushes, cobwebs, grass, fence lines and posts, and any surface however small.

I am carrying out the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/> Although the

watching is supposed to take place between 29th and 31st January, results can be fed in until 19th February.



Single herring gulls swoop through low cloud. Unfortunately I can't include them: I don't think the definition of Big Garden includes the airspace above it! In addition to the seed and peanut feeders, I have discovered a use for the untidy pile of twigs stacked on the patio (cuttings from the apple tree weeks ago...); I have scattered loose

seed straight through the branches, and the chaffinches love feeding there, as does the woodpigeon.

The birdwatch results were exactly as expected: the usual suspects turned up, and only long-tailed tits and the wren turned down the chance of stardom. The object is to note every species within the chosen hour, but not to count every bird – it would be impossible to tell if you were double-counting the same individual. So to note the largest number of any species seen at any one moment.

Many birds come together in winter to feed in flocks, and true to form, goldfinches came in a group of seven, and chaffinches and great tits in groups of four. In twos were the garden regulars, robins (squabbling – they have to maintain a territory even through winter, and both sexes do the fighting), blue tits, house sparrows and dunnocks. One male blackbird hopped about on the ground, while another, possibly a juvenile male (black but no golden bill) sat high in the hedge keeping watch. Only the song thrush and the coal tit came singly, as is their wont, and of course the very plump woodpigeon.

The song thrush has been living up to his name during the last few days, singing at dawn and dusk as if this will be the first spring ever, and as if there was no such thing as Covid or climate change. His song is easy to identify. Like the nightingale, his song is endlessly varied, but he always repeats in groups of three, whatever exquisite phrase he has invented. Just two or three repeats, then a different tune – and so on for half an hour or more.

My total of different birds seen, by species, counting numbers in the largest groups only, was 28 in the given hour. I can forgive the wren, the blackcap and the long-tailed tits for not showing up, and the redwing and mistle thrush which are rare visitors anyway. It has been a good hour. I had forgotten how liberating it is to forget everything and just watch, eyes open and mind alert for the slightest sign.



Song thrush. Credit: Paul Chesterfield / RSPB Images

“I call with all my heart; Lord, hear me, I will keep your commands. I call upon you, save me and I will do your will. I rise before dawn and cry for help, I hope in your word. My eyes watch through the night to ponder your promise.” Ps 119: 145-148