



St. Patrick's Church

Broad Green/Cowley Drive Woodingdean BN2 6TB



Our Lady of Lourdes

Whiteway Lane Rottingdean

# St. Patrick's Newsletter

Fr Benny O'Shea (01273) 302903 Email office: rottingdean@abdiocese.org.uk

Mobile phone: Mgr Benedict O'Shea 07884 171710 (new number); Deacon Neil Mercer 07801 706167

Fr Benny's address is : Eastfield, Steyning Road, Rottingdean BN2 7GA

Web: <https://www.ololandstp.org/> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StPatricksWoodingdean>

Churches are now closed for regular public Masses: see <https://www.ololandstp.org/>

Fr Benny continues to say MASS which is streamed live : 09.30 each weekday, preceded by Adoration usually at 08.30; 18.30 Saturday evening and 10.30 Sunday.

Welcome to the twenty-first "apart but together" e-newsletter (16th January 2021)

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

## Sacred Spaces

## Barbara Bond

Anyone who lives in love lives in God and God lives in him | John 4

It was a white and still Sunday morning, the first of this year that St Patrick's has been closed again. I decided to walk, and listen to 'Sunday Worship' on the radio at the same time. The focus was on our care of the planet, with lots of mention of Pope Francis and Our Common Home (*Laudato Si'*), but my attention was caught by a reference to Pennant Melangell, a remote valley in Powys, Mid Wales.

In 2017 we camped in Mid Wales in splendid isolation, as the only occupants of a site where we could be engrossed in the doings of raptors, or captivated by the flitting antics of the redstarts as they frolicked in the trees and by the stream.

We never went to Pennant Melangell, but fell in love with a spot in the next valley called Pont Llogel, a tiny village beside the River Vrnwy, and spent many hours beside the stream trying to spot a dipper... The village is dominated by its church, and to visit it we had to wait for the rather intermittent opening of the village shop, and borrow the key.

Inside the simple church, clinging to some netting and flapping weakly, was a trapped swift. Patrick gently caught it and carried it to the church door. There it lifted up into the sky, free once more. A profound moment: I have long pondered on the fact that birds are held by something so powerful yet invisible...



Railway Land Nature Reserve

As the hand is made for holding, and the eye for seeing,  
You have fashioned us for joy.

Share with us the vision that shall find it everywhere.

And, when our song of joy dies down to silence,

Come, hold our powerlessness with love!

Then shall our fear be gone,

and our feet set on a radiant path.

*Celtic Daily Prayer Book 2 p847*

As I walked on, the radio was still playing in my ear and I was brought back into the present as they began to sing, "Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here". In that moment, the morning's deep frost had indeed brought everything to stillness, and the beauty of the normally ordinary view in front of me led me away from real and pressing worries and concerns, to a very peaceful place, a truly sacred space.

The newsletter appears fortnightly. For the next issue, please send contributions by 29th January to Barbara Bond: [bond\\_barbara@ymail.com](mailto:bond_barbara@ymail.com)

Walk for Water



**Walk for Water**

During Lent CAFOD will challenge supporters to walk 10,000 steps a day for 40 days, to raise money and awareness of water poverty.

**Above all we can pray!**

In collaboration with Christian Aid, Tearfund, and others, CAFOD invites us to join a year of prayer for our common home.

From now until the next UN climate summit in November 2021 (COP26) we will be praying without ceasing, to renew the earth. Prayer is a powerful tool, and is needed now more than ever as coronavirus reveals the persistent injustices faced by vulnerable communities, particularly climate crisis.

Let us pray together as we look towards a fairer, more just society, where the world's most vulnerable people can live in dignity, and our common home can be restored for future generations.

Link for signing on (and to see the map of prayer):

<https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-without-ceasing>

**Cancel The Debt**

The coronavirus pandemic is the worst global health crisis in a century. Yet many countries are being forced to choose between health care or paying their debts. Unless urgent action is taken, countries will end up being plunged into a new debt crisis.

**Climate Crisis**

Homes, agriculture and people's ability to earn a living are being destroyed by the climate crisis and the pollution of our land, oceans and forests. We need to restore God's precious gift of creation, enable people to adapt to a warming world and stop the climate crisis from getting worse. The Paris Agreement requires countries to submit new climate targets in 2020, whether the COP is held or not.

**Human Rights Defenders**

Human rights defenders act to promote or protect human rights. They are community leaders, lawyers, activists, journalists and bloggers. They often work in conflict zones and defend the rights of the poorest. Coronavirus is making their work even harder, with indigenous leaders at particular risk from the virus. Several governments use lockdown rules to restrict freedoms.



*“Give us joy to balance our affliction, for the years when we knew misfortune. Show forth your work to your servants; let your glory shine on their children. Let the favour of the Lord be upon us.” Ps 89: 15-17*

How many of us had heard of Zoom before the great ‘lock down’?

I had not, but when the virus struck so forcibly, all my ‘Varndean in the Community’ classes, U3A ones and others were unable to continue in the flesh — and so off we went!!

Zoom, zoom, zoom! Help!!

*“There is no other tool that has brought people closer together than Zoom”.*



- I joined ‘Singing for Better Health’ — run by the wonderful Uditia. A mixture of adults, a lot on their own, aged, disabled and often in sheltered housing, who just want to sing ‘the old songs’ they love. It has been a pleasure to become friends with such lovely people, and to exercise lungs and voice!
- I have had numerous meetings on Zoom — St. Patrick’s at the forefront as ever, with Irene organising parish get togethers and Advent groups. Our friend, Tracy Strickland ran ‘a parish coffee’ morning after the OLOL mass on Sundays. Fr. Benny was forced on to YouTube but he did Zoom for coffee!
- I have attended webinars, visited Art Galleries, taken part in AGM’s, etc.
- I have even been able to continue my voluntary work for ‘Possability People’. I help disabled people with form filling and benefits and that can be done with Zoom. It is of course harder for the client, and we cannot create that rapport that only ‘face to face’ relationships can bring. It has been a steep learning curve for the clients and myself but if one or two have been helped, it is so worth it.

App safely installed, I started Tai Chi, Meditation, Keep Fit — all in my own home. I used my old iPad to move from conservatory to lounge, depending on the weather, and off I went!

Just zooming along!

Of course, there were teething troubles with so much internet use, and tutors having to learn new skills. Frozen screens and poor volumes became part of the fun.

It was a new journey for teachers and pupil!

If I was still working I might think differently – meetings on Zoom all day and endless staring at the screen... But it has enabled people to work safely and effectively from home.

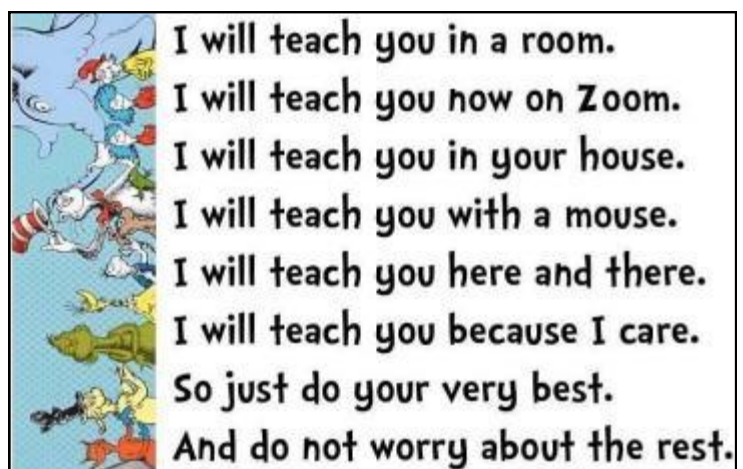
Our newsletter is based on ‘Apart but Together’. In no way is it preferable to interact with people solely on Zoom; the benefits of face to face relationships are much more important, and the feeling created by being close to someone is so valued.

However, Zoom has opened up many new fields for us retired people. We have become more technological (!) and have been keen to interact in the safest way. Friendships have continued and new ones developed.

Thank you Zoom!

I do not want to keep on using you, but for now you are the safest way of maintaining contact, and you have enabled me to keep in touch, learn new subjects and to be less isolated.

Let’s Zoom again!!!



<https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/dr-seuss.jpg>

*“ ‘Babylon and Egypt I will count among those who know me; Philistia, Tyre, Ethiopia, these will be her children, and Sion shall be called “Mother”, for all shall be her children.’ ” Ps 87: 4-5*



## Community News

### Maintenance — St Patrick's

Irene Green

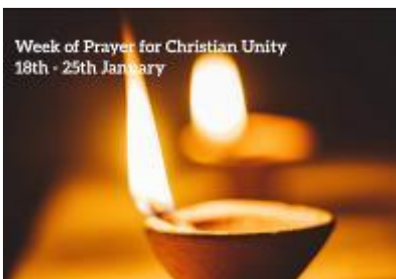
The St Patrick's interested parishioners continue with maintenance and other issues by email and Zoom.

The current in-tray includes modification of the wiring path for our air purifier in the church, and keeping up with Safety Toolbox check list.

At very regular intervals we need expert examination and reports on all our services and buildings. At the moment, the flat roof and the fascia, soffits, guttering, downpipes and soak aways (at the church) are being dealt with.

There are repairs needed at times in the rented house as well as updating some features which have become unfit for the purpose. We are fortunate to have a letting agency look after the property but our parish/committee input is needed from time to time.

Bernadette is chairperson of our group. Be assured we are still working efficiently, unseen, and that repairs cost (loads of) money. In case you wonder why we bother to hold on to a rented house, which was once the presbytery, the income is necessary to keep St Patrick's going. We have parish expenses beyond own building maintenance.



#### Week of prayer for Christian Unity is 18th to 25th January

See the website and the diocesan website <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/>  
<https://ctbi.org.uk/resources-for-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2021/>

Materials for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by the ecumenical [Monastic Community of Grandchamp](#) in Switzerland which has fifty sisters, women from different generations, Church traditions, countries and continents. The theme is based on John 15:1-17 'Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit' and expresses the Grandchamp Community's vocation to prayer, reconciliation and unity in the Church and the human family.



The latest edition of our Refugee Crisis Newsletter is out now.



People across our parishes will be familiar with the invaluable work of our Refugee Crisis Migrant Fund. Bishop Richard writes:

'The latest edition of our [Refugee Crisis Newsletter](#) is an excellent reminder of the work that is going on across the Diocese to respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters who find themselves having to leave their homelands... Thank you for all that is being achieved – and for renewing your commitment in prayer, volunteering your skills and talents and your financial generosity to ensure that we can continue to welcome those who, having suffered the loss of their home, the all-too-common loss of loved ones and the hardship of dangerous travel, come to dwell amongst us.'

*"It is he, the Lord Most High, who gives each his place. In his register of peoples he writes: 'These are her children' and while they dance they will sing: 'In you all find their home.'" Ps 98: 3-4*

## Shorts & Snippets

### Love the sun... But

The back of our home faces south west and at this time of year when the sun shines as it did today, it illuminates the whole house. In the summer the angle of the sun just penetrates a metre into the back of the house. So *what do I see on our wooden floors...* dust and fluff that wasn't visible when it was raining outside!! I love the sun but it is cruel, so out comes the Hoover to shame me and my housekeeping. Grrrrrrrrrr...  
Bernadette

### Marmalade:

If you happen to be passing I've put some new season marmalade in our porch (42 Ainsworth Ave Ovingdean). I bought 18 kilos of organic Seville oranges from the wholesale market. Friends and neighbours had some of them but I have made, and am still making, batches. They are for sale for **The Kanji Project** (India) usually £2 a jar.  
Bernadette

### Not today Love



### Tree surgery

On 26th January we are to have our tree surgeon come and do some branch removal on our two beech trees, bay, cypresses and evergreen wrinkled viburnum. The wood is cut into pieces of about 2 feet long. If you want any wood of that size from these species for any purpose get in touch. The biggest diameter of the beech items will be 6-8 inches, but most will be less. We aren't offering to chain saw it to the correct size for your wood burner – although we do chain saw the wood we keep. Irene [icgreen@ntlworld.com](mailto:icgreen@ntlworld.com)

### Programme on how you can help your immune system

See on BBC iPlayer: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b05p5v5f/the-truth-about>

- Vitamins and supplements don't have measurable response except for Vitamin D (if you don't get outside in the winter) and for cold shortening supplement use echinacea THR mark for quality.
- Watch out if you have lots of allergies which keep the immune system heightened but unable to mount big response
- Eat very varied diet including fibre, not junk food
- Feed your gut microbiome to help your immune system

- Some stress is good – after shower turn cold tap on for 30 secs...
- Exercise, exercise, exercise, in moderation
- Sleep to help your T lymphocytes latch on to infected cells and for a quick boost get a massage (not easy in lockdown).

***How I miss having a sauna, I have no idea whether it helps!!***  
Irene

### Marmalade:

I hope to leave some jars of Seville orange marmalade 2021 – various sizes and prices – in St Patrick's before Sunday 17th Jan. This would be the normal time to start selling new batches. If you have a church key and want to buy marmalade do come, take what you need and please put cash in the basket! Thank you.  
Irene [icgreen@ntlworld.com](mailto:icgreen@ntlworld.com)



*“Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the isles like fine dust.” Is 40: 15*

## Vaccine story

Husband and I received the Pfizer BioNtech vaccine on 10th January – later than the Queen, but earlier than the Pope! There was some surprise about our getting an appointment since we were in group 3 – the 75-79 age group – and the over 80s were dismayed.

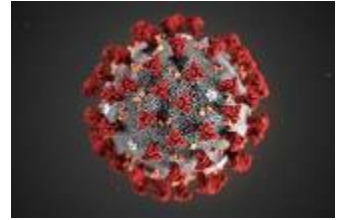
The explanation may be that our GP is at the Univ of Sussex health centre, which doesn't have many patients of our age. Ours was one of 5 surgeries which combined to get vaccination done at the medical centre in Carden Avenue, Hollingbury. We were informed by text with a link to a website to select our own appointment time in 4 days.

On Sunday, the vaccination process was running ahead of clock time, so we were vaccinated 20 minutes ahead of our appointment time. There are about 6 questions to answer re current health, whether you have had allergic reactions and use an epi pen and if you are on blood thinners. It doesn't matter if you have a common cold, or have allergies as long as they don't induce anaphylactic shock. For those on blood thinners the vaccinator holds the arm longer.

The Pfizer BioNtech vaccine is 30µl of the mRNA held carefully in complex lipids - you feel it takes longer than the flu jab.

Afterwards you are required to sit for 15 minutes in a supervised waiting room before you get permission to leave. I had later side effects of stiff upper arm, slightly fuzzy head, and for two evenings was noticeably tired, thereafter no symptoms. No hint about a second vaccination, though this one should produce antibodies in 2-3 weeks.

Local vaccination sites are The Brighton Racecourse and The Brighton centre. You will be contacted very soon if you are in the vulnerable age category.



## The vaccine gives much higher antibody production than the disease can – and why

The virus skews people's immune system to produce a worse response to infection and then a few days later ramps up the patient's own immune reaction to a level which is very damaging to organs especially lungs and heart. Outcomes can be recovery, long COVID or death.

If the new COVID variant infects cells more readily, you would expect it to multiply more rapidly within the victim and to cause a more severe disease. But this is not the case. It's always a trade off between a virus and its host. Here is a link to the webinar which we watched last July. It may offer an explanation. "How Cells Know They're Infected With SARS-CoV-2 and How the Subsequent Response to This Results in COVID-19"

<https://go.technologynetworks.com/how-cells-know>

When a cell is infected with a virus, it sends out signalling molecules warning the body that it has been infected. Interferons send a warning to neighbouring cells to close down and make it harder for the virus to multiply. The COVID virus has a special trick of synthesising a molecule that inhibits the Interferon branch of the response. This then leads the Chemokine branch of the response to overreact and can cause a dangerous "Cytokine Storm". It is not the virus, but your body's response to the virus that kills you.

The surprising observation from cell culture studies was that when cells were infected with a high dose of virus the immune system kicked in first. Compare this with when people get the variant virus, which is more infectious but allows the immune system to give a better, balanced response.



## Singing and other classes

St Patrick's cannot hold adult education community classes currently because of lockdown. For some years we hosted "Community Singing" class. **However, you can join this class and others**, see brochures or website <https://varndean.ac.uk/adulted>

Queries to Learning & Participation Adviser 01273 546602 / 07749 357321 [dem@varndean.ac.uk](mailto:dem@varndean.ac.uk) or contact Adult Education on 01273 546602 [commed@varndean.ac.uk](mailto:commed@varndean.ac.uk). Action needed now to ensure classes run.

**The Bible in a Year** (with Fr. Mike Schmitz) – The definitive Catholic Bible in a year podcast, brought to you by Ascension, copy this link into your browser <https://bibleinayear.fireside.fm/>

or use: <https://podcasts.google.com/feed/aHR0cHM6Ly9mZWVkcyc5maXJlc2lkZS5mbS9iaVVjsZWluYXIIYXlvcnNz>

*"If you uphold me by your promise I shall live; let my hopes not be in vain. Sustain me and I shall be saved, and ever observe your commands." Psalm 119: 116-117*



## Caring & Daring under Lockdown

Barbara Bond

*No awkward silences please! Grieving people think saying the wrong thing is better than nothing.*

Today a miracle happened. It was the funeral of a couple well known and loved in our town (Lewes) for their service to the community. But they were also part of my family life in the more than 25 years I have lived here.

So I was standing in the pouring rain under my brolly by the church railings, waiting to pay my respects as the cortege arrived, and saying the Divine Office on my mobile phone app as I waited. Suddenly the priest came over and invited me to come in and stand at the back of the church!

This is a pretty tough time both at work and at home, but during that service two things happened.

First, I had a powerful sense of this lady, who had always been a very wise if rather scary presence, giving me one of her famous stares and telling me, “Its OK, you have got this – and always remember, you are not doing what you do on your own”.

And I had a really strong reminder, as I saw the family together – but apart – in the church, of how we are all held so close in God’s love.

Much later, I had a message from one of the family simply saying, “Thank you for being there – seeing a friendly face meant so much”.

In fact they had helped me – and the timing of that text, arriving when we too were facing our own goodbyes (to Patrick’s mother, who died

from Covid in the early hours of Saturday) just reinforced to me how much power we have, to touch one another with love and kindness.

I had intended to write this having listened to *The Reunion* – Michael Rosen on BBC Radio 4, talking about his experience of being on a Covid ward, for seven weeks in intensive care. Rosen lost his son Eddie suddenly, aged 19, and this experience led him to write *The Sad Book*, a picture book for children – and indeed everyone. It is a moving combination of sincerity and simplicity, which acknowledges that sadness is neither always avoidable, nor reasonable; and it perfects the art of making complicated feelings plain.

In the programme, Rosen also talks to one of the doctors involved in his care. He also, at the end of the first lockdown, lost his own son as the result of an accident. It is very moving to hear the two men describe how they supported one another.

In a strange way I feel that a very positive legacy of this time would be this: that we were able to sit more comfortably with the knowledge that both life and death are our constant companions; and that it

is our job – not that of experts or medics or even priests – to hold the light for one another.

You don’t need to say anything profound – or even anything at all. Dare to be present, dare to smile...



*Let's talk about it*



Giving hope to grieving children

### Useful resources

For children: <https://www.winstonswish.org/>  
or The Sad Book: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sad\\_Book](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sad_Book)

For adults:

<https://www.dyingmatters.org/page/updated-resources>



[Pax Christi](#) the international Catholic movement for peace, has produced a variety of resources to celebrate Peace Sunday, with materials for parishes, communities and families - allowing for as much creativity as possible!

In his message to parishes their National President, Archbishop Malcolm McMahon says: 'This year has been one of unprecedented and continuing challenges. We are all conscious of the need to restore and rebuild our communities here and around the world, accepting that we need new ways of working and relating to each other. The Christian message of peace, through reconciliation, justice and nonviolence, can offer hope and direction in these times. I invite you to seriously consider facilitating a collection for, or making a donation to, the work of Pax Christi at this time as a way to make a practical contribution to continuing the work of peace.'

*“I have no love for half-hearted men: my love is for your law. You are my shelter, my shield; I hope in your word.” Ps 119: 113-114*

# Afterthoughts

## Winter Twilight

Patrick Bond

As I write, the afternoon sky is relaxing into thin high cirrus, blue showing in the north but a veil of cloud building in front of the declining sun in the south. The sun's light seems to gather into a white icy glow behind the slim silhouettes of ash and sycamore trees, beyond the railway embankment.

It is a peaceful moment in the building chaos of the pandemic.

In the garden, there are no shadows but the light ebbs away gracefully. The small birds, blue tits and great tits, flit back and forth from the apple tree to the feeders. Chaffinches, which feed exclusively on the ground (I thought!) also sit in the apple tree, apparently watching for any morsels which might fall – the tits hold the seed in their claws on the branch, and peck away at it till finished.

To my astonishment, one chaffinch sauntered along a nearby twig, seeming uninterested, then deliberately flew at a tit, barged him off and snatched

the seed before it had time to fall. The great tit was notably unfazed, and immediately flew to the feeder to retrieve another seed.

A territorial robin is always near or near-about. If you can't see him on the ground, he is in a bush somewhere, sitting next to a leaf and thrusting out his pillarbox-red chest – a living reminder to any other robin that he is boss on this plot. He has even mastered the knack of perching on the vertical mesh of the feeder and extracting a sunflower seed, though he is unsuited to this manoeuvre and always manages to slip or fall off rather awkwardly.

This morning I spotted a little head popping up out of the bushy tussocks of grass, and promptly popping back down. All I could see

was a dusky head, pale breast, and a sharp eye-stripe. I clattered upstairs to retrieve my binoculars, and from the window watched a foraging wren, scuttling like a mouse, pushing into the very roots of the tussocks as if disappearing down a burrow, and coming back into view with a kind of 'hey presto' flourish.

As he came closer and closer, constantly popping up his head to check for danger, I could admire the beautiful 'stitching' of his tailored country suit, and the radiant foxy brown of his short strunty tail. When he came really close to the house, in the weedy rose bed, I could look down almost vertically, and I saw that while he moved in a blur of jerky twitches, angling and rotating his head non-stop, he did not seem to cause anything else to move.

A dozen times every second his long, thin beak would stab out as he located an insect, grub or other morsel, but no matter how flimsy the plant on which he found his food, the stab was so precise that he took his food without touching the stem on which he found it. No leaf quivered. He ducked under, through and over plants without making them stir.



Chaffinch, female – RSPB



Robin – RSPB



Wren – RSPB

*"For the Lord has chosen Sion; he has desired it for his dwelling: 'This is my resting-place for ever, here have I chosen to live. I will greatly bless her produce, I will fill her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her faithful shall ring out their joy.'" Ps 132: 13-16*