



St. Patrick's Church

Broad Green/Cowley Drive Woodingdean BN2 6TB

St. Patrick's Newsletter



Our Lady of Lourdes

Whiteway Lane Rottingdean

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

Mobile : Mgr Benedict O'Shea 07884 171710; Deacons:- Rev Neil Mercer 07801 706167

& Rev Bernard Hill 07505 460888; **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/StPatricksWoodingdean>

MASS at Our Lady of Lourdes is streamed live: for weekdays see website <https://www.ololandstp.org/>

Vigil Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Saturday 6.30 pm; 16th January: Sunday Mass: 10.30 am

St Patrick's - Mass: Sunday 30th January at 9 am: 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mass: Sunday 6th February at 9 am: 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Note Funeral Mass Thursday 3rd February 11.00 am at St Patrick's for Michael Lee RIP

Welcome to the 46th "apart but together" e-newsletter (30th January 2022)

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

On What it Means to Love

Barbara Bond

And the greatest of these is love... 1 Corinthians 13

You may have heard Kathryn Mannix speaking to Michael Rosen on Radio 4 recently. She is a Doctor, and now a very well respected author, who has spent her career working with people who have incurable, advanced illnesses. Her wisdom and grace shine out.

Working in palliative care at Christmas is never easy; my hope is always that I have made something a little better for someone, working with them at a time when everything going on outside of their situation must seem so frivolous. Tinsel and fairy lights don't seem important when you are about to lose the person you have spent the last fifty years with, or the one who has been the anchor in your life up to now.

This year has been the hardest. It felt as if the whole, constant, lack of clarity about COVID was exploding families – and the pain of loss was magnified by all the different approaches and beliefs informing how they dealt with these new circumstances they found themselves in. It felt as if fear and anger had boxed love into a corner. Sometimes even Kathryn Mannix's wise words, about trying to understand from someone else's perspective, felt too hard!



**God be in my head
And in my understanding;
God be in my eyes,
And in my looking;
God be in my mouth
And in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end and at my departing.
Amen**

As I reflected on today's Gospel I felt something of the same atmosphere of hostile anger and frenzy. You can imagine the scene in the synagogue, noisy and threatening, and yet, "He slipped through the crowd and walked away". I am left with that image of Jesus slipping through the storm of hate, walking away to pray.

In the second reading, such a well loved passage, St Paul gives us a template, even a lifeline – but also a life's work. I pray that we all have the love that endures whatever comes, and that we can share it freely with one another in faith and hope.

The newsletter appears fortnightly. The next issue will be on 13th February. Please send contributions by Friday 11th February to Barbara Bond: bond_barbara@ymail.com

COVID in 2021: The shock of this virus is still being felt in every corner of the globe. Sierra Leone Country Manager Kayode Akintola tells us about the experience of Sierra Leoneans.

"We have one of the most stretched health systems in the world. From here in the capital, Freetown, I sometimes worry that we'll be back to the days of Ebola. I am concerned, when I know there are dedicated nurses and doctors – just like with Ebola – trying to treat people and save the lives of people, and all the while they are risking their own lives. We don't



Kayode Akintola, CAFOD's representative for Sierra Leone, presents a coronavirus prevention workshop to faith leaders in Freetown

Isolating, hand-washing, masks

"Some of the problems we face are that isolating to protect yourself, your family and your community – means you can't farm your land to grow food, or go to work to buy enough to eat.

"There can be a shortage of water in some parts of the country, so handwashing is extremely difficult when you need to make sure your family has enough to drink."

"We're also encouraged to wear masks, but masks are 50 cents each – money that some families can't afford."

providing simple, cloth masks to communities. We have been able to give emergency food to people who were hungry because of restrictions. And we have been working with communities throughout the country to help with safe hygiene."

Your support and what it means

"This would not have been possible without the kindness of people in England and Wales and the teams throughout Sierra Leone who have been working bravely throughout this terrible crisis." "I would ask you to pray for your sisters and brothers in Sierra Leone and around the world in the coming year."

Please donate: <https://cafod.org.uk/donations/>

have easy access to oxygen in more remote parts of the country."

"The World Health Organization and Sierra Leonean health officials advise social distancing, but you can imagine how difficult that is in places where houses are side-by-side, and where generations of families live together."

"We have been reaching out to families throughout the country. Near the border with Liberia, we have been

"People need food urgently. They need clean water urgently. They need healthcare urgently."

Prayer: The World Can't Wait

Ever-present, ever-loving God,
May your gentle spirit surprise us,
shatter our complacency
and wake us from our dreams.
We know the time is now.

May your urgent spirit send us out,
and demand our courage;
may we set forth the stories of truth
in the face of the story of power.
May world leaders listen to us.

May your comforting spirit
turn us towards the discomfort
of knowing, seeing and
understanding.
The hour has come to act.

May your holy spirit burn through us,
and call us to tell even those who
aren't ready to listen
that the world can't wait.
Amen.

(Linda Jones/CAFOD)

"In you, O Lord, I take refuge. Let me never be put to shame. In your justice, set me free, hear me and speedily rescue me. Be a rock of refuge for me, a mighty stronghold to save me, for you are my rock, my stronghold. For your name's sake, lead me and guide me." Psalm 31

Community News – St Patrick’s

Social events at St Patrick’s, March-April 2022: Dates for your Diary

A Walk: 12th March We will have a downland walk for anyone to join, on Saturday, 12th March starting at 10am. It will be led by Frances Low. The circular walk is up Whiteway Lane, across to Balsdean Farm and then back to Rottingdean.

A Coffee Morning: 17th March. St Patrick’s Day is Thursday 17th March. Mass at 10am at St Patrick’s will be followed at approx 10.40 by an extended morning coffee until 12.00. We invite members of the local community and churches to join us for refreshments and music, free of charge. Possible **Fund Raising** on the weekend of 23-24th April when we prioritise plant and food sales. (icgreen@ntlworld.com)

Note: Ash Wednesday is 2nd March; Easter Sunday is 17th April.

Covid regulations The diocese follows government rules: legal requirements have now been removed. However diocese recommends we keep safety measures e.g. mask wearing and highly ventilated buildings.

The Little Way Association: St Patrick’s used to support **The Little Way Association**, because one of our parishioners (Bridie Reynolds) was close to the founder and the London office. If you are interested in The Little Way and helping the missions, contact details are on the website <https://www.littlewayassociation.com/>



The Little Way Association

Root and Branch Synod

<https://www.rootandbranchsynod.org/>

The Root and Branch Synod is campaigning for change in the church, mostly with an agenda for the ordination of women Priests.

We are being asked to set up local groups to meet monthly on Zoom so that we can continue the momentum from the Bristol Synod that took place in September.

If you are interested please contact tracy.stickland@gmail.com

[Individuals can also respond to diocesan synod questions online via <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/synod> Deadline is 4th February.]

“But, now, look to that glorious garden which love planted, and gather to yourself every virtue in true humility and simplicity of heart. And although you find yourself among people of various states of mind, learn how patient divine goodness has been to us all...”

St Hildegard of Bingen, 1098-1179, Abbess and Visionary (letter to the Monk Guibert; ref 106r, AD 1176)

Image is from Our Lady of the Mountains R.C. Church, Jasper, Alberta (www.olmjasper.com)



Please do not attend Mass or other functions at St Patrick’s if you have been in contact with people with Covid

“Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God. My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life; when can I enter and see the face of God?” Ps 42

For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission



A Personal View Irene Green reports, and comments on Synod and the buzz word “discernment” – “the ability to judge well”

Lay experts and religious orders presented their views on the *Synod 2021-2023*, at two *Tablet* webinars in the last fortnight.

The Synod should be like a council of the Church in the whole world (a global council reporting to the Vatican). In that respect it is rare, and opportunities to engage mustn't be missed.

The questions posed recently by the Diocese for us to discuss were subtle: i.e. Is the Church good at accompanying people on their faith journey? Is the Church good at heart-to-heart listening? Is the Church good at communication?

But were these the right questions? Or is the Church afraid of being able to keep a lid on debate, if conflicts are released? I would like to have my say about very different issues – church services, celibacy, divorce and re-marriage, justice and human rights, same sex marriage, liturgy, women priests.

I always try to extrapolate what I hear on webinars to see if it can be applied to our own church community. Much of the discussion referred to larger, multicultural, multiracial parishes.

The church in the West is in serious decline and this is the age of hyper distraction. But there is a spiritual hunger, and the Church is not connected to it.

Lawrence Freeman suggested that spiritual hunger, meditation, retreats, deeper spirituality and synodal process go together.

Meditation is transformative. Be silent, listen to one's own heart. Prayer is the highest form of listening, it calms the mind, produces good works. Start and end with silence.

The process is all about relationships. Give people a chance. Who are the voiceless people in our community? We need to seek out the marginalised and the young who are our future.

What kind of events can we have at which members of the local community can be welcomed into the church?

I refer you to <https://www.rootandbranchsynod.org> – The Root and Branch Synod is a “forum for reform in the Catholic church that starts with women and doesn't end there”. There are a lot of YouTube sessions on the Synod which I look forward to studying. I think Tracy attended the Bristol conference

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJgd2tiiez8>

People who reform the church should be many decades younger than me and be prepared to be radical. But can an ultra conservative pyramidal-structured organisation do what's needed quickly enough?

[Individuals can still respond to Diocesan synod questions online via <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/synod> Deadline is 4th February.]

***There is a contemplative
in all of us,
almost strangled
but still alive,
who craves
quiet enjoyment
of the Now,
and longs to touch
the seamless garment
of silence
which makes whole.***
Alan P. Tory



Invited – A&B Diocese online reflections and films –

Remember the Diocesan programme 2021-2025 called *Invited*. A second series of *Invited*, with online groups, will happen during Eastertide 2022.

This is the link to a “January Reflection” and to 5 films (with transcripts). Subjects are – God's Love; Theology of Brokenness; Salvation; Prayer; Scripture (each film between 15 and 45 minutes in length).

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

“Assemble all the tribes of Jacob, as when they first received their inheritance. Pity the poor people called by your name, pity Israel, chosen as your first-born. Have compassion on your holy city, Jerusalem, the place of your rest. Let Sion ring with your praises, let your temple be filled with your glory.” Sirach 36

Covid Corner

Special Relationship

**Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday dear COVID, Happy Birthday to you.**

**Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday dear COVID, Happy Birthday to you.**

**OK so now my hands are clean ...
My fingers, thumbs and in between ...
At last it's safe to scratch my nose,
I just can't reach it with my toes ...**

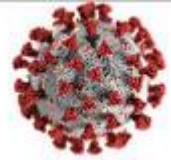
**And then perhaps I'll have a pee,
Then wash again before my tea,
Or perhaps I should drink a glass of bleach,
Like Mr Trump said in his speech ...**

**Such foolishness he does expose:
I'd like to squirt it up his nose !!**

Brian Kendall

Thoughts on Omicron

Irene Green



The idea of Omicron as the “last stand” of the coronavirus holds enormous appeal, but the virus doesn't conform to expectations.

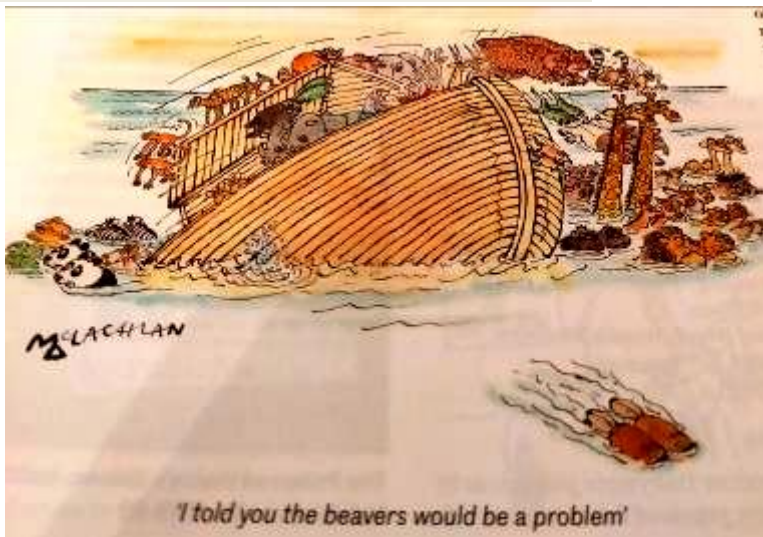
Contrary to popular myth, this coronavirus is not guaranteed to transform into a milder variant form.

Even if the next variant is as mild as Omicron or even milder, a highly contagious variant, or one that sidesteps our immunity, may still overwhelm hospitals and cause havoc.

The science correspondent for the New York Times spoke to more than a dozen epidemiologists, immunologists and evolutionary biologists, and they said the course of the virus in the U.S. appeared more complicated and a bit less rosy. Likely to be the same here in the UK.

It is unlikely that we'll reach herd immunity and that the virus will completely disappear. If it becomes endemic that doesn't mean low risk. Tuberculosis is endemic in many parts of the world and last year 1.5 million people died of TB.

We may be closer to the end of the pandemic and we can hope for the best but let's not let our guard down too soon and assume it is all over.



Cartoon – thanks to Ted

Sue Grey – thanks to Irene

“Do you have a copy of the Sue Grey Report? Oh, you do? Wonderful!”



“When your words came, I devoured them: your word was my delight and the joy of my heart; for I was called by your name, Lord, God of Sabaoth.” Jeremiah 15:16

Fratelli Tutti and the Refugee Crisis: Thoughts from Canon Rob Esdaile

Taken from a presentation at the Diocesan Justice & Peace Assembly 2022 - "To A Safer Shore?" - via Zoom, 15th January. Pope Francis' encyclical, Fratelli Tutti (2020), offers building blocks for our reflection on refugees.

What are our general principles for responding to the Refugee Crisis?

- A commitment to "a social friendship that excludes no one and a fraternity that is open to all" (FT n.94)
- Action to convert state and civic institutions so that they do not limit themselves to ensuring "the free and efficient working of certain economic, political or ideological systems, [but] are primarily concerned with individuals and the common good" (FT n.108)
- Expressing this through lives of solidarity: "It means thinking and acting in terms of community" (FT n.116)
- Human rights are universal and do not have borders: "No one, then, can remain excluded because of his or her place of birth ... The limits and borders of individual states cannot stand in the way of this" (FT n.121).
- Given the common destination of the earth's goods, "we can say that each country also belongs to the foreigner, inasmuch as a territory's goods must not be denied to a needy person coming from elsewhere." (FT n.124)
- In sum: "If every human being possesses an inalienable dignity, if all people are my brothers and sisters, and if the world truly belongs to everyone, then it matters little whether my neighbour was born in my country or elsewhere. My own country also shares responsibility for his or her development." (FT n.125)
- We require a whole different way of understanding international relations and "a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation in the service of a future shaped by interdependence and shared responsibility in the whole human family." (FT n.127)



"Our response to the arrival of migrating persons can be summarised by four words: welcome, protect, promote and integrate." (FT n.129)

Donate <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/donate>

Praised Be

A prayer inspired by the papal encyclical 'Laudato Si'

**Living God, have mercy on us,
for the times we forget
that we belong to each other.
You call us to be still,
to hear the whisper of our Sister
Wind,
to feel the radiance of our
Brother Sun,
and to be nourished by our
Mother Earth.
Renew us in your healing love.
Inspire us to water the earth
and nurture one another,
so all may flourish.
Together, as one family, may we
always sing your praise.
Through Christ our Lord, Amen.**
Rachel McCarthy/CAFOD

Webinar on Afghanistan: Wednesday 2nd Feb 4.30-5.20pm

Beyond the headlines from the UNHCR: What is happening to the refugees who got out, and those who are left behind? Book at the United Nations Refugee Agency: www.unrefugees.org.uk/rsvp

Quotations Trivia Interlude: Who said, or wrote: (– see p.8 for answers)

1. Never give a sucker an even break.
2. Rowe's Rule: the odds are five to six that the light at the end of the tunnel is the headlight of an oncoming train.
3. You can only predict things after they have happened.
4. I never think of the future. It comes soon enough.
5. I have nothing against undertakers personally. It's just that I wouldn't want one to bury my sister.
6. *fax sent to Harry Secombe*: I hope you go before me because I don't want you singing at my funeral.
7. You can't get buried quickly at Bexhill on Sea – It's like getting a table at the Caprice.

"Do not take the word of truth from my mouth, for I trust in your decrees. I shall always keep your law for ever and ever. I shall walk in the path of freedom, for I seek your precepts. I will speak of your will before kings, and not be abashed." Psalm 119, VI

Visions and Reflections



St Vincent
de Paul Society
England and Wales
Turning Concern into Action

Befriending is at the heart of what we do

The St Vincent de Paul Society (England & Wales) is part of an international Christian voluntary network dedicated to



tackling poverty in all its forms by providing practical assistance to people in need.

Our 10,000 members, motivated by their faith, visit vulnerable or isolated people across England & Wales, and offer them friendship and practical support. The essence of our work is person-to-person contact, and spending time with people is our greatest gift. This is at the heart of the SVP – assisting people by visiting, befriending, listening, helping.

The Our Lady of Lourdes Conference does just that. If you know of anyone who is isolated, lonely, ignored, vulnerable, please let Ann Knox (01273 301252) or myself, Frances Low (01273 388910) know. We will contact them and see if they wish someone to visit or phone.

If you yourselves want someone to talk to, do contact us. Support is there but it needs to be identified. All welcome - old, young, religious or not. The SVP makes no distinctions. All are given whatever help they need.

'Our Vision, which is inspired by Christ's message to love our neighbour as ourselves, is for individuals and families who are in any form of need to have hope together with a sense of dignity, worth, well-being and peace of mind'.

Reflecting on Wisdom

Barbara Bond

Last Lent I spent some time with a book called *We Walk the Path Together*. The author, Brian Pierce (an American Dominican) uses reflections from Meister Eckhart, a medieval Christian mystic, and from Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk and 'father of mindfulness', to celebrate the common spiritual ground occupied by both Christians and Buddhists.

The recent death of Thich Nhat Hanh (on 22nd January) made me go back to this, and the first place I opened it spoke very profoundly of our situation now. Thay (his nickname) says, "Love cannot exist without suffering.

In fact, suffering is the ground on which love is born.

If you have not suffered, if you don't see the suffering of people or other living beings, you would not have love in you nor would you understand what it is to love.

Without suffering:— compassion, loving-kindness, tolerance and understanding would not arise... We need to touch suffering in order for our compassion to be born and to be nourished."

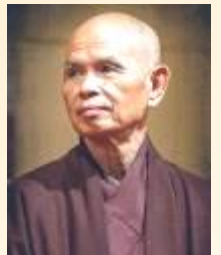


Another great loss recently has been Desmond Tutu (Archbishop of Cape Town, Nobel Peace Prize winner, anti-apartheid activist, coiner of the term "Rainbow Nation", affectionately known as 'The Arch'). *The Book of Joy*, which captures the wisdom of both him and of the Dalai Lama, is a great source of inspiration. Tutu says,

"Discovering more joy does not save us from the inevitability of hardship and heartbreak. In fact, we may cry more easily, but we will laugh more easily too. Perhaps we are just more alive.

Yet as we discover more joy, we can face suffering in a way that ennobles rather than embitters. We have hardship without becoming hard. We have heartbreaks without being broken."

As I think about which book I might choose to guide me through the coming Lent, I notice that this wisdom comes from Elders, from long lives spent on the journey.



"You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings, but an open ear. You do not ask for holocaust and victim. Instead, here am I. In the scroll of the book it stands written that I should do your will. My God, I delight in your law in the depth of my heart." Ps 40

I came across this quite accessible manual or method of Lectio Divina recently, and thought I would share it today, with a view to use during Lent. (Based on C Bourgeault *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening* p 66)

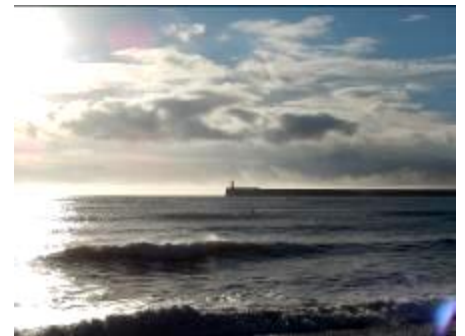


Bourgeault treats Lectio as a process of deepening. There are four ‘stations’ in Lectio Divina, like points on a compass, and they do not have to follow in any set order after the first stage.

Lectio, or reading: at this first stage a very short (no more than a few verses) passage of scripture is read, slowly, and aloud if at all possible. As this takes place, open yourself deeply to divine guidance and allow yourself to be drawn to the sentence, phrase, or even single word that seems to resonate with a particular kind of vibrancy or attunement. This first and key step in *lectio* is founded on the faith that scripture is a living

word – not just the history of an encounter with God that happened long ago, but one that continues to resonate and feed us in our own times.

The second station, typically, is *meditatio*. In this classic Christian usage, the term meditation really means a concentrated effort of the faculties. You bring your mind, your feelings, your personal associations, your visualization to bear on the passage to try to get inside it and become intimate with it.



The third station, *oratio*, means “prayer”, and it is at this stage that your own deepest feelings are invited into play. You might ponder words like, “My son, you are always with me and all that I have is yours,” and it might suddenly strike you that, through the words of the father in this parable, God is addressing that same reassurance directly to you! You might feel the guardedness of your own heart relax... Feelings, and even tears, of gratitude might arise, as the words touched your heart. Then you would be having a direct experience of *oratio* at its fullest.

But there is still a fourth station, which is known as *contemplatio*. As early as the sixth century, St Gregory defined contemplation as “resting in God”. At this point in the process all the mental and even emotional work is suspended. The faculties are stilled (overwhelmed), and one simply rests in the presence of the divine -- “like a weaned child with its mother” in the words of Psalm 131 – in silence and stillness.

In Christianity, Word and silence form a sort of “breathing”, which is at the heart of the Christian path to inner awakening. Meditation is not an isolated activity, to be undertaken too far removed from the Word...

Contemplatio becomes a “womb”, in a sense, in which scripture is enfolded in stillness and then reborn, deep within a person’s heart, in a quickened conscience and more vibrant archetypal imagination.



Trivia answers (from p.6)

1. **W. C. Fields** (1880-1946) *Title of one of his films*, 1946.
2. **Paul Dickson** (1939-) *Washingtonian* Nov 1978.
3. **Eugene Ionesco** (1912-1994) *Le Rhinoceros* 1959.
4. **Albert Einstein** (1879-1955) Interview on the *Belgenland* Dec 1930.
5. **Jessica Mitford** (1917-1996) *Saturday Review* 1/2/64.
6. **Spike Milligan** (1918-2002) *attrib; in Daily Telegraph* 28/2/2002.
7. **David Hare** (1947-) *R Eyre National Service* 2003

“This is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive – it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people.” *Jeremiah 31: 33*