



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; Deacon Neil Mercer 07801 706167

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

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

Our Lady of Lourdes – Resumption of attendance at scheduled Sunday Mass:

See website: <https://www.ololandstp.org/>

MASS is streamed live from Our Lady of Lourdes : 09.30 Wed, Thurs, Fri this week; Monday 19.30;

Tues Funeral Mass (Peter Kelly RIP) 11.00; 18.30 Saturday evening and 10.30 Sunday. Church open

for: Private prayer Wed 10-11; Divine Mercy/Private Prayer Fri 10-11

St Patrick's – Attendance at Mass, from Sunday 21st March 9.00 am (see p. 6)

Welcome to the twenty-fifth "apart but together" e-newsletter (14th March 2021)

Fourth Sunday of Lent, Laetare Sunday

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

The Greatest Commandments

Barbara Bond

"You must love your neighbour as yourself." (Mark 12)

This Sunday is Laetare Sunday – a moment to pause in our Lenten journey and look forward to the joy of the resurrection; to focus on the Light. My Laetare moment was earlier in the week when I managed, at last, to have a walk and a picnic with a friend I haven't seen for months. The sun was shining, making the Downs look like brushed velvet, and the sound of larks filled the air. We trudged over the hill to Mount Caburn, immersed ourselves in the 360-degree vista and felt enlivened by the windchill!



Mount Caburn

My chum has Welsh Methodist roots, we have quite different faith traditions but much in common and we both lost our Dads at this time of year. Springtime is when we reminisce and give thanks. Both were men of deep faith and whilst erudite their way was to live out their beliefs and values rather than to talk about them. As we climbed the hill our conversation turned to my friend's new voluntary role as a Beachy Head chaplain and I was suddenly very conscious of how we have followed in the footsteps of those men.

**May the blessing of light be upon you,
Light without and light within...
And in all your comings and goings,
May you ever have a kindly greeting
from any you meet along the road.**

*Old Gaelic prayer, Celtic Daily Prayer Book 2, Collins
2015*

The mass reading from Friday is the story of the scribe asking Jesus which is the first of all the commandments; I really resonate with this summary of "loving your neighbour as yourself":

'Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can'. (John Wesley)

The newsletter appears fortnightly. For the next issue, please send contributions by 26th March to Barbara Bond: bond_barbara@ymail.com

CAFOD Lent Appeal: Questions for Lent



Ethiopia has one of the lowest worldwide carbon footprints and yet is one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change. Many people are impacted by the severe drought this causes.

What is our response? Do we wash our hands of our brothers and sisters or seek to act in solidarity?

The burden of carrying water over long distances is one that too many people must bear, including children. Mohammed is 11 and twice a day must journey alone to fetch water. It takes him three hours. "It's so difficult," he exclaims. "I always hope someone will help me one day. If nobody helps me in this life, maybe in the next life they will help me. I think a lot about the time when one day I will not have to do this."

We all have burdens to carry. We also place burdens on others. In what ways do I place loads on other people?

Abdella knows what it is to be totally exhausted. This young farmer who lives in northeast Ethiopia, one of the hottest parts of the world, must spend ten hours every day on the long walk to collect water for his family. Abdella says, "I don't have any more words to express how hard this is. I'm so tired, I'm struggling to give you words. The journey for water is so long."

The choices we make have an impact on other people both near and far. In what way do my choices cause others to stumble?

So many mothers throughout the world grieve; with empty hands unable to feed their hungry children or get medicine and care for their families.

Let us look to the example of Mary and not turn our faces away from those who are suffering.

Abba Tesfalem lives in northern Ethiopia, in an area prone to severe droughts. There is very little paid work available and it is often a struggle to support his family. At one point he was forced to take a loan just to buy bread for them to survive. Despite his own hardship, Abba Tesfalem still reaches out in generosity and kindness to others in need. "Another family we know, I gave some money to them. They didn't have enough and they had big problems. I had to help them and they bought bread."

Do we look for opportunities to help others, or do we try to keep out of the way, telling ourselves that it is not our responsibility?

We too are called to compassion. It is easy to be discouraged by the scale of poverty and need in the world, but each day offers us the opportunity to perform small acts of kindness and generosity. In so doing, we recognise the face of Jesus in our neighbour and he imprints his face on each of us.

Loving God, we hear your call to all who thirst for a brighter future: Come to the water, all you who are thirsty!

Pour out your Spirit upon us and lead us to walk alongside one another.

Let a desire for change well up within us, may we overflow with compassion and love. And as a stream wears away stone, may we reshape our world together to reflect your kingdom of hope for all. Amen

Do we seek opportunities for acts of generosity and love? Are we attentive to the face of Christ in our brothers and sisters?

We think of the people of Ethiopia, many of whom have faced poor harvest after poor harvest due to droughts. They show great resilience and strength in continuing to work for a better future. We think of those who are struggling to hold on to hope due to the daily struggle against natural disasters and lack of opportunity.

How can we live in solidarity with those who feel despondent or invisible?



To help people like Abdella
**Text LENT to
70460**
to donate £10 to
CAFOD's Lent Appeal
Or visit
cafod.org.uk/give



"Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. In your compassion blot out my offence. O wash me more and more from my guilt, and cleanse me from my sin... Indeed you love truth in the heart; then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom." Ps 51: 3-4, 8

My Dad was a medical scientist and he worked at the Institute of Urology, now part of UCH, which was based on several sites scattered around Covent Garden. A great deal of what he did to support pioneering clinicians in kidney transplantation is now automated; even early in my career we nurses were let loose, to use automatic machines that now did what he had been doing by first principles and experiment!

My Dad was a very self-effacing man. He appeared to be quiet, almost withdrawn, but this belied a dry and razor sharp wit and an intense passion for life and for knowledge. In that stillness there was immense strength. His work meant that he often spent weekends up at the hospital being on call, and consequently spent a great deal of time exploring places that I would otherwise know nothing about. One lasting legacy of this was what he called the **Stations of the Stations**.



This is his pilgrimage around some of the churches in central London, each one close to current and lost railway stations, like Victoria, London Bridge, and Paddington; and "ghost" stations like Broad Street in Whitechapel.



I followed this route a few days after he died in 2013, thinking of him. It took a whole day, and involved more than 17 miles of walking.

The first railway station is Victoria, specifically opposite Platform 6. The plaque commemorates 531 railwaymen from the London Brighton & South Coast Railway Co. who lost their lives in the First World War, and 626 men of the Southern Railway who died in the Second World War.

Tucked behind WH Smith there is another plaque, now almost hidden, marking the place where the unknown warrior was brought by special train on November 10th 1920 on his journey to Westminster Abbey. There was a pop-up exhibition at the station for the Centenary of this event, scaled back due to Covid.



The meditation and prayer that my Dad wrote remain so powerful.

Those young men were doomed to die as surely as if a judge had passed sentence on them, because politicians had made alliances where they should have had the courage to make peace. In far off Judaea, long ago, a Roman administrator made a pact with the Sanhedrin and an innocent young man was condemned to die.



St Patrick's Chapel mosaic, 1999

Lord, when we pursue justice may it always be tempered with mercy and sought in peace.

The Church for the first "station" is Westminster Cathedral. It is quite easy to have a sensory overload with all the richness in there – my place of calm is St Patrick's Chapel.

The Cathedral is also the home to Eric Gill's Stations of the Cross (see above). These were being crafted during the years of the First World War. Gill had only recently become a Catholic. "For him they were both a statement of personal belief, and church furniture produced for his fellow Catholics as a focus for prayer - 'a statement without adjectives'. The figures are impassive and are meant to be so, for the emotion must come from us" (Patrick Rogers, writing in *Oremus*, the magazine of Westminster Cathedral, March 2005).

Those Gill stations will go with me as I walk again the route my Dad set out, whenever that can be...

"Let my lips proclaim your praise, because you teach me your commands. Let my tongue sing your promise, for your commands are just. Let your hand be ready to help me, since I have chosen your precepts. Lord, I long for your saving help and your law is my delight." Ps 119: 171-174

Community News

Maintenance — St Patrick's

Irene Green

Good news that the air purification Mitsubishi unit is better wired and positioned than when it was quickly installed in time for Christmas. We will use it during Masses, currently setting the temperature of the fanned filtered air to 22C. The website is <https://www.anemoiair.uk/air-conditioning-installation> though the proprietor has two companies and I dealt with another company at first. Maintenance is provided every day of the year.

The next scheduled work at St Patrick's is making a new soakaway and drains at the rented house. The work cannot start until several factors come together – a small digger which is available for hire, the expert user, and good weather. The work will take about a week. Delighted to have Shaun Pickering in charge for that shaun.sjpickering@btinternet.com – and thank you volunteers.

Volunteers may also do some routine work prior to Easter – paint white lines on the steps, sand and add Hammerite paint to the railing tops and dispose of dug out chalk. **Have you time to spare?**

We are investigating the sealed small windows on the north side of the church with a view to getting air circulating up high. There are various devices to consider; we are getting quotes. When hirers are in the church it is a windowless space. At Mass we have the sanctuary doors open and do have windows in that space.

Parish Mission, Diocese-wide

Irene Green

The Diocesan *Invited* programme – Each week the zoom groups are at least 75% female – Week One talked about how much God loves us – whatever we do – and how he desires a relationship with us.

Week Two looked at challenges of maintaining that relationship and about sin – presentation by Fr Thomas Kent. People used to remark about feeling old when policemen were so young – but they hadn't met Fr Kent.

The zoom group I was assigned to was a bit dull. People discussed God's radiance and beauty entirely from the point of view of nature (which I don't think is the same thing, but didn't challenge). There were questions about whether one treats the health of the soul the same way we treat the health of our bodies? People seemed to be fairly sure they did!! We talked mostly about the Church as a field hospital where people go to be healed and about their own church – how people interact and judge one another – or not. The group was very trad conservative Catholics, and I am not one of them.



Week Three programme was the most difficult yet – the mystery that is the death and resurrection of Jesus. The discussion group I was in was unbelievably different to that of week 2. The first reflection question was if Jesus was sitting here with me now what would I say to him? The leader set the tone a bit by saying she couldn't repeat what she thought she would say or what Jesus would say to her.

The leader was a single mum (not by choice) whose daughter was bringing her her dinner, which she was eating while the 9 screens said who they were and whatever else they wanted to reveal about themselves.

There was a great deal of scepticism in the more mixed group about Jesus paying for our sins. Several participants under 40 years old, really went for it in terms of saying how they didn't "get it", listed all the things they didn't understand, there was a great discussion about Confession and Catholic mysteries. Older participants said they had been confessing the same thing for 60 years and some said about having to 'psych themselves up' beforehand. There was great participation with constructive and broadly sympathetic remarks. Everyone felt that sessions should be like that – where people open up, without fear and feel liberated when they have seen that others think the same way, but have been given some avenues to explore.

SPRING IS SPRINGING: – It's spring, we have a pond, we have frog spawn. Anyone want some? it can be supplied in a lidded jam jar or small tub (for example). Contact Irene: icgreen@ntlworld.com

"I take delight in your promise, like one who finds a treasure. Lies I hate and detest, but your law is my love. Seven times a day I praise you for your just decrees... I obey your precepts and your will; all that I do is before you." Ps 119: 162-164, 167-168

Food for Thought: “Do Women have a future in the Catholic Church?” Irene Green

Webinar organised by The Tablet for International Women’s day on 8th March. Discussants were Joanna Moorhead, writer and editor, Kate McElwee of the Women’s Ordination Conference, Zuzanna Flisowska of *Voice of Faith*, and Liz Dodd, Home News editor of The Tablet.

- ◆ Catholics have been dependent on change coming from the top. Pope Francis says things helpful in the equality movement, but there is a disconnect between that and what he has done – very little for women.
- ◆ Women cardinals? Token women were appointed to other posts and no mention of women in the title of encyclical *Fratelli tutti* – brothers all. Good encyclical, shame not inclusive for women.
- ◆ The Church is engaged with the abuse crisis, climate change, peace in the Middle East. It hasn’t engaged enough with women, who are the energy of the church, it isn’t breathing with two lungs, it isn’t being **just** to the overwhelming proportion of its members, they need a seat at the table.
- ◆ The Church practices institutional sexism, it needs to fulfil its role in the world, social justice missions, live the gospel, be a peacemaker (women are good at this), be **just** within your own organisation.

Irish bishops have announced a Synodal Church model – this is the opposite to the pyramid structure we have at present. A synodal church uses large numbers of non-clerics, sisters, lay people who discuss with the bishop for example. The structure is fluid. German church has already begun this format at the end of January this year, it has its limits but it is a huge improvement.

Calling for a women’s synod is the organisation Root and Branch. Reform is needed now in our Catholic Church <https://www.rootandbranchsynod.org/> Root and Branch “walk together with the institutional Catholic Church to rediscover its prophetic soul and its relevance among all religious faiths in today’s world by sharing governance between women and men, lay and clerical, and by sharing ministry with all who hear God’s call”.

solidarity and inclusivity between ethnic groups.

- **“The way forward is the way we make (not the way we take)”** – Amanda Gorman (poet and Catholic)
- **“This will be the last female generation who will compromise.”**
- **“The webinar title could also be, ‘Does the Church have a future without women?’ ”**

Parishioners or like-minded women in the diocese need to be involved in a Catholic reform group. Catholic feminism – you can do a theology course on this subject. The first steps have to be made now, if it isn’t too late, to analyse our shared concerns for the future and understand what the future looks like. The Catholic church is not in tune with women’s lives in the west. **You can join an inclusive Synod for dignity and equality** via Zoom and in Bristol on September 5-12th 2021. Professor Mary McAleese, former President of Ireland, Canon Lawyer and Chancellor of Trinity College, Dublin, is key speaker. Mary has pledged to spend her retirement challenging Church teachings on homosexuality and women. Religious sisters in their own countries, all around the world, are joining in enthusiastically, in

Irene comments: I know that some readers will think Christ didn’t give equal prominence to women as men. If Christ didn’t do something, does that mean we **can’t**, two millennia later? I keep thinking Christ didn’t use an iPad, does it mean we can’t? Rhetorical question!

In fact, the essential involvement of women in the life of Christ on earth 2,000 years ago is known. It also seems that women rose to high positions in the Christian church for the first 4 or 5 centuries, but this has been airbrushed out of Church history. The patriarchal mindset has to change if the church is to survive.

There is much in the press over the years on the topic of women in the Catholic Church: <https://www.thetablet.co.uk/features/2/18605/women-in-the-church-so-tired-of-waiting>

I would like the church to consider not just female but gender equality. The Bible talks about God creating man and woman, but in life he has created many intermediate forms – so say human endocrinology medical textbooks.

“O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise. For in sacrifice you take no delight, burnt offering from me you would refuse; my sacrifice, a contrite spirit. A humbled, contrite heart you will not spurn. In your goodness, show favour to Sion: rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.” Ps 51: 17-20

Snippets



www.embroiderypanda.com

St Patrick's Day Wednesday 17th March: Mass at St Patrick's Woodingdean at 11am. No booking, come along. For COVID tracking we must know your name and contact details. All usual precautions apply. Please notice the weekly parish Zoom is on Wed afternoon at 16.45 for 40 minutes. Usual chat with some Irish entertainment. Thank you to those who offered links to short videos and Irish songs: suggestions to icgreen@ntlworld.com

St Patrick's church will open for Sunday Masses on Sunday 21 March 9am. We will try to regulate numbers without using Eventbrite and see how it goes. So just come along. If you attend (as at all churches) you will be required to stay socially distant, masked, with sanitised hands. You will need to provide your name when you come in- we do have contact details for most people. We will keep list of names for 3 to 4 weeks.

Modest Heroes – Mike Lewis

I had surgery for a hernia in the middle of January. Naturally, I had to self-isolate for a couple of days before the operation and for a few afterwards. I hated it. It was a reminder of how lucky I have been, being able as a fairly fit pensioner, to get out and about fairly freely.

After two weeks I was allowed to drive again so I returned to going to my daughter's in London to help with the children. I confidently thought that I could help with the home schooling. I was soon disabused of that idea. While Edie wanted to do the schoolwork she wanted to do it at school; she was psychologically unprepared for doing schoolwork at home. School is for schoolwork and home is for playing with and talking to her friends using iPads. I don't have a lot of hair left but I was pulling out even that! Then I heard that retired teachers who have tried to help their grandchildren have had the same problem so I didn't feel so bad. How difficult it must be for parents without any support.

I am now walking the Downs again and, on one of my recent walks I started musing on the nature of heroism. We have heard a lot about the heroes of the NHS and the inspiring activities of people like Captain Tom Moore. What struck me was that Captain Tom was not a hero for raising a huge amount of money but for taking action to raise a modest amount while seeking no recognition. It is the idea that an individual can make a difference and that, even if the difference is not great in the overall scheme of things, it is worthwhile.

How often have we heard such a sentiment in homilies. NHS staff and all others who work with the public carry on despite the risks, despite the difficulties. So we have families working under difficult conditions, or not working because their jobs have gone, worrying about money and housing and their children's education and they quietly carry on, tired and stressed. I find that truly heroic and I realise that I live my life surrounded by heroes who deserve my prayers and praise.



Not The Usual Garden Bird

– Bernadette Skinner

For a couple of weeks, we and our bird lover neighbour Jay (an appropriate name) have been noticing an unusual bird call whilst in the gardens. Very one noted and sad sounding with no melody at all. Early one morning Ted went down to check on our hens and found a bird caught in our hedge between some wire netting. It was feisty but had severely damaged the top of its head nearly to the skull. We boxed it and took it to wonderful

Roger Musselle and his wildlife sanctuary in Woodingdean. Roger was trying to have his breakfast but immediately accepted the box and pronounced the occupant to be a woodcock. I'm sure it will be restored to full health.

I've known Roger for over 50 years and he has worked tirelessly for wildlife. Any time of night or day he answers calls to help all types of creatures. He never ASKS for financial help but a donation is gratefully received.



RSPB

"Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Sion all the days of your life! May you see your children's children in a happy Jerusalem." Ps 128: 5, 6

Seeds and Reflections

Reflection for Sunday 14th March: Laetare Sunday

The world seems to be in turmoil, suffering under the uncertainty of Covid, lockdowns, illness, the loss of loved ones, and for seafarers, the uncertainty of when they will get back home to their families. – With only a guess as to how the future will turn out and when we will return to stability in our lives.

Yet today the Church tells us to REJOICE. Yes, today is REJOICE Sunday, or to give its Latin name, LAETARE Sunday. In the middle of the serious season of Lent, we are asked to take time to relax, get away from the anxiety, and look ahead with confidence.

We hear today Jesus explaining what His mission is all about and the promise being made to those who are willing to believe in Him. Jesus has been sent by the Father to save the world and to offer eternal life to everyone who believes in Him. That is the Good News: that's the reason to Rejoice! Why? Because he did it out of love for each one of us. It is a message of reassurance: we are to feel consoled by the message of His love for each of us.

In these days of turmoil, it may be difficult to feel consoled and to see this moment as a time to rejoice. Yet there are things to celebrate. At Stella Maris, we are delighted to see more seafarers finally being repatriated after being stranded abroad for many months. Just this week 90 seafarers from the small island nation of Kiribati who have been stuck in Hamburg since October are finally on their way back to their loved ones.

Talk to God about how you feel, do not hold back, let go of your fears and doubts; he wants to console you. Listen to what he might be wanting to tell you. Remember what St. Paul says in the second reading, **'We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning He had meant us to live it'**. As to the future, it is not a guess for us, we have the certainty that is eternal life – what a gift.

So, Rejoice on this Mother's Day. Crack open the Prosecco, have some chocolate, your future is guaranteed.

Reflection provided by Deacon Peter Barrigan, Tees and Hartlepool Regional Port Chaplain, Stella Maris



STELLA MARIS



Easter Cards – 3 designs: Magdalena and Jesus, Resurrection Fresco, Resurrection of Christ. Pack of 10 cards of same design with envelopes.

Card measures 126 x 126mm: £4.50

Message inside card reads:

Wishing you every Easter blessing

<https://www.stellamaris.org.uk/shop/>



Prayer of St Patrick

I gird myself today with the power of God;

God's strength to comfort me;

God's wisdom to guide me;

God's ear to hear me;

God's word to speak for me;

God's hand to lead me;

God's shield to protect me.



Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Port Clinton, Ohio, stained glass

"How blessed are those who love you! They will rejoice in your peace. Blessed are those who grieved over all your afflictions, for they will rejoice for you upon seeing all your glory, and they will be made glad for ever. Let my soul praise God the great King!" Tob 13: 15-16

Afterthought

Living as Children of Light

Patrick Bond

Today has seen “March month of many weathers” (John Clare) on full display. Brilliant sun, glorious daffodils, a cutting wind, speeding cloud formations shining like flares, then black and threatening as a coming storm, lashing hail with ice grains as big as frozen peas, brief havens of delectable warmth and calm...



I took my camera out this morning and caught some of these fleeting moments of light, but was shortly forced back indoors as my fingers lost all feeling in the wind-chill. The garden, and our parish of birds, continue to advance inexorably towards full springtime.

I was trying to capture today’s spring light, its intensity, the way it increases and decreases so fast, the haste, the acceleration of the clouds, the pulse of growth in the garden plants, cherry and apple tree buds swelling, the rose leaves just launched into this icy morning, the whole sense of being carried along as everything prepares to burst into life.



I had been taken with the idea of looking at the readings for Laetare Sunday (*Laetare Jerusalem* – the old plainchant Introit for Mass on *Hebdomada Quarta Quadragesima* – the fourth Sunday of Lent).



The words are taken from Isaiah 66: 10, 11: “Rejoice with Jerusalem, be glad for her, all you who love her! Rejoice, rejoice with her, all you who mourn over her! So that you may be suckled and satisfied from her consoling breast, so that you may drink deep with delight from her glorious bosom.”

The theme of drinking deep with delight in new life seems to be in all the Second Readings for this Sunday. In Year A: *For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; live as children of light...* (Eph 5:8)

In Year B: *We are God’s work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it...* (Eph 2:10)

In Year C: *And for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation...* (2 Cor 5: 17)



And the Gospel confirms that “the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God” (Jn 3:21). There is a strong sense that we are asked, and are able, to choose the light, the new creation, the good life: that is the wonderful excitement of spring, an irresistible joy that carries us along.

“As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; your bones shall flourish like the grass.” Is 66: 13-14