



St. Patrick's Church

Broad Green/Cowley Drive Woodingdean BN2 6TB



Our Lady of Lourdes

Whiteway Lane Rottingdean

St. Patrick's Newsletter

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Churches are open for Mass: please book — 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 twentieth “apart but together” e-newsletter (1st January 2021)

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

On Being Vulnerable

Barbara Bond

Recently I was driving to work in the dark, with Storm Bella not yet blown out. It was frightening, although at the time I was too busy trying to navigate the huge pools of water on the A27, and not be distracted by flying debris.

When I arrived in Eastbourne my colleague told me that she had been on the verge of tears for her entire journey. I am pleased to report we are both safe, and as we checked our tasks for the day we had a good chuckle when we heard, “When you walk through a storm, hold your head up high...” playing on one of the volunteers’ radios. Indeed we had not

walked alone!

It hasn't really felt like Christmas, but I have been very aware of the



Enter, Lord Christ – we have joy in Your coming.

You have given us life, and we welcome your coming.

I turn now to face You – I lift up my eyes.

Be blessing my face, Lord; be blessing my eyes.

May all my eye looks on be blessed and be bright.

My neighbours, my loved ones
be blessed in Your sight.

You have given us life
and we welcome Your coming.

Be with us, Lord – we have joy, we have joy.

This year is a new year, the opening door.

Be with us, Lord – we have joy, we have joy.

mystery of the baby Jesus. This year, like no other, I have been thinking of that tiny baby, dependant and defenceless, totally relying on others for its very survival.

The “gift” of the time we find ourselves in, is perhaps the fact that we are able to see that vulnerable child in one other. The stripped down nature of Christmas this year places us all in the stable in a new way.

In the words of a carol that I am sure we all miss having sung, our response is very powerful – “Yet what I can, I give him, give my heart”.

Celtic Daily Prayer Book One p. 115, Northumbria Community, HarperCollins 2002

This is the first issue of 2021! The newsletter will appear fortnightly as before. For the next issue, please send contributions by 15th January to Barbara Bond: bond_barbara@ymail.com

Building a Culture of Encounter that sees others as a gift, not a threat

In the last newsletter, Irene gave a very insightful overview of *Fratelli Tutti*, the Pope’s latest encyclical, in which he invites each of us to recognise Christ himself in each of our abandoned or excluded brothers and sisters.

The Pope makes the point that the pandemic showed us that we can come together as local, national and global communities, but now the immediate response has fallen apart. He challenges us to make sure that this is not another tragedy from which we learn nothing.

We would, if not for the pandemic, have been considering the outcome of the UN Climate Summit COP26 – instead we are still waiting for this to be held in Glasgow in November 2021.



There is some evidence that the so-called “anthropause”, or reduction in human activity, has given nature a breathing space in which to recover from our relentless and unsustainable use of the world’s resources. The lifestyle adjustments for us, in affluent northern-hemisphere countries, have been seismic.

However, while we are dealing with lifestyle and economic challenges brought by the pandemic, it is hard to imagine not even having water for hand washing, no access to PPE (personal protective equipment), and very limited healthcare personnel or resources.

In Latin America it has been the poorest who have been worst affected and figures up to December suggest almost half a million lives have been lost.

Even as individuals we have power to protect our environment and to speak out for the common good. The new normal can be a kind of rebirth – indeed if we use that analogy, we acknowledge the pain in bringing it to fruition.

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.

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>

“Yours is a mighty arm, O Lord; your hand is strong, your right hand ready. Justice and right are the pillars of your throne, love and truth walk in your presence.” Ps 89: 14-15

One winter many years ago I volunteered to take a nursing post in the Haute-Savoie region of France. For a few weeks I had to look after an aristocratic old English lady who needed her legs dressed regularly.

When I arrived I was surprised to see her house was an old ramshackle building guarded by two big dogs chained up and barking furiously as I approached. My employer Betty, (not her real name) was a stooping rather unkempt figure with long grey hair, almost blind and wearing big unlaced boots.

From the moment we met she treated me as a sort of hired help, and life from then on was a battle of wills. I couldn't help feeling sorry for her, nevertheless, as when I saw her legs they were badly ulcerated and had to be treated with special dressings which she had ordered from UK and I had brought with me.



Le Grand Bornand, Haute-Savoie
thegoodlifeinfrance.com



Presilly, Haute-Savoie
en.wikipedia.org

But she was still definitely in charge. After I dressed her legs she often tied long bandages around the dressing to show that ultimately she knew best how to do it.

Betty was actually very wealthy but also very mean. There were no comfortable chairs in the kitchen where we spent most of our time – only hard upright wooden ones which I grew to hate. Betty also cooked for both of us, refusing my help. Usually it was soup, or a veal or pork stew, with boiled cabbage, bread and cheese.

When she flailed the air with a soup ladle, as she spoke, food really did fly everywhere, particularly onto the Aga and

the floor. She frequently tossed food from a saucepan onto our plates and missed, but she would never admit that she could not see. I was alternately laughing and enraged at the mess I had to clear up. Often I used to pretend to eat, and later make a sandwich after scraping black smuts from the butter.

An enclosed staircase led to our bedrooms on the first floor. This was a worry to me as there was no rail or support for climbing upstairs and I could see the scratch marks on the wooden sides where Betty had clawed her way up.

One day I suggested to her that I could fix up a rope to help her up the stairs. She flatly refused. If I persisted she started to sob and scream as she did whenever anything upset her. So one day while she was asleep I fixed metal rings into the wall and looped a rope through them.

When Betty woke she grumbled about it for half an hour, but then never mentioned it again.



“I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart, and glorify your name for ever; for your love to me has been great.” Ps 86: 12-13

Community News

Mitsubishi air conditioner and air purifier

Irene Green

St Patrick's had a very generous legacy from the estate of Don and Kath Young, parishioners of huge importance to the parish from its foundation in the 1960s – before there was a church.

We hope to let the Young family know that the recent installation of an air conditioning, filtering, purifying unit, Mitsubishi SRK60ZSX-R32 from <https://bit.ly/3o84RPs> will have a plaque below to signify its purchase using some of the Young legacy funds.

The electrician has some tweaking to do on the installation wiring, so pictures later (*Generic photo from internet – Ed*).

I think we need a light coloured plaque otherwise it won't be seen against St Patrick's brown wooden wall (if I said *Alpine style panels* it would sound better).

Anyone know anything about small plaques? I can ask an artist group but prefer your thoughts. Irene icgreen@ntlworld.com



Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Air Conditioning SRK60ZSX-R32 Wall Heat Pump 6Kw/21000Btu 240V~50Hz

Centenary Year for Northern Ireland - a holiday venue

Northern Ireland was formed in 1921. The island of Ireland was a British 'colony' but in the United Ireland struggle, six counties of Ulster stayed British. The six counties were the richest of the 32 Irish counties – they had shipbuilding as well as coal and linen industries, creating employment and great wealth. They also had their share of pro-English population, some of whom were descendants of those who had been settled in Ulster by Queen Elizabeth I.

Ulster declined greatly socially and economically, from the late 60s when civil war – also called The Troubles – broke out. Each attack and the retaliation hardened attitudes and provoked worse. There was an exodus of those who could move and unlike in previous Irish emigration, it was whole families who left for the UK, Australia, Canada, USA. My brother in law and his wife – both doctors – emigrated to Australia.

People have heard a lot about the Good Friday agreement (one of the greatest political achievements ever) – the full context was sent to each voter. This peace agreement and the current sea border with the UK gives N. Ireland a favoured position economically. To the annoyance of the DUP the centenary celebrations will be tinged with sadness - if not concern - that Ulster is now a slightly detached part of the UK.

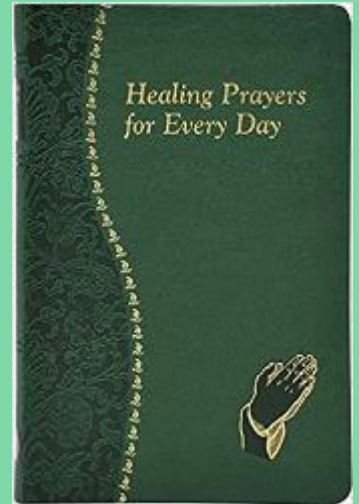
Husband and I had planned to go to Ulster in October 2020, but will go in 2021. We are booked to go to Portugal in September, but since travel abroad will have restrictions especially due to COVID, travel within the UK and to Ireland will be easy. There is no border for human travel, just goods.

“All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy.” Ps 98: 3-4

HEALING REFLECTIONS

For those who have difficulty relating to God as a loving Father, the following steps may be helpful:

- (1) Ask for the grace to be healed of past hurts dealing with your father
- (2) Reflect upon the three greatest hurts
- (3) Expect that there will be healing
- (4) Seek prayer from someone familiar with this type of healing process
- (5) Pray for the desire to forgive
- (6) Pray for your father, whether living or dead. If he is living, pray blessings upon him. Place no conditions on your prayer.
- (7) Praise and thank God for your father, whether living or dead, whether you have good feelings or bad feelings about him. Praise is a decision, not a feeling.
- (8) Search the Scriptures and write down all the verses that speak to you about God the father's personal love and care.
- (9) Repeat these Scriptures daily and let them become a part of you.
- (10) Seek spiritual direction.



From: Catholic Book Publishing Corp, 2006; ISBN 9780899421926

Looking back at 2020

Irene Green

“A family from Kent who shared a video of their living room performance of a lockdown-themed adaptation of a Les Misérables song have become a sensation online.

Ben and Danielle Marsh and their four children changed the lyrics of One Day More to reflect common complaints during the Covid-19 lockdown. They say the video, which has gone viral, was intended to give friends and family a laugh during this stressful time”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wdcS0Nbo7Ng>



Nessun Dorma...alla Corona - Daniel Emmet



I don't think many people took notice of the contents of my email on 31st December, however, the No Corona song was noted.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uL52AuF4QzY>

All voices and lyrics by Daniel Emmet
www.DanielEmmet.com

“He will say to me: ‘You are my father, my God, the rock who saves me.’ And I will make him my first-born, the highest of the kings of the earth. I will keep my love for him always; with him my covenant shall last.”

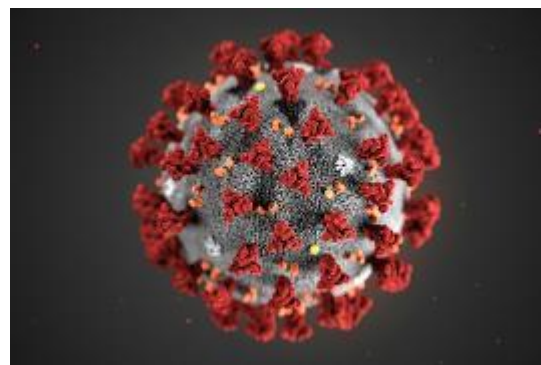
Ps 89: 27-29

Community News (2)

Coronavirus News

Irene Green

The dramatic increase in COVID cases in the UK is usually discussed in the context of our NHS's ability to cope. The situation in the UK is the most dangerous yet because *the NHS at full stretch will not be able to meet the need in the next weeks.* The new variant of coronavirus affects all age groups including the young who have been at school last term. Older people can generally shield themselves. The variant has made the UK "the sick man of Europe": about 40 countries have travel bans.



The extreme danger of high numbers of COVID cases is not only to Health Services.

High numbers greatly increase the risk of two biological processes, mutation and recombination, that drive the evolution of the virus. The outcome may be not just a virus with worse infectivity rates but potentially one which could evade detection and destruction by the antibodies generated by the present vaccines.

The higher the level of infection, the greater is the chance of a more dangerous variant emerging.

Vaccination – delay to the second shot

If Public Health UK want to decrease the virus numbers the idea of providing one injection of vaccine per patient is a reasonable one. One injection will provide antibodies after a couple of weeks. The second injection is to be delayed until about 3 months.

Front line workers in the NHS, care homes, schools, supermarkets etc should be vaccinated, in order to reduce the pandemic. This will have two benefits – health workers won't be stressed and totally exhausted, and the risk of dangerous variants will be decreased.

It isn't quite so much fun for those of us of a certain age who envisaged having two injections, 3 weeks apart, then waiting just 2-3 weeks before being free at last. Freedom will take a little longer.

What credentials do I have to provide coronavirus news?

Apart from none – over 40 years ago I was generating antibodies for research purposes, doing radio immunoassays measuring second messengers in cells (these molecules were present at ng or pg levels). We usually gave the second "vaccination" after 6 -12 weeks to boost antibody titre.

Husband Michael, a research scientist with the medical research council (MRC), studied and published on many topics including recombination – though of DNA not RNA.



Recently he was in touch with MRC statistician David Spiegelhalter https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Spiegelhalter. They had each done chi squared tests on the Oxford-Astra Zeneca published data on the half dose followed by a full dose of vaccine (versus 2 full doses).

They agreed the data was marginally statistically significant i.e. not a big effect.

"I am deeply afflicted, O Lord; by your word, give me life. Accept, Lord, my freely offered homage, and teach me your decrees. My life is in my hands at all times; I do not forget your law." Psalm 119: 107-109

Seeds

Mothers

New Year's Day is also the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. In my working life I encounter many mothers, often beloved matriarchs, sometimes mothers facing the loss of a child. My observation is that mothers come in all shapes and forms, some better equipped for the job than others; and that mothering has nothing to do with blood ties or indeed gender.

In the past year both Patrick and I have been facing the sad but inevitable changes that come with the declining health of our elders. In common with so many families this has been complicated by the pandemic with all the shielding, isolation and lack of contact that has been necessary.

None of us would be here without a mother. We have been chosen as children of God: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (Jer. 1:5) but the miracle of birthing is through very human people.

Whilst there are important dogmas relating to Mary – the Mother of God, the Immaculate Conception, her perpetual virginity and her Assumption, what speaks to me most about this Feast is the question of how can I bring Christ to birth in the world – and you don't have to be a mother or even female to do this.

I can pray for the grace and humility to place Mary's words, "Let it happen to me as you have said" (Lk 1:38) and "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord... for the Almighty has done great things for me" (Lk 1:46, 49) – right in the centre of my life.

Barbara Bond



Coming Together into the Perfect Man

Patrick Bond



I chose not to attend Mass in person on Christmas Day, because of the sudden spike in infections. An early walk up on to the Downs was a sombre experience despite the bright sun. Many others were out taking the air. Eventually I summoned up the cheek to sing out "Happy Christmas" as I passed walkers sunk, like me, in the gloom of an unnatural silence and enforced stand-offishness. Remarkably, nearly everyone perked up enough to wish me a "Merry Christmas" back – albeit with a mixture of surprise and terror in case we accidentally breathed each other's air.

We are so separated at the moment, person from person, avoiding each other in the street, governed by fear of the unknown, the present but invisible virus.

St Paul says, "Take every care to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, one body, and one Spirit, just as you were called in the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all and in all...until we may all come together into unity of faith and profound knowledge of the Son of God, into the perfect Man, into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ..." (Eph. 4: 3-6, 13) (First reading, Mass for 2nd January: Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops, Doctors of the Church)

I think this last year (2020) has shown many examples of people holding each other in love and respect. A new picture of how we need each other has emerged. We are separated, yes, but in that void a new kind of togetherness has emerged – walking alongside each other in love, banging pots and pans together, delivering parcels and making networks of support. Perhaps the "perfect Man" is taking shape, and we may be seeing something of "the stature of the fullness of Christ". Who knows? I wish it for all of you, in this coming year of revelations, 2021.

"And to all these add love, which binds all things together in perfect unity. The peace that Christ gives is to be the judge in your hearts; for to this peace God has called you together in the one body.

And be thankful." Col 3: 14-15

Afterthoughts

Waters and Woodpeckers

Patrick Bond

The end of December has seen copious amounts of rain. The Winterbourne, which runs close to our house, has come to life (true to its name). In the space of a week, it has gone from an inoffensive rivulet to a torrent, pouring across its weir and filling the entire width of its channel. Huge lumps of wood have been bodily shifted downstream. The chatter and rustle of the waters, especially where they are made turbulent by an obstruction, is hypnotic and soothing. In the midst of the upper frequency sounds there comes from time to time a deep boom, as if the water has hit a hollow space and made it sound out.



Now the sky is full, veiled in layers of grey or blotchy with gleams of white. The trees on Love Lane are leafless, providing a frequent perch for a woodpigeon or two... which always seem simultaneously dumpy, and enigmatic. Less frequently, jackdaws in considerable numbers can be seen sitting high up, resting from aerial cavortings. They are nearly always in pairs, if you look closely; and they fly in pairs too, no matter how much of a frolic is going on. Today, unusually, eight magpies are fretting each other in the trees, hopping through branches and ivy and out into space again.

The goldfinches are still flocking into the back garden, inconspicuous in the low-light gloom, until a sudden movement disturbs them and they fly up like the spray of a heavy wave hitting a harbour breakwater. They usually re-group and wheel away about thirty feet up, in a busy bustle of small shapes silhouetted against the clouds.



Much excitement was occasioned the other day by a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a young male (bright red patch on the back of the head) which perched low on one of the feeders and just kept still for a long while, sizing up the territory. Only its head rotated, looking all around. Eventually it flitted on to the sunflower feeder for a few moments.



Great Spotted Woodpecker – RSPB

Woodpeckers are another miracle of nature. In pecking with their sharp beaks, their heads move at speeds of around 23 feet per second, and the impact deceleration is 1200 times the force of gravity. For comparison, humans sustain brain damage with an impact of 80 times gravity. Their brains are protected by several adaptations, including a long flexible tongue which is partly bony, and wraps around the brain when not in use. The tongue is used for capturing insects when the beak has done its work.

Another occasional delight is the flock of long-tailed tits, which come to the fat-balls. In summer they are insect feeders. They love to congregate in close proximity on the feeder. If you cup your two hands together you will have the size of their nest, woven as a chamber from moss, long cow or horse hairs and feathers, supported on criss-crossing brambles and twigs, with a small entry hole near the top. In this chamber can fit two parent birds, chicks, and all their long tails. No wonder they enjoy being close – lucky things!

“He is the image of the unseen God, the first-born of all creation, for in him were created all things, in heaven and on earth: everything visible and everything invisible... All things were created through him and for him. He exists before all things, and in him all things hold together, and he is the head of the body, the Church.” Col 1: 15-18