

Ampleforth Hospitalité of Our Lady of Lourdes

June 2012

newsletter



A SPIRITUAL THEME FOR 2012

For those of you who are able to join us, thank you for applying to come on Pilgrimage to Lourdes with us this year. I hope that both your service of the sick and your prayer will make the week a time of blessing for you. Among the many prayers that we will say in Lourdes, the Rosary has a special place, and I would like to offer you some reflections to help you prepare for your Pilgrimage by thinking about that prayer.

Every year the people who run Lourdes propose a spiritual theme for all the Pilgrimages that come. This year's theme follows on from the themes of the last two years: With Bernadette, making the Sign of the Cross (2010) and With Bernadette, praying the Our Father (2011). For 2012 we want to look at the prayer of the Rosary illuminated by the light of Bernadette and the light which surrounded the Mother of God during the apparitions – the same light which God gives us to help us follow in his Son's footsteps. Our theme this year is With Bernadette, praying the Rosary. Describing the first time Our Lady appeared to her, Bernadette said "I heard a noise like a gust of wind"; the Holy Spirit was given to Bernadette, as to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, so that she could contemplate the salvation of all humanity, make it her own, and bear witness to it.

Mary, the Mother of God became her spiritual teacher. By her presence, her words and her gestures, she led Bernadette, little by little, into the contemplation of the mystery of her Son, the Redeemer of the world. The meaning of this "Marian teaching" is first seen in the mutual welcome given to one another by these two women, Mary and Bernadette. In welcoming Mary, Bernadette welcomes Christ: "Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?" (Lk. 1:42) and in welcoming Bernadette, Mary welcomes Christ: "in

so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did it to me." (Mt 25:40). This same welcome waits for you in Lourdes.

The second element of the "Way of Mary" is the prayer of the Rosary, which was a sort of aid to their meeting then, and continues to help us in the same way today. It helps firstly by teaching us, building on the few prayers known by Bernadette (who had no knowledge about her faith at the time) which are contained in this traditional devotion of the Church. It is also a spiritual aid, as this simple, accessible prayer helps all Christians contemplate the unfolding mysteries of Christ's life. Mary shares with Bernadette her own experience of Christian life, in which "she pondered all these things in her heart" (Lk 2:51). It can help us in the same way. In this way, Mary, the spiritual teacher, and Bernadette, child of Mary, daughter of the Father and disciple of Christ, first opened the doors of this magnificent "school of prayer" which has been part of the gift Lourdes makes to us for 154 years.

By the recital of the rosary, today as in the past, millions of pilgrims, in the shrine and elsewhere, continue to learn and take possession of the unfathomable riches of the mystery of Christ. In our Pilgrimage we will make the mysteries of the Rosary our guide and allow ourselves to reflect on the apparitions and message of Lourdes in a light which is joyful, luminous, sorrowful and glorious. Each day our prayer will lead us to contemplate one of these Mysteries of the Rosary, and I hope that this will enable us to grow together in prayer throughout the week.

Fr Luke Beckett OSB
Spiritual Adviser



NEW BISHOP IN LOURDES

Just before Christmas, Bishop Jacques Perrier reached the age of 75 - the age when Bishops submit their Letter of Resignation to the Pope.

On 11 February, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, the Holy Father announced the appointment of Nicolas Brouwet, Auxiliary Bishop of Nanterre (a suburb of Paris), as Bishop Perrier's successor.

Bishop Brouwet was installed by Archbishop Le Gall of Toulouse on 25 March, the Feast of the Annunciation, at a packed Sunday Mass in the Lourdes Basilica of St Pius X at the end of the local Bigorre Pilgrimage. Then Bishop Perrier, previously Bishop of Chartres, retired to Limoges where various members of his family live.

Bishop Brouwet has been to Lourdes regularly with the relatively new Nanterre Pilgrimage and at his Installation Press Conference, he said that his first thoughts were of "Continuation" i.e. to continue the work carried out by his predecessor during his 15 years as Bishop of the Diocese.



One of Bishop Brouwet's first public commitments within the Lourdes Sanctuaries was to attend a meeting on 24/25 April with the 5 firms of architects short-listed by his predecessor, to discuss their proposals for the new Baths' building - Project Siloe. Planning Permission has been granted finally for this new building, which is to be constructed behind the Ste Bernadette Church, looking out over the Gave towards the Grotto. It is hoped that Siloe will open in time for the 2014 Pilgrimage season.

Please pray for Bishop Perrier in thanks for all he has done over the years for Lourdes Pilgrims and for Bishop Brouwet, aged 50, who now leads the Diocese and has become Patron of the Hospitalité Notre Dame de Lourdes to which the Ampleforth Hospitalité is affiliated.

Please also remember Bishop McMahon of Brentwood in your prayers. Fr Thomas came on our Pilgrimage as a Group Chaplain throughout most of the 1970s, before he was appointed Bishop at the young age of 44. His installation in 1980 was led by Cardinal Basil Hume OSB, one of the founders of our Pilgrimage in 1953. The Holy Father has yet to accept the Letter of Resignation, which Bishop Thomas sent, when he reached 75, last June. After 32 years in post, he continues to lead his diocese. The Pilgrimage continues to enjoy close ties with Brentwood. Several members of Diocese come regularly on our Pilgrimage, including Mgr John Armitage, who is a Vicar General.

Paul Williams
ALH Chairman

FINAL PREPARATIONS

As many of us prepare for our week in Lourdes we are each feeling different emotions. Some are excited, some are disappointed, as they cannot join us this year, others are exhausted and do not know how they will manage our week in Lourdes, and yet others are answering Our Lady's calling, and do so with a heavy heart.

Whatever your reason for coming with our family, whether you are staying in the St Frai or the St Rose, we come to listen to each other, to serve, to hold, to laugh, to weep, to pray, to comfort, and above all to let the word of God wash over us, and the Blessed Sacrament heal, nourish and bless us.

Like our journey to Mass each week, we must prepare to do our Lord's work, and that means making space, and taking time, to reflect on what our week in Lourdes will mean to us this year. How will we, in our own small way, fulfil that Christ-like quality of giving of self, without counting the cost, with forgiveness in our hearts if and when things do not go to plan.

We have a wonderful week prepared for everyone who is able to join us, we hope you enjoy it, we hope you are enriched by it, and we hope you return spiritually refreshed. For those who are at home, we simply ask that you remember us all in your prayers, and we pledge to remember you all at the Grotto when we visit, and when we are celebrating Mass together.

I look forward to seeing many of you in a few days.

God bless you all.

Mike Thoms
Pilgrimage Director

FUND RAISING – Helping Those Less Able

It is vital that funding is in place to ensure the continuity of the pilgrimage. As well as giving financial support to Hospital Pilgrims, we are now increasingly supporting members of the medical team as it grows in numbers. To achieve this, we hope to create a fund raising programme that is very much in the spirit of the pilgrimage, with events that add to the community such as the Carol Service and 2000 Club, as well as seeking donations 'through gifts and legacies. In order to maintain the integrity of the pilgrimage and to co-ordinate event diaries and offer support, would anyone considering any fundraising initiatives please contact me to discuss. Email address: gaynor.townley@thorpehall.com

Gaynor Townley
ALH Fund Raiser



WHAT'S NEW IN LOURDES THIS YEAR!

Well, firstly, we are! Michael Dawson and I have taken over as the Chef Brancardier and Chief Handmaid. At our first meeting in October we decided that we ourselves would not have deputies. All the Group Leaders will be our deputies.

After much consideration Michael, Father Luke and I met with 15 potential leaders at Ampleforth in April for a retreat weekend. Before tackling practical matters, such as this year's programme, we focused on the rule of St Benedict and the life of St Bernadette, and how these saints might inform the leader's role in Lourdes.

The group really enjoyed visiting Ampleforth, some for the first time, and attending Vespers and

Lauds, as well as dinner at the Fairfax Arms.

One of the ideas the leaders agreed on, was that they would not have deputies either. So, you may well find your Group Leaders asking you to help with some of the duties that the Deputy Group Leaders used to carry out.

They also made useful suggestions about distributing buddies throughout the groups. We bore this in mind when we were selecting the members of each group and sincerely hope that the result is well balanced groups.

There will be a meeting/briefing in London in June for those who were unable to attend in April.

This year there will be three Responsables, looking after the wards, and they will be assisted by three deputies.

You will find most of what we will do in Lourdes this July is unchanged and very familiar. Our changes are subtle & limited. If they work well we'll keep them.

We are so looking forward to seeing you, working with you and sharing with you the great privilege of serving our Hospital Pilgrims, ensuring that they will be, as always, the focus of our loving care.

Diana Williams
Chief Handmaid





MEDICS NEWS

Almost there! These last few weeks have been spent making phone calls to families, GPs and consultants all over the country, liaising with Elisabeth and Annie, and finalising plans and arrangements for our hospital pilgrims.

I am indebted to and touched by the willingness of so many to help in various ways to ensure that all will go well. I feel secure in the knowledge that a loyal and dedicated group of doctors will be with us. I am most grateful for their support- a special thanks to Janet who has nurtured and encouraged me over the years, and for her ongoing advice and support.

Thanks to all the nurses who have volunteered to spend their week caring for the our hospital pilgrims and without whom the pilgrimage would just not be able to exist. I am looking forward to seeing you all, meeting up with old friends and making new ones and having the luxury of spending time with everyone.

Most of all, I am looking forward to the fun and laughter, the music and dancing...not long to go!

Rita Rigg
Chief Doctor

THE AMPLEFORTH HOSPITALITÉ OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Last year Mike Thoms asked me to take over from Richard Murphy as the person representing the ALH and after much thought and some trepidation, I accepted. The prospect was daunting; following on from Richard who has done such a wonderful job of maintaining the aims and objectives, working tirelessly to ensure we continue to honour Our Lady and respond to her request for prayer, pilgrimage and penance in the 21st century. Furthermore, he has been brilliant at maintaining the records and data base of all past pilgrimages and keeping tabs on the archives kept at Ampleforth.

It is important to remember that those of us who belong to the Hospitalité are members for life and the commitment involved is not to be undertaken lightly. Looking at the aims and thinking about them I have questions to ask you all. How do you think we should remember the Hospitalité throughout the year? What could we do on a weekly or monthly basis to ensure we do not forget all those links made during our week in Lourdes?

During the years I have come to Lourdes on our Pilgrimage, and indeed come to live with the nuns at the St Frai on my Stage, I have made many friends whom I see and talk to regularly and I feel so lucky that my life has been enriched through these friendships. Taking on this role from Richard has reminded me how life-changing Lourdes has been for me and is something that for me is far, far more than the week in Lourdes. Taking part in all the events organised throughout the year whether they are spiritual or purely social is exactly what the aims of the Hospitalité wish us to do and what fun to be able to meet up with everyone whether it be in London or Ampleforth! See the photos of recent events where we have come together to pray and catch up!

So, please share your thoughts with me and offer ideas for new ways of supporting each other in our daily lives through prayer and by remaining in contact throughout the year. My email is lucy.rowanrobinson@gmail.com and you will definitely find me around during our week in Lourdes. Get thinking!!

Lucy Rowan-Robinson
Hospitalité

HEALTH AND SAFETY (and nuts) IN LOURDES

What bad thing do you have to do to be asked to take on the role of Health and Safety Officer for the Lourdes Pilgrimage?

Well it is true that, over the dozen or so Pilgrimages I have made to Lourdes, I have been involved in a couple of relatively minor "incidents". Perhaps more significantly, since I was last able to come on the pilgrimage in 2010, I have both fallen down an (unfenced) hole and broken my ankle and fallen off my Brompton and broken a rib.

This year we will all be given the new, one page Health & Safety Policy Statement. As you will see the policy starts with the Gospel command "you must love your neighbour as yourself", identifies who, in the context of the pilgrimage, our neighbours are, then

lists the particular challenges that arise and the categories of training, refreshers and updates which we will be providing to every pilgrim each year to enable us to put the command into effect. What you won't get is a long list of do's and don'ts.

None of us comes to Lourdes in the expectation of harming ourselves (or anyone else). Rather we come to care, to learn and be cared for. By listening to the guidance we receive on how to handle the challenges of the pilgrimage and by our thoughtful care throughout the week we can develop in ourselves, and each other, a culture which will reduce the risk of all types of harm.

Those involved in the management of the pilgrimage are giving careful thought to where risks and challenges

arise and how they can sensibly be minimised. Our objective through implementing the Health & Safety Policy statement is to encourage everyone, through what we hope will be effective means, to do what they want to do anyway – to care appropriately for themselves and others.

And the nuts? At the entrance to our house in Yorkshire we have a magnificent horse chestnut tree, over 150 years old. Every year it produces a good crop of conkers which fall to the ground, potentially onto passing vehicles, riders and pedestrians. I have no plans to cut it down.

Philip Westmacott
Health & Safety Officer





ARMF – TEN YEARS ON

The Alistair Roberts Memorial Fund was set up in 2002, after Alistair's tragic death in December 2001. The aim, to provide financial help for young people who wish to go to Lourdes as volunteers to care for the disabled and terminally ill, was bold. We realised this would need to be carefully promoted to ensure we got the right message across without appearing overtly patronising. This is why those who apply do so in complete confidence, and no one knows, other than the trustees, who they are. Over the past 10 years ARMF has established its rightful place in its support of Lourdes, and has proved to be a worthy and essential vehicle for financial help where needed.

The first recipients of the fund came in July 2002, and to date we have funded 197 volunteers which has cost us £58,481.84. This means an average of just under £300 is given to most recipients. There are a wide range of helpers from those on a Westminster pilgrimage to the young volunteers from an entire East End parish, and they simply would not have been able to take their sick without the support of ARMF! ARMF supports any one from whatever background or religion. Working closely

with ALH and the Ampleforth Abbey Trust, a substantial number of the young who come with the Ampleforth pilgrimage have been funded by ARMF.

Applicants can be fully or partly funded depending on their circumstances. They must come on an official pilgrimage and want to care for the sick, but have no way of paying for themselves. All that is asked of them is that they light a candle and pray for Alistair at the Grotto.

To witness the development of these young people and the sometimes life changing experience they find, gives great comfort to Alistair's family. The fund has proved to be a lasting and fitting legacy for a young man who so loved life and cared for the sick and disabled in Lourdes himself. His family remain justly proud of what the fund achieves and the people it helps, knowing that Alistair would approve.

Kim Roberts

ARMF Trustee and Father of Alistair

www.armf.org.uk

armf is a registered charity no: 1127010

REMEMBER THE DRESS CODE



OOPS! Remember to read the dress code!



They've got it - White with Red accessories!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

POST-PILGRIMAGE LONDON REUNION

Wednesday 29th August.

Mass 6.30pm at St.Mary's Cadogan Street, then The Builder's Arms pub. Please check the website/facebook for last minute changes.

EASTER REUNION

Sunday 7th April 2013.

Details will be announced nearer the time.

RETREAT

26th to 28th April 2013

at the Grange, Ampleforth.

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE

6th to 13th July 2012

12th to 19th July 2013

CAROL SERVICE

Thursday 5th December 2013

Ampleforth Lourdes



A limited batch of scarves has been produced, which we are selling to raise funds to continue the Pilgrimage's work. They are made in the UK from Saxony wool, are hand pressed, and at 180cm long will keep you warm in the winter months ahead! The red, white and Marian blue colours will also remind you of the week we share in Lourdes.

The scarves cost £40 each, and will be available at the reunions and Carol Service.

If you would like to purchase a scarf please contact Matthew Plummer by emailing matthew.plummer@gmail.com