



# Ampleforth Hospitalité Our Lady of Lourdes

July 2015 Newsletter



## Lourdes, the Joy of Mission

This year the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes is suggesting that we should reflect on the invitation that Pope Francis is giving to all of us to become "missionary disciples". What does this mean for us all, and especially what does this mean for our Lourdes Pilgrimage?

We could start by looking at the words of Jesus at the end of the gospel of St Matthew:

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

This command is addressed to us, as much as it was to those first followers of Jesus – and like them, we too are called to reach out to all people. Some of those first disciples fell down in prayer – and some hesitated. We may feel that we are one or the other, or more likely that sometimes we pray and sometimes we hesitate. But Jesus speaks to all, whether praying or hesitating. He does not write off the moments of hesitation, but allows his word to speak even to them. Both our faith and our doubt can find a role in God's plan, and we are called both when we are believing and when we are doubting. That sense that God has a plan for us, and has a task for us in his plan, is most of all a gift. We are touched by God when he chooses us; I often reflect that Pope Francis chose as his motto *miserando atque eligendo* (having mercy and choosing) – a quotation from St Bede's commentary on St Matthew's gospel, which underlines how God chooses us, and how when he does so he is not expecting us to be perfect. Instead in his mercy he gives us what we need.

How do we begin to respond to God's choice? The first step is expressed in Jesus' command to baptise. Baptism involves us in the life of the Trinity, of the God who is Father, Son and Holy

Spirit; we are called to share in that life, and we begin to do so in our own spiritual life. Pray is thus the first essential, as it is in our prayer that we open ourselves to receive the Holy Spirit and to allow Jesus to come closer to us so that we can come closer to him. Most (perhaps all) of us find it easier to pray in Lourdes, whether on our own in the silence of the Grotto or the Chapel of Adoration, or in the gathered community of the International Mass. Our conversation with God in prayer reminds us of the meaning and direction of all that we do.

The second step is expressed in obeying the commands that Jesus gave us. If we are to be witnesses to him, our lives must fit with this, and what we do must be based on the choice we have made to be a follower of Jesus. By doing this, and by obeying his commandments, we give the world the example of a new and different way of doing things. Often in Lourdes I am struck by the way that even the architecture of the Sanctuary gives priority to those whom wider society takes no account of – and impressed by the way fellow pilgrims are able to live that out in the way they relate to each other. When Jesus tells us to obey all the commands he has given us he is telling us to live in the way of relating that Lourdes invites us to, that sees us at our best as we reach out to those who are on the edges of ordinary society, and find that by entering into a relationship with them we have begun to transform our world.

One of the strange miracles of grace is that when we begin to reach out to those on the edges, those who the gospel calls the poor, is that we find that in fact it is they who bring the gospel to us, they who show us the face of Christ. Bernadette commented that if Our Lady had been

able to find anyone poorer and less significant she would have chosen them – and yet from her very poverty Bernadette has been able to bring the good news to the hearts of so many. By allowing the poor of today to bring good news to us we can come to share in the joy of Bernadette.

*Fr Luke Beckett OSB  
Spiritual Advisor*



## The Chairman writes

The planning for each Pilgrimage starts in earnest during the annual Meeting of Pilgrimage Directors held in Lourdes each February. The Ampleforth Pilgrimage has now settled into a routine where our Director, Mike Thoms, is accompanied at this Meeting by our Spiritual Adviser, Fr Luke, and by me as Chairman. This team has enabled us to cover off all that needs to be done and also the fact that Mike has other commitments there in his role as Director of the Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Pilgrimage. This worked very well in 2014 and made it possible in 2015 for me to travel at short notice to Ampleforth during the Meeting in order to represent the Hospitalité at the Funeral of our co-founder Fr Martin Haigh.

It is not that long since I attended the Funeral of Fr Bernard Green, Fr Martin's successor as Director of our Pilgrimage. Fr Bernard was only 60, when he died. Fr Martin reached the age of 93. As Director, Fr Martin served from 1953 to 1987 and Fr Bernard from 1988 to 1995, when he handed over the leadership to Fr Richard Field, our last Monk-Director.

Many readers of this Newsletter will recall that Fr Martin was a very hands-on Director. Nothing much happened without his direct involvement in its planning and implementation. Others will have learnt a lot about Fr Martin from Fr Abbot's homily at his Funeral, which is posted on the Hospitalité website. In this edition of the Newsletter, there is a full obituary of Fr Martin and also a piece by Fr Francis on Fr Martin's close working relationship in Lourdes with the Hospitalité Notre Dame de Lourdes, which continues to this day.

Every second year, the Director and, if available, the Chairman of the Hospitalité visit Ampleforth to meet formally with Fr Abbot and the Abbey Trustees. As several of the Trustees come with us on the Pilgrimage, including Fr Luke, this is a very friendly and supportive meeting, examining what has been achieved and our aims for the future. This visit also gives an opportunity for the Director to meet with the various members of staff at Ampleforth, with whom we work closely on matters such as Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Finance. The visit in early March this year was the first, which your Chairman has been able to attend, and I was very impressed with

what I heard in all areas. We really are blessed with having such hugely competent people on the Committee.

All our congratulations and best wishes go to Mgr John Armitage on his appointment as Rector of the Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham in succession to the new Bishop of Brentwood, Alan Williams. There was some mischief out in Lourdes, where some claimed in jest that I had been appointed a Bishop. However I quickly confirmed on the Internet that Paul Williams was the newly appointed Anglican Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham!

Vincent Thompson has recently been appointed as the High Sheriff of Essex and Bishop Alan's predecessor at Brentwood, Bishop Thomas McMahon, is his chaplain. Vincent stood in at short notice to replace Simon Hall, who had to stand down in view of the ill-health of his dear wife, Teresa. All those mentioned in this paragraph are members of our Hospitalité!

Further up in East Anglia, Jamie Gaynor very sadly died. He was in his first year at St Thomas's House at Ampleforth, when your Chairman was in his last, and it was a very great pleasure for many, including me, when he was awarded his 25 year Pilgrimage Medal. This edition of the newsletter includes a very moving tribute to Jamie by his eldest brother.

I understand from Fr Luke that no less than 10 current members of St Thomas's will be on this year's Pilgrimage, in addition to the return to Lourdes after many years of Fr Henry Wansbrough, the Housemaster in my last term, who recently celebrated his 80th Birthday.

Among other members of the Hospitalité who have died recently are Vincent Marmion, a Pilgrimage Doctor, and Bernadette Davie, a Pilgrimage Nurse, both of whom served our Pilgrimage over many years.

So what news of Lourdes itself? Work continues on the Grotto. It was thought that there would be a complete halt during the Pilgrimage season, but the Baths ladies reported there was still a fair amount of building noise at times during the June Stage. Many say how successful the new layout in the Grotto is; while others say they observe the Grotto now from the far

bank of the Gave. I suspect we will have to wait until the works are complete – hopefully by the beginning of next season – before we can all form a balanced view.

Sadly the numbers of Pilgrims continue to fall. French Pilgrimage trains with Ambulance cars are now a thing of the past. The French come in TGVs or on Buses. Italian and German Pilgrimages continue to come by train, but the waste disposal arrangements of the ancient rolling stock probably give them a maximum life of 5 more years. However the number of Charter planes at the airport continues to increase, often arriving at hugely anti-social hours.

Fr Brian de Burca OMI, who has been the English Language co-ordinator of the Lourdes Chaplains, is in the process of returning to Ireland and the other English Language Chaplain Fr Paul Horrocks OMI, a South African, is due to leave Lourdes at the end of this Season. How they will be replaced in future years is not yet entirely clear. Meanwhile a new Rector of the Sanctuary, Pere André Cabes, who was born in Tarbes and currently works in Rome, has been appointed by Bishop Brouwet to succeed Pere Horacio Brito in October this year.

I am hugely privileged to have been re-appointed by Fr Abbot as Chairman of the Ampleforth Lourdes Hospitalité and thank him for this. My second term will end after the 2019 Pilgrimage, which will take place 50 years after the formation of the Ampleforth Lourdes Hospitalité at the most gracious invitation of the then President of the Hospitalité Notre Dame de Lourdes.

The final planning is in full swing for our 2015 Pilgrimage from 17-24 July. Our Pilgrimage Policies have been updated and where appropriate run past the relevant staff members at Ampleforth, the Abbey Trustees and even their lawyers in relation to our Safeguarding policy. The all-important Helper Training took place up at Ampleforth and has already been held twice in London. So it only remains for me to ask for your prayers for the success of our Pilgrimage and to look forward to seeing many of you very soon out in Lourdes.

*Paul Williams – Chairman ALHC*

## Days away from our week together!

As we all prepare for our week in Lourdes over the coming days, I was reflecting on Bernadette's story, and her profound faith in accepting what Our Lady was saying to her, despite being viewed by her family, friends, Parish Priest, and the authorities as a fantasist during the initial apparitions.

She was chosen to communicate Our Lady's message, and we too have all been chosen by Our Lady's invitation to come to Lourdes, to learn, appreciate and commit to what we are being asked to do, not just in Lourdes, but in the other fifty one weeks of our year between each Pilgrimage.

For some of us, this commitment requires change, and for many of us, change is difficult, painful, inconvenient and unwelcome, but this is what Our Lady wanted when she chose St Bernadette to be her voice. A change that would truly reflect what Jesus Christ wanted all of us to do – be more like Him, and think about others, do for others, consider others, more than we consider ourselves.

At times this means that we need to do things that we find hard, dull, tiring, and unfulfilling, and in times gone by, pilgrims used the term "offer up" to demonstrate that they would not have chosen to do a specific task, but would offer it up for the love of our Lord and Our Lady.

We look forward to offering our week up, alongside all of you, who out of generosity of heart, will offer your week in memory of Fr Martin Haigh, who as a founding Father of our pilgrimage showed all of us, what it was to serve in Lourdes.

As with all weeks in Lourdes we will have joy, we will have laughter, we will have sadness and we will have tears, but most of all, we will have each other to celebrate with and give comfort to.

I wish you all a safe journey.

God bless you all.

*Mike Thoms - Pilgrimage Director*



## Pilgrimage Helpers Retreat at Ampleforth 24-26 April

Twenty-seven pilgrims from previous years' Pilgrimages assembled (in answer to Lucy Rowan Robinson's call) at Ampleforth over the weekend 24-26 April, to benefit from an excellently-programmed retreat, masterminded by Fr Luke Beckett. On offer – an offer readily taken up – was the opportunity to join the monks in the Abbey Church for the Divine Office at various times during each day. After Vespers and Compline on the Friday evening, Fr Philip Rosario gave the first of two talks on 'Seeing the face of Christ' and on Saturday morning (after Lauds and Matins) the second, 'Seeing the face of Christ – a Resurrection perspective'. The first related in particular to the actions of Helpers on the Lourdes Pilgrimage; the latter "just as belief in Christ's Resurrection brings together our mind and heart (enlightened by God's grace); so we are enabled to see the presence of Christ in others only by the action of the Holy Spirit."

This was followed by Fr Oswald McBride (Vocations Coordinator) giving a talk as an introduction to the Monastic Profession Mass. His vivid description of everything that was to happen gave us a very clear perspective of the significance of the Simple Profession which was to be made by Brother Benedict Donleavy later that morning, a key event both for the Professing Monk and for all the other Monks as they recalled and pondered upon that same event in their respective monastic lives. Having met this 23-year-old Brother Benedict and his family and friends over the previous 18 hours, one felt a real bonding with him having been present when he made his Simple Profession. For Fr Oswald it was particularly poignant as the next day's 'Good Shepherd Sunday' was the 24th anniversary of him having decided to embark on becoming a monk.

After a buffet lunch in the Main Hall and a 'Deux à Quatre' break, the Lourdes video for the year (with the theme 'Lourdes, the joy of mission') was shown, which was followed by a most thoughtful talk by Fr Matthew Burns on Prayer, which inter alia proffered the simple habit of 10-minutes a day alone in one's room, accompanied by a lighted candle.

Choral Vespers was then held in the Abbey Church, with the roof being raised by the voices of the Schola Cantorum, Schola Puellarum and the St Martins Ampleforth choir. This was followed by drinks and a delicious supper in a marquee on the Bounds, at which Fr Abbot made a short speech about securing Ampleforth's long-term future, thanking all those who had thus far donated to 'our journey' and encouraging future financial contributions. The memorable day concluded with Compline.



Sunday began with Matins and Lauds, and then High Mass in the Abbey, whose organ – accompanying belting Eastertide hymns – didn't sound as if it needed any refurbishment! The final element of the Retreat Weekend was a talk by Fr Luke on 'Mission and Community', which covered the life of sacraments and service, and the certainties of being loved and of being able to love. The memorable and prayerful weekend concluded with the retreatants undergoing the formal Helpers' Training Session in preparation for this summer's Pilgrimage, ably led by Emma Craig.

*Michael Goldschmidt*

## The Ampleforth Lourdes Reunion March 2015

It was a beautiful day and we all met for Mass at Christ the King church in Chingford. Sadly, there was a dreadful traffic incident so quite a few people arrived after Mass, just in time for lunch.

The Reunion works entirely due to Ros Lynch's marvellous organisation and we are so grateful to her and all at Christ the King church; they make us feel so welcome.

Father Luke celebrated Mass and Ros Wood arranged all the music, liaising with Stephen Anderson who played the organ beautifully. We managed to have people from all parts of the pilgrimage taking part. Jo Butler sang amazingly and Joy Pankhurst acted as Eucharistic Minister.

It was lovely to see Peggy Debieux's daughter Bid. She has been to the Reunion for the last two years and after hearing so much about the Pilgrimage has been persuaded come with us this summer, hurray!

Everyone brought delicious food to share and it was a perfect opportunity to catch up with so many APs. I think we had between 40 and 50 people in the end; people had made such an effort to get there. We particularly appreciated the effort Mary and Mervyn Shipsey, thank you!

We all look forward to next year and hope for even more helpers to attend.

*Lucy Rowan-Robinson*



### Quiet Day of Reflection

Below, is part of the talk given by Father Edward Corbould on our quiet day of reflection at the home of Cath and Johnny Gaynor. It was a very rewarding day and Father Edward gave us all food for thought. After his talk we went and meditated on what he had said. We then had Mass offered by Father Edward and this was followed by an Anointing for those of us who wished to be anointed. This made the day all the more special and he anointed almost all of us. We had a delicious lunch with food brought by everyone and socialised for a while until we slowly began to depart for home, all feeling we had gained a real depth from the day.

Grateful thanks to Johnny and Cath for their great hospitality and for kindly allowing the use of their lovely home. And of course special thanks from us all to Father Edward! Here are two short extracts used by Father Edward in his talks – From 'Evangelii

Gaudium' – On the lips on the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over: "Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten strengthen and free you. "This first proclamation is called "first" not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things. It is first in a qualitative sense because it is the principal proclamation, the one which we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment. For this reason too, "the priest – like every other member of the Church – ought to grow in awareness that he himself is continually in need of being evangelised."

And a second extract entitled 'Love will Remain' – Hope and faith will both come to an end when we die. But love will remain.

Love is eternal. Love comes from God and returns to God. When we die, we will lose everything that life gave us except love. The love with which we lived our lives is the life of God within us. It is the divine, indestructible core of our being. This love not only will remain but will also bear fruit from generation to generation.

When we approach death let us say to those we leave behind, "Don't let your heart be troubled. The love of God that dwells in my heart will come to you and offer you consolation and comfort."



*Richard Reid – one of our longest serving APs*

## Fr Martin and the Hospitalité

Fr Martin Haigh who died on 31 January 2015 was responsible as Director of the Pilgrimage for starting in 1985 an Ampleforth Stage Group. In 1981, he had taken a small group to serve for a week at the Cite Secours as helpers during the 42nd International Eucharistic Congress in Lourdes. With this in mind, he and the Lourdes Committee decided to start an Ampleforth Stage Group serving with the Hospitalité de Notre-Dame de Lourdes. On this group, between April 1985 and July 2015, over 30 years, there will have been 35 stage groups involving 206 persons doing stages and involving in all 375 stages. Also, since June 2004, John Dick (O1977) and Fiona have brought a Stage Group each year in early June – “made up not of boys in the school but of experienced pilgrims” – [such as Paul and Sue Williams, Mark and Alice Shepherd, Rupert Plummer, Lucy Rowan Robinson, Cath Gaynor, Fiona Collins and many others].

These groups help to forge the support the Pilgrimage gives to the Hospitalité and our commitment to share in the work of service welcoming pilgrims to Lourdes on behalf of the Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes. By 2008, there were 26 medallists of the Lourdes Hospitalité - what Fr Bernard in his History describes as “a remarkable sign of the contribution made by our pilgrimage to wider service in Lourdes and of the experience of our helpers”. When in 1953 George Bagshaw volunteered to help Fr Martin start the Pilgrimage, there were only 16 medallists in the whole of England.

These early pilgrimages had many of the elements of a stage, and in 1958, a non-pilgrimage year, a group of Amplefordians came to do a Stage in the centenary year of Lourdes – and this developed in future years into the Oxford Pilgrimage with Fr Michael Hollings, and today the Oxford and Cambridge Pilgrimage [In the 1960s, they would always be at the airport to unload the Ampleforth Sick, led by Fr Michael Hollings in a bow tie]. In the Pilgrimage of about 1983, a group on the pilgrimage did a Stage during the Ampleforth Pilgrimage.

*Fr Francis Dobson OSB*

## Fund Raising

First of all, thank you all so much for all the hard work done and support given to raise funds for FOALS. It is so important to the pilgrimage that we continue to be able to fund a clinical team, the sick, disabled and accompanying carers.

Our biggest fund raising event, our biennial Carol Service, is taking place this year on **10th December 2015**. Not only is it very important from a financial perspective but it is always such a lovely evening seeing friends and families from the pilgrimage and a great way to get into the Christmas season. Tickets are £60 with £25 tickets available for the under 25's. If you or anyone you know would be interested in advertising in the programme it is £1000 for a full page and £500 for a half page. Please help us to get the word out.

We are also working with a great website called [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) which makes a donation to FOALS every time you purchase something from an online retailer like John Lewis, Amazon and hundreds of other leading stores. It is really easy to use. Simply go to the [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) website, register and specify the FOALS charity when prompted. Then login through the site to whichever website you want to shop on and a percentage of your purchase will go to the charity. It works for all products available on the original websites, there is no price difference and it even works with sales. So please do take advantage of this whenever you can. Our aim is to try and make a £1000 through this before the Carol Service (feel free to do your Christmas shopping through them!).

If you would like details of any of the above, please contact me at [gaynor.townley@thorpehall.com](mailto:gaynor.townley@thorpehall.com).

*Gaynor Townley*



## Fr Martin Haigh OSB

Fr Martin Haigh was the joint founder of the Ampleforth Lourdes Pilgrimage in 1953 – and for 34 years until 1987 ran the Pilgrimage

Anthony Haigh was born in London on 17 January 1922 and educated was at Ampleforth, in St Edward's House, leaving in 1940. As a sportsman, he was an orthodox right-handed batsman in the 1st XI, and a keen rugby player – and at Oxford once played as a substitute for the All Blacks. From September 1940 until his death on 31 January 2015, over 74 years – he was a monk. He was given the monastic name Martin (after St Therese of Lisieux, whose surname was Martin – and to whom he had a great devotion). He was ordained priest on 17 July 1949.

Fr Martin, along with Fr Basil Hume [later Abbot and then Cardinal Basil Hume] started the Ampleforth Pilgrimage in August 1953. The 1953 Pilgrimage of 54 pilgrims was from 6 August to 13 August – travelling to Lourdes by train and returning by bus (as there was a French national rail strike). This 1953 Pilgrimage had followed an experimental visit to Lourdes in 1952 by Fr Martin and Fr Basil - and Lourdes overwhelmed them. There had been earlier Ampleforth groups going to Lourdes - between 1928 and 1938 Fr John Maddox and (in 1938) Fr Peter Utley led an annual group to Lourdes with the Catholic Association Pilgrimage, and an Ampleforth boy Charlie Flood (A1930) was it seems cured at Lourdes of cancer in 1926 – and as early as 1896, an Ampleforth group had gone to Lourdes. But the group taken to Lourdes by Fr Martin and Fr Basil in 1953 was for the first time an independent Ampleforth pilgrimage. Eventually in 1969 it was invited to become a *Hospitalité* when it was recognised by the Lourdes *Hospitalité* - it was a mark of singular honour that Ampleforth should be given by the *Hospitalité de Notre-Dame de Lourdes* the same status and recognition as a diocese – and it was a notable acknowledgment of Ampleforth's contribution to Lourdes, the high standards of the pilgrimage, its leadership and the quality of its volunteers.

Fr Martin led the Pilgrimage each year - at first the pilgrimage happened every second year - in 1953, 1955, 1957, 1959 - and from 1961 onwards thereon every year. He remained its Director until 1987 (except in 1978 when his mother was seriously ill). Thus Fr Martin led 30 pilgrimages between 1953 and 1987, 30 out of the 58 pilgrimages

between 1953 and 2014. These years saw many developments: the decision to fly rather than travel by train; the innovation of the Mass and Anointing of the Sick at the Cite Secours; the transformation of the Opening Ceremony into the Blessing of Hands; the annual Grotto Mass; the introduction of the Ward Party; the bringing of disabled or sick pilgrims and hospital pilgrims (originally the pilgrimage helped the sick of the Dublin Oblates); the introduction of groups and group leaders; the formation from 1969 of a properly constituted organising committee. Fr Martin always wished to draw the pilgrims to the Grotto for prayer, and to hear the story of Lourdes. And in these early years, Fr Martin was fully involved in all organising – bookings, travel arrangements, and the week in Lourdes.

The inspirational role of Fr Martin was explained by the historian of the Ampleforth Pilgrimage, the late Fr Bernard Green, writing in 'Not Strangers, But Pilgrims – A History of Ampleforth in Lourdes' (published 2009). He writes of Fr Martin as he took over the new Pilgrimage in 1953: "Now aged 35 [in 1953], Martin was tall and had a very distinguished presence. With a beautiful speaking voice, a fine singer, a powerful preacher, he was a natural leader. Intuitive and imaginative rather than methodical or analytical, he was not afraid of emotion and could appeal to the feelings of his fellow pilgrims. He could sense mood and judge the moment as he steered the group through the week, a mix of the inspiring games master and the creative art master. He led the pilgrimage with the skill and the panache of an accomplished impresario. One of his greatest gifts was never to get bored or blasé about Lourdes: his passion for the message of Our Lady, for the holiness of the place, for St Bernadette, remained perennially fresh. He could inspire each pilgrim as though it was the first."

Fr Martin had a wide variety of roles in his monastic life. He worked in the school at Ampleforth for 35 years from 1947 to 1981: he taught Art and French from 1947 to 1981; he was Games Master from 1948 to 1963; he was Housemaster of St Bede's House from 1963 to 1977. Fr Martin served as Junior Master in the monastery. Fr Martin was monastic Guest Master from 1978 to 1981. For 27 years from 1979 to 2006 he served on Ampleforth parishes – and was resident in them for 21 of these years (1981-1997, 2001 to 2006): he was in Gilling East (1979-1981), in Grassendale, Liverpool (1981-1997), in Ampleforth

village (1997-2001), and in Leyland (2001-2006). Fr Martin was an accomplished artist – in 1993 and in 1998 he held exhibitions of oil pastels. He was a devotee of the Shroud of Turin, often speaking on this subject and making a film. Fr Martin arranged for a crucifix to be placed on the summit of Mount Everest by Edmund Hillary when with Sherpa Tenzing Norgay from Nepal when these two made the first known successful ascent on 29 May 1953 – this was a small crucifix blessed by Pope Pius XII, which Fr Martin sent to the Leader of the Expedition, John Hunt. Sixty years later and into his nineties, Fr Martin was giving presentations to Amplefordians about this Everest crucifix. Later he wrote to the Leader of the expedition, Sir John Hunt that "When the real history of the world comes to be read, the day when men climbed to the very summit of the earth and left there the sign and symbol of our faith will rank as one of the very great days in the history of the world".

Fr Martin returned to Ampleforth to live there from 2006 onward. He was a guest at a St Dunstan's House Dinner in London in 2006 and subsequently became seriously ill, and returned from the parish at Grassendale to the Abbey. At about this time, he made one last visit to Lourdes – in fact without his passport (which he forgot), but travelling successfully by train with a group led by David Tate (E1947, died 2012). Fr Martin died peacefully in the monastery infirmary at Ampleforth on 31 January 2015, aged 93. His funeral was celebrated by Fr Abbot and the monastic community on 10 February 2015, and he was buried in the Monks' Wood amongst the snowdrops on the eve of the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

*Fr Francis Dobson OSB*



Fr Martin Haigh on his 90th Birthday

## Testament to a Hero: Jamie Gaynor

Thank you for reading this brief Testament to a Hero.

Jamie was much loved. Over a hundred people attended his funeral service, wishing to show and share their love for him. But why was he so loved? For he could be stubborn and difficult, and was fiercely independent!

Perhaps the essence of our love for Jamie lies in his vulnerability and suffering. And in his special qualities in dealing with this vulnerability and suffering. What were these qualities?

Six spring to mind. First, he had Great Courage. Both physical and emotional. He was a good boxer at school, not so much due to his skill in laying punches, but rather in his stoical endurance in receiving punches. He never flinched, which he left to those who were watching. Once, when a gang of youths shop lifted in the wine shop he was managing, he stood up to them all, and demanded they put down the stolen goods before he would allow them to leave. Surprisingly, they duly obeyed.

Secondly, he had Great Gentleness, like his father, Pat Gaynor.

Thirdly, he had Great Humility. It would never have crossed his mind that he was any sort of a hero. On the contrary, he thought he was nothing special. From his early teens, he felt great anxiety and fear of failure, and to deal with this, he learned early on that smoking calmed his nerves, and drinking gave him the confidence to voice his opinions.

Fourthly, he had Great Acceptance, and never complained, whatever he was going through, and whatever the circumstances.

Fifthly, he had a Great Sense of Humour. He would often joke that he had more 'O' levels than Mark Phillips. And when helming the family boat, much to the surprise of his siblings and parents, he would simply walk away from the wheel when his 'watch' ended, leaving the boat to fend for itself!

Finally, he had a Great Gift for Friendship, as was demonstrated by the presence of all of us who attended his funeral.

All of these Great Qualities were expressed in his many interests.

He loved to play golf in his youth. Better still, he enjoyed fishing for salmon in

Scotland, where he became best friends with the ghillies. He loved nothing better than to invite them to share a wee dram of whisky, and play a few hands of cribbage, either on the river bank during the day, or in the local hostelry in the evening.

He enjoyed watching, and was very knowledgeable about, International Rugby (visiting Australia one year to support the Lions Tour) and Football (being a firm supporter of Spurs, and latterly, Ipswich Town). He followed the horses with great enthusiasm, always putting his money on any runners trained by his sister, Lucy Wadham.

He was a Master of Wine Tasting, and managed wine shops for Victoria Wine, eventually running his own wine shop for a while in West Sussex. He loved bridge, and played to a high standard, being a



Local Master at Aldeburgh and Leiston Bridge Club.

Perhaps his greatest passion was going on the Ampleforth Lourdes Pilgrimage. He went every year for over thirty years. It was there that he made many friends, and was always made to feel incredibly welcome and appreciated. His sense of humour, good companionship, and quietly inspirational presence, will be sorely missed.

Finally, he enjoyed nothing better than a drink in his local pub. In Saxmundham, at the Cooper's Dip, Jamie's fellow drinkers and the Landlord have erected a plaque in his memory above the stool he used to occupy most days.

All these activities and interests were enjoyed by Jamie in spite of his hardships. He was born with a cleft palate, which delayed his speech development, and a club foot, which had to be kept in splints,

and delayed his walking development. Later, in his teens, he developed high anxiety, and his coping mechanisms were smoking and drinking.

The result of this was that in 2005, at the age of 49, he developed mouth cancer. After intensive treatment in the Royal Marsden, when he nearly died several times in intensive care, he pulled through, but his speech was severely impeded, and he had to learn to live on a PEG feed.

Somehow, even with only a third of his tongue left, he found a way of drinking by mouth, but some of what he drank went into his lungs, and he was hospitalised with severe pneumonia in 2009 and 2014.

On 26th January 2015, Jamie died suddenly and peacefully of a fatal cardiac arrhythmia, shortly after returning from the Cooper's Dip. When found by the cleaner, we were called to his flat. We found him lying peacefully, with a mild look of surprise on his face. He looked much younger, and paler, with all the oedema drained from his face.

Jamie's final gift was to draw back the veil of death. Standing, looking down on this peaceful, silent, still, hero, there leaped to mind the certainty that death is nothing; not empty; not the end. Rather death is an entrance, a gate, a portal, to new life. All is Equal, so time and change stand still. All is Compassion, so suffering and anxiety have no power. All is Peace and Freedom, so there is nothing to attain. Jamie's message is simply this: Death is great. Don't fear it. Welcome it.

Among Jamie's very few papers that he kept, there was carefully preserved his Grandfather's Citation for his Military Cross from the London Gazette dated 26th July 1917: "Temporary Captain George Charles Gaynor, Royal Army Medical Corps. For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when attending to the wounded. He showed magnificent disregard of danger in going constantly through heavy barrage to fulfil his medical duties, greatly assisting and encouraging all ranks by his example. He has on previous occasions performed similar gallant work."

If there was a peacetime equivalent, Jamie surely earned it.

James Steven Gaynor - Born 27th March 1956 - Died 26th January 2015.

*John Gaynor*

## NOTICE BOARD

**POST-PILGRIMAGE REUNION** will be held on Wednesday 2nd September. Mass will be at 6:30 pm at St Mary's, Cadogan Street, London SW3 2QR. We shall then move to the Builders Arms, 13 Britten Street, Chelsea, London SW3 3TY

**CAROL SERVICE** will take place on Thursday 10th December 2015. Further details will be available nearer the time.

**NORTHERN REUNIONS** will take place at Ampleforth on Sunday 13 September 2015 and Sunday 6 March 2016 at 12 noon.

**EASTER REUNION** will be held on Saturday 12th March 2016 at Christ the King Church, South Chingford, London E4 8SP.

**RETREAT in 2016** will be held from Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th April at the Grange, Ampleforth. Further details will be available nearer the time.

**ASSISTED PILGRIMS FOR 2016.** If anyone knows someone who would like to come with us to Lourdes in 2016 and be resident in Saint Frai, would they please contact: Annie Bowen-Wright, Corner Farm House, Stowupland, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 4AN.

Tel: 01449 676967. Email: bowenwright@talktalk.net

**DATABASE AMENDMENTS** Please send any changes to your personal details to: Ros Wood by emailing rosjwood@gmail.com

**NEWS** Please send notification of deaths, serious illness or any other news to: Lucy Rowan Robinson, Grey Walls, Park Lane, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5HP Tel: 07976228554.

E-mail: lucy.rowanrobinson@gmail.com

**FACEBOOK** Join the Facebook group Ampleforth Lourdes to keep in touch with fellow pilgrims, share photos and hear about social events.

**WEBSITE** containing News, Events and Photographs ([www. http://lourdes.ampleforth.org.uk/](http://lourdes.ampleforth.org.uk/)). Any ideas, articles and contributions can be sent to rosjwood@gmail.com

**PHOTOGRAPHS** If you would like your pilgrimage photos to be included on the website please can you email a selection of up to 30 (with the longest side of the image no greater than 1000 pixels) to rosjwood@gmail.com as soon as possible after the Pilgrimage finishes.

**FUTURE PILGRIMAGES:** 15th – 22nd July 2016

14th – 21st July 2017 (provisional)

### AMPLEFORTH LOURDES 2000 CLUB

For those not familiar with this club, it is rather like the lottery, with a third of all funds collected each month being allocated as prize money, divided into 5 prizes of descending value, the remainder of the funds are given to the pilgrimage to help with the costs. Anyone wishing to join can get an application form from Richard Reid or Michael Doherty. Michael's email address: m\_p\_doherty@talk21.com

### Editor's Note

This edition of the Ampleforth Hospitalité Newsletter includes a mixture of messages from our Spiritual Director, our Chairman and our Pilgrimage Director giving us some pre-Lourdes food for thought and some wonderful obituaries. Please may I thank all those who have taken time to contribute to the newsletter and finally, I am really looking forward to seeing many of you in Lourdes this July! Lucy Rowan-Robinson