



Ampleforth Hospitalité Our Lady of Lourdes



July 2016 Newsletter

Ampleforth Lourdes Pilgrimage 2016

Message from the Abbot

I look forward to seeing many of you in Lourdes in a few weeks' time. As we prepare for our Pilgrimage let us pray for one another – and I would ask for the prayers of those who are not able to join us this year.

We are blessed in having so many Pilgrims who are willing to take on roles of responsibility in the life of the Pilgrimage, and as some change roles I would like to take this opportunity to thank not only them but everyone who works so hard to make the Pilgrimage happen.

Since 2012, the Honorary Presidents of the Ampleforth Hospitalité have been Anne Tuomey and Dr Robert Blake-James. Following the sad death of Anne at home in Dublin last December Robert suggested that this was a timely moment for him to step down from his position; as he does so I would like to thank both him and Anne for the exemplary way in which they have carried out their honorary roles. After consultation, I have appointed in their place Dr Priscilla Noble-Mathews and Richard Murphy for a period of 3 years as the next Honorary Presidents of the Ampleforth Hospitalité.

At the end of our Pilgrimage next month, Fr Luke Beckett comes to the end of his second term of office as Spiritual Adviser to the Ampleforth Hospitalité. I have decided to re-appoint him to this role for a further term of 3 years.

As Mike Thoms finalises his hand-over as Director of the Ampleforth Hospitalité to Diana Williams, I want to take this opportunity to thank Mike for the enormous amount of time and effort he has put into being a very successful Director since his appointment in 2011 and I look forward to thanking him personally out in Lourdes during our Pilgrimage next month.

We come to Lourdes in the Year of Mercy, and it is my hope that this year we all both encounter the merciful face of Jesus and learn to show that face to our world.

With my prayers and all best wishes,

Cuthbert Madden OSB

Abbot of Ampleforth



Richard Murphy



Priscilla Noble-Mathews

The Chairman Writes



I should begin by congratulating Priscilla Noble-Mathews and Richard Murphy on their appointments by Fr Abbot as the two Honorary Presidents and also Fr Luke on his re-appointment by Fr Abbot as our Spiritual Adviser. I'm sure we all look forward to their participation in our forthcoming Pilgrimage, which will also mark the handover of the Directorship by Mike Thoms to Diana Williams.

We owe Mike a very great deal and I'm sure we look forward to maintaining a close relationship with him and the Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Pilgrimage into the future. I know Mike and Diana can be certain of the prayers and good wishes of us all, as can Nik Birkett, our new Chief Lady Handmaid replacing Diana.

I write this piece in mid-June looking out over the cloud-covered Pyrenees and hoping the weather will improve before our Pilgrimage arrives in Lourdes in less than 4 weeks' time.

The June Stage Group, organised so capably for the last 13 years by John and Fiona Dick, enjoyed rather better weather 10 days or so ago. That said, we had the heaviest storm I can ever recall on the Monday afternoon in the lead up to the spectacular conclusion to the Pilgrimage of the "Anciens Combattants" of the French forces, who fought in the Algerian and Indo-china campaigns. This is an enormous undertaking with this year's Pilgrimage having over 14,000 Pilgrims.

As well as all the obvious Lourdes ceremonies, they have outings and cultural events. Susan and I were invited to attend their Soiree Musicale on the Saturday evening, where a huge orchestra played in the Underground Basilica. The venue was packed out and the quality of the sound was quite amazing. It was very different to the Ampleforth Grotto Masses to which I invite my fellow HNDL Presidents, when our relatively small Pilgrimage is out in Lourdes. However I'm pleased to say it is always much enjoyed by them.

This year the Stage Group had 24 participants, several of whom were new. Regulars included Peter Swinden, making his Engagement with HNDL. He came with us on Pilgrimage as a New Hall parent some years ago. Once again Fr Luke kindly came out from Ampleforth to hear Confessions in the Sanctuary and said Daily Mass for the Group. The increase in size meant the time and location for this had to be formalised, but the 6.30pm Mass in St Patrick's Chapel retained its informality, while at the same time enabling other English-speakers to attend, whose service with HNDL clashes with the 9am English Mass.

At the end of a very successful week, John Dick organised a Dinner at the Palacio Restaurant, where we had two very convivial tables of 12 each. Jean Buscail, who has led the Airport team for HNDL, since before the first Ampleforth Pilgrimage flight in 1960, was able to join us

and in his short speech, John offered Jean our best wishes for his 75th Birthday later this month.

Jean was not the oldest person present as Dr Michael Kenworthy-Browne remains the English formateur for our Group, but he was joined in the Formation Service this year by Louise Marshall, having transferred from the Baths Service. So succession-planning in the Group looks to be alive and well!

Since I last wrote in December, there have been a number of deaths of our former Pilgrims and these are all listed by month on our Hospitalité website. I will pick out just two to comment on here.

Anne Tuomey first came on our Pilgrimage in 1967 and rose to the position of Head Nurse, which she held for over a decade. She was an obvious choice as an Honorary President of our Hospitalité in 2012, being much-loved by many of us – young and old. Her sudden death aged 88 following a fall during a Christmas Shopping trip into Central Dublin shocked us all. Unusually for Anne, it was so un-planned! She had told me at the Cité Secours last July that she would like to have one more year as an Honorary President of our Hospitalité and Fr Abbot and I readily agreed. However Anne took her sudden change of circumstances in her usually placid way. As her niece Siobhan told us at her Funeral on the Saturday morning before Christmas: "Auntie Anne simply announced that she would not be celebrating Christmas this year and on the Monday went into the Funeral Directors in the village of Clondalkin, where she lived, to pay for her Funeral. By the end of the week she had slipped away." May she rest in peace.

Then in February Abbot Patrick died at the age of 98. As Fr Patrick, he joined the Pilgrimage 3 times before becoming Headmaster and then Abbot. Although he had not been out for over half a century, he retained a great interest in the Pilgrimage and worked closely with one of my predecessors, Pat Gaynor, when it came to his appointment of Fr Martin's successor after his 35 years in post as Director. Fr Patrick was not one for small-talk and there was always the risk of a penetrating question. I remember telling him in 1987 that we had travelled to Medjugorje as a family, which I thought was a fairly harmless comment. Quick as a flash he was back: "Tell me Paul, how do you see the difference in the spirituality between Medjugorje and Lourdes?" Many members of the Hospitalité attended his Funeral in the Abbey Church and there were many stories exchanged about him over Lunch. May he rest in peace.

Earlier this month half the Ampleforth Lourdes Hospitalité Committee were in Lourdes on the June Stage. This enabled me to see at close quarters their hard work in making the final arrangements for the Pilgrimage. So I would like to close by thanking all the Committee for their service and I look forward to seeing them and many of you out in Lourdes next month.

Paul Williams - Chairman ALH

Lourdes Newsletter July 2016

As we prepare for our Pilgrimage this year we do so remembering that this has been proclaimed as a Year of Mercy by Pope Francis. One of the first things that we will do on the Pilgrimage (as we walk down to our Opening Mass) will be to walk through the Door of Mercy that the Sanctuary has created. As we walk through the doorway we will say the Apostles' Creed, proclaiming our faith in God and renewing our trust in his mercy. I hope that this will remind us that the whole week is marked in many ways by mercy. The most obvious way in which that is true is that in Lourdes we have the opportunity to receive God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There we encounter God's merciful forgiveness: the Pope invites us to reflect on the gospel stories in which people look on the face of Jesus and encounter in that face the mercy of God. Prayerfully reading the story of Zacchaeus could help as we prepare for confession, reminding us that Jesus comes to meet us as well, with the same message of welcome.

Mercy, however, is a wider theme. Pope Francis, when he launched the year of mercy, drew special attention to the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Perhaps we don't think about these so much today, but Lourdes is a good time to return to them. The corporal works of mercy of very obvious during our time of Pilgrimage: we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, care for the sick and welcome strangers several times a day (even if we do not visit the imprisoned very much); all these are important elements of our life during the Pilgrimage. The spiritual works of mercy are even less well known: to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to admonish the sinner, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive offences willingly, to comfort the afflicted and to pray for the living and the dead. If we reflect carefully on these, however, we can also see that the Pilgrimage offers us plenty of opportunities to show mercy to each other in these ways as well.

Why should we do this? The Pope's prayer for the year of mercy reminds us that the face of Jesus that people in the gospel encountered, freeing from their sins, has to be shown to our world by us. He wants people who look at us to see that face, to experience the loving mercy of God in our own faces. Appropriately, our Pilgrimage ends on the (newly-elevated) feast of St Mary Magdalene – who offers us both a great image of someone whose life was transformed by an encounter with the forgiving and loving gaze of Jesus, and who announced the news of the Resurrection to others. We pray that something of the same experience of transformation can be ours this year in Lourdes.

Whether you are preparing to join us, or can't come to Lourdes this year, please pray the prayer the Pope has given us for the Jubilee Year of Mercy, and remember the Pilgrimage in your prayer:

"Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him. Show us your face and we will be saved.

Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief. Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the gift of God!"

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.

You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with His anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor; proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen."

*Fr Luke Beckett OSB
Spiritual Advisor*



Farewell, but only au revoir!

As most of you now know, the time has come to pass on the reins of Pilgrimage Director to a younger better looking candidate, and I am so grateful that Diana Williams has agreed to take over from me and will organise our wonderful pilgrimage going forward.

It has been my great honour, over the past five years, to serve the Abbot and all of you as your pilgrimage director. There have been many blessings along the way, and I have also enjoyed serving in a variety of capacities on the ALHC (the organising committee) for the past 15 years. Before I step down though, I wanted to take this opportunity of thanking all of those people who have helped me along the way. The ALHC is a wonderful group of people who serve selflessly throughout the year to plan our wonderful week in Lourdes. Unlike many pilgrimages, we do not pay any member of the committee, and so it is all the more wonderful that so many are willing to serve in this way.

I would also like to thank the many silent pilgrims, who do so many things before and during our week to ease the burden of the organising committee. Without them, we would not be able to run a successful week in Lourdes.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you, for your love, your kindness, and your generosity in serving each other. Our pilgrimage is a wonderful family, and those of us who have been to Lourdes many times, have enjoyed a richness of gospel spirit that is hard to find in any other walk of life. With every blessing for the future, and prayers, especially for Diana, as we journey on our way to many more successful years enjoying each other's company in Lourdes.

Rev Mike Thoms



Preparing for our Pilgrimage.

Nik Birkett, our Chief Lady Handmaid, and I were very fortunate to be part of the large Ampleforth June Stage Group in Lourdes this year. We were delighted that Ros Wood, in her role as St Frai Counsellor, had arranged for us to serve on the Fourth Floor of the St Frai, with Sr. Therese Agnes, who is the Responsible for that floor. We were helping her to serve a full floor of Assisted Pilgrims. Our Pilgrimage will be on the Fourth Floor in the St Frai this year.

We had a lot of fun, as well as doing plenty of hard work. On our first evening duty, as a result of a tremendous thunderstorm, we washed up for the whole floor by hand. In amongst our daily service we also swept a lot of floors, washed many chairs and Nik cleaned all 27 of the noticeboards beside the room doors. We were very involved in preparing the floor for the next pilgrimage; a very useful experience.

On one day we found ourselves being drawn into a 'kitchen choir', and singing 'I the Lord of sea and sky' with Sr. Therese Agnes and the Assisted Pilgrims' chaplain, first in the 4th floor kitchen, and then we were invited into the Dining Room for a second performance, to the apparent delight of the full dining room! This was followed by a picnic lunch with all the nuns on the roof of the St Frai. We were also invited to walk beside the hospitality banner in the Blessed Sacrament Procession, following Peter Swinden's Engagement earlier in the week.

We are both so grateful to John and Fiona Dick for organising this annual June Stage, and to all the members of this year's Stage group for all their friendship and support. The week of Stage has given us both the opportunity to get to know parts of the St Frai that we do not normally see, and to get to know Sr. Therese Agnes, members of the Community, and several of the St Frai employees. We had such a happy time preparing for our Pilgrimage in July.

Diana Williams and Nik Birkett



Ampleforth Lourdes Helpers' Retreat 22nd - 24th April 2016



It was still almost dark in the Abbey church; the only light was the hint of dawn through the great pointed windows. A small group of us were waiting quietly in the north transept for the moment when we could join the monks in the choir stalls for Matins. In those few moments I felt the church suddenly radiant with the peaceful, powerful presence of God. It was a moment of pure gift.

In Lourdes, too, of course, there are sometimes moments of pure gift: and the Helpers' Retreat at Ampleforth is like a mini Lourdes, bringing its own joys and blessings. There is the special privilege of being able to share, for 48 hours, the Offices with the monks throughout the day. Five times, from 6am Matins to 8.15 Vespers, we can, if we wish, let the beautiful plainchant calm our minds and touch our souls.

Then we have a fascinating series of talks throughout the weekend. This year the theme was "The Year of Mercy": a beautiful topic in its own right, echoing the inspiration of Pope Francis and preparing us for Lourdes, where the same theme will guide our pilgrimage this year. Following the pattern of previous years, we had a different monk for each talk. What a stimulating and fascinating experience that was! Each monk bringing their own perspective, their own way of presenting the theme.

Fr Luke led the welcome & introduction, setting out for us the Corporal and Spiritual works of Mercy. Fr John then gave us a very practical explanation of the significance of the

Door of Mercy & the Plenary Indulgence that can be gained. How fortunate that both Ampleforth, and Lourdes itself, have Doors of Mercy, and we can take advantage of them. Fr Philip led us deeper into the theme, from contemplating the face of mercy in Christ, to showing mercy in our actions and particularly in relation to our own pilgrimage. Fr Hugh gave us three different perspectives, looking at Mercy from the Biblical, from the Scriptural and from the Monastic standpoints. Fr Henry, as always, delighted his audience with his unique blend of erudition and humour; starting with Adam and Eve and leading us on through the Sinai desert, with a mixture of biblical vision and accounts of his own escape from bandits. Finally, Fr Matthew took us on a very different journey of quiet prayer in the Spirit. What a wonderfully rich variety of spiritual nourishment we were given.

Over and above the spiritual nourishment, we have the joy of meeting old friends from the pilgrimage, or indeed making new friendships. There is a great sense of easy companionship and precious shared time, whether it is over an early morning cup of tea between Matins & Lauds, during the excellent meals served by the Ampleforth chef, or over a glass of wine at the end of the day.

The Helpers' Retreat, recharging our batteries as it does, is a 'must', whether as a foretaste of the pilgrimage to come, or as a precious alternative for those unable to go to Lourdes in July.

Rowan Blake-James



AMPLEFORTH LOURDES REUNION

AMPLEFORTH LOURDES REUNION took place on Saturday 12th March at Christ the King Church in South Chingford. It was a beautiful sunny day and over 40 of us gathered in the church where Father Luke celebrated Mass. We were fortunate to have Stephen Anderson playing the organ and Ros Wood masterminding the singing; always an uplifting way to start off our day together.

Ros Lynch had arranged everything superbly and our day ran smoothly without a hitch! We had so much delicious food and drink and I think we all realised it was 3 o'clock and we hadn't stopped talking. It is always a joy to see friends, both APs and helpers. Matteo Domeq had flown in from Brussels and both young and old so appreciated this time as you will see from the photos below. Thank you to all those who helped to make this such a happy day, roll on Lourdes in July!

Hospitalité Member



FUNDRAISING NEWS!



'SAVE THE DATE!' On Saturday 17th December 2016 Stephen Anderson, one of our helpers, is giving an organ recital at Christ the King Church, South Chingford E4 8SP. This is definitely one not to be missed. Ticketing information to be released nearer the time.

We also have an update on our initiative with www.easyfundraising.org.

So far we have raised £837.35 which is fantastic BUT, we could raise so much more if we had lots more supporters. For example, we know many of our pilgrims buy on-line from John Lewis and with one click of the button before you start you could ALL add to this total. All money raised goes towards funding our nurses, our APs and our chaplains. It will not cost you a penny! PLEASE HAVE A GO - it is such an easy way to fundraise.

Gaynor Townley - Fund Raising

Anne Tuomey Former Chief Nurse and Honorary President



Anne's sudden death came as a great shock.

We had been talking on the telephone two weeks earlier. She had had a fall but was recovering well from the wrist injury. We talked about the 2016 pilgrimage. She had agreed to stay on for a further year as Honorary President.

I first met Anne in 1979 as I was about to join Ampleforth Pilgrimage Nursing Group. Anne became chief nurse in 1975 and served until 1991. She was a highly professional nurse, exacting high standards of practice from the nursing team. Her task was not an easy one. Facilities in St. Frai were very basic to say the least. There was no nurses' station or medical room. All equipment and medical supplies were stored in trunks on the corridor outside the ward.

We had two doctors on the pilgrimage. Seymour Spencer, a Psychiatrist and Anthony Couldrey, an ENT Consultant. We were covered for any problems above the neck! The wards were cramped with up to 15 beds close together, no baths, just sinks and toilets. The hospital pilgrims were treated to a variety of blanket baths!

All through her term of service as chief nurse, Anne's sense of responsibility, care and compassion was accompanied by a great sense of humour.

There were many funny incidents especially with nurses straight from acute hospital backgrounds. The skills of compromise were soon learnt!

Over the years Anne and I became good friends. After she moved back to Dublin she stayed with me on the way each year on the way to and back from Lourdes. We enjoyed these occasions and the chance to reminisce over a glass of wine. It became very much part of our pilgrimage.

Anne's last role was as Honorary President, which she greatly enjoyed and performed with her usual dignity.

I am thankful for Anne's friendship and the happy memories of good times on pilgrimage.

AR DEISH DE GO RAIBH A ANAM DILIS

Ros Lynch

Donall Cunningham



Donall was a great friend of Joe and myself, having known him, his wife and his three boys for over 50 years. This being the case, my thoughts are quite personal as you can imagine.

Donall was a man of great faith, very generous and kind. He was a wonderful father and so proud of the achievements of his boys; always there for them with great guidance.

David Tate was one of his greatest friends. It was David and Donall, who all those years ago, persuaded me to go to Medjugorje, and I am eternally grateful to them both and will never forget their thoughtfulness.

The two of them together were such wonderful company, with a great sense of humour and yet always there for you when you were faced with any problem. Those Happy Lourdes days, with their room in the Saint Sacrement looking down the hill. Well behold you if you were noisy coming back late at night! They both believed they had the best hotel room going, until one day I and others took them to look at our much more palatial room and before you knew it they had booked our room for the following year! So many, many happy and wonderful moments.

We miss them both a lot. Donall's Thanksgiving Service at the Holy Redeemer with Father Edward, was very special. Donall's boys and their wives arranged it all beautifully, he would have been so proud!

Fiona Goodhart

NOTICE BOARD

POST PILGRIMAGE REUNION will take place on Thursday 15th September. Further details to follow.

NORTHERN REUNIONS will take place at Ampleforth Abbey on Sunday 2nd October 2016 and Sunday 19th March 2017. You are invited to join the community for 10 o'clock Mass, followed by a talk, discussion and lunch.

EASTER REUNION will be held on Saturday 11th March 2017 at Christ the King Church, South Chingford, London E4 8SP.

RETREAT in 2017 will be held from Friday 21st to Sunday 23rd April at the Grange, Ampleforth. Further details will be available nearer the time.

ASSISTED PILGRIMS FOR 2017. If anyone knows someone who would like to come to Lourdes with us in 2017 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: 14th – 21st July 2017
Save the date now and please pass it on to those who have been unable to come this year!

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

Please may I thank all those who have taken time to contribute to the newsletter, especially kind as many are up to their eyes preparing for our week in Lourdes! I look forward to seeing many of you there in a few weeks.

Lucy Rowan-Robinson