

ParishQuarterly

O u r L a d y & A l l S a i n t s C a t h o l i c C h u r c h , O t l e y

www.olasotley.org

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*Growth in holiness
is a journey in community,
side by side with others - Pope Francis*

A Call To Holiness

The most recent Letter from Pope Francis is subtitled "The Call to Holiness". Early on this quote from Pope Francis appears **"We are all called to be holy by living our lives in love"**, and he refers to **"a holiness found in those living in our midst"**.

Like many people I find the word "holiness" not an easy one to handle. It feels like a word from the past, one that's difficult to place in our lives today. But I see the real connection with what the Pope refers to as "holiness" and what most of us would regard as those we have known who have lived, and are living, really good lives. Those we have regarded as "good" people. And I'm sure we have all met such people.

Some years ago when I belonged to the St Vincent de Paul Society, part of our work was helping out at St George's Crypt in Leeds. Many of the homeless there had mental health issues, some struggling with alcoholism, and a number were extremely aggressive. The Warden was Reverend Don Paterson, who was probably the nearest to a saint that many people would

have encountered. The following was said of him:

"Don's brand of Christianity was not of the contemplative school. His was the "roll-up-your-sleeves" variety. Where there was poverty, suffering, loneliness or failure he saw a person, not an abstract social problem, and he believed in offering dignity and hope in practical ways".

I watched him bring all of those things to some very difficult situations: he was never anything but compassionate and caring and so clearly shared Christ's love with others.

Many Parishioners are supporters of Sylvia Wright who received her vocation over 35 years ago, sold up everything she owned . . . her house, her car . . . literally everything, and began bringing medical aid to some of the poorest of the poor in South India.



Now aged over 80, Sylvia is still involved with the running of a hospital, she manages a school for profoundly deaf children, a purpose-built therapy centre for severely disabled children, and a nursing college. She would not regard herself as being "called to holiness", but it's difficult to imagine that Sylvia is not a good example of what Pope Francis is urging us all to become.

There are so many in our Parish today whose lives are marked by "goodness", but rather than embarrass anyone alive today, I'll mention Gerard Brennan who died nearly 30 years ago. Our more elderly Parishioners will surely remember Gerard for his constant kindness and good humour. Even when he was far from well himself, he would always be looking after other people, visiting and running errands for them, and always with that infectious joy of the Holy Spirit that seem never to leave him. Pope Francis recently said, **"We all share the responsibility to sanctify each other and care for each other"**. Gerard was just one whose life exemplified that sharing here among us.

Joe McGuinness

Reflections on “Ordinary Time”

I am writing this piece during what the Church calls Ordinary Time i.e. the period between Trinity Sunday and Advent. In my view this time should be anything but ordinary as we have to deal with the aftermath of Easter, the Ascension, Pentecost and contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity revealed by these events.

I'd like to take us back therefore to the scene described by Luke (Acts 2:1-11) where the Disciples are gathered in a room, afraid to emerge into a hostile world with little inkling of what awaited them. It is recorded that the first Christians spent much time in prayer and possibly they would be

praying Psalm 104 among others, which is the Responsorial for Pentecost. The response is “Send forth your Spirit O Lord and renew the face of the earth”. It would not be hard to imagine that it was at that moment that the Holy Spirit broke in on them.

Luke wants us to understand that the group were suddenly set on fire with their message. They received the gift of tongues which enabled the hearers to hear the message in their own language. They were impelled to proclaim, without fear, the message that Jesus was the Good News of salvation. They were able to communicate their message of faith,

hope and love to all who were prepared to listen. Life would never be the same again!

I have just been reflecting that maybe it would be helpful if, instead of consigning the considerable part of the Church's year between Pentecost and Advent to the anonymity of “Ordinary Time”, we called it something like “Pentecost Tide” or “Extraordinary Time”. Perhaps it might help us to keep the Holy Spirit in our thoughts during the long haul up to the end of the Church's year and the start of Advent.

What do you think?

Frank Bowe

Book Review

“Places of Pilgrimage” Ian Scott Massie

This beautiful book will surprise and delight any reader. The Places of Pilgrimage are not the usual Lourdes, Fatima or any other Marian shrine. These are places in the UK that mean something to the average traveller. And each page contains a brief description of the location accompanied by a watercolour painting.

I first opened the book at page 158, Masham. The short reading has the author recounting driving from Durham in the 1970's as he had heard of the local brewery there making a new cider. From the A1 he switched to country lanes before arriving on the edge of Wensleydale. “When I saw the market place it was love

at first sight”. His colourful painting of Masham Church and spire seems to suggest something magical. And that is the essence of this book. We can all find something special wherever we travel, places that have a special meaning to us.

There are the more familiar



“pilgrimage” places such as Lindisfarne and Canterbury, but for many Abbey Road Studios draws them like a magnet as they arrive in their thousands to capture something all over again of Beatlemania. For those devotees of History would find their own piece of Heaven perhaps in Runnymede. The author is inspired by the experience of visiting the site of the Magna Carta signing which is alongside a memorial to John F. Kennedy. He writes “Both speak, in their inscriptions, of Liberty. Somehow it seems to make sense in this lovely spot”.

If there is a searching for a “spiritual home” in all of us, then it may be well served in this very different, very readable, and very beautifully illustrated book.

Joe McGuinness

Great Love



The Salvation Army – an international Christian movement currently at work in 130 countries in the world – has worked and witnessed to extend the Kingdom of God's love for 153 years.

Its main features are

- a message based on the Bible;
- a motivation based on the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ;
- a Christian mission based on a simple, passionate belief that faith demands expression in action as well as words.
- a programme of practical help for people in need; to defend the vulnerable and abused in society and to fight against injustice.

The Salvation Army's work reflects the needs of the people and communities in each of the countries where it works. In the UK it is involved, among many things, in helping folks affected by homelessness, addictions, domestic abuse and modern-day slavery.

Overseas it helps communities with practical every day needs, which are not provided by any other organisation there; such as

- the provision of medical services at the 144 - bed Howard Hospital in Zimbabwe
- the continuing provision of recovery from the 2017 hurricanes in the Caribbean
- the international emergency services help communities recover from natural disasters – such as rebuilding homes destroyed by the monsoon rains in Bangladesh in 2017.

The Salvation Army is an established Christian Church and is a member of Churches Together in England. The good relations between all the main Christian churches at national, regional and local level lead to regular combined initiatives between each other. One distinctive example, of such co-operation in Otley, is the monthly prayer breakfast held on the first Saturday of each month. A different venue is used each month – giving each member church the opportunity to host it. These breakfasts provide an opportunity of sharing prayer and

worship with folks who normally pray and worship, in their own distinctive denominational liturgy. As all who attend are God's children and recognise that in each other, the times of shared prayer and worship provide a unique experience of blessings and God's love for the ongoing journey of faith.

Similar interdenominational blessings were experienced (and continue to be felt) throughout Lower Wharfedale this year in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the raising of the Chevin Cross.

Within the North Yorkshire division of the Salvation Army there are some distinctive programmes of practical help –

- a prison chaplain visits three HMI prisons – including Wetherby Young Offenders Institution
- there are permanent SA personnel at both Catterick Garrison and the Infantry Training Centre there
- a community worker (based in Immanuel School) oversees a Christian project in Bradford schools
- the G21 project (God in the 21st Century) which can be accessed at www.GodCan.org.uk

Wes Kennedy, Salvation Army

Medjugorje: “Between the hills”

Medjugorje is a village nestling in the hills

“Since 1981, in a small village nestling in the hills, called Medjugorje, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Our Blessed Lady has been appearing and giving messages to the world, including these years she is spending with us are a time of special grace granted by God. In Her own words Mary tells us, “I have come to tell the world that God exists. He is the fullness of life, and to enjoy this fullness and peace, you must return to God”.

Medjugorje has been my haven, my sanctuary, for peace, reflection, adoration and worship since the late 1980’s. I believe it to be a conduit for conversion, reconciliation and love of our Lord.

Real or Fake? - the same question was asked of Jesus, of the little children in Fatima and of St Bernadette in Lourdes. To our family there is a much greater reality to Medjugorje than a lot of what is going on around us in today’s “modern world”.

Pope John Paul II is known to have said to Mirjana, one of the visionaries:

‘If I were not Pope, I would have been in Medjugorje a long time ago. I know everything, I have been following everything. Ask pilgrims to pray for my intentions. And take good care of Medjugorje because Medjugorje is the hope for the entire world...’ ”

To have witnessed conversions, healings, renewal of faith and THE deepest sense and feeling of overwhelming peace in what is, for me, THE most special place on earth, makes me feel truly blessed.



“I would recommend that everyone make this pilgrimage at least once in their lives - because it’s absolutely worth it” - a quote from an American lady who travelled with our group pilgrimage from St Roberts Church in Harrogate to Medjugorje last year. It sums up my own feelings and I pray each day that more people can share this most special, holy, beautiful and peaceful of places with us. Just to be there and witness and share with thousands of people in total silence Adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament on the outside altar by St James Church on a starlit night, is on its own worth the trip!

Medjugorje is my second home. Every visit is unique. My love for Jesus and Our Lady is strengthened. My desire to live Our Lady’s messages is renewed. The Holy Mass becomes the highlight of my day. Swimming in the waterfalls, sitting on top of the mountains enjoying God’s beautiful scenery and wildlife in the warmth of the sun, and receiving God’s blessings and graces are a bonus! I pray I can return as soon as possible!

We always travel as a group with Aglow Pilgrimages (www.aglowpilgrimages.com - next year’s dates are 8th to 15th June) - all are welcome to join us although places are limited. We do also have plenty of fun and laughter, a few drinks, good food, good company, fellowship and companionship along the way - many a new friendship has formed on these most special of trips. There is a lovely short video clip of one of our trips that you can watch online at:



www.aglowpilgrimages.com/medjugorje-pilgrimages

Katherine and Richard Baylis

Mayors of Otley

What is it about Otley? For five out of the last eight years, the Town Mayor has been a Catholic. Indeed, Nigel Francis has served for four years, Ray Smith for a year and the current Town Mayor, **Mary Vickers**, recently started her second year in office. What does she think?

"I think that's a really good thing, I'm proud of that. And other mayors recently have come from the wider Christian Community here in Otley too. It has an impact. People know you are a Catholic. All of our annual Civic Services have been at Mass here in Our Lady and All Saints. We bring in other Mayors from all over Yorkshire, from as far as Wakefield and beyond, so people see our Catholic ethos of understanding of - and caring for - the community.

As the First Citizen of the town, being Mayor is a big responsibility as well as a great privilege. As Nigel did before me, I shall aim to represent the town, work with the people of the Town, local businesses, schools, market folk and others. I have to listen to what they want and work out what I can do to help. I represent the people and try to use the influence I have as Town Mayor, help to promote tourism, be a host for dignitaries and other visitors to the town." This year, my chosen charities are both Otley based: local community groups who are part of our Town. Being Mayor enables you to help raise funds for needy causes and I am delighted to be able to contribute to the caring nature of the town I love so much.

Mary Vickers



In May 2017 **Nigel Francis** became Mayor of Otley for a record fourth time. Since handing over to Mary I have often thought about the occasions when I have been asked the question "What does it mean to me as a Catholic to be the Mayor of Otley?" The most important thing is to be impartial, to work for the good of Otley and all its people. You have to balance your own personal beliefs and practice so as not offend anyone. I have always shown respect to other churches, faith groups, and political parties, When you wear the Badge of Office as Mayor you represent everyone in the town of Otley irrespective of their religious beliefs. You have the opportunity to be a witness to your own Christian beliefs by showing due respect and



impartiality in all matters.

Why take on the role of Mayor for a fourth time? As Mayor of Otley I was particularly keen to raise money for various groups and charities, as well as to unite Otley and promote it in the local area. To be Mayor a record number of times is something no-one can take away. It's an honour money can't buy. I have endured a number of personal challenges in my life over the years, even from school days, and I am extremely proud to have been Mayor of Otley, helping to raise thousands of pounds for a wide range of good causes and of making a difference to so many people's lives.

Nigel Francis

See Parish website for more.

Pat Wiley at 80

More than 50 friends recently joined Pat in the Parish Centre for a very enjoyable celebration of her 80th birthday when she thanked all those who had helped to support her in times past, particularly since losing her husband Ivor six years ago. Pat has been a flower arranger at church since coming to the Parish 30 years ago. She was just 15 when she began work on a flower stall in Bradford market. From there she moved to Strikes Nurseries and then to a high class florists, developing her floristry and flower arranging skills, leading to her exhibiting at the Chelsea Flower Show.

Pat studied flower arranging at Shipley College and began demonstrating to various local groups. She later returned to Shipley College to teach floristry and progressed to a Diploma in Floristry after 3 more years study. Over 25 years of teaching, lots of her students have benefitted from her experience and the thought that those skills are probably now being demonstrated across Yorkshire and beyond by her past students gives Pat a great deal of satisfaction.

One of the highlights in Pat's life was meeting the Queen at Westminster Cathedral where Pat had been invited to arrange flowers for the high altar. Quite an honour! An even greater pleasure was first meeting her beloved late-husband Ivor, quite fittingly, at the RHS gardens at Harlow Carr. Pat does not describe herself as someone who prays in the traditional sense of the word, but rather



gives thanks to God for the gift He has given her by creating beautiful arrangements for the Sanctuary. For her, the flowers in some way transmit to people her own feelings of love and care and peace. "Flowers feed me" she says modestly, adding "working with the freshness and the colours of flowers is more than handling God's creation, it's almost like praying". She is aware that for so many people, particularly at funerals, there is a therapy in being comforted by fresh flowers. And for more joyous occasions such as weddings, Pat says that "flowers, and especially the colours chosen by the bride, play a really important part in the service and really do add to the specialness of the wedding ceremony". It seems for Pat Wiley flower arranging is not simply part of her life: it's also a part of who she is.

Joe McGuinness

More volunteers are required to help arrange the flowers in church: training will be given.

THERE IS
ALWAYS
TIME FOR
TEA & CAKE

www.olasotley.org/parishcentre

Baptisms

Arthur Talpade
Sophie Gawrylo
Henry Woods

Sugar Ray Leonard Price

Georgia Garnett
Arthur Stringwell

Weddings

Matthew Wright & Laura Davies
Richard Cooks & Laura Fletcher
Jonathan de Bono & Rebecca Dodd

Recently Deceased

Beryl Bower
Clifford Smith
Maureen Hutchinson
John Swale
Ron Diffey
Stephen Bochonek
Kevin Smith
Gladys Jordan
Mollie Canning
Eric Wallace
John Booker

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May they rest in peace. Amen*