

St Cecilia's Abbey, Ryde Chronicle



St Cecilia's Abbey, RYDE,
Isle of Wight, PO33 1LH
Registered Charity 1088086

Abbey website: www.stceciliasabbey.org.uk

Calligraphy website: abbeyscribes.org.uk



01983 562602 Fax: 01983 614003

email: abbey@stceciliasabbey.org.uk

Retreats: garth@stceciliasabbey.org.uk

Altar Breads : hosts@stceciliasabbey.org.uk

Printery: printery@stceciliasabbey.org.uk

Sung Mass & the full Divine Office every day.

Usual times of principal celebrations:

MASS : 10.00 a.m. Sundays & Solemnities

9.30 a.m. Weekdays

VESPERS: 5.00 p.m.

COMPLINE: 8.00 p.m.

HOLY WEEK 2021

1st April, Maundy Thursday: Missa Vespertina: 5.00 p.m.

2nd April, Good Friday: Actio Liturgica: 3.00 p.m.

3rd April, Holy Saturday: Paschal Vigil: 10.45 p.m. (please check)

4th April, Easter Sunday Mass 10.00 a.m.

2021 Ascension Day: Thursday 13th May, Mass 10.00 a.m.

Corpus Christi: Thursday 3rd June, Mass 10.00 a.m.

Feast of the Sacred Heart: Friday 11th June, Mass 10.00 a.m.

Front Cover: Sacred vessels used in our church. The pandemic has given us a heightened appreciation of the privilege of daily Mass and the responsibility of praying for those who do not have access to the Sacraments.

Back Cover: Illuminated Gospel used at Vigils on the Feast of St Joseph.

From Mother Abbess

In 2 Timothy 2:13 there is a remarkable statement about the fidelity of Christ: even ‘if we are unfaithful, he still remains faithful, for he is not able to deny himself.’ Human failure cannot block this promise; it comes from God’s design and gift. He keeps His word to man; man breaks his own word continually, yet, in giving signs of repentance and conversion, ‘the broken word becomes whole again’ (Von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord* vol. 6, *Theology: The Old Covenant*). Then man finds that God has been waiting for him; He has, in fact, never gone away.



The divine remedy for man’s recurring infidelity is foreshadowed in the book of Isaiah, in the Suffering Servant who prefigures the perfectly faithful witness, Jesus Christ. Christ is the living proof that human infidelity is not irredeemable, that through Him God works with the flawed human nature which is ours since the Fall. In today’s idiom, He takes us as we are. If we do not barricade ourselves against grace, if we take the extended hand of Christ in the midst of our weakness, we can rely on His fidelity.

In the pages of the Gospel, we see Jesus taking people of good will as they are. The Apostles, for example, are limited in their understanding and unexceptional in their human failings. Christ even selects Judas to be among the Twelve, despite knowing his potential for evil. Yet Christ reveals to them the truth about His Person, explains His parables, gives them the power of binding and loosing and the mission to preach the good news to the whole world. In a word, He trusts them. He even reinstates the over-confident Peter, whose human resources imploded at the first test, as the Rock on which He would build His Church. He endows him, therefore, with the firmness, solidity and faithfulness of God Himself.

What saving grace did he and the other imperfect characters of the Gospels have in common? Peter supplies the answer. When Jesus asks him if he loved Him more than these, Peter replies: ‘Yes, Lord, you know I love you.’ Three times. Then, ‘feed my sheep’. These personalities all loved Jesus without fear and He never failed their confidence. Does this mean that He glosses over faults? No, but the faithfulness of God encompasses our fallibility; He can transform it beyond recognition. Many of the Apostles will die for Jesus – Peter, says tradition, upside down on a cross. Greater love has no man.

Faithfulness is a gift from God, exemplified fully by Our Lady, who stood by the cross of Christ. *Stabat Mater*. Recipients of this gift, this bond of fidelity between God and the soul, we for our part are expected to show loyalty to others. Sometimes, they let us down; but if people change, sometimes through old age and illness, our

fidelity to them, does not. 'Love is not love / Which alters when it alteration finds' (Shakespeare, Sonnet 116).

Fidelity is proved by remaining. The travellers to Emmaus asked Jesus to remain with them, even before they knew His identity. *Mane nobiscum*. And He does remain. Along with the Father and the Holy Spirit, He makes His home in hearts open to receive Him. A home is no transitory lodging, and there He will stay, for He cannot deny His love for us.

Peace and paschal joy,

Sr. Ninian

Easter Night

This night's work? Your sacred mysteries, our pure prayer,
simple pleas and hands held high to heaven
in Your praise, Father, and Your Son's...
That He may be our theme the whole night through,
we bring bright fire before Your holy altar.
Surrounded by a ring of countless robes, the moulding wax
(wax, honey's home) contains its water-bred wick.
All the crowd of worshippers now, too, dilutes the dark
with multi-form light; each flaxen shred
bursts to life, the motley crew's aglow as one,
so as the holy mysteries progress
the tapers in their watch rival the fiery stars.
O Son, not differing in nature from Your Father:
shining with greatest light, for You this night
blazes in all the earth, bright night brighter than day.
No nation's so held fast by northern snow,
oppressed to sluggishness by perduring wintry chill,
but that it sees You now, O Christ, as Light.

'countless robes' - presumably the ministers in the sanctuary, unless he is looking ahead to the neophytes' white robes. 'water-bred wick': aequoreus papyrus - candle wicks were among the many products made from reeds. 'each flaxen shred...': ubertat stupas, fervet discordia concors, literally 'it [the crowd] makes the tow/flax fruitful; a harmonious disharmony boils hot' - I am guessing that 'tow' was also a material for wicks or spills, but have not been able to confirm this; one could interpret the 'harmonious disharmony' in many ways, if not with reference to the varied crowd being united by the candles they hold, then perhaps to the several meetings of opposites evoked in the Exsultet.

from De cereo paschali by Drepanius Florus, PL 61.1088. Sr MTB

*Homily by Abbot Xavier Perrin of Quarr
Feast of Saint Scholastica 2021*

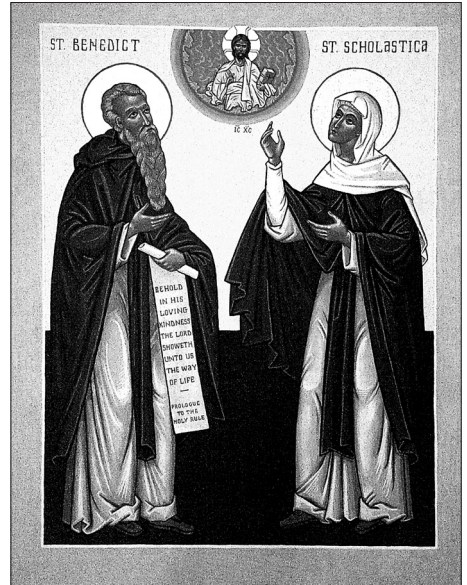
On the fifth day, God created ‘every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind’ (Gen 1:21). God blessed them and charged them to multiply. God loves birds, and Jesus tells us that not a single sparrow ‘will fall to the ground without [the] Father’s will’ (Mt 10:29).

Two kinds of birds have been most especially associated with the Benedictine family: ravens and doves.

Ravens are independent, long-lived, and clever birds which, according to the Gospel, are the objects of God’s special care: ‘Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them’ (Lk 12:24). In his youth at Subiaco, St Benedict emulated God’s merciful care by feeding a raven with what was left from his spartan regime. He, too, was very conscious that he was fed by our Father in heaven, even to the point of being able to feed others. In memory of this, ravens were kept at Subiaco till not so long ago. The animals are no longer there, but there still exists a ‘Cortile dei Corvi’ or ‘Raven’s Courtyard’.

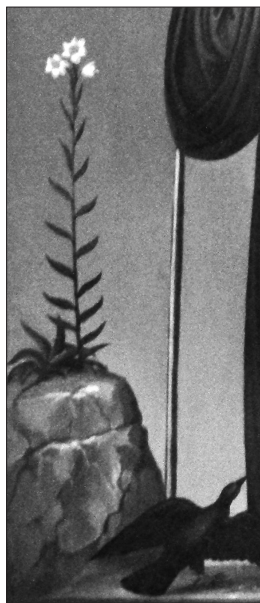
How could we not be reminded of the very first bird which was sent out of the ark after the deluge? ‘At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made and sent forth a raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the face of the ground’ (Gen 9:6-7). Ravens are among the very rare animals able to report on something which happened in another place. This is probably why Noah chose to send this symbol of vigilance and keen observation, as well as of faithful reporting.

After the raven, Noah ‘sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground’. A first time, the dove came back and Noah ‘put his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him’. But after seven days, he sent her out again. The ‘dove came back to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth a freshly plucked olive leaf’ (cf. Gen 9:6-12). This was the sign of new life appearing on earth after the waters of death had done their purifying work. As we know, St Scholastica is associated with the dove, since she appeared to her brother as a dove ascending to heaven at the time of her death.



The raven and the dove have thus become fitting symbols of our Benedictine monasticism.

On the one hand, you have the raven. In its black suit and with its rugged voice, it is the clever, methodical, and persevering servant, patiently waiting for the waters to dry up. It is a creature of the night, or of the end of the night. It does not rejoice before the time has come. It keeps the mourning attitude of the one who knows that God's justice must first bring its work to completion. You cannot have Easter morning without going through Good Friday and Holy Saturday. You cannot be called a saint before you have become one. You had better, dear Brother, dear Sister, climb the descending ladder of humility, with its degrees of virtue, conversion, and observance. Follow the Rule and do not think too soon that you can free yourself of its yoke. Rather, submit yourself in obedience to your Abbot, follow the examples of your seniors and the common rule of the monastery.



The dove, on the other hand, speaks of hope. It goes out, in perfect obedience, and comes back, in irreproachable submission. But, with its white robe and its musical voice, it belongs to the day. It anticipates the morning. It lives for Sunday, for the light and for the resurrection. It brings back home the sign of life and breathes the Benedictine Pax. It is a bird of desire, of aspiration, and of loving longing. It has found the light and discovered the source of joy; it is given more, because it loves more. Dear Brother, dear Sister, live, you too, for the Lord and His victory. Be a man, a woman, of the morning and the light. Follow the desire of your heart and answer the voice which is calling you: 'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo the winter is passed. O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet and your face is comely' (cf. Song of Songs 2:10-14).

There was a certain day when St Benedict wanted to be a good, serious raven whereas St Scholastica felt in her heart the great desires of a dove. And God agreed with her. There was another day when St Scholastica made it to heaven as a dove. St Benedict, on that day, ascended with her in desire. As a good raven, he did not forget that their bodies had first to descend in the tomb. But he had no doubt, now, that he, too, was called to the freedom and the audacity of the loving dove.

The monastic tradition has clothed us all in black, so that we might not forget our raven-like vocation. But this does not forbid us to aim at the freedom of the dove. *Nigra sum*, I am black like the raven, *sed formosa*, but beautiful like the dove, because the Son of God 'loved me and gave himself up for me'. This is why I hold nothing dearer to me than Christ, the Lord of the doves, of the ravens, and of all sorts of other strange birds.

St Joseph, Monk
Chapter Talk

This talk is entitled, 'St. Joseph, monk', as, partly with the help of the Liturgy of the Feast, I intend to try and show that Joseph possessed many traditional monastic virtues.

Joseph is called. He is given a task in life. He was not consulted, in one sense. The hand of God formed him for his role and then tapped him on the shoulder. St. Bernard puts him on a pinnacle in saying : 'He was God's sole and most faithful collaborator in his great plan on earth.'¹ St. Augustine, in his turn, is at pains to show us that his role is inseparable from Mary's. 'That which the Holy Spirit accomplished, He did for both...together.'² Joseph, then, is called to play a unique and essential part in God's design for man's salvation and called along with the Blessed Virgin in a parentage that for both was out of the normal run. In our small way, we are likewise invited and even summoned to play our part in God's plan, to fulfil our task and our mission, and to fulfil it along with the others whom God gives us.

Although Joseph says nothing, his actions or rather his promptness in action show us the absoluteness of his commitment and devotion to his task. Hidden behind each genuine task lies, in the first instance, 'a human being or human beings for whose sake and profit I must take care of the task. At any rate, my real task will always be a human being with his or her demands, expectations and needs.'³ Joseph's task, his immediate task, was to care for Jesus and Mary, to provide for and protect them, to take responsibility for them. These were the persons 'hidden behind' his daily, no doubt, unexciting tasks. The parallel with our own lives is evident. Our work, our activity, are always oriented towards the other, towards the community.

But of course one must go further. God's call is enshrined in or behind the task in hand, however lowly. There is a suggestion of this in the short lesson at Vespers on Wednesdays in Lent: 'Whatever your task, work heartily as serving the Lord... knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ' (Col. 3:23-24). Tasks come and go, however important; our capacity to work at specific tasks waxes and wanes with the years; but the claim God lays on our life does not pass away. In and beyond all the tasks, there is a total claim on us for total commitment. As Fr Henrici observes: 'The destiny of the human being and the meaning of human life can ultimately exist only in this: that he or she is claimed by Someone greater and is thus made to transcend the self in love.' This is as true for lay people as for religious. In consequence, we can no longer speak of life's lack of meaning, even when the time for important tasks has passed.

No one can doubt Joseph's complete receptivity to God's claim on his life. He was wholly offered, wholly given. Thus God was able to act in him and through him.

1 Vigils lesson taken from *Sermons in Praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, 2.16.

2 Sermon 51, also read at Vigils on St Joseph's feast.

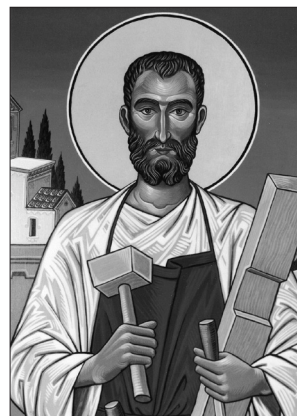
3 Fr Peter Henrici, 'The destiny and determination of human existence', *Communio* 17 (1990), p.307.

He could be Himself in Joseph. This is another definition of humility and, of course, of obedience. There is in Joseph a filial heart, which makes him the great obeyer, the perfect son. On the testimony of a dream, which he recognises as coming from God, not from his own subconscious, he takes Mary to wife; he changes domicile; he accepts anonymity in service; he practises the respected trade of carpenter, but he cuts no dash. He disappears from the pages of the Gospel, having said not a single word, his task completed. Yet being the perfect son or disciple, he is, thereby especially suited to be father. Knowing how to obey, he knows, as a result, how to be in charge, to be guardian. In Joseph, God can be Father to His own Son.

Connected with this unfailing obedience to the one God and Father there is in Joseph a *stabilitas*. He does not move around much, except at a higher command than his own wishes. But his true stability lies in his fidelity to Jesus and Mary. Just as we saw that, behind each task, there is a human being or beings for whom the task is undertaken, so the heart of stability is faithful love towards the people God gives to us to live with and to care for. Ultimately, this faithful love is directed towards God Himself.

Joseph is a man of unshakeable faith in God. He believes implicitly all that comes to him through the angels of his dreams. There is no indication that he ever doubted. If there is implied perplexity over Mary's condition in St. Matthew's Gospel, it is allayed immediately by the divine word of encouragement, to which he responds forthwith. St. Benedict's monk, 'clothed with faith and the performance of good works' (Prologue to the Rule), is a good image of St. Joseph. It may be noted also that we always speak of St. Joseph in connection with the Holy Family, which is his community, so to speak. He is a community man. We might think he had it easy, living with the Incarnate Son of God and His Immaculate Mother. But we forget that difficulties in community life are not all sins; some problems are nobody's fault. Even the Holy Family must have experienced difficulties, even misunderstandings. There was certainly some tension about, when Jesus went missing for three days. Joseph doesn't remonstrate, but Mary does, and makes specific reference to their anxiety. It was legitimate – and it occurred in the perfect community. In passing, we observe that it was resolved by the mutual encounter in the Father's house. It is in prayer, common prayer, too, that reconciliations are forged, that we are enabled to look beyond present anxieties to the overarching design of the Father. The Lord is still always pointing to that: 'Did you not know...?'

Mary speaks for Joseph. Perhaps he understood that she had more right to speak than he had. Again, since the Word of God lived under his roof, it was more fitting to keep silent in that Presence, before that Word. His task was to be guardian, watcher; being articulate was not on the job description. Yet his task is all important. It is



to keep Jesus hidden from the world before the moment of His Baptism and self-revelation. If John the Baptist is a voice crying in the desert, Joseph is like the pillar of cloud going before the community of Israelites in the desert; but, says Paul Claudel, sheltering under this cloud are the two ‘pauvres’ who are going to change the face of the world. Their protector needed much strength and Joseph’s silence is also his strength; ‘in silence and in hope shall your strength be’ (Is 30:15, Douay). He does not dissipate his strength by words of complaint or idleness or even, as St. Benedict will say (RB6), in good and holy talk. As Pope St John Paul II says, ‘The Gospels allow us to discover in his actions – shrouded in silence as they are – an aura of deep contemplation.’

It might be said that there is a link between Joseph’s silence and his chastity. We cannot imagine that his silence of words was accompanied by a lack of interior silence. No, his heart was also silent, abstaining from the noise and jangle of desires. One knows somehow that his heart was unified in one single desire, therefore at peace and filled with the Quiet of God. Chastity is silence of the heart.

And God gives His secrets to the quiet heart. St. Bernard says that ‘the Lord found him to be a man after His heart, one to whom He could safely entrust the most hidden secrets of His own inmost being... God made known to him the obscure and correct meanings of His wisdom and granted that he should not be ignorant of the mystery which was unknown to any prince of this world.’ We have seen in Joseph many of the monastic virtues: he is, if you recall, obedient, humble, faithful in stability, chaste and silent, living in community, diligent at work, filled with faith and trust, responsive to his vocation. In the text from Bernard, we see him also occupied with divine things, an occupation which we call by the names of prayer, contemplation and sacred reading. As well as God’s Son, he is God’s friend, a man after His own heart, *particeps caelestium sacramentorum*, one who shares in heavenly mysteries. Joseph reads in God’s heart with unique insight. He is the *beatus vir*, the blessed man.

He must have felt himself blessedly happy, because uniquely privileged, not only by the gift but also by the task of being Christ’s foster-father. ‘Mary gave him a son,’ says St. Augustine, ‘words which confirm Joseph’s fatherhood, not according to nature but by charity. It is in this manner that he is father... by tender affection there was born to Joseph from the Virgin Mary a Son who was also the Son of God.’ Jesus is truly Joseph’s son in the order of charity. This reminds us of the Lord’s words which refer to us all. ‘Whoever does the will of God’ – or in Luke, ‘who hear the word of God and do it... are my brother and sister and mother’ (Mt 3:34). Doing His will, practising His word, is the heart of charity and prepares the ground for Christ’s birth and growth in the soul. Then we shall share with St. Joseph in the work of *custodia*. We too, as in the Collect for St Joseph’s feast, nurture tiny beginnings of the mystery of salvation in our own hearts and lives and community. St. Joseph was *custos Ecclesiae*, guardian of the Church, in his guardianship of Jesus and Mary, and we can confidently affirm that so he remains. By the practice of our simple monastic programme, we can become like him and share in the growth and upbuilding of the Church.

The History of Appley House: Part 5: *The National Hero*

On 2nd April, 1794, in the cabin of HMS *Queen*, moored in the Solent, Captain John Hutt was writing his will. He had come down to Portsmouth, sharing a chaise with Captain John Harvey of HMS *Brunswick*, and the two experienced naval men knew that their next job could well be their last. They had been summoned to join a fleet being assembled by Admiral Lord Howe in the war against Revolutionary France. Bad harvests had caused serious food shortages in France; its Government had organised a large convoy of supplies to sail from America; the French fleet was going to meet the convoy to conduct it safely to France; the Royal Navy were going out to tackle the French fleet. There is a note of sincerity in the preamble to the will: 'Like all mortals uncertain of the next hour ... relying on the mercy of my Creator to forgive innumerable sins and weaknesses, in trust that my soul through the Almighty's clemency may be received amongst the just and virtuous.'

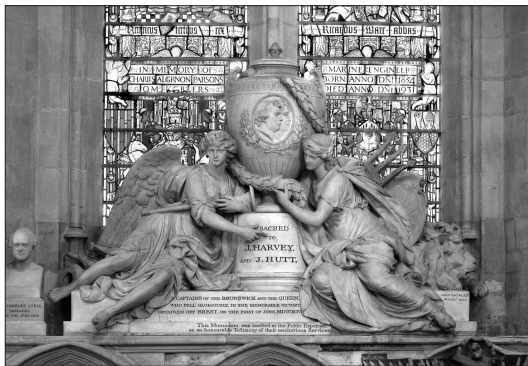
One who served under Hutt described him as 'one of the strictest Officers in the Navy, an excellent sailor, and woe betide those that were slack in carrying on the duty. He had a stern look, with a penetrating eye that would pierce through those whom he questioned.'¹ Another witness, however, wrote of his kindness and practical help after a bereavement.² Hutt was the cousin of Mrs Betty Ann Walker of Appley House, and her chosen heir. We do not know if he had time to visit the Walkers before he joined his ship on this occasion but he showed his esteem for them by appointing them executors along with his brother Richards. This was no doubt wise, since Richards was in the East India Company Maritime Service and could easily be away when the will needed to be proved. In April 1794 he was in the middle of a voyage on the *Hillsborough* to the Coast of Coramandel and Bay of Bengal, as First Officer. No information has come to light about the parents or education of the two brothers. One wonders if they were orphaned early and it was Mrs Walker's money which had launched them in their chosen professions.

The first important provision in the will is that £200 sterling should be paid to Dr and Mrs Walker, 'being indebted to them for moneys lent to me in the years 1781 or 2'. This was a reference to a painful episode. John Hutt was a lieutenant at the time, and had been put in command of a brig called the *Antigua*. His ship was at Dauphin Creek in St Lucia when it was captured and burnt by the French, who were trying to seize the Island from the British. Hutt and his crew were prisoners of war for six months, returning to England on parole only in November 1781. Shortly afterwards he was released from his parole in an exchange of prisoners. He was court-martialled for losing his ship, and, although he was acquitted, it must have been a bleak period in his life.

1 *Recollections of James Anthony Gardner, Commander RN* (The Council of the Navy Records Society, 1906)

2 Hutt 'had been very kind in superintending the settling my poor Brother Edward's Affairs in Jamaica (the Account of which & of the Cash & Effects left by him he had just brought over to England)': *Diary of John Marsh (1751-1828)*, <http://www.williams.gen.nz/18and19a.html>.

Clearly Dr and Mrs Walker stood by him and gave him a very generous open-ended loan (£200 in 1781 would be about £34,000 today). The remainder of his fortune, £300 in 3% Consols (Government stocks), plus whatever might be due to him for his service on the *Queen*, he left to his brother, with two exceptions. The first was 'a small diamond ring ... which I request Miss Letitia Paine will accept on my account'. Richards Hutt was already married with two little girls, but John Hutt was still a bachelor. Perhaps he cherished certain hopes in Miss Paine's regard. If he had been told that Appley House would one day contain a Sister Laetitia Payne and thirty other women, he would have been astonished. The other bequest was of 'a silver cup presented to me as the engraving will show by the late Major-General Archibald Campbell'. This must have been during Hutt's time in Jamaica, where the Major-General was an energetic Governor. The will continues: 'Which I request my much loved and affectionate cousin Mrs Betty Ann Walker will accept as a small token of my gratitude to her.'



Memorial to Captains Harvey and Hutt in Westminster Abbey.

The British and French fleets met at the end of May, with serious fighting for the *Queen* on 29th May and then a major battle on 1st June. There exists an account of the fighting in a letter from an ordinary seaman on the *Queen*: 'hower ship ad to run the gantlet twice throw the french lins and we ad no less then three ships uppon us at one time but by the help of god we made thiem strike to us and in the time of action we sunk two of the french ships one of 80 guns one of 74 guns and a bought one thousand men sunk with the ships and in one ship that we tooke we cild right houte five hundred men ded and in hower ship we ad one hundred and thirtey eight cild and wounded and to leet you know that at the gun that i was quarted at we ad 4 shot Come in and cild two men and wounded five do witch I was – wounded in my left harm and in my brest – but thanks be to god im a grate deal better.'³

The French food convoy got away, but the British captured or sank seven French naval ships. This was a tremendous boost to British morale, and when the news reached London the audiences in theatres spontaneously stood and sang *Rule Britannia*. When the British fleet returned to Spithead they were fêted by King George III and all the senior politicians, and the battle became known as the Glorious First of June. Neither John Hutt nor his friend John Harvey were able to share in the glory. On 29th May, Hutt had lost a leg, while on 1st June Harvey lost an arm. In both cases they seemed at first likely to recover, but both died on 30th June. *The Times* reported on

3 Letter from John Wilkinson, <https://www.militaryheritage.com/queen.htm>

5th July: 'The remains of Capt. HARVEY were this day carried in military procession, attended by Earl Howe, Sir Alexander Hood, Admirals Gardner and Sir Peter Parker, with all the Captains of the Channel Fleet. After attending the body to the gates of Portsmouth, with every honourable solemnity, it was put into a hearse to be conveyed to Sandwich [his home]. Capt. HUTT will be buried at Gosport tomorrow, with the like solemnities; and, it is added, these honours are at the particular instance of Earl Howe, in regard to the public and private worth of the officers in question.'

Lloyd's of London (the insurance market) presented the families of both captains with a silver gilt soup tureen, and a large memorial to them both still stands in Westminster Abbey. A small island near Vancouver is named after Captain Hutt.

When Richards Hutt came home in August, therefore, he had to be told that his brother was dead and that he would be the heir to Appley House.

Sr EL (*To be continued*)

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of the Head of Collection and Librarian at Westminster Abbey.*

Chant Commentary *Communion Antiphon 'Potum Meum' for Wednesday in Holy Week*

Ps. 101, 10, 13, 14

CO. II

P Otum me- um * cum fle- tu tempe-rá-

bam : qui- a é- le- vans al- li- sísti me : et e- go

sic- ut fe- num á- ru- i : tu autem, Dó- mi- ne, in

aetér- num pérma- nes : tu exsúrgens mi- se- ré- be-

ris Si- on, qui- a ve- nit tempus mi- se- réndi

e- ius.

Ps. 101, 2. 3 abc. 3 dc. 18

Graduale Romanum p.157

I mingled my drink with weeping... for having lifted me up Thou hast thrown me down... and I am withered like grass. But Thou, O Lord, endurest for ever ... Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Zion; for it is time to have mercy on it. (Douay translation.)
(Ps 101 vv 10b, 11b, 12b, 13a, 14)

This is a carefully abbreviated version of verses 10-14 of Psalm 101 (Vulgate). The first section of this Psalm is a

lamentation on the part of an individual. The second section is a prayer full of hope for the restoration of Zion. The antiphon includes lines from both these parts and fuses

them into a single prayer. The first half, as far as *arui*, speaks of the physical and moral torments of an individual who feels rejected by men and abandoned by God. In the second part, hope, joy and thanksgiving break through, as the psalmist remembers with confidence God's mercy, His power to save and His fidelity to Zion. The selection of the texts makes it easy to discern the parallels with the language of the Lamentations, where the identification between the individual and the holy city is so strong.

In the Christian tradition, the voice of Christ is discerned in these words, and this intuition is highlighted by the liturgical situation of our antiphon, placed as it is in Holy Week just before the Paschal Triduum, as we are about to enter with Our Lord into His Passion. In the very first words of this Communion chant we are reminded of that drink, that cup of life which is offered to us at Communion time, when this antiphon is set to be sung, and at what price – Christ's own tears – we receive it. We are reminded too of that other 'cup' which Christ insisted He must drink (Mt 26:39; Lk 23:42; Jn 18:11) and in which He invited His disciples to share (Mt 20:22). Was the third line ('I am withered like grass') chosen intentionally in continuity with this theme? The drink He is given, mixed with tears, does not quench His thirst, but is followed by dryness (we think of His complaint *Sitio* on the cross); meanwhile He is preparing for us a drink that will give us eternal life, such that we may never thirst again. In the second part of the antiphon we are given the other side of the diptych: mercy, resurrection, life: it is time to have mercy on Zion.

The antiphon has appropriately been composed in the second mode, the mode that best expresses *humilitas*. This is truly the prayer of a humble man, in whom suffering does not engender bitterness, but trust, hope, and eventually thanksgiving and new life. With its small ambitus and tendency to remain in the lower range, the capacity of this introspective mode to express melancholy is fully exploited in the first part of the piece, which, in an almost claustrophobic way, keeps repeating the same pattern and the same cadence (*meum, temperabam, arui*) while barely rising above Fa. The repetitive nature of the melody reflects the psalmist's weariness and depression. The striking exception is on *elevans allisisti me*, as though to emphasise the brutality and suddenness of the apparent change in fortune: these Las only exist in order to form a more powerful contrast with the mournful Re-Fa pattern.¹ The melody of *et ego sicut fenum arui* exactly parallels that of *cum fletu temperabam*, with only one difference: the raised step carrying us up to Soh on 'a' of *arui* and announcing the leap to La on *Tu autem*.

At this point, a very marked change occurs. The text, which revolved until now around the person of the sufferer and his sense of rejection and contingency, changes from lament to prayer, suddenly focussing on God. As though to express this, the melody twice leaps dramatically up a fifth from Re to La on the divine pronoun *Tu*;

1 The more recent critical version of this phrase in the *Graduale Novum*, where the melody goes up to Ti, makes this contrast even more striking: *Graduale Novum* Tomus I (ConBrio, Regensburg/ Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011), p.121.

there is a marked change in character, with a much more pronounced focus on the Fa-La interval, and in particular on the La which becomes increasingly the focal point, reaching the climax of the piece on the second Re-La leap, at *Tu exurgens*. Thanks to the confidence in divine action expressed here and the manner in which it is set off by the melody, our antiphon becomes a kind of preview and summary of the entire paschal mystery which will be celebrated in the next few days: everything points in hope to the glorious resurrection which will follow from the suffering of the Messiah, and to the liberation which will ensue for us. Something of that hope is expressed in the upward cadences of *Domine* and *Sion* and in the swift intonation formula of *quia venit*, as well as in that Fa-La major third that rings through this section in contrast to the Re-Fa minor third. *Venit tempus*: ‘the hour, the time has come’ - how often do we hear these words on the lips of Our Lord when He speaks of the decisive moment of His passover (Jn 2:4; 12:27; 13:1). This is the time now and he rejoices at the thought of that fruit which His sacrifice will win for Zion, the Church, the redeemed, those who will receive God’s mercy. The lowly second mode is also frequently used to express thanksgiving, and we can hear in the final notes of our antiphon, and in particular in the drawn out and controlled descent of that final melisma on *eius*, echoes of that thanksgiving which is the fruit of humble hope.

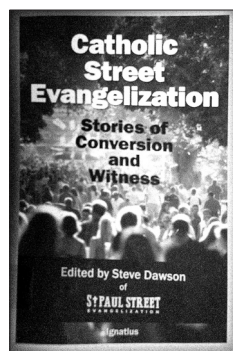
Sr BB, with others.

Read in the Refectory

Steve Dawson, ed., *Catholic Street Evangelization: Stories of Conversion and Witness* (Ignatius Press, 2016), 184pp.

This account of the birth and growth of St Paul Street Evangelization, a Catholic movement which takes the Gospel onto the streets, makes inspiring reading. Many of those involved were first converted themselves and one cannot fail to be confirmed in faith by their testimonies. Most of the writers came from a Catholic background but many had reached a place far from God. Their courage and honesty in speaking openly of their sinful past lives and their redemption through grace, is worthy of admiration. Be prepared for drama! One was the leader of a gang, shot nine times one night and left for dead; another murdered his father. The message imparted is that Jesus can heal every wound and He works through His Church. Not surprisingly, the value of sacramental Confession features significantly.

While the approach of the evangelisers is always non-confrontational, friendly and personal, avoiding a narrowly apologetical stance, fidelity to the Church’s Magisterium is a hallmark of the movement: it is emphasised that Catholicism teaches the fullness of



truth. Several of the contributors pursued a long, thorough search, sometimes passing through other Christian denominations, before committing themselves to Catholic Christianity.

The practical technique used for evangelisation is to set up a table on the street and offer passers-by a rosary, medal, leaflet or prayer card, engaging them in conversation. All their materials, including books and CDs are given free of charge. There are many stories of such encounters with encouraging, sometimes spectacular results. Obviously not every meeting will bring immediate conversion; a lot of seed-sowing is involved. An additional benefit, however, which many experience in bearing witness to the faith, is the growth and deepening of their own relationship with God.

That the power of the Holy Spirit has been at work is plainly evident, and those involved are the first to praise and thank God for good fruits, rather than crediting themselves. What began as an individual effort by one man and his wife spread quickly across America and beyond, with over two hundred teams participating when the book was written in 2016. Presumably the pandemic has halted, or seriously disrupted this good work. May it flourish anew, and may the readers of this book be moved to play their part in this missionary outreach of the Church:

‘Let us allow the Holy Spirit to work in and through us, attracting souls to the beauty of Christ. On the streets, in our homes, in the workplace, across the fence, let us not be afraid to speak the truth in love’ (p.181).

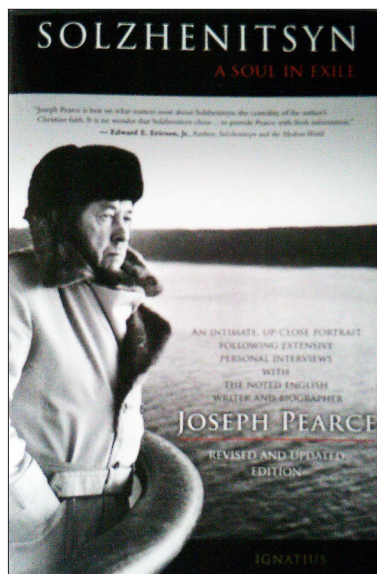
‘Let us always rely on Him who sustains our every breath, allays our every fear, and makes marvels out of our lives, surpassing anything which we can see and understand’ (p.65).

Sr CW

Joseph Pearce, *Solzhenitsyn. A Soul in Exile* (Ignatius Press, 2011), 392pp.

The life of Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1918-2008), Russian dissident and Nobel Prize-winner, reflects almost a whole century of Russian and European history. Though brought up in conservative Christian circles, the precocious and arrogant young Solzhenitsyn soon turned his back on the traditions and the faith of his family and became an impassioned Communist: from the age of 17 he threw himself into the study of Marxism-Leninism with almost religious zeal.

His idealist theories seemed to be absolutely watertight against reality: for a long time he stubbornly refused to see how the devastation of Russian culture and economy as well as the



climate of repression and censure around him belied the dogmas of Communism. At the age of 23 he was recruited for the Soviet army. The experience of the Second World War – which he later described as one of the most defining and important times of his life – served to shatter some of his idols. Yet it was during the eight years (1945-1953) which he spent as a political prisoner in the Russian labour camps that his Communist mindset finally crumbled and gave way to a worldview based on the eternal truths of the Christian faith.

It is this faith, and his conviction of the superiority of the spiritual realm over the merely material, that stirred and enabled Solzhenitsyn to defy the Soviet regime: once released from prison he worked tirelessly – at great risk to his personal freedom and life – at attacking the corrupt Party apparatus and revealing the crimes of Stalinism. Forced into exile in 1974, the focus of his concern shifted to the more hidden totalitarian tendencies of Western capitalism and the disintegrating effects of consumerism. Although his own prophecy that he would be able to return to Russia within his lifetime was fulfilled, he remained a highly controversial figure until the end of his life.

Joseph Pearce describes Alexander Solzhenitsyn's life from a distinctly Christian point of view, presenting his conversion to the faith as the turning point of his whole life. Pearce does not hide his great admiration for Solzhenitsyn and obviously enjoys defending him – often with a good dose of polemic – against journalists and politicians in both East and West who never weary of accusing him of hatred of his own country, fascism, anti-Semitism, misanthropic pessimism or simply irrelevance. The book is written in an elegant, captivating style and provides a good balance between the portrayal of Solzhenitsyn's life, reviews of his literary and theoretical writings and detailed descriptions of political and cultural developments. All this reveals a great depth and precision of research (even though Pearce is not apparently a Russian specialist), as well as an intimate understanding of Solzhenitsyn's spiritual convictions, which Pearce was able to acquire in an extensive interview with the author. This gives the book a great intensity and makes it a worthy and encouraging 'tribute to a life well lived, a life of courage in the face of tyranny, a life of true heroism.'

Sr CS

Bread in the Refectory

(1) Family Recipes from the Novitiate

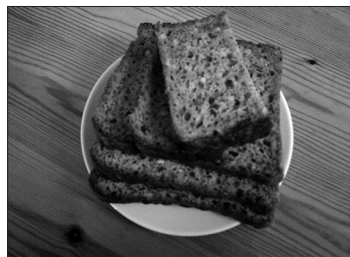
German Sourdough Bread

For 3 loaves you need:

a small lump of sourdough (to start sourdough from water and flour is difficult; you can get old sourdough from wholemeal bakeries or from someone who bakes sourdough bread)

600g wholemeal rye flour

1 kg plain white flour
200 g wholemeal spelt flour
salt, sugar
1 teaspoon full of dry yeast
seeds (linseed, sunflower, pumpkin etc.) ad lib.
warm (not hot!) water
fat (sunflower oil or margarine) to grease tins



Put the rye flour together with the old sourdough into a sufficiently large bowl, add water, and stir until the mass is even. (It should be so stiff that, if you put a spoon upright into it, it only slowly falls to the side.) Cover the dough with a cloth and let it rest for 24 hours. If you want to continue baking sourdough bread, take some spoonfuls of the new sourdough and store it in a small container in the fridge. (It lasts up to 3 weeks.)

Add a little bit of sugar and water to the yeast in a small separate bowl and stir until sugar and yeast dissolve into the water.

Add spelt and plain flour to the sourdough, as well as seeds and salt (depending on taste, but at least 3 large spoonfuls). Add the yeast-mixture and warm water and start kneading the dough with your hand. It is advisable to keep one hand free to add more water if necessary. The rule for stiffness given above applies here as well.

Grease three baking tins carefully, then distribute the dough equally among them. Cover the tins with the cloth and let the dough rest for another 2-3 hours. (For washing the bowl one should use cold water first, since warm water makes the rye very sticky.)

Bake the bread at c. 200°C for about an hour (no need to pre-heat the oven). Then take the loaves out of the tins and let them cool down for at least 3 hours. (Waiting till the next day makes it easier to cut the bread.)

Irish Soda Bread

600g wholemeal flour
300g plain flour
2tsp bicarbonate of soda
2tsp salt
2tbsp sugar
840mls buttermilk or natural yoghurt
flour and porridge oats for dusting



Preheat the oven to 180°C Fan/400°F/ Gas mark 6.

Sift the two types of flour into a large bowl, then mix them with the bicarbonate of soda, salt and sugar using wide fingers. Make a well in the centre of the flour. Add the buttermilk or yoghurt and mix in a circular motion with your hands until a sticky dough forms. (Add more liquid if too dry.)

Lightly flour a work surface and tip the dough onto it. Gently roll and fold the dough a couple of times to bring the mixture together. Do not knead. Shape the dough into a ball. Flatten the ball gently with your hand until it forms a circle. Score the dough with a deep cross dividing it into quarters. Brush with milk then sprinkle with porridge oats and dust the bread with flour.

Place onto a baking tray lined with baking parchment greased with a little butter, and leave to rest for 15 minutes. Then bake for 45 minutes at 180°C. Check if it is cooked by tapping on the base of the bread a few times – if it sounds hollow, it is cooked – and insert a metal skewer – if it is hot and dry when removed, the bread is cooked. If not, reduce the oven temperature to 160°C and cook for a further 15 minutes. (Cover with foil if it is too brown.) The loaf should be golden-brown.

Leave to cool on a wire rack. This bread toasts really well, and goes well with marmalade and lots of Irish butter!

To be continued.

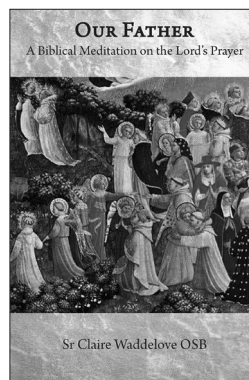
Notebook

The ‘Notebook’ for the Easter Chronicle usually mentions events in the short but often full months between Advent and Lent. This year, as for every other monastic and domestic community, it is a matter of ‘Tales from Lockdown’. The Isle of Wight had the relative luxury of being in ‘Tier One’ of England’s restrictions until 26th December, when we were moved into ‘Tier 4’ until the new lockdown began shortly afterwards. Post-Christmas visits from family and friends were of course impossible; the Garth and the shop are again closed at the time of writing.

Once again, we have so much for which to be grateful. Our brothers of Quarr have continued to bring us the greatest wealth on earth, the Sacraments. We have been grateful that in England, unlike other parts of the UK, churches have been permitted to remain open for worship, which has meant we have been

able to offer liturgical hospitality to the faithful. While we are aware that many have still found it difficult or impossible to venture out to Mass, custom in the Altar Bread Department is slowly rising again, a sign that the country’s parishes are growing in hope. We continue to pray for the material and spiritual needs of all.

Sr Claire’s book, *Our Father: A Biblical Meditation*, was published by Gracewing in January and



has been received enthusiastically, as witnessed to by both sales and readers’ comments. ‘A loving familiarity with the sacred text poured forth as prayer, is shared with us,’

comments a priest in his Amazon review; 'a fine new book' and 'a gem', say other reviewers. The book is highly relevant in this Year of St Joseph, for among the prayers specified for the special indulgence for this year, the first option is to meditate on the Our Father for half an hour.

Sr Anselma's book, *Art, Truth and Time*, was given a highly appreciative review in *Cistercian Studies Quarterly*.

While we remember that many religious communities have been hard hit by the pandemic, we also recall that history gives us many examples of religious facing trials. One such were the Daughters of Charity in Smyrna (Izmir), Turkey. During the First World War, the sisters struggled to support the orphans in their school in extreme wartime poverty. Three of the sisters were moreover suspected by the authorities of collaboration with the French government, based on comments in letters such as, 'We will be very united with you on 15th, 19th and 25th March' – feasts of special significance to their order, which were interpreted as dates of planned battles! The three sisters were given a prison sentence, mostly served under various forms of house arrest. Many individuals were very kind to them, including a Jewish doctor, and a Muslim institute-director who made helpful arrangements for a priest to bring them Communion. After the war, the school revived, only to be devastated in 1922 by the great fire of Smyrna. Again they returned, until the increasing secularization of Ataturk's Turkey made the school untenable.

Why are we remembering this particular tale of fidelity to religious service? Firstly, because two of those sisters, Sr Eugénie (1851-1937) and Sr Cécile (1856-1950), recipients of the Légion d'Honneur, were great-great-aunts of our Sr Marie-Germain. Sr Eugénie Fiévet was given a teaching assignment in France at the beginning of her religious life. She soon asked her superiors for something more challenging. They, and the Lord, took her at her word. She spent the rest of her religious life in Smyrna, apart from a few months after the great fire. And we can remember, secondly, because not only did the Daughters of Charity write a record of events, but Sr M-Germain's father also ensured that typed copies were made for his children. 'Shun forgetfulness,' says St Benedict. He means, in the first place, forgetfulness of God; but remembering God includes remembering His gracious works in the lives of His servants. We are grateful for their lives, and grateful to those who have cultivated the memory of them.

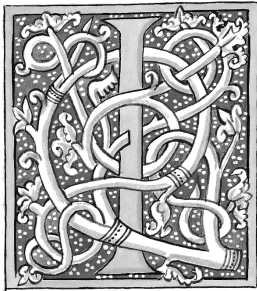
Our motto for this year is: *Ille fidelis manet*, 'He remains faithful' (2 Tim. 2:13). As the uncertainty of wordly certainties becomes ever clearer, we need to remember God's steadfastness. Now we are approaching the Church's act of living remembrance par excellence in the Sacred Triduum, when the Lord's life-giving fidelity in the mysteries of His Passion and Resurrection is made present anew. May all our oblates, friends, benefactors and readers be blessed this Easter with a new share in the abundant life brought by the Paschal Mystery.

Die 19 Martii

IN SOLLEMNITATE SANCTI JOSEPH

Anno A & Anno B

Lectio Sancti Evangelii
secundum Matthæum



ADOB GENUIT

Ioseph virum Mariæ, de
qua natus est Iesus, qui
vocatur Christus. Iesu

Christi autem generatio sic erat. Cum
esset desponsata mater eius Maria
Ioseph, antequam convenirent, inven-
ta est in utero habens de Spiritu
Sancto. Ioseph autem vir eius, cum