

St Cecilia's
Abbey,
Ryde

Chronicle

PATER NOSTER, QUI ES
IN CAELIS
sanctificetur nomen tuum.
Adveniat regnum tuum. Fiat
voluntas tua, sicut in caelo
et in terra. Panem nostrum
quotidianum da nobis hodie.
Et dimittē nobis debita nostra
sicut et nos dimittimus debi-
toribus nostris. Et ne nos
inducas in tentationem.
Sed libera nos a malo. Amen

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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.

Paschal Triduum 2024

Maundy Thursday, 28th March, Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper 5 p.m.

Good Friday, 29th March, Actio Liturgica 3 p.m.

Holy Saturday, 30th March, Paschal Vigil 9.45 p.m.

Easter Sunday, 31st March, Mass 10.00 a.m.

Ascension Day: Thursday 9th May, Mass 10.00 a.m.

Corpus Christi: Thursday 30th May, Mass 10.00 a.m.

Feast of the Sacred Heart: Friday 7th June, Mass 10.00 a.m.

Cover Illustration: *The Lord's Prayer, illuminated by our abbey scribes. Pope Francis has asked for intense prayer in this year of preparation for the Holy Year of 2025, with a particular focus on the Our Father.*

Illustrations: p. 4, WikiCommons.

p.19, Dom Patrice Mahieu, Mother Abbess and Mother Nirmala of Shanti Nilayam at Shantivanam Camaldolese ashram in Tamil Nadu, India, with the Prior and another monk.

From Mother Abbess

Among the liturgical treasures of Easter is the hymn *Ubi Caritas est Vera*, ‘Where love is found true, God is there,’ that we sing during the Offertory procession on Maundy Thursday.¹ It has the distinction of being the only hymn or chant that is specifically prescribed for the Offertory in the *Missale Romanum*. As far as the *Graduale* is concerned, it is quite different from the usual Offertory chants. It found its present status only in the reforms of 1970, though it was undoubtedly sung on this day for centuries.

Our English term for this day, Maundy Thursday, comes from the first word of antiphon *Mandatum novum do vobis*, ‘I give you a new commandment’ (Jn 13:34) that traditionally opens the ceremony of the washing of the feet. Such a ceremony seems to have been associated with this day since at least the third or fourth century, as St Augustine discusses in a letter whether it is better carried out in Holy Week or Easter Week.² There are exasperating gaps in the records so we are not clear what was being done precisely, and how widespread it was. St Eligius of Noyon (a most attractive character who went from being a talented goldsmith to becoming bishop of Noyon in North-East France) in the mid seventh century mentions a ‘fraternal washing of feet’ on this day,³ while at a Council held in Toledo in Spain at the end of the seventh century there were complaints that the rite had fallen out of use, and calls for it to be reinstated. From later references, it would seem that what all these writers are referring to is not something done in church with the whole congregation watching, but a ceremony done wherever there was a group of Christians living together. Thus bishops were expected to wash the feet of all their household, and abbots the feet of their monks. The customary of the Gilbertines explains, ‘The prior performs in this office the role of him who although he was the Master and Lord of all made himself the servant of all.’ St Bede says of Our Lord’s command to wash one another’s feet:

‘We should take this statement in both its literal sense and its mystical sense, and we ought to carry it out devoutly. Its literal sense is that we should serve one another in charity, not only by washing our brothers’ feet, but also by aiding them in any of their needs. The mystical sense of the washing of

1 The text can be found on the back cover of this Chronicle.

2 Ep 55.13.83.

3 Philip J Goddard, *Festa Paschalia: A History of the Holy Week Liturgy in the Roman Rite* (Gracewing, 2011), p 150, provided all the information in this paragraph.

the feet is that, just as Our Lord is wont to forgive the sins of those who repent, so also should we hasten to forgive our brothers when they sin against us. Just as he washes us from our sins by interceding with the Father on our behalf, so also should we. ... Just as he laid down his life for us, so we also, if the occasion arises, should lay down our life for our brothers.⁴

St Bede was, of course, a monk, and we know from the Rule of St Benedict and other monastic rules that washing the feet of the brethren was a regular occurrence.

The point here, however, is to have a special ceremony of it on Maundy Thursday. As the centuries passed, the rite became more elaborate. At Cluny on Maundy Thursday the rite took place in Chapter. The hebdomadarian would wash the monks' feet but leave them wet, and the abbot would then come along and dry them. At the end there would be a reading of St John's



Gospel chapters 13 and 14, and then all would go in procession to the refectory. On the same day in a separate ceremony, the monks would wash the feet of poor men, and also give them a sum of money.⁵ (Presumably the money was an incentive to take part.)

A Franciscan Missal of 1243 was very influential in encouraging a liturgical rite of washing of feet on Maundy Thursday, and it is in this Missal that we first find the hymn *Ubi Caritas* prescribed in association with it.⁶ A large number of antiphons is provided, beginning with *Mandatum novum do vobis*, and *Ubi Caritas* is sung at the end.

From then on there would be a standard rite but it was separate from the Mass, and generally performed in monasteries and cathedrals rather than in parishes. In Pope Pius XII's reform of the Holy Week liturgy in 1955, however, the whole ceremony was inserted into the Maundy Thursday Mass itself, but with the same chants and *Ubi Caritas*. It is not actually obligatory, which is why it is legitimate for us to have it as a separate ceremony after the Mass is over. What is obligatory, is to sing at the Offertory of the Mass the hymn *Ubi Caritas* or something similar, and to this hymn we now turn.

The form of the hymn that we are used to is of three strophes of four lines each, plus the refrain, *Ubi Caritas*, 'Where love is found true, God is there.' It has been like

4 St Bede, *Homilies on the Gospels*, Book 2, Homily II, 5 (Cistercian Publications, 1991) p 48.

5 Goddard, p 151.

6 Goddard, p 154.

that (apart from a slightly different wording of the refrain) since the Missal of 1570.⁷ Earlier liturgical books, however, show nine, ten or even twelve strophes. The full twelve strophes are given by Dom André Wilmart in his book *Auteurs Spirituels et textes dévots du Moyen Age Latin*.⁸ Just for interest: Dom Wilmart entered Solesmes in 1901 just before the exile to the Isle of Wight. He was ordained in 1906 at Appuldurcome, so it is possible that he said Mass for our own community then at Ventnor. He was, however, soon sent to the foundation at Farnborough, where he lived for the rest of his life, dying in 1941.

What has been sung since 1570 is the first and fourth verses, plus a different concluding verse. The other verses are well worth looking at. For example, the second goes,

*Qui non habet caritatem nihil habet
sed in tenebris et in umbra mortis manet.
Nos alterutrum amemus et in die,
sicut decet, ambulemus lucis filii.*

‘He who does not have charity has nothing, but remains in darkness and in the shadow of death. Let us love one another, and let us walk in the day, as is fitting, as sons of the light.’

And so it goes on, noting that charity makes Christ present, according to his promise, that it joins together those who are absent from one another, whereas discord separates even those who are bodily present to one another; charity is the summum bonum, the ‘supreme gift’; charity bears fruit that lasts for ever, whereas discord leads to eternal punishment, and therefore the hymn exhorts the singers, ‘Let us ask God to grant peace in our days and to join our charity to faith and hope so that we may attain to the company of the saints in heaven.’

What is noteworthy is that the hymn nowhere mentions Maundy Thursday, much less the Lord washing the disciples’ feet. Also noteworthy is what it does include. The eighth strophe begins,

*Tota ergo mente deum diligamus
et illius nil amori præponemus.*

‘Therefore let us love God with our whole heart and let us put nothing else before his love.’

This of course comes straight from the Rule of St Benedict, chapter 4: ‘First of all, love the Lord your God with you whole heart ... Put nothing before the love of Christ’ (4.1, 21). Dom Wilmart concludes that the hymn was composed in a monastery where every Saturday the monk who was finishing his week as refectory

⁷ The revised Missal of 1970 restored the original version of the refrain, that is, the one that we use.

⁸ *Auteurs Spirituels et textes dévots du Moyen Age Latin* (Bloud et Gay, 1932) pp 26-36.

server, and the one who was taking over, washed the feet of all the brethren as the Rule of St Benedict prescribes (ch. 35.9). From the manuscript traditions he judges it to have been composed in a monastery in Italy in the 9th century.

If we just focus on the verses that are sung at the Mandatum today, the very first line also recalls the Holy Rule:

Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor, ‘The love of Christ has gathered us into one.’

We can think of St Benedict’s injunction to put nothing before the love of Christ already mentioned (4.1, 21); there is also an echo of Chapter Two of the Rule: ‘We are all one in Christ’ (2.20). It also links with Colossians (3:11): *Christ is all and in all*.

Let us rejoice in him and be glad recalls all the passages in the psalms and prophets about rejoicing in the Lord, as well as St Paul’s exhortations. *Let us fear and love the living God* reminds us of the reverent fear that is the first step of humility (ch. 7.10), as well as a mark of the good zeal that monks ought to have (ch. 72.0). *And love each other sincerely from the heart* is Our Lord’s new commandment and is spelt out more fully in the Tools of Good Works (ch. 4).

*Therefore when we are gathered as one
let us take heed not to be in mind divided.
Let bitterness and quarrels cease.*

We can here think of Our Lord’s prayer for the unity of his disciples that he made on Maundy Thursday, as well as the unity of our community, and St Benedict’s injunctions about how to achieve this: Not to cling to anger, not to nurse a grudge, not to make a false peace, never to forsake charity (ch. 4.24-26).

The hymn then indicates the blessing that follows:

Et in medio nostri sit Christus Deus. ‘And in our midst be Christ our God.’

This is a little flash forward to the picture of Our Lord in the midst of the disciples on Easter Sunday, proclaimed by Thomas as Lord and God.

The final verse that we sing is different from the medieval original but no less beautiful, as we turn to address Our Lord directly:

*And together with the blessed may we behold
your face in glory, Christ our God.*

This is the end to which our whole monastic and Christian life is oriented, and with hope in him we look forward to

Joy immense and boundless throughout all ages.

Wishing all our families and friends the same hope this Easter,

L. Eustochium

The Hymns of Easter – Lauds: Aurora lucis



The beautiful hymn *Aurora lucis* is sung to an eighth mode melody full of bright alacrity, fitting for the office of daybreak. The text has been used at Lauds in Eastertide for centuries, although only recently on Easter Day itself.¹ Its four verses are the beginning of a longer poem, the rest of which is also used in the Office, in the two lovely hymns for Vespers and Lauds of the Apostles in Eastertide – *Tristes*

erant Apostoli (The apostles were sad) and *Claro paschali gaudio* (With bright paschal joy). These are both set to a sweet and gracious third mode which creates an entirely different atmosphere. While the whole poem offers a selective narrative of the events of Easter day, the slice taken for Lauds is a single burst of triumph, even triumphalism.

Aurora lucis rutilat, / caelum resultat laudibus, / mundus exsultans iubilat, / gemens infernus ululat. ‘Light’s dawn is shining, heaven resounds with praise, the exultant world sings for joy, hell groans and wails.’ The verb *rutilo* means to shine red or gold. Prudentius addresses Christ as author of *rutilum lumen*, the shining light (*Cathemerinon*, Hymn 9, l.1), while a homilist speaks of ‘the splendour of the radiant resurrection, *resurrectionis rutilae*’.² The sun is surely already making the colours of the scene glow as all creation acknowledges its Lord’s victory. The threefold division into heaven, earth and the underworld is familiar from Scripture (Apoc. 5:3, Phil 2:10). In patristic Easter sermons the underworld often appears as the place from which souls in the ‘limbo of the fathers’ are emerging with joy, and so hell in a sense joins in the praise. In our hymn, however, it is clearly the devil’s realm whose lamentations are the foil to the rejoicing above. Compare St Peter Chrysologus imagining our Lord assuring his disciples, ‘It is I, before whom death flees and the underworld trembles; hell has confessed God by its fear (*tartarus Deus confessus est, cum pavescit*).’³

Cum rex ille fortissimus, / mortis confractis viribus, / pede conculcans tartara / solvit catena miseros. ‘When that mighty King, now that the powers of death have been shattered, treading hell underfoot, frees the poor souls from their chain.’ The Risen Lord appears as a triumphant King, of unambiguous and irresistible strength. The eastern icon of the Resurrection could illustrate the last two lines: Christ tramples the broken doors of hell and leads out the faithful who had been waiting for the Redeemer. The verb *conculco*, ‘tread underfoot’, is familiar in the Latin Old Testament to describe

1 In older Office books, it was used only from Low Sunday onwards. For the hymn’s origins, our hymnal offers a cautious ‘5th century?’.

2 PL57.592, printed in the works of Maximus of Turin, but not regarded as authentic (see PLS 3.360).

3 Sermon 81, PL 52.428.

total mastery, contempt or conquest (e.g. Is. 26:6; Ps 90/91: 13), and Christian writing applies it to the Lord's victory over death (e.g. *ab inferis calcata morte conscendere*, 'to rise from hell with death trodden underfoot', Chrysologus, Sermon 81, PL 52.430).

The next verse then seems to move into the picture which would feature in later western art, of the Risen One literally emerging from the tomb: *Ille, quem clausum lapide / miles custodit acriter, / triumphans pompa nobili / victor surgit de funere*. 'The one who was shut in with a stone and over whom a soldier keeps a sharp watch, rises from death as victor, triumphing with a noble display.' The squadron of guards is here condensed into one representative figure, reinforcing the sense of a picture painted in strong outlines. To triumph had a technical sense in antiquity: a triumph was the victory procession of a general (later reserved to the Emperor), publicising his success and the spoils of victory, including prisoners taken in war. This victor, then, is a victor in battle. The military terms are the only glancing allusion to Good Friday in this section of the hymn: the Passion had been characterised as a battle already by Prudentius (*Dic tropaeum passionis, dic triumphalem crucem...*, 'Sing of the prize won in the Passion, sing of the triumphal Cross...'. *Cathemerinon*, 9.83.), and the theme would have a long literary history.

Inferni iam gemitibus / solutis et doloribus, / quia surrexit Dominus / resplendens clamat angelus. 'Now, with the groans and pains of hell undone, the resplendent angel cries, "The Lord has risen!"' Hell is now seen from the point of view of those who do not want to go there. Its power is broken, we see with relief that the inevitability of eternal sorrow is ended, and a heavenly messenger proclaims the cause of this hope: the Resurrection. No hint here of the bewilderment, fear and disorientation of the women and apostles at the mystery of the empty tomb, and even the continuation of the poem will emphasise their joy rather than 'slowness to believe'. Our poet is in tune with Chrysologus's rhetorical address to the myrrh-bearing women: 'Now that the law leading to hell is undone, and the prison of the underworld destroyed along with the dominion of death itself, Christ is no longer to be anointed as a dead man, but adored as victor' (*Soluta enim lege tartari, et inferni carcere destructo, et ipso mortis imperio, jam Christus non est ugendus ut mortuus, sed adorandus ut victor*, Sermon 82, PL 52.430).

Our age is perhaps suspicious of unalloyed rejoicing in victory. We are well aware that few emerge uncompromised from human conflicts, and that the wrong people may pay the heaviest price. The single combat of the Passion was, of course, a strange reversal of such dark sides. Christ was the innocent one allowing himself to be crushed for the sake of us who were already hopelessly compromised, and he does not begrudge the fruits of his sufferings. The verses of the Lauds hymn encourage us to believe that the light of his victory is indeed for us, the light in whose brightness we will see light (Ps 35/36) and become light (Eph 5:8).

Sr MTB

CD Review

The Season of Advent. Gregorian Chant from the monks of Pluscarden Abbey.

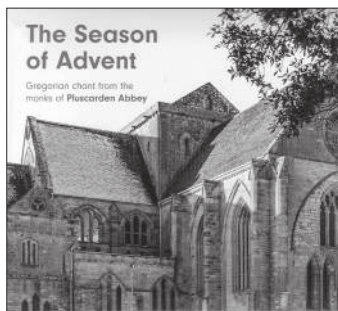
Pluscarden's two latest CDs are a contrasting pair. Their Advent CD adds to their existing recordings of selected liturgical repertoires; it also thereby fills a glaring gap in the available range of Gregorian Chant recordings, and we should thank the monks for remedying the lacuna. With it they offer the public a counterbalance to the overwhelming secularization of this ancient and rich liturgical season of the Christian year.

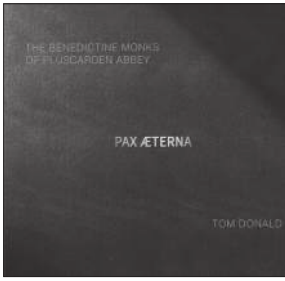
The selection made presents a varied and balanced overview of the chant repertoire for this season in the monastic Liturgy of the Hours and the Roman Mass. It is divided into four sections, one covering each of the four weeks of Advent, and concludes with the solemn tone of the *Alma Redemptoris*, traditionally sung at this season. Each section offers some examples of Office antiphons and Mass chants sung during that week, to which is sometimes added some extra heterogenous items, such as a hymn, a responsory or a devotional chant like the *Rorate Cæli*. Section four also includes the Second Preface for Advent as well as Sanctus and Agnus Dei 17, usually sung on Sundays in Advent. The CD is accompanied by an excellent booklet giving the Latin text and a translation for each item, and, in the case of the Mass chants, a brief but pertinent commentary on its musical, historical, or spiritual significance.

The singing is of high quality, entirely unaccompanied, respecting the tradition of the organ's silence during Advent. The pitch is near perfect. The general ensemble of voices is very unified, the enunciation faultless with no final consonants falling by the wayside (as so often happens). Repercussions are performed with subtlety, and in chants of the Mass in particular (*Tollite porta, Qui sedes...*) some melodic lines are impressive in their sweep. In general, the attention to detail and expression creates a nuanced interpretation that results in something beyond mere correctness, something truly beautiful that emanates spiritual longing and hope, joy, and genuine devotion.

Pax Æterna – The monks of Pluscarden Abbey with Tom Donald.

Pax Æterna, meanwhile, is a new departure, initiated by pianist Tom Donald. Gregorian Chant accompanied by improvisations on the piano does not seem like a very promising prospect...but be prepared for a surprise! 'The monks in choir began to sing. They imitated with their voices the timelessness of heaven. Mildly they mocked, among the sounds of the ebb, the urgencies and ambitions of men.' These words in George Mackay Brown's *Magnus* spontaneously rise to my mind as, through the timeless echo of the monks' voices singing Our Lady's Magnificat, rivulets of fluid





sound weave their way, gradually building up to form a great joyful tide. With Gloria 15 the tide becomes crashing breakers, evoking the image of the Pantocrator who dominates history. In *Parce Domine* the breakers become the relentless beating of insistent supplication knocking at the door of Divine Mercy. The three Gradual Psalms flow like a stream through the verdant meadows of meditation; but the dark and threatening Psalm 139 speaks of treachery and danger, and the gathering clouds of the Passion. By contrast comes the gentle trickle of arpeggios sweetly running through Psalm 132 like the melting snows of Mount Hermon or the fragrant oil on Aaron's robe. Not all pieces are equally successful. If you have experienced the profound silence that accompanies Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, and Benediction, the abrupt opening chords and the slightly syncopated jazzy modulations that form the sound backdrop to the *Laudes Divinae* come as some thing of a shock. One might also question their musical suitability for a chant which is essentially a smooth litanic *recitatif*.

Dare I suggest a favourite? Perhaps Psalm 113A which, as though by a stroke of magic, seems to carry us back through the mists of time, evoking deep communal memories that forged a people in newly found freedom and divine election. Here as elsewhere, an unmistakable Celtic influence can be heard in the modality and musical poetry of the piano part. Another influence – that of jazz – is discernible in the subtle interplay – at times playful, at other times provocative – between the two musical partners.

What we have here is a daring and imaginative project in which the live convergence of two completely different musical genres results in the astonishing creation of an altogether new form. The result is provocative, exciting, spiritually uplifting, and witnesses to the 'eternally regenerative process of music as it develops through the ages.' (James Macmillan)

Sr BB

Coronation Coconut Tiffin

We invented this paler variant on Tiffin as a suitable surface for patriotic decorations on Coronation day last year (it does taste good as well!).

Crush **8 oz biscuits** as finely as possible (we use a mixture of digestives and rich teas, but anything you like would do). Melt **8 oz margarine** in a pan over a low heat with **2 tins (2x398g) condensed milk** and **3 oz sultanas or raisins** (which you could soak in liqueur or spirits first, if you like). Meanwhile, toast **1 pint desiccated coconut** (about the same by volume as the biscuit crumbs) by dry-frying it - keep stirring it as it can burn quickly. Once the margarine is melted, mix in the biscuit crumbs

and coconut. Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper and press the mixture into it. Refrigerate for a few hours at least. If wished, top with a layer of melted white chocolate and refrigerate again. It will be nicer if it is back to room temperature by the time you eat it. This quantity gives 25 small squares.



Dom Guéranger and Joy: Part 1

by Dom Jacques de Préville OSB, St-Pierre de Solesmes

‘Charming beyond belief in his letters or in his conversation’: this is how Charles Louvet described Dom Guéranger in 1875.¹ Louvet was one of Dom Guéranger’s childhood friends, an intimate friend, faithful until death. He had had a brilliant political career; he had been in contact with a wide variety of backgrounds and had many relationships. Yet Dom Guéranger remained for him the one who was ‘charming beyond belief’.

For his part, Dom Guépin, Dom Guéranger’s favourite disciple, wrote in his *Souvenirs*: ‘Whoever has not known him, and known him in the intimacy of his monastery, will never be able to form an idea of the inexpressible charm that this holy man had in him, of his perfect simplicity and *bonhomie*’.² The two testimonies coincide.

We have several paintings of Dom Guéranger. The one that we keep in the Chapter room of our monastery, which was painted by Emile Lafond, expresses better than others his *bonhomie*, his cheerful character. The blue eyes, limpid and deep, which so often struck those who met him, look kindly; the Abbot is half-smiling, and he seems ready to speak.

But it is necessary to have recourse to other witnesses, to his own writings, especially to his correspondence, in order to try to rediscover that charm which emanated from him and which touched so strongly all those who knew him, as well as his profound joy, inseparable from the life of his soul.

He had a cheerful temperament, inherited from his mother, it has been said; but we know little about her, Dom Guéranger having always been extremely discreet about his mother. He had the cheerfulness of simple, fresh souls. ‘He had the frank and easy laugh of a child,’ Dom Guépin says of him.³ Neither disappointments nor trials, however hard they may have been, could take away this freshness of feeling. Dom

1 Letter of Charles Louvet to a monk of Solesmes (possibly Dom Piolin), 7 December 1875.

2 Dom Alphonse Guépin, *Souvenirs de ma jeunesse monastique*, unpublished, p. 27.

3 Dom Alphonse Guépin, *Souvenirs...*, p. 11.

Guéranger himself spoke in a letter to Madame Swetchine of ‘the enormous fund of cheerfulness’ that God has given him.⁴ He was spontaneous, energetic, enthusiastic. These natural qualities must have helped him greatly in the difficult undertaking of restoring Solesmes, which was initially full of unknowns and uncertainties. He was starting from scratch: he was young, destitute, with no other vocations assured. It is hard for us now to imagine his position. But Father Guéranger felt filled with enthusiasm at the idea of resuming the life of the monks of old who had helped shape France since ancient times. Nothing could stop his momentum, his *afflonement* [akin to ‘buoyancy’ in English] a word from the Sarthe patois that he would use so often (with the corresponding verb), and which expresses well his own temperament, impervious to discouragement. He fell ill in November 1824 from overwork after his first year in seminary and an overly studious summer break; he confessed in his autobiography: ‘This situation [his illness which he has just described] had affected my character; I had become so gloomy that they feared hypochondria for me.’⁵ Joy returned with healing. He wrote in 1828: ‘Thank God I have not lost my cheer; I hope they will bury it with me.’⁶

This good humour, this *joie de vivre*, so far removed from the melancholy of the romantics of his time, is particularly evident in his correspondence as a young priest. He wrote often and at great length to his brother Édouard, for whom he had a very strong affection. He once wrote to him: ‘I place you first in the first rank of my first friends.’⁷ In his letters from the time when he was secretary to the bishop of Le Mans, Monsignor de la Myre-Mory, and later in charge of ministry in Paris, amusing descriptions abound: his travels, for example. There was no shortage of colour in these long stagecoach journeys (it took one night to go from Le Mans to Paris and it was not done in great comfort!). Prosper Guéranger knew how to see and have fun with it. He describes with verve and talent his companions in the carriage and the various incidents of the journey. With humour, he likes to emphasize the funny side of situations.

‘We made our way very gaily to the first post, where I unexpectedly saw M. Bérard Senior get out of the carriage. We were very courteous; however, I was careful not to tell him that our parcels had been very well wrapped in certain printed sheets which he had read at the Society of Arts, on finance and botany, and of which he had been extremely kind enough to bring to the Bishop I know not how many beautiful notebooks, no doubt led in this by that Providence which always comes to meet our needs... In the midst of the snoring of my neighbours, I could not sleep and looked

4 Letter to Mme Swetchine, 5 August 1833, Archives of the Abbey of Solesmes. Published in *Lettres de dom Guéranger à Mme Swetchine* (Archives dom Guéranger, Solesmes, 1992), p. 8.

5 Dom Guéranger, *Mémoires autobiographiques* (Éditions de Solesmes, 2005), p. 44.

6 Letter to Euphrasie Cosnard, 27 June 1828, Arch. Abb. de Solesmes; *Lettres de dom Guéranger à Euphrasie Cosnard*, Archives dom Guéranger, VIII (Solesmes, 2003), p.11.

7 Letter to Édouard Guéranger, 15 April 1830, Arch. Abb. de Solesmes; *Lettres de dom Guéranger à sa famille*, Archives dom Guéranger, XIII, (Solesmes, 2004), p. 84.



forward to dawn with impatience. At last the day came, we lowered the windows, and we saw that we were seven or eight leagues from Chartres, the eternal steeples of which could already be seen.⁸

One should read the description of a session in the Chamber of Deputies which he had attended,⁹ or the account of a procession of Corpus Christi in the village of Marolles, where he stayed for some time, stopping at the house of a nephew of Bishop de La Myre, whom he accompanied to the waters:

‘I made the procession, in the midst of which I thought my singers were going to come to blows. Some wanted to go one way, others to another. At last, after a vigorous altercation, the rebels were

silent, apart from a few swear words, which they still uttered to each other for some time in the various pauses of the song.’¹⁰

One could also cite surprisingly lively dialogues reported in his letters, for example his first interview with Bishop Carron to obtain approval of his project for the restoration of monastic life,¹¹ or the account of an audience with the Archbishop of Paris.¹² Reading them, you would think you were there.

In the letters to his brother Édouard, there are several mentions of a ‘mimi’. At first, one might think it was a cat that he had entrusted to his brother in his absence. In fact, he was talking about his canon’s mozetta [a short cape with a hood, which he had the right to wear as a canon of the diocese]: ‘Do you always take good care of my Mimi? How is he doing? Tell him that I should very much like to stroke him soon in my stall in the choir of Saint-Julien’, the cathedral of Le Mans.¹³

Cheerful, he needed to laugh: ‘Write to me at length,’ he asked l’Abbé Fonteinne during his stay in Paris in 1833, ‘Make me laugh, because I’m too serious here. If you only knew all the people I meet, and to whose great airs one must respond with great airs; it’s unbearable.’¹⁴ He alludes to the steps he is taking, without much success, to raise funds for the next foundation. During this long stay, he wrote daily letters of stunning verve to l’Abbé Fonteinne in which he recounted his days in detail.

He uses a familiar tone with this first companion. Speaking of the Priory, ‘It’s

8 Ibid., 25 May 1828, p. 11-12.

9 Ibid., p. 15.

10 Ibid., 22 June 1828, p. 18.

11 Letter to Dom Fonteinne, 8 November 1832. Arch. Abb. de Solesmes, *Lettres de dom Guéranger à ses moines*, t. 2, Archives dom Guéranger, IV/2 (Solesmes, 2000), p. 26-27.

12 Letter to Dom Fonteinne, 29 April 1833, op. cit., p. 69.

13 Letter to Édouard Guéranger, 24 July 1828, Arch. Abb. de Solesmes, *Lettres de dom Guéranger à sa famille*, op. cit., p. 26.

14 Letter to Dom Fonteinne, 2 May 1833, op. cit., p. 73.

only this shack that bothers me a little,' he said, 'If she were to escape us! Let us pray to God and St. Benedict to preserve it for us. You have an excellent idea in thinking that while waiting it would be very useful to grease for Mr. Machin's ['Mr Thingumajig's'] paw. I had the same thought, but I see only a slight difficulty in that; it is that we have no money.'¹⁵ 'Farewell, dear friend, brave *bique* [nanny goat] -head.' This expression often comes up in correspondence; it is a term of endearment for him.

Dom Guéranger liked nicknames. Saint Scholastica is 'our good aunty'. He speaks of 'Sister Saint-Charles-de-la-tête-de-loup' [a *tête-de-loup*, literally 'wolf's head', is a kind of duster]. 'Aunt Bique' is Mademoiselle Manette Cosnard, a benefactress from the very beginning. Creditors – he would have them for the rest of his life – are the 'barkers'. In the community, there is 'the Captain': Dom Gardereau. He sometimes writes to him, 'Dear Captain.' 'The Dove': Dom Gauthey. 'Ceciliano', 'Cécilien' or 'Benjamin': Dom Guépin. The 'Corporal': Dom Dépillier. In a letter to Dom Piolin, the 'you-you' [yodelling or warbling] refers to Gregorian chant.

Joy, for Dom Guéranger, is part of monastic life.

To be continued. Translated by Sr MBR.

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Information about the Cause of Beatification for Dom Prosper Guéranger, founder of our Benedictine Congregation of Solesmes, can be found at www.domgueranger.net.

The History of Appley House: Part 10: The Connection with Napoleon

The news of Wellington's victory at Waterloo on 18th June 1815 was of particular importance to the eldest of the family at Appley, Elizabeth Hutt, as she was engaged to be married to a naval surgeon, William Warden, serving on HMS *Northumberland* under Admiral Sir George Cockburn (famous for the burning of Washington in 1814). Son of the landlord of the Bamff Arms at Alyth, Forfarshire, Warden was fourteen years older than Elizabeth and had spent most of his career at sea (as did his brother John, a purser, who will also appear in the history of Appley House). Hopes for a wedding had to be postponed, however, after Napoleon decided (as he wrote to the Prince Regent) 'to throw myself upon the most powerful, the most constant and the most generous of my enemies.' With a group of his officers he surrendered to the Captain of HMS *Bellerophon*, who took him to Plymouth. On instructions from London, Napoleon and his entourage were transferred to HMS *Northumberland* to be taken into exile on St Helena. In a letter to 'My dear Miss Hutt,' Warden described the arrival of the defeated Emperor:

¹⁵ Letter to Dom Fonteinne, 31 December 1831, op. cit., p. 20-21.

‘With a slow step Bonaparte mounted the gangway, and on feeling himself firm on the quarter-deck, he raised his hat when the guard presented arms and the drum rolled... He saluted with an air of the most affable politeness. His dress was that of a general of the French infantry. His face was pale, and his beard of an unshaven appearance. His forehead is thinly covered with dark hair, as well as the top of his head, which is large, and has a singular flatness. What hair he has is bushy, and I could not discern the slightest mixture of white in it. His eyes, which are grey, are in continual motion, and hurry rapidly to the various objects around him. His teeth are regular and good; his neck is short, but his shoulders of the finest proportion; the rest of his figure, though a little blended with Dutch fatness, is of very handsome form.’

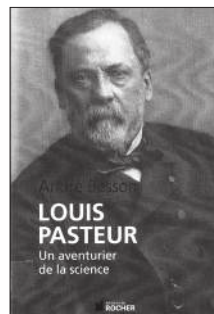
During the voyage, and afterwards for some months on St Helena, Warden enjoyed long conversations with Napoleon, who gave him an ivory chess set and, at their final meeting, the gold buckles out of his knee-breeches. The conversations and anecdotes filled Warden’s long letters to his fiancée. They say little about Appley, but one letter concludes, ‘Pray offer my respectful compliments to Captain Hutt, and my love to every person else; don’t forget Ann, Fanny and Kate, such impudence. George must by this time have got on his legs, don’t let him forget me. I think Ben and Will would be unwilling to do so.’ The final letter which Warden brought home with him ended thus: ‘The sketch which you desired of St. Helena may be the object of conversation hereafter, by your hospitable and friendly fireside. In the meantime, and at all times, I am, &c. &c., W.W.’ Urged on by friends, he published the letters in 1816, and the book went through sixteen editions in the first two years. There was then an enormous row, as the favourable light in which Napoleon was presented excited bitter criticism by supporters of the Government. The *Edinburgh Review* praised the book as ‘one of the few works on Napoleon that is neither sullied by adulation nor disgraced by scurrility; neither disfigured by blind admiration of his defects, nor polluted by a base and malignant anxiety to blacken and defame a fallen man.’ The *Quarterly Review*, however, savaged ‘The fabricated letters of that poor bungler Warden.’ The Governor of St Helena, Sir Hudson Lowe, complained that it was a breach of discipline on Warden’s part, and the Admiralty duly struck his name off the list of naval surgeons. It was, however, shortly restored at the insistence of Sir George Cockburn, and Warden was appointed surgeon of the *Argonaut* hospital-ship at Chatham. He and Miss Hutt were married on 11th August 1817 at St Helens, Isle of Wight, and they went on to have two daughters and a son. The latter was called George Cockburn Warden, doubtless after the Admiral who had rescued Warden’s career.

To be continued.

Read in the Refectory

André Besson, *Louis Pasteur : Un Aventurier de la Science* (Éditions du Rocher, 2013), 314 pp..

If the only things that come to mind when you hear the name Pasteur are pasteurised milk and the Institut Pasteur, then this fascinating biography will prove something of an eye-opener. Louis Pasteur was born in December 1822 in Franche-Comte and baptised the following January. During the ceremony, to the horror of the assembled family and friends, the little cap on his head caught fire from a nearby candle. His father dashed forward to put out the flames, burning his hands a little in the process but the baby was unharmed. Drama was never to be lacking in Louis' life. Besson sets his story against the backdrop of the turbulent and often violent upheavals that marked 19th century French politics, and which make Pasteur's success as a scientist all the more remarkable.



As a young child Louis was an idle daydreamer with little inclination to read. At around the age of 14, however, a great change took place. Under an inspiring teacher who recognised the boy's potential, Louis began to demonstrate his phenomenal ability to work hard. His first scientific discovery came when, while aged only 24 and still a doctoral student, he identified the odd dissymmetry present in the crystals of a newly discovered acid which was otherwise identical in structure to tartaric acid. The fact that these two acids reacted differently to light had remained an enigma that, up to that point, had defeated the best scientists.

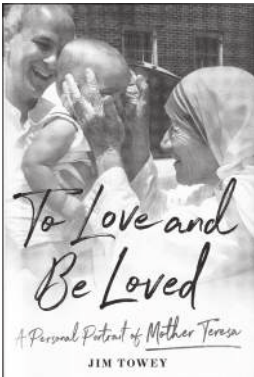
Those of us who are strangers to physics and chemistry might be tempted to give up when Besson starts to describe Pasteur's experiments. But Besson steers us through the stickier bits, and ensures that at the very least we understand enough to appreciate and admire the skill and originality which Pasteur brought to all his work, and the excitement of the discovery. When presented with a problem, he would pursue it with determination, working tirelessly and methodically till he found a solution. Although he spent long hours in the laboratory, often working into the small hours, he combined his rigorous experiments with meticulous observations in the field. So, for example when trying to discover a way to prevent anthrax in sheep, he spent time visiting farms, talking to the farmers, and examining the animals. The result was a vaccine against the disease. An innovative thinker who took a broad view of things, he believed that science should serve the needs of society. His achievements range from saving the French silk-weaving industry by identifying the parasite responsible for a silkworm disease, to coming to the rescue of brewers by finding a way of preventing beer from decomposing in barrels. Perhaps his most important, certainly the most dramatic, of his discoveries was that of a treatment for rabies – a world-wide scourge at that time. Besson's account is thrilling.

Pasteur was far from being a cold rationalist: Besson shows him to be a deeply compassionate and tender-hearted man, describing his anguish at being unable to save the three of his little girls who died in childhood, the care and attention he gave his wife during childbirth, and his concern for the sufferers of rabies. Louis and his wife Marie were very happily married. A devout Catholic, Marie was calm, patient and intelligent, acting as her husband's secretary, supporting and encouraging him in all his many trials, though she fought a losing battle over his tendency to overwork. Besson's sympathetic portrait of a sympathetic can be highly recommended. *Sr MAB*

Jim Towey, *To Love and Be Loved. A Personal Portrait of Mother Teresa* (New York/London: Simon and Schuster, 2022), xii+275pp.

Jim Towey visited us last summer. He was one of a number of speakers at Quarr Abbey and came to spend a recreation with us. We were struck by his friendly simplicity and evident goodness. Clearly, his association with Mother Teresa had left its mark.

He wrote this book twenty-five years after her death, to show her as he knew her, 'not as the perfect, plastic saint that she inevitably became in the minds of some people, but the real person who had friends and liked chocolate and told jokes and occasionally got angry. Seeing her humanity, with all the sweetness and frailty that entails, makes her life and works all the more remarkable.'



It is indeed a personal portrait, a very readable, humble and humorous account of Mother Teresa's life and mission and the author's friendship with her in her last twelve years. He writes with disarming honesty of his life before they met and his gradual growth in grace through her influence. As a lawyer, he was able to give professional help to the Missionaries of Charity, as well as the practical service open to all volunteers. From the inside, then, he recounts stories which might otherwise have passed unrecorded.

The author tried his vocation with the MC Fathers, but his vocation was in the world. Mother Teresa encouraged him to do his governmental work 'with Jesus, for Jesus, to Jesus... all for Jesus through Mary. You must bring holiness right there in the heart of the government... be His love, His presence right there where He has put you... and keep your heart pure.' Her letters – and she wrote thousands, by hand, to recipients all over the world – were full of simple, holy wisdom. Many glimpses of it appear in this book.

Revered by people in high places, she courageously brought the Gospel of Life to the heart of politics. Invited to speak at the American National Prayer Breakfast in 1994, she said, 'Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of

love and peace is abortion.’ A few feet away, the decidedly pro-abortion president Bill Clinton ‘repeatedly took sips from an empty coffee cup to hide any reaction’. Yet after a private meeting with the couple Mother Teresa befriended Hillary Clinton and in 1995 the two together opened the MCs’ home for adoption in Washington. Two years later, Mrs Clinton led the US delegation to the saint’s funeral in Calcutta, and was later seen distributing Miraculous Medals of Our Lady!

Jim Towey was as shocked as everyone else by the posthumous revelation of Mother Teresa’s long years of spiritual darkness and seeming abandonment by God. Like her other close associates, he had had no inkling of the interior pain and desolation she was enduring, beneath the cheerful smiling exterior. The trial evidently enabled her to identify herself with the outcasts she served. ‘The physical situation of my poor left in the streets unwanted, unloved, unclaimed – are the true pictures of my own spiritual life.’ Yet the more she felt rejected by God, the more her missionary work flourished. Whatever her feelings, her will and her trust did not falter, and she kept the private vow made in 1942 never to refuse God anything. She no longer felt God’s love, but was still able to bring it to those who needed it most.

After her death, her life and teaching have continued to influence our author: ‘For me in the thirty-seven years since I met her - what I refer to as life “after Mother” - the path to holiness has meant imitating her. She is my compass. She often asked me to pray that she didn’t “spoil God’s work”, and I pray each day that I don’t squander God’s gift of Mother to me.’

Sr CW

Notebook

The first monastery of enclosed Benedictine nuns in India was founded just outside Bangalore in 1968, after a group of young Indian women had made their novitiate in our community. Shanti Nilayam Abbey has been fully independent for decades, but contacts between our communities remain very close. This January, Mother Abbess had the opportunity to see Shanti Nilayam in person when, with Dom Patrice Mahieu of Solesmes, she conducted their canonical visitation. Bangalore in January turned out to feel like a lovely English summer’s day, which meant it was still rather chilly

for some of the sisters. At home, we were enthralled by regular emails reporting the travellers’ experiences, and afterwards we enjoyed seeing photographs which allowed us to put faces and images to the people and places we hear about so often. Mother Abbess was delighted to experience Shanti Nilayam’s liturgy, celebrated prayerfully and with vigour. Their Office and Mass are celebrated in English to suitably adapted versions of the Gregorian melodies, as worked out by sisters of our community and an American church musician in the 1970s. This great labour of love continues to bear its fruit in



Shanti Nilayam's daily worship.

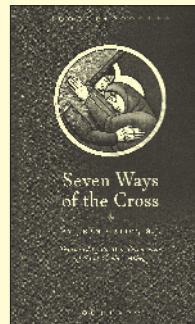
A site which was outside Bangalore fifty years ago is now greatly affected by the rapid expansion of the city, an expansion not always accompanied by adequate infrastructure, which has resulted in some recent serious flooding in the monastery's compound. The pictures we saw of their gardens and vineyards nonetheless witnessed to hard work towards recovery. Another important area of production is candle-making; Shanti Nilayam supply a popular local Christian shrine.

Mother also visited one of Shanti Nilayam's foundations, Rosa Mystica Monastery in Dindigul diocese in Tamil Nadu. The seven-hour journey from Bangalore to Tamil Nadu means travelling east, into a hotter and more humid climate. It was Pongal on the day of the journey. Pongal? This is an Indian festival celebrating the beginning of the harvest. Coloured patterns adorn the pavements in front of houses and buildings, from a roadside café to the bishop's palace. A fire-pit is dug outside, and rice is cooked in a sweet and spicy milk pudding which must boil over to signify abundance. For Christians, this is kept in a Christian light, and the oxen who pull the plough

are brought to the priest for a blessing. The discovery of Indian Christianity's particular flavour was a very interesting part of the visit. For example, in Shanti Nilayam, it is customary to remove one's shoes before praying. The priest on the sanctuary walks barefoot, and it is a gesture which is also used for private moments of prayer such as the Angelus.

Mother was enchanted by the joy and fervour of the Sisters at Shanti Nilayam and Rosa Mystica, and by the courtesy shown by all the Indians she met. Please pray for many monastic vocations to continue Shanti Nilayam's precious life of prayer and witness in India.

Sr Bernadette Byrne has contributed various English translations to a beautiful bilingual volume, *Un Psaume, Une Abbaye. One Psalm, One Abbey* (Weyrich), which brings together Marie-Line's Burguiere's photographs with meditations on the Psalms from twelve monasteries, including Quarr. Sr Lætitia Payne's translation of *Seven Ways of the Cross* by Jean Galot SJ has been published by Angelico Press.



The book includes reproductions of a set of Stations of the Cross painted by Caryll Houselander and now in our abbey, a kind gift from the Sisters of Christ when their house on the Island was closed a few years ago. May the Cross and Resurrection of the Lord shed their light upon all our readers this Easter.

Ubi caritas est vera, Deus ibi est.

**Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsulemus et in ipso iucundemur.
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.**

Ubi caritas est vera, Deus ibi est.

**Simul ergo cum in unum congregamur :
Ne nos mente dividamur, caveamus.
Cessent iurgia maligna, cessent lites.
Et in medio nostri sit Christus Deus.**

Ubi caritas est vera, Deus ibi est.

**Simul quoque cum beatis videamus
Glorianter vultum tuum, Christe Deus ;
Gaudium, quod est immensum, atque probum,
Sæcula per infinita sæculorum.**

Where charity is true, God is there.

*Christ's love has gathered us as one.
Let us rejoice and be glad in Him.
Let us reverence and love the loving God.
And let us love one another from a pure heart.*

Where charity is true, God is there.

*When, then, we are gathered us together as one,
let us take care that nothing from our hearts divides us.
Let ill-willed arguments cease; an end to quarrels.
And let Christ our God be in our midst.*

Where charity is true, God is there.

*Together too with the blessed,
may we see Your face in glory, Christ our God -
that joy which is boundless and sure,
for endless ages.*