

PLATEA

Herne Bay's Catholic Parish Magazine
Summer 2019 (issue 7)



Christianity & Humanism ♦ Michael Norman
Our New Archbishop: John Wilson
Euphrasie Barbier ♦ Sr Yvonne Pepper RNDM
Journeys into Mass ♦ Brian Molloy





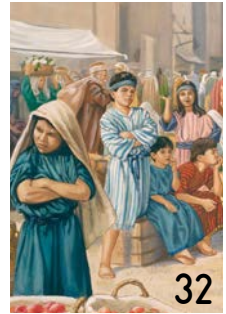
Going to Church by **William H. Johnson** [1940]

This painting by William H Johnson sits in the Smithsonian American Art Museum and is an example of naïve art; referring to its simple, unaffected and unsophisticated character. This rather derogatory phrase is often used to refer to art by artists who have had no formal training in an art school or academy. Beautifully simple and very effective, *Going to Church* is both colourful and joyful to look at, not necessarily loaded with meaningful thoughts, ideas or layers. It is, simply, a depiction of a family travelling on horse and cart to church in 1940. As a community gathers in the Lord's name, Jesus tells us, He is present.

The artist, William H Johnson, whilst initially not having any art training, ended up learning his skills at the National Academy of Design in New York and paved the way for other black artists to follow suit and break into the mainstream art world. He was a pioneer and is now being recognised as one of the foremost African-American artists and a major figure in 20th-century American art.

In this Issue of **PLATEA**

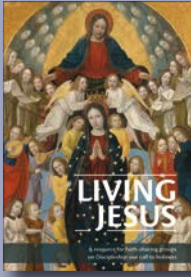
Highlights



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PLATEA

Herne Bay's Catholic Parish Magazine

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PLATEA features original stories and other articles, ideas and creative content intended to inspire the Catholic parish in Herne Bay to ever deeper discipleship of Jesus Christ.

PLATEA includes contributions that we believe are worthy of our readers' consideration, whether or not we fully agree with them. Views expressed by our contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial position of **PLATEA** or of the parish community. Adverts are not necessarily endorsements of the businesses featured.

Editorial team: Annette Ballard, Connie Caira, Richard Carr, Gabrielle Davis, Marian Green, Mark Nash, Rachel Nash, Deacon Barry Walker and Fr Mark White (if you would like join in, get in touch)
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Cover: Archbishop John Wilson's Installation: arrival at St George's Cathedral / © Mazur/catholicnews.org.uk

Welcome to **PLATEA**

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the seventh edition of **PLATEA**, the parish magazine of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Herne Bay.

Back in July 2019, the Archdiocese of Southwark, of which our parish is a part, received a new archbishop, John Wilson. Inside these pages you will read a little of what he had to say of his appointment; we look forward to having him visit our parish in the not too distant future.

Also in this edition, we have brand new poetry and an article from Michael Norman on the clash between Christianity and Humanism - this will be sure to provoke some thought and discussion. There is some of the wonderful photography taken by Marcin Mazur, at the Bishops' Conference, of the National Eucharistic Congress in September 2018. Canon John O'Toole's talk in preparation of the Congress also features as well as Brian Malloy's article on experiencing Mass in France and India.

Last edition we featured a story about a Tyburn Nun whose faith life was nurtured in our parish; this edition we are delighted to have received an article about Mother Euphrasie Barbier of Our Lady of the Missions. The cause for her being recognised as a saint for the Universal Church is progressing well at the moment and her tomb is just down the road in Hersden parish in the village of Westbere (Sturry).

We feature the third *My Faith Journey* submitted by Sorcha Jull. Such stories are a source of encouragement and the sharing of our own particular journey of faith is a task that we are all called to undertake.

I hope that you enjoy all of the articles in this edition of **PLATEA**. Thanks to all who contributed. We look forward to receiving your contributions for future editions, in the form of letters, questions, articles, photos and, of course, your stories of faith.

With an assurance of my prayers and best wishes,

Fr Mark White CP
Parish Priest

PLATEA LETTERS

In response to the article on the Tyburn Convent

Dear Althea,

I am writing on behalf of the Prioress with a belated reply to your kind letter.

We found your Parish Magazine very interesting, especially, of course, the article written by R. Mother Josephine. We are delighted that she had the chance to make known our Mother Foundress to a wider public, notably to your parishioners and the two priests, Father Mark and Father Patrick. It was lovely to read of their happy celebration.

I belong to St Loup, where R Mother Josephine is the sub-prioress. Last Friday I had a good 'chat' on the phone with R Mother Josephine. I told her that I had read her article.

Please let Linda know that I enjoyed reading her 'faith journey' testimony. It is so good to know that another soul has 'come back' to God! May her journey continue to be blessed by the Lord! Your parish sounds to be a very welcoming and vibrant community.

As we are now coming up to Pentecost, I pray that the Holy Spirit may

guide your parish community always, that your obvious spirit of unity may continue to flourish in the parish, and hopefully, draw more to join you.

Thank you for your very interesting letter. It has been lovely to learn all your news, and to know such a united parish exists in the south of England, my own country, but I am a northerner from just outside Liverpool.

Thank you for your prayers and the calling down of God's blessing for us here in Rome.

Possibly we will meet someday if you visit St. Loup, which has 25 guest rooms. I should think that R. Mother Josephine would love to have you there! May the new found knowledge of Marie Adele attract some of the parishioners to join you!

May your parish of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart be blessed always - no wonder it salvaged that lovely statue bearing the same title!

United in the same spirit of devotion to the Sacred Heart and His Holy Mother, let us pray for each other.

Yours in the Risen Lord,

Mother M. Martin Carney O.S.B
on behalf of R. Mother M. Colmcille Allan, O.S.B



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Parish in Review

Minsteracres 10-16.8.19



Passionist Icon Visit 7.4.19



Easter 2019 21.4.19



Move of the Sacred Heart Statue



If you wish to share a short reflection on something that has happened in the parish or have a photo of a recent event please either email: plateamag@gmail.com or write to Platea, 3 Sea Street, Herne Bay.



ON THE FEAST OF ST JAMES, 25 JULY 2019, Archbishop John Wilson was installed as the eleventh Archbishop of Southwark. He takes on one of the biggest roles in the English Church after only being a bishop for three years, previously serving as an auxiliary bishop in Westminster and Titular Bishop of Lindisfarne. As Archbishop he will be head of one of the largest dioceses in England, covering south London and the county of Kent. He will also be Metropolitan of a province covering the entire south England coast.

Following Archbishop Peter Smith's resignation, upon reaching the canonical age of retirement of 75, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, appointed Archbishop John Wilson to be the 11th Archbishop of Southwark

On news of the appointment, Archbishop John said: "Someone once said if you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans. In whatever way I might have imagined God's plan for my life to unfold, the news of my appointment by Pope Francis as the new Archbishop of Southwark came as a complete surprise. I am grateful to His Excellency Archbishop Edward J. Adams, the Apostolic Nuncio, for his encouragement, and for reminding me of C S Lewis'

invitation to be 'surprised by joy.' It is the joy of the Gospel, the Good News of God's love for the world in His Son Jesus Christ, that sustains and animates the Church's mission in which I am to share in a new way.

"To say I am deeply humbled by my appointment, while absolutely true, hardly seems adequate. It is an immense privilege and I will do my very best to serve joyfully after the example of the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Aware of my unworthiness and limitations, and with more than a little trepidation, I am grateful to Pope Francis for entrusting me with this new mission in the service of the Lord and His people in the Archdiocese of Southwark. There is so much that is new to me and I know I




AT THE TIME OF WRITING, the Archdiocese of Southwark has 8 bishops! Archbishops Emeritus (that is retired) Michael Bowen, Kevin McDonald and Peter Smith, Bishops Emeritus John Hine and Howard Tripp as well as our new Archbishop John Wilson and his auxiliaries Bishops Patrick Lynch ss.cc. and Paul Hendricks. That's the same as the number of dioceses in Scotland and there's still a vacancy in Kent!


have much to learn. I rely totally on the Holy Spirit to guide my new ministry of witnessing to the love of God for each person so that we might be evermore a Church of joyful missionary disciples, alive in Christ, our risen Saviour.”

Archbishop Wilson was born in Sheffield on 4 July 1968. He studied at the University of Leeds before beginning his priestly formation at the Venerable English College in Rome. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1995 by Bishop David Konstant.

Bishops of Southwark		
1851	1870	Thomas Grant
1871	1881	James Danell
1882	1885	Robert Aston Coffin, C.S.S.R.
1885	1897	John Baptist Butt
1897	1903	Francis Alphonsus Bourne
1904	1949	Peter Emmanuel Amigo
1949	1965	Cyril Conrad Cowderoy
Archbishops of Southwark (Metropolitans of Southwark Province)		
1965	1976	Cyril Conrad Cowderoy
1977	2003	Michael George Bowen
2003	2009	Kevin John Patrick McDonald
2010	2019	Peter David Smith
2019	Present	John Wilson



**Roman Catholic
Bishops and
Archbishops of
Southwark**



What's hanging around Archbishop John's neck on p.8?

It's a Pallium. 'Pallium' is a Latin word which translates as 'cloak' and it is the sign of a metropolitan archbishop. It is worn over the chasuble and bears six crosses, of which four bear a pin (known as a 'spinula', which translates as 'thorn'). Every year, on the feast of St Agnes, two lambs are brought from the site of St Paul's martyrdom at Tre Fontane to the Basilica of St Agnes on the Via Nomentana in Rome. After being blessed they are taken and presented to the Pope and will then remain in the care of the Sisters who reside at the Basilica of St Cecilia in Trastevere. The two lambs are shorn just before Easter and their wool is used to make the pallia for newly-appointed archbishops. Before being presented to the newly-appointed Archbishops, the pallia rest overnight before the tomb of St Peter, which is located in the Crypt of St Peter's Basilica in Rome (pictured above).



Message from Archbishop John Wilson on the occasion of his installation

DEAR FRIENDS,

Today, Thursday 25th of July 2019, the Church keeps the Feast of the great Apostle St James. It is also the date of my formal Installation as the eleventh Archbishop of Southwark which will take place in St George's Cathedral.

I begin my new ministry in the joy and hope that comes from faith in the Lord Jesus, once crucified and now forever risen from the dead. In the Gospel reading from St Matthew, which we shall hear during the Installation Mass, the Lord Jesus proclaims that he came 'not to be served, but to serve.' This is the pattern for all discipleship and mission in the Church. We are to be servants of each other in the strength of the love of Christ which has been poured into our hearts.

I very much look forward to getting to know the people of the Archdiocese, its parishes, schools, and religious communities. I have much to learn and I will need your support and collaboration as we work together to share our faith in word and action.

Please pray for me, and for the priests, deacons, religious and lay people of the Archdiocese. And please be sure of my prayers for you, in particular if you, or your loved ones, are sick or facing any kind of difficulty or suffering.

We are one body in Christ and we step forward together with trust in God's living and loving presence in our lives. With every blessing.

YOURS SINCERELY IN CHRIST

The Most Rev. John Wilson, Archbishop of Southwark



PAY DAY

When Jesus wanted to explain something about God He would often tell a story to make His point. These stories were called parables and one of them that Jesus told was about how God made it possible for everyone to go to heaven regardless of whether they accepted His invitation while they were young or when they were old.

Jesus told the story of a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers to work on his vineyard. This guy offered to pay them a denarius (a silver coin) for a day's work. Yep, that sounded good and so they set to it.

A little later in the day (around nine in the morning) the landowner went off to get some more labourers to work in his vineyard. Sure enough he soon found what he was looking for and he set them to work as well.

He did the same at midday, at three in the afternoon and then at five o'clock. The chances are that probably having begun work at around six in the morning the working day would finish around six in the evening. That meant that the last lot would only have to put in an hour's labour. Oh well, never mind. At least they'd get a little bit of money, which was better than nothing.

That's precisely what the labourers who'd been slaving away since the crack of dawn thought. It had been tough working through the heat of the day. Surely they deserved to receive a bigger payout for their endeavours?

'Fraid not chaps! The landowner in the story represented God, and Jesus wanted His listeners to understand that the reward of spending forever in heaven with God was available to those who snapped it up right away *and* to those who came on board at the end. Jammy or what!



I'VE NEVER
STARRED IN
A PARABLE
BEFORE!

Here's how the story
ended in Bible book
Matthew, chapter 20 and
verses 8 through to 16.

JOURNEYS TO MASS

By Brian Molloy

It is always enjoyable going to Mass with my wife and friends, along with friends at the Mass and all those others unknown to us. We travel a fair amount, and so experience Mass in various parts of the world and, of course, in many different languages. We have witnessed a variety of practices in conjunction with attending Mass. It is some of these experiences that I have chosen to share with you. However, whatever the experience, the process central to the Mass is the same always. Language is not a barrier.

As we spend much time in Burgundy, France, these experiences relate mainly to going to Mass in France. The traditions are quite different from being in England, where the story of Mass attendance is more stable. The tradition in France is like the services delivered to the villages like the butcher, baker and other services. The priest celebrates Mass in different villages of his parish on a sort of rota system i.e. every Saturday vigil and/or Sunday Mass is celebrated in one of the villages, and then not again in that village for some time. People rarely go to another village for Mass. These same people are to be seen in local supermarkets some distance away from their village. We have attended Mass in at least 25 different churches in our area. Sometimes we make up the congregation to 5 people, but more usually there are 10-20 people.

Happily, Easter and Christmas Masses are well attended.

Churches vary in size but there is a feeling and visibility of damp and green mould. In the winter they are very cold. For the most part the heating is antiquated. Where we attended Mass in one church, some people were sitting on the right-hand side. Presuming this was because there would be a baptism or other occasion, we sat on the left, only to learn that the heating worked solely on the right-hand side of the church.

It was much like our first Christmas in our area of France. There was already quite a crowd, but seats were available near a disused door. We took those seats and we soon realised why no one was sitting there. It was mega draughty and cold. Sometimes the small congregation would huddle together behind the altar. Sometimes there is a big thick curtain cutting off part of the nave to help with the warmth.

At one Mass, the priest announced that there would be a period of silence and meditation. A really nice idea. Then – from the gallery, a trumpeter played the ‘Sound of Silence’. We did not dare look at each other but the pew shook with mirth.

Lent and Easter have their own specialities. At Palm-tide, at the cathedral in Orleans, a service for school children



was in progress. We could not understand why the nave was strewn with clothing. We had to work out that one. On Palm Sunday, bunches of box hedge are used instead of palms. People arrive outside the church where the priest blesses the people and the box hedges. After this blessing, the majority of people process into the church – but some leave just after the blessing without attending Mass having had their ‘palms’ blessed. Locally, at the Easter Vigil with the New Fire, the fire is lit after several attempts with loud suggestions being put forward. A fire engine is known to be close by. The cinders and ashes blow everywhere. The procession to the church is accompanied with much mirth as people try to keep their candles alight.

At Assumption, people bring along cake etc. for sale. Also, the priest encourages people to buy chocolates and nougat at the back of the church. Eager buyers hover near them during the Mass.

Baptisms are a time guaranteed to fill the church with noise throughout the Mass except for the few minutes during the Consecration.

We have been to a couple of funerals locally. It depends on how well known and the popularity of the deceased as to how many people turn out. Recently, a young man of 26 died of a heart attack. There were more than 300 people at the funeral. Everyone who wishes process around the coffin. As you can imagine this takes a long time. The church was small with barely room even for the family. It was a long time standing outside in the cold.

To finish this section on France – we enjoy visiting Taizé – only a few hours away from our house in France. However, in 2018, we thought it would be extra special to attend the Service on Easter Sunday morning. Taizé is usually packed with people and their coaches from



across Europe. We could not understand why it was so empty. It turned out that it had been decided to hold the Easter Sunday Service at 6.30am to greet the sunrise, the new day. All those of us who were expecting the Service at the usual time were crammed into the crypt for a brief Eucharistic Service.



Finally, at Cochin, Kerala in India, we attended Mass at the National Basilica of Our Lady of Ransom (*above and bottom left*). This was a special place of pilgrimage with people coming and going and talking throughout the Mass. Outside was a shrine with panels depicting a variety of images of Our Lady. People were sweeping round this shrine with grass hand brushes (*pictured*). One lady offered a sweeper to me. I didn't know what I was supposed to do with it. She was so surprised when I quickly handed it back to her. Later we learned this was a form of penance or intention.

I'm sure that as we travel far and wide, we all have tales to tell of our journeys into Mass.

If, like Brian, you would like to share your experiences of Mass elsewhere in the UK or from far flung fields, please email plateamag@gmail.com or drop in a note to the Retreat, 3 Sea Street for the attention of **PLATEA**. It would be wonderful to hear from you.

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Reflecting on the Eucharist

Canon John O'Toole • A talk delivered for the Canterbury Deanery on 30 June 2018

In a busy world, time is very precious and so my thanks above all to you for taking the time and making the time to be here and to support each other as individuals and as parishes as part of the preparation for the Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress in Liverpool in September. While the focus of the Pilgrimage and Congress will be on Adoration (*Adoremus* means 'we adore') the overall theme will be "Jesus – I am the Bread of Life" – which is wider and broader.

In the middle of Year B, the lectionary interrupts Mark's account as we listen for five consecutive Sundays to the Bread of Life discourse from chapter six of St John's Gospel.

There are 2 major themes in Jn 6 – the Bread Jesus is and the Bread Jesus gives. Jesus is the Word made flesh and the Eucharist is the sacrament of Jesus, the Word made flesh. Why do you think there is no breaking of the bread in Jn 6? [John wants no separation between the Giver and the Gift]. An excellent preparation would be to read John Chapter 6 individually or in small groups and to reflect on how Jesus nourishes us by his presence and his power. 'I am' is God's own name in the Scriptures and when Jesus says 'I am' he means 'I am with you' to nourish, support, comfort

and challenge you. Having received the GIFT we are to called to become GIVERS of the gift to others.

We are all likely familiar with the saying of St Augustine of Hippo that the person who sings prays twice. We can learn a lot from the Methodists whose hymn book is called 'Singing the Faith' – as our best Eucharistic hymns are a key to opening the door of the Eucharist for us. As the Latin tag has it, *lex orandi, lex credendi* – the law of praying is the law of believing. The hymn I have chosen was a popular one when I was a young seminarian at St John's Seminary, Womersley – but it doesn't seem to be sung very often these days. My ambition is to encourage people to learn or re-learn the hymn by John Grealley SJ (on p.19) as preparation for the Liverpool Pilgrimage and Congress.

The Eucharist is like a jewel which has many aspects which we can always explore but never exhaust. Why the Eucharist? St Thomas Aquinas's deeply theological answer is – "friends should be together." For us as Christians, mystery means not the inexplicable but the inexhaustible. So let me give a brief and very broad sweep of the rich mystery of the Eucharist – which I call 5, 4, 3 2, 1.

1. See us, Lord, about thine altar though so many, we are one; many souls by love united in the heart of Christ thy Son.
2. Hear our prayers, O loving Father, hear in them thy Son, our Lord; hear him speak our love and worship, as we sing with one accord.
3. Once were seen the blood and water; now he seems but bread and wine; then in human form he suffered, now his form is but a sign.
4. Wheat and grape contain the meaning; food and drink he is to all; one in him, we kneel adoring, gathered by his loving call.
5. Hear us yet; so much is needful in our frail, disordered life; stay with us and tend our weakness till that day of no more strife.
6. Members of his mystic body now we know our prayer is heard, heard by thee, because thy children have received th' eternal word.

5 There are five movements to the Mass or the Eucharist (meaning thanksgiving). The five movements are GATHER (it is the Spirit who gathers us), LISTEN (to the Word of God in the words of men and women. 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening' – God's heart speaks to our heart), GIVE THANKS (How can I repay the Lord his goodness to me? The cup of salvation I will raise). TAKE AND EAT (The Eucharist is food for the journey. To embody Christ we need strength and medicine. We cannot do it on our own). GO (from where we get the word Mass. The word Mass means 'sent'. It is a sending not an ending. Communion is for mission. 'Go and make love to one another!').

4 The Second Vatican Council spoke of the four modes of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. These are highlighted when incense is used at Mass. So when is incense used in the Mass and for what purpose? (Altar, ambo, priest, people). Not just as a symbol of prayer but of mystery. As already mentioned, for us as Christians, mystery is not the inexplicable but the inexhaustible – as in the presence of Christ. So Christ is present firstly in the people who gather for Mass. Secondly, He is present in the priest who presides (as the visible head of the body who gather to worship. Christ is the Host of every Mass). Thirdly, He is truly present in the Word which is proclaimed so that when the Scriptures are read to us it is Christ himself who is speaking to us. Fourthly, he is uniquely and supremely present in the sacramental signs of bread and wine where His body is broken for us and his blood poured out for us. 'This is my body' means 'this is me'. 'This is my blood' means, 'This is me, giving my life for you.' Now you do the same in memory of me.

3 The Eucharist is the work of the Trinity. It brings us into communion with God and with each other and celebrates the presence and power of God in us as human beings and in all of God's creation. It is right and just that we give praise and thanks to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – the Father as the Giver, the Son as the Gift and the Spirit as the Giving. There are three dimensions to the Eucharist – past, present and future. It looks back to the Last Supper. 'Do this in memory of me' means not just recalling the past (like a school reunion) but the making



The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes (1545-50) by Jacopo Tintoretto

spiritually and effectively present an event of the past. The Eucharist is a sacrament in as much as it is given and a sacrament in as much as it is offered. It is truer to say that the Mass is THE sacrifice than a sacrifice – since Christ has died once and for all and cannot die again. Rather than one eternal sacrifice is made sacramentally present to us whenever we gather to celebrate the Eucharist. So the Eucharist looks also to the present where Christ is truly with us according to his promise that where two or three gather together in his name, he is there with us. Thirdly, it even remembers the future (just as one might say ‘don’t forget we are meeting next week’) and brings it into the present. It looks forward to the heavenly (or eschatological) banquet and to the fulfilment and happiness of those called to the supper of the Lamb. Notice that in the prayer we say just before Communion it is ‘those’ not ‘we’ who are called. God can surprise us about who will be at the banquet in heaven. None of us are invited onto God’s Admissions Committee but we are all invited onto God’s Welcoming Committee.

2 The liturgy or prayer of the Eucharist is a two-course meal of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of

the Eucharist – both of which are to be treated with equal dignity. The Word that is spoken prepares us for the Word that is broken. Christ nourishes and nurtures our faith in both Word and Sacrament.

Another pairing is the account in Mark’s Gospel of two feedings of the crowd (*as depicted by Tintoretto, above*) – one of 5,000 people with 12 baskets left over and one of 4,000 people with 7 baskets left over – often interpreted as stressing that the Eucharist is for Jews (the 12 tribes of Israel) and Gentiles alike (the 7 representing wholeness and fullness and so all the nations of the world).

Another pairing that St Mark stresses is the bread which is broken and the cup which is poured out. The bread is a symbol of the breadth of God’s love. The cup is a symbol of the depth of God’s love (Can you drink the cup that I must drink?). Receiving communion under both signs celebrates the breadth and depth of God’s love for us. Good to pray ‘Thank you, Lord, for the breadth of your love’ and ‘Thank you, Lord, for the depth of your love.’ Liturgically the sign of reverence in approaching the Eucharist is the procession together to the altar. This is a procession not a queue. Good to pray for the person in front of us and the person behind us. The Eucharist is

not just for me but for us. We pray not 'My Father' but 'Our Father' and "give us this day our daily bread."

One final pairing is the double epiclesis in the Eucharistic Prayer. Who changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ? We call on the Holy Spirit (not the priest) to change the bread and wine into the sacramental body and blood of Christ. We also pray (but may not notice) that the Holy Spirit will change us, the people of God, into the body and blood of Christ for the world. St Teresa of Avila's prayer reminds us that "Christ has no body now on earth but ours." How are we embodying Christ as individuals, parishes, deanery, diocese, the whole church?

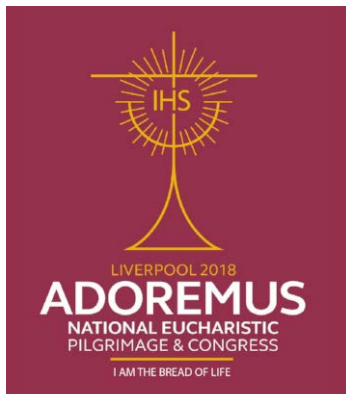
I There is one heart, centre and focus – and that is the person of Jesus himself who is our Brother, our Master and our Lord. He is not an absentee Lord, not a dead Lord. He is not only Risen but present – and present not only in the host but as the host of every Eucharist and is present with us both as Giver and as Gift. It is always good to remember that it is the Lord's Supper we celebrate, not our own.

One Person and One word. Jesus is the YES of God to us. The Eucharist is both God's YES to us and our AMEN to God.

The whole Gospel can be summed up in 5 words 'you did it to me.' Our mission is to go and nourish others with our presence.



For more photos from the National Eucharistic Congress see page 22



ADOREMUS: NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS 2018

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Euphrasie Barbier: A Great Contemplative, Rooted in Reality

by Sr Yvonne Pepper RNDM

Honouring a great woman in the
Archdiocese of Southwark

The 20 September 2018 was an especially important and blessed day for the Sisters of Our Lady of the Mission all over the world, as much for the Church and the Archdiocese of Southwark. The Cause for the Beatification and Canonisation of the Sisters' Foundress, advanced another stage.

Under the direction of Monsignor Canon James Cronin, the then Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese, a number of people were invited to give 'witness statements' as to the holiness, devotion shown, and relevance of the Foundress' life today. These documents were first typed and printed by the Archbishop's Secretary, Miss Rachel McKenzie, who accomplished the daunting task most ably and efficiently. These were then triplicated, and all signed by the Chancery Administrator, Deacon Michael Kennedy, under the watchful eye of Father James B. Hurley, as Promotor of Justice. The documents were then tied with red ribbon, sealed with the traditional wax seal of the diocese and then given to Sister Carmel Eberius RNDM, Promotor of the Cause, to be taken to Rome over the signature of Archbishop Peter Smith. If this stage goes forward, the Servant of God, Mother Mary of the Heart of Jesus, would be honoured with the title 'Venerable', and then, hopefully, 'Blessed', and maybe even 'Saint'.

It certainly was a day of great joy and relief, not only for those present but for all those over the years who have worked unremittingly, researching, writing, preparing and gathering all the documentation required by Rome.

SERVANT OF GOD

Title given once a cause for sainthood is presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints and is accepted.

VENERABLE

Title given after an in-depth investigation and a declaration that the person has lived the Christian virtues heroically.

BLESSED

Title recognising that the person is in Heaven; after a miracle occurring through the person's intercession is verified.

SAINT

Title given after a second miracle is verified. After this, the Pope declares the person a saintly example and the Cardinals of the Church are summoned to Rome for the ceremony.

At this point, after all the formality, everyone was able to relax. Many photos were taken and much interest shown in all that had taken place. Many questions were asked about this great woman, born humbly, 'unnoticed and unknown', except by her family and the priest who had baptised her: Adele Euphrasie Barbier; the question of the moment being, why all this was taking place in the Archdiocese of Southwark, far from her birthplace in Caen, Normandy.

Well, it was in this diocese where, in Sturry, on Wednesday 18 January 1893 the much-loved Mother Foundress died. Her remains lie in a marble tomb next to the altar in the Sisters' Chapel, there close to the Blessed Sacrament where this Holy Woman spent many hours in deep contemplation and prayer for her Congregation and the World.



Overlooking the altar and the tomb, is the room where she actually died. Her last words echo her life's dream: 'Be all united! Be all united on earth, that you may all be united in heaven.' This room is now part of a heritage museum to which Sisters from other Provinces of the Congregation and parishioners from the places where the Sisters work, make 'pilgrimage' to honour a woman who has touched so many lives in so many different ways.

Monks from St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate had always generously served the spiritual needs of the Sisters and it was Dom Thomas Bergh, the Ecclesiastical Superior of the Sisters of Sturry and Deal, who arrived just after their dear Mother had breathed her last. We are told that 'he looked in wonder at the unearthly beauty of this holy woman... he exclaimed... "if I live to a hundred, I shall never forget this scene". This from him was no exaggeration' (Dom Romanus Rios OSB from 'Heroine of the Mission Field).

So, it was there that the Solemn Requiem Mass on Saturday 28 January 1893, was sung by the Benedictine Monks from Ramsgate, the chief Celebrant being Dom Ephrem Blouzon. This kind priest was her 'old friend' who had frequently visited the 'Dear Mother' during her last illness. There has recently been discovered, in the archives of the Kentish Gazette, an account of this funeral and particularly of the panegyric delivered by Dom Ephrem (pictured left).

In it he quoted the words of St Augustine's Mother: 'Remember me as your Mother and pray for me at the altar of the Lord' saying that these words could be taken as expressing the dying wish for her Sisters from their 'Beloved Foundress', from her who died for years of self-sacrifice, laboured unceasingly and through many dangers for the Glory of God. ALWAYS FOR THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD!

Father went on to give a glowing account of the amazing things this frail but faith-filled and determined woman achieved for women, young girls, for the sick, the poor and those on the margins of life and lastly of the Congregation which she had begun so that, in the future, those in many parts of the world, in any kind of need, could be served with the same love and compassion.

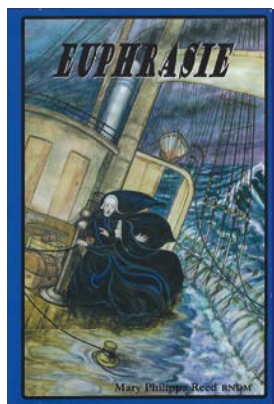
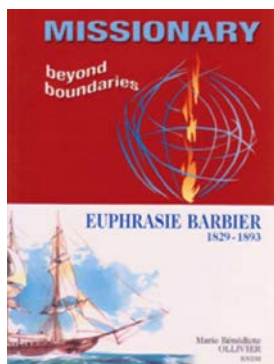
Yes, her achievements were certainly not for the faint-hearted! The stories of her life make for interesting if not for amazing incredulity. In writing about these in documents for Rome, bound together in her book *Missionary Beyond Boundaries*, Marie Bénédicte Ollivier RNDM wrote in great detail about her personality and achievements under the following headings: 'Woman of Conviction', 'Outstandingly Active', 'Deviating Neither to the Right nor the Left', 'Unshakable Faith and Compassionate Kindness' and 'A Great Contemplative Rooted in Reality'.



Mother Mary of the Heart of Jesus, born Euphrasie Barbier, a true 'Heroine of the Mission Fields' simply deserves to be honoured by the Church and all her Sisters in Christ. Many people have given thanks for favours they believed have been granted through her intercession. She is still at work and her story needs to be told.

UPDATE: Since September 2018, Rome has requested more witness statements before considering the next step of the canonisation process. A new Tribunal was set up and statements gathered from London and areas of East Sussex. These were duly completed and signed by our new archbishop, John Wilson on 31 July 2019 in his residence adjoining St George's Cathedral a place visited twice by Euphrasie Barbier when she was seeking permission to establish communities in Deal and Sturry. All signed and sealed another precious bundle was ready for Sr Carmel Eberius, the Promoter of the Cause, to carry to Rome for the consideration of the Commission for Causes of Saints. Let us hope and pray that we receive a speedy and positive outcome.

For more on her life and works read: *Missionary Beyond Boundaries* by Marie Bénédicte Ollivier RNDM or *Euphrasie* by Mary Philippa Reed RNDM



MY FAITH JOURNEY

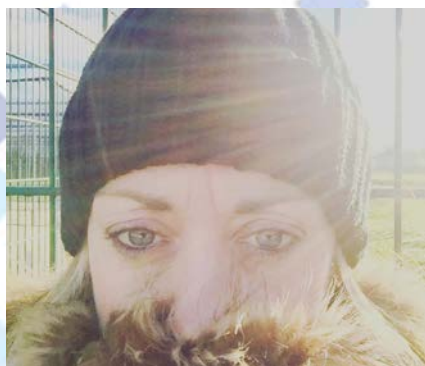
Sorcha Gull

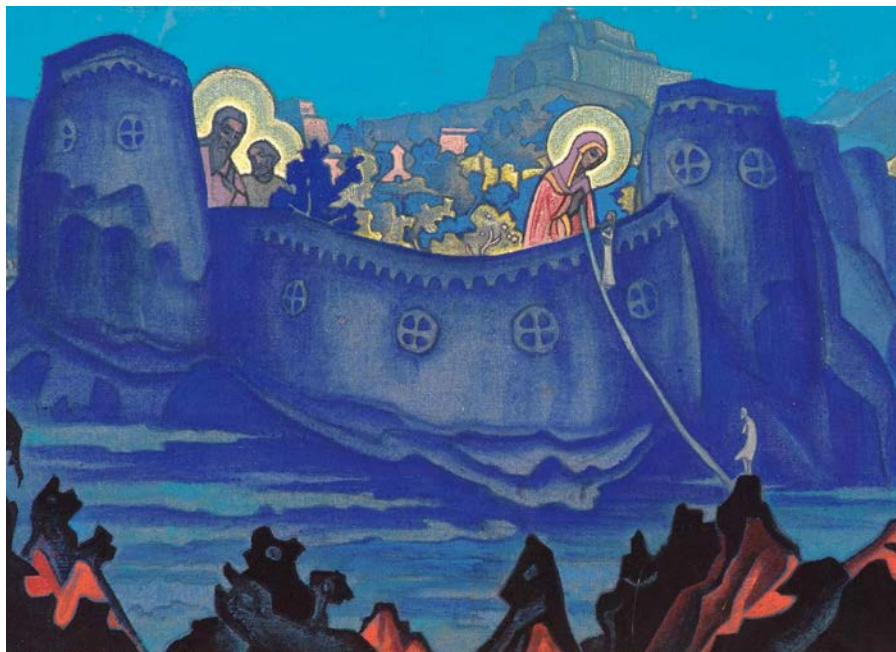
Each one of us is on a faith journey - sometimes moving towards God, sometimes backing away. Ordinary people, people like you and me, sharing their stories of encounter with Jesus; this Good News speaks to the heart and can change lives. Talking about Jesus's love for us and our love for him is the essence of the New Evangelisation. In each future issue we will aim to include one such story. If you want to share yours, email: plateamag@gmail.com with it already written or ask for a chat and we'll write it up.

AS A CRADLE Catholic my journey with Christ and Faith has been at times bumpy and at others non-existent. By the age of 15, I had turned my back on attendance completely and this continued into my mid to late 20's but I truly believe, through it all, I carried a small flame of hope and faith that could never be extinguished.

This was most keenly felt when I least expected it. Walking home from work in East Hounslow, I passed the local

Catholic Church (pictured) but on this particular day I'd had a very strong urge to go in; as I stepped through the outer door the feeling of anticipation was quite immense and then to my utter horror the inner door was locked! The intense emotion that washed over me was quite overwhelming and I stood and cried, unable to reach where I felt I was being called to go. I always see this as the starting point back to Christ and my Faith. I have not always chosen to





Madonna Laboris by Nicholas Roerich (1933)

listen but whenever I am still and stop the inner chattering of my mind I have that feeling pulling me in and onwards.

The move from London to Whitstable in 2001 helped my faith grow and strengthen as I found support and renewed peace in my love of God. Here I married had my children and started to love my faith again.

As I have grown older the urge to fight against it has diminished, I've found it at times hard bringing my children up in the Faith on my own - I'm happily

married to Andy who has no Faith - but I feel, if I can plant a tiny flame of faith within them and keep a spark glowing, they too can carry it forward in life, nurturing it themselves, with my love and support.

Coming to Herne Bay has been a spiritual closing of the circle, I grew up 5 miles from Minsteracres in Northumberland and the first time I heard Father Mark speak in Mass I knew I'd come home!

Share your story - plateamag@gmail.com

FIRE & WATER

May my life be **FIRE** and **WATER**
Knowing the torment and passion of love
And the calm refreshment of reason.

Let it be full of contrasts:
Brightness–Shadow, Colour-Clarity
Warmth -Coolness
Energetic dance and Restful inactivity.

May my spirit be alive and active!
Fired by desire to transform and be purified
Yet content with stillness
And the often, drop-by-drop pace of change.

Let me hear the rushing effervescence of water
which holds the whole world in its embrace,
Glimpsing even above the heavens
the shimmering waters
Which fall to earth as gentle, life-giving rain.

Give me the keenness to penetrate the fire in the
centre of the earth and in my being
So that I burn with zeal for your Kingdom
radiating your love and compassion.

May my relationships be warm and comforting!
Deep and lasting like the pools and silent streams
of mysterious underground, undisturbed caverns.

YOU who hold the power of these elements
Forming them to create the beauty and wonder of our world
Use them now again in me, that I might ever be
A fountain of living Water and a glowing tongue of Fire!

by Sr Yvonne Pepper RNDM



April in Paris

by M. Delfanne

Ark of Paris, Notre Dame
In Holy Week fire-flooded.
Her mast-like spire a flaming sword
Fell past her own deep heart to pierce.

Ideas for a new glass roof
Museum bright (each soul laid bare)
But out of place within the old.
Instead concealment, to enfold.

Such generous help from many came
And as the Morning Star looked down
The anchored darkness lit the nave.
Our Lady's ark, triumphant, saved.

If, you would like your poetry or art featured in a future edition of **PLATEA** please email: plateamag@gmail.com or post your submission to: Platea, The Retreat, 3 Sea Street, Herne Bay, CT6 8SP.



The Children in the Market Place (Lk 7:32)

by Michael E Norman

MANY CHRISTIANS TODAY are understandably puzzled by the escalating speed with which the Church in Western liberal societies is in decline. They are aware of a number of surface conditions: the pursuit of pleasure as an apparently acceptable purpose in life; the secularization of public institutions and practices; the utilitarian basis of what is prompted in the educational systems; the rapidity of cultural change; the collapse of received sexual morality; the absence of transcendent values; the cultural relativity which is now so readily accepted; individual claims to extensive rights and benefits; the technological revolution which is subordinating human experience to the determination of machines. These conditions, and so many others, are beckoning the populations of the world in an unfathomable future in which the traditional acceptance of religious

concepts must seem utterly unnecessary.

Beneath these superstructural features of modernity, however, there is a shift in human perception which is fundamental and which, more than these, should worry religious believers everywhere. Christianity particularly is under threat because it is most prevalent in those societies which have inaugurated the discoveries and achievements of material existence.

Christianity and modern materialist Humanism ought to be at war with each other, and they are not. Why should this be so? The message proclaimed by Christ is about the corruption and sinfulness of men and women, their inability to procure their own redemption, the forgiveness which he holds out to those who repent. It is about an intrinsic bias to evil in human nature which could not be eradicated but whose lamentable consequences could nevertheless be forgiven. Humanism, in contrast, declares an optimistic view of the capabilities of



men and women: that they are entitled to moral autonomy, that they achieve a progressive improvement in the conditions of life of earth, that they are broadly able to control most aspects of their development. They are also known to possess rights which dignify the individual without the need for reference to any transcendent authority. These two attitudes to human nature are quite simply incompatible. Either humans are internally corrupted and in need of the forgiveness of a divine person or they are morally autonomous creatures with the capacity for a large measure of self-correction.

The message Christ proclaims is the forgiveness he holds out to those to repent.

There are, indeed, Christian thinkers of the modern era who have embraced fundamental aspects of materialist Humanism, and identified them as essential applied Christianity. They have tended, sometimes unconsciously, to

regard the ideological incompatibilities as merely superstructural – the conditioning of outmoded cultural parameters – and have pointed instead to a common agenda of human material need. The Christian love of neighbour, it is asserted, is such a supreme expression of the love of God that even those who practise it whilst simultaneously rejecting the transcendent authority of the teaching of Christ are in effect doing his work. And in a manner which is, to them, plainly acceptable. This is to depict Jesus as primarily an ethicist, and in some versions to regard the baneful evidences of human sin and its universality, as the fruits produced by rank growths nourished by wrong social systems.

HUMANISTS, for their part, have customarily shown themselves rather less accommodating to religion, which they have often assailed as an impediment to human self-fulfilment. In recent times, however, and aware of the decay of support for the teachings of Christianity as conventionally understood they have



become, in the process, an even greater threat to genuinely spiritual priorities – by seeming to remove the ideological precision of a declared Humanist foe. The concept of ‘spirituality’ itself is a telling indication of what has happened. Once, the word was employed solely in relation to the human capacity to experience communion with the divine. Now it is used to describe merely human aesthetic or emotional sensation, the celebration of human artistic or literary accomplishment, an exposition of the finer qualities of individual sensitivity to creativity. The retention of the word ‘spirituality’ in a secular understanding is thus itself very suggestive.

THE NOTION OF HUMANITY as separate from those traditional religious structures which have accorded dignity and purpose to human life is too bleak for human vanity, however, and a substitute was inevitable. The practical deification of human

accomplishments serves this purpose adequately. Then the horrific effects of human wickedness can be attributed by Humanists in large measure to the miscalculations of particular social classes or economic systems – thereby rendering the concept of inherent depravity obsolete - and the sacralising

The Christian life is properly described as the conversion of suffering into authentic spirituality and the service of others becomes service of Christ himself.

welfare provision and the cultivation of what are now called ‘caring’ attitudes assume quasi-sacramental status in the refurbishment Religion of Humanity.

Thus a secularised version of the love of neighbour is released from the constraints of a coherent moral system – least of all from one, like Christianity,



claimed to be of divine origin – and elevates human material needs as a sovereign principle. Once Christ has been represented as primarily concerned with justice and welfare, rather than with sin and redemption, the equation of his religion with the leading tenets of modern Humanism is easily effected. Humanism, in whatever guise it represents itself, however, is about the sovereignty of humanity, and not about the demands of God at all. It is not only inherently an enemy of authentic religion, but also its probable successor.

The acceptability of Humanist views of human nature is actively facilitated by the non-ideological form in which it is received in current Western culture. When Marxism (in the twentieth century) was the available vehicle of materialist understandings of humanity, it could easily be met in argument – as, for example, in the important sequence of pronouncements made by Pius XII about existing political authoritarianism.

Philosophical materialism today, on the other hand, is not often represented as a system of ideas – capable of being countered by opposed ideas – but as an orientation of life and ethical thought. Morality then appears to be self-evident: it is the palliation of whatever humans regard as the cause of their suffering or deprivation. It is in reality a catechism of moral crudities. The response of religion is in fact somewhat blunt. It is that the redemption of souls is a very much more pressing duty than a mere alleviation of the material suffering of which society complains, and which constitutes the agenda of their lengthening list of self-proclaimed entitlements.

At the centre of religious understanding is the realization that life was not ordained for pleasure or repose. The Christian life is properly described as the conversion of suffering into authentic spirituality: then the service of others becomes, not an entitlement, but the service of Christ himself.



THE PARISH SUMMER FAYRE 15 JUNE

All our prayers were answered. The sun was shining, not too hot and a kind breeze. As the smell of the BBQ wafted across the grounds, and the noise of children joyfully screaming on the bouncy castle, and as sumo combatants tried to knock each other over, the scene was set for a wonderful afternoon. The effort by all involved both pre and during the afternoon was well rewarded with a constant flow of parishioners, family and friends, and local neighbours plus a final net profit of over £2200 (compared with £1900 in 2017).

The stalls ranged from tombola, plants, 'wine or water', soft arrows and darts, coconut shy. The tug of war and the egg and spoon races created much competition but were enjoyed by participants and spectators alike. Pip the Clown worked her magic with balloons and assisted in the judging of the children's fancy dress. This year we introduced our first Art and Flower arrangement competitions, which were well supported. We hope to build on these at our next Fayre with the help of our wonderful judges.

There are too many individuals to name and thank, but without our parishioners' support, the day would not have been such a success. Special thanks to our wonderful Catholic Club staff and members.

Fr Mark has also expressed his appreciation of the participation by parishioners and for extra funds for parish needs. The SVP also wish to express sincere appreciation for all those able to buy Grand Draw tickets, which provides much needed money to help those in need in our town.

Article by Frank Gormley; Photos by Ken Dawson



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PLATEA RECALLS AUG 2018-AUG 2019

BAPTISMS

By one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slave or free; and have all been made to drink of the one Spirit [1 Corinthians 12:13].

Oliver William Adcock	19 August 2018
Alfie David James Claydon	6 October
Ella Louise Clements	6 October
Lexi Mia Scuffil	21 October
Jude William Anscombe	28 October
Baxter Rejniak	18 November
Arthur William Duncan	6 January 2019
Michael Julian Aquino	3 February
Arthur Edward Hayes	24 February
Olivia Miller	21 April
Thomas John Mitchell	28 April
Stanley Foster	4 May
Harrison Philip Grainger	12 May
Aurelia Jane Mia Slater	19 May
Edward Rodney Owen	9 June
Mia Grace Lovell	25 August
Mia Rose Maria Alderman	25 August

DEATHS

We are the Lord's. Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living [Romans 14:7-9].

Barry Richard Gowan	17 September 2018
Margaret Henry	11 October
Alan Richard James	22 December
Patricia Coxon	27 December
Patricia Jennings	3 January 2019
Charles McErlane	10 January
Neil Petrie Florence	21 January
James Francis Molamphy	25 January
Brian Anthony Phillips	10 February
John Langman	22 February
Margaret Povall	23 February

DEATHS

We are the Lord's. Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living [Romans 14:7-9].

Elsie Palmer	25 February
Patricia Egle	3 March
Wallace Gilbert Pateman	4 March
Betty Audrey Evans	16 March
Ellen Mary Curran	21 March
Jean-Claude Guilliamet	5 April
Sonia Jeanette McCulla	24 April
David Noel Nutt	24 May
Michael Francis Quelch	1 June
Rosemary Dobson	6 June
John Joseph McCarthy	13 July
William Robert Payne	13 July
David Edward Manser	30 July

WEDDINGS

And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy [Hosea 2:19].

David O'Shea & Elaine Quinn	6 April 2019
Andrew Vowles & Elyshia King	11 May
Paul Mitchell & Nina Shilling	22 June
Jacob Foad & Harriet Pooley	13 July
Jamie Ross & Ellie Fagg	13 July
Matthew Hoffmeister & Alisha Tulleth	23 August

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS

Jesus said: I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he or she will live forever [John 6:51].

Finn Patrick Bracey	
Joe Lovelock	
Troy John Sales	
Fabio Sebastian	
Alyssa Salas Smitherman	
Sylvie Rose Mavity	23 June 2019



The Peasant Wedding by Pieter Breughel the Elder [1567]

You are warmly invited to Our Lady's this Autumn
 [and, of course, at any other time of year]

Times of Masses and Devotions

Weekdays	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament [8.30-9.30am]; Mass [10am]
Thursday	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament [7am-10pm]
Friday	Adoration [3-4pm] at 25 Western Esplanade
Saturday	Adoration [10-11am]; Rosary, said for the parish [10.45am]; Mass [11.05am]; Vigil Mass [6pm]
Sunday	Masses [9.30am and 11.15am]



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PLATEA

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