

NEWSLETTE R

NUMBER 64

<http://www.netcomuk.co.uk/~downs>

July 1999

Dear Pilgrims,

This year's Pilgrimage is fast approaching; I trust those of you who are intending to come have booked, have your bags almost packed and have managed to do a few practice walks. Those pilgrims who did the Romero Walk (26th - 27th June) had scorching weather, brilliant scenery and two days walking that makes the Pilgrimage seem easy (approx. 36 miles over two days)!

We are blessed this year that Fr. David Russell will be with us for the whole Pilgrimage as our Chaplain and Fr. Rob Esdaile will join us for the second week. Julian Martin will be our van driver for the first week and John Russell for the second week. John Bentley will drive the catering car for Frances Dean and Fran Philipps for week one and Tony Brown will drive the catering car for week two. Rosemary Southern is our trusted drinks car driver for the whole Pilgrimage and the very experienced Joan Gale will act as 'Sarnie Queen' throughout (so sarnie dodgers beware). This year we do not have a nurse for the whole Pilgrimage so I draw your attention to the enclosed 'feet' leaflet for those of you walking and be prepared to treat your own blisters.

Well, enough of the staff changes: The St. Dunstan's Pilgrimage looks set to be full of spiritual enrichment. In following St. Dunstan we will be looking at the Benedictine Rule, Wholeness in our spiritual life and St. Mark's gospel as we continue on our pilgrim journey to Bath. The route has some spectacular days walking. You will see from the route notes that many days are shorter this year. We will be having a Taize and an Iona style worship around the rest day on the Isle of Wight. There will be plenty to do at Shanklin and Salisbury, with the option of a meal out at the latter rest day, and Bath has numerous attractions which are all very central including free walking tours of the city if you feel up to it after the 160 miles walking to get there! (I do recommend it.)

Finally, I would draw your attention to the details sent with your full route notes about luggage, fire practice and the celebration meal.

Happy walking,

Lesley.

Pilgrimage Contacts

The Pilgrimage can be contacted via
DABCEC, 4 Southgate drive, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6RP
Co-ordinator -Lesley Hill -
Bookings Secretary - Louise Chenery -
Newsletter editor - Mike Kanssen -

Romero Walk

Since 1991, following an epidemic of cholera in Peru, Terry & Jo Furse have organised an Annual sponsored walk, each one covering ~40 miles over a June weekend. To date, under various titles, this has supported many projects in Latin America, raising a total of £42,000. From this year the walks will be named in honour of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador. Several other pilgrims have joined in this year, which was in aid of the Maya Chorti Indians of Copan, Western Honduras.

Last October, Hurricane Mitch devastated large areas of Central America, taking the lives of hundreds of thousands. It wiped out crops, homes, schools, leaving an already impoverished people to face utter destitution. Although immediate relief has been provided by appeals, and those in the cities are recovering fairly well, those in the poorer rural districts are harder to reach. Through a parishioner working with a relief agency, Terry & Jo Furse had first hand accounts of the terrible conditions affecting many and in particular the Maya Chorti Indians of Western Honduras. All buildings in the area have been demolished, including the schools. Education and literacy are vital to help people realise their potential. With this year's walk they raised money to build and equip rural schools, which will also be used as health and nutrition centres. Simple techniques to improve health can be taught, as well as advice on improving diet and nutrition. By education, the people will be enabled to take more control of their lives, and, we hope, to gain some civil rights.

This year's walk explored some of the paths in the north of Sussex, and enjoyed the very best of weather. Passing through a deer park, fields and woods, before circling to the west of Pitch Hill, (highest in Sussex) and on to Chilworth, then over the hill, and on to Guildford. After a meal at the Spread Eagle, they spent the night in St. Joseph's hall. Next morning, they climbed St. Martha's Hill, and followed the North Downs Way, mostly along the crest, with stunning views until lunch at the Jolly Butchers in Dorking. After lunch, there was a nice level stroll along the valley of the Mole via the Greensand Way, through charming little villages (with pubs) and so to the finish at Reigate Parish Centre. After a rest and a reviving cup of tea, there was the chance to talk over the shared experiences of the weekend, swap addresses with new friends, before a lift home, or to the station. Throughout both days the 'guardian angels' alias support vehicle personnel provided snacks, drinks and encouragement at hourly intervals.

Keep an eye out for next year's walk which is bound to be as pleasant, and the funds raised as desperately needed. You are welcome to join at any point and Walk all or any part of the route.

Pilgrim Shop

Most people go on holiday to forget work, but for a second year Monica is bringing hers along! Each evening her little shop will offer pilgrims stamps, small gift items & a wide variety of cards many at bargain prices.

News



Julian Farmer & Betsy Earley were married on Saturday April 24th at St Joseph's RC Church, Guildford (the starting point of the Norwich & Hereford pilgrimages). There were a scattering of pilgrims amongst the congregation, for the happy event, including Sue Earley who was the bridesmaid and Richard House who was an Usher. The Groom wore a Canterbury Tales tie adorned with pictures of Chaucer's characters (a souvenir of the '97 St Augustine Pilgrimage to Canterbury) but the Bride wore a very unpilgrimlike traditional wedding dress. I'm sure you'll all agree that they looked wonderful!

Another Pilgrimage wedding; Special congratulations are due to our beloved co-ordinator Lesley and John Brennan who have just announced their engagement! They plan to get married 'sometime after the millennium'.

Many congratulations to Gary & Iwona O'Brien who are expecting a new addition to their Pilgrim family. Mikdaj, who is now nearly four years old, can expect a new playmate around September. They hope to meet the pilgrimage at some stage this year.

Mark Hopper is back from Kuwait and has got engaged to Merlyn De Souza. The wedding is due to be held in Goa next Easter. Congratulations to you both.

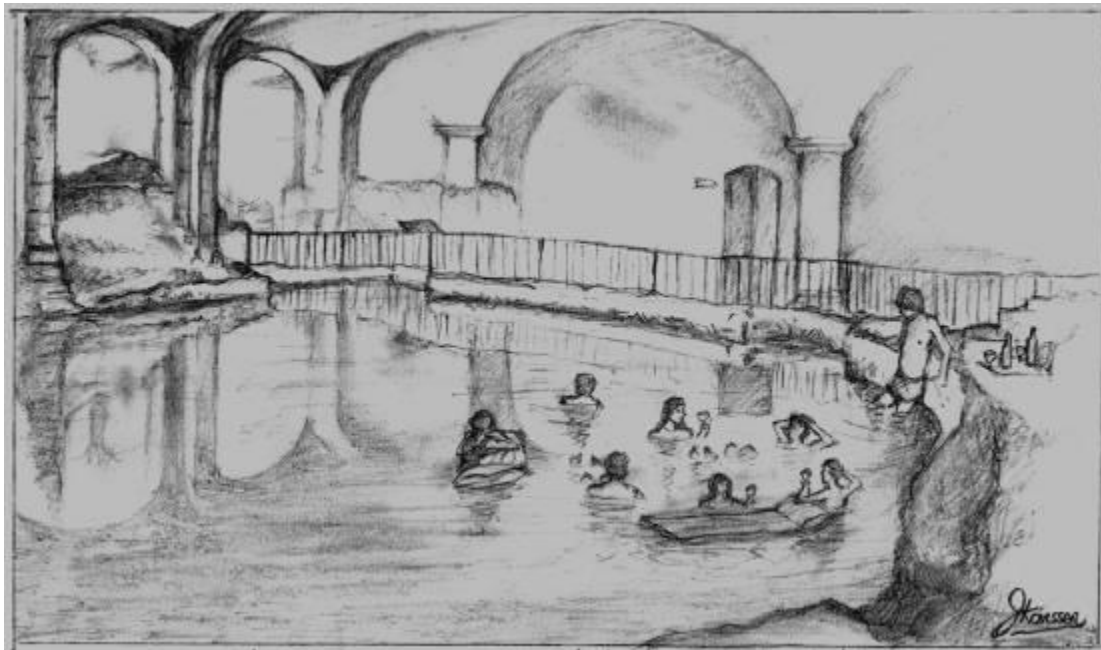
Mary Fuller has offered to house this year's reunion in Lewis, full details will be in the September mailing.

If anyone has any news for inclusion in the September newsletter please send it to one of the pilgrimage contacts listed on the front page, or give it in during the pilgrimage.

The Life of St Dunstan

St Dunstan is the most famous of Anglo-Saxon saints. He was born near Glastonbury around 910AD, and embraced the religious life whilst still young after he recovered from a skin disorder that he took to be Leprosy. Dunstan received holy orders from his uncle 'St. Alphege the bald', who was Bishop of Winchester. He then is said to have built himself a small cell, where he divided his time between prayer, study and manual labour. Dunstan made bells, & sacred vessels for the nearby church, copied & illuminated books, and played the harp.

In 943 St Dunstan was appointed Abbott of Glastonbury, at once he set about reconstructing the monastic buildings, and restoring the church. He introduced monks among the clerks in residence, and made the abbey into a great school of learning. When King Edmund died he was appointed as the new king's chief advisor, in which role he stood out for moral reform, and unification of the country by conciliating the Danish element. This earned St Dunstan bitter enemies amongst those whose vices he opposed and the mass of West Saxon nobles. In 955 King Edred died and was succeeded by his nephew Edwy, who on the day of his coronation left the banquet to seek female company. St Dunstan sternly rebuked the new king for this, and so Dunstan was sent into exile. Dunstan took refuge in Flanders where he came into contact with the recently reinvigorated continental monasticism. Within a short time rebellion broke out in the north & east of England where Edwy's brother was chosen as ruler. Edgar recalled St Dunstan, bestowing on him the see of Worcester. On the death of Edwy, Edgar was made King of the reunited England, and Dunstan was made Archbishop of Canterbury. In this role Dunstan did much to restore the great monasteries that had been destroyed during Danish incursions, as well as to found new ones. Aided by St Oswald & St Ethelwold he also made considerable reforms amongst the clergy, expelling those who refused to live morally. Throughout the reign of King Edgar and his successor Edward the Martyr, Dunstan played a major role as chief advisor to the state, only retiring around 970 with the Coronation of Ethelred. On the feast of Assumption the now ill Dunstan celebrated mass & preached to the people of his impending death. Two days later he died peacefully.



Ah Bath! Just the place to heal those blisters