

# **NEWSLETTER**

**NUMBER 67**

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**July 2000**

“Our Jubilee”, goes the new song for the Jubilee Year! Whilst we have achieved our 25th Year of Walking Pilgrimages this is the 2000 Year of Christianity and Lichfield Cathedral is celebrating its 1300th Anniversary. All of which is very humbling, I feel, to be one of the many pilgrims over the centuries who have been led to journey to a holy place and on the journey experienced emotion and companionship that mirrors one’s journey in life.

One only had to be present at the 25 Years Anniversary Reunion weekend at Ropley to appreciate the breadth of our Pilgrimage Family, many have joined, left, and returned and we are now into ‘third generation’ pilgrims!

Our start this year at Guildford is important because it is where we have commenced several of our pilgrimages. On route this year we have been offered immense hospitality by churches keen to join us or have us join them in worship so we should have a real chance to encompass our ecumenical aims. Our Rest Days at Henley on Thames and Stratford Upon Avon will be filled with ‘culture’ for the discerning pilgrim and whilst I do not pretend walking around the Birmingham metropolis will be easy, those that remember the Papal Pilgrimage will recall the challenge of walking to Wembley which demonstrated that “Pilgrimage” is not only found in the shire counties and sunny seaside resorts. Lichfield itself is a gem of a city, with its’ own St Chad celebrations this year and with the contacts Aidan has made already is so very keen to host us.

You will notice that this year we arrive in Lichfield on the Saturday, have our Service of Arrival at the Cathedral then our celebration meal that same evening and our cabaret, so any acts need to be planned in advance and “short!”



I look forward very much to meeting those of you who have booked for two weeks, one week, a weekend or are joining us for just a day. In liasing with St Chad's Cathedral I understand we can obtain an Indulgence in this Holy Year for making a Pilgrimage to the Shrine of St Chad and to some this will be of prime importance, However, perhaps of equal importance is the opportunity to "live out" our Christian faith for two weeks in community and to share with those we meet on route the saving love of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lesley Hill

### **Pilgrimage Contacts**

The Pilgrimage can be contacted via  
DABCEC, 4 Southgate drive, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6RP  
**Co-ordinator** -Lesley Hill -  
**Bookings Secretary** – Pat Donachie -  
**Newsletter editor** - Mike Kanssen - e-mail: [via WebSite](#)

## *Why do we bother?*

Back in the hazy days of last summer, enjoying the tastes of France on the banks of the Loire, it seemed like a good idea. I'd completed one year as 'Accommodation Officer'; the first week of the pilgrimage had gone well; and, as far as I could tell from mobile-to-mobile calls to Lesley, the second week was also working out. I wanted another go at the job, to do some bits better with that year's experience. So I gaily volunteered to stay on.

Then the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary was approaching. We'd run a successful reunion for the 20<sup>th</sup>, and (as we'd met on that first pilgrimage and kept in touch) I guess we felt some proprietorial rights to host this one. In any case, I felt it was important, so I offered to organise that.

And, as I started out on the accommodation and made contacts in Lichfield, I wanted to help with that final stint, so I quickly signed up to route plan the last day's walk.

None of these individually is unreasonable, but I'd also forgotten that this all happens in the busiest period for a consultancy working largely on government projects. The net effect is that my workload over the past few months has been at the same level as the aircraft that shuttle me to and from Belfast on a regular basis.

So, not surprisingly, on various occasions others have asked me, or I have asked myself, "Why do you do it, why do you bother?" It's a good question, one that got asked several times as bookings failed to arrive, then got changed, then arrived in a flurry after the closing date; as the halls I'd booked imposed difficult conditions, or had to be cancelled; as I tried to find an opportunity to walk the route through just once.

I suppose the thing that gets me through is the feeling, which dates back to very early in the first pilgrimage in 1975, that the pilgrimage matters. I find it hard to say why it matters, other than that the pilgrimage has developed a practical spirituality that I find accessible and hope is accessible to others, but matter it does.

Then as the reunion drew to a close, and we hurriedly cleared the hall, I knew again why I do it. Yes, the pilgrimage matters. Yes, there is satisfaction in making it happen. But the icing on the cake is you, the pilgrims. You appreciate what we do; you co-operate with unreasonable rise times; you muck in when there are things to be done; you even take the last minute organisation of the celebration service in your stride. Most of all, dare I say it, the pilgrimage matters to you too.

So here's to the next 25 years; let's work together to take the pilgrimage forward, and share it with an ever-increasing band of pilgrims. We've got a job to do, let's get going!

## **Aidan**

P.S. Less than an hour after you'd all left, when we'd stowed the remains away and settled down with a cup of tea, I swear I heard Meld say "Next time we should..." Next time? Oh yes, there'll be a next time. But not for another 5 years – there are limits!

## **Pilgrim News**

Many congratulations to Mark Hopper & Merlyn de Souza who were married at St Anthony's Church, Siolim, Goa on April 27<sup>th</sup>. I hear the Pilgrimage was well represented at the wedding!

The Wedding of Lesley Hill & John Brennan is to be held at St Andrews RC Church, Brook Rd, Thornton Heath, Croydon, on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2000. All Pilgrims are invited to the Nuptial Mass which begins at 1pm. (The Church is 5 minutes from Thornton Heath station.)

Dominic O'Hara (Who 1<sup>st</sup> walked with us in 1977) begins his studies for the priesthood at Womersley in September. Please remember him in your prayers.

During our Easter Pilgrimage Jess & I discovered that we are to have a New Kantsen Pilgrim joining the Pilgrimage family. The arrival is expected in late November, along with drastic changes to our lifestyle!

A large number of Pilgrims have again walked on the annual Romero Walk organised by Terry and Jo Furse on 24th and 25th June from Forrest Row to Shoreham, to raise money for El Salvador.

### **The aim of pilgrimage: taking the pilgrim vow**

Coming up to another walking pilgrimage perhaps we should give some thought as to why we go on pilgrimage, and what our aims are. These aims could be, for example; spiritual - to get closer to God and one's faith, or to define and strengthen faith where there is little or doubt, physical, - to take some strenuous exercise, and, social - to aim to get along with people better.

The aim or aims could remain personal or be shared with fellow pilgrims. They can be underpinned with taking a "vow" to try to achieve a desired goal by the end of the pilgrimage.

During the middle ages the key element that defined a pilgrimage was the pilgrim's vow. This was taken in public, before the bishop or a priest, and it marked the formal beginning of the pilgrimage. Upon return, it would be the same bishop or priest who declared the vow fulfilled, marking the person's return to normal life. Before the vow, one was merely intending to go. After it, the pilgrimage had begun. Most people set out in the very same hour.

The bishop or priest would have given the intendant pilgrim the robe, scrip and staff that were the outward symbols of being a pilgrim and not merely a traveller or rambler. These special clothes first appeared in the 12th century; before this, pilgrims dressed more or less in ordinary clothes, and the change is almost certainly an effect of the First Crusade, with its distinctive symbolism.

The robe was a plain tunic of grey or brown, marked with a cross or scallop shell. The scrip was a leather pouch attached at the waist, supposedly carrying all the pilgrim's possessions, for he was supposed to put aside worldly luxury. The wealthy were inclined to ignore this inconvenient and uncomfortable tradition. In the 13th century was added a wide-brimmed hat, with a long scarf at the back that hung down and wound around the body to the waist.

The priest then blessed the pilgrim, who now made his vow, listing specifically which shrines he intended to visit. This was the specific contract of the pilgrimage - it was a promise to go to particular places. This promise would



include what the pilgrim wanted to aim for during and at the end of the pilgrimage.

The blessing would be followed by a sermon and a mass. The pilgrim had already said goodbye to family and friends back at his home, but an important pilgrim might be followed out of town by hundreds or even thousands of people eager to share in the event. These would trail away quickly, though, and the pilgrim would soon enough be in the company of just his fellow pilgrims.

Sometimes, a great many people set out together, and the blessing ceremony became an event conducted for the whole group. The public nature of the ceremony, then, marked the mode change into pilgrimage very clearly. It ensured that the pilgrim himself knew that the pilgrimage had begun, and that the rest of the community knew it as well.

On our walking pilgrimages each pilgrim is called out by name at a service, and he or she declares, "I am here!" A cross representing the particular saint, destination or theme of the pilgrimage is hung around their neck. It is at this time that an inner vow can be undertaken: a pilgrim vow.

A pilgrim has been defined as, a person in motion, passing through territories not their own, seeking something we might call completion, or clarity; a goal to which only the spirit's compass points the way.

Pilgrimage reminds us of our condition on Earth as pilgrims walking towards Heaven. The way to get there is more important than the destination itself, the journey is a time for prayer, meditation and dialogue with God.

Make this, the first walking pilgrimage of the new millenium, one both to enjoy, and to achieve your goal, however small - it will become a building brick, bound with the mortar of faith, creating a stronger pilgrim, progressing towards your celesstial destination.

### ***Saint Chad***



### St. Chad Prayer

Almighty God, whose servant Chad, for the peace of the Church, relinquished the honours that had been thrust upon him, only to be rewarded with equal responsibility: keep us, we pray, from thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, and ready at all times to step aside for others, in honour preferring one another, that the cause of Christ may be advanced. In the name of him who washed his disciples' feet, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Danny Thomas July 2000

## Positions Vacant / Organisation

At the time of writing the second half of the Pilgrimage was still without cover in the vital role of Catering Driver / Assistant (with own car). Anyone who can help Francis with shopping & cooking (instead of walking) please contact the Bookings Secretary – Pat Donachie – or the Co-ordinator Lesley Hill

A venue for the autumn reunion is still needed, could anyone who would be willing to host this event please contact Lesley. She would also like to hear any ideas for the 2001 Pilgrimage Route or other comments on the general pilgrimage set-up (should the dates or length change etc.)

The pilgrimage AGM is to be on 17th September at 3pm in St Joseph's Parish Centre, Ladbroke Rd, Redhill. All are invited to attend.

### ***ECUMENISM QUESTIONNAIRE – YOUR VIEWS:***

Nineteen responses to the questionnaire were received, several from Pilgrims not walking last year.

1. **Aspects of worship and prayer important to you on Pilgrimage:** Words like “sharing”, “community”, “praying together” got frequent mention. Many responses related more closely to Question 3, so I have put them there.

2. **How would you like these aspects altered or improved?**

More inclusive worship/less stress on the Mass	<i>6 responses</i>
More “Eucharistic hospitality”	<i>4 responses</i>
OK as it is	<i>3 responses</i>
More time for reflection	<i>1 response</i>
More Iona, Taizé	<i>1 response</i>
“Structured” evening prayer	<i>1 response</i>
More pilgrim participation in Liturgy	<i>1 response</i>

A little prayer routine before setting out each day *1 response*

3. What format, types of service, etc. would you like to have on our Pilgrimage

Mass *3 responses*

Morning and Evening prayer *3 responses*

God stops *2 responses*

Co-celebration *2 responses*

Morning and evening prayer but NOT Divine Office *2 responses*

More liturgies without Eucharist *1 response*

More prayer and worship formats e.g. Taize *1 response*

Use non-RC ministers if possible *1 response*

A mid-week prayer service for all *1 response*

Broader source of music *1 response*

Sharing e.g. “Agape” meal *1 response*

Liturgies with themes e.g. Justice and Peace *1 response*

Ecumenical services provided by different denominations *1 response*

4. What denomination are you?

Anglican 1: Methodist 2: RC 15: URC 1

5. Any further comments or suggestions?

Keep lobbying RC episcopacy for inter-communication on Ecumenical Pilgrims. *5 responses*

Stay cool, practice what you are and be tolerant

Wider publicity

“Pray and you go”, prepare yourself for Godstops

Make alternative forms of service be seen as main ones rather than add-ons, then Mass for those who want it.

Encourage individuals to organise services and thus get diversity.

Form a prayer committee

Have no Eucharistic liturgies and thus avoid hurt

Away with contrived co-celebrations and the like, it is all or nothing

Turning a blind eye to intercommunion is insulting: do it properly or avoid the issue

All should try to recruit non-RC chaplains.

Many thanks to all respondents. John Lamb

## →→→ THE ARROWING STORY →→→

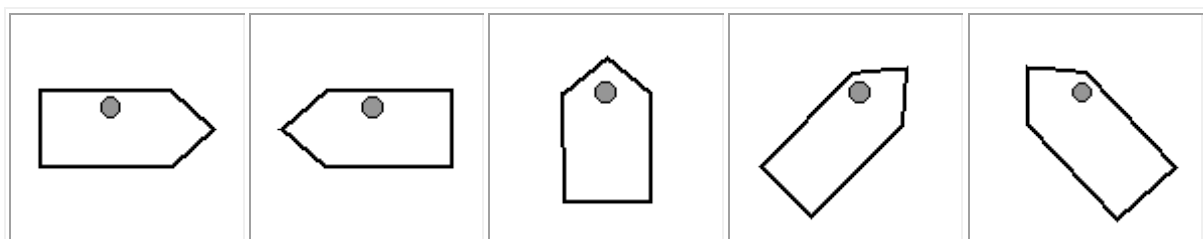
It was in the summer of 1974 that I borrowed an orange Volkswagen Beetle and spent a holiday with my Mum (RIP 1982), who was then fit and well, going out for days exploring bits of the Holy Year Pilgrimage. The exploration took us to a fascinating variety of places in Sussex: Midhurst, Hartfield, Hurst Green, Rye, St Leonards, to name but a few. As we walked along the country paths we wondered how many people would reply to the adverts for the walk when they appeared, and how they would all follow the lovely routes we were discovering. It would be very tedious, we imagined, for a large group to walk together, constantly having to either strive to keep up, or stop to wait, for the party to progress together. And so the arrowing system was devised in our minds and has been used over 25 years to keep the pilgrims on course.

The front markers, one of whom has thoroughly explored the day's walk, put up the trail of arrows, the pilgrims follow, and the back markers take them all down leaving no trace of our route through the countryside. The front markers technique is briefly this: (If the arrow trail looks different the pilgrims can suspect foul play!)

The arrow is placed in the direction of travel with the pin approx. 1" from its top edge (so that if the pin was loose and it could swivel, it would point in the direction of travel.) Having put up an arrow, the front markers look ahead and note the furthest point visible, and put up the next arrow near the end of that visible distance. Where there is a turn at least three arrows are placed to indicate the change of direction, and at least one more confirmatory arrow a few yards down the new path. Where we go straight ahead at a junction, an arrow is put up not at the junction but just past it. The rule is "enough but not too many".

The arrows show us the way on our pilgrimage, like the Gospel of Christ's love does in our life.

Bill Haynes





Go Right	Go Left	Straight ahead	Half Right	Half Left
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### Last Day of the Pilgrimage

It's four in the morning,  
The pilgrims are snoring,  
Their chorus nocturnal they hymn.  
Their muscles are aching,  
Their rest they are taking,  
Stretched out on the floor of the gym.

Dear fellow wayfarers,  
Mud brothers, and sharers  
Of blisters and bruises and things,  
The day's slowly dawning,  
Insomniacs yawning  
Herald the joy that it brings.

Today we are parting,  
Sweet sorrow is starting,  
Our paths stretch ahead undefined.  
Let's pray for each other,  
Both sister and brother,  
That each his true heaven may find!

*Michael Simons ~ 4 a.m. 14.4.1975 ~ Upper Beeding*



The Lichfield Gospels

Normally on view in St Chad's 13<sup>th</sup> Century Chapter House

