

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 68

<http://www.pilgrimsprogress.org.uk>

Dec. 2000

Dear Pilgrims,

I held back writing this note until I, and more than two dozen other pilgrims had seen Lesley Hill-for-the-last-time and John Brennan properly married. This was a very happy occasion and Lesley's radiance was more than a match for a dismal day. I am sure we all wish many blessings upon them as they start their life together.

As for the other high point of A.D. 2000, it is good to be able to report a successful "St Chad's Pilgrimage 2000", with only(!) two serious injuries. Despite its inferior strength a malicious rabbit broke a pilgrim's leg by digging a hole for Julian Farmer. He is well on the mend now. Abi was involved in a complicated series of events which involved water, boats and a sharp object while on a 'rest' day and had a badly cut foot. This was bad for her but of some help to John Russell who would otherwise have been unloading the van single-handed. While the support team generally was short of help, there was no shortage of pilgrims - 96 in all, of whom 46 did the whole distance from Guildford to Lichfield. There were also day visitors: old pilgrims and a pleasing number of people, including clergy, from local churches who joined us too. The route was good, for the most part through pleasant scenery, often near water, without major climbs, and punctuated as always by prayers and pubs. It was a revelation to many of us what an intricate system of canals runs through Birmingham. The towpaths were a godsend as an alternative to public roads with the bonus of leading us to Fr Rob Taylorson and Andy Ollard. Some compromises had to be struck over accommodation but the average level seems to be noticeably more luxurious year after year. Our accommodation officer must guard against making us a bunch of softies. We had a tremendous welcome from local church people and Cathedral dignitaries at Lichfield thanks to the contacts Aidan made. This will be remembered by us all.

I guess we each take away our more individual fond memories but another shared one is probably the reciprocal welcome at Chadlington. Where an impressive number of villagers joined us in evening prayer squashed into a small hall and we then retired to their Social Club to finish the evening off. And whose wedding rings were blessed at Lichfield?

See the General Meeting report a few more details and for what next.

God bless,

John Lamb

Pilgrimage Contacts

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

General Pilgrimage Meeting 17 September

Your Committee elected for 2000-2001 is

Co-ordinator	John Lamb	Deputy	Lesley Brennan
Secretary	Gillian McLauchlan	Treasurer	Pat Reeve
Accommodation	Aidan Simons	Alt. Transport	Monica McLauchlan
Back-up car	Julian Martin	Booking Sec.	Pat Donachie
Day Bookings	Gillian McLauchlan	Catering	Frances Dean + asst.
Chaplain(s)	Fr David Russell + ???	Chief Rte Plnr	Maurice Hickman
Church Liaison	Sarah Doran, John Lamb	Database	Bill Haynes
Drinks car	Rosemary Southon	Footcare	
Liturgist/music	Theresa/Bernie*	Publicity	
Safety Officer	Peter Storrow	Sandwiches	Joan Gale
Youth concerns	Patrick Reeve	Van	John Russell + asst.

Note there are a few gaps: Assistants to Frances and John R., Blister Queen/King and Publicity Officer. If you feel you can help, please tell John Lamb (See contacts, page 1).

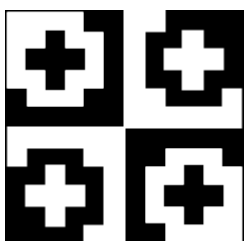
The meeting drew lessons from the St Chad 2000 experience and your committee will try to iron out identified wrinkles such as getting route information in on time and tightening evacuation procedures for the nocturnal fire alarms which seem to be a feature of life in super-safe halls! One day it may be for real.

Progress has been made this year in responding to ecumenical concerns but there is more to be done. Financially we recouped some of the loss of the year before. Of the routes proposed at the 2000 pilgrimage a unanimous decision was made in favour of Lichfield to Lavington (also associated with St Chad). This is a bit of a risk due to the distance from our south-eastern base but it would be good to tap the pool of Lichfield enthusiasts and there is scope for developing the St Chad theme further.

Aidan had made preliminary skirmishes looking for halls along the route:

Depart Lichfield 18/8/01 - Uttoxeter - Ashbourne - Bakewell - Dore (rest day) - Chapelton (N.E. of Sheffield) - South Kirkby - Knottingley - Stillingfleet - York (rest day) - Slingsby - Kirkbymoorside (via LASTINGHAM) - Home 1/9/01

looks good, though halls may not always be where you want them, especially if they have been washed away. You should be able to look forward to an uplifting fortnight **18th August - 1st September**. Yes, a week later than usual because Francis is busy with her son's wedding before that and John Russell is busy too.



The pilgrimage will be called

St Chad II Pilgrimage 2001

Lichfield - York - Lastingham

Put this in you new diary as soon as you get it.

COME AND JOIN US

Planning meetings in 2001 are scheduled for 14 Jan., 22 Apr. and 8 Jul. all at St Joseph's Parish Centre, Ladbroke Road, Redhill and the next General Meeting will be there on 16 Sept. 2001. Pilgrims are welcome to attend any of these meetings. If you are not a committee member ring one up a day or two before to check that there is no change in venue or time.

Meanwhile, enjoy your Christmas.

"We each have our cross to bear"

This statement sums up the human condition but it is also something to celebrate if it brings us closer to Our Lord! Veteran pilgrims will have borne quite a number of lightweight crosses to indicate their allegiance to the crucified Christ. This is no burden, just a symbol.

But Geof Bedford has been making these crosses for us for 25 years; generally about 100 of them. Each one demands many operations to turn the raw materials into an attractive and dignified cross. Geof says this year about 1400 machine and hand operations took him four days. By the end of this time it must become a real burden. You can ask yourselves why he has done this. His design almost always has some subtle allusion to the saint or place, which is the focus of the pilgrimage. Geof now feels that it is time to retire. Joan Gale's husband, John, has made Geof a large cross to be presented to him on our behalf together with a photomontage of samples of all the crosses he has made for us, which looks very attractive. (You can see the individual images on the pilgrimage website.) There may be a picture in the A+B News some time in the New Year.

So thanks, Geof, most of us only know you by your crosses, but that speaks volumes. Enjoy your retirement and accept our warm gratitude and prayers.

NASEMA ASANTE

We are grateful to Father Joe Kengah for his cheerful company and for giving us insights into the life of Christians in his area of Kenya. It was a great pleasure to learn the simple but reverend hymn giving thanks and praise to God in Swahili; it seemed so full of life.

<i>Nasema asante</i> (*3) <i>Ewe Mungu wangu</i> (*2)	I give thanks to God
<i>Wewe ni alfa na omega</i> (*3) <i>Ewe Mungu wangu</i> (*2)	You are the alpha and omega
<i>Hakuna Mungu kama wewe</i> (*3) <i>Ewe Mungu wangu</i> (*2)	There is no God like you
<i>Wewe ni Mungu wa upendo</i> (*3) <i>Ewe Mungu wangu</i> (*2)	You are the God of love
<i>Wewe ni Mungu wa huruma</i> (*3) <i>Ewe Mungu wangu</i> (*2).	You are the God of mercy

It would be wonderful if Christians and Muslims could get on as well throughout the world as they do in Father Joe's family.

At the reunion prayer stop pilgrims were saddened by the news that Monica McLauchlan (Many pilgrimages 1975-2000) has breast cancer. She had a mastectomy in early November and is now recovering well and in good spirits, even starting back at work part-time from next month. In the coming months she is to undergo precautionary Radio & Chemo therapies and asks for your prayers.

Peter Dare- previously of Danbury, Essex has made a rather longer move to **Canada**.

There's now an e-mailing list that you can join (via www.thepilgrims.org.uk or by contacting Aidan). Using this Aidan is pushing out occasional reports etc., and there'll be progress updates on the planning of next year's Pilgrimage.

I haven't yet received a full report of Leslie & Johns' Wedding, (or any photos!). Hopefully this will be in the next issue. I have however heard one snip-it on the grapevine... When couple retired to their hotel room after the reception, they discovered a number of suitably inscribed orange arrows had found their way into the bridal suite! - Is nowhere Sacred?

By the time this is in print there will be a baby Kanssen joining the Pilgrimage family. He/she is now slightly overdue so I won't spend too long on adding items here!

The Portslade Reunion - 13-15 October 2000

This year's reunion was held in Portslade Old Village, hosted by Patrick Reeve and Frances Dean. We had a slow start - the hall was occupied until 11 p.m. by the local Dog Club, so some chatted in a back room while others slipped round the corner for a drink. In the back room, displays were erected showing next year's plan and seeking route planners, together with minutes of the recent meeting and other relevant information. After the dogs were gone we moved into the hall and laid out beds.

We awoke on the Saturday to a pleasant morning - little sign of the rain that had recently dogged this part of the country. With Patrick suffering from a bad back, and Julian called in to work, Aidan and Sarah picked up the responsibility of leading the day's walk (and no chance to walk it through first!).

The start of the day was the trickiest - trying to weave through the built-up area to the footpath we wanted to escape on. Once on the path we climbed up towards the Downs, crossing over the A27 Southwick Hill Tunnel (which had been closed the previous night) before cutting off across the hills to the Devil's Dyke. Here we stopped for a brief refreshment, and looked back over the Adur valley. The evidence of recent rain was clear, though by no means as bad as in Lewes in the opposite direction.

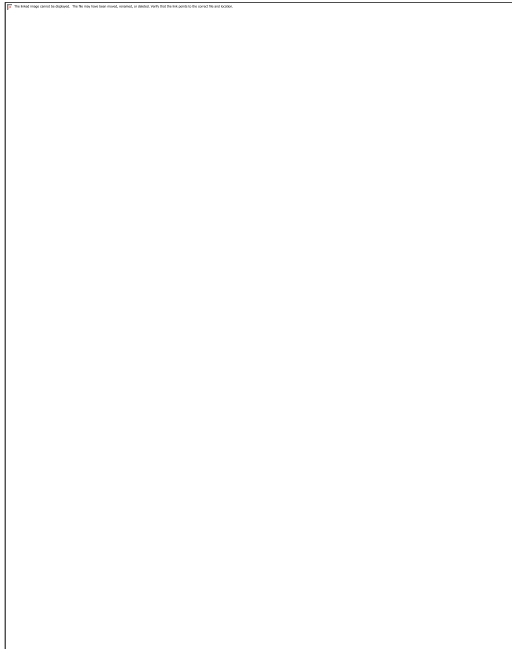
From the Dyke we cut across the scarp face then descended by steps to the village of Poynings, where we lunched at the Royal Oak, and we were joined by a few pilgrims who hadn't been able to walk in the morning.

By the time the pub was eventually vacated the rain had returned! We walked down to Holy Trinity Church, where a flower arranging lesson was in progress, and left the main party to pray, heading off back up to the Devil's Dyke. Here we were joined by Anthony, able to front mark now that Lauren was not walking. It was a stiff climb so soon after lunch, but the reward when we reached the top made it worthwhile! Rosie, Bridget and Jessica were not far behind either (the benefit of youth!) though it took quite a while for all the Pilgrims to get back.

Patrick showed the slides sent over by Bill and Dorothy from the USA - a pleasant reminiscence of this summer's pilgrimage. Our founder Bill Haynes had joined us, with Kate.

Then we all sat down to eat a feast prepared by Patrick, Frances and others to Patrick's recipe, before the tables were moved back and we let rip with a true pilgrim-style barn dance. It just HAD to include the Cumberland Square Eight so Patrick could make his back worse.

Two birthday girls Bridget (10) and Siobhan (18) received cakes and best wishes before everyone made their way eventually, to bed.



Up in the morning, packed, and off to St Theresa's in Southwick for their 10.30 Mass. They had invited us to lead the music, which we did in style with 3 guitars, 3 flutes, 3 egg-shaped shakers, 1 set of bongos and a tambourine (plus enthusiastic voices!)

After Mass we chatted over coffee, then some retired across the road to lunch at the pub, while others headed home. An enjoyable reunion - now back to planning next year's "St Chad's Pilgrimage".

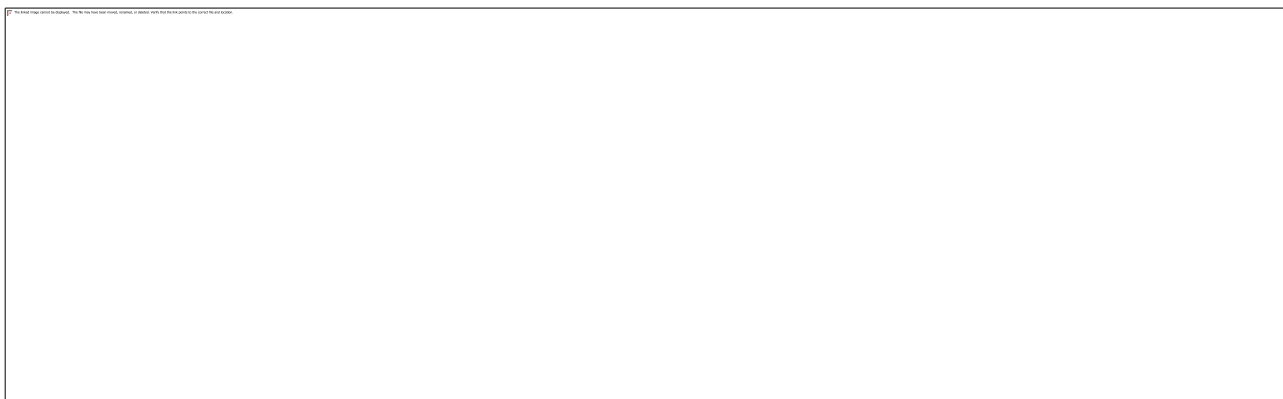
Pilgrimage report

This year Aidan has kept a daily Internet diary of the pilgrimage. Which has proved a great way for those unable to walk all the way to keep in touch with the pilgrimage. (Jess & I only joined for the last third but due to the regular updates we felt fully a part of this years pilgrimage as soon as we joined!) For those who are connected his excellent pilgrimage web site can be found at www.thepilgrims.org.uk. The following pilgrimage report is a heavily trimmed version of his diary without the many photos.

Day 1: Guildford to West End

With half an hour to go we get a phone call from Patrick - the van (with all the hymn books and pilgrim crosses) is still far away, so PANIC we had to re-plan the liturgy to not need hymn books until half way through!

Day 2: West End to Bracknell



Starting a new tradition we all prayed our "setting out" prayers together.

Father Joe preached an amusing yet inspiring sermon. He compared the hall to heaven - there's space for everyone and everyone works together. He obviously hadn't heard about tonight's hall

Day 3: Bracknell to Henley-on-Thames

We all managed to fit into Priestwood Youth Centre, and have a decent night's sleep despite the illuminated and refrigerated Coke dispenser which we dared not turn off lest it flood those sleeping nearby.

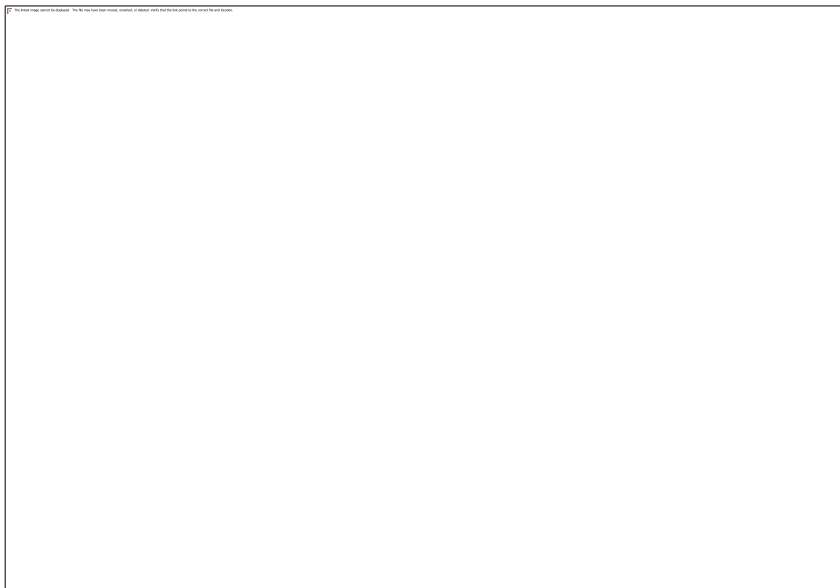
Day 4: Rest Day in Henley-on-Thames

Rest day? Call this a rest day? At 3 a.m. the fire alarm drags us all unwillingly from our slumbers, and we stumble out to the front lawn, ignoring the nearest fire exit. Sunday's sermon about what we'd take from a burning building came back to haunt us.

As breakfast ended, Fr Joe was presented with a birthday card to a chorus of "Happy Birthday to You", and then we had a lecture from Patrick on what to do when the fire alarm sounds (i.e. GET OUT QUICK BY THE NEAREST AVAILABLE EXIT). Just as the lecture was concluding, off went the alarm. Out, quick, directly. Much better this time.- the guilty party: ten slices of black toast

Back to base, a group planned to go boating, for an expedition downstream. A total of 18 of us embarked on 4 boats, sum total of rowing experience less than 3 persons. This was going to be entertaining.

Day 5: Henley-on-Thames to Wallingford



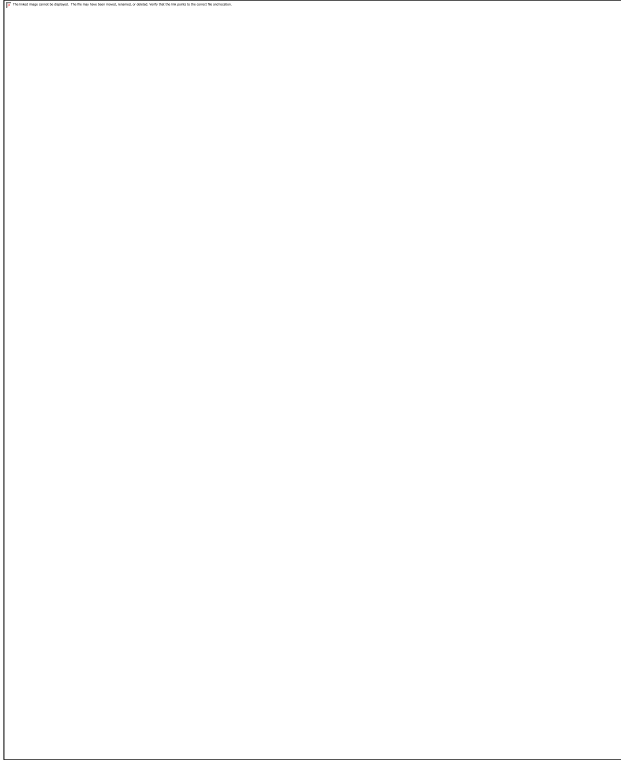
Fr David preached about St Chad and his role in reconciling the Roman and Celtic churches 1300 years ago, and the parallels with the current state of the Christian churches was clear. We were sent on our way uplifted!

It was a "stay in" night, well there was a bar in the foyer, and it gave a chance for those who like a drink and those who'd rather not to be together. Once supper had cleared, we had a good old-fashioned singsong!

Day 7: Abingdon to Eynsham

St Leonard's Church at Sunninghill we were met by Revd John Stevenett, who had early links with Lichfield. He led us in prayer on the theme of the need to stop, look and listen.

Off into the now pouring rain (we'd heard it on the church roof). A wayside pub proved too much of a temptation as a retreat from the rain. Andy and Dennis were with the backmarking team, and looked ready for shelter. They'd donned their waterproofs, but the vests were safely stowed to keep them dry, justifying their nickname of the "Topless Brothers!" And so into Eynsham village, Poor Abi (whose toe had been cut during restday amusements by the river) was sitting exhausted in the corner having unloaded the van virtually single-handedly. Maybe we need to consider weight limits on pilgrims' bags - some are just too heavy and unwieldy.



Day 8: Eynsham to Chadlington

There were some classic views of pilgrims on lines across the rolling Cotswold countryside. Here we are in two halls, the Memorial Hall and the Primary School. Locals joined us for evening prayer in the hall, and we retired to the Sports Club opposite for refreshments and a hearty singsong. As Saturday comes to a close and the second half of our pilgrimage dawns, we must retire ready for tomorrow. And we have a WALK back to our beds!

Day 9: Chadlington to Shipston-on-Stour

We had a great send off at both locations. We'll remember Chadlington not only for the link with St Chad, but especially for the welcome and interest of the locals.

Day 10: Shipston-on-Stour to Stratford-upon-Avon

We started with Mass at Shipston-on-Stour. Father Joe preached with his usual exuberance, and we sang his song at the offertory.

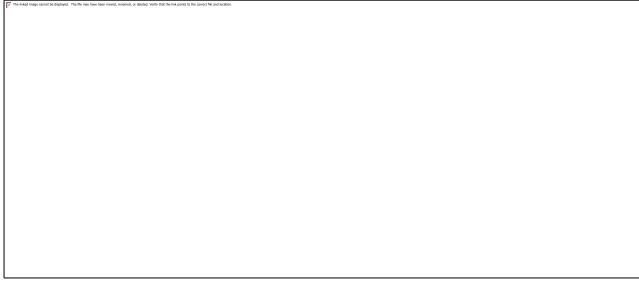
It has been noticeable today that people have been more subdued when walking - 6 consecutive days have taken their toll

Day 11: Rest Day in Stratford-upon-Avon

Father Joe tried drying his washing by the African method but, although it was sunny, there wasn't enough heat to dissipate the moisture!

In the evening the wind ensemble (!) played, to the uninvited accompaniment of assorted improvised percussion. The two factions then joined forces and we played various hymns and songs, including learning some new ones, for hours

Day 12: Stratford-upon-Avon to Henley-in-Arden



Fast asleep, thinking of my dad's pilgrimage poem "It's four in the morning, the pilgrims are snoring, laid out on the floor of the gym..." Oh no, FIRE ALARM. AGAIN. Everybody out! This time we called the fire brigade - we had no means to silence the alarm, and the source was in an area we weren't using. So, we all assembled outside; Pat took the register; pilgrims in various stages of undress huddled in what they could grab. John unlocked the gates to allow the fire tenders in; lots of burly firemen; BUT NO FIRE. We still couldn't silence the alarm. The fire brigade took over, and tracked down a key from the headmaster. Building clear, all back to bed. Only one-hour sleep lost. It may have been a short day's walk, but after last night it was still a relief to reach Henley-in-Arden High School. We relaxed in the showers, then gathered outside for an Iona-style jubilee service.

Day 13: Henley-in-Arden to Hampton-in-Arden

We awoke to bad news: Julian had fallen yesterday, and his ankle had swollen badly after he'd been ferried to the school, so Rosemary took him to the hospital. They returned at 2 a.m., Julian plastered to the knee - a fractured fibula. So sadly, Julian and Betsy had to leave us.

The morning walk joined up with the Grand Union Canal, taking us to The Navigation Inn at Kingswood. From here we went to the Poor Clare's Convent for Mass. The music used the improvised percussion practised a couple of nights ago, so on to Hampton-in-Arden. Nice hall, not huge, but there's a bar!

Day 14: Hampton-in-Arden to Oscott College

The penultimate walking day! We set out from Fentham Hall after a good night's sleep. We were heading for the next village, Catherine de Barnes, but the route differed from that Maurice had measured. We stopped at the church, where the Gospel "whatever you do to the least of my brothers", was illustrated on a board in the church by a painting of the woman at the well.

Out of the church, we joined the Grand Union canal and headed towards Birmingham. Near the city centre, we cut off through the city streets to St Chad's RC Cathedral.

Leaving the Cathedral we rejoined the canal, which took us right through (under) spaghetti junction. Although it was noisy, there was a peace in the shelter of the massive elevated roads.

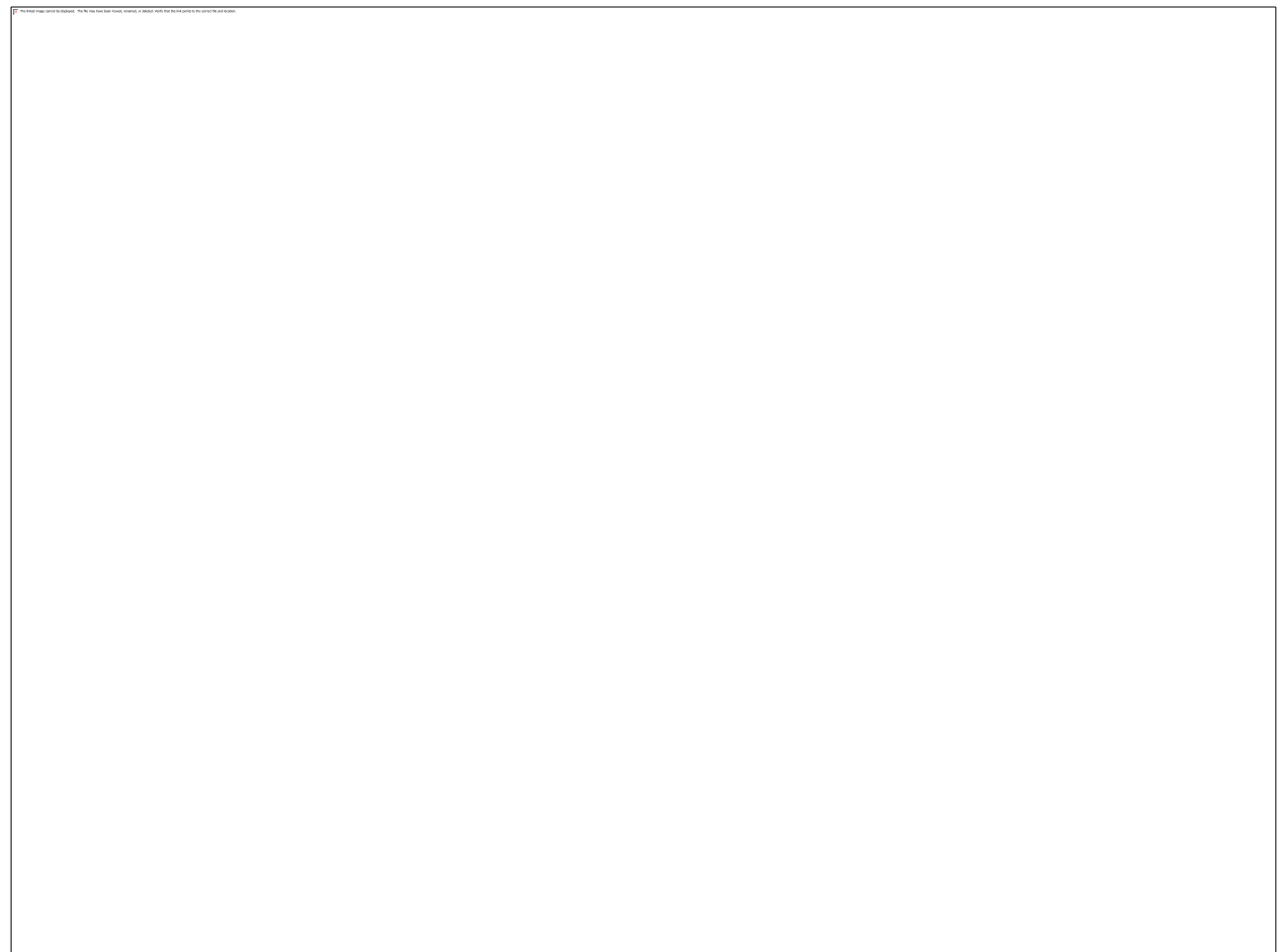
We eventually crossed the canal, walking in a bit of a cluster as Rob, the day's leader, had been taken ill (too much sun and too little water).

Leaving the canal, we walked the length of College Road, which must be one of the longest! But it faithfully led us to St Mary's College, Oscott, the seminary for Birmingham Diocese.

Day 15: Oscott College to Lichfield

The last day - and what a start! Steve Roche, Bursar of Oscott College, arrived saying he'd needed an outboard motor on his car to get through the floods. We'd certainly heard it on the roof of the room we were sleeping in. So after breakfast, setting off prayers and a farewell from Steve Roche, the front markers set out into the downpour.

We continued north, to Wall where we lunched at the Trooper. Here we were met by a group of no fewer than 20 walkers from St Chad's Church in Lichfield, led by their rector, Jill. We threaded through the city streets to reach St Chad's, where we received a great welcome. We enjoyed refreshments as we prepared our liturgy. Then we were invited to follow the Bishop Keith past St Chad's Well and Stowe Pool to the Cathedral. We tried to sing as we processed, but had to compete with the Lichfield Pop and Rock Festival! At the gate to the Close we were met by the Dean, who led us round to the West Door.



From the Cathedral we walked up to Holy Cross RC Church. We then celebrated our final Mass in Holy Cross, ending with a blessing of Lesley's engagement ring and so to our celebration meal.

Day 16: Celebration in Lichfield and Journey Home

So here it is - our final day. Although yesterday was our final walking day, today started with a walk (under a mile) to St Chad's church to join their 9.30 Holy Communion, so it was a relatively early start.

But what a welcome! The order of service showed the extent to which St Chad's had adapted their service to accommodate us. After the Creed and intercessions, a new chasuble was presented to the church. Having blessed the chasuble, Jill (the rector) donned it to continue the service. Chatting to other pilgrims, it is clear that we've never had a welcome quite like this anywhere else.

Aidan

The Art of Hearing

Hello everybody. A few of you probably remember me from the first half of Glastonbury (1991?) and the whole of Buckfast, (1996?) and occasional appearances at reunions. I wanted to recount a recent experience, which changed me, and ask that you bear with the somewhat foreshortened language used for the sake of brevity.

Whilst rummaging through some biographies in the library, I came across 'Depardieu' by Paul Chutkow in October 1998. This excellent book about the French actor was very much a tearjerker for me. Though not one for cinema (or TV, video, pop...etc.) the early channel 4 series had me hooked. What screen presence! But what a problem, in such a mess at the age of 18 with his voice & memory. Well, nothing that a specialist in Paris couldn't put right. By chance, browsing through a health supplement, I came across this Doctor's name again, and a hint that I might find a course of treatment for something that had afflicted me since I was 18: tinnitus (ringing in the ears).

There followed a series of consultations, listening tests and a training programme for me in London, in March and April 1999. I became intrigued by some literature on the subject – ghastly case studies (including some help for self-abuse), a little book called 'When Listening Comes Alive; and 'The Conscious Ear', this doctor's autobiography. Here we are in the field of audio-psycho-phonology, with filtered music, relating to frequency range, to stimulate and retrain damaged middle ear muscles; and firm conviction as to the chief role of the ear; to stimulate cortical charge (in a nutshell, to energise the brain).

There are different stages of 'passive' and 'active' listening involved, a so-called 'sonic birth', the use of one's own voice and free expression with coloured crayons. This last point brought me back to painting and the completion of a truly meaningful picture in oil pastels. The music itself, mostly Mozart, immersed me to a large extent in the world of Mum and Dad – both classical musicians.

I experienced many benefits, for example in improved posture and energy levels, and a reduction in the volume of the tinnitus. But I have to say that the greatest thing is to be free from depression, to have more of a sense of what is real, tangible. I try to read aloud daily for half an hour if possible. It seems strange, but in this way I was led back to the Bible; anything else I chose to read irritated me. I am convinced now of the importance of sound, especially the human voice, and the close links between the voice, emotions and intellect.

Thank you for travelling with me in this newsletter, and I wish you a safe and pleasant onward journey.

Paul Martin

The electronic ear gives you the euphoria of listening, “Tomatis explains, “and above all, it restores the ear to its full, deep functioning – a functioning completely forgotten even by most doctors. If you have many problems, I have the good fortune to furnish your brain with enormous energy. And when I light up your brain, it is intelligent. It will look at those problems, put them back into proportion, and the result will be healing.”

‘Depardieu’ by Paul Chutkov, Knopf, 1994.. (p146-7)

Gerard feels that Mozart taught him a whole new language: the language of music, poetry, intuition and the emotions. “With so little schooling I grew up with no inhibitions regarding language, “Gerard says. And when I started working with Tomatis and Cochet (his drama tutor), I saw each word with its own visual image. And when I read Racine and Moliere, I heard the words as music.”

‘Depardieu’ by Paul Chutkov, Knopf, 1994.. (p149)

It is as if by being plunged into one’s own past, one were being offered a better way of mastering the future. By bringing the ear back to its earliest influences, the filtered sound treatment enables it in this roundabout way to achieve the most advanced stage of its evolution, that of ‘human listening’.

‘The Conscious Ear’ by Alfred A. Tomatis, Station Hill Press.
1986. (137)

A car radio not only provides a diversion; it also masks the noises of the ear itself. We can imagine the unborn child making first attempt to ‘connect’ with the more agreeable sound of the voice of her mother. But unlike a radio, the voice is not always ‘on’ and the foetus cannot control it. She has to wait until it comes on to enjoy it. Thus the first motivation to reach out is born. This is followed by the first gratification – the pleasure of hearing this sound again. This initial silent ‘dialogue’ gives birth to listening.

‘When Listening Comes Alive’ by Paul Madaule, Moulin Press,
1994. (p230)

Every quest, every search, and every piece of research (however scientific it may appear to be) only has value in so far as it leads to the divine. Every discovery has a purpose only within a context that draws together into a greater understanding the relationship that should exist between the human condition and the infinite grandeur of the Creator. At this level, man is not shut up in his human body; he is part of an infinity, which encompasses his and carries him in his sidereal course, to sing in unison to the glory of the Absolute. What matters in human life is the opportunity to discover God himself.

‘The Conscious Ear’ by Alfred A. Tomatis, Station Hill Press.
1986. (p230)