

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 79

October 2004

Dear Pilgrims

It is the time of year to look back on the Chester Pilgrimage just completed, with fond memories and with thanks to every pilgrim for your personal contribution and for your prayers. We were well cared for and enjoyed the hospitality of many churches, schools and pubs along the way. I have received several letters of thanks from churches, who welcomed our visits. We sent a pilgrim cross to Canon Trevor Dennis at Chester Cathedral. He replied: *"Thank you very much for your letter... and for the marvellous cross, which I am wearing proudly as I write (although I don't think I have done the walking to deserve it!)... It was a privilege to welcome you all. I don't think I was sufficiently vocal in congratulating you on making it. I didn't realise, until I was talking to one of your number after the service, quite how far you had walked! The spirit alive in your group and the quality of friendship was plain for us to see. Thank you for choosing Chester and the Cathedral as the goal for your Pilgrimage. And God bless for next year"*.

Next year is our 30th Anniversary: thirty years since Bill Haynes planned a one-off, celebratory walk for Holy Year to "beat the bounds" of the Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. Such was its success that the event was repeated the following year and so on. In 1981 the Pilgrimage became ecumenical, and has remained so. This year, alongside Father David Russell, we welcomed Revd Robert Bull as our first Anglican Priest for some years.

After 14 Pilgrimages, it is now my privilege to take over as Co-ordinator from Bruce Matheson. Over the last 2 years, Bruce has adeptly handled everything (from risk assessments to broken statues) with quiet assurance, ably assisted by his wife, Hazel. We thank them both for their service and dedication. We also thank Maurice Hickman for eight years' service as Chief Route Planner, Monica McLauchlan for much Alternative Transport and Keith Donachie for taking the minutes.

John Chenery takes over as Chief Route Planner. Monica continues as Bookings Secretary; Rosemary Southon takes on Alternative Transport. John Lamb will take the minutes. Thank you all. Other Pilgrims continue in their current roles; we need a Church Liaison Officer and there are other roles to be filled before next summer. If you would like to help or have suggestions to make, do get in touch.

For next year the committee has agreed on a Pilgrimage from Canterbury to Winchester, via Rochester and Guildford, Saturday 13th August to Sunday 28th August 2005. The theme will be the "Holy Spirit". Other celebrations include a 30th Anniversary Weekend April 1st-3rd 2005 for all pilgrims, past and present. Book now for the Chester Reunion, Nov 5th-7th.

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout the generations, for ever and ever! Amen." St Paul, Ephesians 3 v20

Sue

Dates for your Diary:

The Chester Reunion organised by Bill Ward is planned for **November 5th –7th** at DABCEC, 4 Southgate Drive, Crawley, details enclosed. Do come and bring your photographs. Please book in advance, so we know how many to cater for, especially for the Saturday night meal.

Day Route Planning for the 2005 Winchester Pilgrimage: a list for volunteers will be put up at the **Chester Reunion**. There should be a minimum of two pilgrims planning each day. We would welcome some new route planners; it is a great way to become more involved with the running of the Pilgrimage (if you can read a map!) For advice or if you cannot attend the reunion but would like to lead a walk, you should contact John Chenery.

Canterbury to Winchester, via Rochester (never previously visited by Pilgrims) and Guildford, from Saturday 13th August to Sunday 28th August 2005. Theme: **“Holy Spirit”**.

30th Anniversary Reunion, organised by Aidan Simons, April 1st – 3rd, New Alresford. All Pilgrims, past, present and future (?) are welcome. Do come, bring your families, friends, photos and musical instruments and enjoy a great weekend.

Pilgrimage Committee Meetings: will be held at 3.00pm in the Bar area of the Church Hall, St Joseph’s Catholic Church, Ladbroke Road, Redhill on Sundays: January 9th, April 17th, June 19th and September 18th.

The Chester Pilgrimage Report

This is a brief and plain summary of the pilgrimage to Chester. The sparkling version, with illustrations, is on the website. Last September the Welsh Marches route was chosen for 2004 because it was time for an away pilgrimage and the area was completely new to most of us. The other hopes were; to develop a learning theme and to bring in more new pilgrims.

The completely new route became a challenge for Fred Adilz as Accommodation Officer because there was no record of sympathetic halls owners to call on. Even with Fred’s extensive database of schools, churches and leisure centres it took three trips up and down the Welsh Marches to secure halls in the right places. Meanwhile John Lamb, Aidan Simons and Sue Earley prepared a Peace and Justice theme guide for Church Stop speakers together with backup notes and lists of sources for further material. This was a first of a kind effort that had a serious amount of thought behind it.

Months of detailed work by the route planners, coach organisers, van hirers, cook and church stop officer finally came together at the Salvation Army Hall in Gloucester. This was a good central location embellished by the late night repartee from the local revellers. Many of us joined in the Cathedral evensong and some went on the tower tour. Sunday’s walk was a pleasant amble up on to the heights above the Severn. After lunch the first of a number of August downpours soaked the route.





The occasional damp conditions contrasted to last years roiling heat. Despite this there are many good memories of beautiful countryside; the view from the top of the Malvern Ridge, the woods above Ludlow, the Llangollen valley and a rowan tree clinging to the limestone escarpment above Offas Dyke path.

The churches were often amazing for their antiquity and breadth of architectural heritage. Leominster Priory featured a ducking stool that Milly tried on for size. The congregations we met

were so welcoming it was a blessing to join with them for a range of service traditions that spanned centuries. Also the teas were really good with what felt like unlimited tea and cake.

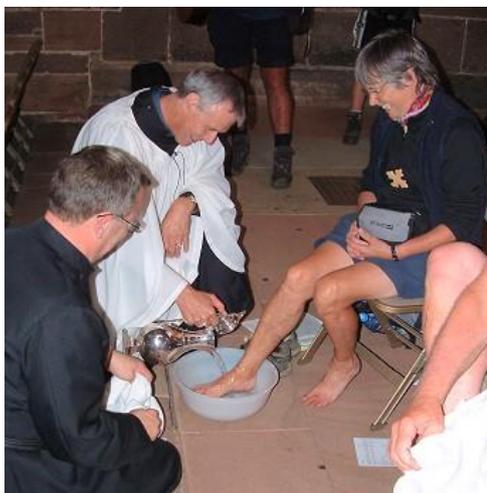
At long last we benefited from ministers of both Catholic and Anglican denominations. Father David was with us all the time for services. Revd Robert Bull could join us on the weekdays. The joint communions showed both our fellowship in the body and blood of Jesus and our theological division. This year, we had many new pilgrims, especially from overseas. They all made a strong impression and I hope that they can come on pilgrimage again in the future.



Most of the pilgrimage went well as the result of good planning and peoples' efforts to join in fellowship. The few glitches also leave sensitive spots. A gate latch slipping off and having to rush recompense (plus a bottle of Scotch) around to the farmers. Buying wine for the celebration and not thinking about balancing this with juice and soft drinks. Trying to support a backup team short of the willing muscle power the Topless Twins provided in previous years.

The approach to Chester by a cruiser on the Dee was an inspired touch that took the load off those aching feet. The welcome at Chester Cathedral was a sumptuous sequence of processing in through the West Doors, a foot washing ceremony then joining in with the Cathedral service from the ancient choir stalls. The day in Chester was a chance to connect with our nation of shoppers roots. The lovely celebration meal in the evening was my chance to thank everyone, the helpers in particular, for the work and thought that blessed us on The Chester Pilgrimage





Bruce

Those of you able to pick up the October edition of the A&B news will find another pilgrimage report, by Bill Ward, on the front page!

Pilgrim News

Congratulations to Betsy and Julian on the safe arrival of Grace Mary Farmer, born 4th September 2004, weighing 7lb 7oz. Pilgrims send their love. Special congratulations from Auntie Susan!



Congratulations also go to Lesley & John who are proud to announce the birth of the first girl in the Brennan family for a long time! Clare Brennan was born 11.25am on Saturday 25th September at Mayday Hospital. She was delivered two weeks early by caesarean section. Clare weighed a respectable 7lb 4 oz Mother and baby are fine.



Fr Tim L'Estrange writes:

Anyone whose mind goes back as far as the 1997 St. Augustine Pilgrimage may be interested to hear of my engagement to be married to Miss Elizabeth Bronwen May Lloyd, at an as yet unspecified date next Spring. Best wishes to all,

Father Timothy L'Estrange Anglican Chaplain, 1997 Pilgrimage

I'm sure many pilgrims will want to join me in wishing you many happy years together.

David Ward has announced his engagement to Annette Johnson (who joined him on the Eastbourne to Lewis Day of the St Richards Anniversary Pilgrimage). Congratulations to you both!

Liz Wakefield sends in an update :

A bit of updated info on me and my family- maybe you would like to print it in a newsletter... I am now 43 but feel no different from when I was in my 20's, must be the vegan diet! My daughter Vicky is 20 and at Sheffield university studying Archaeology and in her 2nd year. I am teaching 3 days a week up in London, Havering where I am the head of the Traveller Education Team and work with Traveller, Roma and Gypsy children in schools and at their homes be it house, trailer, chalet. The other 2 days I work as a sessional home tutor with Brighton and Hove education authority with ill and 'looked after' children. Rob and I have been married for 21 years, seems impossible, many of you will remember our wedding. Rob is head of science at Croydon college. We still live in the same place in hove. Oh I am also very involved with green politics and am standing in local elections. Peace and Love Liz

To add a little humour (& help fill an awkward gap) here are some clippings allegedly from actual church bulletins. I trust I haven't unknowingly added a few of my own elsewhere!

"Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands."

"The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict. "

"Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get. "

"Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack's sermons."

"Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you. Don't let worry kill you-let the Church help. "

"At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice. "

"The senior choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir. "

"Scouts are saving aluminium cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children. "

"Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person(s) you want remembered. "

"The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon. "

"Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door. "

"Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 P.M.- prayer and medication to follow. "

"Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance. "