

# NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 87

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## Dear Pilgrims

By the time you are reading this, there will be less than four weeks before we set out on Pilgrimage again - this time heading from Wells to Arundel. I suspect that 2007 will come to be known as the ferry pilgrimage, five in all - though two are quite short river crossings! Starting from the spectacular cathedral at Wells we will be walking across some wonderful Somerset countryside, passing Pilton - better known as the setting for the Glastonbury Festival, then on to beautiful market town of Castle Cary.

It would take a book to outline all that we will see and visit. In brief there will be rolling Dorset downland, New Forest heathland, Hampshire coastline and then spectacular coastal walking around the Isle of Wight. I am not biased really! There's even another Island - Hayling - and some reasonable coast and country en route to Chichester and Arundel - our goal, for 2007.

For new Pilgrims and as a reminder to all the regulars; The pattern of our day is;

An earlyish start, rising time mainly around 7.00am - no noise before, apart from the 'official' tea/coffee makers. Morning Prayer an increasingly popular option for 15 minutes around 7.30. Breakfast is sandwiched between packing own gear and joining in the general chores clearing, cleaning and van loading. At the appointed time to depart a pilgrim will send the gathered throng on the way with a prayer of departing. Soon after we will pause for the Eucharist of the Day.

Front markers set off, once they have received, to blaze the trail with orange arrows. The body of the pilgrimage is driven forward by determined Back markers anxious to avoid losing any malingeringers pausing for a quick coffee or even an ale. During the day we stop on two or three occasions for Prayer and Reflection in a variety of mainly rural churches, lovingly cherished by small congregations. Many refresh us liberally with tea and cakes. It would be rude to refuse another scone, even if it is the third occasion, in one morning!

Lunch is always taken in a suitable hostelry, where rolls can be eaten or even supplemented with a touch of ' Pub Grub' and it has been known for some to imbibe the odd half or... There is often a Church stop soon after to gather the pilgrims before the gruelling (only for the first day, or seven) afternoon till our resting place for the night is reached.

In the scramble to secure a bed space spare a thought for later arrivals and once scrubbed and refreshed there are always a few tasks needing spare hands - table setting, meal serving and of course preparing the rolls for tomorrow's lunch. It never ends, but it is amazing how enjoyable it can be. Somewhere between arrival and dinner will be a chance for Evening Prayer. The aim is to start Dinner with Grace. Not too successful. Let's keep trying. Ne'er leave the table till Notices - never rambling - and Lights Out Time is announced. Then the joy of washing up in cold greasy water outside in the rain. I jest, or possibly not.

After dinner there is a varied choice - total collapse, join the Scrabble Aficionados, Social hour at the Neighbouring inn or a rousing sing song cum practice for the morrow's Eucharist.

Lights out is total darkness and complete silence. Sleep is essential to maintain this daily - PILGRIMAGE.

And so it is the morning and the scramble to wash and pack and clear and pray and be away. Are you sure you made the right choice? For 32 years many, many pilgrims have responded to the call again and again and again. Let us pray that you will be one of that company as 2015, 2030 creep on their way.

Each day there will be a chance to be involved, to contribute - playing an instrument, (Don't forget the guitar, flute or castanet) Reading, Bidding a prayer writing or/and reading, Offering - amazing the gifts that are given, ministering. Wherever your talent lies please share it. Everyone is needed, but no one is obliged ...I promise.

SEE YOU ALL in Wells... *Peter*



*This year's pilgrims cross is a slave's eye view of the ceiling of a ship as seen from below; the ring is representative of a shackle worn by slaves.*

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## **Invitation**

Pilgrims old & new are invited to join us at the Spur, Slindon from 13.15-14.15 on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> August for lunch and to walk the last 4 miles into Arundel for Mass 16.30.

Please note that we have reserved the courtyard space and skittle alley; if you order food (and please do; it would help cover our hire charge), say that you are a pilgrim and are sitting in the courtyard.

The Spur is at GR SU971082 on the A29. - We look forward to seeing you.



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## Reunion

For those whose diaries fill up early we can help with some advance planning – John and Louise Chenery are hosting this year's reunion over the weekend of 26-28 October at Dorking.

Fuller details in the next newsletter.

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## Father Joe Kengah's Silver Jubilee

In February Aidan made a business trip to Kenya, and was able to meet up with Father Joe Kengah, the Kenyan priest who walked with us in 2000 and 2002 and briefly in 2005. Joe celebrates his Silver Jubilee this year but, rather than having a big party, he wants to start a project to build a school for the deaf at Shimba Hills, within his large rural parish. The plan includes a sponsored walk to the Tanzanian border and back - no "walk in the park" given the heat and humidity.

There will shortly be the opportunity to sponsor Joe via Aidan's website.

Fr Joe will be in England this summer and will join us on the pilgrimage for a day or two.

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## Pilgrim News

Liam Breathnach writes:

Not having been a day pilgrim for a few years now since our children were born, I would like to thank you for continuing to send me the details of your latest pilgrimage, which I am delighted to see has a stopover in Emsworth.

In case any of our parishioners are interested in joining the pilgrimage, be it for a day or longer,

I have put some of your application forms on the notice board in Emsworth's Catholic Church

(St Thomas') and put something in the parish newsletter, which also covers St Joseph's church in Havant (the other half of the parish).

Matthew Huntbach has also been in touch saying:

Many thanks for continuing to send me copies of the newsletter - I think it must now be 20 years or more since I last went on an A&B Pilgrimage, but I remember those days fondly, and it's good to see it's still going on.

I have just returned from a pilgrimage (but not a walking one!) to central France, visiting Lyon, Ars, Paray-le-Monial, Cluny and Annecy - I'd recommend these sites to anyone looking for a pilgrimage to France to somewhere which makes a change from the usual destinations.

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## This year's Theme

In planning the pilgrimage when the theme was discussed it was noted that the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abolition of the transportation of slaves, is celebrated this year. The discussion developed in the order listed and brought up the following points. It was decided to collect a pack of resources, some brought to the meeting, to take on the pilgrimage to provide material and ideas for developing prayer stops (listed here to enable those unable to walk this year to be more part of the pilgrimage).

1. The contrast between **slavery** and **freedom**.
2. Different **meanings of the word "freedom"**. Physically free; spiritually chained. Peoples' concepts of freedom. Freedom to make choice.
3. That **change requires struggle** – change takes **time** and is **difficult** (re: abolition and its implementation)
4. What we personally need to do to continue to change or implement change.
5. Contrast between **servant-hood** and **slavery**.
6. Obedience preferred when there is an element of personal choice and control present.
7. Need for **structure** and **roles** within **communities**. Leadership. Pilgrimage working as a group and community.
8. **Living as a servant** – foot washing, the lowest menial task done by **Jesus** human face of servant-hood and example.
9. Is there a difference between **service to people** and **service to God**? Christians may see service to people as service to God. Contrast service to God in conflict with service to people when a tyrant rules.
10. **Communities can help** the oppressed, rejected and disadvantaged people by providing support, shelter and employment: L'Arche community (disabled people), Senacle and Emmeas Communities (drug addicts), others needing support: illegal immigrants. Become **families** for otherwise rejected peoples.
11. Means used to **oppress people** involves separating families, deceit, de-humanisation and barring access to education. The Moravian Church educated slaves before freedom.
12. Slave owners although "free" were **oppressed by their actions** and the need to keep slaves in check.
13. **Slaves today**: human trafficking, illegal immigrants (cheap labour).
14. **Jesus** is the **Light of the World**; **we** are to be **Light to the World**.
15. **Salt** preserves food and makes it tasty. The world benefits.
16. **Jesus makes himself known** to the world through us and our actions.

17. **Bruce's Cross Design:** the cross design is superbly considered from the **slave's viewpoint**; we thought an explanation of the design should be given at the **Induction Service** at the presenting the crosses.
18. **Resources:** "The Unchaining Word" Sue Hookway, "An Ecumenical Journey L'Arche in the UK" Therese Vanier, Can we build a better world – learning from William Wilberforce: Slavery, Friendship & Prayer, Change & Struggle, The Bible, Redemption and Restitution.
19. **Role of Humour** in cheering people in dire circumstances. "Thought for the Day", Rabbi Jonathan Sachs speaking of Cardinal Basil Hume: **"He took God so seriously that he did not have to take himself seriously at all"**.