



# St Mary's Magazine

Aug 2020

## Feeding our faith during lockdown

Being unable to attend mass & take communion has been difficult for me. I miss the people and the sense of being in a faith community. I miss the music and I miss the weekly chance to stop, be still and be in God's presence. But I have also found some help in being part of a worldwide, virtual community of believers. Here are some of the internet sites that have helped:



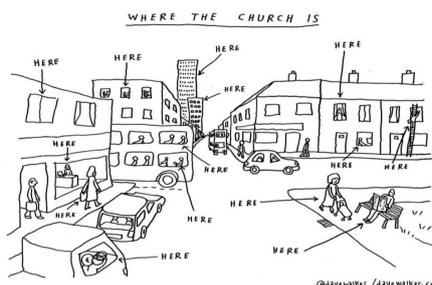
ibreviary: <http://www.ibreviary.com/m2/lettuce.php?s=lettuce>

Updated every day, this site contains the full texts of the Catholic breviary. I use it for the readings at daily mass (First reading, psalm and Gospel reading) and it also contains the Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and the rest of the Office. If you're interested, it also contains notes on all the saints of the day (in Italian, but translatable via Google Translate).

Eternal Word Television Network: <https://www.ewtn.com>

I have also used this for the readings of the day. You get the audio, read by priests, and a sermon, as well as the written text. The site is American; as well as the daily readings, it has lots of interesting information about Catholicism.

Pray as you go: <https://pray-as-you-go.org/>



[player/prayer/2020-05-22](https://www.verbumdeiphilippines.com/daily-shots#)

This is a daily reflection on the gospel for the day (every day but Saturday). It's about 12-15 minutes long, with quite a long passage of music at the start, to get us in the mood for prayer. The reflection always includes questions that can prompt us to think, or to challenge us to allow our lives to be changed.

Daily Shots: <https://www.verbumdeiphilippines.com/daily-shots#>

There is a shorter version of *Pray as you go* (around 7 minutes). It comes from the Philippines and tends to have a variety of speakers. Not all of these have English as their first language so they can sometimes require some effort to understand but this effort is well worth it for the inspiration it often brings.



The Parish Whatsapp group. Lots of good chats, and a chance to keep in touch. Fr James often posts photos of the church, and tells us the focus of his daily prayers. To join, send your phone number to Steve Joseph.

Tim Cain



Mrs. Jones got a little too used to watching online worship from home.

## COVID PENTECOST

*For fifty days they watched that door, unsure, uneasily cocooned,  
protected by its bulk and bolts yet startled by each passing sound,  
lest soldiers come and haul them out into the unfor-  
giving daylight of the street  
and thence into the even less-forgiving darkness of a  
priestly or imperial cell.*

*For fifty days their bodies stayed unstirred, it seems,  
by  
empty grave-space, visions, visitations;  
wounds seen, voice heard, hearts that burned along  
the road;  
bread blessed, broken, shared; final recognition that  
"It is the Lord!"*

*And so they watched that door in fear for fifty days,  
powerless until the Dove descending clatter round  
them  
singeing brows, inflaming hearts and spilling onto  
Pentecostal streets  
their lives transformed and lips uncorked to pour  
New Wine.*

II

*For eighty days and more, we've sat behind our  
Covid-closed doors,  
fearful not of brutal soldiers' spears  
but of the tiniest viral barb borne, maybe,  
on our loved-ones' love-filled breath;*

*Fearful of those normal daily human things:  
caress, hug, handshake and the rest,  
lest broken lungs deny us life-sustaining breath  
and ventilated coma meld into the kiss of death.*

*We know too well the wounded Christ  
and understand the first disciples' fears –  
but wonder: What shape can a resurrected life have  
here,  
when will our Pentecostal moment of unlocking  
come  
and where's the Paraclete this year?*

III

*The healing Spirit hovers still, for sure,  
in quietened skies, in cleaner air,  
in manic schedules voided  
and in lives made strangely still –*

*Still enough to hear the rhythms of each others'  
hearts  
and to dream 'new normal' where, maybe, we'll  
grasp at last  
the dignity and value of the humble folk who keep us  
safe –  
porters, cleaners, carers and the rest;*

*Still enough to heed  
the invitation to us all to start afresh  
and learn to tread more lightly  
on God's earth.*

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## Growing up in Jane Austen's House

### (Part 6)

Gradually, other rooms were taken over for the museum and we ended up sleeping in the attic. I would quite often be with my aunt as she took visitors around the house.

I have always loved the house and Chawton, to grow up in the large garden, riding my bike and having my small plot of garden. Watching the blacksmith at work in his small building close by.

My Great Granny lived across from the village hall and my mother told of making butter at the house. The names of two uncles are inscribed on the memorial to the first war, on the wall of the village hall.

At one time one could go over to the public house and by way of a side passage, access a hatch, to be served with a jug of ale. Cost not known, takes one's own jug.

It has been a pleasure to make my memories available for you to read. I hope you have found them interesting. Thank you to Anne for making it possible.

God Bless

Pam Barbour

### First Holy Communions

Saturday 1st August saw 6 families and 8 children celebrating First Holy Communion at St Mary's.

It's been an odd preparation for many reasons, not least the pandemic but families and catechists, especially Jo Higgins, have carried on with the programme with a little help from others. The last few months all have embraced Zoom as a method for continuing lessons.

The Mass itself may have felt a little odd to begin with, no parishioners, no extra family members etc but it was lovely, holy and appreciated by all.

As Fr James said in his sermon, it was back to the basics and the real meaning of the day.

Congratulations to all those who took communion for the first time and we look forward to celebrating with you at a future date.

### **Apostleship of the Sea**

The apostleship of the Sea has been very busy around the world, supporting seamen who find themselves in difficult conditions due to the pandemic.

Here is an excerpt from their newsletter.

In the Philippines, more than 120 seafarers are spending lockdown at our three dormitories, along with staff who are staying with them. In Manila we're **distributing food to more than 1,200 out-of-work seafarers**, housed in local centres.

Here in the UK, chaplains are bringing food and essentials to crews who are unable to leave their ships. We're speaking to seafarers regularly through video calls, and providing faith resources and practical advice.

### **But things are really tough for seafarers.**

*There are three things you and I can do to help.*

**Pray for seafarers.** In this global crisis, people are turning to our Lord – so pray that seafarers will know God's comfort, strength and hope.

### **Send a message of thanks to a seafarer.**

Fill out the [form online](#) to write your words of encouragement and we'll pass it on; your support will be such a blessing to a seafarer visiting our shores.



### **Make a donation to help a seafarer facing a tough time.**

I understand the pandemic has affected us all, and for many it's caused financial challenges. So please don't feel any pressure to send a gift. But if you can help today, your support will really make a difference.

### **The Venerable Bede**

At the time of the Saxons the inhabitants of lowland Britain were made up of Saxons, Jutes and Angles, however Pope Gregory considered them one English nation and referred to them as 'Angli'. He sent missionaries to this far away island to convert these pagan 'Angli' to

Christianity.

The dramatic story of this conversion was recorded by a monk living in a Northumbrian monastery at Jarrow. This was Bede who many consider as the greatest English Historian ever.

An impressive claim for a humble man, who spent most of his life the monastery of Jarrow, albeit surrounded by hundreds of books and manuscripts. Bede wrote many books on History and theology, he had a particular interest in numbers and spent time trying to calculate the date of Easter and the Christian calendar. He popularised the system of dating using BC and AD.



But his most famous book was 'The Ecclesiastical History of the English People'.

Four years after the completion of this work, Bede died in 735AD. His works continued to be influential and popular, being copied and dispersed across Europe. His writings influenced many, including King Alfred.

Remains thought to belong to Bede were found at Jarrow in 11<sup>th</sup> Century and laid to rest at Durham Cathedral.

### **Trees**

Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918) was an American writer and poet. He was killed in the First World War serving with the US Forces. He is remembered for his poem Trees. During this lockdown many of us have had the chance to watch our gardens and appreciate nature.

Tom Barbour

I think that I shall never see

A poem lovely as a tree,

A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed

Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,

And lifts her leafy arms to pray,

A tree that may in Summer wear

A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain,

Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,

But only God can make a tree.



### **Saving Seeds**

If you have been busy in the garden this year, you may be at the point now when you are going to be collecting seeds for next year, or taking cuttings. If possible, try and save some for the church next year, we usually have a plant sale in Spring.

### **Alton Foodbank**

Recently, the foodbank has not been in need of any items. Checking on the website 2nd Aug the list for items needed is as follows.

- Sponge puddings
  - Biscuits
  - Washing powder
  - Laundry conditioner
- Cleaning products (disinfectant sprays etc.)

### **Washing Hands with Our Lady**

We are all supposed to be washing hands regularly for at least 20 secs, just the time in fact that it takes to say the Hail Mary.

Think how many decades of the rosary this would be each day.

### **A Blessing from Padre Pio**

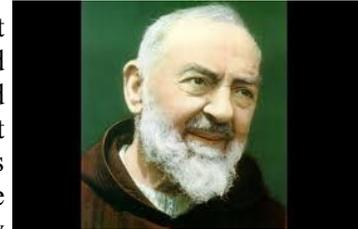
Some years ago I travelled around Europe and eventually found myself in San Giovanni Rotonondo, Italy, where Padre Pio lived in the monastery. His mass was always very early in the morning before daylight. The locals and pilgrims queued outside the church door. It is the only church where I have ever seen worshippers running in to get a front seat as soon as the door was opened.

Padre didn't wear his mitts for mass but the sleeves of his alb were long so his stigmata wasn't visible.

I got to speak to Bill Martin who was an American brother looking after Padre Pio. One day I was allowed to join the men in the sacristy for Padre to give us his blessing. We knelt, heads bowed. I did not expect the blessing I got, his hand or fingers came down on my head with a thud. I felt it for days after. It really surprised me as I thought his hands would be sore from the stigmata. After that I asked Bill Martin if Padre would accept me as a spiritual child. The answer next day was yes but I wasn't to let him lose face. Being human, I expect I have many times since that day.

One evening during Rosary and Benediction, I was kneeling in church and felt eyes on the back of my head. I turned towards the balcony running around the church to see Padre raise his hand to me. To say I was surprised is an understatement even though it was my birthday and I was in the back of the church. I had become a Catholic in March of that year. Next day, I asked Bill if Padre was in church for the Rosary last evening. The answer was 'No, I tucked him up in bed long before'. I said no more.

We know that Padre bilocated to people but did he really do that to me? It seems hard to believe even now many



years on. He also had the gift of perfume, it could fill your house or be a presence outdoors without explanation.

When I returned to Britain, I had a projector and movie film of Padre, with testimonies of people who had been healed and brought to faith. Along with a friend, we travelled wherever people were gathered, to watch the film. Several prisons were visited. The film was well received everywhere, we made no charge but a cup of tea was always welcome. The prison trustees were good at that. On one occasion on returning home my house was full of the most beautiful perfume for which I have no explanation.

This all happened in June 1968, three months before he went home to Our Lord. Since then, of course, he has been made a saint.

Pam Barbour

### **Magazine**

**Where can you leave contributions?** Please ensure that all contributions are named. They can be sent to [anne.bothwell@gmx.com](mailto:anne.bothwell@gmx.com). Thank you.

#### **Parish Pastoral Council**

Fr James  
Anne Bothwell,  
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