

Magazine
Serving
the Parishes of
St Mary & St John
Wigan

Spring
2003

50p

Spring 2003

Dear Parishioners,

Last Wednesday was Ash Wednesday and we began the season of Lent. For most of us it is probably not our favourite season of the Church's year. There is the thought of doing penance and then we begin to feel guilty because we haven't done what we set out to do. And that, when you come to think of it, is a strange way to prepare for Holy Week and Easter. It is odd because Holy week and Easter are not a celebration of what *we* have done for God, but rather of what God has done for us. As we journey through Lent that must be the good news that we carry with us.

There is a tendency in all of us to view our relationship with God in terms of what we have done, our efforts and our achievements. This is quite natural when we consider that we live in a world where survival depends on our success. But when it comes to God things are different. The God that we believe in is totally Giver and Forgiver: the Giver of life and all that we have, the Forgiver of all our faults and failings.

Lent is a time, not for heroic acts, still less for guilt, but rather a time for gratitude. Gratitude for creation and life, for friends and family, talents and possessions. Especially it is a time of gratitude for the life and death of Jesus, for forgiveness and reconciliation.

As we journey through Lent, perhaps we could spend some time each day looking carefully over our lives, thanking God for all that he has done for us and as our gratitude grows for all the graces and blessings that we have received, then we will grow closer to him. It is when we recognise that we are forgiven, that we will find the freedom to forgive others in turn.

May our Lenten journey bring us closer to the God of love and forgiveness, so that his peace may reign, not only in our minds and hearts, but in our world at this troubled time.

Father Andrew.

Magazine Matters

On behalf of parents and parishioners this issue notes the outstanding success of St Mary & St John School in the recent OFSTED Inspection. We congratulate the staff, pupils and supporters and wish them well in their coming endeavours.

In the Autumn of 1991 Cyril Birchall provided an article for this magazine and continued almost uninterrupted as our resident humorous writer until the Autumn of 1999. In this issue we are delighted to welcome him back with his 45th article. Since he now writes from Cardinal Heenan House he has even more claim to be a resident writer.

You may notice a couple of changes to the 'Contacts' provided on the back page. Please tell us of any need for further change or addition.

The treasurer's figures indicate that our income still virtually balances our expenditure. No significant loss or profit; which is what we aim for. Again we thank contributors for the material they prepare. It can be quite demanding in time and effort.

Following a suggestion that we consider reducing the frequency of issues, the magazine team has agreed and decided to maintain those for the Spring and Autumn whilst discontinuing the Summer and Winter ones. Records show that fewer copies are sold in Summer (presumably because some readers are on holiday). Whilst there is no such drop in Winter sales, it is accepted that normal Christmas activities tend to claim our time and attention in December.

The Autumn issue will be on sale on Sunday 14th September 2003 so that the last day for accepting material will be Sunday 24th August.

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News from the Don Orione Centre, Upholland

Last week, the meeting of the Sons of Divine Providence, the priests who run the Home for the elderly at Cardinal Heenan House in Upholland, took place at the farm house, the building where two resident priests live. The resident priests at the moment are Frs John Carmel Perrotta and Gerry Tuite.

Fr Philip Keogh, a Lancashire man from Widnes and now Superior of the Order in England, came from London where he now resides. He lives in Kingston on Thames, a beautiful spot quite close to some well known landmarks - Kew Gardens, Hampton Court, Kempton Race Course etc. Here the followers of the Don Orione run a care home for the elderly as they do here in Lancashire. This is also the headquarters and administration centre for the organisation. I saw this beautiful group of buildings and more beautiful gardens for the first time only recently. These surroundings exist and are maintained by benefactors who generously make donations or remember the interests of these priests in their wills - simply because they admire the work of the followers of Don Orione for the underprivileged.

Fr Michael Moss, who is Superior in Ballyfermot Dublin where he runs a home for difficult youths and supervises a group of flats for the elderly. Fr John Carmel the bursar for the Order in England is now resident in Upholland so is now, on the spot when ever these meetings take place in Upholland.

One topic, I am sure those attending the meeting would discuss would certainly be the new role of the farm house as a retreat house. It is hoped to provide more Days of Recollection, residential and day retreats and facilities for small group meetings. Nine people can be catered for in single rooms. There are also two

bungalows adjacent to the farm house. Fr Gerry is the person to contact for retreats.

Cardinal Heenan House and the adjacent bungalows where our elderly residents are housed are always the concern of those who attend these meetings. At last, after discussion, it has been decided to buy the mini bus which we have struggled to afford, asking you from time to time to support our annual Spring Fayre and annual Grand Raffle. Fr Carlo had a special fund which he annually topped up. But it was going to take for ever, so, with help from generous benefactors we now have a 'not quite new' mini-bus but a very sound one. We were advised that it was more financially wise to buy a nearly new vehicle and there it stands outside Cardinal Heenan House when it isn't transporting residents to their various therapeutic pursuits, to or from hospital or on days out for those able to travel.

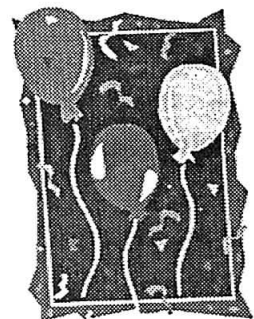
I'm sure the priests and you at St John's and St Mary's parishes are pleased to hear that Mr Cyril Birchall, who entered the Home a few months ago and no longer delighted us with his humorous writing in the magazine is back again this month with his article. I look forward to reading this and congratulate him on what must have been more difficult in his new surroundings. Congratulations from all of us!!!

Fr Carlo Mazotta who left Upholland in October to work in Zorka Jordan sent everybody his greetings at Christmas. He now runs our technical school there for Christians and Muslims - to train youths in mechanical engineering, furniture making etc so that these desert boys have a chance of becoming employable. He also runs a family centre where comfort and help can be given to the poor there. He's Australian remember so he did boast about their winning the ashes. A demerit mark for this!!

Frank Ryding

Newsagent and Card Stall
MARKET HALL

Cards for All Occasions





The Farmhouse

Fr Malcolm Dyer, contacted us from Kenya where he is guiding the people there in a project to provide elementary education for the young children there. Did you read that at last the Government there have this week decided to pay a little towards each child's education. Previously these poor people had no help so children either ran wild or parents struggled to pay. He still pleads for his many babies dying of AIDS and for the doctors and nurses who care for them.

At Christmas the staff of Cardinal Heenan House really excelled themselves, producing entertainment called "Stars Night Out". They dressed up in pantomime style, wearing wigs and lavish costumes and provided welcome refreshments. I didn't see it, but believe the venture was very much enjoyed.

The Friends on the 14th December did their bit: a Coffee Morning, Bring & Buy Sale and Plant Sale was organised and in just two hours, on that Saturday morning a godly sum was realised and the proceeds dispatched to Fr Malcolm in Kenya.

No doubt in the weeks ahead we'll all be preparing for our Spring Fayre. This will probably take place on Spring Bank Holiday Monday. Please write the date in your diary and please come along. If your group wants a venue for your meetings perhaps you'd like to contact Fr Gerry.

Fr John Carmel is organising a pilgrimage to Rome in September. More news on this later. Perhaps you would like to join us.

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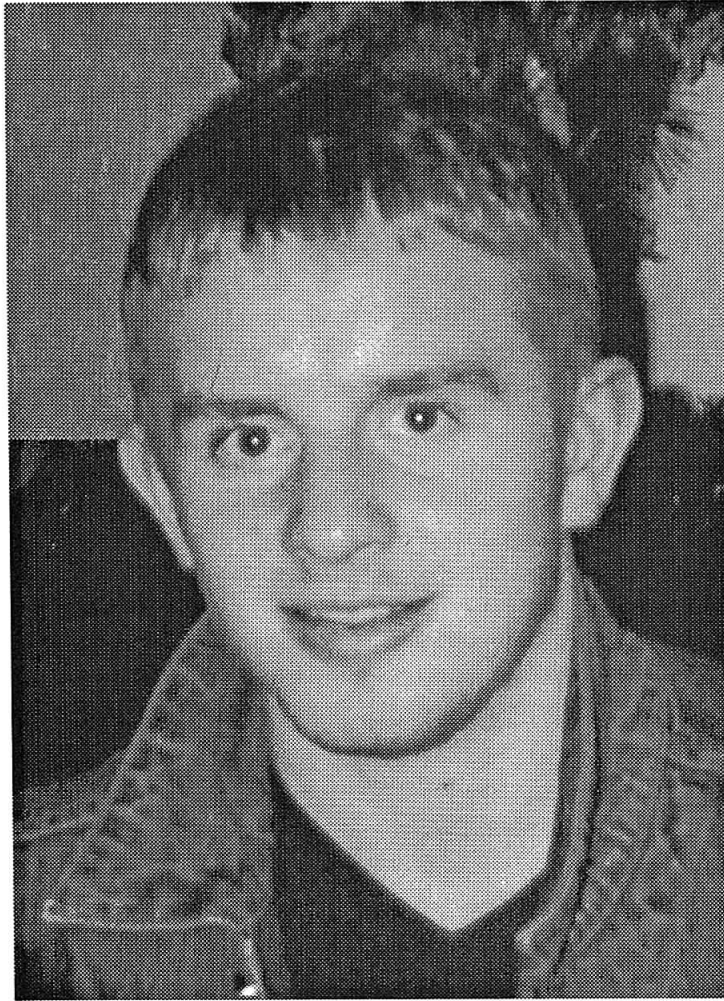


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Billy-Joe

All associated with Billy-Joe Edwards were shocked, stunned and deeply saddened to find out that he was tragically killed in a motor accident on 9th. February 2003, at Tottington, Bury. Also tragically killed in the same accident was team mate Craig Johnson, Billy-Joe's halfback partner in the Wigan Warriors under 21 Squad.

Both extremely popular local lads, educated at St. Mary and St. John's and St. John Fisher; Woodfield and the Deanery, came through the ranks with their school's teams, Wigan town teams and local amateur club teams before joining the Warriors as professionals. They were looking forward to the season ahead.

As well as playing for the Warriors, Billy-Joe, was a community development officer involved in visiting schools in the borough with various initiatives, whilst Craig had just returned to his home town club after a spell with Warrington Wolves. Both have been described as best of friends, pupils to be proud of and terrific young men.

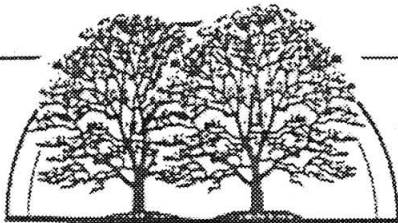
Billy-Joe was son to Phyllis and Jackie and brother to former Rugby League star Shaun, who is currently coaching at Wasps Rugby Union Club, and nephew to Father Johnson.

Craig was son to Janet and Dave and brother to current Wigan Warriors' international centre Paul.

It will be a loss felt by the whole of Wigan.

May they rest in peace.

Graham Mayor



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Crossword No 81

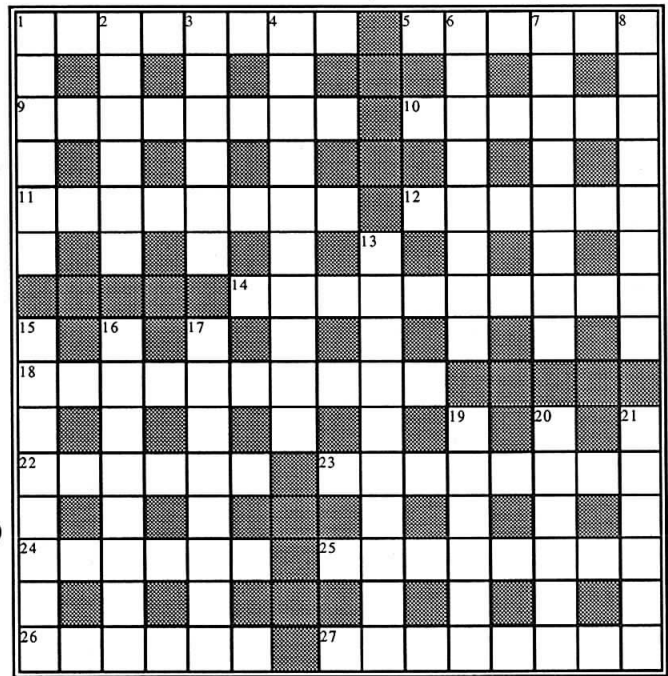
By John Deady

ACROSS

- 1 See the worker go to Gretna with a ruminant. (8)
- 5 A military surgeon. (6)
- 9 Keeps an eye on exotic lizards. (8)
- 10 The garment stays on. (6)
- 11 Cynical about a semi-precious stone whose unknowns are realised. (8)
- 12 The vile are imbued with religious instruction to become truly manly. (6)
- 14 Got into bed. (7,3)
- 18 The honest feller. (10)
- 22 EPNS craftsman. (6)
- 23 Proverbial way to perfection. (8)
- 24 Infuse gradually, in taking pains till the job is done. (6)
- 25 Providing food while caring about the 7th note. (8)
- 26 Have a good look at yonder bird. (6)
- 27 Written judgement. (8)

DOWN

- 1 Almost all to almost all. Practically. (6)
- 2 Holding ten on the river. (6)
- 3 I've almost an idea for a salve. (6)
- 4 A bit of fun with fires on a French beach. (10)
- 6 A cat is in charge of the paper and is completely destroyed. (8)
- 7 Rough metal implement tossed by a player in a paddy. (4,4)
- 8 Returns from periods of meditation. (8)
- 13 Caged grouse, for instance, enjoyed at leisure. (6,4)
- 15 Exchanging part of London's dockland. (8)
- 16 The murderer is a German elite soldier with a British elite soldier in. (8)
- 17 If you love sage, it's all the same. (8)
- 19 This can be an acute stress. (6)
- 20 A servant with a short skirt on. (6)
- 21 Give me a great amount, and what remains will be very little. (6)



Name

Address

Answers for No 80

Across: 1 Jack of all trades 8 Classes 9 Leakage 10 Lifts
 11 Negligent 12 Run up 14 Existence 16 Ash blonde 17 Cures
 19 Constable 22 Stair 23 Soluble 24 Station 25 Dance attendance

Down: 1 Jocular 2 Chaffinch 3 Oasis 4 Arson 5 Realistic
 6 Drake 7 Spectre 9 Lignite 13 Palatable 14 Ennoble
 15 Narration 16 Accused 18 Strange 20 Nylon 21 Ensnare 22 Stand

Entry please to the Competitions Secretary, Mrs E Hutchings,
 13 Ashland Ave, Wigan WN1 2DP, marked "Crossword" so that it can be
 kept until Sat 19th April 2003 when the first correct one opened wins £10.

There were 12 entries for No 80 and the winner was
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FROM THE FRONT PEW.

(at Cardinal Heenan House)

By Cyril Birchall.

WANTED: £32,000.

No! Not for me, but to increase the fund for the replacement of the old minibus for the benefit of the Cardinal Heenan Home, of which I am a resident. I write old because one of the residents in the home seems to recognise the van or one similar, that used to take him from the billet in Ypres to the front line on the Somme. Sometime ago, one of the female residents brushing against the side of the van and wiping off some of the dirt disclosed the words 'London Exhibition 1922'.

The driver of the van is John, a genial Irish man who thinks that *urine* is the opposite of 'you're out'. He is also the gardener at the home and attends to all the grass-cuttings and tree felling when necessary. Sometime ago, he found a spare patch of ground underneath the central heating exit and decided to plant some bush roses there. They all died from the flue. He also thinks that a bull market is something they hold every Thursday.

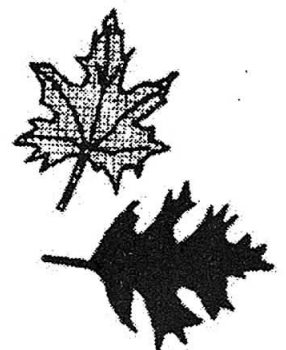
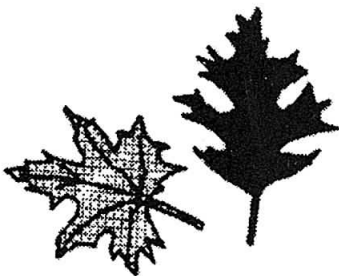
On trips, John is accompanied by Barbara one of the care workers, a very lively woman. I found out quite recently that she has a degree in sunbathing. I have just heard from her local club that she has been promoted to be in charge of the hosepipe on the occasion of the wet shirt contest. She sits next to John in the minibus as if she is riding shotgun for him, but in reality it is only to tell him when he is on the kerb. In fact seeing the two together, there is no greater meeting of unlike minds since the Wolf bumped into Red Riding Hood.

John has always wanted me to visit Ireland and my father also used to tell me to pay a visit.

So:

At last I went to Ireland,
Twas raining cats and dogs,
I found no music in the glen
No purple in the bogs.
And as for Angel's laughter
In the smelly Liffey's tide,
My Irish daddy said it
But the dear old humbug lied.

So, if anyone has the above amount available please be a good Christian by remitting the amount to me for the purpose intended.



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Wigan & Leigh United Against Racism

By Pete Coulson

In my last article, I referred to the general threat of racism brought to Wigan by organised extremists from outside the town. What exactly do I mean by racism? Racism is the deadly combination of prejudice and power. Racism is what is suffered constantly by minority ethnic groups in many countries, whether through deliberate hate-crimes or, more subtly, through unwitting but "institutionalised" discrimination. Both of these were carefully examined by the inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, which led to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Racism demeans not only the victims and the perpetrators but also the whole of any society that tolerates it.

Now, a few months later, the threat has a more tangible form. It is a threat posed to Swinley by the British National Party.

As Father Johnson clearly stated at Masses in January, this organisation is based on fundamentally un-Christian values and it is the Church's duty to oppose racism.

It is in response to the presence of the BNP in our town that a new and broadly based umbrella group has recently been formed – Wigan & Leigh United Against Racism. Over 100 people attended a packed inaugural meeting at Wigan Town Hall on Saturday 1st February. This included several members of our own two parishes, together with representatives from other Christian denominations, the mosque, all the main political parties, the MP, the MEP, the Leader of the council, teachers, musicians, trade unionists and the Anti-Nazi League as well as interested individuals. Messages of support were received from a range of other organisations too.

Wigan & Leigh United Against Racism will be celebrating its official launch on Saturday 12th April as the guests of Wigan Athletic. At 1.30pm before the Brentford match at the JJB Stadium, local children will be invited to join in activities organised in collaboration with the club's own campaign, Latics Against Racism.

I am sure there will be many opportunities like this in the coming months for parishioners who wish to take part in anti-racist and anti-fascist activity.

Let us hope and pray that enough decent people in Wigan will rally round to see off the hateful scourge that threatens us all.

Where do you stand?

p.coulson@blueyonder.co.uk

St John's Club Monthly Draw

November 2002

£20 No 56 Brian Derbyshire
£10 No 53 Tony Allard
£5 No 71 Elsie Halsall
£5 No 39 Lilian Schofield
£5 No 17 Jackie Rowe

December 2002

£20 No 64 Kathleen Harbinson
£10 No 47 Joan Green
£5 No 75 David Bennett
£5 No 46 Steve Connor
£5 No 69 Colin Blake

January 2003

£20 No 30 Derek Stephenson
£10 No 48 Joe Devine
£5 No 58 Tony Jones
£5 No 1 John Wilkinson
£5 No 82 Tony Whitney

There are still places available
in the monthly draw!!
Bingo takes place every Friday
and Sunday at 8.15 pm.

A Trip to Rome & Assisi

has been planned for
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WIGAN'S WONDER

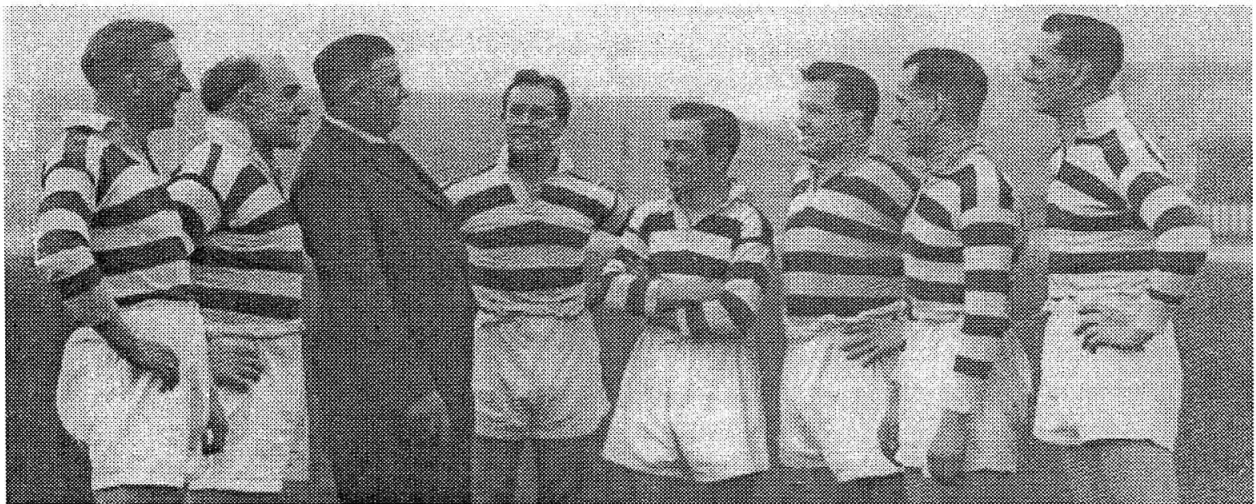
THE MAN WHO REVOLUTIONISED THE ROLE OF THE FULL-BACK!!

By James Clinch

Martin Ryan, the man who was responsible for re-styling the role of full-back play in the rugby code, died recently at the age of 79 years at the Wigan Infirmary. Requiem Mass was held at St Mary's Church, which was packed to capacity, many mourners having to wait outside.

I recollect one of the greatest full-back's of all time, the renowned Jimmy Sullivan, in one of his final days at Central Park, when he and Gus Risman were trying to out kick each other, from one end of the Park to the other. In these days this was the role of the full-back, together with their conversion of tries, attempts at goal or finding 'touch'. The style of play was to be changed by a young St. Joseph's lad, one, Martin Ryan, who joined the Wigan Rugby League Club on 12 October 1940, at the tender age of 17 years. He won his first International cap with England some three years later but as a stand-off half!

When Sullivan finally retired from the scene, Ryan was switched to full-back, so successfully, that he was Great-Britain's No. 1. choice for the 1946 Tour of Australasia. After his second tour in 1950, his career was plagued by a damaged shoulder, which frequently became dislocated. At the time of this Tour, a record number of eight players were selected from the Wigan Club. Seven of them are depicted with Jim Sullivan in the following photograph. The eighth was Gordon Radcliffe.



Jack Hilton, Ken Gee, Jim Sullivan, Martin Ryan, Tommy Bradshaw, Joe Egan(Capt), Jack Cunliffe and Ernie Ashcroft.

Martin's full-back performances had a touch of theatre and he had the good looks to match. He was the architect of the attacking full-back, previously unknown to this position. He rewrote the text books on full-back play with his subtle change of pace and direction; his handling, passing, positioning and tackling were a wonder to watch and he often had the fans spellbound. One memorable occasion was during the 1948 Wembley Final when Ryan's tackle on Trevor Foster, the Bradford forward, saved the day; this historic final was the first to be graced by a reigning Monarch. The picture shows King George VI presenting the Challenge Cup to the Wigan captain, Joe Egan, closely followed by Blan and Ryan.





The victorious Wigan team is seen in the third photograph; Martin being left of centre and carrying the Challenge Cup Holder.

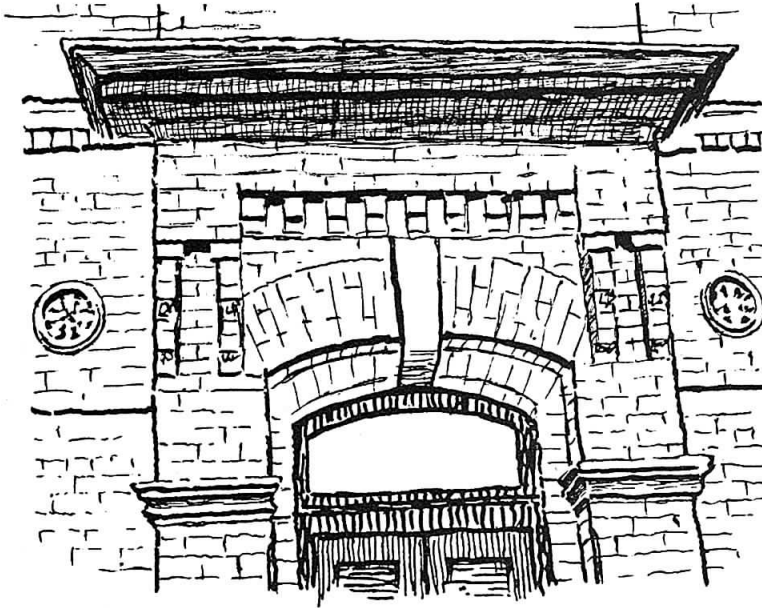
Sullivan was Ryan's idol and although famous for his miraculous kicking, Martin's versatility enabled him to fill the roles of centre, stand-off, scrum half and loose forward. He played his final match for Wigan at Workington in 1952; this being his 291" game for the Club in a spell during which he scored 50 tries and more than 50 goals. His goal-kicking was limited as during the same time, Wigan also had the redoubtable Jack Cunliffe on their Books.

Final picture showing the memorable Wigan Squad from the 1950's, with Martin seated on the extreme right, immediately behind one of the trophies. Martin became a PT (now known as a PE) Instructor with the Coal Board before spending 27 years as a Representative with Burtonwood Brewery and was a Director of the Wigan Club for some 12 years. A brother and sister and his charming wife, Eunice, who still resides in Wigan, survive him. He was one of the stalwarts of the Wigan Club, a true gentleman and will be remembered for many years to come.



The pictures are printed with acknowledgement to Mr Jack Winstanley, former editor of the Wigan Observer and author of "The History of RLFC".

Feature Quiz No 87



Here is a fine example of intricate brickwork. Although it is within half a mile of Market Place and is easily accessible it is somewhat concealed. If you know where it is why not tell our competitions secretary: Mrs E Hutchings, 13 Ashland Ave, Wigan WN1 2DP. Please mark the envelope "Feature Quiz" so that it can be kept sealed until Sat 19th April 2003 when the first correct one opened wins £10.

Number 86 is the HSBC bank at the corner of Library St and Wallgate. There were five entries and the winner was Mrs A Davies of Frog Lane.

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YOUR MAJESTY

by MAUREEN BURNS

The papers told the story
 the truth by all was seen,
 The day our kid went to London
 and chatted to the Queen.

Her Majesty in splendour
 smiled as she passed by,
 But quickly was to turn around
 on hearing our kid's cry.

It would give me so much pleasure
 your Majesty my dear,
 If I could have a little word
 and whisper in your ear.

I see you lead a very stressful life
 with your Palace there to keep,
 So why don't you get a cleaner
 who'll come in every week.

Your workload could be halved then
 from cleaning windows to mopping floors,
 And maybe Charlie boy would help you
 by polishing Palace doors.

Phil could walk the corgi's
 around Trafalgar Square,
 While you could wash and iron
 then put your rollers in your hair.

It makes a lot of sense now
 your Majesty don't you agree,
 And before you go, may I ask
 can I have an M.B.E?

Frank Ryding

Newsagent

Market Hall

Books

New Releases & Book Exchange

FROM THE DOTAGE

I actually retired on 31st August 2002. I see I failed to make this point clear in the last magazine. I am truly in my dotage! As to the story of my new house, this follows.

Completion of the purchase of my house was in January 2002. I quite thought I should be in by now, but I am not in yet. First, I asked the plumber to take the cold tank out of the roof, and put it in the bathroom, to rearrange the kitchen, and to service the boilers. (Now, I am waiting for him to get the heating going.) This was Duttons.

Aspull Electrics was very quick. They rewired the whole place, with four double sockets in the study (nowhere near enough, but there never could be. unless I ringed the room with them), and five in the living room. Pier Alarms were almost as quick. I set off the alarm, the first time I went in afterwards, and frightened myself silly.

The joiner kept me waiting for months, but eventually came. and set to with a will. He insulated the roof. He fixed handles and latches on all the doors, which lacked both before! He found a new door for the cupboard under the stairs. He eased the front and back doors, making them rainproof. He fixed skirting boards where they were lacking. He fixed two rails on the stairs (Why two? My father fell down stairs, when he got old. He afterwards got a second rail put up, which I thought was the wrong way around.), as well as hand rails by the steps in the yard.

He got a lovely fireplace for the living room. and put lots of shelves in the study, as well as in the spare room. bathroom, kitchen, and cupboard under the stairs. He made two new meter cupboards. He also eased the doors, and fitted new mortise locks in the outer ones. I fear I have forgotten something, but no matter. All this in a fortnight. and to a high standard. I was glad I waited for Clem Turton.

Now the decorators are at work and almost finished (they are Strettons). At the same time the joiners fitted new windows. When they are out of the way, the carpet firm will come in. and rip out the ghastly laminates, and then the decorators will come back and finish the down-stairs skirting boards. The carpet firm will come back, and lay the carpets I chose in their shop. They are Select-A-Carpet. of Hindley.

That leaves the kitchen roof. The builder tells me that this is knackered. It wants new flashings, new felt, and the old slates putting back.

Then I have to have the fridge-freezer, the cooker, and the washer-dryer, delivered, and I'm in. I guess its a race between this magazine, and me!

Bernard Harrison.

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Children's Liturgy of The Word. St. Mary's.

What sort of person are you?

How does little church come together, (hopefully) on a Sunday morning?

Resources?

How many times a month will I take a group?

How long does it take to prepare?

Is there any help?

These are some of the questions that could well come to mind, as we again appeal for volunteers to take up the challenge of "little church."

What sort of person are you?

What sort of person becomes a little church leader?

Well *you* do. If you have a love of children, knowledge of the Gospel and can spare an hour or so every 3rd week, we need you. All the leaders, at present, come from a variety of backgrounds and professions. We each bring our own unique talents to each Sunday.

How does little church come together, (hopefully) on a Sunday morning?

We try to run two groups at 9.30 Mass. The children are encouraged to transfer to the "biggies" group when they have reached 8/9 yrs. We set the work and activities at two different levels, and the children naturally progress as and when they feel ready. Each Little Church meeting starts with an introduction, the lighting of the symbolic candle, and the children prepare to listen to the Gospel by making an act of Contrition. The Gospel of the day is read and then we have a question and answer session, so that the leaders know the children have internalised it.

We then split into two groups, and we have activities/discussions, to reinforce the Gospel, and make it relevant to them in their daily lives.

Resources?

The children come up with their own ideas and suggestions. The leaders themselves are some of the best resources we have. Liturgy of The Word encourages us all to discover talents and use them. During the years, we have collected a store of publications that are helpful or just copiable. I personally use the Internet to resource many of "my Sundays". (I will let you into these next issue, they are a good source of activities, ideas, not only for Little Church but also for every parent during the long holidays.)

How many times a month will I take a group?

This depends on how many leaders we have. We work on a rota, and it is usually twice a month. The more volunteers we have the more the load is spread.

How long does it take to prepare?

As long or as little time as you yourself require. I find that once I start researching the Gospel and Activities, time flies. If you are not artistic don't worry, we all pitch in and we have photocopier on standby.

Is there any help?

Yes. We hold get together's for brainstorming sessions 2/3 times a year. You also get together with your partner prior to 'your' Sunday. The rota is flexible and we have each other phone numbers.

Sr. Philomena is one of our best assets, if we can't work something out or need inspiration, we call on her.

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COULD YOU JOIN US?

Christmas message.

The children again did the Parish proud with their Christmas message. We had very few rehearsals and the children, youngest to the leaders, worked very hard and the effort did show when they did it for 'real'.

The photo shows the artwork created by our resident artist Tony, and how the children interpreted the Christmas Story in decorating the artwork.

The group photo is at final rehearsals. We say a special thank you to our late stand-ins, who valiantly helped us when some of the original volunteers came down with the dreaded lergy.

The party that followed allowed everyone to let of steam. Thank you to all helpers

Bernadette Phillips,
Liturgy Leader.

Up-coming events.
(hopefully)

A sponsored mini walk and a meeting with a Hearing dog for the disabled.

A Teddy Bears picnic.

An increase in the 'biggies' participation of the Liturgy.



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Foundation Stones - St John's and St Mary's

by Fr Andrew

As 2003 marks the 185th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stones of both St. John's and St. Mary's Churches it seems appropriate to reflect briefly on some of the history of those early days.

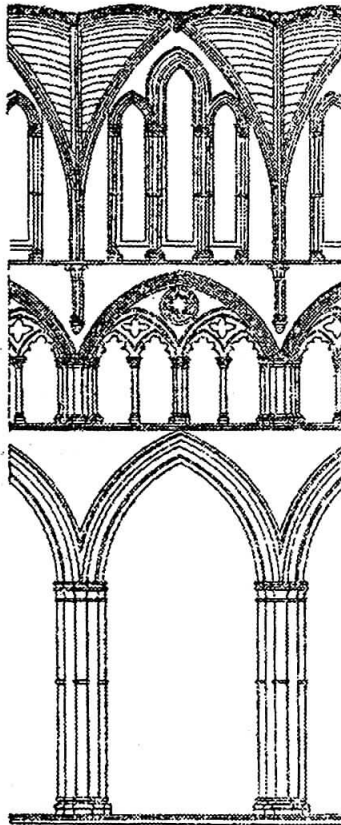
Although Father James Cannell S.J. has a claim to the title, Father Charles Brockholes has long been considered the founding father and first missionary at St. John's. Father Brockholes entered the Society of Jesus in 1704 and was first sent to Blackrod, in succession to Father Turbervil, as the Chaplain to the Andertons of Lostock, and he arrived in Wigan in 1740. On moving to Wigan he set up his residence in Standishgate, almost entirely at his own expense. The upper part of this residence was arranged as a chapel. At this time the chapel had a congregation of about 300, who were known as "customers".

Father Brockholes died in 1759 and was succeeded by Father John Worthington, who remained in Wigan until his death in 1777 at the age of 64. His successor was Father Marmaduke Langdale, who had been ordained at Cologne in 1776. In 1785 he erected the old St. John's chapel, fronting Standishgate, and the site of the high altar was close to where the topped Walmesley Cross now stands. The mission was to flourish under the pastoral care of Father Langdale, who was to die in 1784. Father Barrow was next to take charge of St. John's, until 1799 then Father Herman Kemper was to take charge. At this time the parish began to flourish and another priest was sent to assist in the work. St. John's at this time was served by three brothers, Fathers John, Joseph and Thomas Tate who was to succeed Father Kemper in 1811. He was to remain at St. John's until his death in 1819 of typhus fever, caught while attending one of his sick parishioners, and is buried in a vault made under one of the old confessionals, next to the presbytery in the church he was to build. The foundation stone of the present church was laid on January 27th, 1818, the church being opened on 24th June the following year.

The following extract was found in an old register of St. John's:

"In consequence of the increase of Catholicity, and also the decayed state of the Chapel erected by Rev. Mr. Langdale,

Subscriptions were given for the speedy erection of a new and spacious Catholic Chapel on the same premises. The corner stone of the building was laid by Charles Walmesley, Esq. Westwood House, attended by several Rev. Gentlemen on 27th January, 1818. High Mass was solemnly performed on the occasion to invoke the blessing of Heaven; and



crowds of every denomination were present. It was agreed that the Holy Sacrifice should be offered annually on that day for all the Benefactors alive or dead".

The new Church was to be built on a plot of land lying behind the old church which had been built in 1785. After the building of the new church the old one was demolished and two houses facing each other on either side of the entrance to the then chapel-yard were erected on its site. The one on the left was occupied by the priests, until they moved to the other house when the nuns took possession of the one that had been vacated.

St. Mary's foundation stone was also laid in 1818, on March 17th, and on 23rd April of the same year a second foundation stone was laid. St. Mary's was solemnly opened on January 27th, 1819. The first baptism to take place there was on March 7th and was performed by Father Sergeant. In its early days St. Mary's was served from Manchester by Father Sergeant of the Rook Street Mission and then by Father Lupton

from St. Mary's Mulberry Street, the Hidden Gem. Father Charles Middlehurst was to begin his strenuous career at St. Mary's in July 1819.

Unfortunately Father Middlehurst left no records of his early days at St. Mary's. However we know that he built the school in 1824, the following inscription was on the wall:

St. Mary's Catholic Sunday School 1824.

Sit Jesu et Filio et Mariae Deiparae.

A report issued by the committee for this great work issued a report in 1838 which stated that: "In the Sunday Schools there are upwards of 100 persons who, as Teachers and Monitors, render both institutions (i.e. St. Mary's Day and Sunday Schools) an invaluable support by their diligent and gratuitous services."

Father Middlehurst was not only anxious about his flock, but he also entered into the stormy ground of controversy. In 1837 he published some vigorous letters in defence of Catholic doctrines against the Rev. Dr. O'Neill.

Also at this time it appears that the Ince Mission was served from St. Mary's, and Father Middlehurst was also responsible for collecting funds to build St. Patrick's Church, which served initially as a Chapel of Ease to St. Mary's. Father Middlehurst, like Father Tate was to catch typhus fever while attending a parishioner and he died on January 19th, 1848, a victim in the cause of priestly duty. He is buried in a vault beneath St. Joseph's Altar; a beautiful brass tablet marks the spot.

General Knowledge Quiz No 39

Saints & Sinners

By Anne Taylor

1. Who was the only apostle to die a natural death?
2. Where did he die?
3. What is the state capital of Minnesota?
4. Who won an Oscar for her role in the film "The Song of Bernadette"?
5. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is better known as what?
6. Who is the patron saint of television?
7. Who was the first archbishop of Canterbury?
8. Why is the football club 'Southampton' nicknamed 'The Saints'?
9. What is the Collegiate Church of St Peter more commonly called?
10. Whose last words were "See me safe up, for my coming down let me shift for myself"?
11. Who's real name was Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov?
12. Where was the highwayman Dick Turpin executed?
13. Who painted a series of paintings entitled 'The Rakes Progress'?
14. Which couple were killed in an FBI ambush in 1934?
15. On which ship did Dr Crippen flee Britain after the murder of his wife?
16. Who was Sherlock Homes arch enemy?
17. Who was the first actor to portray Hannibal Lector on screen?
18. Henri Landru was executed in 1922 for murdering 10 women. What was his nickname?
19. Who's last words were "What an artist the world is losing in me" ?
20. Who killed David Blakely on Easter Sunday in 1955?

Answers to G K Quiz No 38

Something Old
Something New

1. Dunfermline, Scotland
2. Twentyfour
3. Mozart (41 in C)
4. Seventeen
5. Marie Curie
6. Keir Hardie
7. Calder Hall
8. Louis Washkansky
9. Beechams Pills
10. Daphne du Maurier
11. Billy Cotton
12. Morning Cloud
13. 46 years old
14. 1967
15. 1978
16. Annie Mae Bullock
17. Copy-Cat
18. Nine weeks
19. Anne Robinson
20. Paula Radcliffe & Ashia Hansen

Entries to Mrs E Hutchings at 13 Ashland Ave, Wigan WN1 2DP
with the envelope marked "GK Quiz" so that it can
be separated from other mail and kept sealed until Saturday
19th April 2003 when the first correct entry opened wins £10.
Even if you don't complete it you could still win.

There were eight entries for No 38. None was fully correct.
The winner with most correct answers was Mr Roy Gordon of Walkden Avenue East.

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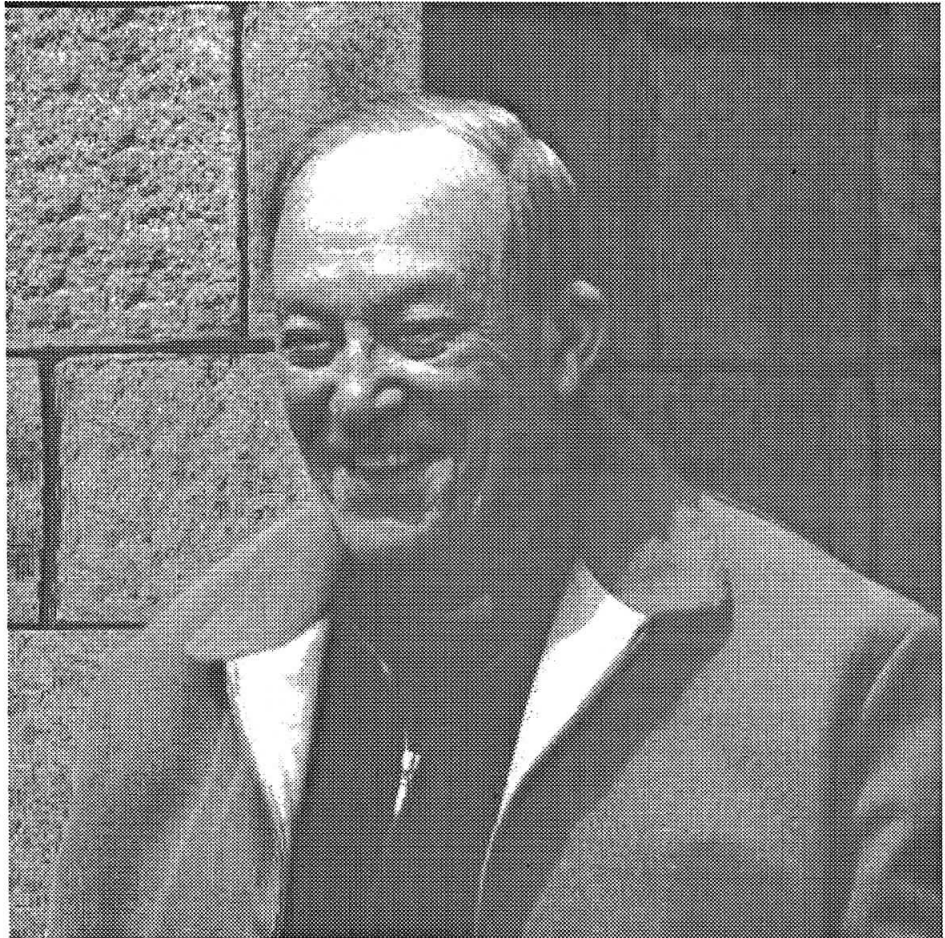
Established 1880

A Tribute to Monsignor Philip Loftus

by Margaret Farley

Mgr Philip Michael Loftus was born in Radcliffe on the 26th April 1920 and was baptised at St Mary's Radcliffe. He came from a large family. Philip began his education at St Mary's Elementary School, Radcliffe and St Bede's College, Manchester.

His studies for the Priesthood began in 1939 at St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw. From the early days of his priesthood, his path in the Church was planned and determined for him. He was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood by the Right Reverend Henry Marshall, Bishop of Salford, at St Mary's Radcliffe on the 29th June 1945.



Following his studies at Leuven University (Belgium) he was given a professorship at Ushaw College and joined the staff of St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw. A spell of ill health took him to America where he was given a parish in Oklahoma.

He returned to Ushaw where in July 1967 he was appointed President of the College. A second five year term in that capacity followed at the same time he was appointed a Domestic Prelate to His Holiness.

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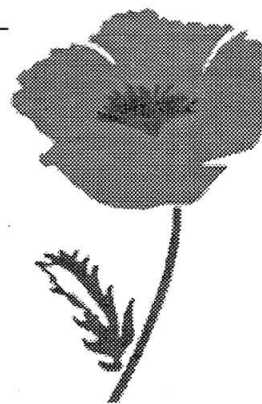
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NORTH WEST'S LEADING SALONS & BARBER SHOPS
Appointment is not always necessary

In 1979 on leaving Ushaw College, Monsignor Loftus served as Parish Priest in Sacred Heart, Blackburn. It was his great desire to have a parish and so be able to minister to his parishioners. (He had expressed this wish on many occasions to his own family.)

Ill health, this time in the form of a heart attack, deprived him of any further parish work for some time. Having eventually recovered sufficiently, he took on the duties at Holy Family Parish in New Springs near Wigan.

It was while Mgr Loftus was Parish Priest here that I met him - a popular, caring, unassuming, tolerant, highly respected man who was loved by old and young alike. (He would come into school each Friday to have lunch - a time to sit with the children, swap jokes and listen to their chatter.) He seemed to radiate goodness and his love for his fellow man extended to everyone.

Our "Fr Loftus" as he liked to be called, enjoyed his time serving the homely community at New Springs. He maintained that the parishioners were the most friendly, warm hearted people he had ever encountered. Here he had found complete fulfilment of his vocation.

In 1986 Mgr Loftus went to work full time with the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal and resided at Cathedral House next to Salford Cathedral. Having left Holy Family, he never lost touch with his many friends he had made. So it was that in June 1995 the Cathedral was packed to celebrate our friend's Golden Jubilee as a Priest. Of course many of his New Springs friends were there to share in this event. After a Mass of thanksgiving everyone was invited to join in the buffet provided and the celebrations concluded with a spectacular

firework display. Fr Loftus enjoyed it all immensely.

I always sent him a copy of our parish magazine "to browse through" and enclosed family news too. We didn't meet often but during the summer holiday period a 'picnic' to visit Fr Loftus would be planned. We would attend the Midday Mass at the Cathedral and then have a picnic lunch with him. He made our family so very welcome that our children loved him dearly - in just the same way as did those of 20 years before at Holy Family School.

Fr Loftus became ill before Christmas and because of this moved to the Little Sisters of the Poor, Manchester. It was they who nursed him into eternity, which he entered on 3rd February 2003. Amid torrential rain on the evening of Monday 10th February Fr Loftus' body was received into the Cathedral. Before Mass was celebrated the coffin was covered and on it was placed a Missal, a stole and chalice - all symbols of Philip's priestly vocation and ministry.

Prior to interment at Radcliffe cemetery, his Requiem Mass was offered by Bishop Brain on the 11th February, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The service had been previously planned by Fr Loftus and included his favourite hymn - 'Oh Lord My God, when I in awesome wonder'.

So it was that many people from so many different backgrounds and circumstances, who loved and respected - Monsignor - Fr Loftus - Fr Philip - Pip - all had chance to say their 'good byes' in their own way. A very sad time for us all. He had waited patiently and quietly 'in joyful hope for the coming of his Saviour Jesus Christ' over the last several months. No one could begrudge him eternal life.

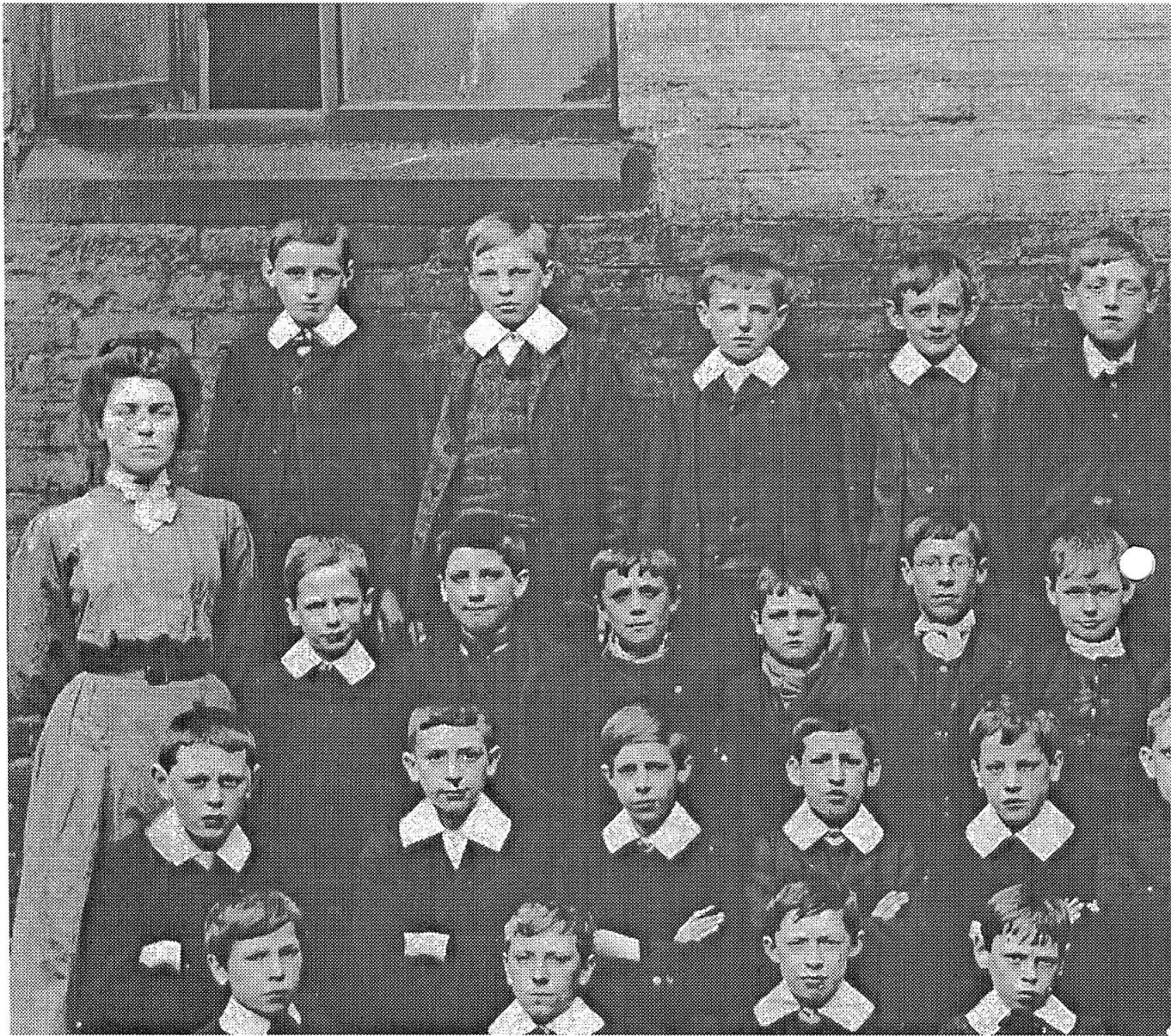
Fr Loftus rest in peace.

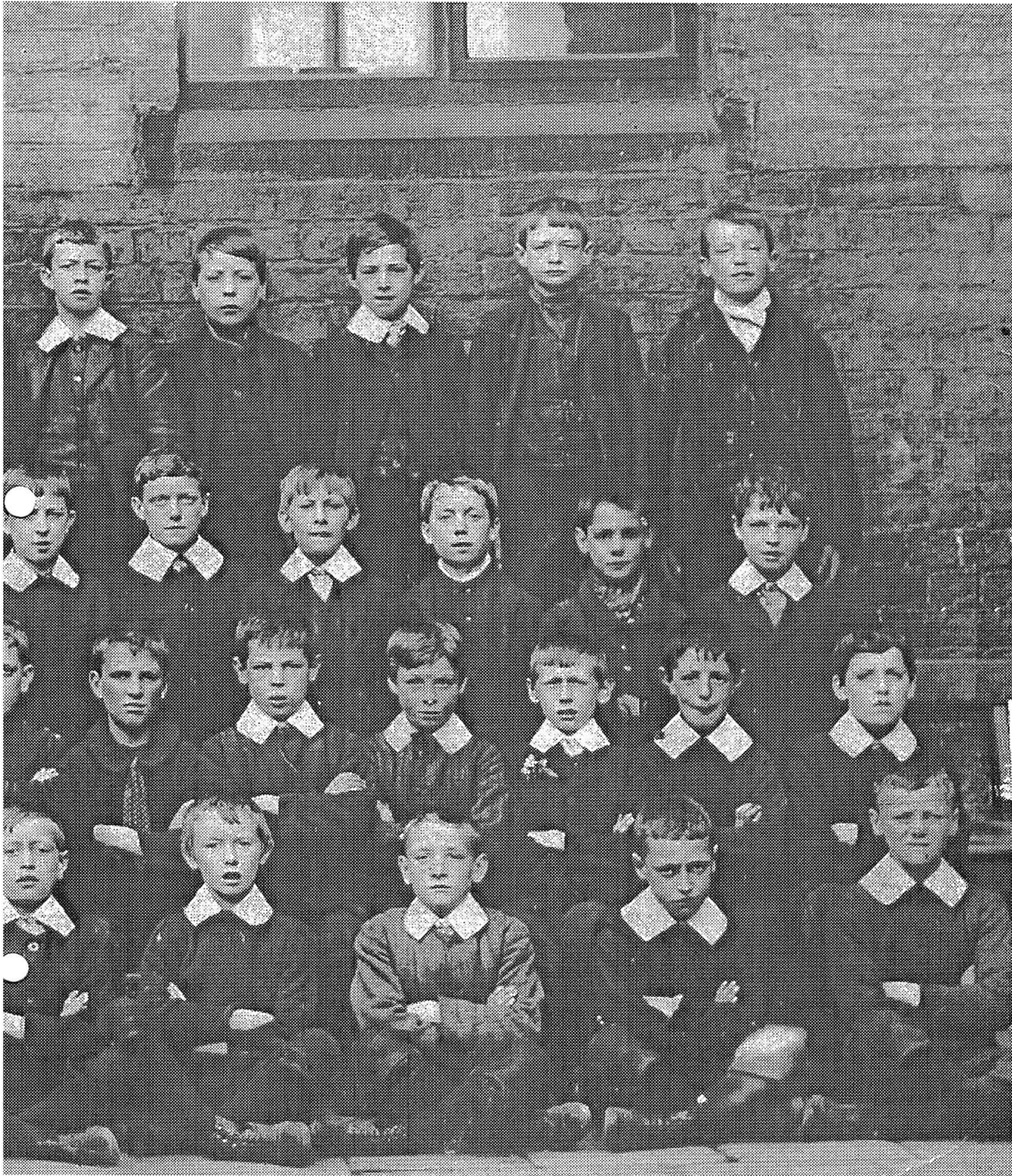
Wigan Welcome Group

(Welcoming and assisting newcomers in an unfamiliar land)

The local group which has been operating from St Michael's Hall has joined with Members of the Queens Hall to run a 'Drop-in and Friendship Centre' on Saturdays, 2.30 pm to 4 in the coffee bar at the Queens Hall.

The session on the 22nd February was well attended and fruitful. Parishioners are invited to attend these sessions and offer encouragement and local advice. Responsible adults should arrive for 2 pm and be able to stay until the coffee bar is cleared up when the session closes at 4 pm. A meeting has been arranged to review progress to which all are invited. It will start at 4 pm following the session on 22nd March.





Mr John Lonsdale kindly provides these St John's
school pictures from the past.
The larger one was taken in 1910.
The smaller indoor one, was taken three years later.



The Thistle Society, Wigan

By Margaret Rowe

Thistle Show This year we held our 25th Thistle Show on St. Andrew's Night, 30th November in a new venue - the St. James Social Club, Orrell where our Adults meet. The Show was to be given in aid of the Mayor's Charity, "SCOPE".

The room was packed to capacity and there was an air of excitement as the starting time drew closer. However, there was an added expectant atmosphere as the Mayor and Mayoress of Wigan and the Mayor of Southwark, (originally from Orrell) with her Town Crier, who would be wearing full regalia, were due to arrive at any moment. Tom piped the Mayoral party in at 7.30pm and all was ready to go. The Town Crier ringing his bell, announced the start of the Show. All our adult Scottish Country Dancers and children from 6 to 15 years of age, danced beautifully. Anne Bradburn with great style, accompanied by Tom, gave a lovely display of Highland Dancing and some of our younger dancers performed the Highland Fling. The children sang "Mairi's Wedding", "Loch Lomond" and "Scotland the Brave", whilst the instrumental group played traditional Scottish airs. Anne Maiden, accompanied by Astrid, delighted us with "For These Are My Mountains", "Mull of Kintyre", "Flower of Scotland" and "The Tartans". Kathleen, with her lovely Inverness accent recited "The Baby Sitter" and "Islay Cheese". We even managed to have audience participation - everyone squeezed onto the floor to enjoy two round the room dances - "Be Seeing You" and "The Tryst".

There was a happy, relaxed atmosphere the whole night, with several amusing incidents, not part of the Show. One of our little ones was allowed to try on the Town Crier's plumed hat, you could hardly see her under it, then one of the little boys sitting near him, despite his mothers efforts to keep fingers away, was seen stroking and feeling the feathers of this magnificent hat. Everyone seemed to enjoy the closeness and informality of our venue and we look forward to being there again next year.

We were delighted to present a cheque for £500.00 to "SCOPE" the Mayor's Charity Appeal.

Christmas Celebrations After all the hard work and preparation there was not long to wait for Christmas celebrations and parties. The adults held theirs at St. James and enjoyed a buffet supper, chatting with friends and some Scottish Country Dancing. The children had a very happy

night. Many of the children came in fancy dress. During the evening the older girls enjoyed a disco, organised by themselves, whilst the younger ones happily played games in another room, mind you, there was plenty of changing over all night from one room to the other. Towards the end of the evening all enjoyed special treats, crackers and novelties and everyone went home with a present.

Burns Night In January of course we celebrate Burns Night. Our adults started on 18th January providing entertaining for the Leigh Lions at Lowton Civic Hall. After their meal at 9.30pm it was our turn, firstly to give a display of dancing and then to get them up onto the floor to take part themselves. They were full of enthusiasm and it took no second bidding to get them up. Out of 160 attending there must have been at least 130 on the floor all doing their best to follow instructions - even if they did not get it right there was plenty of laughter and fun. At 11.45pm we closed with Auld Lang Syne. We have been booked again for 2004!!!

On Thursday 23rd we were down at the Wheel Restaurant in Pagefield Buildings for their Burns Night. Ted, our piper led Donald in to say "The Selkirk Grace" After the Cock-a-Leekie soup came the Haggis. Ted led the way followed by the Chef, then Donald to give the "Address to the Haggis". Shortly after this the children gave an excellent 20 minute performance - everyone loved them. After coffee had been served it was then the adults & they gave a lively display of dancing and recitations. The evening closed with everyone coming onto the floor for Auld Lang Syne.

The Friday night saw our own celebrations at Ince Public Hall. The venue is always warm and welcoming and there





was general happy chatter amongst friends as they gathered for the meal. The Haggis was piped in by George Phillips and addressed with great flourish and style by George Penman. An excellent meal was enjoyed after which we were given the traditional speeches. Our speakers gave lively, amusing speeches, just the right length!! Local well known soloist Ken Rees sang "The Star o' Rabbie Burns" and other familiar Scottish songs and Isla Longmuir delighted us with her violin playing. The dance programme contained dances for every taste – for the true Scottish dancers and for those who wanted to try, plus some old time. A good evening was had by all.

This year our junior members were invited to dance at the first Burns Night Supper of the Ormskirk & District Association for National Trust held at Edge Hill College, Ormskirk. The hall was decorated beautifully and there was little room left between the tables. Merseyside Cadet Force Pipe Band had played and then it was our turn. Fortunately the serving tables were moved giving us a little more space. The girls looking bright and fresh in their red jackets, white blouses and tartan skirts used all the area and gave an excellent performance of Country and Highland dancing.

Young People's Festival The Young People's Festival was a fabulous day. The music played by Ian Slater was inspiring and made the children want to come onto the floor and it was just great to see the young dancers cover the floor of the Floral Hall as the teams danced in the set group dances, joint solos and their own chosen dance. The solo item for the Thistle children was "Raising the Flag" which they danced beautifully covering the floor and making a lovely pattern. The adults from RSCDS Manchester Branch gave an excellent Demonstration in two spots in the programme. It was lovely to see all the children of whatever ability joining together to take part in the Round the Room dances when 250 children were on the floor at the same time. After the Parade and Presentation of certificates the afternoon came to a close with the Dashing

White Sergeant at the end of which a net filled with balloons opened and the balloons came tumbling down to the floor for the youngsters to play with and take home.

Ramble Once again we were most fortunate with our ramble on 8th February. The weather which had been very cold with snow, ice and lots of wind, turned milder, rather





cloudy and overcast, but with frequent bursts of sunshine and ground muddy underfoot, when twenty three of us, set out from the Harrow Inn at Ashton. Agnes and Alan certainly seem able to choose their days!! Everyone enjoyed the walk and a delicious meal afterwards in the lounge bar of Harrow Inn where there was a lovely log fire burning.

Manchester Scots' Night We are delighted that our

children have again been invited to take part in the Manchester Scots' Night Concert to be held at the Royal Northern College of Music on 9th and 10th May 2003. It is a wonderful opportunity for our youngsters to dance on a large stage in a Manchester Theatre.

Preparations are in progress for the Federation Music, Arts and Craft Festival and Ceilidh in Liverpool on Saturday 15th March.



Spring Ball We are holding our Spring Ball on Friday April 11th at Ince Public Hall. Sandy Legget from Ayrshire encourages everyone onto the floor as he plays such excellent music. Even at the end of the night dancers seem to find the energy to keep going. We look forward to an excellent evening of dancing and delicious refreshments.

Our Society has a very interesting and varied programme. If you would like more information about activities please give me a call on 01942 247403.

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NEWS from FRIENDS OF ST MARY & ST JOHN (formerly PTA)

By Marcella Sherry

We have changed the name in the hope that it will encourage any one involved with school to take an active part in this social side of our children's education. If you think that you can contribute in any way at all please get in touch.

The 200 Club draw took place on the 20th January and the winners were:

- 1st prize Mrs Whitney £50
- 2nd prize Mrs Kearsley £25
- 3rd prize Mrs Moran £14

You can still join at £1 a month, half the money goes to the cash prizes and the other half goes to the school. The draw takes place every 2 months if you would like to help the school in this way please contact Marcella on Wigan 236806 for an application form.

On Friday the 7th February after school, a **Quiz Night** was arranged by the Friends of St Mary & St John. Each team had a Year 6 Captain; they decided what they wanted to be known as and were made up children of all ages. The Question Master was Mrs Diane Harvey

who asked a variety of questions to test the children's knowledge.

The teams were Thick as Custard, Toms Army, Team 5, Brainstormers, Clever Dicks and the Game Masters.

After a hard battle the *Brainstormers* won. Pictured below they are:

Jason Bisell (Y3), Beth Harvey (Y2), Eleanor Sherry (Y4), Matthew Lancaster, Captain (Y6), Siobhan Kelly (Y4) and Elizabeth Gibson (Y4)

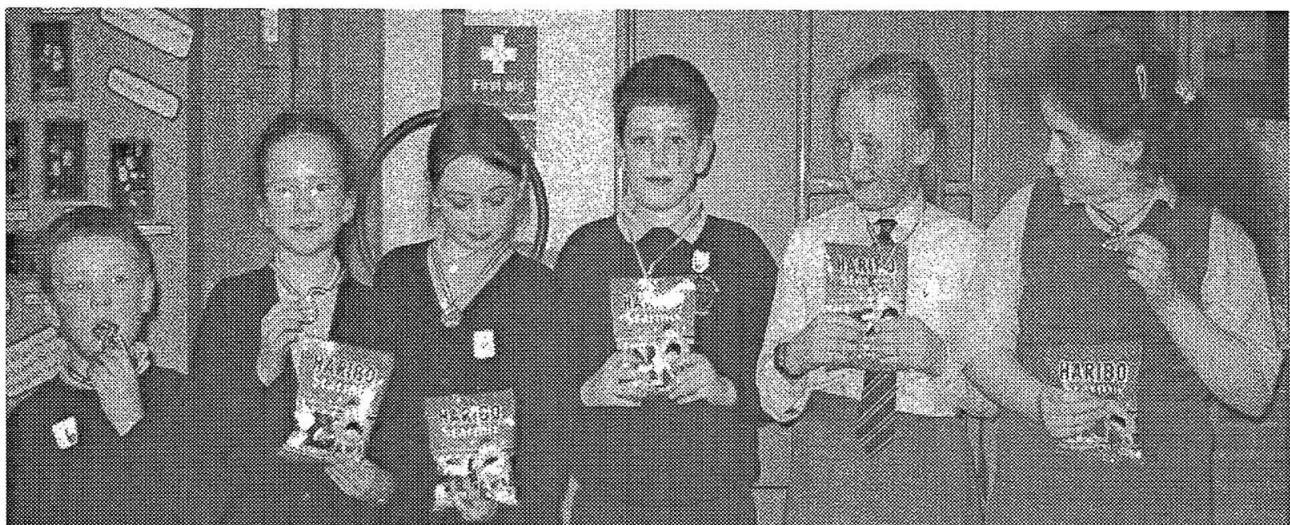
On Thursday 13th February after school the younger children had a **Fun Night** they had hotdogs, drinks and sandwiches. They had the opportunity to win prizes at the disco for their dancing skills and if that wasn't their thing they could play with a multitude of games with their friends.

FUTURE EVENTS

- A Virgin V Party in March (date to be confirmed)
- Friday 11th April a Family Night
- Sunday 13th April a Table Top Sale



Contestants & Winners



Ronald Walters

Ronald Walters of Wigan Lane, Green Hill died aged 81 years on the 8th December 2002. He had lived and worked in the Wigan area all his life. His profession was in chemistry. He was a member of the Royal Society of Chemistry and became Head of Research and Development at H J Heinz, Kitt Green.

Ron played table tennis for the first division of the West Lancashire League over many years.

He leaves a wife, (who has written articles for this magazine over the last seven years), two daughters Marilyn and Patricia, and four grandchildren.

Sadly missed by his family and friends.



HCPT - THE PILGRIMAGE TRUST

Where has the last year gone to? It doesn't seem 12 months since we were preparing for our pilgrimage in 2002.

This year we are taking seven children in our group: Daniel T, Aishne, Lucy, Zoe, Anneice, Nicola and Daniel W. - Two Daniels so there are bound to be little mix-ups. But that is not as bad as last year with three Emmas. There will be 13 helpers and as usual we will stay in the Hotel Tara.

We will take part in all the activities, as any other pilgrimage would do but also there will be lots of playing, trips out, sing-songs and Café visits.

The cost of each child this year is £465 plus hats, neckerchiefs, sweat shirts and the trips out. It comes to approximately £525 each. The cost of the coach to take us to the airport and back is £320. Each group must undertake to raise the money for all of its costs

If anyone feels they would like to help our group we would be very grateful. e.g by paying for a sweat shirt, hat etc or by donating to our group candle.

Please don't forget, anyone who wants us to light a candle for them or take a petition (don't put money in the envelopes - they are burnt) let me know or put them through my letter box.

We will remember you in our prayers at the Grotto. Thank you for your support.

Anne Keating & Group 80

2 Goldenways, Wigan Tel: 245323

The following was picked up from the Internet. It was circulated on "National Friendship Day".

AN ENLIGHTENED PERSPECTIVE

Read all the way to the bottom! If you will take the time to read these, I promise you'll come away with an enlightened perspective. The subjects covered affect us all on a daily basis! They're written by Andy Rooney, a man who has the gift of saying so much with so few words. Enjoy.

I've learned.... That the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

I've learned.... That when you're in love, it shows.

I've learned.... That just one person saying to me, "You've made my day!" makes my day.

I've learned.... That having a child fall asleep in your arms is one of the most peaceful feelings in the world.

I've learned.... That being kind is more important than being right.

I've learned.... That you should never say "no" to a gift from a child.

I've learned.... That I can always pray for someone when I don't have the strength to help him in some other way.

I've learned.... That no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to act goofy with.

I've learned.... That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.

I've learned.... That simple walks with my father around the block on summer nights when I was a child did wonders for me as an adult.

I've learned.... That life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

I've learned.... That we should be glad God doesn't give us everything we ask for.

I've learned.... That money doesn't buy class.

I've learned.... That it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular.

I've learned... That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.

I've learned.... That the Lord didn't do it all in one day. What makes me think I can?

I've learned.... That to ignore the facts does not change the facts.

I've learned.... That when you plan to get even with someone, you are only letting that person continue to hurt you.

I've learned.... That love, not time, heals all wounds.

I've learned.... That the easiest way for me to grow as a person is to surround myself with people smarter than I am.

I've learned.... That everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile.

I've learned.... That there's nothing sweeter than sleeping with your babies and feeling their breath on your cheeks.

I've learned.... That no one is perfect until you fall in love with them.

I've learned.... That life is tough, but I'm tougher.

I've learned.... That opportunities are never lost; someone will take the ones you miss.

I've learned.... That when you harbour bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere.

I've learned.... That I wish I could have told my Dad that I love him one more time before he passed away.

I've learned.... That you should keep your words both soft and tender, because tomorrow you may have to eat them.

I've learned.... That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

I've learned.... That I can't choose how I feel but I can choose what I do about it.

I've learned.... That when your newly born grandchild holds your little finger in his little fist, that you're hooked for life.

I've learned.... That everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.

I've learned ... That it is best to give advice in only two circumstances; when it is requested and when it is a life threatening situation.

I've learned.... That the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done.

St Luke's Weekend in France and Belgium

(7th to 10th Feb 2003)

It was the 4th trip Tom and Jean Glover had organised. The previous tours were to Paris, Lille and Rouen.

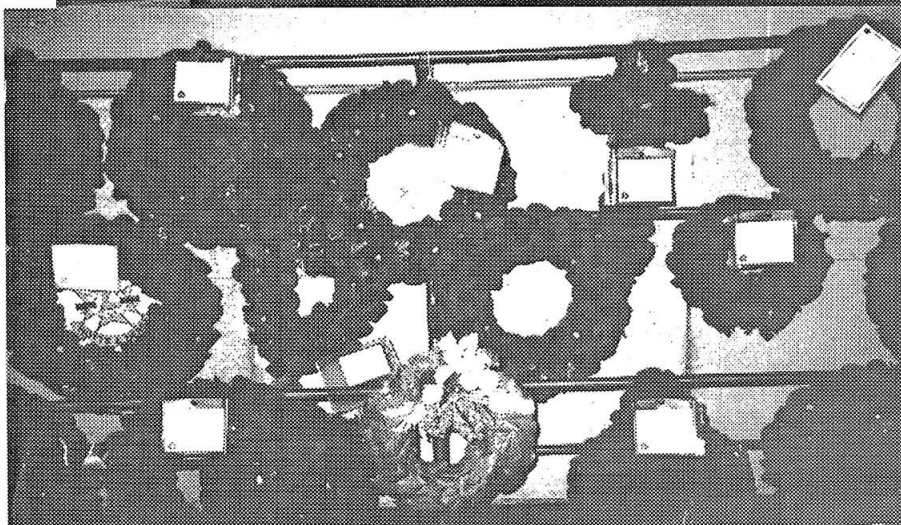
Forty people set off from St Luke's Church at 7 am. The journey except for one or two hold ups was very smooth. The channel was like a mill pond. The evening meal of filet de volaille and entremets chocolat and of course les boissons went down very well.

After a lovely petit déjeuner on Saturday morning we travelled to the pretty town of Bruges in Belgium. It is surrounded by canals and has many medieval buildings. Before arriving at Bruges we made a short detour to the seaside town of Ostend.

The next stop was Ypres. We enjoyed a Flemish stew at the Rivaldi restaurant and then all gathered together at the Menin Gate at 8 pm. St Lukes had received the honour to conduct the service. Most of us thought there would be few people there to brave the cold night, but hundreds of people (mainly young) stood under the arch and when the service started you could hear a pin drop. The thousands inscribed on the walls of servicemen who had died in the first world war is a reminder of the futility of war. Rev John Southern's prayers brought tears to people's eyes. Siegfried Sassoon wrote in a bitter sonnet:

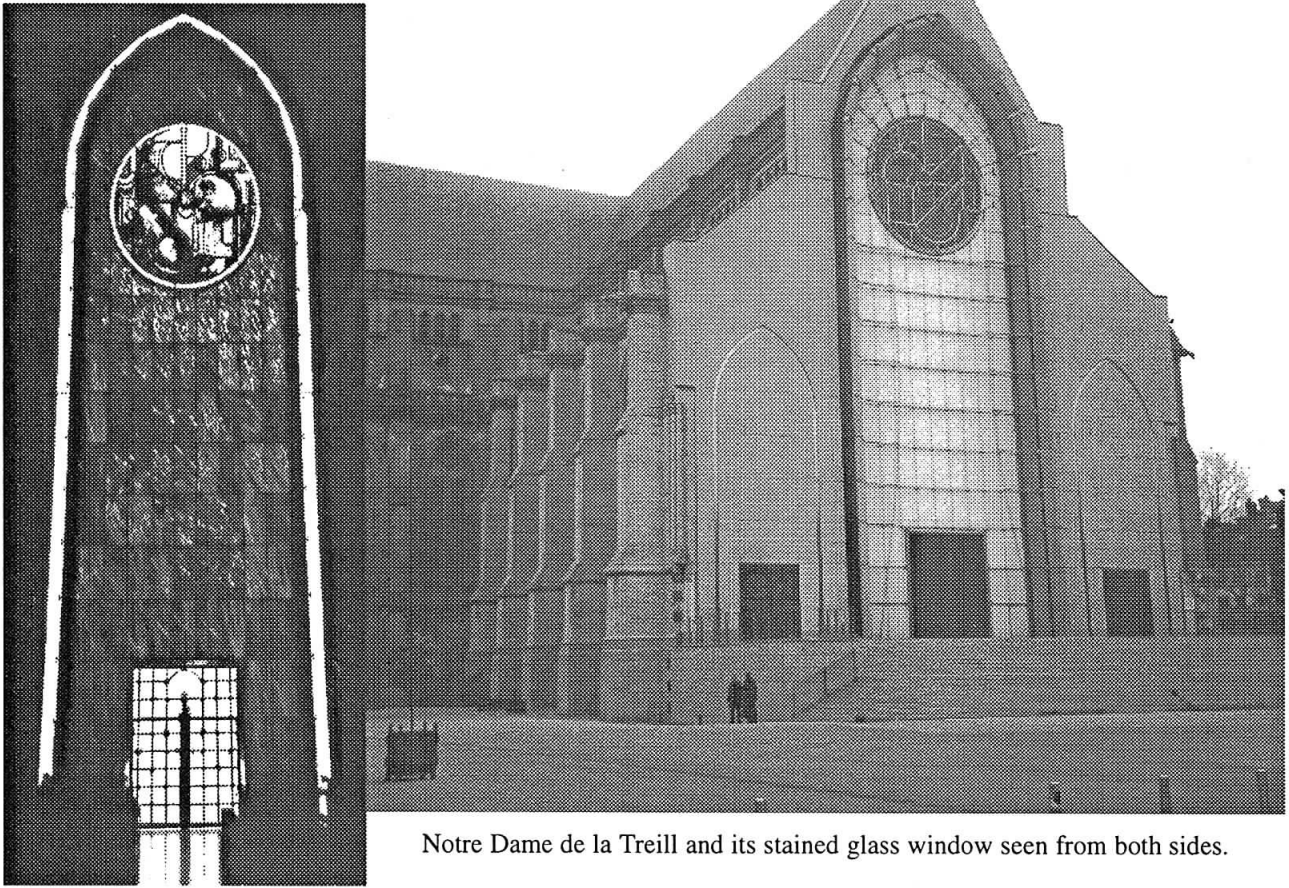
"Who will remember passing through this gate the unheroic dead who fed the guns"

He is answered - once a day, every day of the year.



Above:
The Menin Gate

Left:
Rows of wreaths.
St Luke's is the centre one
on the bottom row.



Notre Dame de la Treill and its stained glass window seen from both sides.

Wandering around Lille on Sunday morning (another dry but cold day) was memorable. The city has many interesting places to see. The Catholic Cathedral (Notre Dame de la Treill) is beautiful, especially the remarkable stained glass window. The Opera House (now closed) and railway station are notable buildings. 6th December 2003 will be a special day - The Opera House will reopen and there are to be processions, singing and dancing in the street, because in 2004 Lille will be the European City of Culture.

Finally, in the afternoon, we visited St Omer a town that suffered much in two world wars. Just outside St Omer is 'La Coupole' - the secret base where some of the V I and V II rockets were built. Fortunately none was launched because of the D Day landings.

David and Wendy Clayton's quiz, Max Bygraves tape and the expert coach driver all ensured a pleasant journey home.

Terry Chadwick

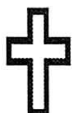
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Rosary Sunday 2002



6th October

The Mayoress and Mayor, Mrs and Cllr Roberts, Secretary Mr Dowd and our Dean, Fr MacNally, are pictured here at the annual Wigan Catholic Mens Society, Rosary Sunday Walk..

Some 250 parishioners from surrounding parishes took part in the event which, this time, terminated with devotions and refreshment at St William's church.

AN EVENING OF SONG WITH A WELSH CHOIR

The Flint Male Voice Choir

Friday March 21st at 7.30 pm
in St Jude's Church, Poolstock Lane
and afterwards in the Club.

Proceeds from this event go to 'SCOPE',
the Mayor of Wigan's Charity.

It is the disability organisation in England and Wales
whose focus is people with cerebral palsy.

Tickets are £3 each and can be obtained from
Tom Sherratt, 10 Thornbury Avenue, Lowton, Warrington WA3 2PG.
Tel: 01942 676686.

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

by Roy Gordon

“Visit Rome in the Spring”, the TV Travel Programme announced invitingly.

“It would be a better time for sightseeing”, declared Alice, putting down her knitting for a moment. “And cheaper too” I quickly added, from behind my newspaper. Our previous visits abroad had been made in July or August. We had travelled extensively throughout Europe but most of our time had been spent lounging by various swimming pools, soaking up the sun. It had always been far too hot for much else. “It will make a nice change to get around a bit more. We can take in Pompeii and Mount Vesuvius”, I suggested. “I can’t wait to visit the Trevi Fountain and what about that Sistine Chapel?” said Alice enthusiastically.

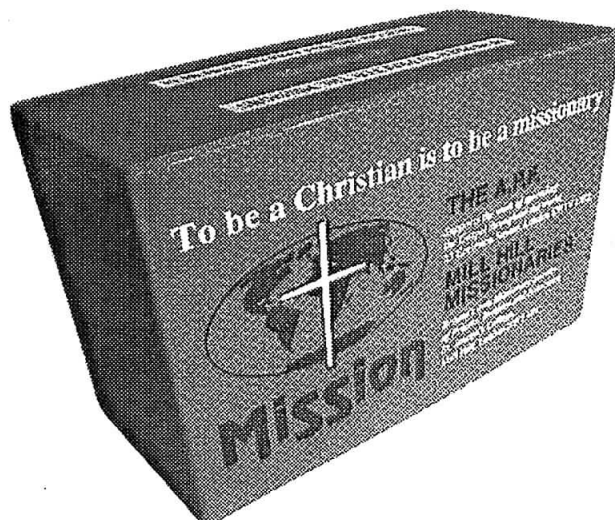
The hotel Apollo was little more than half full when we booked in at the end of May. That certainly was a change from what we were used to. On our first visit to the dining room we couldn’t help but notice that a kind of unofficial segregation seemed to be in operation. The German guests were seated to the left and the British to the right there seemed little evidence of other nationalities anywhere. We spotted the young German on that first day. He was sitting alone in ‘no mans land’. His attention seemed to be attracted towards a boisterous English foursome a couple of tables from him. They were obviously Northerners of the ‘Up for’t cup’ variety. We were immediately adjoining them and could hear every word they said. So could everybody else for that matter.

In the next few days it became more and more apparent that the German lad was showing more interest in the English guests than in his fellow Germans. He made no secret of the fact that he was listening to the conversations whenever the opportunity arose. Perhaps he was a student trying to improve his knowledge of the English language? I could not say for sure but that seemed a reasonable explanation for his most unusual behaviour.

It was on the Friday when it happened. The young German was sitting with his elbows resting on the dining table. His chin was in his hands and he was staring intently at the Lancashire quartet. His food remained untouched as he unashamedly eavesdropped in their conversation for several minutes.

Suddenly he rose from his feet and slowly, but purposely, walked over to the subjects of his interest. His voice was both gentle and polite as he addressed Albert, the leader of the quartet. “Excuse me please. You *are* English but you don’t *speak* English.” A look of sheer bewilderment appeared on Albert’s face. For a moment it looked as though he was going to be lost for words. But not for long. He looked first at his companions and then at Fritz, to whom he delivered the immortal words - “Eh dust meck that ate me owd fettler?”

The expression on Fritz’s face was a picture to behold. When all’s said and done there’s no answer to that, whatever your native language.



If you have a Mission Box like this one you may have received a multi-page calendar for 2003 which is entitled ‘Mission Today’.

If so you should be wary of basing your arrangements on the May page which contains errors. The first incorrect date is the 12th May and the last is the 30th May. Between those dates all the feasts are shown a day later than they should be.

A corrected self-adhesive page for May will be included in your Spring issue of the Mission Today magazine.

SWEET

Swinley & Whitley Churches Together

Good Friday Walk
18th April 2003

Starting at 6 pm from St Michael's Church and arriving at St John's by 6.30 for Stations of the Cross

The Two Cathedrals event in Liverpool
Pentecost Sunday 8th June
Coach leaves St Michael's Church
at 1 pm for the walk along Hope Street

St Mary and St John parishioners requiring seats should contact
Mr Steve Atherton
on Telephone number 243745

Bishop rebukes Queen

A comment taken from the news letter of the
Merseyside & Region Churches,
formerly known as MARCEA

"Language is the perfect instrument of empire".
So said the Bishop of Avila to Queen Isabella in
the fifteenth century, reminding her that the use
of the "right" words is the prerogative of those
who hold power. Domination is not the same as
leadership, and certainly not the same as part-
nership.

We do well to remember that in our working
together across denominational boundaries.
Words can divide, especially words which ex-
press cherished denominational beliefs, among
those who are not sophisticated in the use of
words.

Albert Mehrabian's research has shown that only
7 of the impact of any message comes through
spoken words, 38% comes through vocal sig-
nals (tone of voice, etc), while a massive 55%
depends on non-verbal signals (body language,
etc).

Perhaps our ecumenical conversations ought to
be less verbal and more active. Then we may dis-
cover the truth of what Aquinas said: "The emo-
tions are more effectively aroused by things seen
than by things heard". After all, the Word was
made flesh.

Revd Martyn Newman,
Ecumenical Officer

A WIGANER'S VIEW OF PARBOLD

by Roy Gordon

Popular with boat enthusiasts
In a cluster round the mill.
Popular with folk on bicycles
Who just love to whizz down that hill.

Popular, too, with canal side strollers,
Who can enjoy each native plant. .
A fine example to early milestones
To help those who gallivant.

In fifteen hundred and eighty eight,
When the Armada was about'
The Parboldians lit a beacon
To keep Wigan informed throughout.

I remember fifty years ago
When Parbold was the place to be.
Kids would cycle there from miles around
To Delph Gardens - but not for tea.

Rowing boats were the big attraction
And we would hire them by the hour.
Gorging ourselves on ice-cream and Tizer
To give us more pulling power.

We weren't aware that a petrified tree
Had been there for a million years,
Didn't know that Parbold stone built Haigh Hall,
More concerned with schoolboy hopes and fears.

It was from the top of Parbold Hill
I first sighted Blackpool Tower.
Ashurst Beacon, on the other side?
I walked there in less than an hour.

A pal of mine named David Tomlinson,
Was free wheeling down Parbold Hill.
Front wheel suddenly became detached
And he began to feel quite ill.

We picked up all the pieces
And put them on the train.
We often went back for more,
Dave never went again.

When I was quite a few years older
I supped at the Windmill and Stocks.
Then the Breathaliser stopped all that,
Now I'm home with gin on the rocks.

Nowadays we visit by motor car,
Enjoy meals at the Wiggin Tree.
We still delight at the wonderful views
And now we do have time for tea.

Table Tennis

St John's 'A' Team - JOE GREEN, PETER JONES, STUART GALE, and TONY WHITNEY, are at present one point behind the leaders in the PREMIER division, with a game in hand. TONY WHITNEY is still out of action due to the operation on his hand. In the 'PLAYERS' table JOE is joint top with 32 wins out of 33 - his only loss being against STEVE in the 'B' team. PETER has 24 wins out of 39. STUART has 14 out of 33 and TONY 5 out of 9.

St John's 'B' Team - STEVE STRINGER, JIM FOSTER, ALAN MARTLAND, TERRY CHADWICK and ably led by DAVE BENNETT are seventh in the 'PREMIER' division. They have won five, drawn one and lost seven. In their latest match they came up against ST JOHN'S 'A' team. With their star player STEVE STRINGER playing the 'A' teams JOE GREEN, who had won all his 30 games this season, the scene was set for a very thrilling match. Their encounter came in the third set with the score one all. JOE made STEVE wait while he 'glued up' - gluing the special rubber on the bat as late as possible gives extra speed. Both players were very tense even in the knock-up before the match started. In the first game JOE gave a dazzling display and got off to a flying start with a 21-13 win. However, losing by that margin seemed to spur STEVE on into an amazing set of table tennis shots, to which even JOE had no answer in a 21 - 12 defeat. In the deciding game it seemed as if JOE hadn't recovered enough from the 'set-

back'. Hard as he tried it was 'curtains' for him with STEVE giving another impressive effort in a 21 - 14 win. It was the best display of table tennis by two players at ST JOHN'S in 60 years!!!

The 'B' team won the match 6 - 4 STEVE winning three, DAVE BENNETT one, JIM FOSTER one and STEVE and JIM winning the doubles. The 'A' team scorers were JOE with two, PETER JONES one and STUART GALE one. In the 'PLAYERS' table STEVE has 26 wins out of 27 - his only loss being against JOE earlier in the season. DAVE has 17 out of 42. JIM has 6 out of 36 and TERRY has played 24.

The 'C' Team - PAUL SINEY, CHRIS DUFFY, KEN WALKER and myself are in leading position by 9 points in ALLIANCE division two. We have played 15, won 10, drawn 4 and lost 1. PAUL is playing well and has 29 wins in 45 matches. CHRIS has missed her last two matches due to a mystery ailment - it could be due to her being at the dizzy height of top of the PLAYERS' table with 34 wins in 39 games.

Our BOLTON WANDERER - KEN, who started the season late, and was then hit by the FLU bug *and* his towns football team's trouble - back problems, has now returned and has 4 wins in 12. Yours truly hasn't been 'breaking any pots' lately and has 19 wins in 39. The team will have to play well to keep top position, because in the remaining five matches we have to play the team in second place twice *and* the team in third place.

TAS

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Paws for Thought

Having just read about the Moffat Ram in your last edition I thought I would tell you about my Scottish adventure. The tail begins one day in May. My mum and dad told me that we were going on a short holiday to Scotland, all my toys and yellow ball packed along with my dishes, food and all my grooming equipment. Why grooming equipment? I thought this was a holiday, I would find out later. With the car loaded up I take my place on the back seat, not a lot of room, half the seat taken up with my carrying box (I call it jail) they lock me in at the drop of a hat. We drive along the M6 great views, lot's of sheep and cows to bark at, dad just keeps turning the radio louder. After an hour or so we stop at the service station, toilet beckons, lead on, mum walks with me to a small lake I spy with my little eye DUCK'S. They are funny when they run on land and they do make a great splash escaping from my charge.

Having watered a lamppost, back to the car. Dad came back to the car and told me the coffee shop sold Traidcraft coffee and tea just like the stall in St.John's.

We carry on over the border into Scotland, the homeland of my biological father, I wonder if we shall see him. We arrive in the town of Moffat, out comes the map mum reads the instructions how to find the guest house. Follow the main road in, when you see the Ram turn right and then right again, then after 200 yards turn left up the track to the house. What a great house over 100 years old a large detached in about an acre of garden. Lots of trees and bushes all waiting for me to explore and leave my scent on.

Later we decide to walk back in to town to explore and find our bearings. We walk past the playing fields, find the Catholic church, a small wooden building in a well kept rocky garden, the notice told us the Sunday Mass was on Saturday night and that the priest would come from Lockerbie a short ride away. We find the High St. and that Ram again, this is a chance to try to catch it, it stands on top of a pile of rock to high for a young pup like me to jump, not for want of trying. By this time, the shops were all closed except a small co-op super market, which stayed open until 10pm. Behind the store was a large woollen mill shop.

On our way back to the house, we stop at the playing fields for a run off the lead. I was so excited running like a greyhound I just didn't see the river

over the banking and I ran straight in. Not too deep but ice cold, (a shock to my system, I can swim and I am only 7 months old). We make our way back to warmth of the house to dry off.

The following day we again walk to town, I walk on my own down the track a sniff here a cocked leg there suddenly I stop and listen a strange noise, into the hedge to investigate lo and behold large birds (hens) charge! make them scatter, help! I get stuck in some wire fencing need dads help to get free. We never walk past the hens without a lead again, dad got bitten by the wire fencing. As the days pass we wonder around the town sampling the pies, the fish and chips and ice cream, visiting the woollen mill and other female clothing shops. The one shop I liked was a small pet shop on the High St. the lady owner told us she came from Liverpool and had only just opened the shop. She was great she let me have a good sniff around and even gave me biscuits for buying a new red squeaking ball. Saturday came and so did the rain, dad and mum took me along the road to Selkirk and stopped by the track up into the forest out we got, the rain eased off and into the forest we go up a steep path that zigzagged to the sky. This place was fun, trees everywhere what a place to hone the skill of standing on three legs and watering the trees (still learning) (now expert). There was evidence of Rabbits, Squirrels, Deer and lots of Birds being around, including in the distance the sound of Peacocks. Halfway around the walk we met two ladies with a Springer Spaniel, while mum and dad spoke with the ladies the Spaniel and I ran off into a rather boggy part of the forest, mum and dad not best pleased. We carry on with the walk and arrive back at the car just as the rains

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came down again. Back at the house I get dumped in the bath and scrubbed, my muddy coat all white and clean again. As the grooming implements come in to use mum tells me "tomorrow we are going to Edinburgh to the Scottish Kennel Club Show and I would see my sister my older brother and Rio the Ridgeback who live in Abram, and possibly your father or some of his other offspring's."

Sunday morning early breakfast, on the road by 8-00am a one hour ride to the show ground (The Royal Highland Showground) adjacent to Edinburgh airport, you take the city bypass towards the Forth Road Bridge and follow signs to airport and showground. We find the car park a huge sprawl by the side of the airport runway, people are unloading dogs, cages, boxes and hampers. More dogs than I have ever seen before. We find out later that there was over 4,000 that day and it was the second day, think of the piles of manure.

We make our way in to the showground with our pass and pick up a catalogue (2 centimetre's thick). This booklet lists all the dogs by name and breed, it also told us were to go and wait for our turn to perform in the ring. This was a good thing because I would meet up with my sister, older brother and other offspring of my father.

This was now the start of my jail sentence locked in my cage while mum and dad went to explore all the different tents and stalls it was like a carnival. Each breed had its own parade ring all on grass and covered by a tent roof. We had to wait until the after noon before it was my turn to show off. Show off I did as it was grass not an indoor ring the first thing to do was to have a good sniff. The next

thing was the judges table it has wooden legs, you guessed cock a leg and water it. Mum not best pleased she was trying to make me do the proper things but I am only seven months old and the class was for six to twelve months most of the other pups were nine months or so. I did my best but didn't win, the Judge came over and told mum that I was fine but a little young at such a big show. My sister and older brother both got placed but not Rio the Ridgeback. As the time came to make our way home, you could tell who had won their class because of the bags of Pedigree goodies the owners were carrying back to their vehicles. We said our good byes piled into the car and set off back to Wigan. The journey along the motorway was miserable not only was it the end of an adventure but the weather turned very wet all the way from Scotland through to Lancaster. Never the less we were all glad to see the two boys back at home and have a nice cup of tea.

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Stations of the Cross

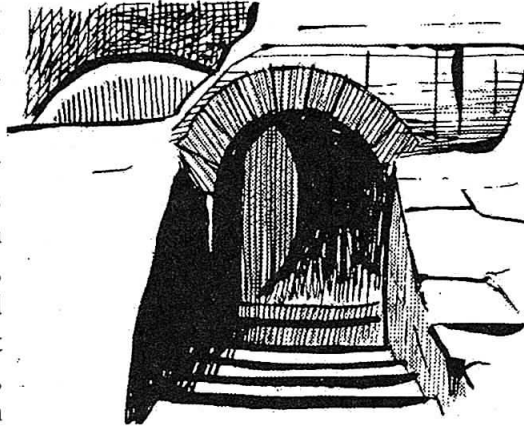
by Thalia Hamilton

This is a devotion most of us remember from our childhood - the one church service when we did not have to keep our attention firmly fixed on the altar but were expected to swivel round in our places. Inspecting the congregation was quite diverting, so was watching the altar boys managing their candles with greater or less skill as they processed ahead of the priest. Later we developed more awareness and sensitivity but how did this old practice of "doing the Stations" arise?

It is easy to imagine- Christ's early disciples in the years following his death tracing his last journey from Pilate's Praetorium to Calvary, sadly recalling the events and praying as they went. Throughout Christendom from the earliest times there was a great interest in and longing for the Holy Places. The Venerable Bede in his "History of the English Church and People" devoted two chapters about the Holy Places for the benefit of people living at a great distance from these places. These are extracts from a book by Adamnan, Abbot of Iona, based on first hand descriptions by a friend Arculf, a Bishop of Gaul, who had travelled extensively in the Holy Land. The Crusaders of the 11th and 12th centuries stimulated this interest. On returning home they erected tableaux of the places they had seen for themselves. These were the forerunners of the representations we now have in churches. We all appreciate the importance of visual aids, often far beyond their artistic merits. There could be any number of these "tableaux", between 5 and more than 30 have been recorded in different churches. The higher number is not surprising when you think that there could be for instance, one for each of Christ's last seven words on the cross. The practice of following the Stations was popularised by the Franciscans, guardians of the Holy Places in the 14th century. Presumably they were called Stations because one stood before them meditating and praying.-

The number was stabilised at 14 in the 18th century; 9 are scriptural, 5 traditional. "Veronica wipes the face of Jesus" could be based on the compassion of charitable Jewish women who ministered to condemned criminals. In recent times the number and subject of the stations have become more varied again. Some are well-known works of art - Eric Gill's in Westminster Cathedral (almost 6 feet. square); later ones in Clifton Cathedral, Bristol; others in Miskin, Wales and St. Matthew's, Birmingham. Arthur Dooley's in St. Mary's, Leyland are often visited.

Since the Stations are not liturgical there is no set text, they can be followed silently and informally. The 18th century meditations of St. Alphonsus Liguori have been especially popular in England and are valued by those who have used and internalised them for many years. In these, our personal responsibility for the sufferings of Jesus is emphasised, couched in the language of the time. More recent meditations tend to include the realisation that our sins of injustice against the rest of humanity by exploitation and oppression, our racism and neglect of the needy are also offensive to God. "Christ died at Notting Hill" by Michael Hollings and other modern texts are deeply moving and effective. With what has been called "a recovered



Pascal Mystery" the integral unity of Christ's death and resurrection is stressed. So we now finish with a 15th Station, the Resurrection, on a note of hope, thanksgiving and joy.

Last year, for the first time, our Justice and Peace Stations were truly ecumenical. Members of all the Swinley churches took part. Their representatives prepared their own meditations and prayers for the Stations as J & P members have done for many years. They found this so moving and rewarding that they wish to repeat the experience.

Swinley and Whitley Churches Together members will carry the Cross in public witness from St. Michael's to St. John's at 6 pm on Good Friday. J & P Stations of the Cross will follow at 6.30 p.m.

FAIRTRADE

Please remember our sales at the back of St. John's church, Buying these products regularly helps to establish and improve Third World industries, With fair wages and working conditions. This is a very positive way to lift their people out of their helplessness and dependency on our charity.

WIGAN'S NUGENT CARE COMMUNITY RESOURCES PROJECT

PROGRESS REPORT

It is only just over a year and a half ago that the diocesan Nugent Care Society approached us to explore the possibility of setting up a Wigan - based Community Resources project. In the mid-nineteenth century Father Nugent, after whom the Society is named, saw and ministered to destitute people in Wigan before his move to Liverpool. He experienced the suffering, hardship and deaths that degrading poverty, insanitary housing and typhus fever outbreaks caused in this town. These days we tend to think that all that is history. We are living in a welfare state; there are safety nets and systems in place to prevent such evils happening again. True, but the requests which we volunteers get continually for practical and basic assistance are proof that a great deal of hidden poverty and personal suffering is present in Wigan still.

Recently some of the results of the 2001 census were released. One set of statistics relates closely to our Resources project. It shows a huge growth in the numbers of people living alone. How we encounter this is through the many requests we get to supply basic necessities and even some food for single, homeless people being re-housed. Some are often as young as 17 years of age. Family breakdown, unemployment, individuals moving on from being in prison or in care - so many sad causes.

Thanks to your generosity in providing bedding and household goods we are able to make up what we call "starter packs". As requests come in, the volunteers get to work trying to select from our stores things that will not only be useful to the client but pleasing and attractive, covering their essential needs. Although we cannot provide furniture, we can refer the social worker or agencies which apply to us on behalf of a client to places such as the Queen's Hall shop on Gidlow Lane where it is possible to obtain items to furnish a bed-sit or small flat.

When there is a lull between dealing with requests for help, the co-ordinator of the volunteers calls the group together now and again to sort out the donations of bedding and

other goods which we have been given. We often wish we had more space to store things because sometimes we have to turn out numerous bags from our bedding store in order to reach the items we want! Still, we are not complaining! We are always happy to receive donations and we have a basic rule: we never give anything to a client which we ourselves would not be willing to have and use. In that way we respect their dignity.

We receive requests through voluntary agencies such as Wigan Family Welfare, Wigan Family Centre, Palatine Housing Association and the S.V. P. conferences. They act on behalf of the actual clients and collect for them from us. Just before Christmas we began to link up with the S.V.P. and similar agencies in Skelmersdale and are able to respond to requests from there through S.V.P. members who provide transport.

From time to time the volunteers meet with Sharon Deverdie who is the official Nugent Care contact person for our project. Her manager is Ged Flynn, who, incidentally, also chairs the diocesan Justice and Peace Commission. They invited us to their headquarters in Liverpool to see how things operate there and to meet other volunteers like ourselves.

This project may be small and humble but that's the way the gospel works. Right from the start Ged Flynn encouraged us to let the seed be sown in Wigan and already those of us who have been nurturing it are happy to see it beginning to take root and grow. We shall never know what the contributions mean to the clients who receive them but judging by the comments made to us by their social workers this project really is helping people to rediscover hope, make a fresh start and begin to build a life for themselves. So, once more, keep those donations coming in and thank you for making this project possible.

Sister Philomena Grimley SHCJ

on behalf of all the volunteers.

Stephen J Connor

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CAFOD 2003

On behalf of the CAFOD group I wish to thank all who contributed to the 2002 campaign "TODAY, TOMORROW, TOGETHER". We reached our target and now somewhere in the South East of Africa people can have clean drinking water. The amount raised was enough to supply four water pumps, thus allowing at least four villages to have their own water supply. As the problems still exist in the area around the Horn of Africa with the consequences of the Drought and failed Harvest, we feel that we can still do more to help them. This year we shall continue to support the same campaign TODAY, TOMORROW, TOGETHER.

CAFOD is also campaigning for tradejustice this is a call for a new approach to food and farming. CAFOD is campaigning for a win - win solution, that's fair to small-scale farmers everywhere and for an agricultural system that feeds everyone in our world. At the back of St. John's church on the CAFOD table, you will find post cards you can send to the EU Trade Commissioner asking for reforms to the EU Agricultural Policy.

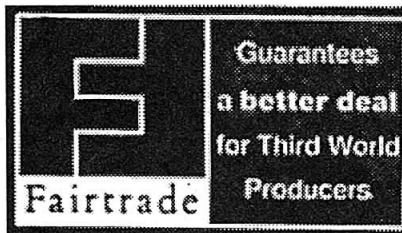
Did you know that the European Governments could send their 21 million dairy cows on an annual trip round the world - stopping off in Shanghai, San Francisco and Auckland - for the amount they spend on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The average European cow now receives support of \$2.20 a day; half the world's population or nearly 3 billion people struggle to survive on less than \$ 2 a day. The EU spends £28 billion on CAP every year - that's twice as



much as Africa earns from agricultural exports. European Union agricultural policies cause hunger in the developing world. Because EU farmers receive subsidies, European agribusiness can sell food on world markets and in developing countries for less than it costs to produce — undercutting the poorest farmers. Economists call this "dumping". The EU must keep the promises it made to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to cut subsidies

that cause dumping of food.

"The money that goes into subsidising farmers annually, in the European Union and North America, is almost double the value of debt owed by developing countries. The amount Africa loses in unfair trade is more than is required to cancel its debt. These are not just economic choices; ethical choices need to be made." *Neville Gabriel, Director, Justice & Peace Dept, Southern African Bishops' Conference.*



One of the ways we can be of help to the developing world is to buy Fairly Traded goods. March 3-16th is Fairtrade Fortnight. It gives us a chance to buy something that we know is helping farmers and traders in the Third World. All the profits go back to the producers to help them and their communities to be self-sufficient and less reliant on aid handouts. This allows Aid Agencies like CAFOD to help many more needy people. Just try a Fairtrade product during the fortnight. It may cost a few pence more but you may get to like it.

Frank Houghton.



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WIGAN DEANERY TEAM FOR EVANGELISATION

In the Winter issue of this magazine there was an article by Father Pat MacNally, our dean, about Wigan deanery and concerns for the future. How we as a deanery might begin to share a vision for that future and discover ways to make the vision a reality is a huge task and will have to be addressed in due course.

Meanwhile, the deanery team has taken a small but important decision which it hopes will help to resource us for such a task. We believe that the inspiration and energy which we need can only come from the living wells of a renewed faith. So, we have decided to offer in the deanery during Lent 2003 an initial course in a series entitled **CAFÉ** or **Catholic Faith Exploration**.

The programme brings people together informally in a social setting. As they watch and react to the stimulus of a professionally produced video they are encouraged to share their reactions and begin to understand their faith more deeply. The course we have chosen to begin with is: **KNOWING GOD BETTER**. It is a relaxed and enjoyable series covering such topics as: Knowing God's Love; Knowing God's Forgiveness; Knowing God's Help; Knowing God's Word; Knowing God's Hope.

CAFÉ programmes are being used in hundreds of parishes across the UK at present. They have been produced by **Catholic Evangelisation Services**, set up in 1996 and based at Westminster Diocese Pastoral Centre. There, with the encouragement initially of Cardinal Basil Hume and now of Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor, the team works to promote this resource. They aim to help Catholics become more enthusiastic about their faith and empower them to make more of a difference in the world in which they live. The programmes they have produced are a practical response to the Pope's challenge to communicate the gospel in new ways and with new ardour using modern media for evangelisation.

Since we are called the *Wigan Deanery Team for Evangelisation* we are hoping that this programme will contribute to that work of faith renewal in our area. We hope that you will support it with your prayers. Better still - you might come and see for yourself! Details will be sent before Lent to every parish in the deanery. A TV set and video recorder have been obtained for parish use in St. John's parish house and that is where the first **CAFÉ** course will take place.

All that we need now are some takers! We live in hope!

Sister Philomena Grimley SHCJ