

Newslink



Mirth at Mirfield: Father Dennis, Father Dennis... and a Hippo

**St Faith's Church, Great Crosby
Parish Magazine
November 2014**

Worship at Saint Faith's



SUNDAY SERVICES

11.00 am SUNG EUCHARIST and Children's Church
Holy Baptism by arrangement

WEEKDAY SERVICES

The Daily Office

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 9.00am: Morning Prayer

Tuesday: 6.30pm: Evening Prayer

Thursday: 8.00am: Morning Prayer

Friday: 6.00pm: Evening Prayer

Saturday: 9.30am Morning Prayer

The Holy Eucharist

Tuesday: 7.00pm; **Thursday:** 11.45am; **Friday:** 6.30pm; **Saturday:** 10.00am

Please see the weekly online bulletin for any variations.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

The Clergy are available by appointment to hear confessions or to talk about any matter in confidence. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is always available in preparation for Christmas and Easter and at other advertised times.

HOME VISITS to the sick and housebound and those in hospital

If you, or someone you know, are unable to get to church and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, the Eucharistic Ministers are happy to undertake this - please call 928 3342/07976 901389 to arrange this, or to arrange a visit to someone in hospital or at home.

IN A PASTORAL EMERGENCY

Please telephone as for home visits, or a member of the ministry team.



From the Ministry Team : November 2014

“Jesus told them a parable to show them that they should pray continually and not lose heart.” (Luke 18:1)

How many times has someone said to you, “If there really is a God, then why does he allow people to suffer; what about wars, famine, disease, cruelty? What’s the point in praying?”

Many Christians may find these questions difficult to answer and to give explanations when people ask why, for example, when two people pray and ask for the same thing, such as healing, and it appears that only one has had their prayer answered and is healed, and the other remains ill, and they say, “God doesn’t always answer prayer!” When we hear in the news of the Ebola virus killing thousands of people, and the suffering of people who are held in captivity, some people may well be wondering “what use is the point of praying?” and may lose heart.

Personally, I believe that God answers prayer. It may not be when WE want it answered, or even WHAT we wanted, but it **will** be answered. And I truly believe that God knows best; He knows me best, and He knows what is best for me. He understands my concerns and my fears. And He is patient with me, and expects me to be patient with Him, to have faith in Him, to persevere and understand that He does listen and take on board everything that I say to Him.

However, having said all that, I must admit that to have patience and absolute faith can, at times, be very difficult, and during difficult times it can be hard to pray. Pain and hardship can often makes us angry; but it’s good to know that, even in our anger, God still hears our prayer and by His loving grace, he guides and helps us through whatever ails us.

I read once that prayer is beyond any question the highest activity of the human soul. Man (or woman) is at his highest when upon his knees and he comes face to face with God. That prayer is simply talking to God, without pretence or flippancy. And yet, many people can find it difficult to pray.

For many, prayer has been replaced with pragmatic action. Function overrides fellowship with God; busy-ness crowds out communication. For others prayer may even lack a sense of awe and respect. In the busy-ness of their lives, their effort at prayer may be half-hearted and flippant, becoming more of a routine ritual. And then there are some people who believe that prayer is designed to make demands on God and attempt somehow to force Him to do what they believe He should do for them.

But for many people, prayer is held with utmost respect, a spiritual time of being still in the presence of God and feeling totally surrounded by His love. Prayer has, and continues to be, of great importance and is central in my daily life. On our recent visit to Mirfield, one of the things I was most looking forward to was partaking in the ritual routine of prayer, which is an important part of monastic life, and I felt it was such a blessing to be able to spend time with God in quiet prayer. At the most basic level, prayer is being attentive to the presence of God: being attuned to God's word being spoken in scripture, in creation, in other people, in ourselves. In this sense, it is clearly fundamental in the life of all Christians.

Prayer is the life-line to God. It connects us spiritually with Him and is the work of the whole people of God. When we share in the daily prayer of the Church, we are drawn into something which forms us, which deepens our communion with one another and with God, and which strengthens our hold on eternal life. When we pray in the liturgy, the words we pray come from the Bible, and so we are drawn into God's life-giving Word. We never pray alone; even when we say our prayers by ourselves, we are always drawn into the prayer of the whole Church on earth, and in heaven.

What is praying like for you? Does your prayer life fall into one or two of the aforementioned categories? Or perhaps there have been times when prayer has been a little bit of everything? Some people find it can be difficult to pray, but we should never give up on praying, because God is a just and loving God who is always more ready to hear than we to pray, and in his great love for us the smallest portion of our lives offered to him is repaid a thousand-fold.

He listens and reacts in a loving way when His people call to Him. If we enter a covenant of prayer with God and by faith continually call on his Holy Name, then He will hear and will respond. But remember, because He knows us so well, and He sees the total picture, whereas we only see a part of it, then sometimes His answer to our prayer could be "No", or "Wait", or "I've got something better planned for you", or simply, "Yes".

"Jesus told them...that they should pray continually and not lose heart." (Luke 18:1)
Continuous prayer is energy; the energy of love and transformative power. It is given to us to use for the good of all creation. In prayer God gives us the fuel of life, and asks us to live it. May we continue to pray daily not only for ourselves but for all

people and, by the grace of God, His presence will be felt by all who pray in His name.

With my love and prayers,

Jackie



Roofing Review

or It Never Rains But it Pours!

St Faith's suffered further criminal damage to the roof on Friday 3rd October. Below is an update of the letter from the Priest-in-Charge to the congregation, originally sent on Sunday 5th October.

Dear Friends in Christ,

On Friday 3rd October, the Church suffered another incident of criminal damage to the roof, this time to the North (Kingsway) side.

We know it happened within a very small time window; the alarm has been off during the day whilst we have been expecting contractors to the site. I was at Stanfield School taking assembly on that Friday morning, and it had not happened when I walked back at 11.30am. The gardener was working in the Memorial Garden and alerted me at 4pm.

It is criminal damage this time and not theft because the gardener and I found the lead from the roof hidden in the bushes by the boundary wall. It is now under lock and key, as is the trolley the perpetrators used.

Ecclesiastical, our insurers, have been informed. BBR, our excellent contractors who have been working on the South roof, were called out by Robbie Bell our Architect and a temporary repair was done very quickly indeed. This uses the plastic membrane we used on the South roof, and it is very effective – it 'beds down' into the gullies and actually gets more effective over time. This makes us 90% watertight – and, indeed, in the apocalyptic storms of Wednesday 8th October (which woke me up... and made me contemplate going over to Church to have a look, but I didn't...) – we had just dribs and drabs of water.

I informed the Wardens and Treasurer immediately, closely followed by the Standing Committee and PCC, and then the Archdeacon, as is our obligation. Once we have specifications for the repairs in, the Standing Committee and then PCC will meet, as scheduled, on 12th November, but much of the Agenda will be cleared to enable the PCC to decide how to proceed.

I am gutted myself about this – it is a blow, just as St Faith’s was beginning, in so many ways, to recover. However, we have shown already we can get major repairs to the building done; this is a random, if well-planned, criminal act, and the important thing is what happens now. So I am asking you to dig deep spiritually and to remember we continue to be God’s holy people in this place - so let us go on living out our calling – worshipping God in celebrating the Sacraments, saying our prayers, loving God and loving one another and our neighbours. I’d like to pay tribute to the Wardens, and many others, who have done just that, as well as pitching in immediately in practical ways. I will of course keep you fully in the picture just as soon as we know – through bulletins like this, announcements, and in due course the website. Do please contact me personally if you would like to ask anything at all.

Meanwhile, keep St Faith’s in your prayers –

Yours in Christ

Sue

‘So we do not lose heart...’ (2 Corinthians 4.1)

‘We know all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose’ (Romans 8.28)

The 100+ Club Draw: October 2014

1	£150	59	Audrey Dawson
2	£100	179	Jackie Williams
3	£50	72	Joan Tudhope



Two entertaining recent typos spotted by the editor (known to some as The Stickler).

An old-fashioned wind-up gramophone was displayed in a local charity shop window, with the splendid legend alongside:

Genuine 1930s Grammar Phone with Records

The editor was hugely entertained, and wonders whether the records were by His Master’s Voice...

The recent Patronal Festival service booklet bade us ‘**see the glory of God in the Face of Jess Christ**’.

Maureen, whose dog is of course called Jess, was delighted, and declared that the hound had more than once been her salvation.



St Aidan

A STORY OF AUTHENTIC MISSION

The text of a talk given at a recent ‘Tuesday Think About’ at St Faith’s

It’s been a pleasure to visit St Faith’s twice in the past two months: firstly, to speak about St Hilda (whose image appears on one of your stained glass windows) and then St Aidan, her contemporary and mentor. Both have much to teach us about ‘being church’ in the 21st century. The meaning of their names alone speaks to us about our mission: Hilda means ‘struggle’ and Aidan means ‘bright flame’.

But let’s stay with Aidan. We told the story interactively, with (Mother?) Sue featuring as the godly bishop (she looked the part!) and members of the congregation in other starring roles! The year was 634. Dark days, after the collapse of the Roman Empire when there was much warring between different tribes in England. Oswald, of the Northumbrian royal family, had been exiled for years on the island of Iona, living with the monks there, sharing their worship and studies. The time came when the throne of Northumbria was vacant and Oswald decided to return to claim the crown. But first he and his army had to overcome King Penda and his powerful army from Mercia. Oswald planted a large cross in the field where the battle would take place and promised God that, if he should win, he would call evangelists from Iona to bring the Good News to his Kingdom. Not only would his subjects find life, but he hoped this would help to bring unity to a divided region.

So it was: Oswald was victorious at the battle of Heavenfield, and the following year (635) he sent messengers to Iona. A band of monks led by Cormac arrived, but didn’t stay long! Cormac claimed the Northumbrians were ignorant barbarians who would never be able to receive the Gospel. However, when he reported this to his fellows back on Iona there was a dramatic moment. Aidan stood up and rebuked Cormac, saying that such people needed to receive the pure milk of the Gospel before being given stronger ‘meat’. His wise and gracious words were echoed by the other monks: they promptly made him a bishop and sent him to Northumberland with 12 other monks!

Now it was a different story. Aidan met up with King Oswald, who promised him the tidal island of Lindisfarne, off the north-east coast of England, where he could set up his mission headquarters (monastery). There he trained a large number of English monks, teaching them the Scriptures and training them in evangelism. Small groups of monks would travel far and wide, and the historian Bede tells us that people would come running joyfully to receive them. Furthermore, the king himself would often travel with Aidan, for the latter could not speak the English language and Oswald acted as translator. This was a marvellous partnership between church and state. It was a golden age in the history of English Christianity, and some would say that Aidan has a stronger case to be nominated patron saint of England than St George! Not for nothing has he been called ‘the apostle of England’.

There are several stories of Aidan in Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (a fascinating read altogether). Perhaps the most telling comment that Bede makes is that Aidan ‘lived as he taught – unlike many others of his generation’. He eschewed wealth, giving money away often to purchase the freedom of slaves who then became his monks; he kept company with rich and poor alike, kings and peasants, but always preferred the latter; he would walk rather than travel by horseback, thus being able to encourage fellow Christians along the way, or speak to pagans about the love of God in Christ.

Our ‘play’ ended, we reflected on the significance of Aidan for the church’s mission today. Here’s what we discussed, in summary:

The need for perseverance in living and sharing the Gospel. Don’t give up as Cormac did.

Start from where people are, not from where we’d like them to be. We have some explaining to do, if our neighbours are to ‘get’ the Christian message and the values we try to live by.

The importance of the faith community, as people and places of hospitality and welcome. Aidan’s first move was to set up a base, where people could come and go, finding refreshment for body and soul. We should not underestimate the significance of the local church – people and building.

The need for authenticity. How well do our lives reflect the values of the Gospel and the Way of Christ?

Thank you for having me and God bless the faith mission of St Faith’s!

Godfrey Butland

September 2014

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The Left Footer's Revenge



Once upon a time, young Ged Callacher was St Faith's much-loved organist. We missed him when he went from us, to emerge eventually as Fr Ged Callacher, at Liverpool Roman Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral. He returned at our Patronal Festival to preach to us.

It's a great joy and privilege for me to be able to take part in your Patronal Festival celebrations. St Faith's has, for many years, been close to my heart. I was Director of Music here for 12 years, and this Church has played a huge part in my vocation to the priesthood. Maybe that's not surprising, because, over the years, St Faith's has fostered a large number of vocations to ministry, both lay and ordained - although I'm pretty sure I'm the first left-footer!

This morning, as we celebrate this Patronal Festival, we give thanks for this holy place and all that it means to us. People have always been drawn to sacred places, places where they feel particularly close to God. This beautiful building is such a place. I've always thought that this church has a special feel to it; it's as if the walls have soaked up the atmosphere of years and years of devotion and prayer.

Beautiful, dignified and uplifting liturgy takes place week by week within these walls, and it engages all our bodily senses. We have the sight of the beautiful furnishings and works of art; the sound of bells and splendid music; the perfumed smell of incense, and the taste and touch of the Communion. All of these things invite us to lift up our hearts, minds and bodies to God, in praise and adoration.

But, of course, St Faith's is more than just a building; it's a community of faith, and today we give thanks for all who have worshipped here over the years - people who have kept the Faith alive here, in good times and in bad. We all have our fond memories of people we've known here - individuals whose lives have given us a glimpse of the love of God - people who, despite their faults, have lived out their faith in their daily lives, with humility, compassion and kindness. Today we thank God for the legacy they've left us. By their example, they've all helped to shape the life and witness of this church throughout the decades.

But as we celebrate our Patronal Festival, we commemorate, first and foremost, the life and witness of our patron, St Faith. As you're all aware, we don't know much about her life, but we know that she suffered an agonizing death during the Persecution of Christians by the Romans, early in the 4th Century. Her martyrdom took place in Agen, in Aquitaine, but her relics are now in the Abbey at Conques, in the South of France. I know that some of you have been to Conques. It's a beautiful medieval village, and the centrepiece, of course, is the magnificent Abbey.

Thousands of pilgrims visit Conques on their way to the shrine of St James in Santiago de Compostela. Every evening in the Abbey, there is a Pilgrims' Mass, followed by a blessing to send the pilgrims on their way. I was fortunate enough to celebrate a couple of these Masses last September. It was a tremendous privilege, but it was a strange feeling too. Here was I, a Bootle lad from L20, a former organist of St Faith's Crosby, saying the Pilgrims' Mass in the Abbey Church of Saint Faith in Conques. I was there with a group of friends, and we all felt a powerful and moving connection between that sacred place in France, and this parish church, especially when we heard the organ playing that favourite hymn "In Our Day of Thanksgiving".

Saint Faith was only a young girl when she was martyred, but she was firm in her faith, and would not be forced into giving it up. She was given the option of following pagan gods, but she simply said 'no'. She was determined to follow the way of Christ in a hostile world, and her example should inspire us today, because we also live in a hostile world, a world which has turned its back on Christ. Our culture is so often about me, me, me... and that's totally at odds with the Christian values of self-sacrifice and self-denial.

For us, the Way of the Cross is essential to our Christian discipleship. In today's Gospel, Jesus makes it clear that, if we want to be his disciples, then we must take up our cross and follow him. The way of the cross involves self-sacrifice, self-denial. It means putting aside our selfish desires and putting the needs of others before our own needs.

Following the way of the cross, the way of love, is always demanding, and sometimes we might think that our efforts don't count for very much. But remember the parable of the Mustard Seed. That tiny seed can grow into a large tree. And so, in God's Kingdom, the smallest acts of love and kindness can make a big difference - things like a friendly smile, a small word of encouragement, a phone call or a visit to someone who's sick. Any small act of generosity and self-sacrifice is precious in the sight of the Lord, and helps to spread his kingdom of love, peace and healing. The caring and compassion we show for each other sends ripples out into the community as a sign of hope.

Of course, we don't always get things right. Because of our human weakness and frailty, we find ourselves saying and doing things we know we shouldn't, and in our church community, our relationships with each other can be fragile and strained. There's a little rhyme which goes like this: 'To live above ... with saints we love.... That would be such glory.... But to dwell below with those we know.... Now that's a different story!'

But despite all our faults and failings, we know that we are loved and valued by God the Father, who is always slow to judge and quick to forgive. The reading from Isaiah that we heard earlier, speaks of the love that God has for his children: Do not fear, for

I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name, you are mine. The knowledge that we are forgiven and loved unconditionally by God should give us the will to persevere in our faith.

And so, on this special day, we give thanks for our patron saint, St Faith, and for this much-loved church, dedicated to her. You, as a community of faith, are well-equipped to carry forward the work of God in this special place, and I hope and trust that there will be exciting and fulfilling times ahead. I pray that the Lord will continue to bless and guide you as you plan for the future. Stay close to Christ, through prayer, through reading the Scriptures, and through the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist. And stay close to each other, in mutual support and love.

Fr Ged Callacher



Magazine Matters

As from next month, we are planning to revert to the pattern of double issues of *Newslink* for December/January and also for July/August, making a total of ten issues per year. This was in fact the frequency of publication some years ago.

The change is designed to relieve the pressure on your editor and your incumbent at the busiest time of year (the former months) and the so-called holiday season (the latter). It also reflects the changing pattern of readership in an age of increasing online access.

With the advent of charging for the magazine, and the easy availability of the online edition, we have reached the stage when the number of printed copies has dropped to some 70 or so, and the list of those receiving the monthly notification of online publication is itself approaching the 70 mark (and doubtless there are quite a few others who read online without being on our list).

More significantly, the church website carries very regularly updated news, information and pictures, as well as liturgies, notices and a wide range of historical and general material for which there is no room in the magazine, which latter can of course in any case only be a monthly snapshot, necessarily outdated in the following days and weeks.

There is no intention, needless to say, to do away with a printed *Newslink* at this stage, and we know that many still value its physical presence and others have yet to come to terms with the electronic age. The editor continues to welcome contributions of any kind, and will aim to publish them either in print or online – or indeed both.

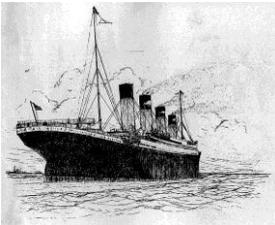
How to Know if You are Growing Old



Everything hurts, and what doesn't hurt, doesn't work.
You feel like the day after the night before, and you haven't been anywhere.
Your address book contains lots of crossings out and names ending in M.D.
You get out of breath playing cards.
Your children begin to look middle aged.
You join a health club — and don't go.
You know all the answers but no one asks you the questions.
You look forward to a dull evening.
You need glasses to find your glasses.
You turn out the lights for economy, not for romantic reasons.
You sit in a rocking chair and can't get it going.
Your knees buckle but your belt won't.
If you manage to bend down you find yourself wondering what else to pick up now you've got there.
Your back goes out more than you do.
You have too much room in the house and not enough in the medicine chest.
You sink your teeth in a slice of meat and they stay there.
You can remember 1940 but not yesterday, or even this morning.
And finally

You wonder why more people aren't using this size print.

With thanks to Sister Charity, C.H.N., late of the Chester Diocesan Retreat House, and now at the C.H.N. Convent in Derby, for supplying this entertainment!



Titanic Near-Miss

Letter describing liner's close shave is to go under the hammer

“It was the worst of omens for the gleaming new ship embarking on its maiden voyage.

As the Titanic left Southampton docks for a journey that has gone down in history, the ship came close to hitting two other liners.

Had they collided, it would have cut short the Titanic's ill-fated voyage to New York and may well have averted the catastrophe that was to claim 1,500 lives when the boat struck an iceberg on April 14 1914. The near miss is described in a letter from the Titanic's chief engineer Joseph Bell to his son Frank, which is to go under the hammer later this month in Devizes, Wiltshire*. Mr Bell told his son, who was training in Belfast to be a ship's engineer like his father, how the mooring ropes of the New York and Oceanic liners broke as the Titanic passed, causing the New York to set off across the river.

'We nearly had a collision with the New York & Oceanic when leaving Southampton, the wash of our propellers made the two ships range about when we were passing them, this made their mooring ropes break and the New York set off across the river until the tugs got hold of her again, no damage was done but it looked like trouble at the time, keep well and be a good lad, regards to Mrs Johnston.'

Mr Bell died in the disaster."

St Faith's people will know that Joseph Bell, Chief Engineer of the ill-fated Titanic, was a faithful member of St Faith's. There is a memorial tablet to him in the south aisle, and his story is told on our website (type 'Titanic' into the search box). The recent story in the Liverpool Post reprinted above adds a new chapter to the saga.

****Stop Press: would you believe it – the letter went for £24,000 at auction! Ed.***

Sierra Leone: at the Foot of the Cross



On Sunday 12th October the Waterloo Partnership heard that James Jajua, the Community Health Officer for Waterloo Sierra Leone, had died from Ebola virus disease: he leaves his children and pregnant wife Fatima, who are now at risk from the infection. We were able to remember James during our intercessions at the Eucharist that morning.

In many ways James' passing marks a watershed in the Ebola crisis in Waterloo SL. James had served as a health care worker throughout the barbaric civil war in Sierra Leone, and had told us that the consequences of the Ebola epidemic were likely to be just as grave. His death has already added several new twists to the spiral of suffering: not only has the community lost its medical officer, but the Health Centre where he worked has now been quarantined, leaving Waterloo, a town of about 40,000 people, without any government health facilities for three weeks.

It is poignant to remember that on the same evening that James' died, St. Faith's hosted a very successful concert in aid of the Waterloo Partnership. This was initiated



The Mirfield Experience

In September a party of pilgrims from St Faith's went on retreat to the Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield, West Yorkshire



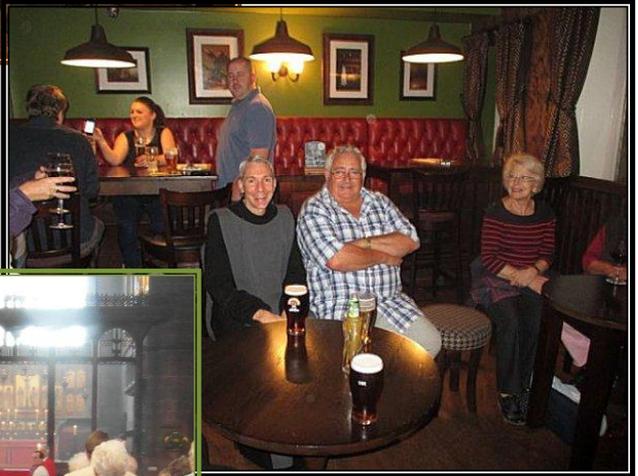
The pictures speak for themselves; the group experienced time together with the Community, as well as in prayer, worship and silence. These photos are by Judith Moizer: read her account of her retreat on page 17 of this issue





Making Merry at Mirfield

The party relaxed at the Airedale Heifer inn. Fr Dennis (CR) and Fr Dennis (SF) shared a table, but with no sign of the hippo (it's on the cover). Pictures on this page: Kathy Zimak



Making a Splash

A few weeks later, at the Patronal Festival on October 5th, Sue sprinkled all and sundry, including preacher Fr Ged Callacher (see his sermon on page 8).



Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness

After the Patronal service,
we sat down in the church
hall to a fine three-course
celebration lunch



Cheers!

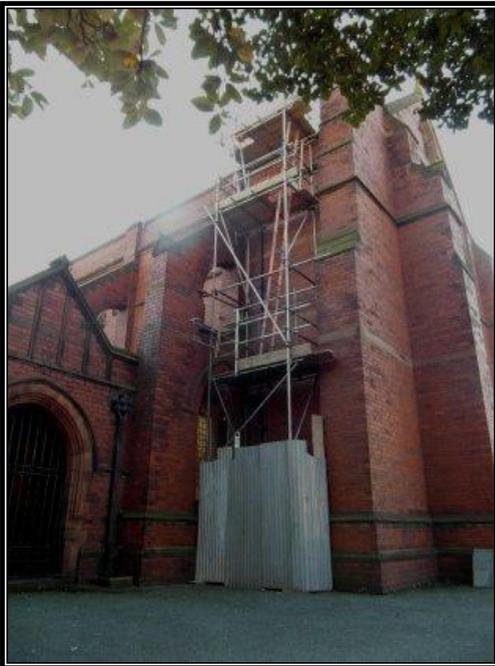
As always on these
special occasions,
many a glass was
raised to toast St
Faith and St Faith's
– past, present and
(most definitely)
future





When plates were empty and glasses drained, Sue led the applause for the gallant band who had made it all possible.

Patronal pictures: Chris Price



It Never Rains ...

... but it pours. More damage to the roof, this time on the other side. They didn't get away with anything this time, but Robbie Bell's picture shows the damage – and the scaffolding is back! Read the article on page 4 for the current situation.



and arranged by Rick Walker, ably assisted by Rosie, and raised around £1000. The next day Rick, as WP treasurer, was able to send a similar sum to our SL partners to provide food for everyone quarantined in the Health Centre. On Sunday morning Mother Sue likened the work of the Partnership to Our Lord's parable of the mustard seed: we can only pray that through His grace God will make fruitful the little that we are able to offer.

And little it is. A small charity like the Waterloo Partnership cannot hope to make much impact on the spread of the disease, and an enormous international response is needed if it is to be contained. It has been estimated that, for this to happen, Sierra Leone currently needs 1148 Ebola Treatment Centre or 'isolation' beds: the number actually available is 304. It was encouraging to hear that the British military are opening a new ETC in Kerry Town, not far from Waterloo, but this will provide only 92 beds; 80 for general use and 12 for the care of infected health care workers. A ship carrying logistic support (including helicopters), and 250 members of staff, has yet to leave Falmouth for Freetown. (*It finally sailed on October 17th. Ed.*)

Although further beds have been pledged, with the number of Ebola cases doubling every three weeks even more will be necessary by the time the Kerry Town centre is established. The WHO is forecasting a total of 20,000 Ebola cases in West Africa by the beginning of November, and one estimate puts the figure at over one million by the end of the year.

Faced with statistics like these, the Waterloo Partnership and our two partner charities are focussing more and more on how we can provide basic humanitarian relief for the survivors. Although the World Food Programme is active in Sierra Leone, our experience has been that its input is patchy and subject to bureaucratic obstacles and delays. So we will try as best we can to plug the gaps in the international food provision: we need to do something fairly urgently for the growing number of Ebola orphans and for the many vulnerable street children.

It is not an exaggeration to say that this appalling disaster is a test of faith. When Linda and I were at Mirfield for the parish retreat we were confronted by the contrast between two worlds. On the one hand there was the undeniable presence of God within the monastery and the calm and reflective worship of the religious community, and on the other the world of pain and suffering in Sierra Leone, that kept breaking through into our hearts and minds. But the Guest Brother, Father Dennis, reminded us that the two worlds were one, and that the suffering Christ was there among the dying, and the grieving, and the starving. When we can do very little to help, we are still drawn with Mary and the beloved disciple, to stand, and wait, and pray, at the foot of the cross.

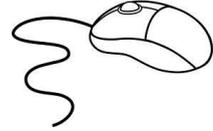
Fred Nye

13 October 2014

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'Of Your Charity'



Website links, supplied by Kathy Zimak, for organisations with which the people of St Faith's are associated in various ways. They feature on the church website.

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

Christian Aid is a organisation that insists the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great, tackling the effects of poverty as well as its root causes, We are an agency of the churches in Britain and Ireland and we are mandated to work on relief, development and advocacy for poverty eradication. Christian Aid's work is founded on Christian faith, inspired by hope and acts to change an unjust world through charity – a practical love and care for our neighbours.

<http://www.traidcraft.co.uk>

Traidcraft fights poverty through trade, helping people in developing countries to transform their lives. Thanks to our supporters, we have been the UK's leading fair trade organisation for 35 years. We run effective development programmes, sell a great range of fair trade products and campaign hard to bring about trade justice.

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

Fairtrade is a global movement with a strong and active presence in the UK, represented by the Fairtrade Foundation. Fairtrade is a movement for change that works directly with businesses, consumers and campaigners to make trade deliver for farmers and workers. The international Fairtrade system represents the world's largest and most recognised fair trade system. We are a global organisation working to secure a better deal for farmers and workers.

<http://fairtraded Crosby.org>

The Fairtrade Crosby Network aims to promote the use of Fairtrade products in Crosby, Hightown, Thornton and Waterloo in order to help producers in less developed countries. Our first aim is for Crosby to be officially recognised as a Fairtrade town with the support of our churches, schools and retailers.

<http://www.medicmalawi.org>

Medic Malawi is a charity supporting St Andrew's Hospital in the Mtunthama region of Malawi. St Faith's has strong links with the organisation and has raised funds for many years in support of the hospital. The kindergarten at St Andrew's is named after St Faith's.

<http://www.waterloopartnership.co.uk>

The Waterloo Partnership actively supports the community of Waterloo, Sierra Leone. St Faith's members include past and present trustees of the charity, and have made successive visits to the area; support is given to educational, health and building projects, especially during the current Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone.

Mirfield Commemoration

St Faith's people have recently returned from a parish retreat to the Community of the Resurrection in Yorkshire – with which our church has strong and continuing links. Judith Moizer's account of her first such visit is printed on page 17. Your editor went to Mirfield for their Commemoration Day over thirty years ago, when the preacher was newly-appointed Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, St Faith's Old Boy, and he penned these verses on return. The year was 1981!

The faithful flock to Mirfield in the sun,
Thronging the grounds and squashed in the marquee;
The tented ceremonials have begun
And everything's as High as High can be.

See now the Solemn Eucharist begin
With incense swinging gaily to the clouds:
Concelebrants, monastics process in
While Robert Cantuar enthral the crowds.

Now charismatic chorus fills the air,
As thousands flock to take their bread and wine,
Shuffling up, marshalled with love and care
To queue in rev'rent Mass-production line.

Outside, a panoply of picnics spread
As hunger after righteousness takes hold
And Church of England appetites are fed
As Church of England anecdotes are told.

No dog-dirt or transistor babble here:
Just happy voices drifting on the breeze;
And see the Punch and Judy man appear,
Belabouring the baby 'neath the trees.



And this is not the croquet crowd you see
- Cathedral close inhabitants at play -
They're folk from parishes like you and me,
Just common Anglicans out for the day.

All so wonderfully polite and keen:
We queue for tea, for evensong, for loos,
Watch Morris Dancers prancing on the green,
And share the latest scandal from the pews.

Until at last the plainsong echoes sound
And crocodiles of coaches sidle up,
Gath'ring away supporters from the ground -
Those fulfilled followers of a better Cup.

Beyond the gates the cruel world invades:
Bad-tempered motorists still fume and curse;
The blissful Anglican experience fades
And weekday living goes from bad to worse.

If only every day could be like this!
Lord, give us grace to shape ourselves anew:
Regain lost innocence and fallen bliss:
And make our lives a garden party too.

Chris Price



Welcome Maestro

Robert Woods took up his appointment as our Director of Music at the beginning of October, ready for our Patronal Festival service. For those eager to know a little more about Robert, he has supplied his c.v. for us.

Robert was born in Craigavon, Northern Ireland, in 1986. His interest in music began when he started his secondary education at the Royal School Armagh, where initially he studied trumpet. At the age of 11 he joined St. Patrick's Cathedral Choir, and commenced study of piano, voice and later organ with Canon Martin White, the then Organist and Master of the Choristers.

After becoming second trumpet in the South Ulster Youth Orchestra, he was appointed as organ scholar of Armagh Cathedral, and Vicar Choral, before he also was appointed Director of Music of Tartaraghan and Diamond-Grange Parish where

he grew up. During this time he gained a place in the Ulster Youth Choir, and as well as a singer and accompanist with Cantelina, the Regal Singers and the Charles Wood Singers, under direction from David Hill.

At the age of 18 Robert went on to study Biochemistry and Music at Keele University where he hosted his own university radio show. In 2007, he moved to Liverpool Hope University and studied Music with Politics where he was a joint Choral and Organ Scholar at the University, as well as becoming the accompanist of Frodsham and District Choral Society, Port Sunlight Choral Society and Director of Music of an a cappella group in South Liverpool called "Mostly Madrigals".

In 2009 Robert was a soloist with Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra for the opening of the Universities new Capstone building. He is currently the accompanist for Southport Bach Choir, Director of Music of St. Faiths Great Crosby, as well as being a countertenor Lay Clerk in Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Choir, where he also plays for occasional services. In his spare time he enjoys studying Spanish, playing snooker and reading.

My Mirfield Experience



Our sacristan, JUDITH MOIZER, paid her first visit to the Community of the Resurrection with the group from St Faith's recently. She writes about her experience. See this month's cover to identify the two Fathers Dennis (and the hippo!)

Friday

I wasn't sure what I was expecting from my weekend at Mirfield... I know I felt quite nervous and anxious, not knowing what would be expected of me, and a whole new environment I had never experienced before. After a smooth journey with Rev Sue and Margaret Davies, we arrived around 3.30pm on Friday 26th September. After finding our rooms we awaited the arrival of the rest of our group, and enjoyed afternoon tea and bread and jam. The brethren were in a period of silence, so the atmosphere was very calming and serene.

At 4pm we met Fr Dennis (not our Fr D!) and we embarked on a tour of the buildings.. By this time I had started to relax and "tune in" with the vibe of the house. It was difficult not to! Brother Dennis (as I will refer to him to differentiate between the two!) was so welcoming, he made me feel at ease very quickly.

The original house was a Woollen Mill owner's house, and over time the various other sections have been very sympathetically added. The Chapel is the most awe-inspiring place. It is so beautiful in its simplicity, without feeling sparse.

We gathered for Evensong in the Chapel at 6pm, the brethren taking their places on the inner chairs, surrounded by the students of the Community of the Resurrection College. The service was beautiful, I just sat and took in the beautiful singing of the psalms and the readings, joining in with the prayers. Until you get used to it, the singing can be difficult to follow, so rather than mess up, I was happy to just listen. Psalm 13 was sung, and immediately struck a chord with me, it was suggested I was given a text, and I should embrace it... which I did.

Silence was still being observed at this time, we gathered in the main hall to wait for the bell and the Superior to lead us in to supper. We took our places in the Rectory, ensuring we all spread out on different tables to integrate with the Brethren, even during the silence. We stood behind our chairs, and grace was said, and we enjoyed a supper of soup, and bread. At the end of the meal, when the Superior was happy everyone had finished, we followed his lead and stood, and gave thanks for the food. I have to say, at first the thought of silence worried me. With all the hustle and bustle of everyday life, there is never really true silence. Even when I am home alone, the telly or the radio is on, the washing machine, or even just the buzzing of the fridge freezer! How would I cope with this? But it was a “different” kind of silence... at the risk of sounding like a ‘fruitcake’, it was as if the silence embraced you, comfortable, serene, thought-provoking.

We gathered as a group in our common room which was reserved for us for the duration of our stay. Rev Sue then delivered her first talk of the retreat, ‘Entertaining Angels Unawares,’ about Abraham and Sarah’s encounter with angelic visitors that leads, eventually to the birth of something (someone!) new – Isaac. After a period of individual contemplation of Rev Sue’s lesson and quiet time, we then gathered again in the chapel in silence for Compline, another truly moving service.

Saturday

5.20am! Who knew there were two 5.20s in a day? A slight shock to the system, but up, showered, dressed, ready for Mattins at 6.30am, still observing the Great Silence. Again, following the routine of the day, we gathered in the Main Hall to await the breakfast bell. This meal is slightly less formal than the others, being served “buffet style”. There were various cereals, bread for toast, porridge, fresh coffee, tea, all kinds of fruit, and on the tables various jars of marmalade in different flavours, homemade. I even managed not to deviate from Slimming world Plan, although I easily could have! The Great Silence ended at 9.30am. I was amazed at how much I had appreciated being silent, and how I had used the time effectively, reading, thinking, and dare I say it, praying! I know it sounds daft, and I am not proud of it, but I realised, I don’t really pray, in the true sense of the word very much. Being in a one to one situation with God is very different than being on the altar each Sunday.

We gathered again in our common room, where (our!) Fr. Dennis shared with us the

reason he didn't get to Mattins. During the night, his alarm clock had fallen off the chair next to his bed, and consequently had managed to set itself an hour and a half slow. To which Fred added "and the dog ate your homework!" Funny!

Rev Sue continued with the 2nd in her series of addresses, this time about a journey of healing in the company of an archangel (and a little dog!) in the Book of Tobit.

I took the opportunity during the period of quiet time and reflection to explore the grounds on my own. I enjoyed finding little hidden away places, sitting taking in the atmosphere, contemplating, oh, and talking to the fish! They would literally pop their heads out, as if they were saying hello! Before you all think I have lost the plot, I'm not daft - I know they were hoping I had some grub on me, which I didn't because I am being good. Unlike Fr D, who had a variety bag of Walkers crisps in his room in case of the midnight munchies – but to be fair, they went home unopened!

12noon was Midday Prayer followed by lunch, which is the main meal of the day, and we gathered in the main hall again as before and distributed ourselves around the Refectory, and said grace, we would now have the chance to chat to some of the brethren over lunch. Over a meal of homemade meat and potato pie, peas and chips, followed by pudding, we introduced ourselves and chatted away, enjoying getting to know our hosts. Again following the Superior's lead, at the end of the meal, the chatting ceased, prayers of thanksgiving said, and we left the brothers to the clearing and washing up.

It was now time for number 3 in our series of addresses, this time, on wrestling with angels – the story of Jacob at the Jabbok wrestling an angel – when he was on the way to what was likely to be a difficult reunion with his brother!

At this stage we had 3 hours of our "own time". I decided to walk into the village, which was downhill all the way! Whilst walking, I was thinking about what we had discussed, the day's lessons, and how they related to my own life. I have never been very good at being on my own, even on a day off from work, I always feel I should be doing something – I'll phone mum and see if she needs shopping or wants to go anywhere, or a friend if they want to do something, or go shopping for something I don't really need, rather than take time for myself, and ultimately time with God... but I felt different. I enjoyed it. I felt at ease with myself, I was constantly over-analysing stupid insignificant stuff, or worrying about things I can do nothing about...

On my return to the retreat house, (I got the bus back, it is all uphill!), I still had time to spare and went off into the grounds again. Why wasn't I bored? Why wasn't I craving contact with another human being? Before heading in to prepare for Evensong, I went to talk to the fish again... I took the opportunity to speak to Rev Sue about how I was feeling, and how I felt the urge to look at my spirituality more deeply, and to understand God's love and how it can make me feel, and I asked her

about the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession). I was very aware of all these negative feelings I had been carrying around, probably for years really, anger, bitterness, resentment, frustration, guilt, to name a few! And these were suffocating me. I felt I wasn't really me.

Evensong was followed by a salad and cooked meat supper, and fresh strawberries and cream, and chatting with the brothers, following the traditional routine.

At 7.30pm we gathered in reception for the pilgrimage to the Airedale Heifer a few hundred yards down the road. Fr Dennis was to lead the way, as written on our programme for the weekend, however, the fact that there was a Fr Dennis at Mirfield also meant he had thought it was him and was teased by the other brethren! But good for him, he joined us anyway and a pleasant hour was spent with two vodka and diet cokes chatting with the group. We headed back for Compline, a lovely way to end the day. Brother Dennis had arranged for me to make my first confession with him the following morning.

Sunday

6.30am - a lie in! Up showered, dressed ready for Mattins at 7.30am... we all made it this time. Mattins led into the Solemn Mass of the day at 8am. All the students from the college in situ, and a crucifer, two acolytes and thurifer resplendent in their white albs. It was a wonderful, uplifting service with the traditional Eucharist, again, the beautiful voices of the brethren joined with the students, we could join in with hymns and the organ was played. We all filed in for breakfast after Mass, and the anticipation of my first confession later that morning was palpable within me. I don't think I was scared, I think I was looking forward to getting rid of the barriers that stopped my linking with God, and being my own true self, and accepting things as they are.

Rev Sue's 4th lesson was again held in the common room, this time on perhaps the most familiar angelic encounter in the Bible, the Annunciation.

The time had come, I went with Brother Dennis, and made my first confession, after which, he took the time to counsel me in some issues. To hear someone who doesn't actually know you, believe in you and appreciate you as a human being, as well as a fellow Christian is certainly something I will never forget. I was able to make more sense of all these feelings inside me, and get a better understanding of my own true self. It was a hugely emotional experience, I cried buckets, but I wasn't sad, it was more like a release.

You all probably think I am barking mad, but I can only tell you how it was for me... Don't get me wrong, I am not about to take the veil! But I know now what I have been missing not being connected with God and my spirituality as I should be. Each Sunday I have a job to do, to serve God and my church, something I love doing, but this can detract from the matter at hand, and you are preoccupied with ensuring things run as they should. So this time on retreat was a revelation to me.

It was soon time to head home. My worries about the routine, the silence, the solitude were all totally unfounded. I found comfort in the routine, what was going to happen, when and how, it made me feel secure, the silence and the solitude was a warm enveloping silence, giving you the opportunity to explore your own thoughts more deeply and to pray.

The group were all lovely to be with. If you needed someone they would be there, the group sessions were enjoyable and a giggle or two was had. It was lovely to actually get to know people a little more than just seeing them on a Sunday morning. I travelled back with Rev. Sue and Margaret, arriving home around 4pm, and to a huge cuddle from Emily.

In Memoriam 1914

Commemorating the First World War



If you would like to remember the events and sacrifice of the first World War, come to the Crypt Concert Room of the Metropolitan Cathedral on Tuesday, 11th November at 7.30 pm.

The Metropolitan Cathedral Society, in the shape of its Cantata Choir, is mounting a commemorative concert, using music and poetry from that time. The evening looks like being a very special experience for both audience and performers alike. It will also feature Richard Lea playing a solo piano piece. He is not only the Cantata Choir's conductor, but also the Cathedral's outstanding organist and pianist and known to many in Formby as the Choral Society's accompanist. Tickets (£10/£7) are available at the door or on line via bookings@cathedralconcerts.org.uk.

Climate Change

Our church response to Christian Aid's call to action

On October 19th, representatives of Churches Together in Waterloo walked a pilgrimage of prayer around the local area stopping at points which marked our dependence on God's creation and the natural resources available to us. Together we remembered how our misuse of those resources affects the poorer people of the world by unleashing the forces of climate change. At the end of our walk we ended at St Mary's Church with refreshments and signing of cards to our local MPs urging them to bring pressure on our governments to hold firm to their promises on reduction of carbon emissions.

Christian Aid's climate campaign explained

Millions of the world's poorest people are feeling the impact of climate change right now. They are suffering first and worst from the consequences, and yet they are least to blame. But millions of us hold a vision of a better future. We can show our love for the world by making changes in our lives to tread more lightly and lead by example - in solidarity with those who are already bearing the brunt of climate change. That's why we're building a mass movement of people willing to take a million actions towards cutting carbon, to encourage politicians and businesses to lead the way by creating policies and economies to tackle climate change.

Our future is at risk

Collectively, we need to stop temperatures rising above 2°C worldwide, otherwise experts predict more droughts, floods and extreme weather. To name just a few of the consequences, we will expect:

Less crops and more hunger

Acidification to cause fish stocks and coral reefs to diminish

People of Africa to lose up to half of their farming yields by 2020.

What needs to happen?

We have a choice. We can prevent global temperatures rising to dangerous levels if we accelerate the pace of action at all levels. We want to see a bright and sustainable future for our own communities here in the UK and for poor communities overseas. That means rapidly reducing the use of fossil fuels, particularly in developed countries like the UK, and switching to low carbon energy.

In 2014-16 we want:

The UK Government to stand firm on its commitments in the 2008 Climate Change Act for reducing the UK's carbon emissions.

The UK Prime Minister to show leadership globally to help generate political progress. The EU – including the UK - to agree ambitious targets for reducing carbon emissions and increasing both energy efficiency and the amount of energy Europe generates from renewable sources such as wind and solar power.

A fair and ambitious global deal on climate change at the UN climate change talks in Paris in December 2015.

What you can do as a Christian global citizen for the sake of future generations.

All our actions – big and small - make a difference. Whether it's walking to church on a Sunday morning instead of travelling by car or urging your MP to act on climate change – every step you take count.. As more people like you join us, the impact we have will be multiplied time and time again. Together, we'll take a million steps towards cutting carbon in the next two years and send a message to our politicians letting them know that we have taken action and so should they.

Online Extra

An entertaining and sympathetic article in the Lifestyle section of the Sunday Telegraph of October 19th, 2014.

Meet the Atheists' Favourite Vicar

Pop star turned broadcaster - and priest - Richard Coles tells Sally Saunders about sex; drugs and rock'n'roll

The Reverend Richard Coles's diary must look a bit different from that of most vicars in the shires. On the day we meet, it reads something like this: 10am: junior school harvest festival. 2pm: interview and photo shoot. 8pm: book launch party at the Ministry of Sound in London.

But then, Rev Coles is not like most clergy.

His claims to fame are fast becoming too numerous to mention: Eighties pop star (in *The Communards*); long-time radio broadcaster; the inspiration for the BBC sitcom *Rev*; part of the gay group portrayed in the latest Brit-hit *Pride*; popular guest on the likes of *QI* and *Have I Got News for You*... the list, it seems, is endless. The best description is his own: "'The atheist's favourite vicar', although I don't know what that really says about me," he says darkly.

I am meeting Rev Coles in his "man shed" in the garden to discuss his autobiography, *Fathomless Riches, or How I Went from Pop to Pulpit*, which was released this week. It is a book that is sure to raise a few eyebrows in the church, I suggest. "For a clerical memoir, there's a lot of sex and drugs and rock and roll," he admits.

Quite. The book does not pull a single punch. The memoir proper begins with an unlikely encounter with a naked man in a lay-by on Christmas Day, and goes on to detail the ups and downs of life as a gay man in the Eighties and Nineties. It's not for the faint-hearted, and has already ruffled a few feathers.

Rev Coles does not want to offend ("If anyone is upset by it, I can only apologise"), but it seems he has a greater purpose, and rather than titillating, he wants to inspire. The preface to the book discusses St Paul's Damascene conversion, with Rev Coles later recounting his own epiphany, and subsequent devotion of his life to God. This,

he says, is the reason for his complete openness, and warts-and-all discussion of his past.

"Religious people see it as a confessional in the tradition of St Augustine, and although I would hasten to say I am not comparing myself with St Augustine, I wonder if I can make this look not completely implausible," he says.

This is important to him, to show people his journey, the depths as well as the heights he had hit, and make it still look "possible" to have faith.

He is unflinching in his portrayal of his drug use and casual sex, and equally honest in describing the horrors of losing friend after friend to Aids when the disease first swept the homosexual community.

He sees frightening parallels with today. "I think it's a bit like Ebola: something terrible but far away that doesn't really affect 'people like us'. But then, certainly with HIV and Aids, it did affect people like us.

"It was very near. Going back to it now I think lots of it has been buried because it was such a catastrophe."

One of the darkest aspects of the autobiography is when Rev Coles describes how he lied to friends, claiming that he was HIV positive, after a row with then-bandmate Jimmy Somerville. The Communards split up shortly afterwards but it took Rev Coles years before he admitted his deception.

However, the disease did shine one tiny ray of light. After years of not speaking to Somerville ("In a band there's so much tension, it's a bit like an ex-husband, too much water under the bridge") the pair were reunited by the loss of a friend. 'We realigned when we lost an ex-flatmate of Jimmy's, and have stayed in touch ever since. He's coming tonight, actually." Tonight being the book launch party at nightclub Ministry of Sound.. "I just couldn't resist it," he says, smiling.

He seems to love the .lightly incongruous nature of the event, but then in his career it's nothing new.

"I find myself with a curious double ministry," he says. "I have my parish here, where I am the vicar, but because of the wonders of having been famous, and having this platform, I have another kind of ministry as well.

"In the church I am very accountable, to the parish and the deanery; in the media thing I am not really accountable, I am out there on my own as a sort of busy, recognised religious person.

"I feel like I am a missionary of the 1880s going on the Zambezi getting darker and darker and further away from home and I am thinking, how am I going to stay here?"
"I spend much of my time in a broadly liberal secular world but I don't belong to it, I belong somewhere else. There is a tension there."

But Rev Coles is prepared to put up with tension to get his voice heard. "I think that Christians should have confidence, we have always been part of the mainstream conversation, and if we don't join in often what you hear gets hectoring and mad, just people on the margins."

"I think of the peace and comfort with which the Church of England has long fitted into the mainstream of people's lives, and I would like it to be there still." He has his own ways of fitting into this "mainstream conversation". Many people know him as the presenter of Radio 4's *Saturday Live*, or as a guest on TV panel shows, particularly *QI*, where he has a foil in Stephen Fry. "Like me he has one foot in a very traditional world, one foot in a very radical world," says Rev Coles. "It's a little bit awkward sometimes actually, I feel very much like the poor man's Stephen Fry." One difference is the two men's opposing stances on religion, although Rev Coles says this sometimes slips his mind. "There's something of the archdeacon about Stephen," he says, smiling. "Sometimes when we get into a deeper discussion I imagine we are both canon of Barchester cathedral."

So is a cathedral where his ambitions lie now? Has he got designs on a bishop's hat? "I don't have any ambitions," he says. "I am looking forward to retiring, or at least having more time. When I was young I wanted more stuff, now I am older, I want more time."

"There is a place I love in the west of Scotland, we go there every year. I want to be there walking the dogs on the beach with David [his civil partner, with whom he has a celibate relationship]."

"I want to walk around looking at stuff." It is not surprising he wants to walk, rather than sit: Rev Coles is so busy with a "million jobs" as a vicar and a broadcaster that he seems to be in perpetual motion. Does he know why?

"I am pained by a sense that I do nothing with my life. I have a real terror of being called to account by God at the end of my days and Him saying, 'What have you done with what I gave you?'"

"I don't fear Him telling me off for being naughty, but I have always felt that I have not done enough."

With such motivation, don't expect Richard Coles to disappear any time soon.

Parish Directory and Church Organisations



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Monday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Mary McFadyen 284 0104

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Friday 7.30 pm - 8.45 pm.

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