

# THE ANGEL

The Magazine of Belmont Abbey Parish



JULY 2016

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**Sunday Mass Times**

8.30am: Parish Mass

9.30am: Conventual Mass

11.00am: Parish Sung Mass

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Saturdays 10 am and at request

**Weekday Mass Time**

8.00am every day and

Wednesday and Friday 12.00 noon

(Check newsletter)

## **From the Parish Priest ...**

I welcome you to this rather belated edition of the Angel. Unfortunately, the lack of 'copy' somewhat undermined our efforts to go to print earlier in the year. Had we been a political magazine we would have been spoilt for material, such has been the topsy turvy world of the last few weeks! Nothing has been predictable or to plan, very much like our weather this year! Fortunately, parish life has continued along a more reliable and predictable path.

There have been special moments though - the Celebration of the Holy Year and the Centenary of the Archdiocese have brought many visitors to Belmont. And the confirmation of 12 young adults in May was a truly wonderful occasion and we thank the Archbishop for his visit and words of wisdom. It's also been a very busy few months for weddings in the Abbey Church. The sun didn't always shine but they were still happy and wonderful occasions and the brides always looked radiant, if a little chilly at times! The number of weddings also meant an abundance of flowers throughout to keep the Abbey looking its best.

Other highlights have been the parish fete. The day was blessed with sunny weather and a fine turnout and was a truly happy and successful day. I would like to thank all our stall holders and our sponsors who donated prizes for the Grand Draw. Thank you!

The life of a Parish revolves around the liturgical seasons of the Church and those moments of special importance. But other events too, such as our parish picnic for the Queen, are all part of the life that brings us together in Christ.

Since our last edition of the Angel we have lost a few friends who have returned to God and a few who've moved away from the area. However, there are always new parishioners arriving and guests and visitors passing through. We welcome them all and hope that our small parish continues to flourish and offer people the chance to deepen their relationship with God and to find friends, support and perhaps have a bit of fun too!

We are a small parish and we rely heavily on a few over worked volunteers. If you feel you can help our mission or support our church activities in any way, please do get in touch. We are always pleased to welcome new faces and families to our parish community.

*Fr Nicholas*

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## **Very Reverend Dom Luke Waring**

John Vincent Waring was born in Leyland on 6th April 1927 to Henry and Sylvia, the first of six children, two of whom died in infancy. In 1938 he passed from St Mary's School, Leyland, to the Jesuit run Preston Catholic College, where he excelled in studies, but not in music or in games: he was tone deaf and too uncoordinated to take part in ball games. Not that he wasn't athletic, for, he was later to become a first class cyclist and a keen walker. After obtaining excellent grades in the Higher School Certificate, he came to Belmont as a postulant in 1945.

At Belmont he came under the influence of its cultured abbot, Dom Aidan Williams, and its saintly and austere novice master, Dom Benedict Adams. He was clothed in

1946 and made his First Profession on 29th June 1947. When he died on 9th June, he had been a monk for 70 years. He began his priestly formation at Belmont and in September 1949 was sent to Fribourg in Switzerland to study theology. In the meantime, on 15th September 1950, he made his Solemn Profession under Abbot Anselm Lightbound. Br Luke cycled to and from Fribourg each year and in 1950, the Holy Year, cycled to Rome on pilgrimage. He was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood by Archbishop Michael McGrath of Cardiff on 13th July 1952. He completed his Licentiate in Theology in June 1953 and returned to Belmont.

On his return from Fribourg, Fr Luke was appointed Assistant Priest of Belmont, for the abbot was technically the parish priest. It was not until 1963 that he was made Parish Priest. He became renowned for his pastoral zeal, visiting every home once a month on his bicycle, no matter the distance or the weather. He made many converts and loved having a few pints in every village pub, chatting with the men in the public bar and sharing his packed lunch, made by himself with the leftovers of his breakfast. He knew everyone by name and each family history in detail. People loved him because, like Jesus, he loved them and he would go out of his way to help them; it was the poor, the needy, the marginalized and the underdog who were the focus of his attention.

While looking after the parish, he also taught Philosophy, Canon Law and Sacred Scripture to young monks in formation. In 1966 he was appointed Novice Master by Abbot Robert Richardson. He was in post until 1971 and again from 1973 to 1976. He was strict and demanding, for ever

checking up on us but with the weak he was indulgent and far too kind. When an irate novice complained to him during Holy Week that one of his companions wasn't turning up to do his work, Fr Luke promptly replied, "He's just getting over Christmas!" At times he would have you pulling out your hair, like on those month days when he'd walk the novices all the way up Orcop Hill, for example, and make us take turns in carrying the heavy box of sandwiches, apples and crisps, only to be left with nothing to eat as he passed them round his cronies in the pub, "Have a sandwich."

In 1970 Abbot Jerome appointed him Claustal Prior, a role he was to take up again later under Abbot Mark. Then in 1971 he was named Bursar, hardly a task for which he was suited, but Fr Luke was an obedient monk, who did whatever he was asked, even the impossible, to the best of his ability. Two years later he was able to hand over to our first lay bursar, Major Leo Oddie. It's true to say that Fr Luke held every office at Belmont other than that of abbot. In 1976 he was sent to be Prior of Llanarth, our prep school in Monmouthshire.

In 1977 he was appointed Parish Priest of St Begh's, Whitehaven, where his pastoral skills were put to good use in this large, traditional West Cumbrian parish, which at the time still had four curates and four Mass centres. However, in 1981 he was chosen by Abbot Jerome to be one of the founding fathers of our Peruvian monastery and its first Prior. After an intensive Spanish course in Bolivia, Fr Luke, Fr David and I arrived in Lima on 6th August, moving north to Tambogrande in the Archdiocese of Piura on 20th. Fr

Luke was to remain in Peru for ten years, all of them spent in the vast rural Parish of San Andrés, the first five as superior, the last five as parish priest. Here Fr Luke became more than a legend, he almost became a saint. During the torrential rains caused by the Niño in 1983, strapping a kitbag to his back, he would jump almost naked into rivers and torrents in spate and swim to distant villages to celebrate Mass or anoint the sick. One such village, the poorest in the parish, was La Rita, with a population of 10,000. When the floods subsided, they decided to build a new church and named it St Luke, not in honour of the evangelist, but of Padre Lucas, their hero and their friend.

On his return from Peru, he became assistant priest to Fr Thomas at Our Lady's, Hereford, before moving on to Weobley and Kington as Parish Priest, until, in 1995 he was asked by Abbot Mark to help out in Peru for a year before becoming Novice Master and Claustal Prior at Belmont. In 2000 he became Parish Priest of St Francis Xavier, then, at the age of 75, helped out as assistant priest at Whitehaven and, finally, Parish Priest of St David's, Swansea, until, the end of 2008, by which time Fr Luke was almost 82. In January 2009 he became Chaplain to the Benedictine nuns at Colwich Abbey, Staffordshire, where he flourished in the company of the nuns and of his cat Diana. Fr Luke adored cats and in the course of his life had at least four, all called Diana. In recognition of his services to Belmont and the English Congregation, the Abbot President made him Cathedral Prior of Rochester and he was invited to preach at Rochester Cathedral.

Towards the end of 2012 he came home to

Belmont to live in our infirmary and to be cared for by the brethren. As he grew weaker, he suffered a stroke and had to be hospitalized. He was wonderfully looked after by the staff at Hereford County Hospital and then at Oaklands Nursing Home, where he died peacefully, shortly after being anointed, on the evening of 9th June.

May he rest in peace. Amen.”

*Edited from the homily given at the Requiem Mass by Very Reverend Dom Paul Stonham, Abbot of Belmont on 23 June 2016*

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## **Blessed Roger Cadwallador, Hereford's Hidden Saint**

1610 – dangerous times to be a Catholic in Herefordshire, - Blessed Roger Cadwallador, the convert son of a local gentleman farmer, was condemned for being a ‘priest ordained abroad’ and was hung drawn and quartered. His life and death discovered through letters and documents held in the Belmont Abbey archives shine a light on his faith and on his attractive cheerful character.

Father Abbot has written to the Archbishop who has given consent to carry forward the cause for Roger Cadwallador's canonisation. It will involve some work which we have already begun and which our small committee will keep you posted about. Please support our endeavours and pray for us.

If you would like to know more - Blessed Roger Cadwallador by Lynne Surtees is available in the Abbey Shop, from the publisher Gracewing, or from the Aid to the Church in Need UK Shop on line.

*Lynn Surtees*

## A Rosary Reflection

In my pocket every day  
I carry a rosary which helps me to pray  
It reminds me of all my Lord did for me  
Even to dying on a tree

It tell of his life from birth to the grave  
And how he came for mankind to save  
It seems at first glance that God was  
unkind  
But if we look deeper I think we will find

God did not allow him to die  
That was down to folk like you and I  
They stood when Pilate asked whom shall I  
free  
And shouted Barabbas save from that tree

So crucifixion was to be Jesus fate  
But why were these people so full of hate  
Was it because they were in fear of Rome  
In case they were to lose their home

Or may be even sent to die  
Would we have been different you and I  
Was it because he was both gentle and kind  
This man who was sent to heal the blind

And to set the world free from sin  
If only we would follow him  
Take up your cross he did say  
And I will show you the way

*Lesley Ann Baker 2015*

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## The Mystery of Our Lady's Dormition

Have you noticed the scene of the  
Dormition, the 'falling asleep' (i.e. death),  
of the Virgin Mary on the altar in

Belmont's Lady Chapel? And if you have,  
have you ever wondered, or even tried to  
work out, who the characters might be?  
The information board, that is sometimes  
put up for visitors, explains who is who on  
the reredos above the altar and also in the  
window above reredos, but nothing as  
regards the Dormition.

Several times a day, I pass by the altar when  
going into choir and so it is an image that is  
very familiar. Whilst it is obvious that Our  
Lady is the one on the deathbed and her  
Son the one who stands over her,  
accompanied by a group of angelic  
acolytes, with crucifer and thurifer, the two  
male figures on either side of the Virgin are  
much harder to identify. This had not  
troubled me much before, for there are  
always more pressing matters to be  
'troubled' about. I always thought,  
however, or rather vaguely hazarded a  
guess, that the one on the left, the one  
vested as a bishop, could be St Peter,  
prince of the apostles, all of whom were  
traditionally believed to have gathered  
around Our Lady as she lay dying.

It was only when I was in the middle of  
giving a talk to the Belmont Walsingham  
Association (of which I am currently the  
chaplain), in September of last year, that  
the 'mystery' of the Dormition was brought  
directly to my attention. I had visited  
Ukraine the month before and had been  
present for the Feast of the Dormition.  
This Feast is the same as that of the  
Assumption in the West, but of course  
under a different name and, perhaps more  
confusingly, using a different (the old  
Julian, rather than the Gregorian) calendar,  
so instead of 15th August, it is celebrated  
thirteen days later on 28th! I therefore  
wanted to explain, during my short talk to

the Walsingham Association, the different approaches of both the Eastern and Western tradition to what is essentially the same mystery: namely that Our Lady, “having completed the course of her earthly life [Dormition], was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory [Assumption]” (Munificentissimus Deus, Pius XII).

The first slide, which I showed as part of the presentation, was of an icon of the Dormition, similar to those I had seen and venerated in Ukraine at the end of August; the deathbed scene in which all the apostles were depicted and, as on the Lady altar at Belmont, Christ standing in the centre, flanked by angels. Behind the apostles were four bishops, each of whom carried a book, and above all of them floated patriarchs and prophets from the Old Testament. When I came to project a slide of Belmont’s Dormition, I found myself at a loss in attempting to decipher the mysterious characters. Was one of them an apostle? The one on the right was dressed like an apostle, in the everyday clothes of that era, but his facial features were not typically those of either a Paul or a Peter, who (as I had previously mused before) should surely have been represented, if at least one of the apostles were included in the scene. The other figure, I then thought, although looking slightly like St Peter, could not be an apostle either, given that he was portrayed instead as a bishop with a book.

This is where I had what seemed like a eureka moment, which soon developed into two. Which of the four bishops could it be? Then I suddenly remembered that among the four who were believed to have arrived at the deathbed of the Virgin was St James, bishop of Jerusalem, the place where it is all meant to have happened.

That appeared to be a logical and fairly satisfying idea, and yet who was on the right? If he was neither a bishop nor an apostle, who could he possibly be? One of the ‘Old Testament’ figures who had accompanied Christ from heaven? Could he even be St Joseph? It seemed a rather wild guess, but it struck me that it might in fact be possible that just as St Joseph’s death is depicted, with Christ and the Virgin Mary (and angels as well) in attendance, on the altar opposite in the chapel which bears his name, so it would be fitting if St Joseph was also present, posthumously though of course, together with his foster-Son at the death of his spouse.

Indeed an intriguing thought, though obviously in need of some more exploring and to be supported, if possible, by any available evidence. Was there anything from the time of the altar’s construction? I contacted the Belmont archivist, Brenda Warde, who informed me that there was no indication in the records of who the altar’s carved figures could be. Prior Wilfrid Raynal (Cathedral Prior, 1873–1901), while mentioning in his chronicle the completion of the altar in 1875 and the figures on the Assumption reredos above it, says nothing about those in the Dormition. Apart from historical sources, was there another way of knowing? That prompted me to return effectively to where I had started in the first place: icons. Perhaps my friend, Fr Panteleimon, who had looked after me during my recent trip to Ukraine and who is currently professor of dogmatic theology at a seminary near Lviv, might be able to help with his knowledge of iconography? He also found the Dormition difficult to unravel and suggested that my St Joseph might actually be the one from Arimathea,

of Holy Grail and Glastonbury fame, to whom one of the traditional accounts, The Passing of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is attributed.

I was not particularly persuaded by this and, contemplating the ensemble around the deathbed, grew ever more convinced that it was the other St Joseph, simply because his position in the scene seemed to suggest that he had come with Christ, whose gesture (of blessing or of pointing upwards) he appeared to be imitating, escorted by the angels. This also made me realise that I was trying too hard to interpret everything from an Eastern point of view, with reference to icons and stories regarding the Dormition. The problem was that the term itself, 'Dormition', is almost exclusively Eastern, whereas its equivalent in Western art is represented by the Death of the Virgin: Western influence presumably being more likely in the case of the Belmont Lady altar. In examining various images of this subject, I revised my idea about the bishop being St James, since St Peter is sometimes depicted in these scenes merely as a priest with a book, never mind a bishop. So perhaps it was him after all! The other apostles are nearly always also present, yet why would the Belmont version just have one other apostle, if the figure on the right is consequently taken to be one? St Joseph still, for me at least, appears to provide an answer, appropriate both to the context of the scene itself and to that of the Abbey church: St Joseph's altar also dating, as it happens, from 1875.

We will probably never know for sure who is who, and maybe even the mysterious figures carved in the 'Dormition' were not meant to represent any characters in particular, though I suspect that they were.

Perhaps you will develop theories of your own. Even so, you may well agree that it will no doubt remain a mystery.

*Dom Jonathan Rollinson*

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## **St Joseph's School for the Hearing Impaired**

### **Makeni, Sierra Leone**

Extract from previous article:

#### **The Ebola emergency: September 2014**

Everything has come to a standstill. All educational institutions throughout the country closed in June or July and no-one has any idea when they will be able to re-open. The country's health resources were very weak already but now have been stretched to breaking point.

One of the consequences of the rapid spread has been the withdrawal of expatriate personnel which has greatly affected the economy and inflation is rising rapidly. People are starting to go without food particularly those families who have been quarantined.

With its schools and colleges all closed, the work of the Makeni Catholic Mission is being completely focused on the present emergency. There are two medical facilities in the Mission: the Loreto Clinic and The Holy Spirit Hospital. Father Turay, the hospital director, is playing a big role in keeping the district hospitals open and assisting with gathering and distributing the supplies needed to treat patients which really improves life expectancy. Father Turay is co-ordinating well-wishers' offers of support from different parts of the world and has arranged the papers necessary of immediate customs clearance. The Loreto Clinic, run by the Cluny sisters

is struggling with additional patients and having to cancel some routine clinics.

### **The Situation: December 2015**

Thanks to the generous donations from Belmont Abbey parishioners and many other friends, Sister Philomena was able to keep the Loreto Clinic open and serve the community throughout the crisis. This was a remarkable achievement as a very large number of health facilities closed down due to lack of protective clothing and the fear of infection.

From August 2014 to May 2015 the Cluny sisters provided practical support and counselling to over 100 local families who had been severely affected by Ebola but were not receiving any help from government or international agencies. The food, clothing, bedding, household goods etc. was provided by generous British and Irish charities and friends.

All schools and colleges remained closed from June 2014 until April 2015. The government re-organised the academic calendar so the 2014-15 academic year has only just finished this month. It has not been an easy time getting the children (and teachers) back to learning and teaching after such a long break and after so much disruption and anxiety. No new pupils were admitted in 2014 as the school did not open in September. When it opened in April, at first only the day pupils returned and then the older boarders began to drift in. Only since September has attendance really picked up. It has been great to see lots of new young children starting school in the last couple of months. About 25 new children have started. Most are aged 5 to 9 years, have severe or profound hearing loss and have little or no language. Some older children who lost their hearing after speech

acquisition have transferred from mainstream schools where they found it impossible to learn. Many parents have been bringing their children for admission but the school really has not the capacity, resources or teachers to take any more.

And so January 2016?

A few months ago it seemed that the Ebola crisis would never end but on 8th November 2015 Sierra Leone was declared Ebola free. There are still enormous challenges and the after effects will be felt for a very long time. However after the bleak misery last year we can only look forward to a much more hopeful New Year.

Thank you everyone who supported people of Makeni through the crisis.

*Monica Tomlin*

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### **Hospitality and Welcome- are we doing enough?**

We are fortunate to be in a Benedictine parish. The Rule of St Benedict (Chapter 53) states that all guests are to be welcomed as Christ. We have our welcomers, we have tea and coffee after the 11a.m. Sunday Mass, we donate shoe boxes filled with presents at Christmas and we donate to the Hereford Food Bank. A recent initiative is meeting for a cup of tea and a chat once a month in the Parish Hall. This is all good.

Are we doing enough? Do we know how our fellow parishioners are feeling as we gather to pray together? Do we get to know strangers and newcomers? Can we do any more to make them welcome?

I don't know the answer. Do you have any thoughts or suggestions?

## World Youth Day

Hi my name is Nathan Morawiecki and I am going with a group of young people from the diocese to the World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland in 2016.

World Youth Day (WYD) is a worldwide encounter with the Pope which is typically celebrated every three years in a different country. The most recent WYD was celebrated in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil in 2013.

WYD is open to all young people and is a unique way to deepen your faith and grow closer to Christ, by means of prayer and the sacraments, together with thousands of other young people.

Krakow is the city where St. John Paul II spent most of his life before being elected at Pope in 1978. St John Paul II was the Pope who founded the WYD idea and he was canonised in 2014.

Preparing for WYD is as much a part of the pilgrimage as the event itself. In our Spiritual Preparation we will look to significant figures like St. Jon Paul II, St. Faustina Kowalska of the Divine Mercy, and the martyr, St. Maximilian Kolbe, and the important things they have to teach us. Once in Krakow, we will hopefully have the opportunity to visit places associated with these important Polish saints.

As part of the journey to WYD, I will be organising various fundraising activities to help fund my trip to Krakow. Fundraising for ourselves in our own parish and communities means that we develop a sense of ownership and commitment to our pilgrimage.

I have done some fundraising events to help raise money for the trip in July 2016,

which included:

- A sponsored litter pick once a month in Breinton
- Coffee mornings
- DIY jobs
- I might do a sky dive to raise money (but I don't know yet!)
- Sponsored bike ride (20 miles)
- Small functions at a donation per head/course

Please keep me and my fellow pilgrims in your prayers..

*Nathan Morawiecki*

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## The Catenians – What Do We Do?

Membership of the Catenians is open to any practising Catholic layman. There is a group, or Circle in Hereford which currently has 27 members – we refer to each other as Brother—covering most of the parishes in Hereford Deanery.

What do we do?

We meet monthly and our meetings always begin with prayer which includes prayers for sick members and their families and all those in our Circle who have died since its inauguration in 1959. Each Deceased Brother is prayed for by name every month. We also pray for all the other Brothers of the Province who have died since the previous meeting.

We celebrate Mass together and each Circle round the world has a Mass said for Vocations so that nearly every day of every year there is a Catenian Mass for this intention.

The monthly meetings include reports on

those who are sick and we endeavour to visit them and support their families; we also support the widows of our deceased brothers and invite them to attend our events.

The whole purpose of the Catenians is to build up the family of God through meeting together and supporting one another. This includes helping those less fortunate than ourselves. Most Presidents nominate a charity for their year which can be a local charity such as the local Life group or St Michael's Hospice right up to the national charities such as CAFOD and Diabetes UK.

The Association as a whole maintains a Benevolent Fund which supports Brothers and their families in times of crisis and also a Bursary Fund which supports young Catholics aged 16-24 who are undertaking some good work, of at least 15 days duration, usually in a Christian context and often abroad. Small grants are also available to those who help the sick on pilgrimages to Lourdes with HCPT or other organisations. In our Centenary year, 2008, the Association raised of £250,000 for Water Aid.

The Association is now springing up in other countries with Circles in South Africa, India, Bangladesh, Malta, Asia and has had a presence as far away as Australia for some years. It is fast becoming a global fraternity of Catholic men.

No Circle is left in isolation and a number of Brothers visit other Circles, sometimes when they find themselves away on business and at other times on organised trips, especially to important celebrations such as Circle Anniversaries and Centenary Meetings. This visiting allows us to grow our Circle of Catholic friends, something

which we view as very important in an increasingly secular society.

Hereford Circle is part of Province 12 which covers places such as Bath, Cirencester, Swindon and Bristol and over into South Wales as far as Penybont – so there is a lot of variety.

Socials can include anything from theatre/cinema/concert trips to walks in the country, dinners with our families to celebrate everything from Christmas to the installation of a new president and of course, we entertain all the parish priests in the Deanery once a year.

If what you have read so far seems interesting, why not come along to one of our meetings to find out more about us. Each meeting is held at Hedley Lodge, Belmont Abbey and is followed by a 2 course dinner. Contact our Membership Officer, Rob Warren for more details on [robrhw@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:robrhw@hotmail.co.uk) or 01885 490350 to make arrangements.

*Chris Moore*

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### **What does a Monk do?**

It struck me the other day how little parishioners really know what a Monastery is and what the monks do all day. You see them sometimes in the shop, sometimes walking in the garden or celebrating Mass, officiating at funerals and weddings and of course at baptisms.

But what do they really do all day? The above just doesn't seem enough to fill a day!

Well, they usually get up at 6 am to go to Morning Office which lasts about 45 minutes, a bit longer on feast days. Then they prepare for the Conventual Mass at 8

am after which they go about their various jobs. After all someone has to clean the monastery, clean and iron the vestments, clean the chalices and pattens. They answer mail, deal with numerous phone calls – all the time remembering that everything they do is part of the Benedictine rule – ora et labora – work and pray – pray and work!

At 12:45 they re-enter Church for Midday Office. That doesn't take long but again grounds them. Then comes lunch which although prepared by the kitchen staff still involves them in some work as they take it in turns to set the tables and serve the monks eating while they listen to one of the monks reading. That could be anything from a spiritual book to a book that will make them think. The monk serving the other monks gets to eat later.

The afternoon carries on much as the morning does, but the postulants and novices and juniors attend classes so some of the older monks give these classes. After all someone entering the monastery isn't born a monk – they have to learn what being a monk is all about.

At 6 pm they assemble again in Church for Vespers which on Sundays includes Benediction. This takes about 30 minutes – sometimes a bit longer and then they go for supper. Again the tables have to be set, the monks served and the tables cleared.

At 7:45 pm they assemble again in Church for the final office of the day, Compline which is a beautiful office giving thanks to God for the day and praying for a peaceful night.

In between all this they also attend conferences given by the Abbot and have sessions where they discuss the way forward for the monastery and monastic

life, finances and other items that affect them all. The monks who are also priests have to prepare homilies for Sunday - every Sunday they say Mass. Not a job I would like! Other monks have to prepare retreats both at the Abbey and other places such as monasteries and convents.

10 pm to 8:30 am denotes the time of the Great Silence when no talking should be the rule and if they haven't had time during the day, they do their spiritual reading or catch up on whatever they haven't been able to fit into their very busy schedules during the day.

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### Confirmation 2015-16

Twelve young people from Belmont and other parishes in our Deanery signed up for the Confirmation preparation course *Transformed in Christ*. This part of their spiritual journey began in September 2015 with a weekend retreat hosted by Belmont Abbey which included a range of activities including Holy Mass, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, talks and questions to monks and talks on God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. We were joined for the retreat by further candidates from The Most Holy Trinity Parish in Ledbury. This was followed by 20 sessions held on Sunday afternoons which were completed in May. The sessions covered a whole variety of topics including the Dignity of the Human Person, Prayer, The Mass, the Sacraments, Salvation History, Eschatology, Our Lady and the Communion of Saints.

The course culminated in the Sacrament of Confirmation being conferred on the candidates by His Grace, the Most Reverend George Stack, Archbishop of

Cardiff at the 11am Mass at Belmont Abbey on Sunday 22 May 2016.

When asked about the highlights of the course, our candidates put Adoration at the top of the list.

Please continue to keep all of these young people in your prayers.

*Chris Moore*

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### **Parish Second Collections**

The second collections at all Masses are used to support the Parish Outreach to a variety of different causes throughout the year. Some are mandatory such as the Holy Places, Day for Life and Home Mission Sunday. Others are regular and expected such as Family Fast Day and Harvest Fast Day (CAFOD) and Racial Justice Sunday.

This leaves many weeks where the Parish is able to involve in Outreach to local charities, like the Food Bank, which we support every week with provision of food but who need money to buy fresh produce. Various other local charities are also supported such as breakfast and soup kitchens for the homeless. National charities, which operate locally in Hereford such as Alzheimer's Society and Age Concern, are also supported. The Parish Outreach is also international and supports CAFOD and Peter's Pence.

The Parish also supports St Joseph's School for the Hearing Impaired, Makeni, Sierra Leone, West Africa, who are still in great need following the trauma of the Ebola crisis. [See also the article on St Joseph's School elsewhere in this edition of *The Angel*]. Also to the Church in Need, which is for the persecuted Church in the Middle East. This is not an exhaustive list

of all of the causes which are supported.

Fr. Nicholas has asked that more information about Second Collections should be given therefore, in future, it is proposed that the information is presented in the weekly Newsletter one month in advance of the collections being made and the sums donated are reported in the subsequent month along with a brief resume of the work that the charities do.

It is intended that a small International Disaster Fund (DEC) would be built up in advance of the need arising so that money can be sent immediately the emergency occurs.

This Parish has always responded with great generosity to all requests for help. If parishioners can continue to give regularly we will use the money responsibly to meet local, national and international needs both great and small.

Thanks to you all for your past giving and please continue to keep up the good work.

*Ray Rose*

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### **Centenary of the Archdiocese of Cardiff 7th February 2016**

One hundred years' ago today, with the publication of the Apostolic Letter "Cambria Celtica", Pope Benedict XV created the Ecclesiastical Province of Cardiff, transferring the Episcopal Seat of Newport to the City of Cardiff, capital of Wales, and making the Diocese of Menevia suffragan to the Archiepiscopal See of Cardiff. The beautiful church of St David was to be the new cathedral of the Archdiocese, while the Episcopal Cathedral at Belmont was to remain co-cathedral with a Monastic Chapter and a Cathedral Prior.

Unique in the Church, the Archbishop of Cardiff would have two chapters, one Secular and the other Regular and two Cathedral Churches. This extraordinary arrangement, fraught with difficulties and misunderstandings, was only to last four years, for in 1920, with the Papal Bull “Praelara Gesta”, Belmont was raised to the status of an autonomous Abbey within the English Benedictine Congregation, thus ending its 60 or so years of service as a cathedral. The first Archbishop was to be James Romanus Bilsborrow, Bishop of Port Louis, Mauritius, and a monk of Douai, who would only stay four years at the helm of the new Archdiocese, ill health forcing him to resign.

You might well ask how a flourishing archdiocese came to be created in a part of the British Isles so devoid of Catholics only 75 years earlier, when Bishop Joseph Thomas Brown, a monk of Downside, was appointed Vicar Apostolic of the Welsh District in 1840. This was the work of but two men, Brown himself, who is buried under the window of the Welsh saints in the North Transept, and Bishop John Cuthbert Hedley, a monk of Ampleforth, whose monument is next to Brown’s, but whose bones lie buried at Cathays Cemetery, Cardiff. The amazing story of the Catholic Church in Wales in modern times surely belongs to these two great men, monks and bishops truly worthy of our praise and thanksgiving. Between them they built up the Church in this land and provided for the needs of a growing Catholic population, most of whom were poverty-stricken immigrants from Ireland, Italy and other parts of the United Kingdom. That is why we are here today, to give thanks and praise to Almighty God for the apostolic labours not only of these

two monks, but of all Catholic men, women and children, religious and clergy, who worked tirelessly to build up and establish the Archdiocese, which celebrates its 100th birthday today. Archbishop George, our heartfelt congratulations to you, as well as to the clergy, religious and faithful Catholics of the Archdiocese: our prayers and the pledge of our support for the future.

The story of the work of these two Benedictine bishops and the connection between the English Benedictine Congregation, Belmont and the Archdiocese of Cardiff will be told many times in the course of this Jubilee Year, so it might be wise not to say too much about it again today. Most people think of Herefordshire as being that quintessential English county of apple orchards, hop fields, black and white villages and herds of Hereford cattle. It is also a border county that looks out from the Black Mountains towards the Malvern Hills, from the wild crags and valleys of Wales to the rolling countryside of England, and is cut in half by the River Wye. It is famous not only for its 250 or more medieval churches, among them the magnificent Hereford Cathedral, but also for an equal number of Norman castles, many of them reduced to almost nothing today, and a large section of Offa’s Dyke. It is a county that from its earliest days was the meeting place of two worlds, the Celtic and the Welsh on the south side of the river and the Mercian, the Saxon, the Norman and the English on the north. Many of you will have come into Herefordshire today by crossing a narrow bridge guarded by traffic lights over the River Monnow. This is a false national boundary, as the ancient Diocese of Hereford extends beyond it into Wales and

yet, at the very spot you entered England you were in an ancient Catholic parish, now Anglican, that until 1852 was part of the Diocese of St David's. Go to Newton St Margaret's, a tiny church with a glorious rood screen, and you will find a notice in the vestry on the duties of church wardens written in Welsh, the language commonly spoken here well into 19th Century. Visit any cemetery south of the Wye and, with the exception of English settlers, you will not find a single gravestone that does not bear a Welsh surname. It is no anomaly that Herefordshire should still be part of the Archdiocese of Cardiff: the historical links run deep, the cultural links still strong.

Let us go back to the beginnings of Christianity and of Church organisation in the three ancient counties that made up the Archdiocese until Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot were snatched away from us to create the new Diocese of Menevia in 1987. Yes, there were Christians here in Roman times and the martyrdom of Saints Julius and Aaron at Caerleon at the beginning of 4th Century bears witness to this. The Venerable Bede, following Gildas, mentions them in his Ecclesiastical History and they are to be found in the Roman Martyrology. However, when dealing with the lives of the great and lesser saints of 6th and 7th Century South Wales, it is far more than the mists of time we have to contend with: there are the fantasies, elaborations and exaggerations of the medieval chroniclers and a certain vying for influence and authority among the various dioceses and their incumbents. Above all, the Norman Conquest brings with it an ethnic cleansing that affected the Church more than any other institution. Even so, it is not impossible to come to interesting conclusions, which to some extent reflect

what happened in the 19th Century and the groundwork done by our own saintly heroes, Bishops Brown and Hedley, who in earlier times would most certainly have been canonised as the Apostles of Wales.

Perhaps it is St Dyfrig, also known as Dubricius and Devereux, who should be the Patron Saint of Herefordshire and South Wales. He really is our Father in Faith for he it was who gave the strongest impulse to the vast enterprise of evangelisation of saints such as Teilo, Samson and Illtud. Dyfrig was born just three miles from here at Madley. His two great monasteries were at Moccas, further along the road to Bredwardine and Hay of Wye, and at Hentland, again on the banks of the Wye near Ross. He became Bishop of Ergyng, an area that more or less covered the three counties that became the Archdiocese of Cardiff in 1916. But this was a time when bishoprics were attached to people rather than to places. He used as his base Weston under Penyard, just two miles beyond Ross on the Gloucester road. He is said to have attended the Synod of Llanddewi Brefi in 545, where he resigned his see in favour of St David and retired to Bardsey Island, there to die. Later his body was transferred to Llandaff Cathedral, but you can see here a great saint being used and claimed by rival factions in medieval times in the hope of securing an archbishopric and a Church independent of Canterbury for Wales. No such rivalry between Belmont and Cardiff in 1916: we kept the body of Bishop Brown, Cardiff that of Bishop Hedley. And, of course, both the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church secured its independence from England about the same time, the first through the Apostolic Letter "Cambria Celtica," the other by Disestablishment and



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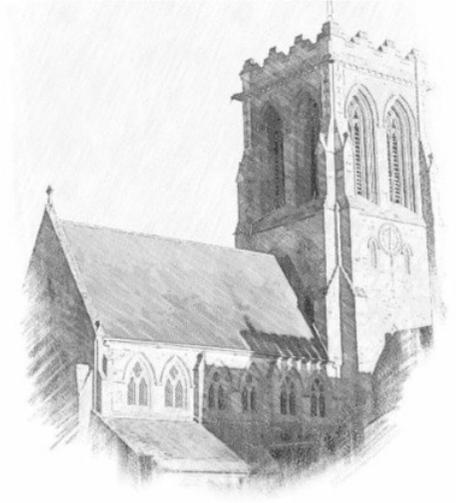
an act of parliament. However, today the Anglican Diocese of Hereford remains firmly in the Province of Canterbury, having been formed in the year 676 by taking the northern part of the Diocese of Llandaff and joining it up with the western part of the Diocese of Litchfield. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, decided to retain the older Celtic order and keep Herefordshire firmly attached to Wales.

That is the end of our history lesson for today, but the important question remains unmentioned, the elephant in the sanctuary, so to speak. What about the next hundred years and what will they be celebrating in 2116? These are difficult times, stressful and distressful times. Society, the world, the Church even, appear to be falling apart. Wherever you look, horror and division. The world is spinning

out of control and God, where is God? We are men and women of faith who worship the living God is spirit and in truth. We trust in his Holy Name and we know that he is with us and that he alone has power to calm the storm, to forgive sin and to save mankind, not for this world only but for eternal life. The lesson of the past, our Christian past, whether in remote Celtic days or more recently just one hundred years' ago, is that like St Dyfrig and his friends and like Bishop Brown and Bishop Hedley, we too must walk in faith, putting our hands into the hands of God and trusting in him.

The times ahead are sure to be difficult, but, in the words of St Paul, "if Christ is for us, who can be against us?" We might be tempted to give up, but, in the words of St Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go; you alone have the words of eternal life." We

must take heart and follow the example of the early Church in Jerusalem, a Church under persecution. “They remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.” True Doctrine, Community, the Eucharist and Prayer, lived in a spirit of charity and mercy: these will keep us strong, faithful and united. The Church a hundred years from now depends on what we do today. This is our vocation. This is God’s will for us. Long live the Church of Christ! Long live the Archdiocese of Cardiff! Praised be Jesus Christ! Amen.



### **Baptisms 2016**

William Pritchard	24 <sup>th</sup> January
Tate Alexander Lane	20 <sup>th</sup> February
Lara Maria Jones	2 <sup>nd</sup> April
Ethan Colin Whitehead	10 <sup>th</sup> April
Charlotte Abigail Whitehead	10 <sup>th</sup> April
Thomas James McLaughlin	1 <sup>st</sup> May
Crawford Max Perkins	1 <sup>st</sup> May
Ralph Alex Nicholas Trigg	29 <sup>th</sup> May

## **Weddings 2016**

Beshar Allos & Prita Banerjee	23rd April
Patrick Harrington & Kimberly Wood	30th April
Anthony Catlin & Rachael Layton	7th May
Hugh Loughrey & Carley Yapp	4th June
Benjamin Mazur & Nathalie Eakins	2nd July
Joe Markiewicz & Abigail Trumper	9th July
Kerry Matthews & Jon Dallow	23rd July
Gerard Cleugh & Andzela Kacinskaite	28th July

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## **Deaths 2016**

John Hopkinson	January
John Keeler	24th January
John Wallin	2nd February
Mary Carroll	10th February
Sue Ball	10th March
Bernard Clayton	29th March
John O'Neil	26th May
Lesley Hayes	3rd June
Fr Luke Waring	9th June
Edna Ledford	17th June
Fr Jerome Hodkinson	12th July

May they rest in Peace. Amen.

**Confirmations 22nd May 2016 Parish**

Thomas Andrews	Most Holy Trinity, Ledbury
Filip Chocelowicz	Belmont Abbey
Grace Coyle	Belmont Abbey
Wiktor Janeczek	Belmont Abbey
Jazmine O'Leary	St Francis Xavier
Agnieska Maryniak	Most Holy Trinity, Ledbury
Wioletta Maryniak	Most Holy Trinity, Ledbury
James McAteer	Most Holy Trinity Ledbury
Shannon O'Leary	St H Francis Xavier
Andre Paiva	Belmont Abbey
Joao Paiva	Belmont Abbey
Alistar Pearce	Most Holy Trinity, Ledbury
Lucy Reed	Belmont Abbey
Emily Shortland-Hayes	Belmont Abbey
Joshua Stephenson	Belmont Abbey
Anastasia Thompson	Our Lady Queen of Martyrs
Hebe Thompson	Most Holy Trinity, Ledbury
Jess Thompson	Our Lady Queen of Martyrs
Moses Thompson	Most Holy Trinity, Ledbury

