

QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE  
COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION

MICHAELMASS 2014

NUMBER 447

The background image shows a stone building with a gabled roof, partially covered in ivy. In the foreground, there are several apple trees with green leaves and ripe red apples. The scene is set outdoors on a grassy area.

# CR Review



## Picture Prayer Meditation:

“I DO NOT THINK OF THINGS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME.”

Two paintings from my residency fascinate me particularly: *I Seek But Cannot Find* shows a figure reaching intently and urgently into a pool, muddying the water, disturbing reflections, missing the value, beauty or meaning of what is before him. It developed as a metaphor for our too-often complex attempts to resolve the mysteries of God and theology.

This image is its pair. Here the figure contemplates thoughtfully, seeing many things: the surface and depths of the pool, the trinity of koi within, reflected sky and coruscating light. He meditates on his source and meaning but is content that so much remains mystery. He does not need to understand beyond his ability to comprehend.

Psalm 131:1 encourages us to learn contentment in a world of physical and spiritual mystery: “I do not think of things too wonderful for me but I have stilled and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother ...” We are surrounded by wonders: the beauty of creation, assurance that a loving God behind and within our world cares individually for all, the revelations of scripture, reason, tradition, experience, promises of ‘Salvation’. St Paul believed that God’s truths are revealed in creation (Rom.1:20) yet seeming inconsistencies in the world and reason bring up many questions. Human minds grow by reaching to comprehend things that seem beyond our capacity (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

The strange green and purple colouring, intermingling images in the pool and pose of this figure suggest that he is wrapped in mystery. He seems content that somewhere in here is truth, despite all he does not know. His questions do not unduly disturb his faith. As he contemplates, spiritual truths are opening to him, since we see behind that he is being drawn gradually up steps to God’s Temple. Spiritual enlightenment often does not come directly from our search but from God opening himself to our active openness. Thomas Merton’s wrote in *The Inner Experience*:

*There is no special technique for discovering the inner self ... (it is) a spontaneity that is nothing if not free ... Only from the inner self does any spiritual experience gain depth, reality and a certain incommunicability ... We are the image of God and our inner self is a kind of mirror in which God sees not only himself but reveals himself to the ‘mirror’ in which he is reflected.*

(2003 p.6-7, 11).

Theologians and everyday Christians inevitably seek to understand God and truth. But faith grows where we learn to be content, keeping spiritually alive,

attentive and open to God's communication, despite so much 'incommunicability' where the mirror seems only to reflect dimly (1 Cor.13:12).

In prayer you might like to meditate upon:

- When has God drawn you closer to him and to truth, through experiences you could not understand?
- How content are you to hold in balance the wonders and the questions of life and faith?
- How able are you to trust God and scripture's promises to you 'like a weaned child' despite the 'clouds of unknowing'? In this lies faith.

**Iain McKillop**

Artist-in-Residence at CR 2014

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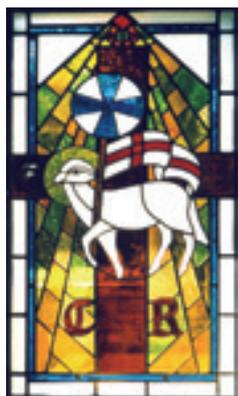
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# CR

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## Believing in an Unbelieving World

As generations of students will tell you, *The Acts of the Apostles* is not my favourite book in the New Testament. Something about the smugness, the endless tales of extraordinary success quickly becomes wearing; and it sits uncomfortably with those other moments when a stark realism recounts yet another instance of human frailty and sin. But I cannot, for a moment, overlook the central characteristic of the book: it is an exuberant, joyful, passionate celebration of the new life in Christ.

Those who were caught up in this new adventure could not get enough of it: they were “daily in the temple”; they met together “for the breaking of bread and the prayers”; and they had “everything in common”. It is very hard for us to imagine the kind of social revolution entailed in this commitment to the way of Jesus Christ, but we do know that it was very successful. Successful in that the Church grew very quickly and within a hundred years had transformed the ancient world; but successful also in that women, men and children found a new freedom, joy and purpose in life.

What troubles me increasingly is the gulf between that joyful, celebratory, passionate commitment (described most succinctly as ‘life in the Body of Christ’) and the present state of religion in Western Europe and North America. It is important here to stress that I am talking not just about Christianity, but about religion; not just about the churches, but about theistic belief. Indeed, I think one of the reasons that so-called ‘political Islam’ (which is rooted in cultures and societies outside Europe and America) presents such a dilemma to us is because the ‘God’ element in it is so utterly foreign to us. It is an example of theistic belief, but it has the effect of making theism itself look unattractive. On the other hand, the steady unfolding of intellectual and social history in the west has led to an increasingly sophisticated conversation with the religious heritage. Much has been gradually abandoned as naive, or superstitious, or incompatible with scientific discovery. Increasingly, scientists and others have accused religious people of clinging to a ‘God of the gaps’ approach. Not wishing to be thought naive or ignorant, we have revised our religious language and the content of our belief. Much of this has been necessary and directly in conversation with the continuing revelation of God the Holy Spirit. However, more sinister consequences are now evident. Arguably, the vast majority of people in the west and in North America have arrived at a place where there is neither evident need for God, nor any obvious way back to the discovery of God. Religion has become not so much a stepping into a new and exciting world where unimagined possibilities are opened for us through our free abandonment to the divine providence, but rather an add-on that some of us indulge in because it suits our

temperament, or because it fulfils a need to nurture the 'spiritual dimension'. This version of religion is, of course, significantly marked by the individualism of the age: we persist with it so long as it meets my needs.

Not surprisingly, all this is accompanied by widespread decline: in the Christian world, whole denominations are disappearing, congregations dwindling and aging. In response, the leaders of the ecclesiastical institutions devise ever more desperate strategies for renewal. For more than twenty years now we have been drowning under calls for renewed evangelism; everything must be seen in terms of mission. There is nothing inherently wrong with this, but it does not begin to address the root of the problem. I see little hope that even a revival of the church (say of the Church of England) so that it again looked as healthy as it did in the 1950s could begin to address the problem. What is needed is nothing less than the kind of radicalisation of Christian life that is recounted in *The Acts of the Apostles*. A significant element in all this is, of course, the changed relationship between church and the wider society. If ever there was a genuine embracing of the Gospel by the state in Western Europe then it was centuries and not decades ago. It is simply not possible to endorse the values and judgments of the state as compatible with the Gospel.

In the 1980s there was increasing talk of the need for Christians to read the signs of the times and recognise that faithful discipleship meant opting out of the world and opting instead to live in the 'Christian ghetto'. Influential theologians like Stanley Hauerwas made such a claim with great clarity. Other theologians, notably Rowan Williams, have argued for a continuing investment and participation in the society of which we are part. I have come to think that the kind of engagement for which Rowan Williams pleads will only be possible if it is accompanied by a corresponding detachment and distancing from the society on the part of the Church. That is to say, we have reached a point where the distinctively Christian understanding of the world is not being seen or heard in the increasingly compromised context of Christian life today.

We should also acknowledge that the problem is not just outside the church. Aware of the decline, aware of the immensity of the changes, leading figures within the church act more and more out of an essentially a-theistic stance. Sociology and secular anthropology increasingly shape the religious agenda, while theology is pushed to the side-lines. Entrusting ourselves to the sovereign mercy and love of God, the God made known to us in Jesus Christ, seems less and less sensible and human flourishing becomes the central concern.

Reading this you may think I am discouraged or depressed by contemporary developments. On the contrary, I feel energised by it all and the main response is one of frustration that the abundant evidence of God's continuing goodness seems to go unheeded. I am constantly, for instance, astonished at the array of

gifts displayed in those called to offer themselves for ordination - but frustrated at the Church's apparent lack of imagination in knowing how to release those gifts for the good of the Body of Christ. This is a watershed moment. It is a moment for seeing clearly and acting decisively - but the impetus for action must be the Holy Spirit and the blueprint is the new society that is recorded in *The Acts of the Apostles*, brought into being as people were drawn into the 'total institution' of the Body of Christ, the Church.

**Peter Allan CR**

## **Living the Psalms**

**D**uring a sabbatical year I have been expanding my study of the history, theology and practices of faith-traditions that use art in prayer. My six weeks as Artist-in-Residence with the Community of the Resurrection enabled me to practise what I had been studying and to reconsider how my faith and art interweave. Prior Oswin encouraged me to use the residency to experiment, not follow my former well-practised methods but explore new paths. I had often used drawing and painting to explore biblical or faith themes as a 'visual lectio divina'. At Mirfield I decided to listen to the inner-self, scripture, monastic life, silence, see how thoughts and experiences directed me. I hoped particularly to discover whether I could use the process of creating to pray and praise more directly.

Early in the residency the Psalms, such important content in monastic liturgy, opened themselves as sources. For many the psalter is a key aid to expressing their relationship with God, yet I had often found difficulties in using Psalms for personal prayer or praise. The Psalms of Lament in particular, with their expressions of self-justification, vengeance, assertions of superiority, or dismissal of 'enemies', leave me uncomfortable as a Christian. I immersed myself in studying the Psalms, ranging widely in Christian and Jewish commentaries and studies, especially Walter Brueggemann's works on spirituality and meaning in the Psalms and Robert Alter's translation with commentary. I followed daily Brueggemann and William Bellinger's new commentary (Cambridge U.P. 2014), and Jonathan Magonet's *A Rabbi Reads the Psalms* (S.C.M. 2014) which I recommend particularly. Magonet, who recently led a study day at Mirfield, helped me understand the context, poetic form and meaning of the Hebrew more than ever before. I thought I knew *Psalms* 23, but he demonstrated how much stronger is its content in Hebrew.

The residency challenged me over how to live as a contemporary Christian with faith and trust like that expressed in this poetry. It is not enough just to sing, pray or paint the Psalms uncritically; we need to interpret them in the light of Christ’s revelation about the nature of God, truth, and Christian discipleship. It is a truism about the Psalter that “all human life is there.” Psalms bring before God uncomfortable sides of life and human personality - vindictiveness and self-righteousness as well as the loving and peace-bringing. Brueggemann emphasises that Psalms encourage us to bring all our experience into our relationship with God. We should not limit what we share with our Source of Life. Christians should not deny that we have doubts, frustrations, longings we recognise as un-Christ-like. Sharing them with God in prayer, as in the Psalms, can be therapeutic. We grow through learning how to channel such thoughts towards Christ-like love, forgiveness and trust of God in an untrustworthy world.



*“Deliver me from lying lips and a deceitful tongue”*

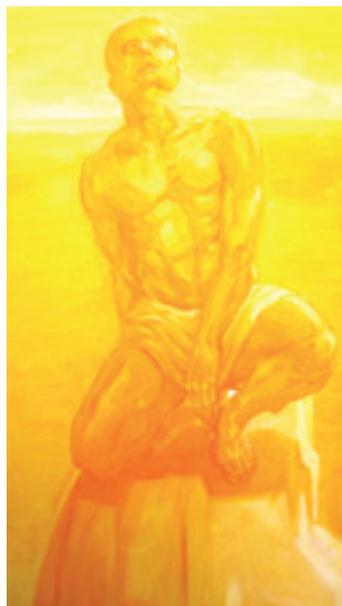
I had wondered for years whether it might be possible to create my own ‘painted psalms’, but not known how. This was my opportunity to experiment, combining personal experience with the imagery, message and meaning of the Psalms. Rather than ‘illustrating’ whole psalms, I painted recurrent themes of life and faith, or expressive metaphors such as “I am a worm and no man” (*Ps.* 22:6), “I find refuge under the shelter of your wings” (*Ps.* 91:4), “My youth is renewed as the eagles” (*Ps.* 103:5). I used drawing and painting to pray through issues relevant to myself and to the world. This began with “Who am I to God?” (*Ps.* 8) and moved through repentance, the search for truth, acceptance of mystery (*Ps.* 131), disquiet at the nature of society and the contemporary church, longings for justice and spiritual integrity in life and worship, trust in an unseen God, sensing the value of life, my own value and that of others. I had not expected my study of the Psalms or painting to take me on such a meaningful spiritual journey through my life, faith and experience. I recorded the development of

my thoughts and images in an illustrated spiritual journal, printed each week for the Community. The experience and process encouraged transformations in my attitude to myself, work, scripture, faith, as well as art. When placed in order for exhibition at the end of the residency the pictures' themes and titles followed this journey, forming a new psalm in themselves: (Ps. 144:9).

I am introvert by nature, as are many priests and artists, so am used to reflection, yet I find that the daily, disciplined monastic rhythm of meaningful liturgy, study, prayer, work and quiet enhances thought. The sense of freedom offered by Benedictine hospitality stimulated creative responses. From the outset Prior Oswin emphasised that the time was for me to use as felt right; I wasn't 'obliged' to produce anything while there. This freedom proved an incentive to study and paint intensely, enriched by the worship, fellowship and wisdom of the Community. 24 substantial paintings flowed, sketchbooks of further ideas on which I am now working, and reams of writing.

I imagined a monastery to be more peaceful and still than my home studio. In many ways Mirfield is, but as you know it is also busy. An open invitation on my studio door led to meeting and discussing faith and art with extraordinary combinations of people. Brothers shared stories, insights and experiences, students from the seminary and Yorkshire Ministry Course discussed aspects of vocation and the arts. Rainy days brought many into the studio: the bishops of Ireland on retreat, an American novelist writing her fourth volume set in the monastery, study groups on retreat, visitors coming to the Community for spiritual direction, rest, reflection, spiritual exploration. I also joined the Mirfield Centre study days. Early in the residency Graham Howes' stimulating discussion of ideas of spirituality in contemporary arts and society encouraged new directions of thought and work. A day comparing Buddhist and Christian spirituality with Oswin and former artist-in-residence Rachelle Allen-Sherwood helped me reflect on my content, composition, colour and mark-making.

I have been fascinated for years by how art-critical and religious language often uses over-loosely terms like 'spiritual', 'soul' and 'sacred'. This residency provided time to reflect on this confusion, consider the spiritual aspects of creativity, and explore how art might authentically encourage viewers' spiritual contemplation. I had felt for a while that some



*"You set me as a watchman upon a rock that is higher than I"*

of my previous artwork seemed over-didactic. The most spiritually engaging Christian art often contains allusive or mysterious elements. Ambiguity can encourage inner meditation, examining what we believe through pondering varieties of potential meaning within images and texts.

This time to experiment with unfamiliar methods and content led to some of most colourful, positive pictures I have ever produced, and some of the most poignant, expressing inner pain in paint and prayer. These are among my most personal artworks; a visitor to the studio shared that they seemed to reflect her own soul too. The Psalms can be catalysts for personal journeys in prayer about individual and communal experiences. As poetic songs from a pre-Christian culture they confront Christians with many difficulties and challenges about life and faith. This foundational Hebrew poetry is important for Christians, I believe, because it can inspire our own authentic, creative relationship with God. Psalms can help us find ways of expressing our own faith sincerely. I found that interpreting them in my own words and other media enabled me to sing my own “new songs to the Lord” (*Ps.144:9*), travelling through my life-experiences and beliefs in fresh, invigorating ways. You might like to try some similar process yourself. Too often traditional liturgy in some churches seems to plough heavily through sung or spoken Psalms like a sort of penance, half-heartedly keeping alive an historic tradition. By contrast, I found that examining my life and faith through them renewed me, helping me review much of my life in prayerful perspective. This prepared me spiritually and emotionally for a painful, challenging time encountered soon after the residency.

A mysterious figure, whose identity I did not fully understand, recurred in the Mirfield paintings. His posture, gesture and colour altered, expressing our experiences of life or the mood of the prayer. At first I thought he was a psalmist or my own inner-self responding to the psalm’s theme. Gradually his identity deepened: I found myself trying to paint ‘the servant-soul’, that part of us which longs to be righteous and know unity with God (*Ps.123:1-2*). Much modern art developed as artists won freedom to express themselves. The Psalmists’ self-expression gives others the language to articulate their own faith. Christian freedom encourages us not just to express ourselves self-centredly but to be socially-responsible in how we develop what fulfils us. The Christian artist has wider responsibilities than self-centred creativity; we need to communicate to encourage others to explore truth. I am enormously grateful to the Mirfield Community and the Northern Sacred Arts Foundation for enabling this residency. It revitalised me, took my painting forward, encouraged me to use art in living my relationship with God, and helped me consider how the visual can assist others to reflect on faith in creative, fulfilling ways.

**Iain McKillop**

## The General Synod



**T**he General Synod of the Church of England is a strange beast. It is a partly elected body which discusses and learns, but which also passes measures which affect the way the Church of England is run and the way she worships. In short it is a law making body, although unusually it does not have an executive. Because the Church is by law established and has a constitutional relation to the English part of the British state, some measures, such as the one concerning the ordination of women to the episcopate, have to go to parliament to be approved. It means also that it can take a long time before something is changed or introduced and sometimes a long period of discussion, lots of amendments and speeches, is followed by a 'no' vote at the end; the horse falls at the last fence. Procedure can be intricate and the influence of the British parliament is palpable and not always a positive one; should a body which is adversarial by nature shape the procedure of a body of Christians who, however disputatious they may be, should not assume others to be adversaries?

The Church of England has many bodies who are answerable to synod, though in practice many things can be done and furthered which have been put together out of sight of representatives. This is certainly no bad thing, though sometimes it may arouse suspicions. One of the blessings of synod is the presence

of those who ask the difficult questions, though I get the impression that there are fewer of these than there used to be. Each synod has about an hour and a half for questions to the various departments about issues, sometimes asking for information, otherwise for explanation about something felt to call for redress or change. Questions on investments or on poor communication about a bishop's house (there were many questions on that one!) have recently been posed.

The recent synod passed through the legislation which will allow women to be ordained to the episcopate. This was rejected two years ago, which shocked many though should have surprised no-one. The present arrangement which assures a continuing place for those who for theological reasons cannot see this as adequately grounded was put together because the customary way of getting something like this together had not worked and something new was done, more consultative and more respectful of differences between people. One could either see this as an indication of the failure of the synodical process or a tribute to its possibility to adapt procedures when needed. Although the quality of speeches in my view was poorer than two years ago, it was noticeable how many speakers said how glad they were that it failed then and that we have what we have now.

The synod also discusses financial matters, how much to charge for weddings and how to organise pensions and so forth. These receive much time and seem to be harder to find agreement than one might expect, but there it is. The smaller the matter, the longer and more attentive the debate.

That does not reflect too well, it must be said, on the priority given to Christian doctrine as the basis for the church's life and which, for want of a better phrase, are her policies. The case of the ordination of women to the episcopate is a case in point; few if any speeches have ever been given which come close to giving a theological rationale, theologically serious that is, for such a measure. There is much engagement, some passion and even sadly hysteria occasionally, but not often a widening of horizons because of an encounter with the Word of God. I have not been on synod long, but if pressed, I would take the view that the content of speeches has got weaker rather than stronger since I arrived.

That said, some of the encounters one has are ones I would not have made otherwise and that is a great blessing. Among the abiding blessings are conversations to be had with traditional Evangelicals; much is different, but I know I am singing from a similar song sheet.

At its worst Synod is pompous and time-wasting; at its best, synod can help Christians walk together and that surely is something which makes it of consequence.

**Thomas Seville CR**

## The Society of the Precious Blood, Masite (Part 1)



*Masite Priory*

**I**t was a fitting farewell in February this year for the small multiracial religious contemplative community living in a remote area of the Lesotho mountains, in the heart of South Africa. The five remaining sisters of the Society of the Precious Blood living at the Priory of Our Lady at Masite were about to disperse, for health and financial reasons, to different homes in Lesotho, the House of Prayer in Kimberly in South Africa, and Burnham Abbey in Buckinghamshire in the UK.

At their final Eucharist were three bishops, many clergy and local people. Also the Prime Minister of Lesotho, the former Prime Minister, and South Africans who had shared their life while in exile. The South African High Commissioner and staff, on behalf of the South African Government gave them a farewell dinner in thanksgiving for their ministry to South African exiles during the apartheid regime. Members of the ANC woman's League from Bloemfontein presented the sisters with Basotho blankets and hats and the South African High Commissioner presented each sister with a beautiful plaque thanking her for her ministry in the struggle for a free Southern Africa.

How did it come about that contemplative sisters living in community for 57 years in a remote locality should through their Eucharistic devotion, daily office and intercessory and contemplative prayer and hospitality have such an impact in the wider world? An impact bringing local people and representatives of the

South African government together for thanksgiving for their dedicated life, for their common purpose, “joyfully to spend and be spent.”

The story begins with a remarkable Mosotho priest and religious, and contemplative sisters of the Society of the Precious Blood at Burnham Abbey in the UK. Fr Patrick Maekane was the first African in Southern Africa to be ordained priest and be a member of a religious order, “Mohlanka Ba Kreste.” He died in 1985, at the age of 83. Two years before he died, he was the first African priest to celebrate 50 years of priesthood and the religious life. He found his vocation with the help of fathers of the Society of the Sacred Mission, at Modderpoort in the Free State. At the age of thirty-eight he came to live at Masite, together with some brothers who had joined him. Sadly they all left, but Fr Patrick remained faithful to his vows as a religious.

He was a man of deep prayer. Although his brothers all left, many young girls and women came to join him in a life of worship together, silent prayer, and work on the land. They were called “Makhabunyane a Me Ma Mohau,” “Handmaids of the Mother of Mercy”, and at one time there were over 40 of them at Masite. Because their life together had grown spontaneously, and they lived and prayed under Fr Patrick’s direction, they were called a guild rather than a community.

They decided that they should become a community, perhaps by joining another African community, the Sisters of Mary at the Cross, who lived with the Bloemfontein sisters of St Michael and All Angels at Hlotse in Lesotho. A few of the Handmaids were handicapped in walking, and the Handmaids were told by the St Mary at the Cross sisters that they should be sent home. The Handmaids refused to agree. They would send no one away.

They looked for another solution which they found in a remarkable way. It was in line with their spirituality to live a life of prayer, and bring in the outsider, to break down divisions. Through a notice in “The Church Times” Fr Patrick had been writing to Mother Mary St Agnes of the Society of the Precious Blood at Burnham Abbey in England, sisters dedicated, like the Handmaids, to a life of worship, silence and prayer. After much prayer and fasting, Fr Patrick and the Handmaids decided to ask the SPB sisters to join them. They asked them to come from England, not to teach them for some time and then return home, but to come to share their life permanently.

This was remarkable for two reasons. Apartheid racist and economic separation was strong in South Africa, and also in colonial Basutoland. Black and white didn’t meet as equals, even in the Church. When Fr Patrick wanted to become a religious, he was not invited to join SSM at Modderpoort. He was asked to form his own order, for Africans only. The African sisters of St Mary at the Cross lived with sisters of St Michael and All Angels at Hlotse. They lived

in separate buildings, had a separate chapel, separate altars.

When Fr Patrick and the Handmaids asked the SPB sisters to join them, they were doing something that for their time was revolutionary. – to break down barriers of race and culture and language in order to share together in the Body of Christ, the Church.

The second remarkable thing is that sisters of the Society of the Precious Blood at Burnham Abbey agreed to leave their home and come to Lesotho. They had joined their community because they were called by God to the contemplative life– a life of prayer and worship in a community which was given by God to be their family. They lived a life of great simplicity in a beautiful house that had been used by Augustinian sisters six centuries before. For them to leave their community, the life they had chosen and loved, would be a tremendous sacrifice, but that is what five Sisters, Clare, Josephine, Julian, Veronica and Gabriel agreed to do. The Church thanks God for Mother Millicent, founder of the SPB sisters, and the spirituality which she imbued in her sisters. Also Mother St Agnes Mary, SPB mother at the time who supported this move and came to share the sisters' first year together, and their Warden at the time, Fr. Hugh Bishop, CR.

The SPB Sisters in England knew about the evil of Apartheid, and some had worked in South Africa. They recognized that the best way to fight it would be to form a multi-racial, multi-cultural community showing by the life they shared together that Apartheid was a lie, that it destroyed life, while Jesus came to bring life in all its fullness. Our Lord could do this best by a praying community of sisters both black and white, from different cultures and ways of life, and bringing the gifts of their own spirituality into the life they shared together. Through their simplicity of life and voluntary poverty, they would share the life of the poor, sharing in some way in the suffering of a divided and oppressed people. Through the way they resolved conflict and tension among themselves, they would give confidence and hope that indeed all can become one family in Christ.

The community started on Ascension Day 1957 with eight Handmaids and five Burnham Abbey sisters. Bishop John Maund, first bishop of Lesotho from 1950 to 1975 and former Mirfield student, encouraged the SPB sisters to come to the Diocese. Fr Trevor Huddleston CR helped to raise funds in the UK to enable them to travel to Masite. Later the Community of the Resurrection fathers in Johannesburg would give much help through spiritual direction. The Roman Catholic Archbishop Mabathoana, OMI, gave help and encouragement and a number of Roman Catholic OMI religious gave help over the years with teaching, advice and spiritual direction.

In their early years the sisters lived like the local people, walking barefooted,

tilling and reaping maize in the priory field by hand, sleeping on the floor on grass-filled mattresses, and cooking and lighting by coal and wood stoves and paraffin lamps. Solar power followed by electricity came fairly recently.

At the height of the apartheid struggle the sisters began a House of Prayer in 1977 in Kimberly, South Africa, when three SPB sisters came to pray with the people there. They have given help to the adjacent St Barnabas Mission and local community with water from a mountain spring and a borehole, Help also to the local church schools, and sponsorship for needy secondary school students. The sisters started the first small clinic which today has outreach to many centres, and helps people affected by the HIV/Aids pandemic. They have supported people with food relief in times of drought.

The sisters have also given solace and comfort to people caught up in the traumas of political upheaval in Lesotho, such as the 1970 political coup and emergency, military rule, the massacre of ANC cadres and Basotho by South African troops in 1982, and the burnings in Maseru 1998 following internal conflict

They cherished a ministry of hospitality. They welcomed to Masite young South African exiles who came out of the Soweto uprising and other conflicts in 1976 and the years following, to struggle for a free, democratic, non racist and non sexist equalitarian South Africa. They saw in the community life of the sisters a small picture of what South Africa could be, – an ideal for which some of those same young people would eventually give their lives. Today some are SA Government ministers, ambassadors, generals in the SANDF and in other high positions.

The sisters gave the writer much help when he was Rector



*Sisters Theresa, Julian and Magdalena*

of Masite from 1973 to 1980, especially when he was seriously injured by a parcel bomb sent to him in July 1979 by South African security agents because of his help to the same young South African exiles. Also a year later when he was forced to leave Lesotho through pressure from the South African Government.

Others came out of the apartheid struggle to find, for a longer or shorter time, a home and safety at Masite. Fr Aelred Stubbs CR, exiled from South Africa in 1977, lived at Masite a life of quiet prayer, and edited his book of the writings of Steve Biko, “I write what I like.” David Russell, former Mirfield student and later anti-apartheid activist and bishop of Grahamstown lived with Peter Hipkins for six months to test their vocation to live and work among the poor as religious brothers. Barney Pityana, leader of the Black Consciousness Movement and now Rector of the College of the Transfiguration, Grahamstown came with his wife Dimsa for some months of safety at Masite. Also Thenjiwe Mtinso, former Mkhonto we Siswe Commissar and today a SA Government leader.



*Archbishop Desmond Tutu with Sr Julian*

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the second bishop of Lesotho records that Sister Julian was his spiritual advisor and prayer companion from his earliest days of vocation to the priesthood. He found support from the sisters in dangerous and challenging times and has written, “My association and friendship with the

SPB sisters has provided me with the prayerful rock on which I have stood and drawn strength over many years, to bring down Apartheid, and bring about conditions for the dawning of the Kingdom of God in South Africa.”

Dr Phyllis Naidoo, ANC veteran, dedicated the last of her many books on activists of the South African liberation struggle to Sister Josephine. In a remarkable way the sisters brought Eucharistic devotion, faithful use of the daily Office and contemplative prayer and intercession to bear much fruit in the Church and wider community of Lesotho and South Africa. The community has Oblates and Companions who share in the spirit of their rule of life, “joyfully to spend and be spent,” and value their letters of devotional insight.

**The Rt Revd John Osmer,**  
Former Mirfield student. Assistant Bishop of Lusaka, Zambia.

## A Future with HIV?

**H**IV is a horrible disease. You don't realise that until you meet someone who has it. Tariro keeps bringing us up against questions that do not normally come our way. Often they are quite heart-rending problems; often we find solutions to them which give us (and the kids) great joy. It is really exciting!

Annie is a little girl of 13. She is small and thin because she has never been properly fed. She has a lovely smile and a very gentle nature. She managed to pass primary school well enough to get into the local secondary school which she loves. Unfortunately, she is often sick. We investigated and found she is HIV-positive. This is not her fault. She got it from her parents, both sadly now dead. Fortunately, there is treatment for HIV. It cannot yet be cured, but sufferers can live a normal life. Annie has started on the retrovirals, which are free. Unfortunately, there are still problems. There is a clinic nearby which can give her the medication, but to see a doctor, to have a blood test or anything like that she must go to Gweru more than two hours away by bus, and of course someone must go with her. That costs bus fare she and the Sisters cannot afford. She also needs extra food to supplement the medication. Her home diet is very basic and has little nutrition in it, so we must buy the extras. Then the medication itself is a problem. It has to be taken at the same time every day. Children are never good at remembering this. People like her family, who live without watches and are never very time-conscious, easily forget. So Annie gets sick because her medication is out of order.

What is Annie's future? She does OK in school, but she is not brilliant. She is not clever enough to escape from this poverty-stricken world, at least without a lot of help from us. If she keeps her medication in order she may live a healthy and normal life; but what happens about marriage or a normal sexual life? Will she always be an outsider? Thousands of people in Zimbabwe are HIV positive but there is obviously a stigma. How will she deal with all that? She will need counselling over the years and that too costs money. We do not begrudge the money. She is one of our children. We love her and want her to have the best life possible for her. That means we have to find answers to these questions and the means to give those answers some reality. It comes down to money in the end.

Annie is not our only HIV child. We have a boy called Nyasha. He is younger and so far seems to be coping better, probably because his relations are better organised. Yet the same questions apply to him. We cannot just pay school fees without asking the larger questions: how can we give him a good future?

There are other kinds of questions: Peter is a very clever boy. He has a scholarship to a good school and is doing well. His mother suffers from a skin condition, and anyone who has one knows how horrid that can be. Medication for this costs \$45.00 (about £30.00) a month. Tariro money is really for children;

can we spend it on relatives? Fortunately, some of our generous friends give us money simply for our work in Zimbabwe. We can draw on this fund for medical needs of those like Peter's mother.

Many stories have happy outcomes. One of our remarkable young men, Philip, has a mother who has suffered for years from mental illness. From the age of 8, when his father abandoned them Philip has cared for his mother, worked in neighbours' fields to get money for food, and managed also to put himself through school right up to A level. He came to us then an exhausted, burdened young man of 19 who could not smile, even for a camera. We gave him counselling and within weeks he was transformed. He is now doing well in accountancy studies and has a part time job as well. Better still, he brought his mother into town and there she found medication for her mental illness which seems to have put it right. Even in Zimbabwe good doctors and good medicine can be found that transforms peoples' lives.

'Transform' is a word I use a lot! Some of our young people are such delightful, confident and well-balanced youngsters, doing well in school and with a bright future ahead of them; it is hard sometimes to believe the appalling stories they have come with: the death, neglect, hunger, abuse and bleak hopelessness that was their life before they came. How have they come through that to be such good young people now? One can only admire their resilience and determination. Not all our young people do well. Some are not very bright and struggle in school. Some, boys especially, are inclined to be lazy and need constant chivvying. Some are still coping with bad conditions at home and we haven't yet found a way of making life really different for them. But all of them are in a better place than if we had not been around. To be 12 and in school, with friends, sport, food and no great worries in life is a freedom that ought to belong to every child and sadly does not. To be 16, not pregnant, not having to turn to sex to survive, not living rough and still going to school is much better than life could have been.



What shall we do with these youngsters, especially the ones not clever enough to get into good jobs or professions? We are looking now at ways of giving them survival skills: better ways of doing agriculture so that they can make a small living off a small piece of land; making floor polish to sell to churches and schools; learning skills of carpentry and mechanics which are always useful in rural areas; beekeeping. This last has been an adventure for me. Anyone who has kept bees knows how fascinating they are. It has the merit of not being a lot of work. It takes quite a bit of money to get started but after that is not expensive. It is also environmentally friendly. "Bees save trees," a lady told me. I looked surprised. She explained that when country people find you get better honey from trees they stop cutting them down. In Africa this is very important to keep the soil together and keep the birdlife happy. The only problem is to find a good way to sell the honey which does not lose us our profit: another steep learning curve for all of us.

Is this what monks should be doing? What about preaching the Gospel? Well actually these kids are all Christian and we try and give them teaching and church experience they would not get otherwise. God has always been concerned for the poor; that is not a new idea! (see the Old Testament where the rich are constantly criticised for not caring for the poor). Giving life to those who have no life is a very Christian thing to do. CR has always done this sort of work and it is a joy to keep on doing it. It is a double joy that you, our nice friends, make it possible. As you read this, Harvest festivals will be coming up. Can you consider giving Tariro some fruit of your harvest festival? Could you consider putting on a harvest event specially for Tariro? A not-very-well-off parish in the North has just sent us £452.00 raised at a tea party. Could any of you do the same?

*(The children in these stories are real children; the names, of course, are not.)*

**Nicolas Stebbing CR**



## The Horror of a Great Darkness



*This photograph shows the gathering of the Brethren outside the House of the Resurrection, Mirfield during General Chapter, July 1914. Little did anyone know at the time that two months later the War would have a profound effect on the brethren of the Community, particularly some of those pictured who would be called upon to serve as Military chaplains.*

“**W**e need make no apology for the heading of this article”, wrote the Superior Father George Longridge CR in the 1914 Michaelmas number of the *CR Chronicle*. “The war is in every one’s mind. It presses on us with an infinite sadness, a terrible sense of shame. What a spectacle for the vast heathen world, to see nearly all the nations of European Christendom engaged in a life and death struggle with each other! God does not will, but God permits; and verily, through that permission the devil seems to have been let loose. We can almost see his exaltation as he views all the horror which is going on.” Two fundamental questions Fr Longridge asks:

Why are we at war?” and what is to be its outcome? We’re not at war for “glory” falsely so called. Not for aggression, or to avenge a grudge, but to uphold before the world the sacredness of solemn pledges. We are fighting for truth and honour, we are fighting to declare before the world that, so far as we are able, might shall not count as right, and that treaties solemnly made are binding and cannot be

tossed aside in the interest, or at the convenience, of those who signed them. What is to be the outcome of the war? What are we looking forward to, hoping for, praying for? Once again we are seeking nothing for ourselves. We are not seeking to triumph over another nation. Towards the German people, as apart from the military caste, we have no feelings of ill-will. We wish to live at peace and in friendship with them.

The above is an extract from Father Longridge. He concludes by his closing words: "May God help us to keep our hearts and minds fixed on this great hope! And if the awful horrors and the sacrifices of this war lead us to this truer conception of the relation of Christians nations one to another, it will not have been in vain."

With the passing of time, the events that captivated and forever embedded in the minds an entire generation are not forgotten. Each year we remember our War dead, those who made the ultimate sacrifice for service to their country. 1914 commemorates the centenary of the beginning of the First World War - the Great War. Most of us will have had a relative - father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle - who served in the Armed Forces which had more fatalities than the Second World War. All across Europe in military cemeteries, the graves of the war dead include British and American soldiers who fought to preserve peace among the nations. But as time marches on, there are fewer survivors who can still tell the story. There are now no more War heroes alive from that First World War. The men who fought during World War II seventy years ago who are still with us are getting older and fewer, like their contemporaries before them, their time will come.

Were Anglican Religious Communities involved in the War effort? They certainly were indeed, and CR was no exception. No less than sixteen brethren were assigned as Military chaplains on the Front, the first two chaplains during the War were Keble Talbot CR and Frederick King CR. Humphrey Money and Ivan Tunnicliffe were both novices, they too served as chaplains.

It was during the War that CR Fathers were ministering largely to soldiers who were not of an Anglo-catholic tradition, a shock to the system realising that many of the men registering as "C of E" were lacking in Christian teaching, including sacramental teaching. When Guy Pearce CR produced his *Soldiers Book of Devotion* it fulfilled a need that previously did not exist.



There were casualties during the War both wounded and the dead, among them were those brethren from Anglican Religious communities: William Freestone CR was the only chaplain among the CR brethren to have been killed at the age of 24 in December 1916. He had been sent to Salonika, Macedonia as chaplain. Kelham



*Keble Talbot CR, middle row, third from right*

seems to have lost three of its brethren in 1917: Herbert Ledbitter SSM, Samuel Preece SSM and Francis Wyllie SSM, the latter lost at Sea. Cowley also suffered the loss of one of their novices, Br Walter Frederick who died in 1917.

The S. John Baptist issue of the *CR Chronicle* for 1918, 'Notes about the Brethren on Active Service' begin with the notice that Father Hill had been taken prisoner in Germany with some South African men of the Regiment to which he was their Chaplain. Thankfully he was not wounded and had written a letter to the Mother House at Mirfield:

Food and clothes were sent to him and he reminded us that letters sent to him



*Charles FitzGerald on his camel. North West frontier campaign, Egypt.*

must not contain printed matter or any reference to military or naval events or persons. Father FitzGerald is still in Palestine, Father Pearse who last year was invalided home from Palestine, is now well again, and has returned to Egypt. Father Rees is still doing special work he was asked to do at a Base Hospital in France, Father Victor, having been home for some months on account of ill health, has

returned to France. Father Talbot is in France, previously he had been sent to Italy as Chaplain to the English Gunners, He has been made one of the Deputy Assistant Chaplains-General, Father King is still in France, where he has been ever since he returned with troops from Gallipoli. Father Richard Barnes is also in France, Father Money has been invalided home from France, though now recovered doctors forbid his returning to France, he will act as Chaplain to the New Zealand Depot in England. Fathers Bell and Tunnicliffe are both acting Chaplains in the Navy, Fathers Shropshire and Winter are working with the YMCA in India, the former at Lahore, the latter at Jubbulpore. Father Northcott with the consent of the Bishop of Wakefield has enlisted as a private in the Honorable Artillery Company. He had made his profession in January this year.

Five brethren were awarded the *Military Cross* for their efforts in ministering to the soldiers: Keble Talbot, Frederick King, Timothy Rees, Richard Barnes and Eustace Hill.

Space does not permit to recapture some of the heart wrenching letters sent by those brethren describing the horror and sheer waste of human life, the agony of the young men on the battlefield, their hopes and fears. Father Paul Bull CR who had served as a chaplain during the Boer War had written of his experience in a book entitled *God and our Soldiers* published in 1904 and he also wrote one entitled *Our Duty at Home in Time of War*.

Both books were reprinted ten years later drawing the attention of the readers of the CR Chronicle which would be of special interest at the outbreak of the



April 1918, funeral of 66 of the officers and men who fell in Zeebrugge action. Ivan Tunnicliffe, standing far left.

Great War. Sir Charles Douglas, G.C.B., Chief of the Imperial General Staff wrote a preface to this new edition: “I am very pleased to hear that you intend to publish a reprint of your book *God and our Soldiers*. A publication of this sort should be in the hands of all who wish to interest themselves in our troops, for it depicts the life and characteristics of the soldier so truly and so well ... I hope it may find its way into the homes of those who, through ignorance or otherwise, do not appreciate the true characteristics of the British soldier - his chivalry towards his enemy in the field, his dogged determination, in invariable cheerfulness in most trying circumstances, his loyal obedience to his officers ...”

**Steven Haws CR**

## **A War’s Anniversary and Forgiveness**

**T**his past 4<sup>th</sup> August saw Britain marking the commencement of the First World War, and that centenary anniversary made me ask “What does forgiving mean?” It has little to do with fairness, which demands an eye for an eye. It also is not about making excuses, which could be simply brushing something aside. Life is not fair and it is full of things that should not be excused.

Forgiving someone requires us not to lash out or bite back when we are offended or hurt. Instead it seeks to restore the fractured relationships with the other persons who have caused injury to us. Doing this is not easy and it may not instantly take away our pain. Forgiveness might not even be acknowledged or accepted. Yet the act of offering it keeps us from being sucked into a downward spiral of resentment and bitterness.

We have all probably met bitter people: the sort who have an amazing memory for the smallest offences and maintain a catalogue of every injury done to them. Bit by bit these resentments eat away at them, corroding them on the inside until eventually spilling out against others. If I am honest with myself, I must admit that there is more than a little of this type of person within me.

Bitter people hold on tightly to their grudges, feeling that they have been hurt so much that their own particular pain exempts them from the need to forgive. But this is the person who needs to forgive most of all, because as long as their heart is full of anger and resentment then they will not have the capacity to love fully. Forgiveness also is a healing balm for our souls, because offering it to others frees us from the enslaving chains of regret.

Reflecting through the hindsight of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War’s commencement made me aware that this event is not about one group

self-righteously pointing a finger of blame at other offending parties. All of us need to be the sort of persons who always are practicing forgiveness. Letting go of hurts and offences that have been done to you can change everything – your attitudes, your emotional health and your relationships. It can give you a better life because it is one of the most beautiful expressions of love. Forgiveness is not a sign of weakness but rather of spiritual strength, and its most powerful symbol is the cross!

**Dennis Berk CR**

### **+ Timothy Rees** (*A letter to the editor*)

Dear Father,

A recent funeral requiem for the late John Austin Baker, Bishop and Theologian and a week later the Winchester Cathedral Liturgy of the Foundation included the popular hymn set to the tune *Blaenwern: God is love, let heaven adore him*.

How few even among CR review readers realise that the words of this outstanding adornment of 20th century Anglican hymnody was authored by a Mirfield Father, later Prelate Brother, + Timothy Rees (Bishop of Llandaff)?

+ Timothy also authored a superb contemporary Passiontide hymn found only in the New Hymns Ancient and Modern and thus too rarely encountered: *O Crucified Redeemer, whose life-blood we have spilt*: a hymnal response to two World Wars. Yours faithfully

**Paul A. Newman**

O Crucified redeemer,  
Whose life blood we have spilt,  
To you we raise our guilty hands  
And humbly own our guilt;  
Today we see your passion  
Spread open to our gaze;  
The crowded street, the country road,  
Its Calvary displays

We hear your cry of anguish,  
We see your life outpoured,  
Where battle fields run red with blood,  
Our neighbours' blood, O Lord;  
And in that other battle,  
The fight for daily bread,  
Where might is right and self is king,  
We see your thorn-crowned head

The groaning of creation,  
Wrung out by pain and care,  
The anguish of a million hearts  
That break in dumb despair;  
O crucified Redeemer,  
These are your cries of pain;  
O may they break our selfish hearts,  
And love come in to reign.

# Brothers from Mirfield and Trier together visited the French cemetery at Verdun 100 years after the outbreak of the Great War:

*Abbot Ignatius OSB, Philip CR, Matthias OSB, Simeon OSB, John CR, Jacob CR, Johannes OSB, Sebastian NovOSB.*



## A Warm Roman Welcome

When I arrived at the Pontifical University of Sant'Anselmo this past July, the warmth of Rome welcomed me. This was true literally because the temperature was 31 degrees that first afternoon and then got even warmer by several degrees over the next few days. One of the first things that I saw upon arriving at the entrance was a larger-than-life statue of St. Anselm. Seeing one of Canterbury's archbishops portrayed in that statue in the garden atrium at the church's entrance gave me a sense of the shared heritage that Roman Catholics and Anglicans have in these saintly witnesses of our common faith.



Sant'Anselmo originally was founded on the Aventine hill as a house of study by the Italian Benedictines in 1687, and then re-established by Pope Leo XIII in 1887 as a Benedictine college and university of philosophy and theology. It is a visible symbol of the unity of the worldwide Benedictine Confederation and the monastic brotherhood

shared by all those who follow the Rule of St. Benedict. The course that I was commencing is entitled 'Cultural Dimensions of Christian Spirituality' and it is a two-year Master Programme consisting of a residential fortnight in Rome each July with the rest of the work done by extension studies.

I was one of eighteen students enrolled in this programme. These 11 men and 7 women reflect the global presence of Christianity as they come from Africa, Asia, Australia and Europe – there even was another American to keep me company. Half of us are members of religious orders, and we are as ecumenical as we are international. In addition to Roman Catholics, who formed the majority of students, the course had members who were Anglican, Dutch Reformed, Old Catholic, Melchite and Romanian Orthodox. The largest group of students were from the Netherlands since this course is run in cooperation with the Dutch university of Radboud in Nijmegen.

Trying to squeeze considerable course content into a fortnight kept our days quite busy, with the first lecture beginning at 8:30 each morning and the final lecture ending at 6:50 – just in time for Vespers at 7:15 followed by supper. In keeping with the Mediterranean culture we had three hours of siesta each afternoon, but for some of us this was spent as study and reading

time in preparation for the following day's modules. Fortunately the library at Sant'Anselmo is in the former crypt of the church so it is one of the coolest places to spend the afternoon siesta when temperatures in Rome approach the mid-thirties.

The character of Benedictine hospitality was conveyed by our welcome at worship as we joined in the canonical hours. Each day Lauds and Mass were said in English, but Midday Prayers and Vespers were entirely in Latin. The monastic heritage that CR shares with other religious orders was manifest to me as my participation was eased by already knowing the plainsong settings which were almost identical to those sung at Mirfield. The hospitality of the classroom and the church continued in the refectory of Sant'Anselmo where we ate our meals, as well as when going into the local neighbourhood to have a creamy gelato or a frothy latte with one of the professors, or enjoying lasagne with my fellow students at an outdoor café alongside the Tiber. The course title is very appropriate because the cultural dimensions of my experiences in Rome took place within the wonderful warmth of the hospitality extended to me as spirituality was lived and expressed daily not only in the church but also in the classroom, the refectory and the cafes of the Eternal City.

**Dennis Berk CR**



## A Surprise Visit with a Link from the Past



On Monday 9th June being S. Columba's Day, the Community received a surprise visit from a relative of one of our departed brethren. Mr Stephen Fortesque arrived at the House of the Resurrection from Devon accompanied by his daughter Mrs Anne Simon who had arranged the surprise visit. Mr Fortesque is the nephew of Fr Cyprian Rudolf, CR. It had been a chance meeting of Mr Fortesque to see where his uncle had lived during the remaining years of his life. The family were bowled over to see archival material, newspaper cuttings and photographs of the 'young' Cyprian. Cyril de Montjoie Rudolf arrived at Mirfield on 29th January 1914 after serving his curacy at Holy Trinity, Rotherhithe. He was admitted as a Probationer (novice) on 7th March of that year and made his profession on 19th January 1916 and shortly after was sent to South Africa to serve on the staff of S. John's College, Johannesburg. He was known to his brethren as Cyprian, the name he had chosen, since there was already a Cyril [Bickersteth] in the Community.

His great and permanent work, according to Fr Edward Symonds CR was his layout of the grounds of S. John's, which with its terraces and amphitheatre, made it one of the finest buildings in the Union. He was a close friend of the architect, who recognised in him a real landscape gardener and was always ready to respond to his suggestions. Cyprian spent nine years at S. John's and on his return to England he became Secretary of the Children's Society for Waifs and Strays (now known as the Children's Society) which was founded by his father, the Revd Edward Rudolf in 1881. Cyprian spent several years at our London house and became chaplain of S. Nicholas Orthopaedic Hospital and Home for

Children at Pyrford, Woking, Surrey which had been established by the Waifs & Strays Society and moved to Pyrford in 1908.

By 1945 Cyprian had returned to the Mother House, with increasing blindness and deafness, he had a great gift of friendship and spent his remaining years visiting people in the immediate neighbourhood and guests who came to stay with us. He died on 30th March 1958, having been hit by a car on the Leeds-Huddersfield Road in Mirfield the previous November for which he never fully recovered.

Mr Fortesque was taken to the Community cemetery and shown Cyprian's grave for which he was most grateful. Throughout his visit he has taken a keen interest in the Community which helped to shape and form his Uncle a century ago. The highlight of the visit was a chance encounter with one who knew and lived with Cyprian Rudolf CR. Working in the Calvary Garden was Br Roy CR and Mr Fortesque had a chance to speak to him who remembered his Uncle with affection. The bonds of friendship do not fade with time and no doubt we will be seeing Cyprian's nephew again.

**Steven Haws CR**



*Br Roy CR with Mr Fortesque*

# Companions CR

## R.I.P.

Leslie Baker  
Jeanne Lindley

## New Companions

Hilary Atkins  
Daniel Burton  
Ian Davies  
Brenda Greig  
Catherine Hardy  
Sue Tatton-Brown  
Alan Warner

## The 2015 Companions' Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

will take place from 29th May to 1st June inclusive. Would those Companions and friends who are interested in going please contact Michael Stocks, who is arranging the bookings, so that Michael knows who to get in touch with when booking forms are issued later in the year. His phone number is 01524-807192 and his email address is [michaelstocks993@gmail.com](mailto:michaelstocks993@gmail.com)

## Book Reviews

**Private Lord Crawford's Great War Diaries** *Christopher Arnander (ed.)*  
Pen and Sword Books Ltd. £19.99 (Hbk). Isbn 178159367-1

In all that has been written of the First World War, this stands out for its unique viewpoint, in a number of ways: the author was the premier earl of Scotland, ex-Eton, former chief whip for the Conservatives, an art historian of some note who was much involved in the National Gallery and the V & A – yet when war came he enlisted as a private in the Royal Army Medical Corps; he served for 18

months at a medical station behind the lines, then was catapulted out to become Minister of Agriculture. Here you have this highly educated, cultured peer living with 'other ranks' in very basic conditions. How did he get on? He seems to have got on very well. He read *The Imitation of Christ* each day in Latin as the English translation was so turgid. He wrote up his diary in a straightforward style of English. He scrubbed floors, walls and windows of rooms that had to be converted into operating theatres and took pride in providing a sterile environment for the surgeons.

He seemed to get on well with the men but he does not patronise them, or laugh at them. He finds them and the common soldiers generally hard-working, reliable if well led and, if they occasionally drink too much or catch VD, he doesn't moralise. He has almost complete contempt for the officers who at best were (in his view) ineffectual and were obsessed with their appearance, their huge amounts of luggage, flirting with the nurses, ordering common soldiers about and generally behaving in an arrogant and unpleasant way. He dislikes the nurses almost as much as they seem to have been largely untrained society girls (some arrived at the front with tennis racquets!) who gave time-wasting orders to people like him, flirted with the young officers and generally got in the way. He is also amazed at the sheer wastefulness of the army, the poor organisation, the stupid commands that come out of HQ. He is not the first soldier of any rank to think that!

He is not against the war. There is none of the War Poets' grief and anger: 'The Pity of War' is not his theme. He does not like it but believes it is necessary. He is much against the shirkers both behind the lines and back home who have found ways of avoiding going into the trenches. He himself only goes occasionally to the trenches. But he evidently was very busy at the hospital. His comments on most of the politicians with whom he worked or was to work, are pretty scathing. He was a clear-sighted, unsentimental man who must have been fascinating to know.

The diaries have been extremely well edited by his grandson whose footnotes and explanatory comments about the state of the war at that point are one of the great delights of the book. You can read it straight through from the beginning as I did for the first half, or dip into it at any point and be immediately caught by the dry observations on people he met, odd things he saw, Germans who spoke excellent English, English officers who spoke not a word of French or German. And at £19.99 for a beautifully printed hardback, it is a very good buy.

**Nicolas Stebbing CR**

# CR Pilgrimage to St Hilda's Hartlepool 31st July 2014



# Supporting the Community and College

The Community and the College are very grateful for the support they receive from so many individuals, parishes and others. If you would like to add your support to enhance their future, please consider:

## Making a Regular Gift

Planned monthly giving enables budgeting for the future and over a period can add up to a significant sum. Using Gift Aid enables the Community or College to claim an extra 25p from HMRC for every £1 given by a taxpayer.

## Gifts of Shares and Securities

Giving shares or securities to the Community or College can attract tax relief and capital gains tax relief. For further information, please contact the Bursary.

## Leaving a Legacy

A gift in your will to the Community or College will help support the future development of the Community or College and their work.

## Supporting a Particular Project

We plan to complete art commissions for the Church as well as starting work on the Quarry Theatre and looking forward to the new monastery. Please do be in touch if you would like to support a particular aspect of the Community's work.

Gift Aid forms and information about legacies/bequests and other tax effective ways of giving are available on the Community's website at [www.mirfieldcommunity.org.uk/appeal](http://www.mirfieldcommunity.org.uk/appeal) or please contact

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Thank you for helping to continue and enhance  
the work of the Community and College.

**The Community is a Charitable Company (No. 232670)**