



THE DOME

Winter 2009

THE MAGAZINE OF PETERSFIELD CATHOLIC PARISH

Hampshire's Canterbury



by **Tim Concannon**

In Western Europe in the latter half of the first millennium,

Christianity was a new and exciting movement; in many ways it was the "hip" way to be, and monks were the hippy gurus of the day.

Its adherents believed in peace and love and formed communes, where like-minded people could live and love without interference from outside. They formed communities which can be compared to Bible Belt villages in the United States.

Like the Jehovah's witnesses of today, people were expected to go around the country proselytising to the natives.

The men were known as "canons" and had their own houses but were expected to frequent the church, the refectory and the dormitory according to the rule of monastic discipline.

They were also expected to dispose of their houses in such a way as they did not go out of the community. There was no vow of poverty, nor yet of chastity, and many of the canons were married.

Continued on next page

First Catholic Mass since the Reformation



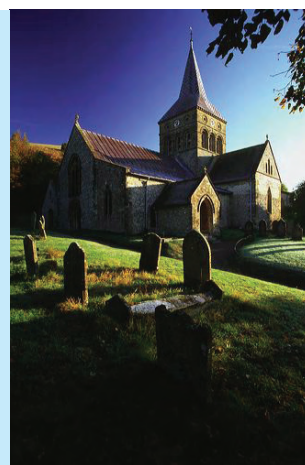
by **Michael Blakstad**

The first time we tried to arrange it, the ceiling of the nave of All Saints

church collapsed. The second attempt was more successful and on November 14th, Canon Hetherington celebrated what is believed to have been the first Catholic Mass since the 1580s.

Despite dreadful wind and rain that day, the event was very well attended: an estimated 150 people, both Petersfield parishioners and the congregation of All Saints. Its Vicar, Canon Terry Loudon, welcomed his Catholic guests in the name of Christian Unity, emphasising the similarities rather than the differences

All Saints Church, East Meon. In the Reformation, recusant priests were smuggled into the Church through a secret tunnel, to say Mass. East Meon had six Catholic martyrs



between the two branches of Christianity, a sentiment echoed by Canon Hetherington.

Tim Concannon relates, left, how East Meon was an important religious centre when Petersfield was no more than a field belonging to someone called Peter. Under the Normans, Bishops of Winchester came to the Court House to hold assizes in the Court Hall and the imposing size of All Saints is an indication of the importance of the community in Norman times.



The choir included singers from both churches. Right, the two Canons say farewell to those who attended,



All Saints' Vicar, Canon Terry Loudon, accompanied Canon Hetherington. Right, drinks were served to the congregations in the Church Hall.



ABOUT THE PARISH

The Dome

Your Parish Magazine appears twice yearly and depends on contributions from members of the parish.

The next edition will appear in July 2010 and we would welcome any articles and photographs which parishioners might wish to contribute by the end of May.

Contributions to:

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Production

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Papal visit

Pope Benedict XVI is to visit Britain in January 2010. It will be the first papal visit to Britain since 1982, when Pope John Paul II's six-day tour drew huge crowds.

Hampshire's Canterbury

continued from front page



Model of All Saints and the Court Hall in Norman times, from the Musée de la Tapisserie in Bayeux.

Around 970 A.D. king Edgar granted 'that famous place which the locals have always called Aet Meon' to his grandmother Eadgifu, the widow of king Athelstan, one of the truly great figures in Anglo Saxon history. Eadgifu wished to retire to the religious life and the Charter recites

that many holy women had pleaded with the King for the privilege of Eadgifu joining them to ornament their devotions and that it had pleased the King to grant the honour to Meon with its sixty-five earth houses.

After the Norman Conquest, the last Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury, Stigand lived here until his deportation in 1075. Curiously, the last monk of Westminster Abbey, Dom Sigebert Buckley also ended up in East Meon. It appears that his remains still lie under flagstones in a house in Punsholt, outside West Meon.

All in all, East Meon provides a wonderful illustration of the Christian History in this small corner of Wessex.

Young people who received the Sacrament of Confirmation

July 17th Nicole Chanengeta, Megan Collins, Chloe Davies, Richard Davis, Christian Effenberg, Frances Fry, Bethany Gabriel, Imogen Gabriel, Isabel Harwood, Thomas Harrison, James Lomas, Euan McLeod, James Meiklejohn, Alex Pusey, Olivia Scardullo, Louisa Spear, Olivia Woodgate.

Baptisms 2009

April 26th Christopher Churcher
May 10th Nicholas Hall
May 17th Gabriela Cassidy

Weddings 2009

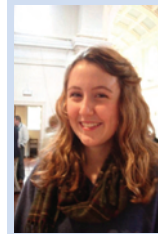
July 18th Tom Lyndon and Christina Sellers - Fr Murtagh officiating
August 22nd Jason Alden and Hannah Dickson
September 5th Clinton Mitchell and Chrystelle Davo
September 12th Paul Cooper and Franczyk Kinga.
September 29th Blessing Andrew Mitchell & Emanuel Didier

Forthcoming Marriages.

May 1st 2010 Ian Miller and Megan Hammond

Funerals 2009

July 3rd Veronica Nethercott
Sept 24th James Ryan



Congratulations

to Altar Server Sarah Mathews who has been made Head Girl at TPS, The Petersfield School.



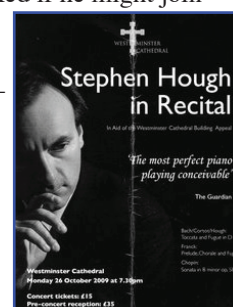
Music for Heaven

by Neil Dobinson

Thirteen parishioners, complemented by twenty friends travelled to Westminster Cathedral on Monday 26th October to listen to a piano recital by Stephen Hough in aid of the Cathedral Building Appeal. We were treated to a magical experience. Stephen Hough usually plays at venues such as the Albert Hall where this year he performed at four Prom Concerts, but this was different. We were seated at the very front of the Cathedral and this was a very personal performance. It was both intimate and stunning, and easy to forget that there was a great Cathedral behind and around. The acoustics of this grand structure gave great depth to the music.

There was a moment 'within the formal' not noticed by all. Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor had been seated in the place of honour but, following the interval, two ladies had 'improved' their seating position and displaced the Cardinal. Tactful to the state of perfection, the Cardinal chose not to draw attention to this incident and asked if he might join our gathering, which we felt privileged to accommodate!

It was an event treasured by everyone.



St Vincent de Paul

by **Tony Omara**

The Parish Pastoral Council has been actively considering the re-establishment of a St Vincent de Paul ("SVP") group and would all be very glad to hear your ideas about this proposal. There was previously a very active "conference" in the parish which did a great deal of good work and which provides us with an excellent precedent.



The core objectives of the SVP are: to look at society from the perspective of people who are excluded

- to become more compassionate and caring
- to deepen our commitment to the elimination of poverty and suffering
- to open our hearts to people who are poor, in the hope that we will be personally transformed and inspired to work for the transformation of society in their interests.

The SVP is an international lay Christian voluntary organization dedicated to tackling poverty and disadvantage by providing direct and practical assistance to anyone in need. It was formed in Paris in 1833 by Frederic Ozanam and his student companions, inspired by the thinking and life of St Vincent de Paul. Membership is open to men and women, young and old, of any denomination.

Canon Hetherington sets the Society in context: "It has a reputation of looking after the poor, in a much wider sense than their financial means. Beggars often ask for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul; he was known for his concern for people, even placing this above formal religion. He shocked his contemporaries by saying that if you are worshipping in church and the need arises for an act of charity, you should stop what you are doing and attend to the person in need."

The main work of the society is to befriend and assist individuals and families in need through visits to domestic residences, care homes, hospitals, prisons and other institutions. In England & Wales, around 10,000 volunteer members make more than half a million visits each year. The SVP is active in 140 countries and has nearly 600,000 members worldwide.

The SVP runs an active programme of youth development in parishes, schools and universities. It also operates holiday schemes, accommodation for vulnerable people, disability projects, furniture stores, support centres, soup runs, deaf clubs, debt counselling, community transport and asylum care.

The most recent initiative is the creation of Community Shops providing resources and employment in areas of deprivation.

If you would like to find out more, please speak with Canon Hetherington or any member of the PPC.

A member of the St Vincent de Paul Society, Ricky Johnson, talked to all Masses on Sunday November 29th and a Parish meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 8th December to plan the re-institution of our Parish SVP



The Harvest Festival Supper

News from St Agnes

by **Terry O'Connor**



The Church of St Agnes is looking really

good after the hard work put into its external redecoration by Justin Kelly and his willing band of workers, to whom we give our grateful thanks.

The Parish Harvest Festival Supper after Mass held on the 3rd October in Liss Village Hall was a great success with a record attendance of 95! The Effenbergs and their team also deserve our appreciation for this, raising £572 in aid of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre.

It's worthwhile mentioning that a number of parishioners could not get to the 9 o'clock Mass if it were not for kind-hearted drivers such as Yvonne Elsworth who regularly brings Ann Judson and Maureen Carter from Forest Brow Residential Home in Liss Forest. Incidentally, visitors are always welcome at the Home to see Ann and Maureen. Finally, a reminder that St Agnes' Feast Day will be celebrated on the 23rd January.

OUR PARISH PRIEST

Holy Days of Obligation

by Canon Gerard Hetherington

At a lunch earlier this year the lady beside me spoke of her regret that the Ascension was no longer observed on a Thursday. She had no problem with Corpus Christi, but Ascension was wrong, it should be forty days.

The conversation reminded me of something I read on Holy Days some years ago. The author was concerned with the situation in America but some of his points might help us to come to terms with celebrating these feasts on a Sunday. (Holy Days in America. John A. Gurrieri. Worship Vol 54. No 5. September 1980)

Until the middle of the 17th century the regulation of these feasts was left to the local bishop. However, in 1642 Pope Urban VIII ruled that every diocese was to observe thirty four feasts as "Days of Precept". Among his motives for the ruling he listed social unrest and poverty. But the debate raged on. Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758) granted reductions to various countries, he was concerned that the feasts be properly observed, by the celebration of Morning and Evening Prayer as well as Mass. The idea of "getting Mass in" did not enter his thinking.

What about England and Wales at this time? Because we had no regular hierarchy we observed Pope Urban's thirty four feasts plus two: St. George and St. Thomas Becket. This arrangement lasted until 1777



Canon Hetherington celebrated his 75th birthday on November 1st. These two pages are by and about him.

It so happens that this year all the Holy Days have been kept on a Sunday; on the left, what the Canon thinks about it...

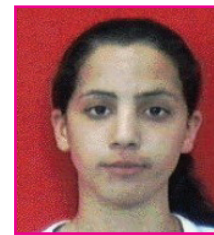
when Pope Pius VI reduced the number to eleven; these were the feasts we still keep along with Circumcision, Annunciation, St. George, Easter and Pentecost Mondays. This situation prevailed until 1969 when Pope Paul VI promulgated a new Liturgical Calendar. Since then many countries have stabilized or reduced the number of Holy Days.

This is only a cursory glance at a complex subject. We should remember that the purpose of Holy Days is to celebrate the mysteries of Christ, Mary and the saints in such a way that keeps alive and nourishes "the spirit of piety", and that Holy Days have varied from country to country, and from age to age for a variety of reasons. While their origin was to celebrate our faith they gave a welcome break from work, but as time went on their observance became a burden on the poor and, in our technical and material age, their observance has become extremely difficult.

Knight of the Holy Sepulchre

by Michael Blakstad

Our parish priest has a second life. For eleven years, Canon Hetherington has been a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, Chaplain (or Prior) of the Southern Section of the English Lieutenancy. This takes him on regular pilgrimages to the Holy Land, resulting in vivid first-hand accounts from the pulpit of the problems faced by Christians who have to live, work and pray in the most consistently turbulent region in the world today.



On his return from his latest visit, this October, he asked parishioners to intercede on behalf of Berlanty

Azzam, above, a Palestinian student in her fourth year at Bethlehem University, who had just been arrested, blindfolded and handcuffed by the Israeli military authorities as she tried to cross a West Bank Check Point despite the fact that she was carrying the required visa. She was held in detention and taken to Gaza late at night, just two months before she was due to take her finals, all too typical of the problems faced by students in this region.

The University is one of the many educational institutions supported by the International Order of Knights; the Canon asked us to petition the Israeli authorities to release Berlanty. At the time of going to press, the Israeli High Court

has called for a hearing of her case, with Berlanti in attendance, within the coming 7 days. It has also asked that the Israeli military resolve this matter quickly so that Berlanti could return to Bethlehem and continue her studies. The High Court was almost certainly influenced by emails and letters sent from this country, including those from our Parish.

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem was founded after the First Crusade in 1099. The Knights formed an 'Honour Guard' to protect the Holy Sepulchre. They were driven out of the Holy Land in 1291 and, along with other Orders which suffered the same fate, the Holy Sepulchre Order declined in strength and struggled to continue.

Pope Pius IX restored the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem in 1847 and the Order of the Holy Sepulchre was revived, to support the Patriarch. His diocese covers Israel, the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, and Cyprus, serving some 72,000 Catholics in 60 parishes. The money raised by the Order is vital for the parish clergy and the maintenance,



not only of Bethlehem University, but also of a Seminary at Beit Jala and 41 Patriarchal schools, one of which, near Nazareth, is wholly funded by monies raised by the Order. It has 900 pupils, over half of whom are Christians.



These schools get no state funding at all. The English Lieutenancy also supports the building of homes, aids social projects and provides loans for farming and craft work. The funds raised at the parish Harvest Supper were donated to the Order (see page 3).

The Canon describes the difficulties faced by Patriarch Fouad, pictured left, who struggles to stop Christians leaving the region as soon as they can afford it, usually leaving the Middle East for countries as far afield as the Argentine. "Ramallah" he says "was all Christian in 1948. Today it is almost entirely Muslim. Christian life is being squeezed out of the region."

"The Patriarch himself is often stopped and searched – it is impossible to forget the Israeli presence" he says. He stresses that the support provided by the Knights is not political "but financially, by our presence and by prayer." Canon Hetherington admits that he doesn't enjoy the travel "but being out

About to enter the Holy Sepulchre. In the front row, centre, the Lieutenant of the Southern Region Section, David Smith. Flanking Canon Hetherington, Fr Dominic Golding, the Spiritual Director, and Fr Gerald Freely from Westminster.



Canon Hetherington celebrating his 75th birthday with parishioners after Morning Mass at St Laurence. Terry O'Connor presented the Canon with a cheque for £500 from the Parish.

there, meeting the people, knowing what is going on. We are greeted, as the Knights have been for 900 years, by Franciscans chanting the Te Deum, which expresses our heart-felt feeling: thank God we've got here!"

Writing pens with a difference can be yours



Canon Hetherington has donated two new gold-plated writing pens (seen above) measuring 5¼" made in USA from the Vatican Library Collection to raise money for the Parish Organ Fund.

The Collection contains authentic recreations inspired by the masterpieces within the Vatican Library. One pen features a cameo of Our Lady highlighted with crystal accents and the other a beautifully detailed crucifix. Please send a sealed bid (from £15 upwards) marked 'Vatican Pens' for each of the pens to the Parish Office by 22nd December.

REFLECTIONS

Heavenly Vision by Pat Stamp

On Sunday 14th September 1997, the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, I saw an angel.



My sister-in-law, Lourdes, and I were staying with an old school friend, Dewi, and his wife, Magdalen, in Benllech in Anglesey. My family had been evacuated there from Eastleigh during the war, as my sister was so frightened during the air-raids, that the doctor advised my mother, that we should go to live in a quiet country place for the duration of the war. My father was in London working for the MOD as an instructor teaching electric welding. On the Sunday I drove Lourdes to Mass and didn't intend going into the church myself, as I hadn't been to Mass for some years. However, I thought Lourdes might feel awkward going in alone, so I decided to go in, sit in the pew but take no part.

It was when everyone was going up to receive Holy Communion, that I saw the angel at the altar looking down at me, and holding his hands out to me inviting me to come up also. I looked down, feeling completely unworthy and sinful. When I looked up again, he had gone. I have reproached myself so much, that I had denied God's Messenger.

I told no-one at the time, but when I got home to Petersfield and was helping at the Pop-In Club, I told fellow-volunteer, Lyn Norris, wife of the Revd Peter Norris, Minister of the United Reform Church, about my experience. Lyn said, 'Why don't you tell Father Murtagh?'

And I did, and was received back into St Laurence on 2nd October 1997. Thanks be to God.

A Tough Decision by Ann Saunders



The hardest decision in my life was when I had to book a place at a local residential home (Forest Brow in Liss Forest) for my mother who had dementia in the last 5 years of her life. Although I knew I was doing it for the very best reasons, I cried into my pillow the night before. My mother, never complaining, was there for 3 years before she died a year ago aged 90.

I gave the Home a potted version of my mother's life and what her interests were before the dementia started. I put up in her room an enlarged picture of herself aged 37 holding my younger sister. Like in the well-known *Mattie's Poem*, that picture reminded the staff to remember that my mother had a full life before dementia. When I used to visit, I found it calming for my mother to spend time looking at old photo-albums or giving her a facial and listening to sing-a-long music. It has been proved in an American study that regular doses of music can calm as well as stimulate dementia patients. Our roles were reversed and she was like a 2 year old who had to be directed and distracted rather than contradicted.

Through my experience with my mother, I now work for Help the Aged/Age Concern as an Expert by Experience and help inspect Residential and Nursing Homes for older people, which I find very rewarding.



Have you had a tough decision in your life which you could share with us? Please contact one of the editorial team.

Ann's mother Betty Priestley, aged 36, with baby daughter Susan

St John Mary Vianney and the Year of the Priest by Anna Luke

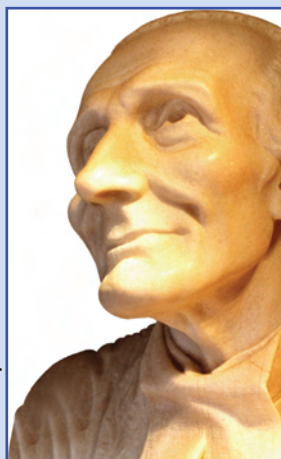


"The Priesthood is the love of the Heart of Jesus". (St John Vianney) On the back of the *Cure of Ars Prayer Book* which has been published to mark the 150th anniversary of St. John Mary Vianney, it says that he is "famous for his preaching, religious instruction, love of the Eucharist, zeal for souls, prayer life and love of God". He was a very humble parish priest who spent many hours in the confessional and would "preach or teach the basic truths of the Catechism". He was canonized in 1925 and declared Patron Saint of parish priests worldwide in 1929.

Our Priests are in need of our daily prayers and support. Without their self-sacrificing ministry we would not have Holy Mass, a sacramental life or

have so much to be thankful for. This is their year, the "Year of the Priests" proclaimed by the Holy Father, Pope Benedict. They are "the love of the Heart of Jesus".

Sacred Heart of Jesus – pray for us. Mary, Mother of the Clergy, pray for us. St John Vianney – pray for our Priests.



Christmas...The Slovakian Way

by Maria Cemova



Christmas in Slovakia is a family feast celebrating the birth of Jesus. There are different Christmas traditions depending on which part of the country you live in. Our main celebration is on Christmas Eve. We fast during the day as a preparation for the arrival of Jesus. All the family including grandparents sit together for a Christmas Dinner at about 5 pm.

At the Christmas table we keep an extra seat with cutlery, plates, and a napkin. This empty seat symbolises Jesus' presence within the family and to remind us of our dead relatives and the hungry or homeless. We start with a reading from the New Testament and a thanksgiving for all the blessings we have received during the year.

The first dish is a wafer (Oblatka) or home-made bread with honey and garlic, then sauerkraut soup

(Kapustnica), which is made from pickled cabbage, mushrooms, and sliced sausage. Other ingredients depend on the traditions of the part of the country where people live. The second main dish is fish with a potato salad, small cubes of potatoes with carrots, pickles, onion, hard-boiled eggs and mayonnaise. The fish is usually fried in bread-crumbs, but it can be prepared in different ways as well. Next, we eat "Bobalky" which is made from pieces of baked risen dough with poppy seeds followed by different type of cakes. The dinner is very rich, but the tradition is that every dish must be at least tasted!

In the old days, there was also a tradition of putting a chain around the table which should keep the family together for the forthcoming year.

After dinner, we collect our Christmas presents around the Christmas tree and later sing Christmas carols, finishing the day with the Midnight Mass. On Christmas Day, families sit together for lunch and then visit relatives and friends to wish them all the best.

Unfounded Prejudices

by Carmody Grey



Last year I started teaching Philosophy, Religion and Ethics at Bedales School. The subject is only a few years old at Bedales which has no chaplain, no chapel, and no 'religious' function(s) of any kind. The students are mostly dedicated secularists with an entrenched suspicion of 'religion'. They are often ignorant of the religious traditions of this country and of Europe as a whole, and have no sense of the way it has shaped their culture, language, ideas, and way of life.

The majority will orientate themselves like this: "I'm spiritual, but not religious"; or "I have a spirituality, but I don't like organised religion". They justify these views by a series of clichés, misconceptions, and Dawkins-esque stereotypes. Religion is about 'belief' and 'doctrine', but spirituality is about experience and personal fulfillment, seen to be exemplified by Eastern practices which do not demand intellectual assent, and which offer meditative experience leading to the achievement of personal goals. Semitic faiths are seen to be 'dogmatic' (pejoratively understood to mean that one is required to renounce intellectual freedom) and unspiritual because not focused on subjective experience.

To a Catholic with experience of practising and studying Eastern traditions, these caricatures are troubling in that they reflect neither history nor current practice in the East or the West. They misunderstand the categories 'religion'/'spirituality' and 'belief'/'experience' by presenting them as polar opposites when, of course, they are inextricably intertwined.

Given the standard portrayal of religion in the media and popular culture it is unsurprising that these views are now endemic among young people. Much of my time is spent deconstructing these prejudices because they destroy openness and curiosity and inhibit real learning. It is ironic that my students themselves begin to incarnate the very 'dogmatism' they think they are revolting against.



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TOUR OF THE RELICS OF ST THERESE

In September we welcomed the relics of St. Therese to England. When she was a child, she drew a map of England and pointed out two cities, Portsmouth and London; the reason why they were chosen at the beginning and end of the tour. This is a short explanation from “St. Therese of Lisieux – A Prayer Book”, published in preparation for the tour: “Before she died in 1897, Therese expressed the desire to work as

a missionary, spreading the faith to distant parts of the world. Whilst her early death prevented the fulfilment of this ambition, over the last fifteen years her relics have travelled to many countries, inspiring thousands of pilgrims to pray in their presence”. The following are personal experiences and reactions of those who visited the relics at Portsmouth and Westminster Cathedrals. Both are different, but nonetheless moving and thought provoking.



by David Blower



We were afforded the opportunity to prepare ourselves for the visit of St Therese’s Relics to St John’s Cathedral. In Our Lady Chapel the simple display of St Therese’s photograph and supporting leaflets including her book of prayer, helped me to understand more clearly her message to us all. To be able to see a photograph of a Saint and read of her simple and direct approach to her Faith (The Little Way), certainly helped me to feel closer to her.

I attended the mass with the Anointing of the Sick. The Cathedral was packed with people wishing to attend this special occasion. As the queue filed past the casket, every so often, a priest would say a short prayer or observation from the Sanctuary. It was surprising how effective this was in keeping people aware of the solemnity of the occasion. To me the service was fulfilling.

Early the next morning I attended the last part of the all night vigil. This was followed by the first Mass of the day. I found this whole experience moving - perhaps it was the atmosphere of peace and calm that contributed to this. Individuals had the opportunity to approach the casket and, unrushed, offer their private prayers and intercessions, and reverently touch the casket if they wished.

I felt the whole experience uplifting and since that time I have found St Therese’s prayer book helpful and thought provoking.



by Jane de Halpert

I was relieved to read a letter in the October edition of Port-

smouth People which questioned the recent tour of the relics of St Therese. I felt heartened that our Diocesan Magazine was prepared to print negative as well as positive response to this tour, for I too had strong reservations and had believed that the veneration of such relics had been relegated to the back burner of Catholic Practice.

Thinking to myself ‘Don’t knock it till you’ve tried it’, I visited Westminster Cathedral to join a multi-national group processing quietly and reverently past the casket. Feeling consciously self-righteous, I refrained from purchasing at the door either a rose or a special candle, thinking that the overt sale of such items was distasteful.

Afterwards I walked away in search of coffee and found myself questioning why I had not purchased a candle and decided that my behaviour was rather churlish; a candle being a symbol of continuing prayer which I frequently employ. The pull to coffee was strong but I turned around and re-entered the Cathedral. This time I witnessed the

kindness and attention the lady dispensing the roses gave to each purchaser and my candle was passed over with a lovely smile and the assurance that it had been blessed. I experienced a sense of communal prayer and peace and of the universality of our church.

Although relics still make me uneasy, I realise that we can differ in our outward expressions of faith yet be united in our core belief. I walked away again to enjoy that delayed cappuccino with a clear conscience.

St Therese’s Prayer for Humility

I implore thee, dear Jesus, to send me a humiliation whensoever I try to set myself above others. Thou knowest my weakness. Each morning I resolve to be humble, and in the evening I recognise that I have often been guilty of pride. The sight of these faults tempts me to discouragement; yet I know that discouragement is itself but a form of pride.

I wish therefore, O my God, to build all my trust upon thee. As thou canst do all things, deign to implant in my soul this virtue which I desire, and to obtain it from thy infinite mercy I will often say to thee: ‘Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto thine.’