

PARISH Magazine



St George's Church

The Heart of Christ  The Heart of Waddon

June / July 2023

Minimum donation
£1.00

Walking with God

Pilgrimages, retreats and other journeys

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Leaving, Arriving, Surviving *Angela Gluck*

'Take the child and his mother, and flee...' *Rosie Edser*

A Day to Remember *Denise Mead*

Regular service times

Croydon Minster

Morning Prayer, Monday – Friday 8.30am

Sunday

8.00am Said Eucharist

10.00am Sung Eucharist

5.30pm Evensong (Choral Evensong in term time)

Monday

11.00am Said Eucharist

Tuesday

11.00am Said Eucharist

5.30pm Choral Evensong sung by the Boys' Choir (term time only)

Wednesday

11.00am Said Eucharist

5.30pm Choral Evensong sung by the Girls' Choir (term time only)

Friday

11.00am Said Eucharist

St George's

Sunday

10.00am Eucharist

Thursday

10.30am Eucharist

Diary dates

Croydon Minster

June 2023

Sun	04	Sung Eucharist for Trinity Sunday, 10.00am
Thu	08	Sung Eucharist for Corpus Christi, 7.00pm
Sun	11	Children's Liturgy, 3.30pm: St Barnabas the Apostle
Thu	15	Deanery Synod, 8.00pm, venue TBA
Sat	17	Croydon Philharmonic Choir concert, 7.30pm
Thu	22	Windrush 75 event, 5.00–9.00pm, to include an Act of Worship
Fri	23	'From Pub to Pulpit' performance, 7.30pm
Sun	25	Sung Eucharist for Patronal Festival, 10.00am
Wed	28	Baptism Enquirers' Evening, 6.30pm

July 2023

Sat	01	'Ship Ahoy' concert, 3.00pm; tickets £10, under 18s free https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ship-ahoy-tickets-635387580357
Mon	03	Old Palace of John Whitgift School Prizegiving, 7.00pm
Thu	06	Old Palace School End of Term Assembly, 10.45am
Sun	09	Last Sunday of Choir term; no Choral Evensong Children's Liturgy, 3.30pm: The Parable of the Mustard Seed
Tue	18	Minster Junior School Year 6 Leavers' Service, 9.30am
Wed	19	Minster Infant School Year 2 Leavers' Service, 9.30am

Lectio Divina (prayerful reflection on the Gospel text for the coming Sunday) takes place on Tuesdays at 12.00 noon on Zoom. For the Zoom link please contact a.bond@croydonminster.org

Lunchtime Recitals take place at 1.10pm on Fridays until 7 July.
Please see posters in church for further details.

Journeys of Faith

Movement, journeys and pilgrimage are at the heart of the Christian experience. Before we were known as Christians, the disciples of Jesus were known as followers of 'The Way'. That implies that we are pilgrims, sojourners: the Scriptures are full of this language and imagery. This is not surprising given the experiences of the people of Israel, a nation itself formed by journeys and 'wanderings' including the defining experience of the Exodus from Egypt.

We have an excellent and packed edition of the magazine, reflecting on the journeys of life and faith. To begin, Fr Alan gives us an overview of pilgrimage, making the point that the journey of life and faith is a common human experience with manifestations in different faith traditions.

The distinctive nature of Christian pilgrimage is explored by Charles Bishop, as he shares the pilgrimages he made on his gap year within the UK, Europe and the crowning glory of pilgrimage, the Holy City of Jerusalem itself. Charles mentions the beautiful shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, and Deborah Miller writes in more detail about the shrine and her love of Walsingham (a love I share too, as a Priest Associate of the Shrine).

Another of our young adults, Charlie Watkins, reflects on the 'Word Alive' conference she attended with fellow Christian students from University. It is a great illustration of how we can explore new insights from the Bible when we step out of the familiar. Charlie's article called to my mind the verse from Psalm 119, 'Your word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path'. The Word of God in the Holy Scriptures is a companion and guide on the journey.

On 22nd June the Minster will host a service commemorating the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush in the UK and the immigration from the Caribbean that followed. Lynette Richards-Lorde was not on the Windrush itself, but 64 years

ago made the journey from Guyana to the UK. Lynette reflects on her career in nursing and her many achievements. Hers is a journey undergirded by her faith.

Coming from Ghana to the UK we get to know more about Adjoa Isabella. Her story speaks of the themes of journeys and finding a home. Fiercely proud of Ghana, she has found a home in the UK with her husband Christopher, and together, post-pandemic, they have found a home at the Minster.

Mention of the pandemic reminds us of when we couldn't get out on pilgrimage or any other journey. Jane Broughton Perry makes fascinating connections between the 'virtual pilgrimage' necessitated by the pandemic, which sounds so modern, and the practice of devotional pilgrimages in the Middle Ages for those for whom physical pilgrimage was not possible. For that 'virtual' pilgrimage or experience of the 'desert', Sue Kibler introduces us to the notion of the Poustinia from Russian orthodoxy; a destination and place of prayer, a sort of pilgrimage or retreat in life in order to foster contemplation and prayer.

Sometimes we are forced to travel away from home. Migration and fleeing home to seek refuge is a reality of the modern world – as it has been for millennia. Angela Gluck, Acting Chair of The Separated Child Foundation, with whom we have been working, shares stories of child migrants and the challenges they undergo. They are salutary accounts that will challenge how we think about migration and what seeking asylum is all about. This is echoed by Rosie Edser's reflection as she also links the experience of the migrant to the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt to escape the murderous King Herod.

Finally, following on from her article in the last edition, anticipating her attendance at the Royal Maundy, Denise Mead gives an account of her journey to York Minster for that momentous occasion: even a flying visit can stick long in the mind.

I am confident that this edition will feed your mind and encourage you on your journey of faith.

Fr Andrew

Pilgrimages and Life Journeys

Fr Alan

I've recently been watching the BBC Television series 'Pilgrimage', which traces a journey across Portugal by a group of celebrities who are walking along an ancient pilgrimage route to the shrine of the Virgin Mary at Fatima. Those taking part are a very diverse group of people of different ages, different backgrounds and of different faiths and none. At the beginning of the journey, they are unsure about how they will get on with each other, but as the journey proceeds and they get to know each other better the modern pilgrims start having profound conversations about their own faith or lack of it and how it helps them make sense of their own journey through life with its ups and downs. It's a fascinating programme and I commend it to you.

Pilgrimage is described as 'a spiritual journey to a holy place' and is undertaken for all sorts of reasons. In the 4th century Christians started making pilgrimages to Jerusalem on foot to visit the holy places associated with the life of Jesus, following on from the first royal visit by Helena, daughter of the emperor Constantine. Pilgrimages became very popular in the Middle Ages with pilgrims visiting shrines associated with the Virgin Mary or prominent saints as well as the holy cities of Jerusalem and Rome. The pilgrims would travel hundreds of miles on foot staying in special inns and other places along the way. The pilgrimage route to Canterbury to visit the shrine of St Thomas à Becket, who was murdered in the Cathedral, passes very close to Croydon and was made famous by Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales*. One of the most popular pilgrim routes is the Camino to Santiago de Compostela with a network of pilgrim routes crossing France and Northern Spain, following the way of St James the Great whose shrine is at the great cathedral church in Santiago. People went on pilgrimage for all sorts of reasons: to atone for their sins, to draw closer to God, to gain more merit in the afterlife or to search for a deeper meaning in life.

Pilgrimages largely ceased in England following the Reformation, however, there has been a revival in the last century with annual pilgrimages to Walsingham and Glastonbury becoming popular again along with pilgrimages to Rome and the Holy Land. Even though modern pilgrims often make the journey by air, train or coach rather than on foot, the experience can still be life-changing for many.

It is not only Christians, but people of other faiths who make regular pilgrimages. Jerusalem, for example, is sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims and all three faiths make regular pilgrimages to the holy city. Unfortunately, this can be a source of tension and conflict, as in recent months when violence has flared up again on the Temple Mount at the time of Passover which this year coincided with Easter and Ramadan. At times like this the words of Psalm 122 which encourage us to 'pray for the peace of Jerusalem' take on particular poignancy.

Muslims are strongly encouraged to go on the Hajj to Mecca, which is one of the five pillars of Islam, and Hindus often make pilgrimages to the River Ganges in India and other sacred sites.

There has been a growing interest in pilgrimage in recent years, especially amongst younger people who are searching for deeper meaning in a world that feels increasingly uncertain and confusing. Some of the ancient pilgrim ways in this country have become popular again, such as the route across the tidal causeway to Lindisfarne where pilgrims carry large wooden crosses at Easter or the pilgrim way to St David's in Wales where the shrine of Dewi Sant has been rebuilt. As the pilgrims make the journey together with others, they discover more about themselves both through the physical journey, which often involves walking long distances over difficult terrain, and the inner spiritual journey which helps them to reconnect with their own faith or discover faith in a new way.

Our common life together as members of the Church is a kind of pilgrimage as we seek to travel closer to God through Jesus Christ and to build each other up

by regular participation in worship, where we are fed for the journey with the sacred food of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist and learn more about our faith through the preaching and study of God's Word to us in the Scriptures.

In fact, certain aspects of the Church building itself reflect this sense of pilgrimage, especially the fact that our faith journey as Christians is always centred around the cross with many Church buildings being cross-shaped and having the stations of the cross in prominent positions around the walls. The font, the place of our baptism and the beginning of our Christian journey, is often located near the entrance to the Church and we travel through the building in the nave, the ship of salvation, to the altar at the other end where we meet with God in the sacrament and receive nourishment and blessing for the journey of life.

If you've never been on a pilgrimage, I would encourage you to go on one especially in the company of others who are also on the journey of faith and travel on foot, if possible! The outer journey we make, the friendships gained, the joys and tears shared can be a life-changing experience for many as we journey inwards to a greater experience and understanding of the God who meets us on our journey through life with all its challenges and opportunities for growth in the Spirit. Pilgrimages teach us the importance of listening and learning from others who are also on the journey, especially from those who are very different to us in belief and outlook. Pilgrimage also teaches us to look out and support each other on a journey which can involve many physical challenges and difficulties. It also teaches us to have greater respect and kindness for all people and indeed for all life on this precious planet that we inhabit and share together.

I end with a prayer of blessing for pilgrims of all faiths and none.

Travel well!

May flowers spring up where your feet touch the earth.

May the feet that walked before you bless your every step.

May the weather that's important be the weather of your heart.

May all of your intentions find their way into the heart of the Divine.

May your prayers be like flowers strewn for other pilgrims.

May your heart find meaning in unexpected events.

May friends who are praying for you carry you along the way.

May friends who are praying for you be carried in your heart.

May the circle of life encircle you along the way.

May the broken world ride on your shoulders.

May you carry your joy and your grief in the backpack of your soul.

May you remember all the circles of prayer throughout the world. Amen.

Pilgrimage

Charles Bishop

I believe that pilgrimage is an underemphasised part of our faith. Our earthly life is itself a journey, and travelling to holy sites reflects the enduring pilgrimage we make towards Christ and towards our salvation. I have been privileged to have visited many fantastic sites of pilgrimage, all of which have left a different mark upon me.

In effect, the first pilgrimage I undertook was not to one specific site but a six-month placement as Ministry Experience Scheme (MES) intern and pastoral

assistant at Christ Church Vienna. Whilst living in Austria I took my first pilgrimage proper, to Mariazell, a shrine of Mary. We joined a group of Romanian Greek Catholics in the stunning basilica for their celebration of the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, an alien yet fascinating experience. This was my first experience of Orthodoxy, and it was an illuminating one. I particularly remember offering prayers in the small grotto behind the Basilica, and making my petitions for others not present felt particularly meaningful.

In another small shrine to Our Lady, one so well loved of England's Christians, I felt a profound sense of belonging and freedom at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. My first experience was perhaps an unconventional one – while working as pastoral assistant at St Michael and All Angels' Croydon, I went in a chaperone role to the children's pilgrimage. Being as it is in the middle of nowhere, it is incredibly quiet and tranquil, and being connected to the roots of one's tradition is an amazing feeling. I returned more recently with other young Anglicans, and it was even more special. I felt deeply that my prayers at the Holy House were powerful and, aided by the intercession of the Blessed Mother, God really was listening. Of course, He always hears our prayers no matter where we are, but it is special to be in a place devoted purely to prayer.

I was extremely fortunate to join Fr Tim Pike and Fr Michael Dixon along with fellow young Anglicans on a trip to Chevetogne, a monastery in Belgium, and I am very grateful to the Philip Usher Fund for facilitating the trip. What is particularly fascinating about this place is that it is bi-ritual, a highly unusual set-up. In this monastery, both Latin and Byzantine Rite Catholics coexist in a fantastic display of mutual Christian flourishing in which ecumenism plays an important role. Since our trip was primarily to research Orthodoxy we joined the Byzantine monks for the majority of the Daily Hours, including Morning Prayer at the gruelling time of 6am lasting a punishing two hours, as well as evening prayer, similarly long before we joined the Latin Rite for Compline. We were fortunate to meet the Abbot, tour the incense factory and the library and discuss Orthodoxy

with our hosts. We were there for the celebration of the Theophany (Epiphany) and so we were able to be in the main church for the celebration of the Liturgy of St Basil, which only takes place on the most holy days of the year. Although initially the services felt long, by the final day when the three-hour liturgy concluded, one felt disappointed that it was over so soon! The early morning hours in a dimly lit crypt, adorned with icons of the Saints who have gone before us, the smell of incense, the light of the candles and above all of the heavenly chanting of the prayers and psalms by the brothers was truly awe-inspiring. Everything around you directed your prayer to the Holy Trinity. This was truly a most remarkable experience.

Finally, the mother of all pilgrimages. The Holy Land. The Holy City of Jerusalem. The place where the events of Christ's Passion, his death and his Resurrection took place. It is hard to put into the words the depth of awe and beauty that exudes from Jerusalem.

Walking past the Temple at night, I could barely wrap my head around the fact that Jesus Christ, Our Saviour, the Incarnate Word, YAHWEH in flesh had walked in the exact same place as me. It was truly humbling. Walking into the places that Christ knew, and where from the earliest days that Christians had worshipped him, was unbelievable. From the Shepherds' Field and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem to the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, all the way to the Temple Mount and Church of the Assumption and finally to the most holy site in all of Christendom, the Holy Sepulchre, going where Jesus had was the most amazing experience of my life. The Holy Sepulchre in particular was like nothing I had ever experienced, and holiness and solemnity exuded from every pore. If there is one pilgrimage to take, it is of course to Jerusalem.

The photo on the following page shows Charles kneeling in prayer at the Stone of Anointing in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The stone is the place where Christ's body was laid after being removed from the cross and prepared for burial.



The Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

Deborah Miller


The Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham is a Church of England shrine church built in 1938 in Walsingham, Norfolk, England. Walsingham is the site of the reputed Marian apparitions to Richeldis de Faverches in 1061. The Virgin Mary is therefore venerated at the site with the title of Our Lady of Walsingham.

It is a beautiful part of England. It is called England's Nazareth. As soon as I arrive, I feel myself relax, especially when I sit in the beautiful gardens and listen

to the beautiful church bells. There are many walks nearby passing through the beautiful countryside, and I usually spend at least a few hours of my retreat visiting Wells-next-the-Sea or Cromer so I can smell the sea air (and have an ice cream!).

When I first started to visit in 2009, I would attend all the church services so that I could work out which I found most fulfilling. As you can see, there are many services that you can attend on a weekend retreat.

I love the Saturday evening service at 8.15pm, the procession through the grounds with Our Lady is very moving and the Healing Ministries is a beautiful end to the service.



THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM
TIMES OF WEEKEND SERVICES
(from 6 May)


Saturday
7.30am Mass
2.30pm Sprinkling
5.00pm Shrine Prayers (livestream)
6.00pm Pilgrimage Mass
8.15pm Homily, Procession of Our Lady, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and Healing Ministries

Sunday
7.30am Mass (livestream)
2.30pm Sprinkling, Procession of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction and Last Visit
5.30pm Evening Prayer
6.00pm Shrine Prayers (livestream)

GUILD OF ALL SOULS CHAPEL

Saturday
10.00am Mass

Sunday (except as below)
5.00pm Mass
First Sunday in every month
4.30pm Mass


www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk

I would recommend a retreat to Walsingham to switch off totally from everyday life and focus on your journey with God. Whenever I have been, I have felt refreshed and ready to face the day-to-day challenges that life brings when I return home.

This photograph shows the ruins of the mediaeval Priory of Our Lady of Walsingham. The grounds are opposite the present day Anglican Shrine and every time I visit, I am left in awe of just how immense the ruins are.



Word Alive 2023

Charlie Watkins

In April of this year I travelled to Pontins Prestatyn in North Wales to attend 'Word Alive' with some of my friends from the University of Chichester's Christian Union. 'Word Alive' is an annual evangelical conference for Christians of all ages, with different activities and lectures for different age groups and interests; an opportunity for Christians from all over the UK to come together for a week to encounter God through Bible reading, prayer and song. The theme of this year's conference was 'Walking in the Word'.

The style of worship that I have encountered as a member of the Christian Union is very different from the Anglican tradition that I grew up in – my friends always find it funny that I don't know most of the worship songs that are central to the CU worship, apart from one or two that I learnt at primary school. My chalet at 'Word Alive' was next to the marquee where the children's worship sessions were held, and every day I was woken up at 8am by the worship band doing the sound check for the same song. I still don't know the words of this song, but I shall never forget the tune!

Each day there was a wide range of seminars to choose from, with something for everyone. The seminars included topics about spreading the Word of God in daily life, the current debate surrounding LGBTQ+ people in Christianity, and practising Christian worship in places where Christians are persecuted. One of the seminars I went to was about Biblical counselling and how to support someone who is struggling with mental health problems with the guidance of God and his Word in the Bible. I found this very beneficial, as mental health awareness

is increasingly important and it was interesting to think about how parts of the Bible can offer guidance on dealing with problems such as anxiety and depression. My friends and I found it surprising how parts of the Bible can be linked to mental health problems because mental health awareness seems a more modern construct, but the speaker was able to draw parallels between different lessons in the Bible and the mental health struggles that so many people face today.

A highlight of 'Word Alive' was the evening worship, when everyone of all age groups came together in the main marquee to sing and listen to someone preach about a section of the Bible. On the penultimate day the preacher spoke about the biblical figure of Hannah and her struggle with infertility, and he managed to make it a really powerful talk for everyone in the marquee. He spoke about how it is good to cry sometimes because life has its challenges, but also how God answers our prayers but not always in the ways we expect. It was a very intense, emotional worship and many people did cry, but there was a sense of release and safety in doing this among fellow Christians and friends.

Each evening our university group had encounter groups – small group discussions every day about what we had learnt, heard and been up to over the past day. I think we all liked having that time set aside because it allowed us to process everything that we had experienced. The days were busy and filled with things to do, so it was good to have these calm moments to reflect on and discuss everything with friends. It allowed us to share what we had learned from the seminars that we had each attended, and chat about issues that had piqued our interest.

It was a special experience to be in a setting where I could focus on worshipping God freely with friends. There were opportunities for us all to discuss what we had heard in the lectures in our encounter groups, but we also had time to hang out on the beach, play beach games with our friends from the University of Portsmouth's Christian Union and have dinner together. Every evening all the

students from Chichester would gather in my chalet, coming together to prepare and eat our dinner. The Christian fellowship was one of the most enjoyable aspects of my time at 'Word Alive', learning more about God with my friends as well as having time to cool down and reflect on what my faith means to me.

My Journey

Lynette Richards-Lorde

28th February 2023 marked 64 years since my arrival in Plymouth, UK on my journey from my home, 47 Palm Street, Georgetown, Guyana, South America. I was born and brought up there with my parents, an older sister and two younger brothers. On 7th February 1959 I left behind family and friends from high school, art and music classes and my church, St Sidwell's.



After attending an inspirational talk by a Guyanese nurse who trained in the UK, I met Revd Canon Derek Goodrich who had arrived from the UK and was appointed to St Sidwell's as our priest. He encouraged me and persuaded my parents that nurse training in the UK was the best and Somerset would be a good starting point for me. His parents in Norbury offered to help in directing me to Taunton, Somerset.

I worked as a Civil Servant with the Ministry of Health and was able to save for two fares, £100 each for my sister and I to travel together. Our journey started on 7th February 1959 on SS Orangestad. Three weeks later we landed at Plymouth. We were met by the British Council, who directed us to our respective destinations: my sister to Oxford to Cowley Hospital and I to the Goodrichs' warm and hospitable home in Norbury.

On 14th March I left London and travelled to Taunton, Musgrove Park Hospital. I was warmly received by Matron, introduced to fellow students, measured for my nurse's uniform and given my own room. I was told that my salary would be £9 a month after board and lodging was paid for.

Preliminary nursing school training was three months in the classroom and practical rooms. After successfully completing this preliminary training, one was ready to work on the wards. A 28-bedded female surgical ward was my first ward experience.

At the end of my comprehensive three-year training, I successfully gained the top prize as the best practical nurse of the year (1962). This coincided with an invitation from the Lord Chamberlain's office to attend the Garden Party for Commonwealth students in July 1962 at Buckingham Palace.

Six months after qualifying as a State Registered Nurse, I journeyed from Taunton to Cheltenham Hospital and undertook Part 1 Midwifery, followed by going to Birmingham to complete my certification as a State Certified Midwife in December 1963. I returned to Guyana to work but sadly the country was having political problems, so I was advised to return to the UK.

I married and had my daughter in December 1964.

Professionally I have always loved community midwifery, so I worked in Redhill, Sutton and Croydon from 1965 to 1974 and delivered over 2000 babies. In 1974 I was promoted to management, taking the post of Nursing Officer in Greenwich District Hospital.

Because inclusiveness and principles of providing personalised care for mothers and babies have always been enshrined in my care values, when the opportunity came in Wandsworth Health Authority for me to apply for a post as Senior Nursing Officer, responsible for hospital, community and teaching services, I applied and was successful in securing the post. Rapid promotion was given to me as nine

months later I was appointed as Divisional Nursing Officer, the first black Divisional Nursing Officer responsible for all midwifery services in Wandsworth and responsible for commissioning the then new St George's Hospital Lanesborough Wing.

Articles were written in the nursing press about the personalised care mothers received. In 1987 Oklahoma City Hospital, USA contacted Wandsworth health services asking for me to be sent to Oklahoma on an exchange visit for a lecture tour to provide information about my service in the UK. The UK government invited me as a Director to attend a Social Services Committee meeting to provide information about personalised care. After this meeting it was adopted as good midwifery practice for units.

I was promoted to the post of Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services in 1988, then due to another reorganisation in the NHS I was successful in being appointed as Unit General Manager for all Women and Children's Services. All staff including medical staff working in the unit were responsible to me.

Voluntary work has been an important part of my life. I was co-founder of the Association of Guyanese Nurses and Allied Professionals, which was set up to aid Guyana's healthcare and education of nurses. I was a volunteer librarian and midwifery lecturer at the Institute of Child Health. I took part in a research project conducted by the Department of Health and Croydon health services, investigating low birthweight in African and Afro-Caribbean babies. I have been an active member and former President of Soroptomist International Croydon and Barbados; an active member of Inner



Lynette (front row, right) took part in 'Antiques Roadshow: Nursing Special' (BBC, broadcast 26 February 2023)

Wheel and former President of the International Club, Croydon branch; a member of the Croydon BME Forum; and an active member of Mothers' Union, St Mary Magdalene Croydon branch.

In 1992 I decided to take early retirement and undertake projects in the UK and Guyana. Project Audiology developed an ENT countrywide service in Guyana with the help of The Commonwealth Society for the Deaf (Sound Seekers). £250,000 was raised in the year 2000. In 2005 I was recalled by the Department of Health to go to the European Commission in Strasbourg to represent the UK on a committee looking at Inequalities in Health Care and Services, and I worked there for two years. In 2008 I worked to set up a breakfast club, library, computer classes and a kitchen garden in my mother's village school in Guyana. (Before this, children were going to school without breakfast.)

I have been honoured with many awards, including:

- * Best Practical Nurse of the Year, 1962
- * Guyana Government Certificate of Recognition for work done in the UK and Guyana, 2008
- * Soroptimist International Daphne Whitmore Humanitarian Award, 2009
- * Ambassador of Peace, 2015
- * Three Inspire Awards from Diabetes UK for my work as a Diabetes Community Champion and Risk Assessor
- * Windrush Award for my contribution to the development of UK health services

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You can read more about Lynette's life and work in:

Many Rivers to Cross: Caribbean People in the NHS 1948–69, Ann Kramer (Department of Health, 2006)

47 Palm Street, Ruthy Richards-Levi (Yummies Partnership, 2019)

Nursing a Nation, Jak Beula (Nubian Jak, 2021)

Getting to know...

Adjoa Isabella

Tiffany Willmer

Isabella was born in Accra, Ghana, the second child in a family of five girls and two boys. Her father was a senior policeman, with a background before that in the Royal Signal Corps. Throughout her childhood, Bella and her sisters were often introduced to people who couldn't remember all their names as 'the Chief Inspector's daughter'.



The Chief Inspector was a prosecutor for Ghana Police in the '70s and '80s. A very religious man, he often held prayer meetings and encouraged prayer and Bible reading at home. He was also a feminist, believing that his daughters no less than his sons should have an excellent education and employment prospects. Their home was full of books and Bella remembers an atmosphere of general 'educational stimulation'. They also discussed cases due to be heard in court the next day.

After leaving the Anglican Girls School her secondary education took place at a boarding school which permitted very few visits home during the year. The cooped-up girls inevitably turned to mischief to generate excitement and Bella developed a reputation for being the silent 'brains' lurking behind these plots, always just out of reach of the avenging arm of school authority. On more than one occasion her father was called in to account for her behaviour but ended up giving the teacher a stern talking-to for accusing his daughter of 'crimes' for which there was no evidence whatsoever. He was accordingly labelled a 'difficult'

policeman by the school and they eventually had to give up calling him in, foiled by the joint skill of this father-daughter team in repelling all attempts to make the misdemeanour stick.

Sudden change to the whole family's life came when Bella left school. A coup in Ghana brought political turmoil and danger for many prominent citizens, including members of the judiciary. Her father narrowly managed to avoid arrest, but did lose his job, resulting in Bella's mother having to become the main breadwinner for a while. Among the general chaos and near anarchy in the capital, most universities shut down.

Bella therefore had to think of a different location to pursue her studies and opted to come to London to study journalism. The move was made easier by the fact that her junior sister Hilda was already living in London and the two were able to flat-share. The girls also had other relatives working and studying in the UK at the time.

On graduating from college, Bella found there were no jobs to be had in journalism and started doing care work to make ends meet, including working as a keyworker for adults with special needs. She went to church at St Stephen's Norbury for a number of years before finding a new spiritual home at Holy Saviour Church, West Croydon. Though she did not know it at the time, this was to be the place where Bella would meet her future husband, Christopher.

He was a member of the choir at Holy Saviour and initially stood out to Bella for two reasons. On the positive side, he had an excellent tenor voice. On the negative, he persisted in coming to church in shorts during the summer – something Bella rather disapproved of initially. Luckily one day they bumped into each other in the street, got talking, and discovered that they hit it off extremely well. Bella maintains that after a while, as Christopher was very persistent and her mother who was visiting the UK at the time advised, “Adjoa, you can't ‘shake this man off’ ”, she ended up marrying him.

Meanwhile Bella had not forgotten her professional aspirations. She decided to get some careers advice and was recommended to start training as a social worker. Christopher encouraged Bella to pursue this and before long she enrolled at Bromley College of Technology and then Brunel University.

The degree course was extremely practical, and Bella found herself rapidly gaining experience of placements at youth courts, prison visits, street drug projects and real-life children's safeguarding cases. Within days of graduating, she was straight into her first job as a children's social worker, for Kingston Council. She moved on to Wandsworth, where she worked as a duty social worker in a child protection team. This involved joint visits with Police, and extensive court work to apply for emergency protection orders to remove children from abusive families while applications for care orders were in progress.

In the following years, Bella worked for various local authorities as a practice manager and also as an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), responsible for monitoring the progress of children in the care of local authorities. She was a head of Service at the 'front door' of Croydon Social Services, where she had the role of overseeing managers and spearheading Croydon's improvement journey following an OFSTED inspection. She worked as Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at a county council where she managed investigations of allegations against adults who worked with children. She was recently interviewed by the BBC after the tragic death of a child.

Bella has been to quite a few churches in Croydon over the years but started coming to Croydon Minster once it reopened after the Coronavirus lockdown. She has found it to be very welcoming and can often be heard on a Sunday morning doing a Bible reading or leading intercessions.

Poustinia

Sue Kibler

The origin of this word is the Russian for 'desert' and refers to a room or cabin where a person goes to be alone with God. I am lucky enough to have been able to create such a space in the summerhouse in my garden (which Fr Andrew has visited). Hence the request for an article for this edition of the Magazine which is themed around pilgrimages, retreats and prayer.

Although I personally find it helpful to have a special place to go to be with God, it certainly isn't necessary for everyone. I suspect there are as many ways to pray as there are people praying, as prayer is about having a relationship with God. Just as no two human relationships are the same, so each of us will have a different way of entering into that all-important connection with the Almighty. And just like in human relationships such as friendship, marriage or parenthood, the relationship is there whether we are conscious of it or not as we go about our daily lives. As in human relationships, the quality and depth of connection depends on the time and attention given. A wise spiritual guide once said to me, 'We have all been given 24 hours every day. How we spend that time is down to us – we can choose how available we make ourselves to God.'

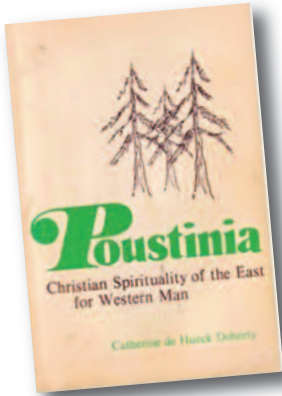
Many of us lead very busy lives, but that doesn't mean prayer isn't happening. In his book *The Word in the Wilderness* (2014), Malcolm Guite included a poem by Kelly Belmonte called 'How I Talk to God' which illustrates this:

Coffee in one hand
leaning in to share, listen:
How I talk to God.
'Momma, you're special.'
Three year old touches my cheek.
How God talks to me.

While driving I make
lists: done, do, hope, love, hate, try.
How I talk to God.
Above the highway
hawk: high, alone, free, focused.
How God talks to me.
Rash, impetuous
chatter, followed by silence;
How I talk to God.
First, second, third, fourth
chance to hear, then another:
How God talks to me.
Fetal position
under flannel sheets, weeping
How I talk to God.
Moonlight on pillow
tending to my open wounds
How God talks to me.
Pulling from my heap
of words, the ones that mean yes:
How I talk to God.
Infinite connects
with finite, without words:
How God talks to me.

Reproduced by kind permission of Kelly Belmonte; <https://allninemuses.wordpress.com>

A Poustinia can be a physical space where we go to meet God, but it can also be an inner place of the heart where we enter into 'kenosis' – the emptying of oneself in order to listen to God.



Catherine Doherty writes about this in her book *Poustinia: Christian Spirituality of the East for Western Man*, first published in 1975. This book had a big impact on me as I sought to learn contemplative prayer (the prayer of silence). I knew nothing of this sort of prayer until I met someone who practised it. I was the ward sister of a terminal care unit at a London hospital; the nearby Catholic seminary sent its student priests to the hospital to learn pastoral care. The man who was assigned to my ward was so Christ-like – so compassionate, loving and full of the Holy Spirit – I realised he was the sort of Christian I longed to be. We had many in-depth conversations and he taught me about contemplative prayer – the prayer of silence in God’s presence. This changed my life!

We live in a culture that values achievement, productivity and money. In short, *doing*. The life of prayer calls us to *being*. It is in coming to a stop, stilling our chattering minds and opening our hearts to be available to God in silence that we begin to know ourselves as we truly are. It matters more who we ‘be’ in our relationship with God than what we ‘do’. We can keep rituals, say prayers, fast, and do any number of good works – but at the end of the day (in my personal experience) it is being in silence with the One who created us and loves us unconditionally that brings abundant life.

The path of contemplative prayer takes commitment to follow, but it is not a path of striving for achievement of a spiritual goal. Rather it is a continual letting go, a setting aside of intention towards progress; a willingness to be available in love even when it feels there is nothing and no one there. It is a place of trust and ‘yes’. In my experience it is also the place of the living water that Jesus spoke about in his conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4.7–15). Just as in physical reality there is no life without water, so in spiritual reality we need the quiet desert of the Poustinia to receive the living water always being offered to us.

Pilgrimage by Proxy

Jane Broughton Perry

Throughout the centuries, worshippers have wished to go on pilgrimages to holy sites, as part of their Christian witness. For many this has been a fulfilled wish, but for others an impossible dream.

In the late Middle Ages, the opportunities for nuns and other religious women (in particular) to travel abroad were mostly non-existent due to restrictions on their movements and lack of finance.

Thus the practice grew up of going on virtual or imaginary pilgrimages while remaining in their cloister. Exercises were devised with the aid of accounts written by actual pilgrims, and using devotional objects and images: the women could walk around their convent, re-enact events, or just imagine the route. Visiting the Stations of the Cross was a way of walking in Christ's footsteps. Contemplation and prayer could be focussed in this way.

More recently, especially since Covid-19 and increased use of online platforms, modern day would-be pilgrims can do something similar. The shrine at Lourdes has hosted the first worldwide online virtual pilgrimage, and a virtual walk of the Camino de Compostela can be taken.

A quick search on Google reveals possibilities for both Christians and followers of other major religions to complete a digital pilgrimage. This can also be viewed as a low-carbon footprint approach to practising one's devotions.

* * *

For further reading on this subject, try: *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent: Imagining Jerusalem in the late Middle Ages* by Kathryn M. Rudy (2011) – out of print but available in some libraries.



Leaving, Arriving, Surviving

Angela Gluck, Acting Chair: The Separated Child Foundation

His mother packed food and clothes for him and wept profusely when he left. Her husband had been killed and Khalid, at 13, was her oldest. She couldn't keep him with her because she had to keep him *safe*. In Afghanistan, dangers were too many and prospects too few, so there *was* no other way. Still, it broke her heart to see him go and he could hardly tear himself away.

He had no clear idea where he was heading – it was simply anywhere but there – and he hardly knew much more when he arrived. There were scorchingly hot days and bitterly cold nights. He met up with other boys, they walked together at night, for safety, and slept during the day, taking turns to stand guard. There were times he went days on end without food, times when he was robbed, times when he was brutally attacked, times when he was betrayed.

He'd been on the road for over a year and a rocky road it was: difficult, dangerous, dirty and distressing – walking, swimming, hitching, clinging under or on to trains, crouching in trucks. When a lorry finally offloaded him and the authorities picked him up, he had only the clothes he stood up in: dirty and dishevelled, reeking of diesel and excrement. He was cold and hungry, tired and frightened, bewildered and wretched.

* * *

Some days Asmarina wanted to be a teacher. Some days she wanted to be a doctor. They were both big ambitions for a girl in Eritrea. At 14, she was the eldest of six children who all lived with their mother and – until he was conscripted

into the army – their father, too. But they hadn't seen him in five years or heard any news in three. Where was he and what had happened to him? It was a worrying and demanding time. Life was tough for all the villagers: the hard soil had to be raked for planting, wood had to be chopped for cooking and water had to be fetched from the river. But Asmarina didn't mind the long walk to *school* – because she loved learning, because she wanted to make the most of her life and because she dreamed of changing the world for the better – either through education or medicine, she couldn't decide.

Yet a heavy cloud hung over her and her friends. They'd reached the age when they'd probably be conscripted. It was supposed to be for a limited period but it could last years and years. She didn't want to kill people: she wanted to *teach* or *heal* them. Besides, they'd heard that the army posed particular dangers and horrors for girls and young women. Yet there was an alternative to the military: a wedding, because married women – no matter their age – were not conscripted. It was her mother's solution because it would keep her safe and it would keep her close by. But it wouldn't do for Asmarina: what kind of choice was that – between marriage and the military? She and three friends decided on a third option: *move*.

Their journey took them into southern Ethiopia and on to Sudan, scrounging for food on good days and petrified of forest hyenas on bad nights. They knew that others had trod that path before them because they saw corpses along the way. They finally reached Libya from where an overcrowded and unseaworthy boat was sailing to Sicily. The risk was enormous but “We've come this far...” Asmarina decided.

When Asmarina arrived in the UK, her tender age was disputed by the authorities who initially designated her as being over 18 years. Along the way, she had indeed had many *adult* experiences.

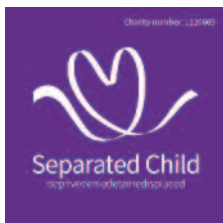
Separated children are lone refugee youths, some orphaned, some wrenched from their families as they fled for freedom, some escaping – like Asmarina – and some – like Khalid – sent away by their parents from their homeland in the hope of a safer, longer life. What they all share is an experience of *rupture* from their past, *turmoil* in the present and *doubt* about the future.

What separated children need when they reach their destination is what we *all* need after a long journey: toiletries, a towel, underwear, clothes... The difference is that separated children *lack all these things*. After the humiliation and the hardship that they've suffered, we want to offer them comfort and dignity. That's why we provide various types of packs, including the Essentials Packs created by some of you in the hall at Croydon Minster in March and last October. We think of them as 'a hug in a bag'.

Separated children also lack security and dignity, identity and community and that's where our growing educational, social and cultural programmes come in, like the Club Class we hold every Monday in Croydon.

* * *

The support we've had from the Croydon Minster community over the past year has given The Separated Child Foundation the opportunity to grow and develop, and to support even more children like Khalid and Asmarina to rebuild their lives. You can read more about the work of the SCF at www.separatedchild.org



JOB OPPORTUNITY

The Separated Child Foundation is looking for a youth worker to join their Club Class programme in Croydon. This is an exciting opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of separated children and young people.

To find out more please visit <https://separatedchild.org/get-involved/work-for-us/>

'Take the child and his mother, and flee...'

Rosie Edser

You have four minutes to grab your passport, currency, GHIC card and leap into the car. This time you're not rushing to Gatwick shoving clothes into a holdall to catch a holiday flight whose date you mistook (ahem, that's never happened in my household). No, this time is far more stressful; anything you've forgotten you will have to do without permanently and may be destroyed or used to track you. I'm always impressed by Asylum Seeking mums who have thought in that moment of panic to photograph their family vaccination records. I suspect my mind would gravitate to keepsakes and sentimental things. Judith Kerr (author of *Mog*, *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* and *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*) was delighted to discover some of her childhood paintings in the emergency bag her mum had packed when they were fleeing Nazi Germany. A reminder of happy times past, cherishing of a talent or perhaps a symbol of hope for the future. Some Turkish mums prioritise bringing one beautiful coffee pot or tea jug nestled in the clothes suitcase. I was treated once to a beautiful poignant family Turkish tea drinking session in Haling Grove Park. As we watched the sun glint on the brown liquid, listened to the gurgle of it being poured with a flourish into tiny glasses and passed around with sunflower seeds, I recognised a hospitality ritual that rooted them to home. I wonder what happened to their other possessions. Had they been dashed to the ground by enemies searching the cupboards? Or carefully redistributed among family and friends?

I often wonder about this moment in the Holy Family's flight to Egypt. What did Mary do with the gold, frankincense and myrrh that they'd just been given by the Magi? How bulky were those containers? Could they be swiftly tied into an efficient bundle on a saddle bag? Were the caskets an intrinsic part of their gift or could they be decanted into something more practical with Jesus' spare clothes tucked around them? Meanwhile was Joseph stereotypically jingling the donkey

harness, rolling his eyes and urging her to hurry? Or perhaps he'd woken some family member and pressed the expensive gifts into their hand with a swift explanation while Mary stirred her sleepy son and threw Palestinian toddler weaning snacks into the 1st-century equivalent of Tupperware.

Matthew's account of their flight really is very similar to the experience of many of the refugee families arriving in Croydon (obviously minus the Divine element): '...an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying, "Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to seek the child to destroy him." So he got up and took the child and his mother during the night and went away to Egypt.' (Matthew 2.13–14)

Imagine that nocturnal scene. Did Joseph literally shake Mary awake, tell her about the dream, grab a purse of coins and run out of the back gate? Was Mary by now accustomed to the unexpected, immediately rubbing the sleep out of her eyes and starting to pack trying to visualise what they'd need for life in Egypt? How unexpected was all this? Had she and Joseph seen it coming, guessing how paranoid Herod might react to a potential rival and making a point of washing their travelling cloaks and quietly ensuring their walking sandals were in good repair? Or was it a horrible shock fuelled by adrenaline and cortisol dreading the violent soldiers' imminent arrival?

I wonder too about the Holy Family's means of transport. (I remember Bishop Jonathan's consternation when a teenage boy seeking to join his family fell off the lorry wheel arch he had been clinging to at a petrol station in Oxford and was tragically crushed.) Or might they have ended up on the equivalent of a small inflatable boat across the Nile? A few years ago those families who felt comfortable discussing their journey would talk about how cold it had been in the refrigerator lorry with the strawberries. There was often a moment of connection as fellow travellers with less English cottoned on to the conversation topic and mimed shivering. Sometimes the mothers would describe how awful it had been

trying desperately to keep their small children from making any sound at crucial moments on the journey. Now hardly anyone seems to have arrived by lorry. Recently a very organised mum fleeing domestic servitude pointed out that since their small boat crossing, her son (currently building a Duplo tower) and her daughter (hiding her face in the buggy) were both now terrified of water and needed coaxing to use the shower. Those fleeing danger have always had to undertake dangerous journeys. They are in good company.

Rosie's official role is Croydon Refugee Day Centre Trustee for welcome and education and she has worked with them in various capacities for 20 years. Her Refugee welcome blog can be found at <https://doyouspeakemoji.wordpress.com/>

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Deadline for the August / September 2023 issue:

Thursday 13 July

Please email contributions to magazine@croydonminster.org

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A Day to Remember

Denise Mead

Following on from my piece in the last magazine, I wanted to share a little of the Royal Maundy Ceremony with you.

Irene and I left for York on the Wednesday of Holy Week, the day before the Royal Maundy Ceremony. As we approached York on the train, the heavens opened and it actually didn't stop raining until the Thursday afternoon as we were preparing to leave. We located our hotel, a slightly plusher one than we would normally stay in, and on inspection there was



a small box on the dressing table which contained two white corsages with a note from my husband Melvyn wishing us a wonderful time. After unpacking, and despite the rain, we decided to go and explore to work out our route to the Minster for the morning, as timings would be tight. We had been asked to be seated by 8.45am for an 11.00am service!

Surprise, surprise, we got lost, but had fun doing so. Neither Irene nor I have any real sense of direction outside our own areas but by asking a local person we eventually found the Minster. I was a little surprised that there was no Evensong nor anything devotional for the Wednesday in Holy Week. After a very tasty handmade pizza, and better directions for the morning, we headed back to our hotel.

We awoke very early on Thursday morning, breakfasted, titivated and set off. Tasked with not bringing anything, other than a small handbag, was just impossible when it's bucketing down and your best shoes are suede. So armed with my fascinator, umbrella and shoes, we set off. This time we didn't get lost

but negotiated the Minster and joined the lengthy security queue. Next was the queue to gain entry. The welcomer, noticing that Irene has a walking stick, allowed us in via a different door with no queue and told us to head east to the welcome table, where the name badges and sign in sheets were. Once signed in we were shown to our allocated seats on the South side of the Minster. Recipients sat in the front row, companions just behind. Each seat was named and had an Order of Service on it! The vergers had obviously been hard at work early that morning to get this all set up. We were told that, should we need them, the toilets would close at 10.15am. As the seats began to fill up, there was a chatty air of expectancy.

As ever, it is a small world. Odette Penwarden from Southwark Cathedral, another recipient, floated by and then Chris Watson, who is branch treasurer for our particular branch of the Church of England Guild of Vergers, just happened to walk past so stopped to have a quick chat, well more of a mini branch committee meeting. Chris is also on the verger team at St James' Palace, although they are not referred to as vergers, he is called 'The Groom of the Vestry'.



Following the Minster and Ecumenical Processions, the grand West Doors of the Minster opened heralding the entry of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, who joined the procession followed by the Royal Almonry Procession, and then the service began. During the service the Distribution of Maundy Gifts began with distribution to the South side of the Minster. King Charles, followed by the Archbishop of York, the Yeomen of the Guard carrying the Dishes containing the Alms and the Keeper of the Closet who is Martin Castledine, the

Dean's Verger at Westminster Abbey, processed down the main aisle where more

recipients were positioned on the ends of the rows, across the cross aisle, then up along the south aisle. Each time the King shook hands with the recipient, said, "Thank you for all you do for your church and your community", handed the recipient two purses (a red one and a white one), and moved along. The service continued and the King then repeated this process on the North side of the Minster while the Choirs of York Minster and His Majesty's Chapel Royal, St James' Palace, sang gloriously for each ceremony.



Once the service was over, the King was whisked away and despite there being several official photographers, sadly the photographers never caught the block we were seated in. We were under strict instructions not to take photos of the King, which was a real shame as he was so close. I personally didn't fancy being whisked off to the Tower for disobeying this rule.

Minster Records

Baptism

Lottie-Mae Mitchell, Shane Mitchell, Angel Chase

R.I.P.

Alan Lewin, Fr Peter Smith, Kevin Ralley, Bob Waters, Dennis Blaquiere,
Charlie Ellacott, Deryc Sands, Ndidi Ikejiani, Eileen Walkin, Philip Dunne

After a quick cuppa, where the café owner took our picture for his Instagram page, we went back to the hotel to collect our luggage and then off to the station to start the journey home. Both Irene and I had Maundy Thursday services to get back to.

I can't thank Irene enough for choosing me to be her companion. For her friendship and the fact that we never stopped talking from the moment we met at King's Cross until the moment we parted at King's Cross. For Melvyn for encouraging me to go. For both our Vicars who trusted us enough to be back in time to serve our own churches on Maundy Thursday. For the girls' choir matrons who covered for me. This will truly be a time I will never forget.

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