

Little Saint Mary's, Cambridge

August 2019: No. 529

NEWSLETTER



This newsletter contains news from the Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service, a report on our Junior Church, a reflection on our recent parish pilgrimage, the next in our series of articles explaining the Eucharist, plus the usual Vicar's letter, daily intentions for prayer and more.

Highlights of August

Tuesday 6th August

Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord

7.45am Low Mass

7pm Sung Mass *followed by refreshments*

Saturday 10th August

Guild of All Souls

3pm Vespers & Benediction at S. Edmund, Downham Market

Wednesday 14th August

10am **Monthly Healing Mass** *with laying-on of hands and anointing with oil.*

This is preceded by a time of silent prayer for the sick at 9.45am. All welcome.

Thursday 15th August

Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Patronal Festival

7.45am Low Mass

7pm High Mass. *Preacher:* The Rev'd Dr Andrew Keith Malcolm Adam, Tutor in New Testament at S. Stephen's House, Oxford; we also welcome the Rev'd Anne Strauss, former member of the congregation, as Deacon.

Sunday 18th August

Assumptiontide BBQ

After High Mass, at the Vicarage. Tickets £10 including food and drink.

Profits go to the Papua New Guinea Church Partnership. See Vicki Farmer vickifarmer24@gmail.com for a ticket.

Saturday 24th August

Feast of S. Bartholomew, apostle

10am Low Mass (not Sung on account of ...)

1pm Nuptial High Mass of Rob Francis and Alex Howard

Advance notice: Fr Gregory's last Sunday with us is 22nd September. There will be a buffet lunch to say goodbye to him and Enrico after High Mass that day. Put the date in your diary!

From the Vicar

Feast of S. James the Great, apostle, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Well, it had to happen eventually...

I don't mean the election of Boris Johnson as Prime Minister, but the appointment of Fr Gregory to a new post! I always knew that because he was an experienced priest – albeit in the culture of the Roman Catholic Church overseas rather than the Church of England – we would probably not enjoy the full three years of the Bishop's licence for him and he would be appointed quickly to his own incumbency. This is exactly what has happened and while I'm sad for the parish and me (as I was when Fr Max left us in 2017) I'm delighted for Gregory and for the people of S. Paul's, Weymouth, in the Diocese of Salisbury, where he has been appointed as Vicar. Congratulations, Father!

We have several more weeks to enjoy Fr Gregory's ministry among us – his last Sunday is 22nd September and we will have a buffet lunch after the 10.30am High Mass to mark the occasion. There will also be a collection so that we can send him on his way to Dorset with a suitable gift – do get in touch with the Treasurer, Richard Martin (contact details at the rear of this newsletter) if you'd like to donate. Many of you have benefited from his pastoral ministry and from his wisdom in the confessional and we have all benefited from his preaching and teaching. The penultimate instalment of his excellent and profound series of articles on the Eucharist is in this newsletter. It is a fine priest whom we are sending to minister to the people of Weymouth.

From 23rd September, therefore, the parish will return to having only one stipendiary priest and one self-supporting priest in the form of Fr Mark. It is a great consolation that we continue to enjoy the ministry of Fr Mark, but this will be the first time in five years that it has just been the two of us. At best this will last until July 2020 and its ending then depends on our being given a new Assistant Curate – and it's worth recalling that any new Assistant Curate will be in Deacon's Orders for the first year and so not able to celebrate Mass, anoint or hear Confessions. More to the point, the Diocesan Director of Ministry informs me that there is no-one suitable on the books at present.

The first thing to say therefore is to urge you to pray that an Assistant Curate might be found for the parish for next academic year. We are a good training parish and both curate and parish benefit greatly from the relationship. Secondly, to ask you to volunteer to take on roles to allow me to do the priestly work that Fr Gregory was doing. I'm grateful especially for assistance with our new home groups I hope we will establish in the autumn and with the preparation of this monthly newsletter. I want to note here my gratitude to those who already do so much and in particular to Emma Bourne (who is leaving us at the end of August). Thirdly, we should remember that we are still blessed to be one church with one priest, unlike so many other parishes where clergy are spread across several congregations (albeit much smaller and less active ones than ours). I would not want the gains of recent years to be lost, however, and I urge everyone to recommit to being together at the altar Sunday by Sunday: you really are missed when you are away.

Finally, if we want to secure our future ministry and not only secure one priest but a regular supply of two priests then we are going to need to cease to depend on the indulgence of diocesan finances and raise sufficient monies to fund a second priest ourselves, as the parishes of St Andrew the Great, Holy Trinity and S. Barnabas do. These are all in the evangelical tradition of Anglicanism but there is nothing about evangelicalism that means it has the monopoly either on growth or on fund-raising. So do please commit all this to your prayers. The PCC will be reflecting on this over the coming months. Any thoughts or suggestions you have about any of this will be gratefully received by me or by the churchwardens.

In the mean time, we give thanks to God for Fr Gregory, commend him to his new ministry on the south coast, and pray for our parish.

With my prayers and love for you, I am,
yours ever in the Lord,

Fr Robert.

Explaining the Eucharist (XVII)

Fr Gregory writes...

The Lord's Prayer (2)

We may need to get used to the fact that Pope Francis likes controversial declarations. One of the latest ones is about the Lord's Prayer where, following the example of the French church (how times change!), he proposes a different translation of the words "lead us not into temptation". He thinks we should say: "do not let us fall into temptation". Some Italian newspapers reported the news with the title: "The Pope corrects the Lord's Prayer", strengthening the utterly incorrect idea of the Pope being an absolute Monarch in questions of faith and morality, rather than being simply the custodian of it.

This "magisterial intervention" however raises some important questions, and also gives us an opportunity to reflect on the words of our Lord. But before doing so, we must see clearly the four fundamental errors behind all this controversy.

The first error is to think that we can perfectly and fully know/understand God (and His revelation). When God talks to us, He uses a "language" accessible to us, that is why revelation makes sense, our knowledge of God is correct even if not complete, theology is a science, etc. But at the end of the day, God is an infinite mystery, and sometimes we must humbly take a step back, and acknowledge that we will never fully understand Him, His words, His revelation, His intentions, or His plans.

The second error is christological. In simple words: many theologians will erroneously think that Christ Himself needed to discover His own vocation and mission, was limited in knowledge or influenced by His own times and culture. So, they will say: Christ's words reflect the contemporary Jewish views about temptation, but we have surpassed that limited view. But we know how our Lord, the eternal Wisdom of

the Father, Himself truly God, knew very well what He was talking about.

The third error is to put our own theological understanding above that of the Catholic (as in “universal”) Church. The Church, because of her Divine Founder, is the ordinary means of salvation, the realisation of the Kingdom on earth until the second coming, the column of Truth, Mother and Teacher. According to the divine promise, not even the gates of hell will prevail against her. All this means that the Church (“the blessed company of all believers”, as the BCP defines her) cannot be in error for a long time in important theological or moral questions; otherwise we should suppose that Jesus failed in His promises and efforts regarding the Church. There must be a good reason why every translation has had “lead us not into temptation” for two thousand years. The Greek verb is simple: εἰσφέρω from εἰς + φέρω (in Latin: *in + duco*) which literally means to bring in, to lead into.

And finally, the fourth error regards Holy Scripture. In modern times some theologians introduced the concept of *ipsissima verba Jesu* in interpreting the Gospels, distinguishing between the presumably “very words of Jesus” and the words the holy authors (SS. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) “put into” Jesus’ mouth. Part of this problem according to this theological school (to which the ex-Jesuit Pontiff evidently belongs) is that the Gospels reached us in Greek, and Jesus spoke Aramaic. How could we possibly know what He *really* said or meant... But our Catholic faith reassures us that the Scripture contains no doctrinal or moral error, the Holy Spirit was perfectly capable of inspiring the Gospel writers to recall the words of Jesus (John 14,26 and Luke 1,4), and that the main author of the Scripture is God Himself.

Jesus’ words have created great difficulties from the very beginning. As early as the 2nd century there are already Christian writers (like Tertullian) trying to explain these difficult words. And the biggest problem has always been the fact that God never tempts us. As St James (1,13-14) writes: “Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted by God. For God is not a tempter of evils: and He tempteth no man. But every man is tempted by his own concupiscence.”

But it is not that simple. The concupiscence is a *consequence* of sin. It leads into more temptation and sin, but it cannot be the cause of the first sin. So we must ask the question: who or what caused the first sin? Most people will quote Genesis, thinking about Adam and Eve in the garden, and say: the Devil. Fine, there are indeed fallen angels who want our eternal death (1 Peter 5,8) and they do tempt us. But the first sin in absolute was not that of Adam and Eve. The very first sin was that of the fallen Angels. They did not have the concupiscence to tempt them, they did not have evil creatures to tempt them. How can we explain then their fall?

Let's start with the fact that the Scripture contains many things that are "hard sayings" for us. In the book of Job, Satan makes his moves under God's orders. Israel, especially in the desert, lives under continuous "temptations" as tests of their faithfulness, and it is God who brings on them all these troubles (1 Kings 9,9). "The Lord trieth the just" (Psalm 11,5), and: "Thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us by fire, as silver is tried" (Ps 66,10). St. Raphael tells Tobias: "And because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee" (Tob 12,13). The Gospels are more subtle, but they clearly state that Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert, to be tempted (Mt 4,1), and St. Paul teaches (Rom 9,19) that it is God who hardens the hearts of some.

It is clear that the idea of God leading into temptation is not at all unknown to the Holy Scriptures, so I do not think the verb "lead" is problematic here but rather the noun "temptation". The Greek original does have the meaning of temptation (as in: trying to make someone commit a sin), but its primary meaning is simply "trial" or "test". But if so, then what sort of trial or test is it that God could lead us into, but we would rather He did not? In order to answer this question, at least partly, we must go back to the fall of the Angels and the temptation of Jesus.

Grace is what makes possible for any rational creature to do good things; faith, charity, and hope are infused in us together with grace; our supernatural life and vocation are made possible by grace. It is through

grace that God makes us part of His divine life. But this grace is God's free gift; we could never merit or deserve it, it is not due to us, and God is in no way obliged to give us grace. The only explanation for this freely given gift is God's love. But the nature of free, never deserved, not due gift is that it can be withheld without injustice (on God's part), or that it can be refused in pride and ingratitude (on the creature's part).

Since God had foreseen the pride of some of the Angels, He tested them - not to see what dwells in them (He very well knew it), but in order that they themselves could see it. Because of their pride, God withheld His grace from them (which, as He had foreseen, they would have refused anyway), and so they utterly failed the test, falling into darkness, disobedience, hate, eternal death. Without grace they have been revealed to be barely more than nothing, and have become incapable of any good at all. There is a great warning for us. As S. Thomas Aquinas writes, God withdraws His grace from those who continuously and willingly sin, and consequently they will fall into even more temptation and sin. And at the end of a sinful life, there is doubt whether they will receive the greatest of gifts: the grace of last perseverance, the grace of a good and holy death.

In the case of Jesus, on the other hand, the Spirit led Him into the desert where He was "tested" by God and tempted by the Devil - so that it can be manifestly shown to the whole creation what dwells in Christ Jesus: obedience, love and charity, the fullness of grace and holiness, every virtue and perfection, the very fullness of divinity.

In the light of all this, what does and what does not "lead us not into temptation" mean?

It does not mean: "Please, God, do not tempt us to sin". It would be blasphemous even to think that God tempts us to sin, and indeed no Christian has ever thought about this prayer in this way. Thus the Pope's proposal is not only unnecessary, but is very uncharitable as it reveals a very low thinking of Christians.

It does not mean "Please, God, save us from temptation" either. Firstly, it would be unrealistic to ask such a thing. Secondly, disturbing as they

may be, temptations may also be greatly meritorious in the Christian life. As S. James (1,12) writes: “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for, when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life which God hath promised to them that love Him.” Our Lord Himself did not want to be free from temptation. So the proposal of the Holy Father seems to be even slightly erroneous.

Finally, it does not mean “Please, God, do not let us be tempted beyond measure” either, since we have His promise that it will never happen (1Cor 10,13).

The only plausible explanation (given by S. Thomas Aquinas) is that we implore God in this petition not to deprive us justly of His grace owing to the multitude of our sins. Not to take back His free gift. Not to put us to test where our nakedness, frailty, nothingness would be revealed. We ask Him not to let us ever experience how vulnerable, how lifeless, how damned, how incapable of any good we are without His grace. How we would be but walking in the shadow of death without Him. We ask Him not to withhold His greatest gift, the grace of last perseverance, this free gift that alone can assure life eternal for us. Indeed, the last petition says: “but deliver us from evil (τοῦ πονηροῦ)” - and the Greek word here indicates “the evil thing”, “the one evil thing”; and what else could *that* be but a life without God?



Calendar and Intentions

for

August 2019

The list of Thanksgivings and Intercessions offers a focus for our daily prayer, both at the Offices and Mass, and in our personal times of prayer.

The Vicar would be glad of suggestions or additions to the list of daily intentions.

Calendar for August

THU	1 st	S. Peter's Chains, Lammas Day
FRI	2 nd	of the Sacred Heart
SAT	3 rd	of Requiem
SUN	4th	SEVENTH SUNDAY after TRINITY
MON	5 th	S. Oswald, king & martyr
TUE	6th	The Transfiguration of Our Lord
WED	7 th	<i>John Mason Neale, priest</i>
THU	8 th	S. Dominic, religious
FRI	9 th	Mary Sumner, founder of the Mothers' Union
SAT	10 th	S. Laurence, deacon & martyr
SUN	11th	EIGHTH SUNDAY after TRINITY
MON	12 th	
TUE	13 th	Jeremy Taylor, bishop & doctor
WED	14 th	<i>S. Maximilian Kolbe, priest & martyr</i>
THU	15th	ASSUMPTION OF THE BVM (Patronal Festival)
FRI	16 th	
SAT	17 th	of the Blessed Virgin Mary
SUN	18th	NINTH SUNDAY after TRINITY
MON	19 th	
TUE	20 th	S. Bernard, abbot & doctor
WED	21 st	<i>Richard Crashaw, priest</i>
THU	22 nd	
FRI	23 rd	
SAT	24 th	S. Bartholomew, apostle
SUN	25th	TENTH SUNDAY after TRINITY
MON	26 th	
TUE	27 th	S. Monica
WED	28 th	S. Augustine of Hippo, bishop & doctor
THU	29 th	Beheading of S. John the Baptist
FRI	30 th	John Bunyan, doctor
SAT	31 st	S. Aidan, bishop & missionary

Daily Intentions and Anniversaries of death for August

Prisoners 1st

Reparations for offences against the Sacred Heart *Vera Harman* 2nd

The Faithful Departed *Roma Gill* 3rd

Our Parish & People 4th

Renewal of Christian monarchy in the world *Geoffrey Lampe, pr.* 5th

That we might know the divinity of Jesus 6th

Those under sentence of death *Olive Robinson* 7th

The Dominican order 8th

The Mothers' Union *Irene Morris, Michael Cook* 9th

Cheerfulness in adversity *Eric & Mary Hindley, Norman Clift* 10th

Our Parish & People *Arthur Dex, Geoffrey Smith* 11th

The Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham *Peter Chamier, pr., Susan Yealland* 12th

The Church in Ireland *Gwen Woolfenden* 13th

The sick *David Paton, Adrian Martinez* 14th

Thanksgiving for Mary's patronage of our parish 15th

To be advised *Ella Cassell* 16th

Great devotion to the BVM *Richard Wardill, Geoffrey Smart* 17th

Our Parish & People 18th

Joy *Eric Loinsworth, Blanche Poulter, Maurice Fretten, Edwin Windeatt* 19th

Christian scholars 20th

Christians in exile 21st

Those affected by famine *John Robinson* 22nd

Craftsmen and women 23rd

Robert & Alexandra's marriage *Margaret Hutchinson, Elizabeth Wyngard* 24th

Our Parish & People *William Sanders* 25th

Our Parish Choir and musicians 26th

Christian mothers *Thomas Haynes, Robin Bishop* 27th

Those who do not yet know Jesus *Sybil & Patricia Fleet, Ione Spalding* 28th

Those whose human rights are not respected 29th

Sites of Christian pilgrimage

Helen Culverwell, Tom Chalmers, David Hume 30th

Those who suffer from mental illness 31st

Saints of August – 10th Saint Laurence, deacon & martyr

*Almighty God,
who didst make Laurence
a loving servant of Thy people
and a wise steward
of the treasures of Thy Church:
fire us with his example
to love as he loved and to walk in the way
that leads to eternal life; through Jesus
Christ Thy Son our Lord, who liveth and
reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen*



Laurence was martyred at Rome under the persecution of the Emperor Valerian in one of the earliest and most brutal persecutions of the Church.

One of seven deacons at Rome when Sixtus was bishop (257–8), Laurence was responsible for the distribution of charity to the poor and needy. One account of his death tells of his being beheaded four days after the death of the bishop; the other account tells how he was ordered to be roasted over a fire for his response to Valerian's demand to be given the treasure of the Church. According to this account, for three days Laurence gathered up all the poor of the city, amongst whom he had previously distributed alms, and declared to those who had come to claim the Church's money, 'Here is the treasure of the Church'. This act resulted in his slow death over a fire, a death which according to legend was borne cheerfully, without pain, and resulted in the conversion to Christ of many onlookers. Whatever form of the legend is true, Laurence was honoured from a very early stage, and quickly became one of the foremost saints of the Church in Rome. A chapel was built over his tomb by Constantine, and he is regarded as the patron saint of deacons. The more legendary 'acts' of his life and death have popularised his memory, and in death he has risen to the position of archdeacon! His legend spread quickly, and he is often depicted in deacon's apparel bearing silver and gold to distribute to the poor.

People for our prayers

I'm pleased to report that after a nasty leg wound from a falling table, **Joyce Bishop** is at home and in good spirits and expected to make a full recovery. Do please keep her in your prayers.



We also pray for **Fr Hugh Wilcox**, a retired priest who has worshipped with us for a number of years, who is in hospital. Fr Hugh suffers from dementia and is very unwell and unlikely to return to LSM. Please pray too for **Barbara** his wife, who is caring for him and trying to find him a suitable nursing home/hospice.

Thirdly, it is with great sadness that I report the death of **Rita Fearing**, mother of **Cheryl Cook**, on 26th July at the age of 97. Please keep her and Cheryl in your prayers, uniting them with the intercession of Ss Anne & Joachim, parents of the Blessed Virgin, upon whose Feast Rita died.

Finally, let us pray with gladness for **Robert Francis** and **Alexandra Howard** as they prepare for their wedding on S. Bartholomew's Day (24th August). Rob and Alex are both regular congregants at LSM, and are both involved in the ministry here; we pray for a long and happy marriage for them.

Thank you!

Emma Bourne, our outgoing Parish Administrative Assistant, writes:

At the end of August I am leaving LSM to take up a position as Pastoral Assistant in a group of parishes in Sunderland, prior to hopefully training for Ordination. I wanted to say how profoundly grateful I am for my time working here, and for the warmth, friendship and support everyone has shown me. I came here when still recovering from a period of mental illness, and being here has been a deeply healing experience. My most hearty thanks go to Fr Robert, for his kindness, wisdom, encouragement – and patience! His example of

service and devotion to duty will be a touchstone for my own future ministry, whatever form it takes. Thank you also to Fr Gregory, and to so many people, too numerous to name here, who have been like a second family to me for 18 months. Be assured of my daily prayers for this wonderfully special parish.

Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service Annual Update

The Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service (CRS) is one of our longstanding international mission links at LSM. It is always a joy to hear news of our overseas connections, so it is with pleasure that I can update you on the vital work this charity has performed this past year.

Building expansion at Mahamaya

Last July CRS appealed for donations to build a multi-purpose community centre for the people of Mahamaya, a village south of Kolkata. Happily, the response was very generous, and three storeys of the construction are now finished; in time, they will house a school, a medical centre and a workshop for local women to make products for sale. The project is due to be finished in July 2020 and we wish it every success.

Nari Dana – growing and strengthening

Nari Dana aims to provide training in high-quality needlework for women, to equip them for independence in business and textile production. As well as practical skills, the project helps women grow in confidence with far-reaching results. As one woman, Dola Ghosh, explains, 'I can stitch much better now since joining Nari Dana a year ago. I love to work here. The earnings from Nari Dana are invested in my child's education.' We wish the project and all the women involved every blessing in their future.

Brace Bridge – a new venture

Brace Bridge is a busy commuter train station in south-west Kolkata. About 700 families live in its shadow, working as rickshaw pullers, fruit sellers, domestic servants and in other low-paid, sometimes dangerous, employment. Women and children are especially vulnerable to prostitution, substance misuse and other kinds of exploitation. CRS has therefore partnered with Right Track, a local organisation, to attempt to relieve some of this suffering through

an education programme for children, and training for women in sewing and healthcare. In time, they hope to build a community centre. We wish them every success.

Finally – funding needed!

CRS has been involved with the community at Pally Mangal, in south Kolkata, since 1996. It has a focus on women's empowerment through business, and runs courses in textiles and beautician training. However, space is in short supply. The community committee has received permission for an additional floor, but funds of approximately £3,300 are needed if the project is to be realised. If you are able to help raise funds for this, please visit www.cathedralreliefservice.net/locations/pallymangal or speak to Clive Brown for more information on this or any other project enabled by the Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service.

Women's group outside the community centre at Pally Mangal, which is in need of expansion:



Blankets for the Hamlin Fistula Mission



Christine Tipple writes:

Dr Catherine Hamlin, seen in this photo, started work in Ethiopia with her husband Reg in 1974, when they discovered

how many women were suffering during childbirth without medical help or knowledge. Since then much has improved. Many midwives have been trained to prevent the condition, which leaves them incontinent and often rejected by everyone. Those with the condition can be cured quite easily. After leaving one of the hospitals each patient is given a blanket. Sometimes this is the only personal possession she has. Some of us have been knitting squares for the blankets for some time. We send them to the mission's UK Centre near Birmingham where they are gratefully received and sent on.

If you wish to knit a square (or more!), please contact Christine at cstipple@gmail.com

News from the camomile lawn

It is with joy (and no little relief!) that we report that the drains under the camomile lawn have at last been replaced. However, the lawn itself continues to be a cause for concern. It has been suggested that it might be best to remove the lawn completely, as it has never 'taken' well in the soil conditions, and replace it with slate. If you know of someone who would be willing to dig up the lawn and undertake this task, please speak to the Vicar or to Christine Tipple.

The next Garden Coffee Morning is on **Saturday 10th August at 10.30am.**

Junior Church Report

Jesus said: Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these Mark 10:14a

Helen Thompson, co-ordinator of ministry for our parish's youngest disciples, writes:

The start of the summer holidays always causes one to reflect on the previous twelve months. Here at LSM we have seen the number of children regularly attending on a Sunday increase and we have had the joy of watching them grow.

I would like to thank the volunteers who help run and support the children's group on a Sunday morning especially those who are continuing for the coming year. I must also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to those who are moving away, your support and help will be missed!

As we move into August and on into the new academic year, we need to think about the next rota. The volunteers we now have are dedicated but fewer in number. Potentially this means we do not have enough leaders to safely hold a group every Sunday. **More people are needed for this work!**

Leading and helping with the children's group is fun, easy and not too strenuous on the diary! You do not need to have experience and there is no age limit! We simply need people who want to help explore and explain the Christian Faith with the children. You do need to be DBS checked and to complete some straightforward online safeguarding training. We have plenty of resources which means that you are not expected to spend hours preparing a lesson plan. We just look at one of the morning readings and respond in discussion, crafts, drawing, drama or any other way you feel works with the children.

If you feel you could support this vital ministry, please speak to one of the leaders or myself or drop me an email at helenthompson300@yahoo.co.uk

We would be thrilled for you to join us!

Wheels to Walsingham!

On the weekend of 19th – 21st July, 17 pilgrims from Little S. Mary's, led by Fr Robert, made a residential pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham. While most pilgrims travelled by coach or car, Geoffrey Howe cycled all the way from Little S. Mary's, setting off after Mass on Friday lunchtime. He performed this impressive feat in aid of the Whitworth Trust, the charity for vulnerable women which this parish supports. He writes about his journey, and the Pilgrimage in general, here:



During a sudden brainstorm at a recently held PCC meeting, I decided that as long as my belongings could be taken on the coach, I would cycle from LSM in Cambridge to the Shrine in Walsingham, and also I would do it for charity for the Whitworth Trust, with whom we have close ties at LSM

I've done this particular ride a few times before as I have friends living in Walsingham, so I knew a safe route which avoided any major roads and also that it would take me between four and five hours depending on the weather conditions. So after Mass at LSM on the Friday I set out in the hope that I could time my arrival with the coach. Lycra on a middle-aged man only looks good if you're sitting astride a bicycle – and certainly not if you're strolling around the grounds of the Shrine!



The forecast was for rain, but I must have stayed just ahead of it, and I thought that my chances of coinciding my arrival with the coach were severely diminished when I suffered a puncture at only six miles out of Cambridge. They never sweep those cycle paths you see, which is why most road riders like myself appear to be deliberately holding up the traffic while riding on the road!

Puncture repaired and on my approach to the last major town – Fakenham, I thought it would be a good idea to check in with the coach so that they knew where I was. To my great surprise I was told they were still some twelve miles behind me so I needed no other incentive than this knowledge to put in some record-breaking times over the final nine miles.

For the record I was at the Shrine some forty minutes before the rest of the Group – so I did walk around the grounds in my Lycra! The whole journey took me 4 hours and 29 minutes and I rode for 78 miles. At the time of writing and due largely to the generosity of members of the congregation at LSM, I believe that I have raised about £300 for the Whitworth Trust.

The ride aside, the whole weekend itself was a fantastic spiritual experience. I particularly enjoyed doing The Stations in the Shrine grounds on the Saturday and also Mass at Saint Mary's in Walsingham on the Sunday. Fathers Rob and Gregory had worked hard to organise a fully spiritual weekend for all of us and I was very happy to be a part of this my first ever proper pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Walsingham.



If you would be interested on going on residential pilgrimage to Walsingham next summer, please let the Vicar know as soon as possible. The Shrine gets booked up well in advance and so we need to have a clear idea of interested individuals before booking. However, if you think this is you, please do speak to Fr Robert or the Churchwardens.