

PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMME

Saturday 21st August 2010

11.30am

Solemn Eucharist at **St David's Church, Llanthony.**

1.30pm

Assemble **outside St David's Church** for Pilgrimage Walk.

3.30pm

Assemble **outside St Mary's Church, Capel-y-ffin** to process to the **Wayside Calvary** and to the **Abbey Church*** for the Ecumenical Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary,⁺ followed by prayers at **the Statue of Our Lady of Llanthony.**

*There will be seating in the Abbey Church, but if the weather isn't suitable then the service will be held at 3.30pm at St Mary's Church, followed by the procession.

⁺ Preacher to be confirmed.

Car parking is available in the official Car park at Llanthony Priory for the Eucharist at St David's and in the field at Chapel Farm, Capel-y-ffin by kind permission of Mr & Mrs Watkins, for the afternoon event.

The usual pilgrimage walk will take place in the afternoon. Stout footwear is essential and weather-proof clothing is suggested.

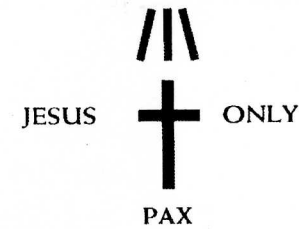
Please note:

The next pilgrimage will take place on Saturday, August 20th, 2011

n.b. **The Father Ignatius Memorial Society** is on the web:
www.fatherignatius.com



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*The Father
Ignatius
Memorial
Trust* Charity Commissioners'
Registration No. 253225

NEWSLETTER

NO. 38, SUMMER 2010

website at:
www.fatherignatius.com

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The Pilgrimage Association

THE IDEA OF FORMING AN ECUMENICAL PILGRIMAGE ASSOCIATION has been well received.

The ecumenical Llanthony Pilgrimage Association was launched at last year's pilgrimage to further the spiritual ideas of Fr Ignatius.

It sets out to do so in two ways—through the annual pilgrimage to Our Lady of Llanthony at Capel-y-ffin, and by mutual support and prayer for those causes dear to his heart.

These include the evangelisation of our country, the renewal of community and monastic life in the Church and the reconciliation of divided Christians in the faith and practice of the undivided Church. Membership of the Association is £6 per person annual (which also covers the joining fee for new members).

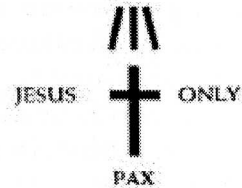
It is hoped that, over time, the Association will attract a wide range of people, including those interested in the Llanthony Valley, walkers, local history enthusiasts and, of course, pilgrims.

If you would like to know more, forms will be available at this year's pilgrimage, or contact:

The Membership Secretary,
The Llanthony Pilgrimage Association,
10 Llwynu Road,
Abergavenny,
Monmouthshire NP7 5TB,
email: caroline@woollard.go-plus.net

Caroline Woollard
Association Membership Secretary

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From the Chairman...

The Vicarage,
Monk Street,
Abergavenny,
Monmouthshire

Feast of Pentecost, 23rd May 2010

Dear fellow pilgrims,

The year since some of us last met in the Llanthony Valley has been a somewhat turbulent one in many ways—political, economic and environmental.

It has also seen the death of Douglas Lyne, Honorary Archivist to the Father Ignatius Memorial Trust, and a wonderful supporter of its work. We pass our belated condolences to his family. A full obituary will follow in the next Newsletter.

On the global scene, there is a sense in which all this upheaval and change has led to a striving for deeper meaning in our lives, for spirituality and for faith, if not for 'organised' religion itself. Of course, that sense of striving is nothing new—down the centuries and in all cultures there has been a searching for meaning, fulfilled for Christians in the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

That sense of striving must also have been felt by Fr Ignatius as he sought to 'serve the Lord in

solitude', moving, with two others, to Capel-y-ffin in November 1869. Over the following few years, he would, of course, have been busy raising the money needed for the building, which he did through his preaching, and in supervising the work being carried out. But that 'busyness' of life—which is something we all share—must surely have been stilled at the end of August and the beginning of September, 1880, when the Virgin Mary appeared at the monastery on four occasions—appearances we commemorate in our annual pilgrimage.

The first, on Monday, August 30th, was to four boys playing in the meadow next to the monastery, when they saw a bright dazzling figure gliding across the meadow towards them in the form of a woman with a halo of light surrounding her body. The figure entered a hedge and remained there for a few moments before passing through a rhubarb patch and vanishing.

The Virgin Mary appeared on three more occasions—September 4th, 8th and 15th, the last being witnessed by Fr Ignatius himself, who said:

The whole heavens and mountains broke forth in bulging circles of light, circles pushing out from circles—the light poured upon our

...the Chairman continues



Pause for refreshments

faces and the buildings where we stood and in the central circle stood a most Majestic Heavenly Form, robed in flowing drapery. The Form was gigantic, but seemed to be reduced to human size as it approached. The Figure stood sideways, facing the Holy Bush. The Vision was most distinct and the details were very clear; but it was in the 'twinkling of an eye'.

Whatever you feel about visions, there is no doubt that there is a sense of the Holy in the Llanthony Valley, something of God which is unique and compelling among the hills through which we will walk on August 21 this year.

It will be an opportunity to get away from the stresses and strains of our everyday lives and to

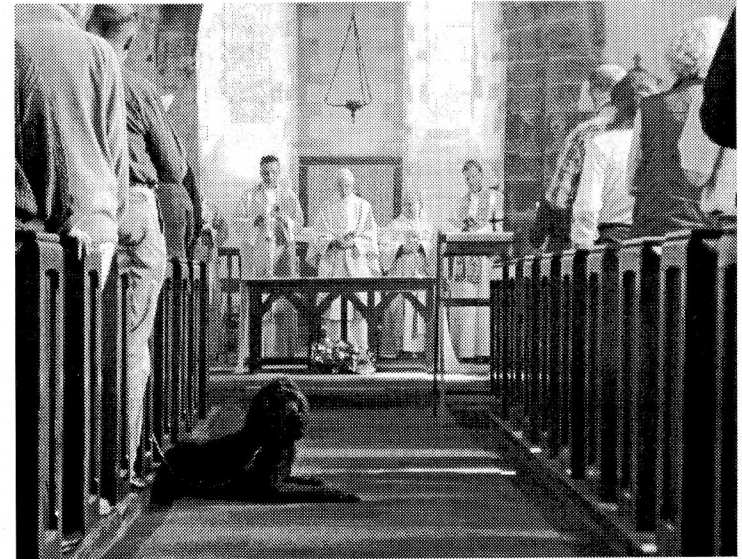
It will also be a great deal of fun—walking through the wonderful Llanthony Valley with good companions can be nothing but a joy.

This year we hope, weather permitting, to have the afternoon service in the ruins of the Abbey Church itself.

Please spread the good news of the pilgrimage, encourage others to join us—and I look forward to seeing you all on the day.

The Rev'd Canon Jeremy Winston

Pilgrimage 2009



Solemn Eucharist at St David's Church



Prayers by the Statue of Our Lady of Llanthony

The Lost Organs of Llanthony Abbey: where are they now?

THE ABBEY CHURCH of Our Lady and Saint David at Llanthony Tertia now lies in ruins; a metaphor, perhaps, for the state of the Anglican Church in this age.

Having constructed the monastery buildings it was unfortunate that Fr Ignatius was unable to complete the church itself. However, it was fitted out with all that was necessary for the fullest ceremonial that Ignatius could devise or imagine.

In all that has been written about the abbey and its services, by Ignatius or others, several references are made to the organ. For example, in *Llanthony Teachings* of 1890 Ignatius writes about the daily life of the abbey, '...Prime is solemnly sung daily with the great organ at 5...'. Another mention of it is made by Peter Anson in, *Building up the Waste Places*, p.119:

The mighty organ stood in the centre of the gallery, beneath which was a screen. The door in the middle was trellised...

and in *Father Ignatius of Llanthony* (1931) p.43, Donald Attwater describes the interior of the church writing,

The great organ, on which Father Ignatius so loved to perform, was also in this gallery, above the returned stalls.

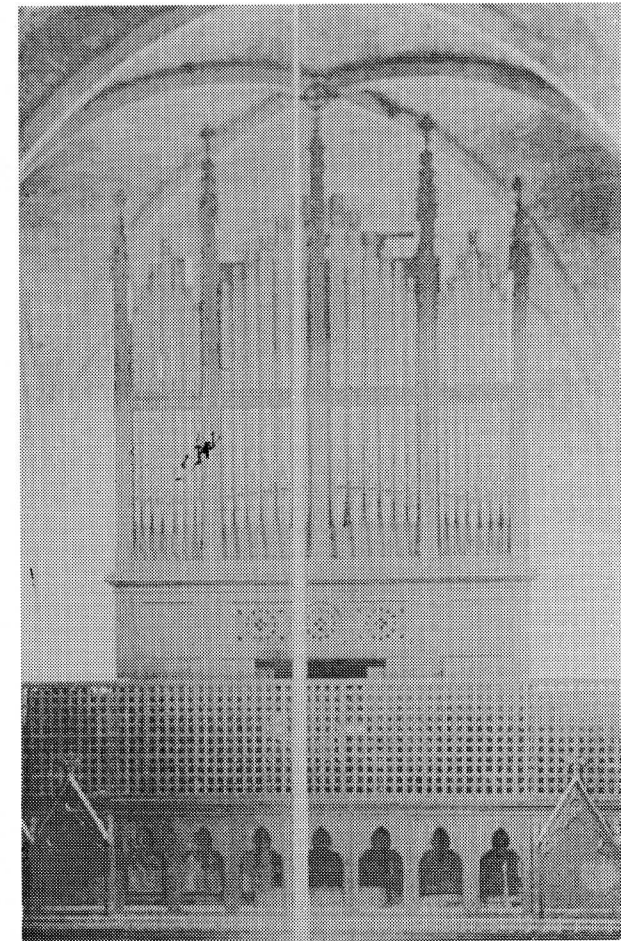
More often than not any mention of the organ is made in conjunc-

tion with some liturgical action taking place below in the church itself. 'The mighty organ', 'a great swell from the organ' and other such emotive descriptions give an impression of a great, grand organ indeed. But what of it? With the church in ruins, where is it now?

This article will attempt to trace the history and design of the organs at Llanthony Tertia and in doing so perhaps draw forth some nugget of information that someone may have to help us trace their eventual fate which is, at present, unknown. I have now made mention of the organs at the abbey and this is indeed correct. In 1869 when Ignatius and his monks came to live at the monastery the buildings were not yet complete. By 1871 they were habitable and a chapel was created where the community could worship.

At their former home, the Abbey at Elm Hill in Norwich, an organ had been installed in the chapel there. It had been built by Gray & Davison, the well known organ building firm from London. In their Account Ledger 07 page 218 for the Benedictine Monastery, Norwich an order is recorded:

1864. The Rev'd Father Ignatius July 18th. To Organs in Stock for an Organ of one Manual & Pedals erected complete at Norwich as per Est. £130



A quick calculation on a money conversion website tells us that this is the equivalent to about £5,600. Good value at today's prices!

Thus far no stop list has come to light but we can surmise that the instrument was indeed of one manual and pedals with probably about half a dozen stops and was bought from stock. In an age of intense church building and rebuilding most organ builders would have had small instruments readily available for hire.

On August 22nd 1872 the foundation stone of the, never to be completed, church was laid by Ignatius under the centre of the eastern wall. This section of the church was to have been the quire with the nave extending westwards connecting to the monastery buildings. This quire was of three bays, 70ft long, 30ft wide and about 45ft to the vault. Into this space was placed the small organ and it was regularly tuned and maintained. We hear no more about this

instrument until 1882 when Attwater, again in Father Ignatius of Llanthony p.67, quotes Ignatius' own writings from his Log:

1882 (September) 30, St Jerome's Day: the first stone was prepared to be laid. On this day also the Choir was closed to the Divine Office & Mass was said in the East Cloister of the Abbey, for as much of the great Altar is to be completed, **a large new organ to be built** [my italics] & the new oaken Stalls to be erected.

So here was that 'great organ' about which so many have spoken together with a record of the deposit and subsequent payments. It is interesting to note the extra charge for the men having to walk some two miles morning and evening in severe weather. We must assume that they lodged further down the valley at Llanthony 'Prima'. 'Seculars' were permitted to stay at the monastery but these were tradesmen and as such, perhaps, not permitted by Ignatius.

The specification of this organ is recorded in the Gray & Davison Shop Book of 1882.

From these records it is clear that some thought had been given to the provision of a new and larger organ for the abbey for some time before a firm order was placed (July 1882) and a deposit or first instalment paid (August 1882).

Characteristic Gray & Davison stops are included viz; the Clarinet Flute on the great and the Keraulophon on the swell but of note is the provision of an adjustable seat.

There is space provided for the future addition of four extra stops (Trumpet on the great, Cornopean and Vox Humana on the swell and Bourdon on the pedal) to be inserted, possibly, when funds allowed.

The case pipes were to be decorated and from the only evidence yet uncovered it looks like rather

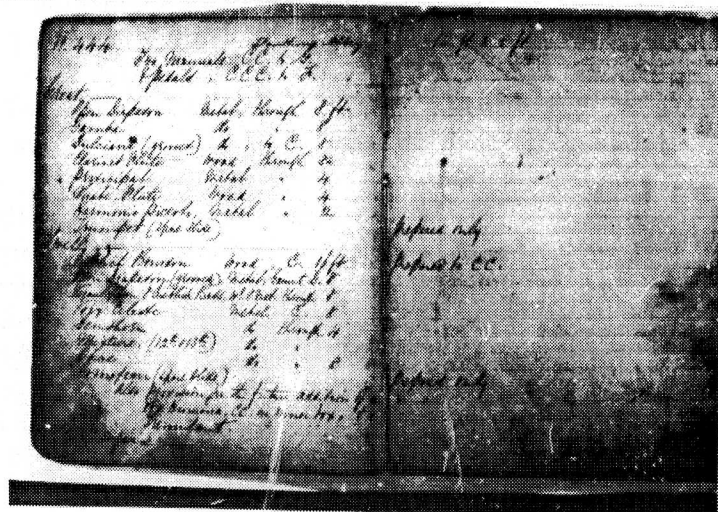
standard stencilling on, presumably, zinc bass pipes.

Where the small organ stood in the church we do not know. However, we do know from Ignatius' own record that the new larger organ was to be placed centrally on the screen which divided the monk's quire from the western third of the building where the laity were allowed; in the same way as in some university college chapels. The organ is also shown to be free-standing in a detailed technical drawing made by the organ builders. This shows that the organ had two 'fronts' i.e. two sides of decorated pipes, one facing east into the monk's quire and one westwards. Given the quite cramped layout of the unfinished church, this organ would indeed have seemed 'great' and imposing. Anyone entering the west door of the church would immediately have had to look up at an acute angle to see the west front of the organ. Again, so far, no representation of this side of the organ has come to light. As for the east front I have managed, quite by chance, to find a postcard picture photograph, of what must be the great organ of New Llanthony Abbey.

A study of this picture points in many ways to this being the organ in the abbey church of Llanthony. It stands on a gallery with light entering from behind; it looks rather

like a Gray & Davison organ of the period with the pierced woodwork over the console and the painted pipe decoration; the trellising on the gallery edge is clearly seen; the carved woodwork of the returned stalls is seen at either end of the picture and this was removed when the abbey closed eventually finding a home at Prinknash Abbey in Gloucestershire where it can be seen to this day; the vaulted roof matches that which can be seen in other representations of the inside of the church. If one looks carefully, the outline of the swell box can be seen together with the tops of the pedal open diapason pipes on the left with nothing corresponding on the right hand side. A comparison with the builders' drawing shows these details to be in the correct position and the pedal bourdon would have been on the right where nothing in this picture is seen. In addition there is written 'Llanthony Abbey' in pencil and in an old fashioned hand on the back of this card. Perhaps this picture was taken when the organ was relatively new?

Whilst it cannot be said to be a distinguished piece of organ design, it is functional. The use of four 'flats' (the groupings of pipes and their divisions by the uprights) without some centre pipe is somewhat unusual. In this design all five upright posts are finished as



crocketed pinnacles; the central one topped with a celtic style cross. Some input from Ignatius himself maybe? He did change the dedication of the abbey, replacing St Dunstan with St David, and had consistently championed the Ancient British Church.

Regular tuning and maintenance was carried out and in November 1896 the organ builders returned to install some of the stops prepared for in 1882.

This is the last record of any work done to the organ at the abbey. It is possible that another firm was engaged to come and tune the organ but unlikely.

Father Ignatius had died on October 16th, 1908. The last maintenance on the organ was in the following April and as we know from subsequent history, monastic life at Llanthony did not survive very long after the decease of its founder abbot. For one thing, the income of the abbey had been almost totally dependent upon the frequent and often extended preaching and money-raising tours made by Ignatius. With his death this came to an abrupt end.

It appears that the Llanthony Foundation had never quite succeeded in rooting itself firmly enough to be able to outlive its founder. With Ignatius' death, little income and the removal of all but the vestiges of monastic life to Caldey under

Abbot Carlyle, the future was at best uncertain.

1913 was a year of great turmoil for Caldey with the split in the community following the conversions to the Church of Rome. In fact the Caldey monks were so reduced in numbers that it soon became clear that it would be impossible to maintain life on the island in addition to a monastic outpost in the Black Mountains of Wales.

On 29th September 1915 a sale was advertised. Auctioneer H. Montague of Abergavenny was engaged to hold a sale of a great many items from Llanthony Abbey. Tables, chairs, bookcases and much more are mentioned but not the organs in the church and the community room. What became of them?

From the last tuning of the church organ in 1909 no further reference has yet been found. Presumably they remained in situ for a while at least. The small organ could have been sold to a private owner as a domestic instrument, as still happens occasionally today. It could have been sold to a small church or to a local organ builder who may have rebuilt it elsewhere. Given its size, this organ could well have survived with little or no alteration to the present day. Were either of them sold at all or did they remain neglected and suffering from damp

and cold conditions? Montague's sales lists from this period have not survived.

The large church organ presents another problem. It was probably too large to be sold as a house organ but could have been sold on to another church or to an organ builder who would have had it to use in whole or in part in another place. It's rather lofty 'gothic' case may have prohibited its re-erection in many church buildings, although, it is also possible that it was removed and used in another church minus the casework, having the decorative pipes redistributed to form a new facade. It seems almost inconceivable that this instrument would have been merely broken up.

With the fate of the monastery seemingly sealed there was a glimmer of hope that restoration might, at some time, be possible when the premises were sold to Eric Gill, who lived there for a while. He and his companions did much to restore the monastic buildings but even then (1924) the church was reported to be beyond repair. Was the great organ upon which Father Ignatius 'so loved to perform' still there or had it been dismantled and stored when so many effects were sold in 1915?

There is one remaining piece to this mystery. Prinknash Abbey became the new home to the

Caldey brethren when they were forced to sell their island home and so is, indirectly, successor, in part, to the Llanthony foundation. Fr Charles Watson was the monk-organist at Prinknash for many years and dabbled with organ building now and then. In an all too brief reference to Llanthony in their archive at Prinknash Fr Watson says, Batley used some diapasons to make [support?] some shelving in the scullery.

Who was Batley? Wood or metal diapasons; and from which organ? To which scullery does he refer; one at Prinknash or Llanthony?

It would be wonderful to find one or both of these instruments surviving somewhere wholly or in part. With renewed interest in Ignatius and the Llanthony pilgrimage, might it be possible, in the future to restore the abbey as a great pilgrimage centre and rebuild that organ? Llanthony is a truly special place where holy things have indeed been made manifest.

As noted near the beginning of this article the fate of both these organs is at present unknown. Keep your eyes peeled!

I am greatly indebted to Mr Chris Keair, Hon. Archivist to the British Institute of Organ Studies, for finding and supplying copies of the relevant pages from the Gray & Davison Ledgers. My thanks to Father Richard Williams, Vicar of Hay-on-Wye, at whose suggestion this article was written.

Cameron Luke

A more detailed version of this article is available on the Father Ignatius website [Ed.]