

refer, of course, to the school of theologians who commend what they call 'the New Reformation' and 'Better Theology' which, in reality, means the sweeping away of all the doctrines of the Christian Faith." Father Ignatius is a most brilliant and powerful preacher and wherever he is announced to deliver a course of sermons in London – usually at the Portman Rooms in Baker Street – an enormous congregation flocks to hear him. He has a remarkable delivery and wonderful flow of language and, when moved by his subject, he delivers his discourse with an impassioned eloquence that is irresistible . . .

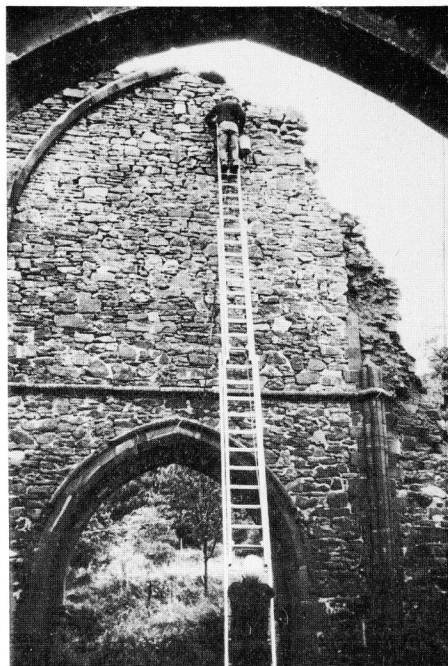
That Father Ignatius is eccentric none can dispute, but that he is a man of great power and earnestness is equally apparent. He is certainly one of the hardest workers in the Church. Even his holidays are work days for he cannot bring himself to be idle. Some time ago, after a heavy Mission, he decided not to take the long journey back to Llanthony for Easter Day but remained 'quietly' (sic) in a little village, Thorpe, in Surrey, and this was the order of his holiday Sunday:- He went to the early celebration at the parish church and then to the eleven o'clock service. He catechised the children on the Resurrection in the afternoon at the vicar's request and, in the evening, he preached to an overflowing congregation. When asked by a friend whether he considered such a day's work as rest, he replied, "Yes, comparative rest, at all events. The peace of that quiet, beautiful village, free from the intrusion of people of the fashionable world, was delightful." . . .

At Llanthony, the lives of the Brotherhood are ascetic to a degree, luxury knowing no place within the monastic walls. At 6.30 am there is a 'pittance' of bread and milk. At 12.30 after sext and meditation, there is a full meal. Meat is only allowed in the refectory twice a year – on Easter Day, when roast lamb is served and on Christmas Day, when the fare is roast beef. The food for the rest of the year is fish, eggs, vegetables, fruit, bread, butter and milk. Before vespers, there is supper which consists of tea, bread and butter and such garden produce as lettuce and radishes. The number of the Brotherhood is seven but none of them is under life vows. In reference to

this point, Father Ignatius holds very strong views and has expressed himself on the subject in the following words:- "I do not think I shall ever let anyone take the life vows again unless it pleases God to send us someone who has the vocation and who would be able to take my place in my absence. He should, of course, be in orders, so as to be able to administer the Holy Communion." The abbey and the monastery are entirely supported by the collections made by Father Ignatius on his yearly tour of sermons. He is always glad to get back to Llanthony because the services are lovely and the abbey is his home.'

For the Trustees
MALCOLM GOULD

Delwyn Hall at work on the damaged South wall of the Abbey Church.



THE FATHER IGNATIUS MEMORIAL TRUST

Trustees:
Father Brocard Sewell, Order of Carmelites
The Reverend Canon Ivor Ll. Davies MA
The Reverend Hugh Allen
Malcolm Gould (Master of Ceremonies)
Douglas Lyne MA (Archivist)
Wilfred Davies (Secretary/Treasurer)

Charity Commissioners'
Registration No. 253225

Correspondence to:
Hon Secretary
Park House
67 Park Street
Abergavenny NP7 5YD
Tel: (0873) 3543

NEWSLETTER NO.13 JUNE 1985

A RECENT opportunity to read all the issues of this Newsletter since the first in 1969 could only convince the reader that much has been achieved in consolidating the several objectives of the Trust, both in the well established Annual Pilgrimage, and the skill and care which has resulted in the preservation of the Monastery Church, despite the ravages of time and inherent weaknesses in its original building some 113 years ago.

When the writer recalls his first visit to the ruins some 25 years ago, the imagination could not have been strained to visualise its restoration to the point where services could again be held there, much less the thought that one might oneself have the privilege of serving as a Trustee to assist in planning its future.

Nothing could have been achieved without the generous financial support of our many friends, and the attendance of pilgrims from far and near is a constant source of inspiration for those concerned with the practicalities of organisation.

Last year's Pilgrimage on August 18th was an unqualified success from all points of view. The weather was the most superb experienced for many years, and undoubtedly influenced a very large turn-out of pilgrims and friends for the Holy Eucharist at St. David's Church, Llanthony, and the Procession to the Monastery for Solemn

Evensong. For the latter we were indebted to the leading of singing by the Choir of St. Julian's Church, Newport, making their second visit, and we hope that their support will be a regular feature.

A notable address was given by the Reverend Stanley Luff, of Our Lady's Church, Llandoverly, in which he gave an interesting picture of the character and work of Father Ignatius, interspersed with anecdotes of Father Luff's earlier friendship and conversations with Peter Anson and Dom Asaph Harris. It was a kind thought of Father Luff to make available to pilgrims copies of his address, which have well repaid reading at leisure.

Following the collapse of part of the wall during the winter of 1983 much thought and discussion was given to the possibility of continuing to use the Monastery Church for our annual services, but following the excellent cleaning-up operation by the young soldiers of the Prince of Wales Army Depot at Crickhowell reported in our last issue, and your generous financial support, we were able to face the problem of repairing and stabilising the dangerous section of wall left by the collapse. By competitive tendering, we were able to get the work done for less than half the original estimate. The small local firm, D. A. Hall of Abergavenny, who took on the job are to be congratulated for tackling a difficult and dangerous job quickly and efficiently for less than £1,000. The work involved capping off the exposed section of wall with a cement seal, colour-matched with the Old Red Sandstone masonry, also re-inforcing steel bars were inserted and concealed to strengthen the sections. The task also included replacing and re-grouting broken tiles on the tomb of Fr. Ignatius, and supplying and spreading new chip-pings to cover the corner of the Church where the collapse had occurred. The large quantity of surplus stone was put to good use in building and maintaining masonry walls at Capel-y-ffin which enhance the conservation of the upland countryside there.

Fr Ignatius in 1907 – the year before he died.



Also reported in our last issue was the news that Wilfred and Helen Davies would this year be moving from The Monastery to make a new home in Abergavenny. Their kindness and unflinching generosity over many years has not only made the Pilgrimages a practical possibility, but their work has ensured the viability of worship within the ruined Monastery Church. For this, the Trustees and countless visitors will never cease to be grateful. You may know that the Monastery has been occupied by the Gill family and their descendants since 1924, and we give our warm wishes to Wilf, Helen and their family as they settle in a new environment after an association with Capel-y-ffin over such a long period.

This issue of our Newsletter is also an opportunity to extend a warm welcome to the new owners of The Monastery, Stanley and Karol Knill. A Cardiff family, they have already shown a kindly interest in the aims of the Trust and in the Annual Pilgrimage. We are sure that all our friends will join with us in wishing them a long, happy and rewarding life here. Certainly it is something of a vocation to live and work in a place like this – always the focus of public attention and interest. But we feel sure they will receive in good measure encouragement and help from all those friends of The Monastery who come here from time to time for visits of renewal and refreshment of body, mind and spirit.

The 1984 pilgrimage procession leaving the hamlet of Capel-y-ffin.



Your generous support continues to be needed to meet future repair and maintenance charges in order to keep the Abbey Church as a safe and fitting place of worship for all future pilgrimages and for the steady stream of interested visitors who come throughout the year. Your donations, of course, also enable us to produce and distribute our annual newsletter to you.

Please note that all future correspondence about Trust affairs should be addressed to

Wilfred Davies,
Hon. Secretary,
The Fr. Ignatius Memorial Trust,
Park House,
67 Park Street,
ABERGAVENTNY, Gwent NP7 5YD
Tel. (0873) 3543

Details of the 1985 Pilgrimage on SATURDAY, AUGUST 17th are as follows:

- 11.30am The Holy Eucharist at St. David's Church, Llanthony.
- 2.30pm Procession leaves Capel-y-ffin Church for the Monastery Church, where the Address at Solemn Evensong will be given by the Very Reverend Alun Davies, Dean of Llandaff.

Light refreshments will be available after the service, and we look forward to welcoming all our friends, old and new.

Finally, from our archives, the following excerpts from an article attributed to Bishop Llewellyn Jones of Newfoundland and published in the September 24th 1897 issue of *The Illustrated Church News* will be of interest to our readers.

"It must be twenty-five years since I first saw Father Ignatius. I remember the day well. It was Whitby, in the summer, and I was driving up to St. Hilda's Abbey to lunch with the delightful old-world couple who were the owners of that historic property in those days. Before us we saw another carriage and, as we got nearer, descried the tonsured heads of two monks. They arrived at the Abbey after ourselves and presently a calling card was brought in with a courteous message that "Father Ignatius of Llanthony Abbey would like to pay his respects." It was a vivacious luncheon party, the young monk proving himself as brilliant in conversation as he was in his work as a priest (or 'deacon', as I ought more properly to style him for, though offered priest's orders by two Archbishops if he would give up monastic work, he has never risen beyond the first grade of the ministry). Twenty-five long years ago – and yet, as I look at the man to-day, he is as full of go and energy as then. Time has, of course, left its mark and there are lines and furrows that denote a life of genuine hard work and doubtless anxiety, which have been the outcome of these twenty-five years; but the worthy Father is a marvellous man and to-day, after all the brunt of the scorching mid-day sun, is as indefatigable as he was in the days of his youth . . . Rising at daybreak, his time is incessantly occupied with preaching engagements and interviews, in addition to carrying on a colossal correspondence. Speaking of the varied character of the letters he receives, Fr Ignatius observes: "A great many of them are about difficulties of conscience and difficulties of religious doubts; you see, there is so much harm to religion being done in this country by the publicly-avowed infidelity of many of the clergy. I