

PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMME

Saturday 26th August 2006

12 noon

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

1.30pm

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

3.30pm

Ecumenical Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary at **St Mary's Church, Capel-y-ffin** with address by the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, the Right Reverend David Thomas. This service is followed by the Procession to **The Monastery and Abbey Church** with stations at **the Wayside Calvary** and at **the Statue of Our Lady of Llanthony.**

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.

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

The Apparitions at Llanthony (cont'd)

during the seventeenth century, but nothing during the sceptical eighteenth century. However by 1840 opinion changed and pilgrimages in honour of Mary were instituted or revived.

The apparition at Knock was similar to that at Llanthony. They both occurred on a dark rainy evening in late summer. In Knock an old woman called Bridget Trench tried to kiss the Virgin's feet and found that the earth below the visitation was 'perfectly dry' as the ground in the rhubarb bush at Llanthony had remained. In both accounts there

are mentions of flickering lights. The Virgin also remained silent in both instances. At Knock Mary was accompanied by St Joseph and St John, both of whom also remained silent. At Knock the figures did not move and at Llanthony it was the whole vision that moved rather than the figures within it. Archdeacon Cavanagh and Father Ignatius who both did the most to publicise the apparitions, were both sceptical at first. Cavanagh never saw the vision and Ignatius only saw here briefly at her final appearance.

Rachael Rogers



Ignatius 1623
Mem.

Y GWIR YN ERBYN Y BŶD

JESUS



PAX

ONLY

*The Father
Ignatius
Memorial*

Trust Charity Commissioners'
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NEWSLETTER

No. 34, SUMMER 2006

now with website at:
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The Lyne family & Monte Cassino

FATHER IGNATIUS attempted to visit Monte Cassino after his private audience with Pope Pius IX in 1866. Armed with letters of introduction from Mr Gladstone, he was taken ill on Monte Cassino station, and was unable to make the ascent to the abbey. This was a keen disappointment to him for the rest of his life. It was therefore a great joy to me, as his kinsman, to have been able to complete this pilgrimage for him.

When I returned to Monte Cassino in 1969, for the 25th anniversary of the battle, I took with me the remaining mosaic fragments from the centre-piece of Fr Ignatius' tomb, which had been shattered when the church roof collapsed on it, for presentation to the Abbot, Dom Ildefonso Rea, then nearing the end of his life: he assured me that he was most glad to receive this remembrance of one acknowledged to be 'an honoured member of the great family of St Benedict.' Thus was a personal cycle completed for me. The last time that I had seen the Abbey of Monte Cassino was on the morning of February 15th 1944 when, as a private soldier of artillery, I was standing with a fellow Welshman on a mountain top across the valley of the Liri river. Soon after breakfast our bombers began to come over in mighty waves, and we were wondering where such a vast armada might be bound when

we saw the first bombs pounding down on the 'Mother of Monasteries': and so it continued for the next five hours. Short of bombing Jerusalem or the Vatican City it is doubtful if any act could have been more futile or barbarous than the senseless holocaust caused by three hundred Allied bombers at Monte Cassino. At the time its desecration seemed total and irreversible.

But so too at times has the destruction of the priory of Llanthony and the collapse of the abbey church at Capel-y-ffin. But the imprint of history's true visionaries is not so easily obliterated. Monte Cassino was rebuilt and reconsecrated in 1964, and at the same time the Pope declared St Benedict 'Patron of Europe'. The celebrations for the eighth centenary of Llanthony Priory in 1975 also reminded us of a certain indestructibility and continuity.

More modestly, on the tenth day of July 1967, the Father Ignatius Memorial Trust came into being for the remembrance of a man who, for all his human shortcomings, was without doubt an exemplar of holy intention. As Kilvert described him: "A gentle man, of simple manners...a very fine head and brow, a saintly face, and entirely possessed by his one ideal."

Ignatius was a pioneer. If his 'failure' was the will of God, he would not have had it otherwise: nor his 'success' either.

Douglas Lyne

From the Chairman...

The Vicarage, Mill Lane,
Thorpe-le-Soken,
Clacton-on-Sea,
Essex

CO16 0ED

Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, 26th June 2006

Dear Friends and Fellow pilgrims, I HOPE to see many of you once again at the Pilgrimage on Saturday 26th August. The Pilgrimage will take its usual form with a Mass at 12.00 noon and Office of Our Lady at 3.30 pm.

This year we will welcome Bishop David Thomas, who will preside at the Mass and preach in the afternoon. It will be very good to have Bishop David with us again after a break of several years.

As the walls of the ruined Abbey Church have been undergoing their long awaited strengthening and re-capping, there is now some hope that we may be able to hold at least one of the pilgrimage services in it and, for practical reasons, that service would have to be the afternoon office, so pilgrims are asked to go as usual to Llanthony for the Mass at 12 o'clock and there you will find out what is happening for the rest of the day.

Much looking forward to another happy pilgrimage together,

Father Jeremy

RELICS OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

FROM TIME TO TIME some relic or other of the monastic life at Capel-y-ffin comes to light. Many have disappeared for ever, such as Father Ignatius' writing desk which was left to the Trust by Fr. Malcolm Riley (ob.1987) sometime vicar of Holy Trinity, Abergavenny. But instead of receiving the desk, the trust received a letter from the then Rector of Holyhead where the late Fr. Riley had been living in retirement, stating that he had burnt the desk because it contained wood-worm. I can remember the desk very well in Holy Trinity Vicarage and I saw it again in Holyhead a few years before Fr. Riley's death. It looked to me the sort of thing a clerk in a Charles Dickens novel would use.

An old picture

At Holy Trinity Abergavenny on the south wall of the chancel there used to be an oil painting, perhaps 8 or 10 feet long and 36" high. The Faculty under which it was placed in the church recorded the title of the picture as 'Te Deum'. It was in fact a representation of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Central in the foreground of the picture was a large thurible from which issued clouds of incense smoke. Resting on these clouds, and surrounded by heavenly clouds, was a long altar, resting on four

slender pillars. On the altar stood an enormous Monstrance bathed in golden light—the whole thing like a glorious vision.

At ground level, to either side of the picture, stood a host of saints—a heavenly host but looking up from earth. Among the few identifiable saints was St Catherine with her spiked wheel and there were lots of mitred heads, and at least one triple tiara.

On either side of the thurible knelt a figure; on the left side a monk and on the right a nun. I have never doubted that the monk was meant for Fr Ignatius, he was dark haired, tonsured and in a black Benedictine habit—maybe the nun, also in black, was Mother Tudfil.

The picture was originally part of the furnishings of the High Altar of the Abbey Church at Capel-y-ffin. It can be recognised on a few old photos that show the altar without a frontal, the altar and reredos. The picture was used as a background under the mensa (altar-stone) and it could be seen through the four slender pillars of the altar.

ADOREMUS ÆTERNUM SANCTISSIMUM SACRAMENTUM

THE altar and reredos went to the church of Ss. Julius and Aaron in Newport, but only after falling masonry had smashed the original mensa.

In the Abbey's heyday, it featured a picture of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the large Latin inscription 'Adoremus Æternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum' (trans. 'Let us adore for ever the Most Holy Sacrament' on the reredos), a canopied Expositorium high above the large enamelled Tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament was placed for adoration, with angel statues in niches swinging censers towards the Expositorium. The imagery of the altar with its reredos was entirely directed to adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: the Expositorium had to be reached by a ladder behind the reredos but, since its translation, has contained only a crucifix.

In its present home at the church of Ss. Julius & Aaron (St Julian's), the Expositorium contains a crucifix hanging by chains and has never been used for its original purpose.

Ss. Julian's also has a pair of large standard candlesticks (at least the same height as me). These were originally two of the 'big six' on the altar's gradine. Two more are, or were, in St. Matthew's, Newport and two more were said to have been owned by the self-styled Bishop of Caerleon (c.1930s) who apparently offered them for sale to a particular church with the threat that if they didn't buy them he would throw them into the river

Usk from Newport bridge. I cannot vouch for the veracity of that particular tale; neither do I know the whereabouts of those two candlesticks.

With the exception of the altar and reredos which went to Newport in the 1920s, these items and others like them were probably purchased during a general dispersal sale in 1916 when through various causes, not least the First World War, it became impossible to keep the monastery open at all. Father Ignatius had died in 1908 and was buried in the Abbey Church. In his Will he left the abbey with its two farms to Father Asaph and Mother Tudfil, two of his followers who, sadly, never had the means to keep it going. Father Ignatius had always been the breadwinner through his preaching tours. Above all it was Ignatius' greatest hope that his community or another religious community would keep the Abbey in the use for which he had laboured to build it and so he added a codicil to his will to the effect that if Dom Asaph and Mother Tudfil were unable to continue the 'work' they should convey the entire property to the Abbot of Buckfast, in Devon. The small community dwindled and Mother Tudfil relinquished her rights to the Abbey and returned to the world. Dom Asaph, unable

to continue and unhappy at not being under a proper authority, joined the Anglican Benedictines at Caldey Island, off Tenby, where, after some years at Painthorpe in Yorkshire, Dom Aelred Carlyle had settled the community which he had originally founded in London in 1895. And so ownership of the Abbey passed to the Caldey Benedictines. Carlyle, however, had similar problems to Ignatius in finding an Anglican bishop who would care for them and so in 1913 he and all except one of the Caldey community seceded to Rome, Father Asaph was among them.

This took ownership of Father Ignatius' monastery into a Roman Catholic community, the one that is now Prinknash, not to the Abbot of Buckfast, who went to law over it, and lost. Of interest to those who use incense in their churches may be the fact that the famous Prinknash brand was originally made by Anglican Benedictines in Caldey—when they seceded to Rome they took their incense-making with them. And so, some of the principal archives and artefacts of Llanthony Abbey now reside at Prinknash Abbey at Cranham in Gloucester.

Father Jeremy C. Dowding SSC

Visit to Prinknash Abbey

IN APRIL, THIS YEAR, I visited Prinknash Abbey in the hope of finding out and viewing what artefacts they have there that were once in use by Fr Ignatius and his community at the Abbey of Our Lady and St David in Capel-y-ffin

My visit was of necessity arranged at quite short notice but in spite of this I was made very welcome by Mr Robert Jones at St Peter's Grange, where I was shown the very beautiful house chapel containing some very fine oak stalls with a beautiful and interesting series of misericords. But these were not the stalls I was looking for, which were quite plain. I later learnt that they had been transferred to Farnborough Abbey. Also at the Grange was the statue of Our Lady, very beautiful and in a lovely setting against a stained glass window on the stairs.

Next I went to the main Abbey building to meet Dom Damian, who gave me a warm welcome and showed me the miraculous monstrance and a cope with orphreys and hood from one of Father Ignatius' copes; the original fabric of the cope had become so threadbare that the hood and orphreys had been remounted. The monstrance is very beautiful and quite ornate but, Father Damian pointed out, it once had an additional set of gold rays which have been removed. Both the monstrance

and the cope are still in regular use. Father Damian was very interesting to talk to and we soon found that we had several acquaintances in common. Before I left he told me that I would be welcome to return at another time and see the archives, much of which is concerned with the day to day running of Llanthony Abbey.

The Miraculous Monstrance

The monstrance in question is called miraculous because of something that happened on August 30th 1880. The following is taken from an official statement made in 1881:

Brother Dunstan was alone praying before the high altar, kneeling about twenty feet from it, between 9 and 10 am, on a bright morning. The monstrance containing a reserved host gradually appeared outside the tabernacle (which was locked) and remained on the altar. Brother Dunstan finished his prayer and left the church without saying anything. He was succeeded by a woman (Sister Janet, a schoolmistress), who saw the same thing, and reported it to him. He then told Father Ignatius, who ordered him to say nothing and went himself to the church and found nothing extraordinary.

The same day, August 30th 1880, in the evening, the four choirboys of the monastery were the first to see the apparition of a woman, which they, themselves, described as 'a beautiful spirit' and 'the Virgin Mary'. For more on the Apparitions, see p.11 [Ed.]

Father Jeremy C. Dowding SSC

Progress on The Abbey Church...an Update

IT MAY BE RECALLED that in the last Newsletter I reported that negotiations had taken place with the contractor who had submitted the lowest tender to see what work could be carried out for the money available.

As a result of these meetings the basis for a contract was agreed and approved by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A contract was entered into on 14th September 2005 with Rourke-Davies of Brecon, the Architect being David Harvey who instructed Jeremy Drinkwater to act as his structural engineering consultant; the contract completion date being 17th December 2005.

The work comprised the stabilisation of the east wall by filling in the arched recess with reinforced concrete and forming a solid altar to act as a counterweight, whilst tying in the outer bulging skin of the masonry wall to the reinforced concrete.

Also, the higher parts of the east and north walls were to be demolished to relieve the weight on the cracked and bulging lower sections. Some other demolition of lower sections of walling to regularise the contour and partial rebuilding of the west wall was also included; all the upper surfaces of the remaining walling were to be

capped to prevent water ingress. The requirement being that at completion of the contract the remaining structure would be safe, but would require further work to put the Abbey Church into a presentable state.

It is anticipated that the contract will be completed in June 2006. Some of the delay has been due to the contractor starting work late, making slow initial progress and, in the contract overrun period, hitting some very bad weather. At a meeting of the Trustees held on 17th May 2006, to which the Architect was invited, he explained that due to fears of progressive collapse he and the structural engineer had decided that it had not been possible to demolish the upper parts of the east and north walls. It is clear that the objective of the contract has not been met, but the Architect has reported that the Cadw Conservation Surveyor who visited the site before Easter was happy and impressed with the work and would support an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for further grant aid to fund a Phase 2 element.

Stanley Knill

The Birth of Brother Joseph, 1861

The third and final part of an edited lecture by Edward Luscombe delivered to the Plymouth Athenaeum on 23 May 2002

ALTHOUGH THE young Ignatius' time with St Peter's was but a matter of months, his coming under the influence of Fr Prynne and Mother Lydia, as well as that of Dr Pusey, had a significant effect on his subsequent career, and in his efforts to establish a brotherhood in the Church of England, which culminated in the building of a monastery and a church at Capel-y-Ffin a few miles from the ruins of the mediaeval Llanthony Priory.



Joseph Leycester (born 1837) was an enthusiast in the practice of his faith, or perhaps in those aspects of it which most appealed to him! From early life he knew that he wanted to become a clergyman, not an 'easygoing clergyman', but 'more like a missionary'. His parents were not at all pleased. He was an extreme Tractarian. Monks nuns, monasteries and nunneries were an almost inevitable concomitant of the Tractarian movement. He went to Trinity College, Glendalmond in Perthshire, where his extreme tendencies and opinions did not endear him to his tutors and fellow students. In his autobiography he stated 'I left college as ignorant of Jesus as my personal Saviour as when I entered it!'

During 1860, he explored the possibility of his future. Dr Philpotts, the Bishop of Exeter, was a good Tractarian, as we have seen. But on the other hand, Joseph's record had come down from Scotland. On the 23 December 1860 he was ordained deacon. Since he was not a graduate of any university, he was required to remain a deacon for three years before being ordained priest. And that also meant he must not preach in the Diocese of Exeter until he had received priest's orders. Preaching was his forte, he drew large crowds, and was an influential preacher. It was probably because of some of his extreme views that the Bishop wanted to keep him quiet, since almost inevitably opposition and hostility would have occurred. He was, at the time, an inspired colt, valuable because of his zeal, dangerous because of his lack of experience. But there were few opportunities in the Diocese of Exeter. The most conspicuous spiritually was Fr Prynne. Prynne was regarded as one of the outstanding Tractarian parish priests in the Diocese of Exeter. He never lacked assistants, clerical or lay; and to serve under him was a great privilege. For Joseph Leycester, the chance of working under Mr

Prynne, and in the same town as Miss Sellon, whose patron was the great Dr Pusey himself, was a God-sent opportunity, and he took it with all the enthusiasm of which he was capable.

Surely his motive for working in Plymouth must primarily have been to meet Miss Sellon, rather than to work as an unpaid curate (he did have some means to support himself) for Fr Prynne. As a curate his main function was the visiting of the poor and sick, a task which demands tact, humour and non-sectarian human sympathy. In none of these qualities was Joseph Leycester Lyne strong enough. Convinced of the certainty of eternal damnation, he was not concerned with the agonies of Mrs Smith suffering from 'the screws', the plight of Mrs Jones with a drunken husband or the worries of a housewife with a large family, a small house and less money. His cure was of souls, not bodies; and unless there was sign of churchmanship in the family visited, he felt that time was wasted on purely material troubles. He was appalled by the indifference, or even outright hostility, to religion. He could not appreciate that this might be caused by people like himself, who had failed to make any contact with the realities of the lives of the poor.

'Brother Joseph' meets 'Mother Lydia'

I met Dr Pusey and Miss Sellon, the lady who first restored the monastic life for women in the Church of England. Through these servants of God the idea of the monastic life definitely formed in my mind, and I determined in the year 1861, to embrace the life of a monk. One of Miss Sellon's nuns made me my first monastic dress and Dr Pusey sent it to me.

From the Autobiography

As we have discerned, Miss Sellon was a very remarkable woman, an autocrat, inclined to be led on by ambition, over-grandiose, but with a great heart, a shrewd sense of character and a nobility of purpose which had a strong foundation in common sense.

The Prynnes tried to discourage him from meeting Mother Lydia. Relationships between the Prynnes and Mother Lydia were somewhat strained over the schooling and Christian upbringing of their daughter Lucy. And Lydia was not in good health, they said, and would not have wanted to be bothered by this impetuous young man. It is now 1861, some ten years after the establishment of St Dunstan's Abbey.

Before calling at the Abbey, Joseph had started a sort of guild for men and boys called the 'Society of the

Love of Jesus' which had 'a monastic flavour about it,' because the members were called Brothers. 'Brother Joseph', as the founder, nominated himself its Superior!

When at last Joseph Leicester presented himself at St Dunstan's Abbey, it was not as Mr Lyne, Mr Pynne's unpaid curate on three years probation from Bishop Philpotts before being given priest's orders, but as Brother Joseph, the Superior of the Society of the Love of Jesus. To his astonishment, he was received immediately.

But perhaps not so surprisingly. Mother Lydia would have heard about this young man and would have been anxious to meet him.

It was a long and important meeting between two people each of whom had a strong sense of mission – and an almost equally strong desire to dominate other people – of course, in the service of God. Mother Lydia felt that here was a spiritual son who could extend her mission to communities of men. It seemed a God-sent visit. But she had to consult her spiritual adviser, Dr Pusey. Perhaps this very

ardour of young Brother Joseph, which was so infectious, might he rather suspect?

However they thought that it was a risk worth taking. They suggested that the Society for the Love of Jesus should take over a house belonging to Mother Lydia for the foundation of a resident community (The house was, I believe, in Stoke). But only two members of the Society felt prepared to follow their Superior into this community. Parents of others objected as strongly as Joseph's father did. Within days there were certain unexplained happenings which terrified the new residents, and Joseph was seized by an attack of typhoid fever. With these occurrences at so crucial a moment in the rebirth of English monasticism, perhaps it was a sign of the Divine disapproval, or at least of its timing. When he recovered his parents took him away for convalescence.

And so ended his connection with Plymouth, and the failure of his first attempt to establish a community.

The Apparitions at Llanthony

IN 1880 THE VIRGIN MARY reputedly appeared at Capel-y-Ffin on four occasions.

The first appearance was on the evening of Monday 30th August. Four boys aged between nine and fifteen, were playing in the Abbot's meadow, next to the monastery. John Stewart saw a bright dazzling figure gliding across the meadow towards him. The form was a woman with a halo of light surrounding her body. There was a veil over her head and her face and hands were raised as if in blessing. The other boys, Thomas Foord, Daniel Maguire and Joseph Chalkley, also saw the vision. The form entered a hedge and remained there for a few moments before it passed through the bush and vanished.

On September 4th, the bush was the scene of a second vision. One of the boys called for Brother Dunstan, who was in charge of the community whilst Father Ignatius was away. The bush glowed with light and the form of a woman appeared, followed by a man in a loin cloth. As the figures met they vanished. Daniel Maguire claimed that an angel touched him and cured his headache. It was noticed that although the grass was wet with a heavy dew, the ground in front of the bush was dry and warm. On September 5th the Virgin Mary briefly reappeared in a 'flickering of light'.

The final visitation of 1880 was on September 16th during a rainstorm;

this time it was witnessed by Father Ignatius.

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

Following the appearances, miraculous cures occurred, including that of Mother Cecilia, a friend of Father Ignatius. She announced her chronic stiff knee had been healed by the application of leaves from the bush—a clump of wild rhubarb.

Father Ignatius said of the Apparitions:

"I think they are of great value to the Church of England because there has been so much of the supernatural in other parts of the Church and the Church of England has been without the least sign of it for so long a period".

This apparition was one of several across Europe during this period. The romanticism of the nineteenth century bought about a revival of Marian enthusiasm. There had been apparitions in Vinay near Grenoble and in the mountains above St Etienne

Canon Ivor Llewellyn Davies

His promised obituary
will appear in the next Newsletter.