



CR Review

Poem for Meditation



Photograph by Ken Geiger

Seeing people gazing in awe at the breath-taking eclipse this summer reminded me of my own ‘eclipse experiences’ described in my poem ‘Solo Eclipse’, and of a statement I came across recently: ‘My heart belongs to the maker of the stars.’

Solo Eclipse

My first eclipse was at the age of six,
standing in the school playground,
“mixed infants” without protective glasses,
watching the moon eating the sun,
lacking words for our primal experience,
the eerie exchange of darkness and light.

Four decades later, with some care for safety,
the event was reflected in water, an old tin bath
placed in our garden to capture the magic.
This would be your last observation,
at least from an earth-bound point of view.
We held hands as daylight and birdsong waned.

At my third and solitary encounter,
as I stood expectantly again, missing you,
a blackbird perched on the garden fence,
its yellow eyes mirroring my skyward gaze
while clouds veiled the stellar embrace,
and the memory of love eclipsed the sun.

Maggie Jackson

CR’s Poet-in-Residence

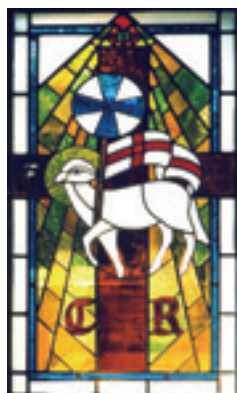
See page 23 for Maggie’s article about her forthcoming time in residence.

CR

Michaelmass 2017

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*The Sermon preached by the Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd Graham James, Visitor
to the Community of the Resurrection at the Re-hallowing of the Community Church,
Sunday 9th July 2017*

“Salvation has come to this house today.”

(Luke 19.9)

It was in July 1911 that Charles Gore presided at a service here for the laying of the foundation stone of the Chapel of the Resurrection. He and Walter Frere were not at one on the liturgical arrangements. Gore was “all for incense” but refused to use holy water or oil saying “I do not take kindly to the anointing of things”. By 1938 Frere could devise a liturgy for the consecration of this great church without concern for Gore’s sensitivities, though sadly Frere died before the service took place. Our liturgy today owes much to Walter Frere. I hope even Charles Gore would sanction the anointing of an altar, it being no mere “thing”.

46 years passed between the formation of this religious community and the consecration of your community church. By anyone’s standards that’s a long time. In itself it suggests a degree of uncertainty and perhaps even ambivalence about what your community church should be and do. This Community of the Resurrection began with a group of celibate priests seeking “together to reproduce the life of the first Christians” in something like the manner described in the second chapter of *the Acts of the Apostles*. The worship and service of God took primary place, expressed in the breaking of bread and the prayers. But the aim of CR was to travel light in the religious life. Alan Wilkinson’s history traces the starts, stops and readjustments in the plans for this church which was finally consecrated when Keble Talbot was coming to the end of his long period as Superior. Alan Wilkinson quotes Talbot saying afterwards that CR was still “lightly perched on the branch” and was able “at any moment to cut loose and take flight”. It was an illusion. Wilkinson describes the erection of this huge church as more like dropping anchor. Buildings, he comments, begin by expressing a community’s life but end up determining it. Presciently, Alan Wilkinson goes on to say that “the completion of the church pushed CR, at any rate at Mirfield, towards the Benedictine end of the monastic spectrum.”

Perhaps the hope that this community may be still “lightly perched on the branch” lies behind the reading the story of Zacchaeus as our gospel today. It is a rather subversive gospel on an occasion like this. Yet it was also used in 1938. I couldn’t help thinking how much easier it would have been to have had the healing of the centurion’s servant. The centurion was the one who had built the synagogue for the Jews. That was why they were so well disposed towards him.

He was a proper church builder about whom Jesus says “not even in Israel have I found such faith”.

Yet Walter Frere chose Zacchaeus, perched on his branch. So Zacchaeus it will have to be. Zacchaeus, the despised little man who isn't just a tax collector but a chief superintendent of taxes, collaborating at the highest level with the Roman occupying power, raking in as much as he can from his fellow Jews and creaming off plenty for himself. He is rich, contemptible and ridiculous as well, climbing a tree to see Jesus. Jesus picks someone scorned with whom to keep company. That single encounter with Jesus is

enough to change Zacchaeus. He promises to give half of all he owns to the poor and to recompense four-fold anyone he has defrauded. What a contrast with the story of the rich young ruler just a few verses earlier in Luke's gospel. That wealthy young man took his religion seriously, kept the commandments and was genuinely seeking eternal life. He is asked to give everything away but cannot do it.

I once heard it argued that it was easier for Zacchaeus to respond because he only gave half his wealth to the poor, whereas the rich young ruler was expected to give everything. I think that's to miss the point. The rich young ruler was seeking his own salvation. He seems an isolated figure. Zacchaeus, by contrast, opens his life to others. He doesn't simply give away his wealth. He opens his heart. A new sympathy enables him to make relationships again.

The renewal of this community church in recent years has not been done simply for the brethren. Worship and prayer remain at the heart of your life, but this church is a gift to others too. Some have been surprised at the sheer number of people who have come to this beautifully reconstructed church. It has been the source of new mission and ministry. It is physically spacious. But more tellingly it enlarges the spirit. A house of God should always do that.

Cathedrals, those great buildings which represent the church at its most institutional, have found new ministries and fresh purpose in an age in which the institutional church is looked upon with considerable suspicion. There seems an irony in this. But it is their spaciousness, not just in scale but in spirit, which animates their mission and ministry. They are enlarging places where



the God who makes us more than we are is discerned. “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” (*John 14.2*) We worship a roomy God whose kingdom has space for all.

This refurbished church has become attractive to a host of people who did not seek it so much when the Community appeared to love it less. Sharing this church with others changes the community which inhabits it too. The shafts of light and the beauty of this place may lead you into a fresh lightness of spirit. I had never thought of Walter Frere as subversive or much like Zacchaeus. Now I wonder. In 2017 perhaps we are able to repeat Keble Talbot’s words with a bit more confidence. With the story of Zacchaeus ringing in our ears we pray that this Community of the Resurrection may be still “lightly perched on the branch” and even at any moment spiritually to “cut loose and take flight”. “Salvation has come to this house today.” (*Luke 19.9*)

Rt Revd Graham James

Photos of the Re-hallowing of The Community Church 9th July 2017





Let all guests who arrive be received like Christ *(Rule of St Benedict, chapter 53)*



The weekend of celebration around CR Festival Day in July gave an opportunity to give thanks for all that has been achieved over recent years – particularly the stunning transformation of the Community church – and to look forward to what the future might hold for the site, for CR and for the thousands who come to Mirfield each year to share in the brethren's life.

The Saturday afternoon saw a series of 'Stations of the Future' around the grounds, visited in turn by groups of those had come for the day or weekend. Each station focused on an aspect of the Community's plans for the future. So George CR talked about the Community church and the life of a religious community in today's world, I covered plans for the House of the Resurrection and a new Monastery, Peter CR spoke about the College of the Resurrection, Dennis CR about the pastoral and retreat programme, Jacob CR covered the Community's educational work, and the vision was grounded by a presentation from Andrew Davies, our fundraiser, on how it would all be paid for!

We have found – to our delight and slight puzzlement – that more and more people want to come to Mirfield each year. This presents us with two happy quandaries – how to live the religious life amongst and alongside ever-increasing numbers of guests and how to maintain the 'climate' of the site which is recognised and valued by all who come.

The answer to which the brethren have been led, after a considerable period of prayerful reflection, is to give over the whole of the House of the Resurrection – our home since 1898 – to retreatants, guests and visitors. This will provide the space required for those coming to stay or coming for the day, whether as individuals or as part of a group. The different rooms will be designed in a way that allows more than one thing to happen at once – so, for example, a school group could be here at the same time as a silent retreat without either impacting on the other. Reconfiguring the House will also give a greater number of dining rooms – a major pinch point at present.

We brethren will move from the House to a new, purpose-built monastery linked to the Church. The monastery will be a space in which CR can foster our life as a community, while remaining at the heart of the site and physically linked



to the current buildings, in which much of our ministry will continue and grow.

We shall be looking to expand our programme of retreats, courses, learning events and other activities in the reconfigured House, as well as broadening our work with schools and universities. You may have seen from our programme leaflets over the last couple of years that the range of activities is becoming greater, but there will come a time (some would say it has already arrived) when without new facilities we will no longer be able to meet the demand.

So we find ourselves in exciting but challenging times. In a world where the cult of the individual appears to be on the increase, the need for persons formed in community becomes ever greater. At Mirfield we are called to work with God's help at becoming an instance of this, that God may enable us to follow Benedict's instruction: "Let all guests who arrive be received like Christ, for He is going to say, 'I came as a guest, and you received Me.'"

Oswin Gartside CR



St Martin's Ruislip Family Camp at Mirfield, August 2017 (photographs used with permission).

Eyewitness – Northern West Bank, occupied Palestinian Territory

The light breaks on a cold December morning. Around a fire agricultural workers share coffee, awaiting the arrival of soldiers.

In the immediate vicinity are rolls of razor wire in front of a trench and military roadway that carves an unnatural, ugly path, across the ancient hillsides, to the left and right, and far as the eye can see.



Photos: EAPPI/JohnH

I am observing an agricultural gate – ie a checkpoint – in the Northern West Bank, occupied Palestinian Territory. As the sun rises, I glimpse the Mediterranean, some 8-9 miles away in the distance.

Other men and women begin to gather in front of the padlocked metal gates, some with tractors and donkeys with carts.

And then an elderly shepherd arrives with a flock of sheep and goats. I watch the animals obey the whistles and calls of their master who skilfully keeps them together in their place in the growing queue.

Four soldiers arrive and assemble themselves at a canopied desk – some 30-40 metres away – whilst two others begin to tackle the heavy padlocks on the three sets of ill-fitting gates.

Five at a time, men and women proceed to walk across, papers to the ready for checking.

The shepherd's turn comes and upon his signal the flock scampers forwards, parting to pass around the heavily armed soldiers and then slowing to a graceful meander through the third set of gates.

And so I watch before me the grinding infringement of the right of these men and women to access their land and livelihoods, indeed the right to go out and complete a day's work.

A fundamental right enshrined in international humanitarian law, breaches of



Photos: EAPPI/JohnH

which are embedded through restriction of movement into daily life across the occupied West Bank.

I had the privilege of spending 3 months living in the Northern West Bank as part of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Project for Palestine and Israel (“EAPPI”), one of a group of 30 volunteers drawn from more than 15 countries.

The EAPPI was set up by the World Council of Churches in 2002, following a call from the Palestinian Christian community for international volunteers to bear witness to the military occupation by Israel and which is 50 years old this year.

In Britain and Ireland volunteers are recruited and trained by the Quakers and commit to live in Palestinian communities where specific monitoring of human rights is required.

I previously visited East Jerusalem in 2010 as part of a legal housing delegation, having first visited in 1991 as a student visiting traditional pilgrim and tourist sites.

I retained an interest in this conflicted land and the opportunity to take a sabbatical from work enabled me to focus on joining the programme and as a barrister in self-employment there is helpful flexibility in how I can complete the required commitments to advocacy.

Following further training upon arrival we attended a handover ceremony in St George’s Cathedral in East Jerusalem where the previously group lit candles and passed a symbolic light on to us.

Thereafter I was based in an apartment with three colleagues, from Finland, Norway and Sweden.

Amongst many issues, we were specifically tasked with daily monitoring of the difficulties faced by farmers accessing their own land.

Upon the cessation of hostilities in 1949 an Armistice line – ‘the Green Line’ – demarcated Israel and the Palestinian territories, the latter which have been occupied continually by Israel since 1967.

In 2002 Israel began building the Wall/separation barrier. But even a simple examination of its route explains its on-going controversy.

The route deviates substantially from the Green Line, penetrating into the West Bank, at one stage to a planned extent of 22km. As a consequence, huge swathes of fertile agricultural land, water resources and whole communities now lie between the barrier and the Green Line.

One result is the separation of farmers and workers from their land and employment and such that they rely upon short opening times at the various agricultural checkpoints situated on the Wall/separation barrier, a work still in progress by Israel and currently measuring over 700km in length.

There is a complicated and often arbitrary permit system for people to access their own land. On many occasions the gates open late, regardless of the weather, and there is inconsistency in who is allowed through, even when a permit is granted.

For example, one morning an elderly woman, an agricultural labourer who harvests thyme in the fields across the gate, was refused entry. She had a permit for the coming months but did not have the current one with her. She sat down on a concrete block and loudly made the point that the previous week she had been allowed through the neighbouring checkpoint without any problem. A kindly man became involved, negotiated with the soldiers and she was eventually let through.

I observed her a few days later as she passed back through the gate after her day in the fields, having waited for over an hour with many others as the darkness fell and the temperature dropped - literally locked onto the land - everyone dependant on the arrival of the military if they were to continue home.

On the occasions when the soldiers did not arrive, we called the humanitarian hot-line, with responses varying from security explanations and fob-offs to outright dismissive sarcasm.

In 2004 the International Court of Justice issued an Advisory Opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (<http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/131/1671.pdf>)

Drawing upon the evidence before it and applying long-established principles of international humanitarian and human rights law, the Court set out strong conclusions as to the illegality of the construction of the Wall on occupied Palestinian land.

Calling specifically for cessation of the Wall's construction, the



dismantling of those sections already built and of attendant legislative and regulatory systems the court then set out the reparations and compensation by Israel required as a result of its unlawful actions.

The United Nations subsequently established the United Nations Register of Damage, providing a mechanism whereby individual claims of economic loss can be recorded, in view of the on-going failure by Israel to take action in accordance with the conclusions of the ICJ.

I often pondered the scale and micro-impact of infringements on a daily basis, multiplied over the months and years since the Wall was built: the loss and denial of chances; the grinding permit bureaucracy and inconsistencies; the military control and intimidation; the sheer waste of time.

EAPPI places emphasis on supporting the work of Israeli peace groups who also oppose the occupation and we were able to meet the Israeli women's group Maschom ('checkpoint') Watch, having seen them in action one morning before dawn across the fencing at one of the checkpoints. Another organisation is Breaking the Silence, a group of young people who have served in the military in the West Bank and who conclude that the occupation must end if there is to be a lasting peace.

Away from the work, during my days off I was able to visit Capernaum, the Sea of Galilee, Nablus and the Dead Sea area.

The programme also arranged for us to spend Christmas Eve in Bethlehem. It was certainly a Christmas with a difference - being far away from home in such a historic place, passing checkpoints to get there and looking out from my room and being faced by the barrier opposite, which in Bethlehem is a 9m high concrete wall.

Prior to leaving for Palestine, I visited Mirfield as part of my church retreat. On my return, I spent several days at the Community as I started to process my feelings and marshall my thoughts. The art room helped, as did chatting to several of the brothers.

Taking a principled stand, EAPPI makes a clear call for advocacy where breaches of international humanitarian and human rights law are identified: put simply, to nurture awareness and to take action in support of the end to the occupation and for a just peace for Israelis and Palestinians based on international law.

It is a privilege to be able to share my experiences here, in the journal of a community with long and credible roots in the movements for conflict resolution, social justice and the search for peace.

John Hobson

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Further information about the work of EAPPI can be found at www.eyewitnessblogs.com

Walking together as Faith Leaders

If you were visiting Mirfield earlier in the summer you would have seen a sight which may have caused you to take a second look! A mixed group of Priests and Imams were just returning from a walk along the canal and through the gardens. As is so very often the case, they were not divided into two separate groups but were chatting and laughing as they walked together. The Oldham Priest and Imam's Group were on retreat together – eight Islamic leaders alongside eight Christian leaders sharing and learning from each other. The theme for the retreat was 'The Religious Life' and we were so grateful for the warm welcome we received from the Community who not only allowed us to use their facilities, but welcomed us into their lives as we shared food together, observed each other in prayer and talked about our understanding of the call to a 'Religious life'.

The Oldham Priest and Imam's Group has been in existence for over five years. It was started by Rev Phil Rawlings (former Inter-Faith Officer in Oldham) and Qari Shakir (Imam and founder of an Islamic Girls School in Oldham). Oldham has a history of racial conflict but in recent years much work has been undertaken to help communities increase their understanding and respect for one another. The Priest and Imam's Group is just one example of the good work that is going on in the town between communities.

The Oldham Priest and Imam's Group meets once a month, alternating between a mosque and a church. We pick a faith-related topic, and a leader from each of the faith groups takes it in turns to speak for 15 minutes. There is then time for questions, clarification and discussion before we share food together. The purpose of the discussion is to facilitate greater understanding about each other's faith and build friendships of trust. So although the discussion may at times be intense, the purpose of the discussion is not to prove each other wrong, but to seek to gain deeper understanding. We do not aim to agree on everything, because we recognise that although we may have many similarities, there are many things on which we do not agree. One of the strengths of the group is that we have been able to maintain our relationships although we disagree on major theological issues. We feel it is important that we model this to our own communities – to show that we can remain good friends even if we see the world very differently. Many people are afraid of disagreement and, as a result, the quality of the discussion is watered down, as they are afraid that they may cause offence. The group has shown that where there is trust between leaders it is possible to celebrate what we share in common but still not be afraid to talk about our differences.

A number of other initiatives have developed from the friendships that have been formed between the priests and imams. One of the mosques and two of the churches involved in the group now meet together monthly to develop the same kind of understanding and respect between lay members of our communities.

These have been well attended and it is great to see how assumptions about each other's faiths are challenged and discarded as relationships are formed. There have also been opportunities to go into local schools. This again has been a partnership between a Priest and an Imam and the visual impact of them standing together and talking to the children about their faith and their friendship has been well received.

As a group we much appreciated the time away together at Mirfield. It was a very significant time for the Imams to see a Christian community in prayer and in particular to see the daily offices which mirrored their pattern of five daily prayers. One of the Imams said, "Now I do really believe that Christians pray!" During the 24-hour retreat we looked at the Religious Life from the Islamic and the Christian perspective. It was good to have Brother Oswin join us to talk about life in the community and his talk raised a lot of questions and discussions. One of the Christian leaders talked about her ministry as a chaplain and again this raised lots of interest from the Imams. But the highlight has to be the final session where we joined the Community to celebrate the Eucharist. It was a very moving experience to see the Imams standing among the small congregation as the celebrant said a short prayer of blessing over each of them as he distributed the bread and wine to others gathered that day. In an increasingly intolerant world, it is so important that we seek to understand and respect our differences, to celebrate what we have in common but be unafraid to talk about those beliefs which have the potential to cause misunderstanding but which, when they are shared, can enrich and strengthen our communities.

Rev Dave Hanson

Previously at Christ Church, Oldham.



First week in Zimbabwe

I arrived on a Saturday evening. It had been a long flight but comfortable. The only snag was that they left my luggage in Dubai.

On Sunday morning I left my hosts' house at 6 a.m. to go to Tafara, a township of small overcrowded houses and delightful people. I had forgotten what hard work it was driving here where the tar roads are worse than the dirt roads, since the pot holes are frequent and sharp edged. It was worth it though as the people were already gathering for mass at seven. Mass took two and a quarter hours with much singing. Then I was off again to a smaller church, only partly built, and dedicated to St Matthias. As with St Philip's we started with a nearly empty church but by the offertory it was full. Africans share with the Orthodox a certain flexibility over the time they arrive in Church.

Later that afternoon I was over at Tariro house on the other side of town. Here I met seven of our delightful young people. Tandeka, Chipu and Tariro of the girls and John, Jawett, Tinashe and Tatenda among the boys. The last two are identical twins so I can never tell the difference between them.

On Monday I set off to the airport to collect my suitcase and we ran into a police road block. There are many of these and they try to take money from everyone by fining us for ridiculous offences. Things got rough when I told the policeman it was stupid to have to have a fire extinguisher. He said I was insulting the president who had signed this law and threatened to arrest me. Eventually we got away with a smallish fine. I must learn not to argue with the police!



Tariro and Tandeka

On Tuesday I had the great pleasure of meeting up with Bishop Chad Gandiya who is a fine person. He has huge problems in his diocese but is always joyful and full of confidence. There are other good bishops in Zimbabwe and they are doing well in a very difficult situation.

Finally on Wednesday morning we set off to the East. It was a wonderful drive. Skies were blue, and it got steadily hotter. As we came near Rusape we began to see hundreds of masasa trees still in their red and rusty brown colours. Anyone who has lived in Zimbabwe will remember September for the masasas and the jacarandas. Then as we turned east from Rusape the jumbled hills of Mutasa and Makoni appeared on one side and the grass on the other side (nice dry, yellow and white grass!) stretched away on the other side to the mountains



Masasa Trees

of Nyanga. It got more and more beautiful the further we went. About midday we reached St David's Bonda where I had my first teaching job in 1969! OHP sisters ran the school then and it has remained a fine school for girls.

A few readers will know Fr Luke Chigwanda who trained at the College and is now the priest at Bonda. We had lunch and much talk with him before driving down through winding mountain roads to reach Christmas Pass and finally the Mbeza Valley and Penhalonga. I couldn't help saying to myself, "This is so beautiful! I am so happy! It is wonderful to be home."

But a greater joy was still to come. First a welcome from the CZR sisters whose faithfulness and affection always moves me. Then some of the Tariro boys started turning up. Christopher, who gave us so much trouble for months on end, then suddenly settled down and got 11 excellent O levels. It was lovely not to be scolding him, but telling him how pleased I am with him. Then Maphosa who has no brains at all, but has done really well with his chicken project and is now growing vegetables as well to sell. We are going to increase his chickens so that he can really make a living out of them. Finally our three form four boys: Tatenda, Charles and Anesu came and we had an entertaining hour of talk before I sent them off to bed.

After a quiet Thursday spent mostly around the mission we set off to Chipinge to see our charges down there. It is a beautiful drive south of Mutare with the Chimanimani mountains on the left and great ranges of mighty hills on the right stretching into the hot dry country of Marange. Whenever I do this journey I think of the CR Fathers who worked there over the decades, often walking miles and miles each day between small churches and little schools, slowly establishing the Gospel in this hard dry land. Fr Reginald did it for twenty six years, followed by Derek Williams and Noel Williams.

Two and a half hours of driving brought us back up into the hills to the town of Chipinge which is beautifully set, but scruffy and over-crowded. Here we found Rejoice, Munyaradizi, Shepherd, Brenda and Liberty waiting for us along with the new Rector. The only problem with their studies is their maths, and to a lesser degree their English. We really could do with a maths teacher of our own to coach our children. The nicest surprise was Liberty. He is a delightful, cheeky



Liberty and Tinotenda

boy with a lovely smile and a lot of charm. Last year I got the impression he was somewhat playful and going nowhere with his schooling. I could not have been more wrong! He got the highest possible marks in all his subjects last term and, if he repeats that at the end of the year, will definitely be going to one of our excellent boarding schools. He is thrilled at the prospect. Then we had the long drive home, which actually I loved, driving through that rugged African countryside. The last few miles up to St Augustine's is along a dreadful road which is far worse than it used to be when Fr Baynham and Fr Prosser were in charge here.

I wondered how many thousands of times CR fathers have driven up that road in the past 100 years!

On Saturday I set off at 5.00 and drove the three and a half hours up to Harare for the Tariro memorial mass. We celebrate this every year and pray for the departed, and lost parents of our young people. It has been a wonderfully healing event and very moving as the youngsters read letters to their parents telling them what has been going on in the past year. We finished with an excellent lunch.

There is much more to be done but it has been a wonderful start. Tariro is in good hands here in Zimbabwe and God has been good to us all.

Nicolas Stebbing CR



Chipinge kids and carers

Fr Eustace St Clair Hill (Part 1)

In a privately published diary (Forgon Publishing 2017) *All Soldiers are Comrades!* – *A British Soldier's World War Memoir* by Walter Harry de Voil, I found the following quote:

Padres of various denominations were amongst British prisoners with whom there were also mingled a few Americans. The padres did excellent work. I remember one Roman Catholic chaplain who was so good with his flock and was a delightful man to lecture us. But without doubt, the outstanding figure amongst us was the Church of England Padre, Fr E Hill. He was a priest of the Community of the Resurrection and had worked in South Africa where he has returned again since the war. He had won the MC and had also lost his right arm in the fighting. He had a wonderful energetic personality and his good influence was immense. I was indeed sorry when I was dispatched to another prison camp and he was left behind in a different one.



Eustace Hill 1908

In *St John's College (Johannesburg) News Jan 2016* we read

In the All Souls Chapel you will see a cross commemorating the Battle of Delville Wood. This year marks the Centenary of this horrendous battle in which two-thirds of the South African Brigade lost their lives during the course of events from the 15th to the 20th of July. Father Eustace Hill was an Army Chaplain and he was awarded the second highest award for gallantry in the British Army, the Military Cross. I quote from *Venture of Faith*, describing Hill's bravery,



Delville Wood Battle, July 1916

"There was no water except at a well at Longueval, under-fire of German snipers who picked off our men when they crawled down like wild dogs with their tongues lolling out. There was one German Officer there in a shell-hole not far from the well who sat with his revolver handy and he was a dead shot, but he

did not shoot the padre, something in the face and figure of that Chaplain; his disregard of the bullets snapping about him; the upright, fearless way in which he crossed that way of death, held back the trigger finger of the German Officer and he let him pass. He passed many times, untouched by bullets or machinegun fire, and he went into bad places, pits of horror carrying hot tea which he made from the water from the well; water for men in agony". The padre in question was Father Eustace Hill, Community of the Resurrection of St John's College. It is upon the shoulders of men such as Nash and Hill that our school is built. Be proud of your heritage and build upon it. (see quote from *Venture of Faith* by Colonel Thackeray p. 194)

Thus we are introduced to the character of Fr Eustace St Clair Hill, veteran chaplain of the South African War. He took part in the WWI campaign in South West Africa and Egypt. He moved to Europe where he was stationed near Ypres in close proximity to Osmund Victor CR and Keble Talbot CR. Here he gained the MC, was wounded and imprisoned by the Germans.

Reading the paragraph from *Venture of Faith* just a couple of weeks ago I realised that I had become proud of those men whom I have never known and who are separated from me by many decades. Hill's heroism reads like a passage from *the Magnet, Gem or Boy's Own Paper*. In fact he was formed by the culture that generated the adventure story. Born into a military family when the British Empire was at the height of its power he had very little doubt that the Boer War and WWI were wars which were engaged in for the cause of justice. He believed (perhaps naively) that Britain fought the Settlers in order to protect the rights of the native peoples and like most people he believed that his Country had gone to war in 1914 to defend the Belgians. As a chaplain he exhorted the men to be brave and courageous. But his was not the jingoism that we detect in some of the speeches of Fr Paul Bull CR. He hated war and he hated the suffering caused to both sides; cf. *CRQ Michaelmas 1916* p. 31ff. In these passages we see something of the dilemma of this brave priest who loved the men he served and men whom he inspired by the noble ideals of courage, bravery and sacrifice. He believed that the allies had gone to war for the sake of justice. To him the invasion of Belgium was wrong and the German treatment of its people barbaric:

I must sort my mind out, as at present I have had a worse succession of shocks each worse than the last, and can hardly realise individual losses in the big gap. How long will Christianity countenance this way of settling disputes, and continue to put painted ribbons full of the wounded's groans and dead men's bones? Self-sacrifice can surely grow on less putrid soil.

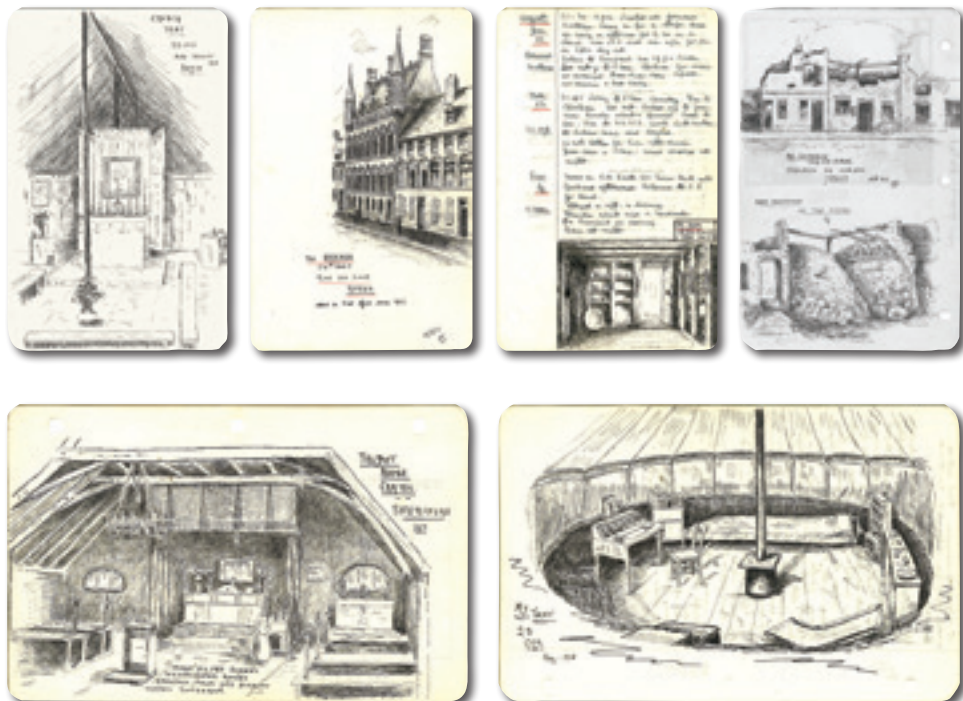
Yesterday I preached on Zeal, e.g., Jehu and his extermination of the Baalites. I delighted the bloodthirsty listeners. I ended by showing he was a failure because his Zeal was not balanced by the Love of God... Love then was to be our driving

force in this war, Love gives esprit de corps to a Regiment, public spiritedness to a Town, Patriotism to Country, and which unites colonies to a Motherland &c.: Love for a noble cause would for the joy of victory beyond, endure death and carry a man through all. Therefore love of right was to be our incentive and not hate.

The South West African campaign seems to have ended quickly and with relatively little bloodshed. Two letters from Eustace in July 1915 are gossipy, lyrical and cheerful. He tells of taking care of a German Missionary and helping him to say Mass in a Latin that neither of them were proficient in. He describes the convent chapel loaned to him by the Belgian Chaplain to the Forces and thus in an unselfconscious way testifies to the ecumenism generated by the war. He writes (with what seems to be admiration) of his thieving house-boy who provides all the necessary utensils for the cookhouse.

His letter of July 11th tells of the German surrender “without fighting!” There is an element of the subversive in his attitude to organised Church parades – “Little scratch services at lonely and lovely bridges and culverts are more to my liking than formal parades with their long introductions and usual waits.”

But if he had an easy time in SWA he was under no illusions about the future:



All line drawings are taken from the War Diary of Osmund Victor CR.

In the morning I saw the wire stating that Frankey and Sedlitz had signed the surrender, and now am wondering when my lot will be on the move towards Johannesburg. It will take some organising to shift our crowd and not have men short of water and grub; but considering how short a notice men have had to fulfil all sorts of posts..., it is wonderful how well they have managed for us. The 1st Kimberly Regiment returned without the loss of a man, and they reckon they had it hard at times: your horrors seem all the more appalling at times.

He was soon to discover the truth of this for himself. A brief note from the same *CRQ Michaelmas 1915* under the heading 'On Active Service' records the whereabouts of various Brethren who are acting as chaplains to the forces. Of Eustace we read Fr Eustace has been with General Botha's Army in South West Africa, and will come with the South African Contingent to Europe.

There are no letters from Eustace telling us when or where he arrived in France. We know from the letters of Frs Victor, Talbot and Fitzgerald CR that in 1916 he was somewhere near Ypres. A letter home on 21st July 1916 from Eustace shows that he is already in Europe and witnessing the horrors for himself:

Sorry to have delayed this but last week has been terrific. I had no experience of such overwhelming and sustained shell deluge as last Tuesday's, and how our men stuck it out I don't know. God is my answer for myself. I 'reserved' on Sunday 12, and had my Pyx on my breast, and had only once to combat fear, and that was after the hospital had its 13th shell into its roof, and a mistaken order had caused men to retire from us. I was alone with three lying down patients, who could not move; the rest we got into a cellar. I gave each of them the Blessed Sacrament, and partook myself with the alternative of a last shell or capture. The next shell landed in the garden, and all was dark for a moment, as smoke, and earth, etc., poured over us. That was the climax; our men returned, our shells whistled over us into the enemy. Bearers arrived and we evacuated all our wounded. I buried 13 in the garden shell hole, and could bury thirteen more there, but snipers make it unsafe to go to the dead, and they snipe across our grave now.



John Gribben CR

[To find out what happened afterwards to Fr Eustace Hill in Europe in the Great War, read Part 2 of John CR's article in the Epiphany 2018 issue of *CRQ*. Eds.]

Meeting at the Holy Well – Preparation for being Poet in Residence



Some years ago, I was staying at St Beuno's Ignatian Spirituality centre in North Wales on an 8-day silent retreat. Here, at this inspiring and beautiful place which was once home to Gerard Manley Hopkins, I engaged in the imaginative contemplation of scripture while gazing over the Clwyd valley to the mountains of Snowdonia.

When my Retreat Guide suggested I should contemplate the Gospel story of 'The Woman at the Well' and her encounter with Jesus, I asked if I could visit St Winifred's Well at Holywell just a few miles away – a place where I, amongst many other people over the centuries, had experienced healing. I promised I would avoid speaking to anyone I met there.

As I entered the shrine I noticed there was another visitor, a man, who stood looking into the depths of the dark, gently swirling water. The man looked familiar but I couldn't place him. For around twenty minutes we stood at either side of the holy well, silently musing.

The man left just before me, and when I went to sign the visitors' book I saw that the signature above mine was 'Seamus Heaney'!

My heart almost burst with joy and I wanted to exclaim what felt to me like the most extraordinary coincidence. As an aspiring poet, and lover of Seamus Heaney's writing, this was a 'magnificat' moment, an encounter to be proclaimed to the world. I turned to the staff who look after the shrine who were clearly unaware what a very special visitor they had just missed, but I remembered my promise to keep silence and restrained myself from conversing with them.

I drove the few miles back to St Beuno's with the biggest smile on my face, longing to tell someone what had happened, but that would have to wait until I met my Retreat Guide the following morning. So, in order to share my story with the universe, I went onto the hillside and told the cattle who were grazing there.

I have, of course, no proof that Seamus and I shared some silent minutes at St Winifred's Well, and can only assume he was oblivious to my presence, but I remain grateful for that encounter and the affirmation it brought me that I too have a gift for poetry.

Since then there have been many more ways in which I have been encouraged to write and to share my writing with others. I have found poet friends and mentors who continue to support me with their critiques of my writing and by the pleasure of their companionship – creative writing can sometimes be too solitary an undertaking. I have also found that the world of contemporary poetry can be extremely competitive, sometimes elitist, with hierarchies and trends that favour some kinds of writing and exclude others. You have to be prepared for criticism and rejection!

Until a few years ago I found myself becoming resentful when poetry of a spiritual nature would be dismissed. It seemed that it was ok to write about anything apart from God !

But, thankfully, God stepped in and connected me to a group of writers from different faith traditions who were not afraid to stand up and be counted. Some of these writers will be joining me at the Poetry Salon ('Words from the Soul') at the Mirfield Centre on November 16th. This event will be offered while I am 'Poet in Residence' at the Community of the Resurrection this Autumn.

The idea of holding a 'Salon' is based on the practice of Literary Salons in the 17th and 18th centuries – a gathering where writing is presented and discussed, and enjoyed! (The Wikipedia definition is that 'A salon is a gathering of people under the roof of an inspiring host, held partly to amuse one another and partly to refine the taste and increase the knowledge of the participants through conversation.') Our event at the Mirfield Centre has a panel of poets who will present poems from a variety of faiths and will share some of their own. Those coming to the Salon will be invited to bring a favourite poem, or a few lines

from a poem which in some way speaks of God or of ‘the transcendent’, to discuss in small groups. I could have called this event a workshop, but for an afternoon of poetic pleasure I think ‘Salon’ fits the bill!

As I write this piece in early September for the next issue of the CRQ Review, I realise how fortunate I am to be given the opportunity to spend time writing at CR and how this is yet another affirmation of the same God-given nature, of active grace, as my encounter with Seamus Heaney. A few weeks ahead of my residency at CR, I’m aware of moments of anxiety and of wavering self-confidence. What if my ‘muse’ goes missing? What if no-one likes what I write? What if I get bored, or homesick? But my Ignatian awareness acknowledges that such thoughts are the attempts of a less than benevolent spirit to undermine and spoil such a privileged time to live in a prayerful community and write ‘For the greater glory of God’.

During my residency, I will also be hosting a Quiet Day at the Mirfield Centre on October 28th on the theme of ‘The Tent of Meeting’. This scene from Exodus and the images it stirs will, I hope, inspire poems which will be published as a collection and will be one of the ‘fruits’ of my weeks at CR. I am confident that there will be many other ‘fruits’ that will grow from this initiative. I hope other people might be encouraged to write or to just enjoy poetry and to appreciate how God finds all sorts of ways to inspire us and share our lives.

I am very glad to see an expanding range of poetry books on the shelves in CR’s bookshop – proof that contemporary poetry has room for spirituality – and hope that some of my own might sit there next year.

I am grateful to the CR brethren for the generous and imaginative invitation to be their first Poet in Residence and I look forward to a creative Autumn.

Maggie Jackson

Being a CR Companion

Text of an address for the Study Day on Prayer and Community in Canterbury on 11 March, 2017 which shortage of time prevented being given in full

A few years ago I gave a talk at our church about Anglican Religious Communities and the reaction seemed to be one of incredulity that such places actually exist. As somebody said then “I thought monasteries and convents all disappeared at the Reformation” – and this sort of reaction was coming from lifelong Anglicans! (It was, famously, Archbishop George Carey who described the Religious Life as the best kept secret in the Anglican Church).



One thing which Companions of the Community of the Resurrection can do is to help CR - and Anglican Religious Communities generally - to become rather better known amongst the faithful. In other words, Companions can help to be ambassadors for CR and the Anglican Religious Life because we are people out in the world with all sorts of opportunities to talk about CR and our affiliation to it.

That affiliation is important: it makes us members of those Religious Communities; not as Brothers or Sisters but rather more like Cousins; perhaps even remote Cousins geographically - but never spiritually remote.

Personally I feel it to be a great honour - and very humbling - that a Community of Brethren, focussed on God 24 hours a day, living alongside Him, following his ways, should invest in reaching out to me and people like me and bring us partly within their fold. It does, I think, give a true reflection of God's love.

Companions are not part of the inner workings of the Community and perhaps that is why the arrangement works so well. We are quietly welcomed, always respected and genuinely given the sort of affirmation and fillip which does not usually happen from other people or situations. It is that attitude of love and acceptance which we, as Companions, can take out into the world on CR's behalf.

There is a word which tries to encompass all the Community stands for: 'charism'. It is that charism and the work of the Community which many of us have come to know which leads us to becoming Companions in the first place so we can then, in turn, share that work and charism in our own lives, in our

own locations and with all the people with whom we interact. We are actually bringing a dimension of the Religious Life into our own Christian - and even secular - environments.

Fr Nicolas CR once described Companions as “following Christ but with added dimensions”. What are those added dimensions? Well, we make our commitment to CR - which we renew annually - and we continue to try to deepen our discipleship, to serve, to try to understand the mystery of the resurrection in our lives and what it means for us and, importantly, to pray - not just for the world and for our own communities and for ourselves but for CR and its work and for our fellow Companions and those listed on the CR intercession leaflet. That prayer is actually two-way, because the Community is also praying regularly for its Companions, so not only are we giving strength to CR through prayer, we are also receiving it.

Trying to have a discipline of regular prayer - perhaps, if we can manage it, at the same time as a CR Office is taking place - really helps to keep us rooted in one of the fundamental roles of the Community. Because we are dispersed, we of course are not participating directly in the Community’s life at Mirfield but through prayer and our other commitments we become extended members of that life, helping to keep the horizons of CR far out beyond the Community’s own walls.

Something expected of Companions is to follow a personal Rule of Life. This actually means different things to different Companions. Each of our personal rules are meant to be challenging yet realistic, so of course they will vary with our individual circumstances. We are each asked to have a Spiritual Director with whom we can work out our own personal Rule and we are asked to think not only about worship in our own individual communities but also daily prayer, regular study, at least one annual retreat if possible - perhaps at the one at Mirfield in Advent specifically geared towards Companions - and other important considerations like penitence, through the Sacrament of Confession, almsgiving, involvement in organisations, maybe even a rule of fasting at certain times. It is adherence to that Rule which helps Companions to keep centred on Christ in a disciplined and focussed way, underpinning everything else which may be going on in our lives.

Almost from the start of what was then called the ‘Fraternity’, CR Companions - as the name by which we are known today - have tried to meet together in local groups. Inevitably, over the years, some groups have come and gone depending on those able to take part in their activities but there is still a great deal of benefit to be had from, if we can, meeting together for talks, reflections, quiet days, social events and, particularly, for the Eucharist, perhaps conducted by a CR-trained priest working locally to the group. This

kind of interaction is a vital source of mutual support for Companions plus - and this can't be overestimated - it gives visibility to the name and work of CR at a local level.

Since the major works on the Community church have been carried out and the site at Mirfield has become something of a place of pilgrimage, Companions can play an important role in helping to bring people to Mirfield on pilgrimage weekends or for retreats or to join working groups. This is often how new Companions come about - they visit and stay at the Community, they come to know it and all that it stands for and they want to become a part of it and take some of it away with them as a tiny seed to be planted in their own community which, when it starts to grow, can lead in turn to new people being introduced to CR.

There is a special day set aside each year for Companions to meet at the Community and this is usually a wonderful blend of worship, study and socialising. There is a pilgrimage each year by Companions to the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham which, again, is another opportunity to meet and pray and socialise together in a very special environment. The other major highlight of the calendar each year is the Companions' Study Week. Actually, it usually doesn't quite last a week - it is what used to be called the Summer School - when we live in the College of the Resurrection at Mirfield and have a specific timetable of study and worship although, again, with a good deal of social time built in.

Companions actually form a wonderful support network for the Community - we are pleased to try and help and support CR as much as we can in our own ways; that may be financially or though using our time and our talents to help or, indeed, all of the above. Because Companions are, essentially, just ordinary people; working or retired, young or old, active or more contemplative, there is a whole dimension of ideas and energy which we can offer to the Community. That great surrounding pool of associated talent and opportunity can act as a source of constant refreshment and renewal for the Community itself and, indeed, can sometimes even give rise to new postulants.

In summary, then, Companions for CR - as with all Religious Communities - I believe are vital in a two-way process: helping, supporting the Community, making it visible locally, praying for it, broadening its reach and influence far beyond what might otherwise be possible; but, equally, allowing us as individuals to tap into the history, experience and love of an established community and to stay rooted in Christ and in something so worthwhile and God-focussed as the Community of the Resurrection.

Kevin Sims

Companions CR

RIP

Brenda Letall

New Companions

Chris Blyth

Russ Naylor

Anne Young

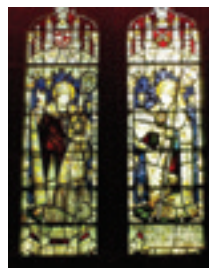


The 2018 Companions' Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

will take place from Friday 1st June to Monday 4th June inclusive.

Would those Companions and friends who are interested in going please contact Michael Stocks, who is arranging the bookings, so that Michael knows who to get in touch with when booking forms are issued later in the year. His phone number is 01524-807192 and his email address is michaelstocks993@gmail.com

The Community pilgrimage to St Mary Lastingham 15th July 2017





The Community of the Resurrection and the Mirfield Liturgical Institute present

The Sixth Annual Walter Tapper Lecture



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'Discovering quality and meaning in sacred places and how we are affected by furnishings'

*Pre-booked supper
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Contact Beth Harper to
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Tuesday 17th October 2017 at 7.30pm

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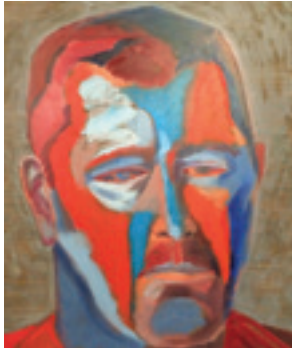
This is a FREE event , booking essential Please contact 01924 481920 or bharper@mirfield.org.uk

~ The Walter Tapper Lecture 2016 ~

The Tent of Meeting: how art engages the transcendent

Illustrations from last years Walter Tapper Lecture, given by Mark Cazalet (artist of the screens in the Community Church, Mirfield). The photos are of 153 painted panels painted by Mark Cazalet at St Edmundsbury Cathedral in 2016 and displayed there, entitled:

‘Silent Colour Meditation: a great cloud of witnesses’





Inauguration of the Society of the Resurrection in the Community's Church at Mirfield on Corpus Christi 2017

Book Reviews

John Bradburne, *The Vagabond of God*. *Didier Rance, abridged by David Crystal.* DLT (Darton, Longman, Todd). 2017. 488pp. ISBN- 978 0 232 53339 2
Obtainable from the Mirfield book shop for £13.99 (it is £14.99 on Amazon!)



John Bradburne (1921-1979) was quite simply a modern day Saint Francis of Assisi who lived an extraordinary and inspirational life; readers of this new biography will not be able to resist being drawn into John's incredible story. It is quite remarkable that John's life and ministry are not better known within the Church but thanks to this new biography by Didier Rance, we are fortunate to receive the most comprehensive insight into John's life that has ever been produced.

John, the son of an Anglican vicar, Reverend Thomas Bradburne, was raised within the Anglo-Catholic tradition and even spent time with the Community of the Resurrection on retreat in the late 1940s. A hero from the Second World War, John eventually decided to join the Roman Catholic Church after discerning a religious vocation which culminated at the Benedictine monastery, Buckfast Abbey; however, John forever remained close to his Anglican roots and prayed for church unity throughout his life.

John spent many years on an incredible journey as he sought to find where his calling from God was to take him. Various times were spent with different monastic communities but this was not where God was calling John to be. John often described himself as the Jester of Christ; others described him as a vagabond of God, what is certain is that he has much to teach us as Christians today. John was not seduced by worldly desires or pulled away from God by unhelpful distractions. John was not interested in money, fame, or a worldly career but instead he spent his life worshipping God, constantly offering prayer through the Daily Office, his poems or by playing music and singing. After hitch-hiking and spending time in various locations throughout the UK and Europe, in 1962, John decided to follow his good friend, Fr John Dove SJ to Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia).

John's time in the country eventually led him to Mutemwa Leper Colony in 1969. John was sickened at the standard of care the residents of Mutemwa were subject to; at that time residents were forced to put bags over their heads as the lepers were told that they were too ugly to be looked at. Immediately, John knew that this was where he was called to be and over the next 10 years John gave his life caring for the lepers, serving God in a ministry that no one else wanted to do. John was renowned within the Church in Rhodesia and many people would visit him including current CR brothers, Nicolas Stebbing and Robert Mercer.

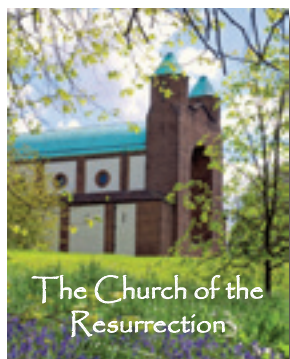
As the war in Rhodesia continued, it became unsafe for John to stay at Mutemwa; he was alone as the only Englishman in the area, an easy target, especially as John would regularly challenge local villagers who tried to steal from the vulnerable lepers. John refused to leave the lepers, he would not abandon his brothers and sisters in Christ; if he left, who would care for and protect them? In 1979 John was abducted at gun-point during the night and spent three days in appalling conditions before he was tragically murdered. John became a martyr, giving his life up after refusing to abandon his ministry. Since John's death a number of miracles have occurred after Christians have asked for John to intercede on their behalf; a formal process to recognise John Bradburne is now beginning in Rome.

This review does not even start to scratch the surface of the amazing and unique life of John Bradburne. I really cannot recommend this book highly enough. John's life is inspirational, an example of living that radical Gospel life that we can so often only see in God's saints. It is also worth noting that each time this book is purchased, part of the cost goes directly towards the ongoing care at Mutemwa leper colony.

Ben Bradshaw

Society of the Resurrection

The Church of the Resurrection. *Frances Stott (author) & George Guiver (contributor).* Mirfield Publications, 40 pp. Pbk. July 2017. £6.

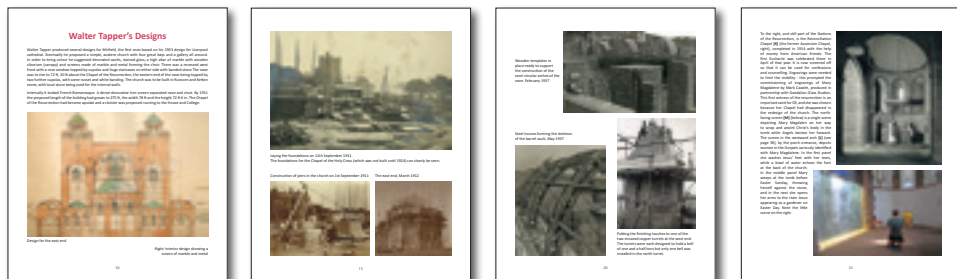


No wonder it sells like hot cakes. Every page is packed with information and photos, from early drawings from the archives to up-to-date photos, almost all in brilliant colour. It concentrates on the evolution of our Church, from different architects' projects, drawings and plans up to now. You see local cloth-capped workmen up on scaffolding, how the Church was used in the past, and the brethren in choir today. 40 pages of information and over 100 illustrations. Published to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the foundation of the Community and

the re-hallowing of the Community church on July 9th.

Fr George CR writes:

“Our church now attracts hordes of people - its stunning refurbishment, and the new art-works commissioned for it, deserved a commemorative picture-book, and we are extremely pleased with what Frances Stott has produced. It shows monastic life fully engaged with the contemporary world, in our common search for what is unchanging.”



Also by Frances Stott:

‘**Mirfield**’, Greenfield House Publications, 2012, has nearly 50 pages on the House of the Resurrection. Available from Greenfield Publishing Ltd First floor, 24 High Street, Uppermill, Saddleworth, OL3 6HX 01457 237200. editor@greenfieldpublishing.co.uk

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The Community and the College are very grateful for the support they receive from so many individuals, parishes and others. If you would like to add your support to enhance their future, please consider:

Making a Regular Gift

Planned monthly giving enables budgeting for the future and over a period can add up to a significant sum. Using Gift Aid enables the Community or College to claim an extra 25p from HMRC for every £1 given by a taxpayer.

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Giving shares or securities to the Community or College can attract tax relief and capital gains tax relief. For further information, please contact the Bursary.

Leaving a Legacy

A gift in your will to the Community or College will help support the future development of the Community or College and their work.

Plans for the Future

The Community has exciting and far-reaching plans for the future at Mirfield, including providing a new monastery and refurbishing the House of the Resurrection to provide improved facilities for retreatants and guests. Please do be in touch if you would like more details.

Standing Order and Gift Aid forms are available on the Community's website – www.mirfield.org.uk – together with more information about legacies / bequests and other tax-effective ways of giving. If you would like more information, please contact:

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Thank you for helping to continue and enhance
the work of the Community and College.

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