

## **Out of the Ordinary.....**

As we enter June, we are just plain Ordinary; gone are the seasons of Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week and Easter to Pentecost. We enter the “Green” time when we don’t have to chop and change colours and booklets, when we don’t have to remember whether “to alleluia” or not. So therefore I really had to look around for something to say that’s not seasonal – and it came to me while I had the privilege of taking Home Communion to some of the parish’s senior ladies.

I had good chats with these ladies (whom I will not name, but they will know who they are). One lady, a very regular at services until unable to attend, told me that every Wednesday and Sunday morning, at the time that the service was taking place at St. Mary’s, she would get out her Home Communion leaflet and read it through, so that she still felt part of the worshipping community; she always remembered **us**, but how often do we give a thought to those unable to be with us?

With another lady, we were musing about age (the lady in question is of *very* senior years). We worked out that her grandmother was born in the mid 1800s – so she herself had known someone born not long into Queen Victoria’s reign. So here we have a more than 150-year link to someone who holds the sacrament very dear to this day.

A third lady spends much time knitting and baking for various efforts connected with the church, and I came away with a large bagful of things for the Romanian Baby appeal (not all made by her). She contributes her time and talents in a way rarely seen by the congregation, but none-the-less vital.

I’m sure these tales can be replicated in many other homes, where people are unable to worship (regularly) in church; however they still consider themselves to be very much part of St. Mary’s. These ladies, and others like them, are not just “Ordinary” like the season; they are “Extra-Ordinary” in their commitment to the Church. I hope I am like them when I get to their age.

*Alan*

## **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June from 2.00 pm till 4.00 pm in the Hall**

“Songs and Scones” – a Social Afternoon of music, conversation and cake. Free entry, but **booking is essential**; contact Yvonne Barwick on 01482 703228.

## **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June at 7.30 pm Organ Recital**

If you have seen the programme for this year's Barton Arts, you may have noticed that there is an organ recital at 7.30 on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June in St Mary's, the first time that our organ has featured in Barton Arts for some years.

The recital will be given by Geoff Brown, our own organist, and Chris Brown, organist at Halifax Minster, playing duets and solos. This will be an opportunity to hear both Geoff and Chris doing something more exciting than playing a farewell voluntary at the end of a service – and they can do a bit more than that. If you feel like finding out what they can do, it'll cost you £5 and well worth it.

## **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June from 3.00 pm to 5.00 pm in the Hall**

Revd Canon Dr. Jeffrey Heskins, complete with ukulele, will present Youth Awards to several youngsters at the world-famous **E1W Afternoon Tea**. Also we will say a formal “goodbye” to Margaret Baker, as she leaves Barton to live nearer family in York. Please come along for some of the time to support Margaret and the youngsters.

## **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00 pm in the Hall**

Midsummer Supper – see Auriol for tickets.

## **Saturday 6th July from 2.00 pm till 4.00 pm in the Hall and Church**

Garden Party – the usual mix of stalls and afternoon tea.

## **Celebrate!**

On Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July at 9.30 am, Gordon will be celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his Ordination. Please do join him to mark this milestone in his ministry. There may even be cake.....

## **The Bishop of Lincoln writes:**

As I write this letter we are emerging from what seems like a very long and harsh winter.

At last, we're now enjoying warmer weather. As I drive around the diocese, it seems as though all of a sudden I am surrounded wonderful vibrant shades of green in our fields, and flowers finally springing forth in all their spring and summer glory in our gardens and along the roadsides. It is a wonderful sight and I thank God for the natural beauty we can all enjoy.

I'm also aware, though, that the vagaries of the weather have made this last year a particularly tough one for all those who farm in our diocese.

In Lincolnshire, perhaps more than most places in the country, we are very aware of being at the mercy of the weather. I'm reminded that the Bishop of Ely was once approached by a group of farmers and asked to pray for rain because the ground was so parched and their crops were suffering. Several weeks later, the same farmers were back at the Bishop, asking him to pray for the rain to stop, since it had fallen incessantly since their last visit and their crops were in danger of being ruined. We need to be careful what we pray for!

This month, many of us will be going to the Lincolnshire County Show, one of the country's largest agricultural shows. It's a timely reminder of our reliance on the land and our dependence on good weather – for work, for play and for the food we eat.

Take time to stop and notice the beauty of our natural environment this month. And as you do so, spare a thought for those who work on the land in our diocese and provide food provide for our tables, and thank God for them.

+Christopher Lincoln:

## **BARTON BIKE NIGHT 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY**

### THE HISTORY OF BARTON BIKE NIGHT.....

Barton Bike Night has grown around the passion of a few Motorcycle enthusiasts who live in Barton-Upon-Humber. One man's Passion has become a major event in the Biking calendar for any two wheeled owner from Classic Scooters to low riding Harley choppers.

Barrie Newton has been involved in the Bike Night since his friend Malc Bennett had the idea back in 1997 following a run of successful Bike Nights in Brigg. Malc arranged with the Town Council to close off the High Street which proved to be his master stroke and the very first event was a huge success with around 2,000 people attending on a midsummer Wednesday evening. At the beginning Barrie recalls most of the help came from local lads mucking in to provide marshalling but as the years past it was obvious larger numbers were needed as the amount of stalls increased and attendants escalated to approx. 10,000 last year.

Over the years organisers provided amazing amounts of passion for the event and gave up there time to produce a spectacular night for Barton to be proud of, then in 2009 Malc decided to step down as the chairman of the organising committee. Barrie took on the roll to keep what is now possibly one of the largest Bike Nights across the UK. With 6 committee members helping him this year Barrie tells me more and more trade stalls, Race teams etc have contacted him to get involved.

It's a true Local Community event with everyone getting involved in supporting it from Barton Lions, Rotary Club, Barton Town Council,

and the Humberside Police and Humberside Road Safety partnership providing a safer environment for all who arrive in Barton.  
So if you want to experience a great atmosphere among thousands of Bikers make a note of the date the 3<sup>rd</sup> July. If you would like to know more visit [www.bartonbikenight.com](http://www.bartonbikenight.com)

***Melanie and her staff look forward to seeing you at 'THE WHEATSHEAF' on Bike Night 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Where you can be sure of a warm welcome.***

***We will be having a BBQ in the grounds.***

***Do come and join us.***

## **MOTHERS' UNION NOTES**

A Mothers' Union Lady Day Eucharist service was held at St John's Brigg at the beginning of April. Several members of St Mary's Mothers Union group joined with members from Brigg and Scunthorpe groups for this service.

Later in the month St Mary's MU members were invited to join with Trinity Fellowship for their Annual Spring Rally. A wonderful service of hymns, prayers, and songs from a soloist was enjoyed by everyone. Christine, the soloist sang two beautiful songs, "He Touched Me" and "One Day in Heaven". Rev. Enid gave a talk about transformation, comparing the transformation of The Apostles in the locked room when Jesus appeared to them and different things that happen in our lives to transform us for the better. She said that God classes us all as "Grade A Students" and May the Peace, Presence, and Love of Jesus be with us always.

The service was followed by a very tasty afternoon tea, "very scrumptious". The fellowship enjoyed in the service continued during the tea. Linda thanked Trinity Ladies for their invitation and hospitality.

Note to all Mothers Union members. We will be making a hamper to raffle as our contribution to raise funds at the July Garden Party again this year. If you wish to contribute would you please bring any appropriate donation to the corporate communion service on June 5th or to our meeting on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

The hamper theme is afternoon tea or morning coffee items. Thank you.

Brenda Skinner

## **St Mary's Ladies' Group**

On May 1<sup>st</sup> we spent a very interesting day visiting York's chocolate story and Goddard's the home of the Terry family from 1927 - 1980. We learned that the cocoa bean was first discovered in the rainforests of Central America and that York's great Quaker families opened their own cocoa houses and chocolate shops. The chocolatier gave a chocolate making demonstration and after tasting several samples we all made and decorated our own chocolate lolly.

After a very good lunch at the Black Swan we went on to 'Goddards' which is now owned by the National Trust. On the guided tour of the house we saw many photographs of the Terry family and listened to stories about their way of life. We then had time to explore the extensive gardens and make good use of the tea room before our return journey back to Barton. J.S.

A large and appreciative audience gathered in the church hall to laugh at the efforts of the 'Potty Panto' Players. The comedy centred on the inept group of players whose most recent production had been an utter failure, cruelly criticised in the press, playing to hardly any audience, and leaving a total of four pence in the funds! Thus the players' chairman decided that the only way forwards was to emulate Saturday evening T.V. shows such as the 'X Factor' and 'Strictly Come Dancing'. A dress rehearsal followed, featuring some

dancing/roller skating and much off stage activity concluding in an unfortunate accident involving the unhappy critic!!

The Potty Panto Players (members of B.A.D.A.O.S. and Goxhill Players) raise money for the production of a Christmas Pantomime which in turn generates funds for various local charities.

The hilarious evening (I don't think I have heard so much laughter at a meeting for a long time!! Ed.) concluded with refreshments.

The A.G.M. of the Ladies' Group is on June 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:30p.m. at which there will be a cheese and wine supper. S.M.

### **The Humber Bridge Half-Marathon**

Once again The Humber Bridge Half Marathon will be passing though Barton. On **Sunday June 30<sup>th</sup>**, about 1,500 runners will leave Hessle at 9.00am and begin to arrive in **Barton at about 9.20am**. A rolling road closure, until around 11.30 will include, Ferriby Road, Holydyke, Market Place, Barrow Road, Falkland Way, Pasture Road, Butts Road, Waterside Road, Far Ings Road, Gravel Pit Lane and back onto Ferriby Road to the Bridge. (The Waste Disposal Site on Gravel Pit Lane will be closed until 1.00pm)

Traffic will be allowed in a **clockwise** direction but access to the route will only be allowed when the safety of runners permits. Hull and Barton Rotary Clubs apologise for any inconvenience caused but hope that you enjoy watching the runners.

The event usually raises over £70,00 for charity and this year's main charity benefiting is the **Carers Trust**. The Half Marathon is again sponsored by **The Co-operative**, who, amongst other things, donate all of the bottles of drinking water and energy drinks given out to the athletes.

### **New topic for the In-Depth group**

At its next session on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 4a Caistor Road, the In-Depth group will be starting on a new study topic. We are experimenting with a study of religious poetry or prose. The idea is that members of the group will each choose a piece of text: either a short poem or a book chapter and read it and then talk for not more than five minutes about it, and then the group will discuss it. We envisage that we might perhaps deal with perhaps two or three items per session. If the idea of religious poetry appeals to you please come along. We always welcome new members.

### **St. Mary's Bellringers**

St George's Day was marked in Barton by the ringing of the bells for half an hour before normal practice on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The band rang a course of St. George Bob Minor which was called by Ringing Master, George Thompson – a suitable celebration, all the more so because that particular method had not been previously rung by the band.

A group of ringers from St Mary's attended the AGM of the Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April. The day included a business meeting followed by lunch then ringing at Stow, Saxilby and Lincoln Cathedral. A day out enjoyed by all those who attended.

The monthly practice of Surprise methods continues to be successful and on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May the following Quarter Peal was rung to consolidate the learning. Well done George!

#### ***Lincoln Diocesan Guild***

***Barton upon Humber, North Lincs***

*St Mary Sunday 5 May 2013 (16cwt)*

#### ***1280 Cambridge Surprise Major***

*1 Ivan Howitt (C) 5 George Thompson*

*2 Geoff Bryant 6 P Ian Till*

*3 Roger Lord 7 Richard Hopper*

4 Rod French      8 Andrew Lord

1st Q of Surprise Major: 5.

*Rung to celebrate the birth of Nellie Rae Reeve, great Niece to the Tenor Ringer, whose Christening took place Last Sunday at St Barnabas church, Barnetby.*

There has been ringing for one wedding in May and the ringers are looking forward to having another simulator practice in the near future. The Northern Branch outing will be to the Elloe Deaneries area on 25<sup>th</sup> May and tower members are invited to ring at Walesby Ramblers' Church on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May – always well worth the climb up the hill to see the stunning view!

**Joan Barton**

### **Theatre and the Teeside Troubadour at Ropery Hall**

Bringing the spring season at Ropery Hall to a close is the return of Vin Garbutt, the Teeside Troubadour, and theatre by Hot Ice Theatre a new company founded by writer and performer Katharine Markwick. On Saturday, June 29 Vin returns with songs inspired by the folk tradition at the beginning of his career and which have now also taken on gritty social comment and life observations. He is renowned for his hilarious intros but his song lyrics continue to be the crux of his performance although his between-song banter is the match for any contemporary stand-up,

The following Monday, July 1, Hot Ice Theatre performs The Historians which was postponed from the end of April. Stepping shell-suited out of the 1990's, Chucker and Mucker offer their lives as a lens on the extraordinary history of Halifax in this play which was the winner of the Edinburgh Fringe Media Network Editor's Choice Award.

This is a funny, moving and unlikely tale of friendship between two teenagers and their town.

Tickets for Vin Garbutt's performance, which starts at 8pm cost £13 in advance or £15 on the door while The Historians begins at 7.30pm and tickets cost £8 or £10 on the door.

[www.roperyhall.co.uk](http://www.roperyhall.co.uk)

### **FROM THE REGISTERS:**

#### **BAPTISMS:-**

May 12 Chelsea Louise HALL & Luke James HALL daughter & son of Charlene Louise CAMPBELL & Mark Alan HALL

May 26 Ava Louise DARBY daughter of Katie Jayne WOODBRIDGE & Paul Leslie DARBY

Amelia-Rose Eliza SYMONDS daughter of Kellie Marie PAXTON & Ian Carl SYMONDS

#### **MARRIAGES:**

May 11 Alanpaul CONLIN & Vicky Louise DAVIES  
Alan Paul SHAW & Jennifer Clare WOOD

May 25 Shaun George Kenneth CRUICKSHANK & Rebecca Leanne LAITY

#### **FUNERAL:-**

May 21 Barbara Ann MANCHESTER

A donation for Church flowers has been received in loving memory of

Marjorie Radford

#### **Over to you.....**

I am a great fan of Rev. Sue Pegg, (Methodist Minister in Market Weighton) who often does the 'Over to you' for BBC Radio Humberside.

Last week she was talking about photographs and in particular Passport Photos. (After all we are near the start of the holiday season - although you would not think so judging by the weather).

However, she realised it was time to renew her passport and hence the photo too. How different we all looked ten years ago!! Now of course there are strict rules when having one's photo taken. No looking up or down, sideways. No glasses, no mouth open or showing teeth and certainly NO SMILING!!

How serious, stern and miserable we look (rather like a convict in Dickens' time).

We may appear like this to a lot of people a lot of the time! So, is it time we did something about it? If we are people of faith who should have an inner joy knowing that God loves us even when life is not as it should be. Perhaps we could show it in our lives and on our faces - love, joy and peace - and hope that we bear in mind what we look like to others when we are serious!!  
S.W.

Sat 1 <sup>st</sup> June	11.00 am		Lectio divina
	1.00 pm		Wedding
<b>Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June</b>		<b>Trinity 1</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>2.30 pm</b>		<b>Service at The Willows</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Choral Evensong</b>
Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup>	9.30 am		Toddler Time

	9.30 am		Deanery Chapter (Waddingham)
Tues 4 <sup>th</sup>	2pm – 4pm		Songs and Scones in Hall – booking essential.
	7.45 pm		In Depth group (4a Caistor Road)
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Said Eucharist (MU Corporate)
	2.00 pm		Service at Eagle House
	7.30 pm		Ladies' Group AGM
Fri 7 <sup>th</sup>	5.00 pm		E1W
	6.00 pm		Prayers before the Blessed Sacrament
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am		Lectio Divina
<b>Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June</b>		<b>Trinity 2</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>4.00 pm</b>		<b>Baptisms</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Evening Prayer (said)</b>
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Toddler Time

	10.00 am		Spirituality group (vicarage)
	7.00 pm		Teaching evening
<b>Tues 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Barnabas, Apostle</b>	<b>Said Eucharist at Barnetby</b>
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
	2.00 pm		Service at Westbridge House
Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 pm		Deanery Synod (Wrawby)
	2.00 pm		Carols at Tofts Road
Fri 14 <sup>th</sup>	5.00 pm		E1W
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am		Lectio divina
<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June</b>		<b>Trinity 3</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Sung Evensong</b>
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Toddler Time
	10.00 am		Diary meeting (Birchdale)
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 pm		Said Eucharist

Wed 19 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
	2.00 pm		Mothers' Union
	7.30 pm		Ladies' Group
Thurs 20 <sup>th</sup>	am		Home Communions
	<b>Parish</b>	<b>News Deadline</b>	
Fri 21 <sup>st</sup>	5.00 pm		E1W
Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup>	11.00 am		Lectio Divina
	7.30 pm		Organ recital
<b>Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June</b>		<b>Trinity 4</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>11.30 am</b>		<b>Baptisms</b>
	<b>3.00 pm – 5.00 pm</b>		<b>E1W Tea, awards and farewell</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Said Eucharist with hymns</b>
<b>Mon 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9.00 am</b>	<b>Birth of John the Baptist</b>	<b>Said Eucharist</b>

	9.30 am		Toddler Time
Wed 26 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
	2.00 pm		MU prayer time
	2.00 pm		Service at Beech House
Thurs 27 <sup>th</sup>	am		Schools' Art exhibition set up
Fri 28 <sup>th</sup>	All day		Schools' Art exhibition
	5.00 pm		E1W
<b>Sat 29<sup>th</sup></b>	11.00 am	<b>Peter &amp; Paul, Apostles</b>	Lectio Divina
	4.00 pm		Wedding
	All day		Schools' Art exhibition
<b>Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June</b>		<b>Trinity 5</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Said Evening Prayer</b>
	All day		Schools' Art exhibition
<b>Mon 1<sup>st</sup> July</b>	9.30 am		Toddler Time

	All day		Schools' Art exhibition
Tues 2nd	All day		Schools' Art exhibition
Wed 3rd	9.30 am	Thomas, Apostle	Said Eucharist (MU Corp) – Gordon's 30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
	10.30 am – 12 noon		St. Peter's school services
	7.30 pm		Ladies' group
	All day		Schools' Art exhibition
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup>	5.00 pm		E1W
	6.00 pm		Prayers before the Blessed Sacrament
Sat 6 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am		Lectio Divina
	2.00 pm – 4.00 pm		Garden Party

### Wilderspin National School Museum

"All Our Stories" is one of the Heritage Lottery Fund's grant schemes that helps communities to explore, share and celebrate their local heritage. The Queen Street School Preservation Trust was awarded funding to involve its volunteers in furthering their knowledge about Samuel Wilderspin, and improving their understanding of his contribution to education in Britain. We wanted our volunteers to get a broader appreciation of the national and historical contexts of Wilderspin's ideas, and to reaffirm the former Church School's role in this heritage story.

So, twenty five of our volunteers journeyed to Hitchin, Hertfordshire, to see the British Schools Museum, and the educational legacy of Joseph Lancaster. Lancaster, a Quaker, was born the son of

a shopkeeper in Southwark, South London. In 1798, he founded a free elementary school in Southwark, using pupil monitors to “teach” his or her peers. Non-denominational, British Schools adopted the Lancastrian system and spread throughout the British Isles. After a visit to Hitchin in 1808, Lancaster persuaded the town to establish a school for educating the children of the working poor. Like the Wilderspin School, the Hitchin site has an extremely important part in the history of elementary education in Britain, and we wanted to compare the ideas and teaching techniques of Wilderspin and Lancaster. [ See centre pages for photo and more information]

Diary Dates: Summer Craft Fair, Saturday

22nd June 10am - 5pm.

Open Gardens, Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th June

10am - 4pm

### **Barton upon Humber Civic Society**

Railway historian, Bryan Longbone, returns on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June to present his talk, “150 Years of Cleethorpes – a Rail and Social View.” The illustrated talk is a railway and social appraisal of the “Playground of the Humber” and asks, was Cleethorpes really “Sheffield-by-the-Sea”? The talk will commence at 7.30pm at the Assembly Rooms. Non members’ admission is £2.

To clear up online confusion on some websites about open days at 51 Fleetgate, I can confirm the remaining schedule for 2013 is:

Sunday 9th June (1.00pm – 4.00pm); Wednesday 3rd July 6pm – 9pm (Barton Bike Night); Sunday 25th August (1.00pm – 4.00pm); Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th September (1.00pm – 4.00pm as part of Lincolnshire Heritage Open Days) and Saturday 30th November 1.00pm – 7.00pm (Barton Christmas Festival).

Ian Wolseley  
Chair

### **'From now on you are spiritually affiliated to the monastic family of Our Lady and Saint John.'**

With these words, Abbot William brought to a close my thirty year search for a spiritual home.

Benedictine Oblates aren't monks; instead we promise to try to live in accordance with the spirit of the Rule of Benedict out in the world (don't say 'the real world' – monasteries are highly engaged with its agonies and joys'). The only visible difference is that I've chosen to wear a ring as a reminder to me of being an Oblate: though I was clothed with the monastic garment known as a 'scapular' (as in the photo), that's only to be worn when I'm in the monastery. Or, *my* monastery – we're always linked to a particular abbey, not to 'Being Benedictine' in general.

So April 29<sup>th</sup>, the feast of St Catherine of Siena, saw me in the abbey Church supported by my three closest friends, and with the prayers of many others behind me. I had written my Chart of Oblation, a simple statement of my promises to God and the community, and stood before the Abbot at the community mass to read it out, then sign it on the altar itself, where it remains for a month. (This process had been somewhat complicated by the fact that the first thing I'd done on arrival was to snap my glasses in half: my sticking plaster repair reduced friends and community to helpless mirth. 'If you think you're standing in front of the Abbot looking like *that*,' announced Liz sternly, 'you've got another think coming.' Borrowed reading glasses to the rescue.)

Dom Timothy, the Oblate Master, had asked me whether I wanted to say or sing the next part, a verse from Ps 119 '*Suscipe me*', 'Sustain me, Lord, as you have promised, that I may live; and do not disappoint me in my hope.' The sensible option at such a highly charged moment is to say it (singing plainsong in front of monks who sing the Office several times each day is an exposed position to take), but at a time like this, you want to do it as fully as you can, to offer everything there is to offer – including the risk of making a complete mess of it. It was comforting to recall that the Abbot's singing is somewhat idiosyncratic, as the pained expression on some monastic faces as he sang his part bore witness.

It was all very simple – the handing over of a copy of the Rule; a medal of St Benedict like you can buy for a few pence at Walsingham; the receiving of the scapular, an embrace from Abbot William welcoming me into the family; and then instead of going back to my usual seat in the congregation, being taken to a place in choir with my brother Benedictines.

How does it feel? I question my motives constantly about everything, and wondered even about this – until I'd done it, and realised that this really was home, where I belonged. And did it get to me? After all, what more had happened than me reading my promises out loud in the presence of my dearest friends and my new family, receiving Abbot William's welcoming embrace for the world's most junior Benedictine, and seeing my handwriting showing through the altar cloth at the spot where the Eucharist is offered every day? What do you think?

*David Obl.OSB*

### **...and the bits he didn't tell you**

To witness the clothing of somebody in the habit of their religious community and see them formally installed with that community in choir isn't something many people are fortunate enough to do, and I freely admit to a lump in my throat as David was clothed in his Benedictine scapular. He looked as though he'd been wearing it for years and his arrival in choir was very much a homecoming after a long journey. (He's too modest to say so, but he sang his "*Suscipe me*" without a single wrong note). However, it probably will come as no surprise to anybody to learn that there were one or two moments over the weekend that were less than solemn.

He's written about the reading glasses disaster, which wasn't the best start, although worth it for the sight of his attempted "repair" Having witnessed his efforts with the tape, Dom Timothy, the Oblate Master, asked me afterwards whose glasses David had worn for the service and I told him they were Marlene's "Oh what a pity", he said, "I thought there'd been a miracle".

Even then we weren't out of the woods when it came to specs. After the service the community left in order of seniority, with the newest oblate last in line. He bowed solemnly before the altar with great grace

– and his borrowed specs fell off his nose, so his bow was deeper than ever as he had to retrieve them from the carpet!

As well as being the newest Benedictine at Alton, he's also the tallest, a point made rather more emphatically than he might have wished as at one point he strode into a room, hit his head on a beam and fell backwards onto the edge of a table. The delightful aroma of "Deep Heat" is wafting after him as his pulled muscle recovers – as close as he'll get to the odour of sanctity.

Benedictine hospitality is legendary and the community at Alton were a joy to meet and spend time with. They were friendly, unstuffy, and had a wicked sense of humour to a man. Bro John gave us a tour of their Communion wafer and incense production works. He offered us a bowl of some nice smelling stuff to sniff and asked us if we knew what it was, which we didn't.

"It's balsam", he said, "the stuff they put in cough medicine, so next time somebody says incense makes them cough, tell them they're sniffing a 'fisherman's friend'".

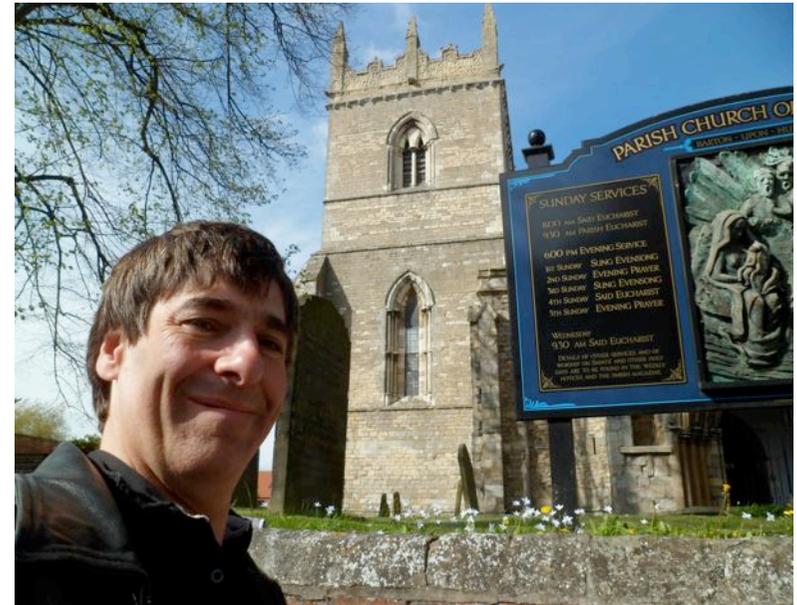
It was a very special weekend and it was lovely that David was supported by three people who love him and knew just how much it meant to him to be there. And the next time he's confronted by a nervous bride, I'm sure he'll remember that three hours after the service his hand was still shaking as he poured his drink at lunchtime!

*Liz*



The Lancasterian room at Hitchin was built in 1837 to enable one master to teach 300 boys with the aid of 30 monitors. The boys sat facing the master on benches at narrow desks and were taught by the monitors at semi-circular 'teaching stations' around the walls. Joseph Lancaster disliked corporal punishment and no child was ever beaten in an early Lancasterian school.

Image: Hitchin British Schools Trust



The image Mark Steel used to start his comedy evening at the Ropewalk



Fr David and friends at Alton Abbey

