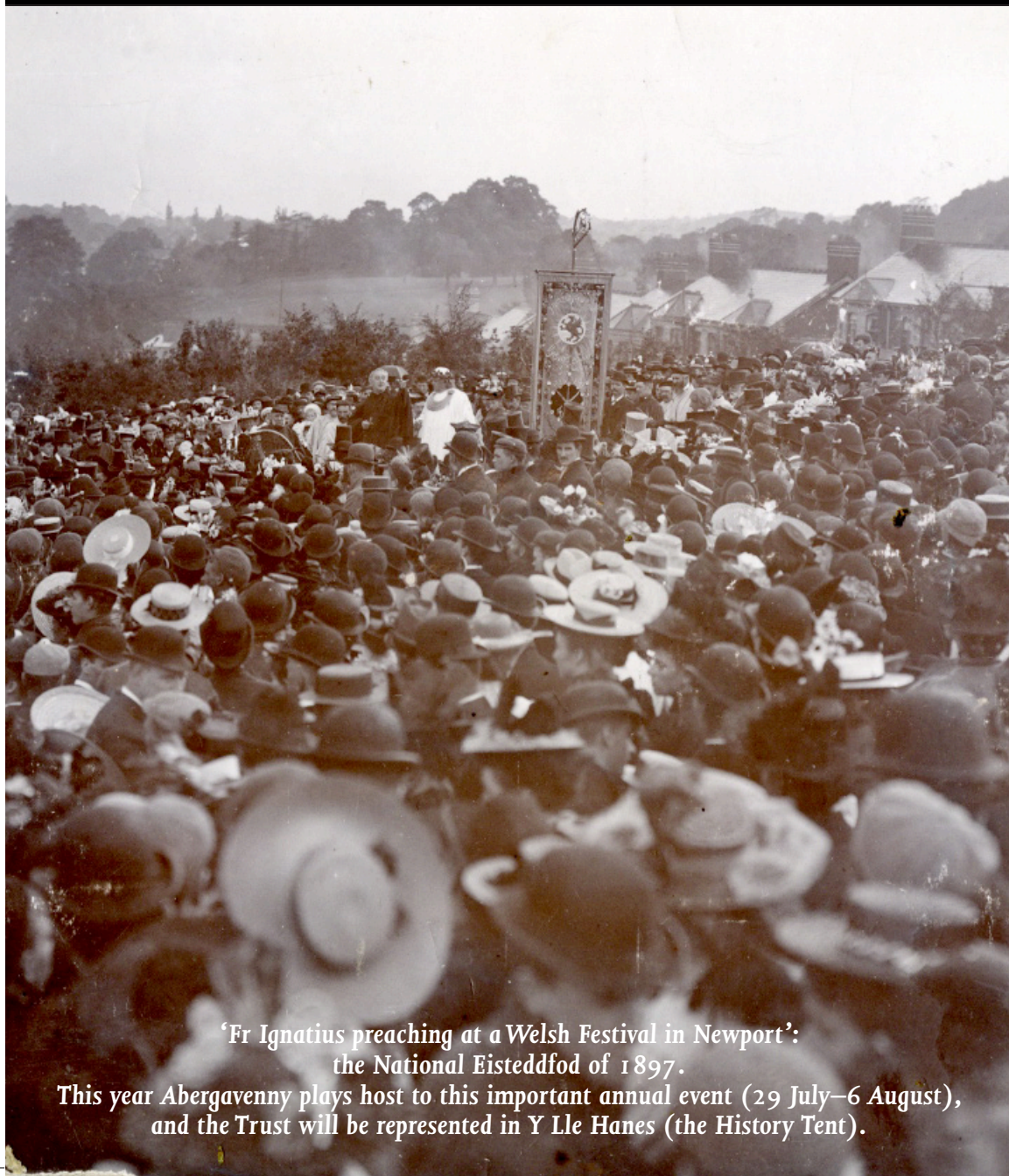


The Father Ignatius Memorial Trust

NEWSLETTER

NO. 44 SPRING 2016

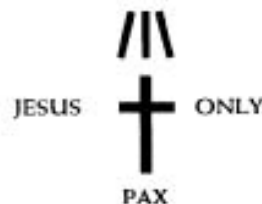


*'Fr Ignatius preaching at a Welsh Festival in Newport':
the National Eisteddfod of 1897.*

**This year Abergavenny plays host to this important annual event (29 July–6 August),
and the Trust will be represented in Y Lle Hanes (the History Tent).**

The ecumenical **Father Ignatius Memorial Trust** was established in 1967 to care for the ruins of the Abbey Church at Capel-y-Ffin built by Fr Ignatius OSB (Joseph Leicester Lyne 1837-1908), first restorer of monastic life for men in the Church of England and popular mission preacher, and to keep his memory alive. Fr Ignatius' body is buried within the church; further information about him can be found on the Trust website: www.fatherignatius.org.uk

Y GWIR YN ERBYN Y BYD



Charity Commissioners'
Registration No. 253225

Trustees

Caroline Woollard (Hon Chairman),
Hugh Allen, Peter Davies (Hon Secretary)
Revd Canon Philip Wyn Davies SSC,
Revd Jeremy Dowding SSC,
Andrew Downey (Master of Ceremonies)
Andrew Knill (Hon Treasurer)
Stanley Knill, Deborah Lyne (Emeritus)
Rachael C. Rogers (Curator,
Abergavenny Museum),
Rev Bernard Sixtus,
Venerable Martin Williams,
Revd Richard Williams,
Michael Woodward (Newsletter Editor)
Consultant: Philip Chatfield

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Update on the Trust & Trustees

WELCOME TO THE 2016 Fr Ignatius Memorial Trust Newsletter; we very much hope you will enjoy reading it and learning more about the work of the Trust.

The last year has seen changes in the running of the Trust, with a new Chairman and Secretary, and with the retirement of some of the Trustees.

Caroline Woollard, our new Chairman (she prefers the term to 'chairperson' or even, heaven forbid, 'chair'), was Secretary of the Trust and the Pilgrimage Association for six years; Dr Peter Davies, having retired as a GP in Abergavenny, now takes on those rôles.

Dr Davies is the son of the late Wilfred and Helen Davies—Wilf was one of the original Trustees and the family lived at the Monastery.

From the Chairman...

Feast of The Ascension, 2016

Dear Friends and Fellow Pilgrims,

AS MENTIONED ABOVE, this last year has seen changes in the running of the Trust without, however, losing the wealth of experience and knowledge vital for any charity to continue effectively.

Hugh Allen, our outgoing chairman, continues to be a Trustee and I would like to place on record our thanks for his hard work and dedication to the cause. His chairmanship of meetings, research into various aspects of Fr Ignatius' life and travels around the country on the Trust's behalf have been carried out with dedication and good humour. Later in this newsletter is a review of Hugh's book about the 'New Llanthony Abbey'. Copies should be available at the National Eisteddfod and at our August Pilgrimage, as well as through Amazon.

We are sorry to report the death on May 6th this year of Fr Roger Shambrook, a Trustee of over thirty years standing. An appreciation will be included in the next Newsletter. Deborah Lyne, daughter of Douglas Lyne who was a former archivist of the Trust and a relative of Fr Ignatius (whose family name was Lyne) has now retired as a Trustee.

We should like to wish her well and thank her for all her hard work for the Trust. We are delighted that Deborah has agreed to become an Emeritus Trustee and so will continue her long association with the Trust. I remember the first time Deborah and I spoke about the pilgrimage and, teasingly, I advised her to 'bring her wellies'. That year, however, the day was fine and the walking good—my first year, the weather was foul and there were only three of us battling through the driving rain (it's the only time it's been such bad weather in recent times, though).

Some of you will have never been on the pilgrimage so below is a report on last year's, which also explains a little bit about its history.

This year, on August 20th, the pilgrims will walk the easier route, which is mostly along tracks rather than open hillside, although that way will obviously still be available for the harder walkers.

Lifts back to Llanthony are organised at the end of the afternoon with those pilgrims who choose to drive between the two churches. We are lucky to have two local priests for our preachers this year. At the midday Mass, the Revd Canon Mark Soady, Vicar of Abergavenny, will address us. The parish church of Abergavenny

...the Chairman continues

is dedicated to St Mary and, in particular, her Assumption, and was founded nearly 1,000 years ago as a Benedictine Priory, from Le Mans.

Two years ago, the Priory founded the Holywell Community of young people who live in the spirit of the Rule of Benedict, working for the church and for the community. At our afternoon service, the preacher will be the Revd Julian Gray, Vicar of Llantilio Pertholey since October 2014.

He is shortly to take over responsibility for the Llanfihangel group of parishes, which include Cwmyoy (with its crooked tower) and St David's, Llanthony.

At our last meeting, the Trustees decided the afternoon ecumenical service will take the form of a

traditional Anglican Evensong and we will explore the possibility of one based on Eastern Orthodox liturgy for 2017, as a number of our pilgrims are from that Church.

At the end of that service, we process to the Monastery, past the wayside Calvary to the Statue of Our Lady and the Abbey Church. In previous years, we have been able to finish the day inside the ruins of the Abbey Church but, unfortunately, the building is not safe so this year we will not be able to do so. The procession will end just short of the gate to the ruins, although it will still be possible to see Fr Ignatius' grave from there.

I very much hope to see you at the pilgrimage on August 20th.

Best wishes

Caroline Woollard



Statue of St Aelred for Caldey

Centenary gift from the Benedictines of Pluscarden and Prinknash to mark the 1913 Conversion

WHILE WORKING on the stone carvings for the squint arches at Pluscarden Abbey in 2013, which was part of the centenary commemorating the conversion of the Caldey Anglican Benedictines to Rome in 1913, I was approached by the Oblate Master Fr Martin Birrell OSB with a proposition.

Would I be able to create something for the Benedictines of Pluscarden and Prinknash Abbeys to give to the Cistercians of Caldey Abbey to mark this significant milestone landmark in their story? After some discussion in the cloister at Pluscarden after Mass, Fr Martin and I thought that a carved stone statue of St Aelred would be an acceptable offering to Caldey. Abbot Aelred Carlyle OSB was the central figure in the 1913 Caldey Conversions, and Aelred of Rievaulx the saint from whom Benjamin Fearnley Carlyle took his monastic name. St Aelred of course wrote several books on spirituality, principal among them being *Speculum Caritatis* ('The Mirror of Charity'), written at the request of Bernard of Clairvaux.

I then developed the idea into a working sketch and presented this to Fr Martin for discussion among his brethren. The figure of St Aelred



Philip Chatfield, Sculptor

was basically a generic saint-like figure but he would be holding an open book in his left arm and his right hand be raised in benediction. I would carve this in stone from the Forest of Dean. Behind the head of Aelred would be a saintly halo. The stone figure would stand over a metre in height, a heavy block of stone even at that size.

The initial idea of Fr Martin was that funds for the making of this gift would be drawn from donations raised among the Benedictine Oblates themselves but this was soon overruled as the project was to be funded half from Pluscarden and half from Prinknash, a gift directly from the brethren. It wasn't long

before Br Michael de Klerk, the Cellarer at Pluscarden, gave me the green light to proceed. Clearly all had been agreed between the two Abbeys and I was then able to place an order with the quarry in the Forest of Dean. This is the same quarry I have used for years and has provided me with good quality carving stone for the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary at St Mary and St Florent at Monmouth, and for Our Lady of Tintern at Tintern Abbey.

I also liked the link that a daughter House of Prinknash Abbey was founded during the 1940s at Bigsweir House, on the Wye just north of Tintern and not far from the Forest stone quarry. A photograph shows one of the original Capel-y-Ffin bells set up in the grounds there.

Some time passed until I was able to find a period in my work schedule to start carving in the workshop I have the use of at Penrice Castle in Gower. It wasn't long before I had roughed out the statue from the large heavy block, stone chips flying everywhere. I had approached Abbot Francis OSB of Prinknash by email to see if I would be able to do the finishing of the carving at Prinknash Abbey. I had originally thought of doing this finishing work actually on Caldey Island, but the frequent storms

would mean longer stays there than one might have time for, and the logistics were not working out. Abbot Francis replied that he would be very happy for me to spend some time working at Prinknash. The Guest Brother soon arranged for my lodging in a cell in the Guest wing, and in the late summer I set off in the laden Land Rover for Prinknash.

Once there I had to sort out a place to work the stone, and a suitable secure area was soon located. This was next to the Incense factory, where wafts of gum olibanum drifted over me as Abbot Francis opened up the workshop doors each morning; the Prinknash monks have been blending incense since 1906, when the community was on Caldey Island. A more pleasing link you couldn't have imagined. It was while I was carving the stone book St Aelred was holding in the statue that I asked Abbot Francis what I ought to engrave on the open pages.

He pondered over this for a while and then said he would think on it. I carried on with other parts of the statue and later in the day the fragrant Abbot emerged from the incense factory with an idea. Of course the famous book by St Aelred is 'The Mirror of Charity', and in Latin *caritas* is charity or virtue, so why not carve the word

CARITAS on the left page and the same word literally backwards on the right hand page... The mirror of charity..?

I also thought it a very good idea and Abbot Francis would share this thought with his confreres later that day at Recreation and let me know. The next day he said it was agreed that I could proceed with that wording, and so I did, with the lettering carved and to be gilded at a later date.

One of the monks at Prinknash is Fr Aelred Baker OSB, who has written extensively about Abbot Carlyle and of the Caldey Conversations. He also took the name Aelred after Aelred Carlyle passed away at Prinknash in 1955. As a novice at Pluscarden Fr Baker also knew Fr Asaph Harris OSB, just before his death in 1960 at Pluscarden, Asaph having been the temporary Superior of Llanthony Tertia after Fr Ignatius died in 1908. Fr Aelred



Philip at work on the statue of Saint Aelred

was a frequent visitor to watch me at work and see the stone statue of Aelred emerging, as were some of the other brothers. The then Chairman of the Father Ignatius Memorial Trust was also able to pay a visit and watch progress while he was making further interesting discoveries from the Fr Ignatius archive there for his forthcoming book. As the face of the statue took shape, more than one visitor remarked on its resemblance to that of Fr Asaph. Was he perhaps playing an active part in this commemorative gesture from his place in the world to come?

It was a very enjoyable and satisfying time to spend at Prinknash Abbey working amongst the Brethren. Once the statue was more or less completed I took it back to Gower and finished the gilding at Nicholaston House Christian Retreat Centre, where I recently built a chapel. One last job was to manufacture a robust wooden crate for the heavy stone figure for its journey to Caldey Island. Before securing the lid I placed a small bag of fragrant Prinknash Basilica incense within to accompany Aelred on his journey. Pluscarden Abbey had arranged for a trio of their brethren to journey across to Caldey for a short visit and take with them the crated statue, Brother Thomas and two Vietnamese brothers, and I met up

with them at a service station on the M4 near Swansea where we heaved the heavy box into their car. They departed, heavily laden, to Tenby for the night and waited and waited for a weather window to embark in the work boat for Caldey Island three miles offshore. Sadly the storm got worse and the venture had to be abandoned as funds for further hotel nights were not available. The time-expired Pluscarden party returned to Prinknash but left the crated St Aelred with the harbourmaster at Tenby, who arranged for it to be ferried across to the sea-girt monastic island when the seas were calmer a few days later.

The figure is set up within the cloister garth at Caldey Abbey for the Cistercian Brethren to enjoy as a Centenary gift from the Benedictines of Pluscarden and Prinknash. Within this story are the links going back to Llanthony Tertia, Father Ignatius and Asaph Harris. Abergavenny Museum holds the principal Llanthony archive, but there is a trunk of Fr Ignatius items at Prinknash Abbey, together with the 'Miraculous Monstrance', seen by Br Dunstan to appear outside the Tabernacle in the Abbey Church a few hours before the first of the reported Apparitions of Our Lady on 30th August, 1880.

New Book Review:

New Llanthony Abbey: Father Ignatius's Monastery at Capel-y-Ffin by Hugh Allen

HUGH ALLEN HAS PUT a wide range of people in his debt with this book, the fruit of years of diligent research, of personal knowledge of many of the persons and places mentioned, and of reflection on the meaning of 'Llanthony Tertia' and its ultimate demise. Exhaustive and detailed, it is indispensable reading for Trust members, and anyone with a close interest in the monastery, and in "the oldest Marian pilgrimage in the post-Reformation Anglican Church."

It brings together well-documented information about the Llanthony community, the people involved, the buildings at Capel-y-Ffin, their furnishings and artefacts, and the outside connections and influence of the monastery down to the present day. It is also an absorbing social history. His was an age of intense urbanisation and industrialisation, the triumph of the machine, to which Ignatius and his disciples opposed the 'wondrous machinery of supernatural holiness and devotion.' It was an age of increasing scepticism about religion and the authority of the Bible, against which Ignatius could only insist on a literal understanding of scripture, condemning Charles Gore – and the hierarchy in general – as heretics and destroyers of his beloved Church.

Dom Augustine Morris, sometime Abbot of Nashdom, is quoted, describing Ignatius as a "pioneer of the Anglican monastic movement, by whose suffering and insecurity we, the monks of today, have obtained security and happiness within the body of the Church."

Ignatius' problem with bishops, and authority in general, meant that he was unable to exercise authority himself in other than an arbitrary manner; his Religious vocation was more Jesuit than Benedictine. He was a brilliant mission preacher with little aptitude for living in community, let alone leading and guiding one. His medieval romanticism, embellished with continental Baroque led to highly impractical arrangements both in liturgy and in daily life. He knew how to make things hard for others, if not for him-

self. There is a wonderful first-hand account of life in a shed whilst the new buildings were under construction at Capel-y-Ffin. Life was said to be 'amusing' in summer, but in winter "I needed to rise at 5am...my blankets streaming with damp, the stone floor wet with rain, or slippery with ice." It is little wonder that few persevered, even among those with a genuine monastic vocation; and Ignatius was no judge of character. Ignatius is a tragic figure, with the highest ideals of Christian commitment and service, but with little ability to put them into practice. He is great enough to be tragic, by his whole-hearted devotion to the Name and person of Jesus, by his perseverance to the end through constant hardship and disappointment, by his vision of something of immense importance: the restoration of monastic life in the Anglican Church, which was taken up more successfully by others, even if most of those influenced by the Llanthony venture ended up in Roman Catholic communities.

If that would have been a disappointment to Ignatius, it should not be to us. He understood that Church allegiance is secondary to committed faith in Jesus Christ. We, living during the pontificate of Pope Francis, can appreciate that Christian divisions cannot disrupt the communion of our common baptismal faith.

And what of the apparitions of 1880? Perhaps the word of the Brother who saw the vision of the Blessed Sacrament exposed should suffice: "It's what I saw." The simplicity of that statement surely justifies our annual pilgrimage.

After the collapse of the community at Elm Hill, Norwich, Ignatius was lonely and depressed. He ascribed his recovery and conversion to the verse of an evangelical hymn. It asks a question we could all ask:

'Tis a point I long to know,
O, it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his—or am I not?

Martin Williams

2015 Pilgrimage to Capel-y-Ffin

ON AUGUST 22, 2015, Capel-y-Ffin, witnessed a mid-afternoon procession of pilgrims walking from St Mary's Church up the hill to the Monastery. The pilgrimage, which has taken place every year since 1972, commemorates events which took place 100 years before that.

The annual Father Ignatius pilgrimage starts at St David's, Llanthony, before the hardier members of the congregation walk to Capel-y-Ffin for an ecumenical service at St Mary's, after which everyone processes to the statue of the Virgin Mary at the monastery founded by Fr Ignatius in 1870. Fr Ignatius is hailed as the 'saviour of monasticism is the Anglican Church', which is probably an exaggeration but this was clearly his intention when he began to build the monastery and Abbey church. He had wanted to re-create the Abbey at Llanthony but failed in this attempt. He was a charismatic figure, preaching to crowds of thousands and, in

one case in London, prompting a riot which had to be controlled by mounted police officers. The pilgrimage commemorates the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in August and September 1880, first to a group of small boys and then to Fr Ignatius himself. By the following year, devotion to 'Our Lady of Llanthony' had taken root. The anniversary of the first apparition, August 30th, was chosen as her special festival and the abbey church was crowded by pilgrims from far and wide, with many having walked the 11 miles from Llanfihangel Crucorney, or over the mountain from Hay. But with the passing of the years and with the monastery no longer used as such (it became the home of artist Eric Gill in 1924), the pilgrimage fell away. In August 1972, the centenary of the monastery was celebrated at an event organised by the Father Ignatius Memorial Trust, attended by some 400 people, and



Across the field, and into the woods



The hillside path

the pilgrimage has continued in this form every since.

Last year, around 50 people celebrated Holy Eucharist at Llanthony, coming from all over Wales and as far afield as Sussex and Devon. After a shared picnic, nearly 20 pilgrims took to the muddy hills to walk to Capel-y-Ffin. The ecumenical service of Vespers took place at St Mary's with part of a sermon preached by Fr Ignatius being read out before the procession of, again, around 50 people took place, ending at the ruins of the Abbey church. The weather – despite forecast rain – held out until just after everyone had a cup of tea

on the lawn, courtesy of the Knill family, owners of the Monastery, who offer self-catering holiday accommodation there.

To find out more about the Trust, the life of Fr Ignatius and the Monastery, and to see more pictures of the pilgrimage and a read copy of the sermon given at St Mary's last year, please visit our website at

www.fatherignatius.org.uk

Caroline Woollard
Chairman
Father Ignatius Memorial Trust

PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMME

Saturday 20th August 2016

11.30AM

Sung Eucharist at **St David's Church, Llanthony**. Preacher: **Revd Canon Mark Soady**, Vicar of Abergavenny, Prior of St Mary's, Abergavenny & Holywell Community.

1.30PM

Assemble outside St David's Church for Pilgrimage Walk. Stout footwear is essential and weather-proof clothing recommended.

3.30PM

Evensong at **St Mary's Church, Capel-y-Ffin**. Preacher: Revd Julian Gray, Vicar of Llantilio Pertholey. Followed by Procession to the ruins of Fr Ignatius' Abbey Church with 'station' at the **Wayside Calvary** and prayers at the **Statue of Our Lady of Llanthony**.

CAR PARKING is available in the official car park at Llanthony Priory for the Eucharist at S. David's, and in the afternoon at Chapel Farm, Capel-y-Ffin by kind permission of Mr & Mrs Watkins.

After the Eucharist pilgrims are invited to a **BRING & SHARE LUNCH** in the picnic area next to the car park at Llanthony (a wet weather alternative is available).

At the end of the afternoon service, tea and cake are served at a modest charge on the Monastery lawn, courtesy of Mr & Mrs Knill and helpers.

Please note:

Next year's pilgrimage will take place on Saturday, August 19th, 2017.

[To be confirmed]

The Pilgrimage Association

THE ECUMENICAL Llanthony Pilgrimage Association seeks to further the spiritual ideas of Fr Ignatius in two ways—through the annual pilgrimage to Our Lady of Llanthony at Capel-y-Ffin, and by mutual support and prayer for those causes dear to his heart.

These include the evangelisation of our country, the renewal of community and monastic life in the Church and the reconciliation of divided Christians in the faith and practice of the undivided Church.

Membership of the Association is £6 per person annually (which also covers the joining fee for new members).

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

The Membership Secretary
The Llanthony Pilgrimage Association
10 Llwynu Road
Abergavenny
Monmouthshire NP7 5TB

email: caroline@woollard.go-plus.net