



Journal Winter 2018



*Christian movement for those
in their middle and later years*

Adoramus Congress

The momentous Eucharistic Congress, 'Adoramus' took place in Liverpool in early September. Eucharistic Congresses are gatherings of clergy, religious and laity which promote an awareness of the central place of the Eucharist in the life and mission of the Church. The last Eucharistic Congress in England was held in 1908.



Despite the rain, thousands of people, representing every aspect of our precious faith met for those few days to revere the Blessed Sacrament, to pray and worship the Lord together, learn of helpful ways of imparting the faith and to convey and inspire the uplifting experience to parishioners, throughout the country.

It is featured on the cover as a reminder of the importance of the Blessed Sacrament in our lives and to promote regular adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in our parishes.

Come Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with wisdom, love and courage. Make us more like Christ in our words and actions. Bless the work of your Church.

Renew us all in the desire to make Christ known and loved in the world today. Bless the work of our parish. Guide all that we do so that our church is a place of mercy and service for all who are seeking you.

Deepen our love for the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and guide us in prayer and action as we journey towards Synod 2020 to become the Church you are calling us to be. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Presidents Message for November 2018

With this particular publication date I am torn between looking back at the summer and looking forward to Christmas. A bit of both I fancy. My wife and I had three weeks in Ireland in July, the first week on a cruiser on The Shannon and then two weeks in a cottage in Donegal near her home village.

Two things will linger in my mind (apart from singing an English folk song in a pub at 2.30am) and the first was a visit to a holy well. The Doon Well is said to have provided a bottle of water to every home in Donegal and cured the sick all over the world and there is even a presence on Youtube.

The other was a visit to the Giant's Causeway which we coupled with a trip to Bushmills Distillery where we had lunch (and a pint of Guinness and three whiskeys) before clambering over the hexagonal basalt columns, said to have been built by Finn McCool, but with a solid scientific explanation. Nevertheless, one could see God's hand at work.

With Christmas on the horizon [one of my sons has already bought a Christmas Sandwich from M&S for his lunch] I thought I might dwell on the song 'The twelve Days of Christmas', there is a great version on Youtube featuring Aled Jones, Hayley

Westenra and Russell Watson.

But it ain't just a children's nonsense song but one of Christian instruction with hidden references to the basic teaching of Christian Faith.



A Partridge in pear tree
= Jesus Christ



Two turtle doves
= old and new testaments



Three French hens
= theological virtues (faith, hope and love)



Four calling birds
= the 4 Gospels



Five Gold Rings
= the first 5 books of the old testament (Pentateuch)



Six geese a-laying
= the six days of Creation



Seven Swans a-swimming
= the seven gifts of the holy spirit



Eight maids a-milking
= the 8 beatitudes



Nine Ladies Dancing
= the 9 fruits of the Holy Spirit*



Ten lords a-leaping
= the ten commandments



Eleven pipers piping
= the eleven faithful apostles



Twelve drummers drumming
= the 12 points of doctrine in the Apostles Creed.

So when you hear this song over the festive period, consider it just another instance of the grace of God at work transforming our lives.

Finally, one of my sons recently uttered what may be a blasphemous thought; If Doctor Who can be a woman, might God also be? One for the feminists among you to ponder.

As ever you can email me using rosslifeascendingpresident@yahoo.co.uk

* love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Life is short but it barely takes a second to smile...

Greetings from the South West !

How great it was to meet up with several of you at Aylesford in June. As a new associate member, it was good to have contact with others in person and to begin to get to know at least some of my brothers and sisters in Christ in Life Ascending.

I am not a brilliant note-taker, but I did manage to scribble down a variety of insights offered by Fr. Kelmsley at Aylesford, some of which I have since shared with my friends here in the Anglican parish where I live and worship. How lovely to be able to cross-fertilise in this way, rather than staying within our own cosy and secure circle. I am of course as fond of secure cosiness as anyone else (especially as these Autumn days make themselves felt!) but we all stand in need of enlarging our vision and looking outwards.

I am reminded of how changed Jesus' disciples and followers were by the arrival of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. They were moved to fearless action as the divine power supply was switched on within them. I guess this empowerment is available to all of us, and I personally find that quite a challenge. Maybe I am not the only one. We need to tap in and switch on, rather than being in standby mode. I have a little card at home showing a standby button, with a dove



Mouvement Chrétien des Retraités

on the reverse side and this serves to remind me to share what I know, and to live out my faith in a truer and more profoundly courageous way.

Following a few months when I have been, for a variety of reasons, somewhat tied to my home area, my husband and I recently had a few days in the French village where we used to live. We were spoiled to death with kindness and welcome (quite undeserved) and we both spent an afternoon in the company of the MCR (Life Ascending France) members of the group I was involved with over 14 years. Lovely to maintain the links. I am currently in touch with VMI (Life Ascending International) and am helping with

some of their translations into English – both formal and informal documents. I can tell you that this is not an exact science! The results are not always as successful as hoped, due in part to errors as text is transposed, but I hope the situation will improve as the VML/LAI site gets going. One step at a time.

To conclude: one idea from Aylesford that really struck me was that of taking a name at random from a basket as we parted at the end of the retreat, and praying for that person throughout the coming year. I passed that one on to my French friends – it would work for monthly meetings too. Why not?

Every good wish to all members and friends. Vive the LA Movement!

Carolyn Paton



Our trip along the Camino Way 2018

Preparation

It began one year prior to the D Day of 1st May 2018.

36 people, including our Parish Priest, with an age range of 30 – 85 years, signed up for this momentous, daunting journey.

We met in various groups obtaining advice/tips from seasoned walkers and two pilgrims who had previously walked part of the Camino Way. The Bishop also shared his experience

of walking the entire Camino Way. Listening to him was both inspiring and challenging.

Small groups were formed to acclimatise ourselves for the journey ahead, as it was important to wear the correct attire, especially our walking boots and socks, to avoid blisters and to improve our ability to walk long distances within a set period of time. Walking became part of our daily routine.

D Day

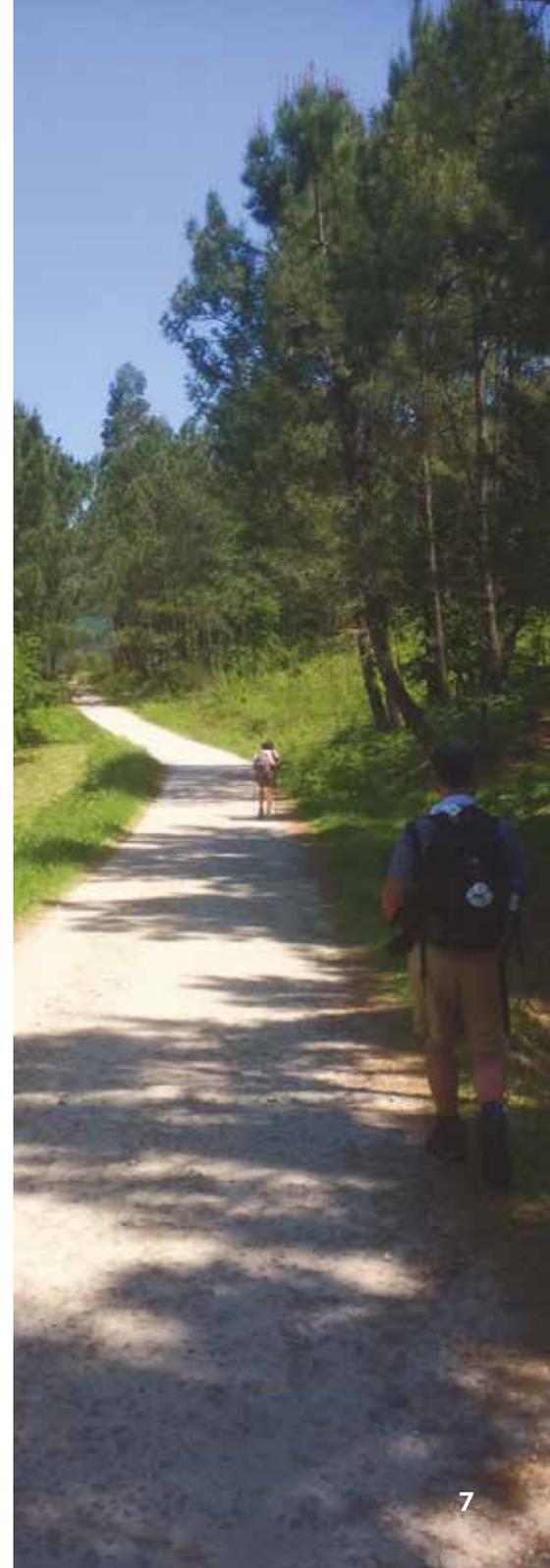
1st May dawned and an early start of 6am on a sunny morning to Stanstead airport. Were we excited?! A mixture of emotions was apparent. What lay ahead of us? Can we do it? Would we complete it? Would we survive?

Too late to back out now. Our first challenge of the day was our service and experience at the airport, as everyone appeared to be travelling at this time. The queues were packed solid or even worse than a train on the London underground. Though, being early, afforded us the time of not panicking and the timely presence of our travel representative was reassuring. We were then off to Porto Airport and on our coach to our hotel in Tuit, Spain.

Day 1 Onwards

Far too quickly the first day dawned and realisation kicked in that we were on our way, no going back!

We were issued with our Camino Passport which needed to be stamped at the beginning and end of each day to confirm that we had completed our walk that day. At this time we were also given our booklet of hymns and prayers to be used at daily Mass. This booklet was compiled by an artistic member of our group and also contained a description of our day's journey and distance walked.





Before each days journey, we prayed for God's protection. We carried very little in our backpack; essential were water, hat, Vaseline, snacks, sunscreen lotion and blister plasters were mandatory.

It's amazing how quickly small groups within the larger group formed without being organised, while at the same time being aware and showing care for the needs of one another (taking time to check feet for blisters, applying blister plasters, sharing snacks and having a drink). We were extremely blessed that no one needed hospital care.

As the days progressed, the temperature rose from a drizzly first day to peaks of 30-31°C. Fortunately lots of walking

was through woods where one experienced nature in all its splendour (the singing of birds, babbling brooks sometimes heard and not seen, dappled shade, farmers sewing seeds, vineyards with new growth, birth of a foal, gentle



breeze and the smell of eucalyptus and industrial estates).

We also became acquainted with the yellow arrows and shells strategically placed along the route guiding us along the right path to accomplish our arrival at Santiago de Compostela. It was also a time for Reflection and Silence.

The familiar greeting of 'Buen Camino' can be heard from the locals and fellow travellers as we encountered all ages from a baby in arms to the not so young, some on their maiden voyage and others having walked it several times.

Our Spiritual needs were met as we celebrated daily Mass in churches and cathedrals, including an open air cathedral in the forest.

Our hotel accommodations were comfortable and welcoming.

Our journey was challenging as we encountered uneven paths, steep climbs (the highest peak being 167m). Many of us struggled and a welcome break for lunch, at the well spaced out cafes, was most appreciated.

Eventually we saw the long awaited final shell and sight of the Cathedral amongst the trees, which indicated our homeward journey in kilometres and the end of the Camino Way.

What bliss! For some of us this took three hours while for others it took seven hours. We had walked



over 100 km in six days and each of us received two certificates signed by the Decanus (Dean de la S.A.M.I. CATHEDRAL De Catedral de Santiago) S.A.M.E. Cathedralis Compostellanae in acknowledgment of our achievement.

On our arrival some of us bowed down in front of the Cathedral and kissed the ground and each other. We thanked God and St James for our safe arrival and experience along the Camino Way.

Would we do it again? For a few – yes, others – maybe, some – no! I will treasure the experience.

Marylyn Duncan - Wood Green



No-one can put out a light that comes from within



Rugby Group

We are a small, enthusiastic group, only seven in number, having lost several of our original group through lack of commitment or death.

We meet on the second Thursday of each month, in the coach house which is a small building near the gateway to the church. Our meetings usually begin with a cup of tea or coffee, general chat and a small raffle followed by discussion based on a religious issue or on the Gospel reading of the day. Some of the proceeds of our raffle were donated to our Church Spire Fund which aims to raise £100,000 for its necessary restoration, our beautiful church being an historic listed building.

We are fortunate in having a member who is a fund raiser for the poor people of Bwengu, Malawi, a charity we like to support. She visits the village from time to time and also gives us regular updates on the projects they have been able to fund and to which we are happy to contribute.

One of our parishioners walked the route of St Jacques de Compostelle earlier this year and gave an excellent presentation on her wonderful experience. We are always ready to welcome new members and through regular notices in the parish newsletter of our meetings, invite them to join us.

Angela Harries



Our Day of Recollection at Mater Ecclesia Convent, Monks Kirby, Coventry.



In 1945, Germany was divided into four military occupation zones – British, French, American and Russian. Berlin was situated within the Russian zone because of its significance as the German capital. It was divided into four sectors, each sector being controlled by one of four powers. Access to the western sectors was by road, rail, canal and fortunately, by air.

In 1948 the Russians began a policy of harassing those travelling to West Berlin – stopping and searching vehicles and trains and spending ages inspecting papers. Then on 24th April, for 'technical reasons', they cut off all the land access. Their policy, led by Joseph Stalin, was to drive the allies out of Berlin, so that they could control the entire city.

There were 2.2 million residents in the western sectors requiring a minimum of five thousand tons of supplies every day. There were stocks for only one month.

At first it seemed that withdrawal from Berlin was the only option for the allies and plans were made to do just this. The idea of an airlift was not seriously considered.

It was Air Commodore Waite, David's big boss, who came to the rescue.

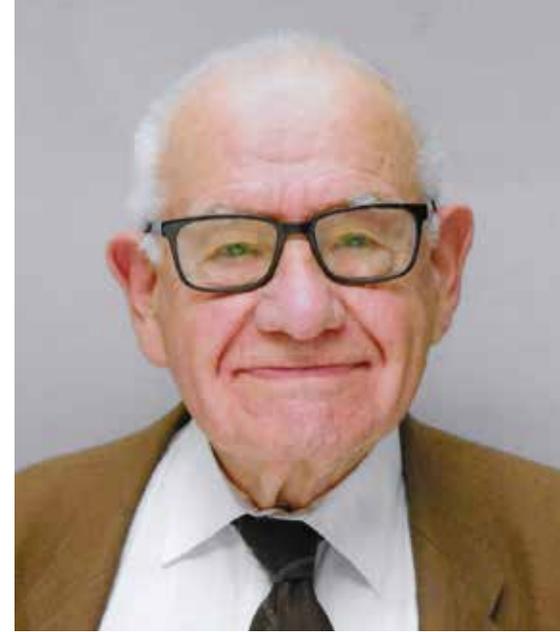
He roughed out some figures for an airlift but these were dismissed by the Generals. He went back to his office and spent a day and half

a night working with a slide rule, revised his figures and was able to get ten minutes with the British Military Governor, General Sir Brian Robertson, who was sceptical at first. However he agreed to put Waite's proposals to his American opposite, General Lucius D Clay. Clay agreed – "Let's go!"

The British airlift began on 28th June, initially using two Dakota squadrons. Later they were joined by Yorks and Lancastrians. The RAF used Short Sunderland flying boats which landed on Berlin's broad Havel river. The Americans used Templehof airfield as their Berlin base. Later a new airfield was built at Tegel in the French sector.

Stalin hoped that the airlift would fail in the Winter. The Russian Winter had been on their side when it halted Napoleon's forces and then the Germans during WW2. But the weather was quite mild and flights were suspended for only one day.

David said how impressed he was when he visited Gatow and saw the planes landing and taking off – just a few minutes between each one. Sadly there were 79 casualties.



The Russians began to realise they were losing face and were being seen as trying to starve the population of West Berlin. On 12th May 1949 they announced that the technical difficulties had been overcome and they lifted the blockade. The airlift continued until October, to build up supplies and to demonstrate that we could go on as long as we wanted.

Visiting Berlin in 2017, David was delighted to find the church he attended when he was stationed there. The Berlin Airlift was the greatest ever use of air power for humanitarian purposes. The Berliners have not forgotten it. In 1945 we were enemies, we became occupiers but when the airlift started we became friends – lifelong friends!

See more at <http://berlinairliftveteransassociation.org>



Berlin Airlift

On 10th July one of our members was watching on TV, the celebrations in London for the centenary of the Royal Air Force and spotted David Edwards of our St Albans group, being interviewed by the BBC.

David and a colleague from the British Berlin Airlift Association stood by a Dakota aircraft, which was one of the nine aircraft on display at Horse Guards Parade. Their main task was to answer questions from the public about the Berlin Airlift.

Called up in 1947 to do his National Service, David was posted on 8th May 1948 to Berlin to serve as a teleprinter operator for the Air Branch of the Control Commission. It was a small unit – only about twenty.

National Council for Lay Associations

This body meets twice a year with representatives from 23 apostolic member associations, nine liaison organisations, an Episcopal Advisor, a Chaplain and five elected officers.

Life Ascending is one of the lay associations as are UCM, Catholic Women's League, Catholic Men's Society, SVP, National Justice and Peace network amongst others along with CAFOD, National Board of Catholic Women and the Polish Pastoral Council for Western Europe.

Each organisation prepares a report on its activities since the previous meeting [CAFOD is always the glossiest] and the common 'cri de coeur' is the need to attract more young people. Life Ascending is the only participant that wants more older people (hee-hee).

Ideas, insights and experiences are shared on major issues of national concern and the Council fosters co-operation between member associations to strengthen their apostolate.

The AGM is in February and is a two day conference at the weekend and we stay overnight at the Oblate Retreat Centre in Crewe. The

October meeting is a one-day affair starting at 10.30am and finishing at 4pm; going to Crewe from Croydon means leaving home at 6.45am and catching a train from Euston just after 8am. Coffee on arrival is a lifesaver and I haven't yet fallen asleep during a meeting. Generally I get home about 8pm so it makes for a long day but one that is fruitfully spent with kindred spirits, albeit with different interests.



Following the meeting a report will be sent to the Bishops' Conference and the council endorsed my request for each diocese to appoint a priest [as happens in France] to nurture Life Ascending with a view to every parish having a group (which it should).

Whether it falls on deaf ears or leads to an increase in the number of parish groups, now sadly down to 27, remains to be seen. We can only trust in the Holy Spirit.

Ross Roberts

Lord help me to remember that nothing is going to happen to me today that You and I, together, can't handle. Amen.

Dates for Diary

Life Ascending Retreat

Aylesford Friary

Monday 17th June - Thursday 20th June 2019.

In Loving Memory



Carleen Doherty passed away on 22nd March after an aggressive illness. She is greatly missed by us all in the Watford Group, which is flourishing with many happy members.

Winnie Brady

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Our National Secretary

Mrs Marie Ryde has been our National Secretary for ~12 years and would now like more time to concentrate on her personal life. She has really enjoyed her time working for the movement and we have been blessed having a caring, competent and trustworthy secretary. Is there anyone who would be willing to take over the reins from Marie? I am sure she will be there to make the transition easy. It can be fun.





Ideas for the New Year

Begin your day by reading a Psalm aloud. Pray for someone amongst your Christmas cards.

Use your mobile phone to take a photo of an ordinary event (person, plant, part of nature) that made you smile. Use it as your screen saver for the next day.

Buy a small notebook and each day of the week, make at least one notation in it that starts, "I never noticed..."

Go to your garage. Find something that you have moved at least three times. Give it away—to a friend, St. Vincent de Paul, or the charity of your choice.

Write a letter or card to someone you love. With real paper, pen, envelope, and stamp.

Remember to give thanks after a meal, as well as before.

Before you turn on your computer or read any documents in the "in-box," sit for 60 seconds with your eyes closed in silence. Breathe in deeply, then exhale. As you breathe, pray "Lord, help me move slowly through this day."

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