

## Making Sense of the Assumption

Recently the *NewScientist* published a review of a book by E.Brian Davies entitled *Why Beliefs Matter: Reflections on the nature of science*, OUP. The author is described as “a self-proclaimed pluralist. That is, he believes that humans have a limited mental capacity and will always need a multiplicity of ways of looking at the world in order to understand it”.

The faith & religious ways of looking at the world are frameworks within which we seek to understand our relationship with ultimate reality (God) and with one another. Faith asks questions that science cannot answer (e.g. why are we here?) and has a desire for meaning that the scientific perspective cannot fully satisfy. The primary meaning of religious language, metaphors and concepts is to be found within the particular religious framework. For example, the image we find in the Book of Revelation 12:10 : “the accuser (lit. satan) of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God” can be understood as the abolition of the power of Law which brings condemnation and the inauguration of the relationship of grace “which brings acquittal” (2 Cor 3:9).

The huge challenge for contemporary religion is how to relate the frameworks of faith with the frameworks of science. To tolerate a total disconnect with no attempt to find common ground is to risk living in a faith world with no grounding in empirical reality.

So how do we understand “Mary, assumed body & soul into the glory of heaven” within our Catholic framework? It can be seen as the final triumph of God’s graciousness towards humanity. Where death & decay were once understood as just punishments for sin, now they must be understood in the context of grace. Where once body & soul were pitched against each other in a false dichotomy now they can only be seen as reconciled and united in the mystery of Christ - the creative Word. Mary was sinless not by a personally achieved perfection of thought, word and deed (cfr Phil 3:9) but by the favour of God whose forgiveness covers all (Jer 31:34). In this relationship of grace there is “no longer any consciousness of sin” (Heb 10:2). For the parent a child’s accidents, mistakes, temper tantrums and sulks are not “sins” bringing condemnation and separation but learning experiences on the journey of life.

Mary as mother of Jesus, the eternal Word made flesh, is ennobled in her motherhood. This nobility is shared by the whole creation which is one with the Divine because it receives its being from the Word (John 1:3).

What of Mary’s body? In Scripture body has many meanings: the community is the Body of Christ, as the Word became flesh, so the Word becomes bread & wine, the sacramental Body & Blood of Christ, the universe is the body of the Christ who “fills the whole creation” (Eph 1:23, Tiellard de Chardin & more recently Pope Benedict). Paul writes that there are different kinds of bodies and that the mortal body that is “sown” is not the same as the spiritual body that is “raised” (1 Cor 15:44). So when we speak of “body” we mustn’t assume we fully understand what we are talking about.

For the Church, Mary assumed expresses the final triumph of God’s grace for God’s creatures. The language of separation, alienation, decay & condemnation is no longer relevant. All the experiences of life - the beautiful, the good, the tragic & ugly, the destructive and vain, the heroic & the wicked are seen in a new light. The empirical realities are what they are, flesh is still flesh, decay still happens, wickedness is still evil, love must still suffer and struggle - but everything is bathed in a new light. This light is the glory of the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus & everything in creation is subject to it and nothing has the power to diminish it. Mary is the symbol of graced humanity. (DMA)

# The Messenger

St Michaels Church, (SM) Langdown Lawn, Hythe SO45 5GR  
St Bernard’s Church, (SB) Southbourne Ave, Holbury, SO45 2NT

**15th August 2010**

## **Assumption of Our Lady, Divine Office Wk 4**

Sun	15th	9am SB Mass; 11am SM Mass 6pm SM Mass
Mon	16th	No Service <i>(Opt. Memory: St Stephen, King of Hungary d. 1038)</i>
Tues	17th	10.00am SM - Morning Prayer & Mass <i>(Liturgy: Of the Day)</i>
Wed	18th	7.30pm SM - Evening Prayer & Mass <i>(Liturgy: Of the Day)</i>
Thurs	19th	10.00am LT - Mass of the Day <i>(Opt. Memory: St John Eudes, Founder, born 1601)</i>
Fri	20th	10.30am SM - Funeral Service for the late Betty King RIP  3pm SB - Baptism Olivier Joseph Anthony Ingham <i>(Memory: St Bernard, Abbot, Doctor, b.1090, celebration of community of St Bernard’s, Holbury)</i>
Sat	21st	10.00am SM Mass followed by Reconciliation until 11.30am <i>(Memory: St Pius X, Pope, 1835-1914)</i>
Sun	22nd	<b>21st Sunday in Ordinary Time</b> 9am SB Mass; 11am SM Mass 6pm SM Mass

**Mass Intentions: For this week:** People of the Parish, Parishioners who are unwell, All contributors to the Roof Fund, Lorraine Wilks RIP Anniv, Flo Warrilow RIP Anniv, Peggy & Mike Kirwan (60th Wedding Anniv), Mary & Pete Reeve (40th Wedding Anniv), Doreen & Johnny Leahy (60th Wedding Anniv)

**For the week beginning 22nd Aug:** People of the Parish, Parishioners who are unwell, All contributors to the Roof Fund, Lorraine Wilks RIP Anniv, Flo Warrilow RIP Anniv, Madeline & David Footit (40th Wedding Anniv), David & Kim Guilding (Wedding Anniv)

### **New Forest East Pastoral Area - Sunday Mass Times**

St Theresa, Totton - Sat Vigil Mass 6pm; Sun 10.30am  
Ashurst Community - Sun 9am  
Our Lady & St Edward, Lyndhurst - Sun 9am

### **WATERSIDE CATHOLIC PARISH**

Pastoral Team:  
Rev David Adams (Parish Priest)  
Rev Steve Bowler (Deacon) (8020 7449)  
Rev Ian Tobin (Deacon) (8089 7354)  
Kevin Barnett (Chair: Parish Pastoral Council)

All correspondence to: The Parish Office,  
Angel House, 6 Langdown Lawn, Hythe SO45 5GR  
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For the Ideal Gift visit  
**Faith, Hope & Charity**  
**8 ST JOHN'S STREET, HYTHE SO45 6DA**  
**Tel: 023 8020 7882**

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:** Please keep in your prayers: Nigel Bolton, Marion Butler, Petra Daniels, Bill Feltham, Pat Gallanagh, Amanda Gudge, Trevor Handol, Jenny Lauder, Bridget Reeves, Pete Thorn, Anne Wyatt. (If you wish someone to be included for prayers here please give their name to Fr David.)

**PARISHIONERS WHO HAVE DIED:** Sadly we heard that **Betty King** died in hospital on Friday, 6th August. Betty was one of those who helped St Michaels right from the start. Betty requested a short funeral service in St Michaels. This will take place on Friday, 20th August at 10.30am. The Committal will follow at 12 noon at Southampton Crematorium and parishioners are welcome to attend the gathering that will take place afterwards at the Foresthome near Hardley roundabout.

**MISSION APPEAL: On Sunday, 22nd August there will be a Mission appeal made by Bro. Andrew Ferris on behalf of the Sacred Heart Fathers & Brothers of Betharram. See the poster for more details.**

**PAKISTAN FLOOD RELIEF:** - Special Collection last Sunday raised: Covenants £517.80 plus Gift Aid Tax Refund £146.05 and Loose £343.42 = £1007.27p. A cheque has been sent direct to CAFOD. Donations can still be made today, and if you are a Gift Aider please use one of the yellow envelopes and put your name & number on it. Thank you very much. (from Francis Waddington - Chair of Finance)

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY** at the 9am Mass is taking a summer break. However, on Sundays when Clare's around she'll still lead a session if wanted. Otherwise, if any parents wish to take their children (aged 2-7) out as usual, or to stay in but keep them occupied, some very easy Gospel-related activity sheets will be at the back of St B's. (Please keep the sheets but return pencils etc.)

**CHILDREN'S MASS:** On Sunday, Sept 26th the 9am Mass at St Bernard's will be geared more especially for children. We will be asking our young people to do the readings for that Mass so if anyone is already on the Rota for that Sunday please be ready to hand over to the children. We hope to do this once a month subsequently.

**LIVING OUR FAITH: The amount pledged by the people & clergy of the parish is now £41,000.** Thank you everyone for your generosity.

**RE: ST MARTHA GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE:**

The next meeting of the St Martha group is 16th August. We will be publishing the results of the questionnaire after that meeting. Thank you for taking part.

**PORTSMOUTH PEOPLE:** Copies of the latest edition are available at the back of the churches.

**FREE TO GOOD HOME:** Ceramic tiles, pale beige & white fleck, 6" x 6" , quantity: 110 plus odds, super condition. Would cover 27 1/2 sq ft plus. Contact Mike Slipper Tel. 80-843908

**CAFOD:** Many thanks to everyone who supported CAFODs **Act on Poverty** campaign by signing postcards to the Prime Minister. **107** cards have been sent off from this parish to join the thousands from all over the country. A letter has also been sent to Dr Julian Lewis, our local M.P. asking him to monitor action on these issues. (From Louise Croll & Claire Davies)

**CAFOD GROUP:** As already announced it is proposed that a CAFOD group be formed in the parish to consider how best we can support their activities. **ALL ARE WELCOME** to what will be informal meetings every 2-3 months. Look out for the date of the first meeting in September! (From Louise Croll & Clare Davies)

**WALK the WORLD** - Join us at 10am on Saturday 28 August 2010 at Immaculate Conception, Bells Lane, Stubbington for Walk the World - an 8 mile sponsored walk around Stubbington and the Lee on Solent area to raise funds for World Youth Day and CAFOD. For more information and to register your place by 16 August contact Dave Hill at the Department of Pastoral Formation on 01329 835583. Sponsorship forms can be downloaded from <http://cafodportsmouth.wordpress.com>

**CELEBRATE WEEKEND: 9th & 10th October 2010:**

The 3rd Celebrate weekend is to be held at St Marys College, Southampton. *Celebrate* is a Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference for people of all ages, a chance for Christians to come together, learn more about their faith and feed the spirit inside. For the **children** there is music, arts & crafts, games & activities all based around their faith in Jesus, pitched at their age group and presented in a relevant and fun way. For **teenagers**, the day is split into a well balanced mix of teaching, music, prayer, drama and group work again appropriate for their age. For **young adults 16-22years**, they have an opportunity for teaching, prayer and praise and to explore in more depth issues relevant to them. **Adults** have speakers and workshops led by people who have national and international ministries, worship led by excellent musicians, and opportunity for prayer, reconciliation and fellowship. **Mass** is celebrated for everyone each day and there is an opportunity for all ages to meet and talk with friends old and new and share a **hot meal** provided on the Saturday & included in the conference price. Adults £30; 16-22yrs £20, 3-15yrs £10, under 3s free. For more information and to book contact Peter & Lynda Szymanski 023-80-292058 or via [peterszymanski@hotmail.com](mailto:peterszymanski@hotmail.com) or ask Angela Slattery after Mass at St Bernard's.

**JAZZ EVENING:** The 7th Parish Jazz Night takes place at St Bernard's Hall on **Saturday, 16th October** with the new Cavalier Jazzmen. Starting at **8pm**. Tickets are £6.00 each and will be available shortly. Raffle prizes are sought. Proceeds will go towards improving parish facilities. Mike Slipper 80-843908. Tickets after Mass or from parish shop - F.H.C.