



The Raphael Recorder

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Welcome

Welcome to this third edition of the Raphael Recorder.

Our mission is to take the sick and disabled to Lourdes, to care for them in every way during the pilgrimage and with them to offer prayers for all those who suffer in any way.

Despite restrictions being eased we continue to be disappointed and frustrated by the restrictions placed on travel due to the Corona virus.

Many thanks to the new contributors brave enough to offer something for publication. May many more follow a good example.

From Wenda Cordell

A few years ago one afternoon Helen took me up the hill to show me the beautiful stations of the cross while Julie did the thing she loves, shopping!!

Helen said Father Vincent always took the youth up there and explained the Stations. Helen did the same for me and it was a very moving experience, one I will never forget. At the top of the hill we sat down and had a long chat about our lives. It was at the top of that hill we became not only good friends but kindred spirits and came down that hill richer for it.

I will be for ever grateful to Helen for the whole experience.

At home we are keeping safe. I'm taking Julie out in her wheelchair for walks but not taking her in any shops, something with which she is struggling as she does love shopping but I need to keep her safe and that's the only way I know to do that.

Take care, Keep safe.
Hopefully soon we will all get together soon.

I am so pleased Father Leo is on the mend I really miss the chats I have with him and Father Michael

Wenda

Editor note: Fr Vincent Royles was a faithful pilgrim with Raphael and used to travel with the Overland Group. Sadly he died after illness in January 2015.

Very many thanks to the generosity of Raphael Pilgrims.



We did ask in the first edition of the Raphael Recorder for contributions to cover potential losses following the cancellation of the 2020 pilgrimage. The response has been inspiring and many piggy banks may have been raided. To date over £2,000 has been received so that with Gift Aid we may reach close to £2,500.

Dorothy Abbott 100 , Mother of Kath Scahill



Pope Francis' prayer to Our Lady, Health of the Sick

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick.

At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith.

You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need.

We are certain that you will provide, so that,

as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us:

He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God.

Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test – and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin



Comment

It was a year ago on 6th June 2019 that Pope Francis appointed a Bishop Antoine Herouard from Lille as Apostolic Delegate for Lourdes.

The Sanctuary of Lourdes had been facing a financial crisis caused by a combination of repairs following two devastating floods, a drop in income from the diminishing numbers of pilgrims visiting the Shrine and overspending on various projects. A significant debt had accrued and Guillaume de Volpan was engaged as business manager to address the debt.

Mr Volpan made himself visible and attended the Conference of British Lourdes Directors on two occasions to explain his brief. He speaks good English and doubtless he visited pilgrimage chiefs from other countries apart from the UK. If anything he was too successful and in two years he had cut costs and generated sufficient income to extinguish over ten million euro of debt.

The Vatican became concerned saying the Shrine risked becoming a business and losing its identity as a centre of spirituality. It was said the Pope 'wants to promote ever more the spiritual primacy of the Sanctuary corresponding to the needs of the people of God'. The Bishop of Lourdes, Nicolas Brouwet, is now able to concentrate on his pastoral role as Bishop of the

Diocese of Tarbes and Lourdes.

Life has not altered significantly for visiting pilgrims. However, there is evidence the Sanctuary is listening and there have been subtle changes. For example, languages other than French and Italian are becoming more widely used.

There remains, however, the pilgrim levy imposed on all those visiting Lourdes on an organised pilgrimage. Plus ça change. Cost remains one of the most inhibiting factors

Out of interest

Each king in a pack of playing cards represents a great king from history:

Spades - King David

Hearts - Charlemagne

Clubs - Alexander, The Great

Diamonds - Julius Caesar

In the 1400's a law was passed in England that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb.

Hence we have 'The rule of thumb'

Note: The editor can find no evidence that this law has ever been repealed!

Many years ago in Scotland a new game was invented. It was ruled 'Gentlemen Only...Ladies Forbidden'. .and thus, the word GOLF entered our language..

**A message from Tracy Ennis,
Chairman of the Trustees of
Raphael.**

My dear Raphael Family,
Raphaelites will know that I am a nurse and have been involved with Raphael for some 36 years now. Many of you will not know what area of Nursing I currently work in so I thought I should let you know what I am involved in during the Coronavirus Pandemic. Having spent most of my career in Hospital Nursing, specialising in Liver Disease and Transplantation then Heart Disease and Coronary Care and between those two specialties I spent a few years as a Nursing Officer in the Royal Navy (QARNNS). I moved on to Primary Care and worked as a Practice Nurse for about four years and for the past ten years I have worked in Public Health - a term many are now very familiar with. My usual role is in teaching, supporting, supervising and auditing GP's and Practice Nurses and working with them to reduce their patients' risk of developing Heart Disease, Diabetes or Stroke. I also lead a monthly mobile Nurse led clinic to a travellers' site. All this has been put on hold. Currently, I work on the Covid-19 Response team in Bromley, South London. My duties are that every third day I am the duty Nurse for



emergency calls or email enquiries. I am there to help facilitate hospital discharges to care homes, advising the staff on Infection Prevention measures and isolation guidance. Many homes are reluctant to accept new or existing residents back due to the current infection rate in Homes. Often, we as a team, have managed to influence and change the Managers' decisions and facilitate the transfer of the resident back to the home after discussion and guidance on what to do, how to access emergency supplies of PPE from our Public Health stock and sometimes with just a sympathetic listening ear. With our help the rate of virus spread has been less in Bromley than other Boroughs, work we started long before the Government said they would introduce it. On the days I am not on-call I contact care homes on a rotational basis to see how they are coping, provide a listening ear to, sometimes, very sad stories of long-term residents who had become family members and who have sadly succumbed to C-19. I still need to complete much of my usual role too - contract management, payments for services provided, Practice Nurses and Health

Care Assistants still contact me with queries regarding patients and I am now what is known as a 'Super Trainer' meaning I can provide training via Zoom or Webex to the care home staff on how to put on and take off PPE in a safe and correct manner. So I am kept pretty busy and mostly work a six-day week.

I am sorry that I no-longer have a hospital role but as I am shielding I would not be of any help there anyway but this is a role I can do from the comfort of my temporary office in the spare bedroom! I thank God for giving me the skills and experience to help in this way.

May God Bless you all and I will keep you in my prayers till we meet again.

Stay well and stay safe.

Tracy

. Smile please

An Italian chef was found dead.

He had Pasta way.

Stealing someone's coffee is called mugging

Viking stories are always full of Saxon violence

Working from home is great, unless you're a fireman

Never go to a paint shop to get thinner. It does not work.

Are priests allowed out more than once a day to exorcise?

From Anthony Cunningham, Pilgrim

I have been privileged during the past decade or so to have participated in three Lourdes pilgrimages. The first was with Across and more recently, two with Raphael in 2017 and 2018.

In 2008 I underwent an operation and extensive treatment for cancer. In thanksgiving for a successful outcome I accepted a place on an Across Pilgrimage in Spring 2009. We travelled overland and through the Channel Tunnel non-stop by Jumbulance taking 19 hours and arriving in Lourdes at 10.30 in the morning. The Jumbulance has regular coach seats down one side and on the other there are bunk beds. We were led by Mgr Chris Brooks as Spiritual Director. Some of the pilgrims were in a poor way and needed to lie down on the beds for the entire journey. Others, like myself, not fully recovered alternated between the remaining beds and the coach seats. We stayed at the [Mediterranée](#) Hotel situated on the edge of town beside the River Gave.



The hotel was pleasant but the journey from the hotel to the Shrine each day was rather long. Sick pilgrims were referred to as VIP's and were supported by two doctors, two or three nurses and general helpers from my local area. At Lourdes itself we participated in the Blessed Sacrament and Torchlight Processions. We had the use of a second, ordinary coach during the week, so could travel further afield to

St Savin on the side of the valley of the River Gave and to Gavarnie on the border with Spain for an open-air Mass and to other convents and to the Ukrainian Church.

Our pilgrimage happily coincided with the annual visit of the International Military Pilgrimage including contingents from the Armed Forces from the UK. The troops dressed in their No 1 military uniforms were supported by their regimental bands. They combined for a concert one afternoon in the front of the Basilicas. Among the most colourful were the Swiss Guards from the Vatican.

We returned to Britain as we had come, a long journey by road but a happy conclusion to a friendly and well organised pilgrimage.

I was invited to join Raphael in 2018. By comparison, the journey was less arduous: a lift to Stansted, a two-hour flight and a short coach ride to the Padoue Hotel in the centre of Town and close to the Grotto. The pilgrimage was led by Frs Leo and Michael and I much enjoyed the daily masses, spiritual talks, Stations of the Cross, the Sacrament of the Sick and the Water Ceremony. As always, the overwhelming beauty of the Torchlight

Procession and in the afternoon the Blessed Sacrament Procession and Benediction in the Underground Basilica will always remain in my memory.

On the secular side, we were fortunate to stay at the Padoue with its convenient location, comfort and cuisine. Those able bodied pilgrims who worked as helpers were outstanding and I took advantage of their wheelchair services at all times. The final evening's social evening with its songs and comic turns was a high spot in the week. I commend the organising team and skills of Rachel and

Trevor who made the week pass smoothly.

The 2018 Pilgrimage replicated 2017 except that on one rainy day the Blessed Sacrament Procession had to be curtailed. Unfortunately, I was unable to travel in 2019 because of an impending hip replacement operation which has not yet taken place. In 2020, as we know, Lourdes is shut down.

Perhaps we will all meet up again in 2021 – God willing