

# CA Hospitalité Newsletter

Volume 17

July 1998

THE CATHOLIC  
ASSOCIATION  
HOSPITALITÉ OF  
OUR LADY OF  
LOURDES.

REGISTERED CHARITY  
No. 267918

Patron: Right Reverend  
Mervyn A Alexander DD,  
Bishop of Clifton

President: Mrs Nell Atkin,  
Rose Cottage, Brookend,  
Chadlington, Oxon,  
OX7 3NF.  
Tel: 01608 676358

Treasurer: David Lewis,  
23 Bandon Road, Girton,  
Cambridge, CB3 0LU.  
Tel: 01223 276205

Secretary and Newsletter  
Editor: Chris Thorpe,  
5 Embury Crescent,  
Norwich, NR6 6DB.  
Tel: 01603 787971  
E-mail: Chris\_Thorpe@  
compuserve.com

Other members of the  
Council:

Chris Atkin, Chief Bran-  
cardier

James Brotherton, Elected  
Member

Chris Collins, Senior  
Nurse

Dr Trevor Fernandes,  
Medical Officer

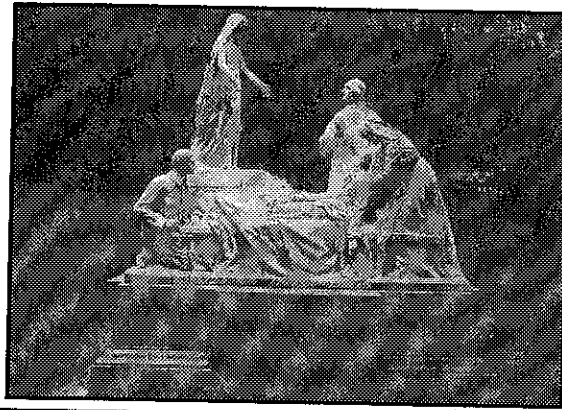
Margaret Fielding,  
Elected Member

Bill Kidd, CAPT Repre-  
sentative

Tony O'Rourke, Elected  
Member

Colette Sharrock, Chief  
Handmaid

Fr John Warrington,  
Chaplain to the Sick



## PILGRIMAGE EXERCISES Bishop Charles Henderson

Our pilgrimage to Our Lady of Lourdes this year will embrace all the elements of pilgrimage. We will travel from home to Lourdes and the journey will be a genuine part of

our spiri-  
tual pil-  
grimage.

The sacri-  
fices involved should be patiently endured and offered up in prayer for our pilgrimage intentions.

In this year of the Holy Spirit in preparation for the Great Jubilee, our pilgrimage exercises should concentrate on the Holy Spirit's special relationship with Mary, as Mother of the Saviour and Mother of the Church. As Our Lady's special place in the redeeming Grace of her Son unfolds, we will hopefully understand just a little better the power and influence of the Holy Spirit in our own lives - as redeemed and yet disciples of the redeemer.

Our Lady's call to Lourdes as pilgrims

stresses the need for prayer in our lives, and promotes the great devotion of the Rosary in which we meditate on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, while asking Mary to be our

*Hospitalité Service on Tuesday  
25 August, 8.00pm, The Old  
Chapel, New St Frai Hospital*

helper in  
our spiri-  
tual jour-  
ney of en-

riching the holiness of our lives.

In the pilgrimage exercises at Lourdes - in which we hope all our pilgrims will participate to gain the full benefit of the pilgrimage - we will have the opportunity to learn about and value the sacramental liturgies of the Church: to appreciate more the value of sickness and suffering, when experienced in close unity and sympathy with the Suffering Saviour: to sense anew the interior delight of God's love for each of us and to realise the important part each person and parish plays in changing human hearts in order to build up

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Support Your Hospitalité Nell Atkin

A memorable day was spent on May 9th by members at the annual reunion and AGM. Father John Beirne and his parishioners gave us a very warm welcome, Father John saying Mass in the beautiful church of St. Aidan, and after our meeting, an excellent lunch was served. Most cleverly, they arranged for the sun to shine so that we were able to enjoy pre-lunch drinks in the garden.

Sadly, the attendance was disappointing. This annual reunion is the one occasion in the year when members of the Hospitalité can get together other than in Lourdes. The Hospitalité is not just about the pilgrimage: one of the objects of our organisation is to offer each other friendship and mutual support, keeping the spirit of Lourdes working in our daily life all through the year. Because of the composition of our pilgrimage, members of the Hospitalité are scattered across the country and it is not always possible for people to get to our reunions. The idea of having the reunion each year in one of the different Dioceses that make up the CA Pilgrimage was intended to make it easier for members

*(Continued on page 2)*

## PILGRIMAGE 1998

### *Chaplain to the Sick* *Fr John Warrington*

As you arrive and are welcomed to Lourdes either at the Airport, in your hotels or at the new Accueil Notre Dame, a small number of people from our pilgrimage will have worked in Lourdes for a week or even longer before hand. This is what you may hear being referred to as a 'stage' and is a period of time when people are able to assist with the various kinds of service which is required to keep Lourdes running along in the busy season. For a number of years I have managed to complete such a week and will do so again this year before the Pilgrimage. This gives me a chance to acclimatise to the atmosphere of Lourdes in the week running up to the pilgrimage. The week before the pilgrimage for most of us is a hectic time, just as it is when we go away anywhere else. But to prepare for Lourdes needs us to think about what

we will find when we arrive in the ever changing and developing town of Lourdes. Last year was certainly 'different' and I look forward to revisiting the 'roof-top experience' of the new Accueil. To come for the first time, for the twenty-first time, it does not matter, for Lourdes creates within each person who finds their way its own wealth of 'little gems' for us all to discover in time. May the Holy Spirit help and guide each of us as we prepare for this years' pilgrimage. May God Bless you always with his love.

### *Chief Doctor* *Dr Trevor Fernandes*

Plans are already under-way for the 1998 Pilgrimage to Lourdes in August. We hope to build on last year's success in the new Accueil Notre Dame. We shall once again have a unit of 56 beds of which the floor-plan should be the same: so this year we know what to expect although hope-

fully the air-conditioning will be working properly! Applications are coming in as usual but there are still some remaining places- it is preferable if they are received by mid-June although in extenuating circumstances a few places are available later. Accueil forms are available from Diocesan Directors or myself and hotel forms are available from Tangney Tours.

The main change this year will be the large flight from Stansted, with smaller ones from Luton, Gatwick and Manchester. In order to facilitate plans for loading, please inform your Head of Department as soon as possible or at least fill in your designation (eg Branc, Handmaid etc.) on your booking form as many people seem to forget this or assume that Tangney Tours should know.

*(Continued on page 3)*

***"Hopefully the  
air-conditioning  
will be working  
properly!"***

### *Pilgrimage Exercises*

*(Continued from page 1)*

the Kingdom of God on earth and promote the immense value of recognising the great family of humankind.

Our intentions and aims should be, through the intercession of Our Blessed Lady of Lourdes:

- (a) to become more holy, more in love with God,
- (b) understand better the Holy Spirit as helper and guide for ourselves and for the Church,
- (c) to engender true peace in our hearts and promote true peace everywhere,
- (d) to become devoted children of Mary and grateful

brothers and sisters of her Son, Jesus, whose inheritance and victory is ours.

I look forward to sharing this time of grace with all the pilgrims.

### *Walsingham Retreat 1999*

The next CA Retreat at Walsingham will take place between 23-25 April 1999 and will be given by Fr Tony Rogers. This retreat takes place only every 2 years so it's worth putting in your diaries now.

Jim Walton will be making the arrangements and more details will be available in the January 1999 issue of this Newsletter.

### *Support Your Hospitalité*

*(Continued from page 1)*  
to attend.

Perhaps we should consider changing the date back to February as there is always so much going on in May? Perhaps London (if we could find a suitable venue) would be easier for a lot of people to get to? Some of those who did attend travelled a good distance to get to Little Chalfont, which makes one think that there could have been a better attendance.

It would be encouraging to have some feedback and the Council would like to know what the members think and feel. But if people do not come to the AGM how are we to know?

## PILGRIMAGE 1998

(Continued from page 2)

As I mentioned last time a group of us have looked into the possibilities of travelling by train. We all agreed that this was not really viable because of a number of factors; the cost was not greatly reduced, the new port arrangements make transfers

difficult and we are unable to use the tunnel for the sick at present and I feel strongly that the train journey is too exhausting for the sick and very few are unable to travel by air due to illness. With regard to the cost for the sick we should remember that subsid-

ies are available if necessary both from the CA Hospitalité and the Dioceses.

See you all in August.

### **Glanfield Group** *Jo Fernandes*

The preparations for this year's Pilgrimage are well under way. We have had applications from many of the children who join us regularly such as Errol, Chris and Claire as well as some children and families who have not been before. The group was rather large last year verging on the unmanageable at times so we are aiming to make it slightly smaller and more intimate this year but using as many helpers as possible in the organisation. We have fortunately got plenty of female helpers, but are a bit short of male ones, so any volunteers gratefully received.

We have not as yet finalised our programme, but we plan to attend as many of the Pilgrimage Masses as possible and of course do some child-centred activities such as swimming and abseiling! Anybody from the main Pilgrimage is very welcome to join us for any of

these or even just a meal if you wish. All are invited to the Children's Mass.

With regard to fund raising this year, we must thank the Music Group for leading a very successful day of carol singing in Watford just before Christmas raising nearly £1000. I am not sure if the security guards will allow Errol's tactics again next year. In February, Sally Annis organised an excellent concert by the Tallis Chamber Choir of which she is part. It took place in Much Hadham and we owe our gratitude to many there including Michael and Hope Gilbert, Lesley Dowling and Bob Styles in raising around £1600. Unfortunately the Ball did not take place this year but with your support we hope it will be back next year.

We have been recently saddened by the death of Ian Hall who has been part of the group for a number of years. A large contingent from the Glanfield Group were present at his funeral celebrated by Tony Rogers and we were honoured that Ian's family asked us to contribute in a number of ways. Please remember Ian and all of the Hall family in your prayers.

I shall end with congratulations to Loo Desmond on her engagement to Nick and Charlie and Rachel Palmer on their recent marriage. We wish both couples many years of happiness together ( and with the Glanfield Group! )

### **Youth Group** *Tony & Liz O'Rourke*

Firstly, we would like to thank everybody for all their support and good wishes. It's made us feel very well supported in the new venture ahead of us. Also we would like to inform all those people who have offered their help, we will be taking them up on their offer! We would like to thank Julie and

Colin for all their help, advice and support this year so far.

Secondly we would just like to let people know what we have been doing so far. In August this year you will see the Young Helpers' Brancs Group in their uniform polo shirts: a three button polo shirt with breast logo (See page 12) in Royal Blue.

We will also be taking a range of CA leisure wear for people to contemplate ordering for the 1999 Pilgrimage. We have had some people already put in requests for Zip-up Hooded Sweatshirts (navy) (£15.99). We will be carrying a small number of these items on the pilgrimage. If anyone is interested in reserving one they can give us a phone call (01603 625123) as soon as you receive this Newsletter. Next year we hope to run a mail order form, for the leisure wear people express most interest in.

### **Chief Nurse** *Chris Collins*

Preparation time is here again and our 1998 Pilgrimage is approaching rapidly.

After our successful visit to the Accueil Notre Dame in 1997 we are looking forward to our return, although St Nicholas welcomes us this year.

Our early bookings for nurses include "old" faithfuls and very welcome new faces. Please encourage your nurse friends and relations to join us for a very special week.

A final plea! As we will be a night sister short this year I would be very grateful for volunteers for one or two nights to allow our sick pilgrims to have the very best of care.

Looking forward to seeing you all in August.

**"In August this year you will see the Young Helpers' Brancs Group in their uniform polo shirts"**

## PILGRIMAGE 1998

### *Chief Handmaid* *Colette Sharrock*

I have just returned from Lourdes, having done a Stage. This year was special for me as, after much heart searching, I had decided to make my full commitment to the Hospitalité. I received my silver medal, not a reward but an outward sign of this commitment. This is given during a Mass for all Stagiaires on the Wednesday evening. A truly "international Mass" - Stagiaires of all nationalities. I was very happy to have the support of our group numbering 12 in all!

The work during the week was varied. Two of us were working in the Accueil Notre Dame and some of us working in the newly renovated Accueil St Frai - just opened. Bridget worked in the Baths, John was assigned to the station, Nell worked for the Ecole de Stage, joined later by David. Of course we had our very own British Conseiller, Helen, who worked in the bureau for the week. You will be pleased to know that the facade of the St Frai remains the same with the upper and lower chapels. However, once inside it's a totally new Accueil, well worth a visit.

The work of Stagiaires is vital throughout the season of Pilgrimages. During the week of our Pilgrimage you may or may not be aware of them - the females will be in white and usually will be wearing a blue medal. They are doing all the background work to ensure Pilgrimages run smoothly.

The week was rewarding and an excellent preparation for our own Pilgrimage. I came home full of good intentions and enthusiasm for our week in August. If anyone would like to know

more about doing a Stage, a CA group goes out the week before the Pilgrimage and another in May, please speak to us in Lourdes.

Turning to August, the only thing I need to repeat from last year is that I am looking for those of you who are willing to volunteer to do a night duty! Also, if you're travelling independently and would like to work, you must contact me as soon as possible.

### *Chief Brancardier* *Chris Atkin*

Happy July to you all! I sincerely hope that, having experienced some dreadful weather so far this year, we will be treated to the best that Lourdes can offer in August.

Thank you to those of you who have contacted me to express an interest in doing more or in taking on less: all requests will be granted! I shall continue to experiment this year with teams (groups of friends, really) who can be given tasks and be confidently left to get on with them. The way our pilgrimage is developing, with large numbers staying in hotels and with those in the Accueil enjoying greater privacy and independence, there is huge scope for this approach to the brancardiers' role. There is still plenty of opportunity to contact me via e-mail (cjatkin@dera.gov.uk) or telephone (0181 892 0323, but be careful: you might get the wife) if you want to sort out teams or responsibilities in advance.

I made a big point in the January newsletter of thanking some of the older brancs for their hard work, not only during my tenure but for many, many years. We now have to look to the newer members of the Hospitalité to

provide example and leadership to the 100 or so brancardiers who will be working for the Pilgrimage this year. Last year I had the rather unpleasant task, as many of you will remember, of explaining to some groups in the Pilgrimage that their overall standards had fallen well below the acceptable. A Chief Branc can do this about once before he puts people's backs up or loses credibility. Standards, therefore, have to be raised by many individuals, not just one. As members of the Hospitalité we need to educate those whose focus at Lourdes occasionally becomes a little too narrow! I hope that we can achieve this in 1998 without the unpleasantness that was sometimes required in 1997.

I would like to welcome Tony and Liz O'Rourke as the new Youth Group leaders. If Tony runs the Youth like he ran the Women's Ward then keep your heads down, Youth Group! Good Luck, Tony and Liz.

### *Announcements*

We were very sorry to hear the sad news of the deaths of Madge Ellwood, Peter Dore and Ian Hall.

Congratulations to Chris and Siobhan Atkin and Charlie and Rachel Palmer on their recent marriages, and to Loo Desmond on her engagement to Nick Fitzpatrick.

Also, congratulations to Chris and Katy Thorpe on the birth of Patrick, and Brendan and Joanna Roche on the birth of Michael.

Finally, congratulations to Colette Sharrock on her engagement to the HNDL.

***"We now have to look to the newer members of the Hospitalité to provide example and leadership to the 100 or so brancardiers who will be working for the Pilgrimage this year"***

## The Holy Spirit

Fr Nick King SJ

The Holy Father has made 1998 the year of the Spirit, as we rush towards the talisman year of 2000, with its slightly contrived air of importance. What does the Holy Spirit do with and for us who go each year to Lourdes?

The Holy Spirit was the name that Jews and Christians gave to God's creative presence in the world, a presence which they could not see

but definitely felt. In the Bible's first chapter, the author pictures the Spirit as "hovering" or "brooding", like a mother bird on unhatched eggs, over the formless mass that was the universe before God uttered the creative

word which brought order out of chaos.

In the New Testament, the "Holy Spirit" was the an-

swer to what some people call the early Christians' "painful question": "how can we survive with Jesus no longer present?", or "how can it be true about Jesus, if we no longer have his company, and no one seems to believe what we say?" To their astonishment, our forebears in the faith discovered that creative presence, present to them in the darkness, reminding them of Jesus, and they gave it the name of "Holy Spirit".

And in Lourdes? Those moments in Lourdes of intimacy and understanding, when we see the face of Christ in the sick, and realise that they do far more for us than we for them; those strange and heartening processions which gather a single, multi-harmonied voice from all nations of the earth; the times when we make the astonished discovery that love actually works; the privileged moment of reconciliation when

we bring our sins to the Lord in the sacrament of confession; those moments of quiet insight at the Grotto, late at night or early in the morning: all these are the insistent speech to us of the Holy Spirit, whom we pray to "wash what is filthy, water what is thirsty, heal what is wounded, bend what is inflexible, straighten what is crooked."

And there is more: we do not come to Lourdes just for what we can get out of it, but to find the strength to go back to our everyday world with the good news about Jesus, and preach it, not by talking but by the way we live. Our Lourdes pilgrimage is not complete until we have returned home and spread the gospel of liberation from all the world's captivities; and the name for the unseen yet unmistakable power that urges us on to do that is, of course, the Holy Spirit.

**"The Holy Spirit was the name that Jews and Christians gave to God's creative presence in the world"**

### Pilgrims at Play

Chris Thorpe

Lourdes is, for all of us, a very special place. We always return with enduring memories of the experiences we have had and the people we have met. Many of my favourite memories are those concerning amusing incidents which, if we look around us, are always happening.

One year, during night prayers, a pilgrimage priest decided to finish by asking everyone to sing a few verses of the Lourdes Hymn. "As many verses as you can remember", he stated, confident that most people can only really remember a couple. Ten verses and a substantial time later he had to call a halt, expressing how impressed he

was. What he did not know was that Nell Atkin and friends were singing from a hymn book hidden underneath their table.

On Stage at the railway station once, we were waiting to load a departing train. Whilst we helped the pilgrimage team to load their blankets and pillows they warned us that their *responsable* was a formidable woman who had terrified everyone and was remarkably efficient. Indeed, as we started to load the pilgrims a few minutes later, we too were subjected to some stern lectures about our methods. We quickly learnt how she managed to be so efficient; the pilgrims were so much in awe of this handmaid that, despite the fact that they were infirm and had been unable to walk to the train, once she called their names they leapt out of their chaises bleus, hopped nimbly

onto the ambulance and lay down immediately on their designated bunks.

Late nights take their toll. Last year Rupert Bell wore his room-mates glasses for 3 hours on morning ward duty without noticing. Also, whilst cat-napping in his room one year, Trevor Fernandes' telephone rang and he was observed attempting to answer his spectacles.

Finally, our lift team was once joined for a journey upstairs by an Italian Cardinal and his entourage. A CA brancardier joked quietly to his friend that they had been joined by a Cardinal and "his mafia". At the next floor, as the Italians departed, the Cardinal's secretary thanked our boys in perfect English and, to their embarrassment, gave a knowing wink!

## *The Spiritual Side of our Work*

### *Père Regis-Marie de la Tevssonniere*

*Père Regis represented M. Etienne de Roaldes, President General of the HNDL, at the reunion of British Members of the HNDL in Liverpool last year where he gave this address. Because of its excellence we have decided to reproduce it here.*

Before the Hospitalité de Notre-Dame de Lourdes (HNDL) was founded in 1885, the idea of a Hospitalité already existed. This idea of Hospitalité, in fact, arose in 1858.

As a result, from the very first Apparition on 11 February 1858, Bernadette was accompanied, in other words, guided or led. This is of vital importance, because, without it, Bernadette would never have gone to the Grotto; she did not know Massabielle. And Jeanne Abadie, (also called 'Baloum', after the name of her parents' house) is thus in one way the first hospitalier of Lourdes.

It is also interesting to note that Bernadette never went alone to the Grotto. Between 11 February 1858 and 3 July 1866, the day she left Lourdes for the last time to go to Nevers, Bernadette was always accompanied to the Grotto - showing the importance of Accompanying (being with people).

But Bernadette was not only accompanied, she was also welcomed. Very quickly the crowd grew quite large. (Two young girls are at the Grotto with Bernadette on 11 February and on 4 March, three weeks later, there are between "10,000 and 20,000" people present surrounding Bernadette at the Grotto at the time of the fifteenth Apparition, according to the Commissioner of Police). Bernadette is thus welcomed by men and women who immediately took things in hand to provide a proper access path,

put planks in front of the Grotto, to create "a place of prayer", help those looking for space and allow Bernadette have access to "her place".

It is in accompanying and welcoming that we find the work of the member of the Hospitalité. The HNDL is the Hospitalité of welcome and the 191 Diocesan or National Hospitalities who are affiliated to it are the Hospitalités of accompanying. With accompanying and welcome, we have the two elements which, united, become Love: the giving and the receiving.

The foundation of the HNDL and the different National and Diocesan Hospitalités are but a continuation of what was experienced at the time of the Apparitions. In this way, if the HNDL exists today it is because there are pilgrimages. If there are pilgrimages it is because the Apparitions are recognised by the Church. If the Apparitions are recognised by the Church, it is because there is a "Message of Lourdes".

The Message of Lourdes contains the following elements: The words and actions of Our Lady, the words and actions of Bernadette because of what she witnessed, and all that she experienced.

As Members of Hospitalité, we must continually return to the Message of Lourdes. The constitution of our Hospitalité asks us to do this, we who have to: a) Welcome pilgrims, especially sick or handicapped pilgrims: *the welcome*, b) To give good order to the important celebrations by our service: *the accompanying (Being with people)*, and c) To pass on the message, that is, to always live out this welcome and accompanying, as well as speaking about it.

I therefore ask you, now, to listen again and again to the "Message" when you are in Lourdes. This message, which is

a calling to mind and a résumé of the Gospel, can be passed on through you by your way of living and witnessing to it.

I now come to the second point. It concerns the responsibilities which pertain to being members of HNDL. The Hospitalité family consists of 192 hospitalités today - 191 are National or Diocesan Hospitalités, and the other one being HNDL. The Hospitalité family, at present, has some 200,000 members: with only a few thousand (between 10,000 and 20,000) who are members of HNDL.

Our responsibility as members of HNDL becomes immediately apparent. Not only must we welcome all the members of this great family which has grown up around our Hospitalité, but also to live and to witness to the spirit of Hospitalité which we have received through the message of Lourdes. In effect, if we are not for them true witnesses and examples of this Message, who will be? On the level of this responsibility, which is our responsibility, I give you a twofold invitation: 1) Be faithful witnesses, and 2) Have the same family spirit among yourselves, doing what you can, as a member, not just of HNDL, but also, of a national or Diocesan Hospitalité. This is to live in Lourdes both the service (the welcome) during your "stage" and the service (the accompanying) during your pilgrimage.

I will now move to the third point of my address by giving you a concrete example. What should the approach of members of the Hospitalité be to the Blessed Sacrament,

***"From the very first Apparition on 11 February 1858, Bernadette was accompanied, in other words, guided or led"***

especially when they are "providing the service within the Blessed Sacrament Procession" ?

This is a fundamental question and an ongoing question. During the Blessed Sacrament Procession and the Blessing of the Sick, there has always been praise and criticism of brancardiers, nurses and helpers.

When she came to the Grotto for the very first time, Bernadette did not come to make a retreat or to take part in a liturgical procession, she came to gather wood to sell so as to buy bread in order to eat. Since then, Lourdes does not attract the spiritual elite of the world, but people who come by chance, through curiosity or through need. People may arrive unbelieving or sceptical and leave believing. They might arrive a pagan and depart having had a deep spiritual experience. This is the result of the great graces given at Lourdes where everyone, ourselves included, are at the same time, and together, turning towards God in prayer and towards one another in love.

Therefore I dare to say this: 1) When people come for the first time they come through chance, curiosity, or need, 2) They are all touched because at Lourdes "there is something different", "there is another way of living", "it is something else", 3) People are

overcome by their own human experiences, be they the signs of love shown by people, the visible signs of suffering and distress, or the hope and the joy among the very young and among the gravely sick, and 4) Within this overwhelming human experience people discover the presence of God.

The Blessed Sacrament, the Eucharist, is the Real Presence of Jesus Christ our Lord. This Real Presence, which we recognise through faith, is revealed to us, little by little in living out our faith. We show, therefore, our love for Christ present in the Eucharist through the way we show love to those who come on pilgrimage.

Yes, there is a close link, a profound link between the presence of pilgrims - of all the pilgrims - and the Real Presence of the Blessed Sacrament: The pilgrims - of whom we are part - are the Body of Christ, and the Blessed Sacrament is the Sacramental Body of Christ. Thus, we cannot treat pilgrims badly or carelessly and at the same time genuflect before the Blessed Sacrament.

On the other hand, it is because we recognise the presence of Christ in all the pilgrims that, when we pass in front of the Blessed Sacrament, we can make a sign of respect, not just out of convention, but out of deep love. The signs we make on the Esplanade, (smile to someone, to give a drink to another, to find

shade for someone else..) impress those who look on because these simple actions are actions of love which have their origin in God. At the same time, our way of genuflecting or bowing before the Blessed Sacrament can make a deep impression on an onlooker if this action is carried out in a loving way.

In the two cases, our concrete attitude, that is, the actions we carry out, are a revelation; they make visible Him whom we love, without having so much to see him again as he is.

As 1998 begins to dawn upon us, when the theme of the year will be "The Spirit lives in us as in Mary, Bernadette and the Church", let us remember that at the time of the Blessed Sacrament Procession, we are together as the People of God, the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and the Church.

But the presence of the Holy Spirit coming into the hearts of everyone makes our hearts more open, so that we, too, allow "the Spirit to live in us". This is what the Lord expects of us, this is what our pilgrims expect of us (especially those who are sick or handicapped, in body or mind), this what it means to be a member of Hospitalité, and this is what it means to live the message of Lourdes.

### *Admissions to the Hospitalité 1997*

The following are due for admission to the Hospitalité this year:

#### **As Ordinary Members:**

Yasumichi Asami, Anna-Lisa Bergström-Allen, Mary Cribbin, Adam Farmer, Deborah Glynn, Philip Grundy, Elaine Haire, Natalie Hartley, Elizabeth Hayward, Stephanie Hayward,

Louisa Hirst, John Holden, Andrew Joyce, Bert King, Bernadette McCorkell, Frank McCorkell, Grainne O'Connor, Theresa Read, Annalisa Salt and Shaun Swales.

#### **As Full Members:**

Judy Ball, Ged Brumby, Margaret Fairey, Francis Leahy, Margaret Lewis, Liz O'Rourke, Emily Rooke, Mary Rooke, Paul Rooke, Frank Way and Jill Way.

The admissions will take

place during Mass with the Anointing of the Sick. If you are unable to attend, please inform the Secretary as soon as possible.

Those becoming Full Members are requested to return their clasps to the Secretary during the Pilgrimage.

Incidentally, if any Full Members still have clasps as well as medals, could they also please return their clasps to the Secretary.

## PILGRIMAGE 1952

Michael Whitehead

One day about three months before the pilgrimage, my uncle, the then Chief Brancardier, said to me "What are you doing for your holiday this year?" He then said "Why not come to Lourdes with the pilgrimage as a Brancardier". Not knowing what I was letting myself in for I said "Yes!"

On a Friday evening in early September, I duly presented myself at Victoria Station. In those days wheel chairs of the type we know now were unheard of and to move any sick person who could not walk they had to be carried on a stretcher. The first duty I was given with others was to go to the First Aid Room at Victoria Station where the early arrivals waited and to bring them to platforms 5 & 6 Continental Departures. The First Aid room was the opposite side of Victoria Station and the perils of carrying a stretcher across the station in the middle of commuters 'rush hour', I can only leave to your imagination.

Departure from Victoria Station was about 8.00pm so that we reached Folkestone around 10.00pm as our ferry was a special private booking for our pilgrimage and that of Shrewsbury Diocese. Both trains converged on Folkestone and had to be off loaded by the two pilgrimage's brancardiers. All the CA sick (about 120) had to be carried by stretcher to the boat about 100 yards, and the same process was necessary at Boulogne, where the sick were placed in couchettes and had to be loaded on their stretchers through the windows on the train. Because I was tall it is not very difficult to guess what I was doing!

The train left Boulogne about 2.00am and was due in

Lourdes about 8.00pm in the evening. Wagon Restaurant cars were inserted into the train near Paris and we had the luxury of Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner on the train. In 1952 French Railways were still recovering from the devastation of war and I well remember our train being shunted into a small station in the middle of the Bordeaux forest to let an express train through. Just outside the station was a small bar and the afternoon was very hot. The bar was drunk dry in approximately 10 minutes - Obviously the owner's lucky day!

The daily Programme in Lourdes for the CA Pilgrimage in 1952 was as follows:-  
 6.30am All Brancs to Hospital.  
 7.00am Take the sick to the Grotto for Mass.  
 (Don't forget that fasting was from midnight at that time)  
 8.00am Mass for ALL 'Sick Pilgrims' in Lourdes at the Grotto.  
 9.00am Move Sick to Rosary Square for Breakfast served from trolleys brought down to the square by Handmaids.  
 9.30am Sick moved to the Grotto or Baths.  
 10.30am Brancardiers return Sick to Hospitals for Lunch.  
 1.30pm Brancardiers on duty to take Sick to Grotto or Baths for the afternoon.  
 3.30pm Move to Rosary Square for Blessed Sacrament Procession.  
 4.30pm Start of Blessed Sacrament Procession.  
 5.30pm Brancardiers take Sick back to Hospitals for evening meal.

The above programme was the daily programme for all sick in Lourdes. It was only varied when wet. When this happened the sick remained in their wards. Individual pilgrimages did not have their

own programmes, did not go off for days outings or have individual Masses.

I mentioned earlier that we had about 120 sick in the hospital. What I did not say was that we only had about 40-50 Brancardiers to handle this number of sick which meant not just one trip from the St. Frai Hospital to the Domaine on each movement but as many as three or four trips up and down the hill!

Equipment, e.g. Voitures, was also in short supply which meant that having taken a sick person down, if they could walk they were placed on a bench and you had to return the empty voiture to the hospital for another occupant.

The Rosary was always said whilst rolling and to keep it going up the hill behind the St. Frai was quite a feat. On the return trip from the Square to hospital Brancardiers took whichever sick person was allocated to them by the Chefs which meant that you quickly had to learn your way to all wards in each hospital. There was no taking 'my sick person'.

Finally the day of departure came. No not a leisurely mid-day departure but one leaving Lourdes station at 8.30am. This meant starting in the hospital at about 5.00am so as to have everybody down in the courtyard by 7.00am when the fourgons arrived. Yes, there were last night parties going on into the early hours of the morning, I leave the rest to

(Continued on page 9)

***"The sick were placed in couchettes and had to be loaded on their stretchers through the windows on the train"***

## OBITUARIES

### *Madge Ellwood*

*Bella Borlase-Hendry writes:*

For many years Madge was a nurse with the pilgrimage and I remember well the times we had together in the Sept Douleurs Hospital.

In her own quiet way Madge gave her all to the sick in Lourdes for many years. Her health and sight failed her and for the last few years she came with us as a sick pilgrim - still the same quiet Madge.

Those who knew her will miss her but I am sure she will be with us this year in spirit as we visit the Grotto and Our Lady.

*Celia Dupuis also writes:*

Madge Ellwood died on 20 March, aged 92. She was a faithful member of the Portsmouth Diocese and worked for many years as a nurse with the CA Pilgrimage.

I first met Madge in 1968 and I will never forget the help and support she gave me in nursing the sick pilgrims at the St Frai. She was a devoted, caring nurse and a good friend to me.

During the last years of her life Madge came with us as a sick pilgrim. She loved Lour-

des and was devoted to Our Lady.

A Mass will be offered for her in Lourdes. May she rest in peace.

### *Peter Dore*

*Malcolm Richardson writes:*

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Peter, aged 78, on the 14th March 1998.

Those who knew him recognised his devotion to his Faith, and what came across most was a gentle, kind, thoughtful and prayerful presence when you met him.

Though Peter was quite involved with the Churches within the Cambridge area, he did look forward to visiting two of his favourite places, Lourdes and the Holy Land.

In the early eighties, Peter became one of the founder Trustees of 'The Cambridge Nazareth Trust', which supports the educational funding in areas of need in the Holy Land. He was for fifteen years the Secretary/Treasurer of the Trust. His visits to the projects, and meeting the people concerned, gave him immense satisfaction.

Peter and Angela commenced their CA Pilgrimage ex-

perience to Lourdes in 1987, and like many others, got hooked. Peter put himself forward as a Brancardier (rolling), which he thoroughly enjoyed. A few years later they were overjoyed when two of their grandchildren (Marie and Alistair Smith) made their commitment with the Youth. Peter became a Consecrated Member of the CA Hospitalité in 1994.

It was in May last year that Peter suffered a massive stroke, and in the next couple of months started to make progress in rehabilitation, but in August a further stroke made things worse.

I will always remember him at this time (it was, I thought, when his Faith shone through) as he became very agitated because he couldn't remember his usual prayers and was unable to go to Mass. Thankfully he was found a room within the Hope Nursing Home which had its own Chapel and Peter was able to attend Mass most days, which made him much happier.

In February Peter contracted pneumonia and he died on the 14th March.

To Angela and their children we offer our prayers and support especially in Lourdes.

### *Pilgrimage 1952*

*(Continued from page 8)*  
your imagination.

The reward for being allocated to help on the last morning from 5.00am onwards was a cooked breakfast in the restaurant car on the train as it left Lourdes. One thing I did not mention earlier was that we had what can only be described as hard leather seats on the train with eight persons to a compartment. However the luggage

in the guards van was stacked in such a way that it was possible to have about ten very hard stretchers laid out for helpers to sleep on.

Arrival at Boulogne was around 2.00am and the same procedure as the outward journey was followed in reverse. Eventually arriving at Victoria about 8.00am on Saturday morning. After the sick had been dispersed it was home to sleep which in my case was about 18 hours solid only to be aroused to go to Sunday Mass! For the record

the cost of the pilgrimage travelling second class and no couchette with two star hotel was £17.10.0. and we thought that was very expensive!

Yes, it was a great experience and not only was I back the following year but also as many years thereafter as it has been possible and my unending thanks to Our Lord and his Mother in allowing me to serve his privileged people, the sick, for so many years.

## NEWSFLASH

It appears that the Hospitalité Notre Dame de Lourdes (H.N.D.L.) agreed at their planning meeting at Easter 1998 to confirm the ban on the Catholic Association Pilgrimage from participating in the Torchlight Procession. This follows last year's debacle, responsibility for which was pinned firmly on the vacillating shoulders of the C.A.'s erstwhile Chief Brancardier, Dr Chris Atkin.

C.A.P.T. management blamed the very changeable weather conditions for the poor planning which resulted in a "Torchlight Go" decision at 8.42 pm, just three minutes before the official start of the procession. The H.N.D.L. view was that *les Anglais* should have been thoroughly familiar with the miserable weather since they were responsible for bringing it over from Britain.

"We adopted a very reasonable and flexible position," claimed Dr Atkin. "Pilgrimage policy was that we would not process with the Accueil party but the Carers' Mission Statement meant that we could not forbid individuals to participate if rollers were available." When quizzed by your Hospitalité reporter as to whether he was trying to pin the blame on the well-meaning helpers who turned up at the Accueil at 8.30 pm just to see if there were any stragglers, Dr Atkin replied, "Exactly — it was all their fault." Dr Trevor Fernandes, C.A. Chief Medical Officer, scoffed, "Nonsense," when informed of this excuse, "The man must go."

The H.N.D.L., although taking a dim view of the decision-making processes within the C.A.P.T., were more concerned by the chaotic

scenes which followed the "Torchlight Go" decision. Shocked witnesses from the U.N.I.T.A.L.S.I. pilgrimages confessed that they had never seen the like as two phalanxes of crazed British and Irish pilgrims attempted to force their way through the Esplanade towards the head of the procession and the C.A. banners. When questioned later by Sécurité Domaine, Dr Atkin apparently tried to confuse the issue by claiming that both flying columns were headed by men called John Holden. One of the groups apparently pushed down the right-hand flank of massed Italian pilgrims; but only managed to progress at the same speed as the procession itself. The other took the more daring option and set off down the empty part of the Esplanade which had been cleared for the return leg of the procession. Stonyhurst brancardiers who were assisting in the control of the procession were seen to whip off their C.A. badges in shame as they were swept aside by the desperate Northampton, Clifton, East Anglia, Portsmouth and Clifton hordes.

The situation was prevented from worsening by the Rt. Reverend Peter Smith, Bishop of East Anglia, who took stock of the situation as the procession rounded the St Michael's Gate end of the Esplanade. The two flying columns had by now met up with the head of the procession and, as the initial fervour subsided, Bishop Smith coolly ushered the late arrivals into neatly ordered ranks behind the C.A. banners and clergy. Following his intervention the procession was thankfully restored to more normal levels of enthusiasm, although Dr

Atkin was reported to have been last seen fleeing towards St Joseph's Gate, pursued by at least five leather-bretelled Frenchmen.

After the event the Accueil pilgrims rather generously described the whole experience as 'entertaining'. Clearly the H.N.D.L. have taken a somewhat different view with the announcement of this ban. Dr Atkin is reported to have been so stunned by the news that he sought solace in marriage. Thousands of French nuns are said to be 'distraught'.

***"...responsibility for which was pinned firmly on the vacillating shoulders of the C.A.'s erstwhile Chief Brancardier"***

### *The Data Protection Act*

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act you should be aware that the Hospitalité holds computer records of membership details. These records contain names, addresses and telephone numbers and, for each member, details of their diocese, the dates they applied for and became both ordinary and full members and, from 1997, the years they have been on the CA pilgrimage.

The purpose of these records is for administration only and no information will be made available to any outside party without the approval of the members concerned.

A copy of your personal record can be obtained from the Secretary at 5 Embury Crescent, Norwich, NR6 6DB. Please send an SAE.

## An Unholy Row

Gerard Eaton

For some years my 'Service' on stage was the Blessed Sacrament Procession. Besides assisting with the Procession's organisation, the 'Service' began early morning at St Bernadette's Altar moving the iron benches and placing sick pilgrims in front of the Altar steps.

Pilgrimage directors have to book 'Our Lady's Altar' many months in advance.

*"I believe just a small smile crossed Our Lady's face"*

With over 4 million pilgrims in hundreds of pilgrimages there is great pressure on availability of altars; meticulous attention to places, and times for Mass are of paramount importance, and, of necessity, strictly adhered to. But things go wrong, even in Lourdes!

One July morning, I, and my fellow stagiaires, assisted with the first Pilgrimage Mass at 7am. It was a French Pilgrimage from Rouen. The Pilgrimage arrived with the sick pilgrims at 6.45am. Prior to this, 4 of us had moved about 35 iron benches to face the Altar. One of the stagiaires, a broad-shouldered Frenchman could pick up 2 benches and sling them across his shoulders - a remarkable feat of

strength - I asked him what his occupation was, he replied, 'Je suis un charbonnier', which explained his lifting power. The sky was overcast, a few threatening clouds, and the morning air chilly. The next Mass, at 8.15am had been booked by a large Italian Pilgrimage. At 8am there was no sign of the Italians. At 8.05am we began to get worried. The Chef d'Esplanade said, 'Gerard, go and see if you can find the Italians'. I walked briskly towards the Crowned Statue of Our Lady, and in the distance saw a Pilgrimage descending into St Pius X's Basilica. Sure enough, it was our Italian Pilgrimage. I found the chaplain of the Pilgrimage and told him in my best French, 'Your Mass is at St Bernadette's Altar'. The priest replied, 'The Archbishop believes it will rain, we are going to have our mass in the Basilica'. I ran back to find our chef. We returned to the Basilica. The French chef met the chaplain, 'Your Pilgrimage Mass is at St Bernadette's Altar'. The chaplain repeated the Archbishop's concern about the weather. The chef continued, 'An Irish Pilgrimage have booked to have their opening Mass in the Basilica, at 8.30am'. The chaplain went to consult with the Archbishop, he returned, but accompanied

by the Archbishop. The Archbishop said, 'The Irish can join our Mass'. The chef said, 'But the Irish Bishop may not agree to this'. The Archbishop said, 'We are staying here, and our Mass will begin shortly'. He about-turned and strode away. The chef then went into the sacristy, dialled the 'Chaplain of the Lourdes Sanctuaries', and, after a short conversation, put the phone down and asked the Archbishop to come to the phone, as the 'Chaplain of the Lourdes Sanctuaries' wished to speak to him.

As a result of the telephone conversation the Italian Pilgrimage moved rapidly from the Basilica, and duly arrived at St Bernadette's Altar. We were agog, and asked the chef what had been said to make the Archbishop move so rapidly. The French chef told us that the Archbishop had been told that 'Unless he took his Pilgrimage to St Bernadette's Altar neither he nor his Pilgrimage would be welcome in Lourdes again!'

Halfway through mass the sun broke through the clouds, the altar was bathed in sunlight. The Archbishop looked at the sky, then at us, then smiled. I believe just a small smile crossed Our Lady's face - what do you think?

## Your Newsletter

You may have noticed that this Newsletter has more pages than the previous one. This is due to the fact that more of you have been sending in articles. Some of these articles have been written by yourselves and others, like the one by Père de la Tevssonniere, you have suggested as being of interest to others.

One of the reasons for

being in our Hospitalité is so that you can share your experiences and thoughts with others. What better vehicle for this purpose than your very own CA Hospitalité Newsletter?

Publication dates are in January and July each year so articles should be sent in by mid-December and mid-June respectively.

Rumours that the Editor

will be in the Falkland Islands from mid-October to mid-February are entirely true, but, due to modern technology, this will not prevent the next issue arriving in your letter-boxes in early 1999.

Details of how to send your articles "down south" at **no cost**, and where to send them to, will be available in Lourdes in August!

## Statement of Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 1997

| (1996)       |   | <u>GENERAL FUND</u> |  |
|--------------|---|---------------------|--|
| £            |   | £                   |  |
| 242          | Balance Forward 1.1.97                    | 66.55               |  |
| 504          | CAPT Advance                              | 683.45              |  |
| <u>*627</u>  | Sundries & Donations                      | 539.00              |  |
| <u>1,373</u> |   | <u>1,289.00</u>     |  |
|              | <u>Payments:-</u>                         |                     |  |
| 779          | Secretarial                               | 411.60              |  |
| 18           | Council Travel                            | 9.30                |  |
| <u>*510</u>  | Sundries                                  | <u>40.65</u>        |  |
| <u>1,307</u> |   | <u>461.55</u>       |  |
| <u>66</u>    | Balance Carried Forward 31.12.97          | <u>827.45</u>       |  |
|              | *Includes £500 for Novenas funded by CAPT |                     |  |
|              | <u>SICK PILGRIM FUND</u>                  |                     |  |
|              | <u>Receipts:-</u>                         |                     |  |
| 2,165        | Balance Forward 1.1.97                    | 2,549.74            |  |
| 282          | Collections                               | 218.72              |  |
| 30           | Donations                                 | 42.00               |  |
| <u>73</u>    | Interest                                  | <u>121.82</u>       |  |
| <u>2,550</u> |   | <u>2,932.28</u>     |  |
|              | <u>Payments:-</u>                         |                     |  |
| -            | Grants                                    | <u>100.00</u>       |  |
| <u>2,550</u> | Balance Carried Forward 31.12.97          | <u>2,832.28</u>     |  |
|              | <u>JOHN WAY / PHILIP DONNELLY FUND</u>    |                     |  |
| 450          | Balance Forward 1.1.97                    | 950.00              |  |
| <u>500</u>   | Donations                                 | <u>-</u>            |  |
| <u>950</u>   |   | <u>950.00</u>       |  |
| -            | Grant to Yong Helpers' Group              | <u>200.00</u>       |  |
| <u>950</u>   | Balance Carried Forward 31.12.97          | <u>750.00</u>       |  |
|              | <u>SUMMARY OF FUNDS</u>                   |                     |  |
| 2,550        | SICK PILGRIM FUND                         | 2,832.28            |  |
| 66           | GENERAL FUND                              | 827.45              |  |
| <u>950</u>   | JOHN WAY / PHILIP DONNELLY FUND           | <u>750.00</u>       |  |
| <u>3,566</u> |   | <u>4,409.73</u>     |  |
|              | <u>Represented by:-</u>                   |                     |  |
| 189          | Current Account                           | 165.58              |  |
| 3,377        | Business Premium Account                  | 1,661.64            |  |
| -            | High Interest Business Account            | <u>2,582.51</u>     |  |
| <u>3,566</u> |   | <u>4,409.73</u>     |  |

David Lewis, our Treasurer, writes:

**General Fund.** Due to a combination of economies in the cost of the Newsletter, in part through system and in part by winnowing the mailing list, with donations procured by the Secretary, for the first time in my long years as treasurer, we do not need our usual sub from the CAPT.

**Sick Pilgrim Fund.** If you are unable to contribute by attending one of our services, at which, of course, we take collections, I am able to receive your donation. I should mention that, as now we are integrated with CAPT, we can handle covenants. Secondly, please do remember that it is almost entirely members who propose Sick Pilgrims for grants. I am pleased to say that we have agreed nearly £700 this year so far. So do keep your ears tuned.

*“I should mention that, as now we are integrated with CAPT, we can handle covenants”*

*The Youth Group  
Clothing Logo*

**Catholic Association**  


### ***HNDL Reunion 1998***

The CA Hospitalité is this year organising the annual reunion of the British members of the Hospitalité Notre Dame de Lourdes. This event is organised each year by a different pilgrimage hospitality, the venue alternating between

north and south, having taken place in Liverpool, London, Glasgow, Cardiff and Newcastle, over the last few years. This year it will be held at Douai School, near Reading, on Saturday, 31st October, 1998.

All members of the CA Hospitalité are invited to attend, and it would be great if we could have a really good turn-

out (dare it be said, better than at our own reunion in May?) Further details will be available during the pilgrimage in August and for those of you who would like to attend but are unable to join us in Lourdes, a flyer will be sent out in September. But for the present, will you please enter the date in your diaries NOW!