

NEWSLETTER 21 : Sept - Dec 2007

Monastery of St. Barnabas the Encourager.

DIARY DATES

Our Monthly Eucharist/Communion

will be usually on the third Sunday of each month at 8.00 am.

30th September, 21st October, 18th November, 2nd December, 16th December. Telephone to confirm these dates and any other dates we may have. The service is followed by Communion Breakfast in the Community Kitchen.

Eucharist can be celebrated at other times by arrangement.

ADVENT DAY RETREAT 8TH DECEMBER 2007.

To be led by Gary and Sian Hiscott.

For more details phone 01686 627 470.

OPEN 'CHRISTMAS DAY' at the Monastery especially for those without family. Contact Fr Bryan.

ACTING WARDENS REPORT

We would like to thank Gary and Sian (Two members of our 'Core Group') for, at their own expense, giving up a week of their time to completely redecorate and re-carpet the

Meeting Room. This room can now seat 11 people for anyone wishing to hold: A worship meeting, A group seminar or another form of gathering

We regret that Rowan, due to ill health has had to withdraw from the '**Friends of the Monastery**', which she started, and from **editing the Newsletter** which she developed and which has replaced our original Bulletin.

We would like to thank her for having organised events which brought together people who had visited or stayed at the Monastery over the years.

Eucharist: We are considering possibly having another celebration of the Eucharist in the month in addition to the regular celebration on the third Sunday.

We have enjoyed visiting parties from Kerry WI and All Saints Fellowship Newtown.

CHAPEL SERVICE TIMES

As most people know from our Handouts – Our service times in chapel are: 8.00 am Morning Service, 12.30pm Midday Service, 5.00pm Evening Service and 9.30pm Late night Service (Compline).

A number of people have found 9.30pm rather late. Therefore we are bringing the Late night Service forward as from 30th September to 9.00pm.

Letter from Resident Anchorite: Father Bryan

For the first time in 30 years Lower Brynmawr can receive 3 television channels because of the efforts of Alan, a friend of the Monastery, who climbed on the roof and fitted an aerial.

Some time ago the Meeting Room had been donated a Television set, Video and a DVD player with the thought that they may be used by visiting groups as resource equipment for training events, highlighting corporate prayer issues and so on; using the television set merely as a screen since, at that time, it was impossible to access television programmes.

Until very recently I have only viewed the occasional television programme



when visiting people who happened to be watching when I called. I have never before realised just what was on offer and have been shocked to the core by what I have seen: violence and more violence, swearing, even by children, and programmes reflecting the immorality of our permissive society. Of course, I have heard lots of people on radio discussing gangs guns and violence but I had not realised that television was dramatising these things to this extent. It seems that they are not 'edifying' the viewers but reflecting' the lowest aspects of society.

Children are very impressionable. When I was a boy I remember seeing my first Cowboys and Indians film at the cinema. I then went out to play with my friends and had them playing Cowboys and Indians. (In those days the filming techniques did not graphically portray people being mutilated and dying in agony, so we were not case hardened to the reality of the real implications of shoot-

ing or bodily injuring anyone (that was left to the imagination) Again when our reading lessons at school included Robert Louis Stevenson's novels I got my friends to play Treasure Island pirates. It was out in the school playground that our fantasies were played out. I am just horrified to think what I would have done if we had been subjected to the constant brain washing and life-like dramatization of destruction and human baseness now in nationally approved media presentations. And that is to say nothing of the decadence unashamedly dramatised as acceptable behaviour and speech. Even when I worked on a building site, the men did not swear as much as children do on TV today.

Both television and radio highlight all the disasters and negativities round the world to the point where many older people are frightened to go out. Five years ago I was told of a mugging that had been broadcast rather dramatically on a local news station. I had cycled

that way numbers of times without being attacked and knew that the risks were small. Hundreds of people must have walked that particular path without mishap. What a pity that dramatic, exaggerated reporting can deprive people of such a pleasant route. Why do the media hype up the negative at the expense of all the good deeds that happen, making the vulnerable fearful?. We read such things as:- 'Gang of young people attack infirm old man.' This is News! even if they scour the country to get such a story, and such a happening is relatively rare. After such a news item a ripple of fear goes through the nation and the freedom to walk about alone is taken away from many people who have been made anxious by this kind of news.

Now, having bought a 'Radio Times', I find there are some positive programmes But these are after peak viewing times when the young are unlikely to be viewing, being either in bed or out on the streets.



I think that, as Christians, we should naturally commit our journeys to God. This does not make us immune to any disaster accident or assault, of course, But it does release us from being victims of fear

Some may say that violent television programmes and computer games which involve the participants in killing people, are channels for aggression but, in my opinion, such games and programmes produce a case hardening which contributes to the violence in society, glam-

orising gang violence and producing an indifference to the personal sufferings of other people.

Some years back I went to ask my MP to vote for UCB (United Christian Broadcasts) as they were having another attempt to broadcast wholesome material on channels that everyone could access. Unlike many other radio stations they were extolling Christian values rather than the degenerate morals of so many. But dramatised anti- social behaviour and decadence goes on. Politicians are reluctant to upset the people who vote for them and Christians are seen as too serious and narrow minded.

We may not be able to stop the undesirable programmes but with the introduction of new technology those radio stations who are endeavouring to edify rather than reflect are able to be received by more of the population and to reflect the positive values recommended by Lord Reith.

Fr Bryan

A Quotation:-

THE HOLY SPIRIT a STATEMENT OF FAITH by Archimandrite Sophrony

“The contemporary world has lost the grace of the Holy Spirit. And it is impossible to understand Christ as God without the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, to believe that this man, who really is man, is the Creator of the cosmos, is beyond us. To believe that God Himself was incarnate, that He calls us to be with Him eternally – that is what is missing in many of our contemporaries, especially among intellectuals.”



Meeting Room

Meditate on These Things ~ Phil 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.



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