

Quarr Abbey

NEWSLETTER

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Easter, Season of Hope

The season of Easter is the season of hope. We celebrate Christ's resurrection. He is victorious over death. He opens human life to an eternal horizon. He brings hope into the world.

Christ's resurrection is not his coming back to the ordinary conditions of our life. It is his entering the new world of the resurrection: our world, but healed, but renewed, but transfigured, but divinised. It is the sign that a great and divine gift is prepared for us and offered to us. A window has opened in a closed wall and a new world can be glimpsed. A different light is invitingly shining.

Or is this a Christian dream? Do we have any proof of this? Is there anything we can contemplate as the guarantee of such a marvellous gift – as the token of our hope?

We could of course wait for a personal apparition of the risen Lord. But they are famously rare – even among the greatest saints. What is very common, however, is the sign of the cross. Ave Crux Spes Unica: Hail, O Cross, our unique hope. What? Can a dead man hanging on an instrument of torture be a sign of hope? Is he not rather a proof of the victory of death?

Unless his death manages to change the meaning of death? We think of the death of the soldier for his country and his people, the death of a parent to spare a child, the death of the lover to allow the loved one to survive. Like these, Jesus' death is a sacrifice, a gift of self in favour of another. Who is this other one? You and me; everyone; all of us. He died for all, the Innocent for the sinners, God in the flesh for all the daughters and sons of Adam and Eve. He went through our death first of all, for us all, instead of us all.

But there is more to the Cross than the noble sacrifice of a generous man. There is the proof of absolute love, the certainty of unconditional and everlasting love. God so loved the world that he came into it, lived our human life, worked, preached, and died for us on the cross. All this Jesus did out of love for the Father and for us. His cross is the proof of God's love and the token of our hope.

To hope is to believe that we have been absolutely loved by God, Father, Son and Spirit in the death and resurrection of Christ, and to build our lives and our expectations on this love. To hope is to be "certain of God", as the late Pope Benedict XVI phrased it. May this certitude always grow in our lives during the Easter season so that we may be joyful witnesses of hope in the present world.

Abbot Xavier Perrin



Friends of Quarr

The Chairman of The Friends of Quarr, Dr Rebecca Ashton is stepping down.

As we approach the 10th anniversary of the launch of The Friends of Quarr on 18th May, I have decided to step down as Chairman.

When I was appointed in December 2012 and was tasked to set up The Friends of Quarr, there was no job description, but the Monastic Community of Quarr and I decided that The Friends would form an interface between them and the wider community at large. The role of The Friends would evolve and in time take their place in the Abbey.

Much has been done to fulfil our aims and the many achievements of The Friends can be seen in our membership leaflet which is on the 'support tab' of the Quarr Abbey website.

It has been a privilege and an honour to undertake this position. I would like to thank Abbot Xavier, the Community and staff of Quarr Abbey for their help and support over the years. The financial help from our grant givers and donors is very much appreciated and the generosity of local businesses, including hospitality has helped us enormously to raise funds either in part

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or wholly for the many projects within the Abbey. Most importantly, the support I have received, both financially and personally from our members was immeasurable, for which I am very grateful.

I retire in the knowledge that The Friends are now a stable group and will be safe in the hands of my successor and

Friend of Quarr, Dr Dominic Fontana FRGS FSA.

“Dr Dominic Fontana is a retired university academic. He studied and taught in the Department of Geography, University of Portsmouth for almost 30 years. He has been involved with the Mary Rose maritime archaeological project recovering, studying and displaying Henry VIII's warship, for 40 years. Dominic

is an active broadcaster and has been involved in several television documentaries on the Mary Rose, the Battle of Hastings, a Time Team excavation for Channel 4 searching for the remains of a medieval hospice. He is married to Cheryl, lives on the Isle of Wight and is a trustee of the Classic Boat Museum in Cowes.”

To contact Dr Dominic Fontana, e-mail friendsofquarr@quarr.org

Quarr Abbey Chronicle

Easter 2023

The Art Gallery's closed season is shorter than ever. We used to shut our doors a few days before Christmas and not open them again until the beginning of March. But we wish to bring more visitors to Quarr in the early months of the year, and the Gallery is a great draw. And so this year Br. Matthew and I were repainting the Gallery walls in the first week of January in time for the first of a new season of exhibitions starting on the 20th.

The first exhibition was put on by

the Abbey bookbinders. Examples of work were on display together with material samples: paper, cloth and leather. An array of panels told the story of the book, of bookbinding and of the bindery at Quarr Abbey. And, of course, the binders were available to take commissions and give advice for the treatment of sick books. And they did receive a good amount of work.

In February Quarr Abbey Archives put on the Two Abbey's exhibition, curated by Fr. Brian. The aim was to communicate something about the history and architecture of both the medieval and modern abbeys of Quarr as we look forward to our nine hundredth anniversary in 2032. An attractive set of display panels showed unusual photographs—for example of the ruins of Quarr's medieval mother house of Savigny, and told the story of some lesser known figures in medieval monastic history—for example, St Stephen Harding and Stephen of Lexington. Fr. George Henderson's

beautiful model of Old Quarr Abbey graced the centre of the Gallery and provided a fine focal point for the exhibition. In addition the ruins field was opened on two days for guided tours. We were surprised and much gratified by the response. Over three hundred people waited for a chance to enjoy closer contact with our history.

Every four years, according to the Constitutions of our Solesmes Congregation of Benedictine monks, our community receives a canonical visitation. Two Visitors arrive, and after opening rites and ceremonies conduct an investigation into the state of the house, principally by interviewing the abbot and all the monks.

Such a procedure, first systematized by the Cistercian monks of the twelfth century, issues in a chart and recommendations to be approved by the Abbot of Solesmes, the head of the Congregation.

This January, our visitation was conducted by Right Reverend Jean Pateau, Abbot of Fontgombault in France and Father Patrice Mahieu, Assistant to the Abbot President of Solesmes. Both had visited Quarr several times before, and already had a good knowledge of our community and the various challenges we face. The visitation was peaceful, constructive, and issued in renewed hope for the future of monastic life at Quarr.

On February 14th Fr Abbot and Fr. Luke left early for a day trip to Oxford. Taking inspiration from the example of Bishop Edmund Rich who in the 13th Century won a small crowd of



The two abbeys exhibition



Fr. Matthew's grave at Pluscarden Abbey

converts to the monastic life for Quarr from among Oxford students, they went to discuss with the Catholic Chaplain of the University, plans to arrange regular contact with Oxford Catholics and raise awareness of the monastic vocation. We hope and pray this may prove a fruitful enterprise. St Edmund, pray for us!

It had been long expected, but we finally heard of Fr. Matthew Tylor's death at Pluscarden Abbey on February 9th. His health had been declining for several years, but dementia had never taken away his humble, gentle and grateful spirit. And so ended a long monastic life, comprising twenty years at Pluscarden, but before that, over forty years at Quarr.

I was chosen to represent the Quarr community at the funeral, and so came about my first visit to Pluscarden, and my first visit to Scotland. I toyed with the idea of a train journey, but the flight from Gatwick to Inverness was so much cheaper that there was no real choice. I had a window seat, but nothing to see but clouds, and so my first glimpse of Scotland was of a grey Moray Firth on the descent to Inverness. Only on the drive to Pluscarden could I take in something of the wild, relatively uninhabited hills so different from

the crowded Sussex landscape around Gatwick.

The welcome was warm and I felt instantly at home. I was also very comfortable, being lodged in the bishop's quarters in the guesthouse! Much of the monastery is medieval, but the local grey stone has been enlivened by splendid modern stained glass with a riot of colour. The house is also very warm, heated by bio-mass boilers burning locally sourced timber, taken from the plentiful woods on the far side of the valley.

The funeral Mass was celebrated on Friday, February 17th. The chief celebrant was Bishop Hugh of Aberdeen, who as abbot of Pluscarden had received Fr Matthew into his community. Abbot Anselm however preached, and recalled the deep faith and fixed purpose of Fr, Matthew which had kept him fervent to the end.

The burial in the monastic cemetery immediately followed the mass, and a mass of white snowdrops and multi-coloured crocuses crowded the grave. I assisted at lowering the coffin, and then sprinkled holy water at the conclusion of the rite.

On the following few days I was shown around the Abbey Of course, as a visiting monk there was the

predictable and professional pleasure in noting all the things they do the same or differently from Quarr, and the equally predictable embarrassment of following home customs automatically and inappropriately.

But time flew, and my flight from Inverness on Monday afternoon soon came around. I had another window seat on the way back, but again, there were only clouds to view until the homely patchwork of Sussex fields appeared as we came in to land. I was coming home.

February 2nd, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple is the fortieth day after Christmas and the last feast in the Christmas cycle, even though it does not fall within the Christmas season. It is also a day on which our community often joins with our sisters of St Cecilia's Abbey in Ryde to sing Vespers.

This year the sense of occasion was all the greater because Mother Abbess Eustochium was celebrating the silver jubilee of her monastic profession on the feast. This year we joined them for Mass as well.

Fr Abbot was chief celebrant and preached and all the community sat in the sanctuary lending our voices to the chants led from the nuns' choir. After mass we had an opportunity to meet and congratulate the jubilarian in the great parlour, and then a fine buffet lunch was provided in the octagon for the guests including three of Mother Abbess's sisters.

None was followed by the singing of the Eastern Marian hymn, the Akathistos, a great favourite of the nuns and a haunting melody. It prepared the way for the festive concert which followed, an entertaining mix of music and recitation which concluded with Mother Abbess joining with her sisters in a rendition of the old school song!

Vespers was the joyful conclusion to a joyful day. And we wish Mother Abbess another very happy and fruitful twenty five years of monastic life!

Br. Duncan Smith



1066 and a king

The Coronation Ceremony

It is with some little trepidation that one sets out to describe the coronation before it has happened, for each coronation has seen variation in its details, responding to the particular circumstances of its time. Yet the heart of the ceremony remains that which was celebrated for King Edgar in 973. The history of the coronation of our kings and queens has always been one of change within a broad continuity.

One thing that has not changed for almost a thousand years is the place. William the Conqueror chose Westminster Abbey to show himself as heir to its builder, St Edward. Ever since it has been the accepted place of coronations. In the chaos that saw the end of King John's reign, his son Henry III had a hurried coronation at Gloucester. Yet he was crowned again four years later at Westminster, just to make sure. He later rebuilt the great abbey Church and did so intending it to be the coronation church of his successors. For this reason, the choir was deliberately built to the west of the tower crossing to create a wide space – the 'theatre' – which has witnessed every coronation since.

Much of the extraneous panoply that gradually accompanied the ceremony has been lost. It is really since Edward VII that the focus has returned to the core of the ceremony proper: our monarch standing before his people and accepting the burden of kingship, made visible in the crown.

With the procession of the king to the theatre, accompanied by the regalia

and those who are to assist in the crowning, the ceremony begins. There are five key parts and despite variations in details they remain essential to the coronation. They are essential also in their due order: the recognition, oath, anointing, investiture and enthronement.

The first thing is the recognition, which may seem a little redundant since the king has already been recognised and proclaimed some months ago. Yet, in its terse wording this stage conceals the historic tension between whether the king was elected or ruled by inherited right alone. William I was happy for the people to be asked if they 'consented that he should be crowned as their lord'; though his soldiers outside surely guaranteed the correct answer. As the middle ages wore on, kings increasingly desired to eliminate this tiresome idea of consent. It was the difficult circumstances of Henry IV's accession which fixed the recognition as a necessary part of the coronation. Whatever the theory, kings needed to be accepted by those they sought to rule. Since the time of William and Mary, any tension has been ignored by simply recognising that the person being presented is our 'undoubted king'.

The idea underlying the recognition – that there is a mutual consent to king and subjects – is then confirmed by the sovereign's oath. Of all the parts of the service, the wording of this has changed the most. The fundamental form, however, has remained the

same. The king first promises to rule by the established laws and customs. He promises to maintain justice, tempered with mercy. Finally, he promises to defend the Church. Since the Reformation this has taken the form of protecting the rights of the Church of England. The heart of the king's oath to his people, however, remains, that he will uphold the three foundations of society: law, justice and religion.

It is the anointing, however, which is the most important element, the very heart of the coronation ritual. It begins with the choir singing the text:

'Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Solomon King...'
(adapted from 1 Kgs 1:39)

These words have been sung at this point at every coronation since the earliest times, yet it points to a heritage more ancient still. It points to the very origins of the concept of a sacred kingship, of the Lord's anointed chosen by God. The recognition and oath may suggest some involvement of the people, the anointing makes clear whose choice this really is. One of the most moving sights of the late queen's coronation was her being divested of her crown, robes and jewels to be clothed in a simple white linen garment for her anointing. So sacred is this moment that the sovereign is shielded from the view of most in the abbey by a canopy carried by four knights of the Garter. At the last coronation it was not shown on television, the camera lingering instead on an embroidery, as she was anointed by the archbishop on her hands, head and breast. It is perhaps the clearest sign of the nadir to which the coronation had fallen under the Hanoverians, that at the time of Queen Victoria it was almost omitted as a 'quaint custom' whose meaning had been lost. Even so, she only allowed the archbishop to touch her hands and head.

It is only once the king has been anointed that he can be crowned, as the culmination of the investiture. For the more romantic lover of the colour of history the investiture will

be the highlight, being the part most redolent of the trappings of monarchy. Clothed in the royal Supertunica, the king is presented with ancient symbols of kingly power and duty. His feet are touched with spurs. The sovereign is given his personal sword; impressively jewelled, as made for George IV, it still represents the king's duty to defend his country. It is then offered on the altar before being redeemed for a hundred shillings and carried, drawn, before the king. Four more are the Sword of State, Curtana, the blunted sword of mercy, and those representing temporal and spiritual justice. He is presented with three sceptres. The first, representing sovereignty, has over time taken the form of an orb. The other two are for kingly power and mercy. Finally St Edward's crown, remade for Charles II, is placed on his head. Weighing almost five lbs it is worn for as short a time as possible. As the coronation has become something more of spectacle than ritual, this has become the most important part and met with great



1953 and a queen

fanfare, yet it is the anointing which is really the most important. For crowns are hollow, but, 'Not all the water in the rough rude sea/Can wash the balm off from an anointed king' – as Shakespeare's Richard II so succinctly expresses it.

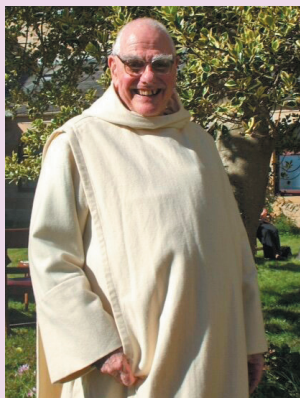
The final moment is the enthronement when the bishops offer their fealty and peers their homage. This was one of the longest parts as each peer individually swore to be the

king's 'liege man of life and limb'. Since Edward VII, with there being so many peers, a representative of each degree of peerage has made his homage on behalf of his fellows. The king enthroned among the gathered crowd of his nobles is the culmination of the coronation rite proper. It is a scene which draws us back to the very origin of kingship: the chief of men, acknowledged by his people

Br. David Yates

Dom Matthew Tylor

Dom Matthew Tylor, who died on February 9th at Pluscarden Abbey in Morayshire, Scotland,



was well-known to many of our readers. Born in 1936 he was a monk of Quarr for over forty years before transferring his monastic stability to Pluscarden in in 2005. He became aware of his monastic vocation on a first visit to Quarr with the University Catholic Chaplaincy when a student of Law at Southampton in the 1950's. He entered our novitiate with his fellow student Leo Avery in 1960.

Fr. Matthew held many offices in the community but he was best known as an affable and deeply spiritual

guestmaster, making many friends for Quarr and helping many souls to find God in their lives. The foundation of his life was a profound spirit of prayer and of faith. He had a deep love for Sacred Scripture and delighted to lead Bible Study Sessions in the guesthouse common room.

He was also an enthusiastic landscape painter, endlessly filling sketchbooks with ideas which he then developed into watercolour paintings. Joining the Isle of Wight Art Club he became a well-known and respected member of the Island's artistic community and on many occasions organized painting days in the Abbey grounds. But his tireless creative spirit could not be satisfied with painting alone. He took to carving in wood, and his strong and sturdy figures graced Quarr's first Christmas Crib for many years. His creativity was also turned

to cooking where he was arguably less successful, but even here his fruit loaf was acknowledged to be delicious by all hands.

On his transfer to Pluscarden Fr. Matthew continued in many of the lines he had made his own. He continued to paint, held exhibitions and sold many works for the support of the Abbey. He was guestmaster in charge of the Ladies guesthouse for many years and while his strength lasted he rejoiced in clearing rough ground in the gardens. He dealt patiently with the trials of increasing deafness which more and more isolated him from community life and indeed from much human contact. And then came dementia which contracted his world still further. But his quiet, humble and gentle spirit never left him, a stirring witness to the years of self-abnegation and silent prayer to the Lord he loved, and to whom, at the last, he handed over his life. May he rest in peace. Amen.



An Address on Monastic Culture

POPE BENEDICT XVI

Given at the College des Bernardins, Paris on 12 September, 2008

The College des Bernardins was originally a Cistercian house of studies attached to the university of Paris in the thirteenth century and founded by Stephen of Lexington, Abbot of Cîteaux and one time monk of Quarr Abbey.
(Editor)

I would like to speak with you this evening of the origins of western theology and the roots of European culture. I began by recalling that the place in which we are gathered is in a certain way emblematic. It is in fact a place tied to monastic culture, insofar as young monks came to live here in order to learn to understand their vocation more deeply and to be more faithful to their mission. We are in a place that is associated with the culture of monasticism. Does this still have something to say to us today, or are we merely encountering the world of the past? In order to answer this question, we must consider for a moment the nature of Western monasticism itself. What was it about? From the perspective of monasticism's historical influence, we could say

that, amid the great cultural upheaval resulting from migrations of peoples and the emerging new political configurations, the monasteries were the places where the treasures of ancient culture survived, and where at the same time a new culture slowly took shape out of the old. But how did it happen? What motivated men to come together to these places? What did they want? How did they live?

First and foremost, it must be frankly admitted straight away that it was not their intention to create a culture nor even to preserve a culture from the past. Their motivation was much more basic. Their goal was: *quaerere Deum*. Amid the confusion of the times, in which nothing seemed permanent, they wanted to do the essential – to make an effort to find what was perennially valid and lasting, life itself. They were searching for God. They wanted to go from the inessential to the essential, to the only truly important and reliable thing there is. It is sometimes said that they

were “eschatologically” oriented. But this is not to be understood in a temporal sense, as if they were looking ahead to the end of the world or to their own death, but in an existential sense: they were seeking the definitive behind the provisional. *Quaerere Deum*: because they were Christians, this was not an expedition into a trackless wilderness, a search leading them into total darkness. God himself had provided signposts, indeed he had marked out a path which was theirs to find and to follow. This path was his word, which had been disclosed to men in the books of the sacred Scriptures. Thus, by inner necessity, the search for God demands a culture of the word or – as Jean Leclercq put it: eschatology and grammar are intimately connected with one another in Western monasticism (cf. *L'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu*). The longing for God, the *désir de Dieu*, includes *amour des lettres*, love of the word, exploration of all its dimensions. Because in the biblical word God comes towards us and we towards him, we must learn to penetrate the secret of language, to understand it in its construction and in the manner of its expression. Thus it is through the search for God that the secular sciences take on their importance, sciences which show us the path towards language. Because the search for God required the culture of the word, it was appropriate that the monastery should have a library, pointing out pathways to the word. It was also appropriate to have a school, in which these pathways could be opened up. Benedict calls the monastery a *dominici servitii schola*. The monastery serves *eruditio*, the formation and education of man – a formation whose ultimate aim is that man should learn how to serve God. But it also includes the formation of reason – education – through which man learns to perceive, in the midst of words, the Word itself.

Yet in order to have a full vision of the culture of the word, which essentially pertains to the search for God, we must take a further step. The Word which opens the path of that search,

and is to be identified with this path, is a shared word. True, it pierces every individual to the heart (cf. Acts 2:37). Gregory the Great describes this a sharp stabbing pain, which tears open our sleeping soul and awakens us, making us attentive to the essential reality, to God (cf. Leclercq, p. 35). But in the process, it also makes us attentive to one another. The word does not lead to a purely individual path of mystical immersion, but to the pilgrim fellowship of faith. And so this word must not only be pondered, but also correctly read. As in the rabbinic schools, so too with the monks, reading by the individual is at the same time a corporate activity.

And once again, a further step is

needed. We ourselves are brought into conversation with God by the word of God. The God who speaks in the Bible teaches us how to speak with him ourselves. Particularly in the book of Psalms, he gives us the words with which we can address him, with which we can bring our life, with all its highpoints and lowpoints, into conversation with him, so that life itself thereby becomes a movement towards him. The psalms also contain frequent instructions about how they should be sung and accompanied by instruments. For prayer that issues from the word of God, speech is not enough: music is required. Two chants from the Christian liturgy come from biblical texts in which they are placed

on the lips of angels: the Gloria, which is sung by the angels at the birth of Jesus, and the Sanctus, which according to Isaiah 6 is the cry of the seraphim who stand directly before God. Christian worship is therefore an invitation to sing with the angels, and thus to lead the word to its highest destination.

In order to understand to some degree the culture of the word, which developed deep within Western monasticism from the search for God, we need to touch at least briefly on the particular character of the book, or rather books, in which the monks encountered this word. The Bible, considered from a purely historical and literary perspective, is not simply a book, but a collection of literary texts which were redacted over the course of more than a thousand years, and in which the inner unity of the individual books is not immediately apparent. On the contrary, there are visible tensions between them. This is already the case within the Bible of Israel, which we Christians call the Old Testament. It is only rectified when we as Christians link the New Testament writings as, so to speak, a hermeneutical key with the Bible of Israel, and so understand the latter as the journey towards Christ. With good reason, the New Testament generally designates the Bible not as “the Scripture” but as “the Scriptures”, which, when taken together, are naturally then regarded as the one word of God to us. But the use of this plural makes it quite clear that the word of God only comes to us through the human word and through human words, that God only speaks to us through the humanity of human agents, through their words and their history. This means again that the divine element in the word and in the words is not self-evident. To say this in a modern way: the unity of the biblical books and the divine character of their words cannot be grasped by purely historical methods. The historical element is seen in the multiplicity and the humanity.



St Bede the monastic scholar

Illustration: The British Library

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From this perspective one can understand the formulation of a medieval couplet that at first sight appears rather disconcerting: *littera gesta docet – quid credas allegoria ...* (cf. Augustine of Dacia, *Rotulus pugillaris*, I). The letter indicates the facts; what you have to believe is indicated by allegory, that is to say, by Christological and pneumatological exegesis.

We may put it even more simply: Scripture requires exegesis, and it requires the context of the community in which it came to birth and in which it is lived. This is where its unity is to be found, and here too its unifying meaning is opened up. To put it yet another way: there are dimensions of meaning in the word and in words which only come to light within the living community of this history-generating word. Through the growing realization of the different layers of meaning, the word is not devalued, but in fact appears in its full grandeur and dignity. Therefore the Catechism of the Catholic Church can rightly say that Christianity does not simply represent a religion of the book in the classical sense (cf. par. 108). It perceives in the words the Word, the Logos itself, which spreads its mystery through this multiplicity and the reality of a human history. This particular structure of the Bible issues a constantly new challenge to every generation. It excludes by its nature everything that today is known as fundamentalism. In effect, the word of God can never simply be equated with the letter of the text. To attain to it involves a transcending and a process of understanding, led by the inner movement of the whole and hence it also has to become a process of living. Only within the dynamic unity of the whole are the many books one book. The Word of God and his action in the world are revealed only in the word and history of human beings.

10 Years of the Friends of Quarr

Some of you might remember an afternoon in May 2013 when the Friends of Quarr were officially launched. There were those who wondered: What are these Friends about? The answer can probably be given with much more clarity after ten years for it is true that under the leadership of Dr Rebecca Ashton, their Chairman, the Friends have slowly taken their place in the landscape of Quarr.

So, what are the Friends here for? Two images come to my mind. The first one is the bridge. Between the monastic community and the wider public, the Friends provide a point of communication through which information is conveyed and support is offered. The second one is the iceberg. The Abbey is surrounded by much friendship and benevolence. The Friends are the visible part of this iceberg, people who choose to express more explicitly their friendship by their visible presence and their discreet action.

Over the last ten years, the Friends have gathered on a regular basis at the Abbey: on July 11th, their 'Day', and for a formal meeting at least once a year. They have contributed to the spiritual ministry of the Abbey by organising retreat days and helping organising theological conferences. In the domain of education and promotion of the vocations, they have supported financially the Interns programme. They have raised funds for building works around the abbey in part for the Visitor Centre and the

stained-glass windows in the south side of the church. They also raised all the funds to undertake and complete the work on projects such as the garden wall and the paths leading from the entrance gate to the inner courtyard. They generously donated the accessible toilet and adjacent unisex toilet. They have raised the profile of the Abbey by producing an annual calendar, donating a bench, speaking to diverse groups on the Island, inviting high profile speakers and excellent musicians to their fund-raising events – including the full production of an opera! The Visit of HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, in 2016, as well as the invitations of local dignitaries on several occasions, have manifested the public esteem with which their action has been received.

This list is certainly not exhaustive, but it may give an idea of the great support from which the Abbey has benefited through the Friends. At a time when Dr Rebecca Ashton has decided to step down after ten years of intensive and sometimes exhausting work, this is my pleasure to give her, in the name of the Abbey, this modest tribute of gratitude for all that she has done with remarkable dedication, perfect courtesy and elegance, and great love.

Thank-You, Rebecca. May Our Lady of Quarr reward you with her loving presence at your side all the days of your life!

And of course: Long life to the Friends of Quarr!

Abbot Xavier Perrin

