

T H E B U L L E T I N .

The Annunciation Marble Arch

A welcoming and international community centred around a devotional life rich in worship, prayer and music

JULY 2018

After all of the disruption of recent weeks caused by falling plaster it has been something of a relief to be back in the main body of the church.

It's easy to think that the Annunciation is just for us who worship on Sundays and sometimes during the week. But others use the building as well and it can have a profound effect on them.

Recently, Wetherby School asked pupils and staff to write a reflection on what the church inspired in them. Here's one that I thought was especially poignant.

*Just sometimes, standing here,
Perhaps in winter's pallid morning light,
When in our clouded doubts,
We yearn for faith in that to come,
A sudden, unexpected sunbeam scatters
Dust from half-remembered catechisms,
Poorly illumined Latin, recalled from school.
Lux Aeternae; eternal light.
How exact and true such simple rule.*

Mr Hewitt, Wetherby School

Contemporary faith with all its busy-ness doesn't have much time for wistfulness. Yet a faith that is rich starts from something that glimmers. That first Easter Day was a dawning. The resurrection appearances are full of questions and uncertainties. Something remembered flickers into new life.

As we move into summer I hope that we'll create some space for contemplation and yearn for that faith which gives substance to life. Holiday sun brings happiness. Eternal light brings joy. And it brings peace.

Yours in Christ
Fr Gerald

THE ITALIAN PILGRIMAGE 2: SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO

Travelling on from Bari, our second port of call was the town of San Giovanni Rotondo. We were still in Apulia but now further north.

This obscure town came to prominence when it became the home of Padre Pio (1887-1968). He was a Capuchin friar famous for his intense spirituality, discerning spirit and profound compassion for people who suffer. Like St Francis of Assisi he had the stigmata, the physical wounds of Christ on his body. Its said that the wounds smelled sweet and never healed.

During his lifetime, Padre Pio built a hospital and medical research centre. In many ways, San Giovanni Rotondo has become Southern Italy's answer to Lourdes.

In 2004 a new shrine church, designed by Renzi Piano was opened. It can seat many thousands of people both inside and out. In 2002 Padre Pio was canonized by the Roman Catholic Church and his body is on display in the crypt of the new shrine church.

For Anglicans unused to such physical and public expressions of suffering and mortality, San Giovanni Rotondo is an unsettling place. But it does challenge us to get out of our heads and contemplate how the soul relates to the body in all its physicality.



THE WILD WEST END GARDEN

In the early morning of Monday 24 June an assortment of the great and good from the neighbourhood gathered to celebrate the opening of the garden that has been installed in Quebec Street behind the east end of the church.

The lead on the project was taken by the New West End Company which is the umbrella name for the Business Improvement District (BID) that covers Bond Street, Oxford Street and Regent Street. Other partners include the Portman Estate, the Marble Arch London BID, the Baker Street Quarter and the infrastructure company, F M Conway.

‘Wild West Garden’ was designed by the award-winning garden designer Kate Gould and was one of the gardens at this year’s Chelsea Flower Show. It won the gold medal in the ‘Space to Grow’ category.

The New West End Company’s publicity says: ‘The garden will transform a quiet street on the Portman Estate ... by removing traffic to create a rich habitat for wildlife, improve air quality and provide a new, calm public space for people living, working and visiting London’s West End.’

‘Wildlife’ is certainly a feature of life around the Annunciation. Let’s hope that the garden encourages this in a good way!



SERVICES & EVENTS IN JULY 2018

- 3 JULY** Children's Choir Practice: Tuesday 3 July, 3.45pm in church. This is the last one before the summer break
- 5 JULY** Thursday 5 July, 11.00am Wetherby School End of Year Assembly in church
- 8 JULY** Sunday 8 July. 10.30am Parish Mass with the Children's Choir
- 10 JULY** Tuesday 10 July, 7.30pm Parochial Church Council Meeting in church
- 19 JULY** Thursday 19 July, 9.30am Hampden Gurney School End of Year Mass in church

Local business

The Leonard Hotel **15 Seymour Street W1W 7JW**

How would you describe your business? *One of the best boutique hotels in the capital.*

How long have you been in the neighbourhood? *Many decades!*

What is your clientele? *The discerning international traveler.*

Do you have an online presence? <http://www.theleonard.com>

What would you like people to know about your business? *We offer unique rooms and fantastic family accommodations. We also have a gorgeous range of apartments for those on extended stays.*

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