



Colwich Chronicle: Advent 2019

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Dear family & friends of the community,

Here we are again another Advent and another Christmas and another year from Colwich. Yes, that's right, Colwich – we haven't moved as we had hoped. I know that many of you will be eager to hear what is happening with our proposed move. Well you know quite well how it goes with trying to move house, except that with a monastery it is quite different. Things are moving slowly though in the right direction, there is a lot of detailed work to do and for this we have to thank our Finance committee.

We may still be here at Colwich for another year or more – so watch this space!

So as we approach the end of yet another year and that of the churches year, we are hearing a lot from our readings about staying awake and being watchful. This I think is preparing us for the coming season of Advent which is the beginning of a new year in the churches calendar. In doing so, there are two themes that stick out for me from the scriptures: they are staying awake and watchful..

In Advent we have to make various preparations to welcome into our lives the one who is to save us from our sins – the Word made flesh. Everyone is ready to welcome a tiny babe, there is great joy and a great celebration at seeing a new life. We can find ourselves extremely busy with writing cards, preparing the food, wrapping presents and wondering what to get a certain special loved one. This advent season is a time of waiting, a time of coming, a joyful time of preparation in anticipation of greater things but we need to be awake, Delia Smith writes in her book 'A Feast for Advent' – *'awake to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. If we are awake then we shall be ready for the final glorious coming of God when his kingdom is fully established'*. Delia goes on to say: 'The awakened heart is the heart of one who is spiritually alert to the continuing presence of God'. 'I hear my Beloved knocking' (Song of songs 5:2). It's the heart that listens to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit within, and responds. So in all this hustle and bustle we need to make time for the God who made us.

So wishing you all a very Happy and Blessed Christmas and New Year!

St. Davina

Blessing of the Abbess of Stanbrook

Sister Benedict attended the Blessing of the new Abbess of Stanbrook, Dame Anna Brennan, on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 14th September 2019.

The Bishop of Middlesborough was the celebrant. Many guests, religious, local people and family of the Abbess filled the church. In addition to traditional plainchant, the Stanbrook nuns sang several pieces a cappella, that is unaccompanied in parts.

The ceremony was very similar to the blessing of an Abbess at Colwich, in the context of the Mass, with the examination of the Abbess by the Bishop, the Litany of the Saints, giving of the Rule of St. Benedict, ring and pastoral staff.

The lunch afterwards took place partly in the open air courtyard garden, in very pleasant weather.

We wish Abbess Anna all the best for her twelve years of office and promise to keep her in our prayers.



Colwich Community 2019

The Solemn Monastic Profession of Sr. Marion at Stanbrook - June 27th 2019.



Mother Abbess and myself started our travels to Stanbrook Abbey at 6.15am on a lovely sunny day. We arrived at 9.30 we were greeted by Sr. Josephine and in one of the parlours we had coffee. At 11am the bell rang for us to assemble in the cloister for statio (for those of

you who don't know it is the monastic term for standing in your places or station). The chief Celebrant was Abbot Geoffrey Scott of Douai, the whole theme of the Mass was giving oneself to God, through the readings and with Sister Marion through her vows. The Mass took about one and a half hours after which we then made for the refectory for a celebratory drink and a festive meal (chicken chasseur & veg and dessert was strawberry pavlova). The weather was good to us with the sun being hot and sitting outside in the courtyard. Before she was whisked away by the Abbess, Sr. Marion thanked us for coming and at that point we took our leave for the journey home.

DEO GRATIAS!

Sr. Theresa Mary

Barbecue

On one of those hot summer days, we enjoyed a barbecue lunch on our patio. Dave and Alison lent us a gas-duelled barbecue and a gazebo. Skippy enjoyed it too!

Mother Gertrude

Mother Gertrude celebrated her 93rd Birthday on 14th October. Her nephew Paul and his wife Tina brought cream cake which Mother Gertrude enjoyed. She is well looked after by Sister Sheila and her carers.



A New Thing...

Over the last year we seemed to have adopted a new thing as part of a Recreational Evening: Movie Nights! Well, as the time of Divine Office has changed and Compline is now at 6pm - yes that's right 6pm, I know it's early but it fits our timetable now, this means although Recreation is at 3:30 still we have an occasional Movie Night (once every 3 or 4 months). This means we have watched: Paddington 2, A Dog's Purpose and The Dish. At half time having popcorn which Mother Abbess tries to do in the microwave and the middle burns... Also a cuppa of Hot Chocolate and marshmallows! Yummy, also perfect for those cold evenings.

Abbatial Blessing of Rt. Rev. Dominic Taylor OSB – Ealing Abbey

On Sat 28th Sept Mother Abbess and Sister Theresa Mary headed down South to London after morning office to the Abbatial Blessing for Abbot Dominic Taylor of Ealing Abbey. What a wonderful occasion it was to celebrate and to try and put aside those fears and anxieties of going to London and trying to manoeuvre around the tube stations! But we did it. Well I had been to London a few times in my earlier days when I used to go to Lourdes and went via Westminster at various times. This time I was to journey in a different direction and it was also Sr. Theresa Mary's first time on the underground. Never too late to do something different – there's always a 1st time for anything! However, arriving at Ealing Broadway (in one piece) we walked up to the Abbey and were taken for a cuppa before Mass as we arrived in plenty of time.

As we lined up for the procession and tried to get ourselves mentally prepared for Mass we found ourselves near the front in which we processed from one cloister to some steps which led us outside. A short procession outside took place before ascending the steps once more at the main entrance of the Abbey Church then entering processing up the nave and taking our places in the choir stalls.

It was a truly wonderful and blessed day and to see so many friends and parishioners of the Abbey there, to wish Abbot Dominic well and give him their full support was marvellous. Cardinal Vincent Nicholls celebrated the mass which took nearly 2hrs, due to the form it took with the rite of blessing. The Cardinal was struck by both the readings but the 2nd reading made a deeper impression on him. Abbot Dominic himself gave a lovely tribute at the end and in what seemed like an emotional tribute gave praise and thanks to Abbot Francis who has been an inspiration through his ministry and witness, plus he had been Abbot for something like 52 yrs. The Abbot also praised the former abbot, Abbot Martin for his leadership and support in this new phase of Ealing's history.

There was a wonderful buffet afterwards.

God's power of love and witness were present truly and everyone felt uplifted by the Holy Spirit.

God bless you all at Ealing!

The Community offer their Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Wheaton on the birth of their baby. A boy, Oliver who weighed 8lb 15oz. Jo is one of our self employed cleaners who is hoping to return in Spring.