

The Colwich Chronicle

Advent 2003

St. Mary's Abbey Colwich Stafford ST18 0UF

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Stability in the Community

Promise

On the feast of St Joseph, 19th March, **Sister Sheila** made her promise of stability in our community for three years. **Father Edward Delepine** presided over the ceremony in the Chapter Room before Mass. Sister Sheila began her religious life with the Visitation Sisters, and has already spent two years at Colwich. Her work is in the sacristy, library and garden.

Sister Sheila



Photo by Ann Buxton

Clothing

We had three postulants this year. The first, **Sister Francesca**, is from Scotland, and she was clothed on 1st November. The second postulant went home after trying her vocation; the third is still with us. Please pray for them and for others who are, thanks be to God, attracted to our life.

Oblates

Two new oblates: **Ann Beeston** made her oblation last December and **Heidi Schofield** this August. Both have been involved with our community for many years. Oblates promise to live according to the Rule of Saint Benedict in the ordinary circumstances of their lives.

Jubilees

Mother Edith kept her Golden Jubilee quietly in March. Then in April she broke her hip and, at age 92, had a successful operation. On 16th October we celebrated **Pope John Paul II's** Silver Jubilee of Pontificate with a special Mass. And **Father Edward's** Diamond Jubilee of Ordination will be on 18th December.

Youth 2000 Formation Weekend

Sister Davina writes "The first Youth 2000 Formation Weekend here (from 17th to 19th October) was truly a successful one. The days before were ones of anxiety, enthusiasm and excitement but all was placed in the hands of Jesus and Mary. Fourteen young people joined in an intense programme of Mass, Rosary, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and talks by priests. They commented on the prayerfulness of the Abbey. Personally I felt I got a lot out of it too."

Full report available

Iraq War

Mother Abbess wrote up outside the Choir: “**We are at war.**” The Holy Father had pleaded for negotiations to continue. Our M.P. **David Kidney** (Labour, Stafford) had voted in the House of Commons against going to war without a clear United Nations mandate. One of the first casualties was **David Clarke** (19) of Stafford. We pray for all who died in war or violence, and for peace in the world.

£ - mail address changed

Please note we have changed to:

marysabbey@bopenworld.com

And this address is still correct:

vocations@colwichabbey.org.uk

Our Animals

Unlike **Chelsea** the dog, the cats **Tabby** and **Thomas** do not live **inside** the Abbey. They call for meals and warm themselves in the laundry. Thomas, who is old now, had a bad tooth this year. So we sent him to the vet for an extraction, which required an overnight stay. He came back fighting fit!



Enclosed Nun to Germany

Sister Benedict writes “Twelve of us, monks, two nuns and some others visited the former Abbey of Lamspringe near Hanover in Germany from 28th to 31st August. English Benedictine monks lived there from 1643, until the government closed it in 1803.

We celebrated this centenary by singing Lauds in Latin in the old abbey choir, now a parish church.

We also joined in the annual pilgrimage in honour of Saint Oliver Plunkett, Irish archbishop martyred in London. His relics were taken to Lamspringe Abbey in 1683 by Abbot Maurus Corker who had been in prison with him. Corker was a great friend of our community in Paris.”



Photos by Elizabeth Stobart

From the Garden

We had a bumper crop of strawberries this summer. We ate them, froze them and sold strawberry jam. There were also plenty of pears and runner beans this year.

On the Roof. History Repeats Itself

In February **1933** snow drifted in heaps on the roof. As it thawed, water dripped into the Infirmary during the night. Workmen were on the roof for months making it watertight and snow proof. Then in **2003** water dripped into the Infirmary. Workmen were again on the roof making it watertight. Inside the roofing they found some antique cigarette packets, containing a card of G. de Stefani, the ambidextrous Italian tennis player, wearing long white flannels. He was the 1931 Wimbledon champion.