

St John the Divine, West Worthing - (stjohnwestworthing.org.uk)

October 1st 2016 at St John's Church, West Worthing

The celebrations began at noon with Father Beau
leading us in the Angelus,
at the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham.



The great procession came in to the hymn
"To God be the glory, great things He hath done!"























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Bishop Martin censed the altar.



Some of the concelebrating clergy.





Bishop Martin enthroned.



“Let us therefore call to mind, and confess our sins”



The first reading from the prophet Isaiah was read by Robert Rymill, from Fr. Beau's former parish St. Wilfrid's, Portsea.



The responsorial psalm was Christopher Walker's version of the 23rd psalm, "Because the Lord is my shepherd"



The second reading was from St. Paul's letter to the Hebrews, and was read by Ron Fuller from St. Martin's, Brighton.



The gospel reading was the account of the institution of the Eucharist according to St Luke.



The sermon was given by Fr. Christopher Brading,
Assistant Curate of St. Margaret's, Swinton, Doncaster.



You can read the text of Fr. Chris's sermon at
the end of this PDF file (pages 59 - 62).



The Intercessions were offered by Fr. Richard Biggerstaff,
Director of the St. Barnabas Society.



The Offertory hymn was “All hail the power of Jesu’s name”
sung to the tune “Diadem”.



The Eucharistic prayer.



The prayer of consecration.





After communion waiting to return to the fray.



Bishop Martin blessing Fr. Beau.



After mass the choir sang the Te Deum,
set to the music of Charles Villiers Stanford.



The final hymn was “Ye holy angels bright”.







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Fr. Chris Brading and Fr. Beau.



The tribute from St. John's Preschool to Fr. Beau.



The dashing young curate!



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Commissioning the first P2000 at HMS Sussex on a wet day.



Baptism on board a minesweeper.



At the Palace to receive the MBE.



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Chief Steward of Walsingham National ,
also in command of Sea Cadets.



Chief Steward of Walsingham National,
also in command of Sea Cadets.



70th birthday, looking at old memories.....



The animator of big “Catholic Events”
at the coal face backstage in London.



The Parish Servers at Fr Beau's Retirement Mass.



May Devotion Procession at St. John's.



Reordering service at St. John's 2012



Reordering service at St. John's 2012,
entombing the holy relics in the new altar.



May Devotion at St John's 2016.



Fr Beau's 50th anniversary Mass - 01/10/16
St John's Worthing

When the Reverend Canon Beaumont Lauder Brandie, MBE BD AKC SSC, asked me whether I would preach at this wonderful occasion, on the topic of 'priesthood' I of course felt greatly honoured, but also felt more than a little trepidation. After all, the oil on my hands was hardly dry from my priesting, and I knew that I would be in the presence of brother priests who I'm sure have each forgotten more than I know about priesthood.

I've known Fr. Beau for most of my life, since I was thirteen to be precise. School friend and neighbour, Wayne Palmer, invited me to go with him to a church youth club that was being set up at St Wilfrid's Church, Portsea, where Fr. Beau was Priest-in-charge. I was invited to attend Sunday Mass, and my Christian journey began. Fr. Beau prepared me for confirmation, heard my first confession, trained me to serve, helped me to discern, and encouraged, my initial calling to the priesthood when I was about eighteen, and over time, became a very good friend.

Now when growing up most people have a hero. Someone they admire, someone who they would really like to be, yes?

Well I don't know that I've ever admitted before, publicly at least, who my teenage hero was - actually I had two.

Jimmy Connors the American Tennis player and, much less likely for a teenager in the seventies...

Claudio Abbado - the great Italian conductor.

Oh wait! you didn't think I was going to say the good father there did you?

Oh no, I never for one minute, wanted to be like Fr Beau!

When I spoke to him the other day, he reminded me that I was to preach on the priesthood; and that it was not an excuse for a character assassination of him.

I guess that means I shouldn't mention the time that Lord Nelson over there nearly sent me to the bottom of the Solent when I took him out sailing.

Father Beau's Golden Jubilee Celebrations 60

Or how great an admiration I have for the patience of the priests who served their title at St Martin's, Brighton.

Or how I've lost count of the number of times he's told me about the great Mass of 2005 at the Royal Albert Hall and the raising of the Cross.

I won't mention any of that!

But looking back over the past thirty years - OK forty five years - I realise that much of what he taught me has stayed with me, and has helped me immensely on my Christian journey.

However, arguably the most significant thing is not something he taught me, but something I have observed and come to understand over time.

And that is the importance of being oneself.

It is clear to all who meet him, that Fr. Beau is unique.

He does not try to be someone else. You may not like what he says, or how he says it, he may not be right, you may not even like him, but he is himself - he's a 'one off', unique.

But of course we are all unique -

"Every hair on your head has been counted" Jesus says in Matthew's gospel (10:30)

It just may not be so obvious in some people, as it is in someone like Fr. Beau.

It took me many years to realise this.

And I think many of us forget it.

We know that we are all called to be more like Christ, but rather than looking directly to him, we look around our churches, or wherever and see people - priests and laity - who seem to us much more pious and holier than us, and we perhaps think, maybe I should be like them. We maybe even try to copy them - I'm sure my contemporaries from St Stephen's House recognise what I am saying.

But what we are doing when we do this is denying our own uniqueness.

Jesus calls us to be like him, but to be like him using the unique skills, talents and gifts with which we have been blessed through the grace of God. And he calls us to develop those gifts so that we might be more like him.

The really exciting thing is not what or who we are today, but what we will become, as St John writes in his first letter:

"we are already the children of God but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is." (1John 3:2)

So what has all this got to do with priesthood?

Well, simply as Baptised Christians we all share in the Royal Priesthood of Christ, we are called to be like Him, and we are called to represent Him in the world - using our unique God given gifts of grace that we each have. St Paul of course has much to say on this topic.

Some of us are called to ordained ministry - this does not make us special or bestow on us a special state of holiness -

Priesthood is first and foremost a ministry of service to, and for Christ's Church.

But the ordained priest shares the priesthood of Christ in a unique way. The foremost example of this is in the Eucharist, repeating Jesus' words that we heard in the gospel reading

"This is my body which will be given for you" and

"This cup is the new covenant in my blood which will be poured out for you"

Through the priest, Christ makes his redemptive sacrifice present to us and offers us his body and blood. When the priest speaks, it is Christ who prays.



This is an incredible privilege and responsibility: to quote Thomas à Kempis, from "The Imitation of Christ", a book, by the way, that Fr. Beau gave me many, many years ago - 60p!

"How great and honourable is the priest's office, for it is the priest who is allowed to use the sacred words and consecrate the Lord of majesty. It is the priest that blesses him with his lips, holds him in his hands, takes him with his mouth and ministers him to others" (Book iv, Chapter xi)

The reason for dwelling on this, and for repeating what I'm sure you all already know, is that - Fr. Brandie has been doing this for fifty years - a modest calculation is that he has celebrated the Holy Mass over 12,000 times.

And here's the thing: I know, that each time he goes to the Altar, he does so in awe, doubting his own worthiness.

Because, at the heart of this brash, imperfect, larger-than-life and unique man is an unfailing love of Jesus. A love that has sustained him and his ministry over all these years.

Clearly there is much more to priesthood, and there is much more to Fr. Beau's ministry, than simply loving Jesus and being yourself. But they do seem to me to be two important foundation stones on which to build our Christian lives.

Amen.

Preacher: Rev. Christopher Brading.

Assistant Curate of St. Margaret's, Swinton, Doncaster.