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## BACC Fill

This is my last edition of BACC Pages as Editor. Over the past three years we have tried to make the magazine more attractive, something people will want to pick up and say "hmm, what's this?" - and then read!

I am sure that whoever takes over will have lots of ideas for the magazine and be able to make it more interesting, more relevant, even more of a good read. Editors don't write everything; they need input from all of you to help them fill the pages. So please be generous with your input, allow your creative juices to flow, and help make BACC Pages something we can all be proud of.

As for me, I have loads of other projects underway, including the co-editorship of an electronic magazine for i-church, the internet based church founded by the Diocese of Oxford as one of their Cutting Edge projects. I hope that each of you has a productive and enjoyable year—and please do think about the BACC Pilgrimage to the Holy land in 2008—it will be wonderful!

## BACC Pages


is the bi-annual magazine of the British Anglican Cursillo® Council.

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Mount Tabor, The Holy land.



## Jenny's Jottings



**Greetings from the Sea of Galilee!** I am writing this whilst looking out over the glittering water; the only sounds are of birdsong and the lake lapping gently against the shore, just a few feet from where I am sitting.

It is the end of a remarkable journey – Cursillo Pilgrimage No. 1, the final act of celebration for our 25 years of Cursillo in Britain. Thirty six pilgrims came here to the Land of the Holy One eleven days ago, most for the first time, to walk in the steps of Jesus, following his ministry from the beautiful Galilee, where he was among friends and close companions, to Jerusalem, where he was feared and reviled and eventually put to death. On the road we have passed through some of the holiest places connected with our faith.

One of the best aspects of pilgrimage to me is getting to know the people with whom I am sharing this journey, and by the time we had our first Eucharist on Mount Tabor, there was already a sense of real 'togetherness' which seems to be the mark of Cursillistas. We sang and prayed in the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, the site of the wedding in Cana, the Synagogue in Capernaum where Jesus, as a devout Jew, would have worshipped, and the site of St. Peter's Primacy, where Jesus bade Peter 'feed my sheep'.

It was with sadness that we left Galilee and set our faces to Jerusalem. Our Pilgrimage took us to Bethany and the Mount of Olives, from where we walked the way that Jesus would have ridden on the donkey, and eventually down into Gethsemane. We followed our Lord to the place of the Last Supper, through his arrest and trial, and finally, inevitably, to walk the Via Dolorosa – The Way of the Cross, which we did in complete silence, broken only by scripture readings at each station.

An integral part of any Pilgrimage involving Dominic and Paul is meeting the 'Living Stones' – those Christians who are serving our Lord under the most difficult circumstances, and whose lives are a wonderful example to us all. And so we met and talked to people in Nazareth, Bethlehem (living under siege behind the separation wall) and Jerusalem; we heard about the work they are doing and the extreme difficulties they face every day. As a Group, we donated money to each institution, and promised them our prayers – a small price to pay for their witness and dedication to keeping hope alive for Christians.

## Weekends

March 1st - 4th	Chichester #14
March 8th - 11th	London #15
March 23rd - 25th	CLW at Wychcroft, Surrey
April 12th - 15th	Blackburn #46 Durham #7 Wakefield #30
April 16th - 22nd	Scotland #53
April 19th - 22nd	Derby #12
April 26th - 29th	Ely #14 Leicester #28 Oxford #3
May 4th - 7th	Coventry #32 Lincoln #24
May 10th - 13th	Chester #34
May 17th - 20th	Chelmsford #15 Cumbria #23 Salisbury #9 St Edmundsbury & Ipswich #24
May 25th - 28th	Canterbury #40
May 30th - June 3rd	York #9
June 14th - 17th	Bristol #6
June 22nd - 24th	CLW at Offa House, Warwicks
July 12th - 15th	St Davids #10
July 20th - 22nd	CLW Kinnoull, Perthshire
August 8th - 12th	Scotland #54
August 9th - 12th	Blackburn #47
September 1st	Ultreya GB Canterbury
September 13th - 16th	Chichester #15

For details of where to send palanca, check the diary page on the BACC website. Don't forget to keep the web-servant advised of the dates of your weekends.

## BACC Resource Manual Contents

<b>Complete Resource Manual</b>	<b>£20.00</b>	
BACC Constitution and Licensing Agreement	10p	
BACC Publications and Style	10p	
Apostolic Message and Team Foundation	£ 1.00	
Authentic Three Day Weekend	£ 1.00	NEW!
Cursillo Workshops inc Clergy Taster days	£ 1.00	
Day of Deeper Understanding	£ 1.00	
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Gifting Cursillo - BACC Guidelines	£ 1.00	
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What is Cursillo?	£ 1.00	
BACC - What is it?	1 copy free, then 10p	
Cursillo Badges	£1	
Cursillo Crucifix (Christ is counting on you)	£3	
Cursillo Car sticker	60p	NEW!
Rule of Life cards	£3.50 per 100, £2 per 50 or 5p ea	
Floating Reunion cards	10p each	
Threefold colour leaflet (reprinted)	£5 per 100	
A5 colour poster	£1 per 5	
Suggestions on Developing & Using a Rule of Life	1 copy free, then 10p	

BACC Supplies Officer  
Elenor Paul

resources@ukcursillo.org

We held Group Reunions, so we could share our experiences, and an Ultreya in the lovely Church of Notre Dame just outside the walls of Jerusalem. As a response to the Witness Talk, the group was invited to share, as individuals, what the pilgrimage had meant to them, and particularly what effect it would have in terms of their Fourth Day. It was obvious that this time spent together in prayer, study and action has touched every pilgrim deeply, and I am sure there will be some wonderful Witness Talks given at Ultreyas in the near future.

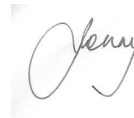
To those of you who undertook to follow our journey and pray for us – a heartfelt ‘thank you’; yours has been a greatly valued ministry. And to those who have been following our itinerary and wondering what we are doing back in Galilee when we were due back home – a national strike prevented us from flying as scheduled.

Our Tour Operator, Lightline, at their own expense, brought us back to the Pilgerhaus at Tabgha to wait until the airline could get us back home. After the initial flurry of phone calls and text messages to reassure friends and family that we were alright, and rearrange hectic schedules, we have accepted this blessed extra time, in this most beautiful spot, as a gift from God – time to absorb what we have experienced and to begin to discern what God is asking of each of us by way of a response.

These thirty six pilgrims have been ground-breakers – but it quickly became obvious that pilgrimage should be a regular part of our life in Cursillo. We have therefore put together a different pilgrimage – ‘Sailing up to Ephesus’ – following the journeys of St. Paul. You will find more details of this further on in BACC Pages. We are also planning another Holy Land Pilgrimage in November 2007 – more details to follow, but please get in touch with me if you are interested.

The Psalm in my reading this morning included the words: ‘Happy are the people whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on the pilgrim’s way’. May I encourage you to pray about joining a Cursillo Pilgrimage in 2008 – I can promise you an experience you will never forget!.

So.....LET US GO!



ULTREYA!

See major article on the pilgrimage –s tarting on page 13.

## Dominic's Deliberations



Has the glory of God been revealed to you recently? As I sit in my study on a dark afternoon at the turn of the year, with the darkness drawing in, I was considering what it might mean to have a revelation of God's glory. For this is the month which the church devotes to the season of Epiphany - the season about Christ being made "manifest" or visible to the (entire) world.

So it is that within this season, as well as remembering the journey of the Magi (strange, gentile figures from a far off land), we also remember Christ's baptism as an adult, when he is acclaimed by God as his "beloved son" as he comes up from the waters at the hands of John the Baptist. As the Sundays of this season progress we also hear the story of the wedding at Cana, (when Jesus performs his first "sign", which, as St John tells us, "reveals his glory"), and the story of his appearance at the synagogue in his home town of Nazareth (when, as Luke tells us, he reads from the prophecy of Isaiah, and, in effect, inaugurates his ministry). And, although it takes us back in time to his infancy, the season of Epiphany culminates in the Candlemas story - the moment, at his Presentation in the Temple, when Simeon acclaims him as the light of the world. And, as we are reminded so constantly, the world needs that light so very much...

For most of the world, and certainly for us in Britain, the arrival of the New Year was dominated by the terrible images of the last moments of the life of Saddam Hussein. Not content with broadcasting the "official" video that had no soundtrack, and which stopped some moments before the actual execution, the illicit "extra" video portraying the true atmosphere around the gallows was then discovered. As an opponent of capital punishment in all circumstances, I found it disturbing enough that this man, evil and despicable though he undoubtedly was, should have been sentenced to death, especially after such a shoddy trial. To see the death sentence carried out in such an appalling manner, and to have the world's press glory in the telling and retelling of the details, added insult to injury in a manner both awful and bizarre.

Such images are not, in any sense, signs of light - they are not signs of God's glory being revealed in people and places that seem to be

We are all familiar with the activity that comes on Cursillo Weekends after the second talk, Grace. Some get out the scissors and glue, cutting and pasting, others create three dimensional masterpieces. On Sheffield #3, one of the pilgrims wrote this poem - and the team were so taken with it they asked the author's permission to publish it here in BACC pages.

## Grace

I've walked too long my own way  
Down blind alleys and cul-de-sacs;  
I no longer know where I'm going  
And it's time to face the facts.

I've looked in all the wrong places  
For fulfilment, fun and release  
But all things I loved are now ashes  
And all I now long for is peace.

And then when I stopped all my running  
And, exhausted, stood in one place,  
You laid your hand on my shoulder  
And offered forgiveness and grace.

I cannot believe that you love me  
When you know all the wrong I have done.  
Yet through your grace you have found me  
And wholly transformed, I'm your son.

At last I have something to offer;  
A journey to follow; love to give,  
For Jesus has saved and redeemed me  
And in his grace let me live.

Peter Benson  
16/02/07



**God is Good....all of the time. All of the time.... God is good.**  
(anyone who was at the GB Ultreya in Durham in 2006 will know this chant—taught to us by Bishop John Pritchard, and said on the coach at the beginning and end of each day)

Ultreya!



If you have something to say in BACC Pages, make yourself comfortable in front of your typewriter or computer and get writing! There are lots of friendly Cursillo folk aiting to hear from you.

consumed in darkness, and a darkness not just prevalent on the gallows in a seedy suburb of Baghdad, but seemingly enticing the countless millions around the world who craved the satisfaction of “enjoying” the spectacle of those brief, undignified, unholy few moments.

The season of Epiphany is a challenge to images, behaviour and all realities of that kind. And it is a challenge to us as well, if we are active and engaged Christians - if we are **cursillistas**. For, in our piety, our study, and our action, it is us who are called to make Christ visible to the world in which we live - we are called to bring light in the gloom and darkness that is so often around us. For, as St John wrote so memorably, *the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

And, if the writer of the fourth gospel had known his medieval Spanish (which, inexplicably, it seems he didn't), I am sure he would have added

Ultreya!

## Cursillo Leaders Workshops 2006/7

Do you want to widen your understanding of the Cursillo Method?

Lay people and clergy welcome.

**23rd—25th March 2007**

**Wychcroft (Nr Bletchingley, Surrey)**

**22nd-24th June 2007**

**Offa House (Nr Leamington Spa, Warwicks)**

**20th—22nd July 2007**

**Kinnoull (Perth, Scotland)**

Application forms and further details from: Jean Radley

## Book Review

### How to Explain your Faith by *John Pritchard*

John Pritchard, who has the unique distinction of having preached at **two** national Ultreyas, and who has just been named as the new Bishop of Oxford, continues to bring his great gifts to the benefit of the wider Christian community through his latest excellent book - **How to Explain your Faith**.

One of the things which makes “normal” church-going Christians most nervous in a country like ours is the kind of blank look we get given when a friend, colleague or acquaintance discovers that we go to church. And, if they dare, or if they are curious as to why we should give up our Sunday mornings in this increasingly unusual manner, all too often they ask us to explain something about our faith - sometimes aggressively, and sometimes out of gentle curiosity. Hence, we can find ourselves on the receiving end of questions or statements along the lines of: “All religions are the same - why is Christianity special?” or “Science tells me all I need to know - it disproves anything to do with religion” or “If God exists, why is there so much undeserved suffering around?” or even, quite simply, “If you say this is about >Good News= - why is church so boring?”

And how often do we struggle to find the right reply, or stammer some kind of compromise admitting that they may have a point, as we cringe with embarrassment, not being sure of the right words to use? And, inside ourselves, how often do we find ourselves wondering, “But why *is* there so much suffering....??”

Such questions and issues are part of our faith journey, and we are all called to grapple with them, and sometimes it is not easy for us to deal with them. And if any tiny bit of what I have written so far sounds remotely familiar to you, then you need to get hold of a copy of Bishop John’s latest book!

In seventeen remarkably succinct and very approachable chapters, we are taken on a tour through many of the issues and challenges that are part of grappling with faith, broken into three sections - “Why bother?”, “Why believe?” and “Why get involved?” Each one considers what “they”

**Sabeel** (=the Way in Arabic).

Later we visited the Ecumenical Liberation centre, started by retired Anglican pastor trying to make Church more relevant. All churches represented on board.

Palestine liberation theology began in 1948 when they were dispossessed. But their *Way* is to read the Bible, to be armed with the Spirit not with weapons asking themselves: *What did Jesus do?*

They work ecumenically with young people, clergy, and ask activists to work for a just peace. .

#### **Day 10 Emmaus, Tel Aviv, (Galilee)**

##### **Emmaus**

Eucharist at Crusader Church at Abu Ghosh, 10 miles from Jerusalem, one of the possible sites for Emmaus. Romans discovered spring there so it became stopping place for legions.

##### **Tel Aviv airport**

Drove to airport: A strike by security staff meant no flights! Swift negotiations and decision made to return to Galilee and the Pilgerhaus.

#### **Day 11 Galilee**

The pilgrimage had ended so we were all free to do our own thing while Paul and Dominic enjoyed a well earned rest. Dominic said the extra 2 days were God’s palanca for us for being good pilgrims!

Several of us went to Vespers at the Loaves and Fishes Church before supper. Though most of us could not follow the German service, it was great to let the service wash over us, and listen to the lovely singing in that beautiful setting.

#### **Day 12 Galilee - Tel Aviv - London**

After packing there was time to sit by the lakeside and be still. Totally brilliant. Christ felt very close here in this lovely part of Galilee. It can’t have changed much since he prayed and taught by the shore.

A last coffee on the terrace , then off to Tel Aviv Airport again. Three hours checking in with numerous security checks and BA trying to sort out enough seats for us all. But eventually, just before the flight was called , we all got on the plane. Uneventful flight; Heathrow and home. Some of us had to made new arrangements to get home, but that was a small price to pay for an extra two blissful days on Galilee.

We stopped to look at St George's, a Greek Orthodox monastery, carved out of the rock face. The monastery, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was founded in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century by St. John of Thebes as a spiritual centre for the hermits of the region. In the 6th century the monastery became known as St. George under the leadership of George of Koziba.



### Dead Sea

Many of us went swimming - well floating! All the stories are true!

### Qumran.

We saw the extensive settlement of the Essene community, a Jewish sect who moved here in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. They wrote and studied and emphasised ritual purity and we saw remains of baths. In 1947, a young Bedouin shepherd searching for a lost animal found a cave holding a collection of ancient scroll jars which held the first of what are now called the Dead Sea Scrolls. Over the next nine years, many more manuscripts and manuscript fragments were unearthed, dating from the 3rd century BC to the middle of the 1st century AD.



Some think John the Baptist may have been influenced by this community. Amer speculated that the Essenes might have recognised Jesus as their Master and that it was an Essene house where the Last Supper took place. Many Essenes were celibate which would explain why Peter and John were sent to find a man carrying water—normally

women's work.

In the evening we had our **Ultreya** at Notre Dame Chapel. Witness talk from Adrian. Lots of other people spoke. We were all presented with ceramic plaques with our name, Jerusalem 2006 and Ultreya on them.

say, and then has suggestions for what we can say by way of a reply, backed up by a wonderful collection of stories, and some helpful, pithy quotations.

Whether you want to become a market square soap-box preacher, hold your own over coffee with friends, or simply - and perhaps most importantly - give your faith a little encouragement and renewal, I think you will be delighted and enthused by this book. And next time someone has you on the ropes, demanding to know why you bother with God, Jesus or the church, you might feel that bit more confident about *How to Explain your Faith!*

Dominic Barrington

*How to Explain your Faith* is published by SPCK and costs ,9.99.

## Words from Worcester



We are still not getting any people to attend a weekend here in our diocese. The secretariat are unable to get to the root of the reason for this. Attendance at Ultreya has dwindled so that it is becoming uneconomical to hire a hall. We hope to continue meeting but in homes.

It is not all bad news however. We have a candidate to attend a weekend elsewhere and some more to follow soon we hope. This will enable us to reach some sort of 'critical mass' to move on again. Meanwhile we are continuing our work to support a 'Happening' weekend here at our Holland House retreat centre. This 'happens' next February 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>. A team is being put together and we have ten applicants at this stage. We think that this is the way God is moving us forward so we're not arguing, just getting on with it. Please pray for this event, the training day on January 27<sup>th</sup>, the team and Worcester Cursillo.

ULTREYA.

## GB Ultreya—Durham

It may have been wet, but it was a great day out - I am referring of course to the 2006 GB Ultreya, held at Durham. About 400 people braved the rain (except Jenny Lowery calls it "liquid sunshine" and gathered in the Gala Theatre for our Group reunion and Witness Talk (which was excellent!). The Durham organisers did us proud, were very prominent in their purple sweatshirts and looked after us all magnificently. As usual at these events old friendships were re-kindled, and many new ones forged.



Unfortunately the liquid sunshine stayed for our walk of witness through the streets of Durham—here you can see the banners being lined up at the head of the procession. The rain meant that there were not as many opportunities to talk to the good people of Durham as we passed by, but no matter. We arrived at the Cathedral,

damp but in high spirits. What a fantastic church! The closing service was the highlight of the day for many, with Bishop John Pritchard in excellent form—and with his permission we are publishing the text of his sermon. Thanks to all for an excellent day.

**He will be in you.**

Bishop John Pritchard

What a joy to meet again today, all of us from all over the place, remembering each others names or not – and this time we meet in this great house of prayer, one of the finest buildings in Europe. If we can't find God here, perhaps we're not really trying.

But maybe it's not as simple as that. Where **do** we find God? That's a real question. Would you tell your neighbour very briefly where you do in fact find God. Where do you encounter him? Just a minute or so. We're Cursillistas after all – we can manage this! .....

Now - I wonder what we said? Maybe we said we find God in nature, or in the Bible, in the sacrament, in prayer, in gratitude and wonder. Yes – I say all that too and I believe it, but sometimes when I say those things,

## Ecce Homo Convent

(*Ecce Homo* =*behold the man* –Pilate's words as he brought Jesus out to crowds) Chapel of Convent built on to the Ecce Homo triumphal arch constructed by Hadrian (so not there in Jesus' time). Convent is situated over part of Antonia fortress built by Herod overlooking temple as HQ for Roman soldiers and named after his friend, Mark Antony. On one stone of the ancient Roman pavement (*Lithostratos*) are markings of a game played by soldiers. The road under the arch, the Via Dolorosa, is the traditional route to Calvary.

### Via Dolorosa.

We walked the 14 Stations of the Cross in silence apart from a reading at each station. We all noticed that the traders, normally so noisy and pushy, respected our pilgrimage, and did not pester us to buy. The last stations are in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (much busier than early on Sunday morning) We climbed the stairs up to Calvary where there are 2 chapels, the RC chapel where Jesus was nailed to the cross decorated with mosaics (11<sup>th</sup> Station) and the more ornate Greek Orthodox Chapel where he died (12<sup>th</sup> Station) Between is an altar with a statue of the grieving Mary. We went forward to touch the rock of Calvary under the altar and stood there in silent prayer for as long as we wanted and afterwards many of us were anointed. After the 14<sup>th</sup> Station we attempted to sing *Thine be the Glory* outside the Holy Sepulchre. We were ushered away into a chapel where we did sing, despite the arrival of a monk to cense the chapel and move Dominic away from the altar! (Apparantly, if we had completed our singing we would have established an Anglican precedent to sing for all time!)

### Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum

Dedicated to the memory of the Holocaust victims, most of us were struck by the parallel between the Nazi persecution of Jews and the Israeli persecution of the Palestinians.

### Day 9. Dead Sea, Qmran, Jerusalem

#### Old road to Jericho.

As we travelled down and down this winding road I found it was easy to picture yourself in the story of the Good Samaritan. We saw camels, goats, donkeys in the desert area to the sides of the road. Some animals were fenced in near Bedouin camps. The road follows the line of a Herodian aqueduct built along on the north side of the valley. Amer said the Israelis draw water from the aquifer away from the Palestinian lands.



blessing her Canon Hussein lifted his baby daughter high in the air behind the altar giving thanks for her too.

After the service we spoke to Canon Hussein's wife and mother and admired the baby, Lorice, named after her grandmother. We went into the garden for small cups of black sweet coffee and met Canon Hussein and his older child, a boy. We spoke to some of the congregation before returning to the hotel.

### Shopping

Most people took the chance to go to the fascinating Arab market where we were offered cups of mint tea. Some did serious shopping: pashminas, jewellery!

### Notre Dame

Had lunch at café attached to RC Notre Dame of Jerusalem Centre.

### Ein Karem

We went to the birthplace of John the Baptist where Mary visited Elizabeth. Good views of the village after steep climb up to the Church of the Visitation where we said Evening Prayer. A lovely statue of the two women is in the courtyard outside. Also ceramic plaques of the Magnificat in many languages. When we came out it was almost dark and a tiny moon was shining just above the crescent on the top of the mosque.



### Day 8 \_Jerusalem

#### Pools of Bethesda

The Pools of Bethesda were originally outside the city walls. Christians demolished a pagan temple to build a 4<sup>th</sup> century church, later destroyed. Crusaders built 2 churches, one over pool, one dedicated to St Anne who traditionally gave birth to Mary in Jerusalem. Muslims destroyed church over pools but spared St Anne's.

#### St Anne's Church

We sang: *Guide me, O thou great Redeemer*. In this church with fabulous acoustics and we could hear sound of harmony long after we'd finished! (Star inlaid on floor to mark where sound is best) Statue of St Anne with child Mary.

they do seem to me to be just conventional right answers, and if I ask myself more honestly whether I really and truly experience God there, I'm not so sure.

Sometimes I long for something more – don't you? I long for God to be more tangible, to give me more evidence; I long for God to overwhelm me with his blazing reality. Like the philosopher Pascal. They found sewn into his jacket when he died a piece of paper describing an experience he always wanted to remember. It said: 'Between 9 o'clock and midnight. Fire! Not the God of the philosophers but the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. Joy, joy, joy!' Isn't that what we want? It's a good job we've still got Mattins in the Church of England, that's all I can say.

Of course when I think like this I then fear that I'm really trying to manipulate God. I'm wanting him to appear on demand, to jump through my hoop. And that's hopeless. So I then feel guilty. But still, isn't it reasonable to expect a bit of high-octane spiritual experience when we call on God? As CS Lewis said, he sometimes felt he was doing all the pulling on the rope – all he wanted was a bit of a twitch from the other end. It wasn't much to ask.

It's the story of religious desire throughout the ages. Men and women longing to know more of God. It's the story of the disciples after the resurrection. They were full of hope, full of desire, but they were missing something vital. They were still stuck with their memories and a very bewildering last few weeks with Jesus popping up here and there and blowing their minds - but what were they to do?!

Maybe they'd forgotten the promise. The great, golden, glorious promise that Jesus had given them at their last meal together. The life-changing, world-turning, spine-tingling promise of Jesus that we've just heard in the gospel. 'I'll ask the Father, and he'll give you another advocate to be with you forever. This is the Spirit...he abides with you, *and he will be in you.*'

Bingo. That's what we need. The Spirit of Jesus to be *in us!* Instead of pursuing poor old God relentlessly asking him for a sign; instead of longing for some external proof (yes, I'm sure I felt strangely warmed at 8.30 last Tuesday; on the other hand it could have been those two glasses of wine'); instead of all that, here is Jesus saying 'thru the Spirit, *I will be in you.*' Instead of worrying about our spiritual temperature all the time we can just relax, let the Spirit breathe within us, and let Jesus work from the inside out.

So where is God to be found? *In us!* The writer Richard Rohr was once

walking through the woods at a monastery and he met a hermit who lived there. The hermit said, 'I'm always in here but you have the opportunity to talk to many people. Just tell them this – *God is not out there.*' And the hermit walked on. He's not out there – well he is, but he's first of all in here, *in us.*

I've just been away on sabbatical and the first thing I did was go on an 8 day Ignatian retreat at St Beuno's in N. Wales. My guide for the week was an 82 year old Jesuit, modelled closely on Bilbo Baggins, but he went right to the heart of what I needed, on the very first day. 'Let Christ ease his way into your life,' he said. And meditate on Paul's astonishing assertion in Galatians 2: 'It's no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.' Wow! As a Xn it's no longer me who reigns supreme in my little life, standing on my little dignity; it's Christ, no less, who lives in me. In you. In us. Which isn't to say anything about our goodness or worthiness. We might still live in sin, as in supporting Chelsea or watching Big Brother. But Christ has a home, and it's *in us.*

So there's no need to go searching neurotically for some spiritual glow, some cosy feelings. God is right here anyway. That's the promise of the HS who we commemorate in this eucharist. We don't just meet God in creation – the Father; we don't just meet God in history – the Son; we also meet God in ourselves – the Spirit. (That's a very short lesson on the Trinity, by the way!)

And that's the gift of Cursillo for many people. After years, perhaps, of pulling on that rope, searching for the reality of God, Cursillo offers immediacy, urgency, the touch of Christ. And people come alive to Jesus. He's in them. It's a gift.

But we mustn't get too literal here. This kind of language can be confusing, especially for children. At a Christian holiday week I remember one of our daughters coming back from her childrens activity at lunchtime and saying she had to smash an egg on her head. This was a puzzle to us. Smash an egg on your head? Yes she said. Eventually it turned out that the day's key verse had been 'Take my yoke upon you ... for my yoke is easy and my burden is light!' To say it's no longer I who lives but Christ who lives in me, is of course a metaphor, like all religious language, but it's a very serious metaphor. It's the best way of describing that intimacy of the spirit of Jesus in our lives.

I read a lot of books on my sabbatical. One I finally got round to reading was *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker. It's brilliant, and full of implicit theology. At one point, Shug Avery, one of the unlikely heroes, is talking

temple was very apparent from the model. The pools of Bethesda were outside the walls of Jesus' day (but inside the third wall) In the Shrine of the Book (building with white dome) we saw facsimile of Isaiah scroll in centre of dome and Dead Sea scrolls (I think facsimiles)

### **Church of Redeemer**

A lovely German Lutheran Church in old city on site of earlier Crusader Church.

### **Day 7 Jerusalem, Ein Karem**

### **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**

Some of us left hotel at 6.30 am to walk to Holy Sepulchre. Copts in black having service at back of Sepulchre. Then a Patriarch arrived preceded by 2 men, each wearing fez on head and carrying wands a bit like a church warden's. A red carpet laid in front of Patriarch, who went into the Holy Sepulchre and censed it and came out and started a service in a chapel nearly opposite Holy Sepulchre. Two small nuns and our party were only ones there apart from a number of attendants. He read what seemed to be a gospel (Dominic said it was a "pre-gospel") We left that chapel in time to see the Coptic patriarch arrive when all the Copts put on white robes on top of their black ones to start their service. Eastern Orthodox, [Roman Catholic](#), and [Armenian Apostolic](#) Churches all have rights to the interior of the tomb under the *status quo* which lays down who looks after what. At the back is a chapel with an altar used by the [Coptic Orthodox](#). It was a very strange experience to see these different Christian denominations acting totally independently. (Dominic said in Holy Week they have a rota to avoid clashes) It felt more like a circus than a very holy place! But as it was fairly quiet there was a chance to have a moment of prayer at the tomb.

### **St George's Anglican Cathedral**

Went to Arabic Eucharist at 9.30. A large group from an Evangelical Church in India were also present with their bishop who was assisting the celebrant, Canon Hussein. Dominic assisted in administering chalice. Without our party and theirs the congregation would have been very thin. Much of service in Arabic (including readings) We sang (unfamiliar) hymns in English while indigenous congregation sang in Arabic (we finished at about the same time!) Canon Hussein preached first in Arabic, then gave an English version. He alternated between Arabic and English for the Eucharistic prayer. An unusual feature of the service was that his wife came for a blessing/thanksgiving after childbirth. After

be brought to heaven to share in Christ's glory. What we say about Mary is what we want to say about ourselves. There are apocryphal letters which speak of Mary *falling asleep*)

Church built by German Benedictines in 1910 over remains of a fourth century church and the 11th century Franciscan Church. In upper church mosaics describing events in the lives of Jesus, Mary and the saints. In the crypt a statue of Mary *falling asleep*. The dome above has a beautiful mosaic zodiac. Under the dome of Mary's shrine is a mosaic of Christ surrounded by biblical women: Eve, Sarah, Miriam, Esther, Jael, and Judith. In spaces between arches are scenes in Mary's life (including Annunciation and one of her *falling asleep* - standing over her body is Jesus holding a very tiny Mary wrapped in white bands - a reverse of the nativity)

### **Cenacle, Mount Zion (*Cena* =supper)**

We went into the Upper Room where Jesus and disciples ate last Supper and where the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost. Franciscans built it in 1335 and when Muslims took it over they turned it into mosque (still has a prayer niche facing Mecca)

Further down Mount Zion saw original steps down to Kidron valley where Jesus would have gone after supper to Garden of Gethsemane where he was arrested. Then he would have been brought up steps again to high priest's house

### **St Peter in Gallicantu**

Church thought to be on site of high priest Caiaphas' house and therefore scene of Peter's betrayal. Statue in courtyard topped by cockerel (*Gallicantu* means cockcrow in Latin) We went into dungeon of high priest's house - where Jesus supposedly imprisoned overnight. Saw hole through which he was allegedly lowered and immersed in water.



### **Israel Museum**

We saw a 1:50 scale model of Jerusalem, built in same white limestone as original and, according to Amer, about 85% accurate. The scale of the

to Celie: 'She says, Celie, tell the truth, have you ever found God in church? I never did. I just found a bunch of folks hoping for him to show. Any God I ever felt in church I brought in with me. And I think all the other folks did too. They come to church to *share* God, not *find* God.'

Now that's perceptive. 'Any God I ever felt in church I brought in with me.' Because, says Jesus, he abides with you and will be in you. That's one of the real gifts of Cursillo to people searching for more reality in their faith. The genius of Cursillo is that it helps people to recognise the presence of Christ in their lives. It's about waking the sleeping giant. Another part of the genius of Cursillo is the mutual accountability of the fourth day reunions, where we can support each other in that daily recognition of the presence of Christ. And in the living out of Christ, his values and his justice, in our daily experience. What we have to offer the world is justice and joy, from an inner spring of life, whose name is Jesus.

St John said: 'You know him, because he abides with you, *and he will be in you.*' And then, in one of the loveliest promises in the NT, Jesus says 'my Father and I will come to you, and make our home with you.' Home. We know what that's like. We've been out all day and you step back into the hall – the friendly familiar smell, the safe ticking of the clock. Or, you come back from holiday, climb wearily up the stairs and fling the suitcase on the bed. You're back. It's home.

And Jesus dares to say that he wants to make our lives, his home, his special place.

Cursillo is the gift of coming home and finding that Jesus is already there.

## **ULTREYA GB 2007**

Our next GB Ultreya will be in Canterbury on September 1st. Now is a good time to start planning—if Canterbury is further than you can comfortably do in a day trip, why not make a long weekend of it? The Canterbury team will be publishing details of all the arrangements in the next month or so, so keep an eye on their page on the Cursillo website (<http://www.ukcursillo.org/diocese.php/Canterbury>). Better still, organise for a group to go down together and enjoy the camaraderie that comes whenever a group of cursillistas get together—and going as a group can be cheaper if you can hire a bus or minibus, or car share.

Whatever you do, put September 1st in you diary—see you there!

## CP1 – Should we have gone?

When the pilgrimage was first mooted, Janet and I were very keen to be part of the group. There was some anxiety about the politics in the area – not so much that we might be caught up in some event or other, but that what was being done by the Israeli occupiers was unacceptable. By travelling would we be supporting the Israeli regime? When the Lebanon war started, and the Israel government showed its colours, our doubts grew even more. Dominic persuaded us that it was because of these problems that our visit was even more important – the Christian community in the Holy Land needed support.

So we went. The whole experience was wonderful. Our fellow-travellers, and the organisation of Dominic and Paul, and the welcome we received where-ever we went, ensured that this Pilgrimage became a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It was something very special.

Many of us had ideas that life on the West Bank is difficult for all. I think no one had any idea just how difficult life has become, and how beleaguered the Christian community now finds itself to be. The population of Christians is declining rapidly and the Bishop-elect of Jerusalem, whom we met, thinks that there will be no Christians left within three or four decades. Just imagine it – no Christians in the Holy Land after 2000 years.

We met a number of Christians whilst we were there who are working against all the odds for the benefit of the community. Their work is quite inspirational – it made the rest of us feel very humble. In the fields of health care, and in education, so much is being done for the Palestinian community in general by these Christian groups. We were welcomed. The fact that we visited was much appreciated – the knowledge that the Christian community beyond Palestine was interested enough to visit was a great morale boost. Being a Christian living in Bethlehem, or in one of the many West Bank towns now being surrounded by walls, must be like living under the harshest conditions of apartheid in South Africa, and almost as bad as the ghettos cruelly inflicted on the Jewish peoples in Europe before World War 2.

It was a privilege to be able to see what is happening – and it is shocking also to have seen it. However, at no stage did we feel insecure. We are now back and can talk about what we saw – and we are talking. It formed part of a sermon I – George – gave today on this the second Sunday of Advent. The response to the sermon was incredible. Can we

There is a Health and Wellness programme with swimming pool, fitness training, audiology, hearing aids for children, metabolic clinic, nutrition, and fitness programme for elderly.

At lunch in the restaurant at the Lutheran Christmas Church we left the books we had brought from the UK.

### **Bethlehem New Store**

Stopped here to shop. (Jewellery, olive wood carvings, ceramics, old Russian icons). Recommended by Amer as goods reliable, credit cards safe and shop sells on behalf of 65 Christian families.

Travelled back to Knight's Palace Hotel, Jerusalem, by road banned to Palestinians: only cars with yellow (Israeli) licence plates can use it.

### **Co-adjutor Bishop of Jerusalem,**

Suheil Dawani, gave pre-supper talk . Elected 2005 as successor to Bp Riah (who retires in 2007), consecrated Epiphany 2006 as Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem and the Middle East (Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon).

He emphasised decline in indigenous Christian population (descendants of those who became Christian at Pentecost) 80 per cent of Christians in Iraq have left. Christians now only 2 per cent of population of Israel and Palestine. In next 2 decades could face extinction in Jerusalem (reduction from 25000 in 1960s to less than 9000 today) and cities in West Bank (in Ramallah reduction from 30000 to less than 10,000) Christians witness by providing educational, health and social services for all; run hospitals, services for elderly, handicapped, mentally disturbed. Vital to keep indigenous Christians in Holy Land to act as bridge for peace and reconciliation to help all “*children of Abraham*” to live together.

### **Day 6 Jerusalem**

#### **Wailing Wall**

We entered the old city through the Dung Gate, then through strict security check (Sabbath, and no photographs permitted.) Watched individuals and groups praying, men in larger section, women in smaller section. Some stood right against wall but some sat in the plastic chairs provided.

#### **Abbey of Dormition** , Mount Zion (Seen on skyline from Mt of Olives)

(Dominic explained doctrine of *Dormition* = *Falling asleep* in Eastern Church , known in Western Church as *Assumption* .We would all like to



Orthodox (who share care of grotto of nativity) and Roman Catholics who care for manger and have built modern church of St Catherine over the grottos of St Joseph, the Holy Innocents and Saint Jerome. We all had to bend down to enter cave. Silver star marks spot where Jesus born (see picture left). Inscribed on it is "***Hic de Maria Virgine Jesus Christus natus est***" (=Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary).

### **Holy Family Hospital**

We had a Eucharist in chapel of Hospital which is supported by Knights of Grand Order of Malta.

This is the main Palestinian maternity and neonatal hospital, looking after complicated deliveries, with many mothers from refugee camps. Renovated in 1990, it has a fantastic record, delivering 3,000 babies a year, including 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> babies and multiple births as a result of IVF and no maternal fatalities. It is a teaching hospital for nurses and doctors and provides scholarships for nurses and doctors to go abroad and improve skills. Patients (7 per cent Christian; 93 per cent Muslim) pay \$100 US if they can afford it but 67 per cent of Palestinians earn less than 2\$ a day and employment is 40 per cent, so many apply to hospital's social fund.

In 2003 tanks emptied machine guns in front of hospital, shelling statue of Virgin Mary, which was unscathed. (Archbishop of Canterbury mentioned his visit to the hospital in his 2006 Christmas Day sermon at Canterbury Cathedral)



### **Lutheran Christmas Church/ International Centre of Bethlehem**

This centre provides training in arts/ crafts (mosaics/ceramics/stained glass) for the unemployed. This alternative education is focussed on arts (Bethlehem University's programme is limited) The centre provides space and tools to produce goods and a gift shop to market and sell them. They are trying to keep culture alive and provide exchanges with rest of world; the world comes to them as they can't get out.

organise a village meeting to hear about the problems? - was one question. Can we do some fund raising? – was another. One member of the congregation asked – “Did we meet any Arabs?” He had not appreciated that all Christians on the West Bank are Arabs – he thought of Arabs as terrorists. How wrong can anyone be? We could answer this, for our newscasts give that impression at times, but political discretion is perhaps the wiser counsel.

Our Christian friends in Palestine need our support – in our prayers, in our financial help, in our presence. If you are thinking of going on a pilgrimage at a future date do sign up. You will have the most wonderful spiritual experience and you will learn a lot – as one of our group put it, the Bible is no longer in Black and White, but is in Technicolor. You will also meet many Christians who are just inspirational in their work, beliefs, and achievements. You will see what can be done in the most adverse of settings – and your visit will be most welcomed by them for it will be seen as an outward sign that you care.

George and Janet Proud

## **CP1 - The BACC Pilgrimage**

**Planned pilgrimage dates 20-29 November 2006**

**Actual dates: 20 November- 1 December!**

***Leaders: Rev'd Dominic Barrington, Rev'd Paul Kennington  
and Jenny Lowery***

**Guide: Amer Driver: Hanna**

These notes adapted from those taken by Anne Fuller during the pilgrimage. Pictures by Phil Wright.

### **Day 1 London-Tel Aviv – Galilee**

We arrive at Heathrow early in the morning, to be met by Dominic who gave us each a large book which we would take to the Bethlehem International Centre . The flight to Tel Aviv is uneventful and we arrived in the late afternoon as the sun was setting.

As the sun sets we set off towards Galilee, arriving in the dark. The Pilgerhaus is a lovely guesthouse at Tabgha on shores of Lake Galilee, run by German RC Benedictines who look after the nearby Church of the Multiplication of Loaves and Fishes. It was a bit like a Cursillo weekend; the staff took our cases to our rooms and we were offered refreshments. After a simple dinner most of us went off to bed.

## Day 2 Mt Tabor, Cana, Nazareth

A few brave souls got up early enough to see sunrise. In the daylight we can see what a beautiful place the Pilgerhaus is; a view of the lake with the sun shining on it (the sun shone every day!) Fountain, lots of green; bright flowers and shrubs in bloom. We squeezed our own grapefruit juice for breakfast!

### Mount Tabor: Site of Transfiguration (picture on page 1)

Our coach could not reach the top of Mt Tabor, an isolated, dome-shaped mountain, so we all got out half way up and piled into ancient taxis for the giddy trip to the top—13 hairpin bends and all. At the top is a Franciscan Church built 1924, to a design by Antonio Barluzzi. Elijah is commemorated in south chapel, Moses in the north chapel. Peacocks in stained glass in windows of lower part of basilica where we had our first Eucharist. Great singing!

Outside the church we admired the view of the Plain of Jezreel, largest valley in Israel, stretching from mountains of Galilee in North and mountains of Samaria in South. In far distance mountains of Jerusalem. In the distance to the left Mt Gilead, in the distance to the right Mt Carmel and Mt. Gilboa straight ahead. The valley is the site of many battles because of strategic position and immense fertility. Amer, our guide explained that this site inspired the description of Armageddon, according to John in *Revelation*. This place is steeped in history.

On the way to Nazerath we passed through Cana, where the first miracle took place, visiting a late 19<sup>th</sup> century basilica. Nazareth is in a hollow valley high up among the hills of lower Galilee overlooking the Jezreel Valley, about half way between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean. Capital of Galilee, a business centre, the largest Arab city in Israel. In Jesus' time caravans on the main trade routes from Egypt, Gilead and Damascus passed through the valley within a few kilometres of Nazareth. Our main visit was to the Bishop Riah School.

### Bishop Riah School

Here we met Hanna Riah, Director of studies at the school which is named after his father, current Bishop of Jerusalem). The school was founded in 1851 by CMS under British mandate and now has more than 1,400 students. We were told of the great difficulties an Arab school faces in Israel, with only one eighth the funding given to Jewish schools, nevertheless the school has won many prizes for excellence and is held up as a model by Ministry of Education.

Church of All Nations built by Barluzzi on foundations of earlier churches. Mosaics made by artists from several countries.

In front of the high altar there is a large piece of rock surrounded by a crown of thorns in wrought iron on which Jesus is supposed to have prayed the night before the Passion.

Then across the Kidron Valley which separates Mount of Olives from City of Jerusalem, and finally we arrived outside the walls of Jerusalem to be taken to our hotel; a busy day!

## Day 5 Bethlehem

Travelled to Bethlehem (=house of bread in Hebrew). Went through checkpoint in vast (over 20 feet) wall. On outside of wall Israeli Ministry of Interior had painted "**Peace be with you**" (is that meant to be ironic?) Inside were paintings on wall and word *Hypocrisy*.

### Bethlehem

Bethlehem is now enclosed with wall and fence. Main road to Jerusalem blocked. Population between 35 and 40 thousand (including nearby villages). Of which less than 30% are Christian (18 years ago 74%). Many Christians (who tend to be more affluent) have emigrated. Those remaining survive only through the generosity of the western world (not as much from US who are influenced by Israel).



### Shepherds' fields

Bethlehem can have snow in winter and be boiling in June; caves in Bethlehem provided natural shelter. Modern Church (last work of Barluzzi) built over caves.

### Church of Nativity

First Church built 324 AD by St Helena (Mother of Constantine) over cave where Jesus was born. Persians did not destroy it in 614 AD because they recognised the images of their ancestors, the Magi, above the entrance to the Church of the Nativity. Crusaders saved church from Muslims, then demolished it(!) and in 1106 built present church. Three denominations share care of Church : Greek Orthodox, Armenian

## Pater Noster Church

Church built on site where Jesus traditionally taught Lord's Prayer and predicted destruction of Jerusalem. First church built by Constantine's mother Queen Helena 333 AD was destroyed by Persians. Saladin destroyed chapel built by Crusaders. Crypt is still there, along with a second cave called the Grotto of the Creed. founded on site in 1870s. Lord's Prayer appears on ceramic plaques in many (over 100?) languages inside church and in cloister of Convent of Carmelite nuns.

## Mount of Olives

Most walked down, some went by coach so missed the stunning view of Jerusalem at sunset from inside and outside the next church:

### Dominus Flevit (= the Lord wept)

Church built by Italian architect Antonio Barluzzi in 1954, in the shape of a tear drop to symbolize Jesus' tears. Church commissioned by the Franciscans, who still care for the site. Current church stands on ruins of a 7th-century church, some mosaics of which still remain.



The western window of church gives a beautiful view (photo below) of the [Temple Mount](#). (Barluzzi got permission to have west facing church by saying Church faced Jerusalem - not East but **Easter**).

If you look carefully you can see the Gold Dome of Rock on Mount Moriah (Temple Mount) where Abraham came to sacrifice Isaac (or *Ishmael*?) Also Black Dome mosque where Mohammed got off horse and ascended to heaven.

We walked down Mount of Olives- on left oldest and largest Jewish cemetery in world - plain slabs of stone ; no trees, grass, flowers.

## Garden of Gethsemane : Church of All Nations

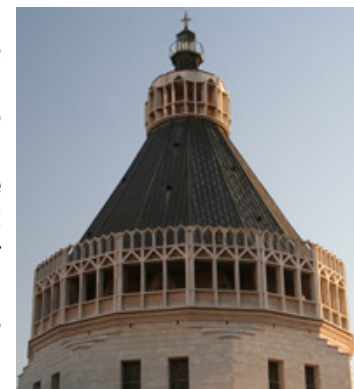
(Hebrew "*gat semani*" means "*olive press*"). Garden still contains fruit bearing olive-trees hundreds of years old, maybe shoots of shoots of the trees that were there on Jesus' last night before his arrest.

The school takes children from downtown Nazareth and gives them self esteem: pupils seemed alert, confident and friendly. It is difficult for Palestinian children to travel any distance in Israel, so school is pioneering e-learning for children in Negev. Whole campus eventually to be "Wi fi".

We saw modern computer rooms, equipped with grants from Microsoft and other suppliers. All the equipment was "the best" demonstrating the high standards set and achieved by the school. In addition to the computer rooms, modern science labs and a new library were on view. The school aims to educate parents as well as their children.

## Basilica of the Annunciation

The Basilica, planned by Professor Giovanni Muzio, was built in 1960-1969 for all the expected pilgrims (who stopped coming following the 1967 war) The dome of the church is like an upside down lily decorated with M for Maria and from outside it looks like a light house. The church is actually 2 churches, one above the other; the lower incorporates the remains of both Byzantine and Crusader churches and interconnects with the cave (grotto) thought to be Mary's home, site of the Annunciation.



On altar in lower church: "***Verbum caro hic factum est***" (=here the word was made flesh).

## Day 3 Galilee

### Church of the Multiplication of the loaves and fishes

This church, run by Roman Catholic German Benedictines, is at Tabgha a little way along the lakeside from the Pilgerhaus. (*Tabgha, we discovered, is corruption of Heptapegon= 7 springs*). Early Christians in Capernaum venerated a large rock on which Jesus reputedly laid fish/bread before feeding crowd. This rock formed the altar of the first church c 35 AD. In 480 AD the rock was moved to beneath the altar when Byzantine church built. In 1932 ruins of church destroyed by Persians in 614 AD was discovered.

We celebrated Eucharist in the open air altar facing the lake. Birds flew over the lake during the service.

### Mount of Beatitudes:



Immediately behind the Church of the Multiplication, we could see the church on the Mount of Beatitudes. (But the coach trip took 15 mins along a very circuitous, windy road!) Set in gardens, this is an octagonal church with a central altar. (8 beatitudes are depicted round the inside of the dome.) Below the church, looking back where we had just come from were banana plantations. Amer suggested that Jesus stood not on top of mountain but **below** where voice would carry up to people above-acoustic of natural

theatre .

### Capernaum on north shore of Galilee

Capernaum was an ancient fishing village, and the centre of Jesus' ministry. The *Via Maris*, an international highway from Egypt to Syria, passed near Capernaum, so there was a Tax station (Matthew's home). Caravans went from here to Jerusalem. The majority of miracles/healings were done around here. Jesus' reputation spread and Amer suggested that when Jesus left the whole town would have followed him: hence the 5000 at Tabgha to witness the loaves and fishes miracle!



As fortold by Jesus, Capernaum was never rebuilt after being destroyed, so all that is left today is ruins. There is a beautiful peaceful modern octagonal church built by Franciscans over an earlier church (also octagonal) thought to be the site of Peter's house (where Jesus healed Peter's mother in law).

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### Sea of Galilee:

Galilee is the lowest fresh water lake in the world, 211 metres below sea level. Lake is 7 miles wide from East to West and 13 miles from North to South. Around forty different varieties of fish live in the Lake. The most



Restrictions around Jericho make it impossible for many Palestinians to be mobile, so city cannot achieve potential as winter resort. Checkpoint outside Jericho-long line of cars. Our coach went straight through. Palestinians have to be checked.

Climbed up to hill country past Bedouin tents where sheep grazed on what looked like very poor pasture. We heard the story of Good Samaritan as coach climbed up road from Jericho to Jerusalem.

### Ma'ale Adummim (=Red Hills)

Here is a huge Israeli settlement, now over 30,000 people, one of the largest Jewish communities in the [West Bank](#). (Jerusalem has extended to include settlements N and S of Jerusalem)

### Bethany (2 miles E of Jerusalem)

Wall separating Jerusalem and Bethany which receives no services but pays taxes. On wall in English ***Palestine will be free*** and posters and slogans in Arabic. Families divided by wall (as in Bethlehem) People from Jerusalem may not live in Bethany and vice versa

We lunched on chargrilled chicken in Muslim restaurant. Excellent

Wall paintings of Biblical stories of Mary, Martha, Jesus, Lazarus. In courtyard older church and mosaics from 4<sup>th</sup> Century Church and tomb of Lazarus.

### Bethphage

In the New Testament, unidentified place, near Jerusalem, traditionally between Bethany and the Mount of Olives. Church built by Franciscans to commemorate start of Palm procession (probably leafy branches, not palms)

Visible from church grounds was house bulldozed by Israeli government (as reprisal and to prevent Palestinians making best use of land),



## Day 4 Galilee - Jerusaelm

### Tiberias

We drove along lakeside through Tiberias, 682 feet below sea level. Founded 26 AD by Herod Antipas, named after Emperor. (Amer thought Jesus probably never visited there) After Hadrian expelled Jews from Jerusalem it became religious and intellectual Jewish centre. Roman and modern hot springs.

### River Jordan

The lowest river on earth, flowing for most of its 160 miles below sea level. In Hebrew, *Jordan*, (*Yarden*), means "*the descender*." Flows from the snowy slopes of Mount Hermon, the highest peak in the Orient, through the Jordan Valley, descending to the Dead Sea, the lowest place on earth, 1300 feet below sea level. Flows into and out of the Sea of Galilee.

Unfortunately, there is no access to actual site of Jesus' baptism (believed to be 5 miles east of Jericho in a military zone). The Israelis have provided an alternative site, close to the Dead Sea.

We travelled along the Jordan, sometimes on West Bank (occupied by Israelis), sometimes on the East Bank. We saw lots of cultivated areas (plastic "greenhouses") farmed by Palestinians, but also fenced modern houses – the Israeli settlements. The land close to the river was fenced off, with mine fields so "*no man's land*" down to Jordan valley and land therefore uncultivated in contrast to cultivated fields on Jordanian side (they supply vegetables for British soldiers in Iraq). Then through country cultivated on both sides. Goats grazing on stony ground. Settlement -in heart of Palestine – lots of green as it is watered by springs formerly available to Palestinians .

Coach went through checkpoint but no need to show passports.

### Jericho

An oasis in the heart of the desert and 1250 feet below sea level. Oldest city in world so far discovered, dating from 7,000-10000 BC. Remains of ancient Jericho on RHS. Jericho was the 1<sup>st</sup> city taken by Joshua and tribes of Israel after crossing Jordan. Name Jericho meant "the moon" to the Canaanites. One of the mountains close by is the Mount of Temptation . (photo next page). In Jesus' day Jericho was meeting place for people from Galilee going to Jerusalem. We stopped by a huge sycamore/fig tree and heard reading of Zacchaeus and Jesus.

popular, *Tilapia*, is now better known as *Peter's fish*. Many fishing villages populated the northern shore in Jesus' time.

We all enjoyed a boat ride on lake, and appropriately heard the reading about Jesus calming the storm. Paul later told us that despite its apparent calm he has witnessed a sudden storm on the lake, as in Bible story.

*(Explanation: Hills between 360-450 metres high surround the Lake like a horseshoe on the west, north and eastern sides. Because the Lake is below sea level, abrupt changes in temperature can occur. This causes strong winds to sweep down without warning, leading to violent storms and turbulent waves)*

### Yigal Alon Centre, Ginosar .

In museum saw ancient fishing boat (between the first century BC and the first century AD) dredged from lake during drought of 1986. 26.9 feet long by 7.5 feet wide—much smaller than the one we sailed on, but likely to be the type of boat used by Jesus' disciples. Many types of wood were

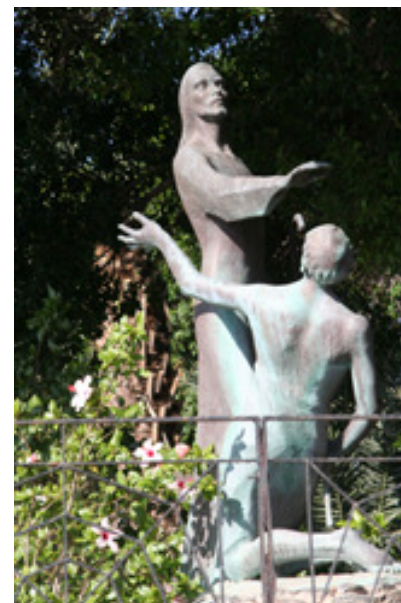
used in the hull, suggesting long working life (hence many repairs)

We then lunched on St Peter's fish - very bony!

### Church of St Peter's Primacy, Tabgha

A church built in 1934 over massive rock called *mensa* (= *table*) *Christi* Here Jesus appeared at lake side to disciples after Resurrection and prepared breakfast for them. Statue of Peter and Jesus: *Feed my sheep.* (photo, left)

Back to Pilgerhaus to see sun set over lake.



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separate pdf file