



JBMS NEWSLETTER

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2016 TRUSTEE VISIT TO MUTEMWA

I wear 'two hats' when visiting Mutoko, one is to stay at the nearby Mother of Peace Children's home and the other is as a JBMS UK Trustee.

Those of you who have visited Mutemwa Leprosy and Care Centre, will be familiar with the drive from Mutoko to the Centre. This road now goes past a huge development of housing on the left just before the Shrine and in places adjoining its fence. On entering Mutemwa gateway the road passes through the beautiful avenue of jacaranda trees and the peaceful scene of residents and staff who wave when they see my car!

At the end of the main drive the four Franciscan Brothers live in the Staff housing area. The



Franciscans have been managing Mutemwa since February 2015 and Fr. Salicio is their present Administrator.

Fr. Salicio invited me to meet him soon after I arrived and he spoke at length and with enthusiasm about life at Mutemwa. There are now 43 Residents with 24 being leprosy, the Clinic treats around 112 people per month, residents, staff and some people from the local community. A big emphasis is being placed on Income Generating Projects and there are now just over 800 egg layers which are bringing in a good income. 1,000 day old layer chicks have also been bought recently and they should start laying too in about four months time. The pig numbers rise too and stand at around 60 at the moment as several sows have recently given birth! There is a small herd of cattle numbering five adults and two calves and 32 rabbits!



Fr. Salicio

The failure of the rains last season has made a huge impact throughout the whole of Zimbabwe and the country has to import maize, mainly from Zambia. Fr. Salicio showed me their maize field but the mealies were very stunted - the monkeys are having a wonderful time helping themselves to it! I was also shown the area growing ground nuts and sweet potatoes which receives water from a new (although small) drip irrigation system. This area is thriving and the

water comes from a nearby borehole; there are plans to install further drip irrigation pipes in the future when there are the funds to do so. One of the continuing problems Mutemwa faces is the lack of on site water and there is only one borehole now that has water in it on a regular basis. The vegetable garden produces nearly all the community's vegetable requirements.

There is a very happy atmosphere at Mutemwa and there appears to be a good relationship between Staff and Residents and everywhere we went we were met with smiles and greetings as we walked around. Fr. Salicio works very hard indeed and he and his fellow Brothers have some excellent ideas about the continuing development of Mutemwa, all of them requiring money of course! They would like to expand their use of Solar power by having a solar pump put near the borehole plus lighting in the Chapel. They talk also about starting to make rosaries and candles as a means of selling to pilgrims who visit.

A new extension to the small pig housing is

planned in the near future. This will bring in much needed funds to help sustain the Centre by making it a more commercial operation. This is thanks to two donors, the Daughters of Jesus in Rickmansworth, and also to the Zimbabwe Challenge charity which operates in Australia and Zimbabwe. We extend grateful thanks for this extra help to help Mutemwa become more self sustainable.

Article by Trustee Christine Pratt



Christine (middle) with friends
Fr Thomas and Mrs Chigwanda

The Great Poetry Hijack by Professor David Crystal

John Bradburne must have been sleeping. Or maybe he was just too busy looking after people. But at the end of February this year I was alerted to the fact that his poetry website had been hijacked. If you tried to access one of the poems, you would have found yourself transferred, as if by magic, to a retail store called Canada Goose that specializes in clothing for extreme weather conditions.

It's awful when that happens, and it's difficult to handle, as everyone involved disclaims responsibility. Somehow the hackers had penetrated the security of the company that provided our hosting service; but whatever the weakness was, we were left to clear up the mess ourselves. A complaint to Canada Goose elicited a similar response: they could do nothing, as this was a counterfeit company - one set up without their knowledge (and presumably pinching their profits). They have an anti-counterfeit team, who (I hope) have by now tracked down the culprits and had their site taken down. But they couldn't do anything to help us either. I spent a useless couple of days exploring the software of the website trying to

see if I could solve it myself, before calling in the cavalry, in the form of the Czech company that designed johnbradburnepoems.com. They responded immediately and brilliantly, but it still took them a couple of weeks to get the site back into a state of health. So, if you searched for a poem during the first half of March and got nowhere, it wasn't your fault!

But the story doesn't end there. A site that can be hacked once can be hacked again, if it's left unchanged. So we urgently need to improve the security, to stop it happening again. In the process we'll take the opportunity to develop a much simpler and more robust database management system and give the site an artistic makeover. It all costs, but it'll be worth it. I'm expecting the site to look a lot more attractive as a result, and that should bring in more visitors, including those in authority who will need to use the poetry as part of the evidence for the sainthood cause. The hack might have been a blessing in disguise. Maybe John wasn't sleeping after all.

See details of new poetry website on page 5.

‘Chigona’

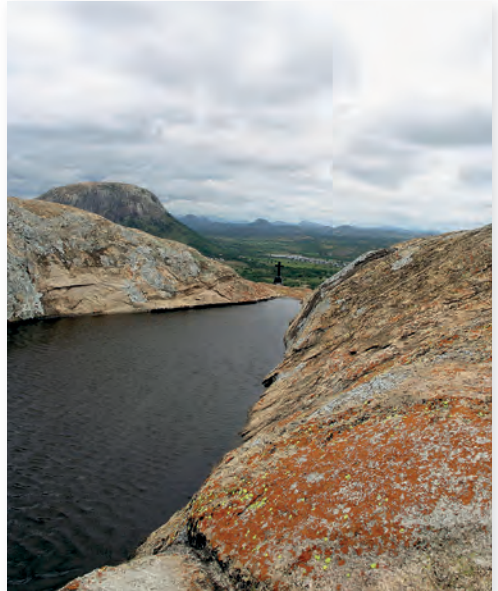
John wrote this poem called ‘Chigona’ in 1970. Chigona is the small mountain overlooking Mutemwa where he used to take a bath in the rock pool on the summit. The name Chigona means ‘you are cut off’. The place was chosen for its remoteness to accommodate people with a disease which was not known about in the early days.

On top of Chigona a large granite cross was erected in the 1980’s. It was a gift from a man who was blinded but later his eyesight was restored after he prayed to John Bradburne.

Poem ‘Chigona’...

*A long reclining wall of granite rock,
A little mountain leaning on the sky,
A western limit cloisterlike, a lock
Against intrusion on our privacy;
“Chigona” means “Can do” or “You are able
To climb me with a minimum of strain”,
But strong is this Chigona, ancient, stable
Above the verdant firmness of the plain;
When every morn I walk through this enclosure
Wherein our sheltered leper-folk abide
I look upon Chigona’s bright composure
Backed by an azure sky where falcons glide:
And then meseems our village is a ship
Riding at anchor on the ocean’s lip.*

*When all my worldwide wandering began
I was not able to enjoy the world,
I was a captive shackled in a span
Of fickle hopes that flagged till they were furled;
I well recall a lofty wall of rock
Gleaming alongside of Saint Vincent Port
At Cape Verde Island, a most charming shock
After a sea more endless than I sought;
So here and now, below the modest height
Of this Chigona mountain at our side,
As up I look, into the azure bright
Backing the granite whence the falcons glide,
I think: the far off days of long ago
Held less of joy than these and more of woe.*



We publish these two photographs by Douglas Cole with his permission.

One is the view from the pool on top of Chigona where John bathed, looking towards the cross in the distance, the other is taken on the summit of Chigona with flowers looking through to the granite memorial cross in the distance. *These images are produced as plain cards by JBMS.*

Holy Year of Mercy -

The Divine Mercy in the writings of John Bradburne

A short anthology by Didier Rance – Author of *Le Vagabond de Dieu*

‘The Church is celebrating the Holy Year of Mercy, a time of grace, peace, conversion and joy. It is meant for everyone: people of every age, from far and near. There are no walls or distances which can prevent the Father’s mercy from reaching and embracing us’. Pope Francis

What does John Bradburne tell us in his writing about God’s divine Mercy to help us live and deepen this Holy Year of Mercy proposed by the Catholic Church for each one of us? A simple look at his writings on the internet, compiled by David and Hilary Crystal on the website www.johnbradburnepoems.com shows that, far from ignoring this dimension of God’s love and His relation to creation, John felt himself very much concerned with this issue: we find mention of divine Mercy and the Merciful nearly two hundred times in his writings, either in his poetry or in his letters to family and friends.

A few of them are quoted here. With more thorough research one could find the exact sources for his conception and practice of God’s Mercy, but it is evident that the first and foremost source is the Bible, the words and deeds of God and Christ (some of his verses are quotations from the Bible). Other sources include the liturgy, Shakespeare (John quotes five times between 1968 and 1978 the verse from *The Merchant of Venice*: ‘The quality of mercy is not strained’), and the *Cloud of Unknowing*. Is the strong emphasis put on the dialectic between Mercy and Justice a part of his Anglican heritage? I leave it to theologians to explore this further.

“I’m a vessel of his Mercy”

First, John acknowledges throughout the years that he owes his whole life to divine Mercy:

I intend no presumption, but am full of hope by our dear Lord’s mercy to me. (1949)

I’m a vessel of his mercy; his astounding mercy (1952)

Through accidents and escapade

His Mercy followed me and saved

My soul and body (1956)

O have You a corner for such as I

In the homeliness of Your Hall?

I trust in Your Mercy, most Gracious King.

For I know you are Lord of all. (1958)

This life of mine will have been such an utter failure if nothing comes of this talent God has given me- setting aside the matter of personal salvation which Heaven’s Mercy may arrange. (1964)

A special gratitude towards Christ for His mercy flows from John’s heart

The King had had mercy and restfully placed

Me there as co-heir where He best was embraced:

His Cloud of Unknowing takes over the spell

And all that we do is to woo with an ‘el’ (1975)

And John presents the basis of his approach:

Whoever seeks for mercy must look hard

At five bright wounds, of heart and feet and

Hands (1977)

For John, Mercy is the heart of Jesus himself, he who “sits upon the mercy-seat” (1971) and “combines it with the Sun of Justice” (1968):

Yet Christ the Glorious would use

E’en such as me, to show the Jews

That mercy is His chief delight. (1952)

She gave us just by standing till the Fount

Of Mercy which is Jesu’s Sacred Heart

Was opened by a soldier with a lance. (1978)

The Sun of Justice clothe in the Mercy several times

And who is He whose Justice never swerves

From Mercy infinite as up it curves? (1971)

Justice and Mercy

John often puts the emphasis on divine Mercy combined and put in balance with divine Justice. He does it more often than with any other attributes to God, such as love, goodness or truth. The relationships between Justice and

Mercy that he highlights or proposes are numerous, sometimes familiar and sometimes surprising.

The Sun of Justice and the Lord of Mercy (1978)

The Sun of Justice shall with mercy shine (1967)

Mercy tempers justice with delight (1977)

Poetic is Justice belonging to God

Whose Mercy's poetic the more

And the man who is angling up there with a rod

Is perfect: complete to the core! (1979)

Mary and the divine Mercy

Quite often John associates Mary with divine Mercy, or asks for her Mercy, with a confidence born from his own life:

'Tis a Bard who's found God's mercy

Through the prayer of Heaven's Queen (1956)

...trust I to the hip

Of Mercy's Mother swaying me her child

To keep me in her Son by grace enisled. (1977)

Mary is for him first of all the Mother of Mercy, who "has become my Dame" (1971). She is also the "Muse of Mercy", the one "who reflects His Mercy", the one "who proffers Mercy's extra syllables" to please God, the "Queen of Jesus' mercy", and so on.

Her mercy towards us is a part of the dialectic between Justice and Mercy, a motherly role:

Mercy's Mother

Does not smother

Justice but she begs our Brother (1976)

Together with Mary, the Church in Heaven (and on earth) is associated with divine Mercy:

The Church triumphant, high above,

Pleads mercy for mankind below;

United by the bonds of love

To them whose miseries they know. (1955-1956)

The Mercy shown by God towards us, we also have to show others. John quotes the beatitude of the merciful. Mercy is in fact a duty for us:

Mercy obtain the man merciful may

Where accusers gain not in the Terrible Day. (1973)

In conclusion, the fruits of Mercy, according to John, are freedom ("**Mercy, us enisling, sets us free**", 1969), beauty, harmony and peace - good incentives for living this Holy Year of Mercy with all our hearts:

The symphony, that was so sorrowful,

Gives no more sighing sounds and sobs no more

Because the Lord of Mercy opens the door

Of His own Heart and makes men beautiful (1956)



Didier Rance with his daughter after his six week pilgrimage on foot from Nancy to St Peter's, Rome

A New Look Poetry Website

The poetry website has had a makeover. The old version, which has been with us for a decade, was hacked earlier this year, and we needed to upgrade its security. So we took up the suggestion of our brilliant web designer, Matous Havranek, to update the whole site - giving it a more contemporary look and making the 'search for a poem or word' function clearer and friendlier. The effect is to place John firmly at the centre of the Internet age. I love the result and hope everyone will enjoy the enhanced experience of browsing among the poems. And of course, as ever, I welcome feedback from browsers. *David Crystal* www.johnbradburnepoems.com

YOUR LETTERS

Archbishop Patrick Chakaipa called all his rural based clergy to a special meeting at Silveira House near Harare sometime in 1978.

This Social Training Centre near Harare is run by the Jesuits and is named after their first martyr Fr Silveira SJ who was killed in 1561.

I came in from the town of Marondera where I worked. Standing there I could see John Bradburne deep in conversation with Dr Luisa Guidotti his nursing Sister friend some paces away. She was killed in July 1979 at a checkpoint road block. There is a famous photograph of John helping to carry her coffin at her funeral. John was then serving the lepers at Mutemwa before he was shot on September 5th 1979.

We went in to the meeting to hear some breaking news, as we say today. Two German Jesuit missionaries, Fr Gregor Rickert SJ and Brother Bernard Lisson SJ had just been murdered at a mission in the north of the country. I knew Gregor very well. I attended that funeral at nearby Chishawasha Mission where the Musami Martyrs rest. Pasi pamdya zvakakomba, death is insatiable.

I never spoke much to John. I remember greeting him when he was a patient in St Anne's Hospital later that year. But I chat away to him now where he is now speaking on our behalf.

Fr Tom Russell OFM, Clonmel, Co Tipperary

John has helped me so many times, I am still getting help from every time I ask, he is there. Many thanks to John.

Please may I have some more booklets for my friends and church.

Theresa Donovan, Hereford

I am very touched by your work. I lived at Mutemwa hospital from 1974 until 1985. My aunt Ruby was a helper at the clinic. I was only 7 in 1974. I remember attending daily Mass with Baba John as we used to call him. He was a very kind and loving person. It was very sad when Baba John was murdered. They were difficult times in the country. I was too young to understand Baba John. I am not surprised at all that miracles are happening through his work. I feel very privileged to have known him personally.

I was very impressed when I last visited

Zimbabwe, I went to Mutemwa tracing my childhood. Things have so improved. It was good to see some of the patients who still remember me and my sister.

I would really like to give back to Mutemwa. I owe a lot of what I am today to my experience living at Mutemwa. My aunt Ruby and Baba John taught me to love. I now work as a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist Nurse at a Community Mental Health Team in London. Keep up the good work.

Perpetua Robert

I am writing once again to say a thank you to John for prayers answered.

My friend's daughter, her husband and their two children have just moved in to their new home.

We have all prayed for a successful outcome to getting a new place to live. They are a lovely family and were living in Preston in a two bedroom house, and needed to have an extra bedroom.

It has taken a while, but thank God and John for his intercession, all has come right for them. Can you please send me a few booklets on John's life. I didn't have one to give them, but I did however give them the novena prayer, which we have all said faithfully.

MM

My husband and I have been praying to John Bradburne for a while, for our grown up son and his family to come back to the Catholic Church. As John is such an inspiration to us, we thought he would help if we persisted in our prayers. We had nearly given up hope of a renewal of their faith, but never gave up praying to John for his intercession in the matter.

Recently we were told by some friends that our son, his wife and the children had been regularly visiting a parish in the Diocese, and they had all been attending Sunday Mass there with their children each week, in fact they were now active members of that parish.

We are so delighted with this news that we wanted to tell you what had happened, and for others to know that John is a powerful intercessor who has helped our family, and helped to bring about a reunion in our family when we had become distant from each other. Thank you John!

Morris family, Cambridge

Memories of Mutemwa

by friend of John Bradburne, Mary Hayes

For over 20 years I had been promising myself a holiday in Zimbabwe. This would give me the opportunity to see the 3 commercial courses I established there and to visit Mutemwa again. I planned my departure from the UK to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the death of John Bradburne, the friend of lepers at Mutemwa.

I first met John in 1970 when I accompanied Fr Dove (John's devoted friend) to Mutemwa. These were the early days, primitive days in the life of the lepers at the camp. With the arrival of John this was changing, not only did John open his heart to receive Christ's love, he used the power of that love in his work caring and living with the lepers. They were quick to sense that they had a great friend among them and soon called him "baba John".

From time to time I would visit John and 'his' lepers, along with John's great friends Kit and Arthur Law who made frequent visits in their car loaded with goodies. It was evident to all who visited John and the community that a transformation was in progress. Improvements were being made to replace the dark and dismal huts, and to increase their meagre food allowance. The lepers would crawl from their huts to greet John, and he would encourage them to enjoy the beauty of the mountains, the trees and above all each other. John would tell them "you are beautiful in the eyes of God who loves you deeply". A purpose and a meaning was returning to their lives. John put a sparkle in to the heart and the life of the

people there, in spite of their pain there was laughter. In September 1979 all who knew John were shocked, if not devastated, to hear of his death. He had been murdered near his beloved leper camp.

I am now moving through time to 1999 and September 4th, the eve of the 20th anniversary of John's death. I went to Chishawasha to visit John's grave and to pray. It was easy to pray so close to his earthly remains. I carried my own petitions, and petitions from people who got to know and love John only after his death. Before leaving John's resting place I added (as I always do) a few prayers as a gift to him for his own use.

Very early on the 5th September I set off for Mutemwa to join thousands of pilgrims from all over Zimbabwe who had arrived the evening before to climb Chigona (John's favourite mountain overlooking the settlement) by candlelight and to pray together. All night their voices joined the sweet singing of the lepers to pierce the skies and reach to the heavenly Kingdom. As dawn broke, Mass was celebrated before the pilgrims began to descend and many made their way for a second Mass.

I attended the 8.30 am Mass held in a field adjacent to Mutemwa. Many priests concelebrated Christ's most precious gift to us, Mass and Holy Communion. Lepers who could struggle along did so. Two lepers came in recently donated wheelchairs. A note of praise and grateful thanks from the lepers and friends of the John Bradburne Memorial Society must go to some prisoners in Parkhurst Prison and to CHAD for making donations like this possible.

Over nine thousand people received Holy Communion before making their way to the many coaches, cars and trucks for the return journey to the four corners of Zimbabwe and beyond.

After the residents had their lunch, I accompanied by Fr Dove and a few friends, visited them with our basket of treats and sweets. My restricted greetings in the Shona language were quickly overcome by getting involved with them. A touching moment was



Father Dove, John Bradburne & Mary Hayes with Hura

when a leper gave me a warm hug- there was no need for words. This loving action spoke louder and clearer than any words. We enjoyed our time in their company before making our way to the beautiful little thatched Chapel designed by John's friend Arthur Law. It was a great joy for me to be at the official opening and blessing of the Chapel in 1971.

Later in the afternoon I, accompanied by three friends, climbed Chigona Mountain trying to keep to the path that John would have used on his frequent visits to pray up there. Reciting the rosary and the stations of the Cross (marked out on the rock) we made our way to the top. Near the top of the mountain is a large granite cross erected in John's memory by a man whose eyesight was restored after being blinded in an accident. We knelt to reflect for a few moments on the twelfth station of the Way of the Cross. I reflected on pilgrims making their journey through life following Christ along their Way of the Cross until the tenth station. It is here most of us leave Christ and only the chosen few accompany Him to the twelfth station and die a martyr's death, John Bradburne was one of those chosen few. On rising our guide said "look at the bee". Hopefully it was a sign that John was with us in spirit!

The following morning I joined the lepers in their little Chapel for Mass. No one could fail to notice that it was not leprosy spreading here but love, lots of love and caring people keeping the spirit of John alive. I then visited John's tin hut, his earthly home. On the wall was a photograph



Leaving John's home at Mutemwa after a few prayers

of John taken some days after his death. It portrayed a picture of a man at peace. When I reflected on all the wonderful work that John did while on earth I could not help thinking "these are priceless treasures that accompanied him to the Kingdom when he closed his eyes to sleep in peace".

I left John's hut and as I turned to bid farewell, a great peace and calm had spread its mantle around Mutemwa. The sun was beginning to set as I took my last look at the lovely little houses, each with a window. I stood in silent tribute to the many friends of Mutemwa whose generosity has made this 'luxury' possible. The lepers not only see or sense the setting sun but through their little window can welcome the dawn of a new day. My closing wish to all, is that as we journey through life we, too, will experience some of the peace and serenity of Mutemwa.

Your Continuing Help

Please do continue to keep in touch with JBMS.

It is important that those who have personal memories about John Bradburne keep in touch so we can keep John's memory alive. Please tell us about them.

For those who hear about John's remarkable life, and for those who receive help from him, we would be delighted to receive your messages and responses to enable to spread the word further afield.

We are most grateful to our friends over the years who have remained in contact, and who help to keep the work going to support Mutemwa Care Centre, where John dedicated the final years of his life.

We especially pray that John Bradburne's life will be honoured and spread by the Church in order to inspire others who similar to John sought to find their vocation by God's Good Grace. If your parish is interested in receiving our free booklets please let us know and we can send these to you. Email: info@johnbradburne.com.