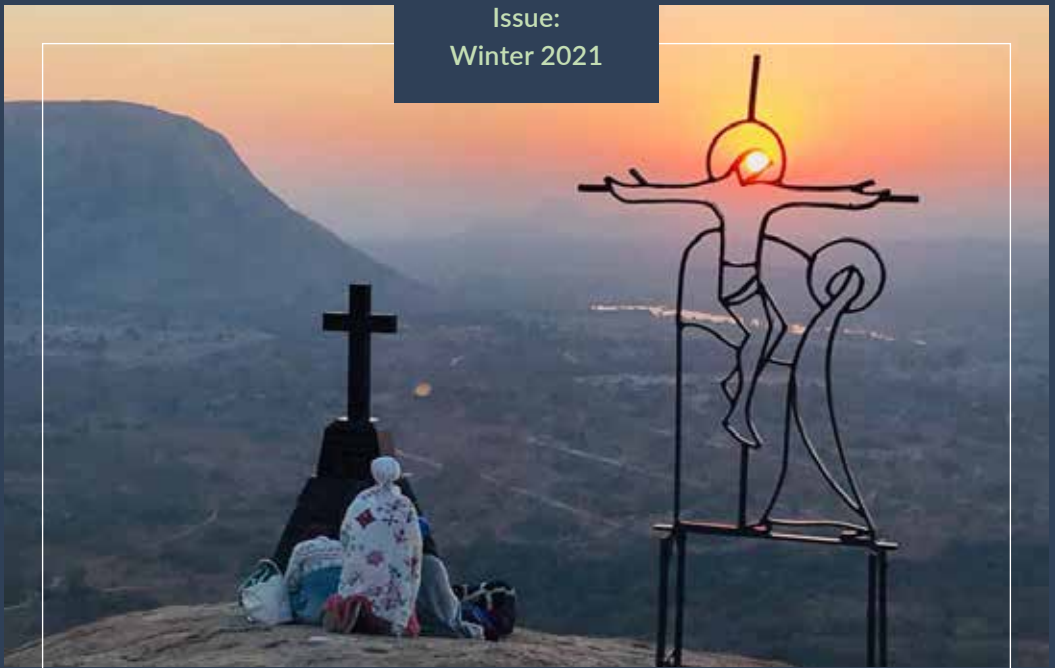


Issue:  
Winter 2021



# JBMS NEWSLETTER



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# CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

## Centenary Concert

On the 25th September 2021 at The Holy Name of Jesus Church in Manchester, JBMS held the first ever concert in honour of John Bradburne's life. World renowned composers and musicians took part in an afternoon of pure musical joy and wondrous poetry. Composers set to music some of John's poetry that was performed by the Bury Choral Society, the Didsbury String Quartet, Adam Beattie, Gabriel Moreno and the Zimbabwe Catholic Community Choir, alongside poetry readings by Professor David Crystal and Reverend Rod Garner and many more.

The eclectic mix of different sounds from the African singing, drumming and dancing to the classical string quartet to the folk guitarist all set the scene for a wonderfully enjoyable musical extravaganza.

Thank you to all of those who came and a very special thank you to the composers and performers who made the event such a memorable occasion.

To watch the full length recording or highlights of the concert go to our John Bradburne Memorial Society YouTube Channel. [https://youtu.be/\\_RoAlb5f2ec](https://youtu.be/_RoAlb5f2ec)



Helen Anne Gregory and The Bury Choral Society



Gabriel Moreno (Left) Adam Beattie (Right)



Zimbabwe Catholic Community Choir  
England & Wales



The Didsbury String Quartet



Joseph Buckmaster (tenor)  
George Shrapnell (composer)

## A GIFT THAT GROWS

Thanks to you wonderful donors, we have raised enough money to be able to buy 100 Mango Trees to be planted at Mutemwa. The community are so thrilled that they will have fresh mangoes which can be dried, stored and eaten all year round and can be sold at markets creating a vital income for the settlement.

## Pilgrimage Walk



On Saturday September 11th, a group of more than 30 pilgrims climbed Cross Fell in Cumbria to commemorate John Bradburne who used to climb here in his youth. The group included local Anglicans and Catholics as well as those from other parts of Cumbria and Lancashire and as far as Stockton, Liverpool, Croydon and Colchester. Importantly, we had 3 pilgrims born in Zimbabwe. Bishop Paul Swarbrick, the Bishop of Lancaster came with us and said prayers before we set off, and on reaching the top.

Cross Fell is England's highest hill outside the Lake District. Just 5 miles from Skirwith where John Bradburne's earliest years were spent. As is often the case, Cross Fell conjured up thick mist and a cold wind but, mercifully no rain, and we all reached the top and got safely, though soggily, down again. The climb took 6 hours with a total distance of 12 km and involved a climb of 700m. It was a wonderful day, thank you to all who were involved.

*Gavin Young*

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## 2022 Pilgrimage Walk

Next year we are planning on organising a pilgrimage walk up Cross Fell on the 18th June 2022 in celebration of John Bradburne's birthday. Please get in touch with Kate on 07979 187498 or [info@johnbradburne.com](mailto:info@johnbradburne.com) if you would like to be involved and reserve your place.



# JOHN BRADBURNE'S INTERCESSION

## BY ALEX WALKER



I can't remember exactly when I heard about John Bradburne, but it may have been when reading something in the Diocesan newspaper or picking up a pamphlet at the back of church. I did know that John was on the road to Beatification and that he was a Servant of God and that he had been born in Skirwith, Cumbria. All he needed was a couple of miracles to promote his cause for sanctity. That's when I started praying earnestly to him after I was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer on the 16th January 2019. I went to see my local GP on the 8th January 2019 after my wife, Jan, badgered me to go. I only had a lingering cough and cold that I couldn't get rid of and as soon as I went to see him he gave me a course of antibiotics and steroids! I thought wow, I wasn't expecting that. I thought he would say, don't worry it will run its course and antibiotics won't do anything for a virus. So, I thought why not give him something to really get his teeth into, as he said to me, is there anything else I can help you with? Well, I said, I seem to be getting up in the night a little more frequently than I would prefer. Have you had your prostate checked, he asked? I said no. Well, pop up on the couch and let's take a look. Oh dear, that doesn't feel good, I will need to refer you for a two week wait referral. My heart sank. Immediately I thought cancer or at best an enlarged prostate.

On the 10th January 2019 I went for a blood test, specifically for a PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) test. On the 15th January 2019 I rang for my blood results and was told by reception that my PSA was 457. I thought there must be some mistake and the decimal point had been missed off as the normal range is less than 5. So, I asked the receptionist if she could print it out and I would come straight away and collect it. Sure enough when I picked up the printout it said 457 and the doctor had made

a note on the print out stating normal range for a man of your age, 4-5.

So, armed with my printout I attended the urology consultation with Dr Nazeem on the 16th January 2019. As I was called into the room, I presented the printout to Dr Nazeem who said to me, I don't need to see that, I have seen them already. By the tone of his voice I realised then that things were not good. I'm afraid to tell you that you have advanced prostate cancer and it has probably spread to your lymph nodes and bones. You should get your affairs in order. At that point, the blood drained from my face and I thought I was going to faint. The nurse said I will fetch you some water. Do you want your wife to come inside? My wife Jan, had been sitting outside with our grandson whom we normally took swimming on a Wednesday. As soon as Jan came in she could see from the palour of my face that something was not right and even more so when Dr Nazeem got up out of his chair and gave her a hug saying, I am so sorry. Jan was then told that I had advanced prostate cancer and would be sent for a CT and Bone Scan to see how far the cancer had spread. He offered me a biopsy there and then which I agreed to immediately without even thinking. I was still trying to take it all in. We were both in total shock. It all seemed very final. There didn't seem to be any doubt on the part of Dr Nazeem who must have diagnosed prostate cancer hundreds of times. No letting me down gently like, it looks like you may have advanced prostate cancer but before we can say for certain how far it may have spread we will need to send you for further tests. We both left the room stunned and went to chat to our assigned cancer nurse specialist, Michelle.

It was after my diagnosis that I immediately turned to John Bradburne for support. I also requested the Sacrament of the Sick on Sunday 27th January and asked for the prayers of all those present. Without the power of prayer we will not be healed or given the strength for whatever lies ahead. On the 30th January 2019 I went for a CT and Bone Scan.

On the 11th February 2019, there was a Deanery Mass at St Joseph's at which the Sacrament of the Sick would be celebrated. Again, I took advantage of being fortified with this Sacrament as I knew that the road ahead would be a difficult one, not just for me but for Jan and the family.





On the 12th February 2019, I had my second appointment with Dr Nazeem regarding my scan results. I am delighted to inform you, he said, as we sat down in the room, that the cancer has not spread to your lymph nodes or bones, but has just escaped outside the capsule of the prostate and into the pelvic area. All this was very good news and a far cry from my initial diagnosis which suggested that I should prepare to meet my Maker. There were plenty of tears of joy and relief. Even Dr Nazeem seemed disbelieving when he gave me the news that the cancer had not spread.

Notwithstanding all that, on the 17th July 2019 I was invited to speak with a doctor about end of life care. Do I want to be resuscitated, where would I prefer to die, who is my next of kin? This conversation, necessary though it is, certainly brought it all home to me of the possibility of death.

Some time later when I had one of my regular three monthly reviews with either oncology or

urology, one of the doctors said to me, Oh Mr Walker, I remember you. I was at the MDT meeting (multi disciplinary meeting) when we were looking at your scan results and couldn't believe there were no secondary cancers to be seen. It was quite remarkable. All of us spent quite a long time making sure we hadn't missed anything. From the moment the doctor said that, I knew that the power of prayer, the intercession of John Bradburne and the Sacrament of the Sick had all played a part in protecting me from this terrible disease that affects 47,500 men every year.

After my course of chemotherapy and radiotherapy which took almost a year to complete, I am now on three monthly hormone injections for three years and since my diagnosis my PSA has been undetectable. It doesn't mean I am "cured" but it does mean that the cancer is under control and will hopefully give me a longer life expectancy.

Whenever, I pray I ask the help of John. Even when I am sat on the loo in the middle of the night, which was often early on, I would ask the help of John. He has been a great source of spiritual comfort to me throughout the course of my diagnosis and treatment.

Why did the scans show no secondaries? Who knows? It confounded the medics. I like to believe it is definitely the power of prayer, the Sacrament of the Sick and the intercession of John Bradburne.

# RADIO MARIA ENGLAND



Radio Maria England has partnered with the John Bradburne Memorial Society to present the poetry and work of John Bradburne. There are a series of programmes sharing the great work that John Bradburne did in Zimbabwe with the people who are supporting efforts for his canonisation.

Interviewees include Teresa Yonge (John's niece) on how her uncle has continued to influence and inspire her in her life. Professor David Crystal presents the Poetry of John Bradburne having created a complete poetry website: [www.johnbradburnepoems.com](http://www.johnbradburnepoems.com), whilst Kate Macpherson, Secretary of JBMS, talks on John's Cause process.

To listen to these interviews, go to: [www.radiomariaengland.uk/september-spotlight-celebrating-john-bradburne/](http://www.radiomariaengland.uk/september-spotlight-celebrating-john-bradburne/) or call us and we can send you the link.

Thank you Radio Maria for your support of John and JBMS this year, we really appreciate your coverage.



# PROTON BAKERY

Thank you to Proton Bakery in Harare, Zimbabwe who have generously promised to donate 120 loaves of bread a week indefinitely to the Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre. We are so grateful for this amazing gift, which will really benefit all the community living there.



Gift (patient at Mutemwa) in front of the Proton lorry



Fr Linous & Brother Raymond accepting the bread donation from Proton

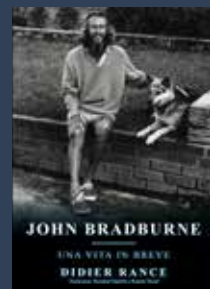
## NEW BOOKS

For the first time, JBMS has published two new books that will give Italian readers the chance to get to know the life and poetry of John Bradburne.

The first publication entitled: "John Bradburne: Una vita in breve" is an extensive synopsis of the biography written in french by Didier Rance, translated by Renato Tomei and Rosanna Masiola.

The second book entitled: "John Bradburne. 100 poesie Del Beato Pellegrino sulle vie del cielo" edited and translated by Renato Tomei and Rosanna Masiola. The book includes 100 most representative John Bradburne poems.

To buy go to [www.johnbradburne.com](http://www.johnbradburne.com) or buy using the items list enclosed.



# TWAM & WELL4AFRICA

## TWAM Tools with a Mission

Finally, after a very long journey from the UK to Zimbabwe the donated tools of school books, computers and equipment that TWAM kindly sent arrived at Mutemwa.

Thank you to TWAM for enabling all these reconditioned tools available to our community.



Primary age children receiving their books



The older children getting their books and stationary



Donated sewing machines from TWAM being used by the patients & community.



A huge thank you to the Secular Franciscans who have helped us drill a borehole at Mutemwa. After a lot of excavation they have found a reasonable and sustainable source of fresh water. This constant source of water is a vital lifeline to the entire community living at Mutemwa.

## GIFT A CHICKEN

This project is now up and running very well. We managed to buy 300 layers to produce eggs and more chickens to be bred for meat and to be sold to generate an income. The birds are thriving and have started to generate a profitable income for Mutemwa as well as sustaining them with constant food.



Mbare (on left) and Kapfupi (on right) are resident leprosy patients at Mutemwa who help out with the chickens.

# SALLY READ



Sally Read is an author and poet and John Bradburne supporter. Her most recent non fiction book, *Annunciation*, is published by Ignatius Press and her latest poetry collection, *Dawn of this Hunger*, is published by Angelico Press later this year. Sally lives near Rome with her family, and is attached as poet to the Hermitage of the Three Holy Hierarchs, which is based in Saskatoon, Canada. In honour of John's 100th year, JBMS asked Sally to write a poem.

**On a Photo of John Bradburne**  
*for his one hundredth birthday*

You stand steady,  
habit darker than branches,  
plimsoled feet planted,  
eyes shut as though waiting  
for rain.

Rain to patter dead nerves,  
delineate ghost fingers' prickling  
shapes, to sluice  
the surface of us

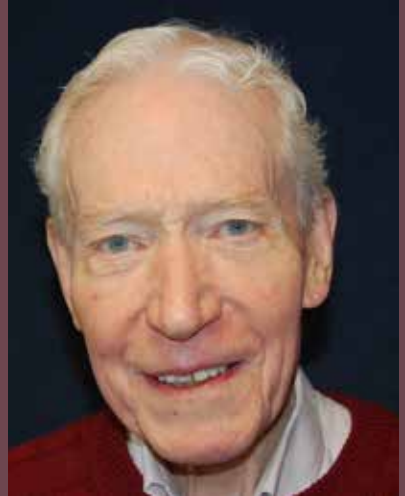
let us know  
form as you know yourself  
in the drenching  
of God's gaze.

In Mutemwa  
you wait in a psalm,  
like a hallway,  
in a prayer that coats us  
like oil, heals us  
where we're torn—  
all our histories in pieces,  
and your life:

nothing is whole,  
but the long-gone  
movement of your hands,  
and your prayer  
that still comes,  
like a longed-for torrent  
busting loose  
honey from acacia's burnt  
leaves;

you in your  
stillness, bursting  
with the long-rooted lines,  
the intractable flight,  
of a prophecy.

# RIP



Father Michael O'Halloran SJ sadly passed away at the Jesuit Community in Boscombe, Dorset, on 23rd September 2021, at the age of 91. Members of JBMS will already know of Michael's links with John (and particularly his presence at John's funeral), but it might be of interest to fill in a few details of Michael's life either side of his time in Harare as Rector of St George's College (1977-83). That was one of a succession of posts of responsibility that he held: a teacher of French, then superior at St Beuno's Retreat Centre in North Wales; Rector of Stonyhurst for nine years; and Parish Priest at Farm Street Church in Central London from 1998-2004. Michael was good company, precise, cultured, and an outstandingly faithful and caring correspondent (provided his fountain pen was to hand - no keyboard ever cluttered his desk). His very active pastoral ministry ended with a crippling stroke while saying Mass at the Sacred Heart, Wimbledon, and he lived with gracious determination for the last three years of his life at Corpus Christi Jesuit Community, Boscombe. May he rest in peace.

*Kevin Fox SJ*



# KNEEL WALK AT WALSINGHAM



As it was impossible to be at Mutemwa this year due to the travel restrictions, Teresa Yonge (John Bradburne's niece) was inspired to bear witness through faith, and take John's Cause and Mutemwa to Our Lady in Walsingham in Norfolk. Teresa 'kneel walked' the Pilgrim's Way, each day for three days leading up to John's Anniversary of his death, on the 5th September.

The idea of this challenge of walking on her knees was a gift for John on his 100th Birthday year and on the Anniversary of his death. The kneel walk was a reminder to Teresa in a very small way, of Christ's suffering carrying the Cross.

She started her kneel walk early on 3rd September at the Pilgrims Way in Walsingham. She got on to her knees and walked the mile route, ending up at the Slipper Chapel at the Catholic Shrine some 3 and half hours later. She continued this 'kneel walk' saying her own prayers to Our Lady asking for her intercession

to take John's Cause for canonisation forward. On her final day, the Anniversary of John's death, 5th September, she was accompanied by two Zimbabweans and John Bradburne devotees, Harmless and Helena Pamburai who did the walk with Teresa on their knees, praying the rosary in Shona, alongside three of Teresa's friends from her prayer group. The end of the kneel walk finished at the Catholic Shrine for a special Mass celebrated by the Franciscan Grey Friar, Father Colin Mary.

Well done Teresa for your sheer determination to do this amazing declaration of faith, despite the sores and blistering on your knees you did a wonderful job and we have no doubt that John and Our Lady were with you

EWTN Great Britain very kindly filmed the whole of Teresa's kneel walk and have made a wonderful film on YouTube called 'A Quest for John's Cause' which can be seen on our John Bradburne Memorial YouTube channel under playlists - EWTN Interviews. Do have a look it is a very inspiring story.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5R11z--N\\_38&list=LLcGjYYMDHb4vQStf63\\_PKDg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5R11z--N_38&list=LLcGjYYMDHb4vQStf63_PKDg)



# JOHN BRADBURNE AND MUTEMWA

## A STORY OF A MUTUAL LOVING FRIENDSHIP BY DIDIER RANCE

John didn't visit Mutemwa in March 1969 with the committed idea to stay there. The toss of a coin after an Ave Maria decided for him, and we know from the important 17th of March 1969 poem, written just after his return to Chishawasha, that he had to entrust himself to Mary to confirm the decision:

*... I did not ever dream that I might go  
And dwell amidst a flock of eighty such  
Nor did I scheme towards it ever, No  
The prospect looms not to my liking much;  
Lepers warmly to treat as human beings  
Is easy to the theorist afar,  
Near to my heart from bondage be their freeings,  
May it be flesh not stone, O Morning Star!  
Miriam, shine, sweet Mistress, in thy name  
Salvation wake, lepers make leap, unlame!*

When John first arrived at Mutemwa, his first decision was to tell the patients they no longer needed to put a bag or a blanket over their heads while talking to him. They had been forced before, because they were considered by the previous warden too ugly to be looked at with their disfigured faces. His arrival was however welcomed with mixed feelings. When he introduced himself to them, Coletta Mafuta was struck by the fact that on his very first day John "was greeting us, very happy" and that "he hugged us as a brother", but Ruka Takawira Dzangare memories are quite different and may be more representative of the group: "When Baba John first came, we thought this chirungu (white man) had gone out of his head".



How did this place of darkness and death become an oasis of peace, songs, prayers and faith, and soon of joy, for example "Stephano - a very holy man with no fingers; one wooden leg, a wasted other leg, no toes and an angelic countenance — he radiates the peace and still joy of God" as wrote John. The mutual "taming" of John and Mutemwa residents was something of a miracle. John arrived to run the centre with no skills either in medical care or in administration to deal with a group of some 80 people affected with leprosy. As John would write later, the leprosy patients had been "both dragooned and despised" for years; having been treated as animals, they had developed like them habits of fear and mistrust and one after another they began to trust him. The miracle is

that this happened, in large part in a few weeks. Less than one month after his arrival, a daily schedule for Mutemwa life was settled by him. John dedicated his whole daytime for the Centre and the nighttime for God and poetry (and some sleep). John devoted some specific times for God during the day and anytime he was needed for the ill or dying during the nights. It is impressive to discover that there is virtually no change between this daily schedule established by John before the end of his first month in Mutemwa and the one described by Father Gibbs at least six years later.

John's days were fully dedicated to the patients, as manager of the Centre, but also as nurse, cook, gardener, supplier of what they needed, choir master, prayer-leader, go-between, counsellor and even undertaker (and later as protector and fighter for them). An older leprosy patient would tell after his death: "If I told you what John did here, I would burst into tears. He slept with the dying, reading them the New Testament. He gave us his own food. He dug our graves and wrapped our bodies in his only blanket." John started to build good personal relations with each one of Mutemwa residents. Two weeks after his arrival he knew all their names and, two more weeks later, had learned enough about their personalities, and habits of each of to write a cycle of poems devoted to all of them, with observations on the particularities of each one! He had his favourites among the residents of Mutemwa, but the richness of his relationship with every one of them was boundless, as is testified by many witnesses, and also by his own poems. Quickly nicknamed Baba (father) John by them, he was a father to each and to all at the same time, and as well as a brother, friend, confidant, consoler and servant.

In this relationship of service towards his leprosy friends, John became more and more aware that he was not only bringing aid and support to them but also receiving from them, from their courageous, resilient dignified and, for several their holy attitude towards life and sufferings. He even reversed the debt between him and them:

*I feel like a usurper in this place,  
A person having little more to give  
Than foreign manners and a foreign face*

*And knowledge bare of how they fare and live;  
Vast fields of earthly hope are far behind  
And wide is their experience of woe.*

*Lepers - they make a mighty mystery  
Excruating mainly for themselves...  
If in my place you stood with these at hand  
By God's good grace you'd better understand.*

Was this life serving the lepers easy for him? No. For Fr John Gough, "He was just as unwilling as the rest of us. It is not a nice disease and yet John totally gave himself to these people. I stayed at the side of a bath where he was washing an old man. I don't think you would like that sort of thing but it has to be done, and John had to do it". And when Mona Smith went to take leave of him after years of regular stay and helping, the last image she had was John helping a dying woman leper, cradling her head on his knees, holding onto her hand as she breathed her last breath, she noticed "Death is never a pleasant sight, but the death of a dirty, smelly, deformed creature is repellent. That is when John's saintliness was really apparent". And John's example was contagious. At the beginning most of the visitors were repelled by the sight of the people suffering from leprosy, but they changed and his friends, old and new, shared his joy to be with the Mutemwa community.

Nor was John blinded by his love for them when he noticed that some of Mutemwa patients behaved in unacceptable ways. He fought against heavy drinking, promiscuity, cutting of trees and branches, lack of religious fervour. He was more than once disappointed, but lost heart only once, in a 1976 (out of thousands of poems written at Mutemwa) :

*You damned ungrateful, cranky, rotten mob,  
You whining, scheming, stealthy, healthless brood,  
You crawlers to the high and mighty Nob,  
You broad disdain, you deep ingratitude...*

In fact, John and the Mutemwa residents were constituting a family, with even its own language, as noticed by Fr Fidelis Mukonori; according to him, they spoke together in a special idiom he describes as "Mutemwa shona", which had to be learnt by others to understand the patients and their relationship with John.

What was the secret of this loving friendship? I think it was this, for John there were no leprosy patients, but only Peter, Veronica, Joshua or Hanza, each one with their own suffering, of course, but above all with their own personality. John didn't look first at the disease but at the person a brother or sister in humanity and equally son or daughter of God. He thus held Peter Katsandanga for a

saint: blind, deaf-mute, without a nose, without fingers - neither on the hands nor on the feet - he was almost a walking skeleton but he often smiled and then he was transformed, serene, blissful. Or Veronica Karugu, once a beautiful woman, her face horribly disfigured by leprosy and suffering so much that no one had ever seen her smile. One day John said to her in front of everyone: "When you arrive in Heaven, Veronica, oh! how beautiful you will be!" So naturally then everyone saw it the same way and Veronica smiled for the first time! She would become his assistant, finding the words that gave peace to the dying ones.

What does John teach us here? That Christian love does not see the other through adjectives, qualifications, or tags, but as only unique people. Acting in such a way, John teaches us also about God who, according to a friend of Pope St John Paul II André Frossard, "does not count human beings by masses, like the ideologues or battalion leaders; he does not put them in a pot like herring; he only knows how to count one, you, me, anyone of us". This secret of John's, basis of a mutual loving friendship, was shared by others who worked with him in Mutemwa. Among them, the Servant of God Luisa Guidotti wrote these lines which express John's experience as well as hers:

"At first, these poor people appear disgusting with their sores, their stumps, their deformed faces. Later on, one enters into God's light, achieving real friendship with them. They become loving people and one notices their patient resignation. No longer do you love them for God's sake, nor because they help one to give in charity, but because they become one's own dear friends. I hope you can understand what I mean. It is a wonderful experience"



# NEW ADMINISTRATOR AT MUTEMWA

We are excited to announce that Brother Raymond Kondo is the new administrator at Mutemwa. He is a Lay Franciscan Brother and has a master's degree in Childhood Studies and Child Rights. Before joining Mutemwa, he worked at Caritas in Harare. Brother Raymond is working tirelessly getting projects implemented and dealing with the day to day running at Mutemwa. Thank you Brother for all you are doing.



## ST FRANCIS LEPROSY GUILD (SFLG)



The Mutemwa community will always be known for the ministry of its former warden, John Bradburne, who gave up his life to care for people with leprosy. John followed in the footsteps of SFLG's patron saint and the founder of his Order, St Francis of Assisi. He embraced people with leprosy at a time when people with the disease were more ostracised, more outcast, and more vilified than even today. "We are delighted to support Mutemwa" said SFLG's Chief Executive Officer, Clare McIntosh. "People with leprosy are so often abandoned by society. With no social services, a diagnosis of leprosy often means a life of begging on the streets to survive. It is truly heart-breaking." Thanks to a very generous donation from SFLG, we have been able to repair water pipes and install a solar pump at Mutemwa to access water from a dam nearby to use on projects, such as watering vegetables and providing fresh water for the farm animals.



## NEW ITEMS FOR SALE

### Christmas Cards

This year one of our JBMS members, Peter Cain, has donated his beautiful painting of 'An owl on a snowy evening', which we have turned into Christmas cards.



£5 Pack of 5 cards with envelopes.

### Holy Spirit Crosses

These are laser cut wooden cross with gold highlights and have been blessed on John's headband. They measure 5.5 inches high and are sent in a little bag with a prayer card.



Priced at £4.50 per cross. The perfect Christmas gift this year.



# THIS CHRISTMAS GIVE THE GIFT OF LEARNING TO A CHILD



**A GENERATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN ARE MISSING OUT ON AN EDUCATION. JUST £90 WILL PROVIDE 1 YEARS EDUCATION FOR A CHILD.**

Education in Zimbabwe is not a right, it's a privilege that many families can't afford. Help JBMS change the narrative for the children at Mutemwa.

**NOT ALL CHILDREN WANT TOYS AT CHRISTMAS TIME, SOME JUST WANT TO BE ABLE TO GO TO SCHOOL.**

**Donate now: [www.justgiving.com/campaign/JBMSXMAS](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/JBMSXMAS)**

# CAUSE FOR BEATIFICATION

BY DR ENRICO SOLINAS



As postulator for the cause of John Bradburne's Beatification and Canonisation, I wanted to give an update on the progress of the cause of the centenary of his birth.

As everyone was able to see and hear, on September 5, 2019, a somewhat "miraculous" event took place, namely the opening of the cause of beatification and canonisation in Zimbabwe of the Servant of God, John Randal Bradburne. It was not easy to arrange this opening, which John's niece Celia had tried to make happen some decades before but never having success. In the end thanks to her faith and John's help this did happen even if she witnessed it from Heaven. Together with John on this great occasion were 15,000 people, 480 including Bishops, Priests and Deacons along with songs and prayers.

The Ecclesiastical Tribunal which was installed by His Excellency Most Reverend Archbishop Robert Ndlovu of Harare proceeded to interrogate various testimonies that had been reported by me. Archbishop Ndlovu has also installed two Theological Censors who will analyse all the texts written by John from the Theological and Catholic Orthodox point of view. This work will not be an easy undertaking as you will know John was one of England's most prolific authors with a tremendous amount of writing. All the works that will be examined were composed by John after his conversion to Catholicism.

There was also the appointment of three members who will be part of the Historical-Archival Commission who will have to examine the figure of John from the historical point of view and will visit all the places (public, private and other libraries, in which documents may have been kept) concerning John Bradburne. Both Theological Censors and the members of the Historical-Archival Commission will then have to draw up a report in which the results of the studies carried out will be indicated. Didier Rance, deacon of the French Catholic Church, has been appointed head of the Historical Commission and is author of numerous publications including the official biography of John "Le Vagabond de Dieu" which several years ago carried out a full-bodied and careful examination of the figure of John and his movements after his conversion to Catholicism.

I have been very impressed by the John Bradburne Memorial Society's efforts to commemorate the centenary event of John's birth, both with the wonderful idea of reading one of his poems for 100 days as well as the concert performed in Manchester which, unfortunately and with great regret I was unable to attend given the critical European situation with regard to Covid 19.

I thought it important that you know that John's cause is moving forward with solicitude. Thank you to the help from Fr Moyo my Vice-Postulator in Zimbabwe and Kate Macpherson at JBMS, without whom I would not have known how. We are working on other initiatives to honour in the most appropriate way the wonderful figure of John and his holiness. I greet you with great affection and I take this opportunity to wish all of you and the readers of this newsletter the best wishes for a Holy Christmas and a peaceful 2022.

*Enrico Solinas*

# PLANS FOR MUTEMWA

We are excited to announce that JBMS are starting the planning process of building a chapel at Mutemwa in honour of John. With the help of the Archbishop of Harare we are hoping to construct a structure that will be able to accomodate all of the community who live at Mutemwa and for the many pilgrims who visit as

a place of worship. Currently the chapel onsite which John worshipped in, is so small it cannot even fit all the patients. It is so important to JBMS that there is a place where people can go and contemplate and pray at Mutemwa, especially as John's following becomes larger. Watch this space for more news.



The chapel at Mutemwa, where John used to pray

## ZOOM TALK

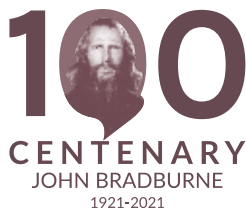
Philip Berthoud, John's godson will be giving a zoom talk on his latest cd 'The Thought Expressed', where he set some of John's beautiful religious poetry to music. Do tune in on Thursday 13th January 2021 at 1930 (UK time) to the zoom meeting.

[www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)

Meeting ID: 812 4256 1234

Passcode: 249604





## Support the John Bradburne Memorial Society (JBMS)

As we emerge from the most challenging period of a generation, please consider supporting our work with the Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre in Zimbabwe in honour of John.

JBMS work tirelessly to be able to relieve people at Mutemwa, who are suffering sickness, hardship and distress from leprosy or other causes, through the provision of supplementary food, medicines, medical care, and shelter, with the objective of improving their conditions of life.

To learn more about our work visit [www.johnbradburne.com](http://www.johnbradburne.com)  
or call us on 07979 187498.

To see the vast collection of John Bradburne 's poetry visit  
[www.johnbradburnepoems.com](http://www.johnbradburnepoems.com)

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