

**The Mount**

Nearing the end of an extraordinary Pilgrimage to the 'Holy Land', our Church Group started out very early one morning.

We eventually arrived at the base of the 'Mount of Beatitudes'. I remember looking at the small hill and I realised that several people would not be able to walk up to the top. However, fortunately, the coach followed the winding road up to the top of the hill where we were met by an expanse of green and rust coloured grass a little larger than the local 'Churchill Gardens'

Because of our hectic schedule, The Rev. Peter Lock, our Vicar, encouraged us to meet in the Open Air Chapel within fifteen minutes. 'Over there', he said, and pointed to a few rocks and stones which formed a small enclave in the distance and to the left of the main Church.

With a few minutes to spare I chose to go inside the adjacent Church, built in 1937 by Franciscans and appropriately called the Church of the Beatitudes. I was drawn to the lectern and noticed a large Bible, similar to the one normally resting on our lectern at BPC. On closer inspection I realised that the large book was a Psalter, opened to the page showing the 'Beatitudes'. It had obviously been most carefully produced by hand, for it was illuminated with four black lines, forming the musical stave and the words, in black, were embellished with red and gold lettering, forming the script. I tried to read and imagine the choir and congregation singing this hand painted 'Gregorian Chant'. I found this almost impossible.

Moving to the Open Air Chapel, overlooking the Sea of Galilee and under a clear blue sky, I found time to smell the fragrance of bright red flowers. These flowers overhung a wooden trellis, a few feet above our heads, forming a cover to this special place. I touched the rocks and

wondered if Christ had sat on any of the seats hewn from large stones. He certainly preached nearby! Warm, still air surrounded our group and only a chirp from a distant bird occasionally punctuated the silence. Beauty and happiness surrounded us all.

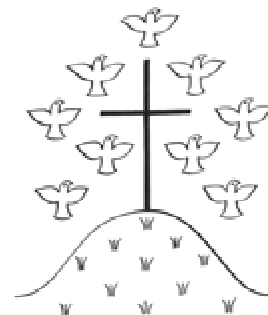
This was the setting for Worship.

Our meeting in this Chapel was very special, for this was the 'Mount of Beatitudes' where Christ's original immortal words were to be heard once again.

Peter asked for someone to read the Lesson: The Beatitudes, and as a matter of course I agreed. The short service continued. I played my part and Dr. Brown offered appropriate compliments.

It was a most moving and sacred experience for us all. Having been Pilgrims with Christ on the Mount of Beatitudes.

Now! I am sure that you are able to understand why the following has become my favourite Prayer:



**The Beatitudes**

'Principles of the Blessed Life'  
Mathew Ch 5 v1-12

Now when he saw the crowds, he went up to the mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst  
for righteousness, for they will be filled.

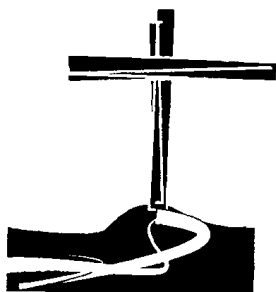
Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted  
because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you,  
persecute you and falsely say all kinds of  
evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your  
reward in heaven, for in the same way they  
persecuted the prophets who were before  
you."

*Garvin Shorter*



**'First Easter'**

in church

on Sunday 4th April at 6.30pm

Professor John Barton writes  
'Any Christian community will find its  
understanding of Easter enhanced through  
this lively and deeply thoughtful work.'

This play won the National Christian  
Playwriting Competition.

**Parish Development Plan  
Review**

We've been working to our Parish  
development plan for a year now and the  
PCC recently got together to check on our  
progress. The good news is that on some  
of our targets we've done pretty well.  
We've now established Emmaus as a  
regular pattern for people to learn the faith.  
We've increased the number of 'drops' we  
do round the Parish and this is helping  
people to understand that they are part of  
this Parish. Our website has been  
completely revamped and now looks really  
good and finally we felt that even having a  
plan in the first place was quite a big step.

There are a few things that we wanted to  
get done in the first year that we haven't  
done. Firstly, we haven't renewed our  
notice boards and secondly we reckoned  
that most members of the congregation  
were still not really aware of the plan and  
the ways in which they could contribute to  
achieving it.

Here then are a few steps the PCC thinks  
we need to take now to revitalise our  
commitment to our Parish development  
plan

- We need to re-engage the  
congregation with the plan and  
remind them that it's still going on  
(hence this article!)
- Each PCC committee is to allocate  
manageable tasks among its  
members
- Something visual needed in Church  
to show how we're progressing.

Any ideas?

*Michael Camp*