

## **26 April, Sunday 4 of Easter: Good Shepherd Sunday, Inaugural Mass in the Abbey Church**

Contrary to the weather forecast which was for rain, the day dawned and remained bright and sunny, yet another gift lavished on us by the Father. It was wonderful to witness the changing light and cast shadows in the church from Vigils, to Lauds and the Day Office where all the readings seemed particularly apt. At Vigils we heard the cosmic battle between good and evil from the Book of Revelation (chapter 12) followed by St Augustine on how the living stones of a building must be as firmly cemented by charity as are the bricks and mortar of a physical structure.

At Vigils, the ambo was 'baptised' when M. Abbess read the Gospel from there, the morning light of resurrection streaming in and illuminating the page.

From about 11am people starting arriving for Mass amid a mounting sense of excitement. About 60 people joined us, including Abbot Cuthbert (principal concelebrant) and about 14 from the Ampleforth community, some family of community, local friends and oblates/associates. It was good to welcome 2 pupils from Gilling who acted as most competent servers. The chants were of the day and the ordinary was Latin, taken up with great gusto, monks & lay guests v. nuns; all enhanced by the marvellous acoustic of the new church. Fr Hugh Sinclair of Oscott, one of the two principal concelebrants together with Dom Adrian Convery, proclaimed the Gospel from the ambo. Abbot Cuthbert preached on the need for pastoral care from and to all members of a monastic community and the necessity of sharing our experiences of God's love. In the bidding prayers and again at the address at the end of Mass which Abbot Cuthbert had invited M. Abbess to make, thanks were offered to all who have brought us to this day, especially our Project manager, Richard Cavadino who was also present.

After Mass there followed a most enjoyable agape: sherry in the Conference Room and a delicious buffet lunch orchestrated by D. Josephine. The Refectory and Garth buzzed with happy conversation into the afternoon.

Deo gratias for all!