

SHELAH'S LOG



The Funeral Notice

In Loving Memory
Shelah Diana Pascoe
2nd February 1936 - 8th June 2008

St Mary's Catholic Church, Shifnal.

A Funeral Mass to pray for
SHELAH DIANA PASCOE
2nd February 1936 to 8th June 2008
Thursday 19th June 2008 11.00am

Principal Celebrant:
The Rt Revd Brian M Noble
Bishop of Shrewsbury.

[Map to St. Mary's](#)

To be followed by burial at the
ABBEY OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS
BELMONT, Near HEREFORD

OBITUARY

Shelah Diana Walker was born into a family of eight children in Dudley, West Midlands (then Worcestershire) on the 2nd February 1936. She was a prim and proper child, being nicknamed "**Muff**" (*Little Miss Muffet*). She loved ballet and tap and was in many shows at the "Dudley Hippodrome" as Miss La Tour's dance class provided children for touring companies. Her brother Bert, now in Canada, was often on the lights and so sometimes put a spotlight on his sister! All the children went to Anglican Sunday School but only Shelah became a regular churchgoer, first at St Francis, Dudley, then to the "more Roman than Rome" St Edmund's. At school she concentrated on singing and netball, but regretted this later and went to Dudley Technical College to do the RSA courses in shorthand and typing, also elocution. She got a job in a solicitors' office in Dudley, then moved on to several offices in Wolverhampton. She became secretary to "**Mr Jack**" of Stirk, Adams, Benton & Co. This lasted full-time for 15 years, and part-time after that. The Stirks became good family friends and are so to this day

I met her at a party in Dudley on 27th January 1968 when she was sent to talk to the new curate at Upper Gornal who looked a bit lonely! She gave me a lift home and became my chauffeuse for the next 40 years! We were married on **12th September 1970** at St Edmund's. We lived first in a tower block in West Bromwich, where I was in charge of the mission church of the Annunciation in St Gabriel's parish. This was the beginning of her excellent support of my ministry over many years. She started a "Ladies' Guild" and spearheaded a Flower Festival. **Tim was born in 1972**. He was always to be a joy to her. In 1973 we moved to St Andrew's, Walsall, an old Victorian Anglo-Catholic church with a five-bedroom Vicarage which she kept immaculately. We had musical soirées in the house and concerts in the Church, which she arranged. She organized a Flower Festival there on the life of Sister Dora. In our final Anglican parish she again set up a Flower Festival on the history of Donnington in Telford, even including Serbian dancers.

She was always immensely proud of being a priest's wife and also exercised her own ministry. Walks with Tim in the pushchair generally involved visiting the elderly. She had a wonderful telephone ministry. She was always patient to answer queries and listen to people's problems. It was at St Andrew's that she started to play the piano. She was told that she might get to Grade 5 if she worked hard, given her age and responsibilities, but she eventually got to Grade 8 standard and took many pupils to Grade 5 both on the organ and the piano. For several years she enjoyed her opportunity to play a piece on the organ at St Joseph's, Albrighton during the distribution of Holy Communion. And she loved the choir.

Her home was very important to her. She took a pride in traditional furniture and housework was never just chores. She was given to hospitality and loved preparing meals for friends and clergy. Likewise she took a pride in her own appearance. She looked after her skin which enhanced her impish smile. She always dressed immaculately. She would never wear jeans and only wore slacks in recent years, generally only around the house. It gave her pleasure that people generally took her to be 10 years younger than she was. She had a great devotion to **Our Lady of Walsingham**, going on pilgrimage every year from the early sixties. In 1963 she had a slipped disc and spent six months in a plaster. She did a great deal of reading in this time and her favourite book was the St Therese, *Story of a Soul*, translated by Mgr Ronald Knox. This began a devotion to her and we visited Lisieux in 1983. We visited other shrines over the years including Aylesford, Ars, Holy Land (including Bethlehem, Nazareth and Jerusalem), Knock, Lourdes, Lyon, Rocamadour and also **Rome** in 1969 and 1999. Converting to the Roman Catholic Faith was very much a joint decision and has brought us much peace and joy. She often said it was the best thing we ever did. The lack of direction in the Church of England we found distressing, especially with regard to marriage and family life. The witness of Pope John Paul II was a great influence on us in this regard. The Diocese of Shrewsbury has been good to us and we are grateful, especially to Bishop Brian.

A tribute like this has to be selective. I can sum up by saying that Shelah was first and foremost a loving wife and mother. Degree Day at Bath for Tim and my Catholic ordination were very proud days for her. She enjoyed good health all her life except for 1963 and this last 12 months coping with what she called "L" (lymphoedema), cancer and a stroke. It distressed her not to be able to care for me, Tim and her home. The care she received at **Compton Hospice** was excellent and we shall always be grateful for this. Also we give thanks for the prayers and practical help of friends and parishioners. **Requiescat in pace.**

POEMS

Shelah wrote a number of little poems over the years, just for herself or for the family.
The following two were printed and used as correspondence cards.

LAKELAND – AUGUST 1992

I struggled to reach the top of the fell,
And before my eyes a sight to tell;
Of lakes, mountains, forests and glens.
Thoughts of God I could not quell,
For here my heart would gladly dwell.
But down the fell I have to go,
To hear of sufferings, sin,
Sarajevo, Somalia and Hell.
Ah, if only I could dispel
Man's greed and self will.

WILLOW TREES – seen on the road to Walsingham.

Willow, Willow, why so sad? With your
overhanging branches, you make me so glad.
Your soft green leaves, I press to my face,
and I am renewed by God's eternal grace.

God has made you so profound,
Hear the rushing of your sound,
May I never leave the shade
Of the willow's glade.

Note on the context of Shelah's Log.

*It was our habit most days to meet up at about 4.30pm in our Conservatory for a cup of tea and to read. Shelah would have been playing the piano from about 2.00pm after our lunch. I would be upstairs working on the computer in my 'third bedroom' Study. Shelah would ring a bell when tea was ready. Tim used to say that it was like a monastery here, bells rung for meals! In the Conservatory we would read until 5.45pm when we would watch the TV news. Mostly we read classical novels, Anthony Trollope, Thomas Hardy, Charles Dickens and so on. But we did read other things, for example when the Islamist thing came to the fore we read the Koran and an ancient Life of Muhammed. When Shelah began to feel unwell in May 2007, she did not feel like reading but would sit quietly and she began to write this Log on Basildon Bond letter pads. She kept each sheet in order and I did not read it until after she had died over a year later. I am very grateful to **Sue and Chris Blake** for typing it all, not an easy task owing to Shelah's handwriting. And also for their general help.*

I have edited a little, clarifying names of people, dates and so on. I have also taken out a few comments which could cause unnecessary offence over ten years on. Items in brackets or italics indicate my editing.

While I am now a celibate priest, I cannot forget Shelah and the love and support she gave me for 40 years. I think of her every day and silently remember her at every Mass I celebrate. This booklet is my memorial of her in her own words.

*I am grateful also to **Janet Lambert** (widow of Father Norman Lambert, first and last Vicar of Darby End, Dudley) whose booklet ten years on of her late husband's Parish Magazine articles gave me the idea to publish this.*

Mention is made of retirement. We had agreed that I would retire in 2009 when I would have been 67 and she would have been 73, The thought was that we would go nearer to Tim in London, perhaps Stowmarket or Sudbury. We had enough equity in our Beech Drive house to buy a retirement flat. I could do supply in that area. That was not to be. Both Tim and Bishop Brian counselled that I continue as Catholic priest for Shifnal and Albrighton. I now in 2019 am retired, over ten years on, though still living in Shifnal.

Premium Bonds are often mentioned. Shelah was very good at saving at least fifty percent of her pension and music lesson fees. The money was invested in Premium Savings Bonds and most months there was a welcome cheque or two or three! I was able at her wish to pass on to Tim a substantial sum.

*She began to be ill in Eastertide 2007, at first pain in her left elbow and hand and numbness in some fingers, devastating for a pianist. She went to A&E on the 23rd May and that led to seeing Mr Hinton, a well-known and respected Consultant, on June 4th, when she attended his Clinic and had a Day Hospital assessment. This led to a small nodes operation on June 22nd. The Log began the next day. **JP***

Shelah's Log 2007/8

Saturday 23rd June 2007

Having had this 'nodes' operation yesterday my left hand is still terrible. This is a moment when I do not think I shall recover.

I do not like to think of cancer but I do fear it has got into my funny bone of my elbow, hence this numbness in fingers and terrifying pain. Please God Help Me.

Tuesday 26th June

Agony today – how can humans stand such pain? We must try to get to Morrisons as we have no food.

Wednesday 27th June

I feel I cannot go on with this pain in my hand. I cannot remember things now. Speed my end please if I am not to get better. I would rather die – one minute I was well and very happy then next after this operation not myself at all. Love you John and Tim XXX

Sunday 1st July

Friday Shropdoc – awful. Methodist Church, Albrighton – Dedication of refurbished hall by Rev Norman Owen.

I enjoyed this – although I tried to forget my pain. Always the tears are near. Love you John and Tim. I cannot understand what sickness has come to me.

Tuesday 3rd July

Woke early – feeling very bad and wondering why this terrible illness has come to me. Just when things were going well. My Grade VIII, playing and helping in the church music – I cannot understand it.

Came back from St Joseph's in terrible pain. Dr Leigh – and nurse this afternoon, but at the moment I just want to die, the pain is so severe.

Wednesday 4th July

Alan Johnston (*BBC man in Gaza*) released, thanks be to God – yesterday was a very bad day for me. So much pain. Saw Dr Leigh, was upset in the surgery – John came with me. Managed to take a piano lesson with Rachel Redman.

Felt lonely and afraid – the first hymn I learnt to play was:

Thy way not mine oh Lord

However dark it be,

It still will be the best

Choose out the path for me.

And as afternoon progressed found myself locked in this terrible nerve pain. Going back to Walsingham. A horrible stiffness of my left hand came there. I went round Stations etc as though for the last time. Such a feeling of despair. And before Walsingham had generated great hope. I could not understand it. I hope this will all pass away – I may be able to see a surgeon on Friday at New Cross. I do pray this will be the case.

There is still Mr Hinton to see on Monday but some relief from the pain would make me more hopeful. I do not know what I would do without John. I am no longer a spectator of the NHS. It is diabolical. And even privately you spend hours phoning hospitals. Nobody cares and of course the older you are the deafening silence speaks for itself, so God help us all.

Thursday 5th July

A most horrendous day – first there was no appointment for me at New Cross hospital – I was crying and very upset because of the delays. The letter to Oswestry was mislaid by a month – my condition by now was that I had lost the use of my left hand – pain pins and needles. Could not hold anything. I had to arrange appointment myself through tears and anxiety. However got an appointment at the EEG – never heard of it before. Stan Turner (Priorslee) took John and I, he is a wonderful person. Treatment at New Cross – they said these tests were carried out every day – there was no need for delay. The care at New Cross was wonderful. Girls who did the tests were caring and kind. The consultant was a great help and gave me hope. He was gentle and explained everything.

Today rang Dr Leigh to hear result of test and the next step. Had a good night. But the worry is hanging over me.

Friday 6th July

Went to hairdresser in the afternoon. Very painful. Rang Dr Leigh who said the result of the tests had been faxed to Mr Hinton and he would discuss the results on Monday. I need not say how worried I am now, because it started with a cancer consultant and it goes back to him. Please God help us all to bear the true diagnosis.

Saturday 7th July

When I woke up this morning still in pain. My thoughts were – I wish not to see another day with my left hand like an iron grip – totally awful. I must try to be positive but it is hard.

A walk to Co-op. Rang Vera (*sister*) – long talk – she was helpful and good to talk to her after so long a time. Weather was better, but there is still a lot of pain and horrible stiffening of the arm which I find frightening. I shall now be glad to see Mr Hinton and hopefully get some treatment. A few prayers at St Mary's. God will help me and Pope John Paul II.

Sunday 8th July

Went to St Joseph's. Struggle to get breakfast and get dressed but I was glad to go to church. I was not in much pain but the stiffening of arm and hand are still scary. Sunday towards evening I became anxious about this Mr Hinton tomorrow. I was in pain – my fingers very tight and swollen – I cannot help but think there is something seriously wrong.

I cannot look at the piano without getting distressed – there is no music sound here for weeks – I hope please God this will change tomorrow. I continuously pray and invoke Our Lady and All Saints. Please give me some little relief.

Monday 9th July

PRH today to hear result. Dr Barraclough, a lady doctor, said there was a tumour. I have been prepared because the state of my arm and hand. But when it comes I felt quite sick. I was so glad John was with me.

A series of tests: breast exam by Dr Barraclough, mammogram left breast, ultra-scan, chest x-ray,nice lady. I was exhausted. Altogether they were all extremely kind. However I have got to go through with this now if there is any hope of returning to full health.

I ask Pope John Paul II for help and all the saints. Care for John and Timothy at this time. I do ask myself why has this suffering come to me? Later I noticed the wound under my arm became significantly swollen. Dr Leigh came. "Shropdoc", he has been very good – gave me some antibiotics. Took 2 painkillers – slept. Rachel Redman came. Managed to get through her lesson thank God.

Tuesday 10th July

Poorly on wakening – stayed in bed longer than usual. A quiet day for me but pain in left elbow. Vera rang yesterday and so did Terry (*brother*) and Tim.

John, Co-op and antibiotics. 1.30pm so much pain although I have taken 2 painkillers – my poor left arm is taking a beating – stiffness – swelling – I could die.

Rang Fr Richard Rutt (*RC priest, former CofE Bishop of Leicester*) in Cornwall about (*his wife*) Joan's illness; so lovely to talk to him – so sympathetic and kind. About 6.00pm my pain in elbow had lessened but it has been bad all day.

Wednesday 11th July

Today Rachel's Grade V piano. Good luck – God bless. I have to have this CT X-ray today. I do find myself getting very anxious. My hand is such a worry – also the thoughts of cancer. I must try not to panic.

I had a good night. Pope JP II is a comfort. The grace he is generating at the moment is a great solace – give John the strength today please God. Thoughts strike me this morning. Mr Hinton consultant said on my last visit "Nothing sinister" but look at what has transpired since. Fr John Wright said a Mass for me in thanksgiving. On reflection I have not had the attention I should have had. Since early in the year things were not right. And since the operation I was kept over a fortnight before telling me the result. Dr Barraclough nonchalantly said a "nasty tumour". I felt I would pass out. Poor John sitting right by me. Should Vera and my nieces want any of my clothes etc that's fine – the rest to charity. An awful afternoon – very tiring. The CT scanner was not as bad as I had thought but I never want another or for anyone belonging to me.

This will be the third weekend of waiting for the verdict. At the moment I am in pain and swelling so much. I try not to get anxious. I am sorry to put John through this but I should so easily die without him. Try as I might I cannot see any future at the moment. I do try to be positive but as things are at present I feel bleak. I pray all the time which is hopeful.

Thursday 12th July

Not a good night – had to take extra tablet because I was worrying and could not sleep. All this is beginning to sink in – the sheer magnitude of how my health has deteriorated. I am sorry for John and Tim – it is most awful for them. Stayed in bed longer – sick and giddy. I shall try to do some little chores as all is piling up. Sitting here this afternoon I have tried to file my nails – they have grown so long – but it is so painful I have abandoned it. Being handicapped is terrible. John and Tim, how I adore you both. This illness has separated me from you at least physically but not spiritually. I had a rest this afternoon but woke up with a lot of pain. However, I have managed to do some ironing and put some washing out – also took tops off the rhubarb which had gone over. Usually by now it would be in the freezer but it is too hard work to wash and cook.

Friday 13th July

Not a bad night. This morning I feel really awful. I have done the exercises, but I feel very sick and my arm and hand make me retch. I must get hair washed – surprising how your appearance loses interest when you feel so poorly. Hope I can find strength to have hair washed and do some shopping.

It is 5 past 11 and my arm seems to be swelling and my hand full of pins and needles. I am finding this very hard to bear – I am doing exercises all the time but to no avail.

Had hair washed – still not as good as I like to wash and care for my own hair – quite a lot has come out. Later managed Morrisons. We had no food left in the house. A bit too much today – and “Molly Maid” rep came, far too expensive. I do try to forget this illness and try to be normal. But my home breaks my heart, no music, no jobs around the house, cannot have left hand mobility to wash my hair. Take care of your limbs, don't take them for granted.

I do not want to complain, but there has not been a moment today with severe pain so many times have I wished to be gone – there is only a certain level of pain a human being can stand and this has been a dreadful day. I no longer have the stiff upper lip. I made myself go down to the cleaners, papershop, chiropodist who was marvellous – Newport later – but I caught a glimpse of myself and I have no colour at all. Terrifying.

Sunday 15th July

This morning I found it difficult not to dwell on the awful painful day of yesterday – but it is another day. Tim is coming home today – please God take care of him on the road from London.

Had a very laboured bath which I needed. Got lunch with aid of John. John said a lovely MASS at home – I find it helps. Not so much pain but arm worries me to death – it is so swollen.

Afternoon – rested. Later did some ironing but my arm is so swollen. Tim is late coming from London. At the moment my nerves are all on edge. He arrived 6.00pm.

Monday 16th July

Hospital. Tim took us and stayed during results which they could not find where the problem was coming from. It was better news than I had expected. Saw Mr Hinton and another doctor. An 'undifferentiated carcinoma'? A mad dash in the afternoon to Royal Shrewsbury Cobalt Unit. Began first radiotherapy treatment – ten treatments in all. But now must rest. John and Tim were wonderful.

Tuesday 17th July

Had a painful night and awful thoughts – treatment today at 2pm. Decided to have a taxi every day – cannot really afford it but in these circumstances it is best. I am not then inundated with all these well-meaning Christians wanting to know how things are!! Ann Pattison, our new cleaner, called today. What a terrible two weeks this has been. I think I shall wake up from some dreadful dream. But the pain is reality. My arm and hand are the worst to endure.

The weather is brighter. Lovely to have Tim for the weekend. Take care of yourself Tim and John. I shall be with you both until we meet on the Resurrection DAY as God promised. Help us not to be confounded: when you are in the midst of suffering it is hard to keep the faith. Renew and strengthen all in pain this day.

John decided on taxis for this treatment because I would have to do a lot of waiting for other people, especially when you feel so awful after the treatment. All went well – everything seems alright – saw another doctor (Dr Varguese from Kerala) – really great – a few jokes about piano lessons. John bought new arm stocking and a large jar of special cream.

Wednesday 18th July

It is good to keep this LOG because you lose track of time. Third treatment today. I had a good night which I do thank God for because you are so listless in the day. Vera (sister) rang last night, and Tim.

There have been moments today when I thought I may get better – if only my arm would return to its strength. A HOME MASS this evening – this is such a comfort.

18th July (again) Third treatment over – all very slow today, but weather lovely. Hung around a bit for taxis coming home – John got lunch ready – thank God for John – he makes this all bearable. I have put hand and arm stocking on today but they are so discomforting – my arm and hand swell more. But I have to persevere. This afternoon I feel depressed especially about my hand and arm – I could not live without the use of these limbs.

Not being able to look after yourself – wash hair – play the piano after the hard work of Grade VIII. So please God send me your angel the healer “Raphael” – and all who are in distress and suffering – what a prize your health is. Although I have always thanked God for this there are times in life when we have to bear the cross – just the strength to bear it.

Rang Father Rutt – Joan had now lost all mobility, her drugs had been changed. Poor Joan – I hope she is a bit oblivious to her plight. Father Rutt was just going to the altar – he would remember me, John and Tim.

I have to wear this stocking which I have just taken off. My hand is very swollen now. It is supposed to take the swelling down! My suffering now is the worst nightmares come true.

Thursday 19th July

Another treatment over. A sunny day – journeys were good but glad to get it over with. My wonderful son sent me some beautiful flowers today. God bless you Tim.

We had a good lunch. I would like to go to Tim's wedding. This is my fervent wish. (*Sadly not to be!*) I am in a great deal of distress this afternoon. My hand and arm are beyond human endurance. I do think this Mr Hinton should have done a biopsy much earlier than he took me seriously. He said “an infected lymph node – nothing sinister.” But look how ill I am now. For months he did nothing – even though I have been seeing my GP lots of times. God be with all sufferers. I wish to die peacefully at home. I don't want to leave John and Tim but I cannot have them suffering too.

Beryl Moran rang She would do my ironing which is so good of her. Today I have wept a lot: this arm is so horrible with a sort of exposed nerves – you just want to die – everything to the touch is so sensitive. My arm and hand keep swelling out of proportion but these stocking sleeves make everything so much worse – it is supposed to keep the swelling down.

Friday 20th July

A very bad night – got doctor out – sick several times. Still I have had my three score years and ten as the psalmist says or if you are strong longer. Raining again today – the weather is dreadful and so damp. Thank God we are home this afternoon. We have had a good lunch, a nice cup of tea now and I think we should both have a rest this afternoon. All this is as painful for John and Tim as it is for me. It is all such a shock and all extremes.

Thank God I was able to complete this week's treatment especially after such a bad night. As I have said so many times before, if my hand and arm were better I could feel tons better myself. These sleeves you have to put on your arms make me swell more. They are most awkward but I have to try to maintain the flow of fluids.

John has gone to the 5.30pm MASS tonight – the 1st for 2 weeks (*Fr John Wright has been covering*) and it is pouring down with rain as it has done all day.

Saturday 21st July

A very good day – but there is always a BUT. I cannot endure this arm and hand pain much longer – O God Help ME. John has a wedding today, (*Colin Lamb and Vanessa Carr*). Please help me to feel better. John – should I have to go to hospital – hospice or any other kind of home – do not worry because I would rather be there than at home where I cannot do my daily tasks. I shall never stop loving you and Tim.

Sunday 22nd July

A bad day of pain – felt a little better – went back to bed. John said his MASS at St Mary's. Good exercises and a good wash. John had an attempt to wash and set my hair on rollers – he did very well. I do hope by this time next week my hand and arm will be better. There is still a shooting pain but not that killing pain you feel you just want to die. John has coped well this weekend with all the MASSES.

Timothy rang – he wanted to come home to help but he is better there at the moment until this treatment is finished. I know he is so worried. Betty Kidson took ironing to Beryl. So good. John said a MASS at home. Had a little walk – supper – TV hopeless – bed. Next week begin second lot of treatment. I hope this will shrink the lump. I feel very much in God's hands.

23rd July

This morning a cloud has descended over me – the thoughts of this radiotherapy again this week and no more joy with my hand – still horrible to feel anything. It must be dreadful for John to see my distress. I do pray that something will come to an end.

The radiotherapy treatment machine broke down – had to get off table and wait for about 10 minutes. Very scary indeed. You are only relying on a machine and frail human beings to work them. The 'A' team are wonderful at the Royal Shrewsbury. We make sure we have a good lunch and a rest because John is feeling it all. Pouring with rain again and terrible floods all over the UK.

Afternoon rested. Wearing sleeve on my arm to help the trouble there which is extremely painful and depressing. This is about the sixth week with this gradually losing sense in my hand. It is hard to take when I think of the silent piano – everybody says you must be positive!!!

Before this happened I was very happy taking the Grade VIII and playing in church to improve my confidence – all was going well. Also thoughts of living in Oxford or somewhere nearer Tim. The dreams all came down. Should I not recover I wish Tim to have my Premium Bonds to buy him another 2-bed flat. I'm sure John will agree.

Tuesday 24th July

The seventh treatment – all went well. Taxi driver was a bit fast. The staff are excellent – and the treatment. Saw doctor. I do hope please God I shall be better after this specifically for John and Tim's sake – it has been a nightmare. But God has been with me particularly on the treatment table. My hand and arm worry me a lot. Walk now – new washing up bowl – some bananas.

Dear John – this afternoon has been bad with pain in arm and hand. I don't want to talk of dying, but sometimes when you are so wracked with pain the thought comes to mind. If it is at all possible I wish to be buried in Walsingham. My first experience of God's grace and a miracle taking place there. At that time I was suffering with a slipped disc and I got well again with the prayers of Our Lady of Walsingham – then I met you. Thereafter I began to feel happy.

Wednesday 25th July

Eighth treatment. Felt very tired – all went well. Taxis good. Good lunch - trying to keep eating well – plenty of soups and salads. Arm and hand still very swollen: this is most frightening for me. I don't know what to do with it. If only the swelling would get less. Go to chiropodist - and get hair washed by Janet. A few showers today. Was inconsolable crying when I came in from hairdresser – felt very depressed at the loss of mobility.

Evening Beryl Moran + “T” (*Teresa Wainwright*) brought back beautifully ironed washing. So good of them.

Thursday 26th July

Ninth treatment. All went well. Nice people to speak to and good taxis. We are both feeling the strain today – just one more to go. Getting another good lunch. We have to keep up our food to keep our strength going. Going to order online today from Tesco.

Lovely carnations from Vera & George (*Felton, her friend*): it's nice when they think of you. My arm and hand are most irksome – pins and needles – so debilitating. I have had a mixed religious experience – thinking God has forgotten me – and then he is always present in the treatment room so I do not feel alone. John has been my rock and comfort.

Ring Fr Rutt about Joan – Joan is in hospital today. We have to wait to see how she is progressing. Fr Rutt said he is very well.

John has done some shopping – also doctor's prescription etc. He is wonderful.

Friday 27th July

Tenth treatment today – please God be with John and myself today. The sun is shining. And I ask God to care for all the people suffering in this unit today. We are just having our coffee before we go to Shrewsbury. My arm and hand are particularly bad this morning. I do hope it will ease.

Tim I want you to be home all the time but I do not want you to see me ill. Love you beyond eternity. The same with John. I hope Joan Rutt is better today.

A good lunch and taxi journeys. Good rest. John MASS at St. Mary's. This morning before my treatment I talked to a few people and found that some of their suffering was indescribable. The pain with this cancer is most horrible. The different places of the body you can get this disease, the loneliness and uncertainty is alarming. TODAY has been another day of devotion towards me from John. I always thought that John's job was first but he is wonderful and caring. But I do not want him to worry unduly – nor Tim.

Saturday 28th July

The treatment is over and what an awful experience. I can only say 'I hope they have cleared all the nasty cells'. The people at this clinic need prayers because their suffering is so terrible. TODAY the whole illness has hit me and I feel sick. I'm trying not to be sick for

that makes things worse. Waitrose groceries online – very expensive for quite a small quantity. NOT AS GOOD AS MORRISONS. Going to take a bath now. John is here just in case. Managed bath but arm painful and so scared of hurting it. We do keep a good lunch going.

Rested afternoon – my mind goes to poor Joan, also all those people I met at the hospital. How do humans endure such a thing as cancer? There are so many ramifications, such a lot of side effects.

The groceries delivered from Waitrose are nowhere near as good as Morrisons – the quality is good but too expensive for so little. Please God I hope I feel better by next weekend to pick up my life again.

Sunday 29th July

I did a lot yesterday: had a bath, tidy, got lunch – made a Quiche with John's help. Walk in the evening. This morning I'm still not well enough to go to church. My hand and arm are still the same swollen pins and needles and awful pain. John has gone to say the MASSES in St Mary's and St Joseph's. I have got the lunch going. I shall go back to bed now and do my exercises. I feel that these are not bearing much fruit at the moment. But I do hope I am wrong. This has been a very long morning.

Good Sunday lunch – rested. Had a lovely walk. Sue Blake cut our lawn. Bert (*her brother in Canada*) rang – I shall ring him back.

Spoken to Bert – he was very well and wanted to know about Tim. Told him about my illness: he is very supportive and positive considering his own problems with his leg and bad eyesight – we need your help Father. Somehow this has been a very long day. Although the weather is good – this is really about the sixth weekend of this trouble.

Monday 30th July

Yesterday seemed the longest day of my life – not having the discipline of going to church.

I miss it so much. Today at 8.30am done a very few chores. But I'm feeling rather giddy and my arm and hand all the same pain and not belonging to me. It is problem keeping my hair clean: quite a lot has fallen out which is another worry.

The birds in the garden are such a solace whistling and chirping. John is going out to say MASS at St Mary's. Doreen Mills rang to say Bernard McGinty was in hospital. Every day I have cried with my arm and hand: it is awful to see it so swollen. It is well over 6 weeks now I have endured this. This certainly frightens me to death as it so ugly a swelling. I do feel that only a miracle from God can help me because I feel the medical profession do not know what to make of my whole position. I have put myself in God's hands.

I had a walk this afternoon – bought pork pie and lamb pie from chap from Ludlow Farmers' Market. He could not get into Ludlow because of floods. A warm sunny dry day. How many times have I said I would feel much better if my arm was well? This evening I do seem to have gone off again feeling sick, and anxiety about my arm continuing in pain, swollen and tight skin.

Tuesday 31st July

I wanted to go back to sleep this morning. Woke up in a lot of pain in my right arm now – I had not had a good night – began to worry as to my future – if any - and all the possibilities of my not getting better. I had my usual tablets 2 – but then I woke up twice and seemed to be disturbed. Then I took another 2 tablets and still in pain – then another 2. The doctor at Shrewsbury said “Don’t be afraid of taking the tablets” but I feel awful the next day. I do hope soon I will emerge from this nightmare and be Shelah – cleaning my home – gardening – taking care of my hair and skin – looking after John and Tim – and my highlight of life – playing the piano – my music. This has knocked me off my feet – the enormity of not playing.

I rang Ann Hensman – a friend from church – she was a patient under Mr Hinton and she was a nurse. She is very helpful – offered to do any jobs. She also talked about the clinic – how people were suffering with cancer all ages all stages – things I had found very disturbing. I am wearing the sleeve a lot but on or off it seems to make the swelling worse. I am seeing the lymphoedema nurse tomorrow.

A sunny day – we have had a good lunch. Try to keep eating although it is difficult to pretend you are hungry. Had a very nice walk – took some cleaning in. Hot day after all this terrible rain. When I woke up this morning I was in a lot of pain in my right arm. I do hope please God this is all right as, of course, it is working harder now my left hand is so bad. It is getting towards evening again and I become weepy when I look at my swollen hand and arm: there does not seem any respite. I will go now and read my prayers and bible reading for today.

Wednesday 1st August

The year is speeding on now. My night was not too bad – did not take as many pills – they make you feel awful next day. Today I go to the ‘Lym-’ nurse – I cannot bring myself to write this most horrible word for the pain and dreadful stiffening of the arm – it is sheer hell – you are not yourself. Another terrible thing I forgot to mention is the tiredness and the creaming of your body every night and going to bed wet with the gallons of cream you have to spread. I do feel quite sick this morning – although the sun is shining – but somehow you are cocooned in a world of pain and suffering. Please take care of John and Tim – I love you. I usually cry at evening with my arm and hand but today I am very down: the pain is bad and my hand quite disfigured. I cannot look at it without getting frightened. The pins and needles and pain at the end of my fingers and a pulling sensation of the nails – it is all a nervous condition. The lump under my left arm is still there and pulling like an infected boil.

Thursday 2nd August

On waking today – a crushing sick feeling of all that has transpired this last month. I look at my hand and feel the pain and realise I'm not the same person. Ann Hensman came and washed my hair – very kind – a lovely person. She has experienced cancer so she understands radiotherapy. Raining every day and I pray for all those people who are there – such pain and fear. TODAY the Zanussi cooker man is calling – this cooker is the worst and most expensive one I have had in my life: even when the jets are off the hob is still hot. We have had a good lunch – a joint effort. John is doing the work these days – I am just giving orders – but I would rather play my part. Zanussi engineer has come about cooker which is not working properly.

My arm and hand are just the same today – pain and stiffening. This “L” is such a great worry – I wonder where this will all lead.

TIM HAS GOT THE JOB AT THE GUARDIAN NEWSPAPER. So glad some good fortune for him and John and me. Yesterday was the only day I have not cried with my arm and hand but today I have been depressed again. Ring Fr Richard Rutt to see how Joan is. I do have to check myself because I worry about my right hand and arm and also about my eyesight and hearing: I become a jelly of worry.

Saturday 4th August

Father Rutt said Joan was fading now. She was not eating and in the grip of Alzheimer's. But he is well. I shall ring again towards the end of next week.

Tim is here this weekend – we have been up to Marks & Spencer today. I have got some loose tops etc. I still feel dreadful – I do not seem to improve with movement – it is horrible.

The stiffness is so painful – I am going into my fourth month now and things are gradually worse. I find myself despairing – I do not know what to do for the best. And a parishioner said “There was no cure for “L” – how thoughtless!

However, evening went well with a nice little supper with Tim. It is wonderful news about Tim's short contract with the Guardian – ten weeks - an entirely new field.

Sunday 5th August

Got up 7am and made some breakfast. We all slept well. What a blessing a good night's sleep is. Did a few chores. Went back to bed until 9.15am. I felt awful when I woke up – everywhere was stiff. I shall go one day at a time – I cannot think of tomorrow. I will try and do some folding with my washing now.

Monday 6th August

A lovely weekend with Tim. It makes me realised how much I love him and John. I treasure this time. A bad morning – went back to bed – seem in a fog. Later got up and tried to do some chores. I get very down because I see and feel no progress with my hand and arm. A continuing pain and prickliness – “L” is surely one area which needs a lot of work and research. It is all on your nerves. Death for myself at a time of unimaginable pain would be welcome. But I do not want to worry John and Tim. They both have a positive outlook. But when you are in pain you are not yourself.

Tim starts his new job today at the Guardian. A lovely sunny day. Going to rest now – in pain.

I have just come in from my walk – today my arm and hand are dreadful – I don’t know why. I do not want any more surgery if this is some form of cancer. Please make me as comfortable as possible and let me die – I cannot bear any more pain. I pray for all with this dreadful curse. This has been a very bad day for me – so much pain and horrible pins and needles in my hand. Sweet Sacrament Divine help me – like my first visit to Walsingham when I had a slipped disc. I became well again. This last time at Walsingham I was a lot worse when I got home. I am still hoping for a delayed cure. Sweet Sacrament Divine.

Tuesday 7th August

Ann Pattison came today to clean for us – she also washed my hair. I could not do the cleaning at the moment. Although I feel a lot better in myself today my hand and arm are still awful. I go to hospital today for massage for the “L”: I do hope for some improvement. You don’t know if what you are doing is good or bad for the condition. I know it is terrible – frightening.

John is saying MASS at Albrighton – Ron Kidson is picking him up and taking ironing to Beryl.

I have just taken off the “L” sleeve and glove – my mind gets into a panic at the swelling and stiffness – I cannot bear to look at my hand.

I rang “L” Support London – they confirmed stiffness and pins and needles are usual symptoms. The lump under my arm looks red and angry. I think there are 2 lumps now.

Wednesday 8th August

I am not writing in my personal diary – this has become my daily notes. After the massage yesterday I did feel sick in the morning – Sue (PRH) said some people feel sick. The weather

has been very nice lately. It is awful waking first thing in the morning because I worry over my hand and the fact I cannot use it. I am going to bed this morning. Take care of John and Tim today, Heavenly Father.

Sent for doctor – I was so red and painful under my arm. I find everything about this illness is frightening. Dr Whiting came. He was sympathetic – gave me some antibiotics. It is good to see a doctor because my skin is so burnt.

We have had a good lunch – I am eating quite well although I have lost 5 lbs. Having said that we have had a good chicken salad and some oven fries and a good tea of scones and thin toasted bread with Cathedral cheese. So I'm not wanting to lose weight. Came in from my walk around the village and got the antibiotics – met a few people – Deaconess Dora and the lady from church who lives in Mercian Court, (*Mrs Flanagan*): She said I looked just the same – she is being kind. The weather today is hot but a cool wind. Just taken first antibiotic – hope these take down the redness. This is the second day of the new sleeve and glove – they are so tight but I have to wear them for protecting my arm and hopefully helping the horrible "L"

NEW BASILDON BOND PAD

My new LOG Shelah Diana Pascoe Wednesday 8th August '07 (continued)

I have taken off this sleeve and glove for a while, and I cannot help but weep. The pain is unrelenting, stiffness – a death has come to my left arm. Shall I ever be better here? I have just read a poem from Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* whereby Cardinal Newman speaks of the peace of death. All these thoughts invade your mind when you are robbed of the use of your hand and arm – you simply do not want to live. I don't think this is what our faith teaches, but it very difficult to be optimistic

Thursday 9th August

This morning I have the drugged feeling of taking 4 painkillers last night – a lot of pain and you lie awake getting more anxious and worried. I do not like taking a lot of drugs.

My arm is so stiff this morning and quite disfigured with crepe-like skin. I find it very hard to go on. But what is the alternative? This is a devastating illness that has come to me. The future is a blur. I look out of the conservatory window and see the robin looking at me. It is as if he understands my sufferings. It is good to look out at a nice garden. After my wash and a few arm exercises today there was not so much pain and I could hold one or two items and kitchen utensils. Keep hope and prayers alive, if it is only a little movement. Under my arm is certainly not so red and disfigured. Walked to Co-op for some drinking

chocolate and bananas. Also walked to chiropodist because I cannot manage my nails – feet or hands. John went to discuss Bernard McGuinty's funeral RIP. On the whole I have not been too bad today – still a lot of pain.

Friday 10th August

Another bright sunny day. A good night – I was so glad of that because towards the end of the day yesterday I did not know what to do with myself because of the pain in my arm. The pins and needles in my hand are the worst with stiffness. Walked to building society. Saw Sr Dora again in Shifnal – she is a tough old bird. She talked a lot about John Tavener the composer. When I come back lie on bed feeling extremely depressed. Also reading about Jenni Murray (*Radio 4 Woman's Hour*) did not help.

I certainly think Mr Hinton should have taken a closer interest in me when it was only the size of a pea – not waiting until 2 of my fingers have lost their use. And even after the operation I was put off before the lady doctor said it was a tumour: my appointment was for the Wednesday – it was put off until the Monday giving me the impression it was nothing to worry about – then she said it was a nasty tumour. They gave me a mammogram, ultrasound and chest x-ray all at the same time. When I came home I sent for the doctor because by now there were several lumps under my arm. And then on the Wednesday they gave me a CT scan. All this was inconclusive as Mr Hinton said he did not really know what the problem was. The other doctor – Dr Agrawal – said they were going to give me ten radiotherapy sessions. But the swelling is still there and the "L" is no better. So all this has gone through my mind today: how my life has changed within 6 weeks – I cannot play, wash hair, cook or clean – and difficult to keep my own hygiene. I find the future terrifying. John goes to MASS now. Hope must stay alive.

I did forget to say I had a wonderful dream last night. I dreamt I was still living with my Mum. I had forgotten my sandwiches for lunch: she called me back from going to the office and said "You are late now" but I felt the surge of normality coming back in my arm, and said this to Mum. She said you can go to the office in the car now. I woke with great elation.

Fr Rutt rang to say he had been in hospital with a chest pain: he had tests – nothing to worry about. Joan is a little better. It is wonderful to talk to him – he is such a great help. We are now going to have some supper – but I do feel sick. Taken off sleeve and glove – I hate these. And I wonder if they are really helping because I have pain on or off.

Saturday 11th August

Not a good night – very hot – and my arm so painful and heavy. Woke up several times. And it is so difficult bringing your mind into focus. I took 3 painkillers or I would not sleep. I am trying to be positive and hoping I will get better – that the use will return to my hand

– but at the moment this is very slow.

Ann Hensman has washed my hair this morning – at least I washed it and she rolled it. Good that she does this because the feel of the rollers is just pressing on the nerves in my fingers. I am getting so depressed with this condition. The use of your hand and arm going is so awful the most horrible thoughts come into your mind. You just want to die. You cannot think of a future. I miss the piano and the discipline of practising.

John is good – he made quiche for lunch – we do get a good lunch. After lunch rested felt a bit off with hair washed as a good wash elsewhere. Walked – I do walk every day. I just dropped in on Carol McFadzen & Alex. They made me very welcome. John said he was concerned whether they were going to church, (Madeley or Our Lady of the Rosary). After all the unpleasantness over finances. Hope they come back to church again. I do hope I did some good.

Sunday 12th August

I cannot describe the utter lonely overwhelming feeling I have this morning. John just gone to say MASS and I cannot go with him. My hand makes me so anxious - I cannot use it without awful little electric shocks. God help all who suffer this because you just want to die – especially when you see no improvement. The lump under my arm is still there after ten radiotherapies. Everybody says keep positive. My faith is keeping me from keeling over. I hope a little help comes soon – and hope for the future.

I had a bath this morning – it was difficult but I was careful. Certainly feel better. I cannot wash right hand side but I soaked. Had to be very careful getting out but I managed it. Then I rested.

Psalm 91 is my favourite – It speaks of God's protection and not to worry – such a comfort. The way this illness is - the afternoon was very hot - had a good walk but the pain under my arm was bad. I dare not look under my arm because to me all the lumps are still there after the radiotherapy.

Still there. And, of course, until these go the "L" will not improve. I do have to stop myself from really breaking down. We had a good lunch but I would rather have chicken than pork.

Monday 13th August

Today I woke up with such a lot of foreboding – I did not want to face the day. When your hand feels as if it does not belong to you. However, got early morning cup of tea 6am – felt better. Did some ironing, cleared dead flowers out. Prepared lunch so I did well. Afternoon

rested. But could not get off to sleep. Decided to walk – I went into St Mary's asking God to make me well again so I could play my full part. Trish Hampton caught up with me. John will say a MASS for me this evening. I feel very low – the pain in my hand and arm are horrendous – so frightening – the stiffness, tingling and puckering of the skin – also the pain in my nails and pinching. I have cried a lot this evening. John said a lovely MASS: what beautiful work this is to be a priest. John is such a good priest – conscientious.

Tuesday 14th August

I have felt a lot more optimistic this morning – not quite as much pain in my hand and arm as I felt last evening. When you are thrust into the world of pain you feel for others – especially this terrible cancer as you feel nobody really understands it – yet there are cures all around you. TODAY I go to the hospital for the “Lymph Massage”. Sue Desborough is a very caring expert on this subject. It is raining.

Had a good lunch – still raining. I found it difficult to keep the sleeve and glove on for 2 hours. It would be lovely to have some relief from this dreadful “L”. I feel sorry for all who suffer this: it is most terrifying – fingers all stiffen up – pain shooting all over your limb – lightness – swelling, pins and needles - you just want to die.

At the beginning of this just after Christmas when I was visiting the chiropractor, I mentioned the pins and needles – also seeing Mr Hinton. But neither of them took it seriously. Good lunch. Afternoon saw Sue for “L” massage – she is absolutely wonderful. The massage was very relaxing – I could almost feel I was better: there was some suppleness in my arm. Taxi home – all this is costing a lot of money. After tea went to Alldays for a walk. On the way home Vince Green & Veronica asked me in for a chat which lasted 2 hours – they are very good people. I was tired because the sleeve had been on for a long time – the gloves and sleeve make me tired.

Assumption Day Wednesday 15th August

After the massage yesterday I feel light-headed today and a bit sick. Did a few exercises, got breakfast – but in a dream. There is considerable pain today in my arm and hand. Also unhappy about not being able to go to St Joseph's. There seems no light at the end for me – and, of course, there is this Mr Hinton on Monday. I cannot understand how this illness has come to me. Veronica and Vince were talking about people suffering innocently. Awful sicknesses that come. I do not want to live if I cannot take my share of home chores which I love – looking after John, myself and Tim. The suffering I have recently seen has been upsetting for me. During this time, I have had lots of cards, flowers and letters. By now I am getting the jitters about next Monday as to my future. I would like my health to be completely restored but I seem weaker today: whether it was the massage yesterday I

don't know. Saw chiropodist – she tidied up my nails. Raining on way back home – I do not want to get a cold.

Evening Mass for John – Assumption. Three phone calls including Tim – a long talk with Tim. How much I love him my beloved son. Call from a Helen – something about unborn children – she is going to pray for me and send me some Holy Water from Lourdes.

Thursday 16th August

Slept well – but I still do not feel good in the mornings. If only my hand and arm were better – my whole life would be better. This “L” is a great worry: I worry about this more than the lump. But of course they are connected. I am in God's hands.

The day is a bit odd today with Mr McGinty's funeral at 1pm. So lunch will be later this afternoon. A pick-me-up on Premium Bond win! Thanks be to God. I have had a little rest – three-quarters of an hour. I have to get up because I'm afraid I might seize up. Just started up Haughton Lane and it poured down – had to come back, although in such a short space of time I got soaked. I could not zip up my coat so I realise what a dreadful thing this “L” is. I cannot really dress myself. Sometimes I think the pain is less then suddenly the fingers begin paining and pinching – I do not want to live without the use of my limb. And at my age things are harder to take. I just feel no end to it. I do want to get better for John and Tim - but I hope this situation will get better. If I stop hoping – then what? Ring Fr Rutt to see how Joan is. She is 84 years and has had some small strokes this year so it must be hard for him with the general chores and meals.

Had a word with Fr Rutt – I do get so depressed in the evenings mostly because that is when I played the piano – such lovely pieces. I cannot explain how this “L” has upset me in this direction – I have nothing to look forward to – especially when I do not know how they will go in the future.

Friday 17th August 2007

Not a good night. Took usual 2 painkillers but woke early – could not get back to sleep.

Had 3rd painkiller – then bad dreams and worrying. Somehow all the fears of health seem to have materialised – surgery – radiotherapy – “L” cancer confusion – how can I survive this? John is wonderful – I could not cope without him. It is just so awful and I do not seem to be rid of the pain nor the lump. Ann Hensman is coming to set my hair this morning but I do not feel well.

Had a good lunch. Pulled myself together and went to Morrisons. Dreadful taxi coming back. I hope please God the next visit to Morrisons God will restore me to good health.

Saturday 18th August 2007

A good night. John and I were terribly tired after Morrisons and that horrible taxi. I felt better in myself although my arm was very painful and stiff – left sleeve off a bit. The weather is rather cold and overcast. Did my exercises. I do try to keep these going. We had a letter from Father Paul Tongue today. Moira is suffering with Alzheimer's which is absolutely dreadful – but she is coping – and the family, which we thank God for.

A good lunch: you have to eat well in spite of the fact I have lost about 5lbs. Going back to Paul and Moira – I am glad the move went alright and Moira was well. It all seems to have worked out ok. Paul has found a niche in Worcester Cathedral which he always wanted. Claire has done well too – she is much better.

My spirits were lifted a little this afternoon with an advert for some BARRATTS apartments in Sudbury – Gainsborough country – near Walsingham – one hour outside London – Liverpool Street Station – wonderful for Tim to call weekends. It is good to think of some future. Otherwise you can get quite down.

Sunday 19th August 2007

Sunday mornings are awful – I am not well enough to go to church so it's a long morning for me. I pray God to restore me to good health again to play the wonderful hymns and pieces – just as I was to take the Grade VIII and have more confidence in church playing I am ill. I just do not understand it. Pray for me and Moira.

I have got to 11.00am now – these Sunday mornings are the longest and the most anxiety filled. I worry about everything. My hand is sheer torture. You don't know if the exercises are doing good or bad – because the pins and needles at the ends of your fingers are just the same.

A good lunch – then I slept for an hour. When I woke up it was like heaven – no pain in my hand or arm, no swelling, no pins and needles: for a while I lay there in heaven. Had a walk later, but very cold. Father David Craig rang.

Monday 20th August 2007

A bad night. Saw Mr Hinton this morning – and another doctor. He was quite nice but I still feel Mr Hinton failed me: he should have done something about my small lump from the beginning instead of saying it was nothing to worry about. Now his department cannot help me at all. It is now left to Mr Agrawal who I do not see until 3rd September. Hand is awful again.

Today I have seen Mr Hinton and my feelings towards this man are unchanged. I rang Joy Jones this afternoon to talk about Brian's experience and the system was very bad for him too. He was told it was too late, but he is still here 7 years later having being referred to another specialist. I have tried very hard today to have a more positive approach, but the doubts take over, especially as I have had such a lot of pain in my arm and hand this evening. I will ring Tim and tell him what happened today.

Tuesday 21st August 2007

Last night we looked at the video on that terrible "L". The exercises were good but the comments were depressing. Everybody's experience is going to be different. Of course I did not sleep well. Sue today – "L" massage. Ann cleaned – it's good to talk to someone.

Good lunch. "L" massage with Sue Desborough: she is wonderful – so comforting – and she listens. I did express my fear about the video – she reassured me of its worth. My swellings were so so much better and this was another good aspect of the day. On my walk went to the chemist and bought some cleansing cream and sponge for exercises.

John has been wonderful again today.

Wednesday 22nd August 2007

A lovely day - sunny although it has that autumn feel. I have done quite well this morning – one or two more exercises added to the list. Sue always has something else to tell me. As I said I found that tape really disturbing about the awful "L". I just wonder even now why this terrible "L" came to me. When I think of all the suffering at these hospitals I see how very frail human beings are. How dependent on God we are for our health and well-being. I see God's power in these beautiful lilies: they are beautiful considering they were free with the Daily Telegraph.

Good lunch. Had a rest at 1.00pm but I was in pain and awful pinching in hand. Walk to St Andrew's. The best day this year – hot and cool breeze. We do really need a holiday now. I went into St Mary's and left my cardigan. It was so hot. Also went into the church: read reading for the day and a special prayer which said "triumph over pain and suffering". I will have to keep this in mind because I get very down with constant pain. At the moment we are sitting in the conservatory with door open and a lovely breeze. Later I began to get a lot of pain in the evening.

Thursday 23rd August 2007

A very bad night for me – pain therefore did not sleep. All the most awful thoughts were going through my mind ending up in a hospice. I do not want Tim to see me suffering: the continual exercises with "L" – may never play a note – suffering for John – so I am quite ill this morning. Go to bed again. I am praying for a miracle. In church yesterday the reading I read on the altar was "victory over pain and suffering". Please God let this be the miracle. The significance as to what has happened to me is now registering – I did a parcel up today which was most trying mentally and physically – the impact is now coming home as to all the limitations.

As I said it will take a miracle – miracle spelling right. I thought I would not be able to do any more today but I feel a lot better after lunch – not so mentally confused – a miracle. A little sleep – Pat Ellis (*St Gabriel's Walsall*) rang – she was on the phone an hour. She has had a mastectomy – radio and chemo – also lost her hair so felt awful. But had a nice talk – cleared my head a bit. Rang Fr. Rutt – he was very well. Joan is still the same. She will be moved to other accommodation soon as they do not keep them in hospital for too long. It is good to speak to him.

Friday 24th August 2007

A much better night. I am endeavouring to concentrate on my hand a bit more – more little exercises here. Of course if this was stronger my whole life would be better immediately. Had some lovely flowers today from Cornwall – from Bob and Pat Ellis – very pretty – just enough to manage. Also some cards and letters from Cornish friends and Father Terry Coyne. His mother is 100 years old. I am applying my Holy WATER from Knock. Yesterday when I felt very giddy this made me feel better. I am asking Our Lady for help wherever she has appeared because I get so frightened about the loss of use in my left hand and also the unspeakable pain. Revd Beverley's wife Lucy Thompson has suffered with this horrible "Lymphoedema" for years from her youth. I had never heard of it.

John gone to MASS – then to meeting Newport Catholic Church. I cried tonight – sometimes it just gets too much for me – there has been a lot of pain in elbow and wrist today.

Saturday 25th August 2007

A very bad night – could not sleep – terrible. I had breakfast but this hand will kill me not being able to use it. I prayed for death because I cannot face the future. They say "God won't give you more than you can bear" but I am being tried here.

The new term will begin soon – and I want to be better to play again and teach – also my daily round of chores. How these are so important when you can no longer fulfil them. Our Lady of Knock please help.

Ann Hensman came and set my hair. A lovely warm day. I am so sorry for causing John and Tim all this worry and the uncertain future. I feel sick to think of their pain. If only my hand got better I would be able to cope better. This morning I could not put a refill in my powder compact. This has rendered me not being able to use my hand properly. Ann set my hair this morning and I remark how thin my hair was getting. When you think of what has happened to me and the fact I am not sleeping – I am getting very depressed.

I thought I might go to MASS tonight – after 6 weeks - and I did. It was lovely especially to see John at the altar again. I felt quite alright but my hand is still awful – I hope please God I shall be well again here. It was tremendous to sit in a pew again.

I bought some sleeping pills because I am not sleeping and I have lost such a lot of hair lately – but I still wake up early in awful heaviness with my arm. I do not think it is wise to mix drugs.

Sunday 26th August 2007

Just one MASS today for John at St Mary's. Later lunch with Michael and Jean Kemp and Grace and Robert White. There will be six at Minhs in Shifnal – here later for a sherry please God. The food was Chinese so we did not like it. However the omelette and chips were ok. I managed to get through it but I was in pain – and I did not feel my best. I hope I did not

let John down. The drinks here went well – they wanted coffee and I was not prepared for that – I could not unscrew the new coffee jar so I saw how limited I am without John. Kems went about 3.45, Grace and Robert 4.30pm. They are off to the Philippines soon. So John and I were so tired. I rang Beverley to find out about Lucy's "L": he said her ankles were swollen all the time – she also had to have an operation on her wrists. He said Joan Rutt was extremely poorly and Fr Rutt was bent over. We have illness all about us at the moment. Tim rang – good to hear from him.

Monday 27th August 2007

It is Bank Holiday Monday today – MASS for John. Good lunch – rested – had a walk – visited church. I am feeling well in myself but I still have pain in hand and arm – mainly the elbow. The weather is not so warm today. No tea today but a light salad for supper which was lovely. I started the car and took it out of the garage and put it back again! So Our Lord is taking care of me.

Tuesday 28th August 2007

A very heavy heart this morning thinking of John going to Albrighton on the 'bus. I do hope please God I shall be able to drive soon – it makes the work so hard. I had a very good night – I do not think I was in any pain. I listened to my Grade VIII pieces and was very upset for a time. I do have to trust in God or it would be unbearable. Boots opens in Shifnal today.

Good lunch. I am down at the moment worried about the long term of this "L". I keep thinking of what I have lost. Playing Grade VIII pieces today disturbed me dreadfully thinking I will not play again. But this is silly. Went down town which was a waste of time. Boots new shop was very poor. Called into church.

Wednesday 29th August 2007

A bad night though I managed to get to sleep after the fourth painkiller. It is so hard to take it all in about my health and the worry I have brought John and Tim. My hand and arm never seem to get better in spite of all the exercises and walking I do. It is so very disheartening. Today my arm is stiff and painful and it is only 10.00am, so I hope I improve with Sue my nurse. I feel I would like to go back to bed all day but I know that would not help me. Lying in bed makes you worry and become very anxious so I will wash, exercise and get dressed. Got upset about my chiropodist not being able to fit me in – my toenails and fingernails grow within a week. But with a bad hand and arm everything is so much worse as you cannot look after yourself properly. However, managed another good lunch: we do keep a good lunch – feel you need to keep your strength going.

Thursday 30th August 2007

Not a good night – how much longer can I go on like this? I am making myself do my little chores this morning. I am trying so hard but the anxiety of losing my hand and arm is now making me feel very ill. The implications and limitations are making me worry – the grief I am causing John and Tim. I hope God will take me very soon as I myself am getting into a

state. As I have said before this has to be a miracle. There is a Walsingham Pilgrimage today from Shropshire and Cris (*sic*) Jones has said I will be remembered there. As the last feeling that came to my arm was at Walsingham , I hope please God this will be the turning point.

Friday 31st August 2017

We managed Morrisons yesterday – Joan Dougill took us. I got very upset waiting for the taxi to come home. The way my life has changed is unbearable. I could not get Fr. Rutt – line engaged. Another bad morning – I wake about 4.00am and then I just worry sick. Today I do not feel well but have hairdresser at 11.00am. Tim comes home tonight. I do hope I'm feeling better by then. Please God help me – the pain is still there. Spoke to Emma about my radiotherapy – she was very understanding – said it was quite good how my hair looked after all this illness. Went into church but I was emotional there. Chris Finlan was doing flowers. I had a beautiful bunch of flowers from Dr. Whiting and Marie which was very lovely of them.

1.30pm. So far today I have not done any exercises. Did exercises and felt better – left my sleeve off for 4 hours which is good – there was some pain and creeping but could bear it. Spoke to Fr. Rutt. He was very down with a “shadow over him”. Poor Joan – he is worried about her. Went to MASS. Tim is home tonight. It will be so wonderful to see him.

Saturday 1st September 2007

Last night was the best night I have had in ages . But my arm was awful and also hand. John had a wedding which went off well. Tim and I went to Telford. He was so good – he hardly let me out of his sight in M & S and Boots – spent a fortune again. I love him to death and with my nerves on edge I was not easy – especially back seat driving. My condition really makes me emotional in shops – you are so limited. I do really have to accept that this is some form of cancer, especially now with all the limitations in my hand and arm and the horrible pain I am in.

A very good lunch again – sometimes I think I am eating for eating's sake – have to keep up my strength although I have almost lost a stone now. I went to MASS – Tim has done a lot of tidying up – such a lot of rubbish. Lovely to have Tim here. I love him beyond anything I can describe. Please God keep him healthy and happy.

Sunday 2nd September 2007

And of course there is John. For the past 2 months I would have died without him as I cannot undo my buttons or screw on any tops. And yesterday was sheer torture in the town centre with Tim – I cannot endure this “L” much longer. Other people have had cancer and can drive but me – I cannot do the things I love:

wash my hair, do my chores, and sleep is not there without drugs. I see all around me well and happy people so this is getting much harder.

However we were all at the garden fete and we had a very lovely welcome with the parishioners: everybody was kissing me so that was lovely and it made me feel I was missed in the church. I thank God that this weekend has gone so well I forgot my horrible “L”. Had

photo taken with MP Mark Pritchard – he is very nice. Good dinner at 5pm after Garden Fete. All very tired. TIM BACK TO LONDON. Glad to have Tim's call after 11.00pm. So happy to hear he was safely back home.

Monday 3rd September 2007 DR. AGRAWAL

Did not see Dr Agrawal – saw a lady doctor – she was very blunt and said it was a form of cancer and they were leaving me for three months. The underlying cause of the “L” is the lump under my arm. She gave me nothing to feel positive about. I began to shake inside – goodness knows how John felt. Cried when I got home. Thank God for John. Afternoon walk – accountants – building society – chemist. Weather overcast. I am trying very hard not to break down – the consultations seemed to go nowhere.

Tuesday 4th September 2007 New Term

Reality begins to come in now as to how I will teach next term – especially after the interview with the lady doctor yesterday. She made me feel the whole case was hopeless. My days at the moment are certainly more down than up. John and Tim – should I not survive: Bury me here in Shifnal.

(Tuesday 24th July Walsingham, not possible – St Andrew's, Shifnal only re openings, town cemetery dire! Improved since. Belmont Abbey eventually.)*

And I'm sorry for this worry – but you and John live and be happy – trust in God. I have had some wonderful comfort from the scriptures and I'm quite content.

Unfortunately I tried to get a new cheque book on the phone and it was horrendous – only machines to talk to. You cannot get any human voice and when you are ill – it is very trying. However – a good lunch.

I wrote a letter to Marie and Stephen (Doctor) in reply to their lovely letter. I shall put it in their letterbox on my walk this afternoon. John went to St Joseph's this morning. Anne Brown sent me some sweet peas – very nice. I did feel ill again. Had to ring Alliance & Leicester – how difficult it is not having the use of both hands. When is this going to end for me? It is such torture – pins and needles and pain in elbow. I have now been ill since early spring – now autumn. Had a walk and went into church. Home – Janet (Lambert) rang – she was good – she listened. I got a bit upset over my hand and arm. Chris Blake called for some music – but could not help him. A really lovely afternoon. I wrote two cheques for Damart and M & S.

Wednesday 5th September 2007

Had 4 painkillers last night – a bad night worrying about losing my memory – so this morning I feel terrible.

My arm is stiff and painful, so having my hair done today is going to be absolutely awful. Hair very nice. Hospital – Sue “L” treatment. Met Mrs Ward – Edward Ward's wife (Vicar of Edgmond). She has had a bad leg for 3 years. My own treatment was excellent. My hair was really lovely and I had a lot of compliments about it. Of course I have lost a lot but I

hope soon I can wash my own hair. My hand is much better – not so prickly: still pain in elbow but I hope God is looking after me. Rachel had her first lesson for new term – all a bit strange – could not think of scales.

Thursday 6th September 2007

A really marvellous night: slept all night – I have not done that for ages. John is marvellous. Getting ready for London this weekend. John deserves a rest – it has been awful for him.

Friday 7th – London

Please God take care of us. I was very worried about this trip thinking I would be ill in London and causing John and Tim anxiety. But thank you God – you were with me all the time. The days were marvellous. My sleeping is still poor – mostly because I worry. The journey was very good apart from the first class lounge which was not on the right platform. Also chocolate drinks went all over the place.

Arrived in London late owing to track problems at Birmingham International. To John Howard Hotel, Queen's Gate, 26 – the same room – very cosy near ground level. Walked to Kensington High Street. M & S – bought some lovely salads for supper. Walked to Kensington Palace and Gardens. M & S – bought a dress.

Good to see my Tim – how I love him – enjoyed evening. He did not stay too late because we were all very tired. John slept but as you know my sleeping is not good. However I did sleep eventually.

Saturday 8th September 2007

Wonderful hotel breakfast. I seem to have put on a little weight again. To Tim's flat – wonderful to be with him. A really good lunch – fresh pizza Tim had made and fresh veg. I feel every moment with him is so precious. We just stayed in Tim's flat all day. Taxi home a bit hair-raising. I do feel the pace of life in London is awful.

Sunday 9th September 2007

The day - firstly the Brompton Oratory – MASS beautiful. Prayed for all of us – Tim, John and myself with this awful nightmare of an illness. Then Harrods for coffee, then M & S. Took dress back as too low cut. Bought a very pretty blouse. Time soon came for "The Ritz". I cannot describe how lovely and moving this was. Tim looked so handsome and John also. We stayed over 3 hours: the food was splendid – a fantastic place. Later Tim drove us to our hotel. I cried but tears of joy. A good journey home to Shifnal – bath etc.

Tuesday 11th September 2007

I did not sleep at all well with the nerves in my hand: this "L" is worrying me crazy – it does not get better.

Felt ill when I got up – sent for Ann (Hensman) to set my hair because I felt so sick of worrying about my hand. The fact that I still cannot do things. Ann came – she cheered me up and, of course, she is a nurse.

I have been very hot all day – I think I have a temperature. I woke up feeling I'm not going to get better: this thought does not help me of course. I have sent for the doctor. The doctor did not come – they only come in real emergencies. However, made an appointment for Thursday 11.10am. Rachel had second lesson.

Wednesday 12th September 2007

Our wedding anniversary – 37 years today – and I have loved every minute of it. There have been ups and downs of course, but on the whole being married to a priest is the best nearest this side of heaven. A pity about my illness today but all the other anniversaries have been wonderful – so I thank God for that.

Good lunch – visit 'Solemates' - my nails grow so quickly. A warm pleasant day – got nails cut – another very nice person called Candy. Few groceries from Co-op and card for John. A good day for me. I must not worry so much – this will not help John and Tim. Afternoon went quite hot.

Thursday 13th September 2007

Feeling quite poorly again this morning although I had a good night's rest without pills. My hand is painful today and I drop everything in that left hand – I was so dearly hoping this would be stronger by now but it is not. Dr. Brinkley today to hear of my fate. Well, it was not as bad as I thought it would be. Dr. Brinkley was good at explaining everything: they were going to leave me for a while but I should have another CT scan as they still didn't know where the seat of the cancer was. They were going to leave me for 3 months to see developments. However I was heartened by the results - Dr. Brinkley was surprised to see how positive it was after my phone call.

Friday 14th September 2007

I had to take a new pill last night and it knocked me out. I felt awful – like a zombie. I could not focus at all – went back to bed but still felt drugged all morning. I got lunch as usual but worried – I did not feel as good as yesterday.

Tim goes to America and Canada today. He will be in London, Ontario first, by my brother Bert, so that is a great worry off our mind. The flight was late. The day was bright and dry. Took some heavy Altar wine etc to the Presbytery and later walked down the village – bought new frying pan and baking tray. Tim was still at Gatwick – the flight was further delayed. It is now 3.30pm. this delay is not good – especially for Bert waiting for him in Canada.

My hand is most upsetting today – pins and needles and stiff. How can I cope with this without losing my mind? My hair has already come out in handfuls.

Saturday 15th September 2007

Had a good night. Washed hair myself. This is what I want to do – look after myself. It was not easy: later I did my bra up too. But the pins and needles were still there. I made myself do this but it was not too painful.

The time is 1.00pm and we have still not heard from Tim– a bit worrying but it is still night in Canada. Still nothing by 3.30pm.

I actually played a little today. It was wonderful albeit the right hand – but it was still marvellous.

Sunday 16th September 2007

St Mary's last night – drove there.

A good night but I felt a bit drugged again this morning. However, I got myself ready and went to St Joseph's with John. There was a kind welcome for me – sat by Madie (Chavasse) and Ann Wright. It is wonderful to have done this – if only my hand was right I would be recovered but this "L" is most awful. Lovely to hear John say the MASS – spoke to Lucy Thompson (Cornwall) – her operation has gone well thank goodness. Had my little walk – Haughton Hall – children conkering there. Very breezy. Tried to play this afternoon but I have a lot of pain today. I am trying not to worry about Tim in Canada and America – such a long time he will be away. I am trying not to worry, not only Tim but John and his work – myself in particular as all things are so uncertain.

Monday 17th September 2007

The worst night. This was awful – could not sleep, even after the sleeping pills. I worried over all sorts of things. My hand and arm were terrible with nerve pain. Rang "L" clinic at Compton Hospice– Benoit (Dr Ritzenthaler) was rather worried about not sleeping and the pain not getting better. He was very nice and helpful.

Tuesday 18th September 2007

Had a much better night. Went to St Joseph's, Albrighton. Still feel giddy but I cannot keep sitting at home because you get down and imagine all sorts of horrible things and worry. A good lunch – managing to get that Thank God. A few chores today and then a walk. It is funny how in the afternoon you meet disabled people walking and of course shoppers. It has gone quite cold today – one day summer – the next winter. We have changed the conservatory to winter, revealing radiator etc. My hand is painful especially in the wind. John meeting, the Parish Pastoral Council.

Wednesday 19th September 2007

Had a very good night. Optician 3pm – Tim Vanes – all was well – Thank God. Got rid of some dead plants in front garden. John cut his finger – poor chap – he is so worried about me. I felt really bad today and disorientated – Joan Rutt died (wife of Mgr Richard Rutt) Monday 17th September RIP. We went to bed for a rest.

Thursday 20th September 2007 – TIM'S BIRTHDAY (35)

Slept all night but still so much pain and dizzy. Some days you feel a lot better than others. Washed my hair which is not wise with all this pain. I have lost clumps of hair. Everything is so worrying particularly when you don't know what your future is and you think the worst.

Usual chores here on a Thursday: John went to butcher; prepared newsletter. A good lunch – we are fortunate to have good meals. If only my hand was a little better I would clear up.

This evening is the Cosford Fly Past if I'm well enough. The afternoons seem endless when all your movements are restricted including getting dressed. I cannot fasten my bra, and of course now winter is upon us my tights are impossible. I experienced some of this kind of pain in 1965 when I had a slipped disc and was away from work for six months. Constant pain is terrifying. You cannot get any comfort anywhere. Just had a few notes on the piano – still tight and painful. I cannot sit at the piano for too long because I get so upset. And I have already lost bunches of hair so worrying is very bad.

Friday 21st September 2007

Marvellous night last night at the Cosford RAF camp: petits fours and food, Parachute Display Team programme – it is good talk to people. Took my mind off my present illness. However I slept all night but this lump seems to be back and a few smaller ones. We went up to M & S to get some winter jumpers etc. Also bought expanding watch. At lunchtime I could see the lumps were worse. After I was doing so well. You are up and down with this.

Ray Hughes, (my sister Vera's ex), funeral today. We have not seen him for about 20 years – but as I am so ill it was not possible to go to Dudley. I have sent for the doctor this afternoon – Dr Whiting said the heat could have caused the swelling to get bigger. It IS rather warm today.

Saturday 22nd September 2007

Today is a very bad day. I cannot lift myself out of the depression of this illness. I am in panic. Especially with the pins and needles in my hand. My hair falls out and I look white and extremely tired. And of course this is having an awful toll on John. I do hope that soon it will be ended one way or another. They said there would be terrible days and it is certainly true – my deepest regret is causing John and Tim pain. The swelling today is twice its normal size. Should I die, please play Schubert's 'Holy, holy, holy' (German Mass) and 'Just as I am'. Also some Elgar – for when I feel as sick as I do today, I do not think I shall recover.

Dorothy (Pople) and Sandra (Callow) called to see me this afternoon which was really lovely. They cheered me up no end – it was good to go over old times when we were well because Sandra has had breast cancer and much more treatment than me and she has survived very well and happy. Dorothy is happy with her move to Portsmouth – she looked very well too.

The "L" tonight is awful. I am feeling everything I touch so much so I'm feeling sick and vomiting.

Sunday 23rd September 2007

Went to sleep quickly without any pills but woke a couple of hours later in pain so took

two painkillers and Amnitraline. No church – went back to bed – spoke to Ann Wright about why I was not going to St Joseph's today. Did some ironing and chores. Very good lunch to keep up our strength. An overcast day.

Monday 24th September 2007

Today is very bad – my swelling is large and painful and I feel ill. Appointment with Dr Brinkley at 3pm. Ann (Hensman) coming to set my hair which has become very thin. I have worried myself to death over this cancer. I cannot fight the pain and loss of my arm and hand – so help me God. I feel I am going to die. It is so weakening. I cannot spring back again – so many doctors, so many nurses, and other people, so much advice – it is all too much to take in. I feel I just want peace. The day was rather bad with the swelling so big and red. I am hoping things will get better. Saw Dr Brinkley. He said I would have to be referred to Mr Hinton again if the swelling did not go down.

Tuesday 25th September 2007

The redness has gone a bit but the swelling is quite bad. I make myself get up and go to St Joseph's – then bought some mint shampoo. Drove alright but I am careful with my hand. Rang chap about a tabletop dishwasher – but he is far too expensive. Good lunch. Ironing. Walked. Called Ann Wright about the dishwasher. Rachel Redman's lesson. I am grateful she still comes – it keeps my hand in a bit.

I had a shock about 8pm. My left armpit was emitting a puss – colourless but quite a lot of it. It lasted all night and most of the next day. Rang Shropdoc - Dr Whiting – he said he would send in the district nurse tomorrow.

It was another blow for John – he has got so upset about me.

Wednesday 26th September 2007

A very good night. Arm had been discharging all night – district nurse came in and dressed it – plenty of chat – she was good. All this illness and all these odd bods is very distracting – your head goes round with pills and instructions. All day very tired because of this discharge.

Joan Rutt's funeral Mass today in Falmouth, St Mary Immaculate Church.

I will ring Fr. Rutt tomorrow.

Thursday 27th September 2007

A good night. John saw Rev Graham Fowell about this chap who is a worry in the churches. I do not want John involved in this. He has enough with me. Dr Brinkley today with nurse. John usual chores – newsletter etc. Butcher and chemist etc. I feel alright in myself – I just wish my hand would be restored to me. We do not like Tim being out of the country – but he seems to be enjoying it according to the photos.

Friday 28th September 2007

Slept all night. District nurse came in and cleaned dressing. I hate this at the moment but there is nothing I can do. She was late and my afternoon has been all over the place. I was not well all day and found the Co-op awful to shop with not being able to use my hand. Drove to village – Candy for my nails – raining. Rang Fr. Rutt. Took John to church.

Saturday 29th September 2007 St Michael and All Angels

Fantastic night's rest – one of the best since I have been ill. You feel so much better the next day. Did a few jobs without my sleeve. Ann came to set my hair but I had started it. District nurse came for dressing – chemist to get other dressings – the district nurse came when I was going to get the dressings so she did not dress the wound – she had no dressings!

It is a lovely day – I have tried to do things as best I could today including my washing and setting my hair – hope I am doing the right thing.

Sunday 30th September 2007

Awake quite early. District nurse called 9.00am – she was very nice. Helped me to get dressed. To St Mary's, picked John up – then St Joseph's – all went well. People were kind to me. Towards end of Mass was feeling tired and my arm and hand were painful. Ann excellent again – shall be glad when the dishwasher is in working order, we do seem to have a lot of washing up.

Very good lunch. Had a walk round block.

Monday 1st October 2017 St Therese

Sleeping better. Waited for plumber who now cannot do the work until Wednesday evening 6pm. He looks efficient. Good lunch. I am very tired. Just had another look at the Sudbury Barratt (retirement) homes – I wonder if we will ever get there? My health is better in myself and the infection had dried up. "L" is still awful. Going to have a little rest – weather raining. Rang Fr. Rutt. Joan's funeral Mass went very well and he seems very well indeed. So glad. Bath.

Wednesday 3rd October 2017

Morrisons. A dry morning. My wound looks a lot better from the infection – but at night it gets very red again. Afternoon did theory for Rachel. Raining. The dishwasher is in good form. It is much better for John – poor dear, he has been left with the washing up for 4 months. My hand and arm do not seem to improve. Washed hair which seems to be coming out a lot at the moment – of course, the uncertainty is awful. But thank God I am driving so this is such a help.

Thursday 4th October 2007

Good night. Things seem more ordered now in the home. Dishwasher works. Quite a saga in the village with Building Society and Premium Bond. Had to go back again because everything had to be in black ink – I signed it in blue ink – ridiculous. Marks & Spencer. Today has been a beautiful day with sun all day long. Bought Premium Bond today. Trying to save for when John and I retire - "God willing".

Friday 5th October 2007

Slept well but I think it is the night pill the Doctor gives me. The wound looks better – I am almost afraid to look these days. Saw Sue Desborough the "L" nurse – she is leaving in 3 weeks' time – this is a shock – but someone else is taking her place so hopefully things will be the same. The Lymph Drainage is very good.

Another lovely sunny day. I do hope I am going to get better to play again, and to do my buttons up and screw tops on jars. John is not very well today – he saw Peggy (Carey) in hospital. I did some ironing this evening.

Saturday 6th October 2007

These “Amitriptylic” – can’t spell it – make me sleep for a good 7 hours. Washed and set my hair today – my hair has got very thin now, of course: everything has been such a shock – me with cancer – I never thought this could happen to me, and also the “L” which is destroying my hand and arm with pain and pins and needles nerve pain. What have I done to deserve this? This is the same question as why all this suffering – nobody knows the answer. Your health is outside your control. St Mary’s – good to talk to people.

Sunday 7th October 2007

Not a good night. St Joseph’s – good sermon by John. Collection for Fr John Bosco (Ekanim) who had been burgled, and also Cafod. Good chat to Kirsty – Benoit’s wife – he has gone to France again to clear up his mother’s estate. Very tired. Benediction at St Mary’s in the afternoon.

Monday 8th October 2007

A very good night – chores – got lunch – ironing – district nurse came. Sunny day but chilly wind – had a walk. I must say I feel a lot better again – just this hand and arm still pins and needles.

Today I have done some chores, including planted fir trees (2) in pots, prepared fruit (apples and plums) for freezer. No sun today but warm and very still.

I miss Tim very much – I cannot just ring him up. He keeps in touch by mobile and internet which is wonderful, as you know roughly what area (of the USA) he is in. This dishwasher is proving to be very useful.

District nurse came and said I should go without a dressing, but I do not think this is a good idea as it is still weeping some fluid.

Tuesday 9th October 2007

Went to St Joseph’s and served – I was alright. I thought I should make a mess of it. I have not served for 6 months at least. It is very hard getting into tights and winter clothes without the use of your hand. I feel I could weep buckets but it will do me no good.

Good lunch. Washed hair. Plumbs lady rang - Thursday 3pm calling about cheap covers. Doctor Ritzenthaler has to give me a second opinion about my trouble. Rachel music.

Wednesday 10th October 2007 – DAY OFF

Slept later – decided to go to Bridgnorth. Lunch out – “Brasserie” very good – too many chips – lovely soup – and fish. We separated for an hour – I bought some towels and a lovely runner for Mum’s sideboard.

Did not need any more food that day. I felt absolutely marvellous – apart from my hand which seems the same every day.

Bishop Brian (Noble) rang – spoke to John first and then to me. He is so nice and caring – having gone through this sort of thing himself.

Thursday 11th October 2007

Usual chores today – take John to Presbytery. He prepares the newsletter, goes to butcher etc. A good lunch – try to have a good lunch to keep our strength because is such a trauma for both of us. Although the lump under my arm is much better and not so big, it is still there and still pus coming out of it. My arm and hand are still locked with this “L”. So terribly upsetting – my hand and arm are still very painful.

Plumbs’ lady at 3pm. I should like to cover this suite but it all depends on the money. Had a lot of difficulty with Rachel’s Grade V C clefs – did some sweeping up – I do wish my hand was better – it is so awful pins and needles all the time – it is getting me down.

Friday 12th October 2007

Tim has been away in America now for ONE MONTH. He texted from Portland, Oregon. Hospital today for draining treatment – Sue is very good to me – I shall miss her.

13th October 2007

Flu injection – wash hair. A very good night – these drugs Amitriptyline are very helpful with nerve pain. Good lunch. We must keep up our strength. I have certainly lost weight – always being 10 stone – now just over 9 stone – I think I was in need of losing weight, but not through illness. Tim has been in America now for over a month – I shall be glad when he is home in London. I would like to live nearer to Timothy – Cambridge or Oxford – but at the moment it all seems useless. I have thought so much of dying these last 4 months – it seems unbelievable that I have felt so well these past 3 weeks even though I had that infection. I do hope the CT scan is alright on Tuesday and I can go all the right way. DV.

Sunday 14th October 2007

Took John to St Joseph’s. (Went to St Mary’s last night.) I have felt so much better lately, more able to do things. Although I have this CT scan on Tuesday, and I was a bit perturbed today about the swelling under my arm – it still is painful and still a bit swollen – I do not want anything to spoil how well I have been lately. It was bad enough having that infection.

Just rang Betty (Whittingham, Llandudno) to say thank you for Poppies in vase – she had a headache. I find myself worrying this afternoon about this CT scan as my hand is awful with pins and needles. I do hope everything will be alright. I wish the lump had gone completely. Of course it is better, but the doubt remains as my hand is not better.

Monday 15th October 2007

Morrisons today – always glad to get it over with. Met Mary Croxton (St Patrick’s) who once said there was no role for a clergy wife in the Presbytery! She was ok today as she did

not realise how serious my illness had been and unfortunately still is. A few chores ie washing new towels from Morrisons – we have no small towels left though plenty of big ones so I have replaced them.

TUESDAY 16th October CT SCAN

Hospital but machine was not working so it was put off – such a nuisance - having got up early, no breakfast and waiting about. Cleaner (Anne Pattison) did not come either as she has had a bad night – tummy upset. Afternoon pouring with rain. My hand is painful again – so prickly. I must say I despair of this arm and hand – it really gets to me. So far this month I have not received any prizes from 'Ernie'. I hope I do because the last month was not good. The only way Premium Bonds are any good is to receive some prize every month.

George (Vera's friend) rang me on Sunday night – he is not well at all. I said I would ring him tonight after my CT scan, which did not take place. George was to see his specialist again too and I said I would ring him tonight. Rachel's music lesson. George rang.

Wednesday 17th October 2007 – Day Off

We are going to Much Wenlock for lunch and a trip out – slept very heavy but it is wonderful to sleep all night. It has made me feel much better. My arm and hand are still awful but the lump seems to be getting smaller. I hope please God it will now completely disappear.

The weather is damp. Lovely lunch in the 'Copper Kettle', Much Wenlock. A bit nippy the weather but it is wonderful to feel myself again – I am not saying I am completely recovered by any means but I do forget the pain and suffering of the last 5 months. I try to enjoy one day at a time. I look at myself in the mirror: this illness has certainly ravaged my face and body. I have lost weight and my hair is not so thick – so I try not to look at myself much. We have prepared some fruit for the freezer.

John is a wonderful help and comfort to me. Thank God for John.

The countryside around Much Wenlock was absolutely beautiful.

TIM RANG from California!

Thursday 18th October 2007

I did not have any pills left yesterday so I did not take any painkillers. I thought I would be in pain and not be able to sleep but I did sleep. But it is better to have some painkillers. Got them today. Washed hair and rolled it. It is wonderful to be able to look after myself. My hand is slightly better but we are not there yet. I thank God I have felt so well and been able to do a few of my normal jobs. Resting a bit today as we have been out every day this week. Tim has been in America 5 weeks tomorrow. I shall be so glad when he is home. I did not think I could bear him out of the country for 2 and a half months, but now 5 weeks have almost gone.

Had a rest this afternoon – actually went to bed. I have tried to avoid going to bed in the afternoon because I could not sleep at night. The pain is less today.

Friday 19th October 2007

Very good night. Early rise – “L” drainage with Sue – she is absolutely lovely – so gentle. Then Morrisons – take back 8 face cloths – bought 3 large ones and a fitted sheet - £13. Then have nails cut – Boots – Flower shop ‘Blue’ – carpet for porch ordered. A nice day but cold. I am so much better I feel it is a miracle.

Saturday 20th October 2007

Nothing from 'Ernie' again this month – disappointing. A few chores today. Good lunch. Went to Newport today to Boots – Newport has got rather common – lots of people shouting, especially young lads. My hand is awful today again – whenever will I be free of these pains in my arm and hand? Although I feel a lot better for sleeping well – I still worry as to when it will end. My right hand and arm are taking all the strain and it aches from time to time.

Sunday 21st October 2007

St Joseph's today. Lovely MASS – weather foggy – Albrighton clear. Good lunch – slept – changed beds. A quiet evening at home. It is wonderful how much better I feel – the wound is still painful and the “L” is still awful.

Monday 22nd October 2007

A good night. Did my exercises as I do every morning – particularly for the horrible “L”. I still worry about all this. Did some washing and ironing – a pile of washing again. Read an account of Christa D'Souza – how she felt when being told she had cancer – this is a most dreadful word. It is a road nobody wants to go down.

Took a lot of bed linen from the Presbytery to the charity shop. All the time I am in pain with my left hand, and now in this cold snap it feels frozen. The tips of my fingers are really painful – certain surfaces make me cringe.

Tried to read a little Trollope (The Way We Live Now) but I cannot concentrate on reading – washed hair and had a bath – a rare thing these days as everything is so awful with my painful hand – still I do the best I can.

Tuesday 23rd October

Letter from Tim. Also a message that he was nowhere near the fires in Southern California – thank God – I could not stand anything happening to Tim, so far away. A good lunch again – thank God for his blessings.

St Joseph's this morning – Building Society – I could not put any money in my ISA as I had put the usual £3000 already in. I have been saving every penny lately so I will have to put it into the other account. “Blue” Flower Shop £15 on an arrangement for Sue Desborough the “L” lady at the hospital – she has been very supportive. Peggy Carey and niece came and brought me some lovely roses. She is wonderful – how she has suffered – she is so caring of others who suffer. Her husband John is so ill too – he drives a little invalid car. Evening alone – John to Rosary prayer group at Mrs Trish Hampton's.

Wednesday 24th October 2007

George rang last night – it is good to speak to him – he is so down-to-earth.

Went to building society – also to collect flowers for Sue – my last “L” drainage with her. I shall miss her. During this horrible “L” I have forgotten to mention the sleeves and the glove I have to wear which is also horrible – putting it on and taking it off – all such a chore – what with the cleansing and dressing of the wound, the creaming which leaves the bed sheets awful and also the painkillers etc. By the time you have completed all these ablutions, you are creeping into bed exhausted. But the bright side of this is that I feel better and am able to do a lot more. Hope all goes well from now on.

Thursday 25th October 2007

Dr Brinkley today. Mike Street came to look at my electronic organ which seems to have gone odd. A quieter day today. John doing his photostatting, newsletter, butcher etc. Saw Dr Brinkley – told him I was quite well. Mike Street came and sorted the organ for me. Good lunch – a little sit after lunch. Walk this afternoon – very cold – went to Co-op. If only my hand and arm were better, I feel I would have made a good recovery, but the pins and needles in my hand are still absolutely horrible. John out tonight at Rita Wilkinson's prayer meeting. Did not go to M & S – in a lot of pain.

Friday 26th October 2007

Still some pain and tightness under my left armpit. I slept alright but woke up several times and then went to sleep again. A sad day – Mrs Peggy Carey's daughter-in-law has died from cancer. M & S afternoon – spent a lot but I have lost weight and now need a size 12.

Saturday 27th October 2007

I have just bathed my wound under my left arm whence all this trouble is – it is still painful and swollen but nothing like it was: in comparison it is now quite clear. Ironing today – how this washing piles up. Not as cold as it was yesterday. St Mary's tonight. Trying now to get life back to normal. Good lunch – chores – getting lunch ready for Sunday and a lot of ironing – miserable day.

Sunday 28th October 2007

Funny night: got up at 4am and thought it was 6am. Obviously the clocks being put back upset my sleep. I have been getting up at 6am to make the tea and then do my exercises which have helped me no end. St Joseph's – not so many in today. Good sermon by John. Good lunch with plenty of washing up – but a good Sunday joint makes at least 3 days' lunches. Nell (Wall) said her tablets were Tomoxifen. I have missed Tim so much. Long conversation with Janet Lambert– St Peter's, Darby End falling to pieces, no vicar at present. Pain still in fingers – I do wish I had some relief from this horrible “L”.

Monday 29th October 2007

Woke up at 3am – back to sleep – everything is ok. John has MASS. Shop at Morrisons. Having a little exercise with my “L” hand on the piano – trying to get this hand back to

normal. It is very hard. Beginning the 7th week Tim has been in America. I miss him not being able to ring and hear his voice.

Tuesday 30th October 2007

Good night. Washed hair last night – my hair is looking better. I have been worried about my hair loss. St Joseph's this morning. Ann Pattison will clean the house today. Quite a nice morning – the birds are singing wonderfully this morning.

Good lunch. Damsons are lovely in spite of the fact they had really gone over. St Joseph's – so good to be there for me, especially good to feel better. This hand is still my worry. Listening to Classic FM – some lovely pieces they are playing today. I miss Tim so much – hope he is OK today. Spoke to Tim last night – so good to hear his voice.

Wednesday 31st October 2007 DAY OFF

Went to bed early – John went to a meeting at the church. A lovely day – sunny and warm – pruned roses. My "L" is painful – it is not so painful with the sleeve and glove but I am afraid to go without them just in case someone knocks me or I knock myself. Good lunch again. Put some washing out. It is marvellous to do some chores again: you feel there is some order and beauty in the home now. My upper left arm seemed very heavy today - as I was on my walk I found this so. Finished washing, put on line and then did a little pruning.

A lovely day – warm for the end of October.

Thursday 1st November ALL SAINTS DAY

St Joseph's this morning – lovely Mass – good sermon – good number present. A lot of trouble about the parking again at St Joseph's.

A dry day though not as sunny as yesterday. I do get very weary of this hand and the pain – it seems to have no end to it – pain every day. I fear for my right hand really because that does all the work to say nothing of this putting the sleeve on and off and also the glove – all trying.

Had a walk this afternoon, which is very lonely. I cannot help but think of this illness now for the past 6 months – my hand worries me to death - wondering what damage this is doing to the fingers and arm. Today the horribleness of all that has happened to me seems to come into focus.

I do hope next week's CT Scan is going to be clear - although I dread that hospital again. Generally the pain is very much better – but I just want to be reassured all is well.

Friday 2nd November 2007

This week has gone very quickly. Today John's jobs – newsletter, butcher etc. Another sunny day. I have had a good night. I do my exercises every morning – they certainly have made me feel better. My hand is a bit creepy this morning: this "L" leaves you with horrible sensations in your arm and hand – it is the nerves doing what they want.

Saturday 3rd November 2007 Farmers' Market in Shifnal

The day looks bright – not too cold. Taking my time this morning – arm and hand very painful. The Farmers' Market was disappointing – just a few stalls. Saw a few neighbours. The weather has gone dull now.

Sunday 4th November 2007

St Joseph's – a lovely Mass – John's sermon was excellent. Foggy day all day. In the afternoon 4.30 'Benediction'. I had a rest – I am much better but "L" is still awful.

Dr Richard Fitzgerald (St Mary's, Consultant Radiologist) says it will go – I hope so – I am getting very weary of it – especially not playing. I have felt a little worried about the SCAN on Thursday. Benoit spoke to me this morning – said he had written to Dr Agrawal but I do not want things to change now. I am very happy with all my treatment so far – I do hope please God it will be an end.

Monday 5th November 2007

Woke up with headache today – it soon went after breakfast. I did all my exercises even though I was late getting up. St Mary's Mass for John – making quiche for lunch. My hand is still such a worry as my right hand does all the work. People say this "L" will go – but when? Rang Ann Wright about the parking at St Joseph's as John was really fed up yesterday with complaints.

Good lunch – ironing – chores etc. No walk – it began to rain. Read St Therese of Lisieux – a chapter on her pilgrimage to Rome. Wash hair and condition it – it is so unruly and thin. Bath. All of which is so exhausting.

Tuesday 6th November 2007

St Joseph's – it is so good to go St Joseph's to feel so much better. Pat Bamford lift to Shifnal – first to Mr Fewtrell's widow – quite a long wait for John. A lovely day and the autumn colours on the way to Albrighton were beautiful. A few errands on my walk today.

Wednesday 7th November 2007

Getting a bit worried about Tim as we have not heard from him for 5 days. Somehow my life seems to have taken on its usual mantle – as if nothing had happened. Of course, my hand and arm are still reminders of its awfulness. However, mostly the weather has been lovely.

The only bad spell was when I was having radiotherapy and it poured with rain every day. We are going to Morrisons this morning to do our Christmas shopping – for which I thank God for being able to drive, although the pins and needles still persist. I try to overcome these. Tomorrow is the CT scan. I'm dreading this.

John has had a text message from Tim dated 6th November – he has been in some inaccessible areas. We were getting worried: Friday is the 7th week – 2 to go. I shall be glad when he arrives back in London.

Thursday 8th November 2007

Princess Royal Hospital CT Scan – awful. The liquid you have to drink is poisonous.

He had to give me two injections: the one in my hand did not take, so I had a second in my upper arm. The weather was good in the morning but it rained heavily in the afternoon. I had to go to bed – feeling so poorly again. Not felt like that for 7 weeks. The first week Tim went to the USA I was really terrible – rang Dr Brinkley that week. Now tomorrow he will have been away 7 weeks – just 2 weeks to go now. Had a good lunch in spite of the fact I was feeling ill. Cup of tea and went back to bed. I have been so well but going to the hospital has made me feel ill! Went to bed 3.30pm – rest is the best thing to do. I shall have to leave my car outside tonight.

Friday 9th November 2007

Not good in the morning although I did sleep in spite of sleeping all afternoon. Had hair cut and blow dried. I have lost a lot of hair and also gone very white. Then chiropody – Candy – she is lovely – so understanding and kind. She does my fingernails as well as toes and hard skin on heels. It is unbelievable how many parts of the body this illness affects. Glad to get home – had a little play – went to do all the cleaning of wound etc. Cried for a long time over everything that has happened to me.

Saturday 10th November 2007

Late getting up – catching up with chores. My arm and hand do not seem to really improve – pins and needles all the time – although I can do a lot more. The bruise on my arm is awful where the needle was put in on Thursday.

St Mary's Vigil Mass 6.30pm.

11th November 2007 – Remembrance Sunday

Good to remember this date although you just want to cry. We had a text from Tim last night saying he was now on the last leg of his journey around America – I shall be so glad to see him. John's Masses over the weekend have been marvellous – so interesting, also with Wendy Sutcliffe's Appeal, towels for the Good Shepherd brothers in Wolverhampton. Weather showers. Good turkey lunch. St Joseph's was good today – but a lot of gossiping! Rested all afternoon although I had got a load of ironing.

Monday 12th November 2007

St Mary's Mass for John. Weather bitter cold – more seasonal. Good lunch. "L" new lady rang up for drainage treatment – Friday 2.30 at the new Severn hospice in Wellington, Telford.

John - funeral at Bushbury Crematorium.

Went to Telford town centre, M & S – a few purchases.

Tuesday 13th November 2007

Good night. My life seems to have taken on its usual rhythm – for which I thank God. St Joseph's this morning. Chemist for prescription – not there again. Rang district nurse. Feel

so much better – my arm and hand still stay the same with pain – I have an appointment on Friday. I do hope my CT scan is clear – you do worry about this. Morrisons for normal groceries. Rachel for music this evening.

Wednesday 14th November 2007

Sleeping better. We were going to Wolverhampton today but I am too tired. We have done something every day now for weeks. However, today I woke up feeling very tired indeed – thought it was best to do a few chores at home. Weather is dry. Message from Tim – he is in Amarillo, Texas – not too long to go now. On Friday it will be the 9th week he has been in the USA. Good he saw Bert in Canada first.

A good lunch again – I myself am eating a lot more than I did before my illness as I tried to keep my weight to no more than 10 stone which is really too heavy for 5' 2". However, now I am as slim as I want to be – 9st 5lbs. The sun has come out now so it would have been rather nice in Wolverhampton today. We have decided to go next Wednesday and be more prepared for it.

Thursday 15th November 2007

Lots of bitty jobs to do on a Thursday – newsletter etc. A cold day with a frost all day. Thank God I am able to drive and do jobs around the house. I am sleeping much better with the tablets – and I am not so overwhelmed thinking about dying for this subject has occupied my thoughts for the past 6 months and I have worried. But I am now able to care for myself – wash and wash my hair – which was a great worry having to get Ann Hensman in. Also I can do my washing and ironing and shopping, so my life has greatly improved. Tomorrow I go for my “Lym” drainage and this is a great reassurance. My hair is a lot better too, for it was coming out in handfuls when I combed it – God has answered my prayers when I see how I have improved. Must ring Fr. Rutt – after Joan has died he must be feeling it badly now.

Friday 16th November 2007

Another frosty day – very cold and winter looking. But I feel well – apart from my hand and arm with the “L”. Today I have the drainage at the new hospice in Telford later on. Wash hair this morning – thank God my hair seems to have settled down a bit more – your hair is always a worry with this illness.

Marked Rachel's theory – did tape of her pieces last night. These will help me a lot as I still cannot really use the left hand for the bass clef. Rang Fr. Rutt – he says he is very lonely now Joan has died. You feel sorry – they were inseparable.

My “L” drainage was nowhere as good as with Sue Desborough – I shall miss her thorough work and friendship.

Saturday 17th November 2007

Another frosty day. I put on my new bedspread last night – it is wonderful and looks Victorian. Chores today – not heavy work. Listened to pieces for Rachel to get some idea

of how they should go as I cannot really play myself. Trying to get the first page right of each piece. My hand still gives me pain and odd sensations, which I find most upsetting. It is the 9th week Tim has been in America. St Mary's this evening.

Sunday 18th November 2007

Raining. John said he was cold all night, but the weather is very cold and damp. St Joseph's – good number in. A talk with Benoit over illnesses. Talked to Andrea Kainz about the Loreal mask for hair. Went to bed in afternoon – very tired. Sleeting in the afternoon. Cold. My hand was awful in the morning and arm so painful. Email from Tim, he has been to Gracelands, off now to Nashville.

Monday 19th November 2007

A disappointing post so far – still no Premium Bond wins, yet only one day to go – 20th of the month means you have not won anything. It is all down to luck.

Tuesday 20th November 2007

St Joseph's for Mass. Raining. Today is the last day for any Premium Bond win – very damp and cold. Six at Mass plus two priests but it is not nice weather and rather dark – motorists had all got their lights on. My hand and arm are bad again today – I do wonder when the pain will cease – my fingers are as if they were frozen. I had a nice picture of Joan Rutt and a card of St Cosmas & St Damian. John has not been well for the past three days with a cold and running off to the WC. (Crohns!) No win for me this month in the P.B. unfortunately. Afternoon, weather still dull. Ironing this afternoon.

Wednesday 21st November 2007

The birds are very chirpy this morning – very noisy. Weather is dry. I seem to have a lot of "L" pain and creepy hand today – nerves are bad in my hand. I do a raft of exercises every morning otherwise I think I would be in a great deal of pain. Tim rang yesterday – he is heading for New York now. John and I will be so glad when he comes home – 10 weeks is a long time - especially in the world we live in today – everywhere is so dangerous. Betty Whittingham rang about an orchestra at Llandudno on February 3rd – John's birthday - 66 years – I can't believe it. But we must do something about retiring in next year or so – because when you get older you start having problems healthwise.

It is stupid to leave it. Perhaps Sudbury or Stowmarket. We have enough equity in 33 Beech Drive to buy a retirement flat.

Thursday 22nd November 2007

I am sleeping well. Last night George Fenton rang – he was ill with his heart – could not breathe – John and I were worried about him. He said Vera was going to ring his surgeon's secretary today. We will ring later on. John is still suffering with a cold.

I went to Telford Town Centre yesterday and I was thinking how bland Telford is. I do hope next year John will do something about moving to East Anglia. I feel I do not want to live here in Telford any longer. A few chores this morning – took John down to the Presbytery

as usual on a Thursday to do the Newsletter etc, butcher, building society and chemist. Showers all day – put washing out. I like my washing on the line outside although it is raining – under the pergola lean-to.

Friday 23rd November 2007

Today is cold and sunny – a typical autumn day. I rang George (Fenton) last night and he seemed much better but Vera could not get his surgeon's secretary. Had a bath last night – it was very refreshing as my baths these days are every 4 weeks! But my arm and hand were feeling good. Today I have washed my hair and set it on rollers – this has proved more difficult – but I managed it. However, I do hope when I see the Oncologist next week it will be good news. You feel it is still hanging over me. However, my general feeling is good and positive. John is still struggling with a cold. This is the 10th week Tim has been in the USA. He has enjoyed the Thanksgiving Day but now I detect from Tim's voice he will be glad to come home. When we said 'Goodbye' to him at the 'Ritz' I was not well at all and I cried, thinking I may not see him again. Your life is always in God's hands – and for myself it is nothing short of a miracle for me to be so well, and this most terrible cancer under my arm seems to have improved, after the awful infections which were so painful and dreadful. I felt so frightened.

Saturday 24th November 2007

Had difficulty getting to sleep – very bad pain in elbow of left arm. It's the horrible "L" again – it suddenly starts to pain. Frosty morning. Buy the turkey today from Co-op – nobody sells small turkeys. Then Newport after lunch – Boots – I think the painkillers are good – also the Amitriptyline. Mass at St Mary's – a good sing – excellent hymns.

Sunday 25th November 2007

The last Sunday for Tim to be in America. He is in the city of New York until Tuesday – home Wednesday – thank God. Today St Joseph's – Baptism also for John – so he will have 3 services today. Afternoon – rested - "L" still AWFUL.

Monday 26th November 2007

Good night – very tired. Morrisons today. Mass for John at St Mary's – weather rather dull. This morning I received a letter from the Shrewsbury Hospital which I was terrified to open – but it was good news. "Lymph Nodes" were reduced "remarkably". I don't really understand what this means, but it is the miracle I prayed for – and other people's prayers. Thanks be to God.

Tuesday 27th November 2007

Tim is making his way to Canada today to get the flight home to the UK. Thank God for this because it has been stressful while he has been there for 10 weeks. I know he have enjoyed it but we have missed Tim – especially when I was so ill.

MASS at St Joseph's – weather overcast and damp. Still thanking God for my good news yesterday – just my hand and arm to recover and I would be A1 again. This afternoon – some chores.

Wednesday 28th November 2007

THE DAY I did not think I would see: when I said Goodbye to Tim I was so ill – God had seen me through these 10 weeks.

We are going to Wolverhampton today to buy some Christmas presents. Tim is back in London now – thank God.

Wolverhampton today for John and I: Britannia Hotel for coffee, M & S and Boots. Beatties and lunch there. A lovely day.

Have come to the end of this pad now – there is still a letter to be opened from the hospital – I have an absolute dread of these letters.

Thursday 29th November 2007

Good night's rest. Tim rang last night to say how tired he was and that he had slept most of the day. John is full of cold. Weather sunny but cold. I rang Benoit and he said the result of the CT scan was excellent – but be careful. I find it hard to believe although I have felt so well of late. Very glad to have Tim back in England. Hope John will be alright for the Masses over the weekend.

Friday 30th November 2007

End of the month. Today I took jacket and top back to M & S. This awful Lymphodema is swollen at the top of my arm and I cannot really wear a size 12 – I have to have the 14 – so the rest of my body is 12 but the top of my left arm is 14. But my hand and arm are still so painful. I should have gone to Lymphodema nurse today but she rang and said she was ill – so it was put off again. I hope the chiropodist later is still working. Tim is coming home on Sunday.

Saturday 1st December 2007

Choir practice last night. The worrying chap turned up – which was alarming. I was asked to give him a lift – he tapped on the car window, but I went on.

Chores – washed hair – still a major problem with hand. However, nothing is as bad as it used to be. St Mary's this evening – I do not like going out at night because there is so much to do before getting in to bed with exercises and bathing the wound.

Sunday 2nd December 2007

Awake very early – John did not cough so much last night – no sign of Tim yet. Although the letter from the Oncologist was so good my hand and arm are still painful. There is still some lumpy feeling under arm. I must not worry. But if my hand was better – because it manifested itself in my hand and this is very nasty – pins and needles and awful pain at the top of my arm.

Monday 3rd December 2007

Tim is home. He is having difficulty getting back in to our time zone – he is sleeping badly at the wrong times. Hope he will be acclimatised by the weekend. I was in pain with arm but I slept well – overslept in fact. John is still battling with his cold. Fr John Wright said the Mass at St Mary's.

Tuesday 4th December 2007

Slept alright. Had some Solpandol which makes me constipated – but I am ok. Lovely having Tim home.

Chores. Constipation was very bad after lunch – terrible pain. Tim went for a haircut – I had a bad afternoon with constipation – I have not suffered anything quite like it – awful. Rang nurse and surgery – Movicol prescription for me – also Doctor to call – Dr Brinkley. I have only just sent him a card saying ‘Thank you’ for helping me – now he is coming to see me again. I am in God’s hands. Poor Tim – he is doing some running about for me tonight.

Dr Brinkley has been: he has given me suppositories – if this does not help then we have to get the district nurse in for an enema. Eventually Dr Jones from Claverley did the enema – O God it was awful. It just came out of the blue. I had been quite alright in that direction – although all the doctors said the painkillers had this side effect of constipation. Poor Tim – not very nice.

Wednesday 5th December 2007

I shall be glad to see the back of this year – terrible. Hair – Emma – a mixed up appointment. She made a good job of it considering my loss of hair. I have a dreadful pain – like a stitch pain – I suppose it is connected to the constipation.

Thursday 6th December 2007

Chores. Ladies Link dinner at Haughton Hall in the evening – good in parts – the food and good company – and thank God my blouse and jacket fitted because I did not try them on beforehand. We won two bottles of wine – I enjoyed it.

Friday 7th December 2007

Lymphodema lady – it was more thorough today but things were a bit of a rush with lunch after with Fr David Craig. He is rather lonely in his retirement but he is very healthy and he has no money worries.

Saturday 8th December 2007

Still have stitch pain. Co-op – a few groceries – got ready for Tim to go back to London – weather torrential rain – very bad. A good lunch – rain not quite so heavy – still awful. Tim left about 2pm. Please God take care of him on the road to London. No MASS for me tonight – have a pain in left side – and still raining. Tim rang at 6pm – he was home safe now. Thank God.

Sunday 9th December 2007

Raining. Not slept at the beginning until about 3am – took two Solpandol. I do not want to take these as they have helped cause this awful constipation. Still not right. St Joseph’s – good Mass – forgot money and early morning our kettle broke so this was tiresome. Eventually borrowed one from St Mary’s. Had a rest. More Movicol – this is worrying because I cannot strain and still feel blocked.

Monday 10th December 2007

In the mornings I still feel worried about Tim and John – also myself – as this trouble has now set me back after the good news from the Oncologist. Today we must go to see the dentist for clean & polish – also inspection. I hate dentists as much as doctors and yet they are so vital. John – Mass at St Mary's.

Tuesday 11th December 2007

St Joseph's – Mass. Nell Wall said she would enquire about NHS dentist (in Albrighton) for us – and she has got us a place for next year – 2008. Morrisons – spent far too much money.

Wednesday 12th December 2007

Christmas decorations. Still trouble with bowels. M & S – awfully crowded. Rang Tim about a leather jacket.

Thursday December 13th.

Preparations again – such a lot to do. Choir practice tonight – St Joseph's. Very frosty weather. Lymphedema lady, appointment - next Monday afternoon Jane. Had rest this afternoon.

Weather so cold – my arm is very painful.

Friday 14th December

Frosty again – freezing weather. Arm painful again. Wash hair – bath – although my hand and arm are particularly painful. But I have not had a bath for 4 weeks. The tail end is better – thank God – this has been worrying. Both John and I must rest a bit today. Very bad pain in my arm – slept a bit today.

Saturday 15th December

Bridgnorth – still was in pain with arm. I always exercise every morning to make my arm stronger but it's a long job. Weather warmer. Bridgnorth – bought new coat (long) camel – very nice – good price. Also earrings and scarf. John did well in spite of his cough at the Vigil Mass.

Sunday 16th December 2007

St Joseph's Mass – good Mass. Good lunch – not quite so cold. Choir concert at St Mary's. I am lucky because I have been able to go to Church and the practices of the choir. Julie (Bromley) is an excellent choirmistress. Fortunate to be able to do so many things now including shopping.

Monday 17th December 2007

St Mary's Mass for John – good night – I have started my pills again at night. Candy's cards – a bit of shopping at Co-op – this afternoon Lymphodema nurse. I am well again – have enjoyed very few good days these last 10 weeks. Amazing – the prayers people have said for me have been answered. Almost normal life. The arm and hand are still bad but things have improved thereto. Weather frosty.

Tuesday 18th December 2007

St Joseph's. Happy to be able to go to St Joseph's again. Very cold - 'Russian weather'. Dentist this afternoon – Crown mock-up – John new dental plate – he could do with it as he has put up with the old one for ages. I was thanking God this morning for my health at the moment allowing me to do all manner of things. Though there is still a lumpy armpit and my Lymphodema is still there – but I pray all is well.

We have received lots of Christmas cards.

Wednesday 19th December 2007 – DAY OFF

Wash hair – this seems to have improved of late – ironing – a good lunch - keeping a good table to keep up our strength. But it's wonderful that I am so well. Weather much milder – John still has awful chest – I was in a lot of pain last night at the choir practice – had to take 2 painkillers. It was my elbow and hand with Lymphodema – cruel pain – I thought I may pass out with it. I was so glad to get into bed.

Thursday 20th December 2007

Last day for National Saving win in December. I have been unlucky for the past 3 months. A good night – still in pain with arm. A lot of ironing to do today – also chores for John and butcher. Chris and Sue Blake party this evening – wine and nibbles – if I feel well enough. In a lot of pain today – not as severe as yesterday, but enough to make me feel weary. Very good lunch – these lunches keep me going.

Friday 21st December 2007

Good night. Chris and Sue party last night – neighbours over road came – Mr & Mrs Jones (Jim & Bernie) also Nerys Jones – quite enjoyable. Today Morrisons to get last minute things and Ann (Pattison) for cleaning. A headache today – not used to a lot of wine from Sue's last night! Not so much pain with Lymphodema. Weather better but still cold. Dunelm for curtains.

Saturday 22nd December 2007

Terrible yesterday at Morrisons – could not park – crowded. Dunelm – chose some lovely curtains for Tim. Good night but still a lot of pain this morning with arm – especially elbow. Bridgnorth – Edinburgh Wool. John's cough still persists. A lot of chores today – getting things sorted for Christmas. Worked all afternoon, especially ironing and vegetables for Tim's casserole so everything was doubled – phew!! But I am so glad to be able to work. St Mary's this evening.

Sunday 23rd December 2007

I had to take some painkillers last night – in a lot of pain with shoulder and arm – I probably did too much yesterday. St Joseph's today – did not bother too much about my appearance. Good Mass – good company – good lunch again. Try to get some cards this afternoon – for Tim and John – then plenty of things to get ready for Christmas. Weather foggy and icy.

Monday 24th December 2007

I slept well – and John. Tim's coming home today from London. Today I must thank God for being here: there were so many times I thought I would not see this Christmas – I was so ill. But thank God he has spared me. I see Dr Brinkley today – to see what he has to say. Call from Tim – 12.45 pm – just set out.

Tuesday 25th December 2007 Christmas Day

This is the day I thought I would not see in the early stages of Cancer and Lymphodema. But thank God I have – and I have enjoyed my DAY very much with Tim and John and all the Masses. My presents are wonderful – my card from John was most touching.

Wednesday 26th December 2007

I could have wept buckets yesterday – but I did not – so grateful to God for his blessing. I had a word with Tess Owen and she said her friend had begun to have cancer again after 18 years of being clear of it. You have only to get a little pain or lump, and you start worrying again. It is Boxing Day today and a sharp frost. Tim has gone for a bike ride with Alex Orsillo. A very typical Christmastide with frost and sun. John is wonderful to me – I could not have survived without him. Take care of John, Father. It was so wonderful to see him on top form with all the Masses. Tomorrow we go to the pantomime in Wolverhampton – Dick Whittington.

Today is a very lazy day – Tim home late from his bike ride. I slept most of the afternoon. But it was so lovely with the Christmas tree, all the chocolates etc and a lovely dinner – just a lazy day

Thursday 27th December 2007

I dare not think how much I have spent. All the Masses over Christmas have gone well – even though John had an awful cough.

The Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton – Dick Whittington – Britannia Hotel for a sandwich – all very nice. The panto was fantastic – very enjoyable – I forgot my pains.

Friday 28th December 2007

John, a Funeral at St Joseph's, then Crem – full Church. Tim and I went to Dunelm about the curtains which Tim did not like – so a waste of time. But still it is his flat so he must choose. Tim went back that afternoon – I hate these last minutes of goodbyes when he has such a long journey and the roads are so dangerous. I do hope that 2008 will bring some good luck and we will be able to buy something in East Anglia. Please God so Tim could come home every weekend if he wanted to.

Saturday 29th December 2007

Just chores – clearing up a bit. I must say that at the beginning of keeping this log I truly did not think I would live to see Christmas but God has spared me. The Lymphedema is still torture and debilitating but I'm hoping this will lessen as time goes on. At the moment it is as bad as always – horrible.

Monday 31st December 2007 – New Year's Eve

John Mass at St Mary's. Very good night's sleep – no extra pills. My arm and hand never cease to pain me – otherwise I feel very well. But this is a horrible reminder of 2007 – the awful illness and pain – mostly the whole of the year. We did not stay up – had a little supper together.

Tuesday 1st January 2008 – New Year's Day

Mass St Joseph's – good number there. I am praying my arm and hand will be better this New Year. However, today there is pain again. Foggy morning – a good lunch. I hope to close this log today and try to get back to normal life. Amen.

On the 16th I see the Oncologist.

(Gap in notes: we had a good weekend in Llandudno, 2nd/3rd February, our birthdays. Imperial Hotel. Concert at Venue Cymru. Coffees etc with Betty Whittingham. Shelah drove there and back, with appropriate rests. J.)

TODAY is Saturday 23rd February 2008.

I thought I could finish with these notes and return to some kind of normal life. This Lymphodema is so painful. I thought I would have difficulty getting back from Newport – the pain was so severe. But thank God I am home. In my Lent Notes I read yesterday's readings as I missed it yesterday. It was all about dying – these thoughts are pervading my mind so much again as with the swelling on my left breast – the rash and the pain.

Of course I want to live. We hear of so much suffering. But sometimes pain becomes unbearable. I will not go to Mass tonight as I want to have a bath ready for my treatment on Monday and wash my hair. My neck is quite awful with the rash – I have taken two painkillers. I have tried not to take them during the day as the pain is so bad at night – and then I need them.

Sunday 24th February 2008

So much better today. Sunday Mass at St Joseph's. I got a bit upset this morning about my clothes – so hard when your breast is so swollen with this horrible (L). Raining. Washed hair last night and a bath. I thought I would have a bad night with pain but it was not too bad.

Monday 25th February 2008

Went to Wolverhampton for the first meeting with the Compton "L" nurses – very thorough examination. Still in pain with arm and hand. Felt a bit worried about having this scan again – The Cedars Clinic will not start the treatment until they have the results of this scan.

Tuesday 26th February 2008

Mass at St Joseph's. Lovely morning prayers too. John talked to Bill about Nora's funeral on Friday – RIP Nora Bray. Morrisons. Dunelm.

Wednesday 27th February 2008

Day off – not well again – chores – tidying up. Things have become untidy – washing – ironing.

Thursday 28th February 2008

Usual jobs – butcher – newsletter – hoovering.

Friday 29th February 2008

Funeral Mass of Nora Bray at St Joseph's. I had a painful night. My breast being swollen is worrying me to death. I thought how much better I have been but this has made me worry about the Lymph Nodes. John gave a lovely Mass for Nora's funeral – very moving. Raining later.

Saturday 1st March 2008

A slow day today – very good night's rest – St Mary's evening Mass – still cold. I am worrying about all the things I am getting now – rash – and lumps appearing. I am dreading the CT scan again.

Sunday 2nd March 2008 Mothering Sunday

A bad night of pain. St Joseph's – got upset about my not being able to fasten buttons or zips – so frustrating – this gets to me. Lovely flowers from Tim and champagne chocolates from the Fortnum and Mason hamper. John bought me a hair curler but this is difficult to use so I will take it back. Weather dry.

Monday 3rd March 2008

Wayne cut trees – very expensive these trees. Carpet came for conservatory – it took all morning. Cold day – I have been in so much pain again – and now I feel awful – short of breath. I have begun to worry a lot. I shall be so glad to get this scan again – nothing will be done until the result. But I am not looking forward to this because of the swelling on my breast.

Tuesday 4th March 2008

Went to St Joseph's. Ann Pattison cleaning. Such a lot of pain again and so tired – feel dreadful. Boots to take back dryer.

The swelling in my breast is far worse today – also my neck is very painful. I became quite concerned about it all day with arm as heavy as lead.

Rachel came for music lesson – I am so glad I kept Rachel's lessons going because it helps me to forget my pain. But the music is difficult now – good for me to go through it again.

Wednesday 5th March 2008

A frost today – cold everywhere but it looks nice. I felt very down when I went to bed with this swelling down my side and in my feet – this is all new – that is why I have become a bit upset. DAY OFF TODAY. Towards end of day feeling very ill.

Thursday 6th March 2008

An awful day – sickness – diarrhoea – swellings – Lymph pains – so we called in the doctor – Dr Philip Leigh – some sort of bilious attack plus all the other pains. Four months have been wasted doing any Lymphatic drainage and there are swellings everywhere. Thought about you a lot today, Tim and John – when I am so ill – my end seems a lot nearer. I hope please God I can get over this bout but it is one thing after another. Looking forward to seeing Tim over Easter.

Saturday 8th March 2008

I was able to eat my breakfast this morning – for 3 days I could not. This week has been all go really – Monday – trees cut and carpet fitting, Tuesday – St Joseph's and Ann, Wednesday – day off when I was sick, Thursday – Dr Leigh – jobs, Friday Women's World Day of Prayer – of course I was not able to go. And I have noticed my shortness of breath: I walked to Alldays for some salad, and I could not breathe. I do not know how I got back home – such difficulty breathing. Had lunch – my appetite is not good. I am having a bad day today with pain and breathing – I have not thought about my demise for a long time, but the way I have felt this week I wonder. Tim and John look after each other. I seem to have had one thing after another – I cannot get really well before something else. I prefer to Rest-In-Peace than suffer – especially with something like cancer, Lymphodema, breathless and general pain.

Sunday 9th March 2008

A lot of pain in the night – took some Solpandol which I have not taken for 2 weeks. Still feeling sick. Went to St Joseph's which I enjoyed very much – such a good crowd there. Dr Benoit was good to talk to me about my scan next week which I am dreading. Afternoon – rested for an hour – then a little walk. I am alarmed how out of breath I have become – just a little walk like that and I could not breathe. I hope this is not something else – for I do love a little walk. Just going back to the 2nd February weekend in Llandudno – I walked miles and enjoyed it. I wonder if I will ever be returned to good health.

Monday 10th March 2008

When I woke up this morning I did not want to get up as I felt I simply cannot stand another day of pain – arm – hand and neck – and now Lymphodema in my body and legs. It is very difficult to stand any more. Managed to eat lunch.

Tuesday 11th March 2008

Stopped patches as they make me breathless which is so frightening. Be with Tim this day, Father – also John and myself. I managed to go to St Joseph's which was wonderful. When you are so ill you realise what a gift life is – just everyday living - sun shining this afternoon. My breathing seems better today – those patches were making this bad.

Wednesday 12th March 2008

Dreadful day – very breathless – Dr Shore came. He said there was water in my left lung causing this – concerned about Lymphedema not getting away – swelling now all over my

body. Poor John – it is a nightmare for him – 12 months of this now. I do not want to burden John or Tim – and I do not want to suffer much more myself – for I have suffered terribly lately. The sun is shining this lunchtime – we have managed to get some lunch. Dr Ritz has to ring Dr Shore this afternoon.

Thursday 13th March 2008

Beat's (sister) anniversary. Vera's (sister) birthday – 69. I had a good night. Worried about swelling and breath but trying to get going today. Morrisons – usual Thursday chores. Managed Morrisons but I still feel breathless. This is something I did not think of having and especially the swelling all over my body.

Friday 14th March 2008

CT scan. I slept alright – I did not worry about the scan because this has to be done to find out what this last development is. Sorry to put John through this again. Emma this afternoon to get my hair cut as it is a mess. Sunny day – but I came home feeling ill – so try again on Wednesday. I could not rest for worrying about this new symptom – loss of breath – heavy arm and the side of my body. Washed hair myself – John has a Conservative Party Dinner at Haughton Hall. The birds are wonderful today – spring-like and very noisy chirping away. Evening – great difficulty washing my hair – John went to the Dinner. Quiet evening – early night – exhausted.

Saturday 15th March 2008

Woke up to swollen legs and body – I curse this Lymphodema – it is so cruel. Slowly got dressed – Candy nails – I seem to have really lost my confidence now. Went to Candy with John – very out of breath when I got there – glad to get my nails done. Good lunch – raining. Now I have a horrible pain at the back of my neck – there is no end to the pain of horrible Lymphedema. Try to change beds this afternoon.

Sunday 16th March 2008

I was so hoping this year would bring me better health, but so far it has been awful – one thing after another. I feel like Job. Tomorrow I have to see the Oncologist: my heart sinks at this but I must face it – I am not getting better. Did not go to Church this weekend. Palm Sunday – I have never missed this Mass as far back as I remember. A very lonely morning.

Monday 17th March 2008

Good night. Did not worry about result today – I just know that something must be done for me. When you are as ill as this, death has been coming in to my mind frequently.

Funeral Music: Margaret Mascarenhas to play the Romance from *the Gadfly* - Shostakovich
Julie Bromley to sing *Ave Maria* – Schubert

Lead kindly light – J H Newman

23rd Psalm

In heavenly love abiding

O love that wilt not let me go

Organist – some Elgar

Reading – St John the Divine – New Heaven and New Earth

See Oncologist today at 3pm in Shrewsbury. It has been a bad fortnight for John – sorry. Ring Tim tonight with results. The result was good and bad. My breathlessness was awful walking to hospital – awful for John to see me so ill. A little supper – taxi driver good – a lot of pain at night.

Tuesday 18th March 2008

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital to have fluid drained off lung which was causing my breathing problem. I pray that this is so, not my heart. I have enough at the moment. I should be in hospital one night. I hope please God – I should feel better when this has been done. Ann, our cleaner is very good – the salt of the earth. Taxi to Shrewsbury, awful this journey again. Doctor said good things first – and then said the cancer was under the collarbone. They said come back tomorrow for drainage off left lung. So terrible the journey home thinking and worrying.

Wednesday 19th March 2008

RSH. Had drainage from lung – most terrible sensation – but the care was wonderful. Senior Consultant saw me – it was like being stabbed in the back – made me shout out. But they were very kind. Food was not too bad – of course not like my own food. I slept a lot which I thank God for, otherwise you are listening to people in pain.

They took out the tubes which was just as painful. Wonderful to come home – but very bad pain in shoulder – glad to get into bed,

Thursday 20th March 2008

Nothing from St ERNIE at the moment! Lovely to wake up at home next to John.

Friday 21st March 2008

Tim coming home this evening. A few chores preparing – Ann Hensman came and put my rollers in which is such a terrific help. I feel very tired and worn out. Good casserole for Tim – the weather is so cold. John has all before him today – Maundy Thursday Mass last night and Good Friday Liturgy today.

Holy Saturday 22nd March 2008

Tim did not get up until nearly lunchtime! Tim found the car so awful to drive – Toyota Yaris – too small. He went to Ironbridge this afternoon.

John Easter Vigil Mass

Easter Sunday 23rd March 2008

I did not go to any of the Masses – which was not good. Tim went back to London. We had a very good lunch – and I was quite well. Clearing up after he had gone but he did not make things untidy. John gave me a Home Mass and healing Anointing of the sick. Fr David Craig rang 9.30pm.

Monday 24th March 2008

This March has fled by again. Feeling very depressed in the morning. Think about dying a lot.

Tuesday 25th March 2008

I must try and get my hair cut. I have a rash at the back of my head, my hair is quite long, and my heat rash makes me uncomfortable. 4.00pm – 'Eclipse' – good cut by Anna. I have already lost a lot of my hair so now having chemo I will probably lose it all – but I hope not please God. It was good to see Tim at the weekend and I managed alright.

Wednesday 26th March 2008

Shrewsbury Hospital to see Dr Agrawal about further treatment. Go in taxis. I feel very weak this morning.

Thursday 27th March 2008

Yesterday was pretty gruelling at the Shrewsbury Hospital. I have to have 6 chemo within the next few months. There are a lot of side effects, especially loss of hair, but I have no choice. If I do have the treatment I could last 2 years or less – it is all a waiting game.

Everything with one is a shock because after the first radiotherapy that was a shock – and now I have been getting on so well - and now chemo. It is all a terrible strain for John. I do not want to burden him any longer. I hope my prayers are answered. It will take a miracle from God. There are many women dying from breast cancer every day. Today we are going to take it slowly.

Breathe on me breath of God, Fill me with life anew.

John did all his chores. Good lunch. Weather – rain, sun and cold. I shall try to have a little walk but I have lost my confidence so I have got to try.

Friday 28th March 2008

Pain in night – painkillers. 12 months now I have been in pain – awful one day – bearable the next – but pain. Went to Co-op. I forgot about my breathlessness but still felt breathless just in that short walk. Had a bath in the evening – could not sit down because of swelling in left leg.

Saturday 29th March 2008

Not feeling well at all. Got the lunch organised but hand and arm terrible. Hope to wash hair later – coffee time now.

Good lunch and I eat it in spite of the fact I have felt sick today. Raining. I feel all this horrible Lymphodema has weakened me so much. I cannot believe it has gone all over my body. I have swelling so I look like the Michelin Tyre Man. But the pain is killing. I have a bad day feeling sick and the pain is unexplainable. The thoughts of the worst happening are pervading my mind all day. My poor hand is crippled with this Lymphodema – it is such a worry for John – he is the last person I want to be worried. If only the Lymphodema would lessen its grip of pain, I would rise up again, but at the moment it is harming my whole being including my heart because of all the pain in that left hand. I wonder if I shall be strong enough for the chemotherapy – I do not want many more days like this.

Sunday 30th March 2008

I did not go to Church – I cannot face it – legs swollen, pain and feeling breathless.

I have prepared lunch. John has not gone to St Joseph's, but there was a Baptism here so he had enough to cope with at St Mary's. A little Mass at home. Upset.

There was some glimpse of my previous life here today if I could just stop thinking of dying. I know the pain wants me to be out of it, but I think of Tim and John and the lovely sunny day it is today.

I shall have to think about what to do about Rachel.

Good lunch although it was an hour late. We have lost the sun and a little rain now.

Monday 31st March 2008

I stopped writing this log and went back to my diary but things are worse now with my health. I cannot do too much before feeling breathless and tired. My health has taken another turn – not for the better. Going to wash hair this morning although I try every day to get back to normal life as much as possible. John – Mass. Did a few chores, washed hair because of another rash under my hair. Good lunch although I did not do justice to it because of the tightness in my chest. It is the swelling from this Lymphodema. I would not wish this terrifying illness on anyone. It is in my legs and body and the discolouration is revolting but nobody knows what to do with it. My breathing is worse today.

John goes with Hugh Meynell to see his Mother – 105 years – at Much Wenlock Old People's Home. She is quite poorly at the moment. Tim must get an electrician in to do the hanging of a new heater for the bathroom – these jobs can be very dangerous. I shall tell him tonight.

1st day of April 2008

I cannot remember such a day of pain and anxiety: I always relished 1st April – had a good laugh. Not today – I can only hope and pray things will get better. The sun is shining and it is a little warmer but I cannot appreciate it with the worry about my health.

Try to go to the chemist this afternoon. Managed chemist – at least I drove and John went to the chemist. Sunny day but feeling ill and now I have a bit of depression. I really had stopped thinking of dying but now it is in the forefront of my mind. So much suffering and discomfort: operation to take lumps out, radiotherapy which burned me, weeks of discomfort, two infections, rash and constipation all the time with this horrible Lymphedema which is now all over my body – water in left lung whereby I had a night in hospital. So this day has been one of reflection and depression. John is a wonderful husband – I love him dearly. I pray Tim and John will be together and be happy should my time of tide be here. Also my left eye is rather hooded because of the pain on that side of my body.

Tuesday 2nd April 2008

I felt alright during the day. I did not go to St Joseph's – did a few chores – Zena Brown popped in. Towards evening my breathing became very bad again – extremely bad. Ambulance took me to Shrewsbury RSH– oxygen was given. They (the doctors) say the lung would keep filling up and, of course, this Lymphodema is not helping me.

Doctor Ritzenthaler should have started the 'L' treatment right away, I think – instead it is all over my body – legs awful and scarring.

Wednesday 3rd April 2008

Two operations to release water in my lung – talc powder blown into lung to prevent it coming back. I just felt awful but Jayne the nurse was terrific, and Doctor Bashir was so kind and gentle – the care I had was excellent. John came everyday. It all made me ill with anxiety – poor John.

Thursday 4th April 2008

They seem to be happy with my progression. I am sleeping most of the time – a lot of pain – but I am stuffed with tablets. And of course constipated.

Friday 5th April 2008

Everything has gone well. They are talking about me going home, but blood pressure was down a bit today. John came. He is not doing any of the Masses this weekend – I do not want to jeopardise John's work – that worries me.

Saturday 6th April 2008

So far April has been awful for me. I have permission to go home now – I was very glad to get rid of that awful bucket which I accidentally kicked one morning and it caused some damage to the dressing. I completely forgot about it. I have opted to come home on Sunday because I do not want to start and do jobs, but when you can see things that need attention, it is hard to ignore them. Slept a lot today. Tim was with John today. Jayne the nurse held my hand all the time during the two operations – she is an angel. Marnie is very good also.

Sunday 7th April 2008

Good night – still constipated. Rang John to say fetch me home. Tim is driving a new Vauxhall – very nice. Home where I cried – so overcome with it all. Tim got a takeaway but I eat very little. Tim went back to London – lovely to see Tim again – safe journey to London for Tim. He got home safely. A good wash and cream for my very dry skin. A good night – I must wash my hair – it is so itchy.

Monday 8th April 2008

Try to get hair washed. Lymphodema treatment today.

Saw Dr Ritz – Lymphodema clinic – Dr Ritz was lovely – he told me the truth and was extremely kind. Maggie "L" lady was all what I had been told before only she said there was no hope of a full recovery!

So unless our Lord gives me a miracle, the future looks grim – but I hope it does not last too long. I am sure God will provide. I only worry about John and Tim.

Tuesday 9th April 2008

I am awake this morning but after yesterday's not good news I felt really low on going to bed. I had four Solpandol and the Amitriptyline and I slept well. Snow again this morning. I feel calm and I'm in God's hand.

John at St Joseph's this morning. Betty came at 11am to bring new pyjamas. Going to have wash now and get ready for blood test at PRH. Eileen Humphries taking us. So very tired – a good day with Betty – Eileen and Rachel.

Wednesday 10th April 2008

Very good night – late getting up – snow again. Try and sort things out a bit today – washing £38 wicked!. Tomorrow this chemo starts but I do hope it will bombard because I have lumps everywhere: my left side is awful, my left ear and eye are strange. I sit here in the conservatory and long to go to Walsingham – pity there is not a good hotel. I must get up now and try to do some jobs – very tired – spent all afternoon marking Rachel's theory – very tired.

Thursday 11th April 2008

Good night. Chemo Day today – Ann Hensman is taking us. Very gruelling 3 hours. But had a good meal – rested a bit. Took a long time to wash and get ready for bed. It was awful for John – this is no picnic for him. Slept immediately till 10.30 and I was confused and feeling ill – but went back to sleep again until 4.30 – went to loo – went back to sleep until John came with tea.

Friday 12th April 2008

Got up feeling awful – a rushing sound in my left ear. John said Tim was coming home again. I got so angry about this because arrangements are not good for him - just starting a new job, long driving journeys, having to get own food here – it is no rest for him. I hope please God the situation is not that bad at the moment – it is not an SOS. Veronica Green is coming this afternoon – apparently Vincent is to have some treatment today.

End of Log

**Jesu mercy, Mary pray.
Our Lady of Walsingham, pray for us.
Rosa Mystica, ora pro nobis.
St Therese, pray for us.
Our Holy Father Benedict, pray for us.
All Angels and Saints, pray for us.**

POSTSCRIPT (J)

1 Later that day, Friday 12 April, Shelah collapsed, intending to make a telephone call to the team at PRH. I could not get her up from the floor so rang 999. Paramedics came and put her into bed. Dr Whiting also came, then Shropdoc nurses who took her to the toilet but neither they or the Red Cross were able to obtain a bedpan (Friday afternoon and the weekend had begun, all stores closed), so later I rang 999 again and she was taken to Ward 7 of the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford at 1.30am, Saturday, where they decided she had had a slight stroke. That was her last day at her lovely home in Beech Drive.

I informed my then parishioner Dr Benoit Ritzenthaler, a consultant at Compton Hospice, who arranged for her to be transferred to Compton on Tuesday 15th for Lymphodema treatment. She was in the single room known as 'Robin' and was there for eight weeks. The chemo treatment was transferred to the supervision of Dr Mehra at New Cross Hospital and she had the second treatment on May 15th, but thereafter she was too poorly for further chemo treatment. I cannot speak too highly of the care she received from all the staff at Compton. She died on June 8th at 4.00am ('early in the morning on the first day of the week') with Tim and me by her bedside. A local parish priest had given her the Last Rites earlier in the week.

For those 8 weeks I visited her every day from about 12.00 noon to 3.00pm. A parishioner, friend or neighbour transported me there and back, plus other lifts.

I would particularly like to thank Vincent and Veronica Green, Tess Carr, Ann Hensman, Eileen Humphries, Jenni Redman, Ron Kidson, Sue Francis, Chris Blake, Stan Turner, Charles D'Souza and John Wadley all for this help.

Also I am grateful to those who helped me with housekeeping, Cath Duffell, Beryl Moran, Teresa Wainwright, Sue Blake and Barbara Turner.

When we got back to Shifnal on June 8th we had a rest until 8.00am then I began to telephone friends and relations. But the first call was to my Bishop Brian Noble who promised to celebrate the Funeral Mass, which he did. A reception was held at Haughton Hall, then the family proceeded to Belmont Abbey for the burial in the new Churchyard. Dom Nicholas Wetz OSB, the Prior, and parish priest was waiting for us and conducted the ceremony. Tea in Hedley Lodge followed.

2 Mention has been made in the log of **Rachel Redman** (now Ridgway) and her piano lessons. Shelah thought she should find another teacher, but Rachel wanted to stay with her. Shelah found those lessons a great comfort, and it is good to report that Rachel passed Grade 5, both theory and practical. Since then her mother **Jenni** has been a very good friend to me.

3 Frequent mention is also made of **Mgr Richard Rutt and his wife Joan**. We got to know them on Conferences of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary;

and later when I did supply for two summer breaks at St Mary Immaculate, Falmouth where I shared the weekday Masses with Fr Rutt.

Shelah became friendly with Joan.

Fr Rutt had a distinguished career as an Anglican Priest in Korea, becoming Bishop of Daejeon. He came back to the UK to assist Bishop Graham Leonard, as Bishop of St Germans in Cornwall. He then became Bishop of Leicester.

He was an expert 'knitter' and collected books on the subject.

On retirement he and Joan were received into the Catholic Church and lived in Falmouth, where he was ordained priest, became a Canon of Plymouth and later a Monsignor in 2009.

Joan died on the 17th September 2007.

Tim and I visited Fr Rutt in 2009. He was quite frail by then and could not go out without help. He died on the 27th August 2011

4 I agreed with Shelah that I would retire in 2009, and we would buy a McCarthy and Stone-type retirement flat in East Anglia, convenient for Tim and London and her beloved Walsingham.

That was not to be. I had discussions with Tim and Bishop Brian and both agreed that I should continue as priest in charge of the Catholic Parish of Shifnal with Albrighton. Tim was particularly grateful for the wonderful help I had received from Catholic parishioners, the Catenians, the Methodists and neighbours in Beech Drive. It would not be the same in a new area.

Bishop Mark Davies on his arrival in 2010 made me parish priest and I eventually retired at the end of August 2019 after seventeen years in the role.

I continue to live in our dear home in Beech Drive and I am pleased to assist the new priest **Fr Tom Cunnah**, saying Mass on Mondays at St Mary's and concelebrating with him at St Joseph's on Sundays. I still say Mass for the Catenians at the Wroxeter Hotel and other venues from time to time.

They have been good friends to me.

5 Finally I am sure that Shelah would have loved Tim to have his own family and be a grandmother. She would have loved Yaeko and our grandson Leo.

I married **Tim and Yaeko** with a full Nuptial Mass on June 21st 2014 at St Mary's, Shifnal, followed by a Reception at Leighton Hall.

We visited Japan (Tokyo, Osaka, and Hiroshima areas) in March 2015, where Tim and Yaeko had a Shinto blessing on the island of Miyajima.

Leonard Haruki Senoo Pascoe was born at the Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel on January 25th 2019.

FR JOHN PASCOE – CURRICULUM VITAE

Born on the 3rd February 1942 at St Day, near Redruth, Cornwall.

Baptised in the Norman Font at All Hallow's, Kea, near Truro. October 25th 1955.

Confirmed in Truro Cathedral by Bishop Edmund Morgan 17th November 1956.

Received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church (with Shelah)
by Fr David Craig 28th April 1995.

Attended Kea County Primary School, 1946 to 1953.

Attended The Grammar School, Falmouth, 1953 to 1960.

Worked at Morris Motors, Cowley, Oxford, 1960-61.

Attended St David's University College, Lampeter, 1961 to 1967.

BA 1965, Diploma in Theology and Certificate in Pastoral Studies 1967.

Anglican Ministry

Made Deacon on 24th September 1967

Ordained Priest on 29th September 1968

both at Lichfield Cathedral by Bishop Stretton Reeve.

Assistant Curate, St Peter's, Upper Gornal, Dudley 1967 to 1970.

Assistant Curate, St Gabriel's, Fullbrook, Walsall 1970 to 1973.

Vicar, St Andrew's, The Birchills, Walsall 1973 to 1980.

Chaplain, The Manor Hospital, Walsall 1973 to 1977.

Vicar, St Matthew's, Donnington Wood, Telford 1980 to 1995.

Roman Catholic Ministry

Made Deacon at Shrewsbury Cathedral on 21st December 1997.

Ordained Priest at St Mary's, Shifnal on 22nd March 1998.

Both by Bishop Brian Noble.

Supply Priest, 1998 to 2002.

Chaplain, Princess Royal, Telford 1997 to 2006

Priest in Charge, St Mary's, Shifnal with St Joseph's, Albrighton 2002 to 2010.

Parish Priest, 2010 to 2019.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, shine through your priests.

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Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the
Easter people and Hallelujah is our song.

St John Paul II (Adelaide November 30th 1986)

Miss no single opportunity of making some small
sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly
word; always doing the smallest thing right
and doing it all for love.

St Therese of Lisieux (Story of a Soul)

Do not distrust the Providence of God. He who made
your corn to grow will surely help to gather it in.

St John Mary Vianney, Cure D'Ars

Pray, hope and don't worry.

St Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)

Jesus, I trust in You.

St Faustina (Divine Mercy image)

