

Rejoice and Give Thanks.

Laura Lambe

As we celebrate this 200th anniversary I find myself deeply indebted to the Founder, as the key to the spirituality of Canon Van Crombrugghe was rejoicing and thanksgiving. He had a continual song of praise in his heart and he believed that this attitude of rejoicing and, thanksgiving enabled the person to better bring the mercy and love of God to others. He saw God in creation and nature. He wrote to his Sisters in 1836, GRATITUDE forbids that you grow weary of singing in your heart a perpetual hymn of thanksgiving.



Well in 1962 as a young newly professed Sister in the Convent, Queen's Street, Scarborough, when it came to going on our summer holidays to Ravenscar, North Yorkshire, gratitude and praise was certainly in my heart and that of the community.

How could you not be grateful and praise God for our wonderful Summer home, Cliff House?



This was a seven bedroomed house with a four hundred foot drop to the sea and exposed to the north easterly gales. However, the situation of the house was very special as from its vantage point you could view north west across to Robin Hood's bay. The front room was the chapel and we were fortunate enough to have daily mass as Mother Mary Edmund's brother lived in a caravan at the rear of the house. We were allowed to make our meditation outside in our new countryside and seaside environment.

I am not sure what the neighbouring folks and the guests at the Ravenscar Hotel in this quiet village thought as they encountered a group of nuns crossing the golf course en route to the very steep slopes leading to the sea below. I am not sure if they were amused as they had to stop their game of golf to let us pass by. Perhaps the only such site they had seen were the nuns in the Sound of Music! But we were not daunted, as led by Mother Mary Ambrose we reached the rocky beach. We clambered over rock pools and boulders until we reached a comfortable and secluded spot where we disrobed from our habits, changed into our swim gear and swam in the cold North Sea. I wonder where we acquired such an array of swimwear and if Mother Mary Ambrose, now 96 remembers. (Sr. Anna Mahoney RIP Dec 2016) She was a very strong swimmer and helped those who were not so brave! Of course it was not so easy when we had to get dressed again and climb back up the slopes to Cliff House but the prospect of a good nourishing meal kept us going. Mother Mary Brigid was great at having treats for us at recreation time.

I am certainly grateful to those Sisters who had the foresight to purchase Cliff House so that the community could be re-created before returning to work in the Convent boarding school and the neighbouring schools.

Sadly the house is now up for sale but if those walls could speak they could tell many a tale about the Sisters who enjoyed their holidays there. I remember all my wonderful friends with whom I spent one of the most memorable times of being in the community in Scarborough and with whom I can still reminisce about our carefree Summer holiday.

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