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Dear Sisters,

Noreen and I thought you would like to share our adventure of today, when we headed off to Bognor for the Requiem Mass for Sr. Bruno, (Sister of the late Sr Margaret Mary Ascott).

We met at East Croydon, and caught the 9.23 for Bognor – well in time for the Mass at 11 a.m. However, just outside Horsham, our train stopped. Eventually we were told that it was a power failure..... and if it was a minor one, then we would “be on our way very soon”, but if it was a major failure, then we could be held up for hours. Emergency lighting was on – everything else shut down. We had a lovely lady-train guard, and she came through and told us all to use the toilets while we could, as very soon it would not be possible! We did as we were told!

A lovely young lady came through, and she too was heading to the funeral. Bruno had been Katie’s head-teacher, years and years ago. Her family still live in Bognor, so she got very busy on her mobile, sending messages to her mother, already at the church, and to her brother. By now we knew that we would either be late – or not get there at all. Finally, Sr Anne Heaney, Providence Sister, known to many of us through ASR or CoR, she also walked into our carriage, directed there by the train-lady, who had discovered that she too was going to Bruno’s funeral. The next thing was that Katie instructed her brother to video the Mass for us! He did his best, but was obviously way back in the Church, and we could not see much – but we did hear a bit of the homily, and later on we joined in the responses for the Bidding Prayers! I am sure that the others in our carriage must have thought we were having a prayer-meeting, as the hymns rang out, and the four of us bent over Katie’s mobile!

We were then told that we would have to evacuate the train – a most interesting experience! All passengers – about 100 of us – had to walk to the back of the train and sit and wait again, and eventually a ladder was carried through the train, and the back door opened for us. There were police and rail officials there to help us, and we slowly had to get down the ladder, and then walk along the track to a gate where we were herded on to a bus. We were told not to walk on the stones, but only on the planks between the rails, lest we slip on the stones. Noreen, however, was told the opposite, lest she slip on the planks! Our delay on the train was for two hours, and the line between Horsham and Three Bridges was totally shut down because of the failure. The bus took us to Horsham, where we grabbed a quick drink, then on to another bus which took us to Three Bridges... then a train back to East Croydon.

We know it could have been worse. We were warm and dry, and made good friends during it all. We did not get to the Requiem, but I am sure that Bruno must have been praying for us. Love from Noreen and Sheila

Sheila Moloney and Noreen Murray.