

## SR LUCY BRYDON, OSB

Sr Lucy of Turvey Abbey died on 23 August at the age of 80. She was born at Tow Law, County Durham, and had three brothers. She was a pupil at St Anthony's School in Sunderland, run by the Sisters of Mercy. In 1955 she joined the Sisters of Mercy, and became Sr Bonaventure. (This is the same community that was in the news during the lockdown for singing and dancing outside their convent.) She studied Spanish and Latin at university then joined the teaching staff at the school. In 1979 she went to Narok, Kenya with the Sisters of Mercy, she was there for nearly ten years working as headmistress. On her return from Kenya, she transferred from the Sisters of Mercy and became a member of the community at Turvey Abbey, changing her name to Sr Lucy.



Sr Lucy loved meeting people, and put her skills to use in our guest department, running weekend courses on various topics, including the enneagram, Eckhart, and Julian of Norwich, as well as meeting with people on an individual basis. An opportunity arose for her to become involved in monastic interfaith dialogue, and over the years she took part in a variety of interfaith meetings, forming deep and lasting friendships.

As many in Turvey will know, her interest in people also extended to their pets—one felt that she knew the name of almost every dog living in Turvey.

For the last couple of years of her life Sr Lucy didn't have the energy to use her computer. I kept her email address open, and every now and again someone would email her. I kept the names and email addresses, most were people I didn't know personally. Last August I emailed these people with the news that Sr Lucy had sustained a fractured hip after a fall and had gone into a care home for about two months—but a month later I had to email these people again with the news that Sr Lucy wasn't expected to live much longer. I looked at my list of names and email addresses, this was going to be a 'bolt from the blue' for most of these people, I felt that I didn't want to contact them.

Then, for me, the unanticipated happened. Replies began to arrive, and, somewhat like seeds germinating in a garden, my dry list began to grow into a list of real people, people from a very wide range of backgrounds united in a common sorrow at the prospect of losing a person who had meant a huge amount to them in so many different ways. I read how she had been a friend, a mentor, a listening ear, a source of encouragement, someone who understood . . . I felt privileged to receive these emails.

When Sr Lucy was dying, the hospital allowed us to visit her, and I went with Sr Miriam. At a certain moment the conversation faltered, and there was silence. 'You don't need to stand there in silence' whispered Sr Lucy. 'We're introverts' replied Sr Miriam. This is a treasured memory, it was the last time I saw her.

Sr Benedict, Turvey Abbey