

## PARISH WALK '06

By David Cain

Oh my God its here again, arrived amongst the morning mail  
An invitation to compete, to strive for walking's Holy Grail.

To face up to adversity, meet challenges beyond the norm  
Both mentally and physically – and that's just filling in the form!

Whilst friends think you're a basket case, its time for action, no more talk  
'Cause when that signature's in place, you've entered for the Parish Walk!

Don't be afraid, you're not alone, if your preparation stutters  
The entry list has daily grown, complete with 1500 other nutters!

Its time to wear the training kit, no excuses, no complaining  
You'll need the miles to get you fit, and don't wimp out because its raining!

Get pounding up and down those hills, improve endurance, hone technique  
Improved perambulating skills will stop you walking like a geek

Absorb advice and friendly tips, prepare, hydrate and carbo-load  
Perfect the wiggle of the hips and you're ready for the Parish road

Its here at last, alarm bells sound, what lies in store along the way?  
The tension mounts and nerves abound, the dawn of Parish Judgement Day.

So rise and shower and dress the part, assure yourself you're not pathetic  
'Cause when you're standing at the start, you should at least *look* quite athletic

In Clima-cool from head to toe, you're feeling lean and mean and keen  
You've donned the orange Day-Glo top, discreetly smeared the Vaseline

Behind the tape, amongst the throng, all sanity has long departed  
The clock counts down, it won't be long, then 3-2-1 at last its started

The field around the track cavorts, all marching forth, no time to lose  
A sea of multi-coloured shorts, and shirts and hats and training shoes

At least the weather's in our favour, quite overcast and later wetish  
But nothing will dilute the flavour, or dampen down our walking fetish!

Stride on beyond each church and mile, take fuel on board and quench your thirst  
Maintain your dignity and smile, especially when the blisters burst

Just grin and bear the mighty Sloc, defeat it with determined frown  
Remember, whilst the hill's a shock, that what goes up must come down

Beyond to Patrick, in to Peel, with over 30 miles complete  
Determine how you really feel, with no sensation in your feet!

Ignore each pain and strain and ache, but don't allow your pace to slow  
Afford yourself a little break, there's over 50 miles to go!

Tick each one off as they're achieved, as northward up to Bride you roam  
You're satisfied and then relieved, to find you're turning back for home

And pushed on by supporting crew, you feel uplifted, hale and hearty  
And tempted by the barbeque, at the Andreas street party

Where they offer you encouragement and shout and clap and cheer  
And burgers stuffed with nourishment, and if you're lucky, beer!

Avoid the insects biting as you push on through Lezayre  
And hope there's no one fighting outside pubs in Ramsey Square!

Hit Maughold as its getting dark, you feel more tired and sorer  
What fun, what joy, its such a lark, to race up Ballajora!

Trudge South to Lonan down the road, that takes the route through Laxey  
Your legs feel like they could explode, and you wish you'd booked a taxi!

From Onchan to the Promenade, delirious you stagger  
You're on a high, although its hard, you start to strut and swagger

And storm across the finish line, with arms aloft in pleasure  
With stories that you'll swap in time, and memories to treasure

And everyone's a winner, from the slowest to the fast  
Whether novice or beginner, or whether first or last

Delighted a new record stands, and that its all complete  
Delighted that the winner's '**Hands**' and not just blistered feet!