

# THE VENERABLE

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## THE VENERABLE 1985

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**MGR. WILLIAM STEELE**  
*Student of the College 1954-1960*  
*Spiritual Director 1980-1985*

## Mary Ward — Another English College ‘Saint’?

*A note about the relationship between the Venerable English College and MARY WARD (1585-1645) together with her first companions.*

Soon after I arrived at the English College early in 1980, I discovered that via di Monserrato was a street of Saints (and I was not thinking of the inhabitants of number 45, the proclamation of whose virtues must await due process!).

Just through the wall of my apartment lived St. Brigid, who died there in 1373.

Exactly opposite my sitting room window is the Church of San Girolamo, in which St. Oliver Plunkett served for several years.

High above the church is the little room where St. Philip Neri lived and prayed and composed the Rule for his Oratory.

In the piazza opposite the College Church St. Jerome lived on his visits to Rome from Jerusalem, where he was translating the scriptures from Hebrew and Greek into the Latin Vulgate.

A hundred yards or so away was the house where St. Catherine of Sienna lived when in Rome.

Then comes the Spanish church of Santa Maria, where St. Ignatius sometimes ministered and preached.

But most important of all, every time I went up the main staircase of the College, my eyes turned to the plaque on the wall half-way up, on which are recorded in pride and joy the names of the 41 College men who suffered martyrdom for Our Lord and His Church. Ten are canonised, eighteen are beatified, thirteen are ‘Venerable’ and await further process. And there are another three College men whose cause is ‘deferred’.

But there was one other, not yet canonised or beatified, whose portrait I also passed daily almost without noticing on the same staircase, to whom Pope John-Paul 2nd, during his 1982 visit to England, referred as:

“An extraordinary Yorkshire woman, pioneer of the active unenclosed congregations of women . . . who taught the Gospel of Jesus Christ to English exiles . . . inspiring women today to take their rightful place in the life of the Church, as befits their equality of rights and particular dignity.”

I refer to Mary Ward, whom the Pope placed with Margaret Clitheroe in the great tradition of our Northern saints.

Mary Ward was born in 1585, fifty years after the martyrdom of John Fisher and Thomas More, and it says something for the bonds between the old English families which provided Mass centres and protection for the hunted Catholics, that when Mary Ward left England in 1606 at the age of twenty-one for Flanders, where she intended to become a nun, hospitality was given to her at Canterbury by Mrs. Margaret Roper, the beloved daughter of Thomas More, and it was his grand-daughter, Mrs. Bentley, who accompanied Mary to Dover and over the sea to Calais and on to St. Omer.


This year is the 400th anniversary of the birth of Mary Ward, to whom all three branches of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary including the Loretto Sisters look as their Foundress. Efforts are being made to further her Cause, which is being impeded because she is so little known, even in her own beloved England. This is due partly to the misunderstandings and persecution and sufferings which she endured and which prevented her from being acknowledged as Foundress of her Institute until 1909. I suspect that this induced a certain diffidence on the part of members of her Institute, but now there is a great flourish of booklets and publications, religious celebrations are taking place in many countries, and in Germany this May a major film on the life of Mary Ward had its premier.

On her actual birthday, 23rd January 1985, Cardinal Ratzinger preached at a great concelebrated Mass at St. Mary Major's in Rome. In England, Westminster had its own celebration on April 19th, when Cardinal Hume and about twenty Bishops of England and Wales concelebrated Mass and the Cardinal preached.


On July 3rd there was a Youth Rally at the ancient shrine of Our Lady at Osmotherly, which Mary Ward visited in 1642.

But my chief concern in these notes is to recall something of her connection with the College and the churches and streets nearby.

Mary Ward first came to Rome in 1621, primarily to get Papal approval for her new Institute, which proved a good deal more complicated than she had expected. In all, she had three spells in Rome covering a number of years, and




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*Bishop Agnellus Andrew and Mother Immolata Wetter IBVM, on the stairway of the English College in Rome. Above them is a portrait of Mary Ward to which many admirers have made 'pilgrimage'. On the wall to the right hangs the list of the College Martyrs who were put to death during the Catholic persecution in England.*

throughout there was a close relationship between herself and her sisters with the College next door. During her first visit, she opened a school in 1622, which at one time attracted 100 to 150 girls, nearly all poor and illiterate, the first of its kind in Rome. It was situated at the corner of via di Monserrato and via Montoro. This pioneer charitable work of the "English Ladies" as they were called, attracted great interest and much admiration, although there were powerful voices which expressed grave doubts about the propriety and the legality of the enterprise. Mary herself was 37 at this time and most of her group were younger, mostly from the 'landed gentry' of England, and they had already served an apprenticeship tending the persecuted people at home and later teaching exiles, mainly in the Low Countries.

Mary's first companions were Winifred Wigmore, Susanna Rookwood, Margaret Horde and Barbara Ward, her sister. Mary Poyntz joined the group a little later, summoned from Liege because of the increasing activities of the school.

Some of them were sisters and relations of the young men at the College next door:

Edmund Sale (or Neville), 1621-1626, is said to have been a connection of Mary herself.

Robert and Richard Wigmore, 1610-1613 and 1614-1617, were brothers of Winifred Wigmore.

Robert Rookwood, 1620-1626, was a brother of Susanna Rookwood.

John Poyntz, 1621-1626, was a younger brother of Mary Poyntz.

Ralph Babthorpe, who had been at the College 1611-1615, was a brother of



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Barbara Babthorpe who, like Mary Poyntz, was summoned from Liege a little later to meet the needs of the new school.

A plaque in the College church above the sacristy door recalls that four members of her Institute were buried in the College church, although later the bodies were sacrilegiously disinterred by Napoleon's troops and the bones collected and reburied somewhere in the precincts. Mary's younger sister, Barbara, was the first — she died of small-pox after a little more than a year, in 1623. The others were Barbara Babthorpe, Elizabeth Cotten and Catherine Dawson.

Mary Ward herself suffered greatly during this period in Rome, and indeed increasingly for the rest of her life. She had been a young woman of beauty and elegance and style, although we are told that even when, as a young woman, she wore her satins and silks and taffetas, under her finery she wore a hair shirt next to her skin. For many years she was afflicted with bad health. But her greatest pain was in the misunderstandings and persecution she suffered from the Holy Office and other officials of the Church.

The Council of Trent, fresh in people's minds, had strengthened the rules about religious orders of women, especially enclosure. Mary's ideal for her Sisters was far from that. Indeed she insisted on a deep spirituality and constant fervent prayer as the basis of the life of her Institute, but she wanted the Constitutions of St. Ignatius, insofar as this was possible for women; without enclosure or the old religious habit, and with the right of responding to the needs of the people of God, especially in the education of girls. And this in Rome itself!

Mary Ward had an immense loyalty to the Pope and the Church, but under the Pope, as Benedict XIV conceded in 1749, she felt that women should be governed by women. Mary wanted her Sisters to be free to pursue an apostolic life outside the cloister. Her model was the recently founded Society of Jesus — indeed there were sneers about the new "Jesuitesses". Her Sisters were sometimes dismissed as "gad-about and galloping girls". Two Popes received her kindly and seemed to approve her ideas, but the official structures of the Church were suspicious and hostile. One Cardinal told her that he had twenty-five spies watching her, and one of the spies reported that what he had seen suggested canonisation rather than condemnation. I am glad to say that he was a Franciscan.

But the common reaction was one of condemnation. Her school in Rome was closed. Her Institute was suppressed in 1631, only to be approved later in 1877, although even then Mary Ward was not to be spoken of as 'Foundress'. She was imprisoned by the Holy Office in a squalid, airless cell, previously used by people dying from diseases which had left fresh and repellent traces, only to be released two months later by order of the Pope. She was calumniated in documents submitted to Rome by some of the English clergy, who disliked both this new form of religious life and her association with the Jesuits. The General of the Jesuits, although some of the Fathers acted as advisers and confessors, refused to accept the normal religious care of the Institute, because the Jesuit Constitution forbade formal charge of Institutes of Religious women.

It was during this period of intense humiliation and suffering that Mary found strength and comfort in prayer in some of the churches near the College, particularly in San Girolamo and Sant Eligio, where she believed she received

special light and inspiration from the Holy Spirit in the Jubilee Year of 1625. Sant Eligio was and remains the church of the Guild of the Goldsmiths, Silver-smiths and Jewellers of Rome, situated on the banks of the Tiber behind the great Spanish church of Santa Maria in Monserrato. It was there that she prayed unceasingly, and in prayer she received two graces: a deep conviction that she was indeed following the will of God; and the grace of understanding and practising the virtue of forgiveness. Her companions later used to say that "it was better to be an enemy than a friend of Mary Ward — she would love you more deeply". Her forgiveness was no mere facade. The life written by Mary Poyntz says: "When she had received an injury, it was her special care to frame in herself an entire pardon, grounded and hearty, not formal and verbal; then to pray for them and seek out occasion to do them service, and this with efficacy but not without prudence, knowing and avoiding their ill-will and malice, as also to discern in them what was good and what bad."

It was for me an immense joy on a recent visit to Rome to celebrate Mass in Sant Eligio in the company of members of both the Irish and English branches of her Institute, attended by a number of men from the College. Raglan Hay-Will was my deacon and some very interesting pictures were taken by Ann Dalton, one of which may prove of particular interest to the College:

Behind the high altar of St. Eligio there is a great fresco of the Crucifixion. It depicts God the Father supporting the outstretched arms of His beloved Son, with the Holy Spirit above in the form of a dove. I do not need to tell *Venerabilini* that this is very similar to the College's own Martyr's Picture. It is difficult to find the original inspiration for this motif. There is a very similar painting in the nearby church of Santissima Trinita dei Pellegrini. Perhaps the Hospice Accounts Book of John Clerk (John Clerk was a warden of the College in the time of Henry VIII. It was he who presented Henry's 'Defence of the Seven Sacraments' to the Pope, the work which earned Henry the title of 'Defender of the Faith'. Clerk went on to become Bishop of Bath and Wells) offers a clue, for it had the same design as its frontispiece. Was this the original for all three paintings? It was certainly an inspiration for Mary Ward: Mother Immolata Wetter IBVM, an authority heavily engaged in research on her life, tells us that she prayed before the Martyr's Picture with deep devotion.

It was in the little churches near the College that Mary Ward prayed day after day, and she walked the streets that the students still walk on their way to the Gregorian University or St. Peter's or the City: Monserrato, Montoro, Campo di Fiori, Piazza Farnese, Pelegrino. And there is a little street running down the far side of Santa Maria in Monserrato, called the via della Barchetta, which, after crossing via Giulia, becomes the via Sant Eligio and leads to the church and on to the Tiber. On the wall of a house at the corner of the via Sant Eligio is a plaque recalling that at this point, three Italian Resistance Patriots were executed during the last World War. The inscription speaks of their courage, fortitude and endurance. Perhaps Mary's spirit still lives on.

Mary Ward died near York in 1645 aged 60, without seeing her prayer fulfilled. Later, her Institute was fully approved and she was somewhat vindicated, but the first English convent of the I.B.V.M., the 'Bar' convent at York, was not opened in those troubled days until forty years after her death. Incredibly, as I have mentioned above, the three branches of the Institute of the

Blessed Virgin Mary were not allowed to call her their Foundress until 1909, and then partly because of the influence of Cardinals Gasquet and Merry del Val.

I have sometimes wondered whether, behind the interpretation of the Decrees of the Council of Trent and behind the dislike of Mary's devotion to St. Ignatius and his religious ideals, there was perhaps a deeper unconscious foundation to the resistance which she encountered. It suggests a certain failure to recognise that, from the beginning, there have been continual inevitable developments in the religious vocation, and that change does not always indicate relaxation or even corruption.

After the early days of the hermits and anchorites in the desert, came the growth of monasticism under Benedict in the West and Basil in the East. Obedience sometimes took the monk away from his monastery on missionary work, as Augustine came from the Coelian Hill to Canterbury, and Boniface from Devon to Germany, and Columba across the seas to Iona. Yet an essential element in the monastic life was stability. The monastery was the monk's home, and his life of prayer and work was lived in the seclusion of the monastic cloister, dominated by the Mass and the Divine Office, around which his whole life and every kind of work was built. In the 13th century came the Friars, led by Francis and Dominic, reacting to the needs of an age of urbanisation and the beginnings of the great universities. Francis never lived in a monastery. He wanted his



*Design above the altar in the nearby Church of S. Eligio, where Mary Ward used frequently to pray. The motif of the Father bearing up His beloved Son on the Cross, is the same as in the Martyrs' Picture in the main chapel of the English College..*

friars to have small, simple friaries as their spiritual bases and homes. They would, indeed maintain the Divine Office and wear plain habits with a cord, but their work was outside, preaching and teaching wherever they found themselves, but above all sharing the life of the poor.

From the beginning there were those who wanted to emphasise more the monastic elements in their life, and some 'reforms' had this very much in mind. Even today, some friars are tempted to feel a sense of guilt if they seem to depart from the monastic aspect of their life. But it is very relevant to Mary Ward's difficulties to notice that when St. Clare joined St. Francis, followed later by her mother and her sister, Francis felt that he had to insist on an enclosed contemplative life for them, even though he regularly visited them and composed his great Canticle of the Creatures, blind and bleeding, in a hut at the bottom of the garden of Clare's San Damiano.

In the years between the 13th and the 16th century there were other developments, but the next big break-through came at the Counter-Reformation, with Ignatius and his Company of Jesus, loins girt and ready for battle. They based their life on a deep spirituality rooted in the Spiritual Exercises, but with no question of monastic traditions or the old monastic habit. They lived in prayer-based communities, accepting severe disciplines but being free to go where the needs of the people of God were greatest. We need go no further in tracing the development of the religious vocation, coming down to the brothers of Charles de Foucauld and the wonderful Secular Institutes, for it was from the Society of Jesus that Mary Ward got her inspiration and it was their Constitu-

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tions that she wished to adopt. When you look at Mother Teresa of Calcutta (who herself spent her early religious life with the Loreto nuns), and when you realise that most modern religious institutes of women follow in the footsteps of Mary Ward, you wonder at the virulence that assailed her, particularly in Rome itself.

How wonderfully has she been vindicated, although perhaps complete vindication in the full sense may only come with her Beatification, if God so wills. Her Institutes, with great discretion, and some others of us with perhaps less discretion, are striving in every possible way to make her better known and thus to increase devotion to her as a contribution to her Cause.

In addition to the film and booklets on Mary Ward, her Sisters have also worked in the wider field of radio and television. At a recent national conference for local broadcasters, attended by about a hundred broadcasters from all over the country and from all denominations, there was a service of prayer and meditation based entirely on the words and life of Mary Ward, and about 200 comprehensive dossiers about her have been sent to TV, Radio and the Press, not without results. During Easter-time we heard of several broadcasts about Mary Ward. Radio Forth in Edinburgh chose Good Friday for their broadcast, seeing her story from a 'death and resurrection' angle. London Broadcasting Company found the story of her life so interesting that they felt it should not be confined to their religious output but should be found a place in their mainline programme schedule. Coventry and Sheffield also ran features on her. And the BBC World Service, with its many millions of listeners all over the world, including Rome, broadcast about her several times around the time of the Westminster Cathedral celebrations on April 19th.

After receiving the dossier describing the life and problems of Mary Ward, a young evangelical married woman, herself suffering many misunderstandings and humiliations, wrote: "I started to read about Mary Ward. I had never heard of her before. All of a sudden, some of the incidents in her life began to shed light on my problem. Mary had faced horrible jealousy, persecution and lack of understanding — and so much more, much worse than what was happening to me. I read about her courage, her perseverance — and how she treated her enemies. Here, in the life and work of this incredible lady who had lived 400 years ago, was the answer for me today. I felt the depression and confusion lift off me — and I felt inspired and enabled to carry on with my activities. Instead of withdrawing and giving up on the people around me, I knew I must continue with forgiveness and love. It gave me an overwhelming sense of freedom and joy. I am so thankful to God for sending this answer — such perfect and timely help. I am also thankful to Mary Ward, who has provided such an excellent example of how we must live."

Mary Ward's Institute, in its three branches, has now some 5,000 Sisters working all over the world. In Great Britain there are 16 convents of two branches of the Institute that she founded, the I.B.V.M. and Loreto. But some of the modern Institutes of women have also derived from the I.B.V.M., and many others have adopted her ideals and something of her style. In Great Britain alone there are 200 active unenclosed Institutes, with about 500 convents engaged in every kind of apostolic work.

But the Church itself has gone far to vindicate and to honour Mary Ward, after her early persecution and frustration. Preaching at that great Mass in St.

Mary Major's, Rome, in January, Cardinal Ratzinger, as Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (the modern successor to the Holy Office) made a graceful acknowledgement of past persecutions. "It is true that the Church caused Mary Ward great suffering, but, at the same time, the Church was and remained her surest source of peace and consolation, the soil of centuries which alone guarantees the truth of the promise, 'One sows, another reaps.'" Surely a neat expression of the hurt Mary suffered, of her unshakeable loyalty to the Church, her perseverance and her steadfastness. Pope Urban VIII, who had earlier denounced her, said of her in 1637 (eight years before her death in England): "A woman of great prudence and extra-ordinary courage and powers of mind, but, what is much more, a holy and great Servant of God." Nearer our own time, in 1951, Pope Pius XII spoke of her as: "This incomparable woman whom England, in her darkest and bloodiest hour gave to the Church." In September 1921, Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, wrote about her: "It is a duty of gratitude to recall continually to the Catholics of England and indeed, of the whole United Kingdom, as well as to all the teaching orders of religious women throughout the world, that the very existence of the modern educational and charitable congregations such as we know them in their almost countless multiplicity, was made possible by the supernatural foresight, the heroic perseverance and the terrible disappointments and sufferings of Mary Ward. She waged the battle to the point of apparent defeat, of which they are reaping the victory. To no-one, after their own Founders, do they owe greater gratitude than to Mary Ward."

I mentioned earlier that at the end of the Low Week meeting of the Episcopal Conference of England and Wales, our beloved Cardinal Hume concelebrated Mass with about 20 Bishops, 100 priests, a great assembly of Mary Ward's Sisters and pupils from all over the world, and a vast congregation. There was a spirit of joy, of thanksgiving, of exhilaration and of prayer, and the Cardinal's sermon matched the great occasion. He referred to Mary's courage,

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her sanctity, her tenacity coupled with complete obedience to the Church — despite the dreadful way it treated her — and recalled the words of St. Theresa of Lisieux:

“How women are despised! And yet many more women than men love God, and during the Passion of Our Lord the women showed more courage than the apostles. They endured the insults of the soldiers and ventured to wipe the adorable face of Jesus. Because He chose to be despised, He allows women to suffer the same fate during their stay on earth. But in heaven He will show that His thoughts are not of these men.”

“Rather strong stuff!” said the Cardinal, “indeed I hesitated to quote it for that reason . . . Mary Ward saw that women in religious life had to be different to what had hitherto been the custom. They had to be in the world . . . Odd, isn’t it, that she has not yet been even Beatified! . . . new ideas generally do produce a shock within the Church, and are very slowly accepted . . . Mary Ward had to be very determined if her vision of what should be was to be realised . . . there is still some way to go before we get it right. If we think along those lines now it is because of the foresightedness of women like Mary Ward . . . being prayerful she was able to discern the guidance of the Holy Spirit . . . but her critics prevailed again and she was cruelly and, I would think, wickedly, imprisoned in Munich in 1631 . . . it is often a consolation to know that those whom we regard as saintly today were often condemned for the contrary in their life time — not unlike their Master . . . Mary Ward was, as I believe, a great woman, and it is right that in this Centenary Year tribute should be paid to her . . . she had the same tenacity, the same courage (as St. Margaret Clitheroe) and a capacity to inspire, and in our own day as well . . . determination, practical common sense and farsightedness — these are all characteristics of any sketch of Mary Ward. Add holiness to these qualities and you have a powerful force indeed . . . recognition of her heroic sanctity will doubtless come.”

I heard it said recently in Rome that “There would be no Mother Teresa of Calcutta without Mary Ward.”

I could not, in truth, go so far as to say that if there had been no Venerable English College there would be no Mary Ward. At that time the College had its own problems, and the *Liber Ruber* recalls the names of many who made their way from College back to suffering and martyrdom in England, often living in the shelter that the families of Mary Ward’s Sisters willingly provided. Looking back over the years, one wonders at the Divine Providence that brought Mary so close to our Venerable and ancient College, where they could find refuge under its shadow and gain strength from its very presence. The College benefitted from the prayers and the example of this little group of English Ladies, and the Sisters gained comfort and edification from the band of heroic men, the “*Flores Martyrum*” who had left their homes in England knowing that when they returned they would be hunted men with a price on their heads. Each must have been sustained by the other.

The College archives recall that Mary Ward and her Sisters in 1627 presented a silver chalice to the College. Perhaps the chalice can be seen as the chalice of suffering which the Sisters, the College and all others must drink if they wish to follow in the footsteps of our crucified and risen Lord.

**Bishop Agnellus Andrew, O.F.M.**

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## Palazzola

On Saturday, 27th October 1984, the excitement at Heathrow Airport was so infectious that the clerk at the check-in desk relaxed from his remoteness when he looked at the needle on the weigh-in scales, and said with a smile, "Have you got the bricks for the building in the cases?" If the luggage exceeded the permitted limit, he forgot any extra charge and we set out on a trouble-free flight with Alitalia. At last the Sisters of Mercy were en route to the Eternal City, to put into operation the project of involvement in Priestly formation, first mooted in January 1984 on the receipt of a letter from Mgr. Hay, then Rector of the English College. The idea was to establish Palazzola as a Retreat/Renewal/Pilgrimage centre, as well as continuing to be a place for prayer and retreat for the seminarians of the College itself down in Rome. There were two main reasons for seeking the cooperation of the Sisters: to have a resident community of prayer, and to strengthen links between diocesan priests and religious sisters. But beyond that it meant also that the 'Villa' as it is known, could be made available to many other groups from England in Italy. Prayer and spiritual refreshment are essential to all of us, clerical or lay, and now there was to be a chance to offer these to a far wider range of people.

As we started the descent to Fiumicino, a fresh upsurge of excited anticipation was palpable, and continued unabated as we were driven towards Palazzola by the Rector and Mgr. Holroyd.

The clouds following earlier rain failed to dampen the feeling of 'having arrived' as we disembarked to take what was for Srs. M. Immaculata, Angela M. and Madeleine, the first glimpse of Villa Palazzola where it rides serenely on the wooded rim of Lake Albano. Sr. M. di Pazzi, while in Rome last year and Sr. M. Imelda since her arrival at the beginning of October, had already visited Palazzola as had the Superior General, Sr. M. Imelda Keena, when the project was under consideration last March, and the adaptation of a part of the building was in progress. However, we all shared the sense of awe and 'beginning' as Alfredo unlocked the huge wooden door which admitted us to the Cloister. Accustomed as we are to the orderliness of our Convents, we were, perhaps, slightly intimidated by the vastness of everything and felt an immediate urge to 'organise'! Womanlike, we decided that a 'cuppa' was indicated, and as if by magic, Sr. Madeleine extracted a packet of Barry's Tea from the pile of luggage. Thus refreshed, we went into the Church where Mgr. Philip affixed a very beautiful ivory figure, which for safety reasons had normally been kept at the College, to the altar cross. Then, having celebrated Evening Prayer with the two Monsignori, we felt that Project Palazzola had truly commenced. The sense of excitement was replaced by one of calm purposefulness, especially after we had sung the Salve before the plaque of Our Lady in the Cloister, and stood for a few moments on the Terrace Garden to absorb the stillness of Lake Albano which quietly reflected the lights of Castel Gandolfo on the opposite shore.

Then followed a visit to Alfredo's house to meet his wife, Fernanda, her daughter-in-law Julie, who hails from Manchester, and three-week-old Riccardo, Julie's first baby who is the idol of his grand-parents. Fernanda had prepared a typically Italian supper, which we carried with us to the Library —

quite a distance it seemed in the dark! The log fire had burned low by the time our leisurely meal ended and we had discussed our 'dreams' for the Project and more immediate plans with Mgr. Philip. We learned, to our delight, that Bishop McMahon and Mgr. D. Donnelly, his Vicar General in Brentwood Diocese, in Rome for a Liturgy Conference, would concelebrate Mass next day, Sunday, with Mgr. Philip. So, our first Mass was memorable in many ways, and when Our Lord had been installed as Master of the House, an even greater sense of home-coming prevailed. The church had been rented for a fashionable wedding in the morning, and as the happy couple had agreed to leave some of their lovely floral arrangements, God's House was suitably adorned for the occasion.

Sisters anywhere can easily imagine the activities involved in unpacking baggage, selecting rooms, setting up a kitchen in the area allocated as a temporary Convent, 'finding' basic equipment in seemingly endless 'stores' which Mgr. Philip and the Italian Sisters had so generously stocked, and, in general, trying to do everything at once! The need for agreed priorities and an attitude of gradualness soon became evident, if a community life firmly based on a prayer pattern was to be established. The fact that Sr. M. Imelda could be with the Community only on an intermittent basis during the days of decisions which would set the pattern for the whole programme, caused concern. After lengthy discussions it was agreed that Sister should consult with the Directors of her course at Regina Mundi and with those responsible in the Pensione where she was resident, to try to defer her course. Both authorities fully favoured the suggestion and assured her that a place would be available later at Regina Mundi. It seemed that the Lord had indicated His wish in the matter, so from 5th

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November, Sister joined her particular gifts to the setting up of both the Community and the Programme.

The Superior General and Sr. Immaculata spent the next three days at the College itself in Rome visiting the Sacred Congregation for Religious. They delivered both the Constitutions and Directives to the Pope after having presented them to the Lord during Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in St. Peter's Basilica. Sr. Mary Linscott explained that several Committees have been set up for the purpose of dealing with a back-log of revised Constitutions awaiting approval, so that the earliest time to expect official comment would be the following April. In the meantime we set the pattern of our lives in the spirit of the Constitutions and Directives. Whilst awaiting the official approbation of the Holy See we trusted that the Lord would stamp His approval by the fruitfulness of our lives as Sisters of Mercy.

A most unexpected and wonderful bonus was provided for all of us through the arrangements made by the Rector for special places in the Paul Vith Audience Hall, when the Pope addressed the pilgrims on Wednesday, 31st October. There was a particular poignancy in the experience for the Holy Father had just received news of the death of a young Polish priest, and Indira Gandhi had been assassinated on that same morning. In spite of what his personal suffering must have been, he gave his full attention to both the group which filled the Hall and to each individual to whom he spoke. It was only when a large group of schoolgirls from the Polish Community in Detroit sang in his mother tongue, that he appeared near to breaking point.



*Villa Palazzola: the modernised kitchen*

Initially our group, six Sisters and fifteen First Year Seminarians from the English College led by the Rector, were allocated places on the second row, but just prior to the Holy Father's arrival on the dais, the Rector and the Superior General were given places on the front row, to be presented to His Holiness in person. In his address to the English-speaking pilgrims present, the Holy Father spoke warm words of welcome to the Sisters of Mercy, as well as of encouragement to the students with whom they were to be involved. He extended his blessing and greetings to all members of our families, especially the sick. Then Sister Imelda was presented to him by the Rector, an event she describes with emotion: "I can't recall uttering a single word!" He put both hands on her head and welcomed the Sisters to Rome, saying "It is a great day, a new beginning; I hope your Sisters will be *very* happy in their apostolate."

On November 2nd, the plane bore away the Superior General and Sr. Immaculata leaving the four Sisters to set to work on Continental soil for the first time in the history of the Order. Our first task was to find our way round the vast monastic building. We knew that every part led off the cloister, but because of the number of identical doors, we had a problem finding the right one to use. The most elusive was the one leading to our own living quarters, known as the Piazza Venezia!

The female urge to organise led us initially to concentrate on setting up the basics in the building which we felt would be essential for future development. Immediately, the cloister became the centre of much activity as we cleaned, polished and moved furniture, preparing rooms needed for immediate use. Our priority was the transformation of the Rector's Salone into an Oratory for use during the winter months, when the unheated church would be too inhospitable. After long years in the field of education it was sheer joy to have just one project to focus upon and to do so in such idyllic surroundings was near heaven, even if at the end of the day we sank into our beds physically exhausted.

Life really came into the building with the arrival of the students on their first '*gita*' day (the students' weekday 'off', which in clerical tradition is Thursday). They showed their unmistakable pleasure at having someone to welcome them. Very quickly we came to know them by name and to look forward to seeing them each Thursday as well as for longer visits for Retreat and Study Days, and for periods of relaxation. After an unforgettable stay in the College over Christmas, we enjoyed their company in return at Palazzola for the second week of the Christmas break. The highlight was a Mass celebrated by six student priests on 1st January, at which we renewed our Vows: a simple annual ceremony for us, but made much more meaningful by the impact it had on the seminarians. By the feast of the Epiphany the snow had begun to fall and it was only with difficulty, braving the hazards of the road through the woods to Albano, that the students were able to return to Rome to resume their academic life.

Then we experienced the isolation and loneliness of which we had been warned. They increased when the snow rendered the drive impassable and we were marooned, without gas, central heating or hot water! For five days, noble attempts to reach us ended in failure, until finally a breakthrough was made by a brave man with supplies on a wheelbarrow — and a camera! Palazzola was certainly set in 'fairy-land', incredibly beautiful — from the inside — and

irresistible to any photographer. A week later, normality was restored, but these days when we were cut off from the outside world brought us much closer to each other and to Alfredo, Fernanda and family, without whose help and cheerful encouragement, our plight would have been considerably worse.

Having established firm links with the students of the College, who encouraged us by their appreciation of the 'heart' we had brought to Palazzola, we were able to turn our attention to its new role as a centre of prayer for those outside the College community. Already before Christmas, Benedictines from San Anselmo and a group of Neo-Catechumens from Rome had made weekend retreats. Then came the Association of Religious Brothers, various groups from the North American College, the Scots College Candidacy Retreat and the Irish College Prediaconate Retreat. Imagine the reaction when the Irish students were welcomed to the English College Villa in their own native Gaelic! The peace and tranquility of Palazzola appealed to everyone, and its opening-up to other Seminarians perhaps made them question the wisdom of giving up their own Villas (every College in Rome used to have one for retreats and for the summer vacation in the days when students spent almost their entire seven years in Italy without returning to England).

In Low week, we had our first group from England — an ecumenical pilgrimage led by Fr. Paschal Ryan (R.C.) and the Rev. Peter Galloway (Anglican) from St. John's Wood, London. We felt this to be a real testing time. In the event, we thoroughly enjoyed their company and it was considered by all to be a great success. The proof came in their reluctance to return to England at the end of the week — they too had succumbed to Palazzola's charm. For us, it was the confirmation of its role as a Pilgrimage Centre.



*Villa Palazzola: the Common Room*

Like St. John, we could record many other events but space does not allow. Two, we feel, must be mentioned. Our Candlemas Day ceremony began at the shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in the cloister, and culminated in Mass in the Oratory. On Palm Sunday, enhanced by the presence of the students from the Irish College preparing for Diaconate, and a number of Sisters from Our Lady of the Missions on the Via dei Laghi, we began our celebration with the blessing of our own olive branches at the far end of the garden. We processed along the garden through the cloister, out of the front door and into the main Church for Mass. These ceremonies were taking place in Palazzola for the first time since 1910, and they revealed to us the wonderful potential for liturgical celebrations.

But just a few months have shown how much it could contribute also to the students' formation, especially in prayer. They and all the retreat groups were universally delighted by the marked spiritual atmosphere as well as the sheer beauty of the setting. It was a foretaste of the people we were preparing to welcome over the summer, not least the Christian family holiday groups. Can Palazzola also be made available for priests, religious and others from the dioceses of England and Wales to spend sabbatical and renewal periods, with all the resources of Rome just an hour away? That is an aspect of the project which we have yet to promote and develop.

There is still a long way to go. At times the broader vision of Palazzola's developing potential has receded behind the day-to-day needs of organising the house and coping with small groups. People who have known and loved Palazzola in the past still sometimes need reassurance about what is happening. For a long time too there was a provisional air about much that we did as we waited for the appointment of a Vice-Rector in Rome that would allow Mgr. Holroyd to join the new Community full-time. But through it all a firm foundation has been laid for the future.

In his after-dinner speech on Christmas Day the Rector referred to the coming of the Sisters to Palazzola as having added another dimension to the life of the College. We have received new experiences and a new form of association with the diocesan clergy which we believe is of value to all. Now we simply pray . . . that the Project's objectives will be accomplished in the three years that have been allotted to it. Please pray with us that we succeed in this.

**The Sisters of Mercy**

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## From the Archives: Whatever Became Of Neill Talbot?

For several years I have been interested in Mgr. George Talbot de Malahide, the frequently mentioned nineteenth century ecclesiastic. He presents a rather pitiful figure: a convert who became a member of Pio Nono's *Anticamera Segreta* and one of his closest confidants. He was Pro-protector of the English College (responsible for the rebuilding of the College church) but because of his access to Pius IX was felt by many to exercise an undue influence upon English Catholic affairs and this consequently made him despised by some and used by others. He left Rome in 1869 suffering from nervous exhaustion and died in a mental hospital at Passy near Paris in 1886<sup>1</sup>.

His papers and diaries make fascinating reading as they present the reader with the opportunity to study such famous incidents as the Errington Case and Newman's position in Rome. Unfortunately all the Manning papers save two are missing, presumably taken by Purcell when writing his life of Cardinal Manning<sup>2</sup>.

Amongst the Talbot papers are four letters referring to his cousin Fr. Neill Talbot. Three were written to Mgr. George Talbot by Bishop Vaughan of Plymouth, Neill Talbot's bishop. The first letter is very long so I shall not quote it *in extenso* but shall rather present the salient points:

Bishop's House  
Sept. 26th 1859

"My dear Mgr. Talbot,

I have been long wishing to write to you but I could not take courage to put pen to paper as the subject is of a most painful nature and if you are already acquainted with the circumstances it will grieve you much . . . You will remember receiving a letter a few months ago from your cousin Neill Talbot to obtain, if possible, a dispensation for a priest to marry, at least he told me that he had written but did not say if he mentioned on whose behalf the question was asked as it was for himself. He had seduced a servant and was so violently attached to her and she was with child by him that he imagined that he could not live without her . . . He wrote that the answer that he received from you in the negative was not sufficient to induce him to give her up, she was confined of a dead child, his money was expended . . . and then they went off together and married at the registrar's office in a legal manner and are now living together and she is again in the family way . . . They cannot separate and I feel that they never will and that death alone will break the unholy bond".

Reading this letter prompted me to search for some information about Neill Talbot. In the *Liber Ruber* I found the following details. He was born on the 2nd February 1830 in the Western District, later to become the Diocese of Plymouth, conditionally baptised at the age of ten (so I presume that he was, like

his uncle, a convert). He entered the English College on 27th February 1852, having already received Second Minors. In January 1853 he transferred to the Collegium Pium and was ordained subdeacon in 1854 and priest the following year. He left for the mission as a priest of the newly created Diocese of Plymouth in October 1856.

In the second letter from Bishop Vaughan to Mgr. Talbot all appears to be proceeding in a slightly better vein; it is dated 17th January 1860:

".. You will be glad to hear that your poor cousin Neill continues apart from the woman — and is at Beaumont Lodge. God grant he may persevere. I fear he is still in a miserable state of mind for he seems to have quite lost his vocation and so esteems his vows a slavery."

One third and final letter from Bishop Vaughan is unfortunately no longer intact. It is dated 5th March 1860 and refers (according to the index of the Talbot Papers) to "the lapse of Neill".

The story does not however, end here. There is a final letter written to Mgr. Talbot by James Laird Patterson<sup>3</sup>. This bears only the date 22nd January but I would conjecture that it was written in either 1861 or 1862 as all the other letters in the collection date from that time. It is certainly before 1864 as he refers to, as living, Bishop Gillis who was Bishop of the Western District of Scotland from 1838 to his death in 1864.

".. I had a letter from him (Neill) last week. He is still with the worthy priest where I placed him in July, and his letter tho' far from what one could wish gave great room for hope of his final perseverance. He needs encouragement and sympathy and it would be very kind if you write to him in that way. . I have got him a letter of recommendation to a great commercial house in Paris who will find him employment. I have made it a condition that he shall live in a religious house or with a priest."

Anxious to discover what happened to Neill Talbot I made enquiries of the Plymouth Archives but they had no information. All other trails have proved fruitless and I am inclined to think that Neill, like his famous cousin, passed the rest of his life in obscurity — unless anybody could enlighten me?

**Charles Briggs**

<sup>1</sup>cf. *The Venerabile* XV pp. 200-209 for the biography.

<sup>2</sup>cf. E. R. Norman, *The Catholic Church in England in the 19th Century*.

<sup>3</sup>He was a priest of the Archdiocese of Westminster who became President of St. Edmund's, Ware, and in 1880 Titular Bishop of Emmaus.

## The Blag a Vague Gita: February 1981

It began with a note on our notice board informing interested singers that a certain Pontifical College needed a number of extra voices to assist in the celebration of a Byzantine rite liturgy in Catania a week hence, all expenses paid. "Good luck to them" I thought to myself, leaving the schola-rs to do their bit. A few days later I was back at that point of reverential homage (the notice board) listening to a number of eminent singers lamenting the academic *impegni* (i.e. exams) which prevented them from warbling polyphonically on Sweet Sicily's Sunny Shore.

As I turned away a newspaper headline twirled before the eyes of my imagination: "Kenny Conquers Catania with Slavonic Schola". With a spring in my step and a *gettone* in my hand I dashed to the phone and dialled a wise man from the East.

- Hullo, it's about the trip to Sicily.
- Oh, you're the English College schola?
- Not quite, but I'm interested.
- Oh, alright then, see you on Tuesday.
- Well don't you want me to come for an audition or a practice or something?
- If you want, I suppose. . . .
- Oh, er . . . perhaps not . . . Tuesday then?
- Yes. Come to supper. 7.30.

So that was that. I was in! Nothing to do now for four days but to keep the story quiet and convince myself I could carry it off. But no! Alas! Someone had pinched the 'Bluffer's Guide to Slavonic Choral Singing' from the library. My one source of consolation was gone. Driven by desperation I confided in a certain Philip Egan. He was very understanding — until I suggested that he should come along too. Eventually the logic of my able argument and the fear in my eyes brought forth from the depth of this compassionate soul the undertaking, perhaps, to go too . . . if possible. Before you could say, "Ad multos annos" I was back from Stazione Termini with a brace of train and *courette* tickets in my hand. He grew steadily more convinced of the correctness of his decision to join me once he knew there was no chance of getting his 10,000 lire note back.

The following Wednesday lunchtime saw us recovering from our overnight train journey in a Catania hotel with as motley a Byzantine crew as anyone might hope to meet. Padre Daniele was the leader of the Gita: a Solzhenitsyn of a man; sometime lecturer in Liturgy at a Roman University, most times smarting from the fact that English was the one European language that he had not yet mastered. Don Pietro was Daniele's sidekick — a brisk Italo-American Lenin lookalike, taciturn in five languages. Hans too came along for the ride; a bearded Swiss seminarian, small and affable. The token full-blooded Easterner on the trip was Igor (sic!), a young, sunken-cheeked Orthodox clerical student who had been released from Leningrad for a year to wander furtively around Rome as

part of a cultural exchange. Don Michele came too: a young Italian diocesan priest with a cheerful and uncomplicated outlook on life — a rare and welcome component for the group dynamic, as you will see. Last, but not least, was the 'wise man from the East' mentioned earlier; Eastbourne or East Anglia? I know not, but he was certainly English. Mark was a mild-mannered individual with a San Franciscan faith in the virtue of being 'laid back' coupled with an abhorrence of machinery which calculated the passing of the hours. "How German" he would murmur when Phil or I wondered what the timetable might turn out to be, "... I think it's time for my siesta".

So there we were, in a Catania hotel, musing quietly on the disadvantages of monoglots at our first meal together. The preferred tongues for conversation were either German or Slavonic so that cramped our style a little. An occasional crumb of comfort came when we were addressed in Italian but the company tended to promote sheepish reserve rather than conversational camaraderie. Nevertheless, the meal passed without incident and the table was cleared. Now was the time for the choir practice. Our music consisted mainly of Slavonic notes and an Italian translation executed on the very evening that the party had set out from Termini. Philip and I had decided that we would face martyrdom rather than sing different parts of the score so we both piped up, "Second Tenor!" when Don Pietro enquired about our vocal range. He eyed us suspiciously and handed us a pile of photocopied sheet music.

"We will begin", he commanded and launched off into page one. Philip and I murmured on convincingly, clearing our throats at the awkward parts and



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assuming a *sang-froid* betrayed only by our pounding hearts and the clear possibility of a place on the next train home.

"I think you will find it a little easier if you put the sheets *under* the pile when it has been completed, like this" said Don Pietro, after ostentatiously calling the music to a halt and reordering my sheets.

"And now, we will begin once more". We gently cantered through the first half of page two before I was hit by a cold sweat as I felt the maestro glancing occasionally in my direction. How the devil had he stacked that last sheet? Come the end of the page I did my best, but no! The maestro's wrist action brought us to the silence of the tomb in a millisecond.

"The correct way to stack the sheets is so, *not* so. Do you understand? *No* do not turn them over".

"Come", said Don Daniele, clapping his hands at the dining-room door, "it's time to go to the church". The party rose to leave the table. Choir practice was over. Pietro's stoical expression hid the fact that he was aware of my guilty secret. I felt like a penitent sheltering behind the security of the confessional seal. A faint smile on his lips seemed to suggest that, if all went well, well and good. If not? We would soon find out.

The service lasted for two and a half hours. It was the patronal feast of the parish church, Our Lady of Lourdes, and Padre Daniele's sister, being a parishioner, had felt, along with the Parish Priest, that a suitably special way to mark the event would be to invite Daniele's Byzantine choir. Don Daniele was the celebrant, Mark the deacon and Don Pietro the *maestro del coro* which consisted of our mystified selves. After half an hour or so I quite got into the swing of it all and began to enjoy myself. If one imagines oneself as an elderly archdeacon in Murmansk then things move along so much more easily. Don Pietro occasionally raised an eyebrow to indicate disapproval of Western innovations to the Slavonic tone but at the end of the marathon I was delighted to hear him say, "It is sufficient"; the hardest 'six vix' I have ever received. The parishioners were delighted. Don Daniele's sister invited us all back to her home. The *Parocco* exuded, "Quanto bravi siete", and yet. . . . The chill of the Siberian steppes hung over the scene: Don Daniele had forgotten his slide projector. All was not well.

Such was the equivocal atmosphere amongst the group that to raise one's voice to either question or suggest was regarded as something akin to treachery. So the next morning was quietly spent by Phil and I wondering what the day would bring, if anything. Were we going straight back to Rome? Had Don Pietro given the game away to Don Daniele, who merely pretended that the misplaced slide projector rather than our wandering tenor line was the source of his wretchedness of soul? Were Mark's ambiguous answers to our questions a non-committal preliminary to his official denunciation of us at the next party *plenum*?

This initial tension lasted throughout the meal despite our sterling efforts to be as subservient as possible. The definitive fall from grace, however, was yet to come. Towards the end of the meal cream cakes were served. I helped myself to an éclair and the waiter moved on to Philip. He took one but at the same instant another cake propelled itself away from the platter, up into the air and down,

soggily, onto the arm of Don Daniele's jet-black jacket. If looks could lacerate . . . Philip whimpered to stifle an 'Eganic chortle' and kicked me under the table to forestall a complete breakdown.

"Enough!" barked Daniele, banging the table, "we will meet at the church at three and forty-five, alle quatro meno un quarto", and so on, in four or five other languages.

The party broke up. Chastened but none the wiser, the two of us strolled down the road to the church in question. There was no one around so we thought perhaps the *Parocco* might be able to help. I knocked at the sacristy door and the sacristan answered. I began to explain myself but after a moment we were being shown in to the accompaniment of the incantation, "Si, si, capisco, la messa, la messa". He sat us down in a parlour containing one of the largest collections of glossy magazines in Italy. He then sat blankly in a corner, leaving his pet puppy to snap welcomingly at our heels. After ten minutes or so the sound of voices could be heard nearby. On enquiry as to its origin the sacristan calmly assured us that it was, "il cadavere da Roma" (the corpse from Rome). With a terror-stricken glance Philip stood up and opened a door connecting with the sanctuary of the church. I followed. There in the aisle was a crowd of wailing Sicilians and a coffin. Realising that clarification from the sacristan was as likely to be forthcoming as from the corpse, and desperate not to miss the appointment which Don Daniele had so meticulously fixed upon, we beat a hasty retreat down a side aisle and out of the main door. There at the bottom of the steps were Don Pietro, Hans and a waiting car. "Time to go now", said Hans, in a tone not unlike Lewis

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Carroll's March Hare. Sighing we got in, wondering which twist the story would now take.

A convoy of three cars, all with our party, twisted and turned with the winding roads which lead from Catania to the back of Mt. Etna, to a small village called Biancavilla. The party was then frog-marched from the piazza to the *duomo* and back out to the coffee bar; a gita-ette interspersed with wild gesticulations to indicate architectural singularities and the occasional snatch of Italian injected into Daniele's flowing German to mark out artistic notabilities. Somewhat perplexed we got back into the car, our confusion being matched only by that of the locals who appeared to me to be extras in a Cinecittà epic about the fall of King Zog of Albania.

Night was falling. I had had enough for one day and was beginning to relish the prospect of sleep when I realised we were approaching journey's end. As I thought.

"There's no need to get out", said Don Pietro as he stopped the car outside the church. "I'll get the things. It's getting late". He rushed back a moment later with cassocks and cottas from the sacristy. Then there followed a hair-raising drive into the city as far as the *centro storico* where the sheer volume of people on the streets made it impossible to drive any further. Abandoning the car Don Pietro called out, "It's no good, we'll have to run". So there we were, running in the dark through the streets of Catania dressed in cassocks with cottas over our arms and not the slightest idea where we were going. Eventually we stopped at the side door of a church and, miraculously, the occupants of the other two cars in our earlier convoy materialised from the throng. On went the cottas.

"Avanti!" cried Don Daniele and in we all went behind him, pushing our way through the crowd at the door, processing in front of a side altar and up the steps to the sanctuary of Catania Cathedral, bowing to the Bishop as we passed him on the way to the choir stalls behind. Turning to look down the body of the Cathedral, it was then that I realised that this was the centre of all the to-ing and fro-ing of the crowd in the streets. The Cathedral was packed, standing room only, and there we were, me in my training shoes, marching onto the sanctuary halfway through the Offertory!

As time passed Philip's pulse rate slowed a little and I thought that he would probably not have a cardiac arrest after all. But more was to come. With the end of Communion came the preparations for more liturgical happenings. On whispered enquiry to a handkerchief-waving sodality member looking something like a morris-dancer, I learnt that Mass was to be followed by a procession of the remains of the body of St. Agnes, the patron of Catania and one of Sicily's protomartyrs. So that was what it was all about! The great bronze, jewel-encrusted, gilded reliquary was removed from its position up behind the high altar with much heaving and puffing, and the confraternity and pious associations led the clergy and the servers off the altar, the Bishop and the reliquary-bearing sodality bringing up the rear. Whilst we processed calmly out by the side aisle the congregation stormed through the main doors and out into the piazza. Just as the Slavonic group passed over the threshold and into the square there was a thunderclap which sounded like the beginning of some dictator's latest military adventure. Poor Igor flung himself against a pillar

with his head in his arms, feeling the worst of Western terrorism was about to unleash itself on his delicate shoulders. Don Daniele rushed to assure him that it was merely the beginning of a firework display. What a display it was!

As we strolled around the square I soon found myself walking alongside the Bishop. After introducing ourselves he motioned towards the carefully arranged firework formations lighting the sky and said,

“Non ci sono spettacoli così in Inghilterra?”

“No, Eccellenza” I replied, “fra due giorni, qui in Sicilia, ho visto spettacoli mai visti in Inghilterra”.

Philip nodded in bewildered agreement.

**John Kenny**



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## East Africa 1984

Within 24 hours of the excitement of the diaconate ordinations I found myself negotiating the slums of Nairobi in search of a *matatu* to take me 400 miles into the Kenyan bush in my first encounter with that indefinable phenomenon — the African Church in the 1980s. The next seven weeks took me to far flung corners of Kenya and overland to Dar-es-Salaam; covering nearly 4,500 miles which included a range of terrain from sunbaked, isolated beaches, fertile highlands, to the famine-wracked deserts of northern Kenya.

The African Experience has not become an obligatory part of the English College seminarian's formation but for me it had always intrigued and, fired by interest in aid development and more recently the issues posed by the new churches in Africa and Asia, I was determined to whet my appetite further. Seven weeks may not seem a long time but it was sufficient to provoke new questions and to shatter past conclusions and make me want to return as soon as possible.

### The Mission

My first week was spent living in "Mill Hill" parish which, over an area of about 1,300 square miles, included a girls' secondary school run by Sisters of Mercy and three mobile health centres run by Franciscan Sisters. As most Kenyan parishes go it is relatively small but the parish team of priest, two catechists and three diocesan sisters were confronted by territory that had hardly been touched by Christianity.

The girls in the school came from as far away as Lake Victoria, Mombassa and Nairobi. As with most Kenyan schools they all had to pay fees which often entails enormous sacrifice for the parents especially since most of them will return afterwards to their tribal village existence. I was sent into the school to teach but in fact this normally entailed answering questions about my home, whether I had come to their country in a "big bird" in the sky or why on earth Prince Charles had only one wife. Polygamy in Kenya is widespread and my first experience of it was being escorted to the school discotheque and being prevailed upon to dance by myself in front of 300 girls — something which a seminarian's training does not necessarily prepare one for!

During this time with the Parish Priest one very inspiring experience was a trip to a small village about 30 miles from the mission. They had asked Fr. Peter to come and pray for rain, having had none for over eleven months. They had no idea what he represented or indeed what he was except that he was known as a "holy man". Anyway we went and celebrated a Eucharist in Masai — this was incomprehensible to me and, in turn, the religiosity of it must have been baffling to them. When they were invited to pray they did so by chant, prayer and song for over half an hour by way of intercession, praise and thanksgiving. For those people God wasn't the Christian God but rather a single being in whom they believed, and they have done so for thousands of years; he is able to create and destroy but also to bring love into their world. It is here, with this kind of innate belief, that the Theology of Story is strongly challenging the traditional thinking which sees evangelisation only in terms of Western Christianity.

Rather we should be looking for what is common to both cultures, and then using that to come to a fuller understanding of God and the way to salvation.

## **Famine-Wracked Kenya**

I spent the next two weeks travelling to the north of Kenya almost as far as the Ethiopian border. This took me up the east side of Lake Turkana into one of the great desert areas of Africa. As soon as the road descends from the eastern highlands the terrain changes from green pastures, tea and coffee plantations — once the total preserve of the white man — into an endless, arid and forsaken area of desert, bush and sun-scorched rock; but at the same time emanating that beauty and mystery which makes Africa so enchanting for Europeans.

It was in this part of the country that I was to witness a little of the hunger and famine which was to strike such a harrowing picture through the television and media last year. Although it hadn't been as bad in Kenya as in the Sudan and Ethiopia, it still left a very marked impression. This became even more striking when I saw some of the Turkana people and their present existence of hunger, village displacement and often destruction of their traditional way of life. As a people they personify nobility and distinction, often at least six foot in height, walking incredibly straight, bedecked with coloured beads, necklaces and bracelets. To see such a people humbled by hunger and famine affected me deeply and yet I felt helpless.

The brunt of relief work was being borne by the churches and other relief agencies, with almost blind indifference from the governmental agencies. The great advantage, in terms of development work and famine relief, that the church agencies have (for instance, Catholic Relief Service, Caritas, Cafod) is that through the parish and diocesan network not only do they have direct contact with the problems, but are also probably much more in tune with the needs of the people in the 'Third World' with whom they wish to work.

I had a surprise as I was hitching back to Nairobi, waiting by a petrol pump in the middle of nowhere. The man seemed inappropriately dressed for the full heat of the midday sun, in brown brogues, jersey and a thick tweed jacket. Anyway, we got talking and he started telling me stories of the various Arab peoples, his time in the Sudanese Civil Service, and the lamentable fact that there were no places left in the world to explore. It sounded strangely familiar and on parting I found that I had been talking to no less than Wilfred Thesinger, whose tales of the *Marsh Arabs* and *Arabian Sands* had entranced me for many years. Considering Lake Victoria was relatively close I suppose to meet one of the greatest living explorers wasn't all that surprising but in my case it was a veritable delight.

## **Nairobi**

Kenya is a country of great contrasts and this is most marked in the capital. My first introduction to it was walking up Kenyatta Avenue bestraddled on either side by towering office blocks and hotels, and bearing a constant stream of Mercedes and BMWs. Some of the suburbs are equally as prosperous with large well-watered gardens, cooks and house-boys and the inevitable batten-wielding security guard at the foot of the drive. One such suburb is Muthaiga, the home of the world-famous Muthaiga Club, so scathingly portrayed in *White Mischiefs* but still a bastion of white colonialism and seemingly impervious to the political

climate. Next door lies “Mathare Valley”, described by some as the most deprived area of slum dwellings anywhere in Africa. It bestrides for five miles an open sewer which was once the Mathare River. No one knows how many people live there but it is probably between one and one and a half million. This number increases every day, whilst government services decline proportionately — the authorities are more concerned with courting the multinational companies and their appendages.

The squalor and poverty was terrible to behold. To see eight people living in a small room, children playing barefoot in open areas of sewerage and refuse, and hearing of all the attendant problems of prostitution, crime and rack-renting landlords left me feeling both very small and very angry. However, as is so often the case, the questions are left unanswered and the problems meet with no easy solutions.

Amongst all this, the presence of the church shone out very strongly. The Missionaries of Charity have a very substantial compound in the middle of the valley. Another is the Ndungu project set up by Father Krol W.F., to look after the “parking boys”, children forced out of their homes to find work but who usually find their way into crime instead. The project has been greatly welcomed and supported by the community of the valley. Also very impressive was a community of Taize brothers. Their skills and the witness to Christ that they exude show how, in small ways rather than grandiose schemes, the church and development agents can work so well together.

## Tanzania

My first impressions of Tanzania were of light bulbs that didn’t work and couldn’t be replaced, air-conditioning systems that did the opposite of what they were intended to do, and black marketeers who promised to give you seven times the official exchange rate. I had been warned in Kenya that Tanzania is the one place certain to make a socialist into a capitalist.

The church on the other hand is solid, well established and conservative. From the President downwards it has much deeper and more secure roots in the country as a whole than in Kenya. The major obstacle to Christian evangelisation doesn’t so much lie in the tribal hinterland but much more in the ever increasing ranks of Muslims. One parish I stayed in had a mosque almost next door to the parish church. At certain times of day there would be a call to prayer, similar I suppose in some ways to our church bells, which would bring people from quite distant parts to worship. The Parish Priest had wanted to improve relations between the two communities but there was no reciprocation at all — something which I hear is common to most African examples of Christian-Muslim contacts. At times fighting and civil war break out, as has happened in Uganda or more recently the Sudan.

In spite of the Muslim population, the church from the President downwards, is a much more vocal force than in Kenya. Julius Nyerere or “Mwalimu” has been one of its strongest supporters, and has given a very clear example of the ‘Christian in politics’: how the Christian’s responsibility in public life does not just stop at the church door. Although his “Ujaama” (family) Socialism has stifled economic enterprise and made Tanzania one of the poorest African countries (very dependent on foreign aid, and industry at 16% of its capacity),

there have been some remarkable achievements. I was fortunate to interview one of his area commissioners, an enormously committed Catholic and Socialist, as well as personal friend — Mwalimu had been Best Man at her wedding. Although it is common knowledge, she confirmed the frugal and almost 'Ghandian' lifestyle of Nyerere. He is one of the few African leaders to appreciate that it is by example one wins the support and respect of a country. He entertains as rarely as possible, lives on ugali (maize porridge), doesn't touch alcohol, and is seen at Mass almost every day. Since the Arusha Declaration he has rooted out corruption and made Tanzania stand high in championing human rights and independence from either the West or the East.

I found the political awareness of the Tanzanians considerable. They were happy to acknowledge the benefits of their colonial past, but at the same time recognised the great injustices in African society, from apartheid in the south to religious persecution in the Sudan. Tanzanians don't call themselves first "Masai", "Kikuyu" or "Ibo" but rather Tanzanian. They have a great corporate identity, and live out the ideal of Ujaama — that a country's progress and development is ultimately dependent on the communal participation of all.

I was forced to travel overland back to Nairobi from Dar-es-Salaam which takes one largely through the most fertile parts of Tanzania. Nevertheless, Tanzania's total inability to feed itself explains its description as the proverbial Banana Republic — the idea is often far from the reality. But development doesn't necessarily have to be about economic statistics and aid dependence: it must start where the people are. That requires a concern for their basic needs: food, water, health care and education. It demands mutual respect and appreciation of one's neighbour as a member of the same family. I would contest that in these areas the achievement of Tanzania has been marked, and epitomises the dream of a truly independent Africa. Has the cost been too great? The IMF and others may think so but I don't; empty shops, car breakdowns or electric lights that don't work are one thing, but human dignity and rights are another — and it is there that Julius Nyerere's Tanzania stands head and shoulders above the rest.

### **The Church and Development**

To some the connection may seem irrelevant and unnecessary but I feel strongly that they must go together. The contradictions in what is pejoratively called the 'Third World' are very marked and my brief glimpses at Tanzania and Kenya showed me that superficial impressions must not be allowed to linger. Many of the problems have resulted in heavy dependence on Western conceptions of a post-colonial country's progress to independence and nationhood. However, as Tanzania has shown, this is not the only way; there are many other things which are more important for nationhood. Nyerere feels that it shouldn't be just about population growth rates or Gross National Products, but about people as people: their rights and their communal responsibility.

The bishops of East Africa have had the building of Basic Christian Communities as a pastoral priority since 1976; it is in these communities and on the larger parish scale that the ideals I have described must be worked for. The community, togetherness and mutual understanding of the Africans is innate but much has been lost already and it is only in such bodies as the church that they can be rediscovered. The easy answer of mass conversions to a Western

church is not the answer. Nor does it lie in a church that compromises totally with the culture and folklore of traditional societies. Rather it must build on that understanding of God as Creator, as love and as neighbour which I first encountered in that Masai village at the beginning of my travels.

My first glimpse of Africa taught me a lot. It gave me an insight into a church that is thriving, vigorous and ever-increasing, but also looking for an identity which our Western culture doesn't always provide. I loved my time there so much and felt privileged; but I would recommend it to anyone. There are so many little memories that bring a smile. But one of the most abiding ones was saying goodbye to Sister Betty — once a buyer for a top Dublin fashion shop, and now not exactly the best dressed lady in Nairobi — walking down a road into the



*Alexander Sherbrooke and friends: East Africa 1984*

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Paul VI in Uganda in 1969 for the  
canonisation of the Ugandan Martyrs.

**Alexander Sherbrooke**

### **Addendum to East Africa article**

There was a sequel to Alex's tour of Africa, which bore out the fact that such 'field trips' have their value and justification not only in the insights gained, but also in giving authenticity and depth to the *way* we present the issues at home. This is particularly important for one planning to become a priest. His efforts to raise the questions of world hunger and deprivation will depend as much on informed and imaginative ways to involve communities in caring for their 'neighbour' on the other side of the world whom they have never seen, as on accurate statistics and critique.

In the November following, the Alexander organised three days of prayer and debate on the issue of the famine in Ethiopia. At this time there is usually a jumble-sale within the College to raise money for a seminary in India, and on this occasion all proceeds over £700 were to be sent to the relief of the African famine. It is a jumble-sale with a difference: everything is auctioned, not priced, and the goods vary from material (books, clothes, appliances) to services (re-painting rooms, washing-up duties) to plain ridiculous (voluntary silence for a week, removal of half a beard, Shakespearian soliloquy at full volume in the central hall of the Gregorian University at break-time!) This year's CUCU (Christians United Cough Up) inaugurated the Ethiopian event, and itself raised £2,000.

Meanwhile, volunteers had already begun a sponsored fast (liquid and perhaps bread if feeling really faint) to last the three days. The second day we held a Variety Concert to which guests contributed by ticket sales and donations. A special midday fast and prayer on the last day gave an opportunity for those not on the full fast to make a special sacrifice and prayer for the victims of famine. Brother Jansens, who has devoted himself to the problems of refugees from famine and civil war (thousands of whom find their way to Rome), led us in prayer and reflection. The College and many friends from around Rome attended a votive Mass for hunger, to which we invited representatives from all the continents of the world. They spoke and prayed, often movingly, of the sufferings of their respective homelands; this more than anything else boosted the collection towards the famine fund.

For those with special interest in aid and development work, we had talks from Denis Canger the African director of Caritas International, and one from Julian Filochowski and Stephen King of CAFOD — with particularly striking

slides and accounts of Julian's tour of the famine areas with Cardinal Hume. The tenor was as simple as the issues are complex: many will die soon if large and effective aid is not immediately forthcoming; but still more will die in years to come if we do not learn to put more into the less "attractive" field of long-term development, enabling potential victims to help *themselves*. We must strive for a "Third World" with its own doctors, teachers and aid agents, and not leave them permanently dependent on short-term contractees from the West.

Three months later, we were asked — as were most of the seminaries in Rome — to give a temporary home to three refugees from Ethiopia, waiting for visas to go to the USA. Berhane, Said and Samson shared our life until receiving clearance from the U.S. Embassy in May. They impressed us by the quiet way they spoke of their sufferings both in Ethiopia (several members of their families had been shot or imprisoned) and in Russia where they were sent as part of an education exchange between the two governments. It was whilst returning from Russia to a very doubtful future that they had 'jumped' train in Rome. Whilst we were glad to see them eventually received by the U.S. authorities, we missed them too and felt in the end that we were the privileged partners of their stay. There are already plans to offer a temporary home to other refugees next year, and as I write a couple from Ethiopia is staying at Palazzola.

The Ethiopian scheme ultimately raised £5,000 — perhaps a mere fraction of the twelve million pounds brought in by combined relief agencies in Britain, but a considerable effort from seminarians on necessarily limited grants, over just three days in which the normal duties at university and in College had to be fulfilled. But more important was to deepen our sensitivity to the issues of a world where twice as many people suffer deprivation of one kind or another as enjoy relative sufficiency. As priests, we will not necessarily help our hungry brothers by going out to them in person — adding just another hungry mouth — as by challenging and inspiring our own communities at home.

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# Consider Your Call: Psychology at the Gregorian

I'm often asked what I'm studying at the Gregorian and the reply, 'Psychology' is usually greeted with surprise. Why should a diocesan priest be studying psychology? The answer becomes clear once it is explained what is intended in this instance by psychology — after all, it is no more a uniform discipline than philosophy is, for example. I'll try to achieve the impossible by outlining the theory and research which underpin the Institute of Psychology at the Gregorian, then describe the course itself in more detail.

As an introduction it would be useful to give some idea of how I got into psychology in the first place. The suggestion came from the Institute itself. I had been fortunate enough to be accepted for the longer-term counselling offered at the Centre they run. The worth of that counselling, experienced at first-hand, was sufficient to convince me that there was a real value in the work they were doing. Of course, the Institute receives many criticisms, e.g. 'all they teach is Rulla's theory' — a glance at the syllabus shows how false that is, even apart from the obvious point that Rulla's theory in isolation would make no sense.

## The theory

What psychological influences may exist with regard to a person's decision to enter into a religious or priestly vocation? what influences are there on the person's perseverance and effectiveness in the vocation? and what role do psychological factors play in someone's decision to leave? These are the main questions which Fr. L. Rulla, S.J., set out to try to answer through the research he began in the 1960's and which is still continuing today. The Institute he founded arose out of that theorising and research; it is concerned with vocation and psychology.

Spiritual values are clearly essential to any understanding of vocation, and we can distinguish three basic elements to them. A vocation is first of all a gift from God, a grace. Then the call is of the whole person, it is not just a job to be undertaken on a part-time basis. Finally, it leads to a new obligation to live a particular way of life within the Church. How may these basic spiritual values be integrated into a psychological approach to vocation? In the past the answer has tended to be that psychology was useful for discerning psychopathological cases, but otherwise had little contribution to make. In other words, people were either mentally ill or were normal; and if they were normal then it was presupposed that they were able to persevere and grow in vocation, with no real role for psychology in their training or life. This simple dichotomy does not seem to be very accurate, as it implies that people are either unfree or totally free regarding growth. It seems to be necessary to consider a third possibility, that people may be more or less mature, with the degree of maturity related largely to psychological factors and influencing the person's freedom. The subconscious in particular has an important part to play. At this stage we need to outline the meaning of some basic terms, before continuing with our argument.

Structurally, we may say that there are two levels to someone's personality, an ideal self and an actual self. The former is conscious and is what the person

desires to be. The latter is partly conscious and partly unconscious, and describes the person as he is now. The contents of these structural attributes are values, needs and attitudes:—

- values — the ideals of life that the person aspires to live up to, chosen by him; e.g. for vocation, union with God in Christ is sought through following the instrumental values given in the Bible;
- needs — fundamental predispositions to action, part of every person by nature, e.g. the need for autonomy or for knowledge;
- attitudes — these arise from experience of life and exert a directive and dynamic influence on the mental and physical activities of the person; they express the more general needs and values of the person, in particular situations. Thus, for example, the vow of obedience would be a value, while respect for one's superior, making oneself available for apostolic work, would be two attitudes leading to the expression of (in this case) the value.

We now come to what is the key point of the theory. Some of the needs are inconsistent with the values fundamental to religious vocation, e.g. the need to be needed is inconsistent with laying down one's life for others selflessly. The value can still be followed but the presence, in this case, of the need to be needed would work against it. In other words, there is a tension within each of us, the extent of which depends on how strong the needs and values are in each person, whether or not inconsistent needs occupy a central position in the person's psychological makeup. One's attitudes, which are seen in action, can express



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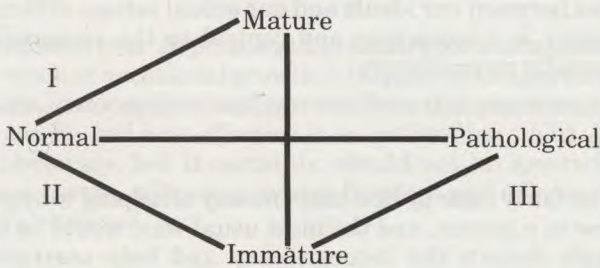
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needs or values. So — an attitude of respect to a superior may be an expression of the value of obedience, consistent with a vocation, or it may express a feeling of inferiority (the need for abasement) inconsistent with vocation. An attitude may also express a mix of needs and values. When a particular need is sufficiently strong in an individual and is inconsistent with the values he proclaims then there will be an inconsistency between his ideal-self and his actual self. And that inconsistency can be conscious or unconscious. In other words, the person may consciously and conscientiously try to live out religious values (ideal-self) but be unaware that a large part of the motivation for his actions, as seen in attitudes, arises from strong unconscious needs which are inconsistent with those values. Such a person need not be mentally ill, but his freedom of action is effectively hindered by an important, unconscious inconsistency. If the inconsistency is conscious then it can be consciously worked against, contained; whereas an unconscious one tends to grow if it is central to that person's personality. Clearly, there will be some degree of inconsistency in all of us, but it may or may not play an important, central role in us. In effect what is being prepared is:—



Thus, the dichotomy of normal-mature (I) and pathological-immature (III) is joined by a third possibility — normal-immature (II), the realm where unconscious inconsistencies which are central to a person prevail.

The final yet important point is that if someone does show an unconscious, central inconsistency, then his ability to really integrate his proclaimed religious values into his personality would be hindered. He would be hindered in his attempts to attain spiritual and emotional maturity, and be unable to see why.

### The research

A lot has been asserted; can it be supported in practice? The simple answer is — yes. Thus, an individual's decision to apply for an entry to an institution is based on a perceived fulfilment of the person's ideal-self in the life of an institute as he sees it. However, both the ideal-self and the perception of the institution can be distorted, unrealistic, because of unconscious needs. Fr. Rulla's research, supported indeed by several other independent studies, indicates that between 60 and 80% of those entering vocation do in fact have a motivation in which the unconscious needs play a significant role. The presence of these vocational inconsistencies was found to be substantially unaffected by the years of formation — four years of the latter produced an improvement in 2% of the men and 2% of the women. It was also found that there was a significant correlation between

the degree of vocational inconsistencies and subsequent departure from vocation. Thus, inconsistencies tend to *increase* the difference between the ideal and actual selves, so that the person eventually leaves, dissatisfied (and note that it is the unconscious needs which have not been satisfied). Sometimes the person may stay in vocation despite the inconsistencies and the discrepancy between ideal and actual selves, but the motive then is usually the security offered by the institute rather than the vocational values. Finally, with the recent loosening of structures in institutes which puts more responsibility on the individual, the vocational inconsistencies which may have been partly kept in check by those structures are freed and can more easily lead to the person's departure from vocation. The return of the structures would only cover up the problem again, not solve it. Note that these results are not a matter of classical scientific laws which always apply; they are statistical, so that significant vocational inconsistencies cannot be said to always lead to lack of perseverance and/or effectiveness in vocation, but we can say that there is a high probability of their so doing.

To sum up the first two sections, I could say that we all have some inconsistencies between our ideals and our actual selves; difficulty arises when the inconsistency is unconscious and central to the personality, so that the person is internally contradictory.

## The Institute

It should be fairly clear by now that one way of helping to overcome vocational inconsistencies in a person, and the most usual way, would be to have someone who could both discern the inconsistency and help overcome it. Apostolic experience is sometimes claimed to be the solution but growth from experience presupposes that the person is *able* to grow and the presence of vocational inconsistencies precisely blocks that ability to a major extent. So, experience may well result in greater efficiency, but that is not the same as maturity.

The Psychology Institute at the Gregorian was founded with the aim of training people who would be able to discern and help resolve unconscious inconsistencies in others. The course lasts three years, rather intense ones at that, and can be considered to have three main areas of attention:—

1. theoretical — this looks at such areas as psychopathology, psychological development, family, group and social psychology, the psychological tests we use, Fr. Rulla's theory, and of course spirituality (prayer, vocation, discernment of spirits, etc.).
2. practical — visits to some local mental hospital to interview patients, plus work in the Centre of Consultation. The latter provides two main services: (a) a series of interviews and tests to assess the person's psychological functioning; (b) longer term work aiming at the resolution of vocational inconsistencies somewhat awkwardly, yet accurately, known as vocational growth colloquia. The Centre is open to anyone though preference is given to priests, religious and seminarians. Work here takes up about half of a student's time in training and is supervised, of course.

3. personal — each student is helped to know himself better, resolve some of his own inconsistencies through two or three years of individual growth colloquia with one of the professors. Each student is also individually directed through the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius in the final year.

I have just completed this course myself and will be returning to England. How might such a training be useful in the Church's mission? The general answer is that graduates of the Institute have been specifically trained to help priests, religious, seminarians and novices come to greater self-knowledge so that the latter may grow in maturity. We all have our limitations, true; but it does seem worthwhile trying to overcome or circumvent as many of these as possible, in that such growth in maturity should enable the person to be a more effective instrument in the service of God. Thus, help can be given at almost any age. Candidates for priesthood or religious life can be assessed for psychological suitability; those in vocation can be helped. And those working in formation can also be aided in their work by both working with their novices/seminarians and also by helping them be more able to discern psychological difficulties.

I have worked with over 20 people at the Centre for a minimum of 50 hours each (diagnostic work or vocational growth colloquia) with ages ranging from 22 to 55, priests, nuns, seminarians; and can say from this experience how helpful such assistance can be and how effective it is for the time spent. Psychology is not a panacea, obviously, but it certainly should not be ignored. It can help release blocks in a person, allowing greater freedom and effectiveness in their work in the Lord's vineyard.

**Chris Brooks**



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# College Functions in Rome; or, Who Incensed the Bishop?

If the College, like any institution, can tend to introspection, this is nowhere more likely, or more dangerous, than in its liturgy. Likely, because liturgy is what generates most emotion (apart, perhaps, from the menu); dangerous, because it is precisely in worship that we hope to be taken out of ourselves and into communion with that big, wide world which lurks somewhere down the Via Monserrato.

The regular functions for which our liturgy moves out serve us, therefore, at least as much as those to whom we go. They force us, not just to pray with others but — a more concrete test of charity — to accommodate their idiosyncrasies and swallow ours, to adapt to their needs and to leave behind for a moment that paragon of liturgical perfection which is the Venerable English College at Community Mass.

For any new M.C., Philip Neri is the first big test: on Philip's Day he either wins his spurs or loses his mind. So it was that within days of my appointment I was in anxious conference with the Choir and Schola Masters, planning our strategy, and going with them to introduce ourselves to the Chiesa Nuova and its guardians. It took quite a few trips up the Capellari before we found someone who could tell us what was — or was not — wanted. A laconic young deacon suggested that we not sing first Vespers: "Last year it was disastrous. You made it sound like Good Friday." Our maestri swallow stoically. Who is keeping the tradition going anyway? — they or we? Are we doing it for a long-dead saint? Or for the parishioners? (Will anyone come?) Or just because it happened last year and the year before? We leave such metaphysical speculations for our successors to resolve and accept an invitation to lunch on the Feast — one of the welcome perks of office.

Lunch on the Feast makes College *festas* seem quite frugal. If it weren't for the prospect of living in Borromini's gloomy and labyrinthine masterpiece one might be tempted to defect. In a panelled 17th century room, under portraits of the Oratorian patriarchs we gather with the little family of their descendants. Plenteous wine accompanies both pastas, both meat courses, both desserts. The service is courteous, the company genial. Star guest is the illustrious Cardinal who will preside at Mass. What will he be like tonight? I mentally con my notes: reduced to shorthand on sleeve-sides cards, they could be the report of a chess match: "P1 to AR, D to Bp, MC takes Mitre. . . ." There is so much to remember. Mustn't drink too much. The patriarchs gaze down severely. What would Philip make of it all? He'd be the life and soul of the party. Oh, well, yes, thank you, just one more glass.

Within a few hours we are in the vast sacristy, milling with priests and seminarians and *chierichetti*. They all look so calm. Fools! Where is the sacristan? With minutes to go, he appears, phlegmatically setting out cruets, chalice, lectionary. At Zero minus 2 someone tells me that the congregation is filling the College pews and I have to dash, with all reverence, across the Church and ask them to move. Zero minus 1 and the thurible still needs lighting. The

sacristan has gone home. Where's the charcoal? There are dozens of cupboards. St. Anthony intervenes and we get the stuff crackling, washing our hands with seconds to spare. The students are chatting and larking; eyes closed, the Cardinal stands, calm as a Buddha; his personal MC asks me crossly, "Ma perche aspettiamo?" Why? Because I'm waiting for the Cardinal to say go. Surely he can't be waiting for me? He is. Good grief. Quiet everybody! Deep breath. "Procedamus."

To my amazement it all goes smoothly, barring a missing Gospel book, an argument *sotto voce* between the Cardinal's *ceremoniere* and myself over who should handle the mitre, and the unpredictable whims of the *chierichetti*. The church is full — Rome still loves its big-hearted Apostle; and all the work and worry seem worthwhile. While the Cardinal is preaching I am able to say a few words of thanks to Philip Neri — and ask him to help us preserve our sense of humour.

The other big away Mass of the summer and for me the most delightful of them all, is Corpus Christi at the Little Sisters of the Poor. No imposing Baroquery here, or unfamiliar faces, but the simple, light-filled chapel and the spotless corridors of the hospital where the nuns and *anziani* are well known to us through our weekly visits.

They seem to love the *Inglese* and are terribly proud to have so many of us with them for the Festa. "Quarantacinque sacerdoti!" exclaims Pompeia rapturously, with pardonable exaggeration, as she surveys the rows of students in immaculate choir dress. Here, I am at ease — no need for notes now, for by this stage I know the rubrics and can even improvise when the need arises — as every MC must — without anxiety. As when, for example, a sister appears unexpectedly with a fringed canopy and four clanking lanterns to accompany the monstrance and I have to recruit 8 willing volunteers just before the procession begins: or when the same fastidious sister has put away the prayer book before the final benediction and I have to go and search the sacristy, leaving the whole assembly in silent, slightly puzzled meditation.

The garden is bright with banners and strewn with petals and as always in visiting that house, one is recalled to a truer, humbler perspective in the presence of such simple faith and courage; to a true, humbler reverence, too, seeing them greet the sacrament from their beds and wheelchairs, or on painful knees. Afterwards there are cakes and lemonade for all before we roll up cassock and cotta and stroll back across the city, happier and, possibly, wiser men.

Categorical realities tend to occupy MC's rather more than loftier speculations. I had enough problems with just one such: a mitre. Our Area Bishop, Mgr. Giannini became an expert at fielding his skull cap in his lap. Mgr. Grochowski, who rejoices in the title of Secretary of the Supreme Tribunal of the *Segnatura Apostolica*, let me 'help' him once and then decided to do it himself. Cardinal Poletti, reverently and patiently, almost in an attitude of prayer, secured his skull cap as I loomed over him. The word must have spread along the Vatican grape-vine. I was not allowed anywhere near the Pope.



Reflecting on my seven months as MC, I have spent more time than most of my recent predecessors at San Lorenzo. This was largely due to that holy year little publicised throughout the rest of the Church, but very much part of our local church. Taking the lead from 'down the road', Mgr. Cecchi promulgated the *Anno Damasiano*, to celebrate the sixteen-hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Damasus I, co-patron of the parish. The highlight of the year was the Pope's visit to the parish on the First Sunday of Lent, after a not-too-subtle hint from Don Augusto to Cardinal Poletti that he expected a visit from the Pope.

This suggestion was made at the end of a Triduum celebrated around the actual anniversary of the death. I had already undergone my baptism of fire with the October *quarantore* devotion, culminating with a *concelebrazione solenne*, presided over, for his first time, by the Rector. I have to admit that I was far from confident about the outcome of the whole evening, although I need not have worried about the proceedings not being heard. Don Cecchi carefully positioned himself next to the lectern, and assiduously, but alas not unobtrusively, adjusted the microphone to the needs of each individual speaker.

There was something about the calm atmosphere, in spite of the frenetic activity in the sacristy beforehand, which appealed to me. The clergy and sacristan of San Lorenzo seemed to be able to leave any worries about the readers knowing where the readings were, that the missal was set, and so on — behind, and to trust that all would run smoothly. A far more sensible attitude to the one we tend to adopt in the College, where despite almost painfully precise preparation, there tends to be a constant alert for danger signals.

I have to confess to not being a devotee of our 'House Functions', but during the year I began to appreciate the role we can play in our parish community. This became clearer during the Triduum to celebrate the anniversary of the death of Saint Damasus, the Papal Visit and Mass during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The people in the parish really do think of us as part of their community. Admittedly our circumstances tend to isolate us from the day-to-day life of the parish, and we thus sometimes react to the fact that we are being wheeled out to put on a 'good show', but it is appreciated by all and I would say that on the whole they are proud to have the association between parish and College.

Mgr. Giannini celebrated the first Mass for the anniversary of Saint Damasus, we also celebrated Evening Prayer, something which neither he nor I was expecting — Don Augusto had had it planned all along. He mentioned *San Damaso* in his homily, but seemed more concerned that the people were prepared for the visit of the Cardinal Vicar. He is a very easy man to 'push around', rarely disagreeing, although he too shares Mgr. Cecchi's fascination for adjusting microphones. The following day, the in-house prelate, Mgr. Grochowski appeared. This time, I was prepared for Evening Prayer, even if he was not. His Italian was reminiscent of the Pope's, his intonation being almost identical. He did not care about the microphone, but before he began his homily, I ceremoniously produced his micro-cassette recorder, which he had passed me in the sacristy. My heart sank when I noticed the sixty minute tape inside.

The final event of the Triduum was Mass concelebrated by Cardinal Poletti. As it was a Tuesday, we took it as our community Mass. I was not sure whether Poletti would bring his own MC, and thus I carefully prepared everything in longhand, not being quite brave enough to annotate everything. We practised

beforehand and, although not completely satisfied — I'm told MC's rarely are — I felt everything would go well. My first mistake was to consult Don Augusto. He listened patiently to me, as I stumbled through my plans. "Si, si, ma quando facciamo la benedizione?" Which blessing? With the relic of course! This had not really entered into my plans; neither, as I gathered from the look on his face, had it entered those of Cardinal Poletti. He survived both this and my attempts to decapitate him without losing his serene smile, or gentle manner, quite an impressive man.

Shortly after this, the visit of the Pope was announced. Cecchi was determined to make it a day to remember, and although some of his plans were thwarted, on the whole the visit was a joyful and seemingly well organised occasion.

I say 'seemingly', because I felt that certainly from a ceremonial point of view, things could have been better organised. I gathered my band of volunteer servers together, and reported to San Lorenzo as instructed on the Saturday afternoon. A few minutes late, the MC — two MCs — two MCs and a sacristan arrived. There was a certain amount of confusion, and I was rather glad that I had been relegated to the back seat. As a consolation prize I was given the job of 'third MC' — basically the one who turns the pages over for the readers. Perhaps I could have gone on to higher things had I been more deft with the mitre.

On the morning of the visit, the Carabinieri were out bright and early, but it was with remarkable ease that I was able to find my way into San Lorenzo through the back door. The sacristy was crawling with security men, but they did not take too much notice of me. This time there were two sacristans and two MCs — I dread to think how many people they use when there are concelebrated Masses at St. Peter's. The whole procedure was new to me and I found it fascinating to watch, although I began to begrudge the way the 'system' was imposing itself onto the parish. One light-hearted moment, in which I took a particularly wicked delight, was when the Papal MC asked me to gather together the readers. I asked Don Cecchi who they were. He too was becoming rather disgruntled, and just shrugged his shoulders, "Leggi tu" he said to me. I wish Osservatore Romano had been there to photograph the MC's face.

I suppose some would say that the Papal visit was the high point of my career as MC. I am not entirely convinced. I began to enjoy the makeshift 'see how things go' attitude which tends to pervade the *quarantore*, the Mass during Christian Unity Week, the more local celebrations which take place not only in San Lorenzo, but also at Santa Caterina and Santa Maria in Campitelli. It seems much more of a community celebration, providing we as a College manage not to impose our way of doing things too heavily. I hope the links we have built up, particularly with San Lorenzo, continue to develop and continue to enrich the liturgical life of the community in which we live.

**Denis Nowlan and Andrew Summersgill**

# The Maltfriscans

Who are the Maltfriscans? Briefly a group of seminary students who offer one another fraternal support and commitment, and encourage one another in the spiritual life.

This manifests itself in various ways; daily prayer in twos together, a weekly prayer meeting, a fortnightly excursion to evangelical witness on Piazza Navona (Rome's equivalent to Hyde Park Corner) and for the very keen, a 7am praise session in the Main Chapel. A recent innovation has been the intercessory "Prayer Baton" which requires the recipient to say a decade of the Rosary for a specific intention pertaining to the Maltfriscans or the Secular Priesthood. (It normally flies around College at high speed until it gets stuck in a certain member's room!)

Other evidence of 'Maltfriscanity' such as the Maltfriscan jacket and cross (which are neither the epitome of sartorial elegance nor subtle piety) are quintessential of the group, but by no means compulsory adornment. They aren't ends in themselves.

The prayer and work of the Maltfriscans is characterised by its musical charism, and I think most people would agree there is considerable talent in evidence. It is our way of giving praise and thanks to God. But music is also a powerful way to appeal to those whom pure dialectic would quickly switch off. And it builds up our unity in the coordination and inspiration that performing together brings.

All this may sound laudable, but why is it necessary in a seminary where fraternal support is not lacking? Further, is not such an intense and visible phenomenon a divisive factor within the community of the College?

With regard to the first question, it seems to me that there are several movements in the church through which God seems to be building up fraternity and 'solidarnosc' among priests and seminarians, such as the Ministry to Priests Programme and Jesus Caritas to name but two. The Maltfriscans are in no way on the same scale or style, but could perhaps be seen in this light. The real question is whether this hinders a more general fraternity amongst the wider student body. This is really something that others can answer, particularly when we are talking about 'Friscans in College. However, I would make a plea that people see such organisations as a help in our weakness and not an arrogant threat to their own spirituality. If such an impression is conveyed, then prayerful criticism is never amiss! Further, openness is to be encouraged: we should be children of the light.

At this point, however, it must be stressed that the Maltfriscans are not just a movement among secular priests. Indeed they are either a fearful charismatic hydra or a rose bush bedecked with many divers blooms — depending on your point of view. To understand them, it is perhaps best to have a look at the history of the community, because its origins belong to a very different situation indeed, far removed from the seminaries at either Ushaw or Rome.

## 1. Summer 1979

In Maltby, South Yorkshire, at the beginning of summer 1979 there existed a couple of prayer groups, one meeting on Monday night at the local school and an as yet small healing service on Friday night at St. Mary Magdalene's church. There also existed a group of punk rockers called 'The Creeps' who met at the market stalls trying to be faithful to boredom and anarchy. (Well, something like it!)

Fr. May, the Parish Priest, stumbled in on a row between one of the group and his mother. After the embarrassment had ebbed a little, Fr. May asked the lad in question "to be an apostle" to his mates. The lads had a certain musical talent and the suggestion was that they play at a forthcoming Evening of Renewal in Maltby. Not being exactly in the younger generation, Fr. May enlisted the nearest he could get, Rosarii Towey, a school teacher, to help the Lads with the task. She was helped by her younger sister Tina and her brother Anthony. She was helped even more by the fact that she had a flat and could bribe the reluctant Lads to come up to practise with the promise of comfortable surroundings to smoke in and (horrors!), the odd can of beer between 7 punks. Despite a basic disbelief in God (right up until the day before the Evening of Renewal they were considering not turning up), they decided to go through the motions of a final practice on the Monday night in the school. This was taking a terrible risk because as they played, the prayer group was asked to pray for them by Fr. May that the "Holy Spirit might really touch them".

After the practice the Lads began to wander out. Two however, Mick Donelan and Joe Kerr, hung back to ask for a blessing from Fr. May. They'd

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heard of 'resting in the Spirit', and were curious to see if anything would happen.

"What do you want to be prayed for Joe?"

"To make people happy with my music Father".

They prayed and the Lord answered in power. Joe fell gently to the floor. Mick panicked.

"What do you want to pray for Mick?"

"Peace for all mankind" replied Mick, dredging his piety from half-forgotten depths. Again Father, Rosarii and Tina prayed and the Lord worked in power. Mick experienced a love which has never left him, the love of the Father, the love of God for all His children.

Meanwhile, the others were watching through a crack in the door and were convinced that Mick and Joe had been killed. When it was explained that it was a blessing and not a karate chop they had received, they hesitantly wandered back in to rejoin their bemused mates who, damp-eyed, began telling Smiggy, Winny, Ben, John and Trev how much Jesus loved them. In turn, each one was prayed with and in turn each fell gently to the floor. Although it would be true to say that their experiences varied in intensity, it would also be true to say that by the following Evening of Renewal they were all witnessing to the Lord. They had been transformed in a manner akin to that of the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2 (albeit without the wind and fire): the Holy Spirit had come upon them.

The whole episode opened up in the eyes of most of us a breadth of vision which we had perhaps lacked before. God seemed to give us a confidence in His Word, not a confidence in conventional wisdom. Most of all He reminded us that the "Good News" is exactly that. Something we longed to share with others rather than be embarrassed about. Winnie Winstanly epitomised this attitude in the first song written by the Lads,

"Jesus, Jesus, we adore you, show you love, show you love. . . .

Jesus, Jesus, give us your love to give away, give away. . . .

Jesus, Jesus, thanks for your Spirit, that lives in us. . . .

Jesus, Jesus, take our lives and give us yours, give us yours. . . .

Jesus we love you!"

As the summer wore on we sort ways to grow in commitment. One of the lads, having seen "Brother Sun, Sister Moon", a film on the lives of St. Francis and St. Clare, came up with the idea of calling ourselves 'Maltfriscans', a shortened form of Maltby Franciscans. The name stuck. Unfortunately, most of the lads didn't. By the end of the summer, it had become clear that leaving the 'old ways' was an undeniable consequence of commitment to the Lord. Even as a series of very powerful 'Life in the Spirit' seminars were coming to an end, the lads were leaving. But Mick remained.

## 2. Autumn 1979-Summer 1981

The seminars were aimed at the younger people of Maltby parish. From them sprang the idea to have a separate youth prayer meeting, on Sunday evenings. Although initially only Maltby people were involved, later contingents from Denaby, Doncaster and Sheffield became the mainstays. Fr. May took

more of an anchor role as time went on.

Meanwhile Mick and Ant had struck up a very fruitful correspondence between Maltby and London where Ant was at University. God seemed to tell them a lot in those days and they only believed about half of it. One thing they were sure of was that the 'Friscans should be identifiable. At a prayer meeting one night, a practical joke of wearing Caroline Cryan's jacket led to her mother making two like it for Mick and Ant. "These are our Maltfriscan jackets — they're for praising in!" They then set about decorating them, principally with the Maltfriscan symbol — the Holy Spirit above the Cross and 'MC' — Maltfriscan Community. Caroline did hers too and they also popularised the use of the St. Bernard crucifix which became locally known as the 'Friscan Cross'.

Spiritually, these were very exciting times. The example of John the Baptist, "Prepare the Way" (Luke, chapter 3), and the call of the first disciples (Luke, chapter 5), were recurrent themes. The promise of Acts 2.17 was another passage of scripture that was incredibly vivid:

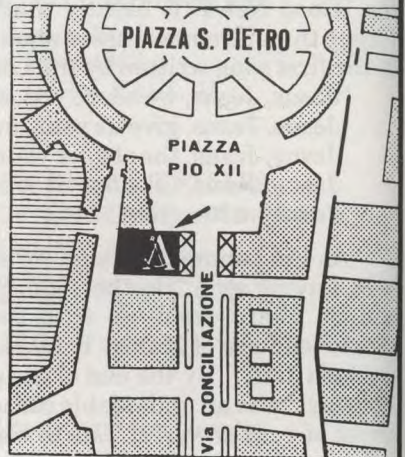
"In the days to come, I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind. Their sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams".

A whole spiritual world opened up, angels and saints, even white-robed elders became a reality to us. The realisation that the Lord longed to speak to us, to challenge us, to comfort us, to encourage us, to love us, for no loving Father is dumb before his children, least of all God.

The gift of Mary as our Mother was also a profound revelation. How precious to Jesus was His Mother, and how He longs for us to treasure her as He

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did. We were blest beyond measure on two or three occasions when Mary revealed herself in a special way to us. She gave us our prayer. . . .

“O dear white rose,  
whose petals enfolded my heart  
draw me close to the centre of your sweetness.”

To be drawn to the centre of her sweetness-Jesus! Praise God. It must be said, that not all the visions were greeted with equal glee. Mick said “Ant, every time I close my eyes I keep seeing myself in a clerical collar.” “Oh no!” said Ant, who spent the rest of the day trying not to blink in case he shut his eyes and saw the same! It was no use, and they bleakly faced the prospect of seminary. George meanwhile gloated about marriage and the idea of having a community house in Maltby. However, he shut his eyes too long at the Spinkhill conference in August of that year, 1981, and he ended up in the Marist novitiate in September. Perhaps, though, the most memorable moment for many at that conference was the witness of Neil Cannon.

### 3. Neil’s story

Neil had been on drugs since he was 13, on heroin since he was 16, and at 21 was one of the biggest users in the Sheffield area, ‘shooting’ something like 1 gramme per day. In his own words, he “spread death” by pushing and won, lost and won again fortunes from the trade.

He made various attempts to kick the habit through medical means — ‘cold turkey’, etc. It is a witness beyond words to tell of the fidelity of his parents to their son. Neil had ruined his body, racked by hepatitis, thrombosis and any other number of related ailments; he had wasted away to five stone and in response to a last desperate request to come off heroin, his doctor had advised him that the pain of withdrawals would kill him.

Eventually, in giving it one last attempt Neil had collapsed and his mother called Fr. May to come and pray with him that night. The ‘Frisicans had been round earlier in the day, Mick, Ant, George, and Bob Acheson. The following day, with Neil feeling slightly better, Mrs. Cannon gave him the keys of the car and told him to go to the ‘Friscan prayer meeting. Neil’s instinct was to go over to Rotherham to get some more ‘stuff’. The withdrawals were affecting his eyesight however, and after driving around for a few minutes he was forced to stop the car. He found himself outside the church! Staggering in, he attempted to remain incognito whilst all around were praising. Then Fr. May asked if anyone wanted to be prayed with. Neil decided that as he’d tried everything else, he may as well try God and asked the Lord to cure him of his addiction. The whole community prayed, and as Fr. May laid hands on Neil, he ‘rested in the Spirit’. For the first time in years Neil slept without the aid of drugs! As he came around, enfolded in the praises of the other ‘Frisicans, he heard God speak to him,

“There is no drug as strong as Me.

I can give you everything you’ve ever wanted  
from life, only better, and with no bad effects.”

Fr. May saw in his spirit, the compassionate Father, wrapping the robe of sonship around His lost son and placing on his finger the ring, God’s faithfulness, God’s love.

The following night at the Monday prayer meeting, Neil was praying that we should go out and tell the young people of today about the love of God for them

all. A truly bewildered Mr. Cannon said, "What've ye dun to ma son?" "Ye'll be telling me next that he's got the gif o'tongues as well". A gleeful Mick told him he had! Sometimes God moves fast. Neil suffered none of the usual cravings or withdrawal symptoms, and God restored his health and physique in a remarkably short time. He'd almost progressed to being an eight stone weakling by the end of the summer!

#### 4. Autumn 1981-Summer 1982

True to his prayer, Neil with Adrian Scott spent a good deal of this time rushing around schools telling anyone who'd listen about God. Smiggy, one of the original punks, was salvaged from Bournemouth beach by the Lord (he was working as a life-guard), and began a dramatic comeback! Tina Towey, back from college, and John Donelan, Mick's brother, and an ex-attender of the seminars were also used by God in expanding the vision of the 'Friscans at this time.

It was in response to calls from God for greater commitment that Fr. May went to Kirk Edge Carmelite Convent to write the Maltfriscan 'Rule'. Basically, guidelines for our lives to aim for. The three main pillars of the Rule were to praise God, to love another compassionately, and to go out to spread the Good News. Those who were able to commit themselves to the Rule were asked to form a 'Chapter' and that their 'habit' was to be the 'Friscan jacket. Those named above, plus Mick and Ant, Caroline and Jayne Hanley — a long-time stalwart from Coinsborough — formed the first bunch of committed brethren.

The summer proved to be a very fruitful time, but this is where in a sense,



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things get a bit complicated. Firstly, a trip to Rome and Assisi by Adrian on a Franciscan vocations pilgrimage confirmed a slight prophetic suspicion: that rather than being a Franciscan, he ought to be a Maltfriscan Religious.

Secondly, at the Spinkhill conference of that year, a few visiting seminarians from Rome and Ushaw (where Ant and Mick were studying) formed respective little communities.

Thirdly, the idea of a complementary branch of Maltfriscan sisters for the girls who had been caught up in the same movement. Then, to take things further into uncharted waters, an attempt to create some smaller, more localised 'Friscan communities had as its somewhat unexpected fruit, the commitment of Fr. Peter Cullen, a secular priest of the Hallam diocese. Needless to say, all these things put the 'Friscan vision in the melting pot. Perhaps the most potent tenet that was guiding us in all this, was the idea of obedience to our local Ordinary Bishop. This had been expressed at various times. Adrian (who by the way has a very sensitive heart), once committed us 'on our knees' to obedience to a very embarrassed Bishop Moverley. Its formal expression took place after the Trinity Sunday procession of 1982 when the Bishop gave the 'Frisicans his blessing. This was the understanding in which the Rule was written, but these later developments did throw up the problem of how people outside the Diocese of Hallam would be able to be involved to the same extent. Fr. May had said that the 'Frisicans are for everybody, in all walks of life. These developments were certainly a challenge to see if it could viably work in various circumstances beyond Maltby. Even as 'H.Q.' was grappling with this, God gave it another quantum leap by invading Scotland!

## 5. Greenock-September 1982

At the invitation of Fr. Burke, the local Parish Priest, a group of 'Frisicans, Mick, Adrian, Jayne and Neil (his last fling before going to Ushaw seminary), went to give a mini-mission to the secondary school in Greenock. Not having much time to do a great deal in class, they invited everyone to the parish hall in the evening. The first night about 100 turned up, on the second evening 300 arrived. Needless to say, no one was more amazed than the 'Frisicans involved. In situations like that, it is painfully clear that you've got nothing to offer; it all depends on God. The Lord moved in power, and the Spirit blew through the whole community. The chaplain wrote later that he'd never seen anything like it and that many youngsters were requesting the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion anew. Praise God! A prayer-group grew out of the mission and later cemented its relations with Maltby when Sandra, Stephen and Patricia, as well as Fr. Burke became 'committed' 'Frisicans.

## 6. Today

Little by little, things have developed since then along those various avenues. The brothers (Adrian was joined by Mark Crisp) have a house, a novice and one interessee. The sisters stand at four committed and hope to open a house in East London in the near future.

The secular priests, including 5 *Venerabilini*, are attempting to explore the 'Friscan Rule in their everyday ministry, despite obvious problems of geographical dispersal. The lads at seminary at Ushaw and Rome have had ups

and downs but at present number a dozen or so.

The various communities in Greenock, London and Maltby have all grown steadily. Peterborough and Plymouth now belong to the picture too. A further challenge at the moment, is the idea of married Maltfriscan life. This is being explored in Maltby, Peterborough and London. We wait with baited breath! Will the world survive the birth of the first Maltfriscan offspring?

There is also the sister community of the Magnificat which is based in Maltby and assists at the Healing Service held there every Friday evening. Whatever one's view of healing services in general or this one in particular, one cannot deny the fact that for many, this service has been a turning point in their lives. This is a short summary of the testimony of Fr. James Deadman of Mt. St. Bernard's Abbey.

A former missionary, in 1972 he underwent a gastrectomy which removed part of his stomach and duodenum. This caused him to suffer from malabsorption in his digestive tract, particularly of calcium. Because of this, he contracted a chronic skeletal disease. So bad was this, that by 1983, an action as simple as reaching over for his breviary in chapel was enough to fracture his spine. It was in such a state of chronic fragility that he was brought up to Maltby, a 90 mile journey completed at 25 miles an hour to avoid further painful breakings. During the mass at Maltby, a surge of power went through him. He was later prayed with and strengthened. His doctor, marvelling at the improvement in his condition, could only encourage him to return for further prayer. This he did and not only was his condition healed in a matter of weeks, but ugly and painful scars from previous operations were also seen to disappear from his body. "This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes!"

As regards the Rule, I would emphasise that ultimately we exist in the heart of the Church or not at all. We attempt to do this by rendering explicit the call of all Catholics to offer reverence and obedience to our Ordinary Bishop. Having said that, it can be seen from the above that we are a very heterogenous group and as far as the Church is concerned, we defy canonical definition! Masters of the science such as Fr. E. Koroway and Fr. P. Ryan reckon that 'Pious Association' is the closest description, but the habit causes problems for this.

Probably because of this, Bishop Moverley has rightly decided to wait and see how the Community develops. After all, it is only three years since the first commitments were made. The Church thinks in terms of centuries. It would be irresponsible to frame the charism in a series of constitutions at this early stage.

Finally, on behalf of all the Maltfriscans I would like to thank you for your support in prayer. May I also say thank you for all the patience and tolerance that has been shown to us, particularly here at the College in Rome.

**Anthony Towey**

## “Ecumenism, Why Not?”

In the day to day life of the College there is little that makes us feel the pain and scandal of Christian disunity more acutely than the fact that our visiting Anglican ordinands come forward to receive only a blessing and not the body of the Lord at communion during the Masses of the first semester. The question of ‘intercommunion’ is complex. Why does the Roman Catholic Church link eucharistic communion so strictly with ecclesiastical or canonical communion (i.e. unity of Church government)? I offer the following thoughts on the grounds that responding to a difficult question can often be easier after recognising some other, perhaps more manageable, questions which closely correspond to the difficult one.

A thread which has run through Roman Catholic theology in the last thirty years is the two-fold principle stated by Henri de Lubac in 1953 in his book *Meditation sur l'Église*: “It is the Church which makes the Eucharist, but it is also the Eucharist which makes the Church” (p. 103). This principle was quoted in the footnote to the Second Draft in 1963 of what went on to become *Lumen Gentium* n. 26 (a highly important text to which we shall return). In an address<sup>1</sup> of 1968 on intercommunion, Jérôme Hamer closely reproduced de Lubac’s reasoning for the first half of his principle to make the point that each Eucharist is a celebration of the *whole* Church. This address is significant since Hamer seems most likely to have been the principal author of the 1982 *Observations on the Final Report of ARCIF* (to which also we shall return), issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (SCDF). Then finally in his 1980 letter to bishops on the mystery and worship of the Holy Eucharist, *Dominicae Cenaе*, Pope John Paul II cited de Lubac and gave his full principle as a “truth” which “thanks to the Council we have realised with renewed force” (n. 4, cf footnote 16).

The poles in the debate on intercommunion (i.e. eucharistic communion between communities not in ecclesiastical or canonical communion) could be expressed as follows; the Eucharist is a sign of already existing unity, the Eucharist is a means towards unity. Clearly these two poles correspond to the first and second halves respectively of de Lubac’s principle and thus it is essential, lest de Lubac’s contribution be divided into two parts only to be used against each other, not to leave the two halves side by side, simply as complementary. Rather we must seek an indication of how de Lubac himself would synthesise the two halves of his principle. From this starting point, which immediately affects all of the texts mentioned above, I would like in this brief article to indicate one possible line of theological interpretation of the Roman Catholic Church’s reluctance regarding intercommunion, a line which I suggest offers answers to one or two sticky problems.

De Lubac, and even more clearly Hamer in his address citing de Lubac, suggests a synthesis as follows: it is the Church properly constituted which makes the Eucharist which makes the Church, where “properly constituted” means the local assembly united around the bishop (or around a priest in communion with him who represents him) who in turn is visibly united with bishops the world over, through communion with the bishop of Rome. Hamer quotes de Lubac directly in the conclusion which indicates what the importance

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of all of these visible bonds of communion is:

“Whether a great crowd is seen there, or a little altar boy tinkles the bell for himself alone, it is all the time the *community sacrifice*. In all places the great assembly takes place. The bonds of unity are woven. In all places the Church is present, the whole Church, to offer the sacrifice”.<sup>2</sup>

Two questions arise, First, why look beyond the actual assembly to the *whole Church* in each Eucharist? Secondly, even if the whole Church is involved in each Eucharist, why concretise this involvement in visible bonds of communion, would not being there ‘in spirit’ suffice? I suggest that the answers to these highly important questions are to be found in a doctrine given prominence by Vatican II, namely that of the Church as Sacrament of salvation, visible sacrament of saving unity, sign and instrument of communion with God and of saving unity among all men (cf *Lumen Gentium* nn. 1, 9).

The sacraments are actions of Christ now living today. But Christ now, living today, is risen and glorified, spiritual and corporate, inseparable from his Body all the members of which already are living a life hidden with Christ in God (cf Col 3:3-4). Thus the sacraments are *ecclesial* acts of Christ, acts of Christ as a Body. They cannot simply be seen as meetings of an individual or a group with Christ, rather they are cultic interventions of the whole Church, the Body of Christ, on behalf of an individual or group. Karl Rahner in his book *The Church and the Sacraments* seeks the difference between the prayer offered to God in a sacramental celebration and that offered non-sacramentally by an individual or group for a specific intention. If it is genuine, God hears the second no less than the first and the Church teaches that the correct personal dispositions are required in order to receive grace in the first case no less than in the second. The real difference is that the private act of an individual or group has an ‘intrinsic fragility’, of it we can only say that *if* it truly is what it seems to be then God’s grace is being offered (and received) there. No such “if” is in order with the sacraments. They stand as acts not of individuals or groups but of the Church itself, the Body of Christ, marked by his eschatological victory over humanity’s intrinsic fragility. Whether accepted or not they stand as sure offers of redemption (hence we say they have an effectiveness “*ex opere operato*”, from the intrinsic value of the sacramental title itself). They are, to use Otto Semmelroth’s image (the usage of which is my own) the fingers by which the hand whose palm is the Church (the great Sacrament of salvation) holds. Just as, we believe, the whole Church can never be in error on fundamental matters of faith, and solemn and binding definitions of the faith of the Church are infallible, so a solemn action of the Church, as the sacramental presence in history of the grace of the victorious Christ, on behalf of an individual or group is a sacrament, infallibly invoking the offer of God’s grace. (On this basis Rahner reasons, for instance, to the sacramentality of Anointing of the Sick since “we can expect an act of the Church in the sick person and in his regard, that manifests the Church as overcoming death and its darkness by her eschatological hope.” op. cit, pp. 113-4.) Just as we instinctively think of the doctrinal infallibility of the Church concretised in the College of Bishops with the Pope at its head, so, returning to the Eucharist, we should recognise the deep significance of the naming of the local bishop and the Pope by the priest in the Eucharistic Prayer at each Mass. The concrete bonds of communion around and between these ministers are the sacramental means of bringing the whole Church, and the

eschatological infallibility of its prayer as the Body of Christ, into each Eucharist, wherever it is celebrated.

Since a sacrament effects that which it signifies, or, better, effects by signifying, the appropriateness and adequacy of the visible signification is of the utmost importance. God's sacramental way of working in the world (the 'sacramental economy') is focused on the Incarnation which manifests God's intention of coming to us in and through our human world and indeed of divinising humanity. We see in Jesus the concreteness of the approach of God, he breaks bread, commands the storm to abate and touches blind eyes with the paste of spittle. In the sacramental economy, the sign value of gestures and of persons is essential, where the sign value is defective what is effected is correspondingly defective. Fingers are rooted in the structured unity of the palm, so the individual sacraments, by which one participates more fully in salvific communion with God and unity among men in various specific contexts, are rooted, particularly via the sign value of the minister, in the structured unity of the Church, the original Sacrament of this saving communion and unity in Christ. By the concrete bonds of communion which the minister has, we know for whom he stands and in whose name he prays.

I think this casts light on the SCDF contribution to a fascinating and far-reaching controversy of which I shall only indicate the two key texts here, since to give a necessarily cavalier treatment of the issues in this short space would not do them justice. In its second agreed statement on *Authority in the Church*, ARCIC recalled that "in spite of division concerning the primacy" the Roman Catholic Church "has continued to recognise the Orthodox churches as

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churches" (notably in *Unitatis Redintegratio* of Vatican II) and it continued:

"The Second Vatican Council allows it to be said that a church out of communion with the Roman See may lack nothing from the viewpoint of the Roman Catholic Church except that it does not belong to the visible manifestation of full Christian communion which is maintained in the Roman Catholic Church" (n. 12).

In its *Observations on the Final Report of Arcic*, the SCDF noted this particular passage and said that its interpretation of the Council was "not exact":

"According to Catholic tradition, visible unity is not something extrinsic added to the particular churches, which already would possess and realise in themselves the full essence of the Church; this unity pertains to the intimate structure of faith, permeating all its elements".<sup>3</sup>

Whether this correction is justly addressed to ARCIC or not the content is clear: visible unity is not just the icing on the ecclesial cake, without it there is no cake to ice.

At the centre of this controversy is a question which mirrors the poles in the debate on intercommunion: is visible unity, structured around the College of Bishops centred on the Universal Primate, necessary in order to effect the Eucharist in the first place, or only in order fully to live out the dynamism for communion and unity with which any Eucharist has already been endowed? Since the ARCIC statement was made with the position of the Orthodox firmly in mind, I would like at this point to bring in two very influential Orthodox theologians the clash of whose theologies enlightens our controversy. Nicolas Afanassieff, who died in 1966, advocated a 'eucharistic ecclesiology' based on the principle: "Where there is a eucharistic assembly, there Christ abides and there is the Church of God in Christ."<sup>4</sup> For him the local church possesses all the fullness of the Church in its Eucharist even if that local church is afflicted with heresy and is in schism. These two factors do not prevent its celebration of the Eucharist, and providing it is celebrating the Eucharist it is the Church of God. But fully to live out the Eucharist it already celebrates the local church should be in peaceful and loving communion with other churches. John Zizioulas, whom Yves Congar recently described as "one of the most original and most profound theologians of our time" has taken up the two factors which Afanassieff does not consider impediments to eucharistic celebration and accordingly accused the latter of 'unilateralism' and 'localism' respectively. Although we cannot expect Zizioulas, as an Orthodox, to speak in terms of sacramental causality and effectiveness (indeed he strongly rejects such vocabulary) we may note that he considers there to be an essential flaw in a 'closed' eucharistic celebration, that is a celebration by a local church which is in schism or which is not giving full eucharistic hospitality to visiting members of other local churches. If the churches were to allow such 'closed' eucharistic celebrations to occur 'they would betray the very eucharistic nature of their catholicity and the catholic character of the Eucharist.'<sup>5</sup> According to Zizioulas it was precisely the need to protect the requirements of doctrinal orthodoxy and eucharistic hospitality, which are presuppositions for *koinonia* (communion or fellowship) in the Eucharist, which led local churches to come together in council and indeed to concede authority over individual local churches to such councils in the early Church.

The Second Vatican Council was well aware of Afanassieff's ecclesiology and wanted to give a Roman Catholic response to it. In the illuminating footnote (to which I have already referred) to the Second Draft in 1963 of the future *Lumen Gentium* n. 26, the bishops were referred "concerning the bond between ecclesiology and the Eucharist" to the work of Afanassieff. However, although held in high regard, his ecclesiology could not be fully accepted, particularly because of what we might call his structural stipulations. He distinguished his eucharistic ecclesiology from 'universal ecclesiology' which considered the attributes of oneness, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity as pertaining to the universal Church and to the local church only on condition that through the communion of its bishop with the other bishops it remained part of the universal Church. A footnote in the First Draft of the Constitution on the Church in 1962 indicated the stance which the Council wished to adopt towards Afanassieff and the distinction he was making: "It seems of the greatest benefit to indicate in what way the Catholic Church also starts from a eucharistic ecclesiology (but one) which is at the same time universal". In spite of the total transformation which the text of this Constitution had gone through in the meantime, the final version, *Lumen Gentium*, still clearly manifests this stance. Thus it is true that *Lumen Gentium* n. 26 seems to bear the imprint of Afanassieff's basic principle given above when it says of the vast variety of "altar communities":

"In these communities, though they may often be small and poor, or existing in the diaspora, Christ is present through whose power and influence the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church is gathered."

However, other parts of *Lumen Gentium* and of other conciliar texts makes it

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quite clear that these altar communities do not exist in isolation, without structure, without communion. I would sketch a possible synthesis of the elements of eucharistic and universal ecclesologies in the teaching of Vatican II as follows: by the union of the presiding priest with the bishop whom he represents (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 28) and who is in hierarchical communion with the Bishop of Rome and hence with the visible episcopal college (it being this communion which together with episcopal ordination constitutes one a member of the episcopal body; *Lumen Gentium*, n. 22, the whole Church, the Sacrament of saving unity (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 9) is truly present and operative (*Christus Dominus*, n. 11), celebrating each Eucharist, and is truly edified (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, n. 15) by the presence of Christ (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 26) in each Eucharist. Indeed the attributes of oneness, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity properly pertain to the local episcopal eucharistic assembly (of *Christus Dominus*, n. 11) which, with the full and active participation of all God's holy people, under the presidency of the bishop, is the principal manifestation of the Church (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 41).

Just as sacramental acts are acts of the universal Church which is not something other than the communion of local churches, but rather is this very communion involved in an activity which transcends the local and which may be termed 'supra-local', so the Pope, whose very ministry testifies to the existence of such supra-local activity, is not something other than a resident local bishop, but nevertheless is one with whom every other local bishop needs to be in communion in order that his local church may have structural integrity. The Pope's ministry is essential to the constitutional wholeness of the Church, to its 'catholicity' not in the secondary, derivative sense of quantitative extension but in the prior sense of qualitative fullness. Primarily in this latter sense we may term him "Catholic Primate" and say that his involvement as focus and promoter of the unity of the Church is essential for truly supra-local activity in the sacramental economy. Hence, for instance, *he* is named as well as the local bishop in each Eucharistic Prayer in order properly to pray that prayer as a prayer of the universal Church, thus invoking the Holy Spirit upon our gifts and upon ourselves with eschatological infallibility.

Zizioulas explains how councils began, in order to guarantee eucharistic hospitality between local churches and prevent isolationism or 'localism'. They also determined which individuals or communities were to be denied eucharistic hospitality because of heresy. Truth is more than propositions, it is life in Christ (who *is* Truth, Jn 14.6), given by the Spirit (the Spirit of Truth, Jn 16.3). Thus there is an intimate bond between orthodoxy (i.e. of belief) and communion (in Christ). To deny that orthodoxy is a pre-condition for the Eucharist is to fall into what, as we have already noted, Zizioulas calls 'unilateralism'. The emergence very early in the Church of councils shows that they correspond to a deep need of the Christian life to be lived in visible communion. Communion overcomes the twin dangers of localism and unilateralism which are so intimately related that I would consider communion and orthodoxy as two sides of the Christian coin. Further, I would venture to suggest that communion, orthodoxy and sacramental integrity stand and fall *together*. Lest it seem that the interpretation I have offered of the doctrine of the Church as Sacrament of Salvation is too modern and unjustified by history, I would suggest that even if not acknowledged as such at the time the bonds of communion between local churches which the need for doctrinal orthodoxy and eucharistic hospitality forged in the early Church in

fact furnished the necessary sub-structure for the sacramental celebrations within each local church. It is notable that Rome featured strongly in the practical response to these two needs. Eucharistic hospitality was regulated by letters of good standing which a bishop would give to a travelling member of his church and by the lists of churches in communion against which a bishop who was offered such a letter would check the church of its origin. It was a general rule that he who was in communion with Rome was in the great orthodox communion. Also, though we enter something of a theological minefield in doing so, we may note that reference to the apostolic sees and ultimately to Rome seems to have been the ready rule for guaranteeing doctrinal orthodoxy.

Finally, briefly, a sticky problem. *Lumen Gentium* made the notable theological advance of affirming that all three episcopal *munera* (functions or powers) are sacramentally conferred by episcopal ordination and thus that these three *munera* of sanctifying, teaching and governing have a radical unity. But the Council affirmed that these three powers cannot be exercised except by a bishop in hierarchical communion and it had to finish the explanatory note appended to *Lumen Gentium* with an open question, for how in that case could Orthodox bishops and clergy, out of juridical communion with Rome, exercise sacramental powers? This exercise was not only not in doubt, it was endorsed by the advocacy of *communicatio in sacris* between Roman Catholics and Orthodox "in suitable circumstances" and by the recognition that Orthodox Churches possess "true sacraments" and that the *whole* Church is edified by Orthodox eucharistic celebrations (*Unitatis Redintegratio* n. 15). In the interpretation which I have offered of the doctrine of the Church as Sacrament of Salvation, it is bonds of communion which sacramentally make the whole Church present at each Eucharist and which also (being considered in 'the other direction') mean that the whole Church is edified, built up, by each Eucharist. Accordingly I think we are forced first to ask whether hierarchical communion and validity of sacraments (particularly of episcopal ordination) are as separable as our current terminology implies and consequently, second, to examine more closely the precise *nature* of the break of communion between, in the present case, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Communion with the Pope as '*Catholic Primate*' is required in the sacramental economy. Given that such communion existed between West and East in the first millennium, was it *obviously* broken in 1054, especially when we recall that there were rifts totalling 203 years within the first millennium itself during which no claim of inadequacy thereby in Eastern sacramental celebrations was made? All sorts of factors, not least political and cultural, precipitated these breaches, but, if no fundamental theological distancing was identified then, must we necessarily conclude that the breach of 1054, still tragically unrepaired, was more theologically fundamental, breaking even the bond with the Pope as *Catholic Primate* which is required for true sacramental celebrations?

Many questions need to be asked and much research needs to be done, not least to specify more clearly the theological nature of the bond with the Pope as *Catholic Primate* which the sacramental economy requires of each local church. But I hope to have at least indicated the possible eucumenical fruitfulness of working this particular theological seam through which the thread with which I started runs.

Paul McPartlan

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>J. Hamer, 'Stages on the Road to unity: the problem of Intercommunion,' in *One in Christ IV* (1968), pp. 235-249.

<sup>2</sup>J. Hamer, *Stages*, p. 241, of de Lubac, *Méditation*, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup>*Acta Apostolicae Sedis LXXIV* (1982), p. 1070. The full text of the observations is on pp. 1062-1074.

<sup>4</sup>See e.g. *Una Sancta*, in *Irenikon* 36 (1963), pp. 436-475, quotation from p. 459.

<sup>5</sup>J. Zizioulas, 'The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church', in *One in Christ VI* (1970), pp. 314-337, quotation from p. 326.



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# College Diary 1984-85

## May

*9th.* Another beginning in the College, both for the new Senior Student, David Manson and for the new Deputy Senior Student, Ian Farrell, as they officially take up their duties. The change-over meeting goes well with thanks to Tim Finigan and Philip Egan for all their hard work over the last year. The Rector speaks briefly as does the Senior Student, the latter smilingly refers to the coming talks in October by the Rector on possible changes in the running of the House (popularly known as the 'October Offensive').

*10th.* The awful weather continues. The College weather expert, Bryan Chestle, continues to shake his head and wear galoshes.

*17th.* The Nun's Gita. Two coaches from the College head north to Toscania and the beautiful eighth century church of St. Peter's. The Rector preaches in a captivating form of Italian and introduces new theological terms such as "insiemita" (koinonia?). Unfortunately attention is distracted from this learned discourse by his slowly but surely descending cincture. However, all comes of well in the end (the sermon and the cincture). We then remove to Lake Bolsena for a lake-side lunch, wonderfully produced by Michael Burke and his team. Aquatic sports follow, including boating. Finally we go to Villa Lante to the beautiful gardens there. Many are caught unawares by a surprise fountain except Edward Koroway, who shames the English amongst us by calmly producing an umbrella and walks away from the fountain unscathed. Canon Law must train priests to be ready for all eventualities! All return to the College as the weakening sun sinks behind the Janiculum Hill with a feeling of well-being and contentment.

*19th.* Anglican Bishop Keith Sutton and Bishop Tripp leave the College after their ecumenical holiday in Rome.

*20th.* The climax of a year's work comes as twelve children from St. George's English School prepared by students from the College, make their first Holy Communion.

*26th.* The Feast of St. Philip Neri. As usual the College assists in the liturgy at the Chiesa Nuova. Cardinal Ugo Poletti presides, and gives a 20 minute sermon, thus falling short of the record of 44 minutes (a significant number?) of three years ago. The function ends with a truly baroque rendition of a well known hymn. The organ playing was so exuberant that one student questioned "whether the organ was going backwards or forwards" — with the consequent implications for the movement of the procession.

*27th.* Another joyful day as children from the Junior English School make their first Holy Communion.

*30th.* Football fever grips the College as today Liverpool play Roma at the Olympic stadium in Rome for the European Cup Winners Cup. Some students go from the College, but because Liverpool win, the journey back to the College is somewhat difficult and is a test of initiative! All the students return safely with many stories to dine-out on for the future.

31st. Rome is in mourning but the euphoria in the College increases yet further, as Geoffrey Marlor is to be ordained priest by the Holy Father today. All goes well in St. Peter's and Geoffrey is duly ordained along with 70 other priests. At ten o'clock we all drink Geoffrey's health, wise counsels having decided to have the main celebration tomorrow, so that we can all get our strength back after the long ordination ceremony.

## June

1st. The new month opens with pouring rain and a steady stream of guests into the College. In the evening we have a festal supper to celebrate Geoffrey Marlor's ordination and the Rector gives his first ordination speech. Geoffrey replies in his own quiet way, and the proceedings break up with thoughts turning to the imminent exams.

3rd. The Vice-Rector gives exciting news of developments at the Villa — a new floor, a new hot/cold water system and a general cleaning up of the building by professional cleaners. Some doubt the reliability of the water-system: a professional testing is one thing, but will it stand the rigours of an amateur testing by the students?!

8th. A little brightness amidst the gloom of the exams; the first real day of summer has come at last!

10th. Confirmation Day. Two children, prepared for the sacrament by students of the College, are confirmed. Archbishop Clarizio performs the liturgy, giving an expansive sermon that is wide-ranging and global in its scope, contents and form.

We bid goodbye to the Rector for a while as he goes to England for the Roman Association Meeting.

11th. Official summertime begins as the 12.15 Mass in the Bede's Chapel is changed to 12 noon to allow swimming-time before lunch!

17th. Trinity Sunday. The College celebrates the *fešta* with the usual aplomb and with a difference. This is the last Trinity Sunday (traditionally the Vice-Rector's day) for Philip before he leaves the College. The Rector makes a farewell speech (the first of many in fact!) and we sing *ad multos annos*. Philip acknowledges the good wishes and astounds us by making no speech at all.

22nd. Today the College becomes more 'cultural' than usual, as there is an exhibition of the various Giles paintings gleaned from around the College.

26th. Today the great move to the Villa takes place. Everyone is anxious to see the 'new' Villa, and we drive up there in beautiful weather to find an equally beautiful building.

28th. The Rector gives the customary pep talk to the house, and ends months of speculation by announcing that the Vice-Rector is to be the new director of Palazzola. This, of course, immediately begins months of speculation as to what the new job involves!

29th. Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul. Not daunted by the heat, the stalwart Romanists amongst us go to serve at St. Peter's for the celebrations.

*30th.* A new (perhaps re-introduced?) item for the Villa programme: the East v West football match. Despite the West having the stronger team, the East wins the day by three goals to two.

## July

*1st.* Philip calls a meeting to discuss the future of the Villa. The new designs for the cloister gain general approval, though many still disagree in principle to the scheme.

John Nelson comes to stay with us after his time in England at Ridley Hall, Cambridge as part of the VEC-Anglican exchange. Another John, namely John O'Brien leaves to go to hospital, having damaged his leg on an expedition down to the hermitage.

*2nd.* The deacons to be leave the villa for their retreat to Monte Fano, accompanied by Dom Mark Butlin OSB. All wish them well and promise their prayers.

*3rd.* Mgr. Cecchi arrives at the Villa bringing with him a return to fine weather after two days of scirocco. Two ex-alumni also arrive to stay: Liam Hennessy and Eugene Harkness.

*4th.* A day of great seriousness as the exam results arrive!

*5th.* Lake Gita Day. Thirty lacustrine devotees set off for the lake on a dry but cloudy day. Billy Steele returns from England having been to the Silver Jubilee celebration of Mgr. George Hay.

*7th.* John O'Brien returns be-plastered to the Villa from hospital.

*8th.* Today Mark Woods receives Candidacy — congratulations!

*9th.* The diaconande return from Monte Fano after their retreat. Mervin Smith arrives at the Villa after his time in England on the VEC-Anglican exchange at Westcott House. The College holds a special Memorial Mass for Chris Pemberton which is a peaceful and joyful affair, just as Christopher would have liked.

*10th.* Another Villa institution today, namely the Tusculum Gita. A rather reduced group of 17 people go: are students becoming less hearty these days several frowning people ask!

*11th.* So far all the new systems at the Villa have worked well with the odd failure. However, today the sewage decides to revolt. The hot weather increases the unpleasant effects of this.

*12th.* North v South cricket match takes place in near perfect conditions. The match ends in a draw, and all agree that this is a fair result. Geoffrey Marlor must be man of the match with his record-breaking six runs in two hours! The sporty vein continues with several of the younger students swimming the lake to raise money for some weight-training equipment.

*13th.* The atmosphere and activity of the College waxes and wanes today. Mgr. Charles Burns gives us an excellent day of recollection, in his own quiet and amusing way. In the evening the top year gives the traditional farewell

dinner. Gerald Anders in a speech on their behalf, perplexes many by mentioning the 'spiritual blonde' between him and the College. . . .!

*14th.* Noises are heard during the night as parents of the deacons to be begin to arrive at the Villa.

Lectorate day: seven students are commissioned as Lectors; Christopher Beirne, Simon Peat, Michael Selway, Alexander Sherbrooke, Thomas Wood, Mark Woods and Russell Wright. Congratulations to all of them.

*15th.* The period of College celebrations continues as eight students are commissioned as Acolytes; Charles Briggs, Raglan Hay-Will, Nicholas Hudson, John Kenny, Liam Kelly, Denis Nowlan, Andrew Summersgill and Anthony Towey. The nuns provide a superb lunch, and this is washed down with a huge range of liquori provided by the new acolytes.

*17th.* With a light breeze and under cloudless skies, seven new deacons are ordained by Bishop Restieux; Anthony Barratt, Joseph Callaghan, Ian Farrell, Robert Le Tellier, Peter McGrail, David Manson and Paul Robbins; *ad multos annos*. The Bishop gives a rousing sermon on the joys of ministry and its non-monetary rewards.

The nuns, as usual, produce a magnificent lunch and many sages agree that it is the best ever. The terrace throngs with guests, and the festivities go on into the early evening when many take a quick breather before the day is rounded-off with a modified camp-fire.

*19th.* The new deacons go with their parents and the Vice to Castelgandolfo for a Mass and special audience with the Pope. Your humble diarist draws the lucky straw to be the deacon for the Mass. The Mass and subsequent audience are a wonderful experience for all concerned, and the proceedings are finished by a breakfast in the Piazza outside the Palace: *la dolce vita*.

So ends the College year.

## September

*30th.* The new students arrive in the College fresh from their Italian course in the unlikely place of Chorley (Lancashire), under the caring wings of David Manson. The old lags of the College arrive in drips and drabs during the week, refreshed and ready for the new College year. Andrew Hulse and Denis Nowlan announce that they have decided to leave the College and we are sorry to see them go. We also say goodbye to John Hynd who continues his studies in Innsbruck. We wish him every success for the future.

## October

*8th.* The College, minus the new men, leaves for the annual retreat at Palazzola. This year's retreat giver is Father Pat Kilgareth from the archdiocese of Birmingham, and destined to be a familiar College figure in the future. He entertains and instructs us with many of his own personal experiences and reflections, and succeeds in keeping spirits up despite the unsettled weather.



13th. Feast of St. Edward the Confessor. Since the retreat ends today, the weather changes and produces a beautiful day. The new men join us for the customary D.B.Ls and festal lunch, and the College rides back to Rome in the afternoon, spiritually uplifted and ready for the new Gregorian year.

15th. The Gregorian officially begins today with the Academic Mass. Father Biolo (the new Dean of Philosophy) provides an interesting interpretation of the liturgy by combining the second and third eucharistic prayers. Some students from the College attend the Mass and others do not, the latter possibly preparing themselves for the beginning of lectures tomorrow.

19th. First Year Party. The students and the staff welcome to the ranks of the College: David Blower, Michael Booth, Benito Colangelo, Paul Dean, Jonathan Harfield, Mark Jarmuz, Derek Jennings, Nicholas Kern, Philip LeBas, Gary Lysaght, James Manock, Shaun Middleton and Peter Newby. A further welcome is extended to Martin Parrott and Andrew Montgomerie who are the two Anglican exchange students this year. A final welcome to Konstantin Tzakonas who is staying with us this year.

26th. Fr. Billy Steele celebrates the Silver Jubilee of his priesthood ordination. He presides at Mass and then we have a very happy *cena* in which all show their gratitude and affection for Billy and give thanks for all the work that he has done in the College as spiritual director. May God bless him during his next 25 years of priesthood.

27th. A new beginning for Palazzola and for the College, as today the Sisters of Mercy arrive at the Villa to begin their work. So we welcome Sisters Angela, Madaleine, Imelda and Mary di Pazzi to the College family. May God bless all their work at the Villa.

28th. The College turns out in force for the annual San Lorenzo function with the customary singing and processions. This is destined to be the first of three events at San Lorenzo as the parish celebrates the 1600th anniversary of the death of Pope Saint Damasus.

## November

18th. Today we celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the ordination to the priesthood of Mgr. William Purdy. The celebration has the status of a double first class feast with a special Mass followed by a festal luncheon. We end by wishing Mgr. Purdy *ad multos annos*.

In the evening the Rector addresses the house. This in fact is the delayed October Offensive, and all are eager to hear the Rector's plans for the College during his Rectorship here. The Rector suggests that we have consultation groups to discuss various issues before any definitive plan is given.

21st. The Wednesday conference is given by the well-known figure of Professor Christian Brusselmanns. She tells us of the recent developments in catechetics, and especially the implementation of the Rite of Adult Baptism.

25th. Today is the feast of Christ the King, or rather of Santa Caterina. Liturgists frown as the Solemnity of Christ the King is substituted by the feast of Santa Caterina at her church opposite the College. The College provides the

traditional liturgical support despite this peculiarity, having of course, celebrated the Solemnity in the morning!

*28th.* The annual C.U.C.U. auction takes place today. As the lights dim, we all wonder who the auctioneers are. The expectant silence is broken by Peter McGrail entering as Beethoven, and then Tim Finigan makes a spectacular entrance as Boy George complete with wig and trappings. After we recover from all this the auction begins with a vast range of items and contracts, usual and unusual. Peter Coughlan sells a Japanese meal for a huge price even though the menu could have been taken from Endor rather than Japan. A record sum of money is raised, much of which will go to the Ethiopian Relief fund.

## December

*1st.* Martyr's Day. This year the celebrations are enhanced by the presence of Archbishop Bowen and Bishop Brewer. After supper the College gathers in the Chapel to sing the *Te Deum* in front of the Martyr's picture and straight after this, the Southwark students and Archbishop Bowen are espied leaving the College to continue celebrations.

*2nd.* Peter Coughlan pursues his Japanese advantage by inviting students to a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. This offer meets with an enthusiastic response.

*5th.* We are reminded of the vicinity of Christmas by the Pantomime read through. This year's production, under the direction of Christopher Beirne and Michael Selway is 'Babes in the Wood'.

*11th.* Today San Lorenzo parish celebrates the 1600th anniversary of the death of Pope Saint Damasus. Cardinal Poletti comes to celebrate Mass and gives the congregation value for money with a sermon that lasts half-an-hour.

*12th.* The Rector gives his plans for the future structuring of the College, so ending a period of much discussion. He leaves for England tomorrow (to look for a new Vice-Rector).

*16th.* Fr. Lawrence Murphy from the Gesu gives the College a day of recollection on the theme of Christian hope.

*20th.* Today Christmas really looms as most of the College travel up to the Villa for the Holly Cam. Large quantities of vegetation are collected by the enthusiasts whilst others enjoy a restful day out of the city. The Villa nuns provide an excellent lunch of traditional English food which all appreciate.

*21st.* Six members of top year and Fr. Billy Steele say goodbye as they leave for a week's pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The tour is quite a memorable one and quite revealing too. For example, John Clarke shows a remarkable ability to haggle over goods. Billy Steele watches such things with quiet English dignity and bemusement.

*22nd.* The Christmas vein continues with carols at the British Embassy.

*25th.* The College celebration of Christmas begins with the Office of Readings and Midnight Mass, both proving to be very moving occasions for many. Mince pies and mulled wine are supplied in abundance by Russell Wright

and his team and these provide a suitable end to the day. The nuns from Palazzola come to stay with us until the 28th of December to join in the festivities.

After morning Mass and lunch (with excellent turkeys and Christmas puddings supplied under the direction of Michael Burke and Russell Wright), attention turns to the Pantomime. Bleary eyed but enthusiastic, the artists turn up to be made-up. All goes well, and at 5.00 p.m. the curtain goes up on 'Babes in the Wood', a pantomime that is destined to grow organically over the next few days as it is performed.

# The Venerable English College

presents



*The cast as follows:*

Jester  
Nurse

Townfolk  
Bert  
Alice  
George

*David Manson  
Derek Jennings*

*Peter Fleetwood  
Andrew Clark  
Michael Raiswell*

Anne	<i>Peter Harvey</i>
Fred	<i>Joseph Callaghan</i>
Herald	<i>Paul Dean</i>
King John	<i>Michael Booth</i>
Rodney	<i>Timothy O'Donnell</i>
Roderick	<i>Benito Colangelo</i>
Flowers	<i>Peter McGrail</i>
	<i>Gary Lysaght</i>
	<i>Luiz Ruscillo</i>
Trees	<i>Patrick Broun</i>
	<i>James Manock</i>
Villagers	
William the Woodcutter	<i>Michael Selway</i>
Betty (his wife)	<i>Shaun Middleton</i>
Mary	<i>Martin Parrott</i>
Eric	<i>Anthony Towey</i>
Cyril	<i>John Kenny</i>
Leo	<i>Liam Kelly</i>
James	<i>Andrew Montgomerie</i>
Jane	<i>Timothy Finigan</i>
Kate	<i>Philip LeBas</i>
Queen Isobella	<i>Robert LeTellier</i>
The Guards	<i>Thomas Whelan</i>
	<i>Mark Jarmuz</i>
Duke of Chipping Sodbury	<i>Peter Newby</i>
Earl of Boreham Moor	<i>Jonathan Harfield</i>
Court Official	<i>Raglan Hay-Will</i>
Mighty Man-Mountain of Cerne Abbas	<i>Russell Wright</i>
<i>The Production Team</i>	
Pianist	<i>Michael Burke</i>
Stage Manager	<i>Simon Peat</i>
Sets and Stage Crew	<i>David Blower</i>
	<i>Andrew Clark</i>
	<i>Frank Harris</i>
	<i>Nicholas Kern</i>
	<i>Simon O'Connor</i>
	<i>Timothy O'Donnell</i>
	<i>Luiz Ruscillo</i>
	<i>Mark Jarmuz</i>
	<i>Michael Burke</i>
	<i>Producers and cast</i>
	<i>Geoffrey Marlor</i>
	<i>Nicholas Hudson</i>
	<i>David Bulmer</i>
	<i>John Finnie</i>
	<i>Philip Gillespie</i>
	<i>Mark Woods</i>
	<i>Kevan Grady</i>
Cameraman	

Written, produced and directed by Michael Selway and Christopher Beirne.

*29th.* Feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury. Fr. Billy Steele presides at the Mass, delivering an excellent sermon on the life of St. Thomas. The College then celebrates the feast with a *pranzone*. Sir Mark and Lady Heath are the main guests. The holiday exodus begins, and like the farewell symphony, students disappear from the College to go to such places as Switzerland, Austria, Venice, Ravenna, Florence, Paris, England and, of course, Palazzola.

## January

*6th.* The College returns during the day, or at least tries to, as Rome and most of Europe is blanketed in thick snow. Much arm-waving and shrugging of the shoulders does little to overcome the chaos everywhere. Still every cloud, even a snow-filled one, has a silver lining and over the next few days Rome takes on a new and even more beautiful shape.

*7th.* Prima Nix. The Vice announces this in a near-faultless note in Latin. Nice to know that traditions continue. The holiday mood is extended in the College, and such inconveniences as frozen water pipes do not dampen the atmosphere.



*Vaticangrad; Philip Holroyd and Peter Fleetwood defy the snow to wish the Holy Father a Happy New Year.*

8th. Yet more snow falls, adding to the yet unmelted snow in the city. A few hardy students brave the extreme weather conditions to go to the Gregorian and with an air of superiority scorn the weakness of others.

13th. The snow thaws and the Rector returns from England. He announces that his visit has been a success and that Fr. Jeremy Garrett of Portsmouth diocese is to be the new Vice-Rector. Several people nod in an informed way, and the Portsmouth students are willing to supply a sketch of the new Vice to those eager for information.

18th. Feast of the Dedication of the Church. The Vice-Rector (emeritus?) presides at the Mass celebrating this feast. In accordance with the new Code (always in Rome but lately extended to all the world), we have fish and not meat as it is a Friday.

23rd. Fr. Edward Koroway is with us for a few days, and today he defends his doctorate at the Gregorian. Many from the College go to support him, but have no need to as he goes through the defence with flying colours.

31st. A general gloom descends upon the College as today is the official starting day for examinations at the Gregorian. The computer (with various nicknames attached to it) showing both feeling and creativity has struck again, giving many people awkward timetables. Protestations at the secretariat meet with shrugs and a finger pointing to the dreaded machine which sits purring quietly in the corner.

## February

15th. Many finish exams today and so go to the Villa or elsewhere for a short break before the new semester begins.

18th. Under blue skies and a fresh breeze, the Gregorian throws open the doors to the new semester.

20th. Mgr. Cecchi is invited to the College to celebrate the community Mass in the evening. He is very moved to be invited, and preaches an encouraging sermon to us on the priesthood, often reminiscing about the days of Pius XII and Paul VI.

24th. The Pope visits San Lorenzo as part of the 1600th anniversary celebrations. Cardinal Poletti and three Bishops add to the colour of the occasion, and the College supplies deacons (Robert Le Tellier and Peter McGrail) and servers. The Pope preaches a sermon on the richness of the parish, and astounds even Mgr. Cecchi by listing over 20 religious houses of one kind or another in the parish. After the Mass we all meet the Pope in the sacristy providing a fitting end to the celebrations.

## March

6th. Today the College says farewell rather than goodbye to Mgr. Philip Holroyd. (His words not mine!) A huge dinner is provided by the nuns, and many of the wider *famiglia* of the College are present. The Rector tells of how he inveigled Fr. Garrett to become the new Vice-Rector. The Senior Student gives a

sincere and appreciative speech of thanks to Philip, and presents him with a gift from the students: various tools of the priestly craft. (Again, Philip's words and not mine!) Philip makes a witty speech, giving a list of statistics that are a result of his tenure of office and then moves on to his own vital statistics, promising that he is to lose weight under the supervision of the Villa nuns. This meets with furious applause. (Some students closely question Philip later about the College statistics especially concerning chicken consumption and much bleeping of electronic watch-calculators can be heard working out rates of food and wine consumption.)

*7th.* Miss Pat Yates arrives in the College to stay for a month. Her job is to train students in the art of reading and speaking in public. There is no definite title for her job, but her contribution to the improved standard of public reading in the College is very great indeed.

Fr. Jeremy Garrett also arrives in the College and is warmly greeted by all. We all wish him every happiness in his new job as Vice-Rector.

*17th/18th.* As in past years the College puts on a play, or rather this year two short plays. Simon Peat directs the cast in two difficult plays by Tom Stoppard. Both are enjoyed enormously, by the audience and by the actors, and provide a bright spark in the general gloom of these tunnel months until Easter.

### CAHOOT'S MACBETH

#### *Cast List:*

Macbeth (Landovsky)	<i>Peter McGrail</i>
Banquo (Cahoot)	<i>Geoffrey Marlor</i>
Lady Macbeth	<i>Gary Lysaght</i>
Hostess	<i>Jonathan Harfield</i>
Inspector	<i>Timothy O'Donnell</i>
Malcolm	<i>Benito Colangelo</i>
Easy	<i>Thomas Whelan</i>
Macduff	<i>Michael Booth</i>
Actors	<i>Paul Dean, John Kenny, Anthony Towey</i>

### THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND

Moon	<i>Michael O'Connor</i>
Birdboot	<i>Timothy Finigan</i>
Mrs. Drudge	<i>Andrew Clark</i>
Simon Gascoyne	<i>Stephen Langridge</i>
Felicity	<i>Luiz Ruscillo</i>
Cynthia	<i>Raglan Hay-Will</i>
Lord Magnus	<i>Russell Wright</i>
Inspector Hound	<i>Mark Jarmuz</i>
The Body	<i>Nicholas Kern</i>

#### *The Production Team:*

Director	<i>Simon Peat</i>
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Stagecrew	<i>David Blower, Frank Harris, Nicholas Kern</i>
Lighting	<i>Peter Harvey</i>
Prompter	<i>Mark O'Donnell</i>
Make-Up	<i>Michael Burke, Anthony Barratt, Sr. Madeleine</i>
Costumes	<i>Mark Jarmuz</i>
Guestmaster	<i>Peter Newby</i>
Refreshments	<i>Michael McCoy, Philip LeBas, Marcus Stock.</i>

*19th.* Incredible as it may seem, snow falls again in Rome, though bright sunshine melts it all by lunchtime.

*26th.* Today we celebrate the fifth anniversary of the episcopal ordination of Bishop Agnellus. Many friends of the College and of Agnellus are present including Archbishop Foley and Sir Mark and Lady Heath. Agnellus makes a speech of thanks and the Rector greets Mgr. Holroyd as an 'honoured guest' (appreciative noises are heard). Mgr. Holroyd is also dubbed 'Lord of the Manor' by Bishop Agnellus, a title that might well stick.

*30th.* Holiday time again as the Gregorian ends for the Easter break.

## April

*1st.* It may be April Fool's Day, but the College puts on a serious face as Fr. Vallabeck O.Carm gives us a day of recollection. He gives an excellent series of talks on the Holy Week liturgy, and many appreciate his common sense approach to the Triduum.

*2nd.* The quiet and peaceful mood of the College continues as today is the traditional 'Quiet Day'. Many students leave Rome enjoying the beautiful weather, to have a day out before the rush of the Triduum.

*Triduum.* Maundy Thursday: many parents and other visitors to the College begin arriving today. In the evening the College celebrates the Mass of the Lord's Supper.

Good Friday: huge crowds come for the Celebration of the Lord's Passion. As usual, the celebration is musically rich and Peter McGrail, Anthony Barratt and Michael Gilmore sing the Passion.

*7th.* Easter Sunday. The College celebrates Easter with the usual dignity and the work of Pat Yates is very much appreciated in the readings. Later in the day, the College wines and dines at Easter Sunday lunch, with many families of the students present adding to the occasion. *Venerabilini* disappear to San Remo, Sicily, Venice and England, and as usual, a group of students leaves for Lourdes to help there on a handicapped pilgrimage.

*8th.* Farewell to Miss Pat Yates today as she returns to England. We shall all miss her, not just for her professional help, but also for her presence in the College. We all wish her well and hope to see her again next year.

*15th.* The College reassembles and the Gregorian begins the new term, this time without any interruptions.

*17th.* Tight-lipped and with prophetic sombriety, Mgr. Bryan Chestle



announces that "the swifts are here". Summer cannot be far away.

*20th.* Today we welcome some midshipmen from England and Wales who are in Rome for a few days. There is a friendly football match in the afternoon in which the College is victorious, and the midshipmen come to dinner in the evening.

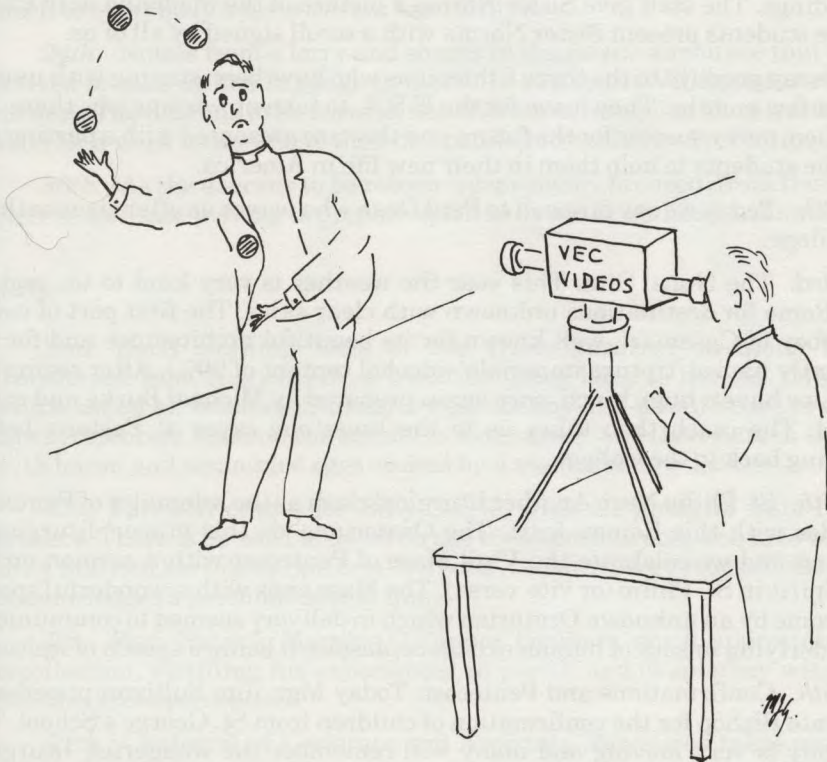
*21st.* In a house meeting, Mr. Louis King talks of future plans for the College and the setting up of the 'Friends of the English College'. There is to be a video made of the College, and many students are keen to offer assistance.

*26th.* Elections and House-job changes are in the offing and are the source of much discussion and interest. The Rector's movements are closely watched. Who will get what? Will fact be stranger than fiction?

*29th.* Some students go to the Vatican to meet the Prince and Princess of Wales. Luiz Ruscillo (deputy youngest member of the College) presents a bouquet of flowers to the Princess with some gallant words. Thomas Whelan engages the Princess in a teasing tête-à-tête.

The Rector has the best day of all, however, as he is invited to lunch at Sir Mark's and has a full ten minutes chat with the Princess.

Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey arrive in the College after a long drive from England and are welcomed as befits old friends of the College.



*Video comes to VEC*

## May

*1st.* Today is a double holiday. It is a public holiday in Italy and the staff go away to the Villa to discuss the College. Many students stay in the city and enjoy the sunny weather.

*3rd.* Senior Student Elections. The Rector announces that Nicholas Hudson has been duly elected as Senior Student. Congratulations Nicholas.

*5th.* Children from the Junior English School make their first Holy Communion in the College. Unfortunately the weather is appalling but this does not dampen the sense of celebration for the children and their families.

*6th.* Deputy Senior Student Elections. Andrew Summersgill is elected as the Deputy Senior Student. Congratulations to you, Andrew.

*8th.* Change-over meeting. David Manson and Ian Farrell now gracefully retire, and Nicholas Hudson and Andrew Summersgill take over.

*12th.* St. George's School First Communion. Despite the draining effects of a *scirocco*, the celebrations are very joyous and twelve children make their first Holy Communion.

*15th.* Sister Norma celebrates 25 years of religious life. The Mother General of the Elizabettine nuns is present, adding substance and dignity to the proceedings. The staff give Sister Norma a picture of the Madonna with Child, and the students present Sister Norma with a scroll signed by all of us.

We say goodbye to the three Ethiopians who have been staying with us over the last few months. They leave for the U.S.A. to take up various jobs there. All wish them every success for the future and they are presented with a parting gift from the students to help them in their new life in America.

*18th.* Today we say farewell to Paul Dean who leaves us after six months in the College.

*23rd.* The Nuns' Gita. This year the weather is very kind to us, and we leave Rome for destinations unknown with clear skies. The first port of call is the Abbey of Casamari, well known for its beautiful architecture and for the innocently named 'tintura imperiale' (alcohol content of 90%). After seeing the abbey, we have a huge lunch, once again prepared by Michael Burke and many helpers. The coach then takes us to the limestone caves at Pastena before returning back to the College.

*25th.* St. Philip Neri. Another liturgical clash as the solemnity of Pentecost coincides with this Roman feast. The Oratorians 'do this proper' liturgically speaking and we celebrate the Vigil Mass of Pentecost with a sermon on the Holy Spirit in St. Philip (or vice versa). The Mass ends with a wonderful speech of welcome by an unknown Oratorian which in delivery seemed to communicate the underlying misery of human existence, despite it being a speech of welcome.

*26th.* Confirmations and Pentecost. Today Mgr. Jim Sullivan presides as surrogate Bishop for the confirmation of children from St. George's School. The ceremony is very moving and many will remember the wonderful 'liturgical presence' of Mgr. Sullivan.

31st. The Gregorian ends today and exams begin.

## June

1st. Joseph Callaghan leaves the College today to do some pastoral work in England. Many turn out to say goodbye and all wish him well for the future.

2nd. Trinity Sunday. The new Vice celebrates his first Vice-Rector's day in the College. Sadly many guests cannot come, but Fr. Frank O'Farrell brightens the day by coming to celebrate his retirement after many years at the Gregorian teaching Metaphysics (Bartolomeo and the others stay at home, however).

We also have the College photograph today ably managed by Christopher Brooks. The photograph is not without drama, however, as the Rector manages to lose a crown from a tooth. However, all is fixed up and the photograph proceeds.

8th. Today Paul Robbins is ordained priest back in England and the Rector attends the ceremony. Every blessing to Paul. *Ad multos annos.*

12th. Bishop Wheeler celebrates his retirement as Bishop of Leeds by saying Mass in the College. We celebrate further by having a large *cena* in honour and thanksgiving for his many years of loving service. However, the celebrations turn out to be not just for Bishop Wheeler. The Bishop announces at the end of the Mass that Fr. Billy Steele has been made a Prelate of Honour, much to everybody's surprise, not least Billy's.

24th. Noises from a lorry and shouts in the *cortile* announce that Enzo has arrived to take up the baggage to the Villa and so the *Villeggiatura* begins in earnest. The deacons to be leave in the afternoon, foregoing the pleasures of the Villa for a week as they have their ordination retreat led by Fr. Philip Rosato S.J.

30th. As the deacons to be return (suspiciously bronzed) from their retreat, their seniors are leaving to prepare spiritually for Priesthood ordination.

## July

2nd. Early-morning Mass of the Transfiguration on Mons Tusculum transferred from August 6th, a tradition going back to the old *Villeggiatura* which lasted all summer. Stalwarts walk for one-and-a-half hours in the cool of dawn, celebrate Mass on the summit's stone altar, and then refresh themselves with bacon and scrambled eggs cooked by a team of fellow-larks.

8th. Farewell *cenone* for Billy Steele, with the *famiglia* from Rome also present. There is no need to dwell on the conscientiousness and love with which Billy fulfilled his role as Spiritual Director, because every student of the College acknowledges a personal debt to him.

9th. Mgr. Patrick Murphy O'Connor begins a much-appreciated day of recollection, distilling his experiences in parish and chaplaincy with humour but also great perception.

11th. Conferral of Lectorate and Acolytate Ministries takes place whilst guests from England begin to arrive for the Diaconate two days later. We are

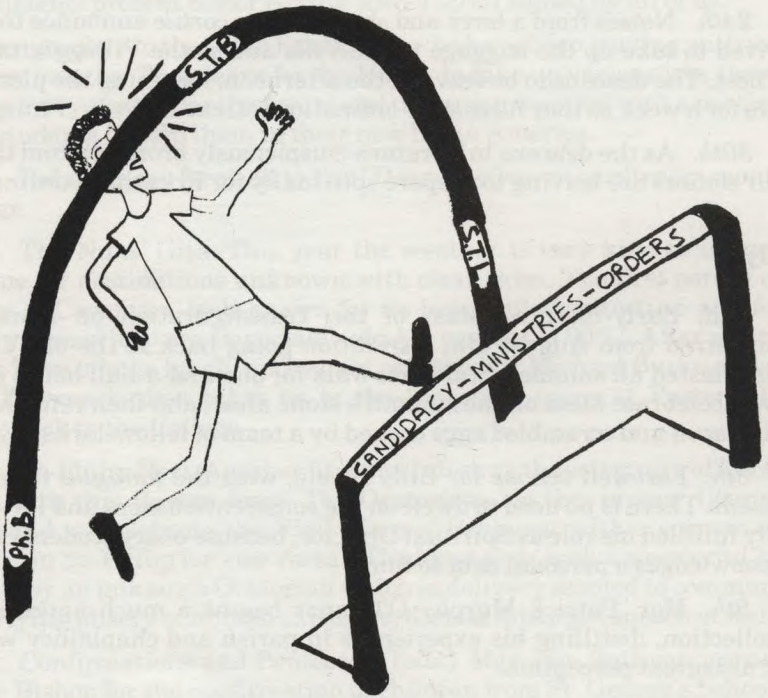
particularly pleased to welcome Mgr. George Hay, who somehow found time from the parish of Paignton to enjoy the Villeggiatura without the pressures of being College Rector.

14th. Diaconate ordinations take place on a Sunday for the first time. Another first is the fact that the celebration and reception (for nearly 300 guests) are the daunting responsibility of the Sisters of Mercy — for once the Elizabetines were guests for the day. All agree that the event is as joyous and memorable as ever. It would have been memorable even without this, because the hillside below the Villa is engulfed by a forest fire which threatens to frustrate even the efforts of the fire-fighting aircraft swooping down for water from Lake Albano. Students taking flights to England depart in convoy through the smoke. But the band plays on, and the evening knees-up (step forward Terry Phipps as guest-star) continues around a defiant camp-fire.

So ends the College year, except for the new deacons and their families, who enjoy a marvellous week, with coach trips to San Felice and Assisi, and the highlight of the Mass in the Pope's private chapel at Castelgandolfo.

Anthony Barratt

## Coordination



Hoopy Steeplechase!

# Old Roman's Notebook

Apologies, first of all to those whom we overlooked in various ways *last* year. Anthony Boers was ordained on the feast of Christ the King in 1934 along with the other Golden Jubilarians we congratulated in the 1984 issue. We were also too late to report John McHugh's appointment as consultor of the Pontifical Biblical Commission last year. His article *On Englishing the Liturgy* was published in two numbers of *Liturgy* vol. VIII, 1983 and also separately as a pamphlet including a long appendix on translating the *Exultet* (available from the author at the price of £1.20).

This year's Golden Jubilarians to whom we send congratulations are Humphrey Wilson, Joseph Walsh, Michael Pierse, Raymond McCurdy, Tommy Fee and Brian Leahy.

Silver Jubilees are celebrated by Bernard Needham, Adrian Chatterton, Gerard Burke, Christopher Smith, Brian Nash, Charles Lloyd, James Robinson and Bernard Linacres.

Since it is of the essence of the faith to view death as the passage to *eternal* reward it is therefore appropriate to move on to mention those who have died this year: Jim Paik and Bob Flynn from Liverpool, Francis Gallagher from Plymouth and Donald Wilkins from Arundel and Brighton.

Very many congratulations to Jack Brewer, installed as Bishop of Lancaster on 22nd of May. We wish him every strength and blessing in his diocesan pastorate.

We do apologise to those University chaplains missed out from last year's list, including Michael Butler at Essex. As we depend heavily on our informants for news of this kind, omissions will occur when the clerical grapevine sags. Brian McEvoy has also been appointed chaplain at Bath University.

In the seminaries, David Quiligotti has been appointed to the staff at Oscott, and Michael ('Toots') Keegan enjoys the distinction of Theology Tutorship at Valladolid (!), after only a short spell in the parish of Wickersley.

After years as chaplain to Kent University, David Standley spent six months with the *L'Arche* community, and is now Parish Priest of Bexleyheath. John Hine in Bearsted now has a new address (St. Peter's, off Yeoman Way, Bearsted), having opened a new church, house and parish room in November last. He has been made a Canon and salutations on this honour go also to Patrick McNamara in Caernarfon and Tom Curtis-Hayward in Stroud.

David Lewis is Rural Dean of Brecon and Radnor, having moved from Tenby to Brecon — in which appointment he succeeded Clyde Johnson, now at Llanelli and himself Rural Dean of Carmarthenshire. Anthony Jones has moved from the joint Roman Catholic-Anglican church at Ruabon to be pastor at Pwllheli.

John White, for some years port Chaplain at Bootle, is now Parish Priest of Sacred Heart, Hall Lane, Liverpool. As the church is due for demolition to enable road widening, he faces the task of opening up a new church in a former

school complex. Peter Cookson is now Parish Priest down the way at St. Mary's, Chorley.

Across the Pennines in Leeds, Kevin Firth has moved from Our Lady of Lourdes, Headingley to St. Joseph's, Bradford. John Osman has been appointed Diocesan Communications Officer.

Ray Matus is at Corpus Christi, Weston-Super-Mare and Thomas Atthill has been appointed to St. Osmund's, Salisbury.

As well as surviving 25 years of ministry, Adrian Chatterton has been much involved in the follow-up to the Nottingham Diocese Response and Assembly, an initiative inspired by the Holy Father's visit in 1982 and now looking forward to its third year. Representatives were brought together in Nottingham after monthly discussion groups in homes within the parishes. Brian Dazeley is Chairman of the organising committee.

### another Old Roman

## COLLEGE NOTES

### Schola Notes

Undoubtedly one of the most perplexing questions facing any seminary Schola Cantorum is that of repertoire. Among the various mediums available to composers of sacred music the male-voice choir seems, more often than not, to have been accepted as given rather than freely chosen for its intrinsic musical potential. However, potential there is — a range and flexibility of expression that will not be fully realised if the repertoire remain limited to a period of no more than 150 years.

Our objective, then, at the beginning of the year was to increase the variety of music sung. Such a task required some tailor-made arrangements, a greater use of instruments, and the continued development of the alto line (without which, it has been noted, our repertoire would be immediately halved).

The first step was a step backwards: the setting of the Ascension hymn 'Ies, nostra redemptio' by Guillaume Dufay (c1400-1474) proved to be a very exciting discovery. Here the alternation of the original plainsong melody and Dufay's polyphony unites the austere with the sensuous. A certain degree of facility in rhythm and breathing is demanded of the singers in this piece and no little effort was required to negotiate Dufay's sometimes long and often intricate phrases.

Christmas came and Palestrina's fine motet 'Hodie Christus natus est' was contrasted with the fourteenth century anonymous English carol 'There is no Rose' — an exuberant song in light triple measure, the character and charm of which were effectively enhanced by the addition of bassoon, recorder, bells and tambour. Instrumental accompaniment (this time a pair of flutes, 'cello, and guitar) also provided access to several short anthems by Purcell: 'O, Remember not' (Ash Wednesday) and 'In God's Word' (Dedication of the Church). The alto soloists in this latter piece were the occasion of much speculation during supper afterwards. . . .

1984 was a significant year for our parish church San Lorenzo in Damaso — December 11th saw the 1600th anniversary of the death of Pope St. Damasus and the beginning of Don Augusto's 'anno Damasiano'. The high-point in this was undoubtedly the Holy Father's visit of the Basilica to celebrate Mass on the first Sunday of Lent. For this occasion, in ambitious mood, we chose to sing Tallis' 5-part motet 'in jejuniis et fletu' (one of the old Sarum chants for the day, *not* a comment on the present pontificate!).

Tallis' music could never be described as dull or anaemic and, sure enough, here we met several delicious instances of his (characteristically English) harmonic non-conformism. Unfortunately though, the need to provide a fifth part necessarily left the other parts weakened. The acoustics in San Lorenzo are

far from helpful at the best of times and we were found wanting when it came to the broad sustained phrases towards the end of the piece.

College composers continued to yield and for Pentecost the Schola presented 'Beata nobis gaudia' by Patrick Coleman. In this motet the ancient practice of 'hiding' a plainsong melody within a polyphonic texture is linked to an adventurous yet attractive modern harmonic idiom. Patrick's experience of College singing stood him in good stead and what appeared on paper, to be irksome and testing, proved, in practice, to be a work of assiduous craftsmanship that is both singable and a delight to sing.

The question ultimately arises of how far from the beaten track College music may stray: the legitimate search for new music cannot disregard the liturgical end to which it is directed. But within this context, what place is there for that which is newest (and, therefore, strangest?) in contemporary forms of musical expression? And how far can you go before the question of repertoire becomes a perplexing one not only for the Schola-Master but for the congregation too?

Michael O'Connor

## Football Report 1984-1985

This season's football report must begin with a big thank-you: to Liverpool F.C. for their very kind gift of a complete set of first team shirts (complete with numbers and sponsor's 'logo') and to Bishop Hitchen for his kind help in this matter.

When the season got under way we kicked off with a match against the 'auld enemy', the Scots College. The sight of eleven of those famous red shirts took them by surprise, for in a fixture which we somehow usually manage to lose, we earned a very creditable 2-2 draw, coming close to winning. All this was despite losing midfield dynamo Ant Towey after only five minutes.

The rest of the season saw us play only five more matches before the sevens' competition. Overall our record was:

Played 6, Won 2, Drew 1, Lost 3, Goals For 25, Against 18.

Most notable was a 'friendly' against visitors from Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, in Rome with their Catholic chaplains. The game gave our forwards the chance to show what they could do but all our goal scorers came from midfield and defence as we won 13-2!

Despite this season's paucity of fixtures the enthusiasm of the team remains undiminished. Every Monday we play a six-a-side game on the playground behind the Cancelleria against some of the *ragazzi* from San Lorenzo parish. Thus, in 'Greg-speak', synthesizing our dipolar dialectic between pastoral work and recreation.

After our games at San Lorenzo we went to the traditional, end of season, sevens' competition at the Scots College with quiet confidence. Sadly the day did not find us at our best and, after beating the German College 1-0, we lost a hard game to the Irish by 4-0. However, our contribution to the proceedings may have been significant as the Irish, looking a little worn, immediately lost the



excellent final to the Scots.

On a sad note we have had to say goodbye and God bless to four old war horses of the English College team, namely Mike Gilmore, Joe Callaghan (who certainly left his mark on some Roman pitches), Frank "I didn't see that one" Harris and Tony Meehan. We wish them all well in their ministries in England. Finally thanks to all who played this year and especially to those who filled in at the last minute:

D. Blower, A. Clark, B. Colangelo, J. Finnie, M. Gilmore; K. Grady, P. Harvey, L. Kelly, S. O'Connor, M. Parrot, S. Peat, M. Raisewell, L. Ruscillo, M. Selway, A. Towey and T. Whelan.

David Blower

## Cricket Report 1985

This was our second year playing on the Junior English School pitch, a stunningly picturesque spot alongside the tree-lined Via Appia. The grass surface is a welcome change from the dusty plains elsewhere in Rome, which tend to drive back even the keenest in-fielder. The 'pavilion' area is shaded, but still allows sunbathing for the less proficient sportsmen who nevertheless want to feel that the afternoon hasn't been totally wasted. There are even nets for practice, so that the growing number of Italian cricket enthusiasts can learn the joys of second-bounce off-breaks and fine-glances to leg in comparative safety. Meanwhile, their fellow-countrymen who have not stumbled upon the mysteries of Albion's national game, block up the way outside as they stop and gape in amazement at the unbelievable spectacle before their eyes.

We play against three teams from the Rome area, who must have a majority of Italian members. So a hybrid culture and terminology have grown up. You hear bowlers (*lanciatori*) asking their fielders to, "muovere un po' a silly mid-off per prevenire il single"; whilst new batsmen (*battitori*) are warned by their unfortunate predecessors to, "guardare il bouncer". One thing, however, they doggedly resist: the requirement to turn up on time. Why should they, when presumably the whole appeal of the game in the first place is that apparently one never need do anything in a hurry?

Nevertheless, once play begins they soon show how good they can be. Perhaps Max da Costa had seen some episodes of the 'Bodyline' series, when he bowled the bouncer that broke Rags Hay-Will's forearm. But we had our triumphs too, as Mike Raiswell had yet another destructive season as our fastest bowler, and several batsmen overcame the vagaries of a sunbaked strip to make good scores.

Yet somehow the season's climax remains the wholly 'in-house' showdown between North and South, which takes place at the Villa ground in July. Feelings run so high that it has even been suggested that the fixture be re-titled, 'England vs. the Barbarians' (without entering into which is which).

Geoff Marlor for the South crowned his final year in College with a characteristically patient 19 runs, and Peter Harvey's sparkling 28 gave the lie once more to his nonchalant attitude. The North were set a total of 106 to win, more even than their most entrenched opponents dared hope for. The Rector and Anthony Towey set the pace with an opening partnership of 30, and were more-than-matched by the middle orders: Simon O'Connor (26) and Mike Gilmore (12). But

the bowling of Simon Peat and Peter Harvey was just as fierce, and held them to 97 for 5 wickets when time ran out. For once, a draw really seemed the fairest result.

Mention must be made of Simon Peat's captaincy, and not only because as Magazine Manager, we must keep on the right side of him. It is an exasperatingly many-headed responsibility which includes liaison with other teams, transport and (not least) refreshments. On top of this, Simon led with firm but polite authority, encouraged the less confident players, whilst himself batting with fire and throwing himself into his fast-bowling. May he enjoy many 'punti' and 'eliminazioni' in the season to come.

**Timothy Finigan**

## Priests leaving the College in 1985

*John Arnold* (Westminster) ordained deacon 27th November 1982 and priest 16th July 1983, obtained a licence in Canon Law at the Gregorian University and is completing studies for a doctoral thesis concerning, "The value of the canons of departure and dismissal from consecrated life in the new Code".

*Christopher Brooks* (Brentwood) ordained deacon 13th July 1982 and priest 24th July 1983, studied for the licence in Psychology at the Institute of Psychology, P.U.G. This licence is based on and directed to practical work.

*Michael Burke* (Menevia) ordained deacon 31st July 1983 and priest 28th July 1984, has studied for the licence in Canon Law, presenting a tesina on, "Toward a better understanding of impotence with special reference to the spinal cord injured person".

*Harry Curtis* (Birmingham) ordained deacon 12th July 1983 and priest 4th August 1984, has studied for the licence in Fundamental Theology, presenting a tesina on, "Newman's doctrine of justification: an exercise in Ecumenism".

*John Clarke* (Leeds) ordained deacon 12th July 1983 and priest 28th July 1984, has studied for the licence in Biblical Theology, presenting a tesina on, "The Law of God written within the heart of man: a study of the interiorised law in 2 Cor 3:1-6 and in the 'Shema', Deut. 6:4-9".

*Philip Egan* (Shrewsbury) ordained deacon 12th July 1983 and priest 4th August 1984, after two years in Allen Hall and five years spent in the College, has studied for the licence in Fundamental Theology. The subject of his tesina was, "Lonergan and world religions: foundational aspects of the inter-religious dialogue in the perspective of Bernard Lonergan".

*Timothy Finigan* (Southwark) ordained deacon 12th July 1983 and priest 28th July 1984, has studied for the licence in Patristic Theology and the History of Theology, presenting a tesina on, "Flesh and Glory: an examination of the Commentary of St. Hilary of Poitiers on the eighth verse of the second Psalm as found in his *Tractatus super Psalmos*' and an investigation of the doctrine found therein".

*Peter Fleetwood* (Liverpool) returned to Rome in October 1982 to begin a doctorate on, "Hegel's conception of *genus* and the anthropology of Karl Marx" which is due for completion in early 1986. He has taught three seminars at the Gregorian and is due to begin teaching philosophy at Ushaw College in February 1986.

*Michael Gilmore* (Shrewsbury) ordained deacon 12th July 1983 and priest 5th August 1984, has studied for the licence in Philosophy, specialising in Metaphysics and Epistemology, and has presented a tesina on, "The metaphysical essence of God according to the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*".

*Frank Harris* (Clifton) ordained deacon 26th November 1983 and priest 19th August 1984, has studied for a licence in Canon Law at the Gregorian.

*Paul Hendricks* (Southwark) ordained deacon 12th July 1983 and priest 29th July 1984, has studied for the licence in Philosophy, specialising in the Philosophy of the Christian Religion, presenting a tesina on, "A study of David Hume's 'Dialogue Concerning Natural Religion'".

*Paul McPartlan* (Westminster) ordained deacon 12th July 1983 and priest 21st July 1984, has studied for the licence in Dogmatic Theology presenting a tesina on, "The eucharistic importance of visible unity with Rome". From October 1985 he will be pursuing research at Campion Hall, Oxford in Ecclesiology with particular reference to Anglican-Roman Catholic and Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue.

*Geoffrey Marlor* (Portsmouth) ordained deacon 26th November 1983 and priest 31st May 1984, has studied for the licence in Liturgical Theology at the Pontifical Liturgical Institute of Sant' Anselmo presenting a tesina on the theme of, "Our communion with the Heavenly Church in the *Communicantes* and *Nobis quoque* prayers of the Roman Canon in the light of Vatican II's eschatology".

*Francis Marsden* (Liverpool) ordained deacon 12th July 1983 and priest 21st July 1984, has studied for the licence in Moral Theology presenting a tesina on, "Marriage: psychology and morality".

*Anthony Meehan* (Birmingham) returns to his diocese after two years at the College having studied for the licence in Moral Theology presenting a tesina on, "The mediation between faith and moral truth".

*Mgr. William Steele* left the college in 1960 and returned as Spiritual Director in 1980. He leaves again to take up an appointment, as yet unknown, probably in his diocese of Leeds.

## The Anglican Exchange

Andrew Montgomerie (Ridley Hall) and Martin Parrott (Cuddesdon) joined the College from September 1984 to February 1985, and studied at the Gregorian University. They were ordained deacon for the diocese of Liverpool and Birmingham respectively, on June 30th 1985.