



THE VENERABILE 2010



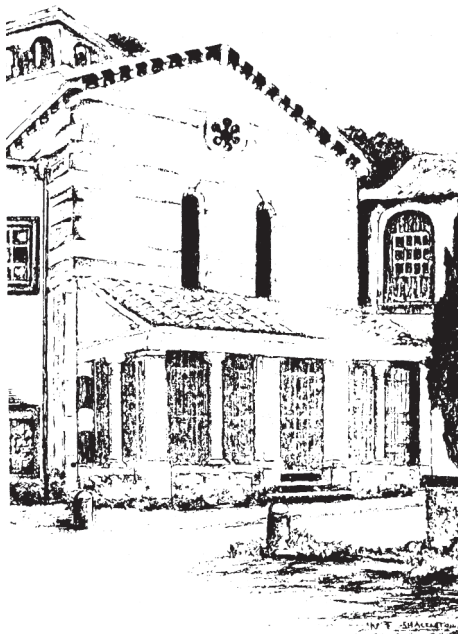
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The Editorial Team welcomes articles for publication on College life, past and present, the Catholic faith, current issues of interest to UK Catholics, the priesthood and formation of priests.

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Please note: the opinions expressed in this publication and its advertisements are not necessarily the opinion of the Venerable English College, its staff nor those of the Editor.

Front cover: Mgr Bryan Chestle casts a glance at the plants in front of the frosted windows in the Cardinals’ Corridor outside the library. (*Photo: Stefan Kaminski*)

Back cover: Villa Palazzola, the College villa in the Alban Hills outside Rome.

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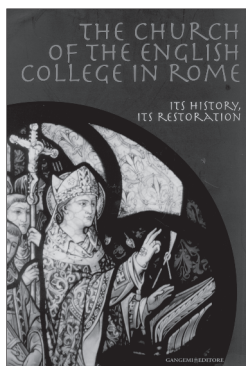
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Recent books on the English College

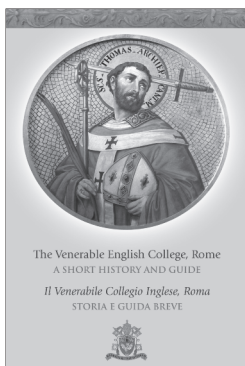
A number of beautiful books have appeared recently on aspects of the College and its history which will be of great interest to Old Romans, Friends and anyone connected with the VEC.

They can be purchased by callers to the College or ordered by e-mail from this address:
secrec.vec@mclink.it.

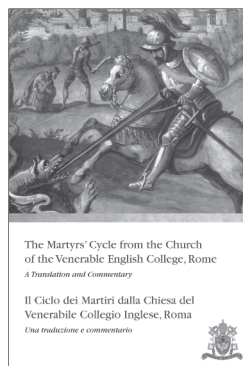
Each is a delight to read and in purchasing them you are helping to support the College.



The Church of the English College in Rome: Its History, Its Restoration, €40



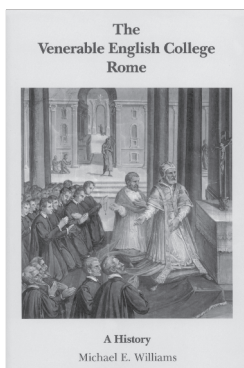
The Venerable English College, Rome: A Short History and Guide, Mark Langham, €10



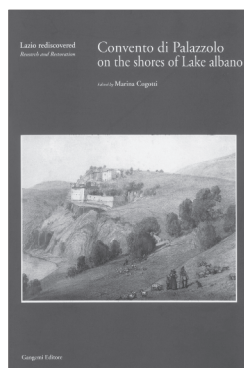
The Martyrs' Cycle from the Church of the Venerable English College, Paul Keane, €10

Hardbacks of the College History and Guide and The Martyrs' Cycle are available as a limited edition, both presented in a handsome slip case.

The perfect gift for jubilarians and for that special birthday or Christmas gift. €35



The Venerable English College Rome: A History, Michael Williams, €20



Convento di Palazzolo on the Shores of Lake Albano, Marina Cogotti, Editor, €20

Some back issues of The Venerable are also available at €15 per copy including post and packing.



Editorial and Dedication

Alexander J. MacDonald

We dedicate this issue of *The Venerabile* to a special resident of the College who exemplifies priestly generosity: Mgr Bryan Chestle. His warm and holy presence testifies to the transformation accomplished in him by Christ. He has allowed us in this issue to reprint a Spiritual Conference he gave in the 1980s in which with vulnerability and honesty he brings us to the very doors of his heart. This act of courage gives us a profound insight into the essence of the priesthood. I am sure our readers will be greatly edified by it.

In this issue we present three articles which indicate something of the nature of the assaults against the Church in the past year. The “London Debate,” which questioned the Catholic contribution to the common good, was an event making headlines around the world. Fr Joseph Carola, S.J. analyses the debate’s failures by reference to the fiery works of St Augustine. Significantly, the visit of Lord Alton to the College this year demonstrates how one dedicated Catholic is contributing to the common good in fighting to extend human rights to voiceless members of society. Third, as an astrophysicist at the Vatican Observatory, Fr David Brown, S.J. counteracts a perennial misconception of the Church.

We also include various snapshots of College life over the past year. The re-opening of the church was a time of great celebration and we are pleased to revisit this event by reproducing the homily of Archbishop Vincent Nichols. The event also saw the reunion of five previous Rectors of the College. Our intrepid Sister Mary Joseph convinced them to share some of their best stories with us from their days in Rome. The surprising results make for some comedic – and hopefully not scandalous – reading. Marking the 300th anniversary of the death of Andrea Pozzo, Mgr Charles Scicluna provides us with a reflection on the four cardinal virtues in the College Refectory.

Another category of articles reaches into the rich history of the College. Fr Thomas McCoog, S.J. presents a biographical piece on the fascinating character of Robert Persons. College Archivist Iris Jones – whose career is dedicated to preserving history – opens up for the layperson the mysterious and exotic inner world of archival work. From royal to renegade, Rev. Liam Bradley unites past and present in a tour of the *scavi* beneath St Peter’s.

Finally, for those who count on favourite segments like the *Diary*, *Sports Report* and *The Year in Pictures*, we have not forgotten to include these.

I would extend my sincerest thanks to the Editorial Team – Matthew O’Gorman, David Howell and Marc Homsey for their advice, skill and dedication. Grateful thanks are also due to Fr Rector Nicholas Hudson for his keen eye for detail and for giving me wide latitude to be creative; to Fr Vice-Rector Andrew Headon for his diligence and rapid-fire responses; and to Fergus Mulligan our publisher for his service and skill.



Alexander J. MacDonald is a fifth year seminarian for the Diocese of Antigonish and studies theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University

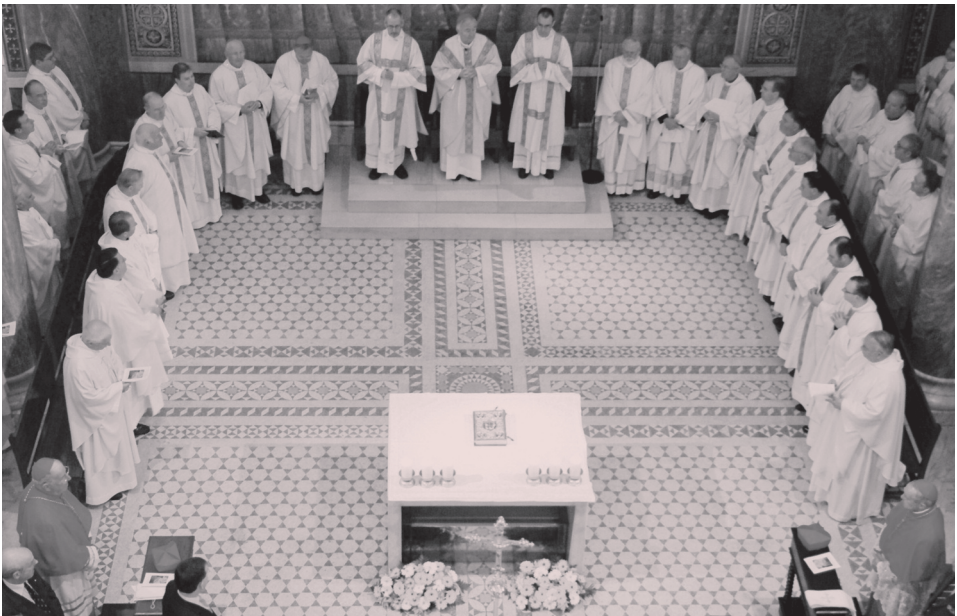


“Yes we can!”

The Homily of Archbishop Vincent Nichols for the Re-opening of the College Church

18 October 2009

We celebrate Mass today in the glorious setting of this restored church. This Mass is, above all else, a Mass of thanksgiving. Today we give thanks for so much: for the generosity of those who have supported this work and made it possible; for the skill and patient endeavours of all who have worked on this project and managed it so carefully; for the history of this College, which is so significantly reflected in this church; and especially for the gift of faith which underpins all of this enterprise and which gives birth to our sure and certain hope that the glory of heaven, which this church is designed to reflect, will one day be ours – and in such a great company.



Archbishop Nichols at the Mass to celebrate the reopening of the church. *(Photo: Anthony Milner)*

There is so much to encompass at this moment. Indeed, a week may well be not long enough – but I know you will give it a good try. Time is needed to appreciate this work, all that it stands for and the historical legacy of both the hospice and the seminary. This heritage, like every heritage of faith, is ours not just to be preserved or protected. Rather, it is given to us that through it we may give a richer voice to our faith. Through our faith, this heritage is enlivened. And this heritage supports and strengthens us. When we find our voice of faith, then the beauty of our heritage – be it in music, art, or in this church itself – is truly understood. Only when we find our voice will the summons of this beauty, which is always a call to God, be heard.

For my part I must concentrate on one aspect of that faith which can find a fresh voice at this moment and in this church. It is by providence that we celebrate this Mass on the Sunday which the Universal Church holds as Mission Sunday. What better moment could there be? The picture behind me is a hymn of praise to the mission of faith: the mission of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit – expressed here and in the original title of the picture, the Holy Trinity with Saints. The picture also points to the first mission of this place – to be a hospice for weary pilgrims, entering through the arched gateway featured in the painting. And it proclaims, of course, the powerful mission of the priests formed in this College who made the opposite journey, leaving through that gateway on their journey to their mission in England. Because of their courageous faith, the picture has acquired its more familiar title: the *Martyrs' Picture*.

Today's gospel reading takes us to the heart of this mission. Just before this passage, Jesus has been speaking for the third time about the passion which lies ahead of him. At this point in the narrative of Mark, Jesus and his companions have completed the long journey down the length of the valley of the River Jordan and are now turning to begin their ascent to Jerusalem. Their hard slog is now beginning and it is a premonition of the suffering that lies ahead.

The companions to whom Jesus speaks in this dialogue, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, are of course, brothers. They have been with him at moments of triumph – at the raising of Jairus' daughter and at the Transfiguration. So they have caught a glimpse of his glory and now they want it for themselves.

It is this band of brothers who need to be tutored in the true meaning of their mission. And we stand in their stead: a band of brothers indeed, resolved to follow and serve the Lord.

So the question addressed to them is also addressed to us. Jesus asks: “Can you drink the cup of which I am to drink?” “Yes we can,” is their answer. And it is an answer that has resounded round this place, before this picture, over the centuries. Today, in our turn, we echo and repeat that willingness: yes we can!

And we can add: “Yes, we do drink of this cup,” for every time we celebrate Mass and receive the Body broken for us and the Blood poured out for us we do indeed drink of this cup. And again we reply: “Yes, we shall drink of this cup.” This is most certainly our fate if we remain faithful to the mission we are given.

The second part of the gospel passage spells out something of the way in which this will come about: we are summoned to be servants. Once we make ourselves a servant then we no longer have control of our own destiny. This is fundamental to the life of a priest. His obedience is the first and abiding practical expression of his readiness to drink of this cup. He is a servant of the Church and of his people. In this obedience, practised day by day, lie the seeds of every martyrdom.

“Floods indeed may rise: a flood of seeping indifference and weariness to all things religious as people struggle simply to survive amid hardship and cynicism.”

But the words of the Lord take us further. Not only are we to accept the status of servant, and wait on the needs of others, summoned at the authority of others, but we are to be a slave, totally subject to the will of the Father.

How can this be? Surely as we would say today, being a slave is degrading – offensive to our rights. How can this accord with our dignity? Only by this truth: that the will of the Father is nothing other than our ultimate good; that the will of the Father is pure love, which flows from no other source and which alone is the well-spring of life in its fullness. Only in this truth can I

happily, readily hand myself over as servant and slave. Without such a truth, this pathway would indeed be one of pointless self-abnegation. It would be grotesque. It is not. This pathway of discipleship in mission is the pathway of truth and of life.

Let us turn again to the picture, which in so many ways provides the continuity for the long history of the College. What generosity of spirit it has witnessed! What heroism for the faith. Its testimony, as you all understand, is complemented by the frescoes in the Tribune, also so finely restored. This painting acts as a point of contact for us with the martyr priests who have given it its abiding title. Remember that the relics of those martyrs were quickly brought to Rome where they became a focal point of prayer, just as the relics of St Therese have been for the 95,000 people who have come to Westminster Cathedral in three days last week.

These are moments of enormous encouragement for us. They prompt me to read again the quotation from St Luke's gospel, so favoured by St Ignatius of Loyola and the Jesuits that it found its central place in this picture: "*Ignem veni mittere in terram.*" Fire indeed, fire of that love of God which alone can burn away our dross and make us capable of bearing a shining witness in our time.

This fire of love, to which Jesus refers in terms of the baptism he brings, and the fruit it bears, has echoes back to the Song of Songs (8:6), in words that resonate often in my heart:

*This love is as strong as death.
The flash of it is a flash of fire,
A flame of God himself.
A love no flood can quench,
No torrents drown.*

Floods indeed may rise: a flood of seeping indifference and weariness to all things religious as people struggle simply to survive amid hardship and cynicism. Torrents may pour down – a torrent of hostile secularism which takes delight in mocking faith. But the fire of this love, expressed in the lives of so many saints and heroes, an inspiring faith in so many people, will not be extinguished.

This church is a fine and wonderful testimony for this enduring faith. We are to fill it with our faith, our love and our hope in the same mission as those who have gone before us. To our loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who pours out such love in the blood of Christ, this church is a glorious hymn of praise. In it we gladly raise our voices of faith today.

To him be glory and honour and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.



(Photo: Anthony Milner)



Archbishop Vincent Nichols is the Archbishop of Westminster.



From Chaos to CALM: The Archivist's Challenge

The VEC Archives in 2009

Iris Jones

The year 2009 was a lively year in the English College. The church restoration, which had been underway for two years, finally reached completion in October when the church was unveiled in all of its splendour. The impressive *Non Angli, sed Angeli* exhibition was also inaugurated on 21 October, supported by an extensive catalogue. A new guidebook was produced as well, since the old one needed updating. The VEC Archives were involved in all of these projects, to varying degrees for each. Let's take a look at the different projects.

Restoration of the Church

The current church of the English College was built from plans by architect Virginio Vespignani in the late 19th century and inaugurated in 1888. It was built on the exact site of the original church, which was founded in about 1376. Time had darkened and muted the gold leaf and vividly coloured wall-paintings. The restoration included cleaning every piece of marble, mosaic and painting. Upstairs in the Tribune, the Martyrs' Cycle was in particular need of attention. The restorers with infinite patience and the tiniest of paintbrushes set to work on the vast wall-paintings, lovingly cleaning the grisly scenes of martyrdom, which had originally been intended to strengthen the resolve of VEC seminarians potentially facing similar fates.

One of the archives' ongoing projects over the past few years has been to photograph significant documents or frequently consulted manuscripts. This campaign began in 2008 and also included artworks and artefacts from around the College. It has proved extremely useful to have good quality images available on demand, both for publication and consultation purposes. One of the archival items which I had photographed in March 2009 was *Ecclesiae Anglicanae Trophiae* (VEC Liber 861). This is a collection of engravings made in 1583 by Giovanni Battista Cavalleri, which reproduced Pomarancio's 16th century Martyrs' Cycle frescoes in the original English College church. When the Vespignani church was built, the Martyrs' Cycle was considered sufficiently emblematic of the College to be repainted upstairs in the Tribune. This new version of the paintings was presumably based on the *Ecclesiae Anglicanae Trophiae* engravings. And the archival photographs of the *Trophiae* also proved very useful to the restorers last year.

In April 2009 the restorers were hard at work on the Tribune wall-paintings. A number of the frescoes had been damaged by water infiltration many years ago and in some places the text below the images was difficult to read. I gave them copies of the *Trophiae* photographs which made it possible for them to accurately reconstruct the missing letters.

Non Angli, sed Angeli

When Fr Andrew Headon first took me to see the crypt space and told me how the College planned to set up an exhibition there, I was impressed. It is a beautiful space and the idea of

following the spiritual and physical pilgrimage to Rome along the via Francigena was new and exciting.

My role in this was essentially to gather and collate images and information for the show. I was also involved in proof reading the catalogue, making suggestions about which images were available to illustrate the text. Once again, our database of College archival photographs proved a useful resource, quickly providing visual impact to some of the articles.

One of the most important archival items used in the show was Christopher Saxton's *Atlas of England and Wales* (as illustrated). This gorgeous atlas was produced in the late 1570s and contains 35 coloured maps depicting the counties of England and Wales. Originally published as a collection in 1579, it is a landmark in British cartography and printing. Christopher Saxton was a protégé of Thomas Seckford, who was a high official in the court of Queen Elizabeth I. Thanks to Seckford's backing, Saxton obtained the Queen's authorisation to survey England and Wales minutely, a sensitive issue at that time, as England had many enemies inside and outside the country. This atlas formed the basis for all succeeding county maps for over one hundred years; in spite of some discrepancies, the maps are remarkably accurate. Evidence shows that Saxton probably completed most of the maps using personal field observation. He was often accompanied by local inhabitants who could help him name the towns and villages he saw from his surveying vantage points.

It is not clear how the atlas came into the possession of the College. It is tempting to think that this beautiful collection of maps was used by the College Protomartyr, St Ralph Sherwin, to find his way about England in the summer of 1580. Alas, there is no specific evidence to prove this.

Two pilgrim books are visible in the exhibition: VEC Archives Liber 18 and Liber 282. Liber 18 is physically on display, inside a freestanding case. It belonged to the hospice, and lists "*confratres*" who visited between 1479 and 1484. Conservation of this manuscript in the exhibition space has been an ongoing concern. Temperature and relative humidity values were consistently elevated inside the display case, requiring me and all exhibition staff (Aimée Forster, Chiara Fasano and Alessia Pirazzi) to hover over Lib.18 as if it were a sick child, measuring its temperature at regular intervals.

A photograph in the exhibition shows the brief entry made for John Milton in the pilgrim book when he came to dine at the College in October 1638. Milton was then a young man but already with a considerable literary reputation. The pilgrim book refers to him as an "English nobleman" who was accompanied by a servant ("*cum famulo*"). He had left England in May of that year to do a sort of "grand tour" of France and Italy, hoping to deepen his knowledge of the artistic and religious traditions of these countries through direct observation. As was usual at that



Ms Jones holding Saxton's Atlas.
(Photo: Claudia Primangeli)

time, he was provided with letters of introduction, which opened many doors for him and made it possible for him to meet famous theorists and intellectuals. Milton was especially interested in Catholicism, though he actually was neither Catholic nor Protestant, and held some unorthodox theological views. Later he would write some controversial pamphlets supporting the legality of divorce. He disliked Jesuits, though he seems to have enjoyed his dinner at the College, where he met some distinguished English Catholics, including the theologian Henry Holden and the poet Patrick Carey. However, in his *Defensio Secunda* (a political tract published in 1654) the poet admits that he might have made some enemies among English Jesuits at that time: "As I was on the point of returning to Rome, I was warned by merchants that they had learned through letters of plots against me by the English Jesuits, should I return to Rome, because of the freedom with which I had spoken about religion."

The fact that such a polemicist was welcomed at the College gives one an idea of how much had changed by 1638. Milton is listed in the VEC pilgrim book but he came as a literary person, not for devotional purposes. More College students would be martyred – such as Sts David Lewis, John Wall, Bl Anthony Turner and Edward Mico SJ, who would die in 1679 as a result of the anti-Catholic reaction to the "Popish Plot." But relations between English Catholics abroad and English travellers were generally less strained in the 17th century than they were in the 16th century. The English College had inherited a duty from the Hospice to welcome English visitors and every year offered hospitality to 30 or 40 guests regardless of differences of religion. VEC Liber 282 lists the names of many English nobles, including William Harvey who, besides discovering the diagnostic value of blood circulation, was the personal physician of Charles I and visited the College in 1636.

The Pozzo Exhibition

2009 marked the 300th anniversary of Andrea Pozzo's death. This attracted various scholars to the archives, such as Dott. Domizio Cattoi, from Trento's Diocesan Archives. Dott. Cattoi was one of the curators of a show about Pozzo which opened in December 2009 in Trento, and he was doing some background research for the catalogue. We also received a request to loan three drawings to another show about Pozzo, opening in March 2010.

Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709) was a Jesuit brother from Trento. His expertise ranged from painting to architecture, decoration and stage design. He came to Rome in 1681 to work for Giovanni Paolo Oliva, Superior General of the Jesuits who believed in using lavish decoration to exalt Jesuit ideals. Pozzo first worked as a stage designer for the Carnival plays held in the Gesù church, but he was so talented that Oliva soon commissioned him to decorate the rooms of St Ignatius in the Gesù. His masterpiece in Rome is considered to be the illusory perspectives in the frescoes of the dome, the apse and the ceiling of the Jesuit church of Sant'Ignazio, painted between 1685 and 1694.

Pozzo came into contact with the English College for obvious reasons: the College was predominantly under Jesuit influence at that time. Pozzo moved in Jesuit circles and taught courses at the Collegio Romano, where he would have met students from the English College.

His first known work at the College is a painting, the beautiful *Pharisee's Supper* in the Refectory, which was finished by December 1700. According to archival documents, Pozzo then set to work on frescoes in the Refectory and Martyrs' Chapel, which appear to have been completed by 1701. These two large rooms had recently been added to the College and obviously needed embellishment.

Shortly afterwards, Pozzo was commissioned to design a church for the College. His solution for the site had a distinctly Jesuit character, copying Sant'Andrea al Quirinale by Bernini, which is the church of the Jesuit novitiate. The VEC Archives contain three drawings related to this proposal. The illustration shows how Pozzo intended to turn the church around, with a new façade on Via di Monserrato. These drawings were loaned by the College to an exhibition, "*Mirabili Disinganni*," held at the Calcografia Nazionale in Rome. The title of the show literally means "Beautiful Disappointments," a tribute to Pozzo's amazing talent for the "false perspective."

The request for loaning the Pozzo drawings was made jointly by the Gregorian University, the Austrian Academy and the Calcografia Nazionale, who were all involved in setting up the project. I was first contacted about the proposal in May 2009 by Prof. Richard Bösel, director of the Austrian Academy. We looked at the drawings together, measured them and checked their state of conservation. Prof. Bosel made an estimate of the value of each drawing for insurance purposes, which amounted to €15,000 per drawing. On the basis of this, Mgr Nicholas Hudson agreed to the loan.

A three day conference on Andrea Pozzo was held at the Austrian Academy in November, followed by the inauguration of the show on 5 March 2010, which I was able to attend. It was fascinating to see so much of Pozzo's work together in one place, which put the work he did for the English College into its context.

CAS Conference

In May I delivered a talk at the Catholic Archives Society's annual conference, held at Ushaw. The Catholic Archives Society (CAS) was founded in 1979 to promote the care and preservation of the records of dioceses, religious foundations, institutions and societies of the Catholic Church. They operate in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and their goal is to support the work of archivists in Catholic institutions. The CAS facilitates and encourages the sharing of information so that archives can be of administrative service to the organisations they concern and may become accessible for academic research and cultural purposes.

The CAS had asked me to speak about my work in the College archives. As a shy person who prefers not to speak in public, I was nervous about accepting. However, the idea of sharing the interesting aspects of my work with other archivists who could understand and appreciate the projects was too inviting an opportunity to refuse. In fact, it turned into a very pleasant sharing of information between colleagues. The title of my address was "From Chaos to CALM" – a word play on the fact that when I came to the College in September 2005 the archives were somewhat chaotic and have now progressed towards order. Using CALM software to catalogue the material has contributed substantially to allaying the initial chaos.



Pozzo intended the façade of the church to face via di Monserrato. (Photo: Claudia Primangeli)

To help explain the project, I used media software extensively, feeling that images would be more eloquent than long, scholarly sentences. I used the images as a support for the facts, figures and chronology of the archive project, describing the decisions made from 2005 to 2009. These decisions include creating a state-of-the art repository, moving the collections into the new room and matters concerning conservation: relative humidity, temperature, lighting, cleanliness and restoration of damaged items. I also discussed our policy on access for scholars and plans for the archives' future. It was of benefit to discuss the use of CALM with other archivists since this software is now being used widely in England.

“A significant portion of this series is made up of legal documents produced by College lawsuits over the centuries.”

Archival Work

One of the larger issues addressed in the Archives during 2009 was transferring the entire *Scrittura* series into acid-free folders and boxes. The *Scrittura* series makes up approximately one-half of the VEC archives. It is a collection of loose sheets of paper – as opposed to the *Liber* series which contains mostly bound volumes – and ranges from the 15th to 20th centuries. A significant portion of this series is made up of legal documents produced by College lawsuits over the centuries and by College correspondence. *Scrittura* 13/6/2, for example, contains a letter addressed to Alfonso Agazzari, Rector of the English College, from St Charles Borromeo. It is dated 30 June 1580. The future saint reports that he had been pleased to welcome “those Englishmen who passed by here the other day” and assures Agazzari that if he should “send to my home any others” he would “welcome them in all charity” because “it is very dear to me to have the opportunity to offer hospitality ... to the Catholics of that nation.” These Englishmen included Ralph Sherwin and Edmund Campion on their way home to England and to martyrdom.

The *Scrittura* series was originally stored in sleeves or folders, tightly packed in metal filing cabinet drawers. Opening and closing the drawers had produced mechanical damage on the edge of each sleeve. In addition, the sleeves were made of wood-pulp paper, which is acidic and therefore damages its contents in the long term. 250 acid-free boxes and 3000 acid-free folders were ordered to substitute the yellowing wood-pulp folders. My work consisted in transferring the contents of each folder, transcribing the written archival description on the outside flap and putting the folders in the acid-free boxes. It was a rather monotonous task so I was fortunate to have the assistance of an Italian university student, Chiara Fasano. Chiara, a language major, was required to do an internship in an English-speaking community to improve her language skills. So we had every reason to chat during the cataloguing, which certainly lightened the task at hand. We used 195 boxes and more than 2000 folders.

When I had finished with the *Scrittura*, I began work on the *Membrane*, this time without Chiara. The *Membrane* series contains 446 parchment scrolls dating from 1280 to 1971.

More than 300 of these are related to the English Hospice (pre-1579); the others are related to the College. The most significant parchment for the College is Gregory XIII's *Bull of Foundation*, dated 1 May 1579. Although the *Membrane* were listed in the Bertram Catalogue (1977), our goal was to create a new more detailed catalogue using CALM software.

The Archives were officially re-opened to the public in 2008 and last year welcomed approximately 50 scholars from various countries including Australia, the United States, England, France, Germany and Spain.

Several scholars who were busy producing articles for the *Non Angli, sed Angeli* catalogue also used the archives, including Dr Carol Richardson, Prof. Eamon Duffy and Dr Judith Champ. Dott.ssa Maria Pia D'Orazio of the *Soprintendenza per i Beni Storici, Artistici ed Etnoantropologici del Lazio*, who was the supervisor of the restoration project, combed through documents in hope of finding new information about the Tribune frescoes – specifically whether one of the account books might reveal who had painted the frescoes in the 1880s. Unfortunately the documents produced no such evidence. For the moment, this will remain an unsolved mystery.

New Guidebook

The old College guidebook needed modernizing and the inauguration of the *Non Angli, sed Angeli* exhibition seemed the appropriate occasion to produce a new version. The significant innovation was to be that the guidebook would be in both English and Italian, and much more extensively illustrated. Once again, as with the catalogue, I was asked to proofread the text and provide images that could be used for the illustrations. It was a group effort, with Barbara Donovan's daughter Paola hard at work on the translation into Italian, Sr Mary Joseph McManamon double checking the text and Fr Andrew Headon editing the whole production. The result is lovely and will make it easier for visitors to appreciate the history and beauty of the College.

With my time at the College coming to a close, I would like to thank the people who have made my work here so enjoyable and professionally stimulating: Sr Mary Joseph McManamon, Fr Andrew Headon and Mgr Nicholas Hudson. Dr Carol Richardson generously shared her extensive knowledge of the College archives with me and her writing on Pozzo has been an important source for this article. Mgr Philip Carroll supported my spirits in tackling the tasks at hand. Thanks also to the many student archivists who helped me carry out my work throughout these past years.



Iris Jones is a professional archivist originally from the United States but has lived in Italy for most of her life. She completed her professional training at the Archivio di Stato di Roma and the Archivio Segreto Vaticano and has worked at the Archivio Doria Pamphili in Rome and the Vatican's Archivio della Fabbrica di S. Pietro. She became the VEC archivist in September 2005.

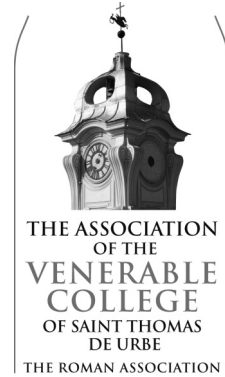
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Deum Creatorem Venite Adoremus

Fr David Brown, S.J.

Why does the Vatican have an astronomical observatory?" This is perhaps the most common question posed to me in my capacity as a Jesuit priest and astronomer working at the Vatican Observatory ("*Specola Vaticana*") in Rome. The number of times the question has been asked has led me to believe that there are three underlying concerns giving rise to it: first, in a world fraught with many problems (hunger, homelessness, poverty, war, disease, etc.), some believe that the Church should direct its resources toward more urgent causes; second, others believe that religion and science are fundamentally incompatible; third, many people do not realise that the Vatican Observatory exists nor what it is. Addressing these concerns not only answers the question, but also reveals much about the Catholic Christian view of science.

Before addressing the points above, it is necessary to describe the Vatican Observatory. Many are surprised to discover that it is a fully functioning astronomical institute which performs actual scientific research. Its day-to-day work is academic in nature. It is one of the oldest research institutes and observatories in the world if one considers the collective history of its various incarnations during the last 500 years. It was already an identifiable entity at the time of the reformation of the old Julian calendar which resulted in the production of the new Gregorian calendar in 1582. This work was commissioned by Pope Gregory XIII and carried out by many astronomers and mathematicians, among whom was the famous mathematician and Jesuit, Christopher Clavius. However, the Church's interest in astronomy pre-dates the reformation of the calendar: it was already evident in the tradition of astronomical studies in the scholastic curriculum of the great medieval universities of Europe and was seen even earlier in the occasional star-gazing of Benedictine monks from the monasteries of Christendom.

Throughout its long history, the Vatican Observatory has not always been known by its current name nor has it been in the same location. It was once known as the Observatory of the Roman College, when it was located at that location, and at one time it was situated next to the Church of Sant' Ignazio. After the political upheavals of the late 19th century, it was again re-founded by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 under its present title of the Vatican Observatory and stood in the Vatican behind St Peter's Basilica. In 1935, because of light pollution in central Rome, it was moved to the papal summer palace in Castel Gandolfo during the pontificate of Pope Pius XI. For the next 60 years, with two telescopes located on the roof of the Papal Palace itself and another two in the neighbouring Papal Gardens, substantial progress was made in the ongoing astronomical work of the *Specola*. In the 1980s, with these instruments rendered technologically obsolete and also because of encroaching light pollution, a new modern telescope was needed in order to continue the research of the Observatory. Consequently, a new telescope (the VATT



The Vatican Observatory's VATT 1.8-m reflector on Mt Graham, south of Tucson, Arizona. (Photo: Vatican Observatory Foundation)

1.8-m reflector) was built on Mt Graham near Kitt Peak, south of Tucson, Arizona in the USA in 1993. Since that time, the Observatory's work has continued with its headquarters based in Rome and its main research telescope located in Arizona. In 2009, another significant milestone in the history of the Observatory was reached when its Roman headquarters were moved from the Papal Palace in Castel Gandolfo to its new location inside the adjoining Papal Gardens.

The rationale for the existence and maintenance of the Vatican Observatory is three-fold. First, the Observatory exists for the sake of scientific truth, in this case pursued by means of actual astronomical research. In this sense, what the *Specola* does is no different from any other astronomical observatory. It exists to contribute to the deposit of scientific knowledge by probing the depths and mysteries of the cosmos in the hope that we might learn more about the structure and nature of the universe. Of course, some might object that the Vatican should not be in the business of operating an institute whose primary aim is to discover only physical truth as opposed to theological truth. After all, if a particular work of the Church is not explicitly theological, why should the Church be interested in it? Then again, in so far as the truth is concerned, even if it is "only" physical truth and not explicitly religious, it is still the truth.

"In a way, it is an act of adoration of the God who is the author of all Truth."

This fact alone makes it worthy of pursuit. All truth comes from God who is "The Truth" ("I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" as the Lord Jesus Christ tells us in the Gospel of John), even if He is not mentioned explicitly. In the end, the quest for scientific truth which can be seen as studying the effects of the Creator is a probing into the mind of God, the First Cause, and into His beauty. In a way, it is an act of adoration of the God who is the author of all Truth.

A plaque located on the exterior of one of the telescope domes on the Papal Palace summarises this well: *Deum Creatorem Venite Adoremus* ("Come, let us adore God the Creator"). Admittedly there are other pressing concerns facing humanity at the moment, but it is equally clear that man's desire to know about reality and truth is crucial to help him find his own place in this life; to maintain his hope and sense of purpose in the midst of the many problems in the world which crush the spirit.

It is also undeniably clear that man's destiny and future lie in the cosmos which astronomy seeks to study. If there is any one science which gives a glimpse of the future frontiers into which man is to venture and which is capable of leading him to the frontiers of knowledge and reality, it is astronomy. This is a science which provokes within him thoughts about his meaning and existence and for this reason it is important for the Church to continue its support of it.

A second reason for which the Vatican Observatory exists is for the promotion of a healthy dialogue between the world of science and the world of faith. This is necessary to counter the misconception that the two worlds are fundamentally incompatible. The very fact that a Vatican-owned astronomical research institution has existed for approximately 500 years is a testament to the fact that this misconception is not true. From the establishment of the great medieval universities to the ongoing research of the *Specola*, the Church has shown again and again that it takes the pursuit of reason seriously. Moreover, the Church reveals its goodness by understanding that reason and faith interact well together; that they are mutually complementary.

This is not just theory. Through the work of institutions like the Observatory and also the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, the Church engages in the pursuit of reason by participating in the same actual research as other scientists. In so doing, the Church gives witness to a living interplay

between the spheres of science and faith, characterised by the respect and appreciation that each can offer to the other. One consequence of this mutual enrichment and a positive encounter between faith and reason, is that science does not imply atheism. If anything, questions posed by science about the nature of reality easily lead into the realms of philosophy and theology which deal with “meaning of life” issues. Rather than being opposed, faith and science work in harmony.

The Church also seeks to engage the world of science through institutions such as the *Specola Vaticana* so that it may have a more credible voice in the scientific debates of the day, many of which have ethical and existential implications. Such credibility depends on the Church’s ability to speak with competence in the scientific community having the same credentials.

Finally, another rationale for the existence of the *Specola Vaticana* addresses the needs of people within the Church itself. Christians have scientific questions. They are filled with curiosity with respect to scientific discoveries, especially in astronomy, on an almost daily basis. They have questions they want to ask and they deserve answers. On one hand, it is necessary that the Church engage with human wonder and curiosity by providing an informed response that respects the intellect. It must do justice to the fullness of the truth. It must maintain the integrity of science. On the other hand, by means of instruments such as the *Specola*, the Church can demonstrate to the faithful that we fear nothing from science done properly, that science neither threatens nor diminishes the full integrity of our Christian faith, and that being a good Catholic does not imply the rejection of good science (or vice versa). Once people become aware of the existence of Church institutions like the *Specola*, they are pleasantly surprised at the level of profundity with which our Catholic faith can engage the full scope of science at its best, for the Catholic tradition has always had at its heart the idea of “grace building on nature.” Belief in God in no way impedes science; rather, it ennobles and complements it. In so doing, it speaks of what is noblest in the Catholic Christian tradition.

Should the Church have an astronomical observatory and be a patron of the sciences? The answer is a resounding “yes.” Gazing at the stars at night, man perceives the splendour of the cosmos and glimpses something of the truth of his reality, a reality ultimately based in God who is the Truth. In so doing, man ponders his meaning, his reality, his destiny, and the hope that sustains him. This was especially true of St Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus. O’Callaghan observes: “The greatest consolation he received was to look at the sky and the stars, which he often did and for a long time, because as a result he felt within himself a very great desire to serve our Lord.”¹



Fr David Brown S.J. was born in New Orleans and entered the Society of Jesus in 1991. He was ordained in 2002. He completed a DPhil in astrophysics at Oxford University and was assigned to the Vatican Observatory in 2008. His field of research is the evolution of stars with an emphasis on binary stars.

¹ O’CALLAGHAN, Joseph, Translator, *Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola* (New York: Harper Torch Books, Harper and Row, 1974) p. 25.



Emeriti Among Us

Stories from five former College Rectors

Sr Mary Joseph McManamon, OSB

One of the highlights of the festivities for the re-opening of the College church in October 2009 was a reunion of the last five Rectors Emeriti of the English College: Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Mgr George Hay, Mgr John Kennedy, Mgr Adrian Toffolo and Mgr Pat Kilgarriff. Informal meals were often the setting for storytelling of "the good old days" and today's students must have been either edified or horrified at the antics that went on in these hallowed halls. Like any institution of higher learning, the College has had its share of "characters," not the least of whom later found themselves serving on the staff!

When they were gathered together here last autumn, I asked each of them to write down some event from their term as Rector to share with us in these pages. I am sure they all have more than one significant memory from their years as Rector of the VEC but they each offer here one or two of their favourites.

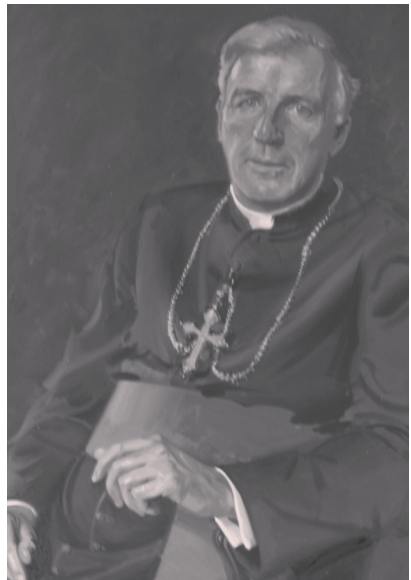
Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor (1972-1977)

I will never forget the day Cardinal Cormac received his red hat in February 2001. It was my first day as the new Librarian at the VEC. My introduction to the College was a day of great celebration and I had the honour of meeting the Cardinal. Not a bad way to start a new job!

In 1977 the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Donald Coggan, came to Rome to visit Pope Paul VI. He stayed at the English College and, of course, we made him most welcome.

On the final day of the visit, there was to be a formal meeting with the Pope to sign a Joint Statement. Rather unfortunately, the Archbishop gave a sermon the night before in which he stated a number of things which were controversial, including the need for married priests in the Catholic Church and one or two other matters. This caused a flurry in the Vatican and Cardinal Willebrands, who was President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, was asked to change the Joint Statement at the last minute.

I remember Cardinal Willebrands arriving at the College the next morning in an anxious state to begin negotiating with the Archbishop a new text



(Photo: Tom Cunnah)

for the Pope and himself to sign. The negotiations were difficult and involved the Cardinal speaking to the Cardinal Secretary of State in the Vatican from time to time. Most unfortunately, the College phones were out of order and some discussions with the Cardinal Secretary of State had to take place from the bar next door. It was all very hectic and lasted for most of the morning.

Finally, a text was agreed. By this time it was 11.45 a.m. and the service was due to begin at 12 o'clock. The Cardinal and the Archbishop were rushed downstairs with their small entourage and had a papal escort to drive them swiftly to the Vatican. I clambered into my modest Fiat *Venti Quattro*, and managed to get in the slipstream of the convoy. I hurtled through Rome to Vatican City and parked my car along with the other cars in the Piazza San Damaso.

I went in for the short ceremony but when I came out my car had disappeared. The Swiss Guards had been angry to see my poor car next to the papal convoy but had no means of moving it because I had the key in my pocket! So six Swiss Guards had removed my car by lifting it and putting it out of sight on the other side of the Piazza. I earned many black marks for my carelessness in not giving them the key!

Anyway, I arrived back at the College, and while the Archbishop gave a press conference in the Salone, I accompanied Cardinal Willebrands and he sat down in my office. He looked tired, was perspiring and was clearly quite exhausted. I remember saying to him, "Your Eminence, I think what you need is a stiff gin and tonic." The Cardinal nodded gratefully. The College is always happy to offer succour in times of need!

Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor

Archbishop Emeritus of Westminster

This had occurred at the end of April 1977. There were quite a number of Anglican bishops staying at the College with the Archbishop of Canterbury and many wrote thoughtful notes to Mgr Cormac to thank him, staff and students for their kindness and hospitality. And each of them mentioned how exhausting it had been. Now we know why!

Materials in the College Archives from this event include a list of those who had been invited to the various dinners, including the Rev. Dr Harry R. Smythe, who was the Director of the Anglican Centre at the time. In thanks for Mgr Cormac's hospitality, Dr Smythe sent six bottles of "a very good wine."

* * *

Mgr George Hay (1977-1984)

In 1977 Mgr Cormac was appointed Bishop of Arundel & Brighton. His successor was Fr George Hay, whose term as Rector saw the election of Pope John Paul II. The Pope visited the College in 1979 and reminded the Rector and students that he had attempted to find accommodation at the VEC when he came to Rome as a student but was turned away because the College had no room for him. The College will never live it down!

A great privilege and a wonderful memory for me was the visit of Pope John Paul II to the College. He celebrated Mass with us in the College church, visited parts of the College and was our guest at supper. During the meal, I sat on one side of him and Archbishop Worlock on the other. He wasn't easy to make casual conversation with but fortunately for me the

Archbishop did most of the talking. Sadly I have little memory of what we talked about. I was somewhat overawed.

Another fond memory was my 50th birthday, marred only by being taken to court for running an "illicit kitchen." At that time, we still took in pilgrims during the summer. Unfortunately, several acquired serious food-poisoning from tinned mackerel and were hospitalised, although all recovered. This led to an inspection of the kitchens, which were in good order, but it was discovered that we lacked the required permit for feeding tourists. Hence the prosecution.

Rather apprehensively, I went to the court accompanied by an advocate. In due course my case was called and we went before the judge. We had been told that he was in a bad mood. Another judge had been shot by ruffians and when my judge had asked for protection, it had been refused. We feared the worst: a fine, the closing of the kitchen, hardly imprisonment? The judge first asked to look at my passport. He saw that I had been born near Peshawr in Pakistan. Coincidentally, he had recently been on a visit there. He remarked on the beauty and interest of Peshawr – and dismissed the case. How fortunate I was to have been born in Pakistan! I returned to celebrate my birthday and my deliverance with DBLs in the Common Room.



(Photo: Tom Cunnah)

Mgr George Hay

* * *

Mgr John Kennedy (1984-1991)

I think that in my first few years at the VEC I heard more stories about Mgr Kennedy's term as Rector than I did of any other...

There are numerous experiences I take pleasure in recalling during my time as Rector of the College. However, there are two defining incidents I would like to share. Both concern language and communication.

The first significant moment occurred shortly after I arrived in February 1984. After lunch one day, I called the year group who had just received the Ministry of Lectorate into the chapel and expressed my concern about the quality of their reading in the Liturgy. They did not take kindly to my criticism. I insisted that the standard was not good enough. I had a passion about the Word: it should be heard and heard clearly. So they were made to practise their reading.

A further development was that I invited into the College an erstwhile colleague of mine named Pat Yates, who was an expert in teaching student teachers oral communication. She came every year toward the end of Lent to prepare those students who were due to read at the Easter Vigil. She taught them to speak clearly according to natural speech rhythms, without idiosyncrasy.

I think it was Easter 1985 when the fruit of her work was first evidenced. I had never heard the prophecies of the Saturday night vigil spoken so authoritatively, clearly or sensitively. It is my conviction that she transformed the culture of public speaking in the College.

Her secret, testified by more than one student, was not so much that she taught them technique or breathing skills or how to project their voices – although she did all of these – but she confronted them with a question that was crucial for those whose life would be shaped by proclaiming the Word, namely: “Do you really want to communicate?”

The second defining moment also relates to language. On becoming Rector, I was determined that since the language at the Greg had changed from Latin to Italian, I would do all in my power to ensure that each student was able to speak and understand Italian. I remembered with shame that I'd spent seven years in Rome as a student without extending my proficiency in Italian much beyond a holiday vocabulary. So it wasn't just a question of the students acquiring some fluency; I was determined to lead them from the front!

I went off to Chorley where the Lancashire College offered a two week intensive one-to-one language course. The course was so satisfactory that I negotiated for the Lancashire College to put on an introductory course for the First Year students. When people asked me where the course was to be held – Oxford, Perugia or London – I took some pleasure in informing them that it was to be in Chorley. Cardinal Hume was so intrigued that he booked himself in at the Monastery in Leyland and subscribed for the same intensive course.

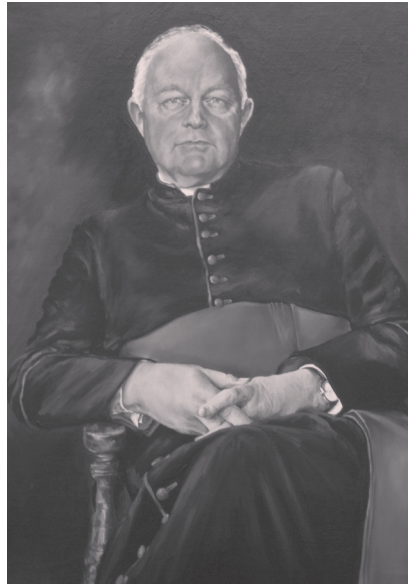
As time went on, I sensed that my efforts were bearing fruit for the students. Yet, despite the intensive course, my weekly lessons and reading the *Il Messaggero* every day, I seemed to be making little progress.

Then suddenly, out of the blue, one bright spring morning, the breakthrough arrived. I was walking up the Via dei Giubbonari and entered one of their innumerable drapery stores to buy a hankie. I looked at one or two, and then found myself actually asking the shop assistant spontaneously, in Italian, without working out in my head tense or case or number or gender. They say that, when inspired, the artist feels taken over by his muse; likewise, I felt taken over by the Italian language itself.

My memorable phrase: “*Me ne dia due!*” A dative, a particle and subjunctive. I was so surprised and ecstatic that I ran out of the shop and did three somersaults.

Alas, this was an isolated case and the muse never visited me again. But I retain my love of Italian, especially Dante and imperfect subjunctives. And to think – without Chorley it probably wouldn't have happened.

Mgr John Kennedy



(Photo: Tom Cunnah)

* * *

Mgr Adrian Toffolo (1991-1999)

The First Library (Reference and Reading Room) is home to the Portrait Gallery of the Former Rectors, from the re-opening of the College in 1818 to the present day. Mgr Toffolo's portrait was hung in the library a few days before the "Official Unveiling" ceremony was due to take place, and his portrait hangs directly across from my desk. On the day before the unveiling, the portrait not yet having been "veiled," I was sitting at my desk when the library door opened very slowly and a head appeared, peeking around the open door. It was Mgr Toffolo himself, in the flesh. He smiled and said, "Sister, you don't know me—" at which point I interrupted him, "Oh, but I do!" and pointed to the portrait hanging directly across from where I sat. He looked at the portrait, then at me, and said, "Oh, poor you ... having to look at that all day, every day!"



(Photo: Tom Cunnah)

I am sure that the memories of any Rector will centre round the colleagues and students with whom he worked, but not too many of those memories may be written about. He probably also will recall the various problems with which he had to deal.

One of the quasi-miraculous things about the College is its survival of many crises, many of them financial. In the early 1990s, the College was once again in dire straits. At that time, Archbishop Michael Bowen of Southwark received notification that a lady had died leaving her not inconsiderable estate to him, to be used according to the wishes of the Holy Father. Archbishop Bowen, a great friend of the College, informed us that when writing to the Pope about this legacy, he would suggest that the needs of the English College be considered. This knowledge allowed us to do two things: first, when called to the Vatican to speak about those needs, I could be fully prepared to argue our case; second, it allowed us to send a memo directly to the Pope himself, informing him of our current financial crisis.

In due course, the Vatican Treasury prepared its report and sent it up to the Holy Father. It recommended that the English College be given 25% of the money. Pope John Paul II crossed out "25" and wrote "50." As a result, we received £2,000,000 which gave us the possibility of an investment that would provide steady income for years to come.

When I remember my time in Rome between 1991-99 and think of so many people connected with that time, I will never forget the invaluable help given to us by Pope John Paul II and Archbishop Bowen.

Mgr Adrian Toffolo

* * *

Mgr Patrick Kilgarriff (1999-2004)

There were two things Mgr Pat loved to do on his free days in Rome: walk in the hills of the Roman Campagna and visit bookshops. Occasionally he would come to the library, or we would run into each other on the street and he would tell me excitedly about his latest acquisition. I am sure he misses Rome but he was blessed by being sent to a parish near the Malvern Hills where he can continue his country walks.

My first post in the College began in 1985 when I arrived as Spiritual Director. I worked for seven years, guiding individual students in their search to discover God's will for them. They came with their different experiences to follow a call to the priesthood. I have always been impressed with the generous and serious men who came to test their vocation. I remember one man saying to me, after a lengthy period of discernment, "During these summer holidays, I have finally decided that I want to be a priest."

After serving as a parish priest at St Osburg's in Coventry, I returned as Rector in 1999. My own delight in the priesthood found great encouragement and joy in the knowledge that God still calls men to follow him. One must be persevering and brave; not be put off too much by criticism or difficulty; and listen to superiors. This calls for humility and openness. The desire to be a shepherd is fundamental. A good shepherd needs to be a balanced man. He needs to be trained in Catholic teaching and tuned in, every day, to what the Lord is saying to him. At an Ordination to the priesthood it is often the Rector who answers the question, "Do you know him to be worthy?" I loved that responsibility when I knew for certain that the deacon had wrestled with this question himself. My "yes" was simply an echo of his.

Another special memory: one evening, I was a guest at the United States Embassy to the Holy See, where the octogenarian Ambassador, Mrs Lindy Boggs, had arranged a dinner for Senator George Mitchell and Dr Seamus Mallon, some time after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. I could not find my name on the table plan and I began to wonder if I had forgotten to accept the invitation. Someone came and told me that I was at the Ambassador's table with the Rector of the Irish College, Mgr John Fleming, the Irish and British Ambassadors and the two distinguished guests.

Dr Mallon spoke of some of the difficulties of the nationalist community during the Troubles and Senator Mitchell talked of the protracted negotiations. During one impasse, all the representatives had been taken to London to the American Ambassador's residence in Regents Park. They spent the weekend together and were asked to enjoy each other's company talking about anything but the negotiations. Two participants on opposite sides of



(Photo: Tom Cunnah)

the debate found they shared a love for opera. I asked the Senator if he had known Ireland before going to the North as a facilitator. He said, "No." Then he added, "Ethnically I am Irish." His grandparents had emigrated with their family, but both of them had died shortly afterwards in a cholera epidemic. The young children were adopted by a Lebanese family. They decided to change their Arabic name and chose "Mitchell" from the phone book as a new family name.

Senator Mitchell enjoyed considerable esteem in Britain and Ireland as a skilled negotiator. Sometimes Irish well-wishers would tell him where the Mitchells originated.

"I never had the heart to disillusion them," he said.

Mgr Pat Kilgarriff



Sr Mary Joseph McManamon, OSB, has been Librarian at the VEC since 2001 and has served as Guest Co-ordinator since 2002.



Spiritual Conference

Given to the VEC during the Rectorship of Mgr George Hay

Mgr Bryan Chestle

Editor's Note: *On a sunny Holy Thursday morning while most of the other seminarians were at the Chrism Mass at St Peter's, I was interviewing Mgr Chestle for The Venerable. After several extensive interviews and many drafts, however, I was still dissatisfied with the article. No doubt sensing my frustration, Mgr Chestle gave me a copy of a Spiritual Conference he delivered to the College community some years ago. I read it - and promptly deleted my article. Below is Mgr Chestle's Spiritual Conference which speaks for itself of the kind of priest he is.*

A recent edition of the *Clergy Review* has an article on The Unification Church, also known as the Moonies, and the young people who join it:

While modern society allows free discussion of sexual matters, it is not so liberal in the discussion of spiritual experiences, and yet many young people admit to having had some kind of spiritual experience – often a vision or strong feeling of the presence of God or Jesus. Despite this they never tell anyone of their experience although it often affects their life in a very fundamental manner. People are afraid of being laughed at or thought mad. You can announce to your peer group whom you slept with last night but to announce that Our Lady appeared to you is to risk ridicule or embarrassment.

There is a taboo on speaking about spiritual experiences. It is “not done.” And yet speaking of such things may perhaps be of help to the people who have such experiences, and a sort of comfort for the people listening. Of course, this presupposes that spiritual experiences are possible in the first place, and many say they are not, that they must be delusions. The idea that grace can be experienced is a subject of which theologians fight shy. In fact, the whole subject needs study. One only has to look at “Grace, Experience of” in the *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* to see that a lot could be done here.

What I wanted to say in this talk, which after all is only a fill-in until the proper conferences begin again, is based on two things. The first thing is prompted by the photograph of the College staff and students hanging in the Common Room corridor, taken in 1958. If I have counted properly there are 83 students. Of these 83, 16 left before ordination and 67 were ordained. Today, out of those 67, 16 have ceased to work as priests. That is nearly one in four gone. It is easy to explain this away by talking about the Council and the turbulent early 70s. Of course there is some truth in it, but this trickle of resignations still goes on. At least one of the people in that photo left only a year ago to

get married. And then there are the departures, plenty of them, among the people who came after, the people who were here when I came back to Rome in 1969 to work. It is still happening. Of the 12 priests with whom I was teaching before 1969, five have now departed.

What is it that causes this loss, deep down? In my opinion it is sheer loneliness – “it is not good for man to be alone” (Gen 2:18). Here in the College there is always company and support. But what about if you end up in a bleak presbytery somewhere remote, with just the parish priest to talk to? And maybe he is against the younger generation and the only other possibility is the housekeeper? It does happen. What does one do? Where does one turn?

One’s family can help; other priests can help; but only to a point. They can keep you going but life should be more than just keeping going.

All that gloomy stuff is the first thing I wanted to say. The second thing I wanted to say is that I believe that God does not expect his priests, or any of his people for that matter, to go through life just keeping going, gritting their teeth and getting on with the job. What I wanted to say is that I think Jesus wants us to live close to him in knowledge and love.

When we come to learn about Christianity, and are given the gift of faith, we have our first conversion. Our minds are converted to Jesus and his message and we decide to follow him. In the case of ourselves, we feel that he wants us to follow him in a special and exclusive sort of way and give up quite a lot to follow him and do his job. The most significant thing we give up is normal emotional satisfaction. And so what is needed is a second conversion, the conversion of the heart. This usually seems to come very much later.

“What I wanted to say is that I think Jesus wants us to live close to him in knowledge and love.”

I was reading something by a priest desiring to be laicised, someone who studied here and actually came later than 1958, so he is not in that photo. He was saying that when he was a student he never seemed to gain that love of Jesus that the other students had. He never acquired a deep interior life. And now he could no longer stand the interior emptiness and loneliness. He wanted to get out. In fact he was probably quite wrong in imagining that those around him had deep interior lives; however, one did not talk about such things at the time.

The second conversion is the conversion of the heart. In the case of many people, certainly many priests or students for the priesthood, it seems that sooner or later there is a crisis. It may be triggered by a bereavement, or by a serious illness, or by a form of mental depression. The person comes to a point where he feels that he can’t go on by himself. He needs help. He doesn’t know where to turn, what he should do. The main feeling is of helplessness. Proud human self-confidence vanishes. One is no longer master of one’s feelings. It is at times like this that the person is tempted to run for cover, to find consolation somewhere, anywhere. This is the point, I think, when resignations take place. As a phenomenon it is so common that I would say every person should be prepared to experience it. It is a moment when one can give up completely – or compromise and decide to live a mediocre life, doing the bare minimum, gradually falling into hard cynicism which is not going to convert anyone. Or one can decide to stick it out and accept blindly whatever Jesus has in store – whatever the cost.

When I say “what Jesus has in store” I mean that this crisis experience is a normal thing for any Christian – and a certainty for any priest who is honestly trying to do his best and refusing to compromise. This brings us to St John of the Cross and St Teresa of Avila, and also to Jack Dominian, a Catholic medical doctor. It is easy and comforting to say that John of the Cross and Teresa are too high-flown for us – that all that mystical stuff is of no concern. I think that is nonsense.

St John of the Cross says that very many people are drawn into the “desert” but unfortunately very few are prepared to stick it out. He talks of dark nights. They are not necessarily something lofty, reserved for special people.

And when I named Jack Dominian, I meant this: if you read his description of the symptoms of depression, which is so common in middle life, these symptoms are uncannily like the things that John of the Cross says about the dark night. One example: both of them speak of the sufferer losing an awareness of time. Days and weeks go by and one has no recollection of what happened or what one did. So, although depression may not be identical with the dark night, I cannot help feeling that God often uses depression as a part of the dark night, the purpose of which is to purify.

What happens if you persevere and don’t give in? I can only speak from my own experience of depression which came to a head in 1976 and led me to resign from my present job, a resignation I withdrew when I suddenly experienced a cure. The cure I felt was of “going through the looking glass.” It was based on a revelation of love, of the fact that God is love and that love is the meaning of everything. It is hard for me to

“What I experienced for many months was what I would describe as sudden and unexpected onslaughts of the Lord’s love.”

express it clearly. What I experienced for many months was what I would describe as sudden and unexpected onslaughts of the Lord’s love. This never happened at set times or during prayer, but at times, for example, when I was climbing the stairs in the College or typing at my desk in the office. These waves of all-embracing delight never interfered with what I was doing at the time. But they were extremely intense. Sometimes I found myself saying “please stop, go away!” It was as though I would be loved to death, which was wonderful but scary. The bodily senses were not involved but rather the corresponding senses of the soul. So when I read in some book something like “After all, Jesus is absent to our senses” my thoughts were: to the bodily senses OK; but he can make contact in another way if he so desires. The result of these “free gifts” is to put the world and its worries in a better perspective. Everything becomes somehow unified. One goes on living by faith, but one’s experiences confirm one’s faith and are a help for the rest of one’s life. Nothing is ever the same again.

In my life things suddenly began to happen. From having felt completely sad and helpless, I began to feel happy and fulfilled. From hating every cobblestone that I walked over each morning on the way to work, I began to greet them as old friends.

Prayer suddenly became very easy, the prayer of simply being lovingly aware. Jesus ceased being someone known about and became someone known personally, in a way that cannot be put into words: not seen or heard or touched but known as being overwhelmingly

present as a lover. For some time I could do with only three hours of sleep a night; the rest of the time was spent praying. I stopped being grey and pasty and became pink. I began to feel interior heat, so much so that I had to turn off the heater and leave the window open. I became aware of my heart and the heartbeat became very irregular. Yet I felt healthier than I had ever felt in my life. I no longer felt the former more or less permanent tiredness. My heart seemed to expand in my chest so that I thought I could understand what it means in the Bible *Dilatatum est cor meum* (Luke 24:32). I also came to know what is meant in the psalm that says my heart and flesh exult in the living God. Just as illness affects both the body and mind, not just one or the other, so I came to realise that things of the soul overflow into the body too. I came to understand in some way the idea of the Sacred Heart and the picture of it with the flames coming out of the top.

“From hating every cobblestone that I walked over each morning on the way to work, I began to greet them as old friends.”

The presence of Jesus is not something that disturbed my work. I could be aware of his loving embrace and at the same time I could go on typing letters in the office. The loving presence became so strong that it was sometimes frightening. I came to realise that Jesus is not only our lover, but a very demanding lover: he doesn't want to share. He wants all our love.

The transition from helpless and hopeless depression was like passing through a curtain into brilliant light. The effect was decisive and apparently permanent. I would say that in some mysterious way I had become a new person. Doubt of the existence of God is now inconceivable. I never feel alone or abandoned. Of course there are variations in the new feeling of happiness – sometimes more, sometimes less, depending on siroccos and digestion and tiredness. But the basic undertone is deep gladness, contentedness and no worry.

I would like to say something about so-called lights in prayer, which tend to crop up in French spiritual books particularly. I do believe they exist and I can quote two. For me, they are nothing to do with insights received when one is deep in prayer. Not at all. The first was about smoking. For 28 years I smoked, and by 1977 I was up to about 25 a day, even two between breakfast and going to work. In lent 1977 I vaguely thought of giving it up but I knew that I had never managed to get through a single Ash Wednesday or Good Friday without at least one cigarette. I celebrated Mass as usual for the Bridgetines on Ash Wednesday 1977. Towards the end I was purifying the chalice when suddenly an unmistakable interior voice said, “Bryan, why don't you give up cigarettes out of love?” This filled me with a happy feeling and I decided to try. From that moment on I lost all interest in smoking – although I kept some in my pocket for several weeks, just in case. I never felt the slightest urge to light up. I know that voice was not me talking to myself because I have never been able to bring myself to call myself by my name, as in when people say “John you've been an idiot.” It was what I could call a light in prayer – an effective light too.

The second one happened last November 4th. It was a holiday so I decided to say the office of readings in the Martyrs' Chapel for a change. It was Charles Borromeo. The second reading was from one of his sermons to his clergy in Milan. The extract begins by talking

about the priest who knows that he ought to be as pure as the angels and lead a life of integrity but he doesn't take the means: fasting, prayer, avoiding temptations. Now those words seemed to jump off the page as though St Charles was speaking them directly to me. Although I haven't yet done much about reforming, I regard that as a very effective "light in prayer." That is what they mean to me, anyway.

It is difficult to sum up this talk. Perhaps one could say that the priest's life is likely to start off positively but with obstacles of various sorts, plus temptations. As time goes by and routine takes over, the shine goes off things and the temptations get more pressing. There probably comes a crisis point at which one can give up completely; or take refuge in golf or drink or even study. If one refuses to compromise and sticks it out, one suddenly passes through a mysterious barrier and life becomes transformed. Things are never the same again.

One can become an effective instrument of God.



Mgr Bryan Chestle is a member of the Papal Household and lives at the Venerable English College.

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The London Debate: Augustine Confronts the Critics

Fr Joseph Carola, S.J.

London, 2009

In early November 2009 the self-proclaimed “anti-theist” Christopher Hitchens and the actor-author Stephen Fry persuaded the vast majority of 2,100 people gathered for an “Intelligence Squared” debate in London’s Central Methodist Hall that the Catholic Church is *not* a force for the good in the world. As an editorial in *Faith* magazine noted later, “[t]he setting and the motion were subtly but clearly formed effectively to be putting the Church on trial in the popular mind.”¹ This “trial” focused especially upon moral questions. Despite their moral relativism, Hitchens and Fry claimed the high moral ground for themselves as they denounced the confessed sinfulness of the Church’s members throughout history while declaring contemporary moral decadence a moral “good.” Hitchens’ and Fry’s performance further confirmed Alasdair MacIntyre’s observation that a new dark age has descended upon us – an age not utterly dissimilar from the “epoch in which the Roman empire declined into the Dark Ages.”² In the 1980s, MacIntyre concluded that we presently await another St Benedict. Coming in the wake of the dramatic events which marked the dawn of the 21st century, recent “anti-theist” rhetoric lambasting Christianity and the Catholic Church reveals that now some 30 years later we await no less than another St Augustine.

New York, 2001

The world changed on the morning of September 11th, 2001, when terrorists turned commercial aeroplanes into weapons of mass destruction. As the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York collapsed, the popular notion that the United States of America was effectively invulnerable to all but a full-scale nuclear assault, collapsed as well. The two World Wars which had ravaged Europe, Africa and Asia during the previous century had left the American mainland unharmed. But on that late summer morning in 2001, the American east coast suffered a direct attack. 9/11 not only ushered in the 21st century, but also paradigmatically changed how the world – America and beyond – saw itself.

Rome, 410

The ancient world underwent an analogous change 1,600 years ago. On 24 August 410 the city of Rome fell to the barbarian leader Alaric and his Visigoth troops. They pillaged the capital of the ancient world for three days, respecting only the sanctuary which the Christian basilicas offered to those members of the terrorised population fortunate enough to reach them. As refugees poured out of the city, the news of Rome’s fall sent shock waves throughout the Empire.

¹ “The London Debate: Why We Lost and What We Must Learn,” *Faith* 41:7 (2010), p. 2.

² ALASDAIR MACINTYRE, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd edition (Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 263.

Although the emperors had not resided permanently in the imperial palace on the Palatine hill since the days of Constantine the Great, the city itself had retained its quasi-mythical status. Despite the historical record (on two previous occasions, first at the hands of the Gauls and then of the Emperor Nero himself, much of the city had been burned to the ground), the ancient popular mind had considered Rome invincible, even "eternal." Its fall in August of 410 proved it clearly to be otherwise. Those three summer days altered forever how the ancient popular mind envisioned its world.

Accusations against Christianity

5th century pagans quickly blamed their Christian neighbours for the fall of Rome. Had the Christian Emperor Theodosius not proscribed sacrifices offered to the pagan gods some two decades before, their devotees insisted, Rome would not have fallen. The decade following the attacks of September 11th has witnessed an analogous series of accusations made against religion in general, Christianity in particular, Catholicism most especially and the Roman Pontiff above all others. Religious belief is to be blamed for war, hatred and international terrorism. "God is not great," Christopher Hitchens proclaims while Richard Dawkins claims to unmask "the God delusion". Whether hurled by an ancient pagan or a contemporary anti-theist, such accusations inevitably fall at the Catholic Church's front door.

Augustine's response

In the 5th century, Augustine of Hippo masterfully responded to the pagan challenge. During the last two decades of his life, he composed his *magnum opus*, *The City of God*. Augustine's tome covers an array of topics ranging from a critique of ancient philosophy to a theological inquiry into the life to come. But, Augustine explains, "the first duty that presented itself was to reply to those who hold the Christian religion responsible for the wars with which the whole world is now tormented, and in particular for the recent sack of Rome by the barbarians".³ He denounced the moral decadence which had long plagued the Roman people. He especially censured pagan "spectacles marked by lewd utterances and gestures on the part of the actors, with a free rein to every kind of depravity."⁴ "Rome had sunk," he concludes, "into a morass of moral degradation."⁵ Luxuries and material wealth, moreover, proved more deadly than any human enemy. These and other factors led to a pervasive moral relativism. Augustine laments that "the only things which evil men count as evil are those which do not make men evil; and they are not ashamed that when surrounded by the 'good things,' which they approve, they themselves are evil, who approve those 'goods.'"⁶ Augustine's great *apologia* for the Christian faith reveals his deeply pastoral concern for the true good of all men and women. "For since our hope is in God," he explains, "and is therefore a better hope, and more assured, our liberty of speech should be all the greater, when our opponents hold Christ to blame for these present ills, which may turn the minds of the weaker and more foolish away from that

³ AUGUSTINE, *The City of God*, trans. HENRY BETTENSON (London: Penguin Books, 1984), *De ciuitate Dei* II.2 (CCL 47, 35).

⁴ *Ibid.*, II.6 (CCL 47, 39).

⁵ *Ibid.*, II.18 (CCL 47, 50).

⁶ *Ibid.*, III.1 (CCL 47, 65).

City [of God] in which alone there can be a life of eternal happiness.”⁷ Thus he set out to win back the popular mind for the sake of the immortal soul’s salvation. Yet Augustine acknowledged that the battle waged by the City of Man against the City of God would continue until Christ’s return. It wages on even now.

Hitchens’ polemic

Cleverly launching his 21st century attack against the Catholic Church, Hitchens seizes upon Pope John Paul II’s historic purification of ecclesial memory. On the first Sunday of Lent during the Great Jubilee Year 2000, the Pope prayerfully sought divine pardon for sins committed by the Church’s sons and daughters over her bi-millennial history. Hitchens exploits John Paul’s profoundly humble act and presents it as evidence of the Church’s “bad conscience.” He suggests, moreover, that in years to come she would be begging pardon for her present sins. It appears that Hitchens does not refer to a future contrite confession on the part of the Church’s members for having failed to live the Gospel, but rather on the part of the Church herself for having authentically proclaimed it. In truth, it is Christ’s teaching itself which Hitchens would have us ultimately deny.

The International Theological Commission’s document *Memory and Reconciliation*

In its carefully articulated document outlining historically and theologically the correct understanding and execution of an authentic request for pardon, the International Theological Commission had anticipated Hitchens’ ploy. The Commission recognised that such an act of repentance by the Church could be “exploited by the Church’s detractors, who are satisfied to see the Church confirm the prejudices they had of her.”⁸ The Commission, however, along with Pope John Paul II, realised that the spiritual benefits of reconciliation and renewal for the Church far outweighed such possibly calumnious side effects.

One hardly expects Hitchens’ polemical sound-bites to do justice to Catholic theology. It comes as no surprise that Hitchens would fail to see that “the purification of memory can never mean that the Church ceases to proclaim the revealed truth that has been entrusted to her whether in the area of faith or of morals.”⁹ A man who rejects faith and the clarity of vision it brings cannot hope, moreover, to understand how the Church is “at once holy and always in need of purification.”¹⁰ Hitchens fails to grasp the Church’s vocation to be “the encounter of sanctity and of weakness, continually redeemed, and yet always in need of the power of redemption.”¹¹ While Hitchens is quick to point out that Catholics, and in particular the Catholic clergy, are sinners, he does not comprehend that the Church’s holiness is rooted in Christ himself. Hitchens has proven himself to be a master of polemic, not paradox.

⁷ *Ibid.*, III.17 (CCL 47, 82).

⁸ International Theological Commission, *Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2000), 1.4.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. AUSTIN FLANNERY, O.P. (Northport: Costello Publishing Company, 1986), *Lumen Gentium* 8.

¹¹ *Memory and Reconciliation*, 3.1.

The paradox of the Church

The Church is Christ's Body. As Head of the Church, Jesus Christ assures her sanctity and imparts his redeeming grace through her sacraments which he himself ministers through the Church's ordained members. Herein lies the Church's sanctity. Nonetheless, the pilgrim Church on earth remains until the end of time a mixed society of saints and sinners, of wheat among weeds as Christ Jesus himself taught (cf. Matthew 13:24-30).

Even the Church's saints are themselves reconciled sinners healed by Christ's mercy. During their life of earthly pilgrimage, all the Church's individual members – her saints included – always have need to pray “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” (cf. Matthew 6:12). No member of the Church can claim to be without sin (cf. 1 John 1:8). Hence, penance rightly and continually characterises the Christian life. Only in the life to come will the Church be perfectly without stain or wrinkle (cf. Ephesians 5:27). In this regard the immaculately conceived Blessed Virgin Mary, assumed body and soul into heaven, singularly models the celestial Church at the end of time. For the time being, however, as the Church on earth makes her pilgrim way to heaven, penance remains perennially necessary and beneficial. Sorrow for sin with acts of penance precedes mercy and pardon. Christ's mercy, in turn, bears its fruit in holiness. Hence, the sinner reconciled in Christ's mercy is indeed a saint. The locus of this reconciliation, which Christ effects, is the Church. On this account, the Church, whose holiness Christ himself establishes, rightly clasps sinners to her bosom, never despairing of their salvation.¹²

The practice of penance

Obviously, the Catholic practice of penance, along with the mercy and pardon which it entails, has stumped Hitchens. It puzzled ancient pagans and heretics as well. Preaching one Lent on the value of repentance, Augustine observed that

pagans are in the habit of making fun of Christians about the penitential discipline which has been established in the Church; and against some heresies the Catholic Church has held firmly to this truth about doing penance. There have been people, you see, who said that for some sins no penance should be allowed; and they have been excluded from the Church, and declared heretics. Over whatever sins you like to think of, our loving mother the Church never loses her tenderness of heart. So, the pagans too are in the habit of poking fun at us on the point, though they don't really know what they are talking about, because they haven't yet encountered the word of God, which *makes eloquent the tongues of babes* (Wis 10:21).¹³

While Hitchens may not be in good company, he is at least in ancient company. Societies whether ancient or modern, which permit everything and pardon nothing, will always find it difficult to comprehend how the Catholic Church at once loves all sinners while hating their sin and calls them through penance to the pardon and peace which Christ alone can give.

¹² Cf. *Lumen Gentium* 8.

¹³ AUGUSTINE, *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, vol. III/10, trans. EDMUND HILL, O.P. (Hyde Park: New City Press, 1995), s. 352.9 (PL 39, 1559).

The very penitential act, which Hitchens perverts, demonstrates convincingly how the Catholic Church is a force for good in the world. Even though the Church can provide list after list of her abundantly good works over the past two thousand years, she herself realises that such goodness does not arise from any alleged self-sufficiency of her own. She would be the first to admit that she is not a Pelagian force for good in the world. Her goodness, while truly hers, comes not from her, but from Christ. His grace makes the Catholic Church a force for good in the world for the sake of the world to come. Penance, which prunes with the aim of producing more abundant fruit, is, as we have already noted, an essential element of the Church's earthly pilgrimage towards her heavenly homeland. "Now, under the attacks of the world that speak of our sins," Pope Benedict XVI preached in April 2010 to the Pontifical Biblical Commission, "we see that the capacity to repent is a grace. And we see that it is necessary to do penance, that is, to recognise what is wrong in our lives, open ourselves to forgiveness, prepare ourselves for pardon by allowing ourselves to be transformed. The pain of repentance, [that is] of purification and of transformation – this pain is a grace, because it is renewal, it is a work of divine mercy."¹⁴ By perverting penance Hitchens rejects the liberating mercy which it entails. The moral relativist may wish to deny the existence of good and evil, but he cannot by this means escape the reality of sin and its effects. Evil will still weigh heavily upon him. Christ alone liberates us from the power of sin and death, and he does so through his Body, the Church, and her sacraments. That her members have need of such liberation is no surprise, for they recognise that it is within the Church that such forgiveness is to be found. In the end, there is no greater force for good in the world than the grace of Christ which flows forth mercifully from his Church.

The scandal of clerical sin

Such sinfulness was not unknown to Augustine who once in his own monastery had to deal with accusations of unwanted sexual advances lodged by a priest and a young monk against one another. He addressed the scandal and his handling of the matter in an open letter to the clergy and laity of the Church in Hippo. His counsel remains as pertinent today as it was 1,600 years ago.

Alluding to Matthew 24:12-13,¹⁵ the Bishop of Hippo advises his flock:

It is evident, of course, that these things do not happen in the Church without grave sadness on the part of the saints and the faithful. May [the Lord Jesus], nonetheless, console us who foretold all these things and admonished us not to grow cold because of the abundance of injustice, but to persevere up to the end in order that we might be saved.¹⁶

On behalf of "those who rejoice over these sorrows of ours," the Bishop enlists the good will and prayers of the faithful. Yet his dove-like innocence does not diminish his serpentine wisdom.

¹⁴ BENEDICT XVI, *Homily for the Eucharistic Concelebration with the Members of the Pontifical Biblical Commission*, 15 April 2010, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100415_pcb_en.html. The Italian original reads: "Adesso, sotto gli attacchi del mondo che ci parlano dei nostri peccati, vediamo che poter fare penitenza è grazia. E vediamo che è necessario far penitenza, cioè riconoscere quanto è sbagliato nella nostra vita, aprirsi al perdono, prepararsi al perdono, lasciarsi trasformare. Il dolore della penitenza, cioè della purificazione, della trasformazione, questo dolore è grazia, perché è rinnovamento, è opera della misericordia divina."

¹⁵ Matthew 24:12-13 (RSV Catholic Edition): "And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved."

¹⁶ AUGUSTINE, *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, vol. II/1, trans. ROLAND TESKE, S.J. (Hyde Park: New City Press, 2001), ep. 78.6 (CSEL 34/2, 340).

Citing Psalm 69:12,¹⁷ he goes on to explain:

After all, for what else do they sit there and what else do they aim at but that, when any bishop or cleric or monk or nun has fallen, they believe that all of them are like that, spread it about, and argue that it is true, though all of them cannot be shown to be like that? And, nonetheless, when some married woman is found to be an adulteress, they do not throw out their own wives, nor do they accuse their mothers. But when some crime, even if it is not true, is spoken of or when a real crime is revealed concerning some of those who make a profession of holiness, they insist, make every effort, and strive that people believe this about all of them.¹⁸

Concluding his letter Augustine openly confesses:

before the Lord our God, who is witness to my soul, that from the time I began to be a servant of God, just as I have with difficulty come to know any better persons than those who have made progress in monasteries, so I have not come to know worse people than those who have fallen in monasteries. As a result I think that the Apocalypse says of this, *The righteous will become more righteous, and the impure will further become impure* (Rv 22:11). Hence, even if we are saddened by some filth, we are, nonetheless, also consoled by many jewels. Do not, then, because of the watery waste that offends your eyes despise the olive press which fills the medicine chest of the Lord with the fruit of clear oil. May the mercy of the Lord our God guard you, my most beloved brethren, in his peace against all the attacks of the enemy.¹⁹

The call to penance for the sake of renewal

A thoroughly Augustinian Benedict presently sits upon the Chair of St Peter. Pope Benedict XVI has tirelessly laboured for the reform of the clergy and the renewal of the Church which such a reform entails. To that end, in his letter of 19 March 2010 to the Catholics of Ireland, he calls the Church to practise penance for our common spiritual good. His words are valid not only for the Church in Ireland, but for the Universal Church as well. They come as a salutary balm. Even though others may hostilely attempt to exploit our penitential practice, we persevere in it. For we recognise that such penance done in faith, hope and love is the graced path to renewal. Indeed, it lies before us as a luminous path in an ominously dark age.



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¹⁷ Psalm 69:12 (RSV Catholic Edition): "I am the talk of those who sit in the gate, and the drunkards make songs about me."

¹⁸ AUGUSTINE, ep. 78.6 (CSEL 34/2, 340-341).

¹⁹ AUGUSTINE, ep. 78.9 (CSEL 34/2, 345).



“When small stones move, landslides can happen.”

A Conversation with Lord Alton of Liverpool

Matthew O’Gorman

En route to Café Farnese we pop over to the kiosk in search of a British newspaper. It is general election time and my companion is eager to find out the latest developments. Being a member of the House of Lords, David Alton is not allowed to vote, yet this does not mean he lacks interest in the outcome. Neither does the end of parliamentary business signal a break in his work as a public servant: tomorrow he joins the British ambassador for meetings at the Vatican and then moves on to Vienna to address a conference on the relationship between Islam and Christianity.

As we sit down for coffee I learn about the many issues he campaigns on, from the plight of street-trafficked children in Brazil to human rights abuses in Burma and North Korea. It makes me think that while many Catholics are grateful for his witness on the abortion issue they might be unaware of his work in these other areas. In the last year alone, he has travelled to places such as China and Tibet to raise the plight of those persecuted for their religious and political beliefs. Some years previously he visited Sudan to tell of the abuses in Darfur and the use of child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Born in the East End of London to an Irish mother and English father, Lord Alton had a happy but hectic childhood. His family had to be re-housed in a spill-over estate which he describes



Lord Alton speaks to a packed Common Room during the Wiseman Lecture last April. (Photo: Tom Cunnah)

as a common experience for many at that time. He becomes animated when describing his education by Jesuits at Campion School, Hornchurch, for which he feels greatly indebted. From that education sprang a desire to become involved in politics which he acted on by writing to the leader of the Liberal Party at the age of 17, expressing his desire to join and help. His connection with Liverpool began when he became a student at Christ's College, studying Divinity and History with the intention of becoming a teacher, a profession he began to pursue first in Kirkby and then with special needs children. A career in politics, however, was launched upon being elected in 1972, while still a student, to Liverpool City Council. He became the city's Deputy Leader and Housing Chairman. In 1979 he was elected to represent the constituency of Liverpool-Edge Hill in Westminster at the age of 27. He was known as the "baby of the house" upon arrival and entered political life with the biggest ever swing of the vote, 38%, and with 64% of constituents ticking the box next to his name on the ballot paper.

Within a few weeks of arriving in Westminster he received a letter from two nurses at Whiston General Hospital, Merseyside, who wrote to explain how they had helped to baptise a baby in the course of an abortion. Lord Alton admits to doubting the truth of the story at first but upon meeting the women and speaking to friends in the medical profession, he became convinced of their honesty. It motivated him to assist the pro-life cause and he became closely involved with the pro-life movement. In the late 1980s he led efforts to bring about abortion law reform through a private member's bill to reduce the upper time limit for abortions. While Parliament decided to "talk out" his bill (thereby denying it the time needed for it to become law) MPs eventually voted to reduce the upper time limit from 28 to 24 weeks.

They also, however, removed any time limit restrictions for abortions carried out on the grounds of disability; thus, since 1990 in the United Kingdom it has been legal to abort a child up to and during birth if he or she is *suspected* of having a "serious" disability. This was a great disappointment for the pro-life movement and for Lord Alton, yet this campaign served to raise awareness about what is involved in an abortion and the suffering it can entail for women. The campaign produced 1 million postcards carrying the image of an eighteen week-old unborn child sucking its thumb ("180,000 abortions are carried out every year") and the interest this created has meant it is still an important political issue in the UK.



Lord Alton at the podium. (Photo: Tom Cunmah)

His outspoken witness on the topic did not, however, win him friends within his own party. Shortly after the general election of 1992 at the party's annual conference in Harrogate, a motion was passed for the party to adopt a "pro-choice" policy in its manifesto. Although Lord Alton was given assurances that he would be allowed a free vote if abortion were raised again in the House, he could not, in good conscience, continue to be a member of a party which had officially committed itself to deny any protection to the unborn child in law. He explains that at the same party conference the Liberal Democrats passed a motion on animal welfare which gave protection to goldfish sold at fairgrounds. With a marked seriousness in his voice he explains that pointing out this perverse irony was the response he gave to journalists and TV reporters when they asked him why he decided to resign.

One of the things I notice, as we discuss these matters, is the great degree to which Lord Alton draws upon the wisdom and witness of priests and religious to help sustain his own vocation as a politician. He is fond of Blessed John Henry Newman's words: "We are not born for ourselves, but for our kind, for our neighbour, for our country." He chose to quote these words in his lecture to the Wiseman Society at the English College on 30th April. The event became standing-room only and was greatly appreciated by the seminarians, priests, religious and lay people who came from across Rome to fill the Common Room. It also demonstrated how much priests and those who aspire to the priesthood are interested in and are inspired by politicians with the courage to witness to the Gospel in the public square.

The power of Lord Alton's witness lies in the diverse nature and great number of causes he champions. He reminded us, in the words of Dr Martin Luther King that "an abuse of freedom anywhere is a threat to freedom everywhere." He went on to describe the abuses suffered by the Dalits ("Untouchables") in India, the 200,000 North Koreans forced to work in gulags and the 6 million people killed during the conflict in the DRC over the past fifteen years. I suggest to him that such examples of suffering must make one feel overwhelmed by the task at hand. Can our own efforts achieve anything? He responds, "When small stones move, landslides can happen." To those preparing to further the Church's mission in Western societies, he said that everyone is called to speak out against a culture which is willing to permit the killing of the most vulnerable. To proclaim the beauty of the Church's teaching and provide practical alternatives to abortion, embryo research and euthanasia, will be to create a new culture of life based on a correct scale of values. Such a culture promotes genuine equality by asserting that the dignity of each human being resides in the truth that they are loved by God, not whether they are useful or wanted by others in a particular situation.

It is clear, however, that this proposed revolution has many obstacles in its path; particularly the secularist campaign to make religion a private matter divorced from public policy making. The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales recently spoke of the need for faith to inform politics in their election document *Choosing the Common Good*. Expressing his thoughts on how this is best achieved, Lord Alton holds up William Wilberforce and the anti-slavery movement as salutary reminders of the possibility of achieving positive political change. Such political change was preceded by a cultural change prompted by a renewal in religious fervour. Today, we are again in need of renewal through the conversion of hearts to Jesus Christ and it is this that will create a greater sensitivity to the needs of our neighbour. We talk about William Gladstone (former Prime Minister and Liberal Party leader), a figure much admired by Lord Alton for the reason that his faith informed his politics and was the driving force behind his presence in Westminster. It is not for the party or the plaudits, but for the Lord that we labour in the parliamentary vineyard.

"The priest is not a politician, nor the politician a priest, yet both can help each other."

For those working as priests and aspiring to become priests, I ask how they can help in supporting the work of politicians committed to serving the common good. The priest is not a politician, nor the politician a priest, yet both can help each other, he suggests. As the Bishops encouraged us in their recent document, it is important for parishioners to be informed of Church

teaching on important issues. I explain that priests do not always feel confident in being able to speak about abortion to parishioners. Lord Alton empathises: "I often feel anxious myself as I get up to speak." This is where other organisations can help. Pro-life charities such as LIFE offer practical help to women in crisis pregnancy and educate women and men to address publicly the abortion issue in a sensitive and informed manner. What is counter-productive, as many priests well know, is a finger-wagging and guilt-inducing approach that is insensitive to the fact that many women and men in the congregation have suffered from the effects of an abortion. "We have had 7 million abortions in the UK so there will always be someone in the audience who will have been affected." The wounds they bear need to be healed. This will take place not through silence but by opening the question gently and affirmatively.

Another difficulty for both priests and lay people, I suggest to Lord Alton, is that they receive too much conflicting literature from different organisations. It is confusing and can cause one to opt to do nothing. He states: "I know that it drives many priests to distraction when they receive conflicting information; if it's any help, it drives parliamentarians mad too!" There are three pro-life organisations which work with the All Party Pro Life Group in Westminster: LIFE, Right to Life and CARE. They co-ordinate their activities with MPs and peers. Alluding to the current state of the movement, he invokes Scripture: "a house divided against itself cannot stand." If we are to win the forthcoming battles on euthanasia, Lord Alton sees an urgent need for unity between pro-life groups. He hopes that, after the dust has settled following the election, the Bishops' Conference may be able to negotiate and secure greater accountability of pro-life organisations. An alliance, formed and approved, would provide consistent, unified and authoritative advice on what to do and how to help.



Matthew O'Gorman is a third year seminarian for the Archdiocese of Southwark and studies theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

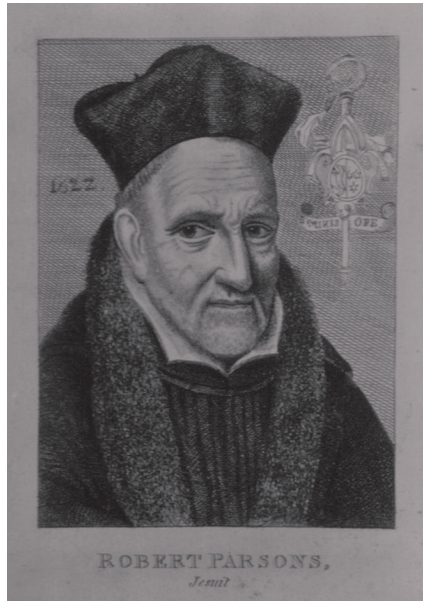


The Controversial Fr Robert Persons

Fr Thomas McCoog, S.J.

Editor's Note: *To commemorate the 400th anniversary of Fr Robert Persons' death, Fr Thomas McCoog, S.J. delivered a lecture to the College community with a skill and enthusiasm so well received that we asked him to contribute an article on the same subject. This is the result.*

Persons took a turn for the worse on Tuesday of Holy Week, April 1610. Despite his physical weakness and insisting on Lenten fare, he was able to implement the instructions of the Inquisition that he write a rejoinder to a recent book by William Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln: *An answer to a catholike Englishman* (London, 1609). On Holy Thursday the first of many distinguished visitors called on Persons: Muzio Vitelleschi, Father General Claudio Acquaviva's assistant for Italy, sometime Rector of the English College, and the next superior general of the Society. On Good Friday, Fabio de Fabiis, Persons' first Rector and Novice Master, visited with English novices from the novitiate at Sant' Andrea. Later that day, other Jesuit officials paid their respects. Cardinals Odoardo Farnese, Ottavio Bandini and others sent representatives. After supper, Claudio Acquaviva himself called on Persons. Other Jesuits, priests and noblemen followed. But on Holy Saturday,



Fr Robert Persons (d. 15 April, 1610). (Photo: Fr Thomas McCoog)

because Persons had taken another turn for the worse, other visitors, including Robert Cardinal Bellarmine, were not admitted. Pope Paul V sent his blessing. Students at the English College not only prayed but also underwent various acts of discipline and mortification in hope of his recovery. Acquaviva visited him again on Easter Wednesday. Afterwards he admitted to the English Jesuits: "Truly, I see him as a martyr. I have known him for thirty-five years and have always held him for a saint." The following morning, 15 April 1610, circa 2:00 a.m., Persons died.

In recognition of his love and devotion to the College, extraordinary permission was given that he be buried there and not at the Gesù. Thus Persons' body was placed before the high altar to the right of William Cardinal Allen, with Owen Lewis, bishop of Cassano, on the cardinal's left. The tomb and original epitaph were destroyed by French revolutionary soldiers. According to Dr Judith Champ, the epitaphs currently in the chapel are 19th century copies based on John Kirk's notes taken during his student days in the 1770s. We know not who wrote the epitaph nor when it was placed in the church. Perhaps further research in the College archives would answer those questions. We do know, however, that without Kirk, the inscriptions would have been lost.

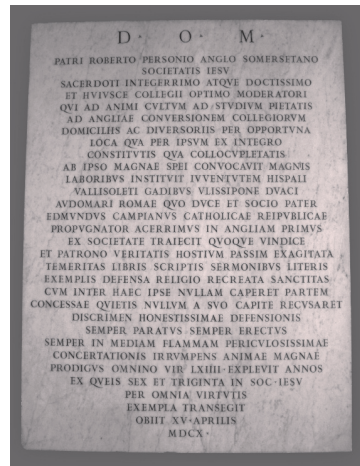
The Latin text of the inscription is not easy. I do not propose the following as a translation but as a “free” English reformulation:

To Father Robert Persons, an Englishman from Somerset, a Jesuit, a most learned and upright priest, and an excellent director of this college, who by himself, founded and financed residences and colleges from scratch for spiritual nourishment, for the growth of piety, and for the conversion of England. With great hope he called together, and with tremendous efforts he established places for young men at Seville, Valladolid, Cadiz, Lisbon, Douai, St Omers, and Rome. From Rome, with Father Edmund Campion as his companion and himself as superior, he crossed to England as the keenest defender of Catholicism and as the first Jesuit to enter that mission. As advocate and patron, in books, sermons, letters and similar writings he repudiated the rash opinions of the enemies of the truth, defended true religion, and restored holiness. He sought no rest nor did he shrink from any challenge in his defence of the faith. He was always prepared; he was always upstanding. He was always ready to jump into the flames of any disputation with greatness of heart. In every way he was a man to marvel at in his 63 years of life, 36 as a Jesuit. He was an example to us in all virtues. He died on 15 April 1610.

Almost in the exact middle of the epitaph is the name of Edmund Campion.

Persons entered the Society of Jesus in Rome on 4 July 1575; Campion, in Prague on 26 August 1573. As Campion preached, lectured, and wrote plays in Prague, Persons remained in Rome. Campion was so indifferent to English affairs that his friend Gregory Martin accused him of forgetting England; Persons, on the other hand, remained in touch with other English Jesuits and was ever attentive to developments. To the dismay of the ever cautious Everard Mercurian, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, tensions arising from the transformation of the English Hospice into the English College, and between Welsh and English students, resulted in Jesuit involvement. Persons observed all developments with concern both for the discipline of the College and because of its repercussions. He did receive a delegation of students, among whom was Ralph Sherwin. Persons claimed that he did not take sides in the dispute but critics later denounced him as a type of “outside agitator” stirring up dissension in the hope of greater Jesuit participation. The Society of Jesus did indeed assume administration of the English College, a prelude to greater involvement with England. Both developments no doubt delighted Persons. Interestingly, the previously mentioned Owen Lewis who was buried next to Allen was one of the prominent Welshmen involved in the initial dispute.

Mercurian twice rejected Allen’s pleas for Jesuit participation. The arguments in Allen’s third petition follow the criteria for the selection of ministries as formulated in the Jesuit *Constitutions*. Persons likely played a role in its formulation. One should not forget the concurrent change in



The Latin epitaph commemorating the life of Robert Persons. (Photo: Nicholas Hudson)

the political climate. Expectations of Catholics and Catholic sympathisers, expectations that varied from immediate tolerance to eventual reconciliation of Elizabeth and the Church of Rome, were raised unexpectedly high by negotiations of a proposed marriage treaty between Elizabeth and Francis de Valois, Duke of Anjou. As diplomats negotiated the treaty, Allen again sought Mercurian's approval for a Jesuit mission. Mercurian had apprehensions that the English government would interpret the mission as a political enterprise; that the Jesuits on the mission would be unable to live a style of life in conformity with the Society's Institute; and that the absence of a hierarchical structure would lead to discord. Oliver Mannaerts, Assistant for Germany, and Claudio Acquaviva, then Provincial of Rome, argued in favour of the mission. Accordingly, instructions were drafted to prevent the actualisation of any apprehensions.

By early December, Mercurian and Allen were selecting missionaries. The Jesuit general named Persons and Edmund Campion the two priests for the mission, with Ralph Emerson as their associate. On 18 April the three Jesuits, three priests from the English College (Ralph Sherwin, Luke Kirby, and Edward Rishton), four elderly Marian clergy, two laymen and Thomas Goldwell, Bishop of St Asaph, began their quasi-triumphal procession from Rome to England via Bologna, Milan, and Geneva, apparently without any concern that such publicity would attract the attention of English spies. Each priest abandoned his soutane for more convenient travel attire and to escape harassment from Protestants in Germany and Switzerland. That the soutane would betray their identity to English spies was not an issue in discarding it. Presumably the group did not anticipate any problems from English authorities during the journey and in crossing the channel. After all, the prospect of a marriage had reduced persecution and executions.

“Since the old religion refused to pass away quietly, in the terse summary of Christopher Haigh, ‘it would have to be murdered.’”

The collapse, however, of the pro-marriage alliance and the re-ascendancy of Protestant councillors resulted in new, stronger anti-Catholic legislation. *An Act to Retain the Queen's Majesty's Subjects in Their Due Obedience* (23 Eliz. c. 1) demanded that all recusants conform at least once a month. Failure to do so could result in financial ruin: a £20 fine for each month's absence. Anyone convicted of persuading a subject of the Queen to abandon the Established Church in favour of the Church of Rome would be guilty of high treason, as would anyone so reconciled. Penalties against celebrating or attending Mass were increased. In order to effectively enforce these laws, all who had knowledge of any reconciliations were required to report the fact to the Justice of the Peace within 20 days or be charged with misprision of treason for withholding the information. Common informers were encouraged with promises of a third of the fines of all recusants discovered. Since the old religion refused to pass away quietly, in the terse summary of Christopher Haigh, “it would have to be murdered” (*Elizabeth I* [London, 1988] p. 38).

Campion was captured the following July and martyred with Ralph Sherwin and Alexander Briant on 1 December 1581. While Campion was imprisoned in the Tower of London, Persons fled to France never to return to England.

Between August 1581 and September 1585 Persons and Allen were actively involved in ventures and negotiations concerning the invasion of England and/or Scotland, the liberation of Mary, Queen of Scots, assistance to the beleaguered King James VI of Scotland, and the

deposition of Queen Elizabeth. After the execution of Mary in February 1587 and James' reconciliation with Elizabeth, Allen and Persons abandoned the Stuart cause in favour of the Spanish claimant to the English throne. They turned to Spain for assistance.

In the midst of his other activities Persons began his career as a controversial theologian. His early treatises defended Campion against official smear campaigns. *De persecutione anglicana* (Bologna [vere Rouen], 1581) alerted the Catholic world to the sufferings and persecution of their English confreres.

“The College was a volcano never dormant for long.”

Over the next two years English, French, Italian and German editions appeared. These editions were distributed to potential benefactors of the English colleges. In *The first book of the Christian exercise, appertayning to resolution* ([Rouen], 1582) Persons adapted insights and principles from Ignatian spirituality to the situation in England. One of the most influential spiritual treatises in English, the book was published in numerous editions as Persons sought to stay one step ahead of the Protestant minister Edward Bunny who, having cleansed the edition of popish elements, published unauthorised versions. Subsequently Persons addressed many theological and ecclesiastical issues.

After the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, Acquaviva sent Persons to Spain to continue his work for English Catholicism by keeping that kingdom on the royal political agenda. Through his influence at the court of King Philip II, he established seminaries and colleges. He secured subsidies for English colleges in Valladolid (a royal foundation 1589), Seville (1592) and St Omers (a royal foundation 1593). By March 1594 as a result of Persons' intervention at the request of Cardinal Allen, Philip II paid the money he owed the English College as it returned to Douai. Persons also advised Philip on subsequent attempts to launch another armada against Elizabeth.

Persons was Rector of the English College at the time of his departure for Spain. His successors found the students increasingly difficult. The College was a volcano never dormant for long.

Disputes and conflicts frequently vibrated throughout the corridors: disagreement over the preferred Catholic candidate for the English throne; over the proper ecclesiastical structure for England; over the nomination of Allen's successor as English cardinal; over the Society siphoning off seminarians; of the general involvement of the Society of Jesus in various aspects of the mission, including the administration of the English College. Fed up with the situation and dismayed by the damage done to the Society's reputation, Acquaviva was on the verge of withdrawing from the College's administration. As a last attempt at resolution, Persons left Spain for Rome in early 1597. He expected to return to Spain. He did not. In fact with the exception of an exile in Naples from late 1604 to circa May 1605, he did not leave Rome.

Persons personified all that one faction disliked about the other. To many, Persons was *persona non grata*. Thus many were shocked that Persons himself should have been selected by the Jesuit general to resolve the latest conflict. On Easter Saturday, 2 April 1597, Persons addressed the seminarians. Citing Scriptural passages, historical precedents, and common experiences, he explained the reasons for his trip to Rome, his understanding of the recent difficulties at the College and his proposed remedies. Persons had been in Spain for nearly nine years. During that period, new English seminaries and residences were established in Spain, Portugal and Flanders. Each was in reasonably good financial state; yet there were certain problems regarding their governance and direction as well as their privileges, faculties and the like. The primary reason for his visit to Rome was an opportunity to discuss these

matters with Pope Clement VIII and Acquaviva. The second motive for the journey "was to see whether by my being here I might do any good office for the comfort and benefit of this house and company in particular after so long a time of trouble and discomfort which hath grown to them selves and to their friends, by that which hath passed in this place." The disagreements and discord destroying the tranquillity and union of the College were, he claimed, the work of Satan who has sowed darnel among the good seed. Satan has numerous goals in mind. Satan has destroyed the peace of mind of the students at the College. Satan has damaged the institution's reputation. Satan has provided so many distractions that the students were unable to acquire the necessary knowledge. Persons lingered on the fourth goal: disruption of good relations with the Society of Jesus. Two or three individual Jesuits might have outraged or angered others, but the Society had been the most steadfast friend of the mission.

Persons recommended that all reflect on certain Scriptural passages with marked resemblance to the current state of the College: Israel wandering in the desert, Israel exiled in Babylon, and the early church in Corinth. There were difficulties; there was resentment; there were factions. Cardinal Allen "who was in deed our Moyses, our Esdras, our Nehemias, and as I may saye in a certayne sort our first and cheefe Apostle in this affaire," had competently coordinated activities performed by the "two hands." From the start there were tensions between nationalities and social classes but the situation had deteriorated. Persons avoided mentioning any name but he informed his audience "that these two hands are now manifestly known to the world." The left hand fostered the dissension then plaguing the exiles. Persons wanted to end all disputes:

Wherefore lettynge passe and bringynge under foote all that ys gone, let us for Gods sayke and for our countreys sayke, and for our owne saykes, utterlye mayke an ende of this tumulte and returne to our old comfort and quietnes agayne, wherein I off my self to laboure most willinglye withall the waynes of my harte; and perhappes I may be no evyll meane therein beinge on thon syde an Englishman and thereby bounde to you to seeke your good every way. And on th'other syde of the Societie, and thereby not unfytt to deale with them yf any difficultye should be of that parte, as I hope there wylbe none, for I know they love bothe you and our countre intierlye and for God which ys the surest fundation of love in the worlde.

Persons was there to help. At the pope's command, he abandoned the professed house for the English College on the 9th or 10th of April and immediately began negotiations with the unhappy students. Reason reigned during the days of discussion. Each side listened to the motives and grievances of their opponents; each side recognised the other had valid points. To the surprise of many, Persons the ogre became Persons the arbitrator. The secular priest Edward Bennett, not known for his fondness for the Society of Jesus, confessed that "he whom we most feared, and whom we accounted for our greatest enemy, hath been our greatest friend; yea, and the only man that hath satisfied us, and put an end to these troubles." Persons had succeeded in gaining the students' confidence. At the English College, Bennett continued,

And, to tell you, as my old friend, I did never think that father Persons could ever have gotten that love of the scholars, as he hath gotten: so that, now we have ended all our troubles, the scholars confidently go to confession to the fathers. The pope's holiness is wonderfully pleased with it, as much as he was displeased with our troubles.... Hereafter there is no place left for the complaints of the Low-Countries, especially seeing we have here united ourselves, whose disagreements before were the occasion that many men were heard, which now shall not. You know what you have best to do: but if you mean to do any good for our country, you must unite with the jesuits; for the common cause hereafter is like to lie altogether with them. I have been much exhorted by the protector to join with father Persons, which I have done; and if you do the like, truly I think you shall be able to do more good in the common cause.

On 17 April six of the leaders thanked Acquaviva for calling Persons to Rome and asked that he be named Rector. During his Rectorship, there were no further disturbances at the College. This internal tranquillity can not be attributed solely to his personality and style of governance: Persons also exercised greater control over incoming students, especially men coming from the more troublesome English College, Douai.

Despite his rapidly failing health and visits from ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries, Persons found time to dictate numerous letters to his secretary during his final days. On 10 April 1610, five days before his death, he wrote to George Birkhead, the archpriest, with whom he had at best strained relations:

Protestinge that I doe departe out of this world with the same desire of love peace and union between all you amongst your selves and with all our fathers which alwayes I have had: and that thear was never on our side, that ever I could knowe or imagin the least desire or imagination of superiority over you or any of yours, but of a friendly concurrence to the good and furtherance of the Catholick fayth according to the functions of our institute.

On the same day he exhorted Jesuits working in England "to unite together in this mission of our Society for the Conversion and consolation of our poore afflicted Country of England." On the 12th he wrote to his friend and supporter Acquaviva: "I am shortly to die of this disease, for I cannot long survive being subject to such intense pain; and therefore I pray the God of mercies ... to shorten my time, that I may the sooner be dissolved and be with Him." He urged Acquaviva to keep English matters close to his heart. On the 13th he thanked Jacques Blaise, Bishop of St Omers: "so great a benefactor, recalling what love you have shown to the cause of England, that most luckless of causes, and how you have aided and forwarded our mission to that harvest-field."

On Thursday morning many paid their final respect to Persons. Father General permitted him to be embalmed. This extraordinary concession so puzzled the Jesuit community that they delayed the process until they had confirmation. Fr Coffin, his secretary, informs us that the College surgeon examined the body and pronounced all organs in good shape with the exception of the lungs and liver. The viscera were placed in an urn and buried separately in the crypt near the altar of St John.

On 1 March 1687, the floor of the church of the English College collapsed. Persons' skull and bones were uncovered. They were reburied in the same place under the same grave stone. Someone at the College commented that Persons' skull "seemed remarkably greater than that of others ordinarily be, and that there were all his teeth, not one wanting." That Persons had an intellect and could bite, no one would ever deny.

"That Persons had an intellect and could bite, no one would ever deny."

But this article is not to bury Persons but to praise him. Praise him for his dedication, determination, steadfastness. The English mission may have grown out of the blood of the martyrs but without leaders such as Persons the fruits may have rotted on the vine. The English mission was never far from Persons' heart. One may wonder what would have happened if he had been captured and martyred, and Campion had survived? Would Campion have been as successful as a diplomat, controversialist, fundraiser, administrator? "In every way he was a man to marvel at in his 63 years of life, 36 as a Jesuit. He was an example to us in all virtues."



Fr Thomas McCoog, S.J. belongs to the Maryland Province and is archivist of the British Province in London. He is the co-editor of Recusancy and Conformity in Early Modern England (Toronto, 2010) and will soon complete a monograph on Jesuit activity in the British Isles and Ireland, 1588-1595. In August he also became curator of the archives of Avery Cardinal Dulles at Fordham University.

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On Pilgrimage to the Tomb of St Peter

Rev. Liam Bradley

My tour beneath St Peter's Basilica begins with an explanation. "The Vatican" is a name which evokes various associations: Bernini's colonnade, the Swiss Guards, or perhaps the towering dome of St Peter's Basilica. "The Vatican" is often cited by the media to mean "the Church" ("the Vatican says ...") or to refer to St Peter's itself, Michelangelo's iconic basilica. Aside from these common associations, the name denotes the territories of the Vatican City State. To be precise, "The Vatican" is a hill, one of the seven hills upon which the city of Rome was founded. The Vatican hill was almost entirely flattened by Emperor Constantine in order to build the first St Peter's Basilica at the start of the 4th century AD.



Liam begins a tour of the Scavi beneath St Peter's Basilica. (Photo: Neil Brett)

When I relate these facts to pilgrims I am always surprised by the number of faces illuminated with interest. It makes me appreciate that many are ignorant of the rich and intriguing history of the site to which they have come to pray.

Every seminarian, once he has settled into life at the English College, chooses to dedicate a certain period of time each week to pastoral work. Not only does this contribute to the development of priestly character, but it is also an opportunity to give something back to the city from which we receive so much. Some seminarians have chosen to work in the local youth centre; others visit inmates at Regina Coeli prison in Trastevere. My previous role involved volunteering at a care home run by the Little Sisters of the Poor. In October 2008 I opted for a change and became a tour guide for the Scavi office at St Peter's Basilica.

The Italian word *scavi* stands for “ruins” and is rooted in the Latin language, from which we draw the English word “excavations.” Underneath the present basilica is an archaeological site dating back to the time of the first apostles. By descending deep under the ground one travels back in time to an era when there was a hill on the Vatican site and when Rome was ruled by emperors under whom Christians frequently endured persecution. Here was discovered a burial ground containing the mortal remains of numerous Roman citizens and the relics of the first pope, St Peter the Apostle.

Before the time of Christ, this area north-west of Rome just beyond the river Tiber was accessed by the Via Cornelia, a main road which passed along the southern side of the Vatican Hill and eventually joined the Via Aurelia, the main road which exits Rome to the West. Ancient Roman law prohibited the burial of the dead inside the city’s walls and most main roads leaving the city at this time were associated with a particular necropolis (burial ground). The Via Cornelia was no exception.

Even though it was technically outside of the city, the area underwent development first by Agrippina Major, the wife of Germanicus (d. 37AD).¹ Her son became the Emperor Caligula (37-41 AD) under whom a circus was constructed. This circus was improved by Claudius (41-54 AD) and finally completed by Nero.² The circus was long and narrow and ran roughly from east to west. It was used for the private entertainment of the Imperial family and was designed for chariot racing. At its centre stood an obelisk which, in 1589, was moved a short distance to its present location at the centre of St Peter’s Square. Part of the racetrack of the original circus was recently unearthed about nine metres under the obelisk’s former location.

In the summer of 64 AD a fire swept through the city of Rome. When inhabitants attempted to extinguish the flames they were prevented from doing so by members of the Imperial guard. According to the Roman historian Suetonius, the Emperor Nero himself had ordered the fire to be started so as to create space for a palatial complex. Such a theory is now disputed; however, what is not disputed is that he subsequently accused the early Christians of having some involvement. It was suggested that they started the fire directly or were responsible for invoking the wrath of pagan gods by refusing to make sacrifices to them. These events instigated the first great persecution against Christians, a persecution which often climaxed on the circus under the current site of St Peter’s. According to tradition, this was the site where St Peter was crucified upside down.³ After he was confirmed dead, his body was taken the short distance along the Via Cornelia and buried in a shallow grave on the side of the Vatican Hill.⁴

Eighty years after St Peter’s martyrdom, around 150 AD, a small monument called the “Trophy Monument” (or the “Trophy of Gaius”) was built over his tomb. It was set into a red wall and composed of two small marble pillars, set atop of which was a travertine stone table surmounted by a decorative apex. The monument was about 8 feet high. By c. 260 AD an additional wall had been built to the right of this monument. Constructed either to support the monument or to form part of a courtyard where people could pray, this wall was named the “Graffiti Wall” because of the many inscriptions that were found etched onto its surface.

¹ ZANDER, Pietro, *The Necropolis Under St Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican*, (Vatican City State 2009).

² *Ibid.*, 7.

³ St JEROME, *De Viris illustribus*, 1.

⁴ cf. EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2, 25, 7.

At the beginning of the 4th century AD Constantine became the Emperor of Rome. Unlike many of his predecessors, this particular Emperor was sympathetic to Christianity. He was baptised before his death in 337 AD. Around the year 325 AD he ordered that a monument be constructed to the God of the Christians. The only Christian monument in Rome at that time was the Trophy Monument marking St Peter's grave. Constantine decided that it should be given a noble status and thus chose it as the site of his proposed new monument. In order to complete the task, the bones of St Peter were removed from his grave, wrapped in a purple and gold cloth and placed in a hollow opening in the Graffiti Wall. Both the Trophy Monument and Graffiti Wall were encased in a large, decorative marble and porphyry box structure. This box was to form the central point of a large basilica, dedicated to St Peter, which has become known as the first Vatican Basilica.

In order to build the basilica, strong foundations were required. Unfortunately, the area around the tomb of St Peter was unsuitable as a construction site. The incline of the Vatican hill made it impossible to ensure that these foundations would be secure. The Emperor was determined that his plan would not be frustrated and so gave the order that the Vatican Hill was to be levelled. It was a vast undertaking involving the shifting of more than 40,000 cubic meters of earth.⁵ The result was that the circus, the Via Cornelia and the outdoor necropolis were buried and forgotten. Many centuries later, in 1939, archaeologists who were working in secret because of the outbreak of World War II, began to excavate the crypt of the present day St Peter's Basilica and discovered several old mausolea. Thus began the project of opening the *Scavi* to public view and the opportunity for people, like myself, to train as tour guides for interested pilgrims.

“Some want factual information. Others are searching for the cornerstone of their faith or for spiritual renewal. Others are sceptical and seek scientific proof of the Church's claims.”

My preparation for priestly ministry has been enhanced by the opportunities afforded to me in my role as tour guide to visiting pilgrims. I have had the privilege of taking different groups of people down to the *Scavi* site. Whether it is a parish group on pilgrimage, a gathering from a religious congregation or a secular clergy support group, each has its own particular interest, questions, and expectations of their visit to the tomb of St Peter. Some want factual information. Others are searching for the cornerstone of their faith or for spiritual renewal. Others are sceptical and seek scientific proof of the Church's claims.

Whatever their motivation may be, I hope to prepare visitors to be struck by the power of the suffering and witness of Christian martyrdom: to communicate the severity of the trials undergone by the Church in the name of Jesus Christ and also the majestic fruits that have been borne as a result. Several of the people I have guided through the ruins have suggested that there exists a similarity between the early Church seeking to find her place in Roman society and the Church today trying to re-establish her credibility in the world.

I regard each tour as a pilgrimage both for me and the group of tourists, be they Catholic or not. When my guided party arrives at St Peter's mortal remains I direct their eyes to look upon the most remarkable bone of all: St Peter's jaw. Once they have all identified it, I remind them

⁵ ZANDER, *Ibid.*, 21.

that this is the mouth that ate at the Last Supper and is also the mouth which spoke as the cock crew. This is the man who was reconciled to his Saviour and found the courage to lead the Church from its earliest days.

Each time I go to his tomb, I pray to him and invite those with me to do the same. During my time in seminary, there has been no greater privilege than to accompany people under St Peter's Basilica and to witness something of a spiritual renewal in them. I have seen pilgrims weep and smile as Christ touches them in a way known to them alone. There are many who look upon the veneration of relics with a certain scepticism but when one sees first hand a spiritual awakening experienced by many simply from their proximity to the bones of the fisherman called by Jesus, modern forensic analysis becomes irrelevant. For those who have had the opportunity to take part in this act of devotion, their faith is strengthened because they are able to experience a connection with the historic events that are responsible for the faith they share.

Those who experience a tour of the *Scavi* also acquire a greater appreciation of the breadth of the Church's mission. Not only do they come to understand the role of the Church in proclaiming the Gospel but they also see how she works to educate pilgrims, inform scientific progress and preserve ancient art and history for the benefit of future generations. In the early days Jesuit priests who were educated in the sciences carried out the investigations of the *Scavi*. Today the *Scavi* team of priests is assisted by highly dedicated specialists in archaeology, restoration, forensic analysis and epigraphy.

One of our most recent visitors was Princess Michael of Kent who had made a donation from one of her charitable funds to help with restoration work in the *Scavi*. I was fortunate to have been chosen as her guide and, as I told her the same facts and stories I recount to all visitors, I noticed that she was equally moved to contemplation. While thinking about the experience as I walked back to College, I was struck by the fact that, whether tourist, pilgrim, consecrated religious or member of the Royal Family, all have the same need for God and can be brought closer to him by approaching the one he chose to lead his flock.

I will treasure the memories of my pastoral work at St Peter's as I prepare to leave Rome as a priest next year. We are all on a spiritual journey and need times and places where the next step on that journey can be taken. St Peter's *Scavi* has been one of those places for me, as I am sure it has been for many others who have had the opportunity to visit.



Rev. Liam Bradley studies at the Angelicum University and is in his second year of a licence in moral theology. Originally a chemical engineer, he arrived at the Venerable English College in 2004 and is now Senior Student. He was ordained a deacon for the Diocese of Menevia in July 2010.



The Four Cardinal Virtues:

A Reflection on the Frescoes of the College Refectory

Mgr Charles Scicluna

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines human virtues as:

firm attitudes, stable dispositions, habitual perfections of intellect and will that govern our actions, order our passions and guide our conduct according to reason and faith. They make possible ease, self-mastery and joy in leading a morally good life. The virtuous man is he who freely practises the good.

The moral virtues are acquired by human effort. They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts; they dispose all the powers of the human being for communion with divine love.¹

Among the human or moral virtues,

Four virtues play a pivotal role and accordingly are called 'cardinal'; all the others are grouped around them. They are: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. "If anyone loves righteousness, [Wisdom's] labours are virtues; for she teaches temperance and prudence, justice and courage" (Wisdom 8:7). These virtues are praised under other names in many passages of Scripture.²

These four cardinal virtues are depicted in the wall frescoes of the Refectory of the Venerable English College. This article offers a brief commentary on the iconography chosen by the Pozzo School to depict the four cardinal virtues.

Prudentia

Prudentia is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it; "the prudent man looks where he is going" (Proverbs 14:15). "Keep sane and sober for your prayers" (1 Peter 4:7). Prudence is "right reason in action", writes St Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle (*Summa Theologiae* II-II, 47, 2). It is not to be confused with timidity or fear, nor with duplicity or dissimulation. It is called *auriga virtutum* (the charioteer of the virtues); it guides the other virtues by setting rule and measure. It is prudence that immediately guides the judgment of conscience. The prudent man determines and directs his conduct in accordance with this judgment. With the help of this virtue we apply moral principles to particular cases without error and overcome doubts about the good to achieve and the evil to avoid.³

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), No. 1804.

² CCC, No. 1805.

³ CCC, No. 1806.

Our fresco depicting Prudence presents a veiled female looking into a mirror which she is holding in her left hand while holding a serpent in her right hand. The mirror symbolises the act of reflection which is necessary for discerning the good. The serpent reminds us of the words of Jesus: "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore *be shrewd* [Greek: *phrōnimos*, Latin: *prudentes*] as serpents, and innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16). St John Chrysostom's commentary from Homily XXXIII on this verse from St Matthew states:

But let us see what manner of wisdom He here requires. That of the serpent, He saith. For even as that animal gives up everything and if its very body must be cut off, doth not very earnestly defend it, so that it may save its head; in like manner do thou also, saith He, give up everything but the faith; though goods, body, life itself, must be yielded. For that is the head and the root; and if that be preserved, though thou lose all, thou wilt recover all with so much the more splendour.⁴

Iustitia

Justice is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbour. Justice toward God is called the "virtue of religion." Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. The just man, often mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbour. "You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbour" (Leviticus 19:15). "Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. (Colossians 4:1)"⁵



The virtue of Prudence as depicted in the College Refectory (Photo: Tom Cunah)



The virtue of Justice (Photo: Tom Cunah)

⁴ Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Vol. X, p. 215.

⁵ CCC, No. 1807.

Our fresco representing Justice shows a female figure holding a sword in her right hand and the fasces with her left hand. A *putto* on her left side holds the scales of justice in his left hand while pointing to them with his right. The scales represent the fact that justice is based on judgment which must weigh arguments with equity. The sword represents the definitive nature of a just judgment. It also represents distributive and retributive justice because through distributive justice riches are divided according to the needs of the members of society. The sword, which cuts equitable parts, also metes out retributive justice to punish. The fasces represent social cohesion – based on members of society treating each other in a just manner – and the judicial authority at the head of such society.

Fortitudo

Fortitude is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one even to renounce and sacrifice one's life in defence of a just cause. "The Lord is my strength and my song" (Psalm 118:14). "In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world (John 16:33)."⁶

Our fresco representing Fortitude depicts a female figure in armour consisting of breast-plate, helmet and shield. The breast-plate and the shield both contain images of the lion, itself a symbol of strength and endurance. A *putto* to her left assists the female figure with a lance which she grasps in her left hand. These symbols remind the viewer of his calling to be an athlete and soldier for Christ (Cf. 2 Timothy 2).



The virtue of Fortitude (Photo: Tom Cunah)

Temperantia

Temperance is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will's mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honourable. The temperate person directs the sensitive appetites toward what is good and maintains a healthy discretion: "Do not follow your inclination and strength, walking according to the desires of your heart"(Sirach 5:2). Temperance is often praised in the Old Testament: "Do not follow your base desires, but restrain your appetites" (Sirach 18:30). In the New Testament it is called "moderation" or "sobriety." We ought "to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world (Titus 2:12)."⁷

⁶ CCC, No. 1808.

⁷ CCC, No. 1809.

The fresco representing Temperance depicts a female figure who is holding a jug elevated with her right hand. With her left hand she restrains a *putto* intent on drinking from a vessel. Traditionally, the virtue of Temperance includes a lady pouring water into a chalice of wine, representing the function of temperance to attenuate the inebriating effect of the alcoholic drink. This would therefore suggest that the female figure in the Refectory fresco is holding a jug of water while restraining a *putto* who is drinking wine. Temperance is thus the act of exercising a beneficial restraining influence on the drinker. A most appropriate image for a college refectory!



The virtue of Temperance (Photo: Tom Cunnah)

Conclusion

St Augustine offers a summary of the Christian doctrine of the cardinal virtues:

To live well is nothing other than to love God with all one's heart, with all one's soul and with all one's efforts; from this it comes about that love is kept whole and uncorrupted (through temperance). No misfortune can disturb it (and this is fortitude). It obeys only (God) (and this is justice), and is careful in discerning things, so as not to be surprised by deceit or trickery (and this is prudence).⁸

And the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states:

Human virtues acquired by education, by deliberate acts and by a perseverance ever-renewed in repeated efforts are purified and elevated by divine grace. With God's help, they forge character and give facility in the practice of the good. The virtuous man is happy to practise them.

It is not easy for man, wounded by sin, to maintain moral balance. Christ's gift of salvation offers us the grace necessary to persevere in the pursuit of the virtues. Everyone should always ask for this grace of light and strength, frequent the sacraments, co-operate with the Holy Spirit, and follow his calls to love what is good and shun evil.⁹



Mgr Charles J. Scicluna is a priest of the Archdiocese of Malta and is the Promoter of Justice at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

⁸ *De moribus eccl.*, 1, 25, 46: PL 32, 1330-1331.

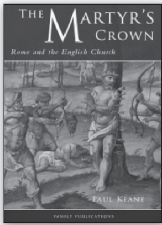
⁹ CCC, No. 1810-1811.



Nova et Vetera

David Howell

Old Romans have published several works this year, including those outlined here which are all available for purchase. Information has been collected from publishers and promotional materials.

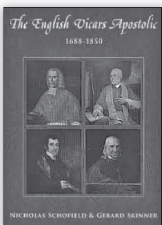
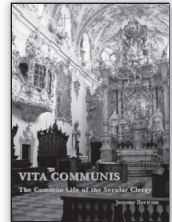


***The Martyr's Crown* by Fr Paul Keane (Family Publications, Oxford)**

The 34 newly restored wall paintings of the Venerable English College reveal the glorious history of the Church in England and Wales up to the crisis of the Reformation. They depict the deaths of figures such as St Alban, St Winefride, St Thomas Becket, St Thomas More and St Ralph Sherwin, protomartyr of the VEC, stressing the unity of the Church in England and Wales with the See of Rome. In the first section, the author describes the religious and historical context of the painting of the pictures before commenting in detail on each scene, all of which are illustrated in full colour.

***Vita Communis: The Common Life of the Secular Clergy* by Fr Jerome Bertram C.O. (Gracewing)**

Vita Communis is "the common life" among priests and other clerics, as opposed to that of monks or friars. Fr Jerome Bertram analyses this type of life for diocesan priests from its origins to the present day. He demonstrates the continuing desire of many secular clergy to live in community and, at a time when priests are fewer and more isolated, this work provides useful models of mutual support for the priests of our time.

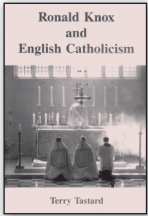
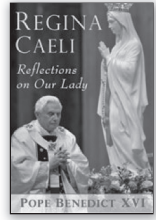


***The English Vicars Apostolic 1688-1850* by Fr Nicholas Schofield and Fr Gerard Skinner (Family Publications, Oxford)**

Fathers Schofield and Skinner describe the dramatic history of the English and Welsh Church from the exile of King James II to the restoration of the Hierarchy in 1850. During this little-known period, the Church in England and Wales was led by Vicars Apostolic: local missionary bishops with authority from Rome. This book covers each District of the country and each Vicar Apostolic, providing an intimate portrait of the towering figures of bishops like Richard Challoner, John Milner and Thomas Walsh. The authors describe the Church's many conflicts in this time, both internal and external, as it emerged from persecution to become a more self-confident force in the period of the Industrial Revolution.

Regina Caeli: Reflections on Our Lady by Pope Benedict XVI (Family Publications, Oxford)

Mary, the Mother of Christ, has been a central theme in the thought of Pope Benedict XVI. This book collects many of the Holy Father's writings and speeches on the subject of Our Lady, covering the period from 2005 to 2010. Pope Benedict explores the theology of Mary's unique calling, the exalted place she occupies in the Church, and her role as a Mother to all Christians. The texts have been specially selected by Fr Gerard Skinner, of the Archdiocese of Westminster.

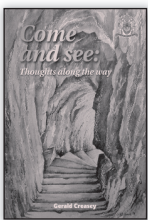
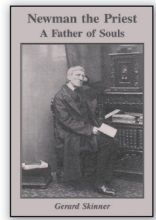


Ronald Knox and English Catholicism by Fr Terry Tastard (Gracewing)

Ronald Knox was considered one of the brightest minds of his era and his conversion to Catholicism shocked many. He was to be one of the most outstanding recruits to the Church of his time. For 30 years he was one of the best known figures of English Catholicism. A talented writer and broadcaster, Knox boosted the self-confidence of the Catholic Church and showed how Catholicism was now more at home in England. Fr Terry Tastard's affectionate though balanced biography brings the reader close to Knox's personality and reveals the extent of his influence both in his day and subsequently.

Newman the Priest: A Father of Souls by Fr Gerard Skinner (Gracewing)

Presenting aspects of the life of Cardinal Newman in his own words, Fr Skinner draws from the tens of thousands of pages penned by this great pastor with insight into Newman as "A Father of Souls." In a series of easily readable sketches we follow Newman's life from the time he first realised God was calling him to the ordained ministry until his last years as a priest and Cardinal in the Birmingham Oratory he founded. Important themes such as his preaching are seen alongside the means by which he felt he was most sustained and strengthened for the not insignificant trials of his life. Seven of his most brilliant sermons conclude the volume.



Come and See: Thoughts along the way by Fr Gerald Creasey

In this book Fr Gerald Creasey draws on his student days in Rome and his 48 years of priesthood to compile his "thoughts along the way," presenting a selection of homilies which will inspire and uplift. He offers them to the reader and his fellow homilists as an expression of the journey we make with the Church through one liturgical year. With humour and wit, Fr Creasey entertains and enlightens. **[Editor's Note:** All proceeds of this publication will be donated by the author to the Old Romans' Association. For contact information please see advertisement herein.]



David Howell is a second year seminarian for the Archdiocese of Southwark studying philosophy at the Angelicum.



Schola Notes 2009-10

Mgr Philip Whitmore

Seldom has the Schola had to hit the ground running to the extent we did in October 2009, but with the celebrations for the re-opening of the College church looming in the second week of term, we needed two motets ready for performance almost immediately. Fortunately, in our first rehearsal of the year on 12 October, we were able to polish the two that we had sung at the Chiesa Nuova the previous May, namely Hassler's *Cantate Domino* for the reopening ceremony on Sunday 18 October and Viadana's *Exsultate Iusti* for Mass with the Old Romans on Tuesday 20 October. Our new members manfully mastered their parts in next to no time, and we were able to sing most joyfully at these two colourful events in the splendid surroundings of our beautifully restored church.

Indeed, the quality of the singing yielded a tangible benefit, in the shape of a benefactor. Old Roman and former Schola member Damien McGrath, present in Rome for the celebrations with his wife Tricia, kindly offered to pay for a much-needed cover to protect the Steinway piano that we use for our rehearsals. This beautiful instrument, now almost 100 years old, was a gift to the College from Carolyn and Franco Gianturco, to whom we are most indebted. Our thanks go also to Damien and Tricia McGrath, especially in the light of further offers of assistance, detailed below.



Mgr Whitmore conducts the Schola on Easter Sunday at St Peter's Square during a break in the rain. (Photo: Tom Cunnah)

There was no time to plead exhaustion after our initial October sprint, since we had to begin work at once for the 2009 Advent Meditation. Benjamin Theobald chose an "angelic" theme for our reflections on the Incarnation, and this gave us an opportunity to learn Victoria's *Duo Seraphim* with the full Schola (previously we had sung it with a solo quartet, cf. Schola Notes 2006-7). It made sense to allocate the middle section (*secunda pars*) to solo voices, and here Michael Patey, Edward Henley, Luke de Pulford and Stefan Kaminski gave a fine rendition of the Trinitarian text. An old favourite, namely Mendelssohn's "Lift thine eyes" from *Elijah*, was intended by the composer as a chorus of angels bringing consolation to the prophet Elijah in the wilderness. James Mackay, Michael Doody and Neil Brett kindly agreed to take the part of the said angels, sweetly singing from on high (i.e. the Tribune).

To follow the Annunciation reading, we chose the English carol *Angelus ad Virginem*, famous at least since the days of Chaucer. We sang the first two verses in unison, to a romping 6/8 melody that clearly caught the imagination of the students, since it reappeared as a surprise

closing item in the "second half" of the programme. For the third and fourth verses we burst into harmony. As is often the way with Latin hymns, the hardest part was getting the tongue round all the words, especially since the pace was anything but slack, but we must have succeeded, because the Latinists present claimed to have enjoyed the unfolding of the narrative.

Our final chorus was an arrangement of a movement from Handel's Chandos Anthem no. 9, "Ye boundless realms of joy, exalt your Maker's fame." For this, Deacon Harris provided a lively accompaniment on the chamber organ, which is conveniently on wheels, and thus able to be positioned within earshot and eyesight. Probably the most ambitious item on the programme, this chorus kept us on our toes right up until the last minute, when, with characteristic determination, and not without a certain amount of extra rehearsal in small groups, the VEC singers succeeded in raising our hearts and minds to somewhere far "above the starry frame."

As an introduction to the service, we sang the last of the "O Antiphons," *O Emmanuel*, from the corridor, and then processed into the Church to the hymn "O come, O come, Emmanuel." A change of gear from Old Testament to New Testament was provided by Deacon Phil Harris who played "Le Verbe" from *La Nativité du Seigneur* by Olivier Messiaen at the midway point. It was good in this way to be able to "pull out all the stops" on the College organ which had not been available to us for the previous two years, and also to put to good use the talents of our Portsmouth organist for his last Advent Meditation before he returns to the mission.

Since the pace of rehearsal had been consistently demanding throughout the autumn term, it seemed only fair to adopt a more leisurely pace in January. The first item on the horizon was to be the Station Mass in Lent, at San Lorenzo in Damaso. For this, we prepared an arrangement of Palestrina's *Sicut Cervus*, appropriately reflecting on the *fontes aquarum* that feature in the Liturgy of the Word for Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Lent. For Good Friday, as usual, we prepared the Byrd Passion with a team of six singers as the *Voces Turbarum*: Edward Henley, Michael Patey, Michael Doody, Luke de Pulford, David Howell and Stefan Kaminski. For our narrators this year we had Deacon Phil Harris as Evangelist, Deacon Neil Brett as Christus and Fr James Mackay, last year's Evangelist, as Synagoga. It was a joy to be back in the College church once again for the Triduum liturgies, and to have such a fine team proclaiming the Passion of the Lord in song.

"Unfortunately the occasion was a washout. *Vidi aquam egredientem de caelo*, we might appropriately have sung. The *fontes aquarum* of the fourth week of Lent emptied themselves all over us."

This year's Easter liturgy had a further distinguishing touch: the first performance of a work specially composed for us. Regular readers of *Schola Notes* will remember that in 2004 a setting of *O Sacrum Convivium* was composed for the Schola by Phillip Pennington Harris, indeed it featured on the Schola recording *Veni Creator Spiritus*, prepared in the course of the following year. This being the composer's last year in the College, he kindly offered to compose another piece for us, and the result was an *a cappella* setting of the Easter hymn *Ad Regias Agni Dapes*, with alternate verses in unison plainsong and harmonised plainsong. We learned it during Lent and gave it its first performance at the Easter Vigil. No doubt doctoral theses will be written in years to come, analysing the effect of living for six years at the VEC on the evolution of the Rev. Harris' compositional style. We are most grateful to Phil not only for the two fine pieces he has written for us, but for so much generous assistance over the years as singer, organist, composer and conductor. Our loss is Portsmouth's gain.

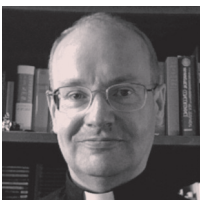
Easter morning offered an opportunity once again to sing in St Peter's Square, and for this we prepared the usual two Easter hymns, *Jesus Christ is risen today*, and *This Joyful Eastertide*, together with the motet *Cantate Domino* by Hans Leo Hassler that we sang last year. We were joined by some of our friends from the Beda, as well as family and friends of the VEC, including our benefactor Damien McGrath with members of his family. Unfortunately the occasion was a washout. *Vidi aquam egredientem de caelo*, we might appropriately have sung. The *fontes aquarum* of the fourth week of Lent emptied themselves all over us.

Among the photographs taken by *L'Osservatore Romano* is a fine shot of Schola members singing with umbrella in one hand and music in the other. It was by far the wettest Easter Sunday the Schola Master has experienced in 15 years of singing in St Peter's Square. Let us hope the Lord will never again send such a flood.

I mentioned earlier the willingness of our benefactor, Damien McGrath, to provide further assistance to the Schola and indeed a suitable project is taking shape in the form of a new Schola recording. Now that the CD *Veni Creator Spiritus* is almost sold out and few of the singers who took part are still resident, it seems appropriate to consider producing another. Experience suggests that the way to achieve the best results in the most painless way is to record live performances, or at least to record the Schola *in situ*, rather than taking them to a studio elsewhere, with an unfamiliar acoustic and endless difficulty in negotiating dates and times. Vatican Radio kindly loaned us a high-quality digital recorder so that we could begin making recordings during Schola rehearsals and during College liturgies. With this end in view, we devoted the summer term to music already familiar which we could brush up with minimum effort and record.

On Founders' Day, therefore, 2 May, we sang the Handel chorus "Ye boundless realms of joy" which we had learned for the Advent Meditation. On Pentecost Sunday, and again at the Chiesa Nuova on 26 May, we sang Tallis' "If ye love me," and on Trinity Sunday we sang Victoria's *Duo Seraphim* with the same solo quartet as in December. We also took the opportunity during rehearsals to record one or two other items from our repertoire, including Harris' *Ad Regias Agni Dapes* and Palestrina's *Sicut Cervus*. My hope is that if we continue in this way we should be ready to issue another recording in about two years from now. Watch this space.

At the Villeggiatura, we plan to sing "If ye love me" for the diaconate ordination. It comes at the end of a year during which Schola membership peaked at 24. And speaking of records, we say good-bye this year to possibly the longest-serving Schola member ever, Fr James Mackay, who has been with us for the whole of the last eight years. If any reader knows of other Schola members who can match this achievement, we would be interested in hearing from them. Fr James combines length of service with a range of at least two and a half octaves and a most distinguished record of Schola solos. He will be missed. To him and to all our leavers, *Ad multos annos* and *Ad multos cantus!*



Mgr Philip Whitmore is a priest of the Archdiocese of Westminster. He works in the Secretariat of State and is the College Schola Master.



Sports Report 2009-10

Marc Homsey

This has been a year full of noteworthy sporting news and initiatives: a new College gym (with subsequent new fitness regimes), football tournaments, tennis rivalries, darts and at the Villa students play pool (if it can be considered a sport), swim and compete at table tennis.

The year began with great anticipation. A new intake of students brought three talented footballers: defender Tom Cunnah, midfielder David Howell and striker Luke de Pulford. These, combined with the veterans, promised to make front page news with every performance. My



The winning team: back row, l to r: Luke de Pulford, Fr Mark Harold, Matthew O’Gorman, Michael Doody; front row, l to r: Tom Cunnah, Tony McGrath, David Howell, Marc Homsey.

predecessor Tony McGrath insisted on rigorous fitness sessions in the new College gym to ensure maximum agility on the football field. Despite going largely ignored, the team registered a string of successes in the first term. Most importantly, these successes were against the home nations: 4-1 against the Beda; 5-1 against the Scots; and 9-6 against the Irish. The only defeat of the term came when the VEC combined with the Scots College to play the North American College, with the Americans coming from 0-2 down to win 4-2.

Having been out of action for eight months with a fractured ankle, the current Sports Man was given the “all clear” over the Christmas break. The first game in January brought some winter misery with yet another defeat against the Brazilians.

Spirits were high, however, with the prospect of having a good team to enter the Clericus Cup, a league of teams from the seminaries and universities of Rome. A hybrid team comprising players from the English, Scots, Irish and Beda Colleges entered under the name Anglo-Celtic Colleges United (apparently there was some opposition to using the term British). It transpired that our only victory would be the first game against the French, with Luke de Pulford scoring a belter to win the penalty shoot-out.

Sunday evening football practice resumed after Easter with an eye to the Ragheed Ganni Cup against the Beda, Scots and Irish Colleges. Could this be our year? After many years of disappointment, might we find the inner strength to overcome our demons? Losing 7-2 to the Irish in the opening game was not a good start to the campaign. Nevertheless, results from ensuing games, along with a draw and a win in our remaining matches, ensured that we gained a place in the tournament final for the first time. As fate would have it, full time expired with the scores tied. In extra time each team scored one more goal. Penalties. The English are not known for their success in penalty shoot-outs. We were 2-0 down after the first two shots. Nevertheless,

keeping a combination of a stiff upper lip, firm resolve and tremendous goal-keeping by Fr Mark Harold, Michael Doody calmly blasted the ball into the back of the net to bring home our first significant silverware in a generation. Celebrations continued well into the afternoon.

Even more hotly contested was the North/South football match during the Villeggiatura. Diplomatic relations broke down immediately. After the first half, the North was up 4-2. The North scored another for 5-2. The South regrouped and scored two but the North held their nerve to claim victory at 5-4. The debate as to who won the “moral victory” continues.

As mentioned above, the College was able to acquire a new gym this year. Situated in the air-conditioned Gradwell Room, it was the generous gift of the Schwarzenbachs and the *Friends of the Venerabile*. Surprisingly, a majority of the house were able to make use of the gym – to varying degrees. One or two unlikely candidates have also been spotted lurking nearby, although it was revealed on investigation that they were simply hoping to make use of the only air-conditioned room in the house.



The new gym courtesy of the Schwarzenbachs and the Friends.
(Photo: Nicholas Hudson)

The other big news development of the year has been on the tennis courts. Sandy MacDonald and Tom Cunnah, along with Tony McGrath and Fr James Mackay and beginners Guido Amari, David Howell and Stefan Kaminski, found among themselves worthy competition, occasionally competing against friends from the Beda or the NAC. The most dedicated tennis player award goes to Tom. So keen has he been for a good game that he has gone to great lengths: new grips for tennis rackets; sweeping and re-sweeping the tennis court; even so far as volunteering to buy a new broom for sweeping the court at Palazzola. With these improvements, Sandy was somehow not at the victorious end of every match. He was heard to say, “I need some new sports clothes – maybe if I’m wearing the right outfit I’ll have better success.”

And so ends another sporting year. It seems fitness in the College is on the up. Running seems to be the most popular form of exercise, the treadmills providing a safe and dry environment for the students. “There are no cobbles on the treadmills,” one student was heard to say. All students wait with eager anticipation to see whether the new intake of students will provide a David Villa or Phil Taylor.



Marc Homsey is a fourth year seminarian for the Diocese of Leeds studying theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University.



The Year in Pictures

Matthew O'Gorman



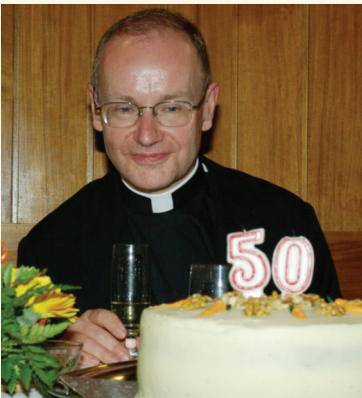
The New Men are introduced to Palazzola; from left to right: Luke de Pulford (Southwark), David Howell (Southwark), Oskar Thorsteinnsson (Reykjavik), Rev. Jonathan Farrugia (Malta) and Tom Cunnah (Shrewsbury). *(Photo: Nicholas Hudson)*



Seminarians in celebratory mood following the end of the October retreat led by Mgr John Armitage (front row, fourth from right). *(Photo: Tony Milner)*



Guests are entertained with a speech by former Rector of the English College, Mgr Jack Kennedy. (Photo: Tony Milner)



Schola Master Mgr Philip Whitmore celebrates his 50th birthday with a festive meal in the Refectory. (Photo: Tony Milner)



Matthew O'Gorman (Southwark) and Edward Henley (Westminster) contribute to the New Man Show with their take on The Two Ronnies "Crossword" sketch. (Photo: Tony Milner)



Leeds seminarians Sean Crawley and James Moreland. (Photo: Tony Milner)

The Year in Pictures



Michael Patey (Northampton) and Marc Homsey (Leeds) practise their Swedish pronunciation during a sketch for the Christmas Show. *(Photo: Tony Milner)*



In his first year he made it to the base but in his seventh year he managed to conquer it: atop Gran Sasso Rev. James McAuley with Stefan Kaminski. *(Photo: Stefan Kaminski)*



New candidates for Holy Orders, Michael Patey (Northampton) and Michael Doody (Leeds) with Bishop Arthur Roche (Leeds). *(Photo: Tony Milner)*



James Moreland (left) is not pleased to hear criticism of Leeds FC from Anthony McGrath (right). *(Photo: Tony Milner)*



Mr Nicholas Coote and Mrs Pam Coote are fêted at the College after making a generous donation towards ensuring that the training of priests continues long into the future. (Photo: Tony Milner)



The refurbished College church hosts the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales who are in Rome for their *ad limina apostolorum* visit to meet with the Holy Father. (Photo: Tony Milner)



Snow way? Rome experiences a cold snap and rare snowfall. (Photo: Liam Bradley)



The Seven Churches Walk organized by Michael Patey (left) is eventually completed by (from left to right) Fr Jonathan Brandon, David Howell, Guido Amari, Fr Chris Willis, Stefan Kaminski, Sean Crawley, Olafur Haukur Arnason, Anthony Rosso and Michael Doody. (Photo: Stefan Kaminski)

The Year in Pictures



With the help of an antenna placed precariously on the Roman column in the garden, the house fails to cheer England to victory in their 1-1 draw with the USA in their first World Cup group game. (Photo: Nicholas Hudson)



Seminarians new and old: Tom Cunnah (first year) and Fr James Mackay ensure the burgers are cooked for the summer exam-tide barbeque. (Photo: Nicholas Hudson)



Fr Craig Fitzpatrick cheers on the Anglo-Celtic Clericus Cup team as they take on the North American College. (Photo: Chris Willis)

The Year in Pictures



Deacons Phil Harris, James McAuley and Neil Brett enjoy a stunning view of Rome from the balcony of the Secretariat of State in the Vatican. *(Photo: Chris Willis)*



New Lecturers instituted by Bishop Kieran Conry (from left to right): Matthew O'Gorman, Anthony Rosso and Sean Crawley. *(Photo: Tony Milner)*

The Year in Pictures



New Acolytes instituted by Bishop John Arnold (from left to right) Anthony McGrath, John Poland, Guido Amari and Marc Homsey. *(Photo: Tony Milner)*



New deacon Liam Bradley with Father Rector Nicholas Hudson and Bishop John Arnold. *(Photo: Stefan Kaminski)*



College Diary 2009-10

Michael Patey

This past year at the Venerabile was not *all* work and *no* play. We celebrated great milestones, building achievements and the generosity of patrons. We had a few festive dinners. But as with every year in the life of a community, we also celebrate daily the tricks, foibles and mishaps of others, and for better or worse these end up in the Diary. In a spirit of loving fraternity, of course.

September 2009

Wednesday 30 September – Phil Harris returns to the College early to register at the JPIL Institute but is dismayed to find the plant life of his terrace-garden a shadow of its former beauty, the price of a Roman summer without water. The state-of-the-art watering system he had purchased from “Euro-garden” before the summer break had sprung a leak, leaving the poor flowers completely parched.

October 2009

Sunday 4 October – Students return to the College fresh from their summer placements, minus the six men of the fourth year who are completing their extended time in parishes. Rumours abound of a possible Papal voyage to Great Britain some time in the next year, possibly to coincide with the beatification of the Venerable John Henry Newman. For now, we turn our minds to the culmination of two years’ work bringing the College into the twenty-first century, with the newly restored church, refurbished *Salone* and a new exhibition centre in the Crypt all to be opened imminently.

Monday 5 October – Prospective Candidates Michael Doody and Michael Patey head to the Alban Hills to get a head start on their individually guided retreat with Mgr John Armitage, Vicar General of Brentwood diocese, who will be simultaneously preaching a retreat to the rest of the house. Meanwhile, plans are afoot for the traditional *Ben Tornati* party, taking place as usual on the roof terrace that evening. We welcome new men Tom Cunnah (Shrewsbury), David Howell (Southwark), Luke de Pulford (Southwark) and Oskar Thorsteinsson (Reykjavik) as well as student priests Frs Jonathan Brandon (Shrewsbury), Jonathan Farrugia (Malta) and Craig Fitzpatrick (Hallam).

Tuesday 6 October – Peace descends on Villa Palazzola. The timely choice of mealtime reading is *Newman’s Journey* by Meriol Trevor with Liam Bradley and Mgr Phil Carroll once again doing the honours.

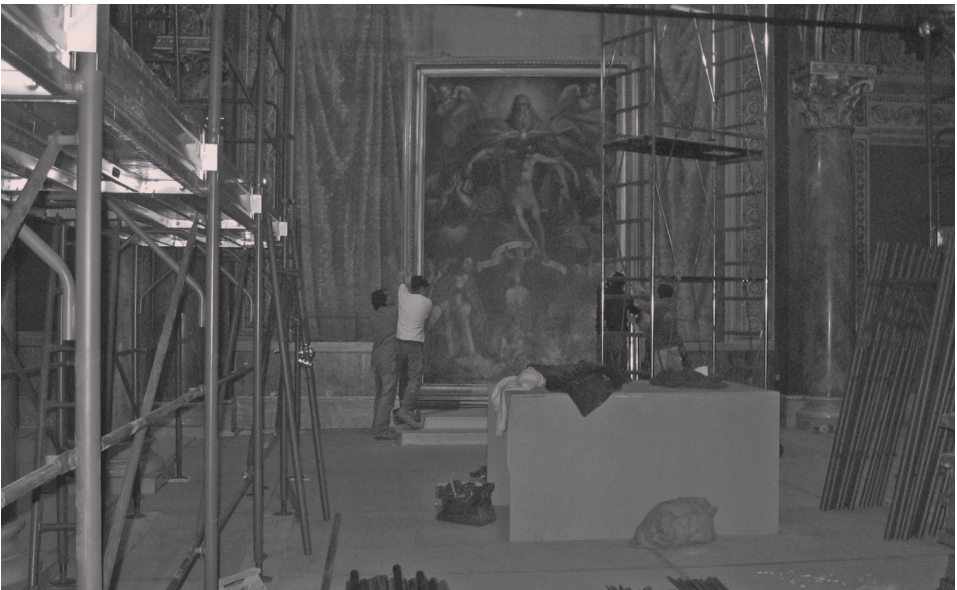
Sunday 11 October – Mgr John Armitage preaches at Mass after an inspiring retreat. Fr Rector thanks Mgr John for his words on the spirituality of the diocesan priest, a fitting theme early on in this *Year of the Priest*. After lunch, Fr Andrew prepares us for a busy week of festivities to

commemorate the opening of the church: "All hands on deck!" Then we sing the traditional *Te Deum* to close the retreat, which is captured by a sound recordist from the BBC which had lost the recording they had made last December of the same chant. The result will be piped as background music for the new exhibition in the Crypt: *Non Angli sed Angeli: a Pilgrimage, a Mission*. In the evening Marc Homsey plays the organ at Vespers for the first time.

Monday 12 October – The familiar routine of seminary life begins again. For the first time, the entire first year will begin philosophy studies at the *Angelicum* following a decision by the formation staff to try this new way for two years. Many questions arise: how will the New Men fit into College life if unable to mimic Fr Nkeramihigo's Italian accent? How will they have the discipline inspired by fear to learn metaphysics without Fr Gilbert's soft touch? Several students show solidarity to their *alma mater* by attending the Mass to inaugurate the beginning of the academic year at the Greg.

Wednesday 14 October – Bishop John Rawsthorne of Hallam, who represents the bishops of England and Wales at the synod for Africa, celebrates Mass at the College. Later, Fr Mark Harold preaches at our customary Wednesday evening community Mass to 35 headteachers from his diocese of Salford. He recalls the e-mail he received that morning from the paradoxically named *Fastweb*: "*È necessario autenticarsi*" – it is necessary to authenticate yourself, which he indeed does with a typically engaging homily.

Thursday 15 October – A group of students from the Anglican Centre are welcomed to lunch. In the evening Fr Rector addresses the community, giving us the news that the Holy Father in this Year of Priesthood has invited all seminarians in Rome to a special audience at the Vatican on 19 November.



The College church in disarray. (Photo: Liam Bradley)

Friday 16 October – Deacon James McAuley preaches for the first time – in Italian – at the fortnightly Italian Mass. Michael Doody is seen breathless as he leaves the new gym, having used a running machine kindly provided by the *Friends of the Venerabile*.

Saturday 17 October – Four portaloos appear in the cortile.

Sunday 18 October – The long-awaited day of the re-opening of the church arrives. Early in the morning the ground floor of the College becomes a hub of activity with *Schola* and liturgy rehearsals taking place, catering arrangements being made and guests welcomed. Archbishop Vincent Nichols celebrates the Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving in our gleaming College church, with Eminences Cormac Murphy-O'Connor and Jean-Louis Tauran, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, sitting in choir, with five bishops and more than sixty Old Romans concelebrating. All are impressed with the transformation that has taken over two years to complete. Of particular note are the magnificent Martyrs' Picture, the stunning restoration of the Tribune's Martyrs' Cycle frescoes and the new lighting system for the 21st century illuminating every corner of a refreshed College church as it would have been generations ago. A buffet lunch is enjoyed by the two hundred present, and speeches follow from Fr Rector, who praises Fr Andrew Headon and Barbara Donovan for their tireless efforts, and Mr & Mrs Urs & Francesca Schwarzenbach for their outstanding generosity in funding the project. Cardinal Cormac amusingly recalls the chronic lack of funds during his tenure as Rector, recounting to dinner guests an occasion in which he and his Vice-Rector stuffed the pockets of long winter coats with *lire* in the height of summer before flying to Rome, suspiciously having *niente a dichiarare!* Urs Schwarzenbach speaks of his gladness at having been in the position to help the College, light-heartedly mentioning he had not looked back since meeting Fr Anthony Wilcox in Henley several years ago, and offering the Vice-Rector a job as a project manager.



The Mass to re-open the church with Archbishop Nichols presiding. (Photo: Tony Milner)

Monday 19 October – Another eventful day of festivities with Fr Bruce Burbidge providing a lunchtime organ recital. Tours of the *Salone* and the crypt exhibition take place. The *Non Angli sed Angeli* exhibition proves to be an atmospheric audio-visual spectacular. Students can be heard singing the *Te Deum* as visitors are taken on a pilgrimage from recusant England to Rome and back, with the amazing effect of walking through the *Porta Flaminia* of the Martyrs' painting. James Moreland is the first to try the cleverly concealed "Priest hole" for size, complete with candle and prayer book. That evening the Amadeus choir gives a concert in the church conducted by Mr David Holroyd. The joyful sound of "*I was glad*" rings out from the tribune before Bruckner's *Locus Iste* with the audience encircled by more than twenty singers. A programme of well-known sacred choral music follows.

Tuesday 21 October – This morning historic news is announced in Rome and Westminster of a forthcoming Apostolic Constitution providing personal ordinariates for Anglican communities wishing to be in full communion with the Church. In the evening, a votive Mass of the College Martyrs is celebrated by Cardinal Cormac. Many Old Romans concelebrate, as do the Vocations Directors of England and Wales who are staying at Palazzola for their annual conference. All enjoy a festive supper. Former Rector Mgr Jack Kennedy represents the Old Romans, giving a memorable (if not brief!) speech. His eminent predecessor, the Cardinal, repeatedly attempts to reclaim the floor with exclamations of "*sufficit!*"

Wednesday 22 October – Many members of the house see the main door of the College church opened for the first time, as visitors are welcomed for *Recreatio*, three reflective musical and scriptural offerings from the New English Orchestra. Another large crowd fills the church for Dr Judith Champ's lecture on the history of English Catholicism and Rome.

Thursday 23 October – Our DSS Rev. Phillip Harris plays a lunchtime organ recital in the College church with pieces from Bach to Buxtehude, reflecting the dedication of the Most Holy Trinity. Later, Fr Andrew, complete with remote control, shows off the sophisticated light system in the College church accompanied by readings and a short reflection.

Friday 24 October – The house is glad for a quiet day after one of the busiest weeks in recent memory. Fourth year students leave for their start-of-year retreat in *San Vito Romano* with Mgr Philip Carroll.

Monday 26 October – Fr Chris Willis arrives in chapel an hour earlier than necessary, thereby losing the hour of sleep enjoyed by those who remembered to change their alarm clocks to daylight saving time.

Wednesday 28 October – Mgr Philip Whitmore celebrates his 50th birthday by presiding at Mass, followed by a festive supper in the Refectory. *Buon compleanno!*

Thursday 29 October – The *Venerabile's* North American contingent, Sandy MacDonald and Tony Rosso, get into the spirit of Halloween by hollowing out pumpkins to produce lanterns, making the Old St Joe's corridor even spookier than normal.

Friday 30 October – The first free weekend of the year. A dozen seminarians and student priests head up to Palazzola to watch low budget movies. Rumours circulate of a charades championship with appearances from Rambo, Indiana Jones and the Muppets. Surely not!

November 2009

Sunday 1 November – On the way back from Palazzola, while caught in a traffic jam, Sandy MacDonald tells his passengers, one of whom happens to be psychologist Fr Michael Doyle, of his long-standing wish to deal with Roman traffic by driving a tank over all of the other vehicles.

Monday 2 November – The New Men depart for a well deserved R & R week at the Villa.

Wednesday 4 November – Forty Jubilarians with combined service in the priesthood of over *nineteen hundred years* join us for the day, spending the afternoon in the Common Room and environs. In the evening our recent custom of weekly festive dinners continues after a Mass celebrated by Bishop Edwin Regan.



The Jubilarians in front of the Martyrs' Picture. (Photo: Tony Milner)

Sunday 8 November – Staff and students, donning poppies, make their way to the church of San Silvestro for the annual Remembrance Sunday Mass with the Scots' College and Beda communities.

Wednesday 11 November – The Catholic Communications Officers of the dioceses of England and Wales attend Wednesday evening Mass. The Refectory is particularly full this night as all expect Rafaella to be cooking her final supper at the College – all of which is halted when Fr Rector announces beforehand that she isn't leaving just yet.

Saturday 14 November – It's off to Palazzola for seminarians and staff, eagerly awaiting the results of the recently completed *Myers-Briggs* questionnaires. Fr Michael Doyle leads a well-received Human Development weekend. The discovery is made that the typical VEC resident (including the diarist) is an ISFJ (introverted, sensing, feeling, judging) on the *Myers-Briggs* scale. Stefan Kaminski now has an excuse for organised chaos as he is one of only three 'P's (perceiving) to the thirty-three 'J's (judging), while Neil Brett and Edward Henley are the two ENTJ "field marshals." Edward celebrates this outcome by leading the community in the *Coventry Gloria* a full octave higher than expected, managing to hit all the high notes.

Tuesday 17 November – Fr Rector celebrates Mass at *Campo Verano* with several students and staff present followed by the blessing of the College Vault. By chance a student identifies two names on the Irish College vault thought to be in our own. On enquiry of the cemetery authorities, the Rector receives a print-out of all those buried in the English College vault, confirming that it housed the mortal remains of both Thomas Lucey and Hugh Boyle. But whereas it gave a burial date for everyone including Hugh Boyle, the burial date for Lucey was blank. So the plot thickens (no pun intended!). Nevertheless, may they rest in peace.



Is she instructing or giving a blessing? Sr Mary Joseph with Sean Crawley and Michael Patey at *Campo Verano*. (Photo: Tony McGrath)

Wednesday 18 November – Archbishop Kelly celebrates Mass in sign language for the Catholic Deaf Association's visit to Rome. Signers simultaneously translate the Mass into seven different sign dialects from Tagalog to Spanish, followed by – you guessed it – another festive meal.

Thursday 19 November – In the morning, Pope Benedict holds an audience in the Paul VI audience hall especially for seminarians and those studying at Roman universities. The students rush back to the Venerabile for lunch with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, who is in Rome to speak with Pope Benedict and to lecture at the Greg.

Friday 20 November – Tragedy strikes the Common Room as Fr Chris Willis attempts to pour himself a *limoncello* prior to the First Year Show. The sideboard collapses sending a case of glasses and bottles crashing to the floor, eliminating our supply of drinks. A band of students appears on the scene to clean up the pungent mess, dodging shards of glass and wondering how to save the evening from disaster. Frs Andrew, Mark and Phil, who are in charge of the College in the absence of Fr Rector, kindly raid the staff *liquori* in the Salone. Entertainment is offered by the first year seminarians in the form of a sketch set around the VEC ("Visit Europe Clerically") Travel Agency. Tom Cunnah plays the travel agent and Luke de Pulford needs a holiday. The sketch includes promoting several travel destinations: Iceland, with commentaries in Icelandic courtesy of Oskar Thorsteinsson, the standard English of the Wirral's Fr Jonathan

Brandon and the fluent "*Urban YooF*" of David Howell; from San Giovanni Valdarno (where students learn Italian) we see an ecclesiastical version of *The Godfather* with Fr Craig Fitzpatrick in the frightening lead role. Fr Craig, Fr James Mackay and James Moreland present Monty Python's *Northern Playwright* sketch.

Thursday 26 November – "But look," begins Mgr Phil at his Thursday Spiritual Conference. "Pray for us," answers Guido Amari loudly, just as Stefan Kaminski tumbles through the door, knocking over three chairs. Our speaker, understandably bemused, allows a pause before trying again.

Saturday 29 November – The term has seen a spell of good form for the football team, unbeaten in 4 matches, including a triple-crown of friendlies against local rivals from the Scots, Beda and Irish Colleges. Later, Fr Mark Butlin OSB leads this year's Advent recollection.

Sunday 30 November – Neil Brett makes his oath of fidelity and profession of faith at Vespers. Processing out, cantor Edward Henley completes a 360 degree turn without a dismount, earning a perfect six from MC Liam Bradley.

December 2009

Tuesday 1 December – Martyrs' Day is celebrated in the usual way with Mass, lunch, solemn Vespers, veneration of the relic and characteristic Venerabile spirit. After lunch Fr Rector welcomes the many distinguished guests including Eminences Levada and Foley, plus Archbishop Augustine Di Noia OP whom the Rector recalls once meeting at the CDF. He assures us he wasn't in trouble. We will let the CDF be the judge of that!

Thursday 3 December – *Nihil Obstat* and *Censor Deputatus* – SS & DSS James McAuley and Phillip Harris – hold a censorship rehearsal in advance of the Christmas Entertainment. The axe is dropped on risqué poetry from Guido Amari and Michael Doody (thank goodness), but Fr Tony Milner's blood-and-guts Tom Lehrer song manages to survive the cut.

Monday 7 December – We celebrate the vigil Mass of the Immaculate Conception, after which eight students head to Palazzola to enjoy the tradition of Holly Cam.

Tuesday 8 December – A brief rest from Advent abstinence for those at Palazzola, as the Villa is already decorated for Christmas, and a fine lunch is on offer after an hour of picking holly (OK, 45 minutes – it started raining). The fruits of the day are more Cam than Holly this year.

Thursday 10 December – Preparations for this year's Christmas Entertainment reach dress rehearsal stage. Edward Henley masterfully directs proceedings. His direction to crooners Tony Rosso and Steven Leightell: "Make sure you have a few drinks before you go on stage."

Saturday 12 December – The day of the Christmas Entertainments arrives. Rehearsals of sketches and musical items are in their final stages. At 7pm, proceedings commence with the Schola chanting the *O Emmanuel* antiphon from the downstairs corridor producing enchanting results. The Advent Carol Service is a success, with even Handel's precarious *Ye boundless realms of joy*

sung well. After two years' exile from the College church, it is a stirring experience to hear Messiaen's *La Nativité du Seigneur* played on the organ courtesy of Phil Harris, followed by Mendelssohn's *Lift thine eyes* from *Elijah* sung from the tribune by the quartet of Fr James Mackay, Michael Doody, Neil Brett and Mgr Whitmore. After *panatone* and mulled wine, Harry and the Whales gets things off to an upbeat start in the "theatre" normally known as the Common Room, with the "2½ Maltese students" (Fathers Jonathan Farrugia and Kevin Schembri with Stefan Kaminski) inducing laughter with their "Meet and Greet" sketch, a survey of the differences between our nations. Tony Rosso and Steven Leightell croon to jazzy Christmas numbers accompanied by Trumpet & Piano Jazz Duo Patey & Harris, balanced with barbershop-style carols led by Edward Henley. The usual adaptations of *The Two Ronnies* and Monty Python humour run in the form of F.U.N.E.X. with competitive *Monsignori* recalling the poverty of their seminary experience – Marc Homsey being the common factor in both of these sketches. Tom Lehrer (known to us as Fr Tony Milner) encourages the full and active participation of the audience. Tom Cunnah is compère, complete with original jokes (e.g. the Earl of Shrewsbury who, receiving an OBE, became an "Ear-lobe") and a literally "cheesy" poem lamenting his confreres' annoying tendency to eat only the nose of the cheese.

Sunday 13 December – At lunch Fr Rector announces that James Moreland and Oskar Thorsteinsson have decided to leave at the end of term. Their friendship and contribution to the community will be missed and we wish them well.

Tuesday 15 December – At supper, Fr Javier Ruiz's conversation can be heard across the Refectory by Rev. James McAuley who sardonically suggests to Guido Amari that he enquire if Fr Javier "could speak any louder" – which Guido very loudly does. Well, you asked!

Friday 18 December – Bishop Arthur Roche admits Michael Doody and Michael Patey to Candidacy in the Martyrs' Chapel. A procession to the College church follows where Neil Brett is ordained to the Diaconate. The new deacon holds forth after the following celebratory dinner, combining humour with profundity about his time in the College. He notes amusingly the recent *Motu Proprio* about the nature of the diaconate published in the very week of his ordination and he is grateful that unlike Mother Teresa's forty years of darkness, in his case it has been only six. Fr Rector congratulates Rev. Neil and mentions slyly that the new Candidates were known in his appointments diary as "M & M," "not because the two Michaels are sweet and/or nuts." He notes the unusual fact that this is the first time a father of a Candidate is present who is himself a Father, in this case a priest of the Nottingham diocese, Fr. Colin Patey. With this celebration, a busy term comes to an end.

January 2010

Saturday 2 January – Notwithstanding the wintry conditions, Romans new and old gather in Crawley for the Ordination to the Priesthood of Andy Moss. *Ad multos annos!*

Wednesday 6 January – The big freeze in Blighty prevents many students' return. As England experiences its worst winter in decades, flights are cancelled especially in the south with Gatwick airport being the worst affected. One seminarian who successfully returns on time is Steven

Leightell, who promptly informs the house of his decision to take time out for further discernment. Steven's valuable presence and stature (all 5'4" of him) will leave many bereft, yet our prayers and best wishes go with him.

Thursday 7 January – The sound of suitcases wheeling along the corridors confirm that most students have returned. Ne'er were those at the Venerabile so relieved to be back!

Friday 22 January – The arrival of the Trustees along with Bishop Roche, Bishop Campbell and Bishop Drainey is marked with a drinks reception. Many students escape to the Scots College immediately afterwards for the Burns' supper. Even Michael Doody is happy with the single malt whiskey on offer this year, after his palate was offended on a previous visit with a blended variety.

Sunday 24 January – Today's lunch is held in honour of Nicholas and Pamela Coote who have generously donated a great part of their wealth to the College in order to ensure that reserve funds are in place in the future. Fr Rector speaks for all of us in thanking them for their kindness.

Thursday 28 January – Winter exams begin and with a session of only two weeks and two days, exams are bunched together, requiring a delicate balancing of diaries to account for functions associated with the imminent arrival of our bishops on their *ad limina apostolorum*.

Friday 29 January – Archbishop Patrick Kelly presides and preaches at Mass with all English and Welsh bishops in attendance.

February 2010

Monday 1 February – Italian infrastructure catches up with the rest of the world with the advent of recycling bins. Where once was found one bin, now there are three. Confusion abounds in the student kitchen as students dither over which bin should receive their refuse. Some people think tea bags are supposed to be put in the same bin as the empty bottles. In actual fact, they qualify as food in the new order.

Tuesday 2 February – The scarlet of the Cardinals' Corridor is merged with the purple and black of the entire Bishops' Conference of England and Wales who host a reception. Guests of the bishops include several cardinals, professors from the Pontifical Universities and Mark Thompson, Director General of the BBC. The bishops are relaxed after the previous day's audience with Pope Benedict. Photos of their respective individual meetings with the Holy Father are shown to all who are interested.

Friday 12 February – For the first time in many years there is a significant amount of snowfall in Rome. Cameras capture an event the *personale* say has not been seen for a quarter of a century. The snow conveniently melts within an hour or so.



On Rev. Harris' terrace, the Diarist hides under an umbrella in Rome's first snowfall in many years. (Photo: Phillip Pennington Harris)

Saturday 13 February – Fr Tony returns to England to recuperate in the comfort of his home country. Get well soon Father!

Monday 15 February – Refreshed from post-exam trips to Assisi, the Alps, Greece, Orvieto, Valladolid and Venice, the community embarks on a new semester.

Tuesday 16 February – In a twist to the tradition, Guido Amari sings "Happy Birthday To Me" at breakfast, taking all by surprise. Stefan Kaminski rescues the ill-fated rendition of his diocesan brother by intoning it more accurately, getting Guido's birthday off "on a better note." Later the house elects Liam Bradley as Senior Student. At choir practice Stefan Kaminski brings his tenure as Choirmaster to a close with a rousing rendition of *Glory, Glory, Alleluia!* (*Battle Hymn of the Republic*).

Wednesday 17 February – Michael Patey is elected Deputy Senior Student. "Glory, Glory, Alleluia!" is not sung, but only because Lent has just begun.

Thursday 18 February – The second day of Lent begins penitentially as the entire house must walk through torrential rain to the Station Mass. The College leads the liturgy at *San Giorgio in Velabro*, Cardinal Newman's titular church. Later, Marc Homsey's annual house job sweepstake is decided even before the house jobs are announced with Rev. Phil Harris winning (getting back his three euros as the only entrant). In the evening Tom Cunnah sits across from Marc Homsey at supper and asks: "So, who is the new MC?"

Marc: "MC"

Tom: (In an even more earnest tone) "Yes, the new MC – who is he?"

Marc: "MC"

Tom: (Measured annoyance.) "Are you deaf or just playing silly buggers?"

Marc: "MC is the new MC!"

Tom: "Oh, now I get it!" Michael Coughlan.

Saturday 20 February – Mid-way through the Vancouver Winter Olympics, Sandy "Olympian" MacDonald shows his nation's sporting prowess at *Brunswick Bowling*. The occasion is held both as a birthday celebration for Guido Amari and as a farewell to Fr Mark Reilly who returns to the diocese of Brentwood to take up his first appointment at St Antony's, Forest Gate.

Sunday 21 February – Uplifting singing from the Junior Choir of the Brompton Oratory provides a treat on the First Sunday of Lent. At the end, celebrant Fr Craig Fitzpatrick thanks the young people for helping us to pray. That evening, the house meeting is brought to order by James McAuley who clears up the question of when *exactly* the house jobs change. It is precisely when the incoming Senior Student takes charge of the meeting. Liam Bradley expresses his hope that he will not drop the baton he has inherited from his predecessor.

Monday 22 February – Outgoing SS James McAuley is *Kaminskied*. As he leaves his room early in the morning, he bounces off a wall of bubble-wrap taped to the outside of his door. The troubled victim later compares his ordeal to the entanglement of Frodo Baggins in the web of

Shelob in *The Lord of the Rings*. It is not necessary for James to cut his way out with a sword, however. In other news Fr Mark Harold plus Shrewsbury students Michael Coughlan, Tony McGrath, Tom Cunnah and Fr Jonathan Brandon are present in Wythenshawe for the ordination of Mgr Mark Davis as coadjutor bishop of Shrewsbury. Their happiness at the choice of the Holy Father had been well understood by the community since Bishop Mark's encouraging homily on the priesthood three weeks earlier.



Stefan Kaminski is deep in prayer: for inspiration for a new trick? (Photo: Liam Bradley)



Tony Rosso and Guido Amari take some time out for recreation in Santa Marinella. (Photo: Matthew O'Gorman)

Thursday 25 February – A majority of students head to *Santa Marinella* on retreat, leaving behind those in first and fourth years. Sean Crawley's retreat is "spiritual" in more ways than one. *Disaronno* anyone? Nice of him to mention that to the Diarist. Sorry Sean.

Friday 26 February – With exclusive possession of the house, a group of ten enjoy an evening of fine dining in the Common Room. The three chefs' specialities are: baked mackerel with fennel and olives (Tom Cunnah), Chinese stir fry with prawns (Luke de Pulford) followed by

lemon meringue pie (Sandy MacDonald). Several rounds of "Just a Minute" provide entertainment. David Howell impresses when his minute-long stream of consciousness produces: "Canada is the best country in the world in which to live because it has leopards leaping across the frozen tundra." "Deviation!" shouts Tom Cunnah and many others.

March 2010

Thursday 4 March – It is announced after a Spiritual Conference that we will have three full weeks of vacation the following Christmas. Fr Mark Harold is confirmed as the successor to Fr Andrew Headon as Vice-Rector beginning in the Autumn.

Saturday 13 March – A rowdy group of students and staff head to a Clericus Cup football match in support of the Anglo-Celtic Colleges United. Fr James Mackay leads in chants such as "Jerusalem," "You're not singing any more" and "Vindaloo." After a physical performance described by the NAC website as "hard, aggressive and sometimes legal play" the Americans win 2-0.

Tuesday 16 March – The inaugural meeting of the VEC debating society discusses freedom of religious expression. President Stefan Kaminski takes to his role sporting DJ with bow tie. He is suitably strict with the debaters. The libertarian thinking of the Proposers (Matthew O'Gorman

and Benjamin Theobald) immediately pushes the Opposers to their back feet (David Howell and Michael Patey). David Howell makes a sterling effort to persuade the incredulous audience that freedom of speech is not always in the public interest, mentioning as an example the potential damage to the common good brought on by promoting questionable marriage practices. The room collapses with laughter when he accuses the Proposers of “planting their flag on the hill of bigamy.” The motion is carried 17-2.

Saturday 20 March – The availability of laminating equipment is signalled by Neil “Plastification” Brett on the notice board. He posts a laminated newspaper article with the details of the Champions League quarter-finals, which will not include recently eliminated Chelsea (coincidentally the Rector’s team).

Saturday 27 March – It’s off to Palazzola for our Holy Week retreat, preached this year by Bishop John Arnold.

Tuesday 30 March – After months of technical problems with the couple of battered old PCs that still worked, we return from Palazzola to find six wonderful new computers installed in the College thanks to the *Friends of the Venerable*. We are grateful to the *Friends* that they came to our rescue and we can now complete our semester’s study unhindered by e-gremlins.

April 2010

Saturday 3 April – Neil Brett has the honour of deaconing for Pope Benedict at the Easter Vigil in St Peter’s.

Sunday 4 April – An early start to a wet Easter Sunday morning as the Schola takes up its usual position in St Peter’s Square. The rain dampens things as some students, including the Diarist, forget umbrellas and leave the square a few hours later soaked through. Marc Homsey has an easier time as reader of the epistle – a Vatican MC holds an umbrella over him throughout.

Monday 12 April – Edward Henley arrives in Rome late from his post-Easter break in Germany, having been detained by airport police in Stuttgart – with a firearm found in his luggage. He is soon released without charges, having convinced his captors that it was simply “paperwork.”

Tuesday 13 April – Michael Coughlan decides that his Lenten sacrifice of adopting a vegetarian diet was not such a sacrifice after all. He officially has “V” added to his name on the meal lists, a move which leads Maria Grazia in the kitchen to demand a medical certificate. Even 27 years of loyal service to the College is not enough to understand our peculiar British ways.

Monday 19 April – The eruption of a volcano in Iceland has produced an ash cloud, grounding all flights to and from the UK. Five days later, several visitors remain in the College forced to extend their Roman sojourn. A coach-load departs from Palazzola with passengers determined to return to work. Meanwhile Mgr Phil Carroll and Fr Andrew Headon remain stranded in England.

Friday 23 April – The Icelandic ash cloud has abated meaning that our refugees are able to return to England in time for St George’s Day. On Via di Monserrato the Solemnity is celebrated with organist Phil Harris providing improvisations before and after Mass uncannily resembling “Puff the Magic Dragon.” We are left feeling sorry for the dragon slain by our patron saint.

Saturday 24 April – Fr Dermot McCaul of the Beda leads a Human Development weekend on “Listening.” Unfortunately our bus driver has not taken such a course as he mistakenly arrives at Palazzola to take us to Rome, rather than at Rome to take us to Palazzola. In the evening, we celebrate 90 years of the Villa being in English College hands with a festive dinner. Fr Rector gives a stirring tribute to “D.O.P.,” unable to resist pointing out that the former villa in Monte Porzio was affectionately known as “D.O.M.P.”

Thursday 29 April – Fr Bob Deeley of the CDF addresses us on recent scandals in the Church. After supper there is an hour of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament to remember all victims of child abuse. It is announced that this will be followed up by a weekly holy hour in May for the same intention, as suggested by the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

Friday 30 April – A packed Common Room as many attend a resumed Wiseman Society meeting featuring Lord Alton who speaks on the “Culture of Life versus the Culture of Death.” Congratulations to Matthew O’Gorman who arranged every detail of the occasion with help from many of the students.

May 2010

Sunday 2 May – Founders’ Day arrives with Bishop Roche presiding at Mass. At lunch our benefactors Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach become respectively Knight Grand Cross of the First Class and Dame Grand Cross of the First Class in the Order of St Gregory for their generosity to the Church in England and Wales. Fr Tony Wilcox becomes Mgr Wilcox (prelate of honour) and is presented with a monsignorial fascia by Bishop Roche. After lunch a plaque above the entrance to the *portineria* is unveiled commemorating the restoration of the church. Now immortalised in marble, the first names one sees when entering the College are those of our leaders, Mgr Nicholas Hudson and Fr Andrew Headon, at the foot of the inscription.



Behind the scenes, Rita, Cristina and Maria Grazia prepare the Founders’ Day feast. (Photo: Liam Bradley)



The plaque is revealed. From l to r, Urs Schwarzenbach, Fr Rector Nicholas Hudson, Francesca Schwarzenbach, Cardinal Jean-Louis Pierre Tauran, Bishop Arthur Roche and Fr Vice-Rector Andrew Headon. (Photo: Liam Bradley)

Saturday 8 May – The College *gita* heads to Sutri and Bracciano for lunch by the lake followed by a visit to an aeronautics museum. Calamity strikes during the annual kick-about as the football ends up out of reach in the lake. Heroic Senior Student Liam Bradley dives into the lake and saves the match from an untimely finish.

Monday 10 May – At a class in homiletics Sandy MacDonald tackles the problem of apathy. Edward Henley: "I've never thought of myself as apathetic but to be honest, I've never bothered to think much about it."

Tuesday 11 May – The Debating Society meets to decide whether the British monarchy "is the best head of state for Britain." Patriotically sporting top hat, monocle and stick, Fr Craig Fitzpatrick is asked by chairman Stefan Kaminski to remove his headgear: "There are two things nobody ever tells me to do," retorts Fr Craig. "One is how to pray; the other is how to dress." He then recites a speech from Henry V before removing his accoutrements and readily admitting to putting style before substance. Former lawyer Tom Cunnah ably adds substance to defend Her Majesty, while the barracking efforts of unlikely republicans Edward Henley and Liam Bradley run them close. In the end, with the support of voters from the United States (Tony Rosso and Sr Mary Joseph), Canada (Sandy MacDonald) and Malta (Fr Jonathan Farrugia and Fr Kevin Schembri), the British monarchy wins the day 10-7.

Friday 14 May – The final free weekend of the year begins. Guido Amari, Marc Homsey and Sandy MacDonald head north to Turin by car to view the Holy Shroud.

Saturday 22 May – The football team are crowned champions after victory in the annual Ragheed Ganni Cup against the Irish, Scots and Beda Colleges. In the final game we hold the Irish to a draw. The subsequent penalty shoot-out sees penalty hero Michael Doody scoring the winner, his opportunity for glory made possible by two spot-kick saves from Fr Mark Harold.

In the evening, the drama is no less impressive at the *Teatro dell'Opera*. A large group led by Mgr Philip Whitmore attends Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and for the first time enjoys the comfort of boxes at surprisingly good value.



Michael Doody's winning shot.
(Photo: Mansel Usher)

Tuesday 25 May – Television historian Dr David Starkey is spotted with a film crew in the College church.

Wednesday 26 May – Mass for the feast of St Philip Neri is celebrated at *Chiesa Nuova* with the whole College in attendance. The principal celebrant is Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, the outgoing Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops.

Saturday 29 May – A morning of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and prayer is well-attended by students at St Peter's Basilica, continuing the month's intention for the victims of child abuse. The event is organised by Luke de Pulford who shows his public relations talents by mobilising the media which provides surprisingly favourable coverage. Many students serve and lead singing and Venerabile resident Mgr Charles Scicluna preaches.

The annual *Schola* meal takes place in the evening, kindly subsidised by the ever patient Mgr Whitmore. We enjoy listening to our recent recordings which were made during the past term; it seems we sound better than we thought.

Sunday 30 May – This year, Sean Crawley is the first to try the pool. A cool way of beginning the next few weeks preparing for his final set of philosophy exams. Archbishop Raymond Burke, Prefect of the Apostolic Segnatura, presides at Mass for the College's second patronal feast of the Most Holy Trinity.

Tuesday 1 June – The students are working hard preparing for the exams which begin today.

Friday 4 June – The house is saddened to hear of the sudden death of David Howell's father, Paul. David returns home for the time being and our prayers go with him.

Tuesday 8 June – A seagull visits the Old St Joseph's corridor in the early hours. She is heard to descend the staircase in a dignified manner, before leaving her mark on the floor and flying away. I wonder who left the skylight door to the roof terrace open this time?

Friday 11 June – Pope Benedict XVI closes the Year of the Priest in St Peter's Square with Mass attended by approximately 15,000 concelebrants. This is certainly the largest ever concelebrated Mass in Rome, if not the world. Tony McGrath reads the second reading at the Mass and deacon Phillip Harris distributes Holy Communion.

Saturday 12 June – The saga of the *ospite indesiderato*. By chance the Rector and Vice-Rector see an unfamiliar priest in the corridor after lunch and pay him the courtesy of chatting to him. Claiming to be visiting a student, he refuses to identify himself. Fr Andrew insists on knowing which student he is here to see, at which point our visitor tries to leave by going through the nearest doors – the Martyrs' Chapel. Fr Andrew asks to see what is contained inside the intruder's large bag but the man evades them and escapes into the cortile, chased at speed by the Rector and Vice-Rector. Meanwhile Stefan Kaminski, innocently returning with his Saturday *panino* helps to apprehend the man and take him back inside while Guido Amari calls the *Carabinieri*. A bag search reveals that he was attempting to steal several large volumes from the Third Library. Other students returning to the College are surprised to see the Rector restraining a very nervous-looking "priest." As Mgr Phil Carroll later remarks, "You'd be nervous too if the Rector was apprehending you." *Dopo qualche istante*, as the paraphrase of Fr Andrew's police statement put it, the *Carabinieri* eventually arrive to arrest the villain. It turns out to be a notorious Italian book thief who has robbed libraries across Rome and from the *Uffizi* in Florence. "*Amo molto i libri*," he is reported to have said in his defence.

In the evening, the College annual barbecue takes place with Tom Cunnah and Fr James Mackay being chief fryers. As the occasion coincides with England's first World Cup event, efforts are made to broadcast the match outside. The Snug's widescreen television is taken into the garden and Fr Mark Harold purchases a digital aerial which sits conveniently on one of the garden's ancient Roman columns. While the football result is disappointing for most (England drawing 1-1 with the USA), Floridian Tony Rosso is happy with the result.

Saturday 19 June – A day of departures. At the conclusion of his studies in Canon Law, Fr James Mackay leaves the College after eight years in Rome. Another friend and good egg leaves our midst. Meanwhile, terrapins Barry and George move on to pastures new after a few years under the care of Stefan Kaminski. They are now living in retirement in the Beda pond with the extended terrapin family. It is unclear if the two of them qualify for a Leaver's Profile in this issue of the Venerabile.

Monday 21 June – Several students attend the *Lectio Coram* examination of Fr Chris Willis at the Angelicum where he gives a superb lecture on "The Prayer of Union as Described by St Teresa of Avila." Rev. James McAuley and Rev. Phillip Harris also complete their studies in impressive fashion this week to bring to an end their studies at Roman universities.

Tuesday 29 June – Archbishop Smith of Southwark and Archbishop Longley of Birmingham receive the pallium from Pope Benedict. Afterwards, the traditional lunch for the feast of SS Peter and Paul is held in the Refectory. Responding to the Rector's congratulatory speech, Archbishop Smith reflects that his fellow recipient of the pallium was at one time in his class when he taught him at Wonersh. Archbishop Longley responds in kind by recounting a story of being asked to turn his music down by the Vice-Rector, this being an impossibility given that the seminarian himself was the origin of such fine (yet loud) music. Mr Peter Horgan of the College Trustees is invested as a Knight of St Gregory for his work for the College by the Archbishop of Birmingham. To the delight of all that know her, Sr Mary Joseph is presented with a bouquet for her efforts as Librarian and Guest Co-ordinator. Afterwards, last minute packing is done, the coach is boarded and all bound for Palazzola to begin the *Villeggiatura*. Vice-Rector elect Fr Mark Harold presides at solemn Vespers and reflects on the spirituality of life toward which one should strive during these weeks at the Villa. After supper, he gives more practical information, specifically his control of the purse strings. "While we're up here," he says, "I'm Emanuela." He adds, amidst laughter, "Except not as pretty."

Wednesday 30 June – "Mr Motivator" Sandy MacDonald interviews Guido Amari over breakfast about what his goals will be for the *Villeggiatura*. Guido responds: "My goals will be specific, measurable, achievable and reachable." Sleep, swimming and sun it is then Guido.

Sunday 4 July – Cardinal John Foley, a friend and regular visitor to the College is admitted to hospital in Rome this morning, meaning that his planned visit to Palazzola to institute our three new Lectors is cancelled. We wish His Eminence a speedy recovery. Fortuitously, Bishop Kieran Conry of Arundel and Brighton is due to arrive at DOP next morning and has kindly agreed to preside and preach at the Lectorate Mass in the evening.

At Vespers, our American connection and assistant choir master Tony Rosso chooses the hymn "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory" in celebration of American independence from British rule.

Monday 5 July – Four days of pastoral courses begin today. Mr Jim Whiston leads a group on leadership; Mrs Gretta Scadden and Bishop Conry lead their regular course on counselling skills; and the top year is given a much-needed dose of reality to prepare for their imminent priestly ministry, courtesy of our very own Fr Mark Harold.

In the evening, Sean Crawley, Matthew O'Gorman and Tony Rosso are instituted as Lectors, a day late but with the added bonus of enjoying two festive meals for the price of one. After supper, James McAuley adds to his many knowledge-based achievements over the last seven years, finally managing to captain the winning team in the Quiz.

Thursday 8 July – The North-South football match takes place with the North winning 5-4. Benjamin Theobald foresees this result and, in his cut-glass English accent, earlier declares: "If the South aren't going to win, why bother?" Benjamin shares the Diarist's philosophy of gamesmanship, still smarting from his defeat to Fr Chris Willis at the Scrabble board earlier in the *Villeggiatura*.

Friday 9 July – At the Leavers' dinner, Fr Andrew's achievements as Vice-Rector are celebrated as he leaves us to continue his heavy involvement in preparing for the Papal visit and to take up his appointment as Parish Priest in Ilford. Styling himself "Lord Lucan," he expresses regret at having had less involvement with the students' formation than he would have liked, whilst being grateful for the opportunity to work with a fantastic team to help secure the College financially and to renew the building. Neil Brett speaks for 36 minutes (12 minutes per person!) on behalf of the other Leavers. It is too long for Guido Amari who must pad out in his flip-flops for refreshment before returning minutes later.

Afterwards, Stefan Kaminski presents the "Photo Review of the Year" in hilarious fashion, if a little cheeky to all and sundry. The show is interspersed with a somewhat exaggerated "Festive Meal Count" reflecting a year in which there has been much to celebrate.

Sunday 11 July – Bishop John Arnold confers the ministry of Acolyte on Guido Amari, Marc Homsey, Tony McGrath and John Poland.

Monday 12 July – The *Villeggiatura* Folk Festival is revived after some years' absence, led by Fr Mark Harold on the guitar. Fellow strummers Tony McGrath and Luke de Pulford are up to the task in front of a crowd hungry for entertainment in the final days of the *Villeggiatura*. The dulcet tones of Edward Henley, Marc Homsey and Tony Rosso provide a wide variety of music. "The Ode to the Vice-Rector" is performed, comprising the unlikely juxtaposition of Anglican chant and the Palazzola fire regulations. The highlight for many is Fr Tony Milner's rendition of the song he has now made his own, Tom Lehrer's "The Irish Ballad." All join in with gusto on the "Sing-rickety-tickety-tin" line.

Tuesday 13 July – "Father of the House" Neil Brett is seen shuffling along the corridors, the painful result of over-exertion on the volleyball court the day before. James McAuley spends his last full day at seminary tackling mountains instead of molehills, conquering *Il Gran Sasso* with Stefan Kaminski (see p.63).

Wednesday 14 July – A day of great joy for many as Liam Bradley is ordained to the Diaconate by Bishop John Arnold. Fellow deacons Neil Brett, Phil Harris and James McAuley welcome a new member to their ranks. A good number of Liam's family and friends are present to support him.

So ends another eventful year as seminarians and priests depart Palazzola for the furthest realms of the empire. Some will launch into new lives as Parish Priests, some will return in October and some will perhaps never return. Such is Rome.



Michael Patey is a sixth year seminarian for the Diocese of Northampton. He is studying for his licence in moral theology at the Angelicum.



Leavers' Profiles

Rev. Neil Brett

Even with eyes closed, there would be few at the College who would fail to identify the measured, purposeful gait of the Rev. Neil Brett making his way down the corridor toward the student kitchen to be the first to scavenge for the bread and cheese left by Mgr Scicluna's weekly Maltese party. A man with undeniable presence, of exceptional conversational skill, a wizard of the turn of phrase and of strong convictions, Neil's point of view comes naturally from a well-cultivated mind.



His career at the VEC began in 2004 and included baccalaureates in philosophy and theology at the Gregorian University and a Master's in Marriage and the Family at the John Paul II Institute. A studious man, Neil was a fixture in several libraries in Rome throughout this time and was not above resorting to cagey tactics in order to enter prohibited ones. He worked hard at acquiring a proficiency in Italian and made many friends, including Italian professors and journalists, in order to exercise his fluency.

Neil's talents, however, are diverse. His large hands and wall-like stature earned him the nickname "Godzilla" on the volleyball court. Not only does he have the lowest and richest bass voice of the *Schola*, of which he was a faithful member for many years, but he lent his voice to represent a local leader of the Communist Party for the People's Republic of China. In his younger years he went door to door in foreign countries selling books and making converts without knowing a word of their language. Known as the best-connected seminarian in Rome, Neil constantly entertained journalists and power brokers who on one night would be at his table in the Refectory and the next night on CNN or the BBC.

While his sense of humour is not quickly caught by the dull of mind, Neil has also been known to draw a laugh by doing silly things: his famous yawning exercises in the Garden Room; offering unusual surgical procedures for sick seminarians as Infirmarian. Even when on one occasion his formal clerical garb was sprayed with pressurised whipped cream by a rambunctious seminarian, Neil was able to maintain his composure, albeit with a strained smile through clenched teeth.

The highlight of his liturgical life came to fulfilment last April when he was able to deacon for the Holy Father's Easter Vigil. His obvious devotion to all elements of the ancient rites no doubt caught the attention of the Holy Father but Neil is a man who believes in sanctifying all of his work, whether it is for the Holy Father or the common man.

After six years of formation, having "run the race" and "reached the prize" it is encouraging to see a man of Neil's quality join the shepherds of Brentwood diocese. His dedication to his work, his parents, his friends and Catholic truth have been inspiring for those privileged enough to know Neil. May the Lord bless your every endeavour in growing the Kingdom of Christ.

Alexander J. MacDonald

Rev. Phillip Pennington Harris

The term "pastoral musician" aptly describes one who works full time directing parish choirs and suggests a fitting approach for a Christian musician. For Phil Harris, both "pastoral" and "musician" apply. Until 2003 he held this role at St Peter's, Winchester. Following this he has generously enriched his Roman *fratelli* with his gifts and carefully brought the musical potential of others to fruition.

Indeed, Phil has shared his gifts unstintingly during his time in seminary. A boundless energy for many other endeavours notwithstanding, from his earliest weeks in the College Phil has beautified the liturgy with his talents as organist, choirmaster and composer. From the *Peter Mass* to *Missa Modalis*, Phil swiftly creates uplifting Mass settings and fresh and modern responsorial psalms. Being a composer who is also a professional organist made his mastery of Widor's *Toccata* as stirring as any one of the works that came from Phil's heart on the spur of the moment.

With his arrival in the summer of 2003, Phil quickly learned the Italian grammar and vocabulary necessary to excel in both philosophy and theology at the Greg. It was natural for him to take a whole-hearted approach to the task. Newly energised when beginning his license in Marriage and Family Life at the John Paul II Institute, Phil risked life and limb cycling to and from the Lateran each day, exchanging Italian banter when the quirks of the local road users came to light. In the afternoon he would become proficient in Moral Theology while whistling a hymn or listening to a Naxos CD. Adding to these achievements, Phil was responsible for editing two excellent editions of *The Venerabile*.

As rigorous as his academic efforts were, Phil's nature was to have a full social life. He would often instigate trips to the local *Vineria* making many friends through light-hearted conversation while passionately participating in the debates of the day. Gaining possession of the newly refurbished Old St Joe's terrace suite for his final two years, Phil made use of his green thumb by brightening his patio with plants and flowers. He was generous in sharing his pleasant surroundings with his fellow seminarians – and was a well-practised host of Benedictine abundance.

Phil was elected DSS and carried out his duties with great alacrity, going so far as to show Maria Grazia in the kitchen how to cook vegetarian dishes, much to the delight of the long-suffering *vegetariani* to which he used to belong. Such thoughtfulness is customary for one who has high expectations of himself and of others. Phil generously shares his expertise to guide people to their best.

When he returns to the home mission, Phil's particular blend of skills, combined with his conscientious kindness, will leave a gap for those of us who remain. His musical legacy will remain, however, in the form of his sacred compositions. The diocese of Portsmouth may have lost a pastoral musician in 2003 when Phil came to Rome, but it has now gained both a pastoral priest and a priestly musician. Thank you Phil and *auguri* as your ministry continues.

Michael Patey



Fr Andrew Headon

"Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis."

The *Leavers' Notes of The Venerabile* 1995 (Vol XXX No.5) said of the young Fr Andrew Headon that "he didn't have a mobile phone – as far as can be reasonably known – a mark of his resistance to the age." Any one of his more recent colleagues who has sat through an often-interrupted staff meeting with Fr Andrew will know how much *"times change and we change with them."*



His skilful employment (as well as his enjoyment) of modern means of communication has served the College well in the six and a half years of his Vice-Rectorship since 2004. We have no need to record here his success in masterminding the building projects of his time in office, in the College itself, in its surrounding property in Rome and at Palazzola. Some of these are obvious to the visitor but many more are hidden. Fortunately, he has also chronicled them for us with characteristic thoroughness in the previous edition of *The Venerabile* (Vol XXXIV No.2, 2009). It is an impressive, indeed unparalleled, list of work.

He concludes that article with this sentence: "The joy, however, has not only been the realisation of all these projects, but the fun of working as part of a great team." It is undoubtedly a great team, but it was his leadership and his vision that developed not only the work, but the team itself. It is rare, I think, that a Vice-Rector could get so much out of people and yet inspire so much affection in them at the same time.

This combination of abilities in Andrew was spotted early. Those *Leavers' Notes* describe his *modus agendi* as a student: "With determined bearing he set an individual but kindly mood... his quiet insistence on principle, cheerful and direct, always commanding an easy respect." These characteristics remain but the intervening years have also taught Andrew to vary his approach as Vice-Rector to needs and circumstances. No longer necessarily quiet in his insistence, but mostly cheerful, often kindly, certainly principled, he has been individual, determined and direct. Ask any student who dealt with him.

Nor were his talents limited to the community of the College. The funeral of Pope John Paul II and the Mass of Inauguration of the present Holy Father brought out Fr Headon the television commentator. But the creative side of his nature was perhaps given its fullest expression in the production of the Exhibition "*Non Angli sed Angeli*" which opened in October 2009 to coincide with the re-opening of the restored College church. The Exhibition tells the story, from earliest days, of the English Pilgrimage to Rome and of the reverse pilgrimage made by our Martyrs back to Reformation England. Dramatically housed in the crypt of the renewed church and the surrounding underground rooms, it has reached a remarkably large audience. Press coverage, both English (*Times*, *Tablet*) and Italian (*La Repubblica*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Osservatore Romano*) has been extensive. Attendance has been good. More than a thousand visiting pilgrims have been edified. Many hundreds who live in Rome, but were not fully aware of the history of the College, have been impressed; and those visitors who already knew of the College's history have had their knowledge deepened.

The Exhibition is quite interactive. It contains representations of the journey of the Martyrs to England and of their lives there, including a very realistic and built-to-scale priests' hole into

which not only visiting *children* have been tempted to climb. Original art was commissioned, with two outstanding examples. First, the beautifully sculpted Trinity, specially created by York-based artist Andrian Melka. It was modelled on the Black Abbey Trinity (1234) of the Kilkenny monastery, the iconography of which is similar to the Martyrs' picture. Second, he commissioned a striking video installation about pilgrimage entitled "From this World to that which is to Come" by artist Theo Eshetu, well known in Italy for his ground-breaking work.

All of this demonstrates Andrew's natural ability to organise and direct things creatively. But during his time as Vice-Rector he did not hesitate to improve on his natural talents. During these projects he also undertook and successfully completed a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Liverpool. Typically, the medium for his study was the same modern means of communication that he was supposed to have resisted as a young man. His work was done online from his desk in Rome, with a dissertation supervisor in San Jose, California and fellow students participating in seminars from their own desks in places as far apart as South Africa, Iceland and Australia. He has come a long way since resisting a mobile phone.

True to character, his time as Vice-Rector was not all work and no play. Rugby (especially Welsh rugby) remains an abiding passion, and his ability to conjure up tickets for international matches from the intricate depths of the Italian online booking system was a boon to his fellow staff members. Golf, too, is an ongoing obsession and Palazzola has benefited from a week's worth of business from England each October for the annual competition for the *Palazzola Golf Trophy* which he established. Cycling once had its place including impressive regular journeys from the College to Palazzola (up in 90 minutes and down in 50) until a recent encounter between his front wheel and a tramline ended in a painful fall. Such spare time as remained after these activities was "filled to overflowing" with a weekly wine class in Italian which qualified him as a *sommelier*. The quality of wine at College *feste* has benefited.

The College and all who love it have good reason to be eternally grateful to Fr Andrew and his bishop who allowed him to extend his appointment as Vice-Rector by one year, in order to complete the massive amount of restructuring and renovation which his time has seen. Rectors are often immortalised on the plaques which adorn the walls of the College – but Vice-Rectors rarely so. Fr Andrew's name does appear on the newest plaque which commemorates the re-opening of the restored church and other recent work. However, future students and pilgrims, guests in the Salone and scholars using the modernised archives who might seek a more vivid memorial to his work, could well be encouraged to follow the advice on the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren in St Paul's: *si monumentum requies, circumspice*.

Mgr Philip Carroll

Fr James Mackay

"The best day of my life so far." So said Fr James Mackay on the day of his ordination to the diaconate at Palazzola, encapsulating his enthusiasm for the diaconate, his fidelity to the Church, love of the priesthood and passion for following Jesus Christ. A year later, after being ordained priest in Canning Town, James returned to Rome to complete his three year licence in Canon Law and his eighth year at the VEC.



Often seen taking breaks from the library to make regular visits to brew a cup of tea, James was fully involved in College life. In his last VEC year, James officially became the longest ever serving member of the College *Schola*. During one annual *Schola* meal he gave a moving testament to the guidance of *Schola* maestro Mgr Whitmore and his own discovery of the inspiration, confidence, joy and freedom that he experienced through singing. James' considerable singing ability has seen him cantor numerous solo pieces such as *Every Valley* from Handel's *Messiah*.

James has also been a regular in anything theatrical in College life making comic appearances in the Christmas entertainments as the secretary to a fiery cardinal and as a jubilarian complete with dodgy Yorkshire accent. He also featured in the College production of *Twelve Angry Men* and played the leading role of St Thomas Becket in T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*. James also made his mark on College sports life: in table tennis he was dubbed the "King of Spin;" in football he was Mc'Kaka'kay; and in tennis he was inconsolable after watching the defeat of his number one sportsman Roger Federer at Wimbledon.

The seminary journey has, however, been tinged with sadness when in 2005 James' brother Billy was tragically killed. His involvement with and love for his family have been a constant witness to us all. James has been diligent both in word and duty, exemplified by his commitment to early morning prayer, daily adoration and service as Guest Master, Sacristan, MC and Deputy Senior Student.

James returns to England with an enthusiasm for the Gospel as a priceless treasure and with a confidence that, in the words of John Paul II, "the past belongs to God's mercy, the future to His providence and the present to His love." *Forza James and duc in altum!*

Tony McGrath

Rev. James McAuley

After working as an accountant at a top firm for 13 years, James arrived at the Venerable English College in 2003 from the diocese of Portsmouth. A graduate of Oxford University, he was more than ready to cope with the somewhat unpredictable challenge laid down by the Gregorian University. He achieved top class degrees in both philosophy and theology, as well as his Licence in Biblical Theology. I have often had the pleasure of partaking in fascinating discussions (or perhaps monologues is more accurate) about chapter 21 of John's Gospel, on which James wrote his Licence thesis.



The way James has carried out his duties in the College is worthy of much praise. As well as some slightly lighter house jobs, he has held the positions of Sacristan, MC and Senior Student. In each of these posts, James demonstrated that he is a remarkably clear thinker and excellent organiser. Invariably, James' successors would find that they had been left with a comprehensive set of instructions which would detail every responsibility imaginable for that particular house job. This talent for organisation and clear thinking also extends to his lecture notes, which have always been immaculately typed and bound. James has never kept these fruits of his labour to himself. When he has been asked to give help with academic work, his instinct has always been to respond warmly and generously. It was this generosity which led him to volunteer as editor of *The Venerabile* for two years. As Senior Student, James approached his role conscientiously, never being content to do the minimum. He always made it clear that he was available to discuss any problem and offer a friendly ear when it was needed.

James has approached life outside of studies and College with similar enthusiasm. He is among the few seminarians to have succeeded in systematically visiting hundreds of churches (more than 250 in fact) around Rome on his day off, as well as making many visits to small towns outside of Rome. He has given of himself generously in his pastoral work, most recently by leading a prayer group for married couples inspired by Charles de Foucauld as well as by giving practical help to the Missionaries of Charity. James could never be accused of being lazy.

James is the sort of person who will never realise how much he is missed but he will indeed be missed. Hopefully the cappuccino addiction that he has developed over the years in Rome will ensure that he visits us soon. Our prayers go with him.

Michael Doody

Fr Mark Reilly

It was a grey, damp and blustery February morning this year when Fr Mark Reilly dragged his last few bags into the back of the College Corsa and departed for England a final time, returning to the Mission, waving profusely to us as the car drove off from the *cortile*. It was the Mission, of course that had brought him here to the *Venerabile* in the first place and the Mission that was now calling him back, following seven and a half years' study and training here.



A Classics graduate from Cambridge, Fr Mark left a successful career in the City to respond to the call the Lord had given him to become a priest. He was sent to the English College in 2002 and immediately threw himself into studies with great gusto. By the time I arrived the following year, finding him as my next door neighbour, he was a source of confident and sound advice on the workings of the Gregorian, the College and life in Italy. His dedication to his studies led him to decide, after successfully completing his philosophy in Italian at the Greg, that he wished to engage with theology in his native tongue at the Angelicum – at least, such was his reasoning at the time. With hindsight, however, I think most of us who know Fr Mark well will say that what really lay behind the decision was his great love of St Thomas Aquinas and a desire to study the Angelic Doctor in “his own” university. Mark’s instinct served him well and he excelled in his theological studies at the *Angelicum*. Having received such a good grounding in Thomas for those three years, he decided to return to the Gregorian and Italian for what should have been his last two years and a Licence in Sacred Theology. Ill-health sadly intervened in the form of what began as a stiff neck and which escalated into a serious condition requiring an operation in England on his vertebrae and the loss of nearly a whole semester’s study. Mark’s humour saw him through much of what was, no doubt, a difficult and painful time. Who could forget him in his large white neck brace while cracking jokes about the “rather extreme Roman collar” he had recently taken to wearing?

Mark’s dedication to his studies did little to dint his sociability. He was always around, chatting, often clutching a half-empty mug of tea, laughing aloud at one joke or another. His service to the College community took on a new dimension in 2008 when he was elected Senior Student – a role he fulfilled with great sensitivity and dedication. What was always so encouraging was that one knew that he was always there, with a smile and a listening ear and good advice whenever one needed to talk.

He was ordained a Deacon at Palazzola in 2008, then a priest in Brentwood Cathedral in 2009. The disruption to Fr Mark’s studies gave him the unusual (and unlooked for) privilege of returning to Rome and the College for one last semester as a priest. For so many of his friends here, it has been a great encouragement to have Fr Mark celebrate Mass. We can see how central this is to his life as a priest and the prayerful spirituality that underpins it. The Diocese of Brentwood is indeed fortunate to have such a dedicated and able priest return to the Mission.

Rev. Phillip Pennington Harris

Fr Christopher Willis

It was with quite some surprise that, two years ago now, I learnt that I was to begin my time at the *Venerabile* with a long-serving priest of my home diocese. In a certain sense, I knew Fr Chris well before either of us had arrived, although it had been many years since we had last met. Knowing some of his spiritual directees and, as they say, having *heard the stories*, I had an idea that an impressive man with a true zeal for the priesthood and passion for the interior life was on his way.



And so it was that Fr Chris arrived in the College in October 2008, having celebrated the silver jubilee of his priestly ordination only a few months before. It is possible, I suppose, that many a student had heard Fr Chris before seeing him, so impressive from the outset were the explosions of laughter which sum up his character so well!

Fr Chris has spent the last two years studying with enviable diligence for his Licence in Spirituality at the Angelicum University. If there were a prize for the man who knows the truth about how long I spend in the library, Fr Chris would be a strong contender! He brought with him a great wealth of pastoral experience, having worked in parishes, university and hospital chaplaincies and having served as spiritual director to many, to list but a few of his past labours.

After being immersed in books all day, one could expect Fr Chris to opt for the *quiet life*. Whilst not wishing to play down the great pleasure it has given the community to have had Fr Chris share in all aspects of the lighter side of life, many of us will appreciate most of all his words of wisdom, both in public and private, which come from a lively faith rooted in prayer. It has been inspiring to see a priest so very committed to prayer over these last two years. Many of us have benefited directly from the generosity with which he gives of his time and himself. I do not believe that there can be any man in the College who has not had some anxiety calmed, some frustration soothed, some sadness cheered or simply some concern listened to by the words, example and simple presence of Fr Chris amongst us. *Ad Multos Annos!*

Sean Crawley

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No Branch Establishments



The Council of the Roman Association

President: Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor (until 2011)

Secretary: Rev. Paul Keane (until 2014)

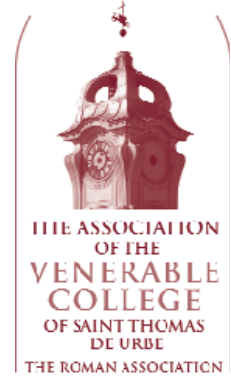
Assistant Secretary: Dr Fergus Mulligan (until 2014)

Treasurer: Rev. Aidan Prescott (until 2014)

Assistant Treasurer: *Vacant*

The Council of the Association consists of the Officers of the Association as above:

Trustees: Rev. Paul Daly (2002), Rev. David Bulmer (2004), Most Rev. Paul Gallagher (2007), Rev. Paul Keane (*ex officio* as Secretary), Rev. Aidan Prescott (*ex officio* as Treasurer).



Immediate Past Presidents: Rev. Michael Koppel (until 2013), Canon Stephen Coonan (until 2012), Archbishop Paul Gallagher (until 2011).

Rector: Mgr Nicholas Hudson

and the following elected for three years:

until 2011

Rev. Gerard Skinner
Rev. Francis Coveney
Mgr Peter Fleetwood

until 2012

Rev. Bruce Burbidge
Canon Michael Cooley
Rev. Simon Thomson

until 2013

Rev. Jean-Laurent Marie
Mr Peter Purdue
Rev. Thomas Wood

ASSOCIATION OF THE VENERABLE COLLEGE OF ST THOMAS DE URBE (ROMAN ASSOCIATION)

Trustees (with year of election):

Rev. Paul Daly (2002), Rev. David Bulmer (2004), Most Rev. Paul Gallagher (2007); Secretary: *ex officio*; Treasurer: *ex officio*.

ROMAN ASSOCIATION TRUST

There shall be six Trustees (excluding a Professional Trustee). However there may be seven Trustees if a Professional Trustee is appointed.

The present Trustees (with year of retirement) are:

Rev. Paul Daly (2011), David Bulmer (2012), Canon Michael Cooley (2013), Paul Keane (2014), Canon Stephen Coonan (2015), Mgr Anthony Wilcox (2016).



The Roman Association Diocesan Representatives

Arundel and Brighton: Rev. Aaron Spinelli, St Joseph's Catholic Church, 12 Eastgate Gardens, Guildford GU1 4AZ

Birmingham: Rev. Gerard Murray, Our Lady of the Wayside, 566 Stratford Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 4AY

Brentwood: Rev. Francis Coveney, St Anne Line, 7 Grove Crescent, South Woodford, London, E18 2JR

Cardiff: Mgr Canon Robert Reardon, Archbishop's House, 41-43 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9HD

Clifton: Canon Thomas Atthill, Trellis House, Station Road, Tisbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 6JR

East Anglia: Rev. Bruce Burbidge, The Presbytery, 933 Lincoln Road, Walton, Peterborough, PE4 6AE

Gibraltar: Rev. John Pardo, Colegio de Ingleses, Calle Don Sancho 22, 47002, Valladolid, Spain

Hallam: Rev. John Metcalfe, Our Lady & St Thomas's Presbytery, Meadowhead, Sheffield, S8 7UD

Hexham and Newcastle: Rev. Michael McCoy, St Joseph's, Paxton Terrace, Millfield, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR4 6HP

Lancaster: Rev. Michael Murphy, The Rectory, Warwick Square, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 1LB

Leeds: Rev. David Bulmer, St Austin's Presbytery, 6 Wentworth Terrace, Wakefield, WF1 3QX

Liverpool: Rev. Thomas Wood, Our Lady Star of the Sea, 1 Crescent Road, Seaforth, Liverpool, L21 4LJ

Malta: Rev. Brendan Gatt, 427 Main Street, Mosta MST1016, Malta

Menevia: Rev. Andrew Cole, Pontificio Collegio Beda, Viale di san Paolo 18, 00146 Roma, Italy

Middlesbrough: Canon Alan Sheridan, St George's Rectory, 7 Peel Street, York, YO1 9PZ

Northampton: Mgr Canon Sean Healy, St Augustine's Presbytery, 32 London Road, Daventry, Northampton, NN11 4BZ

Nottingham: Rev. Peter Harvey, The Presbytery, 17 Nottingham Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 5RF

Plymouth: Rev. Michael Koppel, The Priest's House, Lyme Road, Axminster, Devon, EX13 5BE

Portsmouth: Rev. Simon Thomson, 21 Gladys Avenue, North End, Portsmouth, Hants, PO2 9AZ

Salford: Rev. James Manock, 44 Redcar Road, Little Lever, Bolton, BL3 1EN

Shrewsbury: Rev. Paul Shaw, St Werburgh's Presbytery, Grosvenor Park Road, Chester, CH1 1QJ

Southwark: Rev. Dominic Allain, St Osmund's Presbytery, 79 Castelnau, Barnes, London, SW13 9RT

Westminster: Rev. Philip Miller, St Augustine's Presbytery, High Street, Hoddesdon, Herts, EN11 8DS

Wrexham: Rev. Antony Jones, Our Lady Star of the Sea, 35 Lloyd Street, Llandudno, Conwy, LL30 2YA



Minutes of the 141st Annual General Meeting of the Roman Association

The Minutes of the 141st Annual General Meeting of the Association of the Venerable College of Saint Thomas de Urbe (The Roman Association), held at the Chateau Impney, Droitwich, Tuesday 1 June 2010

Thirty-three members of the Association gathered on 31st May at the Chateau Impney, Droitwich. The Council decided that the next AGM would take place at Palazzola in May 2011.

Annual General Meeting, 1 June 2010

The Meeting began at 10.30 a.m., with Fr Michael Koppel, Hon. President, in the Chair. The President welcomed all in attendance and led the meeting in the prayer to the Holy Spirit.

1) Apologies and best wishes were received from: The Archbishop of Birmingham, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, John Allen, Jo Barnacle, Bruce Barnes, David Barnes, Anthony Barratt, Austin Bennett, David Blower, Michael Bowen, Michael Brockie, Paul Bruxby, Adrian Chatterton, Paul Chavasse, Anthony Churchill, Andrew Cole, Anthony Coles, Peter Cookson, Michael Corley, Mark Crisp, Brian Dazeley, Anthony Dearman, Paul Donovan, Andrew Downie, Robert Draper, Hugh Ellwood, Kevin Firth, Patrick Fitzpatrick, Brian Frost, Paul Gallagher, Timothy Galligan, Matthew Habron, Mark Harold, Andrew Headon, Michael Healy, David Hogan, Crispian Hollis, Tim Hopkins, Edward Jarosz, Patrick Kelly, Paul Ketterer, Michael Killeen, Michael Kirkham, Edward Koroway, Chris Larkman, Charles Lloyd, James Manock, Kevin McGinnell, Francis McManus, Tony Myers, John Nelson, Brian Newns, Vincent Nichols, Gerald O'Collins, Michael O'Dea, John O'Leary, John Osman, Jim Overton, Michael Quinlan, John Pardo, Terence Phipps, Andrew Pinsent, Stephen Porter, David Potter, Aidan Prescott, John Rafferty, Kevin Rea, Robert Reardon, Paschal Ryan, Gerard Skinner, William Steele, Martin Stempczyk, Marcus Stock, Rod Strange, Brendan Stone, Andrew Summersgill, Tim Swinglehurst, Adrian Toffolo, Mervyn Tower, Michael Tuck, Michael Tully, Mark Vickers, Christopher Vipers, Terry Walsh, Michael Williams, John Wilson, Mark Woods and Stephen Wright.

2) The Minutes of the 2009 AGM, having previously been circulated, were accepted.

3) Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.

4) Deceased Members: The *De Profundis* was prayed for the repose of the souls of Fr Theodore OCSO, Ken Freeman, Anthony Cornish and all members who had died since the previous meeting.

5) Sick Members: The meeting prayed for those members of the Association who were sick, including David Papworth, Dick Ashton, John O'Connor, Tony Milner, James Houghton, Mervyn Alexander and Terry McSweeney.

6) The President's Report: The President welcomed Mgr George Hay to the meeting and wished him well on his 80th birthday. He congratulated Mgr Tony Wilcox on his appointment as a Prelate of Honour. He thanked David Bulmer and Paul Daly for their long service as Treasurer and Secretary and wished them well in their "retirement."

7) The Secretary's Report:

The Secretary reported that the hard work of Fergus Mulligan had resulted in the updating of the database. The next stage was for the members to increase the membership by tracking down other Old Romans and encouraging them to join the Association. It had been a pleasure to attend the reopening of the College Church in October and recently to take Top Year out for dinner at *Costanza's*!

The Secretary has served three terms: 12 years in 20 years of priesthood! Not least because he now has 3 schools, 2 churches and 1 hospital to minister to, it is time to lay down his pen. It has been a privilege to assist the Association and for that he is very grateful.

The Secretary's Report was accepted by the Meeting.

8) The Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer presented the accounts of the Roman Association to the meeting. He also thanked Alex Mears for his work in preparing the accounts for the accountants.

Anthony Wilcox presented the accounts of the Roman Association Trust.

The reports were accepted by the meeting.

9) The Rector's Report:

The meeting expressed its thanks for the work of the Rector and College staff and accepted the Rector's report.

10) The following were elected as members of the Roman Association:

James Mackay, Neil Brett and Phillip Harris.

11) Election of Officers and Councillors:

Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor was elected as President.

Paul Keane was elected as Secretary.

Aidan Prescott was elected as Treasurer.

Fergus Mulligan was elected as Assistant Secretary.

No nominations were received for the position of Assistant Treasurer which was accordingly left vacant.

The following were elected as *Councillors* - for three years: Jean-Lauren Marie, Thomas Wood and Peter Purdue.

12) Election of Trustee:

Roman Association Trust: Anthony Wilcox was elected to serve as a Trustee of the Roman Association Trust until 2016.

13) 2010 Martyrs' Day celebrations:

Details of this year's gatherings will be sent to members nearer the time.

The members of the Association celebrated Mass at Sacred Heart Church, Droitwich, presided over by Father Michael Koppel.

The following forty-one members of the Association sat down to Lunch: David Bulmer, Bruce Burbidge, Michael Burke, Michael Butler, Bernard Connelly, Michael Cooley, Stephen Coonan, Francis Coveney, Paul Crowe, Gerard Creasey, Paul Daly, Michael Downey, Peter Fleetwood, Anthony Grimshaw, Peter Hart, George Hay, Sean Healy, Petroc Howell, Nicholas Hudson, Clyde Johnson, Paul Keane, Patrick Kilgariff, Gregory Knowles, Michael Koppel, Christopher Lightbound, Jean-Laurent Marie, Denis Marmion, John Magill, Terence McSweeney, Fergus Mulligan, Gerard Murray, Guy Nicholls, Peter Purdue, Michael Robertson, Jim Robinson, Michael St. Aubyn, Adrian Towers, Francis Wahle, Anthony Wilcox, Thomas Wood and William Young.

Rector's Report to the Roman Association

We were pleased to start the year with 4 new seminarians. They came from Shrewsbury, Southwark (2) and Westminster. This meant that we began the year with 32 students in residence – exactly the same number as a year ago. 23 of these were seminarians, with 21 seminarians for England & Wales. We had, regrettably, no Anglican ordinands this year but will have in 2010. One of the new seminarians came to us from Valladolid. This means we currently have some 9 seminarians from Valladolid, and have had 16 Vallisoletans pass through the College in total thus far.

We had two priests arrive to make the number of student priests in the seminary 8. Four of these priests are from dioceses in England, namely Hallam, Leeds, Shrewsbury and Westminster. Two of our seminarians were ordained priests for the diocese of Brentwood in the summer of 2009 and remained with us to complete their Licences. The other 2 priests come from Malta. The full complement of English & Welsh seminarians at the start of the year was as follows: 1 from Brentwood, 4 from Leeds, 1 from Liverpool, 1 from Menevia, 1 from Middlesbrough, 1 from Northampton, 3 from Portsmouth, 3 from Shrewsbury, 3 from Southwark and 3 from Westminster. The other 2 seminarians came from Antigonish and Reykjavik.

Four men are to be ordained in the summer of 2010. One man is to be ordained Deacon – Liam Bradley for Menevia. Three men are to be ordained Priest – Deacon Neil Brett for Brentwood; and Deacons Phillip Harris and James McAuley for Portsmouth.

I have just completed six years as Rector, having been appointed in February 2004. Fr Andrew Headon of Brentwood Diocese has been Vice-Rector six years as well and returns to Brentwood in the summer of 2010. The College owes him a deep debt of gratitude for all he has achieved there. Fr Mark Harold of Salford Diocese has been with us as Pastoral Director two years now; and will succeed as Vice-Rector & Pastoral Director in the autumn. Mgr Philip Carroll of the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle is in his fourth year as Spiritual Director; and Fr Tony Milner of the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton in his third as Theology Tutor. Fr John Paul Leonard will be joining us from Middlesbrough to be Bursar & Pastoral Tutor.

We started the year at the *Greg* with 3 seminarians in 1st Cycle Philosophy; 10 in 1st Cycle Theology; and 1 in 2nd Cycle Theology. We had at the *Angelicum* 5 seminarians in 1st Cycle Philosophy, 2 in 1st Cycle Theology and 1 in 2nd Cycle Theology. We have 2 seminarians studying in 2nd Cycle Theology at the *Lateran*.

The year began with a five-day retreat at Palazzola, preached by Mgr John Armitage of Brentwood Diocese. There was a retreat at Advent led by Dom. Mark Butlin, OSB. Bishop John Arnold, Auxiliary in Westminster, came to lead the Holy Week retreat at Palazzola. Every seminarian makes a retreat in the course of the year with his year-group. Our Deacon-to-be and Priests-to-be will make a canonical retreat close to their ordination. Each Thursday of the year, we have a Spiritual Conference, normally led by Mgr Phil Carroll and this is followed by discussion in House-Groups, the latter enjoying a successful second year. I give regular conferences and the other staff members give one a year, with the occasional visiting speaker contributing as well.

Human Development benefited from the presence among us once again of Fr Michael Doyle, who also teaches at Allen Hall and Oscott, spending two substantial periods every year to work with seminarians through Pastoral Classes, Spiritual Conferences and meeting with students individually. This is complemented by input from Fr Gerard Byrne of St Luke's, Manchester, Fr Dermot McCaul of the Beda, and others. Areas covered over the last year included *Psychosexual Integration; Personality Types; Listening in Ministry; and Clerical Sexual Abuse*.

For Pastoral Formation, we continue with four-day courses during the *Villeggiatura*, so as to enable students to have pastoral placements lasting the whole of September. These are given by lecturers from England - this year, Mr John Forrest from the Catholic Communications Network and Fr Chris Gorton from the Diocese of Salford - along with the Pastoral Director and Academic Tutor, working with students on *Communications; Schools & University Chaplaincy; and Parish Liturgical Practice*. The weekly pastoral classes during termtime include *Catechetics, Homiletics, Preparation for Diaconal Ministry, Parish Administration, Pastoral Liturgy* and an *Introduction to the New Translation of the Roman Missal*. These are led by the 5 members of staff, with occasional outside input. We place a lot of emphasis in these weekly classes on how these principles apply to our particular English & Welsh context.

For their pastoral work, some students are engaged at the College on a Sunday in Adult Catechesis. Outside the College, students visit *L'Arche* or the Little Sisters of the Poor; others belong to a *Team of Our Lady* or a parish Scripture-sharing group. We are feeling greatly the benefit of having a Pastoral Director once again. He visited the vast majority of seminarians on their summer placements in England or Wales. A significant development has been a large group of seminarians visiting the *Regina Coeli* Prison. Some students catechise in local parishes. A good number remain committed to the Vatican Youth Centre of *San Lorenzo*. Meanwhile, Ms. Tish Nichol keeps coming faithfully each year for two separate weeks to work with each student on Voice Production.

In terms of numbers of students anticipated next year, we expect to have 29 seminarians in October 2010: 1 from Arundel & Brighton, 1 from Antigonish, 1 from Birmingham, 1 from Clifton, 1 from Copenhagen, 1 from Hexham & Newcastle, 6 from Leeds, 1 from Liverpool, 1 from Menevia, 1 from Middlesbrough, 1 from Northampton, 1 from Portsmouth, 1 from Reykjavik, 1 from Salford, 3 from Shrewsbury, 3 from Southwark and 4 from Westminster. With the addition of 1 Anglican Ordinand and 6 priests, this will amount to a student body of 36. With a staff of 5 and also Mgr Bryan Chestle, this makes an anticipated community of some 42 residents.

Financially, it remains the case that income from rental properties is greater than income from fees, viz. 46% from rents; 42% from fees; and 12% from "Other Sources". Other Sources include VEC Trust income, Roman Association Trust income, Friends of the Venerable income, Coote Trust income and 'Other Donations'. A significant element of "Other Donations" has been the Schwarzenbach funding which has enabled the restoration of the whole of the College church and 3rd Library, the refurbishment of the *Salone* guest accommodation and the transformation of the Crypt. It is good to remind ourselves that, in recent years, gifts from the Roman Association Trust have enabled the creation of the Gradwell Room (now an impressively equipped gym) and the rendering of the *Common Room* and *Mayfair Corridors en suite*. Further to that, the Old Romans kindly paid for the provision of a new server for the whole College, along with computers and software for students and staff alike. We are very grateful to the Roman Association for offering as their next major project to fund the refurbishment of the *Portineria* and the development of the *Salotto* as a Welcome Area – something we have long wished for but simply could not have managed without the Association's kind support.

Meanwhile, up at Palazzola, the situation is similarly encouraging. Income remains doubled since 2004. The credit crisis means there have been slightly fewer bookings made for two or so years ahead; yet it is still often full to capacity. We still aim to landscape modestly the rock-tomb garden and develop the *St Edward's* terrace for use by groups; and have the funds for this. In all of this, our goal, as always, is to maximise Palazzola's potential for use by the English College and so many others, not least Old Romans, their families, friends and parishioners. Our students seem to appreciate Palazzola more and more, still using it in the same ways as before: for the *Villeggiatura* with ministries and ordinations at the end; for the annual College Retreat; and Human Development; and increasingly for revision, for their weekly day off and for free weekends. It gives me joy to see so many others able to come at other times to enjoy this most wonderful resource for the Church in England and Wales, Italy and beyond.

Mgr Nicholas Hudson
Rector

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the accounts of the Roman Association, which were approved by the meeting. He noted that there had been a significant increase in revenue from subscriptions, although there was more work to do in this area. He thanked Alex Mears for preparing the accounts for the accountants and submitting Gift Aid claims. After helping in this way for many years, Alex has passed on the mantle to Brian Nichols who has kindly agreed to take on the task. On finishing his term as treasurer, David Bulmer wished Aidan Prescott a happy time in office as his successor.

Anthony Wilcox presented the accounts of the Roman Association Trust. The Trust fund, which is with Smith & Williamson Investment Management, stood at £969,144 at 31 December 2009, compared with £819,882 at 31 December 2008. In 2009, the Trust gave a grant of £10,000 to the College for work in the entrance area to the College, including the *portineria* and *Salotto*. The Trustees had resolved to make a further grant of £15,000 to the College in 2010 towards this work. For the second year in succession, the Trustees also agreed to make a grant to the *Venerabile* magazine, this time for the 2009 issue which Association members had received.

The Report was accepted by the meeting.



News of Old Romans

Arundel & Brighton

Things down here in A&B are pretty much the same, albeit with a few novelties. We have a new priest in the diocese in the person of Fr Andy Moss who was ordained by Bishop Kieran Conry in Crawley in January before returning to complete his licence in Canon Law in Ottawa. There are rumours of a few moves in the summer affecting former students, but at the time of writing these remain on the desk of the bishop! Some changes from last year that I can report are as follows: Bruno Witchalls is now at Bexhill-on-Sea; Raglan Hay-Will is now Parish Priest of Our Lady of Ransom, Eastbourne; and Andrew Pinsent is at Oxford whilst assisting as curate at Epsom during the weekends.

There was sad news of the death of Fr Ken Freeman who was ordained from the College in 1978. Ken who was parish priest in Surrey for more than 15 years died on 2 March aged 57 at the Royal Surrey Hospital in Guildford. I was very privileged to have anointed him the day he died. Ken's trademark humour lasted until the end. As I woke him up, he almost jumped out of the bed and said with eyes bulging, "Oh, I thought you were God, I thought I'd gone!" His death was quick and left everyone in shock, particularly his parish and the diocese. It was good to have had so many Old Romans at his Requiem Mass in Guildford. We shall miss him. *Requiescat in pace.*

There is one correction to make from last year's edition: Tony Churchill is Episcopal Vicar for Mission and Unity and not for Religious. *Mea culpa.* A final piece of news for 2010 is that Bill Davern has been made a chapter Canon. He was installed in the Cathedral at Corpus Christi. A rumour that he was spotted prior to the ceremony in the Surrey Hills with a shotgun looking for white rabbits for lining his Canon's *mozzetta* are completely unfounded!

Fr Aaron Spinelli

Birmingham

There is little new about Old Romans to report from this part of the world. Archbishop Bernard Longley has come to us from London and is settling into his new role. He is spending much time visiting the Archdiocese, getting to know its parishes, people and diocesan organisations and institutions. There have not been any clergy moves since the last report but who knows what the summer may bring! The Archdiocese is beginning to gear itself up for the Pope's visit in the autumn and the Beatification of John Henry Newman at the Mass in Coventry. That he did not attend the VEC does not appear to be an insurmountable obstacle to his cause advancing. Old Roman Oratorians, Frs Paul Chavasse and Guy Nicholls will no doubt be engaged in the various ceremonies and festivities. Fr Tim Menezes has the distinction of being Parish Priest of St Thomas More's, Coventry where a reigning Pope will have celebrated Mass in England not once but on two occasions. Tim too no doubt will be much involved with the local preparations. We are planning to hold our Martyrs' Day Celebration on Wednesday 1st December at Birmingham Oratory. *Mea culpa* for spelling Fr John Osman's surname incorrectly in several of these reports.

Fr Gerard Murray

Brentwood

The names of Brentwood Old Romans receiving new appointments in 2010 are in bold. The first date after each priest's name gives his year of ordination to the priesthood. The second date gives the year of his present appointment.

David Papworth (1961)	St Dominic, Harold Hill (1990)
Michael Butler (1963)	The Assumption, Old Harlow (2001)
Michael Corley (1963)	The Chimes, Weeley Road, Aingers Green, Great Bentley, Colchester, Essex CO7 8NB (retired 2003)
Richard Ashton (1966)	Evelyn May House, Florence Way, Laindon, Essex SS16 6AJ. (retired 2000)
Adrian Graffy (1974: OND 74-75)	Diocesan Director for Evangelisation & Mission (2005) is based at Clergy House, Brentwood.
George Stokes (1976)	Diocesan Director for Catholic Education (1991) living in the Presbytery in Grays (2008).
William Young (1980)	St Mary & St Ethelburga, Barking (1991)
Paul Bruxby (1982: OND 86-88)	St Augustine, Barkingside (2001)
Francis Coveney (1982)	St Anne Line, South Woodford (2000)
Christopher Brooks (1983)	Our Lady of Grace & St Teresa, Chingford (2005)
David Manson (1985)	St John's, Ingatestone (2005) and also VG (2001)
Philip Denton (1994)	Holy Cross, Avely & South Ockendon (2003)
Jean-Laurent Marie (1994)	Our Lady of Canvey, Canvey Island and Holy Family, Benfleet (2009)
Andrew Headon (1995)	Vice-Rector VEC (2004 -2010). Appointed PP SS Peter & Paul, Ilford, (Autumn 2010)
Paul Fox (1998)	St Augustine, Springfield (2002)
Martin Boland (1996)	From St Sabina, Brightlingsea & Chaplain to Essex University (2001) to Dean, Brentwood Cathedral (2009)
Thomas Saunders (2000)	Sacred Heart, Southend with St John Fisher, Prittlewell (2005)
Dominic Howarth (2002)	From assistant priest in the Basildon Team Ministry (February 2009) to PP in the Basildon Team Ministry (October 2010). From Youth Chaplain to diocesan Vocations Director (October 2010).
Paul Keane (2003)	Parish Priest St Sabina, Brightlingsea & Chaplain to Essex University (2009).
Mark Reilly (2009)	To St Antony of Padua, Forest Gate as assistant priest (Oct. 2010)
James Mackay (2009)	To Brentwood Cathedral as assistant priest (Oct. 2010)
Neil Brett (September 2010)	To St James the Less & St Helen, Colchester as assistant priest (October 2010)

Fr David Papworth (1961) has been very ill this year and has been in hospital for many months but is due to return to his presbytery the week beginning Sunday 27 June. Please do continue to keep him in your prayers.

Fr Francis Coveney

Cardiff

Fr Liam Hennessy is still Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Parish, Cardiff, and also looking after St Cuthbert's Parish, Cardiff. I am still at Archbishop's House but not as Vicar General since the announcement of Archbishop Peter Smith's transfer to Southwark.

Canon Robert Reardon

Clifton

All Clifton *Venerabilini* are in the same positions as last year.

Canon Thomas Athill

East Anglia

Not much has changed for the Old Romans of East Anglia since last year but a great deal has changed since the last *Venerabile* report! Here goes for a brief update. Mgr Tony Philpot remains active doing retreat work, chaplaincy to the Portuguese, supply and plenty more. He lives in Peterborough within the Sacred Heart & St Oswald Parish where I am now coming to the end of my second year as Parish Priest. Fr Michael Griffin is back in good health and still Parish Priest of Newmarket. Fr Simon Blakesley remains the backbone of the Diocesan Tribunal and is Parish Priest of Diss. Mgr Eugène Harkness continues as Parish Priest of St Philip Howard in Cambridge. Fr Martin Hardy is now Parish Priest of St Patrick's in Leicester while Fr Mark Hackeson continues as Private Secretary to Bishop Michael Evans.

Fr Bruce Burbidge

Gibraltar

As I write, there are no changes to our Old Romans in Gibraltar. However, we now have our new Bishop Ralph Heskett C.Ss.R., so anything could happen. Then I might be lucky in having some real news to report from the Rock at last! Till next year.

Fr John Pardo

Hallam

There are no changes to report from Hallam this year, except that Adrian Tomlinson has acquired a second parish in Sheffield, St Joseph's, Handsworth.

Fr John Metcalfe

Hexham & Newcastle

It's been a while since the last news report from H&N, however much has been happening recently. First, the diocese gained a new bishop after the tragically early death of Bishop Kevin Dunn. Seamus Cunningham, the former Vicar-General, was ordained on 20th March 2009, the feast of St Cuthbert, patron of the diocese. We wish him *Ad Multos Annos*. Sadly, Bishop Hugh Lindsay, former auxiliary and ordinary of the diocese 1974-91, died suddenly on 19th January. R.I.P.

St Mary's Cathedral itself is undergoing extensive restoration work with the entire floor being removed and retiled, the sanctuary rearranged and eventually a new organ being installed. While this has meant the Cathedral has been mostly out of use for the last few months, including for Easter, work was delayed to allow the joint ordinations of Frs Tom McHale, of the Beda, David Smith, of Ushaw and Lee Barrett, of the VEC on 25th July, the largest number of ordinations for the diocese in recent years – a welcome boost during the Year of the Priest.

The victory of Fr Tony Curren and Chris Lamb of *The Tablet* in opposing the motion "This house believes that Catholic morality has no place in the 21st century" held at the Durham Union, provided another somewhat unexpected boost to morale, given the current climate of opinion. Fr Tony continues as Chaplain of Durham University where he has been much involved in encouraging interest in the new Bede Chair of Catholic Theology, a foundation inspired by Bishop Dunn.

Many Old Romans have recently moved or have taken on additional responsibilities in the diocese. Fr John Butters became Episcopal Vicar for South Durham and Cleveland, remaining Parish Priest of the parishes of Billingham where he was joined by Fr Lee Barrett. Fr Martin Stempczyk, former Academic Tutor, continues as Episcopal Vicar for South Tyneside. Fr Martin's father died during the summer; please keep him in your prayers. Fr Andrew Downie succeeded Fr John James as Vocations Director while continuing as Chaplain to Newcastle's Universities. Fr Michael McCoy moved from Our Lady Queen of Peace, Washington to St Anne's, Sunderland, also caring for Holy Family Parish. He continues to be Vocations Promoter and Co-ordinator for School Chaplaincy and Adult Religious Education. Fr John Cooper continues as Vicar for Religious but moved from St Robert's Morpeth to St Cuthbert's Stockton. Mgr Phil Carroll continues as the College's Spiritual Director.

Fr Lee Barrett

Lancaster

A few replies appear below and I assume the rest are leaving it up to me to bring you up-to-date on their doings and whereabouts.

Joseph Callaghan writes that "After 18 [fruitful?!] years as a priest," he has decided to seek laicisation and will be marrying Gillian Walsh on 4 June, 2011 in St Wulstan's Fleetwood. As a near neighbour of mine in Preston for some years and as my home parish is St Wulstan's Fleetwood, I can assure you that his ministry was fruitful and we wish him and Gillian well.

Thomas Dakin (1945-53) writes that in his "contented semi-retirement to the pleasantly rural parish of St Nicholas Owen by the River Wyre in Thornton-le-Fylde" he is "reflecting on his belonging to the dwindling generation that experienced St Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst." Tom is, as ever, elegant and succinct.

Terry Rodgers wrote from St Winifride's House, a retirement home for priests: "I am well looked after here though, if anybody ventures to Blackpool, visitors will be terrifically welcome and can either have a meal with us or go out." Ill health means that Terry has had to retire early. If you are ever in the vicinity of the Fylde coast, do accept his invitation to visit.

Luiz Ruscillo responded: "I studied at the *Venerabile* from 1983 to 1992, five years at the Gregorian and four years at the Biblicum. Ordained in 1990, I am presently parish priest of St Mary's, Hornby, and Head of the Diocesan Education Service." Luiz is far too modest to mention that he is now a Canon of the Chapter.

Michael Smith sends "greetings from exile on the forsaken side of the Pennines." He moved to 11, Low Saintagnesgate, Ripon in September, 1999, at the invitation of Pearl Elliott, a retired health visitor, Friend of the *Venerabile* and acquaintance from Roman days (she organised Jumbulance trips to Rome). He turned 60 last year and has adopted the motto "Boring is Good." He says, "I am not completely idle. My parish priest is also the local dean and a canon of the Leeds chapter so he needs my services at regular intervals and I have some hope that, as the Catholic clergy ages and dwindles, I will become more not less appreciated over the coming decade." He can handle the controls on an adapted car but suffers a limited field of vision. If transport is provided, he is willing to supply anywhere between Lerwick and Lewes or "even between Lerwick and Livorno if it came to that!"

Adrian Towers is Parish Priest of St Andrew and Blessed George Haydock, Cottam, and St Mary's, Lea Town, both in Preston and also Director of Formation for the Permanent Diaconate in the Lancaster Diocese. Adrian continues to delight in the semi-rural parish of Cottam on the green and leafy north side of Preston.

Michael Tully is responsible for a small parish near Lancaster where he has been for 20 years. He is Judicial Vicar, an office he has held for more than 34 years and now aspires to be the longest serving Judicial Vicar in the Universal Church. The canonical ministry has an even more prominent place in Church life these days because current problems prompt priests to seek legal advice and support. As one priest commented, "I never understood why we needed canon lawyers until now." Retirement is on the horizon, which the diocesan bishop has tried to make mandatory. Michael, I can vouch, is an ever-ready source of advice and support for his fellow priests.

Now for those who didn't reply

Peter Clarke is the Parish Priest of Sacred Heart, Thornton-le-Fylde, near Blackpool. The last time I saw Peter he looked the picture of health and happiness.

Michael Docherty serves as assistant in the parish of Our Lady, Star of the Sea, and St Michael in Workington and is also Luiz's assistant in the Diocesan Education Service. With the recent illness of his parish priest, he is currently the only priest in Workington and has his work cut out.

Emmanuel [Manny] Gribben is currently Parish Priest of St Mary's, Cleator, and Director of Vocations. Due to move to St Kentigern's, Blackpool, in September, he tells me he "feels like a dead man walking."

Hugh Pollock is Catholic chaplain to the University of Lancaster and Dean of one of the colleges. I know that he has enjoyed his work at the University immensely and flourished there. Rumour has it that he may be on the move this summer.

Stephen Shield is Dean of the Cathedral in Lancaster where he does an immensely impressive job and smiles benignly through it all.

John Watson is Parish Priest of St Mary of Furness and priest in charge of Holy Family, both in Barrow-in-Furness where he is greatly appreciated and always hospitable.

As for your humble correspondent, Michael Murphy (1970-1974), I left priestly ministry in 1991 and returned in 1994, having completed a degree in law at Leicester University. After 15 immensely happy years serving the parish of St Augustine of Canterbury, Preston, I moved in May last year to the city centre parish of Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle where any Old Romans who want to break the journey to or from Scotland will always be welcome.

Fr Michael Murphy

Leeds

As Chairman of ICEL since 2002, Bishop Arthur Roche has been closely involved with the work of producing an English translation of the third edition of the Roman Missal. It was announced on 30 April that the text has been approved by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. Bishop Roche commented that “this news ushers in the final phase of preparation for the publication and implementation of the Missal.” Billy Steele was much involved with the preparation of the recent teaching document of the Bishops’ Conference, *Meeting God in Friend and Stranger: fostering mutual respect and understanding between the religions*. A collection of homilies by Gerry Creasey, entitled *Come and see: thoughts along the way*, is now in print, with the assistance of Fergus Mulligan as publishing consultant. After completing eight years as General Secretary of the Bishops’ Conference, Andrew Summersgill has remained in London as the Papal Visit Co-ordinator for the Apostolic Journey of Pope Benedict this September. Russell Wright has taken up a further appointment in the diocese of Venice (Florida) – moving to Naples! Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor visited Wakefield in March. He was present at Evensong in Wakefield Cathedral on 18 March and afterwards spoke and answered questions on the progress of Christian Unity together with Bishop Stephen Platten. The following day, Cardinal Cormac was principal celebrant of Mass for the solemnity of St Joseph at St Austin’s, Wakefield.

The list of clergy is as follows: Michael Buckley (1950): retired, East Preston, W Sussex. Bill Burtoft (1954): retired, Rotherham. Peter McGuire (1956): Chaplain to the Sisters of Notre Dame, Parbold. Basil Loftus (1958): retired, Helmsdale, Sutherland. Billy Steele (1959): retired, Leeds. John Kelly (1961): St Gregory’s, Leeds. Gerald Creasey (1961): retired, Leeds. Peter Nealon (1968): St Malachy’s, Halifax. Philip Holroyd (1971): St Theresa’s, Leeds. Kevin Firth (1977): Sacred Heart & St Patrick, Sowerby Bridge. Andrew Summersgill (1986): London, Papal Visit Co-ordinator. Russell Wright (1988): St Peter the Apostle, Naples, Florida. Malachy Larkin (1989; further studies at VEC): Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Silsden. David Bulmer (1990): St Austin’s, Wakefield. Tim Swinglehurst (1991): St Austin’s, Wakefield (PP). Paul Grogan (1994): Chaplain of Leeds Trinity University College, and diocesan Vocations Director. Stephen Brown (1994): Chaplain to Bradford University. John Wilson (1995): Episcopal Vicar for Evangelisation, Leeds. Gregory Knowles (1998): St Aidan’s, Mirfield. Steven Billington (1999): Our Lady of Good Counsel, Leeds. Matthew Habron (2005): St Austin’s, Wakefield.

Fr David Bulmer

Liverpool

All continues quietly with no significant news or changes of appointment for a majority of the Old Romans. Very sadly, Paul Robbins’ wife, Jean, died during Christmastide after a short illness, and Terry McSweeney underwent major surgery but was well enough to thoroughly enjoy Palazzola during its 90th celebrations, fitting his visit in between chemotherapy sessions. On a happier note, Peter McGrail will celebrate his Silver Jubilee in July and Philip Gillespie is destined to leave Ushaw for the Isle of Man – tax haven or Alcatraz?

Fr Thomas Wood

Malta

The list of Maltese Old Romans includes the following: Rev. Dr Joe Mizzi, Rev. Stefan Bonanno, Rev. Dr Mark Sultana, Rev. Dr Jimmy Bonnici, Rev. David Muscat, Rev. John Berry and Rev. Brendan Mark Gatt. All of us are involved in various projects and activities on a diocesan level: from lecturing at the University of Malta to Defending the Bond in the Ecclesiastical Tribunal; from being Rector of the Archbishop's Seminary to leading the Cana Movement (an organisation within the Church in Malta which offers various services to the family, especially by preparing couples for marriage and counselling those in difficulty); from participating in various diocesan commissions to lending our assistance in various parishes around the island.

I am glad to report that, apart from frequent informal contacts amongst ourselves and with the College, in February 2010 a good number of us managed to get together for a meal with Mgr Nicholas Hudson, Rector of the VEC, while he was in Malta for the annual meeting of the Rectors of English-speaking Seminaries in Europe. It was a lovely evening of happy reminiscing and the food wasn't bad either!

Fr Brendan Mark Gatt

Menevia

There are no changes to report for Menevia this year. Monsignor Clyde Johnson is Chancellor of the diocese and parish priest of the two parishes of Fishguard and St David's in God's own county of Pembrokeshire (The Presbytery, Vergam Terrace, FISHGUARD, SA65 9DF).

Fr Michael Burke has the longest job description of any of our priests: he is Parish Priest of Morrision, in Swansea, Judicial Vicar, Vice-Chancellor, diocesan communications officer and diocesan master of ceremonies (The Presbytery, School Road, Morrision, SWANSEA, SA6 6HZ).

Fr Andrew Cole lives in the Pontifical Beda College and continues his doctoral studies in the Faculty of Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian University where he is writing a thesis on how territorial parishes reflect the catholicity of the Church (Pontificio Collegio Beda, Viale di San Paolo 18, 00146 ROMA, Italy).

We are pleased to have the ordination of Liam Bradley, Menevia's only student in the *Venerabile*, to the sacred order of the diaconate in Palazzola this past summer.

Fr Andrew Cole

Northampton

There is not much change to the postings of Old Romans in Northampton: John Koenig remains at Kettering; Paul Hardy is still in Milton Keynes; Sean Healy is still Vicar General and Parish Priest of Daventry (he has also been made Parish Priest of Aston-le-Walls); Paul Donovan continues in the Royal Navy as both Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain and Vicar General; Kevin McGinnell heads up Education in the diocese and is a Parish Priest in Luton (he has recently become Chairman of NBRIA); Graham Platt remains in France. The exciting news is that David Barrett is about to return to the Diocese after his doctoral studies in Rome. He will take up a new appointment in September.

Mgr Sean Healy

Nottingham

This is the result of the Nottingham jury:

Mark Brentnall: PP of English Martyrs' Alvaston and Chaplain of Derby University.

John Cahill: PP of Holy Souls, Scunthorpe, and VF.

Adrian Chatterton: retired.

Brian Dazeley, Monsignor: PP of Our Lady of Victories, Southwell, and Canon Provost of the Cathedral.

John Guest: PP of All Saints, Ashbourne and Christ the King, Mackworth; VG.

John Hadley, Monsignor: PP of St Pius X, Narborough, and Chancellor.

Martin Hardy: PP of St Patrick's, Leicester.

Peter Harvey: PP of Our Lady and St Thomas of Hereford, Ilkeston.

Edward Jarosz: Canon, PP of St Peter's, Leicester.

Bernard Needham, Canon: PP of Our Lady and St Joseph's, Matlock; VF.

Philip O'Dowd: died 2009, RIP.

Anthony Pateman: PP of The Divine Infant of Prague, Syston, and St Gregory's, Sibley.

John Sherrington: PP of The Good Shepherd, Arnold.

Michael Stappard: retired.

Christopher Thomas: PP of Corpus Christi, Clifton, and Chaplain of the University of Nottingham.

Peter Vellacott: PP of Our Lady of the Angels, East Leake, and St Margaret Clitherow, Keyworth.

In addition: The Rev. Adrian Chatterton STB, PHL, DipRelED, celebrates his Golden Jubilee this year. Born in 1936, he trained at St Hugh's Tollerton and the *Venerabile*. He was ordained 29 October 1960 at Corpus Christi in London, returned to finish studies in Rome until 1961 when he was appointed Curate to St Barnabas Cathedral 1961-65. He then went to St Winefride's, Shepshed 1965-1968, St Augustine's, Nottingham 1968-1969, Holy Trinity, Newark 1969-1971, St Joseph's, Staveley 1971-1978 and Holy Cross, Hucknall 1978-1982. He was Parish Priest of Immaculate Conception, Oadby 1982-1993, St Margaret Clitherow, Keyworth and Our Lady of Grace, Cotgrave 1993-1994, Assistant priest, St Philip Neri, Mansfield 1995, then PP of St Charles Boromeo, Measham 1996-2001 after which he retired to the Sacred Heart Convent at Rearsby.

Rev. Canon Bernard Needham STL celebrates his Golden Jubilee this year. Born in 1936, he trained at St Hugh's, Tollerton and the *Venerabile* and was ordained 10 July 1960 in Rome. He became Bishop's Secretary 1961-1974, followed by PP of Mother of God, Leicester 1974-1977, Rector of St Hugh's College Seminary, Tollerton 1977-1986, PP St Mary's, Brigg 1986-1992, Diocese of Livingstone, Zambia 1992-1997, PP St Hugh's, Lincoln 1997-2000 and Our Lady and St Joseph's, Matlock 2000. He is now Canon of the Cathedral Chapter.

Rev. John Guest VG celebrates his Ruby Jubilee this year. Born in 1946 he trained at St Hugh's, Tollerton and the *Venerabile* and was ordained 11 July 1970 at the Annunciation in Chesterfield. He became Curate of St Paul's, Nottingham 1970-1972 and a teacher at St Hugh's, Tollerton 1972-1986, followed by the Committee for Marriage and Family Life 1986-1992, PP St Theresa's, Aspley 1992-1998, Christ the King Mackworth 1998 and All Saints, Ashbourne from 2003, then Episcopal Vicar for Derbyshire 2001-2006 and VG from 2006.

These are the great milestones.

Fr Mark Brentnall

Plymouth

It is with great sadness that I report the death of Tony Cornish who died shortly before Easter 2010. He was a good and loyal friend whose fine mind and balanced judgement will be sorely missed. May he rest in peace. Incidentally, it is fascinating to learn that, among Tony's many other attainments, it was he who first interested Roderick Strange in the life and work of Newman.

George Hay has finally "resigned from ecclesiastical office" but seems more active than ever in his very well deserved retirement. Robert Plant has stood down as Parish Priest of Topsham to concentrate on fulfilling a mandate from the Bishop to work with the mentally ill.

Fr Michael Koppel

Portsmouth

Bruce Barnes (1997): moves from Christ the King, Reading to Sacred Heart, Bournemouth.

Marcus Brisley (1994): The Annunciation with St Edmund Campion, Bournemouth.

Michael Feben (1964): retired in Newport, I.O.W.

Gerard Flynn (1999): St Thomas of Canterbury, Newport with St Saviour's, Totland Bay, I.O.W.

He is also the Vocations Director.

David Forrester (1972): retired in Abingdon, Oxon.

Jeremy Garratt (1975): Rector, St John's Seminary, Wonersh, Guildford, Surrey.

Alan Griffiths (1974): St Gregory's, Alresford, Hants.

Paul Haffner (1981): Via Mosca, 3/B 00055 Ladispoli (RM), Rome, Italy.

Phillip Pennington Harris (2010): St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth, Hants.

Peter Hart (1980): St Mary's Alton, Hants.

+Crispian Hollis (1965): Bishop's House, Portsmouth, Hants.

James Joyce (1971): Corpus Christi, Wokingham, Berks.

James McAuley (2010): Jersey Parish, St Helier, Jersey, Channel Islands.

Brian Murphy-O'Connor (1954): retired resident at St Joseph's, Basingstoke, Hants.

Cyril Murtagh (1957): The Immaculate Conception, Liphook, Hants.

John Nelson VG (1984): English Martyrs, Reading, Berks.

Simon Thomson (1994): moving from Corpus Christi with St Joseph, Portsmouth to Our Lady of Lourdes with St Swithun, Southsea, Hants.

Terence Walsh (1944): retired in Southampton, Hants.

Fr Simon Thomson

Shrewsbury

This has been a quiet year for the Shrewsbury Old Romans with no significant moves, either in this world or the next. We occupy – if that's not too imperialist a term – a beautiful corner of northwest England, the old counties of Cheshire and Shropshire. 80% of the population lives on a ribbon along the northern frontier, from the Wirral peninsula along into Runcorn, Warrington, South Manchester and up into the Pennines. At the top of the Wirral, we find David Long in St Alban's Wallasey, Nick Kern and Simon O'Connor in the Birkenhead Parishes of St Joseph's and St Michael's respectively, and just outside Birkenhead, with commanding views over the Mersey to Liverpool and the great Archdiocese, Frank Rice is at St John's New Ferry. South Wirral is an enchanting area of little villages looking out to the hills of North Wales and Wrexham Diocese,

and in the neighbouring towns of Willaston and Neston, Chris Lightbound and Denis Marmion are enjoying very well-earned retirements.

At the base of the Wirral, just before turning east for Manchester, the 20th Legion was based at Deva, and your scribe battles on in St Werburgh's. A not infrequent visitor, and always welcome guest, is Paul Simmons, making an excellent recovery towards full strength. If Chester represents *Orbis, Urbis* is adorned by Roderick Strange as Rector of the Beda College.

A friendly war traditionally wages between those living north of Manchester and those on the south side, Lancashire (Salford Diocese, *in partibus infidelium*, as the wise old monks would have had it) versus Cheshire. In the Cheshire half, we find John Rafferty and David Charters at St Vincent's Altrincham, Anthony Myers in the increasingly familiar position of now looking after two adjacent parishes, St John's and St Hugh's in Timperley, and Chris McCurry's in Bob Abbott's old stomping ground of St Ann's Cheadle Hulme. Frank McManus stays put in retirement at St Vincent's Bramhall. A little further along is Philip Egan in Our Lady and St Christopher's Romiley, a stone's throw (as the diocesan crow flies) from the High Peak, Derbyshire and Nottingham Diocese.

Coming south brings us into the lush pasturelands of mid-Cheshire. Peter Burke is in Macclesfield at St Alban's and Mike Morton at St Winefride's Sandbach. The border between Cheshire and Shropshire is mercifully neither armed nor policed, allowing easy transit north for Stephen Coonan from our Cathedral in Shrewsbury and for Jim Robinson from St Peter's Ludlow. Though why anyone ensconced in Ludlow would ever want to leave it, described by John Betjeman as "the loveliest town in England," utterly defeats me.

Fr Paul Shaw

Westminster

Recent changes are in **bold print**

H.E. THE CARDINAL	Retired, resident in Chiswick
+ Vincent Nichols	Archbishop of Westminster
+ John Arnold	Auxiliary Bishop: resident at Vaughan House
Seamus O'Boyle	Vicar General
Charles Acton	Allen Hall, Dean of Theology, Systematic Theology
Peter Anglim	Retired, Nazareth House, Finchley
Mark Anwyll	Awaiting appointment
Keith Barltrop	PP, St Mary of the Angels, Bayswater
David Barnes	PP, <i>SS Anselm & Cecilia</i> , Lincoln's Inn Fields
Jim Brand	Administrator, St John Fisher, Chorleywood
Michael Brockie	PP, <i>Holy Redeemer & St Thomas More</i> , Chelsea and Provost of Cathedral Chapter
Gerry Burke	Retired, Feltham.
Dominic Byrne	PP, <i>Our Lady of Dolours</i> , Hendon
Antony Conlon	Oratory School, Reading
John Conneely	Diocesan Tribunal

Antony Convery	PP, <i>SS Michael and Martin</i> , Hounslow
John Deehan	PP, <i>St Thomas More</i> , Eastcote
Anthony Doe	Chaplain, Carmelite Convent, Notting Hill
Pat Egan	Retired, Ann Arbor, Michigan
John Formby	Retired, St Charles Square
Michael Garnett	Santa Apolonia, Cajamarca, Peru
Roger Kirinich	PP, <i>Our Lady</i> , Stephendale Road
Mark Langham	Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, Vatican
Robert LeTellier	Further Studies, Cambridge
Hugh Mackenzie	PP, <i>St Mary Magdalen</i> , Willesden Green
Eddie Matthews	PP <i>St Joseph</i> , Bishop's Stortford
Paul McDermott	PP, <i>St Agnes</i> , Cricklewood
Paul McPartlan	Professor, Catholic Univ. of America (and International Theol. Commission)
Shaun Middleton	Sabbatical and further studies in psychotherapy
Philip Miller	PP, <i>St Augustine</i> , Hoddesdon
Peter Newby	PP, <i>St Mary</i> , Moorfields
James Neal	<i>Holy Trinity</i> , Brook Green
John O'Leary	PP, <i>Our Lady & St Joseph</i> , Kingsland
Jim Overton	PP, <i>St Michael</i> , Ashford
Terry Phipps	PP, <i>Immaculate Conception & St Joseph</i> , Hertford
Dermot Power	Spiritual Director, Allen Hall
Javier Ruiz	Further Studies: <i>Venerable English College</i> , Rome
Paschal Ryan	PP, <i>Our Lady of Good Counsel</i> , Stoke Newington
Digby Samuels	PP, <i>St Patrick</i> , Wapping
Nicholas Schofield	PP, <i>Our Lady of Lourdes & St Michael</i> , Uxbridge, & Diocesan Archivist
Alexander Sherbrooke	PP, <i>St Patrick</i> , Soho Square
Gerard Skinner	PP, <i>St Gabriel</i> , Harrow South, & <i>St Bernard</i> , Northolt
Michael Tuck	PP, <i>St Ignatius</i> , Sunbury on Thames
Mark Vickers	PP, <i>St Peter</i> , Hatfield, & chaplain to University of Hertfordshire
Chris Vipers	PP <i>St Lawrence</i> , Feltham
Frank Wahle	Retired, Baker Street
Stephen Wang	Dean of Studies and Formation Adviser at Allen Hall Seminary
Philip Whitmore	Secretariat of State, Vatican
<i>Fr Philip Miller</i>	



Obituaries

Fr Ken Freeman, 1952-2010

When Fr Ken Freeman's funeral Mass was celebrated in the Church in Cranleigh, the Mass was attended not only by brother priests, parishioners and friends, but by the children from St Cuthbert Mayne School next door. This was partly because Ken had a very special relationship with the school. His kitchen window looked out onto the school, and Ken delighted in making faces out of the window at the children and their teachers. Their memories of him had been written down and displayed round the altar: "He always made you laugh;" "He was never grumpy;" and "He always made you feel good." They spoke for almost everybody.

Ken Freeman had been received into the Catholic Church as a teenager in his home town of Hove, and this appears to have led to his estrangement from his family – it turned out to be impossible to inform them even of his death. Family issues may have contributed to a problem with alcohol that first emerged when Ken was serving as Secretary to the then Bishop Cormac Murphy-O'Connor. Ken sought help and seemed to have overcome the problem but it was to return.

Ken as a student was very much the way he remained through his priesthood, and everyone who knew him will have stories of his mad antics. One day, as a student at the English College in Rome, he decided that he would go along to the Hotel Medici-Hassler and present himself as the Private Secretary to King Olaf of Norway, who (allegedly) was due to visit the city shortly. Dressed in his best suit and with his well-known black-rimmed glasses, Ken looked the part and was duly shown round and given coffee by the manager before coming back to tell the story and laugh.

For all his eccentric and extroverted behaviour, Ken remained a very private person, and appeared to have few, if any close friends among the clergy. His problem with alcohol returned, and he said this publicly to the parish before admitting himself to a clinic and tackling the problem. He returned to the parish where he was warmly and lovingly welcomed by the parishioners, who very much appreciated his honesty with them.

What appeared to be an infection of the vocal cords kept him out of the parish for a while, and might even have masked the illness that finally brought a premature end to his life of 57 years on 2 March 2010. Such was the affection the parish had for him that when he passed away early one morning, there were two parishioners at his bedside.

The homily at the funeral Mass referred to Ken as something of a closed book, but a book in which there were a few pages open, and these pages were bright, colourful and dazzling. The tributes from the children of St Cuthbert Mayne School, which reflected this, were as eloquent as any tribute and as heartfelt. More importantly, they were right about Ken. Any priest, I think, would have been happy to have them.

Bishop Kieran Conry

Fr Philip O'Dowd, 1947-2009

Born on 31 March 1947, Philip was the son of Jerry and Jean O'Dowd. He was educated at St Mary's Primary School and at The Becket Boys' Grammar School. He read English at Exeter University and after graduation in 1968 was sent by Bishop Ellis to try his vocation to the priesthood at the English College in Rome. He enjoyed his time at the Venerable English College, achieved proficiency in Italian, was known for his excellent memory and admired by fellow students. One such student, now a Papal Nuncio, remarked that Philip's friends understood the expression "*Deus ex machina*" to mean Philip O'Dowd getting out of a car.

Fr Philip was ordained to the priesthood on 6 April 1974 by Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli in the College chapel. He celebrated his First Mass in the church of San Giorgio in Velabro, the titular church of both Cardinal Pignedoli and Cardinal Newman. He took up his first appointment at Holy Souls, Scunthorpe under Fr Andy Murdoch and after six years moved to the Derby parish of Chaddesden with Mgr Jack McClean. Six years later, he moved to Mansfield to be with Fr Peter Dooling, as he then was. After 18 months he became the parish priest of Melbourne and Castle Donnington.

His next appointment would be 11 years as Catholic chaplain at Nottingham University and parish priest of St Thomas More's, Wollaton. I think these years proved to be the happiest and most fulfilled time of his life. It was a place of laughter and tears and sound advice. Students and assistants recognised his goodness, the brilliance of his preaching and the joy of taking part in the annual weekend retreat at Ampleforth, Ilkley or Whitby. Daily prayer and weekday Mass were celebrated in an area Fr Philip called "The Swamp." Sunday Mass was in the Great Hall and it was not over until he had thrown off his chasuble and raced up to the organ loft to play the recessional hymn. He was an accomplished player who had never had a music lesson.

In 1997 he was treated for colon cancer and underwent a major operation requiring convalescence, but he was able to continue his ministry. In 2003 he left for Lincoln and the parish of St Hugh's. In 2007, however, illness returned and he was diagnosed with incurable bone cancer. With patience he once more endured radiotherapy and chemotherapy, each with its own form of debilitation but they were of little long term help. In his last months he had a great desire to revisit his favourite Italian spots in Tuscany and Piedmont; weakness and pain prevented one attempt but in early December his kind friends, Liz and Andy Fielding, drove him there and were able to share his appreciation for the art and architecture of many places in Italy and France.

On New Year's Eve he preached a moving sermon which ended by telling us of the stained glass of Chartres Cathedral. The message for us this New Year: seek God's will and to do it shining in our brightest colours.

Fr Philip's last Mass was on New Year's Day, the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God at her Shrine of Our Lady of England. Later in the day he was so ill that he agreed to be taken back to Nottingham and went into a hospice, Hayward House. Sadly, the cancer was rapidly taking its toll and he entered even more deeply into the mystery of the cross. He accepted all the Lord asked of him for he knew and lived the reality that suffering and dying with Christ leads to rising with Christ. He died in peace having received the last rites at the hands of Fr Chris Thomas, with Bishop Malcolm McMahon having anointed him the previous Sunday.

"Happy are those who die in the Lord! Now they can rest for ever after their work since their good deeds go with them" (Rev. 14:13). Amen.

Fr Andrew Smith



Report of the Friends of the Venerable

Jo Barnacle

The 2009 Annual Meeting

On 19 September 2009 the Friends' Annual Meeting was held in Cambridge, at Fisher House, the University Catholic Chaplaincy, by kind permission of the Chaplain, Fr Alban McCoy.

After an official welcome by the Chairman we were treated to the usual excellent powerpoint presentation by the Rector Mgr Nicholas Hudson who spoke of the Students, Staff, highlights of the College year, the interesting guests received during the year and of the value to the College of the talk given by Fr Michael Doyle during a Human Development weekend and by Fr Tony Milner on Ecumenism.

The College, we were told, remained something of a building site due to the work on the church and the Salone, but that an end was within sight. We were shown many wonderful photographs of the newly restored church, some from amazing vantage points.

Our Annual Meeting followed. We prayed for Elizabeth Usherwood who had died in April and we thanked Anthony Coles for taking over from Elizabeth for the outing to Mapledurham House. An outing to York was planned for 2010 and it was confirmed that a group would be heading to Rome for the re-opening of the restored church.

The accounts were presented by Hamish Keith. After looking at our income and expenditure we were left with £13,209. £8,000 had been donated towards the gym and equipment and in the coming year we would be helping to pay for tiling in the pool at Palazzola following repairs to a leak.

Mike Lang reported that we had 470 paid up members.

A new Committee was elected: Jo Barnacle (Chairman), John Broun (Secretary), Hamish Keith (Treasurer), Jim Holroyd, Simon Howells, Jeremy Hudson, Mike Lang, Carol Richardson, Yvonne Veale and Rodney Webb. John Broun indicated his intention to step down as Secretary at the 2010 Annual Meeting and Jim Holroyd agreed to take over those duties. Rodney Webb took over as Editor of the *Venerabile View*.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Committee for their work over the year especially Mike Lang who had sorted out the membership, Fr Tom Wood our Chaplain and Anthony Coles for all his help.

Lunch was taken in the library and on the lovely sunny terrace.

Our Afternoon Speaker was the Deputy Senior Student Rev. Phillip Harris. He began with the Creation Story as recounted by the Catholic author J.R.R. Tolkien in the *Silmarillion* part of his great output of words about Middle Earth. Phillip's theme was music. Music, he explained, speaks to us at a deeper level than language. It speaks to the soul which is why it is such an effective and popular vehicle for expressing religious sentiment. It also speaks *from* the soul and so is the most natural means of making beautiful our worship of God.

Our reunion concluded with Mass celebrated by the Rector with the homily given by Deacon Mark Woods. He recalled attending a Mass in the catacombs in his days as a student at the College and he reminded us that we too are witnesses to Christ.

The highlight for some of us this year was the week we spent in Rome for the opening of the refurbished church. We were all honoured and delighted to have been part of such a wonderful event. It was very moving. We had a week full of interesting trips, talks, concerts and a visit to the Exhibition in the College crypt, "*Non Angli sed Angeli*" which was excellent.

At the beginning of April we had an outing to York with many of us staying in the Bar Convent. We visited St Margaret Clitherow's House, took a guided tour of York Minster and attended Choral Evensong there. It was the first weekend visit the Friends have made and it went very well.



Jo Barnacle is Chairman of the Friends of the Venerabile.



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House List 2009-10

Staff

Mgr Nicholas Hudson	Rector
Fr Andrew Headon	Vice-Rector
Mgr Philip Carroll	Spiritual Director
Fr Mark Harold	Pastoral Director
Fr Anthony Milner	Theology Tutor

2nd Cycle (Year IV)

Fr Javier Ruiz	Westminster
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2nd Cycle (Year III)

Fr James Mackay	Brentwood
Fr Mark Reilly	Brentwood

2nd Cycle (Year II)

Priests

Fr Kevin Schembri	Malta
Fr Christopher Willis	Leeds

Deacons

Rev. Phillip Harris	Portsmouth
Rev. James McAuley	Portsmouth

2nd Cycle (Year I)

Priests

Fr Jonathan Brandon	Shrewsbury
Fr Jonathan Farrugia	Malta
Fr Craig Fitzpatrick	Hallam

Deacon

Rev. Neil Brett	Brentwood
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Seminarian

Liam Bradley	Menevia
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1st Cycle Theology (Year III)

Michael Doody	Leeds
Michael Patey	Northampton

1st Cycle Theology (Year II)

Michael Coughlan	Shrewsbury
Edward Henley	Westminster
Stefan Kaminski	Westminster
Steven Leightell	Middlesbrough
Alexander MacDonald	Antigonish
John Poland	Liverpool
Benjamin Theobald	Portsmouth

1st Cycle Theology (Year I)

Guido Amari	Westminster
Marc Homsey	Leeds
Anthony McGrath	Shrewsbury
Oskar Thorsteinsson	Reykjavik

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year II)

Sean Crawley	Leeds
James Moreland	Leeds
Matthew O'Gorman	Southwark
Anthony Rosso	Leeds

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year I)

Thomas Cunnah	Shrewsbury
Luke de Pulford	Southwark
David Howell	Southwark

Also Resident

Mgr Bryan Chestle	Papal Household
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Villa Palazzola

“The best view in Italy”

Henry James

So many groups and individuals are discovering the delights of Palazzola set in an idyllic spot on the shores of Lake Albano. Former students of the English College and anyone who has stayed here before will have pleasant memories of days spent in this wonderful place.

What is it that makes Palazzola so special? The location certainly - and the fact that this has been a place of prayer and contemplation for 800 years, ever since the Cistercians built the Abbey of S. Maria in Palazzola.

After careful restoration and refurbishment, Palazzola, the summer Villa of the English College, now welcomes guests all year round who come for a retreat, a conference, family gathering, relaxation or a holiday. Our guests include clerics, parish groups, religious orders, third level students, school groups, writers, families and individuals. This is the perfect place to celebrate an ordination jubilee, a significant birthday or a wedding anniversary.

One of the pleasures of staying here is the variety of people you meet. Our meals are taken at long oak tables in the panelled refectory and it's not long before acquaintances become friends. The food in Palazzola is always delicious, freshly prepared, with lunch served on the terrace in summer.

Many couples choose Palazzola for their wedding and we can arrange everything to make your day special. Have a look at our guest book.

Palazzola offers excellent value and on our website you'll find our rates, how to book and details of our special offers. We look forward to welcoming you soon.

“When I was a student in Rome we used to call Palazzola the *anticamera di paradiso*, a foretaste of paradise! This was because we thought then, as I do now, it is a wonderful place. It has a rich history and has lovely grounds, and the old monastery and the chapel are always welcoming and comfortable. People always feel fortunate to have stayed at Palazzola.”

Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Archbishop Emeritus of Westminster

Website: www.palazzola.it e-mail: palazzola@palazzola.it

