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(above) The Basilica of St Francis in Assisi
(below) 'Prato della Valle'
the famous square of Padua



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Front cover: The processional cross is carried from the church (*Photo: Fr Tony Milner*).

Back cover: Villa Palazzola, the College villa in the Alban Hills outside Rome
(*Photos: Mgr Nicholas Hudson*).

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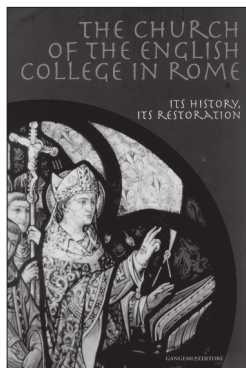
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Recent books on the English College

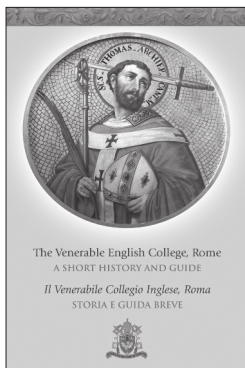
A number of beautiful books have appeared recently on aspects of the College and its history which will be of great interest to Old Romans, Friends and anyone connected with the VEC.

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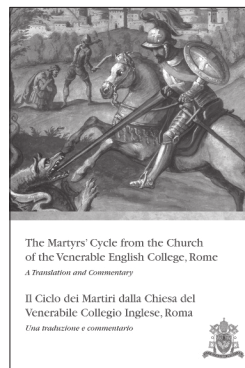
Each is a delight to read and in purchasing them you are helping to support the College.



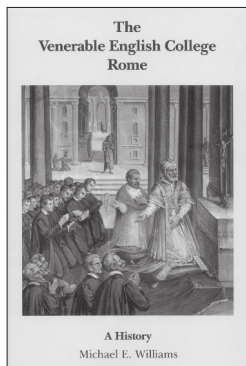
The Church of the English College in Rome: Its History, Its Restoration, €40



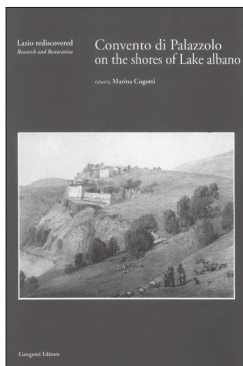
The Venerable English College, Rome: A Short History and Guide, Mark Langham, €10



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



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Welcome to the 2011 edition of *The Venerable*

Editorial

Matthew O'Gorman

Pope Benedict's visit to the United Kingdom last year gave us the opportunity to be with him in person at St Mary's, Oscott. We were joined by fellow seminarians from England and Wales and a media circus broadcasting the event to people at home. It lasted only a few minutes: he came outside, joined us for a photograph and then departed. There was, however, a touching moment when he stopped to hear us sing him a heartfelt chorus of *Ad Multos Annos*. "Why are you so happy?" one reporter asked. An 84 year old man is not the most common celebrity yet the experience of being with Peter made us mindful of who we are as Catholics and the struggles of our forebears to maintain their identity. The martyrs who lived in our lands came to Rome because they knew in their hearts that Christ wanted Peter to feed his sheep. The joy of being with the German shepherd was the happiness of knowing that, thanks to their witness and fidelity, we were also being fed.



(Photo: Dominic Findlay-Wilson)

This year's *Venerable* attempts to digest what we received during the Papal visit. In our first article, Fr Stephen Dingley critiques the argument of Prof. Stephen Hawking who courted attention prior to the Holy Father's arrival for claiming science had made God's existence unnecessary. During the few days that the Pope was with us there was near-blanket media coverage of the events and many were called upon as spokespeople for the Church. Madeleine Teahan describes the experience of being selected, trained and interviewed as one of the *Catholic Voices* who bravely responded to the challenge. Two of the most important addresses given by Pope Benedict were to representatives of civil society at Westminster Hall and to the Bishops of England, Wales and Scotland at St Mary's Chapel, Oscott. We are delighted to include reflections on these addresses by the Rt Rev. Bishop Mark Davies, Bishop of Shrewsbury, and Mgr John Armitage of Brentwood diocese. The culmination of the visit was the beatification of John Henry Cardinal Newman, the first beatification ceremony the Pope has celebrated. While it is generally Newman's ideas that provoke most comment, Fr Gerard Skinner offers us a portrait of Newman the priest which allows us to appreciate the simplicity and sanctity of the now Blessed John Henry Newman. Our own David Howell delves into the College archives to explain and analyse letters written to Rome by the new Beatus. The entrusting of the Ordinariate to Our Lady of Walsingham in the past year reminds us of the central place of Marian devotion in English Christian patrimony; Fr Luke Buckles OP provides a spiritual reflection on the role of Our Lady invoking the wisdom of spiritual doctors along the way.

With so many exciting things going on at the College it is good to create space to review what has happened in day-to-day life. Edward Henley describes the lunchtime preparations and evening performances of the College's *La Francigena* choral group. Anthony Rosso speaks about establishing the Pier Giorgio Frassati society in Rome and how this Italian layman is a good role model for those aspiring to priesthood. Finally, Mgr Mark Langham gives us an opportunity to learn a little more about Rome and encourages us to connect with the apostolic roots of our faith by visiting the Mamertine prison.

Publication would not have been possible without the dedication of the production team. Firstly, thanks to our outgoing business manager, Marc Homsey, for his generosity and service. Thank you to David Howell (Deputy Editor) and Tom Cunnah (Secretary) for their frequent input and assistance. Thanks also to Fr Tony Milner for help with photographs and editing as well as Stefan Kaminski, Anthony Rosso, Tom Cunnah and Phil Andrews (design). Thank you to Fr Rector for his support and to our publisher, Fergus Mulligan, for the use of his talents and patience.



Matthew O'Gorman is a fourth year seminarian for the Archdiocese of Southwark studying Theology at the Gregorian University.

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Hawking, Relativism and Self-Creating Universes:

A Critique of *The Grand Design*

Fr Stephen Dingley

The publication of *The Grand Design* by Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow in 2010 gave rise to some predictably alarming headlines: “Hawking: Big bang did not need God”,¹ “Has Hawking seen off God?”² What caught the eye of most commentators was the authors’ remark on the penultimate page:

Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing. ... Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist. It is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the universe going.³

However, what caused me more concern was the authors’ concluding comment:

Perhaps the true miracle is that abstract considerations of logic lead to a unique theory that predicts and describes a vast universe full of the amazing variety that we see. If the theory is confirmed by observation, it will be the successful conclusion of a search going back more than 3,000 years. We will have found the grand design.⁴

It is particularly striking because the authors appeal in the first place not to observation but to abstract logic. They seem to be suggesting that the existence of the universe and ourselves is a requirement of pure logic: it would be meaningless or a contradiction in terms to suggest that the universe might not exist. This is an extraordinary claim.

In this article I hope to show where their arguments break down; but in order to do this we will need to do some groundwork first.

Model-dependent realism

We must start with the philosophical kernel of the book (somewhat ironically, as Hawking and Mlodinow declare “philosophy is dead” in their second paragraph).⁵ One wonders whether they have any idea what they are wading into!

They adopt a theory of knowledge which they call model-dependent realism. According to this theory, all human knowing and all scientific theories are essentially about making mental models. Our brains interpret the data we receive from our senses by making a model of the world. If the model is successful, we tend to attribute reality to the model and its constituents.⁶ If two different models predict the same observations, then we cannot say that one is more real than another. Thus we cannot say that the Copernican world-view (that the earth goes around the sun) is any more real than the

“In the final analysis it is sheer idealism, in which our ideas are not determined by reality.”



Prof. Stephen Hawking (Photo: NASA/Paul. E. Alers)

Ptolemaic (that the sun goes around a fixed earth),⁷ nor the Big Bang theory more real than six day creationism.⁸ We are simply free to choose whichever model is more appealing or convenient. The authors claim that this theory avoids the philosophical debate around whether or not our ideas correspond to external reality; but in the final analysis it is sheer idealism, in which our ideas are not determined by reality but “a well-constructed model *creates a reality of its own*.”⁹

This view needs challenging. Fundamentally it confuses knowing and modelling. When I know something (the moon for example), there is a correspondence between my idea of the moon and the moon in reality. This is the correspondence called truth. When I make a model (for instance that the crescent moon is like a banana in shape), there is another sort of correspondence, this time between my idea of the moon and my idea of the banana. Model-dependent realism simply muddles up these two sorts of correspondence!¹⁰

Scientific theories often use models. For example, atoms behave a bit like billiard balls, but no one really thinks that atoms *are* billiard balls. Many scientific theories are expressed using mathematical models, but no one actually thinks that the force of gravity *is* the number 10.

In fact, Hawking and Mlodinow are inconsistent in their adoption of model-dependent realism. Firstly, they require that valid models agree with observations; but this presupposes that observations can actually discover reality independently of any model. Secondly, they are more than happy tacitly to set their theory aside when they want to tell us how the universe actually is.

M-Theory

A central theme of the book is M-theory which the authors suggest is the ultimate law of nature, linking up all the known laws of science into a single whole: “the unified theory Einstein was hoping to find”.¹¹ Nevertheless, they say rather little about the theory itself (presumably because it is mathematically very complicated). What it suggests is that the fundamental constituents of the universe (electrons, quarks, etc.) are not point-like particles as in the standard view, but instead are stretched out into tiny vibrating “strings”.

So far, scientists have produced several versions of this “string theory”, which only apply in different particular situations. M-theory is the synthesis of these various partial theories. Unfortunately there is a problem: as they are currently formulated none of them quite fits mathematically with the others. Many physicists are trying to find a formulation which will unite them into a mathematically coherent whole, and which will apply in all conditions. However, the authors concede that this may in fact be impossible; we may just have to put up with a family of partial (and ultimately incompatible) theories. They admit that “this situation does not fulfil the traditional physicists’ dream of a single unified theory”,¹² but suggest that model-dependent realism gets around the difficulty by permitting incompatible theories to co-exist.

This manoeuvre is surely a mistake in the authors’ logic. As we have seen above, model-dependent realism applies when several different models each accurately describes reality. However, in the present case none of the mathematical models (the various partial string theories), accurately describes the whole of reality, so model-dependent realism is irrelevant here. It may turn out that M-theory does accurately describe the universe, even if it cannot be expressed in a single mathematical formula. But this will tell us something about the universe (that it cannot ultimately be modelled by mathematics), not something about how we choose models, or how our models supposedly create reality.

Quantum theory

The details of M-theory are not in fact crucial to the authors’ overall conclusions about the universe and God. Much more important are the underlying issues of quantum theory: the branch of physics which typically applies to very small objects like atoms, but which can apply at any scale. In particular it raises the issue of whether the universe is governed by law or by chance. The physicist Richard Feynman famously remarked, “I think I can safely say that nobody understands quantum mechanics,”¹³ so I have little hope of explaining it here in a couple of paragraphs! Nevertheless, perhaps a few broad brushstrokes can give something of the flavour.

Quantum theory was developed in the first half of the 20th century to account for a number of curious experimental results. It began with the observation that light sometimes behaves like a wave and sometimes like a stream of particles. Neither model alone is adequate to explain all the observations. In some sense light has to be both a wave and a particle; a situation called wave-particle duality. Even more surprisingly, particles of matter such as electrons and protons were found to behave in the same way: sometimes like particles and sometimes like waves, depending on the particular experimental setup. This seems paradoxical since a wave is something spread out throughout space whilst a particle has a definite position at only one point in space.

A further difficulty is that the basic law of quantum mechanics, Schrödinger’s equation, describes the behaviour of the wave, not the particle. However, the wave is not directly observable or measurable: whenever a detection is made, the wave-particle behaves as a particle.

This odd situation leads to Heisenberg’s famous uncertainty principle, which says that it is impossible to know, for example, a particle’s position and speed simultaneously with total accuracy. The more accurately we determine its position, the more knowledge we lose about its speed, and vice versa. It also means that the results of individual experiments cannot in general be predicted with certainty; only the probability of various results can be specified in advance.

Bohr versus Bohm

The question of how to interpret these strange facts is notoriously difficult. Essentially there are two schools of thought. The first, championed by the Danish physicist Niels Bohr (the "Copenhagen interpretation"), sees wave-particle duality as reality. The unpredictability of experimental results arises from an intrinsic lack of determinism in the laws of nature: exactly what happens in a given situation is to some degree truly random. Thus the particular events that happen have *no ultimate cause*. This interpretation is by far the more common in the scientific community, and is generally taught at schools and universities as established fact. It is presumed throughout by Hawking and Mlodinow.

The other school of interpretation was championed by English physicist David Bohm.¹⁴ According to his view, wave-particle duality arises because there is both a real wave and a real particle. The wave determines how the particle moves. In this view the behaviours of the wave and the particle are *fully determined* by the laws of physics. The unpredictability of measurement arises from the fact that the precise form of the wave is unknown to us, since the wave is undetectable. Nevertheless, every event has a real cause, even if that cause cannot be fully known by us.

It has been shown mathematically that these two alternative interpretations predict exactly the same observational results, so they cannot be distinguished by experiment (at least, not by any currently devised). This means that the often asserted claim that quantum theory proves that the universe is intrinsically random is false. The universe is *unpredictable*; but that is an entirely different matter.¹⁵

Why do Hawking and Mlodinow ignore Bohm's interpretation? Perhaps it is because they are unaware of it or do not take it seriously; perhaps because model-dependent realism allows the adoption of any convenient model as long as it matches the observations; perhaps because Bohm's fully deterministic account of quantum mechanics would undermine their entire thesis about the universe not needing God.

A necessary universe?

Having examined the foundational ideas of the book, we are at last in a position to make an assault on Hawking and Mlodinow's extraordinary claims that the universe is logically necessary; that it spontaneously created itself from nothing; that it does not require God "to light the blue touch paper".¹⁶

To start with, the authors offer a number of requirements that "any set of laws that describes a universe such as ours"¹⁷ would have to fulfil: 1. something like energy must exist (no reason given); 2. the energy of an isolated body must be positive, otherwise such bodies could pop up spontaneously all over the place; 3. a law like gravity must exist, so that the universe can be spontaneously created out of nothing.¹⁸

The argument here clearly falls into the fallacy of mistaking one sort of necessity for another. The authors have listed features which are necessary *to make a universe like ours*, but soon treat them as if they were *logically* necessary. Having made this error, it is hardly surprising that they soon conclude that abstract logic demands a universe like ours—but it is a classic circular argument: a universe needs these sorts of laws, therefore they must exist, therefore they do exist, therefore the universe must exist.

That was too easy! What about the claim that the universe will spontaneously create itself from nothing? The underlying question here is what the first cause of the universe is and the authors clearly think it impossible for God to be the answer. How should we respond?

Firstly, it is a mistake to think of God's creative work as simply "lighting the blue touch paper". Creation is as much about sustaining things in existence as starting them off; it is the ultimate answer to why they exist, not only how they came into existence. Secondly, the idea of spontaneous creation stems from the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics which, as we have seen, assumes that individual events happen without specific causes. Once you have allowed this assumption, it is only a small step to say universes do not require causes. Finally, whilst the idea of "spontaneous" creation implies that there is no real cause of the universe, in their previous sentence they say the opposite: "Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing."¹⁹ Creation which requires a pre-existing law is not as spontaneous as they would have us believe.

"Creation is as much about sustaining things in existence as starting them off."

These reflections leave us with three further important questions. Where do the ultimate laws of nature come from? What sort of things are the laws of nature? Why do the laws of nature take the specific form that we find? Once we have answered these, we will have answered Hawking and Mlodinow's challenge.

Where do the laws of nature come from?

There are three plausible options for the origin of the laws of nature: 1. they are made by God, but this is the idea that Hawking and Mlodinow are attempting to refute; 2. the laws are logically necessary which is the option preferred by the authors, but we have just seen that their argument is fallacious; 3. the laws are ontologically necessary, i.e. they *just are*, they are uncaused causes: but this raises the second question.

What sort of things are the laws of nature?

Either the laws of nature are simply *descriptions* of the regular features of the universe, or else they somehow *govern* the universe's behaviour, causing things to happen. If they only describe what happens, they cannot really be the reason why the universe exists, as the authors assert. Hawking himself faced this issue squarely in *A Brief History of Time*, famously asking:

Even if there is only one possible unified theory, it is just a set of rules and equations. What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe?²⁰

On the other hand, if the laws of nature genuinely govern the universe, what sort of thing does that make them? They will be non-material, eternal, unchanging principles, present everywhere in the universe, bringing it into existence from nothing and ultimately causing everything that happens in it. At the very least we have come quite close to the idea of a Creator God!

Many people are prepared to grant the existence of some sort of first cause like this (notably including Richard Dawkins).²¹ However, they balk at the idea of calling it God because the idea of God suggests a personal being with intellect and intentions, whereas this first cause of the universe seems to be quite impersonal. But this nicely raises our third question.

Why do the laws of nature take the specific form that we find?

The particular laws that we find in our universe are very finely specified to allow the emergence of intelligent life. Had almost any of the basic parameters of the universe (e.g. the strength of gravity or the mass of the electron) been slightly different from their actual values, life would have been impossible. This observation has been designated the Anthropic Principle. Hawking and Mlodinow are happy to acknowledge it; in fact they devote a whole chapter to it.²² It is also a fact that needs explaining.

A possible explanation is that the laws originate from a personal designer God who intended to create intelligent life. But this is the conclusion which our authors are trying to avoid. An alternative suggestion, advanced by many including Hawking and Mlodinow,²³ is the “multiverse”. This is the hypothesis that there may be many universes, each of which has its own particular laws of nature. If there are enough of these different universes, then we can expect that one at least will be suitable for life by pure chance—and the need for a designer God seems to vanish.

“The multiverse hypothesis signally fails to remove the need for a personal designer God.”

To make this plausible, however, it must have some scientific grounding. Therefore there must be some sort of overarching scientific “super-law” which governs the production of all these universes and the processes by which they gain their own “local” laws of nature. Once we have realised this, we see that the terminology of “many universes” is misleading. These individual “universes” turn out to be only parts of a bigger whole (the multiverse). The multiverse is the “real” universe. If this is confirmed by observation, it will simply be the latest stage of our expanding human horizons. We used to think the earth was more or less all there was, with some heavenly bodies orbiting around it; then we discovered that it was only part of a much larger solar system; then that the solar system was only a very small part of the galaxy; then that the galaxy was only a small part of what we currently call the “universe”; that is, everything that came out of our Big Bang. Now (perhaps) our “universe” is just a small part of the multiverse. Nothing has really changed except that there is even more stuff out there than we used to think.

Another more important consequence must also be drawn. The overarching “super-law” which governs the multiverse will also need to be precisely specified to allow the emergence of intelligent life. If any old law of this “universe” would not produce life, it is foolish to imagine that any old super-law of a multiverse would produce life. The multiverse hypothesis signally fails to remove the need for a personal designer God.

Conclusions

Judging by their concluding remarks, the authors’ intention was to demonstrate that far from requiring an intelligent and personal God to create our universe, the demands of sheer logic are enough. However, their logic seems to have been decidedly lacking.

If the universe requires “a law like gravity” to exist already, in order for it to come into existence “spontaneously”, then it does require a prior cause, and therefore it is not truly spontaneous. The idea of spontaneous creation also requires the adoption of the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics, which allows uncaused events to happen. Alternative interpretations exist which do not require genuinely random events, but the authors do not even mention this. Instead they cover their tracks by adopting the relativist philosophical world-view of model-dependent realism.

In attempting to explain away the Anthropic Principle, they invoke the multiverse. However, they fail to recognise that the higher laws of the multiverse must also be specifically chosen to allow the emergence of universes which allow life.

Finally, the authors mistake laws which are necessary to make a universe like ours for laws which are necessary on the grounds of pure logic.

If some of the greatest scientific minds of our time have constructed such a shaky case for logical necessity replacing divine design, there is plenty of room left in our universe for God.



Fr Stephen Dingley gained his doctorate in Radio Astronomy from Churchill College, Cambridge. He is a priest of the diocese of Arundel and Brighton and was a student at the Venerable English College from 1991-1997. He is currently Theology Tutor at St John's Seminary, Wonersh.

Endnotes

- ¹ Laura Roberts, *Daily Telegraph*, Thursday 2 September 2010, 7
- ² Graham Farmelo, *Daily Telegraph*, Friday 3 September 2010, 19
- ³ S. Hawking and L. Mlodinow, *The Grand Design* (London: Bantam Press, 2010), 180
- ⁴ Hawking and Mlodinow, 181
- ⁵ Hawking and Mlodinow, 5
- ⁶ Hawking and Mlodinow, 7
- ⁷ Hawking and Mlodinow, 42
- ⁸ Hawking and Mlodinow, 49-51
- ⁹ Hawking and Mlodinow, 172 (my emphasis)
- ¹⁰ Galileo and Bellarmine were quite aware of this distinction between model and reality in their infamous dispute about the Copernican world-view some 500 years ago. How sad that our authors seem to have missed the point.
- ¹¹ Hawking and Mlodinow, 181
- ¹² Hawking and Mlodinow, 58
- ¹³ R. Feynman, *The Character of Physical Law*, ch. 6: 'Probability and uncertainty'
- ¹⁴ See David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980). For a somewhat more accessible (but still pretty technical) discussion, see James T. Cushing, *Quantum Mechanics: Historical Contingency and the Copenhagen Hegemony* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
- ¹⁵ For those more technically minded, the experimental results do show that the universe is intrinsically non-local. That is to say, an event cannot be fully accounted for in terms of the local surroundings of that event; to be fully intelligible it may be necessary to take account of the state of the entire universe.
- ¹⁶ Hawking and Mlodinow, 180-81
- ¹⁷ Hawking and Mlodinow, 179
- ¹⁸ Hawking and Mlodinow, 179-80
- ¹⁹ Hawking and Mlodinow, 180
- ²⁰ S. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: from the Big Bang to Black Holes* (London: Bantam Press, 1988), 174
- ²¹ R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (London: Bantam Press, 2006), 155
- ²² Hawking and Mlodinow, ch. 7, 147-166
- ²³ Hawking and Mlodinow, 136-7, 164-6; cf. P. Davies, *The Goldilocks Enigma* (London: Allen Lane, 2006); R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*



Catholic Voices: Helping the Holy Father

Madeleine Teahan

For some Catholics there comes a point during a professional or personal relationship when the dynamic is irrevocably tarnished by a derogatory and ill-informed remark about the Catholic Church.

It was my first job in The Big Smoke and throughout my employment I was surrounded by colleagues who in every interaction showed sensitivity, tolerance and knowledge about my faith, bar one conversation that I will never forget. It was a quiet afternoon in the office when out of nowhere, a colleague announced that the Pope was “on about condoms again. Apparently condoms do not stop the spread of AIDS”. A chorus of groans and ripples of laughter reverberated around the office. This chorus of contempt ran according to the script with the discussion culminating in the remark: “Well this is a former Nazi we are talking about.”

“I could not quite believe the ignorance which gushed out in such an uncharacteristic way as soon as Pope Benedict was mentioned.”

As I felt myself becoming increasingly frustrated, I desperately clamoured for an argument in my brain. Surely the Pope must have some scientific evidence behind his reasoning concerning condom distribution and the spread of AIDS? Surely the Holy Father did not readily volunteer to join the Hitler Youth and most probably had little choice? What depressed me most was that my colleagues were all lovely, intelligent and very well-informed individuals. I could not quite believe the ignorance which gushed out in such an uncharacteristic way as soon as Pope Benedict was mentioned. As I searched the internet trying to get my head around the Pope’s reported comments on the plane to Africa, it dawned on me more than ever that the Catholic Church in the United Kingdom was experiencing a serious public relations crisis. Key messages concerning the life-giving nature of its teachings were not being effectively communicated and although I desperately wanted to correct this, contemplating such a task was completely overwhelming. Where on earth would one start?



Catholic Voices contribute to a debate on state funding of the Papal Visit in London (Photo: Catholic Voices)

The combination of this disturbing exchange and the inflammatory ignorance that I had struggled with throughout my undergraduate years left a lasting impression on me. Consequently, when the Papal Visit to the UK was first announced it is saddening to admit that I felt a strong sense of trepidation. The hostility to the Holy Father in my eyes would be so strong that I genuinely pondered whether a cancellation would be a blessing in disguise.

When an e-mail was forwarded to me from Jack Valero, press officer for Opus Dei UK, my spirits lifted and little did I know how one e-mail would form such a significant turn in my professional and spiritual life. Valero described how, after a recent meeting with a couple of friends, he had put together a project. The idea was to form a team of Catholics in advance of the Papal Visit in September who would be available to the media and other public forums when Pope Benedict was in the UK. Valero rightly estimated that such an initiative was badly needed: "The Papal Visit will be an opportunity for many contentious and controversial issues to come under public scrutiny, and we need Catholics who are able to articulate the Church's positions clearly and in a straightforward, reasonable manner." This was the initiative that was to become the Catholic Voices project led by Jack Valero and journalist Austen Ivereigh.

The project was blessed from the beginning through the inspiration of an excellent role model in the now Blessed Cardinal John Henry Newman. The focus of the Pope's visit was the beatification of this English priest and academic at Cofton Park, Birmingham on Sunday 19 September. From the very beginning the coordinators of the Catholic Voices initiative emphasised the importance of Cardinal Newman's following words:

I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious, but men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold, and what they do not, who know their creed so well, that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it. I want an intelligent, well-instructed laity... You ought to be able to bring out what you feel and what you mean, as well as to feel and mean it.

But in order to achieve this goal of a humble and well-informed laity one must first question where had the Church been going wrong? It was in fact a public debate held in London, on the motion "The Catholic Church is a force for Good in the World," which propelled the architects of Catholic Voices into action. Jack Valero later explained to me:

We first thought of the Catholic Voices project after watching a debate in London about the Catholic Church in November 2009, where we suffered a heavy defeat because the other side was just so much better at communicating than us. Austen and I had worked together in 2006 forming a group of Catholics called the "*The Da Vinci Code* Response Group" and offering ourselves to the media to talk about the book and film, the Catholic Church, Jesus Christ, the Gospels, etc. It had worked very well then. With the Pope's visit coming up in only a few months it occurred to us that people were needed who could articulate quickly and attractively the position of the Catholic Church on a whole range of controversial issues that were sure to come up as a result of the visit.

In the past, it is understandable why there was arguably a natural squeamishness on the part of Catholics in seeming too keen to embrace modern technology as a medium for evangelisation and Catholic apologetics. Communication and PR operators are often associated

with the “spin culture” that economises on truth and seems incompatible with a Catholic ethos. Furthermore, journalists are often looking for a short, snappy quote which grabs the reader’s attention. It is often difficult for Catholics to do justice to their faith in a few simple words. Consequently it is easy to understand why Catholics operating within the media are performing a delicate operation that demands professionalism and sensitivity.

What was wonderfully refreshing about the coordinators of Catholic Voices was their optimism concerning the role of the media. Austen, Jack and Kathleen Griffin (our media skills trainer), were all Catholics who had worked with and in the media and who understand the ways in which it operates. For too long I had been one of many Catholics in England and Wales who viewed the media as an obstacle rather than an opportunity. It only took one irresponsible or ill-informed report by a single journalist to brand an entire paper or TV channel as “biased” or “anti-Catholic.” Austen, Jack and Kathleen challenged this negativity and encouraged each Catholic Voice to recognise that “the media”, which is of course made up of a multitude of individuals and organisations, was not the enemy. Accepting this basic premise was essential in order to ensure that the Catholic Voices project succeeded in effectively putting the case for the Church, in the modern world.

The final 20 Catholic Voices were selected from a pool of about 90 applicants based on a written application, followed by a mock media interview. I was thrown straight in at the deep end as my interview topic concerned the Catholic Church’s role in combating the spread of AIDS in Africa. Having been briefed in advanced, there certainly was a marked difference in my ability to handle the tough questions thrown at me compared with my previous bad experience in the work place on the same topic. Education about the neuralgic issues enables one to take control of an interview so that it becomes a dialogue rather than a slanging match. The professionalism which characterised Catholic Voices from its inception was a positive indicator of things to come. Walking away from that interview, I felt confident that whether I was chosen for the final 20 or not, this project would be of great service to the Church. I was delighted when invited to join the final team.

“As soon as the Holy Father stepped on British soil a profound feeling of serenity seemed to capture the nation.”

Between March and September 2010 the Catholic Voices Team met on a fortnightly basis and were briefed by experts on key areas of Catholic moral and social teaching. The briefing sessions gave helpful insight into why the Church still struggles to effectively communicate its message on issues such as abortion, euthanasia and contraception: they are complex and difficult subjects! It was a gradual process for all of us learning how, in a three minute interview or 30 second clip, one could best communicate the beauty and life-giving nature of the Church’s teaching. These sessions were further complemented by occasional sessions in media studios and a weekend’s retreat to Worth Abbey which provided invaluable spiritual nourishment.

The culmination of the project was of course the Pope’s arrival on 16 September which came around remarkably quickly. Despite the excellent briefing and preparation (both practical and spiritual) that the project had provided, I still felt apprehensive. The headlines up until September had focused on appalling cases of clerical abuse and in some instances Pope Benedict had been accused of protecting offending priests. However, as soon as the Holy Father stepped on British soil a profound feeling of serenity seemed to capture the nation.



Catholic Voices take part in a training session (Photo: Catholic Voices)

I can honestly say that every journalist was courteous and interested in what I had to say about the Papal Visit and what it meant to me. When the “difficult questions” were thrown at me, the wisdom and humility of Pope Benedict was already inspiring my responses and the training that Catholic Voices provided enabled me to explain the Catholic faith with a new-found confidence.

The world has moved on remarkably since Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected Pope in 2005. The communications revolution we have witnessed demands that the Church recognises the social currency of the media and capitalises on it accordingly. The media is not the property of the secular world. It is a tool for any group or individual who wants to convey their message and the UK is blessed, like much of Europe, with liberal democratic values which enhance this opportunity.

Catholic Voices has sparked a much needed re-think in the way that the Church approaches the media. A remaining prayer is that the success of the Papal Visit will foster the further flourishing of the Catholic laity that Blessed John Henry Newman envisaged.



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A Third Spring Sermon? Pope Benedict XVI at St Mary's College, Oscott

Mgr John Armitage

One significant landmark in the ecclesiastical history of England is etched in the minds of those who prepared – or are preparing – for the priesthood at Oscott College: the First Synod of Westminster when Blessed John Henry Newman delivered his “Second Spring” sermon.

As an Oscotian myself, I was always aware of the famous pulpit in the chapel from which he preached and recall with great affection the figures of Wiseman, Manning and the other Fathers of the Synod standing sentry in the half-finished canvas, now on the main stairs.

Such memories came to me while sitting at the back of the same chapel and listening to Pope Benedict address the bishops at the end of his visit. His words stirred in me a great sense of continuity; a feeling that, somehow, Peter was encouraging us to remember the great events of our country's Christian history, extend their legacy and make of them a message for today.

In the history of the evangelisation of our lands, two popes, St Gregory the Great and Pius IX, were remarkably influential. They brought about the flowering and restoration of the Faith, nurturing an often fragile and vulnerable Christian community with pastoral wisdom in their teaching and action. It is in light of this great tradition that I believe Pope Benedict's address at Oscott will be most fruitfully understood.

Pope Saint Gregory the Great and the Flowering of the Faith

In 596 Pope St Gregory the Great commissioned St Augustine to preach the Gospel to the Anglo-Saxons. The Pope's personal desire to come to England had been thwarted previously, so, after being raised to the Chair of Peter, he sent Augustine. This “First Spring” was no easy mission. Bede describes the reticence of Augustine and his companions in his *Ecclesiastical History*: “...they were appalled at the idea of going to a barbarous, fierce and pagan nation.” Gregory subsequently sent a letter of encouragement to Augustine's party to fortify them.

Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. Forasmuch as it had been better not to begin a good work, than to think of desisting from one which has been begun, it behoves you, my beloved sons, to fulfil with all diligence the good work, which, by the help of the Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of evil-speaking men, discourage you; but with all earnestness and zeal perform, by God's guidance, that which you have set about; being assured that great labour is followed by the greater glory of an eternal reward.¹

We might wonder if our current Holy Father, in light of the hostility directed towards him from certain quarters prior to his visit, might have read Bede's description and been inspired by Gregory's letter.



Pope Benedict XVI with the Bishops of England, Wales and Scotland in the chapel of St Mary's, Oscott (Photo: Mazur/catholicchurch.org.uk)

Bede quotes another passage from a letter of Pope St Gregory sent to Abbot Mellitus as news of Augustine's mission was being expected in Rome, requesting that the Abbot relay his "mind concerning the matter of the English people...". Gregory stated that the pagan temples should be consecrated and "converted from the worship of idols to the worship of the true God" and "the nation, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and adoring the true God, may the more freely resort to the places to which they were accustomed." He went on to explain his pastoral strategy:

For there is no doubt that it is impossible to cut off everything at once from their rude natures; because he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps.²

In advising Augustine to recognise the history and culture of the people so that they might be helped incrementally to "ascend to the highest place", Gregory gives proper emphasis to the importance of recognising and understanding cultural nuance to the spreading of the Good News. This, too, is what Pope John Paul II intended to convey in his great challenge to the modern Church: that we be "Heralds of the Gospel... who are experts in humanity."³ We must look to identify the pagan temples of our own time and seek to convert them and their followers from the worship of idols to the worship of the One True God.

Pope Pius IX and the Restoration of the Faith

The three centuries spanning the dissolution of the monasteries to the restoration of the hierarchy marked a time of great faith and courage. In terms of public practice, our Catholic Faith was dormant yet waiting with hope and patience for emancipation while the quiet witness of recusants and the blood of our martyrs watered the seeds of the same Faith planted by Pope St Gregory.

The early nineteenth century witnessed the "Second Spring": initiated under the guidance of Pope Pius IX, it was a steady growth in Catholicism in England and Wales which prepared the way for the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850.

The Bull *Universalis Ecclesiae* speaks of the Pope's special concern for the people of our countries:

...the history of the Anglican schism in the sixteenth century presents no feature so remarkable as the care unremittingly exercised by the Roman Pontiffs, our predecessors, to give succour, in its hour of extremist peril, to the Catholic religion in that realm, and by all means in their power to afford it assistance.

Having, therefore, before our eyes the illustrious example of our predecessors, and wishing to emulate it, in accordance with the duty of the Supreme Apostolate, and also giving way to the inclination of our own heart towards that beloved part of our Lord's vineyard, I have purposed, from the very first commencement of our pontificate, to prosecute a work so well commenced, and to devote our closer attention to the promotion of the Church's advantage in that kingdom.

This "Second Spring" gave back to our people the gift of a proper episcopal structure, begun earlier with the Vicars Apostolic:

We again invoke, as deprecators before God, the most Holy Mother of God, the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, with the other heavenly patrons of England; and especially St. Gregory the Great, that since it is now granted to such our insufficient deserts to renew Episcopal Sees in England, precisely as he in his age accomplished it, to the very great advantage of the Church, this restoration also which we make of Episcopal Dioceses in that kingdom may redound to the benefit of the Catholic religion.⁴

The restoration of the hierarchy was intended to resuscitate the means by which the faithful of England and Wales could, once again, live a full, ecclesial life. Together with the great priorities of the Fathers of the First Synod of Westminster (the construction of schools and parishes) the programme of recovering and deepening our Catholic heritage was begun; a legacy which endures to this day. Newman reflects beautifully on emerging from the persecutions and challenges ahead which are as true for us today as they were for his contemporaries:

And as that suffering of the Martyrs is not yet recompensed, so, perchance, it is not yet exhausted. Something, for what we know, remains to be undergone, to complete the necessary sacrifice. May God forbid it, for this poor nation's sake! But still could we be surprised, my Fathers and my Brothers, if the winter even now should not yet be quite over? Have we any right to take it strange, if, in this English land, the spring-time of the Church should turn out to be an English spring, an uncertain, anxious time of hope and fear, of joy and suffering,—of bright promise and budding hopes, yet withal, of keen blasts, and cold showers, and sudden storms? One thing alone I know – that according to our need, so will be our strength.⁵

Pope Benedict XVI and the Renewal of the Faith

Springs often run dry and new sources are needed to keep land fresh and fertile. Over the centuries, English and Welsh Catholics have looked to Peter for inspiration, direction and encouragement. Following in the tradition of Popes Saint Gregory the Great and Pius IX and the many illustrious predecessors who expressed care for the people of our lands – perhaps most notably Blessed John Paul II whose teaching and historic visit in 1982 prepared the way, and in

many ways set the agenda, for last September's Visit when Pope Benedict came to the United Kingdom. He spoke not only to Catholics but to all men and women of good will at the invitation of Her Majesty the Queen and her government as an honoured and official guest, showing us by his example the centrality of mission to the Christian life.

I would like to highlight two areas where the wisdom of Popes St Gregory the Great and Pius IX merged with the insightful words of Pope Benedict during his state visit.

Gregory advises Augustine not to tear down the places of pagan worship but to transform them with Truth.

In his address at Westminster Hall the Holy Father recognised the common ground between some of the great traditions of British society and Catholic Social Teaching, praising the former in "its overriding concern to safeguard the unique dignity of every human person, created in the image and likeness of God, and its emphasis on the duty of civil authority to foster the common good."⁶

In our own cultural context, this raises a question about the relationship between the common good and our modern Western society so attached to its, arguably idolatrous, individualist ethos. Having identified the popular and narrow concept of reason as only that which can be empirically known, the Holy Father chose to present faith

"The parts of our heritage we take most pride in exemplify self-sacrifice, not self-interest."

and reason as mutually enriching and enhancing; this was done without alienating an audience inclined to dismiss unqualified references to the supernatural in public discourse. In challenging the *status quo*, he couched his message of hope in a language that made people take him more seriously. He chose also to find areas of correspondence between proud moments in our history and the Christian ethic, from the abolition of the slave trade to the heroic stand of Britain during the Second World War, being "...deeply moved to recall how many of your fellow citizens sacrificed their lives, courageously resisting the forces of that evil [Nazi] ideology."⁷ He was directing the attention of our fellow countrymen to the plain truth that the parts of our heritage we take most pride in exemplify self-sacrifice, not self-interest. These goods are truly common to all and can liberate us from false idols wherever they may be.

All idols have a certain attraction – a hook that draws people in. Contemporary idol worship, like most heresies in the history of the Church, are accurately described as half-truths, attractive on one level but false and misleading at the core. Excessive individualism is putting oneself first which makes all else relative to personal desire. This manifests itself in many ways; a particularly damaging example being the "freedom" to choose abortion. I suspect that few people believe abortion to be a good thing yet the majority regard it as the lesser of two evils; the primary evil being the curtailment of personal choice. Choice, of course, is not to be despised in itself: it is a reflection of God's gift of freedom; yet true freedom is the ability to choose the good who is greater than ourselves. As G.K. Chesterton says, "to admire mere choice is to refuse to choose."⁸ Moreover, Our Lord himself makes clear that "Greater love has no man than that he [chooses to] lay down his life for his friends."⁹ We need to find a way to speak to a society that regards "choice" as the highest value by pointing instead to the goods which bring us peace upon being chosen.

Pius looks to restore the integrity of the Church

The restoration of the hierarchy did not simply resurrect a structure, but reaffirmed and replenished the identity of the Catholic community. As a persecuted minority, that identity

had been characterised by martyrdom and “keeping our heads down”. The Catholic Relief Acts, immigration and an influx of converts from Anglicanism radically changed the role of the Catholic Church in British society, paving the way for the definition and focus given to its identity by the re-establishment of an ecclesial structure. The great vision of the Synod Fathers was that this strengthening and broadening of Catholic identity would be essential to the success and longevity of the Restoration and Second Spring if there were to be one.



Pope Benedict XVI walks past the unfinished painting of the First Synod of Westminster (Photo: Mazur/catholicchurch.org.uk)

The strengthening of Catholic identity, however, is entirely contingent on attending to the signs of the times (as the documents of the Second Vatican Council repeatedly exhort). I would like to translate this to the current context by reflecting briefly on one developing area of Catholic life: our charities.

Over many centuries, charities have addressed the needs of people across all social boundaries with most of them serving the communities from which they arose. In recent years, a number of faith-based charities have departed from their founding values and taken on a more secular ethos. Whilst recognising the rise of secularism and its effect on society as a whole, I believe that the weakening of religious ethos in some Catholic charities has grown as much from an uncertain Catholic identity as from a strong secularism. Identity gives shape to an institution and it is our identity as Catholics that must form the basis of the mission of our charities in the years to come. But what is this identity in terms of our charities? Pope Benedict reminded us that the Church’s “overriding concern is to safeguard the unique dignity of every human person, created in the image and likeness of God.”¹⁰

Our Catholic institutions can no longer – except in a few notable cases – sustain the inward-looking approach to service, for we have a duty to every human person. In our institutions, what is today a necessarily outward-looking model of charitable activity will only endure as authentically Catholic if our service towards others is rooted in the truth. Our parishes, schools, and pastoral activities must be based on a common and clearly articulated Catholic identity that is orthodox and rooted in the tradition so that we may be the signs of contradiction Christ calls us while remaining open to his grace to change our hearts.

Where the timeless truths of our past meet with the signs of the times in the present a vibrant and creative expression of the Faith is always to be found. The cultivation of such an expression requires perseverance. At the end of Newman’s aforementioned sermon, he describes the students of the Venerable English College: “One by one, each in his turn, those youthful soldiers came to an old man, [St Philip Neri] and one by one they persevered and gained the crown.”¹¹ The sight of today’s youthful and not so youthful soldiers going to seek the blessing of an old man at Oscott encouraged them as once Newman did in the same setting:

My Fathers, my Brothers in the priesthood, you, who day by day offer up the Immaculate Lamb of God, you who hold in your hands the Incarnate Word under the visible tokens which He has ordained, you who again and again drain the chalice of

the Great Victim; who is to make you fear? What is to startle you? What to seduce you? Who is to stop you, whether you are to suffer or to do, whether to lay the foundations of the Church in tears, or to put the crown upon the work in jubilation?¹²

These three successors of St Peter have expressed a particular care for the people of our lands. Pope Saint Gregory the Great helps us to understand that fortitude and pastoral sensitivity are essential to mission; Pope Pius IX emphasises the importance of the Body of the Church and her teachings to our fruitfulness as followers of Jesus; and Pope Benedict XVI assimilates these, adding the further injunction not to retreat into ourselves, embattled, but to proclaim fearlessly and openly the Gospel in our service *to all*.

In the final paragraph of *After Virtue*, Alasdair Macintyre wrote prophetically of the situation we find ourselves living in today:

What matters at this stage is the construction of local forms of community within which civility and the intellectual moral life can be sustained through the dark ages that are already upon us. And if the tradition of the virtues was able to survive the horrors of the last dark ages, we are not entirely without grounds for hope. This time however the barbarians are not entirely waiting at the frontiers; they have already been governing us for quite some time. And it is our lack of consciousness of this that constitutes part of our predicament. We are waiting not for Godot, but for another - doubtless very different - St Benedict.¹³

This, I would contend, is where the Catholic Church in England and Wales should be in order to maintain its integrity through these "dark ages that are already upon us."

As the legacy of St Benedict's *Rule for Monasteries* once laid the foundation for hope in the midst of darkness, so the words of a different Benedict will give hope and, we pray, a Third Spring of the faith to benefit all men and women of good will in our countries.



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Endnotes

¹ Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 1, Ch. 23

² *Ibid.*, Book 1, Chapter 30

³ Pope John Paul II, Address to the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, 11 October 1985

⁴ Pope Pius IX, *Universalis Ecclesiae*, 29 September 1850

⁵ J.H. Newman, "The Second Spring", from *Sermons Preached on Various Occasions*, (London: Longmans Green, 1908), 179

⁶ Pope Benedict XVI, Address to the Representatives of Civil Society, Westminster Hall, (17 September 2010)

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ G.K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (Radford, VA: Wilder Publications, 1908), 49

⁹ John 15:13

¹⁰ Pope Benedict XVI, Address to Civil Society given at Westminster Hall, 17 September 2010

¹¹ J.H. Newman, *op. cit.*, 182

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ A. Macintyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 1981), 263



The Faith in The Public Square:

Pope Benedict XVI in Westminster Hall

Bishop Mark Davies

Only the slightest acquaintance with the history of these islands would allow us to hear the echoes of history as Pope Benedict XVI left the official residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury and made the short journey to Westminster Hall amid the sunshine of a September afternoon. It was striking to see those same hierarchies seated side by side in Westminster Abbey waiting to see and hear the Pope. Screens had been helpfully installed throughout the Abbey to provide a live link-up with Westminster Hall. In that same Hall where St Thomas More had been condemned to death, the Pope would now stand today to address representatives of the nation.

The cameras swept across those waiting for the Holy Father: the familiar faces of Prime Ministers of past decades, the rows of parliamentarians and numerous representatives drawn from so many areas of British public life. As this assembly stood to the striking sound of a fanfare the Holy Father seemed to sense this historic moment. He would refer in his address to the memories and architecture around him and direct the assembly's gaze to the vast roof above and the carvings representing the angels reminding us "that God is constantly watching over us to guide and protect us. They summon us to acknowledge the vital contribution that religious belief has made and can continue to make to the life of the nation."

Westminster Hall has been the scene of so many great questions and controversies over the centuries. It was here Pope Benedict would address an urgent question for our own time: "the world of reason and the world of faith, the world of secular rationality and the world of religious belief need one another and should not be afraid to enter into profound and ongoing dialogue for the good of our civilisation." As the successor of Peter on this Apostolic journey he would raise a concern with both clarity and courtesy: "I cannot but voice my concern at the increasing marginalisation of religion, particularly of Christianity, that is taking place in some quarters, even in nations which place a great emphasis on tolerance."



Pope Benedict delivers his address to representatives of Civil Society in Westminster Hall (Photo: Mazur/catholicchurch.org.uk)

In this contemporary and pressing question the Holy Father saw a reflection of the dilemma faced by St Thomas More when brought to trial in Westminster Hall four centuries before. In that trial we see “the perennial question of the relationship between what is owed to Caesar and what is owed to God. The fundamental questions at stake in St Thomas More’s trial continue to present themselves in ever-changing terms as new social conditions emerge.” So, in the building where stands a parliament “which has had such a profound influence on the development of participative government among the nations...”, the Pope spoke of the real challenge for democracy being the danger that if “the moral principles underpinning the democratic process are themselves determined by nothing more solid than social consensus... the fragility of the process becomes all too evident....” As a gifted teacher, the Pope illustrated this point by comparing “the inadequacy of pragmatic, short-term solutions to complex social and ethical problems” in the recent global financial crisis with the British Parliament’s historic abolition of the slave trade. So the central question for post-modern democracies is “where the ethical foundations for political choices are to be found.” The Catholic tradition maintains that “the objective norms governing right action are accessible to reason....” As such, the role of religion in political debate is “not so much supplying these norms” as if they could not be known by unbelievers, still less making concrete policy proposals but helping to “purify and shed light upon the application of reason to the discovery of objective moral principles.” This corrective role of religion vis-à-vis reason is not always welcomed, the Pope noted, “but the misuse of reason... was what gave rise to the slave trade... and to many other evils, not least the totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century.”

The Pope, who suffered as a young man under such an ideology, sees, at the heart of this dialogue, the need to give witness to the necessity of faith which he powerfully described at the beginning of his Petrine ministry: “Only when we meet the living God in Christ do we know what life is. We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary” (24 April 2005). So the vital witness of “religious bodies – including those institutions linked to the Catholic Church – need to be free to act in accordance with their own principles and specific consciences based on faith and the official teaching of the Church.” For religion is not a problem for legislators to solve. Nor should we demand that our social agencies retreat into a grey and obscure secularity. Religion, the Holy Father insisted, is always “a vital contributor to the national conversation.” In the midst of the leaders of British public life and in the historic setting of Westminster Hall that is exactly what Pope Benedict himself became in those bright days of September. The warmth of the sustained applause which accompanied the Holy Father to the doors of Parliament indicated, in the Prime Minister’s words, that: “you have really challenged the whole country to sit up and think.” For this we will always be deeply indebted to Pope Benedict XVI and, as the Church in this land, we are now challenged to do the same.

“We are now challenged to do the same.”



Bishop Mark Davies was appointed co-adjutor Bishop of Shrewsbury in February 2010 and became the Bishop of Shrewsbury upon the retirement of Bishop Brian Noble on 1 October 2010.



Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman: A Priestly Life

Fr Gerard Skinner

Addressing the English and Welsh hierarchy on 1 February 2010, Pope Benedict XVI said: “Much attention has rightly been given to Newman’s scholarship and to his extensive writings, but it is important to remember that he saw himself first and foremost as a priest. In this *Annus Sacerdotalis*, I urge you to hold up to your priests his example of dedication to prayer, pastoral sensitivity towards the needs of his flock, and passion for preaching the Gospel. You yourselves should set a similar example.”¹ Before his election as Pope, Cardinal Ratzinger remarked that “The characteristic of the great doctor of the Church, it seems to me, is that he teaches not only through his thought and speech, but rather by his life, because within him thought and life are interpenetrated and defined. If this is so, then Newman belongs to the great teachers of the Church, because at the same time he touches our hearts and enlightens our thinking.”²

That Newman touched people’s hearts is clear from the reaction to his death in 1890. Over 20,000 people lined the streets on the day of Newman’s funeral. Numerous obituaries lauded the recently deceased Cardinal, the *Manchester Guardian* recording that “A leader is fallen in Israel, and with him passes away one of the greatest Englishmen, and beyond all question the greatest master of the English language, of our time.”³ Exulted as he was, the *Birmingham Daily Post* related something of Newman that points to why he was loved as well as admired. It recorded that “Men thought he was the servant of the unseen and eternal powers, and when they came near him it was easier for them to believe in God and in God’s nearness to mankind.”⁴

“Over 20,000 people lined the streets on the day of Newman’s funeral.”

Whilst, as Pope Benedict said, Newman is now remembered principally as an inspired thinker, he was also a man prayerfully and practically engaged in the various ministries with which he was entrusted throughout his long life. Indeed the Bishop of Birmingham, the city that Newman made his home, declared that when speaking to Newman “I found some little caution necessary,” because he was “always so prompt and ready to go even beyond the slightest intimation of my wish or desires.”⁵

Two and a half years after having decided to take Anglican orders, Newman’s Christian ministry began on 13 June 1824, when, at the age of 23, he was ordained as an Anglican deacon in Oxford. “I am thine, O Lord”⁶ he wrote, as he commenced life serving as a curate in the small Oxford parish of St Clement’s. He had pondered whether or not he was being called to be a missionary and had learned large tracts of the Bible off by heart. He remained in Oxford, however, and the following year he was ordained an Anglican priest, whilst continuing to work in the same parish. In his journal he recorded the words: “I have the responsibility of souls on me to the day of my death”⁷ and from the beginning the young Newman strove to guide and encourage those under his care with individual attention. For Newman it was clear that “the



The Archbishop of Birmingham, Bernard Longley, presents a gift of Newman's writings to Pope Benedict during the beatification ceremony at Cofton Park near Birmingham (Photo: Mazur/catholicchurch.org.uk)

object of Christianity is to save souls".⁸ He made a thorough visitation of the parish and carefully recorded his visits to the sick, "the most pleasant part of my duties", he wrote.⁹ Due to the great age of the Rector of St Clement's, it fell to Newman to organise all that was necessary for the rebuilding of the parish church whilst also continuing with and adding to his various academic responsibilities.

In 1826 Newman resigned from St Clement's to become a tutor at Oriel College, Oxford, a role which he considered to be primarily a pastoral calling in order "to have the care of souls."¹⁰ Two years later Newman was also appointed the Vicar of St Mary's, the University Church, and from this church's pulpit he delivered sermons to both university and parish that would make him renowned as a preacher. "Who could resist the charm of that spiritual apparition, gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St Mary's, rising into the pulpit, and then in the most entrancing of voices, breaking the silence with words and thoughts which were religious music – subtle, sweet, mournful?" recalled one listener.¹¹ These sermons were published, along with other writings that Newman and his colleagues wrote – the *Tracts for the Times* – and a new movement for reform arose among the Anglicans.

This movement sought to restore ancient practices and customs especially with regards to the liturgy and the sacraments. Already as an Anglican, Newman was drawn to the importance of frequent confession and the presence of Christ in the sacraments – as an Oratorian priest he would go to Confession three times a week. He wrote:

At times we seem to catch a glimpse of a Form which we shall hereafter see face to face. We approach, and in spite of the darkness, our hands, or our head, or our brow, or our lips become, as it were, sensible of the contact of something more than earthly. We know not where we are, but we have been bathing in water, and a voice tells us that it is blood. Or we have a mark signed upon our foreheads, and it spake of Calvary. Or we recollect a hand laid upon our heads,

and surely it had the print of nails in it, and resembled His who with a touch gave sight to the blind and raised the dead. Or we have been eating and drinking; and it was not a dream surely, that One fed us from His wounded side, and renewed our nature by the heavenly meat He gave. Thus in many ways He, who is Judge to us, prepares us to be judged,—He, who is to glorify us, prepares us to be glorified, that He may not take us unawares; but that when the voice of the Archangel sounds, and we are called to meet the Bridegroom, we may be ready.¹²

Thus, with his conversion to Catholicism at the hands of Blessed Dominic Barberi on 9 October 1845, Newman had already come to an understanding of the most important “holy arms and defences” that he would know as a Catholic priest. After a year of formation at the *Collegio di Propaganda*, Rome, Newman was ordained as a priest on 30 May 1847 in the Chapel of the Three Kings at *Propaganda*. A brief period of further formation followed during which Newman embraced the life of St Philip Neri’s Congregation of the Oratory, returning home to England to settle ultimately in the industrial city of Birmingham.

In preparing for ordination, both as an Anglican and as a Catholic, Newman subjected his motives and intentions to close scrutiny. His personal journal bears witness to this: the entries made before his Anglican ordinations and his retreat notes before Catholic ordination amply display how particular he was in

“Newman was constantly engaged in some matter or other of the life of the Birmingham Oratory parish.”

examining, as best he could, the state of his soul. There is another striking testimony to Newman’s interior life, all the more surprising as the testimony comes from one who was born some years after Newman’s death – Adrienne von Speyr, a renowned mystic and spiritual writer from Switzerland, who was received into the Catholic Church at the age of 38 on the feast of All Saints, 1940, by Fr Hans Urs von Balthasar. He became her spiritual director and confessor until her death in 1967. Over a period of many years, Adrienne claimed that she would see the saints and other devout people whilst they prayed. She would dictate what she saw to von Balthasar whilst remaining herself in a state of mystical prayer. In the published record of her “visions”, among the likes of St John the Apostle, St Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas, St Ignatius of Loyola, St Bernadette and St Edith Stein can be found an entry on John Henry Newman. Whether or not one believes that her accounts are the fruit of mystical prayer, what she has to say about Blessed John Henry Newman seems apt as von Speyr relates that Newman prayed:

So carefully, with a fastidious, good love, a love that has no patience for anything that is not entirely pure and righteous. He brings everything that is troubling him into prayer with him. At first, it is all unsorted; he sorts it out in prayer . . . And then he denied himself, threw himself into God’s hands, handed himself over, as if he were a monk. His asceticism, his idea of obedience to God, his idea of chastity, of poverty, of love, are absolutely worthy of a monk and, indeed, of a well formed monk. It is as if, at the time of his conversion, he had the whole life of a monk poured into him in a concentrated form. He possesses a rule that lies in God.¹³

Despite the demands placed upon him by attempting to establish a Catholic University in Dublin and being ever ready to defend the Catholic Faith against a number of poisonous attacks from unscrupulous but prominent individuals, Newman was constantly engaged in some matter or other of the life of the Birmingham Oratory parish. As his Bishop, William Ullathorne, noted:

Then arose under your direction the large convent of the Oratory, the church expanded by degrees into its present capaciousness, a numerous congregation has gathered and grown in it; poor schools and other pious institutions have grown up in connexion with it, and, moreover, equally at your expense and that of your brethren, and, as I have reason to know, at much inconvenience, the Oratory has relieved the other clergy of Birmingham all this while by constantly doing the duty in the poor-house and gaol of Birmingham... the mission and the poor school at Smethwick owe their existence to the Oratory. And all this while the founder and father of these religious works has added to his other solitudes the toil of frequent preaching, of attendance in the confessional, and other parochial duties.¹⁴

When Bishop Ullathorne asked that two of the Oratory fathers go to assist a parish in the midst of an outbreak of cholera, Newman volunteered to go. Less than a year before his death, the frail and elderly Cardinal Newman made his way through the snow-lain lanes to mediate on behalf of young Catholic women in an industrial dispute. Many other acts of kindness remained unseen until after his death – one Birmingham doctor's surgery, until it was destroyed in the Second World War, was reputed to have proudly displayed doctor's bills for the poor that Newman had paid. Above all, Newman understood that "the office of intercession... is ever characteristic of the Priestly Order"¹⁵ and so throughout his life he kept lists of all those he was praying for at any given time.

Towards the end of his life Cardinal Newman wrote to a friend saying that "A long life is like a long ladder, which sways and jumps dangerously under the feet of the man who mounts it, the higher he goes, and, if there is any one [who] needs prayers for perseverance, it is a man of 80."¹⁶ From very early in his life Newman was conscious of the demands of fidelity to his vocation and so warned one correspondent that "Another trial lies in the *distant future*. Masters in the spiritual life will tell you that the great difficulty in a high vocation is *perseverance*. This trial may not come for 20 years. I say this, not to deter you – but that you may in your prayers *now* pray for perseverance *then*." ¹⁷

Throughout his ministry Newman aspired to the example of the motto that he took for his coat of arms once he was created a Cardinal – "Heart speaks unto heart." In his own life he felt the hand of God guiding him and sought to encourage others in their lives' pilgrimages. Looking back on his first two years of ministry at St Clement's, Oxford, Newman declared words that fittingly sum up his whole life's work:

For this at least I can thank God that from the first I have looked upon myself solely as an instrument in His hand, and have looked up to Him for all the blessing and all the grace by which any good could be effected. For I have felt and feel now that it is only as He makes use of me that I can be useful – only as I put myself entirely into His hands that I can promote His glory, and that to

attempt even the slightest work in my own strength is an absurdity too great for words to express. He has been pleased to bring me into His ministry and to lay the weight of a high office upon me – and wherever His good providence may lead me I trust I shall never forget that I am dedicated and made over entirely to Him as the minister of Christ, and that the grand and blessed object of my life must be to promote the interest of His cause, and to serve His church, and contribute to the strength of His Kingdom, and make use of all my powers of mind and body, external and acquired, to bring sinners to Him, and to help in purifying a corrupt world – In this good work I willingly would be spent; and I pray God to give me grace to keep me from falling, and ever true to that vow by which I have bound myself to Him that I may at length finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God....¹⁸



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Endnotes

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- ³ J. Glancey, (ed), *The Press on Cardinal Newman*, 163
- ⁴ *Birmingham Daily Post*, 12 August 1890
- ⁵ *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, ed. Martin J. Svaglic, Oxford, 1967, 318
- ⁶ H. Tristram, (ed), *John Henry Newman: Autobiographical Writings*, London & New York, 1956, 200
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- ⁸ *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, Vol. IV, Oxford, 422
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- ¹² *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, Vol. V, London, 1869, 10-11
- ¹³ Adrienne von Speyr, *Book of All Saints*, San Francisco, 2008, 261-62
- ¹⁴ *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, ed. Martin J. Svaglic, Oxford, 1967, 317-18
- ¹⁵ *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, Vol. II, London, 1869, 312
- ¹⁶ *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, Vol. XXIX, Oxford, 340
- ¹⁷ *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, Vol. XXVIII, Oxford, 331
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The Letters of Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman in the College Archive

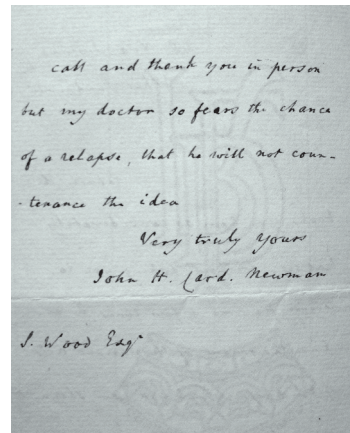
David Howell

The 19 letters of Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman in the archive of the VEC sketch several dramatic moments in his life and reveal his thoughts on important contemporary debates as well as his pragmatic sanctity and warmth of character. Since there is no single unifying theme to the letters, this article will treat them in chronological order and reflect briefly on the insights they offer us today.

The first 17 letters of the collection, written between 1846 and 1856, were addressed to Mgr Talbot, an Anglican convert received into the Church by Wiseman in 1842 and ordained at Oscott four years later. He had tried to join Newman's Oratory but was refused in 1847 and, after two years working at St George's, Southwark, was appointed as a Canon of St Peter's and Papal Chamberlain on account of Wiseman's intervention. From Rome he exercised considerable influence over the affairs of the English Church, acting on Wiseman's behalf.¹ His relationship with Newman, at first positive, deteriorated: his dithering in passing on evidence against Newman's accuser Achilli ruined the opportunity of an out-of-court settlement.² Gradually Talbot's faction became more and more opposed to Newman: he even claimed Newman had donated money to Garibaldi as evidence of his alleged disloyalty to the Pope.³ Nevertheless, the first of the letters was written on 5 February 1846, several years before their relationship soured. Newman, only five months after his conversion and that of his companions at Littlemore, was moving the quasi-monastic community to Old Oscott (later renamed Maryvale). He asked Talbot to assist him with various domestic arrangements, stipulating how to unpack his books (to be left "on the paper in which they are packed") and to remove the smell of paint from the newly-decorated rooms.⁴

But the second letter in the collection treats a much more significant subject: the needs of the English Church. Talbot wrote from Rome in 1850, asking Newman what issues he should bring to the attention of Blessed Pope Pius IX in his role as Papal Chamberlain. Newman replied on 11 August:

I suppose our most crying want is the want of theology. The Pope of the day sent over St Theodore, St Adrian etc. into England... if you ask me, *this* is one of the first wants, i.e. of those, in which the Holy See is able to do any thing. For myself, nothing would be a greater comfort to me than to know there was in England



One of the Newman letters close-up
(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

some theologian who had the express sanction of the Holy See, and whom I might consult on various difficult questions in *controversy*, not simply in *theology*. I could name several in England who are quite sufficient authority in dogmatic theology, but who cannot from the *nature* of the case be such in *polemical*, as not having the distinct *sanction* of the Holy See—e.g. in such questions as the inspiration of Scripture, how far may be conceded as to it;—again minute points about faith and reason; about the origin of ideas etc., etc. As you know, our controversies in England are running to these questions; and for myself, I am frequently perplexed what I may grant and what I must not—and others write to me for information, and I do not know what to say. No theological writer, as Suarez or De Lugo, will exactly do, of course—for controversy changes its shape and bearings, century by century. But perhaps I am wishing what the Holy See *never does*.

Newman's appeal appears apt not only for his age but also for ours, in which faith and reason are similarly seen as opposed. In fact, the very issue of scripture's inspiration, which Newman mentions, was referred for further research by Pope Benedict XVI in last year's Post-Synodal Exhortation *Verbum Domini* (Section 19). In addition, this letter reveals the combination of rigorous study and its pastoral application in Newman's ministry, as well as his humble admission that he is "frequently perplexed" by the questions he receives. Over a month later, on 24 September, Talbot replied: "Regarding Theology, I told the Pope, who takes a great interest in you and what you said, likewise about S. Theodore and S. Adrian. Alas! He said I have no Saints to send to England. And, really, as you know yourself there are few, if any, profound Theologians in Rome itself...."⁵

"Newman presents his strong belief in the importance of the laity's role in the Church's mission."

The next letter, written on 23 October 1850, Newman deemed so controversial that he asked Talbot, his addressee, to "put my letter behind the fire". The restoration of the English Hierarchy by Pius IX on 29 September 1850 was perceived as an act of "Papal Aggression" causing widespread resentment, exacerbated by the media and in particular by *The Times*. Wiseman, the new Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, was returning to England from Rome and Newman wrote to Talbot so he would warn the Cardinal that the "whole public is against him, and the press, I believe, without the exception of any Paper" and that perhaps he should "wait awhile in Florence, till the first ferment is over". Newman was especially worried about the possibility of a cynical legal attack on Cardinal Wiseman, based on fourteenth century laws against promoting papal rights over those of the English Crown: "Our enemies would like nothing so much as to get his Eminence into some technical difficulties, and then to ridicule us." The dearth of Catholic lawyers who were experts in English Constitutional matters made this threat a particular concern. Newman, however, also saw the future fruits of the present strife: "One great advantage of the erection of the Hierarchy and the coming of the Cardinal is that it *will force us* to have Canonists, theologians, men of business, and men of savoir faire."⁶ Here Newman presents his strong belief in the importance of the laity's role in the Church's mission, an idea he was to develop, as the best response to the hostile atmosphere facing the new hierarchy.

However, the crisis did not improve: Newman wrote again to Talbot on 3 December of the same year to tell him that the “excitement is greater not less—county meetings are spreading through England, and each parish sends up its petition or utters its protest.” Yet Newman kept his nerve amid the spreading unrest: “I don’t think they can do us any *harm*, but they will *insult* us, which we must bear, and, like mad animals, they will think they have triumphed over us, when we have the victory.” Cardinal Wiseman and the Bishop of Birmingham both spoke out boldly in defence of the hierarchy and Newman noted that:

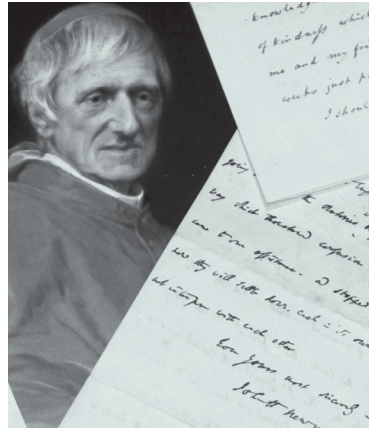
Both would go to prison rather than recede. The people of this great country are such (moral) cowards, that nothing is likely so to prevail with them as firmness. They will rush forward, if you retreat—but they will be cowed and fall back, if you calmly keep your ground. We must not budge an inch—nor will any one, I am sure.

Cardinal Wiseman’s return in the face of media opposition seems to find a contemporary parallel in Pope Benedict’s visit to the UK in September, and just as Newman predicted that to “calmly keep your ground” would win victory, so too did the present Holy Father manage to quell the media, refusing to “budge an inch”.⁷

Newman’s esteem for the tenacity of the newly-established bishops did not, however, kindle any desire in him to be a bishop himself. His next letter, sent to Talbot on 3 February 1851, set out his counter-arguments in response to rumours in *The Tablet* that he was to become Bishop of Nottingham; Newman hoped Talbot could “arrest proceedings” in Rome. Although declaring that he would obey the Holy Father in any decision, he feared the fledgling Oratory in Birmingham was “not consolidated enough to do without me” and, even more important, Newman saw his vocation as “to oppose the infidels of the day...My appointment to a See would take me off this opening field.” He pleaded that “For twenty years I have been working towards a philosophical polemic, suited to these times...A fearful battle is coming on and my place seems to lie in it. Make me a bishop, and I am involved in canon law, rubrics, and the working of a diocese, about which I know nothing.”⁸ As well as his disdain for ambition and his pastoral dedication, Newman’s sense of the importance of the intellectual apostolate is apparent in this letter. The “philosophical polemic” he mentions here was to develop into the famous *Grammar of Assent*, his attempt to show that acceptance of religious truth is rational, despite his culture’s growing rejection of such truth. The foresight in Newman’s creation of a philosophical foundation for faith is shown by Pope Benedict’s concern today about the “dictatorship of relativism”⁹ as the most urgent challenge for the Church today, and the Holy Father prizes Newman’s understanding of conscience as “man’s capacity to recognise truth [which] thereby imposes on him the obligation to set out along the path towards truth, to seek it and to submit to it wherever he finds it.”¹⁰

Newman’s perception of the necessity to justify Catholicism intellectually was combined with a desire to push back the growing secularism that relativist ideas had engendered. This meant the Church needed a well-catechised and active laity in every sphere of society, especially when she was under public attack in the wake of the restoration of the hierarchy. So, on 30 June 1851, Newman began a series of weekly “Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England” in which he emphasised the dignity and duties of the lay vocation in order to encourage all the baptised to evangelise their country. In the fifth lecture, Newman denounced the ex-Dominican Giacinto Achilli who had been exciting English audiences with

tales of his treatment at the hands of the Roman Inquisition after being charged for grave acts of immorality. Achilli responded by bringing a libel action against Newman, supported by the Evangelical Alliance. Newman needed primary evidence of Achilli's sexual crimes, which had taken place in Viterbo some twenty years earlier, in order to secure his defence and so he contacted Talbot on 1 September 1850 to prepare him to help gather documents. Amid the frantic requests for assistance, Newman also displayed a supernatural attitude, stating that as well as doing all within his power, his real reliance was "on our Blessed Lady and St Philip to carry me through. Indeed it is not my cause, but the cause of the Catholic Church. Achilli is going about like a false spirit, telling lies, and since it is forced upon us, we must put him down, and not suffer him to triumph."¹¹



The Newman letters from the archive surrounding the portrait of Newman on the Cardinals' corridor.

On account of Talbot's negligence in sending crucial evidence,¹² mere documents were not sufficient and Newman wrote on 10 December, without any trace of criticism, explaining his new tactic: "If I am to be acquitted, we must have the women [Achilli's victims] or some of them in court."¹³ Newman asked Talbot to help coordinate bringing the witnesses from Viterbo and on 17 December he wrote again to urge haste as the trial seemed set for February. Calamity had nearly struck one of Newman's helpers, Miss Giberne, who had "just escaped a boiler which burst in the steamer" at Marseilles during her mission to bring the women to England. Newman also feared malicious dangers: his opponents, who seemed to be "in league with secret societies in Italy", might hinder the safe passage of the witnesses, or even supply false witnesses to contradict Newman's.¹⁴ Three days later he wrote again appealing for evidence of priests whose morals Achilli had corrupted and again, six days after that letter, on Boxing Day, he requested more details of these priests and also mentioned the words of support he had received from Blessed Pius IX: "nothing can be wrong, if St Peter is for me." Achilli, fearing the strength of Newman's case, managed to postpone the trial by three months and so in his next letter to Talbot, on 9 February 1852, the accused expressed his frustration at what to do with the witnesses during the delay. Again his faith penetrated the ugly situation, but not without his characteristic realism:

Our Blessed Lady and St Philip have done so very much for me, that I suppose we may securely expect, if we do go on praying, that they will do the rest. But it is very difficult to go on praying and to get others to do so. I have had prayers and masses in great number said for me—how can I expect people will go on?

On 16 April 1852, Newman informed Talbot that the trial would be on 8 May and, in desperation, again requested aid in securing another witness, Rosa la Capretta from Viterbo.¹⁵ In fact the trial took place on 20 June, after another delay, and the judge, Lord Campbell, prompted a prejudiced jury to vote against Newman, a verdict deplored by several leading newspapers.¹⁶ As well as the emotional trauma of the protracted trial, Newman was forced to raise funds after the judgement to defray costs and, if he escaped prison, to prepare for a fine.

He wrote on 8 October asking what he owed Talbot for his assistance and describing his fund-raising plight: despite generosity from French and Irish Catholics, he confided his frustration that “(entre nous) England *on the whole* is backward. The poor have given excellently. Birmingham has done very well...but there is a great mass of persons in England, as you know, who do little at anytime.” Yet Newman also showed great appreciation for a less tangible gift: the blessing of the Holy Father whose “Benediction is ten thousand times a compensation for Lord Campbell, the Jury, or any thing of the kind, as I need not say.”¹⁷ To his relief, Newman did in fact receive a fine rather than a prison term when his chief counsel, Sir Alexander Cockburn, overwhelmed his opponents by unexpectedly demanding a new trial. The punishment was given at Westminster Hall, the place where St Thomas More and other Reformation martyrs were sentenced to death: the recent Beatus never shed his blood but this injustice was one of many public attacks he suffered throughout his life for witnessing to the faith.

“Again his faith penetrated the ugly situation, but not without his characteristic realism.”

Newman strove to encourage the laity not only by delivering the lecture series that had precipitated the Achilli crisis, but also by inspiring the creation of the Catholic University in Dublin. A year after being summoned to Ireland to begin the project, Newman asked Talbot on 5 June 1854 to inform the Pope that “the University is now begun”, and with typically natural piety put the enterprise “under the patronage of the Sedes Sapientiae—and that of St Thomas and St Catherine and other saints who are patrons of learning.”¹⁸ On 29 June, he wrote again asking advice on university matters and admitted the undertaking was “very arduous and anxious”.¹⁹ Indeed, Newman faced opposition: his desire that the university be primarily run by lay staff was resisted and he lacked support among the disunited Irish bishops.²⁰

In addition to problems in Dublin, a rift began to arise between the London and Birmingham Oratories in 1855. The London Oratory had sought a dispensation from Rome so they might give spiritual direction to nuns—without informing Newman, their founder and national superior. The Congregation of Propaganda assumed Newman had been involved in the application and granted it for both the English Oratories, which meant that Birmingham now also gained an apostolate that St Philip Neri had explicitly forbidden Oratories to undertake. Newman, deeply troubled by the affair, travelled to Rome to untangle the confusion and the resulting friction caused an open break with the London Oratory in 1856. He remarked to Talbot on 30 June of the same year that things “were going wrong, and the Oratorians were being mixed together, in a way that threatened confusion...I trust that now they will settle down, each in its own place, and not interfere with each other”.²¹ His last letter to Talbot in the VEC archive, written on 17 September 1856, is a polite discussion about “the confusion made between the two Oratories”.²² But in fact he knew Talbot had been subtly cooperating with the London Oratory to undermine him: Talbot helped London seek a formal division between the English Oratories but without their founder’s involvement, so they could accuse him of stubborn resentment despite being granted the separation he wanted.²³ Newman’s sufferings at the hands of fellow clerics, both in the Irish Church, at Rome and within his own congregation, were sorely painful, but, according to an eye-witness of his time in Ireland, he bore them with joy and “shed cheerfulness as a sunbeam shed light, even while many difficulties were pressing”.²⁴

The last two letters of the 19 also show glimpses of Newman’s holiness but amid more ordinary details of life. On 15 May 1879, Newman received his Cardinal’s hat and, despite illness and an

audience with Pope Leo XIII the following day, he found time to write a note of thanks, on 1 June, to accompany the books he was returning to his friend Shakespeare Wood, a sculptor and *The Times'* correspondent in Rome. The new Prince of the Church "would very much like to call and thank you in person but my doctor so fears the chance of a relapse, that he would not countenance the idea".²⁵ He showed similar courtesy and affection four years later when he wrote on 3 July to offer condolences for the death of Wood's daughter "the dear child...who, when I left Rome, saw me off. I have said Mass for her".²⁶ These small acts of charity recall Newman's own belief that "if we wish to be perfect, we have nothing more to do than to perform the ordinary duties of the day well".²⁷

These 19 letters unveil Newman's personal thoughts, piety and struggles with a transparency that only personal correspondence can achieve. As we know from his plans for an unfinished biography of his beloved St Philip Neri, he disapproved of idealising saints but preferred to show them as "men of flesh and blood, as real persons with unmistakable personalities".²⁸ The VEC is privileged to have these letters that present Newman's inner life and are now second class relics of England's latest Beatus.



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Endnotes

- ¹ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman* (Nelson, 1963) ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XI, 357 and M. E. Williams, *The Venerable English College: A History* (Gracewing, 2008), 141-142
- ² I. Ker, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford, 1988) 374
- ³ *Ibid.*, 560
- ⁴ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XI, 107 (NB Words in italics are those underlined by Newman in his letters)
- ⁵ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XIV, 34-36
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 110-111
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 156
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 206
- ⁹ Homily of Card. Joseph Ratzinger, Dean of the College of Cardinals, 18 April 2005 (www.vatican.va)
- ¹⁰ Address of Benedict XVI on the occasion of Christmas Greetings to the Roman Curia, 20 December 2010 (www.vatican.va)
- ¹¹ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XIV, 344
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 451 (NB This letter to Richard Stanton is not in the VEC archive)
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 459-60
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 475
- ¹⁵ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XV, 69
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, xiii
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 174
- ¹⁸ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XVI, 144-145
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 183
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, xiv
- ²¹ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XVII, 303
- ²² *Ibid.*, 381
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 380-381 (NB This letter to Ambrose St John is not in the VEC archive)
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, xvi (Anne Pollen, John Hungerford Pollen 1820-1902, London 1912, 263; *The Month* (Sept. 1906), 319)
- ²⁵ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XXIX, 136
- ²⁶ *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain, vol. XXX, 237-238
- ²⁷ J.H. Newman, *Meditations and Devotions*, "A Short Road to Perfection" (Longmans, 1954), 208
- ²⁸ Paul Türks, *Philip Neri: The Fire of Joy* (T&T Clark, 1995), ix



Discovering Mary: Her Life as steps in Faith and Hope

Fr Luke Buckles OP

In his Encyclical Letter, *Spe Salvi*, Pope Benedict writes of Mary:

Human life is a journey....like a voyage on the sea of history, often dark and stormy, a voyage in which we watch for the stars that indicate the route. The true stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives. They are lights of hope. Certainly, Jesus Christ is the true light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history. But to reach him we also need lights close by—people who shine with his light and so guide us along our way. Who more than Mary could be a star of hope for us? With her “yes” she opened the door of our world to God himself; she became the living Ark of the Covenant, in whom God took flesh, became one of us, and pitched his tent among us (cf. Jn 1:14).¹

There is a fundamental distinction between human happiness and optimism and also theological joy and hope which reflect a life of faith. Human optimism is a function of personality type and experience whereas hope is in God, his providence, and his omnipotent love. One could say that it is precisely when human optimism is exhausted that there is now room for true hope because it is in Christ.

“Human optimism is a function of personality type and experience whereas hope is in God, his Providence, and his omnipotent love.”

Human optimism depends on past experiences, the immediate circumstances and basic personality types. One can imagine a situation that “could be worse” but the very expression seems somehow to be a denial of the present difficulty, or extreme suffering. There is the suspicion that looking on the brighter side includes a neglect of the whole picture especially in its most challenging and difficult aspects. Christian hope does not deny the presence of evil, suffering, injustice, but says that these human realities are redeemed through the Cross of Christ. Every Mass offers the opportunity to say Christ has died (experienced profound injustice, betrayal, rejection, untold physical suffering) but also, and this is true hope, Christ has risen, and Christ will come again. Hope is not limited by human realities, but rather says these realities are ultimately within the mystery of divine providence.

When human happiness and optimism are exhausted, prayer leads the way to the perfection of happiness and optimism in the sure and certain joy and hope that is Christ. The prayer of the rosary with its succession of joyful, luminous, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries offers a joy and hope that the darkness of sin, suffering and death cannot overcome. Mary’s rosary is a prayer like a window letting in the true light of Christ’s Resurrection, radiantly shining love, and mercy, which overcomes all shadows of sin and death. Mary is for humanity a special window through which we see the mystery of Christ, as the poet Dante said, in *The Divine Comedy*:

Look now upon the face that is most like
The face of Christ, for only through its brightness
Can you prepare your vision to see Him.²

Mary is called the personification of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ. Let us consider the steps of hope in Mary's life.

We encounter Mary at the moment of the Annunciation. In this first step of hope, Mary wonders, "How can this be?" and her yes extends beyond the possibility of the immediate human circumstances. She was a virgin betrothed to Joseph. And her step was confirmed: by the power of the Holy Spirit she was with child and gave birth to Christ. "My soul magnifies the Lord, for the Almighty has done great things for me."

We know that her next step would take many years to complete for she knew in the most profound and intimate manner the miraculous birth of her Son, the Messiah, and yet the Holy Family lived life in a small village, Nazareth, and the Saviour of the world, the Eternal Word by whom all things were made, learned how to be a carpenter. "During the years of Jesus' hidden life in the house at Nazareth, Mary's life too is "hid with Christ in God" (cf. Col 3:3) through faith. For faith is contact with the mystery of God. Every day Mary is in constant contact with the ineffable mystery of God made man.³ "How can this be?" And yet when the news came to Mary of her son's teaching in the synagogue and working of miracles, the blind given sight, the lame walking, the deaf hearing, the loaves and fish multiplied to feed thousands, and even the dead being raised, she knew and could say again: My soul magnifies the Lord, for the Almighty has done great things for me.

"Mary had lost everything but the all-important reality of faith and hope in the promise of the Lord's Word."

Her steps in faith and hope would support her on the lonely and steep path to the hill of Calvary. Here all human happiness and optimism are extinguished as a small candle in the relentless wind of human suffering, betrayal, injustice and cruelty distilled in the imponderable suffering of the mother for her innocent son:

How completely she abandons herself to God without reserve, offering the full assent of the intellect and the will to him whose "ways are inscrutable" (cf. Rom 11:33)...Through this faith Mary is perfectly united with Christ in his self-emptying...At the foot of the Cross Mary shares through faith in the shocking mystery of this self-emptying. This is perhaps the deepest "kenosis" of faith in human history.⁴

And again, after the events of her Son's hidden and public life, events which she must have shared with acute sensitivity, it was on Calvary that Mary's suffering, beside the suffering of Jesus, reached an intensity which can hardly be imagined from a human point of view but which was mysterious and supernaturally fruitful for the redemption of the world. Her ascent of Calvary and her standing at the foot of the Cross together with the Beloved Disciple were a special sort of sharing in the redeeming death of her Son.⁵

"How can this be?" "How can this be?" "How can this be?" In the profound darkness when all human light of understanding, happiness and optimism can neither stand or be seen there remains the light of faith and hope. Mary had lost everything but the all-important reality of faith and hope in the promise of the Lord's Word.

The personal suffering and sharing in Our Lord's Cross at Calvary which Mary endured has been mystically experienced in the lives of the saints. We know of the special interior cross carried by Mother Teresa of Calcutta, as well as a series of visions and locutions which revealed her relationship to Mary and would define her future mission. These visions would be a source of a light of hope and faith amidst the profound suffering she encountered in the lives of the poorest of the poor as well as her own interior dark night.⁶

One sees in these visions the central and defining role Our Lady would play in every aspect of Mother Teresa's life and work. She is presented both as provider and as companion in Mother Teresa's work for the neediest, in "bringing them to Jesus."...It is through Our Lady's presence...that Mother Teresa will find the grace and courage to stand at the Calvaries of the world, knowing, with the same faith that sustained Our Lady in that darkest hour, that beneath this mystery was hidden the presence of the Son of God.⁷

Fr Collins (a Carmelite theologian) writes about this healing and transforming experience of human inadequacy and poverty encountering divine love through the passive nights:

For the greater his zeal, the more deeply will he experience the inadequacy of that zeal to reach its own perfection directly; and the more profoundly he experiences the poverty of his own resources, the more is he truly prepared to receive the help of God "passively", which alone can bring him to his true goal...this latter moment of spiritual growth—the knowledge of God's powerful and merciful love—must entirely suffuse the experience of self, [and] the experience of the sheer inadequacy of human resources to reach perfection issue...in the perception of that divine care which heals all.⁸

St John of the Cross describes the profound spiritual suffering that is concomitant with this new infusion of divine light by which a person experiences more clearly than ever his or her contingency, weakness, and need for divine grace. This night is a painful disturbance involving many fears, imaginings, and struggles. On account of their apprehension and sense of their miseries, they suspect that they are lost and their blessings are gone forever.⁹

In the bewilderment of the passive night of the senses or the spirit, the first questions asked are often "What have I done wrong, or what should I do?" St John of the Cross teaches that it is because of a sincere love of Christ that the person endures this spiritual desert of purification and transformation leading to a spiritual oasis, union with the Lord and life of charity. The passage from the way of purification to the way of illumination is the passive night of the senses, and the passage from the way of illumination to the way of union is the passive night of the spirit.¹⁰ Furthermore:

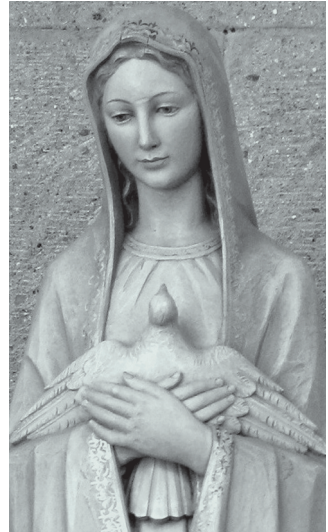


Photo: Matthew O'Gorman

The attitude necessary in the night of sense is to pay no attention to discursive meditation since this is not the time for it. They should allow the soul to remain in rest and quietude even though it may seem obvious to them that they are doing nothing and wasting time, and even though they think this disinclination to think about anything is due to their laxity. Through patience and perseverance in prayer, they will be doing a great deal without activity on their part.¹¹

The desolation in the experience of the passive night of the spirit, "...an inflow of God into the soul which purges it of its habitual ignorances and imperfections, natural and spiritual..."¹² as St John explains, is even more profound and painful. More than ever, during this spiritual transformation that is wrought by God alone, one can only abide in patience.

The contemplation of Mary standing in the darkness of Calvary with no sensible illumination except the light received by hope and faith is also a consolation and answer to the sincere question often asked by the Christian seeking to grow in faith, hope, and charity in times of the desolation of the passive nights: "What did I do wrong and what should I do now to regain the sensible consolation of the Lord's presence?" We believe that in view of the merits of her Son Mary was preserved from the stain of original sin and committed no personal sin. Mary participated in a unique way in the gift of our salvation. The sufferings of Mary are mysterious and supernaturally fruitful.¹³ Mary as the personification of the Church reminds the Christian pilgrim of the hidden vocation of uniting all of our sufferings with that of her crucified and Risen Son. As Pope John Paul II teaches, "those who share in the sufferings of Christ preserve in their own sufferings a very special particle of the infinite treasure of the world's Redemption, and can share this treasure with others."¹⁴

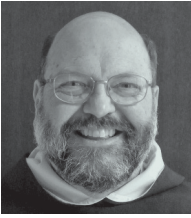
The faith and hope that sustained Our Lady through the profound darkness of Calvary was given its greatest, new and eternal light in the joy of the resurrection of her Son. In the new light of the first Easter, Mary said again her fiat. In the joy and living hope, now fulfilled, of seeing her Risen Son, she could sing more than ever "My soul magnifies the Lord, for the Almighty has done great things for me".

Mary's final step of faith and hope is her glorious Assumption into heaven.

...the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son's Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians.¹⁵

We see in Mary the fulfillment of Christian hope and joy which are given a personal, concrete meaning through the life of Christ, who overcomes through his Resurrection all darkness, sadness, suffering and despair and Mary shares in the first fruits of this life, shown in her Immaculate Conception and Assumption. In being the first to experience a share in the divine life, she is also able to assist in imparting the same gracious fruits to us as experienced in the lives of the saints and, most notably, St Catherine of Siena, with whose words we will conclude:

I was hoping you would keep the promise you had made me, and you gave me so much more, giving me what I did not even know how to ask for. So I really know in truth that the human heart does not so much know how to desire or ask for all that you give.¹⁶



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Endnotes

- ¹ Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, 49
- ² Dante, *Paradiso*, Canto XXXII, 85, 291
- ³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 2. 17
- ⁴ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 2. 18
- ⁵ John Paul II, *Salvifici doloris*, VI, 25
- ⁶ Two excellent sources regarding this aspect of the Marian spirituality of Mother Teresa have been written by the co-founder of the Missionaries of Charity Fathers, Fr Joseph Langford MC, *Mother Teresa's Secret Fire*, (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2008) and by the same author, *Mother Teresa: In the Shadow of Our Lady*, (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2007).
- ⁷ J. Langford, *Mother Teresa in the Shadow of Our Lady*, (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2007), 22-3
- ⁸ R. Collings O.C.D. *The Way of the Christian Mystics: John of the Cross*, Vol. 10, (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 86
- ⁹ St John of the Cross, *The Dark Night*, Bk II, 9, 7 in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh O.C.D., Otilio Rodriguez O.C.D. (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1991), 415
- ¹⁰ St John of the Cross, *The Dark Night*
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 381-382
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 401
- ¹³ John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, VI, 25
- ¹⁴ John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, VI, 27
- ¹⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 966
- ¹⁶ Catherine of Siena, *Catherine of Siena: The Dialogue in Classics of Western Spirituality*, trans. Suzanne Noffke OP, (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 274

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La Francigena: Choral Life at the Venerable

Edward Henley

Every Wednesday lunchtime, a group of us gets together and sings; and then we have a sandwich. Though not exhaustive, these are the basic principles at work behind our little choir, *La Francigena*, and, in the run up to the feast of the College martyrs, we wanted to share some of our delight in music-making and in the College's own rich history that inspires it. We wanted to make our own hymn of praise before the Martyrs' Picture and, at the same time, evoke something of the lives of those who came before us over 400 years ago.

The *via Francigena*, from which we derive our name, is the pilgrim route from Canterbury to Rome that dates back to the middle ages; its relationship to the English Hospice of St Thomas of Canterbury and later the College martyrs who made that journey to their deaths needs little explanation. For our first performance in November, the repertoire sought to provide a flavour of the religious musical life of the late 16th and early 17th centuries; the texts being deliberate references to the martyr tradition both in scripture and the liturgy. Tracing the *via Francigena* across the European continent, we sang works by G. Anerio, Lassus, des Prez and Byrd - more or less representative of the countries that lie between England and Rome.

We opened the recital with the College motto, a short plainsong Communion antiphon for the feast of St Ignatius of Loyola: *Ignem veni mittere in terram* (Lk 12:49). This text was a favourite of the saintly founder of the Society of Jesus and is telling of the interwoven history of the two institutions. In Durante Alberti's great altar piece (the Martyrs' Picture) of 1581, the motto, borne on a scroll held aloft by an angel, sums up 16th century zeal for the English Mission. Pieces for organ by Gabrieli and Gibbons gave some air and colour to the programme, and, played by Mgr Whitmore, gave it a little expertise as well.

In Lent we thought again to visit the 16th and 17th centuries with a compilation of polyphonic settings of the Lamentations of Jeremiah by Palestrina. The choral and plainsong recitation of the Lamentations was greatly enriched by two lute pieces, played very attractively by Olafur Arnason, serving to mark the liturgical progress through the days of Christ's death and burial (Jn 2:19). The College church was filled with a tangible sense of the longing of the human heart. I wondered if in the beauty and longing of music we can know something of the presence of the Spirit in the midst of grief and desolation.

Music seems to have a strange influence over man, one that brings with it both life and death. Ulysses had to have himself lashed to the mast of his ship, after all. On the other hand, there are those who recognise in music a power to form the heart not unlike that of the Holy Spirit. Whilst thanking our guests for coming, I suggested that perhaps next down from prayer, eyes closed, listening to music is the closest you might come to touching the lives of those of nearly half a millennium ago.

I, personally, attach great value to the experience of performing music, not simply listening to it. A tremendous broadening of horizons takes place; a new way of relating to fellow musicians, the audience; a new way of listening. It is easily as rewarding as learning and speaking a new language. But before I start to sound too precious, as students at the English College we



A lunchtime rehearsal in the Garden Room (Photo: Tom Cunnah)

are blessed with a remarkable musical patrimony. Many of the composers of the Renaissance and Reformation *Scuola Romana* served the seminaries, oratories and churches of the city, and the English College was no exception, counted, as it was, alongside the Jesuit-run German and Roman Colleges for its musical activity. The College's long-standing link with St Philip Neri alone brought contact with some of the finest organists and composers of the period. Palestrina himself, the Anerio brothers (Giovanni was College organist and Schola Master) and Tomas Luis de Victoria, who was ordained in the College church, were all employed by the Society of Jesus or the Papal Chapel of the day.

However, English music-making was also privileged to be at the heart of the *rediscovery* of this fascinating era of musical development. Richard Terry, as first Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, was commissioned in 1903 to play a pivotal role in documenting, publishing and performing lost or forgotten works of the period, both continental and English, over-shadowed as they were by rather theatrical efforts of the 18th and 19th centuries said to be "only fit for a singing saloon or a circus..." (*The Tablet*, 27 November 1875).

Being all men's voices, *La Francigena* has only really scratched the surface of this rich seam of English and Roman composition and performance *and* history, but we've enjoyed it immensely and we hope our audience has too.



Edward Henley was a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Westminster and in formation at the College from 2008 to 2011. He is now a novice at Ampleforth Abbey in Yorkshire; see p.85.



Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati: A Friend for Seminarians

Anthony Rosso

Get to know him! The life of this "normal" young man shows that we can be holy by living our friendships, studies, sports and service to the poor in a constant relationship with God – Blessed Pope John Paul II, 5 April 2001

The man Blessed Pope John Paul II was referring to is Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati (1901-1925). Pier Giorgio is increasingly being considered one of the great Catholics of the 20th century. Throughout the last eighty years, his popularity has increased due to his life of service and example of devout Christian living yet to many he remains unknown. In this article I will introduce Bl. Pier Giorgio, and share with you how I got to know him, his family, and how he has come to have an impact on several of the current students of the Venerable English College through their participation in the new Pier Giorgio Frassati Society in Rome.

A life of charity

Pier Giorgio's life may have been short, but he accomplished something in his 24 years that many people spend several decades trying to achieve: he developed a deep friendship with Christ and a passion to live a life true to the Gospel. Pier Giorgio was born in Turin in 1901 to Alfredo and Adelaide Frassati. Alfredo Frassati was the founder of the major Italian newspaper *La Stampa* and also the Italian ambassador to Germany. They were a respected and wealthy family. Pier Giorgio had only one sibling, a sister named Luciana, who was a year younger than him. The two of them were incredibly close throughout all of Pier Giorgio's life. Luciana lived to be 105 and she dedicated many of those years to promoting the cause of her brother.



Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

When Pier Giorgio was only a boy, people close to him were able to see in him the seeds of a commitment to Christian life and charity. He was always kind and charitable to those around him and even as a small child he was interested in his faith. These graces stayed with him as a young man and continued to grow throughout his adolescence. By the time Pier Giorgio was an adult, he had everything necessary for a bright and successful future. He was young, from a respectable family, athletic and very likeable. However, he did not believe that a lifestyle of wealth and success was what God was calling him to pursue. He was willing to put it aside so that he could pay attention to the voice of Christ, which was calling him to a mission of charity.

Numerous people in Turin were amazed at how dedicated Pier Giorgio was to his mission. People would often see him in the streets visiting the needy and giving them money, clothing

and anything else they needed. He would often give away all of the money he had with him so that he could not afford to take a bus home. His faith meant everything to him. He once said, "To live without faith, without a heritage to defend, without battling constantly for Truth, that is not living but 'getting along'; we must never just 'get along.'"

"He would often give away all of the money he had with him so that he could not afford to take a bus home."

Pier Giorgio felt that what he was doing was not enough. For the creation of a better world, social reforms were also needed. He became a very enthusiastic and active member of the newly-founded Italian People's Party, which promoted the Catholic Church's social teachings based on the principles of the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. For him, politics was an essential part of his love of the poor and a means to reduce social injustices.

No matter how sick a person was, he would always visit them. He believed that he must follow what Christ was calling him to do, regardless of the circumstances but in late June of 1925, Pier Giorgio contracted polio from one of his visits to the sick and poor. After a week of immense suffering, he passed away at his family home in Pollone on 4 July 1925. When Pier Giorgio was alive, his family was aware that he helped the poor, although they never knew the extent of his work. They finally realised the scope of his charitable acts only when thousands of people from around Turin lined up through the streets on the day of his funeral to pay their respects to the man who had given them so much hope.

It would not be long before people all over the world would get to know who Pier Giorgio Frassati was. Among them was a young Karol Wojtyla. The future pontiff and Pier Giorgio had several things in common. Both were completely devoted to Christ and also shared a deep love for sports and the outdoors. When Pope John Paul II went to visit Pier Giorgio's tomb in Pollone in 1989, he told the crowd, "I, too, in my youth, felt the beneficial influence of his example and, as a student, I was impressed by the force of his Christian testimony." Pope John Paul II beatified Pier Giorgio at St Peter's Basilica the year following his visit to Pollone on 20 May 1990.

Making new friends

I discovered who Pier Giorgio was during one of the community Masses at the College during the first week of Lent in 2010. During the Mass, Fr Rector gave a homily about Pier Giorgio and the extensive work he did for the poor people in Turin. I remember being instantly impressed by his deeds and I wanted to learn more about him. A few days later, Sr Mary Joseph (our beloved College librarian) laid out the books for Lenten spiritual reading on the table in the library. One of the books on display was a collection of personal letters Pier Giorgio wrote to various people throughout his life. I took the book, sat in the library at my usual spot by the window, and read the whole thing in about two hours.

I told Sr Mary Joseph how much I enjoyed the book and asked her if we had any other books on him. Unfortunately, we did not have anything else at the time, but Sister quickly took care of that. Right away she contacted the Pier Giorgio Frassati Association in Rome and went over to its main office to collect some information on Pier Giorgio. When she arrived at the office, she was greeted by a lovely lady named Wanda. Sr Mary Joseph did not know she was actually speaking to Pier Giorgio's niece, Wanda Gawronska.

A few days later I went into the library and was delighted to find a new display on Pier Giorgio. The first thing I saw on the table was a poster of him that Wanda had given to Sr Mary Joseph. It had a quote on it from Pope John Paul II that said, "Get to know him!" I decided to

take up the invitation and read the new book on display, *Man of the Beatitudes*, which was written by Luciana Frassati Gawronska, Pier Giorgio's sister. As I was reading it, I was amazed at how this incredible young man was able to be so devout in his faith and yet able to live in the same modern world young people like me were living in. He loved to ski, hike, have fun with his friends, and he even smoked a pipe. He is an incredible example of how a young person can live in this world and still be a faithful follower of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“He loved to ski, hike, have fun with his friends, and he even smoked a pipe.”

Sr Mary Joseph told Wanda about me and about how much I enjoyed the books I had read on Pier Giorgio. Wanda asked Sister to send me over to meet her. I was ecstatic about meeting a relative of this incredible man. She immediately welcomed me as if she had known me for years, and she was very eager to hear about how I got to know Pier Giorgio. Within a few minutes of our conversation, I began to realise that incredible people must run in her family. Wanda is a remarkable woman in her own right. She runs the association and dedicates nearly all of her time to it. It is wonderful that she has brought so many people closer to Christ through teaching them the example of her uncle. Wanda has taken on the task her mother had worked on constantly until her death in 2007. I found out from Wanda that Pier Giorgio's sister was very familiar with the Via di Monserrato. Until a few months before her death, she lived just a minute or two away from the College. She attended Mass at the church of Santa Lucia, which is a church I think most of the English College students are familiar with. It did not take long for Wanda and I to become friends. I have been blessed to be able to meet her siblings as well. All of them are wonderful people.

A new project

One day at lunch, Wanda told me about her wish to start a Pier Giorgio Frassati (PGF) Society in Rome. PGF Societies have been established in many places across the United States, but there was nothing in the Eternal City. These various societies are groups of young people who gather together in fellowship to pray and discuss their Catholic faith with one another, having the example of Pier Giorgio as their guide. With the help of a few of her friends spreading the word around Rome, Wanda was able to realise her wish. On 13 November 2010, we had our first gathering together at Wanda's home. It was a beautiful sunny day and there were 16 people present for the first gathering, including a few of us from the English College. Since then, we have met on a monthly basis and the attendance keeps growing. The meetings generally begin with a holy hour at a nearby church, followed by delicious *suppli* and pizza at Wanda's home. After we eat and chat, a priest will give a short reflection to kick off a conversation and we end the evening in prayer. One of our student priests at the College, Fr Jonathan Brandon from the diocese of Shrewsbury, led the discussion at one of our recent meetings. Blessed Pier Giorgio has become quite popular among the students of the VEC, with more and more wanting to get involved with the new PGF society. There are many ideas for future gatherings and I am looking forward to seeing it continue to grow. It has been a wonderful way to meet people from all over the world here in Rome, coming together through their Catholic faith.



Anthony Rosso and Wanda Gawronska

Get to know him!

Ever since M took up John Paul II's invitation to get to know Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, my spiritual life has been enriched and my conviction in following my vocation has grown. Wanda has said to me on a few occasions that she thinks it is wonderful that priests and seminarians are so inspired by Pier Giorgio, especially since he was not a priest, nor did he ever study to become one. I told her that I believe the reason is that Pier Giorgio is an example of a modern man living a true Christian life. He is a shining example for priests and lay people alike. From Popes to Karl Rahner, Catholics in all vocations, men and women, have been inspired by the example of Pier Giorgio Frassati. I pray that the readers of this article will also accept John Paul II's invitation to get to know Pier Giorgio, and that like several of us at the College, they will be just as blessed by developing a friendship with him.

For more information on Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, visit: www.piergiorgiofrassati.org or contact the Pier Giorgio Frassati Association at info@piergiorgiofrassati.org.



Anthony Rosso is a fourth year seminarian for the Diocese of Leeds studying Theology at the Gregorian University.

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The Sad Case of the Disappearing Apostle

Mgr Mark Langham

Even in a city such as Rome where the ghosts of history crowd about the visitor, there are certain places where the dividing walls of time wear especially thin. The Mamertine prison, a site as old as the city itself, is one spot where the imagination has few problems in fleshing out scant historical facts, and attuning itself to the momentous proceedings of past centuries.

As Rome's prison for over six centuries, the *Mamertinum* tells the history of the city as it were from the underbelly. Rather than the triumphs and glorious achievements, it reflects the fears of Rome, its near-disasters, its incubi; a long story indeed. The Mamertine is one of the few places in the city that bears uninterrupted witness

both to secular and religious history; the list of its inmates is a roll-call of the enemies of the Roman state and of the martyrs of the early Church. The tourist, scarcely without realising it, is also a pilgrim.

Founded back when Rome still had kings – its ancient name, the Tullianum, was once held to honour 6th century king Servius Tullius – the prison is now thought to have been originally a cistern. The archaic Latin word *tullus*, meaning a spring, more accurately reveals its true origin. With the draining of the marshy land that later became the Forum, the cistern became a convenient holding cell for the enemies of Rome. Handily situated on the edge of the Via Sacra just under the Capitoline Hill, its location permitted the wretched captives to be paraded through the city in the victorious general's triumph, and then to be dispatched as the *Imperator* continued on up to the Temple of Jupiter to dedicate his spoils. The Mamertine was never a prison in our sense; Romans had no sense of imprisonment as a punishment. It was more a "death row", a place where those facing imminent execution were confined – at least the more eminent criminals (common felons were herded into a quarry on the other side of the Capitoline Hill). The author Sallust describes the Mamertine as a horrible dungeon, "repulsive and terrible on account of neglect, dampness, and smell."¹ The most dramatic account of it comes from the pen of the second century orator, Calpurnius Flaccus, who invites us to visualise the prison:



The Mammertine prison (Photo: Mgr Mark Langham)

"The tourist, scarcely without realising it, is also a pilgrim."

...constructed of huge stone blocks, receiving through the narrow chinks just a faint semblance of light. Culprits cast into this prison look forward to their execution, and whenever the creaking of the iron-bound door stirs those helpless, sprawled-out people, they are terrified; viewing someone else's punishment, they learn of their own soon to come. Whip lashes crack, food is delivered in the foul hands of the executioner. The hard-hearted doorkeeper sits by, a man whose eyes would remain dry even when his mother weeps.²

The catalogue of prisoners who thus languished, temporarily, in the Mamertine includes some of the most important and feared enemies ever to menace Republican and Imperial Rome. One of the first was Gaius Pontius, King of the tribe of Samnites and thus an early Italian victim of Roman expansion, who had defeated the entire Roman army at the Battle of the Caudine Forks in 321 BC. He had earned particular opprobrium for humiliating, rather than executing, his prisoners, by forcing them to walk beneath a yoke of spears – an act which served to “defeat Roman courage and hardihood”.³ Another feared enemy of Rome, King Jugurtha – a north African successor to Hannibal – was starved to death at the Mamertine in 104 BC. His pathetic end is recorded by Plutarch: “When he had been thrust down naked into the dungeon pit, in utter bewilderment and with a grin on his lips he said: ‘*Hercules! How cold this Roman bath is!*’”⁴ Vercingetorix, legendary leader of the Gauls and leader of a rebellion against Julius Caesar, was strangled there in 46 BC having graced Caesar’s triumph through the city. Another probable prisoner was the British king Caratacus, who led a revolt against the Emperor Claudius, but was spared execution after a spectacularly eloquent speech to the Senate.⁵ Political prisoners from within Roman public life itself were also disposed of here. Some of the destitute nobles who had taken up cause with the rebel Lucius Sergius Catilina were confined and executed there in 62 BC. Cicero himself, self-appointed rescuer of Rome from the “Catiline conspiracy”, ordered the execution of the plotters at the Mamertine and announced their deaths to the crowd outside with the terse statement “*Vixerunt*” – they have lived (i.e. they are now dead).⁶ The Emperor Tiberius’ once-proud favourite Sejanus met his wretched end here in 31 AD, while the Jewish rebel Simon ben Giora was decapitated in the prison in 70 AD, after having been displayed in the triumph of the Emperor Titus – an event vividly depicted on the Arch of Titus in the Forum.

Here, too, early Christians were held before their execution. A venerable panel inside the entrance has been used in recent times to list these martyrs: Pope Sixtus II, St Lawrence, the deacons Felicissimus, Marcellus, Cicinnus, Syrianus and Agapetus, the priests Eusebius and Abondius, Largus, Smeraldus and Crescentius “*e altra folla sacra dei ignoti*”. By far the most important tradition, though, identifies the Mamertine as the prison where both St Peter and St Paul were held before their executions, and it is as such that it has been venerated for centuries. Until recently, visitors were shown a column to which, by tradition, both Apostles were shackled. Inevitably, neither of them languished there ineffectually. According to the legend, they converted and baptized their gaolers, Processus and Martinianus, and 47 other Roman soldiers, using water that had miraculously sprung up in the floor.

Serious historians were long skeptical that either of the venerable Apostles spent time there. The earliest reference to their incarceration comes only in the 8th century *Acts of Sts Processus and Martinianus*. A century later, the pilgrim guidebook known as *The Einsiedeln Itinerary* mentions “the fountain of St Peter, where also is his prison.” By the 15th century the scholar Maffeo Veggio speaks of it as “*S. Petrus in carcere*” – St Peter in prison.⁷ Along the way, the Tullianum acquired the name “Mamertinum”, whether a corruption of “Martinianus” or of

“Mars Ultor”, whose temple was in the vicinity, is unclear. The ever-inventive Golden Legend, in the 13th century, gives *Mamertinus* as the name of the custodian of Peter and Paul. From the prison, continues the legend, the apostles were freed by their newly-converted gaolers. Peter fled the city, but, on the Via Appia, encountered the Lord and returned to be crucified.⁸ However unattested these legends, they were compelling enough to draw numerous saints to visit the prison, including St Benedict, St Ignatius Loyola, St Philip Neri and St Thérèse.

As so often in Rome, however, it appears that there may be a solid basis of fact to the shifting sands of legend. Excavations undertaken at the prison in 2010 have revealed evidence that the cult of St Peter existed much earlier than previously assumed. A stone basin for holy water, bearing religious graffiti, indicates that the Prince of the Apostles may have been revered on this site as early as the 4th century. Such an early tradition strengthens the case for the Mamertine as the authentic site of Peter's imprisonment. Certainly, the *Opera Romana Pellegrinaggi*, which administers the site, has made much of this news. Where interested pilgrims used to be able to step into the atmospheric dungeon freely and privately to offer a brief prayer, they must now pay to join a tour in the course of which they are treated to a lengthy (and frankly ludicrous) multi-media presentation of Peter's incarceration. But of St Paul there is no word. He has quietly been dropped, and, apart from some faded and ancient inscriptions, there is no longer any record of his sojourn in the Mamertine, legendary or otherwise.

In a city where legend and history attend so closely upon each other, this seems a harsh and somewhat arbitrary separation. It is perhaps worth revisiting what is known about Paul's imprisonment in Rome. From the internal evidence of his letters and the Acts of the Apostles, it is evident that Paul was twice imprisoned. The first time, around 60 AD, was more of a “house arrest”, and he had some freedom to exercise his ministry.⁹ Tradition locates his prison on the site of the current church of S. Paolo alla Regola, not far from the English College. While there Paul wrote his letters to the Colossians and Ephesians. He asks the Colossians to remember him in prison¹⁰ and describes himself to the Ephesians as “a prisoner of Christ Jesus.”¹¹ Not having been brought to trial in the required period of two years, Paul was evidently released – the letter to Philemon, where he again calls himself “a prisoner of Christ Jesus”, implies his impending liberation.¹² Following his release and further travels, which are not documented, Paul was re-arrested, imprisoned and executed, probably around 67 AD in the reign of the Emperor Nero. It is likely that 2 Timothy was written from prison where Paul was preparing to die.¹³ Paul speaks of Onesiphorus who “often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains, but when he arrived in Rome searched for me diligently and found me”¹⁴ – which at the very least does not rule out a dungeon such as the Mamertine.

“The Prince of the Apostles may have been revered on this site as early as the 4th century.”

For Paul's last days and execution, history yields to fable. The medieval Golden Legend imaginatively insists that Peter and Paul were executed at the same hour on the same day, and that on the way to their passion they met and encouraged each other.¹⁵ Once Paul was dead, curiously enough, things seem to become clearer. In June 2009, Pope Benedict announced the results of carbon dating on bones found beneath the altar of the Basilica of S. Paolo fuori le Mura “confirming the unanimous and uncontested tradition that they are the mortal remains of the Apostle Paul.”

It may well be that medieval Christians ascribed the Mamertine to the chief apostles on grounds of status; the most important prison in Rome would alone be worthy of Peter and Paul. This is not wholly disingenuous. The believer needs somewhere to follow the sacred itinerary, in Rome just as

much as in the Holy Land or Asia Minor. Part of the reason for pilgrimage is to furnish the religious imagination with appropriate images, sites and memories to nourish faith, enabling a personal journey to be undertaken that mirrors the physical itinerary. The Mamertine needs back some of its ghosts, that great throng of early Christian martyrs who may or may not have been incarcerated there but whose suffering the dungeon brings to life. Above all, St Paul needs to stand here alongside St



Inside the prison building (Photo: Mgr Mark Langham)

Peter, as he has done for so many centuries.¹⁶ The ancient prison of Rome can offer a powerful image of the two chief apostles sharing the burdens of faith, supporting each other, and in their suffering laying the foundation of the Church that can never be confined, but that bursts forth from its shackles.

The Mamertine prison lies behind the Campidoglio, beneath the Church of S. Giuseppe dei Falegnami. It is open daily 9am - 7pm. Entry €10.



Mgr Mark Langham is a priest of Westminster Archdiocese working at the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity in Rome. He was a student at the Venerable English College from 1985 to 1990.

Endnotes

¹ Sallust, *The Conspiracy of Catiline*, LV

² Calpurnius Flaccus, *Declamationes* IV

³ Livy, *History of Rome*, Book 9.6

⁴ Plutarch, *Life of Marius* (XII 3-4)

⁵ Following his liberation, Caratacus was free to walk round Rome, and was said to have exclaimed "Why, when you have so many and such wonderful things here, did you ever covet our poor mud huts?" Dio Cassius, *Roman History*: Book LXI, 33.3c.

⁶ This was a formulaic expression. To this day, Italians avoid the number 17 since its Latin form XVII can be re-arranged into the word VIXI "I have lived" i.e. "I am dead."

⁷ The chains preserved at the basilica of S. Pietro in Vincoli relate to his imprisonment in Jerusalem; cf Acts 12:4

⁸ Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, 89

⁹ "On arrival in Rome, Paul was allowed to stay in lodgings of his own with the soldier who guarded him." Acts 28:16. "[Paul] welcomed all who came to visit him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ with complete freedom and without hindrance from anyone." Acts 28:31

¹⁰ "Remember the chains I wear." Col 4:18

¹¹ Ephesians 3:1, 4:1

¹² Philemon 1, Philemon 9, Philemon 22

¹³ "I am experiencing fresh hardships here now." 2 Tim 1:12 cf 2 Tim 1:8, 2 Tim 4:6-8

¹⁴ 2 Tim 1:17

¹⁵ "Then Paul said to Peter: 'Peace be with you, foundation stone of the churches and shepherd of the lambs of Christ!' Peter said to Paul: 'Go in peace, preacher of virtuous living, mediator and leader of the salvation of the righteous!'" Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, 89.

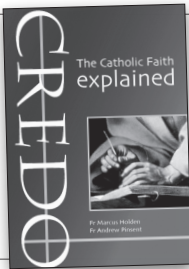
¹⁶ Among the discoveries during the 2010 excavations at the Mamertine were 12th century frescoes, one showing Sts Peter and Paul standing side by side.



Nova et Vetera

Tom Cunnah

Old Romans have, this year as ever, produced a number of new publications on a variety of subjects. The following are the new titles available for purchase which have been brought to our attention in the past year. Information has been compiled from publishers and promotional material.

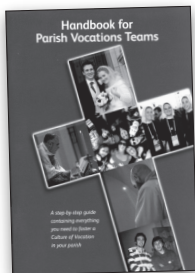
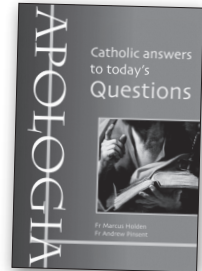


Credo – The Catholic Faith Explained (Catholic Truth Society, London), by Fr Marcus Holden and Fr Andrew Pinsent

This new, illustrated, pocket catechism offers a succinct and reliable introduction to the fullness of the Catholic faith, drawing on Scripture and Tradition, and fully cross-referenced to the Catechism and Compendium.

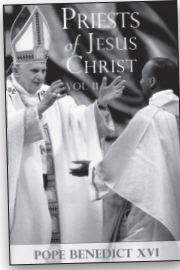
Apologia – Catholic Answers to Today's Questions (Catholic Truth Society, London), by Fr Marcus Holden and Fr Andrew Pinsent

The rise of secularism and the new atheists have posed many difficult questions about religion in general and the Catholic Faith in particular. This booklet, attractively illustrated in colour, responds positively to questions about the existence of God, science and faith, the Bible, the Church, the sacraments and morality, setting out a reasoned defence of the truths of Faith that lead us all to greater happiness.



Handbook for Parish Vocations Teams (Archdiocese of Southwark, London) by Fr Stephen Langridge

This handbook of ideas and practical suggestions is divided into a number of sections each of which forms a self-contained unit. The first section offers an explanation of the concept of vocation within the Church, aiming to constitute the theological basis of what follows. The second section explains briefly what a Parish Vocations Team is and how it can help promote vocations. The next section offers some practical advice to priests and lay people on how to go about establishing such a team and includes suggestions on how to choose team members and how to get the most out of a meeting. Section four contains details of some suggested vocations projects that might be easy to implement in your parish. The handbook was endorsed by the then Secretary of the Congregation for the Clergy, Archbishop (now Cardinal) Piacenza.



Priests of Jesus Christ - Reflections on the Priesthood (Vol. II)
(St Paul's Publishing, London) by Pope Benedict XVI (extracted writings and speeches selected by Fr Gerard Skinner)

Volume I of this book covered writings and discourses of Pope Benedict between 2005 and 2008. The majority of texts in this second volume are taken from the various writings, speeches, prayers and homilies that Pope Benedict gave during the Year for Priests. These texts will, no doubt, inspire priests, seminarians, those discerning God's calling and others who appreciate the gift of priesthood in the mystery of Jesus Christ and give thanks to God for the same.



Tom Cunnah is a third year seminarian for the diocese of Shrewsbury studying Theology at the Gregorian University.

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Schola Notes 2010-11

Mgr Philip Whitmore

As the year began, we were all basking in the joy of the Holy Father's September visit to the United Kingdom, when contrary to so many predictions, the British people turned out in huge numbers to express their great affection, respect and esteem for Pope Benedict. The beatification of Cardinal Newman was a source of particular pride to British Catholics, and it provided a springboard for the meditation that we prepared for the College's own annual Advent celebration, based this year on the theme "O loving wisdom of our God". As usual, we had to start work straight away on the *Schola* items. With 24 voices we were not short of members, even though a number of students found themselves reluctantly obliged to withdraw from the *Schola* this semester, as their lecture timetables clashed with the regular Monday evening rehearsal.

Fittingly, in view of the wisdom theme, chosen by John Poland, the Advent Meditation began with the O antiphon *O sapientia*, sung from the corridor to the plainsong tune before we processed into the College Church. The wonderful "Christmas" reading from the Book of Wisdom, which speaks of the all-powerful Word leaping down from the heavens when peaceful silence lay over all, provided a cue for Jacob Handl's *De Caelo Veniet*, sung by four solo voices from the tribune – Edward Henley, Michael Patey, Benjamin Theobald and Stefan Kaminski. The prophecy of Isaiah brought in a penitential dimension to the atmosphere of messianic expectation, and in response to this, the full *Schola* sang Thomas Tomkins' three-part anthem "Have mercy upon me O Lord", a setting of the first verse of the "*Miserere*".

A beautiful organ interlude provided by Edward Henley – Böellmann's *Prière a Notre Dame* – led seamlessly into the New Testament for the Annunciation reading, followed by Charles Wood's reflective carol arrangement, "Hail, Blessed Virgin Mary". Then came a Sermon on the Incarnation penned by Blessed John Henry Newman, pondering the great mystery of Our Lord's coming among us "in low estate". Yet "this little babe, so few days old" - to quote St Robert Southwell - "is come to rifle Satan's fold". Benjamin Britten's setting of Southwell's warlike poem from "A Ceremony of Carols" formed a vigorous climax to the *Schola's* contribution to the evening, accompanied by Edward Henley on the chamber organ. The drama of the incarnation was placed in an eschatological context by the final reading, from chapter 15 of St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. This text was taken up directly in a stirring rendition of the baritone aria "The Trumpet Shall Sound" from Handel's *Messiah*. Michael Patey's trumpet solos have often graced these occasions, as have Edward Henley's organ accompaniments, but for those who had not previously heard Matthew O'Gorman's resounding solo voice, this was truly a moment of revelation. The joyful message was brought home to us with great conviction: through Christ's saving work, "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed".

Fr Rector reflected with us on Blessed John Henry's much-loved devotional poem, "The Dream of Gerontius", in this way drawing out the underlying theme of the evening: Divine Wisdom, having become incarnate in Christ, has opened up for us a path towards the destiny that awaits us – nothing less than the vision of God. "The Dream of Gerontius" contains what is probably Blessed John Henry's best-known text, the hymn "Praise to the Holiest in the Height", from which, of course, the reference to "the loving wisdom of our God" is taken. These words, that Newman placed on the

lips of the choirs of angels, formed the conclusion of the 2010 Advent Meditation: something of a landmark, as it is the tenth since the series began in 2001.

Everyone in the *Schola* had worked very hard in preparation for this event, and so a lighter workload was called for during the brief period in January prior to the exams. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity gave us our one opportunity to sing for the liturgy during those weeks: at the community Mass on Wednesday 19 January we sang Casciolini's *Panis Angelicus*.

At the start of the new semester, we ventured into four parts for the first time this season, returning after almost six years to Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Laudate Dominum*, a setting of the shortest psalm, no. 117, complete with doxology. Of the numerous occasions during the year when we were to perform this piece, the first was at the Beda, during the annual gathering on *Laetare* Sunday (3 April) of students and staff from the Scots, Irish, English and Beda Colleges for a mid-Lent "oasis". This made for a full church, and a happy decision was made to send the *Schola* up into the choir loft to sing after Communion. It was a bit of a squeeze getting 20+ up there, but we managed it, and it gave us an excellent vantage point from which to fill the church with joyful singing.

A second "away match" followed a couple of days later when we sang Tomkins' "Have mercy upon me, O Lord" at the Station Mass in San Lorenzo in Damaso. The students are used to early starts for morning Mass, but not normally for *Schola* practice. 6.30 am is probably the earliest rehearsal time it would ever be wise to attempt! Having mastered this anthem now, with one performance during the Advent Meditation and another during Lent, we were ready to record it: our repertoire of new recordings is gradually growing, with a view to producing a new CD at some point in the not too distant future. Watch this space!

By now, Good Friday was almost upon us, and our team of soloists was ready for action. There being no deacons in College, Michael Patey took the part of Evangelist, Sandy MacDonald sang *Synagoga*, and Fr Guy de Gaynesford was *Christus*. The extra rehearsal time at our disposal, on account of the exceptionally late date, meant that we were ready well ahead of time. It's not often we can say that! John Carlisle and Matthew O'Gorman joined the "crowd" for the first time, singing the Byrd *Voces Turbarum* alongside Michael Doody, Edward Henley, David Howell and Stefan Kaminski. As always, the fine singing and evident devotion made for a truly moving rendition of the Passion, a high-point of our Triduum Liturgy.



The Schola sings at the Advent Meditation in the College Church

On Easter morning we were up bright and early once again, in good time to take our places on the steps of St Peter's, joined by one or two friends from the Beda and the Scots College as well as some of our visitors. This year, despite somewhat gloomy weather forecasts, we were thankfully spared the drenching we received last year. It had been made clear that contributions from us and from the German College choir during the Mass itself were "not foreseen", so we sang all the music we had prepared – the two Easter hymns, "Jesus Christ is risen today" and "This joyful Eastertide", along with Charpentier's *Laudate Dominum* – prior to the Holy Father's arrival. Far from proving a disappointment, this actually made it easier for us to enter into the celebration prayerfully, and we were amply rewarded with an exchange of greetings as the Holy Father passed by, very close to us, on his way into the Basilica after the end of Mass. All in all it was a wonderful close to our Triduum celebrations.

Founders' Day followed within days of the start of term, so it made sense to sing the Charpentier *Laudate* once again. A further opportunity came on the feast of St Philip Neri at the Chiesa Nuova, where we also sang Costantini's "*Confitemini Domino*" as an Offertory motet. There were one or two surprises during this Mass, almost as if St Philip were playing practical jokes on us. The celebrant, Cardinal Brandmüller, took a great interest in the music and seemed disappointed that we were not planning to sing the Creed. Prudence suggested that we agree to his proposal, made in the sacristy, that we sing Credo III, even though we had neither the music nor the text. An attempt was made to get a message to this effect to Edward Henley in the organ loft, but it proved impossible, since access to that extraordinarily remote region was blocked by this stage. In the event, we acquitted ourselves most creditably, professing our faith with great conviction in Latin without the aid of text, music, or accompaniment.

Yet there was more to come. Perhaps we should have anticipated the problem when we were unable to communicate with the organist before Mass. It turned out that he was locked in! This was rather serious, since the Charpentier motet has some tenor solos which he was due to sing. We had planned that he would come down to the church to receive Communion, sing with us, and then make his way back upstairs for the recessional hymn *O Filippo, amabil Santo*. We had waited for some time, when Edward re-appeared in the organ loft, signalling to us that he was unable to get down! Fortunately, Michael Patey stepped into the breach with a few seconds' notice and provided a fine rendition of the solos, swiftly followed by a trumpet descant during the hymn to St Philip. Thank goodness for the versatility and presence of mind of English College *Schola* members!

One further performance of Charpentier's *Laudate* is planned before the summer break – at the diaconate ordination, which at the time of writing is almost upon us. Once again – for the last time, sadly, in view of his imminent departure for the cloister – Edward Henley is due to play the organ at Mass in addition to singing the solos in the motet. We earnestly hope he will not find himself locked into a tower at the critical moment, since Michael Patey can hardly be expected to stand in as tenor soloist this time, it being his own diaconal ordination!

Our thanks, and assurances of a remembrance in our prayers, go to the two new deacons, Michael Doody and Michael Patey, to our leavers Edward Henley and Sandy MacDonald, and to all our singers for another year of hard work and much enjoyment, in which we have proclaimed on numerous occasions a message that would make a fitting motto for the *Schola*: *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes, laudate eum omnes populi!*

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





Sports Report 2010-11

Elliott Wright

One can only describe this year's sporting achievements as phenomenal compared with past years'. Football dominated the sports arena with the exception of a few tennis matches and the usual bowling, table tennis, volleyball and swimming at the Villeggiatura. A new addition to the villa, the croquet set, also proved to be popular although I am not sure that it should really feature in the *sports* report.

We can be particularly grateful to Fr John Paul Leonard who along with Fr Mark Harold represented a return of the old guard and formed a formidable back line, taking us back to the early 1990s when the VEC were a footballing force to be reckoned with. Fr Mark in particular deserves mention for having represented the VEC on the football pitch in four consecutive decades.

The football season began with then sportsman Marc Homsey organising a 5 a-side game against the Beda, the VEC triumphing 3-2 when Kasper Baadsgaard grabbed the winner. The next fixture was a tournament at the Irish College where two VEC teams competed against one Irish side. The format was once again 5 a-side and, despite some good football on our part, the Irish managed to narrowly beat the first VEC side and dominate the second.

In February the sportsman changed and the new regime commenced with a 7 a-side game against the North American College with the VEC coming out as 6-2 victors after playing some pretty attractive football along the way, with the pick of the goals coming from Fr Schembri finishing sharply after a fine team move. We then moved on to play three Brazilian Augustinian sides in a 5 a-side tournament, drawing the first game 1-1, winning the second game 2-1 and losing the final game 4-1. It was a very positive performance from the VEC as we played some brilliant football and lost only due to difficult goalkeeping conditions and some contentious refereeing decisions.

Having begun to play well in the 5 a-side arena it was decided we would step up a gear and played in two 9 a-side games against the Scots College. The first game was played in typical Cup conditions with the rain lashing down. The VEC started the game poorly and went in at the break 2-0 down, only for star man Tony McGrath to grab a quick hatrick after the restart to send us into the lead. However, we were struggling to come to terms with the new format and found ourselves 4-3 down in the final minute before Peter Stoddart popped up with a wonder goal to end the game at 4-4. A couple of weeks later we decided to take on the Scots again this time resulting in a 4-2 victory for the VEC as we saw significant improvement with two early goals from McGrath and two late goals from Wright.

A week later we headed up to the Irish again and triumphed 10-8 in a goal-fest which saw some good attacking play from the VEC as well as a lot of heart from Fr Mark remaining in goal even though he suffered a blow to the head. This was all good preparation for the season's main event: the revival of the 7 a-side tournament hosted by the Scots College now named after Blessed John Paul II.



Participants in the North v. South football match at Palazzola

The tournament started with a 1-1 draw against the Emmanuel School of Mission, with the VEC totally dominating until some last minute hesitancy in defence allowed the School to equalise. The next game saw us come up against the Scots with whom we drew 0-0 after once again dominating, with Wright missing an open goal relatively late on. In the third fixture, the VEC played tournament favourites the "Irish" - their team basically being an international dream team featuring Romanians and Peruvians. The VEC put in a sterling defensive performance and scored on the break only to see the Irish equalise in the last minute with a thirty yard wonder strike. This left us requiring only a draw in our final group game to qualify for the final and we strolled to a nonchalant 1-0 victory over the Lay College with an early McGrath goal settling the nerves. We encountered the Irish in the final and using the same strategy we lasted until the last kick of the game when an "Irish" Hungarian netted to level our earlier goal on the break and so it went to penalties in which the Irish triumphed 4-3, with their Iraqi goalkeeper making two excellent saves.

Finally we come to the Villeggiatura and the annual North vs South game saw the North victors 8-5 with McGrath grabbing a hatrick and two Leeds men Doody and Wright grabbing braces. The game saw some dreadful refereeing after the North were denied two clear penalties, leading us to conclude Fr JP's football ability does not carry across to refereeing.

So all in all, a very successful year on the football field; hopefully next year we will be able to move up to the 11 a-side game and compete well in the Clericus Cup.



Elliott Wright is a second year seminarian for the Diocese of Leeds studying Philosophy at the Angelicum.



The Year in Pictures

David Howell



The New Men (and Michael Doody) *(Photo: Fr Rector)*



La Francigena in full swing (see p.42) *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



Barbara and Fr Phil at Martyrs' Day *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



Sean Crawley prepares for children's liturgy...or rather Martyrs' Day! *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



Kasper, Edward, Stephen, Fr Guy and Michael Patey at the Advent Meditation (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)



"The trumpet shall sound!" sings Matthew O'Gorman. (see p.54) (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)



The incomparable compère Michael Doody leads the post-meditation fun. (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

The Year in Pictures



The Angelic Doctor à la Derek Hyett, Marcus Walker and Kasper Baadsgaard (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)



Michael Patey entertains the prospect of a night at the cinema (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)



Assembled Advent Entertainers (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

The Year in Pictures



The new candidates with Fr Rector, Cardinal Cormac and Archbishop Marini (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)



Above: A stop-start night at the bar with Sean Crawley, Peter Stoddart and Sandy MacDonald (Photo: Tony Rosso)

Left: Emperor Marcus Walker celebrates his birthday. (Photo: Anthony Rosso)

The Year in Pictures



Fr Rector, Mgr Keith Newton, Ordinary of the Ordinariate and Bishop Alan Hopes (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)



The Seven Basilica walkers march on. (Photo: Anthony Rosso)



Founders' Day smiles all round (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)



Lord Nicholas and Lady Paola Windsor with Fr Rector (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)



Founders' Day Mass begins. *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



Zoomarine proves an enjoyable destination for the College gita, even if John Carlisle gets soaked! *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



DJ Colin Mason wows Vatican Radio during the Social Communications pastoral class. *(Photo: Matthew O'Gorman)*



Fr Rector celebrates Mass on his silver jubilee of priesthood. *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



New Lectors Jan Hansen, David Howell, Colin Mason, John Carlisle, Kasper Baadsgaard and Tom Cunnah with Bishop John Hine and Fr Rector *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



New Acolytes Sean Crawley, Tony Rosso and Matthew O'Gorman with Bishop John Hine and Fr Rector *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



New Deacons Michael Doody and Michael Patey with Bishop Peter Doyle and Fr Rector *(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)*



College Diary 2010-11

Tom Cunnah

In quiet moments at Palazzola, you can often find a student relaxing in the library with the diary of a *Venerabile* edition from years past. The oldest English institution outside England, the College is a creature of tradition and perhaps the instinct to look to the past helps us to understand the present.

In that light, my hope is that this year's diary will capture for you, the reader in 2011, and for readers in the future, a sense of what *this year* has been in the College and what the current community of staff and students *this year* have experienced. It has been a year that began not in Rome but in the UK with the Papal Visit, a year characterised by a happy spirit among a growing community and it has been a year that ends with the promise of the number of College students rising to its highest figure for over ten years. I have sought to record the College's year in a spirit of charity and humour and I trust this year's diary will be received in the same manner.

September 2010

25 September - It's a bumper crop of new men arriving at the VEC this year as we welcome one new member of staff, Fr John Paul Leonard (a former student of the College and a priest of the Diocese of Middlesbrough) as Pastoral Tutor (with Fr Mark Harold becoming Vice-Rector following Fr Andrew Headon's departure) and thirteen men new to the college namely Fr Guy de Gaynesford (Plymouth) beginning a licence in Dogmatic Theology, Fr Nicholas Doublet (Archdiocese of Malta) beginning a licence in Church history (both at the Gregorian) and those in formation for the priesthood being Colin Mason (Clifton), John Carlisle (Leeds),

Derek Hyett (Westminster), Jan Hansen and Kasper Baadsgaard (both Copenhagen, transferring from the Collegio Romano into Second Philosophy), Olafur Arnason (Reykjavik), Peter Stoddart (Hexham & Newcastle), Stephen O'Brien (Arundel & Brighton), Elliott Wright (Leeds), David Doran (Birmingham, transferring from Oscott into third theology). It's a joyful welcome back to Joseph Gee (Salford) returning to formation after several years and beginning a licence in Spirituality and to Steven Leightell after his six months out teaching in a school in the north east of England. We are also joined by Marcus Walker, an Anglican exchange student from Cuddesdon Hall, Oxford.

26 September - Michael Doody returns to College a week before the rest of the house to begin his licence in Moral Theology at the Alphonsianum. He is the first English College student to study there for many years. A possible reason for this state of affairs becomes almost immediately clear as the forty minute walk to the university leaves Doody with a strained Achilles tendon after just a week and a half.

October 2010

4 October - Fr Rector celebrates the first Mass of the year with the whole House present and welcomes students formally to the new year. Fr Rector picks out Anglican exchange student Marcus Walker for a particular welcome saying that, with Marcus present, our communion is more complete. Sadly, though the sentiment is recognised by all, it becomes immediately clear that Marcus is not in fact present in the Church as he has gone to attend a service at the Anglican Centre.



Retreat leaders at Palazzola with Mgr Phil Carrol
(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

5 October - The College community leaves for Palazzola for the annual retreat, following the candidates-to-be who left the previous day. This year's retreat is individually led by a stellar cast of retreat directors consisting of Fr Gerry Whelan SJ, Sr Daniela (Helpers of the Holy Souls), Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, Fr John Eagers of the Scots College and our very own Mgr Phil Carroll. A spell of beautiful early autumn weather and meticulously observed silence makes for a deeply prayerful atmosphere and a spiritual kick-start to the year for all the members of the House.

10 October - At the closing Mass of the retreat, Fr Rector announces the sad news of the proposed closure of Ushaw College. Many of the men in the House have friends or relatives at Ushaw and the news, coupled with the added significance of many of the House having been hosted by the Ushaw community before travelling to the Mass of Beatification of Bl. John Henry Cardinal Newman, makes a deep impression on the College community. We are joined for Sunday lunch by the Archbishop of Liverpool, Patrick Kelly, arriving in Rome for the Middle East Synod, who, at Fr Rector's invitation, gives a heartfelt speech explaining the northern Bishops' sadness at the decision to propose the closure. Senior student, Rev. Liam Bradley,

later writes to the Ushaw Community on behalf of the VEC students to express our support and sympathies.

12 October - The room ballot takes place and, with so many new men to the house (thirteen as against a house of seventeen who finished the previous year) the better "real estate", particularly any room with an *en suite* bathroom, is valued at a premium leading to much speculation, plotting and intrigue as to who will end up with which room. However, cold water is, literally, poured onto the heated competition when the hot water system fails twice in the following week leaving even those with their own bathroom with an ice-cold morning shower.

Later that evening, the College is the venue for a reception for those attending the Middle East Synod. Dignitaries such as the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Bishop of Iran, who minister in what are surely some of the most politically complex and sensitive areas of the world for Christianity, are present and hear an excellent speech given by Archbishop Kelly on the need for peace and harmony in the Middle East and amongst the Christian churches there. An impromptu meeting is then held in the Third Library to discuss efforts towards reconciliation.

13 October - The new men are proving to be a social bunch with rumours of partying on the Monserra'. The first Wednesday bar night of the new academic year gives weight to this reputation as the bar sets a new record for takings, beating the previous record by a factor of two.

14 October - As he waits for the lift, immediately following morning Mass, and contemplating the still-unfamiliar early start, Matthew O'Gorman is surprised to be confronted with Rev. Liam Bradley, in alb, stole and cope, bearing the Blessed Sacrament and on his way to reserve Our Lord in the Nuns' chapel on the second floor. Genuflecting, Matt expects the Deacon to pass by him in the

corridor only to find that Liam, and Our Lord, intend to take the lift. Matt, who is going to the third floor, genuflects again as Liam and Our Lord leave the lift at the second floor and receives impromptu Benediction surely giving a new meaning to the phrase “a real spiritual lift”.

15 October - Students of the Angelicum arrive for their afternoon classes to find that the place has been taken over by movie stars. Robert de Niro and Monica Bellucci are among the cast filming the Italian-language film *Manuale d'Amore 3* with the *Angelicum* playing a Roman hospital.

17 October - Archbishop Patrick Kelly is the principal celebrant at Mass in the College Church and preaches on the Christian meaning of hope. The College community makes a mini-pilgrimage to the Shrine of Divino Amore.

24 October - The sad news is announced that Mr Jim Harold, Fr Mark's elderly father and a regular visitor to the College in the previous year, when he was accompanied by several of Fr Mark's siblings, has died during the night. Fr Mark flies home and the College holds the Harold family and all Jim's friends and relatives in our prayers throughout the following week and beyond. Mr Harold is laid to rest on Friday 28 October, his son officiating, and with the College community represented by Fr John Paul.



“Oui, je parle!” Two French speaking Rectors share a joke. (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

Standing in for Fr Mark, who was to have been the principal celebrant at Mass, Fr Tony Milner gives an excellent homily, at short notice, on the Gospel of the day: the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). *Ad libbing* a little whilst explaining that the tax collectors in Christ's time were despised for lining their own pockets, Fr Tony comments that this is a practice that “doesn't happen today, or at least, *not usually*”. Inevitably, a visiting pilgrim turns out to be an employee of HM Revenue and Customs and is not too impressed by Fr Tony's equivocation.

The influx of new men has strengthened the College's football squad and many of the strongest players are among the oldest men in the House. Whilst deftly holding off a would-be tackler, Fr John Paul Leonard (in his 40s and a former trainee professional for Middlesbrough) makes the almost off-hand suggestion that the very able but momentarily static Joe Gee (age 41) might want to make a run into space behind the defender: “Joe, are you gettin' old?”

Tony Rosso, still trying to settle into his new surroundings at the Gregorian, or “Castle Greyskull” as he has termed it, makes an impressive debut as cantor for solemn vespers. As the publications make their way out to Rome from England it transpires that Tony's chin, though not the rest of his face, has played a starring role on the front covers of both *The Tablet* (along with full face shots of Marc Homsey and Tom Cunnah) and *The Catholic Herald* as both these feature photographs from the Papal visit. Later the same photograph is used on the CTS publication of His Holiness' “Letter to seminarians”.

27 October - The *Venerabile*, 2010 edition, is launched after community Mass. Editor Sandy MacDonald gives a fine speech introducing the issue, which is dedicated to Mgr Bryan Chestle, who is recovering well in England from a period of chronic ill health.

As ever, the diary proves to be the most anticipated and controversial part of the publication. In the midst of well-humoured disquiet over some of the revelations, your correspondent takes note as Michael Patey, now revealed as last year's diarist, confesses that he had doubts about the propriety of some of the diary entries but only on "the day before printing", giving your correspondent cause to wonder whether it might be prudent to arrange asylum at the Scots College when his own time comes.

28 October - Over a relaxed evening meal in the refectory, the outcome of the room ballot draw crops up in some light-hearted banter: Sean Crawley makes the mock accusation that Edward Henley had stolen a room that was rightfully his. Edward responds "God gave me that room": the terraced rooms are clearly the Promised Land. The day marks Tony McGrath's birthday and Fr Guy de Gaynesford, surprised to find a woodlouse in his *dolce*, makes a point of offering the added protein to the birthday boy as a considerate present.

November 2010

2 November - The new men depart for Palazzola for their well deserved R&R week in the company of Mgr Phil and Fr John Paul. The week is one of spiritual reflections and visits to sites such as Monte Cassino, Fossanova and the shrine of St Maria Goretti in Nettuno. The New Men's status as "a social bunch" is confirmed beyond doubt as the Palazzola bar runs out of gin during the course of the week.

6 November - An intrepid group of seven students sets out early to climb Monte Gennaro. Led by Tony McGrath and Stefan Kaminski, who explain that they've "done the route twice before...but got lost both times", the group find themselves on the wrong path (Edward Henley, an hour into the "climb", asking "Does it seem odd to anyone else that we're going *downwards* when we're supposed to be *climbing* this mountain?"), fighting

through undergrowth and suffering a rock fall trying to get back to their planned route.

7 November - The College welcomes the newly-appointed Magnificent Rector of the Gregorian, Fr François-Xavier Dumortier SJ and, friend of and frequent visitor to the College, Fr Norman Tanner SJ. Fr Rector welcomes all the guests present, emphasising the close and fondly held historical links between the College and the Gregorian and announces that the two institutions are considering whether it will be possible for the College to present to the Gregorian the copy of the Martyrs' Picture which hung in the *Salotto* during the refurbishment of the College Church. In the afternoon, the College football team defeats the much improved Beda team 3-2 in a hard fought, physical encounter. New men David Doran (with a brace) and Kasper Baadsgaard get the goals.

8 November - Much hilarity ensues at evening prayer as the unfortunate cantor, Steven Leightell, gets tongue tied over the first antiphon for the feast of All Welsh Saints. Meaning to read "I saw a vast *throng*", Steven stumbles over the final word such that the 'r' is not heard....

9 November - The annual visit to the College vault at Campo Verano takes place.

12 November - Sandy MacDonald reaches the semi-finals of the NAC's tennis tournament: an achievement overshadowed only by his self-restraint in not lauding his victory over his North American cousins.

13 November - Tony Rosso, Jan Hansen and Fr John Paul Leonard attend the inaugural meeting of the Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati Association.

14 November - The College community attend Mass on Remembrance Sunday at San Silvestro with the community of the Beda.

15 November - Staff and students of the College attend the funeral of Fr Professor



Priest jubilarians with the Cardinal and Fr Mark Harold
(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

Donath Hercsik, Dean of Theology at the Gregorian and a popular professor who had visited the College several times at the invitation of students. Fr Hercsik had suffered from leukaemia, which was diagnosed only last year, and died at the age of just 45. The College community mourns his loss, remembering him and his family in our prayers throughout the week.

17 November - The College welcomes this year's visiting ruby-, golden- and diamond-jubilarians during their week-long stay at Palazzola at the College's invitation, to mark their jubilee year. This event, repeating the previous year's great success, is a real source of inspiration and encouragement in giving the student body the chance to spend time with men who have lived their priesthood for longer than most of us have been alive. Mgr David Cousins of Birmingham diocese is the principal celebrant at the community Mass. Looking back on his years of priesthood, he preaches on the priest's relationship with Christ as the unchanging anchor point amidst a changing world. Canon Bernard Scholes of Westminster diocese gives a fine after-dinner speech in reply to Fr Rector's welcome, recognising the momentous milestones being celebrated.

19 November - The New Man Show is a great success, reflecting the happy and vibrant atmosphere that has characterised the house

since the start of the term. Along with Fr Rector's official welcome to the new first years, we are treated to an after-dinner address from Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor who invites the community to consider Newman's phrase "having an eye to all members of the company" as the mark of a good seminarian and of a good parish priest. Among a number of great performances at the after-dinner show, Marcus Walker, Derek Hyett and Kasper Baadsgaard, dressed as Dominican friars and singing about St Thomas Aquinas to the tune of Bananarama's "Venus", complete with dance moves, brings the house down. It's an evening for letting one's hair down and, at lunch the following day, an apparently *over-tired* Olafur Arnason is overheard praising the restorative properties of a glass of coca-cola after a heavy night: "The first sip: it's like drinking life!"

22 November - A symposium begins at the Gregorian on the centrality of God in the thought of Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman. The Symposium is organised and sponsored by the English Bishops' Conference and the College has the pleasure of accommodating several of the speakers as guests including Archbishop Vincent Nichols, Oratorian Fr Keith Beaumont and Anglican Bishop of Europe Geoffrey Rowell. We are also host for two nights to Bishop Mark Davies, less than two months since he was installed as Bishop of Shrewsbury, who is in Rome on Vatican business.

23 November - Over lunch, Ben Theobald explains the initially rather surprising pattern of the week for students in third theology: "It's sex on Monday, drugs on Tuesday, prison on Wednesday and confession on Friday." He is, of course, discussing his timetable beginning with Special Moral Theology. That evening, the first in-house debate of the year takes place with the imposingly impressive duo of Colin Mason and Marcus Walker seeking to propose the gospel-inspired motion: "This house sides with the elder son and not with the prodigal

son" while Stephen O'Brien and David Doran mount stout and ultimately successful opposition.

25 November - John Poland organises and chairs the first meeting of the newly set up Justice & Peace group.

27 & 28 November - The House is led in an Advent recollection by Abbot Timothy Wright, monk of Ampleforth and the spiritual director of the Beda. Drawing on the recently released, post-synodal document *Verbum Domini*, Abbot Timothy gives three conferences forcefully encouraging the students to deepen their relationship with Holy Scripture and making some provocative theological points which give the house plenty of ammunition for the start of Advent.

29 November - Edward Henley directs the *La Francigena* group consisting of Michael Patey (Medius), Phil Andrews, Fr Guy de Gaynesford (Tenors), Matthew O'Gorman and Stefan Kaminski (Basses) accompanied by Mgr Philip Whitmore on the organ as, standing beneath the Martyrs' Picture, they prepare us for Martyrs' Day with a recital of late-sixteenth century choral music from composers representing the countries on the route of the *Via Francigena*.

December 2010

1 December - As the UK is engulfed with heavy snow, the College celebrates Martyrs' Day welcoming guests including Archbishop Marini, H. E. Mr Edward Chaplin (Her Majesty's Ambassador to Italy) along with the Rectors of the Gregorian and the Angelicum (together with several members of staff from both Universities) the Rectors of the Irish, Scots and North American Colleges and numerous Old Romans and friends of the College. Fr Rector gives a moving homily, focussing on the life and martyrdom of St Robert Southwell, and a warmly received and encouraging after-dinner speech. There is rousing and sustained applause for Her

Majesty's Ambassador to the Holy See, H. E. Mr Francis Campbell, when Fr Rector mentions his contribution to the success of the Papal Visit to the UK. Mr Campbell has been present with us for many College events over the past few years and all wish him well in his challenging new post as Assistant High Commissioner to Pakistan. Despite all these guests, the House spares a thought for Mgr Bryan Chestle still recuperating in England, who is not at the College for Martyrs' Day for the first time since 1969.

8 December - Holly Cam sees a bunch of students and staff members at Palazzola enjoying a very pleasant twenty-four hours of collecting festive greenery, relaxing in front of the real fire in the library and tucking into the excellent food including Julie Piacentini's famous meat and potato pie.

11 & 12 December - Weeks of rehearsals, line learning, production and directorial work come to fruition as the College hosts more than 100 guests over two nights for the annual Advent Meditation. The *Schola* performs admirably in the first half with a particularly good performance on the second night. Special mention goes to John Poland, who organised the evening with Mgr Philip Whitmore (who once again works marvels with a *Schola* consisting of men with varied levels of musical talent), organist Edward Henley, last minute first-tenor draftee Michael Patey and Matthew O'Gorman for a simply stunning solo performance of Handel's "*The trumpet shall sound*". Picking up St Paul's line "and we shall be changed", Fr Rector takes the opportunity to preach on Newman's *Dream of Gerontius* reflecting on the moment of death and the soul's purification in purgatory. The variety performance of the second half is a great success with one guest commenting that he'd "not laughed so much during the whole of his time in Rome" (though the guest in question is a student at the Beda and so perhaps has

little to laugh about generally). Marc Homsey's hard work as co-producer and star of two scenes pays off admirably and director Michael Patey shows fine leadership qualities giving rousing pre-performance speeches to the cast and crew based around the "acronym-onious" words "FRIDGES", "DOGZ" and "CWAP".

16 December - David Howell makes his print-media debut with a double page article in *L'Osservatore Romano* about the College's celebration of Martyrs' Day.

18 December - Michael Coughlan, Edward Henley, Stefan Kaminski, Steven Leightell, Sandy MacDonald and Ben Theobald are made candidates for ordination to Holy Orders at a Mass celebrated by Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor and attended by guests including Archbishop Marini and recent Old Roman, Fr Phil Harris. After a happy celebratory dinner and speeches from the Cardinal and Fr Rector congratulating the new candidates and wishing the house a good Christmas break, Archbishop Marini gives a speech in which he gives the standard of the

College's liturgy his vote of confidence saying that nothing need be changed, but encouraging all present to constantly seek to ever-deepen our participation in the Mass. Senior student, Deacon Liam Bradley spends his last day in College after nearly six and a half years as he has decided, with his Bishop, to suspend his licence studies in favour of spending a year or more in parish ministry in the UK. Liam's happy, able and encouraging presence will be much missed.

19 December - The severe winter weather in the UK causes chaos for those travelling home leaving the majority of the House and the guests of the candidates stuck at the College for two or more days. Particular sympathies go to Marc Homsey, who was unable to be present, as best man, at a close friend's wedding, and Steven Leightell, who won the prize for being stuck the longest in Rome, not arriving home until the early hours of Thursday morning. Still, the students rally round and Matthew O'Gorman in particular does a great job of keeping *spirits* up by hosting a Sunday afternoon gin and tonic (and carols) party.



In high spirits - grounded seminarians console each other with a gin and tonic (and carols) party. (Photo: Matthew O'Gorman)

January 2011

11 January - On the students' return to the College, Michael Patey is elected senior student for a fourteen month term. In the evening the formation staff play host to the students for the traditional New Year's Party in the Salone. Fr David Bulmer, Old Roman and priest of the Diocese of Leeds, joins the community so as to devote himself to writing up his doctoral thesis on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*.

15 January - The house enjoys a fine human development weekend at Palazzola given by Old Roman Fr Gerard Fieldhouse-Byrne of the St Luke's Centre, Manchester.

18 January - Michael Doody is elected deputy senior student.

19 January - Marking the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity, Wednesday evening community Mass is celebrated for the intention of Christian Unity with Fr Charles Morerod OP, Rector of the Angelicum and Secretary General of the International Theological Commission acting as principal celebrant and with invited guests from other Christian denominations in Rome.

20 January - Continuing the ecumenical theme for the Octave of Christian Unity Canon Jonathan Boardman Rector of All Saints Anglican Church gives our spiritual conference and speaks of "The gifts we share". It is a memorable day for Fr Javier Ruiz-Ortiz who, after several initial drafts, gains the agreement of his doctoral supervisor, Scripture scholar Sr Nuria Calduch Benages MN, to the proposed title of his doctoral dissertation ("The dynamic of violence and revenge in the book of Esther") giving Fr Javier the opportunity to joke "I've been proposing to a nun and she kept refusing me!"

30 January - Anglican exchange student Marcus Walker celebrates his birthday with a party in the Garden Room. With the invitation specifying the dress code as "*When in Rome....*"

the College community is joined by Marcus' guests from Cuddesdon Hall and from his time as a parliamentary intern, some of whom have made a real effort with their costumes. However, no one has out-dressed Marcus himself who appears in the toga, sash and laurel wreath of a Roman Emperor.

31 January - Examtime begins and the students hunker down for two (or three for the students of the Gregorian) weeks of intense academic work. As ever, study strategies are produced, leading academic theories discussed and, perhaps less admirably yet most importantly, intelligence on professors is passed on to those lower down the House. In this connection, one student is overheard telling a man in the year below him "the trick [with Professor X] is to massage his ego without appearing sycophantic".

February 2011

The House seems filled with guests for the first three weeks of February. We welcome Bishops David McGough and William Kenny of Birmingham in Rome for a few days on Vatican business, former and present vocations directors Fr Kevin Dring and Fr Andrew Downie, respectively of Arundel & Brighton and Hexham & Newcastle, Fr Neil Brett back at the College for the first time since his ordination over the summer in connection with his continuing studies and five visiting priests of the Southwark Diocese, Frs Philip Defreitas, Liam Gallagher, Peter Murphy, Michael Ryan and Stephen Hymer who are in Rome for a few days of well-earned holiday.

It is also a sad time of goodbyes as both Steven Leightell and Guido Amari, well-established members of the College community, separately take the difficult decision to leave formation for the time being. Both will be sorely missed. We also bid a fond farewell to Marcus Walker who returns to Cuddesdon Hall, Oxford after his exchange

semester with us and wish him well for his ordination to Anglican Orders and his curacy in North London.

19 February - Fr Rector, Sr Mary-Joseph and a lucky bunch of eight students (being those who got to the sign-up sheet on the notice board first!) are given a personal tour of the *Pio Cristiano* section of the Vatican Museums by Allen Brent, a lecturer in Divinity Studies from St Edmund's College, Cambridge and a published expert on the early Church.

23 February - Fr Rector celebrates community Mass in memory of Mrs Corinne Bennett, the ecclesial architect and designer of the altar, tabernacle, ambo and benches in the College Church when it was re-ordered in 1981. Her widower, Keith, is present in the congregation and her brother, Fr David Wilson, concelebrates as Fr Rector, who was then a first year student at the College, recalls in his homily the powerful occasion of the dedication of the Church. Mrs Bennett passed away on 10 July 2010 and, before the final blessing, Keith Bennett gives a tribute to her professional achievements speaking of her work at the Venerable English College as the "high point of her career".

24 February - The weekly spiritual conference is given by Abbot Christopher Jamison OSB, the newly appointed Director of the National Office for Vocation, who gives an insightful analysis of the "landscape" of the Church in the contemporary world against which vocation is understood and promoted. Abbot Christopher spends much of the next day in discussion groups with students as part of his fact-finding programme seeking common themes in contemporary vocation.

March 2011

1 March - Following the changeover of house jobs, Elliott Wright's career as College Sportsman gets off to the best possible start with a hastily arranged five-a-side football squad beating the North American College

6-2. It's the first time that the VEC have beaten the NAC on the football pitch in many years and serves to encourage Elliott in his self-proclaimed "reign of terror" as Sportsman which, he threatens, will include public weigh-ins for all students and forced route marches up the Gianiculum hill!

That evening, the House is treated to a fine lecture given by Prof. Hildegard Hammerschmidt-Hummel, Professor of English Literature at the University of Marburg and Mainz and an authority on Shakespeare who, at the invitation of Fr Rector, gives a summary of her thesis on "William Shakespeare's Catholicism: the Bard's life and literary career in troubled times" including her theory that Shakespeare stayed at the College as a pilgrim several times in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

5 March - The third human development weekend of the year focuses on the difficult subject of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Though the subject matter is harrowing, Mrs Jane Dziadulewicz and Fr Barry O'Sullivan (respectively the child protection officers for Clifton and Salford dioceses) give an impressive and encouraging series of presentations demonstrating the English and Welsh Church's expertise in child protection measures.

10 March - Deacons-, Acolytes- and Lectors-to-be depart for three nights of retreat at the Emmanuel House of Prayer in Bagnoregio led by members of the College staff.

11 March - Marc Homsey, struggling with a ruptured thigh muscle (an injury which a crueller diarist than your correspondent might point out was suffered while playing *touch* rugby with the Emmanuel Community in Rome, most of whom are girls...), adds to his already impressive pastoral work commitments by organising *Youth CaFE* for the teenage children of our Sunday Mass parishioners.



Bellezza e pace – on retreat at Bagnoregio
(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

17 March - As well as the Feast of St Patrick, the date this year marks the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy and is a national holiday. With the *centro storico* largely locked down for military processions, civic ceremony and the welcoming of heads of state, and with the weather contriving, literally, to rain on the Italians' parade, the College football team heads out to the Scots College for a hard-fought match. Played on the Scots' own pitch (known as the "potato patch" for the quality of its playing surface) and with a hat trick from Tony McGrath and a last minute wonder strike from outside the box by Peter Stoddart, the game ends in a 4-4 draw but is a moral victory for the VEC who were a man short for the whole 60 minutes played. On the way to the match Joe Gee mentions the new film *The Eagle* which, he explains, tells the legend of the 9th legion: 5000 Roman soldiers who disappeared without trace in Northumbria after Julius Caesar conquered Britain. Quick as a flash, Hexham & Newcastle student Peter Stoddart quips: "That's what happens when you mess with the Geordies". That evening, John Carlisle celebrates his birthday by cooking an excellent Irish stew which is followed by an equally good limoncello trifle prepared by Stephen O'Brien.

19 March - The Entertainments Committee organise a very successful day trip to Palestrina.

22 March - The Justice & Peace group organise a screening of the award-winning documentary *Black Gold* which looks at the unfair trade practices of the world-wide coffee market through the eyes of a farmers' co-operative from Southern Ethiopia. Instigated by Tony McGrath, the evening is well attended and provokes much discussion around the House.

27 March - A free weekend is put to good use with one group of students heading off to Norcia, the birthplace of Sts Benedict and Scholastica (and, while there, taking the opportunity to sample the local delicacy, wild boar, and to enjoy a snowball fight in the late-season, high-altitude snow) while the Shrewsbury contingent are led by Fr Jonathan Brandon in making a mini-pilgrimage to Loreto (home of the "Holy House") in solidarity with their diocesan Year of prayer with Mary.

30 March - We welcome Bishop Alan Hopes and Mgr Keith Newton (the newly-appointed Ordinary of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham) as guests of the College, accompanied by Fr Marcus Stock, secretary of the Bishops' conference, as they attend meetings at the Vatican. We are also joined by College trustees Terry Forbes and Peter Horgan for meetings with the staff.

April 2011

1 April - April Fools' day is marked by students' doors being booby trapped with tambourines, blue food colouring added to milk in the student kitchen and the statue of the eponymous saint from St Joseph's corridor appearing at breakfast in the pulpit above the refectory. Stefan Kaminski and Sean Crawley protest (too much?) that they had nothing to do with it.

3 April - The College spend *Laetare* Sunday, as has become tradition, hosted by the Beda along with the Scots and Irish Colleges for the ever popular "Beda Oasis".

4 April - Jo Barnacle, long serving Chairman of the Friends of the Venerable and, in her own words, "unofficial grandmother" to the students, joins us for a few days which she spends, as ever, encouraging the students, catching up on what has been happening round the House and ministering, with great commitment, to the sacristy's linen.

9 April - A group of students plus Fr John Paul complete the Seven Basilicas Walk ably organised this year by Sean Crawley. The day begins with Mass at St Peter's at 7am (yes, on a Saturday!) celebrated by Fr Jonathan Brandon and a different student gives a reflection at each of the Basilicas on the 30km route. With beautiful weather and fine navigation from Michael Patey (and his Ipod's map programme) the group finish in record time and enjoy a well-earned beer at the *Vineria*. That evening, there is a joyful welcome-back dinner for Phil Andrews, returned to us after several months away undergoing painful back surgery.

10 April - Archbishop Peter Smith celebrates Sunday Mass at the College before attending, as guest of honour, a dinner at the Angelicum University at which he is awarded with the title "Angelicum Alumnus of the year", an honour which, to the amusement of the Southwark seminarians Matthew O'Gorman, David Howell and Philip Andrews, who are present at the dinner along with Fr Rector, includes being presented with a medal, worn on a ribbon around the neck in the style of winning Olympic athletes.

12 April - After several weeks of intense practice and directed with vision and brio by Edward Henley, the *La Francigena* group give an evening concert of Palestrina's "Lamentations of Jeremiah" to a packed church, full of invited guests. The group, consisting of Michael Patey (Medius), Benjamin Theobald and Fr Guy de Gaynesford (Tenors), Matthew O'Gorman and Stefan Kaminski (Basses) and Edward Henley

(Superius), see their hard work pay off royally in a 90 minute performance of haunting plainsong, soaring polyphony and two solo-guitar renditions of great beauty and skill from Olafur Arnason. Fr Rector was away on the evening of the performance and later jokes that the choice of the Lamentations was "*post hoc*" rather than "*propter hoc*" his absence.

16 April - The House begins the Holy Week retreat led this year by Bishop John Crowley, Emeritus Bishop of Middlesbrough who, centring on chapter 12 of the Letter to the Hebrews, invites us to "set our eyes on Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith".

19 April - In his homily during the closing Mass of the retreat, Bishop Crowley looks to encourage the students, saying that feelings of discouragement are not of God but "come from 'old Nick'. And we all know who that is; the father of lies". At the end of Mass, while thanking Bishop Crowley for leading our retreat, Rector Nicholas Hudson graciously says that that he quite understood the grins on the faces of some of the students at the Bishop's turn of phrase.

20-24 April - Holy Week, as ever, is a great joy with friends and family of several students and staff members staying with us in the College and with many guests from around Rome joining us for the Triduum services. Memorable homilies from Fr Tony Milner (on Maundy Thursday and partially based on a song called "The will of the water and the tenderness of the towel" which one of his seminar students had used in a presentation), Fr John Paul Leonard (brilliantly capturing Good Friday by setting the sense of desolation after losing a loved one against the hope of Easter) and Fr Rector (recalling the reflections of Cardinal Basil Hume during the months before his death in the setting of Easter resurrection) add to the hard work of, in particular, MC John Poland, the choirmasters, sacristans, guest-masters and

common room team in preparing for the liturgies and hospitality. Having family to stay does however, have its drawbacks: Fr Jonathan Brandon has cause to change the subject quickly as his mother, Rene, starts telling Fr Rector that their then parish priest referred to the young, and occasionally mischievous Jonathan Brandon, in his altar boy days, as “the Church wrecker”.

May 2011

1 May - It is a day of mixed emotions as the students return from the Easter break. As Rome, filled with Polish pilgrims, witnesses the great occasion of Pope John Paul II being declared *Beatus* (a number of students having managed to obtain tickets for the event), news reaches us of the sad death of David Doran’s brother Damien who, at the age of only 49 died during the morning after a battle with cancer. The College offers prayers for Damien and the Doran family.

2 May - Archbishop Vincent Nichols celebrates Mass for the feast of St George and preaches, following the wedding of Prince William to Katherine Middleton (at which the Archbishop was present) on the complex and ever-changing concept of “Englishness” as the cultural context in which the English Church is called to preach the Gospel today.

5 May - Fr Rector gives a Rector’s conference focussing on aspects of the life of now-Blessed John-Paul II which particularly inspire him and sharing with the House the exciting news that Pope Benedict XVI has accepted an invitation to visit the College during the course of 2012 for the 650th anniversary of the English and Welsh Hospice.

7 May - The College football team heads out to the Scots College for the inaugural “Bl. John-Paul II tournament”. It’s the hottest day of the year so far and, amidst concerns that the team, without any substitutes, will suffer in the heat, David Howell seeks to give some encouragement: “Don’t worry, they have

their own micro-climate at the Scots College – they import the rain specially to make them feel at home”.

8 May - Fr Mark enjoys his first Founders’ Day as Vice-Rector preaching at Mass on the necessity to both speak with and listen to Christ in the model of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. In an excellent, debut after-dinner speech Fr Mark thanks invited guests (including Lord and Lady Nicholas Windsor and the Princess Doria-Pamphilj), the professionals, tradesmen and staff who work for the College and his colleagues on the formation staff. In a touching moment, Fr Mark reserves his last vote of thanks for the students saying that their spirit and offering of themselves encourages him and that his time on the formation staff has deepened his own understanding of priesthood. At evening prayer, deacons-to-be Michael Doody and Michael Patey make their oath of fidelity as they look forward to ordination in July.



Joe Gee (Salford), Peter Stoddart (Hexham and Newcastle) and Tony McGrath (Shrewsbury) enjoy the College gita. (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

11 May - The College welcomes a group of Benedictine and Trappist formators, drawn from communities all over the world and led by Fr Mark Butlin OSB, for a festive meal. As the fourth course and champagne typical of an English College festive meal arrive at one table a nun is heard hesitatingly asking a student: "Do you eat like this all the time?"

14 May - The College *Gita* takes place with a good turnout of students, formation staff, lay-trustees and domestic staff and their families spending a lovely day visiting the ancient village of Practica del Mare (said to be the site of Lavinium from the *Aeneid*), enjoying lunch on the coast and vismting the water park *Zoo Marine* in the afternoon.

15 May - At a drinks reception after evening prayer, we formally welcome all the College's Trustees here for their annual meetings with the formation staff.

18 May - The house has the pleasure of welcoming members of the Roman Association, in Rome for their AGM, for Mass and our third festive meal in less than two weeks. It is an evening of much goodwill and Fr Rector welcomes the Old Romans giving an after-dinner speech thanking the Association for the very generous donation of funds for the refitting of the *portineria* entrance area to the College. Responding on behalf of the Roman Association, Canon Mervyn Tower gives an amusing speech in which he suggests that the evening is a form of *anamnesis* in bringing the past, in the form of the Roman Association old boys, into the midst of the College's present.

19 May - Mgr Phil Carroll gives his final spiritual conference as the House's spiritual director. The topic, looking towards Pentecost, and appropriately for his last conference, is a paradigm of Mgr Phil's priestly spirituality: the priest as one who gives himself, in love for the Lord, fully to the people and particularly to the poor "preferring people to issues" and holding their "joys and hopes, grief and anguish" in his heart.



Mgr Phil Carroll is happy with his leaving present
(Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

25 May - Edward Henley announces his intention to leave the College at the end of the year in order to try a monastic vocation with the Benedictine community at the Abbey of St Lawrence, Ampleforth. Edward's humour and talent will be much missed and the students' prayers and best wishes will go with him.

26 May - As is traditional, the College provides the servers and choir for the evening Mass at *Chiesa Nuova* for the Feast of St Philip Neri. It is a fine liturgy with the *Schola* adapting well when tenor soloist and organist Edward Henley gets locked in the organ loft (a state of affairs that he is only able to communicate to the choir below him by jangling a large bunch of keys over the edge of the loft) and is unable to sing his part. We are treated to a good homily from this year's principal celebrant Cardinal Brandmüller who, as he processes away from his veneration of the tomb of St Philip, wins the affection of the College students by whispering to them, with a grin on his face, "*Salvete flores martyrum*".

28 May - The end of year celebratory meal for the *Schola* is held in the common room with *Schola* members cooking a menu of homemade tomato soup, roast loin of pork stuffed with peaches and sage butter, or cashew nut roast for the vegetarian contingent, and a limoncello trifle pudding.

30 May - Examtime begins in the midst of a spell of mercifully cool and breezy (by Roman standards) weather of the sort that has the Roman people complaining and English College students rejoicing. We are joined by a swathe of guests including Bishop Declan Lang, Baroness Patricia Scotland and Sr Jane Bertelsen (all attending a Vatican conference on safeguarding); Bishop Seamus Cunningham, accompanied by former College theology tutor Fr Martin Stempczyk, and, briefly as they fly in and out for the English seminary rectors' meeting at Palazzola, Mgrs John Marsland, Mark O'Toole and Mark Crisp.

June 2011

4 June - A very enjoyable evening is spent in the Garden for the College BBQ with a shared table of salads, savoury food and *dolci* accompanying the excellent, if in some cases rather charred, sausages and home-made hamburgers prepared by Stefan Kaminski and John Carlisle.

14 June - Fr Rector announces the sad news that the Archdiocese of Malta has decided, for financial reasons, to send our three Maltese priests to live at a different seminary from October. The College has been the home to Maltese priests doing further studies in Rome for nearly ten years and Frs Kevin Schembri, Jonathan Farrugia and Nicholas Doublet, and their predecessors, have contributed a great deal to the College community and will be much missed.

19 June - Trinity Sunday is this year an extra special occasion as it marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of solemn profession for Sr Mary-Joseph, our librarian and guest mistress. Sr Mary-Jo is made guest of honour at lunch and her great contribution to the House is recognised by Fr Rector in a short speech and by the whole community in a rousing rendition of *Ad multos annos* in her honour. Michaels Patey and Doody leave for their pre-diaconal retreat at Assisi led by Fr Tony Philpot.

29 June - Archbishop George Stack receives the pallium at St Peter's with 13 VEC students serving the Mass for the Solemnity of Ss Peter & Paul and Matthew O'Gorman acting as lector. At the festive dinner after DBL, Archbishop George first thanks Fr Rector for personifying the VEC's spirit of welcome and the students for embodying the same and then regales the refectory with the story of Google translator's erroneous translation of the letter of instruction that was received before the pallium liturgy: mistranslating the word "mitre", Google had come up with "Bishops shall process in bearing machine-guns" which, the Archbishop joked, makes an interesting case for dynamic equivalence.

July 2011

1 July - Fr Rector celebrates Mass of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the open air altar at Tusculum with a group of students some of whom had walked from the Villa, led by the highly competent map reading of Fr Tony, having left at 6.30 am and others who had driven to Tusculum by car. Your correspondent (who walked) leaves it to the reader to decide which group best deserved the beer and ice cream in the main square of Frascati afterwards.

3 July - Bishop John Hine institutes Kasper Baardsgaard, John Carlisle, Tom Cunnah, Jan Hansen, David Howell and Colin Mason as Lectors.

4 July - Pastoral courses begin with an excellent morning presentation on the new translation of the missal from Fr James Manock and then Fr Peter Scott and Mr Jim McMannus leading the top half of the house in a course on hospital chaplaincy while the bottom half of the House enjoy a course on dealing with the press led by Mr James Abbott from the office of the Bishops' conference and Mr Tom Bigwood, press officer for the diocese of Clifton. Mr Bigwood is a firm believer in grabbing every possible chance for



Archbishop Stack without pallium but with family (Photo: Fr Tony Milner)

a story and Clifton student Colin Mason finds himself being interviewed live on Radio Bristol's Sunday morning show from Palazzola. In the evening, Peter Stoddart is quiz master for the *Villeggiatura* quiz.

6 July - The feast of St Maria Goretti is the appropriate date for Fr Rector to celebrate, with the College community, his silver jubilee (the actual anniversary of his ordination being 19 July, after term has ended). At Mass, attended by Mgr Charles Scicluna, Mgr Philip Whitmore, Mgr Liam Bergin (Rector of the Irish College), Mgr Rod Strange (Rector of the Beda) and staff and friends of the College, Fr Rector gives a beautiful homily on the devotion to St Maria, St Bernadette and St Thérèse of Lisieux which have grown throughout his priesthood. After dinner Fr Mark Harold and Michael Patey give fine speeches congratulating Mgr Nick who is presented with celebratory gifts including, from the students, an engraved silver paten.

8 July - The Leavers' Dinner sees Mgr Phil Carroll, Sandy MacDonald and Edward Henley congratulated and thanked for all that they have contributed to the College during their time with us, the feelings of the whole community being expressed by the speeches of senior student Michael Patey and Fr Rector who notes in his speech that Fr Phil will not

miss the Roman weather preferring County Durham's "Rain, rain, rain. Rain, rain, rain" (delivered in the best northern accent Fr Rector could manage). Stefan Kaminski's hard work pays off as he gives an excellent photo review of the year on a beautiful Palazzola evening on the terrace.

10 July - Bishop John institutes Sean Crawley, Matthew O'Gorman and Tony Rosso as Acolytes encouraging them in his homily to form themselves ever closer to Christ whom they meet in the Eucharist.

13 July - The College's year ends with great celebration in beautiful weather as Bishop Peter Doyle of Northampton ordains Michaels Doody and Patey (whom he dubs respectively "of Leeds" and "of Northampton") to the diaconate. Doody's large extended family come to Palazzola in great numbers giving a lovely family atmosphere to the day's celebrations (if a somewhat lopsided look to the congregation). The Patey family enjoy a particularly poignant moment as Michael Patey is vested in his dalmatic by his father, Fr Colin Patey, a former Anglican minister and now Catholic priest. So it's a happy end to the College year as students head off for the holiday wishing our leavers the very best of luck and looking forward to meeting those new to the College in October.



Leavers' Profiles

Rev. Liam Bradley

Michael Patey

Usually a chance encounter with fellow seminarians is an unremarkable occurrence, but this is not so with Liam Bradley: "Tell me something new and exciting" he might ask, and while the other would scratch his head unable to think of anything, Liam would amply supply the requisite exciting news. Perhaps he had been on his way to St Peter's to give a *Scavi* tour, or had discovered some ground-breaking and fascinating development in the ecclesiastical world. Or perhaps he was only on his way to a lecture at his beloved Angelicum yet making the mundane sound interesting. Whichever it was, Liam had infectious enthusiasm for it.



Having mastered chemical engineering at Swansea University, Liam arrived in Via di Monserrato in 2004. It was the four years of study in Wales that led to his decision to offer himself for the diocese of Menevia – becoming the seminary's honorary Welshman in the process – and Wales' sole representative at the Venerable English College (or rather, English *and* Welsh College as Liam would have it). Thanks to Liam, the likes of Saints Dewi, Dyfrig, Deiniol and Teilo were annually venerated in the seminary liturgy.

After two years of dogged determination tackling philosophy at the Gregorian, Liam's academic life flourished when he made the move to the Angelicum and began studying theology. In addition to gaining a good grasp of Catholic theology, he found joy in the Dominican approach, making friends with many a Dominican professor. In addition to his studies, Liam was a fully-fledged contributor to the life of the seminary: his house jobs included Guest master, Head Sacristan and Master of Ceremonies and such responsibilities were aptly entrusted to Liam's care. His faithfulness in being one of the first to arrive in the Church each morning is a sign of his commitment to answer his calling to return home to serve the mission. Many a group of visitors to the college will have had the pleasure of being greeted and enthused by the past and present history of the seminary during one of Liam's informative and entertaining tours, a talent also put to use with paying visitors to the excavation beneath St Peter's.

As senior student Liam continued to be himself: communicating well, listening well and keen to act; all qualities which enabled him to represent his fellow students with vigour. Possibly the most comfortable chair in the building, the well worn armchair in the corner of Liam's room saw many a student spending an hour or two receiving generosity, hospitality and fine conversation. For the many friends he leaves behind in Rome life has a little less flavour, while the English and Welsh mission gains "something new and exciting" as Liam begins to use his gifts in his ministry among God's people.

Mgr Philip Carroll

Fr Tony Milner

Fr Phil (as he prefers to be known) hails from Newcastle, though his need of a coat at the slightest hint of a cool breeze suggests he has spent too long south of there. With many years of parish ministry under his belt, as well as a stint as General Secretary of the Bishops' Conference, Fr Phil came to the College as spiritual director in 2006.

Over the past five years his down-to-earth spiritual wisdom has been appreciated by many students in spiritual direction.

Those of us who have not had the privilege of having Phil as a spiritual director have nonetheless benefitted greatly from that wisdom through his homilies, and most of all through his spiritual conferences. One of the images of Fr Phil that will remain with me is of him sitting, slightly hunched and leaning earnestly over his favoured reporter's style notebook and fixing us earnestly with his gaze and delivering his very well prepared talk, glancing down at his notes from time to time and occasionally flipping the page over to see an additional annotation he has made on the reverse side. Those 25 minute talks are the fruit of many hours of reflection and careful composition, and I hope that one day he will find the time to write at least some of them up to share with a wider audience. When not guiding students or preparing conferences and retreats, Fr Phil is likely to be found drinking *caffè decaffeinato lungo e macchiato* at the bar next door, watching Newcastle playing football or England playing cricket, eating pizza and joking with the waitresses in *Ai Ballestrari*, playing rather bad golf, or ironing his clothes (including his pyjamas!).

Phil returns to Hexham and Newcastle diocese and the parish ministry he loves. He will celebrate his ruby jubilee of ordination in December. We wish him well. He will be much missed here in Rome by the College, and by the many others to whom he has been a friend. One final note: if you want to visit Fr Phil and can't find him in one of his parishes, try St James' Park or the Riverside stadium, depending on whether it is the football or cricket season.



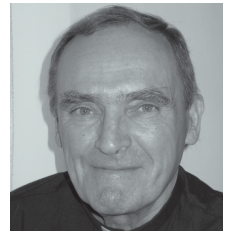
Mgr Bryan Chestle

Rev. Liam Bradley

There aren't nearly enough words to describe Mgr Bryan Chestle accurately. Even if there were, the man who would be most adept at putting them together, with the best possible use of sharp grammar, would be Mgr Chestle himself. Bryan is the kind of man who will be reading this very article with such punctilious acumen that he'll spot

a whole host of possible improvements. With a kind twinkle in his eye and a slight grin on his face, he'll turn to a trusted friend to announce kindly, "not criticising; just observing". A tug of the collar, and a nonchalant glance upwards will follow, as the resulting silence says it all.

Bryan is one of those rare breeds in the Catholic Church – his deadly sharp mind and wit could cut even the highest-ranking prelate down to size – but in charity, respect and obedience, the thought wouldn't even be contemplated. Bryan is always reserved but quietly dedicated to getting the best out of people; encouraging them, nurturing them and praying for them. He doesn't say much, but what he does say is always worth listening to.



Bryan has had an interesting ministry, quite different from most other priests. Bryan once told me that he's never had an actual parish, but that his parish is rather the whole world. "I answer letters" he told me, "letters sent to the Pope, and it doesn't matter if that letter comes from a diplomat or a child in school, a head of state or any office worker, each one has to be answered as if Jesus were talking. Each one is important." If every single letter that Bryan has ever written is an encounter with Christ, then he has been one of the most active parish priests the Vatican has had at its disposal.

Born in London in 1933, Bryan spent most of his youth living in Surbiton and New Malden and being educated in Fulham and Wimbledon College. His arrival at seminary, aged twenty-three, was quite late for the times, but Bryan had gained many experiences that others could neither have hoped nor wished for. He is a graduate of Pembroke College, Oxford, having gained a degree in Russian and French. He'd proved himself a first-class shot during military service and later became involved in teaching Russian in the army, a skill he would later use to teach the language to Bl. John Paul II and to entertain President Gorbachev's wife.

Bryan sailed through his seminary days and early photographs show him as a dashing, young, cassocked cleric who even then had an air of distinction. Following a short appointment to teach at Mark Cross Seminary, Bryan was called back to Rome in 1969 to help out in the Secretariat of State. That appointment of a few months lasted a lifetime! Bryan formally retired in 2003 but was immediately given the position of Protonotary Apostolic *de numero participantium*. He carried out this role with the same qualities he's always exuded: quiet, discreet and total unfailing dedication. If Bryan were the type to tell stories he could keep a good number of people entertained for many hours. Be that as it may, it's not Bryan's style and so the record of Bryan's priestly life has to be gauged by the lower bookcase of his sitting room: it bends under the weight of the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* from his time in the City, and his signature can be found peppered over its pages!

As Bryan leaves the college to relax into retirement at St John's convent in Kiln Green, he will be greatly missed. The College was his home for the greater part of his life and the *Venerabile* is a little diminished for having lost him. The College's loss is the convent's gain and I'm sure the sisters who care for him will quickly see the qualities of a priest, who while exalted in his position, remains a humble servant and was a role model of priestly service to hundreds of seminarians. Monsignor Bryan George Chestle, *ad multos annos!*

Fr Jonathan Farrugia

Michael Coughlan

"Hello neighbour" has often been heard of a morning at the end of St Joseph's corridor just before we all head for lectures. Jonathan arrived two years ago from Malta, which I am told by others is a small island between Sicily and Gozo.

Over the past two years I have come to realise that Jonathan is a man of learning and culture, someone who values the finer points of life. He has always made the most of Rome's cultural scene. Often he would tell me that he was off to the opera, in recent times celebrating the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy by going to see Verdi's *Nabucco*.



Jonathan has a great love of classical languages especially Greek and Latin which is of great benefit to his doctoral studies at the Augustinian Patristic Institute. One day while stressing over my own Greek exam I met Jonathan in the corridor and showed him the paper. He replied: "Easy, that can be done in two minutes!" Toward the end of this last semester he was excited to finally obtain a 4th century text on which he is hoping to develop his doctoral thesis. Showing this to me, I felt somewhat ashamed that I couldn't even work out where the words began and ended, yet he fluently read it (well parts of it at least!).

During these two years Jonathan has remained committed to Benediction at the Bridgettine convent next door. Afterwards, the sisters would always kindly provide us with tea and very nice cake. Jonathan shared my love of culinary delights, which stretched from the cake provided by the sisters to what is known in the College as "Maltese cheese". Being faithful to the regular Sunday evening gathering of Maltese diocesan clergy living in Rome and having appreciated the finer delicacies offered, he was always very generous in bringing back to the College the remaining cheese and other delights shared by the Maltese brethren.

In summary, Jonathan has always been a calm, warm and friendly person to be around and someone with a good sense of humour. We wish him well at his new College as he continues his doctoral studies. Jonathan our thoughts and prayers go with you ... don't be a stranger!

Edward Henley

Matthew O'Gorman

"You meet a lot of characters in life" my grandmother used to say. Her words came to mind when I first met Edward in San Giovanni Valdarno three years ago. Sporting the quintessential Englishman-abroad couture of Panama hat and linen trousers it was the garishly coloured rugby socks (different colour for each day) which were most striking. Edward's choice of attire frequently communicated a sincere devotion to his family (possibly the largest and most widely spread I have heard of); donning his feathered hunting cap, Bavarian jacket and winter coat displayed a touching pride for the traditions among which he matured. My introduction to Edward's musical ability came while receiving some Italian tuition from him and, having betrayed my tendency to treat the language like a set of mathematical equations, he exclaimed: "Allow it to breathe!" As with language, so with music; his primary love being to let his hands and feet express the composer's ideas through the pipes of the College organ. I will always associate Edward with melodious murmurs coming from the church as well as the hearty and joy-filled laughter which I'm convinced could be heard from the Via Giulia, if not the Gianiculum. His pastoral work in Rome involved visiting the patients in Salvator Mundi hospital which on one occasion he concluded with an ice-cream gita only for the car to break down and be pushed by yours truly (with help) over the Ponte Sisto. Edward took the driver's seat.

The driver's seat was an appropriate place for Edward when one recalls how ably he inherited the role of Director for the College production of *Twelve Angry Men* at the last minute. His talents found expression most memorably in two concerts he masterminded, orchestrated and produced in the College Church (*'La Francigena'* and "The Lamentations of Jeremiah", see p.42). As well as being able to plan, his capacity for spontaneity was revealed in a memorable liturgy when he unexpectedly intoned the Coventry Gloria an octave higher than intended, momentarily disrupting the reverie of staff and students.



Juggling the roles of choirmaster and organist can thin the patience of many yet, while coping with an unenviable workload, he was always ready to give time to those interested in improving their musical skills. I am forever indebted for the time he took in teaching me to sing and feel that his *disponibilità* is the defining quality that has served us so well and will continue to benefit others. As he returns to his beloved Ampleforth to begin life as a novice, we pray that the time he will give to God, his brother monks and the people whom he is called to serve may bear fruit in plenty, alleluia!

Fr Kevin Schembri

Anthony McGrath

Fr Kevin Schembri encouraged all seminarians to become more familiar with the Scriptures – he doesn't, therefore, fit the stereotypical canonist's joke which tells us that Scripture is what Jesus said, but canon law is what he meant. Hailing from Malta, Fr Kevin arrived at the Venerabile in October 2008, the year after his ordination to the Priesthood, sent by his bishop to the Gregorian University for a licence in Canon Law. It could be said of Fr Kevin that his passions are faith and culture; his heart is for Sacred Scripture and his mind for canon law. His familiarity and love of the Gospel is central to his faith and spirituality. As he reminded the community in his passionate homilies, Jesus loves everyone and, in a particular way, sinners and the lowly. Kevin's energetic pastoral ministry has led him to involvement with the Missionaries of Charity. Notably he has led day reflections and directed retreats for the sisters in places as far afield as Florence, Bari, Greece, Albania and Ecuador. He has celebrated the sacraments for the homeless at the Missionaries of Charity's community in Rome. Kevin's evident love for the "poorest of the poor" is at the centre of his priestly life and he is gifted with being able to preach homilies with words of hope and encouragement for those on the margins of society.

He could often be seen speaking with fellow students on the College corridors while on breaks from his late night study sessions. He faithfully gave Benediction to the Bridgettines for three years, organised the "Secret Santa" for the College community and participated in Christmas entertainment shows. His involvement in zany and hilarious sketches with fellow Maltese priests has left an impression on all who have seen them, most memorably at the expense of the English College deacons. Fr Kevin made full use of his free time by travelling to visit friends around Europe. On one occasion, in what was possibly a first for a student priest in Italy, after being stuck in traffic for hours, he began motorway ministry by walking up and down the road talking to other drivers and passengers. This characterises Kevin's enthusiasm to embrace new challenges in following the Lord.

Fr Kevin participated in the sports life of the College by playing football. By his own admission he was never an avid gym campaigner, but his lack of fitness did not stop him from being the subject of Maradona comparisons and from working some "Schembri magic" on the pitch, scoring several outstanding goals. As a keen Manchester United and Eric Cantona fan he clearly has good taste too.

Fr Kevin, your presence in the community will be missed but stay in touch and see you again soon.





The Council of the Roman Association

President: Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor (until 2012)

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).

Rector: Mgr Nicholas Hudson

and the following elected for three years:

until 2012

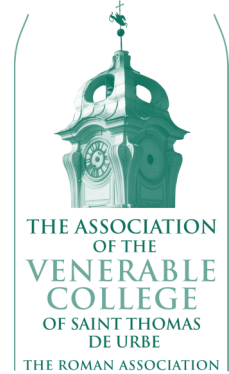
Rev. Bruce Burbidge
Canon Michael Cooley
Rev. Simon Thomson

until 2013

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

until 2014

Rev. Frank Wahle
Rev. Mark Brentnall
Rev. Patrick Mileham



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:

David Bulmer (2012), Canon Michael Cooley (2013), Paul Keane (2014), Canon Stephen Coonan (2015), Mgr Anthony Wilcox (2016), Rev. Paul Daly (2017).



The Roman Association

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Birmingham: Rev. Gerard Murray, Our Lady of the Wayside, 566 Stratford Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 4AY, gerard@olwayside.fsnet.co.uk

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

Cardiff: Mgr Canon Robert Reardon, Archbishop's House, 41-43 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9HD, v.g@rcadc.org

Clifton: Canon Thomas Atthill, Trellis House, Station Road, Tisbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 6JR, tisburyparish@cliftondiocese.com

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Hallam: Rev. John Metcalfe, Our Lady & St Thomas's Presbytery, Meadowhead, Sheffield, S8 7UD, jhf.m@tiscali.co.uk

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Middlesbrough: Canon Alan Sheridan, St George's Rectory, 7 Peel Street, York, YO1 9PZ, sttherese@middlesbrough-diocese.org.uk

Northampton: Mgr Canon Sean Healy, St Augustine's Presbytery, 32 London Road, Daventry, Northampton, NN11 4BZ, staugustinedav@aol.com

Nottingham: Rev. Peter Harvey, The Presbytery, 17 Nottingham Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 5RF, fathercolin.taylor@virgin.net

Plymouth: Rev. Michael Koppel, The Priest's House, Lyme Road, Axminster, Devon, EX13 5BE, rpcpriest@tiscali.co.uk

Portsmouth: Rev. Simon Thomson, 21 Gladys Avenue, North End, Portsmouth, Hants, PO2 9AZ, simont245@aol.com

Salford: Rev. James Manock, 44 Redcar Road, Little Lever, Bolton, BL3 1EN, radcliffecatholic@tiscali.co.uk

Shrewsbury: Rev. Paul Shaw, St Werburgh's Presbytery, Grosvenor Park Road, Chester, CH1 1QJ, werburgh465@btinternet.com

Southwark: Rev. Dominic Allain, St Osmund's Presbytery, 79 Castelnau, Barnes, London, SW13 9RT, dominickallain1@mac.com

Westminster: Rev. Philip Miller, St Augustine's Presbytery, High Street, Hoddesdon, Herts, EN11 8DS, hoddesdon@rcdow.org.uk

Wrexham: Rev. Antony Jones, Our Lady Star of the Sea, 35 Lloyd Street, Llandudno, Conwy, LL30 2YA, aj@serenymor.fsnet.co.uk



The Minutes of the 142nd Annual General Meeting of The Association of the Venerable College of St Thomas de Urbe The Roman Association

Palazzola, Tuesday 17 May 2011

Thirty-one members of the Association gathered on 17 May at Palazzola. They were joined by Bp Roche of Leeds, Bp Campbell of Lancaster and Bp Draine of Middlesbrough. The Council decided that the next AGM would take place in England, perhaps at Stonyhurst, in April or May 2012.

Annual General Meeting, 17 May 2011

The meeting began at 5.30 pm, with Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Hon. President, in the Chair.

1. Prayer to the Holy Spirit

The President welcomed all in attendance and led the meeting in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

2. Apologies

Archbishop Paul Gallagher, Archbishop Kevin McDonald, Bishop Christopher Budd, Anthony Barratt, Michael Burke, Michael Corley, Thomas Dakin, Brian Dazeley, Peter Fleetwood, George Hay, Petroc Howell, Gregory Knowles, Michael Koppel, Stephen Langridge, Michael McConnon, Jim Overton, John Pardo, Michael St Aubyn, Bill Steele and Mark Woods.

3. Minutes of 141st AGM

Accepted

4. Matters arising (those not dealt with elsewhere)

There were no matters arising

5. Deceased Members

The *De Profundis* was prayed for the repose of the souls of Bishop Alexander, Frank McManus, Bill Burtoft and all members who had died since the previous meeting.

6. Sick Members

The meeting prayed for those members of the Association, who were sick, including Dick Ashton, Michael Corley, Terry McSweeney, James Ward and David Papworth.

7. The Rector's Report

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

8. The Secretary's Report

The Council has met twice since the last AGM to plan this AGM and to support the on-going work of ensuring that our members' database is as up to date and as comprehensive as possible. The Council has decided that it will look at having the AGM alternate between England and Palazzola.

The Secretary's report was accepted by the meeting.

9. The Treasurer's Report

David Bulmer, on behalf of the Treasurer, presented the accounts of the Roman Association to the meeting.

Anthony Wilcox presented the accounts of the Roman Association Trust. He noted that the Trust, since it was established, has given the College £289,000. The Trustees have decided to give the College £40,000 for the improvement of the entrance to the College and the *portineria*, in preparation for the Pope's expected visit to the College in 2012.

The reports were accepted by the meeting.

10. Election of New Members

No potential new members to elect.

11. President's Remarks

The Cardinal spoke about some of his most recent experiences (the Papal visit to England, the Cardinal's visit to India and the Royal Wedding), reminisced about his last meeting with Bl. Pope John Paul II and encouraged the meeting to hold the Church in Ireland in its prayers as they prepared for the Eucharistic Congress in 2012.

12. Election of Officers and Councillors

Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor was re-elected as President for another year. Frank Wahle, Mark Brentnall and Patrick Mileham were elected as Councillors for three years.

Paul Daly was elected to serve as a Trustee of the Roman Association Trust until 2017.

13. 143rd AGM

The date is yet to be confirmed as new locations in England are being considered.

14. 2012 Martyrs' Day gatherings

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

15. Any other business

It was noted that the Friends of the Venerabile has given great support to the College. Since many of its members are mature in age we should seek out new members.

The formal celebratory Mass, presided at by the Cardinal, and dinner were held the next day - Wednesday 18 May - at the English College.

Members of the Association who sat down to supper included the Cardinal, Fr Rector, Thomas Atthill, Mark Brentnall, David Bulmer, Bruce Burbridge, Adrian Chatterton, Michael Cooley, Stephen Coonan, Francis Coveney, Gerard Creasey, Paul Crowe, Thomas Dakin, Anthony Dearman, John Deehan, Michael Downey, Kevin Firth, Anthony Grimshaw, Paul Keane, Patrick Kilgarriff, Christopher Lough, Denis Marmion, Patrick Mileham, Leo Mooney, Fergus Mulligan, Gerard Murray, Peter Purdue, Gerard Skinner, Mervyn Tower, France Wahle and Anthony Wilcox. They were joined by the staff of the English College, the students and other guests.

Rector's Report to the Roman Association

We were encouraged to have 11 new seminarians start the year with us. They came from Arundel & Brighton, Birmingham, Clifton, Copenhagen (2), Hexham & Newcastle, Leeds (2), Reykjavik, Southwark and Westminster. This meant that we began the year with 38 students in residence – 6 more than a year ago. 30 of these were seminarians, with 26 seminarians for England & Wales. We were delighted to have with us once again an Anglican ordinand, this time from Cuddesdon. Two of the new seminarians came to us from Valladolid. This means we currently have some 10 seminarians from Valladolid, and have had 18 *Vallisoletans* pass through the College in total thus far.

We had two priests arrive to make the number of student priests in the seminary 7. Four of these priests are from dioceses in England, namely, Leeds, Plymouth, Shrewsbury and Westminster. Two of our seminarians were ordained priests for the diocese of Portsmouth and one for the diocese of Brentwood in the summer of 2010, all three having completed Licences. The other 3 priests come from Malta. The full complement of English & Welsh seminarians at the start of the year was as follows: 1 from Arundel & Brighton, 1 from Birmingham, 1 from Clifton, 1 from Hexham & Newcastle, 6 from Leeds, 1 from Liverpool, 1 from Menevia, 1 from Middlesbrough, 1 from Northampton, 1 from Portsmouth, 1 from Salford, 3 from Shrewsbury, 3 from Southwark and 4 from Westminster. The other 4 seminarians came from Antigonish, Copenhagen and Reykjavik. Two men are to be ordained in the summer of 2011 – Michael Doody for Leeds and Michael Patey for Northampton.

I have just completed seven years as Rector, having been appointed in February 2004. Fr Andrew Headon of Brentwood

Diocese left us in July 2010 after 6½ years as Vice-Rector. Fr Mark Harold of Salford Diocese succeeded him in that role. The new Pastoral Director is Fr John Paul Leonard of Middlesbrough Diocese. Mgr Philip Carroll returns to the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle in July 2011, to be succeeded by Fr Christopher Willis of Leeds. Fr Tony Milner of the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton is in his fourth year as Theology Tutor.

We started the year at the *Greg* with 2 seminarians in 1st Cycle Philosophy; and 12 in 1st Cycle Theology. We had at the *Angelicum* 8 seminarians in 1st Cycle Philosophy; 4 in 1st Cycle Theology; and 3 in 2nd Cycle Theology. We have 1 seminarian studying in 2nd Cycle Theology at the *Alphonsianum*.

The year began with a five-day individually guided retreat at Palazzola. There was a retreat at Advent led by Abbot Timothy Wright, OSB, Spiritual Director of the Beda. Bishop John Crowley, Emeritus Bishop of Middlesbrough, 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 Deacons-to-be will make a canonical retreat close to their ordination. Each Thursday of the year, we have a Spiritual Conference, normally led by the Spiritual Director; and this is followed by discussion in House Groups, the latter enjoying a successful third year. I give regular conferences and the other staff members give one a year, with the occasional visiting speaker contributing as well.

Fr Michael Doyle of the Archdiocese of Birmingham had been contracted to direct Human Formation but decided last autumn that he could not manage this alongside his commitments elsewhere. Accordingly, we approached Fr Gerard Byrne of St Luke's Centre, Manchester, who has undertaken to

spend five separate weeks with us every year, meeting with students individually and teaching in groups. St Luke's have also agreed to lead 3 residential Human Development weekends every year for the whole house.

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, Bishop Conry of Arundel & Brighton and Ms Gretta Scadden from *Marriage Care* came to work with students on Counselling; and Mr Jim Whiston on *Leadership*. The weekly pastoral classes during term-time include *Catechetics*, *Homiletics*, *Preparation for Diaconal Ministry*, *Parish Administration*, and *Pastoral Liturgy*. 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. A new initiative this year has been the establishment of a *CAFÉ* group for young people coming to Mass in College. 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. A significant group of seminarians visit the *Regina Coeli* Prison. Some students catechise in local parishes. Others visit *Salvator Mundi* Hospital. A good number remain committed to the Vatican Youth Centre of *San Lorenzo*; and we have strong links with the *Emmanuel* community. The Pastoral Director and Vice-Rector visited between them all the seminarians on their summer placements in England or Wales. 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 for the new academic year, we expect to have 35 seminarians in October 2010. With the addition of 1 Anglican Ordinand and 8 priests, this will amount to a student body of 44. With a staff of 5, this makes an anticipated community of some 49 residents. Of course, 2012 marks the 650th anniversary of the English and Welsh Hospice in *via di Monserrato*. Friday 27th January, the actual anniversary, Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor will preside at evening Mass and be our Guest of Honour at a festive dinner. The next day, Dr Judith Champ of Oscott College will give a lecture on the Hospice. Then Archbishop Nichols will come to preside at Mass on the morning of Sunday 29th, to be followed by a lunch for all our friends in Rome. We hope that a great many Old Romans will come to be part of this uniquely historic celebration: all arrangements should be made through Anthony Coles.

Financially, it remains the case that income from rental properties is greater than income from fees, viz., this year as last, 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, Harold Hood Trust income and 'Other Donations'. A significant element of 'Other Donations' has been the Schwarzenbach funding which has enabled the restoration of so many significant parts of the College.

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. This we aim to realise in August 2011. It was always our hope that the *en suite* guest accommodation created – through the generosity of the Old Romans – on *Mayfair* might one day be required for student rooms. This threshold we will happily cross in September 2011 – with the large intake of New Men requiring us to expand into that corridor. We are, accordingly, insulating the whole of the *Mayfair* corridor ceiling this summer so as to render it more comfortable for full-time accommodation.

Meanwhile, up at Palazzola, the situation is also encouraging. Income doubled from 2004-08. It remained steady from 2009-10; and is forecast to be better in 2011, with 2012 looking promising too.

The important thing is that Palazzola continues to cover all its running costs; and is still often full to its capacity - of 69 beds. This summer will see us completely paving the *St Edward's* terrace for use by groups and modestly landscaping the garden that stretches above it. 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



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News of Old Romans

Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

Fr Aaron Spinelli

There have been few changes in this part of the Mystical Body. However, this is how things look in our diocese. Bishop Kieran Conry celebrated two significant events: 10 years of Episcopal ordination and his 60th birthday this year. Chris Bergin is now Parish Priest of Haslemere, Hindhead and Chiddingfold in Surrey. Tony Bridson remains in his role in full-time ministry to priests. Tony Churchill is in sunny Bognor as well as Episcopal Vicar for Mission and Unity. Bill Davern is at Epsom, together with Simon Hall. Stephen Dingley is at Womersley. Kevin Dring is now Parish Priest at Sacred Heart, Hove. Rob Esdaile is at Thames Ditton. Stephen Hardaker has moved to Uckfield. Raglan Hay-Will is holding the reins at Eastbourne. Peter Humfrey is living in Guildford. Richard Incedon is at Wanborough near Guildford. Michael Jackson is at Hove. Terry Martin is at Horsham. Tony Milner is at the College as Theology Tutor. Andy Moss (now back with a Canon Law *licenza from Ottawa*) has joined the Redhill Team. Kieron O'Brien remains at Chichester. David Parmiter has left Woking and is helping look after Englefield Green and Egham for the moment. Andrew Pinsent continues his work at Oxford University at the Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion, helping at Epsom at the weekends. Dominic Rolls is at Dorking. Aaron Spinelli is still in Guildford. Bruno Witchalls continues in Bexhill-on-Sea and last but by no means least Mark Woods continues as Communications Officer, whilst ministering in Worthing.

Not much change (as one can see) but that could always change soon!

Archdiocese of Birmingham

Fr Gerard Murray

There is little news to report on the clergy of the diocese this year.

David Gnosill is moving to Corpus Christi, Coventry.

Jim Ward has retired and is living in Redditch.

John O'Brien has moved to take on two parishes in East Birmingham - Guardian Angels in Shard End and St Anthony's, Kingshurst.

Bruce Harbert has returned to the diocese and is to be found at St Mary's, Wednesbury. Midland Martyrs' Day will be celebrated on Wednesday 30 November at St Anne's, Chelmsley Wood (Presbytery: 281a Bosworth Drive, B37 5DP), stannes.rc@btconnect.com, 0121 700 3283 by kind invitation of Fr Gerardo Fabrizio. Mass at 12 noon (to be confirmed).

Diocese of Brentwood

Fr Francis Coveney

The names of Brentwood Old Romans receiving new appointments in 2011 are in bold. The first date after each priest's name gives his date of ordination.

David Papworth (1961) - formerly of St Dominic, Harold Hill died on 11 August 2011, RIP.

Michael Butler (1963) - The Assumption, Old Harlow (2001).

Michael Corley (1963) - The Chimes, Weeley Road, Aingers Green, Great Bentley, Colchester, Essex CO7 8NB (retired in 2003).

Richard Ashton (1966) - Evelyn May House, Florence Way, Laindon, Essex SS16 6AJ. (retired in 2000).

Adrian Graffy (1974: OND 74-75) continues as Diocesan Director for Evangelisation & Mission (2005). PP of Christ the Eternal High Priest, Gidea Park (October 2011).

George Stokes (1976) - Diocesan Director for Catholic Education (1991) now lives in the Presbytery in Grays (2008) where he helps out at the weekend.

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) - from PP Holy Cross, Avely & South Ockendon (2003) to PP Corpus Christi, Collier Row (October 2011).

Jean-Laurent Marie (1994) - from Westcliff (2004) to Our Lady of Canvey, Canvey Island and Holy Family, Benfleet (2009).

Andrew Headon (1995) - Ss Peter & Paul, Ilford (2010).

Paul Fox (1998) - from South Woodham Ferrers & Danbury (2002) to St Mary Mother of God, Hornchurch (October 2011).

Martin Boland (1996) - Dean of Brentwood Cathedral (October 2009).

Thomas Saunders (2000) - Sacred Heart, Southend with St John Fisher, Prittlewell (2005).

Dominic Howarth (2002) - PP in the Basildon Team Ministry and Diocesan Vocations Director (2010).

Paul Keane (2003) - PP St Sabina, Brightlingsea & Chaplain to Essex University (2009).

Mark Reilly (2009) - Assistant Priest St Antony of Padua, Forest Gate (2010).

James Mackay (2009) - Assistant Priest Brentwood Cathedral (2010).

Neil Brett (2010) - Assistant priest St James the Less and St Helen, Colchester (2010).

Although relatively few Old Romans are involved in our annual Clerical Manoeuvres, there are nevertheless quite a large number of changes in the diocese this year. Indeed 2011 may well prove to be an historic year for Brentwood. Five priests are retiring from full time parish ministry this autumn (none of them Old Romans) and six former Anglicans have been recently ordained as priests for the Ordinariate within the Diocese of Brentwood. As well as continuing to minister to significant numbers of their former congregations who have also entered into full communion with the Catholic Church, these six priests will be working in various existing Catholic parishes.

So, for example, Jean-Laurent Marie will be receiving some welcome assistance in Canvey Island and Benfleet. With another priest who studied in Another Place (Wonersh actually) due to be ordained *Deo volente* in September, the Bishop has not needed to link any parishes this year.

Finally, apologies to Paul Fox for having put him in the wrong parish over the last nine years! Paul is far too nice to complain (or perhaps he doesn't read this part of the Venerabile).

Archdiocese of Cardiff

Mgr Bob Reardon

Fr Liam Hennessy has moved (May 2011) to Abertillery to be Parish Priest of Abertillery and Brynmawr.

Diocese of Clifton

Canon Thomas Atthill

Bishop Mervyn Alexander (ordained 1948) died in August [See Obituary, p.106]. Tony Cotter is our senior Old Roman, ordained in 1943. In retirement, he now lives at Winscombe in Somerset. Tony Harding, ordained in 1955, lives in the St John's Flats, Bath. He is our busy and extremely knowledgeable Diocesan Archivist. Brian McEvoy, ordained at Palazzola in 1966, is Parish Priest of St Mary's in his home town, the Roman City of Bath. Once again he hosted the Martyrs' Day Mass and lunch. He visits Rome as often as he can. Thomas Atthill, ordained in 1969, is Parish Priest of Tisbury and Wardour, near Salisbury. He is due to retire from parish work soon, but will still be pleased to cook for any passing Old Roman. Michael Healy, ordained in 1971, is Parish Priest of Sacred Heart, Chew Magna and St Plus X, Witherwood just outside and just inside South Bristol, and works with the retreat team of the *La Retraite* Community at Emmaus House, Clifton. Michael Robertson, ordained in 1993, is Parish Priest of St Bonaventure, Bishopston, Bristol, and is the Diocesan Ecumenical Officer. Philip Beisly, ordained in 2005, is Parish Priest of Fairford, in the Cotswolds. Alex Redman, having completed his training in England, was ordained in 2004. After experience as Assistant Priest and as a Prison Chaplain, he is Parish Priest, currently of Dursley and Nympsfield, also in the Cotswolds.

Diocese of East Anglia

Fr Bruce Burbidge

There are few changes this year to the appointments of East Anglian Old Romans. Tony Philpot is as much in demand as ever as supply priest, retreat giver, Spiritual Director, chaplain to the Portuguese, etc. Michael Griffin continues in Newmarket, Simon Blakesley in Diss (and the tribunal), Eugène

Harkness at St Philip Howard in Cambridge, Martin Hardy at St Patrick's in Leicester, myself at Sacred Heart & St Oswald in Peterborough, and Mark Hackeson in Poringland and Secretary to Bishop Michael Evans until the Bishop's recent death. From September, Sean Connolly will be taking up an appointment in the Diocese again, based in Newmarket with Michael Griffin.

Diocese of Gibraltar

Fr John Pardo

Although I have no news from our Old Romans to report this year, you may spare a moment to pray for the repose of the souls of our two retired Bishops, recently deceased. They were a tremendous source of support and encouragement for Mgr Mark Miles and myself in our vocations and throughout our seminary formation: Bishops Bernard Devlin (retired 1998; ... 15 December 2010) and Charles Caruana (retired 2010; ... 1 October 2010). May they rest in peace. Next year, please God, some happier news?

Diocese of Hallam

Fr John Metcalfe

Michael Killeen, resident in the Little Sisters in Leeds has just celebrated his 90th birthday. *Ad multos annos!* Peter Kirkham is pretty well recovered from the amputation of his leg and once again has the parish under control, albeit it takes him longer to get about. He is now thinking of driving again. John Ryan is at St Bede's, Rotherham, and Mark McManus holds down the biggest parish in the diocese at Chesterfield. Adrian Tomlinson has two parishes, St Joseph and St Therese in Sheffield. Craig Fitzpatrick is to be found either at the *Casa Domus Paulus*, the Angelicum or the bar *Magnolia* in the *Campo*, all the while studying canon law. Kevan Grady will shortly finish his "apprenticeship" in teaching and will take up an RE post (naturally) at All Saints, Sheffield. His two

children will avoid his ministrations for a few years yet. Your correspondent is still at Our Lady and St Thomas, Sheffield.

Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle

Fr Lee Barrett

Fr Phil returns from the VEC to become PP at St Paul's Alnwick, Northumberland. Fr Stephen Watson moves from Sunderland to St Aidan's, Ashington. Fr Andrew Downie finishes as chaplain to Newcastle and Northumbria Universities, responsibility for these being given to the Dominicans, he moves to Pius X and St Joseph's, Consett, where I will be joining him as curate, moving from Billingham, our parish here having recently been renamed in honour of St Thomas of Canterbury.

Diocese of Lancaster

Fr Michael J. Murphy

As I reported last year, Joseph Callaghan and Gillian Walsh were married, as they intended, on 4 June this year. I am told that it was a very happy celebration. Thomas Dakin (1945-53) continues to be in good health and to enjoy his "contented semi-retirement" in Thornton-le-Fylde. His only recent disappointment was that he had to miss the Old Romans' Reunion at Palazzola due to a minor health problem! He was extremely disappointed!

Terry Rodgers continues to live in St Winifride's retirement home for priests in Blackpool and is in reasonably good health. Luiz Ruscillo (1983-92) continues to cope with - even thrive on! - the stresses of being Head of the Diocesan Education Service. Michael Smith continues to reside at 11, Low Saintagnesgate, Ripon, and is still available for supply if transport is provided. Adrian Towers continues to delight in the semi-rural parish of St Andrew & Blessed George Haydock, Cottam, and St Mary's, Lea Town - both just outside Preston.

Michael Tully continues with his aspiration to be the longest serving Judicial Vicar in the Universal Church and to be an ever-ready source of advice and support to his fellow priests. I saw Peter Clarke recently at a family funeral in his parish of Sacred Heart, Thornton-le-Fylde. His very carefully prepared funeral ministry was a great comfort to my family. Michael Docherty continues as Luiz's assistant in the Diocesan Education Service but has moved to be priest-in-charge of Our Lady & St Wilfrid, Warwick Bridge, where he has the care of a Grade I listed Pugin church.

Emmanuel (Manny) Gribben has relinquished his post as Director of Vocations for the diocese. His proposed move to St Kentigern's, Blackpool, in September last year did not happen, despite being announced in an Ad Clerum on Holy Thursday, 2010! Instead, he now finds himself in St John the Evangelist, Kirkham, Lancashire. From family in the parish, I gather that he - and they! - are very happy with his move.

Hugh Pollock, despite rumours to the contrary this time last year, is still flourishing as Catholic Chaplain to the University of Lancaster and Dean of one of the Colleges. He is also a very pro-active Chair of the Diocesan Faith and Justice Commission. Stephen Shield continues in his impressively imaginative (and demanding!) ministry as Dean of Lancaster Cathedral. His current venture is "Treasures from the Cope Chest", an exhibition of liturgical vestments past and present. One of the exhibits is a vestment made for Richard L. Smith (Vice-Rector of the College in the 1930s) when he was parish priest here at Our Lady & St Joseph, Carlisle. Probably made for the feasts of Roman and College Martyrs, lavishly painted and embroidered, it reproduces quite exquisitely and accurately the Trinity, St Thomas of Canterbury and St Edmund, King and Martyr, from the Martyrs' Picture in the

College church. I was pleased (and proud) to lend it. John Watson continues to be both over-worked and always hospitable as parish priest of St Mary of Furness and priest-in-charge of Holy Family, Barrow-in-Furness.

Diocese of Leeds

Fr David Bulmer

Bishop Arthur continues as Chairman of ICEL and of the Bishops' Conference Department for Christian Life and Worship and as one of the three bishops responsible for the Colleges in Rome and Valladolid. Billy Steele has stepped down as a member of the English Anglican-Roman Catholic committee after many years of service. Both Billy and Gerry Creasey continue to help out with supply work in the diocese. John Kelly is now PP of St Patrick's, Leeds. Following a year as assistant spiritual director at Valladolid, Chris Willis is to return to the College as Spiritual Director at the start of the new academic year 2011-12. After over nine years in London, most recently as co-ordinator for the Papal Visit, Andrew Summersgill returned to the diocese in January as PP of St Stephen's, Skipton, and was duly inducted on Shrove Tuesday. David Bulmer has spent some time back at the College pursuing further studies. Steven Billington has had a heavy teaching load as philosophy prof. at Ushaw, helping to prepare students for their transfer to other seminaries in autumn 2011. Matthew Habron has moved to Immaculate Heart Church, Leeds, in the new parish of St John Vianney.

The list of clergy is as follows:

Bishop Arthur Roche

Michael Buckley (1950): retired, East Preston, W Sussex.

Peter McGuire (1956): chaplain to the Sisters of Notre Dame, Parbold.

Basil Loftus (1958): retired, Helmsdale, Sutherland.

Billy Steele (1959): retired, Leeds.

Gerald Creasey (1961): retired, Leeds.

John Kelly (1965): St Patrick's, Leeds.

Peter Nealon (1968): St Malachy's, Halifax.

Philip Holroyd (1971): St Theresa's, Leeds.

Kevin Firth (1977): Sacred Heart & St Patrick, Sowerby Bridge.

Chris Willis (1983; further studies at VEC): Royal English College, Valladolid. VEC from September 2011.

Andrew Summersgill (1986): St Stephen's, Skipton.

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 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): Ushaw College.

Matthew Habron (2005): Immaculate Heart, Leeds.

Fr William Burtoft RIP [see obituary, p.108].

Archdiocese of Liverpool

Rev. Thomas Wood

The role call of Old Romans numbers a healthy 31 of those both in and out of ministry. A reminder of their names (and current location) will hopefully evoke happy memories for the reader and perhaps nudge you to get in touch if you are passing by!

It is sad to record that Terry McSweeney died on 28 August 2011, RIP.

Amongst the brethren, John Gaine in Southport celebrates his Diamond Jubilee of Priesthood this year; Roger Daley in Sandfield Park and Luke Dumbill in Rainhill their Golden Jubilees, and Michael O'Dowd in Eccleston his Ruby Jubilee. Aidan Prescott is in Toxteth and has completed yet another degree, this time in canon law, and is working on a doctorate; he has been appointed Vice-Chancellor. John McLoughlin is busy in Huyton, helping us both introduce the new translation of the Missal and the restoration of the order of the Sacraments of Initiation.

Thomas Wood is in Seaforth and presided over the diocesan process for the beatification of Ignatius Spencer CP, a cause dear to the College, and Philip Gillespie in the Isle of Man has, in a manner of speaking, been canonised. Paul Robbins in Widnes continues to work for the Tribunals in Liverpool and Oslo. Paul Crowe has retired from CAFOD, Michael O'Connor and Jonathan Jones are teaching, a profession from which Anthony Murphy in Woolton has recently retired.

Among the other brethren:

Rev. Gerald Anders: Tarleton and Mawdesley

Mgr Peter Cookson: the Cathedral

Mgr Peter Fleetwood: Blundellsands

Mgr John Furnival VG: Crosby

Abp Paul Gallagher: Guatemala

Abp Patrick Kelly: Mossley Hill

Mgr John Kennedy: Southport

Rev. Francis Marsden VF: Chorley

Rev. Peter McGrail: Hope University College

Rev. Brian Murphy JV: Waterloo

Rev. Brian Newns: Scarisbrick

Rev. Kevan O'Brien: St Helens

Rev. David Potter: Aintree Hospitals

Rev. Andrew Robinson: Widnes

Rev. Paul Rowan: Strawberry Hill

Rev. Anthony Slingo: Upholland

Diocese of Malta

Fr Brendan Gatt

At the time of writing, the list of Old Romans in Malta is as follows: 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. There has been no change in the official roles of all of the above as listed in last year's edition of *The Venerabile*. If anything, the workload - be it lecturing at university or working away in the various pastoral roles we hold in the archdiocese - keeps increasing. We often meet informally and at various diocesan events, although given the size of the island that is hardly surprising! Such occasions frequently become moments of happy reminiscing about our Roman (and Venerabile) days and are at times given a boost by visits from Old Roman friends all the way from England, or by seminarians and students currently studying at the VEC. One such memorable visit took place in December 2010 and saw Westminster seminarian Stefan Kaminski come to Malta together with his wonderful family, visiting their Maltese connections. This visit provided many of us with a lovely opportunity for a get-together at which Christmas greetings were exchanged, plentiful snacks were consumed, and much gin and tonic was imbibed! We even got a special viewing of the 2010 Venerabile Christmas Entertainments on Stefan's laptop. All of us left the evening feeling suitably nostalgic about the VEC (and slightly unsteady on our feet).

Diocese of Menevia

Fr Andrew Cole

Mgr Canon Clyde Johnson is still parish priest of the two parishes of the Holy Name, in

Fishguard and St David, Patron of Wales in St David's, in Pembrokeshire. (The Presbytery, Vergam Terrace, Fishguard Pembrokeshire, SA65 9DF).

Michael Burke has been appointed as Dean of St Joseph's Cathedral, in Swansea. He retains his diocesan responsibilities as Judicial Vicar, Vice-Chancellor, communications officer and Master of Ceremonies (Cathedral Clergy House, Convent Street, Swansea, SA1 2BX).

Andrew Cole completed his stint in the Beda College last summer, and is currently on loan to the Diocese of Nottingham, putting his canonical training into practice (Willson House, 25 Derby Road, Nottingham, NG1 5AW).

Liam Bradley left *alma mater* last December, and is currently on a diaconal placement in the inner-city Parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour in Manchester (St Alphonsus' Presbytery, Ayres Road, Manchester, M16 7GP).

Diocese of Middlesbrough

Canon Alan Sheridan

Mgr David Hogan: Still PP of St Bernadette's, Nunthorpe. Still Grand High President and Lord of all He surveys – sorry President of the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland. Offering invaluable advice on the historic churches of our diocese.

Canon Alan Sheridan: Now parish priest of St George's, York and still Chancellor and JV which involves a drag of a commute twice a week but someone has to do it!

Fr William Massie: Moderator of the clergy of the combined parishes of Scarborough, Vocations Director for the diocese and working well in this capacity. Sadly Fr William lost his mum this year and we offer our condolences.

Fr John Paul Leonard: Appointed as pastoral director to the College. Brushing up his Italian and his moral theology. One can only hope.

Fr Stephen Maughan: Now resident in English Martyrs' York. Still chaplain and teacher at All Saints School, York. Chaplaincy co-ordinator for the diocese. Has finally managed to relinquish musical responsibility for the diocese to a layman.

Diocese of Northampton

Mgr Sean Healy

There has been no significant movement of *Venerabilini* in the diocese since last year. David Barrett is now back in the diocese after his pursuit of a Roman doctorate and is the parish priest of Our Lady of Peace, Burnham. We are also looking forward to the return of Paul Donovan to the diocese when his Commission in the Royal Navy comes to an end this year.

Diocese of Nottingham

Fr Mark Brentnall

A fairly stable year it appears with very few moves in the diocese; however, we have had a few changes to the Roman brethren: Mgr Brian Dazeley has retired as Provost of the Cathedral Chapter and is now a canon emeritus along with Canon Bernard Needham. Fr Christopher Thomas has been appointed to serve as Episcopal Vicar for Finance and Moderator of the Curia. Fr Mark Brentnall has been appointed as Vicar-Delegate for Overseas Clergy and Ethnic Chaplaincies, and Chaplain to East Midlands Airport.

This year marks the Golden Jubilee of Mgr Brian Dazeley. He studied for the priesthood at St Hugh's Tollerton and the Venerable, being ordained to the Priesthood 29 October 1961. He served as curate at St Theresa's, Aspley, until 1966 when he was asked to teach at the minor seminary. In 1974 he was appointed PP of Our Lady of the Angels at East Leake, followed by appointments to: St Wilfrid's,

Coalville (1976-1980), SS Peter & Paul's, Lincoln (1980-1985), and Administrator of the Cathedral (1985-1992). In 1992 Mgr Dazeley was appointed as Rector of the Beda College in Rome (1992-1998). From 1998 to 2008 he served as PP of Holy Trinity at Newark, and from 2008 has been the PP of Our Lady of Victories at Southwell. He was appointed to the Cathedral Chapter in 1985, became a Prelate of Honour in 1992 and served as Provost of the Chapter from 2002 until this year.

Mgr John Hadley celebrates his Ruby anniversary this year. Having studied at the Venerable he was ordained to the Priesthood on 19 December 1971. He served as a curate at the cathedral until 1974 when he embarked upon further studies at Cambridge University for three years, after which he was appointed to the staff of the minor seminary at Tollerton where he remained until 1984. He served as curate at St Joseph's, Leicester, for just a year before being made the PP of St Mary's at Grimsby. In 1998 he was appointed as PP of St Pius X at Narborough. Mgr Hadley serves as Chancellor of the diocese.

Rev Canon Edward Jarosz will move in September from St Peter's, Leicester, to the parish of Holy Souls, Scunthorpe; Rev John Cahill will move from Holy Souls, Scunthorpe to St Peter's, Leicester, and will act as assistant Vocations Director for the diocese. Rev Andrew Cole, recently arrived from the Diocese of Menevia, will move to Bishop's House as Bishop's Chaplain and take over the Chaplaincy at the University of Nottingham as Fr Christopher Thomas has now moved to be the Episcopal Vicar for Finance and Moderator of the Curia. Mgr Brian Dazely although retired as Provost of the Cathedral Chapter will continue as Episcopal Vicar for Retired Clergy.

Diocese of Plymouth

Fr Michael Koppel

Most Plymouth *Venerabilini* have shown their customary stability over the last year. Only a couple of changes spring to mind. Our Vicar General, Robert Draper, has moved from St Austell to Sherborne, and Michael Wheaton has taken over responsibility for the Catholic Chaplaincy at Exeter University and for the National Shrine of St Boniface at Crediton. Both are showing every sign of happiness in their new positions.

Diocese of Portsmouth

Fr Phillip Pennington Harris

Bruce Barnes (1997): Sacred Heart, Bournemouth, Dorset

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

Michael Feben (1964): retired, Newport, Isle of Wight

Gerard Flynn (1999): Vocations Director; Coordinating Pastor of the Isle of Wight; St Thomas of Canterbury, Newport with St Saviour, Totland Bay, Isle of Wight

David Forrester (1972): retired, Abingdon, Oxfordshire

Jeremy Garrett (1975): Rector, St John's Seminary, Womersley, Guildford, Surrey

Alan Griffiths (1974): Hampshire Downs Parish (St Gregory, Alresford, Hants)

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

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

Peter Hart (1980): Coordinating Pastor of Alton-Petersfield, St Mary, Alton, Hampshire
+ Crispian Hollis (1965): Bishop's House, Portsmouth, Hampshire

James Joyce (1971): Corpus Christi, Wokingham, Berkshire

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

Brian Murphy-O'Connor (1954): retired, Winchester, Hampshire

Cyril Murtagh (1957): The Immaculate Conception, Liphook, Hampshire

John Nelson (1984): VG; English Martyrs, Reading, Berkshire

Simon Thomson (1994): Our Lady of Lourdes with St Swithun, Southsea, Hampshire

Terence Walsh (1944): retired, Southampton, Hampshire

Also currently resident: Mgr Bryan Chestle: St John's Convent, Kiln Green, Berkshire

Diocese of Salford

Fr Paul Daly

Seniores priores!

Our Provost, Mgr Canon Michael Quinlan, ex OND, continues to preside over the Cathedral Chapter from his parish on the banks of the Mersey. He is the only Old Roman to sit in the non-existent Canons' Stalls. However, Ian Farrell is Episcopal Vicar for Vocation and Christopher Dawson is Presiding Judge (and a good judge too) of the Diocesan Tribunal and Chancellor as well.

Mgr Michael McConnon is enjoying life at Nazareth House and is hard to beat at Scrabble. Rumours that he invents philosophical terms to gain triple letter scores have been denied. At Nazareth House too is the inimitable Mgr John O'Connor. Tony Grimshaw is PP at the anticamera dell'anticamera del Paradiso, cio è Chipping. He is in training for next year's Grand National on his trusty steed which can run, battery permitting, at up to eight miles an hour. Meanwhile in Prestwich our Martyrs' Day host, John Allen, approaches his Golden Jubilee in 2012. We expect great celebrations.

Last year's AGM at DOP saw Tony Dearman staying at Palazzola for the first time since he left. Tony taught maths and additional maths to your scribe who still remembers his explanation of binary.

John Marsland, having had to oversee the closure of Ushaw, awaits a new challenge. Surely he is too young to follow Mgr Jim Sullivan after he had closed Lisbon, and come to Rome. Nick Paxton works hard in various matters academical and is in demand around the parishes as is David Quilligotti whose impish sense of humour brightens many a gathering.

Robert Lasia has moved from being Judicial Vicar to being Prison Chaplain and Senior Chaplain at that. Geoffrey Marlor, whom your scribe remembers as a skilled panto writer, is now PP in Whalley Range. James Manock has built himself a church in Radcliffe and is now teaching us how to pronounce the new translation. Tim Hopkins, having breathed fresh life into East Manchester, has now moved on, like a whirlwind, to Denton where he is doing great things. Mark Harold has moved temporarily from the diocese and is somewhere in the Meditteranean. Gerard Byrne is looking after us all at St. Luke's in Manchester. Andrew Stringfellow is busy engaging with the local community in Shameless country which is East Manchester. Finally John Flynn is Chaplain to Salford Uni and is also dealing with the press and managing the Diocesan Website. Father Ray Matus from "down south" continues his valuable ministry at the church of the Holy Name on Europe's busiest bus route, Oxford Road in Manchester. The spirit of St Ignatius inspired its building; we hope that the spirit of St Philip Neri will sustain its future.

Oh! And I am in Heywood where, every now and again, it is a joy to welcome Julie and members of the Piacentini family to their English hometown!

Shrewsbury Diocese

Fr Paul Shaw

Some boundaries are obvious, such as the coast of Italy. When we fly down to Rome and hug that amazing coastline we realise we're coming back to what was home for all of us at different periods. Some anniversaries are public celebrations, others we keep quietly in the silence of our hearts. This year, Shrewsbury Diocese welcomed our new Bishop, Mark Davies, after a year or so working alongside Bishop Brian Noble as his coadjutor. Welcome, Bishop Mark! He didn't have to come far, not so much "Crossing the Tiber" as crossing the Manchester Ship Canal; Lancashire to Cheshire and Salford Diocese to Shrewsbury. Parts of that boundary are awesome, such as looking across from Birkenhead or Wallasey to the Liverpool Waterfront, and some are hard to spot, especially in Stockport, where the River Mersey runs underground. There is a metaphysical moment walking up the A6 when you pass from one county and diocese to another. North of the line was where Bishop Mark was born and bred, a pupil at St Anne's High School in Stockport and ordained at St Joseph's Reddish, in the same town.

So, what sort of boundary is it from one bishop to another? At one level, the work of the diocese, the parishes and schools goes on much as before; but at another level, each bishop brings his own vision and priorities to the task, and that way the Church grows and moves on. Cabinet reshuffles bring out the Sir Humphrey in all of us, and Old Romans featured strongly in Bishop Mark's new team. Warm congratulations to Philip Egan on his appointment as our new Vicar General, someone who brings a wealth of experience from university chaplaincy to seminary formation to academic research, all interspersed with a great deal of parish work. My own first introduction to Phil was as a

first year student, home for the summer holidays and on placement at St Peter's, Wythenshawe. Phil was assistant in the next door parish, St Anthony's, and went out of his way to make me welcome and show me the area and especially the huge Wythenshawe hospital. When you're a first year student, that sort of welcome you don't forget. Congratulations too to David Charters on his appointment as Bishop Mark's Secretary.

Boundaries are funny things. "Greater Manchester" was never a popular entity. Those on the north side – Bury, Burnley, Rochdale, Oldham – think the south side very odd. As one old Lancashire lady said to me once, "It's far too flat – it can't be healthy." Stockport was my second parish after St Joseph's, Sale: in both cases, any reference to being in Greater Manchester was firmly corrected to "Cheshire, father!" Stockport shades into leafy suburbs on its southern side, and that's where I first met Frank McManus at St Vincent's, Bramhall (the next door parish). Frank was called home to the Lord on 19 September 2010, after 58 years in the priesthood. A soft, gentle man, he loved talking about his time at the College as part of the generation that went back after the war to pick up the pieces following the forced and hasty evacuation of May 1940. Seven years at Ushaw (1939-46), he was a further seven years in Rome (1946-53), ordained in the Chiesa Nuova in December 1952, and back on the mission the following summer to yet another of those extraordinary Wythenshawe parishes, SS John and Thomas. Seven churches served the one housing estate in those days, built in the 1920s to meet the needs of slum clearance from inner-city Manchester. Covering an area of 11 square miles, it was reputed to be the largest council estate in Europe. Where one parish ran into another, only a local expert would remotely be able to guess.

Always a proud Roman, Frank was parish priest in Oswestry, Ellesmere Port and Liscard (Wallasey), before serving 13 years in Bramhall. He always loved news of the College, and if I didn't have any, I had to make some up. Perhaps the only boundary that really matters is that bourn from which no traveller returns. May we all travel well, and enjoy the *ricevimento* when we get there.

Archdiocese of Southwark

Fr Dominic Allain

Archbishop Kevin MacDonald is enjoying an active retirement.

Bishop John Hine continues to exercise his ministry in Kent and as the Bishops' Conference spokesman on Marriage and Family Life.

Bishop Paul Hendricks is Bishop in South-West London and is based in Carshalton.

Fr William Agley is the parish priest of St Mary and St Paul's Cray. He is also judicial vicar for the Southwark Metropolitan Tribunal.

Fr Dominic Allain is the parish priest of St Osmund, Barnes and continues to help with the chaplaincy at the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School.

Fr Stephen Boyle is the parish priest of Good Shepherd, New Addington.

Fr Charles Briggs combines his responsibilities as parish priest of St Mary, Chislehurst with those of the Diocesan Archivist.

Fr Paul Connelly is the parish priest of the Holy Cross, Plumstead Common.

Canon Michael Cooley is the parish priest of Our Lady of La Salette and St Joseph, Bermondsey, Melior Street.

Fr Tom Creagh-Fuller is now the parish priest of St William of York, Forest Hill.

Fr Martin Edwards is the parish priest of St Mary Magdalene, Wandsworth East Hill and chaplain to the Aid to the Church in Need.

Fr Timothy Finigan enjoys continuity as the parish priest of Our Lady of the Rosary, Blackfen. His blog, has notched up three million "hits." He continues to teach part-time at St John's Seminary, Wonersh.

Mgr Timothy Galligan is the parish priest of St Peter's, Bearsted and Harrietsham.

Fr Marcus Holden was recently appointed parish priest of Ramsgate and Minster where he has, *inter alia*, responsibility for restoring a Pugin church.

Fr Stephen Langridge combines his responsibilities as parish priest of the Holy Ghost, Balham, with the task of Vocations Director for Southwark and Director of the National Conference of Vocations Directors. For more details see his excellent blog: *Southwark Vocations*.

Fr Paul Mason is the lead Chaplain at St Thomas' and Guy's Hospitals, two of London's best teaching hospitals.

Fr Leo Mooney is the parish priest of St Dunstan's, Southborough, Kent.

Fr Michael Murphy has retired and is living in Cheshire.

Canon Michael O'Dea is the parish priest of The Faithful Virgin, Upper Norwood.

Fr Simon Peat is the parish priest of St Winifrede's, South Wimbledon and teaches part-time at St John's Seminary, Wonersh.

Fr David Standley is the parish priest of St Vincent de Paul, Clapham Common.

Fr Richard Whinder is now parish priest at St Mary Magdalene's, Mortlake.

Archdiocese of Westminster

Fr Philip Miller

Recent changes 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: PP, Buntingford, with Puckeridge and Old Hall Green

Keith Bartrop: PP, *St Mary of the Angels*, Bayswater

David Barnes: PP, *SS Anselm & Cecilia*, Lincoln's Inn Fields

Jim Brand: Administrator, *St John Fisher*, Chorleywood

Michael Brockie: PP, *Holy Redeemer & St Thomas More*, Chelsea; Provost of Cathedral Chapter

Gerry Burke: Retired, Feltham

Dominic Byrne: PP, *Our Lady of Dolours*, Hendon

Antony Conlon: Oratory School, Reading

John Conneely: Diocesan Tribunal

Antony Convery: PP, *SS Michael and Martin*, Hounslow

John Deehan: PP, *St Thomas More*, 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, *Our Lady*, Stephendale Road

Mark Langham: Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, Vatican

Robert LeTellier: Further Studies, Cambridge

Hugh Mackenzie: PP, *St Mary Magdalen*, Willesden Green

Eddie Matthews: PP *St Joseph*, Bishop's Stortford

Paul McDermott: PP, *St Agnes*, Cricklewood

Paul McPartlan: Professor, Catholic Univ. of America (and International Theol. Commission)

Shaun Middleton: Westminster Cathedral / awaiting appointment

Philip Miller: PP, *St Augustine*, Hoddesdon

Peter Newby: PP, *St Mary*, Moorfields

James Neal: *Holy Trinity*, Brook Green

John O'Leary: Private Secretary to the Archbishop

Jim Overton: PP, *St Michael*, Ashford

Terry Phipps: PP, *Immaculate Conception & St Joseph*, Hertford

Dermot Power: Spiritual Director, Allen Hall

Javier Ruiz: Further Studies: *Venerable English College, Rome*

Paschal Ryan: PP, *Our Lady of Good Counsel*, Stoke Newington

Digby Samuels: PP, *St Patrick*, Wapping

Nicholas Schofield: PP, *Our Lady of Lourdes & St Michael*, Uxbridge, & Diocesan Archivist

Alexander Sherbrooke: PP, *St Patrick*, Soho Square

Gerard Skinner: PP, *St Gabriel*, Harrow South, & *St Bernard*, Northolt

Michael Tuck: PP, *St Ignatius*, Sunbury on Thames

Mark Vickers: PP, *St Peter*, Hatfield, & chaplain to University of Hertfordshire

Chris Vipers: PP *St Lawrence*, Feltham

Frank Wahle: Retired, Baker Street

Stephen Wang: Dean of Studies and Formation Adviser at Allen Hall Seminary

Philip Whitmore: Secretariat of State, Vatican



Obituaries

Bishop Mervyn Alexander

Canon Thomas Atthill

Mervyn Alexander, eighth Bishop of Clifton, was the third Old Roman Bishop of Clifton of the 20th century: Ambrose Burton (1902–1931), Joseph Rudderham (1949–1974) and Mervyn Alexander (1974–2001) led the Church of Clifton for 81 years.

Mervyn was born on 6 June 1926 in London, his family moving the following year to Salisbury, still one parish at that time. His education began at St Osmund's, the parish school, and continued at Bishop Wordsworth's grammar school. When Mervyn made known his desire to be a priest, Bishop Lee moved him to Prior Park, Bath, then run by the Christian Brothers. Mervyn always saw himself as a Salisburian. In his letter inviting me to become parish priest of St Osmund's in 1985, he wrote, "I was brought up there, so naturally I think it is a good parish." As bishop, he played a strong pastoral role in supporting Prior Park during its years of change.

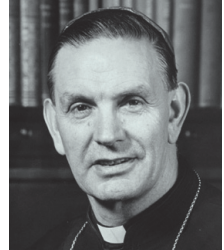
He then joined the English College, at St Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst, (he attended the two reunions there in the 1990s) and was one of the exiles who made the journey to Via di Monserrato in 1946. Aged just 22, he was ordained (in the Leonine College) in July 1948. He stayed on after top year and completed a Greg doctorate in 1951. To Clifton clergy he was "the Doc" all his life.

He spent the next 16 years in Clifton itself. As assistant priest at the pro-cathedral he was also part-time university chaplain. In the early sixties he sought the advice of Fr Michael Hollings, chaplain at Oxford, and was successful in accessing resources to set up the present University of Bristol Catholic Chaplaincy. He took up residence there with a community of students, now as full-time chaplain, in 1964. Bristol students from across the country, indeed the world, remained his life-long friends.

From 1967 he was Parish Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes, Weston-super-Mare. He was in demand in many places too (along with, among others, another Old Roman "Doc", Joe Buckley) in promoting appreciation of the Second Vatican Council. On 25 April 1972 he became auxiliary to Bishop Rudderham, whom he succeeded when he retired in December 1974.

As bishop, Mervyn did all the things post-conciliar bishops were busy doing across the world. He would make the most difficult decisions with care and justice. He apparently also managed to accept every invitation that came his way, from individuals and communities, secular or ecclesiastical. The Christmas cards he sent each year showed an extraordinary memory for personal details and quirks, expressed with wit, kindness and affection.

In the broader scene his special interests are reflected in the national bodies of which he was chairman or vice-chairman: the Liturgy Commission and the Committee for Art and Architecture. He loved liturgy (except trumpets). He presided over the Catholic Child Welfare Council, the RC/Methodist Committee, the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Commission for Non-Believers (also on the Vatican Secretariat). For many years he was Episcopal Advisor to Marriage Encounter. He also chaired the committee responsible for spiritual preparation for the visit of Pope John Paul II.



He was welcomed to celebrate a diocesan Mass in all four of the Anglican Cathedrals in the diocese. When Bishop Jim Thompson of Bath and Wells attended the last of the annual diocesan pilgrimages to Glastonbury before Mervyn retired, he knelt before Mervyn to receive his blessing. Then Mervyn knelt to receive his.

Just before his retirement the University of Bristol recognised their former Catholic chaplain for his contribution to the life of the city by making him an honorary Doctor of Laws.

Having ordained Bishop Declan Lang as his successor on 28 March 2001, Mervyn went back to Weston-super-Mare as parish priest of St Joseph's. In 2008 he moved to St Angela's, Clifton, the convent and residential home of the Sisters of the Temple near the Suspension Bridge. He welcomed visitors, attended special diocesan occasions and made a last visit to Salisbury. He died at St Angela's on 14 August 2010.

A few days later, any sadness that is inevitably present at a funeral was completely overwhelmed—in everyone present, from children to Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor—by pleasure and gratitude for the memory of such a dear pastor. And by trumpets—after all “the Lord goes up with trumpet blast!”

Fr Tony Cornish

Mgr Adrian Toffolo

Although Tony grew up in Plymouth, he was born in Egloskerry, a village over the border in Cornwall. He was always proud of the fact that he was Cornish by name and Cornish by nature. Cornwall for him was a rugged, manly county and there was something strong and uncompromising about him. Once his mind was made up, it was not easily changed: an example of this was his attitude to Mass stipends which he had decided as a student were inappropriate. For over 40 years as a priest he never once wavered from putting his opinion into practice (much to the disadvantage of any priest who might follow him in a parish, one might add!)

Tony was educated at St Boniface's College in Plymouth (a Christian Brothers' Grammar School) and it was general knowledge that he was going to be a priest. He rose to be head boy: here his powers of persuasion were exercised on a speech day when he put forward decisive arguments to Cardinal Godfrey which won an unprecedented three day holiday.

Tony came to the Venerable in 1961 and therefore enjoyed the excitement of the four years of the Second Vatican Council, and the great debates held in the College about how seminary life should change as a result. Tony's voice was often heard in the common room meetings, arguing with conviction and wit for motions such as pastoral placements, more holidays in the UK (in those days there was only one summer at home in seven years), the easing of the “camarata” rule (to allow us to go out on our own instead of in groups of four).

Tony was among the first of Venerable students to be ordained at home: on 17 September 1967 Bishop Restieaux ordained him a priest in Plymouth Cathedral. After his final year in Rome to obtain his STL, Tony came back to work for the next 42 years in the Plymouth Diocese. He was to serve in Devon and Dorset but never in Cornwall: in four parishes as assistant priest, and in four as parish priest. In his time he served as chaplain in schools, hospitals, a polytechnic, and prisons; he had a spell helping at the marriage tribunal and worked in local radio. He was a pastoral all-rounder, and having followed him in two parishes, I can testify that people appreciated most of all his pastoral care: when someone was in trouble and turned to him, Tony would leave no stone unturned to help.

Tony's relish of a good debate never left him: he served several spells on the Council of Priests and the National Conference of Priests. His opinion was always given with conviction and honesty: people may not always have agreed with him but they always respected him.

Tony fought cancer for two years, and at one stage seemed much better. Towards the end of 2009, however, he became ill again, and finally died on the Feast of the Annunciation 2010.

Mgr Bart Nannery, Dean of Plymouth Cathedral and friend of Tony said at the parish Requiem Mass: "With Tony, people got what they saw, a profoundly human man, a great priest of God, who was priestly but never clerical, prayerful but never pious, human but never worldly, kind but never patronising, compassionate but never condescending and above all courageous while never intimidating" – a fitting tribute. May he rest in peace.

Fr William Burtoft

Christopher Willis

Fr William Burtoft (known as Bill to his friends) was born in Rotherham, South Yorkshire on 3 September 1926. He died on the evening of the Exaltation of the Cross on 14 September 2010. He studied at De La Salle College, Sheffield, prior to graduating in chemistry at Sheffield University. Cured of a serious illness (polio), Bill decided to apply for the Diocese of Leeds and went to the Venerable to study for the priesthood, attending the Gregorian University. He was ordained priest at the Church of San Marcello al Corso on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady on 8 December 1954. At St Bede's Grammar School, Bradford, where Bill would subsequently teach for 31 years (1956 – 87), the feast of Our Lady was always a day of celebration for the school. Academic study was not permitted – one rule of the school that was observed!

After ordination, Bill served as an assistant priest at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish in Chapeltown, Leeds, for two years. He frequently returned to the parish where he was revered as a confessor. In 1956 he was appointed as a teacher of RE and Chemistry at St Bede's, Bradford, receiving several promotions which culminated in his appointment as head teacher in 1977. His management style was collaborative; his vision was that of an educationalist who would influence a broad Church, always anxious and generous in helping any school, teacher or pupil in need. Bradford Education Authority remains heavily indebted to him.

Bill was a man of sharp intellect who thought and encouraged his students to think "outside the box". It was a brave student who would remark in his presence: "We have always done it this way!" He had a keen sense of humour and his spirit of joy, verging on being mischievous, was infectious. He firmly believed that academic progress and pastoral welfare were a unity. Consequently, Bill was a man and a priest who worked ceaselessly at being charitable. He inspired, supported and encouraged countless young men to consider serving the Catholic Church as diocesan priests or as religious – not so much by his words but by the example of his life. One wanted to be like him – including the author of this obituary. He was "inspirational".

Several priests and people in the diocese were privileged to have Fr Bill as their spiritual director. As far as one can tell his spirituality was influenced by St Ignatius of Loyola. He certainly lived a life of simplicity and his care and genuine concern for others always came before his own needs. In 1987 Bill retired from teaching and was appointed as parish priest to Our Lady of Graces parish, Kinsley, in West Yorkshire, where he was greatly loved. Ill health forced him to retire. He lived for several years in an apartment adjacent to that of his sister in Rotherham. In a humble way Fr Bill Burtoft was nothing but zealous in his service of the Church and love of the priesthood and tireless in the service of thousands of young men in the field of education. Taken from this world may he now share in the Eternal Life. May he rest in peace.



Report of the Friends of the Venerable 2011

Jo Barnacle

The Annual General Meeting 2010

This was our 23rd Annual Meeting and the Silver Jubilee of the Founding of the Friends 25 years ago. The meeting was held at Holy Trinity church, Brook Green, London, in the excellent parish facilities attached to the church. After an opening prayer and welcome from the Chairman, Fr Mark Harold, the College's Vice-Rector, brought us up to date with what was happening in the life of the College with the aid of the Rector's excellent PowerPoint presentation. We experienced again the opening of the refurbished College Church in its rich splendour. We were taken through the Exhibition in the Crypt, following the route across the sea, on which Fr Andrew and his team had worked so hard. Fr Mark paid tribute to Fr Andrew and all he had achieved in the transformation of the College buildings as well as the exhibition and at Palazzola. The presentation was followed by the business meeting.

The Chairman opened the meeting with the topic that was our major concern. Our membership had dropped considerably over the last few years and we needed to have a recruitment drive to increase our numbers so that we had more money for our College projects. The Annual Accounts were given by Hamish Keith and they showed a drop in our income of £3000 over the previous year. We committed ourselves to alerting the College and Palazzola that we needed their help and commitment to encouraging more visitors to join our ranks. A new Committee was elected: Jo Barnacle (Chairman), a new Honorary Secretary, Jim Holroyd, Hamish Keith (Membership secretary), Mike Lang, Carol Richardson, Yvonne Veale, Jeremy Hudson, Simon Howell, Rodney Webb, Anthony Coles (ex-officio), Fr Tom Wood (Chaplain) and John Broun (co-opted member). Thanks were extended to John Broun for his years as Honorary Secretary. Members were reminded to pray for staff and students of the College. Over the last year the friends had contributed to the retiling of part of the pool at Palazzola and to purchasing new computers for the students. The meeting was followed by a buffet lunch and social time. Our afternoon speaker was Rev. Liam Bradley (senior student). Liam is a trained guide for the Scavi which are the excavations of the Necropolis beneath St Peter's Basilica. He gave us an in-depth history and geography of the area including the location of St Peter's tomb. It was an excellent talk given by someone who really knew his subject and was enthusiastic about it. Our day concluded with the Mass of the Guardian Angels concelebrated by Fr Mark Harold and Fr Tom Wood, assisted by deacons Liam Bradley and Mark Woods. Fr Mark delivered a thought-provoking homily. The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and the Committee for all their hard work and wished all a safe journey home.

Each year we try to arrange an outing; sometimes it is in Rome or perhaps a site of historical interest. This year it took place on 12 March with a visit to the Birmingham Oratory. We attended the Pilgrim Mass in the main Church with a homily by Fr Paul Chavasse. We progressed to the Shrine Chapel for prayers and veneration of a relic of Blessed John Henry Newman. Philip Lefebvre then gave us a fascinating tour of the shrine and the Church telling us of its history and so many interesting facts about Blessed John Henry.

We watched a silent video and looked around the exhibition. We had a shared table lunch and had planned to go on to St Chad's Cathedral but this was in use for the Rite of Election service. Most in attendance were pleased because it gave them time to re-visit the exhibition at leisure.

At our committee meeting on 9 February, held at Westminster Clergy House, Archbishop Vincent Nichols presented John Broun with the Papal Medal, *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*, in recognition of his 14 years as Honorary Secretary of the Friends. We will celebrate his award at our Annual Meeting in September when his wife Judith will be in attendance.

Friends of the Venerable (The Venerable English College, Rome)



Join us to help the College Students By Prayer, Support and Funds

Minimum subscription is £20 per annum, £30 per family.
Payment if possible by Standing Order.

For your membership you will:

- Receive *The Venerable Journal* each year
- Receive *The Venerable View Newsletter* twice a year
- Be entitled to wear the Friends' Tie and Badge
- Have the chance to enjoy a Friends' Outing or Pilgrimage
- Be kept in touch with the College
- Have the satisfaction that you are helping in its good work

For further information please contact the Membership Secretary:

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House List 2010-11

Staff

Mgr Nicholas Hudson	Rector
Fr Mark Harold	Vice-Rector
Mgr Philip Carroll	Spiritual Director
Fr Anthony Milner	Theology Tutor
Fr John Paul Leonard	Pastoral Tutor

3rd Cycle

Priests

Fr David Bulmer	Leeds
Fr Jonathan Farrugia	Malta
Fr Javier Ruiz	Westminster

2nd Cycle (Year III)

Priests

Fr Kevin Schembri	Malta
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2nd Cycle (Year II)

Priests

Fr Jonathan Brandon	Shrewsbury
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Deacons

Rev. Liam Bradley	Menevia
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2nd Cycle (Year I)

Priests

Fr Nicholas Doublet	Malta
Fr Guy De Gaynesford	Plymouth

Seminarians

Michael Doody	Leeds
Joseph Gee	Salford
Michael Patey	Northampton

1st Cycle Theology (Year III)

John Carlisle	Leeds
Michael Coughlan	Shrewsbury
David Doran	Birmingham
Edward Henley	Westminster
Stefan Kaminski	Westminster
Alexander MacDonald	Antigonish
John Poland	Liverpool
Benjamin Theobald	Portsmouth

1st Cycle Theology (Year II)

Guido Amari	Westminster
Marc Homsey	Leeds
Steven Leightell	Middlesbrough
Colin Mason	Clifton
Anthony McGrath	Shrewsbury

1st Cycle Theology (Year I)

Sean Crawley	Leeds
Matthew O'Gorman	Southwark
Anthony Rosso	Leeds

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year II)

Kasper Baadsgaard	Copenhagen
Thomas Cunnah	Shrewsbury
Jan Hansen	Copenhagen
David Howell	Southwark
Derek Hyett	Westminster

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year I)

Philip Andrews	Southwark
Olafur Haukur Arnason	Reykjavik
Stephen O'Brien	Arundel and Brighton
Peter Stoddart	Hexham and Newcastle
Elliott Wright	Leeds

Anglican Exchange

Marcus Walker	Ripon College Cuddesdon
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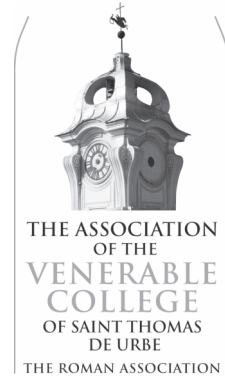
The Roman Association Trust

(Registered as a Charity no.1085919)

Trustees: Revv. David Bulmer, Michael Cooley,
Stephen Coonan, Paul Daly, Paul Keane,
Anthony Wilcox.

What is the Trust?

The Association of the Venerable College of St Thomas de Urbe (The Old Romans) has a Trust Fund invested in a portfolio of stocks and shares. This makes regular substantial donations to support the College Development Plan and improve living conditions for the students.



What has it done?

Since 2000, the Trust has given over £288,000 to the College supporting such projects as the new Gradwell Lecture Room, the creation of *en suite* bathrooms on the Common Room and St Joseph's Corridors, the refurbishment of the Mayfair Corridor (seven guest rooms), the provision of a new portable pipe organ and, most recently, improvements to the College entrance area.

How can you help?

This is your fund and we need your support to continue to endow the College. Here is what you can do to help.

- Send a donation to the address below, payable to the "Roman Association Trust".
- Take out a standing order with your bank to make a regular donation.
- If you pay tax, the Trust can benefit from Gift Aid from such donations.
- Remember the Trust when making your will.
- Join the Roman Association to keep up to date with College news and developments and encourage other Old Romans to do likewise.

Further information from:

Mgr Anthony Wilcox, 31 Vicarage Road, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxon, RG9 1HT
Tel. 01491 573258. Email: anthony@sacredhearthenley.co.uk

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COME AND ENJOY VILLA PALAZZOLA

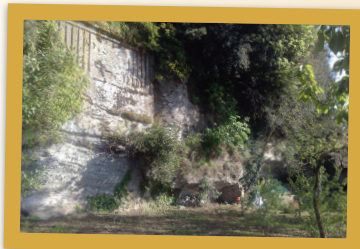
Every former student of the English College has wonderful memories of Villa Palazzola: the setting, peace and quiet, a prayerful atmosphere, clean air, the tank, bracing walks, delicious meals.

Palazzola is now open to individuals and groups who come for a retreat, days of recollection, a conference, a family gathering, sabbatical courses, a few days of peace and quiet or a relaxing holiday.

If you are planning a parish pilgrimage or a school trip to Rome then Palazzola is the perfect location. We can arrange airport pick-ups and transport to and from Rome so you can enjoy all the delights of the eternal city while relaxing at the end of the day in the idyllic surroundings of the Villa.

Palazzola's comfortable rooms and full board offer excellent value. Have a look at our website to discover everything you need to know about booking your stay.

We look forward to seeing you soon.



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

Tel. 00 3906 9474 9178
