



The Venerabile
2015





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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: Detail of the roundel of St Edmund in the Church of the Venerable English College. Used by kind permission of Gangemi Editore S.p.A.

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

Please visit our websites: www.vecrome.org and www.palazzola.it

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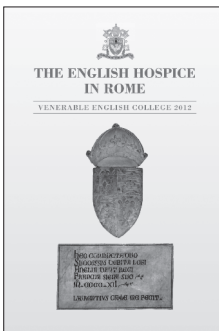
Recent books on the English College

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

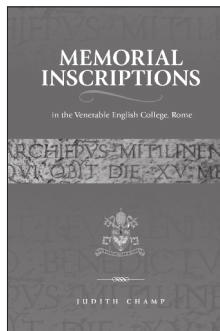
They can be purchased by callers to the College or ordered by e-mail from this address:

secrec.vec@vecrome.org

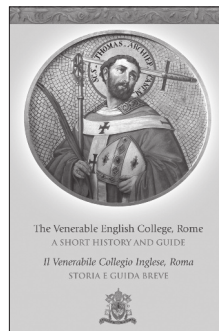
Each is a delight to read and in purchasing them you are helping to support the College.



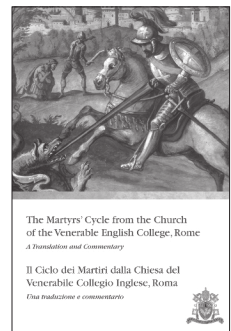
The English Hospice in Rome €20



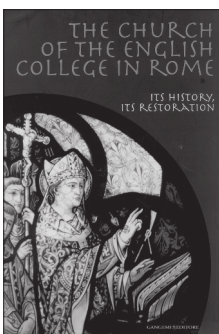
Memorial Inscriptions, Judith Champ, €10



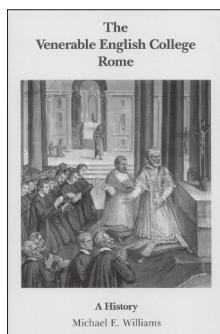
The Venerable English College, Rome: A Short History and Guide, Mark Langham, €10



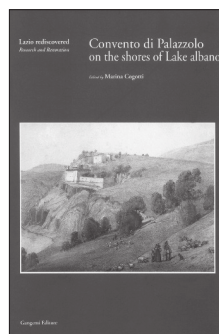
The Martyrs' Cycle from the Church of the Venerable English College, Paul Keane, €10



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



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



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

Hardbacks of the College History and Guide and The Martyrs' Cycle are available as a limited edition, both presented in a handsome slip case. The perfect gift for jubiliarians and for that special birthday or Christmas gift.
€35

Some back issues of *The Venerabile* are also available at €15 per copy including postage and packing.

Welcome to the 2015 edition of *The Venerabile*

Editorial

FIFTY YEARS ON, the events of 1965 have not lost their significance. Many questions raised decades ago continue to resound as the Church marks half a century since the close of the Second Vatican Council. That such an anniversary should follow so noteworthy an academic year presents an editorial challenge. Our 2015 edition seeks to join in the Church's commemoration of the conclusion of Vatican II while also capturing some of the excitement of the past twelve months.

We open the edition with Cardinal Pell's homily for Martyrs' Day 2014: a reminder to the current generation of students of the rich tradition we inherit, and the standard to which it calls us. It is fitting that this should be followed by Dr Lucy Underwood's fascinating description of the fruits of her research in the College Archive. She explores a collection of sermons preached in the presence of popes by English College students, beginning with Bl. John Cornelius in 1581.

Our subsequent features are bookended by pieces in which students Richard Howard and Peter Taylor give personal reports of the College's pilgrimages to the Holy Land (October) and Turin (May/June), with both authors drawing on the teachings of Scripture and the Church's Magisterium as they recount their experiences. Those wondering what was happening "back at the ranch" while students and staff decamped to Jerusalem will enjoy Mgr Anthony Wilcox's account of a low-key visit to the College by The Earl and Countess of Wessex.

Three features point us back to 1965, each constituting a different voice in the debate surrounding the Council's living legacy. Fifty years after *Gravissimum Educationis* and *Optatam Totius* commended the doctrine and method of St Thomas Aquinas to the whole Church, Prof. Edward Feser mounts a robust defence of the Scholastic tradition, noting that mainstream philosophical writers are engaging with Thomism to an extent unseen since the 1950s. Prof. Thomas Pink, meanwhile, offers a striking and provocative take on one of the more disputed conciliar texts, *Dignitatis Humanae*; in so doing he draws attention to continuing academic discussion of the Church's teaching on religious liberty. Finally, Mgr Paul McPartlan contributes a wide-ranging appreciation of Bl. Paul VI's *Mysterium Fidei*, a "conciliar" encyclical overshadowed by contemporaneous events which warrants renewed attention given Pope Paul's recent beatification.

Two features round out our collection. Dominic Jenkinson describes praying for peace in the presence of Our Lord during the College's Forty Hours devotion, highlighting the plight of persecuted Christians around the world. Touching on related themes, Fr Ashley Beck offers an illuminating article on the universal relevance of the teaching and martyrdom of Bl. Óscar Romero, whose beatification took place earlier this year. His heroic witness to the Gospel in the face of political hostility has a particular resonance for students and alumni of the English College.

2015 sees the College community saying *addio* to Fr Chris Willis and Mgr Peter Fleetwood. They will be missed. We also continue to remember Carlo Benvenuti in our prayers. Carlo, whose death came too late in 2014 to secure an obituary in last year's edition, receives here a moving tribute from Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor. Also remembered fondly are Old Romans Mgr Peter McGuire and Fr Denis Marmion.

The *Venerabile* is a group effort, and many thanks are owed to Peter Stoddart (Deputy Editor), Albert Lawes (Business Manager), and Richard Marsden (Secretary) for their various contributions, their wise suggestions, and their cheerful willingness to edit copy in the heat of July. A special mention should be made of Philip Andrews and Peter Taylor (team members past and future, respectively), who proved equally generous with their time and energy. David Howell, “Editor Emeritus”, was gracious in fielding questions.

We are delighted and grateful that this year’s edition is able to feature photographs by our two principal photographers (Alex Balzanella and Antonio Pineda), as well as others by Mgr Peter Fleetwood, Rev. Matthew O’Gorman, and Dominic Jenkinson. Similarly, thanks are owed to all those who contributed obituaries, leavers’ notes, and in various other ways. Fergus Mulligan, our publisher, has been a tremendous support, giving excellent advice and speeding things along. Thanks are due, finally, to Fr Rector, whose counsel and encouragement throughout the year proved invaluable.



FRANCIS MURPHY is a fourth-year seminarian for the Archdiocese of Southwark, studying theology at the Gregorian.

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Please consider leaving a legacy to the Roman Association Trust to benefit seminarians at the English College for decades to come.

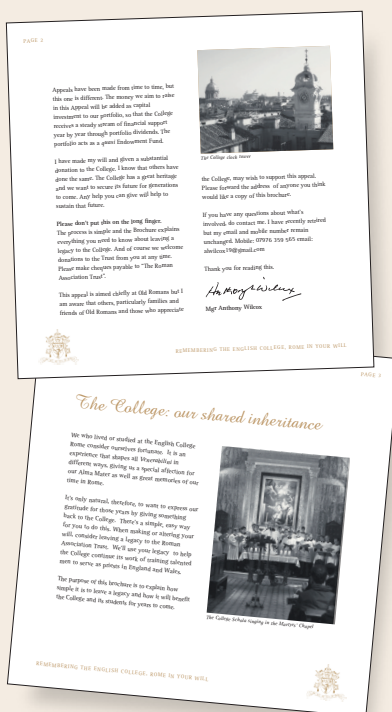
The Roman Association has sent all its members a brochure, “Remembering the English College in your Will”, which explains everything you need to know about leaving a bequest to our Alma Mater.

Further copies are available from:

Mgr Anthony Wilcox, tel. 07976 359 565,
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or from the College.



“Tested by Fire”: Homily for Martyrs’ Day 2014

2 Macc. 7:1-2, 9-14

1 Peter 4:12-19

John 12:24-26

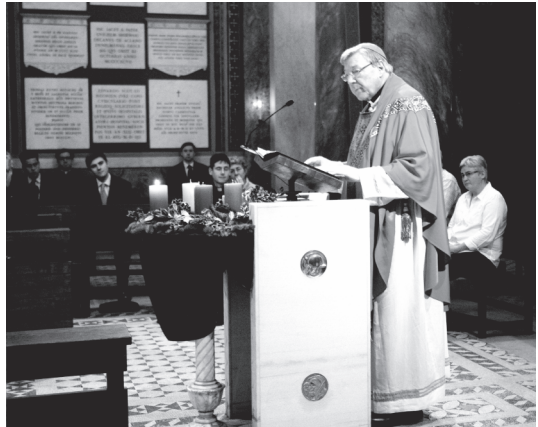
NEARLY THIRTY YEARS ago when I was a seminary rector in Australia I used to offer in my sermons and community addresses - as all rectors do - a mixture of spiritual and practical advice. In my understated approach to such matters, I used to urge the seminarians not to speak about their boring personal lives, but to preach the gospel; to tell their people about God’s love and Jesus’ call to conversion.

This morning I’m not going to follow this advice, at least for the start of my sermon on this feast of the forty-four English College martyrs, which is so central to your identity as future English priests. It must be more than a decade ago when I was visiting this chapel (not for the first time) that I paused to pray and think in this holy place before the painting where the community gathered to sing the *Te Deum*, when the news came through that another of their brothers had become a martyr. As a seminarian I had looked forward to my work as a priest with families and young people in the comparative prosperity, freedom, and priestly respectability of Australian life. The question that came to me here was this one. Would I have thought of becoming a priest, could I have found the courage to become a priest and return home to an almost inevitable martyrdom, where the only alternative was to take the coward’s exit of apostasy?

Naturally, I could not answer that question, but I do know that to come to such a decision it would have been necessary for me to travel a long way spiritually and psychologically.

One initial point might be made in passing. Recent studies by historians such as Eamon Duffy have given the lie to the propaganda of hundreds of years that Catholic life in England in the sixteenth century, beginning with Henry VIII, was an empty shell, weak when it wasn’t corrupt. The evidence does not sustain any such thesis. In fact the destruction of monasteries meant the destruction of the only agencies supporting the poor. It is claimed that as a consequence thousands actually died of hunger.

More germane for our purposes is the fact that hundreds of English men also came to four other formation centres on the continent, not just here in Rome, to become priests and often to



Cardinal Pell preaching his Martyrs’ Day homily.
Photo: Antonio Pineda

work among their persecuted brothers and sisters. Faith had not vanished from the families and communities which produced so many brave men. It is probable that Catholic England then had more seminarians than we have now.

You therefore are blessed and privileged to belong to such a tradition



In fact the suppression and diminishment of the Catholics of England took generations of ruthless and systematic pressure, patient and intelligent, with conspicuous cruelty - but not too much to provoke overall public opinion, such as it was, to act out the conviction that enough was enough. It is an example of English efficiency at its best, for the worst of purposes.

You therefore are blessed and privileged to belong to such a tradition. It is no justification for pride and arrogance, because they set the bar so high. But such a tradition should not be taken lightly and requires from you a prayerful consideration. The final chorus in T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* explains beautifully to us this obligation of religious awe.

We thank Thee for Thy mercies of blood, for Thy redemption by blood. For the blood of Thy martyrs and saints

Shall enrich the earth, shall create the holy places.

For wherever a saint has dwelt, wherever a martyr has given his blood for the blood of Christ, There is holy ground, and the sanctity shall not depart from it...

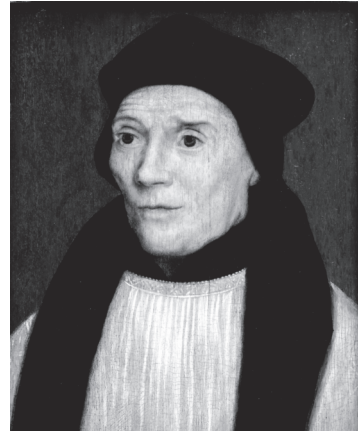
We should not romanticise or water down these men of courage; we should not try to recast them in the pale watercolours of our generation. The Jesuits had not long been founded. Respectable Catholic opinion then looked on them the way the more straitlaced among us look on the Neocatechumenal Way. The Catholics who had supported the more cautious restorationist policies of Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole were deeply uneasy about these firebrands. However, we should be clear that in one way they were not like the Maccabees, who raised an army and fought for their religious freedom against the pagan Greeks. Overwhelmingly, the martyrs from the English College were good servants of their Queen or King. They were tested by fire, the Spirit of God did rest upon them; they struggled to be glad because they had some share in the sufferings of Christ. But they too had their treasure in earthenware jars, often very different jars.

Life in the College was sometimes turbulent and tensions were exacerbated by spies, government agents among the students. St Robert Southwell was a victim of the clash between the secular clergy and the Jesuits who ran the College. St Cuthbert Mayne was the first English seminary priest to be martyred in 1577, but St Ralph Sherwin is the first name in the College register (*Liber Ruber*) who vowed to go to England "today rather than tomorrow". He was also the leader in the English pro-Jesuit party during the "troubles" with the passive conservatism of the Welsh party.

The martyrs' stories are different but always colourful. St Eustace White, on converting, was solemnly cursed by his father William, a staunch Protestant. Tradition tells us that Henry Walpole was sprinkled with blood from St Edmund Campion's brutal execution, which stimulated his conversion. John Lockwood spent forty-four years on the mission before he was executed in 1642. Edward James was arrested aboard a ship off Sussex even before he landed. In the early days before professional executioners, Joseph Lambton's executioner panicked and fled, leaving the drawing and quartering unfinished. A French surgeon who was watching completed the task for twenty shillings. Such stories deserve to be told.

Let me conclude with a brief glimpse into the future. We thank God that no bloody persecution looms on the horizon, that no longer is it a situation of "kill or be killed" between Catholics and Protestants. Ecumenism is a blessing with vast social consequences today, but the signs are not all good. Small harassments are on the increase. Wearing a cross at work has been forbidden;

Evangelicals have been arrested for protesting against homosexuality. In the *Spectator* a couple of weeks ago a “pro-choice” writer highlighted a more ominous development. He had been scheduled to debate abortion against a male pro-lifer at Christ Church, Oxford. Hundreds of furious Oxford students, especially on Facebook, demanded that the debate be cancelled, because the speakers did not have uteruses and because the “students’ mental safety” would be threatened. They reject the idea of free speech, claiming “their right to feel comfortable”. Unfortunately, it was not too surprising that Christ Church, at the centre of one of the world’s leading universities, capitulated to this bullying and halted the debate because of “security and welfare issues”.



John Fisher, by Hans Holbein the Younger (1497-1543). Source: Wikimedia Commons

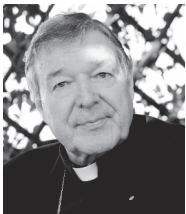
It is one thing for schools today to ban the singing of “Baa Baa, Black Sheep”, but it would be a different world if many of these extremists finished up helping to run the country. Pope Benedict warned about the potential threats from the dictatorship of relativism. He was not wrong. The Catholic Church helped bring freedom in what was the world of European Communism. It is not at all unlikely, even if slightly ironic, that Catholics, and socially conservative Christians, will play an increasing role in the struggle to retain religious freedom and freedom of expression in the English-speaking world. As priests it will be one of your tasks to participate in this struggle and encourage lay women and men of good will to battle publicly for these causes.

I conclude with a prayer from St John Fisher, preached in a sermon in 1508, the last year of Henry VII’s reign and twenty-seven years before Fisher’s execution during the reign of the notorious Henry VIII:

Lord, according to your promise that the Gospel should be preached throughout the whole world, raise up men fit for such work. The apostles were but soft and yielding clay till they were baked hard by the fire of the Holy Ghost.

So, good Lord, do now in like manner with Thy Church militant, change and make the soft and slippery earth into hard stones; set in the Thy Church strong and mighty pillars that may suffer and endure great labours, watching, poverty, thirst, hunger, cold and heat; which also shall not fear the threatenings of princes, persecution, neither death, but always persuade and think with themselves to suffer with a good will, slanders, shame, and all kinds of torments, for the glory and laud of Thy Holy Name. By this manner, good Lord, the truth of Thy Gospel shall be preached throughout all the world.

Therefore, merciful Lord, exercise Thy mercy, show it indeed upon Thy Church.



CARDINAL GEORGE PELL is a member of the Holy Father’s Council of Cardinal Advisers, and the inaugural and current Prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy (since 2014). He previously served as the eighth Archbishop of Sydney (2001-14).

Preaching to the Pope: Ms. Liber 281 at the English College

"...Wherefore, leader of Martyrs, and Stephen the standard-bearer, since out of all Kingdoms and provinces England alone (clearly lest the breed of the Church's martyrs propagated by you should fail in this age) raves against true Christian brothers with tyrannical cruelty, and in particular seeks and thirsts ardently for the blood of the scholars of the Supreme Pontiff, and tears apart in wretched manner by hunger, squalor of prisons, the rack and all excruciating punishments and rips in two whoever is caught, I beg an appeal to you that you would obtain from God by your prayers strength and toughness for these men to the enduring of all things for the religion of the See of Rome, [and] for our souls the despising of all these torments. Be a helper, you who were the inspiration: offer help, you who gave hope; that we who are so kindly sustained in this pontifical, I might almost say Martyrs' Seminary, whenever we come into battle for the religion of our fathers, may out of that seedbed and fountain of martyrs carry off a crown not of dry laurels, and if it must be so, heal the most heavy wounds of the Fatherland with our blood!"¹

NOTHING IF NOT dramatic, the above passage concluded the sermon preached on 26 December 1581 before the court of Pope Gregory XIII, by a scholar of the newest of Rome's "national" seminaries - the Venerable English College. The preacher's name - John Cornelius - and the Latin text of his sermon are preserved in a manuscript volume in the VEC archives, Liber 281. The St Stephen's Day sermon, when the English College preached to the pope, was an annual event until the mid-seventeenth century at least. Liber 281 preserves the texts of forty-four St Stephen's sermons from 1581 to 1643, as well as the names of the preachers. The custom was apparently revived for some years in the mid-nineteenth century, until about 1870, and some nineteenth-century sermons survive elsewhere in the archive.² This series of sermons, though perhaps the most striking element of Liber 281, is not its only fascination. Liber 281 is a collection of the homiletic and literary tradition of the College in its earliest decades. Fifty-five student authors or preachers (not necessarily the same thing) are named; the volume seems to have been compiled gradually, different scribes entering the chosen items more or less in chronological order. The material includes five sermons preached on the feast of St Thomas of Canterbury, the College's patron, and several sermons for other feasts: the Assumption; the Holy Innocents; Holy Trinity; or "Forty Hours" devotions held in the college. Only the St Stephen sermons were preached in the papal chapel; but the audiences of other sermons frequently included cardinals and other dignitaries, often the Cardinal Protector of England, to whom the College looked for patronage.

Homilies are not the only genre represented. Verses (in Latin, naturally) for major feastdays also appear, along with one poem in Greek. There are a number of discourses connected with defences of theses - the live performance by which Renaissance students earned their degrees, "defending" selected propositions or theses in front of an audience. Liber 281 records not the theses themselves, but the polite addresses which accompanied them - speeches of thanks or dedication, often (again) addressed to the Cardinal Protector.

Other speeches are connected with particular occasions. There is a welcome address to an unidentified Polish prince from 1584 (pp.92-6), and a similar one to the son of the Duke of Guise in 1586 (pp.143-5).³ This last one trod a rhetorical knife-edge. The House of Guise were the leaders of

the “Catholic League”, the militant wing of French Catholicism, which advocated uncompromising war against the Huguenots in France and the Protestant rebels in the Netherlands, and was generally fairly hostile to the Protestant government of Elizabeth I of England, who considered the French Huguenots among her special protégés. The English College, of course, emphasised that its purpose was pastoral and spiritual and insisted on its political neutrality. Entertaining the Guise in 1586 was awkward from that point of view. Not entertaining them would have been difficult because they largely funded the sister seminary at Rheims. The speaker, Laurence Owen, expounded the noble and Christian virtues of the Guise family and their defence of the faith. He alluded to the 1563 assassination of the then Duke as a “martyrdom”. These views, if not without their partisans in France and elsewhere, would not have received universal assent.

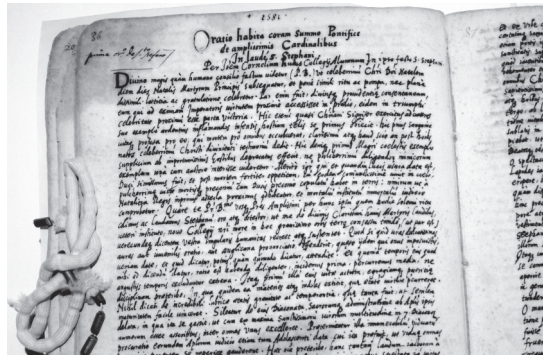
But having praised the Guise as unequalled defenders of the Church, Owen went on to exclaim: “Oh therefore happy France, since that family has come after these events, who have always preserved you unharmed from the plagues of the heretics. Would that in thee o unhappy England such and so many men had been born in this age who were able to watch out for your many evils.”⁴ England’s misfortune was that she didn’t have the Guise. Again, this proposition might not have received universal consent, but the point is that the speaker, rather than prioritise the cause of religion over the cause of nation, identifies the cause of religion with the defence of the nation. He concluded by promising that “... our bodies, our studies, and finally our lives and our blood, together with you, we always oppose (with God helping) against the rages and attacks of the heretics.”⁵ The phrasing avoids any suggestion of military action. What is promised are prayers, vows, studies, and a willingness for martyrdom. But nevertheless a common cause with the Guise and their Catholic League is proposed - a common cause of defending one’s nation from the dire threat of heresy.

The specific purposes for compiling the volume are not immediately clear. One may have been educational as most of the items are exercises in some form of rhetoric - the art of creating effective speeches - which might have been used as examples for students in their own studies hence, for example, the inclusion of dedications to theses, but not the theses. That people did return to the volume to read it is suggested by notes such as that at the end of John Cornelius’ 1581 St Stephen sermon: “Thus the martyr concluded for the protomartyr”, an observation which must have been added after Cornelius’ martyrdom in 1594. Recording so many sermons may have had a certain practical function. In one sermon for St Thomas of Canterbury, the original text has been crossed through and written over in many passages, producing a second text adapted from the first. A marginal note records: “This oration, because it is combined with others in place is not well continued.” It looks rather as though someone had recycled this sermon at a later date, while a similar note at the end of another St Stephen sermon suggests that it too may have been re-used.⁶ It would be natural to keep a record of what was preached to the papal household on St Stephen’s day, surely an important public event for the College. These sermons may have been copied for circulation. Entries in the College account books record payments such as “paid... for one copy of the St Stephen oration”.⁷ But these entries are not regular.

The form and purpose of Liber 281 may have evolved as earlier entries include more miscellaneous items, such as a copy of the faculties given to the first Jesuit mission to England and the obituaries of two students who died at the College, Edward Throckmorton (d.1582) and George Gilbert (d.1583) There are also copies of both of these in the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu.⁸ Later, the focus becomes more defined: sermons; verses for liturgical occasions; and most prominently the St Stephen’s sermons, which are the only (dated) entries for the last thirty years the volume covers.

As mentioned, fifty-five College students are named as speakers, whether of sermons in the College, at thesis defences, of poems, or of St Stephen sermons. Some names recur. Thus Bl. John

Cornelius preached the inaugural St Stephen sermon (pp.36-8) and he also preached at the Forty Hours devotions in October 1582 (pp.50-1).⁹ William Baldwin, who was later a prominent English Jesuit and suffered torture and long imprisonment in the Tower of London (1610-1618) over unproven allegations that he was involved in the Gunpowder Plot, preached at the Assumption in 1584 (pp.113-6) and the St Stephen sermon in 1586 (pp.159-62). There are also three sermons by one Thomas Lister.¹⁰



Liber 281, photographed in the Archive of the English College.
Photo: Lucy Underwood

It is always interesting to come across people who later made their mark in the history of English Catholicism, and to speculate that Liber 281 records their voices. But does it? Authorship is rather a problem in this collection, particularly with those fascinating sermons to the pope. Almost all the St Stephen sermons give the name of the preacher, “*Oratio habita... a Gulielmo Balduino*”, for example; but several also carry a note giving the author (“*auctor fuit*”), and this is a different name. These “authors”, not further identified, mostly have Italian or Italian Latinised names.¹¹ A number show up in the records of the Society of Jesus as members of staff either at the English College, or at the Jesuit Collegio Romano (where the Venerabile’s students were taught) at the relevant time.¹² The implication would seem to be that the sermons were delivered by students, but written, or perhaps edited, by their professors. These “*auctor fuit*” notes do not appear on by any means all the St Stephen sermons, and on none of the other items. Does that mean that, where not stated otherwise, the preachers were sole authors? And if so, why were some assisted and not others? In only one case the author is stated to be the preacher himself (Robert Stafford, 1616 (p.298); the actual text is omitted but the title is there). So who wrote the large number of unattributed sermons? Does “*auctor fuit*” literally mean the students merely recited a script, or just that they had help? And why only the St Stephen sermons? Of course, one explanation may be the importance of the event. This was the English College’s once-a-year chance to impress the pope, the cardinals, and the Curia. One would not risk some inexperienced student wrecking things with poor Latin or dodgy theology.

If we cannot rely on these sermons as reflecting the thoughts of individual students, they still offer an insight into the College as an institution, for instance: how it chose to perceive itself and its mission, and how those who staffed it wished to “sell” that mission to the men who ran the Church. As is obvious from the passage quoted above, martyrdom was a big feature. The persecution in England and the potential for martyrdom was, after all, the English College’s unique selling-point in its early years. But of special interest is the way that the theme of martyrdom was used to portray the English identity of the college, and England’s relationship with the papacy. It is noticeable that Cornelius’ sermon - and this became fairly usual - spoke not only of martyrdom for the Catholic faith, but of “*heal[ing] the... wounds of the Fatherland with our blood*”. William Baldwin, preaching in 1586, posited a special significance in Stephen’s martyrdom in his own “*fatherland*” (not that the biblical narrative places any emphasis on this), saying: “*And just as no-one has greater love, than that he should lay down his breath for his friends, so there is no better, no fairer terms for seeking death, that if one shall pour out for the salvation of the fatherland his blood and spirit...*”¹³ He then went on to craft a link between the “*fatherland*” he spoke of and the “*Holy Father*” he was

addressing. Stephen, Baldwin argued, could be regarded as a patron of Rome because his relics had ended up there; he was a special patron of the English College because he was the protomartyr and they were the modern-day martyrs. Concluding his sermon, Baldwin emphasised that the English missionaries are to be sent “by your [the pope’s] authority” after having gained strength for the task “from you the pastor in these Roman pastures” in order to “water [England] with our blood”.¹⁴ Linking the papacy with the English mission, which is interpreted as an act of love to the *patria*, links the spiritual Roman sonship of these men with their national English sonship. By making the pope the father of these English sons, it also by extension makes him a father-figure towards England. You could not get further from the threatening Whore of Babylon imagined by Protestant English writers; but both are attempts to construct England and English identity.



Bl. John Cornelius depicted at the moment of his martyrdom in 1594. Source: English Martyrs

The texts in Liber 281 are of unique importance because they offer such a rich insight into the cultural identity of English Catholicism, the ways that English Catholics in Rome sought to portray themselves, their nation and their place within the Church, and how they challenged the dominant paradigm of England as inherently Protestant. Further research into these kinds of texts, placing them alongside Protestant narratives, is essential for understanding the conflicted history of early modern England.



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Endnotes

- ¹ VEC Liber 281, 38. Translations from the Latin are mine unless otherwise stated.
- ² F. Rogers, “St Stephen’s Day”, *The Venerabile* 7 (1934), 8-17.
- ³ VEC Liber 281, 92-6, 143-5.
- ⁴ VEC Liber 281, 144.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶ VEC Liber 281, 38, 39, 323.
- ⁷ VEC Liber 168, ff.77v, 135v; Liber 169, ff.113r, 139v.
- ⁸ VEC Liber 281 1-5, 55-76, 99-112.
- ⁹ VEC Liber 281, 36-8, 50-1.
- ¹⁰ VEC Liber 281, 26-30; 39-44; 52-4.
- ¹¹ VEC Liber 281, 165; 176; 231; 235; 243; 263; 266; 267; 272; 274; 303; 305; 313; 315; 323; 332; 342.
- ¹² e.g., ARSI: Rom.54, f.136r, f.161r, f.159r, f.180v, f.226r; f.181v, f.249r; Rom.55 f.1r, f.11r; Rom.53:1, f.156r.
- ¹³ VEC Liber 281, 161.
- ¹⁴ VEC Liber 281, 161-2.

“The Holy Scriptures made Flesh”: the VEC Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY first learnt that it would be going to the Holy Land well before the actual event. That news came during our festive meal following the Candidacy Mass on the eve of the Christmas vacation, back in 2013. Fr Rector announced then to a stunned student body that instead of the usual retreat at Palazzola the following autumn, the whole community would be travelling to make its retreat in the Holy Land. It was also announced that Canon Mervyn Tower, a priest of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, would be leading the retreat. Obviously this news gave each member of the community plenty to talk about for the next few weeks.



Fr Mervyn talking to our group at the Ecce Homo Convent in Jerusalem. Photo: Francis Murphy

If ever there was a living embodiment of that pious epithet “Scripture was always on his lips”, then it is surely Canon Mervyn Tower, our priest-guide during the College’s Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in October 2014. Fr Mervyn came to visit the College community some months before the scheduled pilgrimage in order to explain what we would be doing and what we might expect to see in that extraordinary part of the world. At that point we learnt something of his enthusiasm for the Scriptures and of his love for the Holy Land. After seeing the proposed programme that we were to follow, my initial thought was, “you must be joking!” It appeared that we would be attempting to fit two weeks of sightseeing into only five and a half days. Clearly I had underestimated the energy and commitment of Fr Mervyn. I would learn in the Holy Land that not only can he out-walk you in sweltering conditions, but he doesn’t even perspire when doing so.

And so the College community gathered in 2014 as it always does following the summer holidays, most of us back fresh from completing parish placements in our home dioceses. Nearly every student member of the College community, together with the staff, set off on Tuesday 30 September, in anticipation of what promised to be an inspirational pilgrimage. We were joined on our journey by Pam Coote, one half of the couple by whose singular generosity the pilgrimage was made possible. Unfortunately, Pam’s husband Nicholas was unable to join us, but the presence of one of our benefactors made a charming addition to the group.

Our pilgrimage had several dimensions. In the first place, our aim was to visit some of the famous sites of Christian interest. But we also wanted to pray the experience. Being a community of men training for the priesthood, this was also a spiritual pilgrimage in which we sought to draw closer to God by walking in the footsteps of Christ. We therefore continued to pray the liturgy of the Church while on pilgrimage, meeting every day to say the Divine Office

together, celebrate Mass, and share other devotions and scriptural reflections. Another aim was to gain a better understanding of the Holy Land as it is today, particularly how life is experienced there for the many Christians who try, often in the face of considerable challenges, to live their lives in fidelity to the Gospel. In addition to Fr Mervyn, we were joined by a Palestinian Christian called Rami, who acted as our local guide and shared various personal reflections on contemporary Christian life in the cradle of Christianity.

Our pilgrimage effectively had two parts. We began in Jerusalem and lodged at the Latin Patriarchate, using this as our base to visit the sites of interest. We then headed north to the Galilee region, staying first on the Mount of Beatitudes and then, finally, moving to the shores of Lake Tiberias (the Sea of Galilee).

The Holy Land has sometimes been described as the Fifth Gospel, and being there on pilgrimage it is easy to see why. We visited the places that we have read about so often in the Bible and this offered us a powerful new perspective on our understanding of the life of Jesus and of the amazing story of salvation that played out there during his earthly ministry. Wandering around Jerusalem, celebrating Mass in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and walking the Via Dolorosa while praying the Stations of the Cross: these were some of the powerful moments we shared, during which it was difficult to take in the reality that we were literally walking in the footsteps of Christ.

In the Holy Land, one appreciates the enormous significance that particular places have accrued over the centuries. We are familiar with various biblical stories, but one does not immediately realise that many of them refer to the same place. For example, the Temple Mount itself, now home to a Muslim shrine, was the site of the centre of Jewish worship during the first and second temple periods of Jewish history (Cf. 1 Kings 6; Ezra 3-4) but also, according to tradition, the site of the *Aqedah*, or near-sacrifice of Isaac, as recounted in Genesis 22. This is a foundational story for the Jewish faith and by being there, surveying the scene, one begins to perceive that sacred history is standing before one’s eyes almost like geological strata.

In several locations, it is possible to see this multi-layered dimension of Jerusalem’s history more literally, such as at Bethesda, the site at which St. John recounts the story of Jesus healing a man at the pool with “five porticoes” (John 5:2-9). Archaeologists have worked on this site, unearthing several layers of archaeology going down a considerable way, revealing that the action recounted in John’s Gospel must have taken place several meters below the present day ground level.

Most of us studying at the pontifical universities have at least some exposure to the ancient biblical languages of Greek and Hebrew. Moreover, one of the distinctive features of training and living in Rome is that, sometimes, one is obliged to attempt the odd word in Italian, which for most of us is a foreign language. That very experience is enriching because it allows us to enter into a different way of looking at the world. It is also important to be reminded that, notwithstanding the popular currency of English in today’s world, ours is not the only language.



David Howell shares a Bible reading during our visit to the Dormition Abbey on Mount Zion, Jerusalem.

Photo: Francis Murphy



Celebrating Mass in the Garden of Gethsemane.
Photo: Francis Murphy

Our trip to the Holy Land introduced us to the Hebrew language in a way that was new for most of us; just seeing road signs and newspapers in Hebrew is a cultural experience. But when the same signs are also given in English and Arabic, you begin to realise what a complicated place this must be to live in. Fr Mervyn explained that the Hebrew language spoken and written in Israel today is a modern phenomenon; based on a restoration of Biblical Hebrew, it needed to borrow words from various other languages to enter the modern world. For many centuries, the Jewish people in the Diaspora had spoken other European languages and Yiddish, rather than classical Hebrew, but the latter was introduced into Jewish national life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries thanks in large part to the efforts of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda.¹

One of the most poignant events in our itinerary was the journey down the Mount of Olives, this time retracing the steps of Jesus on Holy Thursday. Our journey culminated in the celebration of Mass in the Garden of Gethsemane, where afterwards we also took the opportunity to spend some time in quiet reflection inside the nearby Church of All Nations. Since it was a warm day, and with the previous twenty-four hours having been packed with activity, the cool dark interior of that church was very welcome and even though our purpose was to “keep watch in prayer”, nearly every member of our group fell asleep. Never again, when I read Mark 14, will I be able to judge the disciples harshly when Jesus asks them, “are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour?” Such is the similarity between the apostles’ weakness and our own.

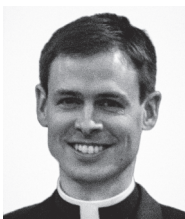
One of the reasons why the Holy Land continues to be a troubled place to live can be seen when one considers the question of water. Our local guide Rami explained that sources of water continue to be a controversial subject between the Jews and Palestinians in the land. And this is not surprising when one considers how vital water has always been for survival in the arid parts of the Middle East. Perhaps this is why water has also been such a vivid metaphor for the spiritual life in the Scriptures.

*“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.
He is like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.
It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.” (Jer. 17:8)*

One “watery” image that I found particularly striking during our pilgrimage was the contrast between the two main inland expanses of water in the Holy Land: the Dead Sea and Lake Tiberias. The Dead Sea is situated at the lowest point on earth, with its surface and shores standing over 400 metres below sea level. It contains water that is undrinkable because it contains such a high concentration of salts and minerals. Nothing can live in it; there are no fish or other marine creatures. I spoke with one of our student-priests about it and he explained that the Dead Sea is like this because it is a depository for other water sources, but has no outlet itself. “Like the spiritual life,” he said, “if it just stays within and is never shared, it becomes stagnant and dead.” On the other hand, having travelled north, we stayed next to Lake Tiberias which is a freshwater lake and full of marine life. Indeed, as we learn from the scriptures, Jesus’ first disciples were fishermen. It is possible to live off the fish that one finds in this lake, and it is full of “living water” precisely because, unlike the Dead Sea, the River Jordan flows into it from the north and out again in the south.

On our last day of pilgrimage, our group enjoyed a boat trip across the lake. In beautiful sunshine and dead calm waters, it was difficult to envisage a storm hitting our boat, even though we read of such an event in the Gospels. But by sailing across the lake, one could better appreciate what Simon and his brother Andrew must have experienced on a daily basis. Perhaps it was a settled, stable life with the prospect of continuing like that for the foreseeable future. But one day an encounter with Jesus would change their lives forever. “And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men.’” (Mark 1:16)

Each one of us as seminarians at the English College has heard something of that call, often leaving careers, family and friends in order to follow Christ. Making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land was a way of drawing closer to the Lord and also to the first disciples, in whose footsteps we also follow. Our time in the Holy Land also fleshed out the biblical stories we know so well, and gave us inspiration to continue the journey started in response to the Lord’s call: “Follow me!”



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Endnotes

- ¹ Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858-1922) was a newspaper editor and the driving force behind the revival of the Hebrew language in the modern era. For more information, see J. Fellman, *The Revival of a Classical Tongue: Eliezer Ben Yehuda and the Modern Hebrew Language* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973).

A Royal Visit to the English College



Prince Edward and friends in the Third Library. Photo: Tony Milner

IT WAS BY CHANCE that no one from the College community was there. Rector, staff and students were on pilgrimage in the Holy Land. Special friends of Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach, the great benefactors of the College, were paying a private visit to Rome. There was a little group of about twenty, and a “must” visit for them had to be the Venerabile.

But who to greet them, given the absence of staff and students? I was due in Rome in any case for other reasons, and had just arrived in the city. Could I help? Could Fr Anthony Milner, who was then visiting to complete his doctoral thesis? Of course we could.

The party were in Rome during the first week of October. So it came to be that, on Sunday 6 October, they made their visit to the College. Barbara Donovan, the College Administrator, was on brilliant form, making sure that everything was in order. We remembered just in time to find the Visitors’ Book; we couldn’t let the opportunity for a signature pass.

At 10.45am, three Mercedes minibuses, complete with police outriders, arrived. First out was HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex. I had the honour of welcoming him to the College. “I hope you don’t mind us dressing down,” he said. “We were told to be informal”. He was accompanied by Sophie, Countess of Wessex and friends.



Cardinal Nichols, the Wessexes, the Schwarzenbachs, Mgr Wilcox, and Barbara Donovan. Photo: Tony Milner

We ushered the whole party into the College church, where Anthony Milner gave a brief summary of the history of the hospice and College. For the next two hours the group went round the College, seeing the treasures and admiring the ambience. Prince Edward was very interested in the special edition of *Chi lo sa* commemorating the Coronation.

We ended the visit with a little reception: some prosecco and canapés, and the signing of the Visitors' Book. An added bonus was that Cardinal Vincent Nichols, who had been attending the Papal Mass, was able to join us.

It was a memorable visit, and almost certainly the first by the son of a reigning British monarch. The Schwarzenbachs, together with those of us able to act as hosts, felt honoured and thankful that this "quiet" visit had gone off so well.



Cardinal Nichols and Prince Edward converse in the Garden Room. Photo: Tony Milner



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In Defence of Scholasticism

Editor's note: *Two of the Second Vatican Council's documents dating from 1965 - Gravissimum Educationis, the declaration on Christian education, and Optatam Totius, the decree on priestly training - recommend the doctrine and method of St Thomas Aquinas to the Church. While the former contains an explicit call for "questions... new and current [to be] raised and investigations carefully made according to the example of the doctors of the Church and especially of St Thomas Aquinas" (§10), the latter insists that those training for the priesthood investigate the mysteries of salvation "under the guidance of St Thomas" (§16). As the Church marks the fiftieth anniversary of these conciliar texts, Edward Feser presents a defence of the Scholastic tradition.*

SCHOLASTICISM IS THAT tradition of thought whose most illustrious representative is St Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274) and whose other luminaries include St Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109), Bl. John Duns Scotus (c.1266-1308), and Francisco Suárez (1548-1617), to name only some of the most famous. By no means only a medieval phenomenon, the Scholastic tradition was carried forward in the twentieth century by Neo-Scholastics like Désiré-Joseph Mercier (1851-1926) and Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1877-1964), and Neo-Thomists such as Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) and Etienne Gilson (1884-1978).

The theological roots of Scholasticism are Augustinian, and this inheritance brought with it a heavy Neo-Platonic philosophical component. However, the philosophical core of the mature Scholastic tradition, at least in its dominant forms, is Aristotelian, with the surviving Neo-Platonic elements being essentially Aristotelianised.

Scholastic thinkers emphasise a healthy respect for tradition, in two respects. First, they are keen to uphold Catholic orthodoxy. Second, they tend to regard the history of Western thought from the Pre-Socratics through to the medievals as, more or less, progressive. On this picture, Thales, Heraclitus, Parmenides, the ancient atomists and the other Pre-Socratics introduced most of the key problems and offered erroneous but instructive solutions; Socrates, Plato, and (especially) Aristotle set out at least the outlines of the correct solutions; later thinkers from various traditions - pagans like Plotinus, Christians like Augustine, Jews like Maimonides, and Muslims like Avicenna - built on this foundation and contributed further key insights; and the great Scholastics, such as Aquinas, finally combined these elements in a grand synthesis, preserving what was best, weeding out error, and adding yet further new features of their own. The result was a well worked-out general account of fundamental metaphysical notions such as change, causation, substance, essence, and the like; of lines of argument concerning the existence and nature of God, the immateriality and immortality of the human soul, and the natural law basis of ethics and politics; and, where sacred theology is concerned, an application of these philosophical results to Christian apologetics and to the explication and defence of the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the relationship between nature and grace, and so forth.

The history of modern philosophy, on this view, has largely been a gradual unravelling of the fabric of this hard-won achievement, and a return to one or the other of the errors of the Pre-Socratics, whether Parmenides (in the case of Spinoza, say), or Heraclitus (Hume), or the atomists (modern reductionist materialism). The intellectual and moral pathologies of modernity reflect these errors, and their cure requires a recovery of the wisdom of the best classical and medieval thinkers.

It would be a deep mistake, however, to conclude from this that the Scholastic approach is simply dogmatically to reiterate the views of certain favoured writers of the past. As the summary just given itself indicates, the Scholastic attitude is to look for and appropriate truth wherever it is to be found, including a wide variety of non-Christian sources. Nor does the Scholastic suppose that even the greatest thinkers of the past solved every problem, got everything right, or cannot still be improved upon even where they did get things right. The idea is not to keep the tradition frozen in the form it took at some particular point in the past (the thirteenth century, say). The idea is rather that you have to master the tradition before you can improve it, apply it to new and unforeseen problems, and then hand it down to future generations for yet further novel applications and improvements. The Scholastic regards the tradition he inherits as a plant to be cultivated and occasionally pruned, not a fossil to be stuck in a museum display case.

Then there is the heavy emphasis that the Scholastic tradition puts on rational argumentation. It is no good, for the Scholastic - contrary to a common caricature - simply to take a view because Aristotle, or Aquinas, or anyone else happened to hold it. (Aquinas himself famously regarded arguments from human authority as the weakest of all arguments.) One must provide a rational justification, or yield to rival views which do have such a justification. Thus, vigorous disputation has always been a key component of Scholastic method, with arguments from all sides of a particular issue carefully weighed before a position is staked out. And a good Scholastic knows that his own argumentation for that position ought to involve the gathering of evidence from all relevant domains of knowledge, the making of careful distinctions, precision in the use of words, the setting out of explicit lines of reasoning, and adherence to canons of logical inference.

The Scholastic attitude is to look for and appropriate truth wherever it is to be found.



In terms of both its content and its method, then, the Scholastic tradition claims to provide genuine *knowledge* of a philosophical and theological sort - knowledge which might be systematised and presented in formal treatises, and was so presented in works from Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* down to the manuals of the Neo-Scholastics. The function of such works is not only to pass on the tradition to future generations of philosophers and theologians, but also to acquaint natural scientists, social scientists, and other academics with the philosophical and theological prolegomena essential for a proper understanding of every other field of inquiry, and to provide the seminarian with the philosophical and theological formation he will need as a priest. The Scholastic manualist thereby aims faithfully to respond to the commission set out in papal documents from Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris* to St. John Paul II's *Fides et Ratio*.

In the years after Vatican II, however, the Scholastic tradition went into an eclipse from which it is only now starting to emerge. Indeed, that tradition has, among Catholic intellectuals of a certain generation, been routinely denounced - sometimes even by people who are otherwise theologically conservative - with epithets like "Baroque Neo-Scholasticism," "sawdust Thomism," and "manualism." Usually the denunciation is treated as if it were self-evidently correct, with little explanation given of exactly what is wrong with the tradition being denounced. When reasons are given, they are uniformly weak.

Let's examine them. Recently, Eastern Orthodox theologian David Bentley Hart rehearsed some of these stock objections, alleging, on the one hand, that the Thomist tradition from the sixteenth century to the twentieth represents "an impoverished early modern distortion of the medieval synthesis."¹ On the other, he assured his readers that:

Thomas was a dynamically original *thinker*, who today would make as avid a use of Darwin and Bohr as he did of the Aristotelian science of his day; Thomism, by contrast, is a *school*, which too often clings to its categories with the pertinacity of a drowning man clutching a shard of flotsam.

Notice first the incoherence of these charges. Hart claims that modern Scholastics have “distorted” or departed from the tradition, but also that they dogmatically “cling to” and “clutch” the tradition. So which is it? Such contradictory accusations are very commonly flung at Neo-Scholasticism. On the one hand, Neo-Scholastics are accused of having an inflexible “fortress mentality,” and of being insufficiently sensitive to the concerns of “modern man” or the findings of modern science. On the other hand, they are accused of selling out to modernity in various ways, such as by adopting a modern “Wolffian rationalist” theory of knowledge, or by adopting a “two-tier” conception of nature and grace that allegedly paved the way for modern philosophical naturalism and even atheism.

Neither sort of accusation is just. For one thing, far from sticking their heads in the sand in the face of modern science, the Neo-Scholastics and Thomists of the twentieth century were keen to show how its discoveries are fully compatible with the Aristotelian-Scholastic tradition (as evidenced by the unjustly neglected works of writers like Vincent Edward Smith, Henry Koren, Andrew van Melsen, James Weisheipl, and William A. Wallace). Nor have modern Scholastics been dogmatic reactionaries in the practical domain. Building on the work of Robert Bellarmine, Francisco Suárez, Francisco de Vitoria, and Bartolomé de Las Casas, they have argued that Thomistic natural law theory is compatible with individual rights, democracy, and limited government.

The peremptory and sweeping charge that modern Scholastics “distorted” Aquinas is also entirely tendentious and partisan. The usual bases of this charge concern several areas where the interpretation of Aquinas’s views has been a matter of controversy. For example, it is sometimes claimed that Thomas de Vio Cardinal Cajetan (1469-1539) misinterpreted Aquinas’s teaching on the analogous use of language, and passed this misunderstanding on to the later Thomist tradition. But whether this is so is by no means a settled matter - Cajetan has his defenders to this day - and in any case it hardly marks a dividing line between Neo-Scholastics on the one hand and faithful interpreters of Aquinas on the other. (The late philosopher Ralph McInerny was *both* a Neo-Scholastic admirer of the manualist tradition *and* a critic of Cajetan.)



Thomas Aquinas, by Fra Bartolomeo (1472-1517).
Source: PD-Art

The precise grounds for the accusation of “Wolffian rationalism” are seldom made very clear, but the idea seems to be that Neo-Scholastics have somehow departed from Aquinas’s view that knowledge comes through our sensory experience of the real world, and adopted the modern rationalist tendency to ground knowledge in an order of “essences” grasped *a priori*. But there is nothing in the work of Neo-Scholastics that entails this. It is true that they have made use of the rationalist’s Principle of Sufficient Reason, according to which all reality is

intelligible. But far from being a distortion of Aquinas, this principle is itself implicit in Aquinas, insofar as it follows from Aquinas's well-known thesis that being (objective reality as it is in itself) and truth (reality as it is known to the mind) are convertible with one another, the same thing looked at from different points of view.

As to the allegation that the Neo-Scholastic understanding of nature and grace paved the way for modern atheism, it is simply aimed at a ludicrous caricature. The charge is that Neo-Scholastics sealed off the "two tiers" of nature and grace in a way that made the former entirely self-contained, so that man has no natural need of God. But this presupposes that the Neo-Scholastic understanding of "nature" is the same as that of the modern philosophical naturalist or materialist, which it most definitely is not. On the contrary, for the Neo-Scholastic, rational demonstration of the existence of

God is something of which *natural* reason is capable, and the knowledge and worship of God is thus part of our *natural* end. Hence the Neo-Scholastic conception of nature, far from entailing atheism, positively excludes it. It is the conception of nature affirmed by thinkers like Aristotle and Plotinus - pagan theists who regarded the knowledge and service of God as the highest end of human life - and not the desiccated "nature" of a David Hume, Friedrich Nietzsche, or Richard Dawkins. What grace adds to nature properly understood is the promise of the *supernatural*, "face to face" knowledge of God entailed by the beatific vision. And in emphasizing the distinction between nature and grace, Neo-Scholastics were concerned, as Pope Pius XII was in *Humani Generis*, to counter theological doctrines which would "destroy the gratuity of the supernatural order" by collapsing grace into nature. A number of important recent works have begun at last to rehabilitate this unjustly maligned aspect of the Scholastic tradition.²


Where matters of ethics are concerned, the Scholastic tradition has been accused of "legalism." The suggestion is that a law-oriented approach to morality of the sort one finds in Scholastic manuals is a holdover from the nominalism and voluntarism of William of Ockham. Yet law has always been at least a component of a biblically-grounded morality - Moses was hardly an Ockhamite! - and there is bound to be a "legal" aspect to any workable system of ethics. If there are objective moral principles, we need to know how to apply them to concrete circumstances, and working this out carefully and systematically entails that casuistry will be a part of any serious moral theory. There is also the fact that the priests for whom the ethics manuals were largely written needed guidance in the confessional, as did their penitents. That means, inevitably, a way of telling mortal sin from venial sin - grave matter from light matter, sufficient knowledge from insufficient, sufficient consent from insufficient, in all the areas of human life where we find ourselves tempted. This too inevitably gives rise to a system of casuistry. Hence, it is not Ockhamism or "legalism" that leads us to the approach of the manualists, but rather the very nature of the moral life, and also the Catholic sacrament of penance.



The Angelicum, where English College students receive their philosophical formation. Source: Gizurr at en.wikipedia

Then there are complaints to the effect that the Scholastic approach is “ahistorical” and “out of date.” Such assertions are ambiguous. Is it being claimed that truth is relative to historical epoch and that in the current era Scholastic claims no longer hold true? If so, then this merely begs the question against the Scholastic, who would deny that truth is or could be relative in this way. Is it merely being claimed instead that Scholastic ideas are no longer as widely accepted as they once were? If so, what does that matter? What counts is whether the ideas in question are *true*. If they are not true, then that would be enough reason to reject them, and their popularity or lack thereof would be irrelevant. But if they are true, then we ought to defend and promote them, and if contemporary intellectuals do not accept them, then it is their views which ought to change, not those of the Scholastic.

Recent decades have seen a revival of interest in Aristotelian and Thomistic ideas within mainstream academic philosophy.



Moreover, the claim that Scholastic ideas are “out of date” in this latter sense is itself out of date. Recent decades have seen a revival of interest in Aristotelian and Thomistic ideas within mainstream academic philosophy. While Aristotelianism and Thomism are still definitely minority positions, they are getting a hearing in contemporary philosophy in a way they have not been since the 1950s.³

Finally, it is often remarked that Scholastic works are too “dry” and “ready-made” in their systematicity, lacking sufficient excitement and creativity. (This alleged dryness is the source of the “sawdust Thomism” epithet.) But the complaint is frivolous. Again, what ultimately matters is whether what such works have to say is *true*, and whether the ideas they convey really are related to one another in the logical and systematic way in which they are presented. No one objects to textbooks of chemistry or history on the grounds that their orderly and systematic presentation of the facts they discuss makes them too “dry” and “ready-made.” How can anyone who believes the Catholic Faith to be true object to there being manuals or textbooks which present the Church’s doctrine in a similarly systematic way?

In fact, such manuals are crucially needed, now more than ever. As Catholic theologian R. R. Reno has written regarding the abandonment of Scholastic manuals in recent decades:

The Church is not a community of independent scholars, each pursuing individualised syntheses, however important or enriching these projects might be. The Church needs teachers and priests to build up the faithful. To do this work effectively, the Church needs theologians committed to developing and sustaining a standard theology, a common pattern of thought, a widely used framework for integrating and explaining doctrine...

[T]he Church can no more function like a debating society that happens to meet on Sunday mornings, forever entertaining new hypotheses, than a physics professor can give over the classroom to eager students who want to make progress by way of freewheeling discussions... [B]elievers need a baseline, a communally recognised theology, in order to have an intellectually sophisticated grasp of the truth of the faith...

The collapse of neoscholasticism has not led to [a] new and fuller vision... We need to recover the systematic clarity and comprehensiveness of the neoscholastic synthesis, rightly modified and altered by [later] insights... We need good textbooks... in order to develop an intellectually sophisticated faith.⁴

It is no secret that catechesis has collapsed in many parts of the Church, and that outside the Church its doctrines are often dismissed as a hodgepodge of irrational prejudices. The neglect of the Scholastic tradition is a large part of what got us into this mess. Its rediscovery will help to get us out of it.



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Endnotes

- ¹ David Bentley Hart, “Romans 8:19-22”, *First Things*, June/July 2015.
- ² See e.g. Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural Desire to See God according to St. Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2010); Steven A. Long, *Natura Pura: On the Recovery of Nature in the Doctrine of Grace* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010); and Bernard Mulcahy, *Aquinas’s Notion of Pure Nature and the Christian Integralism of Henri de Lubac: Not Everything is Grace* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).
- ³ See e.g. John J. Haldane, ed., *Mind, Metaphysics, and Value in the Thomistic and Analytical Traditions* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002); C. Paterson and M.S. Pugh, eds., *Analytical Thomism: Traditions in Dialogue* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Tuomas E. Tahko, ed., *Contemporary Aristotelian Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Ruth Groff and John Greco, eds., *Powers and Capacities in Philosophy: The New Aristotelianism* (London: Routledge, 2013); Daniel D. Novotný and Lukáš Novák, eds., *Neo-Aristotelian Perspectives in Metaphysics* (London: Routledge, 2014).
- ⁴ R. R. Reno, “Theology After the Revolution”, *First Things*, May 2007.



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Religious Liberty and Harmony between Church and State

Editor's note: Few documents of the Second Vatican Council generated as much discussion - both during and after the conciliar sessions - as *Dignitatis Humanae* (1965), the declaration on religious liberty. The text continues to attract study and prompt debate. In recent years, fresh arguments have been made for readings of the declaration that purport to avoid the adoption of a "hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture" (Benedict XVI, Address to the Roman Curia, 22 December 2005). The feature that follows, authored by one of the most prominent exponents of such an approach, is based on an invited lecture given in October 2013 to the faculty and students of Mundelein Seminary of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

CATHOLICISM SEES HARMONY between Church and state as a necessary ideal. For the authority of both comes from God. The authority of the state is based on a divinely created human nature and on a moral law - a natural law - that comes with that nature. The authority of the Church is based on a supernatural law that has been revealed by Christ - the law of the New Covenant. Though this revealed law directs us to an end, the beatific vision in heaven, that transcends what human nature is capable of unaided, pursuit of that end still requires conformity to the natural law that is willed by God for human nature and that is served by the authority of the state. So Church and state must be able to work together.

But how is harmony between Church and state to be attained? Here there appears to have been a change that came with the Second Vatican Council and its declaration on religious liberty, *Dignitatis Humanae*. Before the Council the ideal was Catholic establishment, as defended in the encyclicals of a number of popes, and in especial detail by Leo XIII in *Immortale Dei*: where Catholicism prevails as the religion of the people, the state is under a duty to acknowledge Catholicism as the true religion and then to privilege the Catholic faith through law. After the Council the ideal seems very different. The state must respect an equal religious liberty for all, as a moral right, and should not privilege Catholicism legally. Within a shared framework of natural law, the Church is then to pursue her mission with the same liberty as other religious organisations, the sphere of religion being freed from all state interference and coercion.

Was *Dignitatis Humanae* a contradiction of previous doctrine? Despite all the controversy on this question, the answer is not in fact so mysterious. According to the pre-Conciliar teaching of Leo XIII the authority to coerce religiously - to direct religion through laws backed by punishments - never belonged to the state in any case, but to the Church. As that pope explained, dividing the competences of the two powers of Church and state:

One of the two powers has for its proximate and chief object the well-being of this mortal life; the other, the everlasting joys of heaven. Whatever, therefore in things human is of a sacred character, whatever belongs either of its own nature or by reason of the end to which it is referred, to the salvation of souls, or to the worship of God, falls wholly within the power of the Church and is wholly subject to her judgment.¹

The state should protect Catholicism through law - but only as the Church's agent, acting on her authority. This duty, an obligation on Christian rulers to the Church based on their baptism, always presupposed that the state was indeed Christian - that it existed, at least in

public aspiration, as a community of the baptised. Only if the state had this publicly Christian identity and allegiance would its rulers be morally in a position to lend the state's coercive power to support the Church. But in the modern world states no longer have this religious identity, and are secular in make-up and aspiration. That means they can no longer act as agents of the Church. But then they must lack all authority in matters of religion, even a borrowed authority delegated to them from the Church. And so, as *Dignitatis Humanae* teaches, fully in line with Leo XIII:

Furthermore, those private and public acts of religion by which people relate themselves to God from the sincerity of their hearts, of their nature transcend the earthly and temporal levels of reality. So the state, whose peculiar purpose it is to provide for the temporal common good, should certainly recognise and promote the religious life of its citizens. With equal certainty it exceeds the limits of its authority if it takes upon itself to direct or prevent religious activity.²

Dignitatis Humanae expressly preserved traditional doctrine about people's moral duties to the Church - and so, in particular, about the duty to the Church that in earlier times, in fully Christian states, baptism could impose on rulers:

Religious freedom, in turn, which men demand as necessary to fulfil their duty to worship God, has to do with immunity from coercion in civil society. Therefore it leaves untouched traditional Catholic doctrine on the moral duty of men and societies toward the true religion and toward the one Church of Christ.³

The moral right to religious liberty defended by *Dignitatis Humanae* holds very specifically against the state and other civic institutions. Nothing is said within the declaration about the authority of the Church, which continues in the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* to treat heresy and apostasy in the baptised as crimes punishable, by temporal as well as spiritual penalties, under the authority of the Church.

So *Dignitatis Humanae's* strict teaching is about the authority of the state, not the Church; and it simply recognises what Leo XIII's two powers theory implies for the moral rights of the individual against the state in matters of religion once the state has become secular.

But is the secularisation of the state something good? Leo XIII certainly denied this:

Therefore the law of Christ ought to prevail in human society and be the guide and teacher of public as well as of private life. Since this is so by divine decree, and no man may with impunity contravene it, it is an evil thing for any state where Christianity does not hold the place that belongs to it.⁴

And Leo XIII seems to have been right.

A core teaching of both Leo XIII and *Dignitatis Humanae* is that religion is a distinctive good that transcends the authority of the state. This is why the right to religious liberty against the secular state is so complete. Moreover, harmony between Church and state depends on the state acknowledging that it has no authority over religion. Only then will the state respect the freedom of the Church to pursue her mission.

But why should the state see religion as lying beyond its authority? After all, as Catholic tradition has always recognised, religion could have taken a purely natural form, based not on revelation but on reason. Reason shows us, from created things, that God exists and we are his creation as bearing his image. So even prior to any revelation, natural law dictates that we worship God as a community just as a condition of natural happiness and justice. Had there

been no revelation of a supernatural end, religion would still have existed as essential to the earthly good of the human community that is served by the authority of the state. And then the state would have had a role in the regulation of religion, just as it has in the regulation of other aspects of the natural good of a community, such as education and transport.

We would still have had some right to liberty in relation to religion. For it is true of natural goods generally, such as education or movement and the like, that they involve rights to liberty. The authority of the state to direct and regulate natural goods is not unlimited. But just because education and transport or movement are natural goods, they do still fall within the general jurisdiction of the state, and so the state can regulate them, with due respect for liberty, for the general good. State regulation will attend to the nature of the goods regulated, and criteria of better or worse that come with them as distinctive forms of good. Sufficiently defective forms of education or transport may be restricted, or they may be denied forms of state support given to less defective versions. We have a general right to liberty in respect of where we go. But that does not remove human travel and transport from being subject to fairly extensive state regulation and direction. We may be called upon by the state to sacrifice some liberty of movement if movement itself would be better enabled, or if some other good, such as efficient commerce, might benefit thereby. As for education and transport, so then for purely natural religion: while respecting rights to liberty, the state might still legislatively favour rational monotheism, and regulate some form of public worship worthy of God and of our own dignity as bearing his image, using the laws to discriminate to some degree in favour of religion that is good and rational over opposition to it, whether from atheism or polytheism.

No one would say that our right to liberty of movement against the state is based on the fact that movement is an area of human life transcending the authority of the state. But that is the clear Catholic view of liberty of religion. How then does religion transcend state authority? The answer is clear. Christ has revealed a supernatural end that religion is now to serve - the beatific vision of heaven. And this fundamentally changes the orientation of religion, transforming it to incorporate a sacramental life of grace directed at a level above that of natural law and state authority.

Harmony between Church and state depends on the state acknowledging that it has no authority over religion.



Fathers attending the fourth period of the Second Vatican Council in 1965. Source: Wikimedia Commons

But then for a state to acknowledge that religion transcends its authority, the state must also publicly acknowledge what this view presupposes - the revelation of the supernatural end as true. Without such acknowledgement there really is no reason for a state to view religion as transcending its authority any more than do other areas of natural human life. But that means that political secularisation was always bound to undermine an essential condition of harmony between Church and state. A secular state will not acknowledge revealed religion as true. So it will not recognise religion as a good transcending its authority.

And in fact modern secular states increasingly regard religion as just as much their concern as other forms of communal activity, such as clubs and associations and other institutions of shared public commitment. These associations are certainly given liberty - but are subject to state regulation for the public good, as the modern liberal state conceives that good. If that good dictates, in the interests of equal respect for citizens, enforcement of respect for gender equality or respect for various forms of sexual aspiration and identity, then so be it. The liberal secular state will begin to intervene. And it will begin to intervene even in the institutions that are religious, such as religious schools.

Indeed religion is ceasing to be treated by the modern state as a distinctive good at all, even at the natural level. No matter that natural law might constitute religion as a distinctive good in its own right, increasingly religion is regarded in secular political theory as no more than just another form of group identity or commitment alongside others. And this is because of another malign result of political secularisation wholly foreseen by the nineteenth century popes.

Political secularisation will tend to be followed by incomprehension of and violation of natural law.

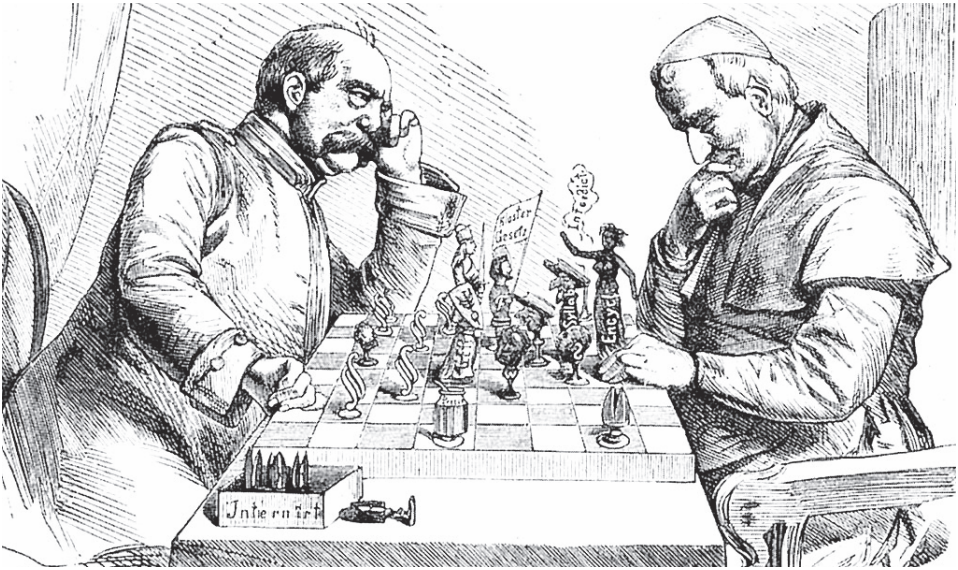


Grace is required not just to sanctify but to heal. We need grace not only as *gratia sanctificans* to raise us to a supernatural level but, even before that, as *gratia sanans* to repair the damage done to human nature by the Fall. Without such grace we can no longer reliably attain a complete conception of the content of the natural law, let alone reliably adhere to it. This grace is provided to a fallen world by the Church and her sacraments. Public understanding of and respect for natural law, vital to any just state, needs then to be preserved through the establishment and juridical favouring of Christianity, and so especially Catholicism, as the religion of the state. Whereas political secularisation will tend to be followed by incomprehension of and violation of natural law, as Pius IX had already warned:

...where religion has been removed from civil society, and the doctrine and authority of divine revelation repudiated, the genuine notion itself of justice and human right is darkened and lost...⁵

Leo XIII developed the point. The state must support the Church in her mission to bring us to the supernatural end - because otherwise the state will likely fail in bringing us even to the natural end. After observing that 'it is an evil thing for any state where Christianity does not hold the place that belongs to it', Leo XIII continued:

When Jesus Christ is absent, human reason fails, being bereft of its chief protection and light, and the very end is lost sight of, for which, under God's providence, human society has been built up. This end is the obtaining by the members of society of natural good through the aid of civil unity, though always in harmony with the perfect and eternal good which is above nature. But when men's minds are clouded, both rulers and ruled go astray, for they have no safe line to follow nor end to aim at.⁶



"Between Berlin and Rome" (1875) - a German cartoon depicts Bismarck's anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf*, and Bl. Pius IX's response, as a game of chess. Source: Kladderadatsch

Events are proving Pius IX and Leo XIII entirely right. Not only is political secularisation imperiling public understanding of natural justice and right generally, as we see in relation to marriage and respect for life, but even the very idea of religion as a distinctive good. This idea requires respect for natural law and an understanding of human nature as bearing the image of God as its creator. But with political secularisation that basic understanding has effectively disappeared from political life. The secular state will not appreciate religion as a good founded on our nature as bearing God's image, let alone as a good that, taking supernatural form, transcends its authority. Without state recognition of and commitment to the supernatural end, the state will not respect the Church's freedom, and there can be no articles of peace between Church and state.



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Endnotes

- ¹ Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*, §§13-4.
- ² Vatican Council II, *Dignitatis Humanae*, §3.
- ³ Vatican Council II, *Dignitatis Humanae*, §1.
- ⁴ Leo XIII, *Tametsi Futura*, §8.
- ⁵ Bl. Pius IX, *Quanta Cura*, §4.
- ⁶ Leo XIII, *Tametsi Futura*, §8.

*Bl. Paul VI's *Mysterium Fidei* at Fifty*



Bl. Paul VI during the final session of the Second Vatican Council (1965). Source: Wikimedia Commons

IN HIS HOMILY for the Mass of Beatification of Pope Paul VI on 19 October 2014, Pope Francis thanked Pope Paul, “the great helmsman of the Council”, for his “humble and prophetic witness of love for Christ and his Church”, but also hinted at the concerns which troubled his blessed predecessor when he added: “before the advent of a secularised and hostile society, he could hold fast, with farsightedness and wisdom - and at times alone - to the helm of the barque of Peter”.

On 3 September, 1965, less than two weeks before he opened the final session of Vatican II on 14 September, Pope Paul issued his third encyclical letter, *Mysterium Fidei*, “On the Holy Eucharist”. So, this year marks the fiftieth anniversary not only of the closing of the Council, but also of this major document. *Mysterium Fidei* (hereafter, MF) is mainly remembered because it rejected certain ideas then being offered to explain the eucharistic change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. The anniversary is a good opportunity to return to the text and to realise from a fresh reading that it did so out of a desire on the part of Paul VI to reinforce some of the major lines of the Council’s teaching about the Church and its saving mission in the world, centred on the Eucharist.

Pope Paul indicated that the encyclical was prompted by “a number of reasons for serious pastoral concern and anxiety” (MF 9). While recognising and indeed strongly defending the idea that the effect of the Eucharist is “the unity of the Mystical Body” (MF 44; cf. 70) - “through sharing in the Body of Christ [we] become one body” (MF 73) - he insisted that private Masses (by which he did not mean solitary celebrations, cf. MF 32) were not to be disparaged; and, with repeated reference to the teaching of the Council of Trent (1545-63) that there is a “marvellous conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body and the whole substance of the wine into the Blood of Christ” in the Mass, he rejected two current explanations of transubstantiation, in terms of “transignification” and “transfinalisation”, respectively, as inadequate (MF 11; cf. 3-4, 24, 44, 53, 72).

The closely related ideas of “transignification” and “transfinalisation” are particularly associated with Edward Schillebeeckx (1914-2009),¹ and to some extent with Karl Rahner (1904-84), also. In a paper originally delivered late in 1965, after the publication of *Mysterium Fidei*, Schillebeeckx said that it was J. de Baciocchi who, in 1959, had first used the word “transfinalisation” to explain the eucharistic change, as follows: “the meaning and end of the ordinary bread and wine are radically and, in this sense, substantially changed by consecration in the eucharistic mystery: ordinary bread and wine no longer remain, but instead there is the sacramental gift of the living, glorified Christ”.² The whole dispute, of course, hinges on whether it is indeed adequate to interpret “substantially” “in this sense”, that is, in terms of a radical change of “meaning and end”. Pope Paul VI clearly believed that it wasn’t.

Schillebeeckx ended his paper by quoting the encyclical and claiming that it actually endorsed transfinalisation and transignification as he understood the terms. The quote was as follows:

After transubstantiation has taken place, the species of bread and wine undoubtedly take on a new meaning and a new finality, for they no longer remain ordinary bread and ordinary drink, but become the sign of something sacred, and the sign of a spiritual food. However, the reason they take on the new significance and this new finality is simply because they contain a new “reality” which we may justly term ontological.³

Schillebeeckx commented: “In other words, the encyclical admits transfinalisation and transignification on condition that they are not considered as an extrinsic designation or as a peripheral change, but rather as having a profound and ontological content.”⁴ However, that is patently not the meaning of Pope Paul’s statement. He says that the species of bread and wine take on a new significance and finality because an ontological change has taken place, not that the new significance and finality themselves constitute the ontological change, as Schillebeeckx wished to claim. In short, Paul VI asserted that transubstantiation meant something more than simply a change, however radical, in the meaning and finality of the bread and wine. It meant a change in the actual reality (substance) of the bread and wine. Schillebeeckx was seemingly operating with a different ontology, and Paul VI did not find it adequate. Ontology for him meant what something objectively *was*, not simply its meaning or finality.⁵

Rahner enters the picture, even though he did not personally use either of the disputed terms, because, in an article on “The Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper”, first published in 1958, he proposed a “thesis” to which Schillebeeckx favourably referred in his paper. Acknowledging that there was some “risk” in his view and that probably not all Catholic theologians would agree with him,⁶ Rahner suggested that “the dogma of transubstantiation ... is a logical and not an ontic explanation of the words of Christ”, by which he meant that it simply expresses what Christ said, namely “this is my body” and “this is my blood”, without venturing to explain how that is so: “the doctrine of transubstantiation tells me no more than do the words of Christ, when I take them seriously”.⁷ In other words, the doctrine did not impose a particular explanation of the change; it simply asserted the change itself.

Transubstantiation meant something more than simply a change, however radical, in meaning and finality.



While it is true that Trent primarily wished to emphasise the change in the bread and wine, a change “most fittingly [*aptissime*]” expressed by the idea of transubstantiation, as it said,⁸ it is nevertheless clearly the case that Trent also thought that “substance” was indeed the proper

category to consider when describing the change. So, while no particular interpretation was necessarily required, which is why Schillebeeckx felt free to offer his own interpretation, only an interpretation consistent with the weightiness of a change of "substance" could be regarded as sufficient, and Paul VI did not regard transfinalisation and transignification as sufficiently weighty. Rahner's own sympathy with the latter interpretations was perhaps indicated by the fact that the *Encyclopedia of Theology* that he subsequently published in 1975 contains an article on "Transubstantiation" by Englebert Gutwenger, which uses both ideas. It states that bread is "naturally apt to symbolise spiritual nourishment and union", and that "the consecrated bread possesses the further property of signifying that the Lord who offers himself as food is not just at a distance but is present in the bread". Gutwenger ends by saying: "transubstantiation means a change of finality and being in the bread and wine, because they are raised to being symbols of Christ who is present there and invites men to spiritual union".⁹

Acknowledging the idea first expressed in the *Didache* and later by Cyprian (and Augustine, also) that the eucharistic bread which originated as many scattered grains of wheat well symbolises what he calls the "effect" of the Eucharist, namely the unity of the Church (cf. MF 40-44), Pope Paul nevertheless says that the actual fact that bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ is not itself to be explained in terms of symbolism. There is a directness and immediacy in the teaching of St Ignatius of Antioch that "the Eucharist is the flesh of Our Saviour Jesus Christ which suffered for our sins and which the Father in His loving kindness raised again",¹⁰ and likewise in the words of Theodore of Mopsuestia that "The Lord did not say: This is the symbol of my body, and this is the symbol of my blood, but rather: This is my body and my blood".¹¹ It may be said that it is a rather weak interpretation of symbolism that Paul VI seems to be rejecting here. There is a stronger interpretation, which one of Paul VI's favourite theologians, the French Jesuit, Henri de Lubac (1896-1995), admirably attributed to the fathers of the Church (especially Augustine), whose eucharistic doctrine he described as characterised by an "ontological symbolism".¹²

Before returning to de Lubac, let us briefly note the other major themes of the encyclical. Because of the substantial change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, Pope Paul emphasised the value and importance of eucharistic worship (MF 55-62) and devotion (MF 63-67), highlighting that the Church has always continued to venerate the eucharistic hosts after Mass is ended (MF 56; cf. 11). He also stressed the absolute necessity of recognising the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist, again in accord with the teaching of Trent (MF 4; cf. 27, 29, 30, 32, 33), and, drawing on the "wondrous doctrine" of the Fathers (especially Augustine), reiterated in the teaching of Vatican II, he gave a broad ecclesial interpretation of that sacrificial dimension: "the whole Church plays the role of priest and victim along with Christ, offering the Sacrifice of the Mass and itself completely offered in it" (MF 31). He notably added that he was "filled with an earnest desire to see this teaching explained over and over until it takes deep root in the hearts of the faithful" (MF 31).

In various ways, therefore, and with some urgency, Bl. Paul VI linked the Eucharist to the mystery of the Church. In order to appreciate further the historical and theological significance of *Mysterium Fidei*, I would like, first of all, to discuss that linkage, then to consider the sacramental and sacrificial aspects of the Eucharist, and then finally to reflect on the idea he so loved of the whole Church offering the sacrifice.

Church and Eucharist

Pope Paul mentions Berengar of Tours (c.999-1088), "who gave in to certain difficulties raised by human reasoning and first dared to deny the Eucharistic conversion" (MF 52). The controversy surrounding Berengar, who was twice called to Rome to recant his views (in 1059 and 1079,

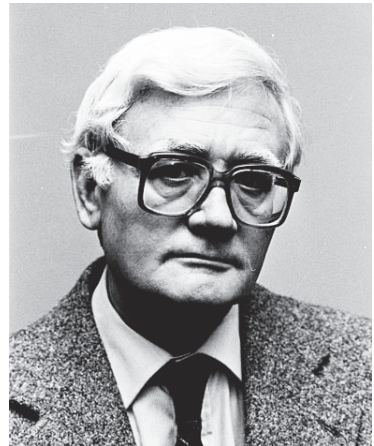
respectively), had a profound and lasting effect on eucharistic doctrine and ecclesiology in the West, most fully analysed by de Lubac in his celebrated book, *Corpus Mysticum*.¹³ De Lubac helpfully explains that the term “body of Christ” can refer to three things: Christ himself, the Eucharist, and the Church, respectively, and that the Fathers of the Church throughout the first millennium delighted in exploring the doctrine of the *corpus triforme*, and the interconnections of all three meanings, whereby bread and wine are changed in the Eucharist into the body and blood of Christ, not however as an end in itself but so that the faithful might then receive and be transformed into the Body of Christ themselves. Hence, in the famous phrase that he coined, “the Eucharist makes the Church”.¹⁴ The Eucharist was the sacramental or *mystical* body of Christ, given to sustain the faithful in this life, by receiving which the faithful were transformed into the true and lasting body of Christ that is the Church. The patristic use of “mystical” and “true”, *corpus mysticum* and *corpus verum*, to refer to the Eucharist and the Church, respectively, should be noted here, because the terminology was reversed after the Berengarian controversy and the use still today of the changed terminology can block our full understanding of patristic teaching in this area.

Because Berengar misunderstood “mystical” in reference to the Eucharist - which originally meant that Christ was really present but sacramentally or *mystically* - to mean that Christ was not really present, he was required to take an oath by Pope Gregory VII acknowledging that the eucharistic bread and wine are “substantially changed into the true and proper and lifegiving flesh and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord, and that after the consecration they are the true body of Christ ... and the true blood of Christ” (MF 52). That profession foreshadowed the teaching of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215¹⁵ (and of course also of the Council of Trent later¹⁶) on transubstantiation, and it also showed the change of terminology that resulted from the need to oppose Berengar and to ensure proper eucharistic understanding: the bread and wine become the *true* body and blood of Christ (hence, *Ave verum corpus*), and the Church began to assume the alternative title of the “mystical body”.

Scholastic theology, which began around that time, primarily concentrated on the change in the eucharistic elements, and an unfortunate consequence was the neglect and eventual forgetting of the further aspect whereby the faithful receive the transformed elements and, thus, the Eucharist makes the Church. Writing also in 1965, Joseph Ratzinger commented:

It may well be said that the separation of the doctrine of the Eucharist and ecclesiology, which can be noted from the eleventh and twelfth centuries onwards, represents one of the most unfortunate pages of medieval theology ... because both thereby lost their centre. A doctrine of the Eucharist that is not related to the community of the Church misses its essence as does an ecclesiology that is not conceived with the Eucharist as its centre.¹⁷

De Lubac’s desire, fully shared by Ratzinger, was to restore the full patristic understanding of the Eucharist, augmenting the rather restricted focus simply on the change in the elements with an appreciation of the edification of the Church by the reception of those elements. Some



Edward Schillebeeckx, who sought to cast substantial change in terms of a transformation of “meaning and end”.

Source: Dijk, Hans van / Anefo

commentators mischievously alleged that he wished to downplay transubstantiation,¹⁸ but that was not at all his purpose. Rather, he wished the second half of the eucharistic mystery, so to speak, to receive as much attention as the first. Indeed, it might well be said that it is only if we understand that the purpose of the Eucharist is to make the Church, to transform human beings into the body of Christ, that we will understand why the elements themselves are truly transformed into the body and blood of Christ. As de Lubac said, so simply and profoundly: “Eucharistic realism and ecclesial realism: these two realisms support one another, each is the guarantee of the other”.¹⁹ One can imagine that phrase being in the mind of Paul VI as he firmly reiterated the doctrine of transubstantiation in the encyclical.

By the time that Ratzinger was writing, Vatican II had already reaped the fruits of the recovery of patristic doctrine by de Lubac and others. There are many places in which it teaches that the Eucharist makes the Church, e.g. *Lumen Gentium* (LG) 3: “in the sacrament of the eucharistic bread, the unity of believers, who form one body in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 10:17), is both expressed and brought about” (cf. also, LG 7, 11, 26).²⁰ Pope Paul VI, who had great esteem for de Lubac,²¹ happily reiterated that teaching in his encyclical, convinced, no doubt, that it was the key to the renewal of the Church, which was the fundamental purpose of the Council itself.

Sacrament and Sacrifice

The harmful separation between the doctrine of the Eucharist and ecclesiology around the start of the second millennium²² led to another damaging separation, namely that between the sacramental and sacrificial aspects of the Eucharist. Transubstantiation emphasised the sacramental aspect of the Eucharist, the fact that bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ. However, the Eucharist also has a sacrificial aspect, which Vatican II expressed as follows:

Christ instituted the “eucharistic sacrifice” at the Last Supper “in order to perpetuate his sacrifice of the Cross throughout the ages until he should come again”.²³ Unless those two aspects are held strictly together, there is a serious danger that it may be thought that what happens in the Mass is that Christ is made sacramentally present by the power of the priest through transubstantiation and then sacrificed again by the priest to the Father, violating the clear scriptural teaching that Christ offered the sacrifice of himself “once for all” on the cross (Heb 7:27; 9:12, 26; 10:10). It was never Catholic teaching that the Mass was a repetition of the sacrifice of Calvary, but that was an impression that could be given, particularly since the Mass as sacrament and the Mass as sacrifice were now routinely treated as separate topics in Catholic theology, and it led to the (equally unscriptural) Protestant rejection of any sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist at the time of the Reformation, several centuries later.

Ratzinger details the consequences of the initial separation mentioned above. Once the Eucharist and the Church began to be treated separately in the Latin West, the Eucharist became just one of seven sacraments (first defined as such by the Second Council of Lyons in 1274),²⁴ “one liturgical act among others, no longer the encompassing orbit and dynamic centre of ecclesial existence per se”. Tellingly, he adds:

*In consequence, the Eucharist itself was fragmented into a variety of loosely related rites: sacrifice, worship, cultic meal.... The pneumatic character of the remembrance that produced presence was dimmed; the linking of the whole sacramental event to the oneness of the crucified and risen Lord was overshadowed by the emergence of a plurality of separate sacrificial rites.*²⁵

It was never Catholic teaching that the Mass was a repetition of the sacrifice of Calvary



Trent, which affirmed that the one sacrifice of the Cross is “re-enacted” (not *repeated*) in the Mass (cf. MF 27), nevertheless unfortunately perpetuated the problematic separation of doctrine on the Mass as sacrament and the Mass as sacrifice, respectively, by issuing its Decree on the Most Holy Eucharist, dealing with the sacramental aspect, in 1551, and its Decree on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass eleven years later in 1562. While vital individual points of Catholic doctrine were therein reaffirmed, the very separation of the decrees prevented the fundamental reintegration of sacrament and sacrifice that was needed to respond in depth, and truly scripturally, to the challenge of the Reformers. Ratzinger’s mention of “the pneumatic character of the remembrance that produced presence” serves to indicate the crucial role of the Holy Spirit in the eucharistic mystery, also, and the importance of pneumatology for the integration of sacrament and sacrifice in eucharistic doctrine. The long-standing weakness of pneumatology in the Christian West, now being remedied thanks not least to access to the writings of the Greek and Syriac fathers and ecumenical dialogue with the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, must be regarded as another historic factor hampering eucharistic understanding and theological consensus.

There were significant efforts to reintegrate sacrament and sacrifice in Catholic eucharistic theology in the decades prior to Vatican II,²⁶ and the Council itself notably pointed in that direction by teaching that “the life of Christ is communicated to those who believe and who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ in his passion and glorification” (LG 7). Thus, the sacraments, and especially the Eucharist, in which “we are taken up into communion with him and with one another” (LG 7), unite us to Christ in the paschal mystery of his Cross and resurrection. The Eucharist is properly understood as a *sacramental sacrifice*.²⁷

This is readily understood by reference to the scriptures. Christ who is really present in the Eucharist is Christ as he is today (cf. MF 45), risen and glorious, the living Lord, who still bears the marks of his sacrifice. After the resurrection, his body still has the marks of the nails in his hands and the spear in his side (cf. Jn 20:19-29), no longer as wounds, we might say, but as trophies of his victory, carried for evermore. The Letter to the Hebrews teaches that Christ has now entered the heavenly sanctuary where, as High Priest, he makes intercession for us in



Christ and the apostles at the Last Supper (detail), from *The Hours of Philip the Fair* (c.1495). Source: British Library

the power of his “once for all” sacrifice (Heb 5:1-10; 7:23-25, 26-28; 8:1-2; 9:11-14), bearing his precious blood “that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel” (Heb 12:24) before the throne of God; and the victorious Lamb of God seen by John in the heavenly visions described in the Book of Revelation “bore the marks of having been slain” (Rev 5:6; see verses 7-14, too). The Letter to the Hebrews and the Book of Revelation both most likely reflect the eucharistic experience of the early Church: in the Eucharist, it is Christ in the power of his one sacrifice, remembered and celebrated for evermore in heaven, who is really present. Thus it is that as soon as we encounter him, liturgically, sacramentally, mystically, we encounter his sacrifice, also.²⁸ As Pope St John Paul II taught in his encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (2003; hereafter,

EDE), the Mass involves “the sacramental re-presentation of Christ’s sacrifice, crowned by the resurrection”.²⁹

It may be said that, though *Mysterium Fidei* strongly emphasises both the sacramental and the sacrificial aspects of the Eucharist (see the references given earlier), the integration of those aspects is not as apparent as it is in the later encyclical of Pope John Paul. Pope Paul certainly indicates that those aspects must be held together - “both Sacrifice and Sacrament pertain to the same mystery and cannot be separated from each other”, “[the Lord] re-presents the sacrifice of the Cross and applies its salvific power at the moment when he becomes sacramentally present” (MF 34) - but, as was said above, pneumatology plays a crucial role in the integration of those aspects, and the fact is that, in a rather characteristically Western way, *Mysterium Fidei* barely mentions the Holy Spirit (cf. MF 8, 24, 35). Together with Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople, Pope Paul initiated the remarkable progress towards reconciliation between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches of recent times (the lifting of the mutual anathemas from 1054 on 7 December 1965, just three months after *Mysterium Fidei*, being a momentous step towards renewed communion), and he cites many Eastern fathers in his encyclical, joyfully saying to the Eastern Churches, “your belief in the Eucharist ... is ours as well” (MF 74). However, the pneumatological aspect of Eastern belief is not yet evident. In contrast, and surely indicating the further ecumenical enrichments of the intervening four decades, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* makes some striking references to the role of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist. For example, it quotes St Ephrem the Syrian: “He called the bread his living body and he filled it with himself and his Spirit.... He who eats it with faith, eats Fire and Spirit.... Take and eat this, all of you, and eat with it the Holy Spirit. For it is truly my body and whoever eats it will have eternal life”.³⁰

The Church as Priest and Victim

More extensive reference to the Holy Spirit, who bestows communion upon the Church as a whole (cf. 2 Cor 13:13), and distributes gifts and charisms to individuals within that communion for the benefit of all (cf. 1 Cor 12:1-30), would serve to consolidate the powerful point that Pope Paul, most of all, it seems, wishes to make in his encyclical, namely that in the Eucharist Christ, who is both priest and victim, draws the whole Church to himself such that she too and all of her members become priest and victim along with him (MF 31). This teaching, famously expounded by St Augustine, to whom Pope Paul refers (MF 31, note 24),³¹ really synthesises all of the aspects of the Eucharist already mentioned, ecclesial, sacramental and sacrificial: in the sacramental celebration of the Eucharist, Christ unites the Church to himself, not in a static way but in the very dynamism of his sacrificial self-gift to his Father, so that we are taken up to the very throne of God “through him and with him and in him, ... in the unity of the Holy Spirit”, as the doxology proclaims in every Mass.

Pope Paul speaks with great conviction of this teaching, convinced, as he says, that it is “a most effective means ... of extolling the dignity of all the faithful, and of spurring them on to reach the heights of sanctity” (MF 31). He thereby evokes two of the great themes of *Lumen Gentium*, namely the idea of the Church as the people of God, all of whom are baptised into Christ and share, with a “common dignity”, in his threefold office as prophet, priest, and king (cf. LG 9-18, 31-32), and the idea of the universal call to holiness in the Church (cf. LG 39-42), and he strikingly integrates them, indicating that the universal way to holiness is actually by priestly sacrifice: “the heights of sanctity” are reached by “the total and generous offering of oneself to the service of the Divine Majesty” (MF 31). Thus, while it is important to note “the distinction between the universal priesthood [of all the baptised] and the hierarchical priesthood

[of those ordained as bishop or priest]" (MF 31, quoting LG 10), and to maintain the distinction "in a proper way" (MF 31), Pope Paul surely wants to highlight what the proper way actually is. *Lumen Gentium* teaches that the two priesthoods are "ordered one to another" (LG 10), and that means that for the Church to be healthy in its life and mission *both* priesthoods need to be functioning well, in close interaction.

In the Eucharist, the ordained priest renews the one sacrifice of Christ at the altar, and the faithful, "by virtue of their royal priesthood, participate in the offering of the Eucharist" (LG 10). Indeed, they join the sacrifice of their lives and of all their activity in the world to that one sacrifice of Christ, and so it is that "worshipping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God" (LG 34). That immense and noble vocation of the laity is clearly essential to the sanctifying mission of the Church in the world, and its effective exercise centres on the celebration of the Eucharist, in which, clearly, they must actively participate (cf. SC 14).

Wanting to reinforce that conciliar teaching, Paul VI stressed that it was "a matter of the highest importance to urge the faithful to participate actively" in the celebration of the Eucharist (MF 1), and, since the meaning of that conciliar directive is still so often misunderstood, his explanation of it is of prime importance: it means that the faithful, "with undivided faith and the utmost devotion", unite themselves as members of the Church to the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, offering it "along with the priest as a sacrifice for their own salvation and that of the whole world" (MF 1, cf. 32). The Council itself actually urged priests to teach their people to offer the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass and to join the sacrifice of their own lives to it.³² So the encyclical, which as mentioned earlier is mainly remembered for its rejection of various reinterpretations of the idea of transubstantiation then being offered, is seen to have, like Vatican II itself, a profoundly pastoral motivation. Its concern was not just for sound doctrine, but for the vitality and effectiveness of the Church in the world, particularly through the dynamic interaction of the ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood of the faithful in the celebration of the Eucharist, the source and summit of the life of the Church (LG 10).

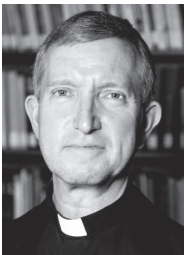
By means of that interaction, the change that occurs on the altar ripples out to affect the Church and the world, and the purpose of God, which is not just the *salvation* of humanity and the cosmos, but their very *transformation* in Christ, is carried out. Bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ in the Mass, as a foretaste and pledge of the new heavens and new earth (2Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1), and the making new of all things (Rev 21:5), when the mystery of the will of God is fulfilled and "things in heaven and things on earth" are all



St John Paul II, whose encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (2003) developed key themes of *Mysterium Fidei*. Source: Bundesarchiv / Schaack, Lothar

united in Christ (Eph 1:10). In his encyclical letter, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis says, "Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God", and he quotes Pope Benedict: "in the bread of the Eucharist, 'creation is projected towards divinisation, towards the holy wedding feast, towards unification with the Creator himself'".³³ It is within the context of God's overall plan of transformation and divinisation that the meaning and purpose of the eucharistic change is best understood, as is the role of the Church, also. Itself transformed into the body of Christ by receiving the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Church ministers to that cosmic plan of God in and through all of its members. The powerful words of *Lumen Gentium* bear repeating in conclusion: "worshipping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God" (LG 34).

The change that occurs on the altar ripples out to affect the Church and the world.

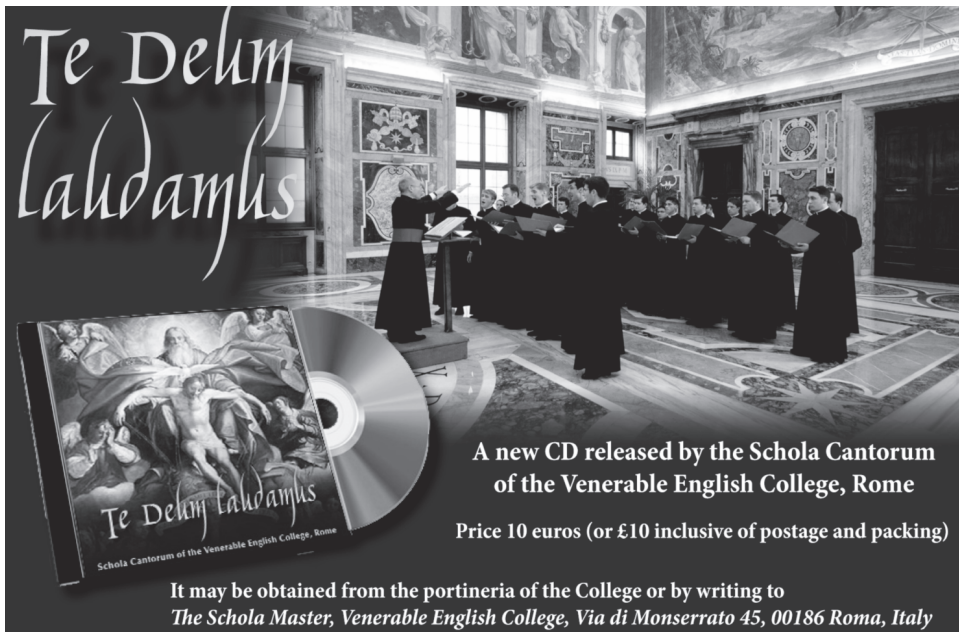


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Endnotes

- ¹ See Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968), especially 107-151. The following comment by Schillebeeckx indicates the context of the encyclical: "The years 1964 and 1965 marked the beginning of a new phase in the reinterpretation of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist... [I]t was then that the new ideas which had been developing in different countries, especially during the ten years following the publication of *Humani Generis* [encyclical letter of Pope Pius XII] in 1950, became widely known in the Church as a whole" (*The Eucharist*, 114).
- ² Edward Schillebeeckx, "Transubstantiation, Transfinalization, Transignification", in R. Kevin Seasoltz, *Living Bread, Saving Cup: Readings on the Eucharist* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1987), 175-89, here at 180. See, *The Eucharist*, 108-121, for a detailed account of the new formulations of de Bachiocchi and others.
- ³ *Mysterium Fidei*, §46, as quoted in Schillebeeckx, "Transubstantiation, Transfinalisation, Transignification", 189. The wording is slightly but not substantially different from that of the English translation on the Vatican website, which is used in this article.
- ⁴ "Transubstantiation, Transfinalisation, Transignification", 189.
- ⁵ A proper appraisal of Schillebeeckx, however, needs to bear in mind his affirmation that "I cannot personally be satisfied with a *purely* phenomenological interpretation without metaphysical density. Reality is not man's handiwork - in this sense, realism is essential to the Christian faith. In my reinterpretation of the Tridentine datum, then, I can never rest content simply with an appeal to a human *giving of meaning alone*, even if this is situated within faith" (*The Eucharist*, 150-1; italics in original).
- ⁶ Karl Rahner, "The Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper", later published in *Theological Investigations*, vol.4, trans. Kevin Smyth (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966), 287-311, here at 300.
- ⁷ Rahner, "The Presence of Christ", 302; cf. Schillebeeckx, "Transubstantiation, Transfinalisation, Transignification", 179.
- ⁸ Council of Trent, Decree on the Most Holy Eucharist (1551), canon 2 (DS 1652).
- ⁹ Engelbert Gutwenger, "Transubstantiation", in Karl Rahner, ed., *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi* (London: Burns & Oates, 1981), 1751-5, here at 1754-5.
- ¹⁰ Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to the Smyrnaeans*, 7 (PG 5, 714), as quoted in MF 44.
- ¹¹ Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Letter to Magnus*, 6 (PL 3, 1139), as quoted in MF 44.
- ¹² Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Aubier, 1949), 253, 287. See Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*, trans. Gemma Simmonds with Richard Price (London: SCM, 2006), 226, 256. References below will be to the translation.

- ¹³ See previous note.
- ¹⁴ De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 88. See also, Paul McPartlan, *The Eucharist Makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993; new ed., Fairfax VA: Eastern Christian Publications, 2006); *Sacrament of Salvation: An Introduction to Eucharistic Ecclesiology* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995).
- ¹⁵ Lateran Council IV (1215), Definition against the Albigensians and Cathars (DS 802).
- ¹⁶ Council of Trent, Decree on the Most Holy Eucharist (1551), ch.4 (DS 1642) and canon 2 (DS 1652).
- ¹⁷ Joseph Ratzinger, "The Pastoral Implications of Episcopal Collegiality", *Concilium*, vol.1, no.1 (1965), 20-34, here at 28.
- ¹⁸ See McPartlan, *The Eucharist Makes the Church*, 63.
- ¹⁹ De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 251.
- ²⁰ Quotations from Vatican II documents are taken from Austin Flannery, ed., *Vatican Council II. The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1975). The translation just given of LG §3 is amended.
- ²¹ See Karl Heinz Neufeld, "In the Service of the Council", in René Latourelle, ed., *Vatican II: Assessments and Perspectives, Twenty-Five Years After (1962-1987)*, vol.1 (1988), 74-105, here at 86 & 101, note 30; and 94. Also, McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, 59.
- ²² See also, McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, ch.3.
- ²³ Vatican Council II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (hereafter, SC), §47.
- ²⁴ See DS 860.
- ²⁵ Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology. Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology*, trans. Sr Mary Frances McCarthy (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), 254-5.
- ²⁶ See, e.g., the work of de Lubac's Jesuit confrère, Yves de Montcheuil, *Mélanges Théologiques* (Paris: Aubier, 1951), Part 1, ch.2: "L'unité du sacrifice et du sacrement dans l'Eucharistie".
- ²⁷ See de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 58, 67.
- ²⁸ For a fuller account, see McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, ch.1.
- ²⁹ St John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (2003), §15.
- ³⁰ EDE §17; quotation from St Ephrem the Syrian, *Sermo IV in Hebdomadam Sanctam*: CSCO 413/Syr. 182, 55.
- ³¹ Pope Benedict XVI refers to the same passage from St Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, X, 6 (PL 41, 284) in his Apostolic Exhortation of 2007, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, §70, and gives the following quote: "this is the sacrifice of Christians: that we, though many, are one body in Christ". "The Church celebrates this mystery in the sacrament of the altar, as the faithful know, and there she shows them clearly that in what is offered, she herself is offered."
- ³² Vatican Council II, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, §4.
- ³³ Francis, *Laudato Si'*, §236.



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Peace in the Lord's Presence: the College Quarant'ore

THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2014/15 saw the Forty Hours' devotion celebrated in the College over the final weekend of November, coinciding with our Advent Recollection. Forty hours of continuous prayer were offered in the College Church before the exposed Blessed Sacrament, with an emphasis on intercession for persecuted Christians. The house dwelt in silence as the whole community took turns to watch an hour with Our Lord and to pray for our many brothers and sisters suffering for the faith around the world.

On Saturday evening, a few hours into the devotion, the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary were recited, with accompanying meditations written by Iraqi Catholics. What we have seen and heard in news reports was confirmed by the personal testimony of those forced to flee their homes on the Nineveh Plain. The reflections spoke of evil and hatred endured for professing the name of Jesus; of the agony of children abducted from families; of bereavement; of houses, churches, schools and villages left behind; and the bitterness of being thrust into the poverty of refugee camps while the world looks on with apparent indifference. In a plea for the intercession of Our Lady, Deacon Ibrahim of Iraq wrote: "Our mother Mary, this is the condition of your Christian people; despite our loyalty and belief and our honesty we were flagellated and persecuted for our faith in Jesus Christ your Son. So, is it fair that ISIS destroyed our lands and possessed everything that we owned, and took our daughters and our youths?"¹

Within these anguished cries of the heart can be heard a clear identification with Jesus crucified and the hope of sharing in his victory. In a meditation on the Agony in the Garden by an Iraqi religious, Sister Muntaha, we heard: "In this our suffering, we feel our closeness to you and your nearness to us. With you, we entrust our existence and our destiny in the lovely hands of the Father, and we say: 'But do what you want and not what I want' (Mt. 26:42). Give us the courage to drink the chalice, hoping in the salvation and the Resurrection with you and with all who suffer in the world."²

Christians and other minority groups in Iraq, Syria, Nigeria, and in various other parts of the world, continue to face grave threats. With the dams holding back chaos broken open in their lands, our brethren live like lambs amidst wolves, easy prey for men of violence. We pray in love and solidarity and beseech the good Lord to strengthen and uphold them, to deliver us from all evil, and to convert the hearts of those who have embraced the darkness of terrorism.

Where better to pray for these causes than in the Eucharistic presence of our crucified, risen and living Lord? As the times appear to darken, we can turn to the source of all light and life for a fresh outpouring of that peace which the world cannot give. St John Paul II taught us: "There is no peace without prayer. Every day the Church asks this gift of the Lord in the Eucharistic celebration. When human hope of peace seems to dissolve, when we feel even more strongly the forces of evil and the influence of the evil one who, being the *'diá-bolos'*, the 'separator', sows the spirit of hatred and division in hearts, Christians, harmoniously united in the name of Christ (cf. Mt. 13:19-20), persevere in praying to the 'Most High, all-powerful, good Lord', invoking from him the Spirit of peace and goodness, the Spirit who moves hearts and inspires thoughts of peace and not of affliction."³

Pope Benedict XVI wrote along similar lines in teaching that “the kingdom of God can counter war and violence effectively; only where God’s kingdom comes near can peace grow and flourish. Prayer, therefore, is an essential part of Christian efforts for peace. ‘Deliver us from evil. Deliver us from every evil and give us peace in our day.’”⁴

Our current Holy Father Pope Francis also continually exhorts us to pray for peace. In his Angelus address at the beginning of the new calendar year he proclaimed, “peace is always possible, and we have to seek it,” going on to say, “prayer is at



An ISIS militant destroying Christian symbols on St George's Church in Mosul, Iraq. Source: Vocativ

the root of peace.”⁵ A few months prior to this he had addressed the presidents of Palestine and Israel, and delegations representing Jews, Christians, and Muslims, who had gathered at the Vatican to pray for peace in the Middle East and throughout the world. Speaking of the need to break the spiral of hatred and violence and see our fellow men as brothers, Pope Francis stated: “We have to lift our eyes to heaven and acknowledge one another as children of one Father.”⁶

Praying for the members of Jesus’ body suffering violence also focuses the mind afresh on the radical nature of Christian discipleship. The noble response of St Ralph Sherwin and his companions to the call of Jesus is echoed in our own day by those willing to give all for the sake of the Gospel. In another of the Rosary meditations we heard Martin, a Chaldean seminarian, pray to Jesus: “We are still carrying the Cross, for you said: ‘Who wants to follow me, he must deny himself and carry his Cross and follow me,’ so we left everything for your name, our villages, churches, houses, families. But we are waiting to go back and raise the Cross again above our churches, our hills, our houses, so everyone on this earth is glorified in your Cross.”⁷

Humbled and inspired by such a witness we desire to emulate it. Where can we find such strength? Again and again, we do so by coming to the fountain of all grace, Jesus Christ truly present in his Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in all the tabernacles and upon all the altars of the world. Here we encounter infinite love, and allow the light of his face to shine upon us. As we dwell in silence before his tender gaze, heart speaks unto heart.

We were reminded of this when Fr Anthony Doe gave the College’s Holy Week Retreat for 2015. During it he described to us how he sees the increase in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament as the most important development in the Church today. He observed that committed Catholics are increasingly focused on Eucharistic Adoration, and that it powers many of the new movements. He offered some fascinating insights as to why this may be so. Cultural norms are no longer enough to keep people attending their local parish. The secular culture we live in has no answer for wounded humanity, and as a result spiritual and human growth is severely stunted. Added to this, the modern world suffers from such severe information overload that many have lost the ability to “tune in” to the spiritual, to listen to and encounter God. In this context, to become a disciple of Jesus one must experience his healing and mercy in a profound and personal way. The parish that is focused on the Eucharist forms a contemplative space that allows this tangible and living relationship to develop; it does so with prayer, *Lectio*

Divina and a return to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our Lord present in the Eucharist breathes his Spirit and healing peace into individuals. He brings us to birth in our true identity as children of the Father and thus forms dynamic communities of compassion, sharing, patience, empathy, and true generative love. The abiding message of the retreat was that the Kingdom of God can be experienced in our day, so long as we foster a renewed intention to develop true intimacy with the person of Jesus Christ, present in our midst in the Blessed Sacrament.

One beautiful reflection, which may spur us to make time for this encounter with Jesus, comes from St John Eudes, speaking of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, into whose presence we come in adoration:

The most loving heart of our benign Saviour is a burning furnace of most pure love for us; a furnace of purifying love, of illuminating love, of sanctifying love, of transforming love, and a deifying love. His love is a purifying love, in which the hearts of holy souls are purified more perfectly than gold in the furnace; an illuminating love, which scatters the darkness of hell with which the earth is covered and lets us into the wonderful brilliance of heaven... a sanctifying love, which destroys sin in our souls in order to establish there the kingdom of grace; a transforming love, which transforms serpents into doves, wolves into lambs, beasts into angels... a deifying love, which makes gods of men... O divine love of my Jesus, I give myself wholly to you; purify me, enlighten me, sanctify me, transform me into you, that I may be naught but love for my God.⁸

Pope Benedict XVI draws the two themes considered in this feature together: solidarity with our suffering Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world, and the invitation to encounter Christ ever more intimately in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar: "Go to the encounter with him in the Blessed Eucharist, go to adore him in the churches, kneeling before the Tabernacle: Jesus will fill you with his love and will reveal to you the thoughts of his heart. If you listen to him, you will feel ever more deeply the joy of belonging to his Mystical Body, the Church, which is the



Pope Francis has encouraged Christians to pray before the Blessed Sacrament for peace. Source: Salt & Light

family of his disciples held close by the bond of unity and love." As we grow in unity and love, so also we grow in joy and peace. May we all, in his presence, experience what the Gospel tells us the disciples themselves did on encountering the Risen Lord: for they were overjoyed, and he said to them, "Peace be with you" (Jn 20:20-1).



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Endnotes

- ¹ <http://www.acnuk.org/peace-in-iraq-meditations-on-the-rosary>
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Speaking at the Day of Prayer for Peace in Europe at the Monastery of St Clare, Assisi, 9th January 1993. St John Paul II, *The Pope Teaches*, Number 1 1993, (London: Incorporated Catholic Truth Society, 1993), 32.
- ⁴ J. Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), *Seek That Which Is Above* (San Francisco CA: Ignatius Press, 2007), 171.
- ⁵ <http://www.cruznw.com/church/2015/01/01/pope-francis-opens-2015-with-calls-for-peace-loyalty-to-the-church-and-devotion-to-mary/>
- ⁶ <http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-francis-a-prayer-for-peace>
- ⁷ <http://www.acnuk.org/peace-in-iraq-meditations-on-the-rosary>
- ⁸ D. Baldwin, *The Sacred Heart: A Pilgrim's Companion to Paray-le-Monial* (London: Incorporated Catholic Truth Society, 1993).
- ⁹ <https://immaculataepcc.wordpress.com/2008/07/29/go-to-the-encounter-with-him-in-the-blessed-eucharist-go-to-adore-him-in-the-churches-kneeling-before-the-tabernacle-jesus-will-fill-you-with-his-love-and-will-reveal-to-you-the-thoughts-of-his-h/>

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Bl. Óscar Romero: Martyr for the Whole Church

ON 23 MAY of this year Óscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador from 1977 to 1980, was beatified by Cardinal Angelo Amato SDB on behalf of Pope Francis. The Holy See in February declared that when he was shot while saying Mass on 24 March 1980 he was martyred because of *odium fidei* (hatred of the faith). The beatification was a major event not only for the Catholic Church in Latin America but for all Catholics, since Romero has become an iconic figure for the Church's struggle for peace and justice in the world.


Constant study is taking place of Romero's significance, and there are many opportunities to learn more about him.¹ Here I want to outline some ways in which we can understand him as a martyr and a teacher for the whole Church.

Romero and Rome

First I would like to observe that Romero is significant for seminarians and priests formed at the Venerable English College and elsewhere in Rome, simply because the city was important for him throughout his life. After his initial studies Romero's talents were recognised, and at the beginning of the Second World War he was sent to complete his formation at the Gregorian University.

He was ordained priest in April 1942, but his family was unable to come to Rome because of the war. Although he started studies for a doctorate in ascetical theology, he was soon summoned back to El Salvador. In the published diaries of his time as archbishop he describes visits to Rome, and it is clear that the city means a great deal to him.² On the first trip following his appointment he writes of going to St Paul Outside the Walls: "I felt stirring in my memory, in my heart, in my love, all those emotions from my days as a student and, once I became a priest, my visits to Rome, my prayers beside these tombs of the apostles have always meant inspiration and strength."³

Romero has become an iconic figure for the Church's struggle for peace and justice.



Romero the Martyr

The facts of Romero's life and death are well known and do not need to be rehearsed here. What is important is the Holy See's affirmation that he was definitely to be seen as a martyr, killed out of *odium fidei*. This did not come out of the blue, nor was it simply the work of Pope Francis. In an interview given on the plane to the CELAM assembly in Aparacida in 2007, Benedict XVI said that the archbishop's death should be seen in this way: "Archbishop Romero was certainly an important witness of the faith, a man of great Christian virtue who worked for peace and against the dictatorship, and was killed while celebrating Mass. Consequently his death was truly 'credible', a witness for faith."⁴

St John Paul II deepened the Church's understanding of martyrdom, and many of his writings at the time of the Great Jubilee reflected on martyrdom in our own age; as he wrote: "The martyr, in effect, is the most authentic witness to the truth about existence. He knows that he has found in the encounter with Jesus Christ the truth about his life and no one and nothing can take away that certainty."⁵

Romero, of course, is far from being the only martyr of our age. We can recall the Jesuit martyrs of El Salvador, Bishop Juan Gerardi in Guatemala, countless Christians killed in China, and most recently, the thousands killed in the Holy Land, Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Iraq. Martyrdom is one of the big theological themes of our day, partly because modern communications make us so much more aware of what is happening in different parts of the world, and Romero serves as an icon of this theme.

Opposition to Romero

Any perusal of Romero's life shows that many disagreed with him, and many hated him. The Raul Julia film *Romero* captures chillingly the hatred felt by many of the rich towards him during his ministry as archbishop, largely because they had earlier viewed him as an ally. Perhaps most disturbing is the hostility towards him of all but one of the other Salvadorean bishops, coupled with the attitude of the papal nuncio and some in Rome.⁶

He had known his fellow bishops for most of his life, and his diaries record the personal hurt he experienced because of the disunity in the hierarchy. Given all this, one reason for the delay in the beatification

is likely to have been that his opponents at home and in Rome did not vanish when he was killed. However, his opponents did not include the pope and Cardinal Ratzinger. Romero's diary entries record great personal warmth in his meetings with Bl. Paul VI and St John Paul II, however much others were briefing against him. When the pope came to El Salvador three years after Romero's death he insisted on making a diversion from his official itinerary (prepared by the nuncio and the bishops) in order to pray publicly at Romero's tomb, and he paid tribute to him.⁷

Now, as during his lifetime, Romero's opponents include those who do not really accept the social teaching of the Catholic Church, or the insights of the post-Vatican II Latin American Church as expounded at the great assemblies in Medellín and Puebla. They cannot accept, for example, that the concept of the "preferential option for the poor" is part of mainstream Catholic teaching. Romero symbolises this option so well.

Romero the Teacher

Romero's episcopal motto was *Sentir con la iglesia*, "To be of one mind with the Church". We cannot understand his ministry unless we realise how much he loved the Church, the people of God. Christians resist most effectively the violence of tyrannical regimes when they have a strong ecclesiology; when Christians are tortured or killed, the whole body suffers with them.⁸ His output was prolific (particularly his regular Sunday sermons which were broadcast on the radio) but for the rest of this article I want to concentrate on the teaching contained in his four pastoral letters.⁹



Bl. Óscar Romero preaching in San Salvador. Source: Gadmer, Bethlehem Mission Immensee

When Christians are tortured or killed, the whole body suffers with them.



The Paschal Church

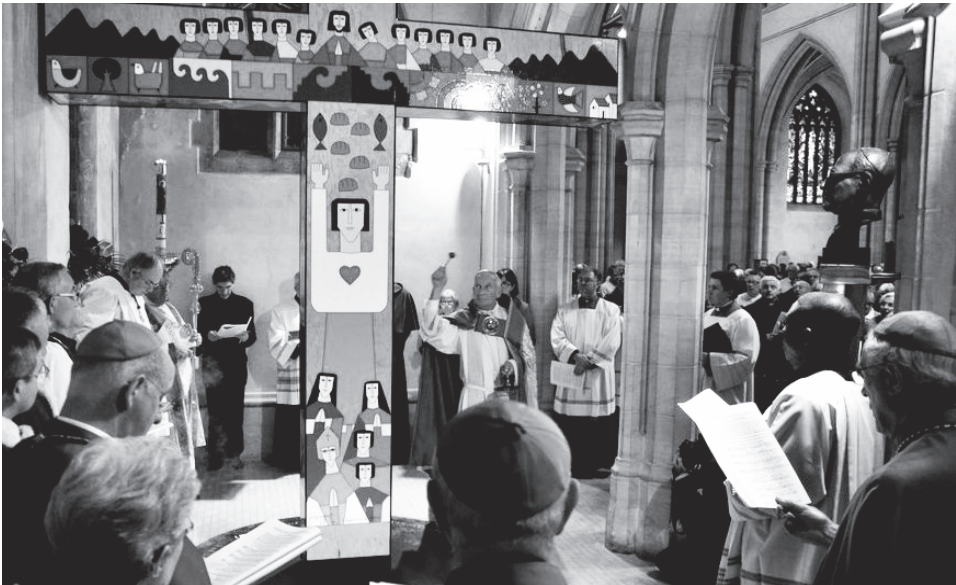
The first was written a few months after he became archbishop, at Easter 1977, and it is the first glimpse we have of Romero's sustained and reflective teaching ministry, entitled "The Paschal Church." He described the archdiocese as living a "paschal hour" made real in the liturgy, and he wanted everyone to be involved in a "reflective dialogue" with the Church "which is always desirous of dialogue with all in order to communicate to them the truth and the grace that God has entrusted to it for guiding the world according his divine plans...the Church does not live for itself, but to bring to the world the truth and the grace of the paschal mystery." In the Exodus the people of Israel pass "from slavery through sea and desert to a promised land, to freedom and repose." Jesus' death destroys the reign of sin, and his resurrection "implants now in history the reign of eternal life." He continues:

The Church is the body of the risen Christ, and by baptism all the members that make it up live that tension of Passover, that passage from death to life, that passage that never ends called conversion, which is the unceasing demand to kill in oneself all that is sin and make live with ever growing power all that is life, renewal, holiness and justice.

The Body of Christ in History

The second letter, written a few months later in August 1977, also has a strong ecclesiology. The remaining pastorals mark annually the "feast of title" of the archdiocese and El Salvador, the Transfiguration. The 1977 letter looks at how the Church's self-understanding has developed:

This is the theme of my letter: the Church is the body of Christ in history. By this I mean that Christ has wanted the Church to live in every period in history. The Church's founding is not to be understood in a legal, juridical manner, as though Christ had got a few men together to entrust them with a teaching and given them



A "Romero cross" (containing relics) being blessed in September 2013 by Archbishop Peter Smith in St George's Cathedral, Southwark. Source: British Carmelites

a charter, while remaining himself separate from the organisation. Rather, the origin of the Church is something much deeper. Christ founded his Church in order to keep on being present himself in the history of human beings, precisely through that group of Christians who form the Church. The Church is thus the flesh in which Christ incarnates throughout the ages his own life and the mission of his person.

So the Church needs to change and adapt if it is to be faithful: "The criterion that guides the Church is not the satisfaction of human beings or its fear of them, no matter how powerful or feared they may be, but its duty to lend to Christ through history its voice so that Jesus can speak, its feet so that he can walk the world of today, its hands to work in the building up of the kingdom in today's world, and all its members to 'fill up what is lacking in his suffering'"¹⁰

He refutes accusations that the Church is preaching hatred and violence, that it has become Marxist, and that it has gone beyond the bounds of its mission. Rather, the Church's faithfulness now leads to persecution and martyrdom, and also to greater solidarity and unity.

The Church and the Peasant Unions

Romero's third pastoral a year later was dated on the day Bl. Paul VI died. It addressed two subjects: the relationship between the Church and the peasant unions,¹¹ and the use of violence. Looking at the first he studies the place of trade unions in social doctrine since *Rerum Novarum*, contrasting the restrictions placed on peasant unions with the freedom given to government-backed bodies. Integral human liberation "embraces the whole human being in every dimension, including openness to the absolute that is God...it proceeds from a gospel vision of human nature and is based on deep motives of justice in charity. It has within it a truly spiritual dimension and has as its final goal salvation and happiness in God. It demands conversion of heart and mind and is not satisfied with merely changing structures. It excludes violence, which it considers 'unchristian and unevangelical',¹² ineffective and not consonant with people's dignity."

The other question, violence, was delicate. The popular organisations and unions had been victims of violence from the police, the army, right-wing militias, and death squads for many years; how far could people defend themselves? Romero looks at the "just insurrection" tradition, reasserting what Bl. Paul VI said: that in certain cases insurrection might be justified.¹³ The roots of violence in El Salvador lie in injustice: "We fraternally invite all, especially the organisations that labour in the struggle for justice, to continue courageously and honestly with just objectives and to use legitimate means of pressure and not put all their trust in violence."

The Mission of the Church in the Nation's Crisis

The last pastoral letter (1979) was written shortly after the CELAM Puebla assembly and aimed to present "the total spirit of Puebla." Romero applies its teachings to his own country, detailing examples of social injustice and the unfair treatment of the organisations of the poor and the oppressed, with statistics about killings and arrests. He accuses the government directly of arming right-wing militias.

There is a masterful analysis of sin: in the ways employers deprive workers of their rights; in unjust strikes and dishonesty among workers; in bribery and other forms of corruption; in sexual exploitation, prostitution, and drug abuse; in kidnappings and threats. Puebla had enunciated the concept of the "preferential option for the poor"¹⁴ and Romero says that this "which the gospel demands of Christians, does not polarise or divide, but is rather a force for unity, because 'it does not try to exclude other representatives of the social picture in which we live... but is an invitation to all, regardless of class, to accept and take up the cause of the poor as though accepting and taking up their own cause, the cause of Christ himself.'"¹⁵

The letter examines the use of violence and Marxism, reflecting faithfully Puebla's position: using certain concepts in a critical fashion is not the same as signing up to Marxist ideology, and "the fear of Marxism keeps many from confronting the oppressive reality of liberal capitalism. Before the danger of a system clearly marked by sin, they forget to denounce and combat the reality imparted by another system equally marked by sin... the best way to overcome Marxism is to take seriously the preferential option for the poor."

Conclusion

As Catholics we believe that martyrs enrich the whole Church. The life, the teachings, and the death of Bl. Óscar Romero are a rich example of this, for which we should be profoundly thankful.



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Endnotes

- ¹ For example, his sermons are gradually being translated and published: *A Prophetic Bishop Speaks to his People Volume One*, tr. J. Owens (Miami, FL: Convivium Press, 2015), has just appeared.
- ² *A Shepherd's Diary*, tr. I. Hodgson (London: CAFOD/ CIIR, 1993).
- ³ Sunday, June 18, *ibid.* 66.
- ⁴ 9 May 2007. The interview is now available on the Vatican website, following the links to the Aparacida assembly. In the original press releases the references to Romero were omitted, but American journalists kept transcripts. In the rest of the interview Pope Benedict refers to the ways in which Romero has sometimes been appropriated since his death, 'using him as a badge'.
- ⁵ St John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, §43.
- ⁶ See A. Beck, *Oscar Romero - Martyr for Faith* (London: CTS, 2015), 30ff., which has references to fuller works.
- ⁷ He referred to him as "the zealous pastor who was led by the love of God and service to his brothers to the supreme sacrifice of his life in a violent way, while celebrating the sacrament of forgiveness and reconciliation."
- ⁸ See on this W. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), ch.1. Cavanaugh's book looks at the actions of the Church under the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile: Romero sought advice from Cardinal Raul Silva, the Archbishop of Santiago, about how to support the victims of torture and violence.
- ⁹ There is a fuller description and analysis of the letters in what is still the best study in English of Romero, J.R. Brockman, *Romero – A Life* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2005). There are also good studies of them in M.A. Hayes and D. Tombs (eds.), *Truth and Memory: The Church and Human Rights in El Salvador and Guatemala* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2001) and R.S. Pelton, *Monsignor Romero – Bishop for the Third Millennium* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004).
- ¹⁰ Colossians 1:24.
- ¹¹ These being the Federación Cristiana de Campesinos Salvadoreños (FECCAS) and the Unión de Trabajadores del Campo (UTC).
- ¹² Bl. Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, §37.
- ¹³ Bl. Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, §31.
- ¹⁴ The concept was later endorsed in the documents examining Liberation Theology from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and written by Cardinal Ratzinger, *Libertatis Nuntius* (1984) and *Libertatis Conscientia* (1986) and in St John Paul II's *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987).
- ¹⁵ He is quoting directly the *Message to the Peoples of Latin America* from the Puebla assembly, section 3.

“Mercy Living and Visible”: the VEC Pilgrimage to Turin

“JESUS CHRIST IS the face of the Father’s mercy. These words might well sum up the mystery of the Christian faith. Mercy has become living and visible in Jesus of Nazareth, reaching its culmination in him.”¹ With these words Pope Francis declared that from 8 December 2015 an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy will take place, to help the Church more fully realise the mercy which God offers to his people. It seems appropriate, therefore, that we use this time which the Holy Father offers to contemplate the visibility of God’s mercy in Christ, for Christ “confirmed with divine testimony what revelation proclaimed, that God is with us to free us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to life eternal.”² It was therefore fitting, even providential, that this year the Shroud of Turin was displayed for public veneration in Turin Cathedral. Several members of the College (as a result of Nick and Pam Coote’s generous benefaction) were fortunate enough to go on pilgrimage in May for three days, to venerate the Shroud and also visit other important sites, including the Shrine of St John Bosco. A second group from the College would follow in their footsteps in June.

Early on a Friday morning in May, a group of intrepid students and staff did without their coffee in order to catch an early morning train from Termini to Turin. Armed with our bandanas and pilgrim packs, and under the guidance of an able Italian guide, we set off. I had some time to contemplate during the journey what I was expecting from the Shroud, having heard about the plethora of scientific studies and many other explanations of this holy image’s provenance.



Pope Francis prays before the Shroud during his own pilgrimage to Turin in June. Source: PA

Whether the evidence pointed one way or another, there was a common feeling among us that what we were about to see would allow us to reflect more profoundly on the suffering of Christ and his victory over death and sin.

We arrived in Turin and were hurried onto our *Pullman*, which whisked us off to the Palace where we joined the crowds assembling to see the Shroud. It was a decidedly un-Roman experience: the organisation was impressive, and although the queue took nearly two hours from start to finish, along the way there were information cards about local saints including John Bosco and Pier Giorgio Frassati. The entire route was covered, with places to rest along the way. As we drew near the Shroud we were shown a short video of what we would see on the Shroud, with different parts isolated and explained, and then without further wait we were ushered into the cathedral. In the cathedral the lights were darkened and we were guided to one of three places so that three groups of pilgrims could see the Shroud at any one time. As we waited next to the tomb of blessed Pier Giorgio, there was a great silence in the cathedral with just a single, amplified voice reciting prayers. There was a great atmosphere of reverence and recollection permeating the place.

We were guided before the Shroud, and given the opportunity to spend a few minutes before this holy image. A hush fell across the assembled pilgrims as we beheld this image of the Father’s mercy. I found myself transfixed by the face of Christ, almost unable to tear my eyes away. Here was the image of Our Lord’s holy face, here were the hands that gave sight to the blind and healed the sick, the feet that walked among his people. Having been to the Holy Land on pilgrimage and having visited the Holy Sepulchre, seeing the place where he had lain, and now seeing the face of the Lord before us was deeply moving for all present.

“Whoever sees Jesus sees the Father (cf. Jn 14:9). Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.”³ In the entirety of his person, this phrase



The façade of Turin Cathedral, where the Shroud has been on display. Source: Wikimedia Commons

hits more deeply when you gaze upon the image of the Shroud of Turin. In this holy image you truly realise the depths of the mercy of God, that in taking on our lowly form Christ became like us: “...but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.”⁴ This mercy, which God shows us in the crucified image of Our Lord, is boundless. He always seeks to draw us closer to him. It is the root of our salvation. As the Holy Father tells us; “[w]e need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.”⁵

It is in prayerful viewing of the Shroud that this becomes so much clearer, for in it we see the lengths that God will go to in order to reunite us to him despite our sinfulness. Christ is the bridge, dying once so that all of us may be free. There are many who consider themselves beyond mercy, and this may go some way towards explaining the impression one sometimes encounters that God is merely a judge, sentencing those who have done wrong to hell. What many people do not realise is that God calls us to be closer with him through his loving mercy. The Holy Father, in his bull *Misericordiae Vultus*, addresses these people when he says, “May the message of mercy reach everyone, and may no one be indifferent to the call to experience mercy. I direct this invitation to conversion even more fervently to those whose behaviour distances them from the grace of God...”⁶

We cannot begin to be closer to him through our own merits, but only through his mercy: the mercy shown in Christ on the Cross. The Holy Father tells us that “[God’s] being merciful is concretely demonstrated in his many actions throughout the history of salvation where his goodness prevails over punishment and destruction.”⁷ Again, speaking of our Lord’s passion, he reminds us, “Jesus entered upon his passion and death, conscious of the great mystery of love that he would consummate on the Cross. Knowing that Jesus himself prayed this psalm [Psalm 136] makes it even more important for us as Christians, challenging us to take up the refrain in our daily lives by praying these words of praise: ‘for his mercy endures forever.’”⁸ By calling the Jubilee Year of Mercy, the Holy Father is inviting us to be drawn ever more deeply into the love and mercy of God, to reflect more profoundly on its importance in our lives and to remember the mercy that God has shown us when others come to us seeking forgiveness. It is only by knowing the Lord’s mercy that we can proclaim it to the ends of the earth. As Pope Francis said in his homily in Turin when he made his own pilgrimage to see the Shroud, “Jesus loves us always, until the end, without limits and without measure. And he loves us all, to the point that each one of us can say: ‘He gave his life for me’. Jesus’ faithfulness does not give up, even in front of our infidelity. Saint Paul reminds us of this: ‘If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself’ (2 Tim. 2,13).”

We see the hands which healed the sick and gave us the Eucharist, wounded by nails. We see his side, pierced, from which blood and water flowed. We see his head, which bore a crown of thorns. In all these ways we see God’s mercy made truly manifest. In contemplating the Shroud one can see these wounds and so say with conviction that “Christ did this for me so that I might be free from sin and death.” As St Paul writes, “‘Where, o death, is your victory? Where, o death, is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”⁹. In the Shroud we see death, but we also see victory, love and mercy. When we prayed in front of the Shroud there was no sadness or weeping but joy and love. In those few minutes you felt a deep sense of love and

humility that our God would go to such great lengths to rescue each one of us from the snares of sin and death.

We were only in front of the Shroud for little more than five minutes, but many of us felt these to be some of the most deeply moving minutes of our lives. As we left the cathedral to continue our pilgrimage to the other holy sites in Turin, including the places associated with the life of St John Bosco, I think we were all affected in our own way; affected by those few minutes in which we were able to gaze on the image of our crucified Lord and see “the face of the Father’s mercy”.¹⁰ In order to summarise the College’s experience of our time in Turin, and in particular our time in front of the Holy Shroud, I give the last word to Pope Francis, quoting once more from his Bull for the Holy Year of Mercy, *Misericordiae Vultus*:

[L]et us allow God to surprise us. He never tires of casting open the doors of his heart and of repeating that he loves us and wants to share his love with us. The Church feels the urgent need to proclaim God’s mercy. Her life is authentic and credible only when she becomes a convincing herald of mercy. She knows that her primary task, especially at a moment full of great hopes and signs of contradiction, is to introduce everyone to the great mystery of God’s mercy by contemplating the face of Christ. The Church is called above all to be a credible witness to mercy, professing it and living it as the core of the revelation of Jesus Christ. From the heart of the Trinity, from the depths of the mystery of God, the great river of mercy wells up and overflows unceasingly. It is a spring that will never run dry, no matter how many people draw from it. Every time someone is in need, he or she can approach it, because the mercy of God never ends. The profundity of the mystery surrounding it is as inexhaustible as the richness which springs up from it.¹¹



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Endnotes

- ¹ Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, §1.
- ² Vatican Council II, *Dei Verbum*, §4.
- ³ Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, §1.
- ⁴ Philippians 2:7-8
- ⁵ Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, §2.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, §19.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, §6.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, §7.
- ⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:55-57.
- ¹⁰ Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, §1.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, §25.

Nova et Vetera

FORMER STUDENTS AND staff have once again been busy publishing books and resources in 2015. These short reviews have been compiled using a variety of sources such as reviews, publishers' promotional materials, and the works themselves.

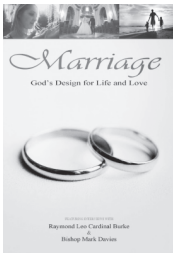
An English Spring: Memoirs

(Bloomsbury, London) by Cormac Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor

From hitchhiking in a cassock to posing as a cardinal's secretary (in order to get into St Peter's Basilica as a student), this autobiography is not short of amusing anecdotes about Rome and the College. Two chapters of Cardinal Cormac's book published earlier this year contrast his times of adventure as a young seminarian with his successful steering of the English College as rector (1971-7) during a period of uncertainty.

His choice of title stems from Bl. John Henry Newman's famous homily about his hopes for a renewal of the Church in which he imagined not only sunshine and the blossoming of new life, but icy winds and torrential rain. With this in mind, Cardinal Cormac seeks to reflect on his own life during a time of turbulence.

The later chapters speak of the dramatic conclave that elected Pope Benedict - at which the cardinal was present - and of the election of Pope Francis. Though not at the conclave in the latter case, the cardinal was present at preliminary general congregations, and shared a meal with the future pope just days before his election. Yet it is perhaps such vivid accounts as that of his going to a Mass celebrated by Padre Pio, and skipping lectures at the Gregorian in favour of a coffee and a bun, that students and friends of the Venerabile will enjoy most.



Marriage: God's Design for Life and Love (DVD)

(St Anthony Communications)

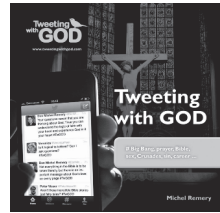
This well-produced, powerful catechetical tool provides an authentic Catholic vision and understanding of marriage. It includes significant input by Frs Marcus Holden and Andrew Pinsent. Produced in association with the Confraternity of Catholic Clergy, it is a colourful presentation, with interviews from Cardinal Raymond Burke, Bishop Mark Davies, priests, married couples and marriage advisors. These are interspersed with high quality shots of young married couples, children and families. The forty-three minutes of the DVD are split into three subject areas: "God's design for marriage", "challenges to marriage", and "the family and the future".

Fr Holden contributes much of the teaching in the presentation, saying that marriage is a unique and unifying love that cannot be dissolved. He points out that marriage provides stability for children and is good for society. Fr Holden, the Director of MA Apologetics at Maryvale Institute, stresses the importance of the Church supporting those whose marriages have broken down, but also says good pastoral practice should be based on good doctrine.

Fr Pinsent is introduced as research director at the Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion, Oxford University. Perhaps his most profound words are on the beauty of Catholic families. He says: "When we have good and holy Catholic families – they stand out as a beacon in today's world."

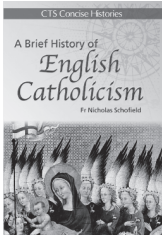
Tweeting with God (Ignatius Press) by Fr Michel Remery

Linking the Twitter phenomenon of brevity and hashtags with Catholic teaching might appear to be a curious catechetical approach at first glance. But Fr Michel Remery, from the Dutch contingent of Old Romans, has produced an ingenious way of teaching the faith by posing two hundred questions collected from young Catholics and skillfully answering them in short paragraphs.



Tweeting with God has its origins in Leiden in the Netherlands where Fr Remery, who is currently Vice Secretary General of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, engaged with young people about their questions concerning the faith. Two of the more specific questions were: Will I meet my pet in heaven, and, was Jesus against women? As well as providing an explanation of difficult topics, the project's aim is also to reflect on the logical reasoning of Catholic teaching. It is split into four parts: tweets about God, about the Church, about a personal relationship with Christ and about Christian life, faith and ethics.

The resource has even been praised by New York's Cardinal Dolan via - you guessed it - Twitter: "Combines the timeless teaching of our faith with the best of modern technology." As well as the book, Fr Remery has produced an app and a comprehensive website (www.tweetingwithgod.com).



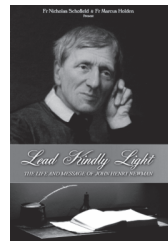
A Brief History of English Catholicism (CTS, London) by Fr Nicholas Schofield
Spurred on by a passion to connect the faithful with the richness of English Catholic history and culture, Fr Schofield provides a whistle stop tour through the centuries in just sixty pamphlet sized pages. The work by the Archdiocese of Westminster's archivist stems from a talk he has given frequently over the last eight years.

As well as obvious historical sources, Fr Schofield argues that the names of places, pubs and streets tell us much about our Catholic heritage. The exploration of the pamphlet begins with England's conversion to Christianity, proceeds onto the period of consolidation in the Middle Ages, then looks at the Protestant Reformation and ends with the "second spring" of more modern times. Fr Schofield's hope is that we are presented with a great chain of faith which will help us be courageous and faithful in writing the next chapter of the story.

Lead Kindly Light: The Life and Message of John Henry Newman (DVD)

(St Anthony Communications) by Frs Nicholas Schofield & Marcus Holden

The life of Newman as an influential teacher, distinguished theologian, a man who went through many trials and a pastor of souls, is brought alive by this engaging film. Frs Schofield and Holden visit key places where he lived and worked from London to Oxford, and Littlemore to Birmingham. The DVD traces his life beginning with his roots in Ealing, his time as a student at Trinity College, Oxford, his time as vicar in the Church of England, his conversion, and his saintly ministry as a priest and cardinal.



RICHARD MARSDEN is a fifth-year seminarian for the Diocese of Middlesbrough, studying theology at the Gregorian.

Schola Notes

THE SCHOLA'S YEAR has unfolded, as ever, in symphonic form, with the difference that its various movements have all, it seems to me, been played at a breakneck *allegro*. We have covered a lot of ground. The first few months were largely under the supervision of Fr Bruce Burbidge, continuing in his role as Schola Master from the previous year. Preparations for the Advent meditation began at once, with a demanding programme for all three voices of the *Schola*. Richard Marsden prepared a cycle of readings and choral pieces around the beautiful and thought-provoking theme of Jesus in the womb of Mary, which provided the College community and guests the chance to contemplate an often overlooked stage of the history of the Incarnation, and indeed, a phase of human life frequently threatened in contemporary society. Perhaps the most evocative piece in this light, taken from our own English Catholic tradition, was William Byrd's *Memento salutis auctor* with its text: "Remember, O Creator Lord that in the Virgin's sacred womb, thou wast conceived, and of her flesh didst our mortality assume". The joy of the angelic choir at that assumption was remembered too in "And the glory of the Lord" from Handel's *Messiah*, ably accompanied by Benjamin Woodley on the chamber organ. Negotiating a keyboard reduction is never easy, but Ben rendered it with much aplomb, helping to set the tone for a lively performance from the singers. Also sung was Willcocks' adaptation of the *Matins Responsory* by Palestrina, with another nod to our own tradition in the form of the *Salus aeterna*, a haunting sequence for Advent taken from the Sarum Gradual, chanted by a smaller group. Seven singers also gave a beautiful performance of Grieg's *Ave maris stella*: Peter Wynanski, Michael Vian Clark, Benjamin Woodley, David Irwin, Philip Andrews, Tao Nguyen, and myself. It was good, in a musical way, to be able to visit Norway, that country being the homeland of Tao, a *Schola* member for his two years at the College before ordination to the priesthood for the Diocese of Oslo.

Unfortunately, a necessary extended visit to England deprived the *Schola* of Fr Bruce for a brief spell during the run-up to the Advent meditation, and then again after Christmas for the rest of the academic year. It was with some trepidation that, at the request of former *Schola* Master Fr Rector, I stepped into his shoes to act as temporary custodian of the choir: the image of my fellow seminarians leaving in protest haunted me, as did the prospect of having to organise our singing at St Peter's on Easter Sunday. Fortunately, the first fear proved unfounded; in fact, I was thoroughly heartened by the *Schola's* support and co-operation. Easter Sunday did, unfortunately, prove somewhat problematic, as will be shortly related.

Lent heralded the start of our second movement: Mass at the Station Church of San Lorenzo in Damaso. For this event, the *Schola* prepared the motet *Asperges me* by Gilles de Bins, also known as Binchois (1400-1460). This composer from the Low Countries provides a wonderful example of the vivacious, earthy style to which musicians of the Middle Ages set even seemingly sombre texts; his *Asperges* is almost jocular in tone, expressing the joy of the sheer possibility of our being washed "whiter than snow" faced with the scarlet red of our sin. But first, we the English-speaking community of Rome, had to be sprinkled quite literally, or should I say lashed, with that very essence of Merrie England: rain. San Lorenzo remained locked on the morning it was due to be opened, with a resulting crowd of over a hundred outside and at the mercy of the elements. Fortunately, the King's Hospice on the Monserrato was able to come to the rescue, swinging into action to welcome all into our very own church. The *Schola*, rather cramped between the many worshippers gathered in the Tribune, gave a sterling performance under difficult circumstances.

Unfortunately, the *Schola's* brush with the inclement weather was not to be confined to the penitential season. The Day of the Lord's Resurrection announced itself with thunder, lightning and veritable torrents: to say "*vidi aquam*" and leave it at that would be an understatement. Still, Ezekiel braved the flood and we, being English, did the same, family members and friends in tow, setting off towards St Peter's Square, which now rather resembled St Mark's in Venice at high tide. The Vatican officials, although sympathetic, were not keen to admit us to the Basilica, where the *coro guida* had been sheltered, so after showing as much phlegm as can be mustered shivering on streaming marble in sodden cassocks, most of us decided to abandon ship and head back to the College for Mass. Some brave *Schola* members did however remain *in situ* to show their devotion to the Holy Father and the Risen Lord with their presence, if not with their voices. And, gratifyingly, if somewhat undeservedly, the *Schola* received a shout-out on television, where the commentary mentioned our singing nonetheless, as I discovered from Fr Rector later at lunch.

The final event of the year was the Solemnity of St Philip Neri at the Chiesa Nuova, celebrated by Cardinal Ennio Antonelli. It is a special year for the church, the Oratorians and for the people of Rome, as 2015 marks the 500th anniversary of the saint's birth. The music at the liturgy aimed to reflect this occasion with some local colour: a Mass setting by Claudio Casciolini (1697-1760), a composer based around the corner at San Lorenzo, as well as a motet at communion, *Cantate Domino* by Daniel Friderici (1584-1638). The *Schola* excelled itself in singing a wide range of dynamic contrast and changing tempi in the Casciolini, as well as negotiating its interweaving plainsong and three-part passages to great effect. The Friderici was also a challenging exercise in vocal gymnastics (especially for the top part), but it went very well indeed; as I write this, we are looking forward to performing it again for the diaconal ordination of Guido Amari, Philip Andrews, Tom Cunnah, Michael Deas, Richard Howard and David Howell at the end of the *Villeggiatura*.

To conclude these notes, I wish to take the opportunity to thank everyone who has helped make such a success of the *Schola's* work this year, namely my brother seminarians who turned out each and every week to rehearsals, giving so selflessly of their time and talents. I would also like to thank those deacons who took part in the usual singing of William Byrd's setting of the Passion on Good Friday (Reverends Sean Crawley, Matthew O'Gorman, and Tao Quoc Nguyen), and the singers of the crowd parts: Philip Andrews, Richard Howard, Haris Roberts, Michael Vian Clark, Benjamin Woodley and Peter Wagnanski. Above all, my heartfelt gratitude must be expressed to Michael and Ben for leading sectional rehearsals at various times during the year; their expertise has played no small part in giving the *Schola* both competence and confidence in beautifying our College liturgies, which I hope have given fitting glory to the Author of all that is good.



Fr Bruce Burbidge conducts the *Schola* for the Advent meditation. Photo: Antonio Pineda



TRISTAN CRANFIELD is a fifth-year seminarian for the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, studying theology at the Gregorian.

Sports Report

GIVING THE ANGELUS address for the Jubilee of Sports People in 2000, St John Paul II said: "Sport has brought you together... [and] is a building block of human solidarity, friendship and goodwill among peoples. May your physical exertions be a part of your quest for the higher values which build character and give you dignity and a sense of achievement, in your own eyes and in the eyes of others." Undoubtedly this is what we hope to achieve through sport at the VEC, although whether we gain that sense of achievement I'll leave to the judgement of others!

This year Elliott Wright took part in the Rome Marathon, finishing in the fantastic time of 3:25:22 and raising over £2,000 for Friends of the Holy Land. Running has become popular in the College, with a Sunday evening group running an eight mile route through the city, and the occasional "friendly" race from Palazzola to Rome taking place after retreats and Human Development weekends.

Students continue to use the College gym, with circuits, resistance training, and the College punch-bag proving popular. This commitment has clearly paid off; heavier weights have been bought to match the students' increased strength. As well as additional weights, the College gym is seeing a general upgrade over the summer, with equipment being updated and better organised so as to provide more space and facilities for a greater number of users.

Sporting trips around Rome - and Italy more generally - are popular too. Saturdays see students heading to the Tevere Golf Centre to practise on the driving range; regulars have included Tao Nguyen, Richard Howard, and Mike Deas. Mountain climbing is a regular feature of free weekends, a notable episode being the ascent of Corno Grande towards the end of the academic year by Ben Hilton, John Waters, and Piotr Wynanski.

The College *Villeggiatura* provided further opportunity for students to participate in different sports, including tennis, croquet, badminton, swimming, and the notorious North vs South football match. In spite of their lesser manpower, and even lesser ability, the South put up a sterling defence and goalkeeper Mike Rakowski was named "Man of the Match". Victory still went to the superior talent of the North, who won 5-0.

This year has seen a growing diversity in sporting activities in the college. We look forward to this continuing, and so developing the solidarity, friendship, and goodwill spoken of by St John Paul II.



Elliott Wright participating in the Rome Marathon. Photo: Alex Balzanella



ALEX BALZANELLA is a second-year seminarian for the Archdiocese of Westminster, studying philosophy at the Angelicum.

The Year in Pictures

2014-2015



Above: Matthew King and David Howell seek some shade in Jerusalem. Photo: Francis Murphy

Left: Some of the New Men (Dominic Jenkinson, Matthew King, Piotr Wygnanski, Alex Balzanella, and Andy Clarke) visit Siena during their summer language course. Photo: Dominic Jenkinson



Members of the College community following the *Via Crucis*. Photo: Richard Marsden



Tao Nguyen, Tristan Cranfield, Haris Roberts, and John Waters enjoy a break after lunch. Photo: Francis Murphy



Above: Tristan Cranfield, Andy Clarke and Matthew O’Gorman rock the New Man Show. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Right: The New Men (and a few others) sing “We are the Champions”. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Above: Cardinal Pell presides at Martyrs' Day Mass. Photo: Antonio Pineda

Right: The grand finale of the Advent show. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Below: Fr Bruce directs the *Schola* for the Advent meditation. Photo: Antonio Pineda





Above: Fr Rector gives his feedback at the show's end!
Photo: Antonio Pineda



Right: The new statue of Our Lady in the College church.
Photo: Alex Balzanella



Bishop Seamus Cunningham with new candidates: Elliott Wright, Philip Andrews, Peter Stoddart, and Richard Howard.
Photo: Antonio Pineda



Flanked by Revv. Matthew O'Gorman and Sean Crawley, Fr Anthony Doe blesses palms. Photo: Alex Balzanella

Right: Sr Mary Joseph weighs her options, with Marco Egawhary supervising. Photo: Francis Murphy



Below: Pilgrims in Turin (Andrew Bowden, Dominic Jenkinson, Peter Stoddart, and Albert Lawes) seek shelter from the rain. Photo: Francis Murphy





Fr Paul Keane of Brentwood gives a jovial after-dinner speech on behalf of the Roman Association. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Ben Hilton and Mark Paver take a break during the Seven Churches Walk. Photo: Alex Balzanella



Carjackings aplenty on the College Gita. Photo: Peter Fleetwood



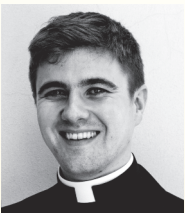
Bishop Mark O'Toole with the newly-instituted lectors: Peter Taylor, Albert Lawes, Michael Vian Clark, and Haris Roberts. Photo: Alex Balzanella



Bishop David McGough with the newly-instituted acolytes: David Irwin, James Barber, Francis Murphy, John Waters, Ryan Service, Andrew Bowden, Ben Hilton, and Marco Egawhary. Photo: Alex Balzanella



Bishop John Arnold and the new deacons: Rev. Guido Amari, Mike Deas, Philip Andrews, David Howell, Richard Howard, and Tom Cunnah. Photo: Alex Balzanella



PETER STODDART is a sixth-year seminarian for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, studying for a licence in dogmatic theology at the Gregorian.

The Venerable Diary 2014/15

Sunday 28 September

The unwashed hordes return to Rome after the summer a little earlier than usual in order to be ready for the College pilgrimage/retreat in the Holy Land. We welcome the New Men: Alexander Balzanella (Westminster), Andrew Clarke (Nottingham), Dominic Jenkinson (Hallam), Simon Jones (Portsmouth), Matthew King (Portsmouth) and Piotr Wygnanski (East Anglia). Also joining as New Men are Deacon Kevin Athaide (Nottingham) who arrives from Allen Hall to study for a licence at the Angelicum, and Mark Paver who joins from the North American College, having transferred from the Archdiocese of New York to the Diocese of Salford (*sic transit gloria mundi*). Fr Martin Kelly returns to the College and, in order to fill all his spare time while continuing studies in Canon Law, takes on the role of Pastoral Tutor. The house is also delighted that the tradition of the Anglican exchange student continues to add colour, and welcomes Darcy Terry for one semester.

Though the returning students and staff are joyful, all are mindful of the very sad loss of our dear friend and porter Carlo Benvenuti, who died following a short illness over the summer.

In addition to the decoration of the second floor corridor, and the installation of a Hollywood-style red carpet running from the notice board to the beginning of the Forty-Four, the other striking improvement, immediately noticeable is the re-upholstering of the sofas in the Common Room. Paid for by the Friends, this was one of Carlo's last acts of kindness to the students of the College before he died - and a splendid job it is too.

The front of the building on the Via di Monserrato is covered in scaffolding while the façade receives a facelift. The Vice Rector

explains that the scaffolding is alarmed for security. Not as alarmed as some students are to receive a cheery greeting from Tonino through their bedroom window while emerging from the shower.

Monday 29 September

In the evening the house gathers in the Garden Room for a final briefing from our pilgrimage leader Fr Mervyn Tower ahead of the following day's early departure for the Holy Land. Fr Mervyn's tremendous enthusiasm whets appetites suitably.

Tuesday 30 September

Bleary-eyed yet eager, the students assemble by the Tiber, where the coach to take us to the airport awaits. It is still dark, yet in the early Roman gloom it remains possible to wonder at the variety of outfits that the students judge suitable for such an adventure: everything from the English gent abroad (Gary Dench) to Crocodile Dundee (Darcy Terry), with most things imaginable in-between.

The security procedures at the airport are tough, which gives John Waters time to treat weary students awaiting interrogation to a detailed description of the weaponry being sported by the guards at the airport.

We arrive in Tel Aviv and transfer to Jerusalem by coach, meeting our second pilgrimage guide along the way: Rami, a Palestinian Christian whose first-hand experience of life in the Holy Land is invaluable, and whose knowledge of Scripture causes staff and students regularly to blush with shame.

We settle in the Knights' Palace Hotel in Jerusalem, and celebrate Holy Mass at the Latin Patriarchate next door before retiring to bed exhausted and preparing for another early start.



David Howell and David Irwin listen as Fr Mervyn addresses the assembled pilgrims. Photo: Francis Murphy

Wednesday 1 October

An early start to get to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for Holy Mass before dawn. Only one of our party oversleeps; uncharacteristically, this being Fr Rector! Fortunately, everyone gets to the church in time.

Students will return repeatedly to pray quietly in this church - and especially in the Holy Sepulchre itself - surrounded by the chants and murmured prayers of Coptic and Greek Christians.

Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa, a visit to the Western Wall, lunch at Ecce Homo, and visits to Lithostros and Bethesda - all leave us ready for a good supper at the hotel after Vespers.

One or two of the more committed students venture out for a nightcap, but most turn in early.



Darcy Terry looking every bit the hunter-explorer in the Holy Land. Photo: Francis Murphy

Thursday 2 October

Another very early start, in time for trips to the Mount of Olives, the Ascension, the Pater Noster church, and Holy Mass in the Garden of Gethsemane. There is then time for quiet prayer at the Church of Agony (where, appropriately enough, almost all of us fall asleep). On the steps of the Church looking out at the Old City of Jerusalem, one student makes an unkind comparison between the Diarist's head and the Dome of the Rock.

After lunch there are visits to Mount Zion, the Cenacle, Dormition Abbey, the Garden by the Coenaculum, and St Peter in Gallicantu. Vespers are prayed - and dinner consumed - back at the Knights' Palace.

Friday 3 October

Yet another early start as we check out of the Knights' Palace and head for Bethlehem by coach for an early Mass and then a visit to the site of the Nativity. Despite being kept waiting for more than hour for a previous liturgy to finish, the students impress with their recollection during this time. Thence to Jericho, with a stop for lunch at a restaurant called "Temptation". We then head to Nazareth and the Church of the Annunciation, going via the Dead Sea and Qumran. There's no time to stop at the latter sites, but Fr Mervyn assures us it's all in God's providence.

Tomorrow being both the Sabbath and Yom Kippur we are grounded for a day and must arrive at the Mount of Beatitudes before sunset. We make it just in time. The peace of the retreat centre overlooking the Sea of Galilee is welcome indeed after several tough days.

Saturday 4 October

A more leisurely start and Mass on the Mount of Beatitudes, where Gary Dench alarms the Rector by reading a bidding prayer for all our deceased spouses. We spend the day exploring sites along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, and walking in the footsteps of Our Lord and his disciples. Once the sun sets and

the Sabbath is over, we head for the Ron Beach Hotel at Tiberias for our last night in the Holy Land.

Ben Woodley and Guido Amari are spotted enjoying the swings in the hotel grounds.

Sunday 5 October

A boat trip on the Sea of Galilee and Mass at St Peter's Church in Tiberias. By coach to Mount Tabor, and briefly to Caesarea Maritima en route to Ben Gurion Airport.

The group express their heartfelt thanks to our guides Fr Mervyn Tower and Rami. Fr Mervyn's energy and enthusiasm has kept us all going and his knowledge is impressive. Rami has been a fount of information about Scripture and the various holy sites. We leave Rami before we get to the airport – as a Palestinian he is not allowed inside – and we are mindful of the difficulties faced by Christians throughout the Middle East at this time in history.

Monday 6 October

Back in Rome, lectures begin in earnest and the students are delighted to find that Fr Ged Byrne is awaiting them for one of his regular Human Development visits. The Synod on the Family has begun and Rome is full of cardinals and bishops from around the world. The students follow proceedings with interest.

Sunday 12 October

After lunch the house makes it way with Cardinal Nichols to his titular church, Santissimo Redentore e Sant'Alfonso in Via Merulana, to dedicate the academic year to the Blessed Virgin before the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help - an image much beloved of the Cardinal. (The house missed Cardinal Nichols' taking possession of his titular church on account of being in the Holy Land.)

Tuesday 14 October

Cardinal Nichols hosts dinner in the Garden Room for a large number of the Synod's

participants. Students show unusual amounts of ingenuity in finding reasons to be near the entrance of the College as dignitaries arrive, eager to know who is in attendance. Mike Rakowski adopts the simple but effective technique of having a cigarette just outside the main entrance.

One of the most eagerly awaited events of the College year takes place – the room ballot. Controversially, although there is sufficient space for everyone to have an ensuite room, Alex Balzanella and Piotr Wygnanski choose to remain as the only residents of the Forty-Four, with Piotr swapping sides in order to escape from the scaffolding.

Sunday 19 October

The Beatification of Pope Paul VI sees students enjoying the spectacle in St Peter's Square.

Wednesday 22 October

Cardinal Nichols addresses the house following the close of the Synod on the Family, and explains his view of the proceedings of the Synod from the perspective of a participant. This is followed by a most enlightening set of questions and answers.

Thursday 6 November

One of the annual highlights of the College year, as we welcome fifty-five Jubilarians from around England and Wales to the College for Mass, followed by a festive supper. Among the Jubilarians is Bishop Terence Brain of Salford who is about to hand over the care of Salford Diocese to Bishop John Arnold. Bishop Brain presides at Mass.

Friday 7 November

The New Men burst onto the stage and thus become first years. Dominic Jenkinson does a very convincing impersonation of a Yorkshireman, telling us that we've never had it so good. Despite a few technical hitches with the lighting, the New Men soldier on. The finale involving the guitar stylings of Piotr Wygnanski and Matthew O'Gorman - with lead vocals from

Tristan Cranfield - modestly suggests that the New Men "are the champions!" Aren't they just?

Saturday 8 November

Cardinal Pell addresses the house in the Garden Room and describes the work of the Secretariat for the Economy, speaking himself as a member of the Council of Cardinal Advisors (variously known as the "Group of Nine" or the "Council of Cardinals"). There follows a fascinating discussion.

Sunday 9 November

The traditional Remembrance Sunday Mass at San Silvestro in Capite. This year the liturgy is organised by the Scots College, and everyone enjoys the usual hospitality of the Pallottine Fathers to whose care San Silvestro is entrusted.

Thursday 13 November

Fr Rector, Fr Martin, Fr Chris, and the Leeds students travel to Leeds in order to attend the ordination of Mgr Marcus Stock as Bishop of Leeds.

Saturday 15 November

The first Human Development Weekend of the Year. The new format of smaller group discussions seems to be welcomed by students. Elliott Wright and Alex Balzanella run back to the College, despite there being plenty of seats on the coach. They are seen limping into Vespers.

Tuesday 25 November

Just to show that you can't keep a good man down, the Wiseman Society is resurrected with an informative talk from Prof. Stephen Mumford on "Thomism in Contemporary Philosophies of Nature", which is well-attended by students and people from around the city.

Wednesday 26 November

Archbishop Patrón Wong - the Secretary for Seminaries within the Congregation for the Clergy - visits the College. The Archbishop

makes a deep impression, speaking extemporaneously and showing great humility. After supper he speaks to the house in the Garden Room about the importance of remaining close to Christ in our journey of formation. Afterwards he joins the students for drinks as the bar opens; beverages in hand and with smiles all around, students pose for photos with the Archbishop.

Saturday 29 November

The house begins Forty Hours of Adoration. Students surprise even themselves with their eagerness to sign up for nocturnal slots. There is an impressive atmosphere of prayer and recollection in the College.

In the evening, the Advent recollection begins, this year led by Mgr Tony Philpot. The students appreciate Mgr Tony's evident erudition and practical wisdom.

Sunday 30 November

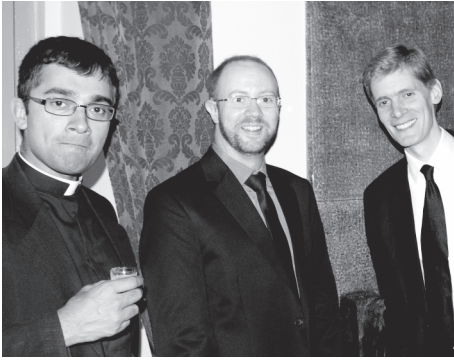
Unfortunately, Fr Tony is taken ill before Mass; the Vice Rector agrees to read the homily that Fr Tony had prepared. Hearing Fr Mark describe a recent trip to Fortnum and Mason to buy a fine Stilton raises a few smiles before Fr Mark clarifies "Fr Tony writes...".

Fr Tony recovers and is able to conclude the retreat, for which staff and students are very grateful.

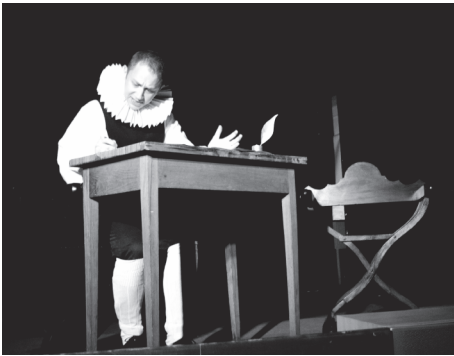
Monday 1 December

One of the main events of the College year, Martyrs' Day. This year, Cardinal Pell presides at Mass and gives a moving homily drawing parallels between the witness of the College's martyrs and the need for a courageous witness to the Gospel by seminarians, priests and lay people alike in today's Church.

The usual drinks and festive lunch follow, at which the house is delighted to welcome a variety of guests. These include Lady Paola Windsor with baby Louis, Archbishop Patrón Wong, the Grand Master of the Order of Malta, and many others. As ever it is the Dominicans who are last to leave.



Rev. Kevin Athaide, Matthew King, and Ben Woodley celebrate Martyrs' Day. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Tom Cunnah, donning a ruff, transports an Advent audience to the age of Shakespeare. Photo: Antonio Pineda

The evening veneration of the relics continues to draw a crowd from around Rome and is a moving and intimate way to end the College's annual feast.

Tuesday 2 December

Fr Ged Byrne delights the house by staying on after Martyrs' Day for another Human Development visit.

Wednesday 3 December

To St Paul's Outside the Walls for Mass celebrated by Cardinal Parolin, celebrating the centenary of the re-establishment of official diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and the Holy See. Cardinal Parolin praises the collaboration of the UK and the Holy See in pursuit of justice and peace in the world.

Friday 5 December

A free weekend begins after lectures. Because Monday is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception this is an extra-long weekend. A good crowd form the traditional Hollycam at the Villa. There is much traditional merriment including the singing of Christmas carols in the refectory after Sunday lunch. Sadly, after students return to the College with three bags laden with holly - replete with fat red berries - an enthusiastic cleaner throws two of the three away. The Common Room team still manage to decorate the College finely, proving that sometimes less really is more.

Friday 13 and Saturday 14 December

The great and the good of Rome descend on the College for the annual feast of two halves known as the Advent Entertainment. This year new heights of musical sublimity are scaled in the recollection in the College Church. As the guests then ascend the stairs to the second floor for mulled wine and panettone, new depths of theatrical degeneracy await them in the Common Room. Ben Woodley lulls the audience into a false sense of security with a virtuoso piano solo, and Antonio Pineda sets a Christmassy tone with some visual accompaniment, also going on to provide sound effects and music throughout the show. With wit drier than a good Sancerre, Peter Taylor leads the gradual descent into chaos. For one night only (well for two, actually) Piotr Wygnanski and Matthew O'Gorman on guitar, Tao Nguyen on drums and Tristan Cranfield as vocalist form "Brit Pop". Proving that there really is no end to his talent, Tristan Cranfield then presents punctuation as we've never seen it. More guitar stylings from jazzmeister Wygnanski, and then it starts to get really strange. Ben Woodley, Guido Amari, and David Irwin treat us to a few Abba numbers, which is really "Super Trouper". After a fatal beating is performed by John Waters and Peter Taylor, in vain do Tom Cunnah and Tristan Cranfield attempt to raise the tone with a little of the untold story of William Shakespeare.



Ryan Service and Fr John Poland enjoy a meal at Palazzola. Photo: Matthew O'Gorman

Relentlessly, the show continues, with Ben Woodley, Ryan Service, Guido Amari and Marco Egawhary giving everyone an insight into a pastoral theology lecture at the Greg. Marco's North American College student - aka MC Hammer - steals the show. John Waters has everyone standing to attention during a defence review before - the doors having been barred to prevent anyone from leaving - the whole cast appear on stage for a musical finale. The final curtain mercifully having fallen, one pallid Jesuit is heard to say, as he runs down the stairs, "Longest hour of my life." A triumph!

Thursday 18 December

After a sleepless night waiting for his Secret Santa gift, Tristan Cranfield is devastated to find that his request for "bottles only" is taken rather too literally. He opens his parcel to find an empty and rather strangely shaped bottle.

Friday 19 December

Bishop Seamus Cunningham confers candidacy on Phil Andrews, Richard Howard, Peter Stoddart, and Elliott Wright, with the latter keeping sartorial standards up with a smart velvet jacket. A fine feast is consumed

and glasses are raised in the Common Room afterwards. With that, the calendar year is over and students depart for the Christmas holidays the next day.

The house says goodbye to Fr Bruce Burbidge until the next academic year.

Tuesday 6 January

Students return to Rome and battle their way from the airport through Rome's Epiphany festivities. Mgr Peter Fleetwood is welcomed as he returns to Rome to take Fr Bruce's place as temporary Academic Tutor.

Wednesday 7 January

The traditional Epiphany Party sees a slightly plumper and more relaxed student body enjoying the elegant surroundings of the Salone. Gary Dench's outfit matches the furniture so well he briefly disappears.

Saturday 10 January

The second Human Development weekend generates such enthusiasm that Elliott Wright and Alex Balzanella run all the way back to the College... but not until it is over.

Wednesday 14 January

Mgr Peter Fleetwood makes his debut as celebrant at Wednesday Mass, telling the students to go and prepare their episcopal mottos. Later one of the students suggests *"omnes quotquot venerunt, fures sunt et latrones"*.

Friday 16 January

The third free weekend of the year begins after lectures, with many students opting for study breaks in view of the impending exam session.

Wednesday 21 January

Bishop Brian Farrell of the Pontifical Council for Ecumenism presides at Mass in the College, marking the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Monday 26 January

Sr Mary Joseph is inundated with untidy guests in the library, while local bars and pizzerias experience a dramatic drop in takings. It must be exam season. Indeed it is. A seriousness gradually giving way to hysteria descends on the College.

Those lucky enough to finish exams early head off to let down what is left of their hair. Destinations include Loreto, Portugal, Valladolid, and of course dear old Palazzola. On the latter trip, Matthew O'Gorman decides that it is not necessary to book a table for an evening restaurant trip despite it being Valentine's Day. One hour later, after several attempts to make outdoor dining a viable



Ben Hilton, Elliott Wright, and James Barber go for a walk in Palazzola's grounds. Photo: Peter Fleetwood

option in February by fixing a dodgy patio heater, room is finally found at the inn and the Senior Student's reputation is salvaged.

Monday 16 February

A new semester begins and students enthusiastically return to their universities.

A statue of Our Lady which the Lisbon Association propose to donate to the College is placed in the College's church for a trial period, having been cleaned and set on a temporary plinth. The statue is German, by an unknown artist, and approximately 137cm high. Since the closing of the English College in Lisbon it had been kept at the British Embassy in Lisbon.

Tuesday 17 February

Elections for Senior Student take place. With the polling station situated in the College "snug" and a swingometer erected on the noticeboard, students elect Tom Cunnah as Senior Student.

Emanuela Piacentini, the College's Finance Clerk, gives birth to a son, Tommaso - the name having been chosen several weeks before by his young sister.

Wednesday 18 February

Morning Prayer on Ash Wednesday sees one unfortunate student [the Diarist - *Ed.*] performing a solo unwittingly, in what may have been the world premiere of a hymn for the Office.

Extolling the virtue of the democratic slogan "vote early, vote often", students are back at the polls. This time it falls to them to elect the new Deputy Senior Student, who proves to be Mike Deas. He is the first DSS from Salford since the Vice Rector held that post.

Thursday 19 February

Excitement in the house reaches fever pitch as new house jobs are allocated. Everyone seems happy enough, apart from anyone who had bet any money on the results.



John Waters providing commentary on Vatican Radio.
Photo: Mary Shovlin

Sunday 22 February

At a meeting of the house, the new Senior Student, Tom Cunnah, informs us that an ontological change takes place when choirmasters become sacristans etc.

Wednesday 25 February

Fr Norman Tanner, a dear friend of the College and something of an institution at the Greg, presides at the community Mass. In his homily, in a way that only he can, Fr Norman reminds us of the importance of the fifth canon of the Council of Nicaea to a proper understanding of Lent. Fr Norman joins us for supper in the refectory, and is presented with a history of the College by Fr Rector, who refers to the Roman street named after our distinguished guest: Via Nomentana!

Thursday 26 February

Those preparing to receive the ministries of Lector and Acolyte, together with a few deacons- and priests-to-be, set off for a silent retreat in Bagnoregio. Ssshhhhhh!

Monday 2 March

Students are free to attend Station Masses this week, and even torrential rain does not dampen the enthusiasm of some intrepid pilgrims.

Sunday 8 March

Our brothers at the Pontifical Beda College provide an oasis in the desert of Lenten

asceticism. Mass is followed by drinks before a splendid lunch. Mgr Roderick Strange welcomes his successor Canon Philip Gillespie and our own Fr Rector by raising a toast to the "due Filippi".

In the evening, Matthew O'Gorman hosts a popular wine-tasting event; participants are undecided whether it is a majestic success or a rather oddbin occasion.

Sunday 15 March

The annual episcopal visitation begins formally with Holy Mass celebrated by Bishop Michael Campbell of Lancaster. Archbishop Longley of Birmingham and Bishop Terry Draine of Middlesbrough join us later.

Tuesday 17 March

English-speaking pilgrims from all around Rome descend upon our parish church (San Lorenzo in Damaso) for the Station Mass. Music, MC, and servers are to be provided by the VEC. It is 6.55am and still the doors have not been opened; the decision is taken that the whole group - some sixty or more concelebrants, and hundreds of laity - should all transfer to the VEC for a hastily organised "alternative Station Mass". Everyone lends a hand and in no time at all we are ready; the College church is packed (including the tribune) and there is a remarkably prayerful atmosphere. Archbishop Longley celebrates the Mass beautifully and the *Schola* raise everyone's minds heavenward. The VEC at its best.

Friday 20 March

A free weekend sees the students taking a deep breath before Holy Week.

Saturday 28 March

The Holy Week retreat begins at Palazzola. This year, Fr Anthony Doe preaches the retreat and presides at the Palm Sunday liturgy. The house is very appreciative of his frankness and insight.

Tuesday 31 March

Staff and students return to the College and for the next few days the traditional frantic preparations for the Triduum begin. Musicians are rehearsing almost constantly. The Choirmaster can be heard practising at all hours and reportedly loses his bed under sheet music briefly. The sacristans are polishing everything that doesn't move. Ben Hilton buys all of the flowers on sale in the Campo de' Fiori for the altar of repose. The MC looks older - even older than he normally does.

Thursday 2 April – Maundy Thursday

Some families of students are arriving and there is a sense of expectation in the air. This year the North American College is not having any Triduum liturgies and we are joined by unusually high numbers of guests. The Mass of the Lord's Supper is a prayerful start to the Triduum. The altar of repose gives some of the local churches a run for their money. The Choirmaster, Ben Woodley, leads a choir amongst whose triumphs can be counted the world premiere performance of Piotr Wygnanski's composition for the Mandatum.

Friday 3 April – Good Friday

We are joined by even more guests for the Commemoration of the Lord's Passion, including a group of monastic formators from around the world who are led by an old friend of the College, Fr Mark Butlin OSB. The sung Passion courtesy of Deacons Tao Nguyen, Sean Crawley, and Matthew O'Gorman, together with a select choir conducted ably by Tristan Cranfield, bring additional solemnity and beauty to proceedings.

Saturday 4 April – Holy Saturday

More frantic preparations today. The MC is seen eyeing the sky nervously and reading weather reports. For the second year running, it doesn't just rain for the Easter Vigil, it pours. Thunder and lightning give the blessing of the fire additional dramatic effect. Another much larger than average congregation is gathered

in the Garden Room to shelter from the rain, while Michael Vian Clark keeps up an heroic fight against the elements to keep the new fire burning just outside. A crack of thunder and flashes of lightning accompany Fr Rector's words of blessing over the fire. The guests wonder whether there is anything that the VEC cannot arrange. Tired, but filled with Easter joy and relief at the end of the Vigil, staff and students join the guests in the Common Room and on the second floor corridor for drinks, cake, and chocolate.

Sunday 5 April – Easter Sunday

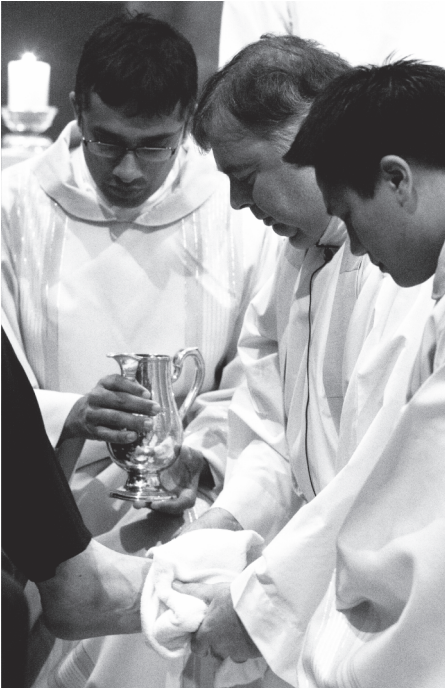
After a shorter than ideal sleep, the *Schola* led by Tristan Cranfield are up and heading for St Peter's Square to sing at the Papal Mass. As we leave, it is raining a little but the sky is showing no sign of clearing. As we reach the Lungotevere it is raining really quite hard. As we reach St Peter's we are in the midst of a biblical deluge. Cassocks are sopping wet, there is no shelter, and there are still ninety minutes to go before Mass even begins. The Basilica Choirmaster advises us to go home. Reluctantly we squelch our way home, and arrive back at the College just in time for a warm and dry 10am Mass.

DBLs in the Garden Room accompanied by the faint smell of wood fire from the night before, and an impressive feast in the refectory followed by *liquori* in the corridor afterwards round off the formal Easter celebrations nicely and see many students heading off for a well-earned week's break. Many of the students with visiting family prepare themselves for a week of intensive sight seeing.

Dominic Jenkinson and Antonio Pineda manage to lock themselves out of a hotel in Assisi.

Monday 13 April

Having returned by Sunday evening, students spring out of bed for 6.45am Morning Prayer like young gazelles, rushing excitedly to the universities for classes which begin again today.



Fr Mark Harold washing the feet of the *virii selecti* on Maundy Thursday. Photo: Alex Balzanella

Thursday 23 April

St George's Day sees the St George's flag flying from the front of the College. In the evening the refectory is decorated with flags and bunting and the tables are laid for a festive meal. Andrea and his team in the kitchen produce a wonderfully English feast of tomato soup, followed by meat pie and chips, and rounded off with apple crumble and custard. There are broad satisfied grins all round. Egged on by Ben Woodley, the Vice Rector appears in the refectory pulpit (seldom used these days) to propose the toast and thank the kitchen. After dinner a happy few retire to the Common Room to watch a production of *Henry V*. Not a dry eye in the house.

Monday 11 May

The Wiseman Society is addressed by Lord Alton on "Communicating the Pro-Life Message Effectively". A good number of students and friends of the College attend, and a wide-ranging discussion follows.



Students (Simon Jones, Michael Vian Clark, and Albert Lawes) and guests listening to speeches at the Roman Association dinner. Photo: Antonio Pineda

Wednesday 13 May

The Roman Association join the College for the Wednesday evening community Mass followed by supper in the refectory.

Sunday 24 May

The College pays its annual tribute to the many people who work often behind the scenes to make the College work. A wonderful meal is served after Mass.

Tuesday 26 May

The Feast of St Philip Neri sees the College at the Chiesa Nuova to help our Oratorian neighbours celebrate in style. Cardinal Ennio Antonelli presides and preaches an inspiring and fulsome homily. The *Schola* under Tristan Cranfield's expert leadership triumph and - unusually - neither Tristan nor the *Schola* get wet.

Wednesday 27 May

Bishop Tom Williams presides at Mass and blesses the statue of Our Lady donated by his alma mater, the English College in Lisbon. The St Philip Neri Singers, led by the one and only Rosemarie Derby, provide the music. A number of visiting Old Romans, celebrating their Silver Jubilee of ordination, join us for Mass and supper. *Ad multos annos!*

Wednesday 3 June

Richard Howard and Elliott Wright are seen ascending the stairs onto the roof terrace armed with a snooker cue, an umbrella, and what looks like a wedding dress. They propose to do battle with a crazed seagull. Only in exam season! They return unharmed, and Richard exclaims, "It was like the movie *Gladiator*."

Saturday 27 June

This morning's burning question is whether those swimming shorts will still fit, as students pack and head up to Palazzola for the *Villeggiatura*.



The Rector presents a statue of the Good Shepherd to Archbishop Scicluna. Photo: Matthew O'Gorman

Sunday 28 June

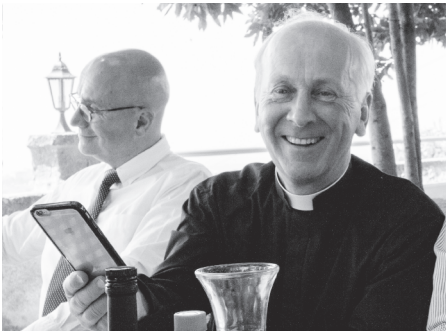
A sunny afternoon by the pool reveals that Saturday's question is answered in the negative in many cases, but not before Michael Vian Clark, Albert Lawes, Haris Roberts, and Peter Taylor have been instituted as lectors by Bishop Mark O'Toole.

Monday 29 June

Archbishop Charles Scicluna of Malta, an old friend of the College, together with members of his family, joins us at the Villa for supper following the Mass for the blessing of the palliums at St Peter's earlier in the day. Fr Rector pays a moving tribute to the Archbishop's hard work for the Church over the years and Archbishop Charles responds with a heartfelt speech in which he greatly encourages the students in their generosity in responding to the call of the Lord to holiness and priesthood.

Wednesday 1 July

The annual quiz night demonstrates that an education at the prestigious pontifical universities is mostly wasted on seminarians from England and Wales. Fr Rector's team do very well, which isn't at all suspicious. The Diarist's team come last - he didn't want to embarrass anybody.



Incoming Pastoral Director Fr John Metcalfe enjoys lunch - and someone's telephone? - next to Andrew Bowden.
Photo: Matthew O'Gorman

Friday 3 July

The folk festival produces an embarrassment of riches - or is it just an embarrassment? Guido Amari and Dominic Jenkinson are our compères, providing an alternative sort of commentary; Guido accompanies the performances by dancing with a torch (which is likened by some to a disorientated glow worm). As ever, Fr Chris brings the house down; Delaney's donkey makes his last ever appearance before being packed into the boot of Rafferty's motorcar.

Sunday 5 July

At the halfway point of the *Villeggiatura* the community starts to brown gently in the summer sunshine; eight men are instituted as acolytes by Bishop David McGough. James Barber, Andrew Bowden, Marco Egawhary, Benjamin Hilton, David Irwin, Francis Murphy, Ryan Service, and John Waters bring the number of acolytes in the College to twenty-three - at least until the ordinations in a week's time.



ANDREW BOWDEN is a third-year seminarian for the Archdiocese of Westminster, studying for a licence in dogmatic theology at the Angelicum.

Monday 6 July

The annual North vs South football/grudge match sees some spirited performances and one broken limb, as Marco Egawhary is stretchered off with an arm injury. The North win - the Diarist is unimpressed.

Wednesday 8 July

We bid a fond farewell to our leavers. Tributes are paid to Fr Chris Willis and Mgr Peter Fleetwood of the staff, as well as Frs Tony Rosso and Tao Nguyen, Revv. Sean Crawley and Matthew O'Gorman. Also departing - and present for the farewells - is Simon Jones. Tired and emotional after a fine supper and moving speeches, the students stagger out onto the terrace for the ritual humiliation known as the Photo Review of the Year.

Sunday 12 July

The last day of the College year and also its high point, as Guido Amari, Phil Andrews, Tom Cunnah, Mike Deas, Richard Howard, and David Howell are ordained to the sacred diaconate in the Church of Our Lady of the Snows by Bishop John Arnold of Salford. The small sanctuary is packed with concelebrating priests from all over the world, including many familiar faces. This is also the end of a long journey for those leaving the College. Sean Crawley's "difficult existence" is eased (temporarily at least) as he and Matthew O'Gorman are waved off, with their ordinations to the priesthood just weeks away.

Leavers' Profiles

Fr Christopher Willis

During a discussion of anecdotes generated by the College staff, Fr Chris is purported to have said, "I don't think I give enough ammunition." I believe most students would "deign to suggest" otherwise. So "if I may" (to use Fr Chris' trademark phrase) say a few things about our jovial outgoing Spiritual Director...

This was Fr Chris' second stint at the Venerabile, the first coming between 2008 and 2010 when he studied for a licence in Spirituality at the Angelicum. After a year as Spiritual Director in Valladolid, he returned to Rome to take on the same role at the VEC.

As Spiritual Director of the College, Fr Chris' weekly conferences drove home the value of contemplative prayer in the life of the diocesan priest, with the importance of acquiring dispositions of "silence and stillness" being a constant theme. St John Cassian featured heavily in his Thursday evening talks, as did Sr Wendy Beckett; they were two figures who dominated Fr Chris' academic studies during his time at the College. There were some more obscure characters too, such as Sr Margaret Mary Funk, and a whole series of Eastern European figures whose names even Fr Chris seemed to struggle to pronounce.

In terms of one-on-one spiritual direction, each student has a story to tell of how Fr Chris influenced their journey through formation. My own experience of Fr Chris has been that he always has words of encouragement for those who turn to him, and he often provided me with reassurance. Carrying on the work of his conferences, he helped many students to develop their prayer lives, showing them how to grow in contemplation.

Fr Chris deserves full marks for effort with the Italian language, going repeatedly to join the first years for their language induction course in San Giovanni Valdarno. By his own admission he found Italian tough, but was always prepared to give it a go. His pronunciation of "gli", "tutti", and "cornetto al cioccolato" stick in the mind. As in language he was ready for a challenge, so it proved in driving: Fr Chris was not afraid to take a chance negotiating the wild streets of Rome. His valiant attempt to drive to the Scots College, which saw him end up back at 45 Via di Monserrato without ever making it to Via Cassia, stands out.

Despite struggling with serious illness during his spell in Rome, Fr Chris remained a joyful presence. He took full advantage of opportunities to attend football and rugby matches at the *Stadio Olimpico*, and enjoyed sitting down with seminarians to watch a sporting event. His stage appearances were frequent and the stuff of legend. Whether it was donning a flat cap to deliver a poem in a heavy Yorkshire accent, or performing something more musical, he never failed to entertain.

Indeed, an album could have been produced given the number of songs Fr Chris performed at the New Man Show, the Advent Meditation, and above all the annual *Villeggiatura* Folk Festival, with Irish folk singer and TV entertainer Val Doonican serving as the inspiration for many performances. Whether Fr Chris was describing the strange construction of "Rafferty's Motor Car", or encouraging audience participation during his rendition of the "Devil and the Bailiff" (leading cries of "ah-ah, oh-oh" between verses), his passion was always on show.



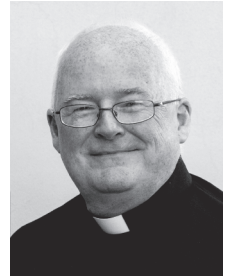
By the time of his departure no performance had become as famous as that in which Fr Chris recounted a townspeople's efforts to help "Delaney's Donkey" win a half-mile race. The complicated chorus describing "Riley pushing it, shoving it, and shushing it" will not be forgotten soon.

Under Fr Chris' care, the students of the Royal English College can be sure of good spiritual guidance (and plenty of entertainment) during their first year of formation. We wish *Don Cristóbal* many blessings as he returns to Spain, and assure him of our prayers.

Richard Marsden

Mgr Peter Fleetwood

We say a fond farewell to Mgr Peter Fleetwood as his six month stint in the College comes to a finish. He joined us "on loan" - imitating a tall, thin person - from Oscott and it's a tribute to his character that he willingly took up the role of academic tutor in a College he knows so well and in a city which has played such a large part in his life. I say "characteristic" for several reasons: his willingness to offer a helping hand, his generosity, and his enthusiasm for a new challenge, among many other qualities which have seen him become a much relied upon academic source and friend to many people: a self-proclaimed "JoaT" (Jack of all Trades).



Perhaps he'll be best remembered for his natural flair for languages. This flare has cast a light on many a dark and difficult linguistic issue in a whole plethora of tongues: Latin, Greek, Italian, French, Spanish, German, Welsh, and perhaps most challenging of all... Scouse.

Or perhaps he'll be remembered for his love of philosophy. Peter has a long history of teaching philosophy going back to his days in the early 1980s, first of all "Greg style", then "Ushaw style", leaping forward to "Oscott style", and now... well... "Angelicum style". Several students have been to him with Hegel-related problems hoping to "get him sussed" only to discover that he can't be sussed even if Hegel can. All joking aside, Peter has a rich philosophical ability that is an absolutely invaluable resource for both the philosophical world and the Church. His wisdom and learning come through not only in his general conversation but also in his advice and in his ability to "go deeper": to get under the surface of an issue, analyse it, and offer a solution or opinion. This can come in very handy when living in close proximity with others!

Peter leaves the community with the *Lost in Translation* series of books, as well as an *Obicà* cookbook. I'm sure that, with Peter's skill, the translation of the recipes will be word perfect. But I am left with several questions: what does "Obicà" actually mean? Which language is it? And how often will he have to correct Scouse or Brummie pronunciation of "Obicà" when his dinner guests peruse its glossy Italian pages? I leave him with the challenge of finding answers to these linguistic questions and with best wishes as he returns to Oscott to continue teaching. So, all the best "JoaT" but I'm sure this won't be the last chapter of your relationship with the eternal city. So not "goodbye", but *au revoir, auf wiedersehen, vale, and arrivederci!*

Elliott Wright

Fr Tony McGrath

How can one write about such a big personality in such a small space? Whether it was making sure the spirit of Britpop was alive and well into the Third Millennium, or his love of day-long gitas to places that only he had ever heard of, or his strong devotion to Our Lady and the Church - there are many reasons why Fr Tony will be remembered fondly.

Arriving in 2007 after a year in Valladolid, Tony embraced all the city of Rome had to offer. With friendships forged in the aula of all sorts of nationalities, Tony can be said to be truly Catholic with his friendships. I have not heard a bad word said about him! A 'people person' if ever there was one.

A Maclaren-esque approach to talking with *stranieri* and a Ferguson-esque devotion to all things Manchester United aren't the only footballing references one can make about him. Tony was a danger on the pitch despite his advanced years.

Many Romans - current and old - will know what I mean when I say Tony was the sort of person you'd make sure was on your table when you had visitors over for meals. His friendliness and disarming presence were always appreciated.

Tony was someone to look up to while at the Venerabile and it was a great joy to see him ordained in Sale in July 2014 and then have him finish off his dogma license at the Angelicum - a degree he enjoyed very much. The passion for Christology and Mariology was certainly infectious. In that way we got to have Tony the priest for a few months - seeing a good friend on the other side of the altar is always an inspirational and consoling thing.

I don't think Tony will be looking back as he begins work in the vineyard of the Lord (do they even have vineyards in Shrewsbury?) Instead he will have his energies focused in spreading the Good News with that same pastoral heart which made him so many friends in Rome during various pastoral work assignments and in the summers back home. In addition to this, we all hope that 'pub evangelisation' can take off in the not too distant future.

As the cliché goes, the VEC's loss is the English Church's gain- but this is true. I have no doubt that Tony will positively impact many peoples lives in the decades ahead just as he has on Via di Monserrato these past few years. Thank you for being a friend to us during these years regardless of year group, diocese or footballing ability, and for showing us how this seminary thing is to be done. Any chance of you returning for a doctorate?

Peter Stoddart



Fr Tao Nguyen

Treading the fine line between hagiography and obituary is the notewriter's lot. Alas, *iacta alea est* – it falls to me to write the saga of Bjørn Tao Quoc Nguyen.

And a saga it is. The days of longships and halberds may have passed, but the steady progression of Scandinavians through the corridors of the Venerabile leaves little doubt that there is unfinished business on that score. The script is well rehearsed: first come Danes, then Norwegians. It is like AD 793 all over again. However, it is clear to us that the policy of "norsification" has taken a new turn of late in the form of hospitality and friendship. Some of us have even been the lucky recipients of new Norwegian names (thus writes *Brynjar den gode*) so that we will barely notice our assimilation when the time comes.



The fact that anyone in this house might equally well have written this note is testament to Tao's universal popularity. The weekly succession of Viking folk in search of Tao shows us that this is no new phenomenon. I doubt there are many places in the world where Tao is unknown; it was no surprise to find him greeted in Jerusalem like a long-lost son on what seemed to be every street corner.

This was the narrative from Day One: the writer was there when the "man in white" first arrived in Rome, the day before our language course exile in Tuscany. It was as well that his winning smile caught more of the attention of the tutor than his leisurewear, and we quickly became accustomed to the trill of his laughter and gentle Nordic lilt.

Love of gym, golf and "gurning" endeared Tao to the brethren who hail from dioceses in the Province of Liverpool, while it was perhaps more his love of wine, chocolate and entertaining that made him doyen of those south of the Watford Gap. But this is the thing: Tao refuses to be categorised according to such boundaries – and his cry of "*alright, brother!*" deflects all but the most acerbic expressions of Anglo-Saxon wit.

Tao's fixing goes far beyond the social realm. Many a seminarian has benefited from his technical wizardry, and the VEC cars have never been as clean. We all know who to go to if there's a practical issue to resolve – and while future generations may ponder the theological significance of Prosecco corks in the base of the processional cross stand in the College Church, the liturgical indignity of struggling with the reluctant standard has been forever vanquished.

Tao was ordained to the diaconate in a particularly splendid ceremony in Oslo in August 2014; his attempt to convince Bishop Eidsvig to participate in a "jumping photo" afterwards met with a typically laconic "Tao..." and a gentle wag of the episcopal finger. Since then we have enjoyed some existential treats from Tao at the ambo: "does a goat have flesh and bones?" (cf. Lk 24:39 – yes, dear brother, goats do; *ghosts* do not) as well as his beatific grin at the dismissal, "Go in peace."

English acronyms can still be problematic, however. Even as the sun was setting on our time with Tao, we were surprised to find him developing a new passion for Anglican-Catholic relations. His eyes lit up at the prospect of our meeting with "ARCIC" – becoming so excited, jumpy in fact, that we thought he was going to do himself, or someone else, an injury. What could he have thought the acronym meant? "ARCTIC", perhaps? Yet said Norseman's delight was brief; once disabused of his error, he appeared rather crestfallen.

Tao's Roman chapter draws to its close and doubtless this brief sketch is both partial and incomplete. As a tribute I leave the real hagiography to his native tongue: Taos tilstedeværelse iblandt oss har vært en velsignelse. Hans vennskap har gjort oss til bedre mennesker. Det gode eksempel han har gitt oss ved sin nestekjærlighet har gjort oss til bedre mennesker og hjulpet oss til å vokse i hellig kjærlighet. Og for dette er vi ham evig takknemlig. Tusen takk! And how could I end without quoting Tao, singing as deacon, again: "What I have writ -- ten, I have writ -- ten."

Michael Vian Clark

Fr Tony Rosso

Heeeyy!!!!

There is no more apt way to begin a brief résumé of Fr Tony Rosso's time at the English College. This cheerful greeting would often be heard echoing down the corridors of the VEC as Fr Tony greeted passing students and staff. That they would receive this greeting was certain no matter whether they were going about their normal business or, indeed, being borne out of the College on a stretcher, as was memorably the case after Fr John Paul Leonard sustained a back injury.



It was with great anticipation that the students awaited the arrival of Fr Tony from the Canadian diocese of Antigonish. A mere two years later he saw the light and transferred to England's premier diocese - a clear demonstration of Fr Tony's keen discernment and good taste.

Fr Tony frequently contributed to the musical side of College life, and did not disappoint in this regard. I speak not only of music for the liturgy, with Fr Tony leading Vespers several times, but also his renowned concluding acts for successive VEC Christmas shows.

Fr Tony also prospered academically during his time at the English College. Flourishing first at the Angelicum, he was one of the few students to secure four 10s from Fr Holzer's metaphysics and contemporary philosophy exams: no mean feat. His transition to the Gregorian was not so easy, and after just one week of lectures he had christened the place "Castle Grayskul" (N.B. use of American spelling.)

Fr Tony held numerous house jobs throughout his time here at the VEC. He was a fine Head Sacristan, and his time as University Delegate was, shall we say, interesting: students sometimes found themselves signed up to do optional courses and seminars they never knew existed! His final house job was to be one of the two Assistant Senior Students, serving alongside fellow Leeds seminarian Sean Crawley: they both suited the role perfectly, demonstrating the many qualities necessary for such a prestigious position.

Fr Tony will be a much-missed presence in the house. As well as losing his trademark greeting, the community will surely feel his absence from the smokers' terrace. His time at the VEC was not without its major challenges. As well as being - memorably - a victim of serious crime in the Eternal City, Fr Tony also had to reckon with several unexpected challenges on the home front. Serious illness in his family occasioned his early ordination, and it was with thanks to God that the community learned of his loved ones all having been able to witness the joyous occasion in Florida. Notwithstanding these various misfortunes, Fr Tony remained a beacon of joy and hope, always smiling and constantly laughing - evidence of his strength of character. He will be greatly missed by the community and I have no doubt that his many qualities will serve him well in the Diocese of Leeds. *Ad multos annos*, Fr Tony.

Elliott Wright

Rev. Sean Crawley

The call to the seminary comes at different times of life and those who are called respond with varying degrees of alacrity. For Sean, there was very much the realisation of *potius hodie quam cras*, applying to the Diocese of Leeds at the age of nineteen. He spent his first year of formation at the Royal English Valladolid for a propaedeutic year of strict fasting and ardent prayer before arriving at this Venerable English College, dinner jacket neatly packed in his luggage, in 2008.



Whilst the dinner jacket returned to England during the Christmas holiday of that same year, the spirit in which it was packed remained. Sean's time in this College is an example to all of those he leaves behind. Of course, seminary life is more than simply early rising and perfect lecture attendance; Sean has proven himself to be a man of communion, and of building it.

His first major triumph came with the New Man Show, in which he and others in his year group acted out a memorable performance of the works of the Scandinavian pop group, *Abba*. Sean, sadly, never trod the boards of the English College again, but continued throughout his time to support such college events through his assistance backstage at college performances and through his involvement with the Entertainments Committee.

Nevertheless, Sean's musical interests have been put at the community's disposal in other ways. His generosity in putting his voice at the service of the liturgy cannot go un-noted. His membership of the Schola has been consistent throughout his time here at the Venerabile and his singing of the Passion at the Good Friday Liturgy was a beautiful example of Sean's commitment to the praise of God and the reverential celebration of the Church's liturgy.

Indeed, Sean is no stranger to the magnificence of the Church's liturgical celebrations. In 2010, he had the privilege of serving Vespers for Pope Benedict XVI, draped in a vimp of deep violet and bearing the Holy Father's mitre. In his preparations for leaving the College, he was also able to deacon Pope Francis' Mass for the Solemnity of Pentecost during which he proclaimed the Gospel.

His commitment and generosity have also been felt in other aspects of College life. We have all benefited from Sean's culinary skills. Like others from the Diocese of Leeds who have gone before him, his ability to cook a meal for twenty to thirty hungry seminarians is well-known. Equally well-known is his willingness to do it without the blowing of trumpets and sounding of fanfares.

Once having expressed a preference for the leopard over the cheetah on the grounds that the latter runs too much and too quickly, Sean has always professed an admiration for the feline species. Indeed, his delight in the "Grumpy Cat" internet sensation prompted the purchase of a mechanical feline action figure which has since come to be known as the "Crawley Cat". And yet, it would be true to say that many of Sean's qualities are peculiarly canine: his compassion, his loyalty to his friends, and his commitment to his vocation. He has a great love for the teachings of the Church, and at the time of writing, as he prepares to return home to Leeds for his ordination, his desire to serve God in the priesthood is manifest.

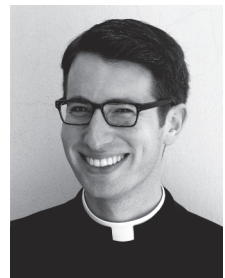
Sean was the *Diarist* when I first arrived at the *Venerabile* and he concluded by noting that God walks with us always, in sadness and sorrow, as well as in joy and happiness. In the sorrow of seeing Sean leave, we take joy in what the people of Leeds will receive from Sean's ministry there. *Ad multos annos*, Sean!

Gary Dench

Rev. Matthew O'Gorman

You can hear Matthew coming towards you long before he becomes visible; his voice has an almost hypostatic quality. Fortunately, when he does arrive, he usually says something worth hearing; very few people are as capable of cheering a friend up when he feels down, or of adding an extra witticism (often a poorly constructed pun) to an already stirring conversation, an ability that will be missed in this house.

Matthew's voice has many other talents too; volume is not its only hallmark. Its second attribute is its Protean nature, able to metamorphose in mimicry of the lesser voices it encounters to an astonishing degree. Its third is its beauty when employed in song. Matthew has contributed so much to the musical life of the house and the liturgy, singing in the *Schola*, acting as Choirmaster, performing solo and in ensemble. This gift is characteristic of him in the sense that it came first to be pursued and nurtured here in Rome, where he has found delight in learning about classical forms of Western music, both secular and sacred. Other hitherto undeveloped talents embrace his sportive side, notably an eager interest in road cycling, and his linguistic faculties, demonstrated in the study of both Italian and German. The cycling has not always been crowned with success, as frequent trips to both Italian and British hospitals testify, but fortunately, his language-learning skill has



proved prodigious. Indeed, Germany has become a home from home for Matthew thanks to time spent in a parish near Limburg in the summer following his fourth year at the College. Germany proved an important step for the former Senior Student, too, in teaching him to expand his horizons with regard to white wine, moving him from a strict "red only" policy, to almost the opposite extreme. I have even, when circumstances were favourable, seen him graduate to beer, a drink apparently less favoured by fellow keen hypochondriacs.

Writing this, I find that it is Matthew's faith, which he deeply lives, that I reflect on most of all. Matthew was probably the first friend that I knew well who impressed on me a great and articulate awareness of the need to evangelise our own generation and the next in terms that they can understand, equipping them with not just an acquaintance with the mysteries, but an intellectual understanding of them. His love of the relationship of faith and reason has shown itself in his perennial interest in philosophy and in his ongoing collaboration with UK-based groups committed to the crucial apostolate of youth catechesis. He is also impressive for his continuing commitment to the pro-life movement, first developed as an undergraduate at Sussex University and then in the world of work. This engagement has continued in a lesser way at seminary and Matthew's ability to engage in ethical issues will always inspire, while his compassion for those suffering will make him, I am sure, an exceptional confessor, able to take into account the whole person before him. In a related field, his interest in the discipline of psychology has exerted an ever greater fascination for him, leading him to a licence programme in Spiritual Theology at the Angelicum, with a view to providing a foundation for a deeper investigation of the interactions of mind, body and spirit within a Christian anthropology. His personal relationship with Jesus Christ is part of his DNA; despite his love of theological concepts, Our Saviour is never reduced, for him, to a mere notion: the dynamics of this relationship can be seen at play whenever he, like us all, experiences struggles, setbacks and failures of his own.

As one-time editor of this periodical, Matthew will know that a short note like this is never enough to sum up seven years' worth of contribution to life here at the English College, especially one as rich as his own. Suffice it to say that he is, at heart, a true friend to so many, and thus will be a true priest. We will miss him enormously, and we wish him well, knowing how much he will accomplish in the Lord's vineyard. *Auf Wiedersehen, Matt.*

Tristan Cranfield

The Council of the Roman Association



Chair: Mgr Anthony Wilcox (until 2016)

Secretary: Rev. Paul Keane (until 2018)

No Assistant Secretary

Treasurer: Mr Peter Purdue (until 2018)

No Assistant Treasurer

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), Mr Peter Purdue (*ex officio* as Treasurer).

Immediate Past Presidents: Rt Rev. Christopher Budd (until 2017)

Rector: Mgr Philip Whitmore

and the following elected for three years:

until 2016 Rev. Kevin Firth, Rev. Gerard Murray, Rev. Gerard Skinner

until 2017 Rev. Christopher Lough, Rev. Patrick Mileham, Mr Peter Purdue

until 2018 Rev. Andrew Stringfellow, Canon Mervyn Tower, Mgr Mark Crisp

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

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: Canon Stephen Coonan (2015), Mgr Anthony Wilcox (2016), Rev. Paul Daly (2017), Rev. Gerard Skinner (2018), Canon Michael Cooley (2019), Rev. Thomas Wood (2020).

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The Minutes of the 146th Annual General Meeting of The Association of the Venerable College of St Thomas de Urbe - The Roman Association

Palazzola, Tuesday 12 May 2015

Thirty members of the Association gathered on Tuesday 12 May 2015 at Palazzola.

Annual General Meeting, 12 May 2015

The meeting began at 11.30 am, with Rt Rev Mgr Anthony Wilcox in the Chair.

1. Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Mgr Anthony Wilcox welcomed all in attendance and led the meeting in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

2. Apologies

Archbishop Michael Bowen, Archbishop Patrick Kelly, Archbishop Bernard Longley, Bishop Crispian Hollis, John Ainslie, Anthony Barratt, Austin Bennett, Neil Brett, Michael Brockie, Michael Burke, Adrian Chatterton, Bernard Connelly, Brian Dazeley, Hugh Ellwood, Tim Galligan, Anthony Grimshaw, Paul Grogan, Matthew Habron, George Hay, Andrew Headon, David Hogan, Dominic Howarth, Petroc Howell, Eddy Jarosz, Clyde Johnson, Michael Kirkham, Gregory Knowles, Michael Koppel, Edward Koroway, David McLoughlin, John Marsland, Terry Martin, Tony Myers, Guy Nicholls, John Pardo, N.R. Paxton, Stephen Porter, Michael Quinlan, Jim Robinson, Paul Shaw, David Standley, William Steele, Andrew Summersgill, Simon Thomson, Michael Tuck, Michael Tully, John Wilson, Mark Woods

3. Minutes of 145th AGM

Accepted.

4. Matters arising (those not dealt with elsewhere)

None.

5. Deceased Members

The De Profundis was prayed for the repose of the souls of Fr James Ward, Mr Timothy Firth, Fr Brian Nash, Mr Michael Oura, Mrs Teresa Howard, Mr Tim Williamson, Mr Christopher Gordon Laughton Mathews, 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: Bryan Chestle, Michael Corley, Antony Jones, Terry Rogers, Michael Smith and Michael Williams.

7. President's Remarks

Mgr Anthony Wilcox celebrated the work of the Roman Association and the ongoing work of the College.

8. The Secretary's Report

The Council has met twice since the last AGM to plan this AGM and to support the ongoing work of the Association. Since the last AGM, there have been two editions of *Venerabile Voices*, an electronic newsletter to ensure that Old Romans are kept informed of what has happened involving Old Romans and making them aware of up-coming events.

The Secretary's report was accepted by the meeting.

9. The Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report was accepted by the meeting.

Anthony Wilcox presented the accounts of the Roman Association Trust. The Trustees have decided to give the College another £40,000 for improvements to the Monserrá. The meeting endorsed this decision.

10. The Rector's Report

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

11. Election of New Members

This year's Top Year of the College were elected.

12. Election of Officers and Councillors

- a) Mgr Anthony Wilcox was elected as Chairman;
- b) Mark Crisp, Andrew Stringfellow and Mervyn Tower were elected as Councillors for three years;
- c) Michael Cooley was elected to serve as a Trustee of the Roman Association Trust until 2020.

13. 147th AGM

To be announced.

14. 2015 Martyrs' Day gatherings

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

15. Any other business

The members of the Association who attended the AGM were Mgr Anthony Wilcox, Bp Nicholas Hudson, Mgr Philip Whitmore, Fr Mark Harold, John Allen, Thomas Atthill, Paul Bryant-Quinn, Michael Cooley, Stephen Coonan, Francis Coveney, Mark Crisp, Paul Daly, Kevin Firth, Peter Fleetwood, Bruce Harbert, Sean Healy, Paul Keane, Christopher Lough, Leo Mooney, John Morris, Fergus Mulligan, Gerard Murray, Seamus O'Boyle, Anthony Pateman, Peter Purdue, Gerard Skinner, Andrew Stringfellow, Francis Wahle, William Young.

Appendix

It should be noted that the evening before the AGM, Prof Maurice Whitehead gave a further excellent talk to the Roman Association on the Archive of the English College, and a number of things that have been discovered in it. His talk was well received.

Rector's Report to the Roman Association

WE WERE ENCOURAGED to have eight new seminarians joining us in September 2014. One had been at Valladolid, two were transferring from other seminaries and five were starting out. They came from East Anglia, Hallam, Nottingham (two), Portsmouth (two), Salford and Westminster. This meant that we began the year with forty seminarians in residence.

We also had three student priests with us. Fr Andrew Chase (Rockhampton, Australia) had been with us last year, and he was joined by Fr John Poland (Liverpool), newly ordained and now beginning work for a doctorate in canon law, as well as Fr Tony McGrath (Shrewsbury), also newly ordained and with one semester remaining of his licence studies at the Angelicum.

During the first semester, one of our deacons, Tony Rosso (Leeds), was absent from Rome, as his mother in Florida was seriously ill and he did an extended diaconate placement at his home in Naples, FL, so as to be close to her. This culminated in his ordination to the priesthood on 2 February, for which Bp Marcus Stock and a small contingent of Leeds priests, together with the Vice-Rector and myself, flew out to Florida.

Fr Tony Rosso came back to Rome for the second semester just as the other Fr Tony (McGrath) was leaving, on completion of his studies. So we continued to have three student priests in residence throughout the year.

Old Romans will be saddened to know of the death of Carlo Benvenuti, the College porter, in September 2014. He had served almost forty years in the *portineria* and many have said how hard it is to imagine the College without him. It was an unexpected blessing that Cardinal Cormac had arranged to come

to Rome, as things turned out, just in time for the funeral. He presided at the Requiem Mass in a packed College Church on the afternoon of Monday 22 September. Fr Mark Harold, the Vice-Rector, preached a moving homily.

There are four men due to be ordained priest in the summer of 2015 – Rev. Kevin Athaide for Nottingham, Rev. Tao Nguyen for Oslo, Rev. Sean Crawley for Leeds and Rev. Matthew O’Gorman for Southwark. At the end of the *Villeggiatura* this year, six are due to be ordained deacon: Guido Amari for Westminster, Philip Andrews and David Howell for Southwark, Tom Cunnah for Shrewsbury, Michael Deas and Richard Howard for Salford.

We have had a few changes on the staff. At the start of the year we were joined by Fr Martin Kelly (Leeds), who took on the role of Pastoral Director, concurrently with the final year of his licence studies in canon law. Fr Bruce Burbidge, our Academic Tutor, had to be absent from Christmas onwards, in preparation for his application for British citizenship. He was replaced, from January to July 2015, by Monsignor Peter Fleetwood (Liverpool). Fr Chris Willis (Leeds), our Spiritual Director, has been in notably better health this year. We are saying good-bye to him, as he is about to transfer to the English College in Valladolid in order to become Spiritual Director there. Our new Spiritual Director from September will be Fr Anthony Doe (Westminster). We will also have a new Pastoral Director from September, namely Fr John Metcalfe (Hallam). Fr Mark Harold (Salford), our Vice-Rector, was due to return to his diocese this summer, but circumstances have conspired against this and he has kindly agreed to remain in post for a little longer.

We began the year with eighteen seminarians in 1st Cycle Theology at the Gregorian University; two in 2nd Cycle Theology; one in 2nd Cycle Canon Law. At the Angelicum we had nine seminarians in 1st Cycle Philosophy; three in 1st Cycle Theology; and four in 2nd Cycle Theology. We had one seminarian in 1st Cycle theology at Santa Croce, one in 2nd Cycle Theology at the Augustinianum and one in 2nd Cycle Scripture at the Biblicum.

The year began with a five-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land, led by Canon Mervyn Tower. This was made possible by the generosity of Pam and Nick Coote, and we were delighted that Pam was able to join us on the pilgrimage. We spent three nights in Jerusalem and two in Galilee. The Coote benefaction also enabled us to arrange two group pilgrimages to Turin, during the period when the Holy Shroud was on display, in the spring of 2015. In preparation for Advent we had a short retreat led by Mgr Tony Philpot. This year, we arranged Forty Hours of exposition, beginning on the Saturday morning and continuing all day and all night. The Advent recollection began after supper on the Saturday and concluded with Solemn Vespers and Benediction on the Sunday evening – the end of the Forty Hours. Fr Anthony Doe came to lead the Holy Week retreat at Palazzola. Those seminarians preparing for ministries or orders had an opportunity for a further retreat in early March with their year-group. Our deacons-to-be and priests-to-be made a canonical retreat close to their ordination.

Fr Gerard Byrne of St Luke's Centre, Manchester, continues to direct Human Formation, spending five separate weeks with us every year, meeting with students individually and teaching in groups. He has been joined this year by two other psychologists – Sister Cait O'Dwyer and Ms Rosanna Giacometto – who are available to meet students individually. So now the students have a choice of Human Formation

Tutor. St Luke's also led three residential Human Development weekends in the course of the year on a variety of topics. The house is split into three groups for these weekends, so that the input can be tailored to the stage of formation that the students have reached.

For Pastoral Formation, we continue the pattern of three-day courses during the *Villeggiatura*, leaving the students free to devote the whole of September to pastoral placements. The courses are given by lecturers from England and Wales. The weekly pastoral classes during term-time include *Catechetics*, *Homiletics*, *Preparation for Diaconal Ministry*, and *Parish Administration*. These are led by the resident members of staff with occasional outside input. In these classes we emphasise the pastoral skills that are needed in our particular English and Welsh context. In addition to this, we have had some distinguished guest-speakers in the course of the year: Dr Tim Macquiban, the new minister of the Methodist church in Rome, Cardinal George Pell, who came to speak about his work at the Vatican's Secretariat for the Economy, and Fr Roger Reader, who spoke to us about prison ministry in England and Wales.

For their pastoral assignments in Rome, a few of the students help with an adult Scripture-sharing group based in the College. Some give tours of the *Scavi* under St Peter's, some assist with the English programme at Vatican Radio, and some work at the *Sant'Egidio* soup kitchen. A group of seminarians visits the *Regina Coeli* Prison. Some assist with catechesis in local parishes, some help out at the San Lorenzo Youth Centre near the Vatican. Others visit *Salvator Mundi* Hospital, others again visit an old people's home in Trastevere. A good number remain committed to the Missionaries of Charity and the Brothers of Charity. During the summer, most of the students were given pastoral placements in their home dioceses and every effort was made to visit them while they were there.

Financially, the College is currently meeting its running costs thanks to some sound management and budgeting in recent years with good relationships between the administration team in Rome and the College's Finance and General Purposes Committee. For some time now there has been a good intake of students each year, and this certainly eases the financial situation, but we have to be aware that student numbers are not guaranteed to remain high and we recognise the need to be prudent in the healthy years. Rents received from the tenants in the various College apartments continue to provide a useful additional source of income.

On 1 February 2015, a three-year Archive Project was launched, under the direction of Professor Maurice Whitehead. The catalogue is to be completely overhauled and brought up to date, to the highest professional standards. It will be made available in digital format and it is hoped also to digitalise some of the most important documents in our possession.

We are often asked how many students we are able to accommodate: we currently have fifty-three student rooms available; only six of these, on the Forty-Four corridor, are still without ensuite facilities. We do, however, have the option of reclaiming areas that have been converted into apartments, such as the remainder of the Forty-Four or the Old Nuns' Corridor, should we ever need to accommodate more than fifty-three students in the future.

The Friends of the Venerabile continue to support the College generously through their annual donations. This year, they paid for the reupholstering of the sofas in the Student Common Room, and they have agreed to fund the restoration of the tennis courts at Palazzola.

We continue to benefit from the generosity of our greatest benefactors in recent times, Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach. Much progress has been made this year on a project to restore the façades of the College, beginning with the

street front and continuing in the *cortile*. By the autumn of 2015 we should be ready to move to the Garden façades.

Meanwhile, at Palazzola, the situation remains encouraging. Income is gradually increasing and occupancy levels last year were as high as they have ever been. We have developed a range of special offers during the seasons when bookings tend to be low. Special rates for clergy and religious continue to be offered during the winter months; so if you are considering a post-Christmas break, why not spend it at Palazzola? The first three months of the year tend to see the lowest occupancy levels. In the course of this year a number of new windows have been installed in rooms where rainwater used to come in. There are plans to resurface the tennis courts as well (see above). There has been little progress regarding the landslide on the lake path, which therefore remains closed. It is possible, however, to access the path from the Sforza, so walking or running round the lake to the umbrella pine is still possible for Palazzola residents.

We have been delighted this year to welcome the Old Romans to Palazzola for their AGM. This year we have also been able to host the hierarchy of England and Wales, the Swiss Guard, and ARCIC III. It is good to be able to place this beautiful facility at the service of the wider Church.

On behalf of everyone at the College, I'd like to thank the Old Romans for their continuing support and their prayers. Please remember especially in your prayers the six men who are to be ordained deacon this summer at Palazzola, and the four men who are to be ordained priests back in their home dioceses.

News of Old Romans

Arundel and Brighton

The diocese celebrates its Golden Jubilee this year, having been founded in the closing year of the Second Vatican Council. Many celebrations are taking place. The year was preceded with much sadness upon the resignation of our former bishop and Old Roman, Bishop Kieran Conry. Bishop Kieran's contribution to the diocese's fifty years was significant, and our prayers go with him. Our new bishop, Bishop Richard Moth paid tribute to him and to two of his living predecessors who were present both at his installation and on the actual day of the foundation of the diocese (28 May 1965). It was good to see Archbishop Michael Bowen and Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor at Arundel Cathedral celebrating the significant milestone in the life of the local church in Surrey and Sussex. Other than the change at top, there have been few changes as Bishop Richard wishes to "see the lie of the land".

Chris Bergin is currently at Haslemere. Tony Bridson is in Ministry to Priests. Bryan Chestle is at St George's Park, Ditchling. Tony Churchill is leaving Bognor to go on sabbatical, spending some time in the Eternal City. Meanwhile, Bill Davern is PP at Epsom. Stephen Dingley is at Wonersh. Kevin Dring is PP at Sacred Heart, Hove. Rob Esdaile is PP at Thames Ditton. Simon Hall is to leave Epsom to take up the reins at Oxted in Surrey. Stephen Hardaker is PP at Uckfield. Raglan Hay-Will is PP at Our Lady of Ransom, Eastbourne. Jonathan How is at Wonersh. Michael Jackson is living in Hove. Terry Martin is Vocations Director. (Dr) Tony Milner is at Dorking and will be taking up an appointment in the autumn after having completed his doctorate.

Andrew Moss is currently at Chichester. David Parmiter is PP at Bexhill. Andrew Pinsent is at Oxford. Dominic Rolls is at Dorking. Aaron Spinelli is at Redhill. Bruno Witchalls is PP at Preston Park, Brighton. Mark Woods is Communications Officer and a deacon at Worthing.

May this Jubilee year be one of joy and blessing for all of us, and a fresh new start!

Aaron Spinelli

Birmingham

At the time of writing you would need a crystal ball to predict the possible destinations of some of the Old Romans in the diocese who might be involved in summer manoeuvres. With this proviso, I shall seek to update the information given in last year's *Venerabile*.

This year we have continued our noble tradition of providing some of the new bishops for the dioceses of England and Wales, with Marcus Stock going to Leeds, and Patrick McKinney going to Nottingham. We offer them our prayers and best wishes for their new ministry.

David Doran continues as assistant at Mount Carmel, Redditch. Christopher Miller has moved to St Joseph's, Burslem in the Potteries. Paul Moss teaches at Oscott College and has relinquished his role as Vocations Director. David Gnosill is at Corpus Christi, Coventry. Joe McLoughlin is at Pype Hayes, north Birmingham, and is Judicial Vicar of the Diocesan Tribunal. Patrick Mileham is Chaplain at Birmingham University. Robert Murphy has an important role as Personal Secretary to the Cardinal Secretary of State. Richard Walker is at St John's, Banbury. Stephen Wright is at Burton-on-Trent. Eddie Clare is the Director of the Maryvale Institute.

Timothy Menezes continues as Vicar General. Gerard Fabrizio is at Our Lady of the Wayside, Shirley. Mark Crisp is at St Peter and

Paul's, Wolverhampton, and is Chaplain to the University of Wolverhampton. Patrick Broun is at Witney, Oxfordshire. John O'Brien has charge of two parishes in East Birmingham, these being Guardian Angels and St John the Baptist. Harry Curtis is Chaplain at Warwick University, and Parish Priest at St Joseph the Worker, Canley, Coventry. Bruce Harbert is at St Mary's Wednesbury in the Black Country. David Evans is now at St James, Rednal, in Birmingham. Mervyn Tower is on sick leave at present. We wish him a good recovery. John Osman is at Dorchester-on-Thames. Gerard Murray is at Sacred Heart, Bilton, Rugby. +David McGough continues as auxiliary bishop in the north of the diocese. Danny McHugh is at St George and Theresa's, Dorridge, Solihull. Patrick Kilgarriff remains at Malvern. Dominic Round is nearby at Upton-upon-Severn. Anthony Wilcox is retiring from Henley-on-Thames. Petroc Howell is now at Aston Hall Priests Retirement Home, near Stone, Staffs.

Gerard Murray

Brentwood

The names of Brentwood Old Romans receiving new appointments in 2015 are in bold. The first date after each priest's name gives his year of ordination to the priesthood. The second date gives the year of his present appointment.

I have also included Old Romans taking on additional responsibilities in the Diocese - even when they have not moved parish.

- Michael Butler (1963) PP The Assumption, Old Hartlow (2001).
- Michael Corley (1963) The Chimes, Weeley Road, Aingers Green, Great Bentley, Colchester, Essex CO7 8NB (retired 2003).
- 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) PP St Mary & St Ethelburga, Barking (1991).
- Paul Bruxby (1982: OND 86-88) PP St Augustine, Barkingside (2001)
- Francis Coveney (1982) PP St Anne Line, South Woodford (2000).

- Christopher Brooks (1983) PP Our Lady of Grace & St Teresa, Chingford (2005).
- David Manson (1985) PP St John's, Ingatestone (2005) and also VG (2001). Stepped down as VG at end of 2014.
- Philip Denton (1994) PP Corpus Christi, Collier Row (2011).
- **Jean-Laurent Marie (1994)** On sabbatical because of ill health (2013). **Now working as a priest overseas (2015).**
- **Andrew Headon (1995)** PP Ss Peter & Paul, Ilford (2010). **Now also Episcopal Vicar for Administration (2015).**
- **Paul Fox (1998)** From PP St Mary Mother of God, Hornchurch (2011) to **PP Our Lady of Ransom, Rayleigh (2015).**
- Martin Boland (1996) Dean of Brentwood Cathedral (2009)
- **Thomas Saunders (2000)** From PP Sacred Heart, Southend with St John Fisher, Prittlewell, to **PP South Ockendon (2015). Also Episcopal Vicar for Evangelisation (2015).**
- **Dominic Howarth (2002)** Parish Priest in the Basildon Team Ministry and Vocations Director (2010). **Also Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Formation (2015).**
- **Paul Keane (2003)** From **PP of Brightlingsea & Chaplain to Essex University (2009) to Vice Rector of Oscott College (2014).**
- **Mark Reilly (2009)** From assistant priest at Brentwood Cathedral (2012) to **PP Assumption of Our Lady, Maldon with St Cuthbert's, Burnham-on-Crouch (2015). Also Chairman of Liturgical Commission (2015).**
- **James Mackay (2009)** From PP Our Lady of Canvey, Canvey Island & Diocesan Youth Chaplain (2013) to **PP Royal Docks (2015).** Remains Youth Chaplain .
- **Neil Brett (September 2010)** From assistant priest at St James the Less & St Helen, Colchester (2010) to **PP Our Lady of Compassion, Upton Park (2015).**

Francis Coveney

Cardiff

Liam Hennessy is parish priest at Abertillery and Brynmawr. Bob Reardon is parish priest at Bridgend and Porthcawl.

Bob Reardon

Clifton

After two years with only one priest, the Salisbury churches are really appreciating having Fr Colin Mason as their assistant priest. (See Clifton's diocesan newsletter of 12 June 2015 for photographs.)

Bishop Crispian Hollis enjoyed returning to Portsmouth Cathedral on 9 June 2015 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of his priestly ordination.

On 27 November 2015 Canon Tony Harding celebrates the Diamond Jubilee of his priestly ordination.

Thomas Athill

East Anglia

It is good to have another East Anglian student at the College after a very long break (well over ten years if I'm not mistaken) so there is hope that in time new names will be appearing in this report! With respect to last year, the changes among the old guard are few. Mgr Tony Philpot continues to live with the Little Sisters in Stoke Newington and has continued to provide Spiritual Direction at Allen Hall as well as numerous talks in divers places. Michael Griffin is now living in Ireland in his retirement. Eugene Harkness has been appointed Diocesan Chancellor and continues as Parish Priest at St Philip Howard in Cambridge. Simon Blakesley is still PP in Newmarket, and Martin Hardy continues as PP at St Patrick's in Leicester. Sean Connolly continues as PP of St George's in Norwich, and Mark Hackeson is now PP in Bury St Edmunds. I have divided my time this year between the VEC (as Academic Tutor) and lecturing at Allen Hall, St Mary's Oscott and Mount St Bernard, whilst also having the welcome opportunity of some weekend supply work.

Bruce Burbidge

Gibraltar

At the time of writing, Gibraltar has been *sede vacante* since July 2014, when Bishop Ralph Heskett CSsR became Bishop of Hallam. Hopefully, next year we will have a new bishop to shepherd the Rock. There are no changes to report for our Old Romans other than the death of Dr Bernard Linares (RIP).

Sadly, on New Year's Day, after battling with an illness for several years, we lost Bernard. He was born in Gibraltar on 17 July 1934. After receiving formation at the VEC, he was ordained in Rome in 1960. Subsequently, he was awarded a doctorate from the Gregorian University, specialising in ecumenism. His appointment as a curate at the Cathedral in Gibraltar was to be his first and only parish assignment. For personal reasons, mainly due to his passionate involvement in the cause of the advancement of workers' rights, he requested laicisation. This was granted by Pope Paul VI in 1972. Some time later, he married Maricela Candeas. They were blessed with three children: John, James, and Isabela. He trained as a teacher, eventually becoming head of the Gibraltar Bayside Boys' Comprehensive School (1988-1994). Following his retirement, Bernard Linares resumed his active involvement in politics and in time was elected to the "House of Assembly" (following the new Constitution Order of 2006, the "Gibraltar Parliament") holding various ministries including: Education, Culture, Youth, Disability Care, the Health Services, and other responsibilities for civic affairs. After his retirement, he was awarded the Gibraltar Medallion of Honour, in recognition of Bernard's selfless contribution to Gibraltar's history. He will be missed. Our condolences to his family, and may he rest in God's eternal peace and joy.

John Pardo

Hallam

I keep saying that nothing has changed with us in Hallam, and it was very nearly still so - but more of that later. A concise *aide-mémoire* will suffice: Peter Kirkham (1966) is at

Workshop; John Ryan (1978) is at Saint Bede's, Rotherham, and has quietly been given the job of overseeing the ongoing formation of the clergy and adult education; Kevan Grady (1990) (and Helena, Luke and Caitlin) teaches at All Saints, Sheffield; Ant Towey (1986) is teaching at Saint Mary's University, Twickenham. Mark McManus (1988) is at The Annunciation, Chesterfield with Craig Fitzpatrick (2005) next door at Saint Hugh's. Adrian Tomlinson (2003) is at Saint Joseph's with Saint Teresa's, Sheffield. Tom Clarke (left in 1967) and Bernadette are enjoying their retirement. Your correspondent is to return to the College as Pastoral Director.

John Metcalfe

Hexham and Newcastle

I have moved from Chester-le-Street and Sacriston to be PP of St Paul's, Cramlington, and to act as chaplain to the new hospital there. The only other direct Old Roman news is that Fr Andy Downie is being replaced as Vocations Director by Fr Shaun O'Neil.

In indirect news, Fr Lawrence Jones, PP of Morpeth and a frequent visitor to the College, died aged 53 in April, the very week a video of him promoting the priesthood was released by the National Vocations Office.

Lee Barrett

Leeds

After a *sede vacante* period of two years, during which the diocese was administered ably by Mgr John Wilson, Pope Francis appointed the tenth Bishop of Leeds on 15 September 2014. Mgr Marcus Stock was ordained and installed in St Anne's Cathedral on 13 November 2014.

Ad multos annos! Jubilarians this year are: John Kelly (Golden), Archbishop Arthur Roche (Ruby), and David Bulmer (Silver).

In the list of clergy following, new appointments etc. are in bold type.

- Bishop Marcus Stock (1988).
- Archbishop Arthur Roche (1975): Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. Bishop Emeritus of Leeds.

- Michael Buckley (1950): retired, East Preston, W Sussex.
- 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 Wilfrid's, Ripon.
- Kevin Firth (1977): Sacred Heart & St Patrick, Sowerby Bridge.
- Chris Willis (1983; further studies at VEC): **Spiritual Director, Royal English College, Valladolid.**
- Andrew Summersgill (1986): St Stephen's, Skipton.
- Russell Wright (1988): Church of the Incarnation, 2929 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota, FL 34239, USA.
- Malachy Larkin (1989; further studies at VEC): Bishop's Secretary, Leeds.
- David Bulmer (1990): St Patrick's, Birstall.
- Tim Swinglehurst (1991): **Episcopal Vicar for Evangelisation.**
- Dennis Cassidy (1992; further studies at VEC): St Joseph's, Keighley.
- Paul Grogan (1994): Chaplain of Leeds Trinity University College and Vocations Director.
- Stephen Brown (1994): Chaplain to Bradford University.
- John Wilson (1995): **St Austin's, Wakefield** (Parish of St Martin de Porres).
- Gregory Knowles (1998): St Aidan's, Mirfield and Chaplain to Dewsbury District Hospital.
- Steven Billington (1999): English Martyrs, Huddersfield (Parish of the Immaculate Heart).
- Matthew Habron (2005): Leeds Cathedral and teaching at St Mary's College, Oscott.

- Michael Doody (2012): Immaculate Heart, Leeds (Parish of St John Vianney).
- John Carlisle (2013): St Robert's, Harrogate.
- Marc Homsey (2014): **Holy Name, Leeds** (Parish of Our Lady of Kirkstall).
- **Tony Rosso** was ordained Priest by Bishop Stock on 2 February 2015 in his parents' home parish church of St Agnes, Naples, Florida, USA.
- **Sean Crawley** was ordained Priest on 25 July 2015 in Leeds Cathedral.
- **Mgr Canon Peter James McGuire Prot. Ap.** (1956), former Vicar General and Dean of the Cathedral, died on 13 January 2015. **RIP.**

David Bulmer

Liverpool

The Old Romans of Liverpool continue their days with little change save that already well-known to many: Archbishop Paul Gallagher has his new position at the Vatican, Mgr Peter Fleetwood is tutoring between Oscott and the College, and Canon Philip Gillespie is to become Rector of the Pontifical Bede College. On the home scene, Fr Thomas Wood has moved inland to the green pastures of Lydiate, with two parishes, Our Lady, and St Gregory the Great.

Thomas Wood

Malta

The list of Maltese Old Romans remains unchanged from previous editions of *The Venerabile*: Rev. Dr Joe Mizzi, Fr Stefan Bonanno, Rev. Dr Mark Sultana, Rev. Dr Jimmy Bonnici, Fr David Muscat, Rev. Dr John Berry, Fr Brendan M. Gatt, Fr Kevin Schembri, Fr Jonathan Farrugia, and Fr Nicholas Doublet. The latter four are the last Maltese Old Romans to be concluding their Roman sojourn. God-willing they will return to Malta permanently in the coming months, having concluded their studies, to join their colleagues in such wide-ranging pastoral fields as family ministry, the Church's means of social

communication, university lecturing, priestly formation, ecclesiastical tribunals, and parish work.

It is also with joy that we announce that His Grace Monsignor Charles J. Scicluna, an old friend of the VEC and spiritual director to many students there, is now Archbishop of Malta. He succeeds Archbishop Paul Cremona OP whom he served as Auxiliary Bishop these last two and a half years. It was a great pleasure for us all to have some friends from the VEC, especially Father Rector, Mgr Philip Whitmore, come to Malta to participate in the celebrations for the new Archbishop's solemn installation in the Cathedral of St Paul in Mdina on the 21st March 2015. Archbishop Scicluna remains a frequent visitor to the VEC, where he stays whenever he visits Rome due to his duties at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. *Ad multos annos.*

Brendan Gatt

Menevia

There are not many changes to report for the clergy of Menevia: Mgr Clyde Hughes Johnson continues in retirement and Fr Liam Bradley continues at Haverfordwest. Fr Michael Burke, however, has taken up a new appointment: In addition to his Canonical, Ceremonial and Communicative roles, he has become the Parish Priest of Clydach and Ystradgynlais. As he bids farewell to the Cathedral of the Diocese, we wish him well as he arrives to the "Cathedral of the Valleys".

Liam Bradley

Middlesbrough

There is no news to report from Middlesbrough this year.

Alan Sheridan

Northampton

In October 2014, the diocese celebrated the 850th anniversary of St Thomas Becket's trial at Northampton Castle. That same autumn saw the movement of three Old Romans to pastures new: Mgr Paul Donovan took on St Augustine's in High Wycombe (the first change of Parish Priest there in over 35 years). Fr

Michael Patey moved to be Parish Priest of St Martin de Porres, Luton, and chaplain to the Luton & Dunstable Hospital. Over in Milton Keynes the Parish Priest of St Edward the Confessor, Fr Paul Hardy, took additional responsibility for Christ the King, Kents Hill, with the help of a resident Parish Sister. Meanwhile at St Augustine's, Daventry, our Vicar General, Mgr Sean Healy, oversaw the cessation of Sacred Heart, Aston-le-Walls, and the closure of St Joseph's, Long Bucky, from his portfolio of Northamptonshire parishes, and is taking a well-earned sabbatical in the summer of 2015. Fr Graham Platt has retired after a spell at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Chesham Bois.

Michael Patey

Nottingham

We are delighted that Old Roman Mgr Patrick McKinney, a priest of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, has been appointed to succeed as the tenth Bishop of Nottingham. He will be ordained Bishop on Friday 3 July in St Barnabas' Cathedral. Mgr McKinney was at the Venerabile from 1982-1984, during which time he studied for a licence in Sacred Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. His earlier studies and formation took place at St Mary's College, Oscott, where he returned as Rector in 1989 and held the post until 1998. Latterly, Mgr McKinney has been Parish Priest of Stourbridge.

Mgr Brian Dazeley will step down as Parish Priest of Skegness and will retire to new quarters in St Peter's, Leicester, as will Fr Anthony Pateman who is retiring from his post as Parish Priest of Syston and Sibley.

Please keep in your prayers Fr Peter Harvey, Parish Priest of Ilkeston and Stapleford who has recently undergone surgery and is convalescing; we all wish him a speedy recovery.

Fr Martin Hardy, who has been for the past few years on loan to us from the Diocese of East Anglia, has now decided to make his home with us permanently and has been incardinated into the diocese. Fr John Paul

Leonard, of the Diocese of Middlesbrough, is on loan to us and is working in the parishes of Swadlincote and Burton.

As for the rest of the Old Romans: no change!

Mark Brentnall

Portsmouth

Current Old Romans' latest appointments or places of residence are:

- Bruce Barnes (1997): Director for Religious; St. Francis de Sales, Wash Common; Coordinating Pastor of the West Berkshire Pastoral Area.
- Marcus Brisley (1994): Holy Ghost and The Immaculate Conception, Crowthorne and Sandhurst.
- +Philip Egan (1984): Bishop's House, Portsmouth.
- Michael Feben (1964): retired.
- Gerard Flynn (1999): Vocations Director; St. Michael and All Angels, Leigh Park.
- David Forrester (1972): retired, Abingdon, Oxfordshire.
- Mgr Jeremy Garratt (1975): Rector, St John's Seminary, Womersley, Guildford, Surrey.
- Canon Alan Griffiths (1974): Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles, Bishop's Waltham, Hampshire.
- Paul Haffner (1981): Via Mosca, 3/B 00055 Ladispoli (RM), Rome.
- Phillip Pennington Harris (2010): English Martyrs, Didcot and St John, Wallingford, Oxfordshire.
- Peter Hart (1980): Director of Permanent Diaconate; Coordinating Pastor of Alton-Petersfield, St Mary, Alton, Hampshire.
- +Crispian Hollis (1965): retired, Melles, Somerset.
- Mgr James Joyce (1971): Our Lady of Peace, Wargrave, and St. Thomas More, Twyford, Berkshire.
- James McAuley (2010): Bishop's Secretary; Cathedral of St John,

Portsmouth.

- Mgr Cyril Murtagh (1957): The Immaculate Conception, Liphook, Hampshire.
- Mgr John Nelson (1984): St. Swithun Wells, Eastleigh, Hampshire.
- Benjamin Theobald (2013): Assistant Priest, St Joseph, Basingstoke, Hampshire.
- Simon Thomson (1994): Judicial Vicar; St Swithun, Yately, Hampshire.
- Bishop Emeritus Crispian Hollis celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his priestly ordination on 9 June at the Cathedral. The Mass of Thanksgiving was attended by many of the clergy and people of the diocese and was followed by a lunch in the Cathedral Centre afterwards.

Phillip Pennington Harris

Salford

The biggest change in the life and ministry of the Salford Old Romans has been the translation of John Arnold from being a Westminster Old Roman to becoming a Salford Old Roman. Bishop John, after 32 years in London, took up his call to become our Bishop on December 8 last year. He comes back “up north” and this time to the proper side of the Pennines (although the Snake Pass, when not blocked by snow, allows him access to South Yorkshire if needed!) It was fitting that the day after he moved in to Wardley Hall, the week before his Installation, he celebrated Martyrs’ Day with us at Prestwich.

Those who are currently in active ministry in the Diocese are the following: Tony Grimshaw is still in Chipping, John Allen in Prestwich, Michael Quinlan in the Heaton, John Marsland in Ushaw, Chris Lough in Whitefield, Nick Paxton in Withington, Robert Lasia in HM Prison Service, David Quiligotti in Davyhulme, Geoffrey Marlor in Whalley Range, Ian Farrell in Longsight, James Manock is still in Radcliffe, Gerard Byrne at the St Luke Centre, Andrew Stringfellow in Gorton, John Flynn at Oscott, and myself in Heywood.

Mark Harold remains at the VEC.

Of those who have moved, Tony Dearman has moved from St Bede’s College to live at John Allen’s in Prestwich but remains College Priest at St. Bede’s, Philip Caldwell is returning from Oscott and (at the time of writing) awaiting appointment, and Joe Gee has moved to Clitheroe.

Your scribe celebrates his Silver Jubilee this summer and had the privilege in May of not just one College *Ad Multos* but two: one with the AGM of the Old Romans and the second two weeks later when the Year of 1990 paid a visit to Rome. He asks your prayers not just for himself and those Old Romans mentioned above, but also for our retired Old Romans: those no longer or not currently in the active ministry, and Salford seminarians who left the College before ordination to pursue other paths.

Paul Daly

Shrewsbury

It is 11 June as I scribble, the feast of St Barnabas. One of my favourite phrases from the Bible appears in today’s First Reading, Acts 11: “As things turned out, they [*Barnabas and Saul*] were to live together in that church a whole year, instructing a large number of people.” As things turned out. Sometimes, as we survey the lives of our dioceses each year, things have turned out quietly, and when it’s a quiet year, your scribe tries to fill out the Shrewsbury report with pen pictures of our beautiful and endlessly interesting diocese. This year, I was mulling a literary tour, from Wilfred Owen’s Birkenhead in the north to A.E. Housman’s Ludlow in the south, taking in Mrs Gaskell’s Knutsford and Lewis Carroll’s Daresbury on the way. But it’s been far too busy a year for such meanderings.

We begin this year with the sad news of Denis Marmion’s death in August 2014. He was one of that remarkable group of “Priest Brothers” in our diocese, which also included the legendary Wilfred & Henry Kelly, John and Gerard Corcoran, Bob & Maurice Abbott and George & Tony Leonard (before Westminster pinched George and refused to let him go).

Like many brothers, John and Denis Marmion were chalk and cheese: both started their studies at Ushaw, John finishing there, whilst Denis moved on to the VEC where he was ordained in November 1955. It was the start of a life-long love of Rome for Denis. He loved talking about his time there, and taking every opportunity of going back. A quiet, gentle man with an eye for detail and an inexhaustible fund of kindness, that latter quality he shared with John. As things turned out, it's John I've seen much more of over the years, missing each other by six months in my first parish, St Joseph's, Sale; John was leaving as parish priest as I was arriving in my first appointment as "junior curate". He proved to be a wonderful friend, and has been a source of support ever since. The folk here in Chester love it when he comes down to St Werburgh's to say Mass, the church in which he was ordained, 21 July 1951. Do the maths.

Congratulations to all our Jubilarians this year. Chris Lightbound, ordained the same year as Denis, 1955, celebrates his Diamond; Michael Morton his Ruby, and Nick Kern his Silver. *Felicitazioni, tutti!* Recalling that metaphysical moment in September 1992 when the hitherto junior curate at St Joseph's Sale opened the door to me and immediately morphed into senior curate, best wishes to Anthony McGrath on taking up *his* first appointment at Our Lady and St Christopher's Romiley in March this year. No more senior and junior curates these days. No more curates. We're "assistant priests" now. *O tempora, O mores!*

One other move to report: Rod Strange finishes at the Beda, after seventeen years as Rector there, and takes up a Visiting Professorship at St Mary's University, Twickenham. *Ben tornato!*

So, Knutsford and Elizabeth Gaskell will have to wait for next year. Or not as the case may be. All depends on how things turn out.

Paul Shaw

Southwark

Once upon a time long ago it was discovered (probably through illicit snooping into

confidential files) that "Jock" Tickle was in the habit of reporting to diocesan bishops that a worthy student of theirs "continues to make steady progress". The same phrase comes to mind when surveying the current pastoral activities of former students of the Venerabile in the Archdiocese of Southwark.

While **Michael Bowen** continues his well-deserved retirement in Charlton quietly and in touch with a group of friends, his classmate, **Leo Mooney**, although harder of hearing and slower in pace, still looks after his parish in Southborough and works hard for the Inter-Diocesan Tribunal.

Having reverted to the role of parish priest, **John Hine** is thoroughly enjoying life in Tenterden, disturbed only by the whistle and smoke of the Kent and East Sussex Railway. He reports regularly on the health of his classmate, **Bryan Chestle**, who does indeed continue to make steady progress.

Paul Mason has not only picked up the episcopal baton from John Hine but has also moved into the Bishop's Flat at The Hermitage in West Malling from where he ventures out into the rural expanse of Kent. In the far west lies Dartford where **Stephen Boyle** is parish priest and continues his encouragement of altar servers. At the eastern extreme lies the Isle of Thanet where **Marcus Holden** in Ramsgate has just been joined by **Tim Finigan** in Margate, both of them offering written and spoken doctrinal instruction well beyond their own parishes. Halfway between the two extremes of the county of Kent is Whitstable where **Stephen Langridge** has his House of Discernment connected to his national work for vocations.

Meanwhile, back in "The Smoke", **Paul Hendricks** exercises his ministry for the deaneries of south-west London from his home in Sutton. Here he comes into contact with a Southwark concentration of Old Romans, some of them former classmates: **Tim Galligan** at Clapham (Common and Junction) and **David Gummert** in Roehampton were in the same year; **David Standley**, now living a full and active retirement in South Norwood, is of an earlier

vintage, while **Richard Whinder** in Mortlake is younger and fresher. **Simon Peat** in South Wimbledon and **Dominic Allain**, not far away in Raynes Park, are having to cope with ill-health but that does not appear to impede their varied pastoral and teaching work. **Paul Connelly**, likewise not in the best of health, is living at Tooting Bec. **Michael O'Dea** in Putney and **Martin Edwards** in Wandsworth, on the other hand, enjoy good health as they care for the people in their parishes, thus bringing up the full number of Venerabilini in this episcopal area of the diocese.

In the south-east episcopal area of London, Old Romans are few and far between. **Charles Briggs** in Chislehurst and **Victor Vella** in Orpington are in the same deanery, whereas **Tom Creagh-Fuller** (very involved recently in eliciting consultation for the Synod) is still holding the fort at Forest Hill.

Nor must we forget our overseas brethren. It was especially gratifying last year to receive a very long e-mail from **Anthony Barratt**, written immediately on reception of a copy of the *Venerabile*, describing his situation and work in great detail. This year, being asked for an update, he wrote: "Good to hear from you and yes, life is indeed busy, but wonderful. Here is a brief update. I am currently pastor of St. Ambrose parish in Latham, NY (one of the huge suburban parishes!). Do look up the website if you have time...! I am also teaching undergraduate courses at Siena College (a Franciscan University) and some Masters courses. [There are] lots of Diocesan things such as: the College of Consultors/Presbyteral Council; Priesthood Board; Diaconate Formation Board; the Marriage Tribunal; and the Pastoral Planning Advisory Council. No danger of being bored!" We can of course assume that **Bill Agley** is equally busy in Rome but as yet no details have emerged.

Last but not least we occasionally receive news of our brother **Nicholas Hudson** who has crossed the great hierarchical divide of London. Meanwhile on this side of the river the parish at London Bridge "continues to make

steady progress". I just wish the same could be said of the massive redevelopment of the parish site.

Michael Cooley

Westminster

Recent changes in **bold** print:

- + Vincent Nichols: Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster
- + Cormac Murphy O'Connor: Cardinal Archbishop Emeritus
- + **John Arnold: Bishop of Salford**
- + Nicholas Hudson: Auxiliary Bishop: resident at Vaughan House
- Seamus O'Boyle: PP, *St John the Evangelist*, Islington
- Charles Acton: Allen Hall, Theological adviser
- Peter Anglim: Retired, Nazareth House, Finchley
- Mark Anwyll: PP, *Our Lady of Muswell*, Muswell Hill
- Keith Bartrop: PP, *St Mary of the Angels*, Bayswater
- David Barnes: PP, *SS Anselm & Cecilia*, Lincoln's Inn Fields
- 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
- **Anthony Conlon: PP. Our Lady & St John, Goring-on-Thames**
- John Conneely: Judicial Vicar, Diocesan Tribunal
- Antony Convery: PP, *SS Edward the Confessor*, Golders Green
- John Cunningham: PP, *Immaculate Conception & St Joseph*, Waltham Cross
- John Deehan: PP, *St Thomas More*, Eastcote
- **Anthony Doe: Spiritual Director at the Venerabile**

- Pat Egan: Retired, Ann Arbor, Michigan
- John Formby: Retired, St Charles Square
- Michael Garnett: Santa Apolonia, Cajamarca, Peru
- Stefan Kaminski: Assistant priest, *St Paul the Apostle*, Wood Green
- Roger Kirinich: PP, *Our Lady*, Stependale Road
- Mark Langham: Chaplain to the University of Cambridge
- Robert LeTellier: Further Studies, Cambridge
- Hugh Mackenzie: Studying for a PhD; and chaplain to St John & St Elizabeth Hospital
- Eddie Matthews: Retired — resident in Sussex
- Paul McDermott: PP, *St Agnes*, Cricklewood
- Paul McPartlan: Professor, Catholic Univ. of America (and International Theol. Commission)
- Shaun Middleton: PP, *St John Fisher*, North Harrow
- Philip Miller: PP, *St Augustine*, Hoddesdon
- **Brian Nash: R.I.P. 29th November 2014**
- Peter Newby: PP, *St Mary*, Moorfields
- James Neal: PP, *St Gabriel*, South Harrow, and *St Bernard*, Northolt
- John O'Leary: Private Secretary to the Archbishop
- Jim Overton: PP, *St Michael*, Ashford
- Terence Phipps: PP, *Immaculate Conception & St Joseph*, Hertford
- Dermot Power: Spiritual Director, Allen Hall
- Javier Ruiz: Assistant priest, *St Thomas's*, Fulham; and lecturer at Allen Hall
- Paschal Ryan: PP, *Our Lady of Good Counsel*, Stoke Newington
- Digby Samuels: Chaplain to St Anne's Home, Stoke Newington
- Nicholas Schofield: PP, *Our Lady of*

Lourdes & St Michael, Uxbridge, & Diocesan Archivist

- Alexander Sherbrooke: PP, *St Patrick*, Soho Square
- Gerard Skinner: PP, *St Francis of Assisi*, Notting Hill
- Michael Tuck: PP, *St Ignatius*, Sunbury on Thames
- **Mark Vickers: PP, *Holy Ghost & St Stephen*, Shepherds Bush**
- Chris Vipers: PP *St Lawrence*, Feltham & Episcopal Vicar
- Frank Wahle: Retired, Baker Street
- Stephen Wang: Senior University Chaplain in the Diocese of Westminster
- Philip Whitmore: Rector of the Venerabile

Wrexham

The Diocese of Wrexham has at present only two Old Romans, Charles Lloyd and Antony Jones. Despite much ill health, Charles has done valiant work in rural mid- Wales. He has finally retired. Now that he is being properly cared for, he is in a better condition and able to enjoy his retirement. Charles was ordained by Bishop Petit of the then Diocese of Menevia in October 1960.

That same month, Antony (generally know as Taffy) arrived. He too was ordained by Bishop Petit, but in his home town of Holywell in 1966. He is now parish priest of the lovely resort of Llandudno, where he has been for the past seventeen years.

Antony Jones

Obituaries

Mgr Peter McGuire 1932–2015

In the long history of the Diocese of Leeds few priests have served it with more dedication and distinction than Mgr Peter McGuire who died in the early days of 2015 at the age of eighty-two. Mgr McGuire was staying with friends in the Lancashire village of Parbold when he died unexpectedly but peacefully late in the evening of Tuesday, 13 January.

Born in Selby in 1932, as a boy Peter McGuire made the daily journey from there to St Michael's College in Leeds, then a Catholic boys' grammar school run by the Jesuits. He was accepted as a seminarian by Bishop Poskitt and started his training for the priesthood at Ushaw College. On completing his studies in Philosophy he transferred to the Venerable English College in Rome. He was ordained priest in Rome on 28 October 1956; one of his classmates ordained with him was Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, who was a close personal friend for more than sixty years.

Between 1957 and 1970 Peter McGuire served in a number of parishes in the Leeds diocese: St Marie's in Sheffield (in the days before the Diocese of Hallam), St Theresa's in Leeds, and St. Anne's Cathedral. In 1970 he joined the team at the Diocesan Catechetical Centre, established by Bishop Wheeler in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council. The following year he was appointed Chaplain to the University of Bradford and in 1974 became the Diocesan Vocations Director, resident at Our Lady of Lourdes parish, Headingley. He was appointed a Prelate of Honour by Pope Paul VI in 1975.

From 1976 until 1981 Mgr McGuire was the Parish Priest of St Brigid's, Churwell. In the summer of 1981 Bishop Wheeler appointed him as Administrator of the Cathedral and later the same year as a Vicar General of the diocese. He was also appointed a member of the Cathedral Chapter. For the next twenty-two years he was at the heart of events both in the city and diocese of Leeds, and held in great esteem both by his own flock and by many people of other faiths and none. During his time at the Cathedral it became a spiritual home to countless people who came from far beyond the parish itself but who found there a place of worship characterised by an atmosphere of warmth and welcome, which in turn reflected Peter's own innate personality.

In addition his careful stewardship of the fabric of the building during these years laid the foundations for the restoration and re-ordering of the Cathedral completed under Bishop Roche in 2006. He was, without doubt, one of the great figures in the Cathedral's history stretching back a century and more.

When Bishop Konstant arrived in Leeds in 1985 he asked Peter to continue as Vicar General and this he did for the next eighteen years. In 2003 he stood down both as VG and (by then) Dean of the Cathedral. In recognition of his long years of service in both capacities he was appointed a Protonotary Apostolic by Pope St John Paul II in June 2003. From 2003 until 2006



Photo: Matthew Lloyd

he was Parish Priest of the Holy Name in Leeds and it was here he celebrated his Golden Jubilee of Priesthood. In 2006 he became Chaplain to the Sisters of Notre Dame at their Provincial House at Parbold near Wigan where he remained for the next five years. In 2011 he returned to the diocese and took up residence with the Little Sisters of the Poor at Mount St Joseph's in Headingley where he lived in retirement, keeping up with his family and wide circle of friends.

The death of Mgr Peter McGuire was an occasion of sadness and grief across the Leeds diocese. On the evening of Sunday 25th January his body was received into the Cathedral in readiness for the Funeral Mass the following day. The principal celebrant was Bishop Marcus Stock, alongside Archbishop Arthur Roche, Bishop Emeritus David Konstant and Bishop Brian Noble, Bishop Emeritus of Shrewsbury. The homily was preached by Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor. Afterwards Peter's remains were taken to Selby for burial in the family grave. The numbers present in the Cathedral for the Mass testified that this marked the passing of a great priest.

Peter McGuire was a faithful servant of the Leeds diocese for the best part of sixty years, held in deep affection by its priests, religious and laypeople. He was wholeheartedly a "people person" but at the same time there were certain places he always looked back on with great joy and appreciation: his native Selby, Rome and the Venerable, and his beloved St Anne's Cathedral. His memory will live long in the history of the Leeds diocese, and especially in the hearts and minds of all who knew him. May he rest in peace.

Robert Finnigan

Fr Denis Marmion 1930-2014

Denis was born in Birkenhead on 20 November 1930. While he was a boy the family moved to Ireland, and his early schooling was in County Down. In 1942 he joined his two elder brothers at Ushaw College, and decided to follow John, the eldest, as a "church student" for the Diocese of Shrewsbury. I arrived at Ushaw a year later, to share the next thirteen years of companionship with him. In the autumn of 1949 we travelled together to Rome to begin our years of preparation for priesthood. After ordination we served in various Cheshire and Shropshire parishes for the next forty-five years. In 2002 Denis retired to live in Neston, and I followed him one year later.



Source: Diocese of Shrewsbury

Denis was a quiet, somewhat shy person, pious and hardworking. He was possibly the most popular character in our closely-knit "1949-Year" of thirteen teenagers. Denis was always the butt of our jokes, which he accepted without rancour – a gentle smile on his lips. Spirituality is perhaps a rarity in the rough and tumble of student life, but we recognised that he – like two others in the Year – was rather special in this respect. (One of them left us in 1952 to join the Cistercians at Mount St Bernard, and after religious profession became a lifelong hermit).

Denis was captivated by Rome, its architecture and its cultural beauty. Throughout his life he delighted to return to the Eternal City, and never missed an opportunity to re-visit the College. He was ordained in Rome on 27 November 1955, and returned to the Diocese in 1956. He served as an assistant priest in Stockport, Dukinfield, Macclesfield and Hazel Grove. As a Parish Priest he served first in Donnington, then at St Mary's, Middlewich, Our Lady's Birkenhead, and finally at Sandbach. In 2001 he retired to Allan's Meadow in St Winifred's parish in Neston. He died in Nazareth House Birkenhead on 13 August 2014.

The early years of pastoral involvement are always formative and exciting in a priest's life. Denis rapidly matured into a much-loved and respected pastoral priest. His priesthood was built on deep and frequent prayer. Few things were urgent enough to interrupt his two hours in church each day – given to Mass, the daily office and to private adoration. One could often find him in church again in the afternoon. He had a particular devotion to the English mystic, Julian of Norwich, and at the time of his death he was deep into "Julian's Gospel", the most recent study of her life.

Everything was done with meticulous care and reverence. Before he took over at Our Lady of the Rosary, Donnington, he made a list of forty-two points on which he requested information from his bemused predecessor! He lived a full life, and wasted little time. He wrote his homilies out in full, but could become quite animated and forceful in their delivery.

Throughout his retirement years he delighted in supplying weekend Mass for priests who were ill, or wanted time for a holiday. He must have supplied in at least fifty parishes in our Diocese and North Wales. For several years he volunteered as an Honorary Chaplain to Chester Cathedral, showing visitors round or spending time with them in prayer. He was a voluntary worker in the beautiful nearby Ness Gardens. During his last year he researched and wrote a life of the Wirral "War Poet", Wilfred Owen, and sponsored a lecture on Judaism by a Jewish speaker from the Manchester Council of Christians and Jews.

Denis was a tireless organiser of prayer and Scripture study groups in the parish, and of holidays and pilgrimages to Walsingham and the continent. He became a popular and venerated "character" in St Winefride's. Less than three months before his death he and a few friends joined a pilgrimage of Salford clergy to Auschwitz. He was taken ill while on retreat at St Beuno's in North Wales, and taken into hospital. After initial hesitation he accepted the need for nursing care in Nazareth House, where he was loved and respected. His death was sudden and peaceful. The two funeral Masses at St Winefride's and at his former parish of Our Lady's Birkenhead were crowded and emotional occasions, underlining the veneration universally felt for a deeply "spiritual" man – I would without hesitation change that word to "saintly". He loved God, and he loved people.

Christopher Lightbound

Carlo Benvenuti 1950-2014

I was in Rome in the days following Carlo's death on 20 September 2014. I was thus glad to have had the opportunity to be present at the Requiem Mass with members of his family and friends, together with the College community which Carlo had served faithfully and generously over so many years. I was able to join with them in praying for his repose in the peace and love of God, and to celebrate with gratitude all Carlo had been and done.

My mind went back to the early days of my time as Rector – more than forty years ago now - when Arrigo, who had served in the College *portineria* for what seemed countless years, introduced me to Carlo, the young man who was soon to be the fiancé of his daughter Simonetta. The scene was typical of the Rome of that time where family connections were one of the principal ways in which positions of employment were arranged. It reflected what has often been described as a "consummate portrait" of Italy presented by the writer and



Source: VEC

politician, Luigi Barzini, in his famous 1964 book, *The Italians*. With insight and humour Barzini spoke of three words which capture essential features of Italian life: *conoscenze* (who you know), which made possible *raccomandazioni* (putting in a good word for someone), in order that the person in question might be *sistemato* (established in a job or favourable position... permanently if at all possible!)

While this system can lead to abuses, in the case of the College at that time it worked well where Carlo was concerned. Different times can require different arrangements, but at that time it was a good solution for Carlo and for the College. He benefited from having his job and a flat at the College, while the College benefited from his honest and dedicated service for the rest of his life. When Carlo took up his job he had already been trained as an upholsterer. In the early years he continued with his upholstery work, insofar as this was compatible with his work in the portineria, and he repaired and spruced up a great deal of the College's furniture as a result. When answering the phone in the portineria Carlo's slow and steady responses were solid and reassuring for the caller, and he was always courteous in meeting visitors. In fact, he took pride in offering a welcome, especially to students returning after years away.

On the day that Carlo married Simonetta in the College Church, it poured with rain, and Simonetta was met with the familiar Roman greeting, *sposa bagnata, sposa fortunata* – "a drenched bride is a fortunate bride"! And this touches on the aspect I remember most strongly about Carlo. Simonetta was indeed a "fortunate bride" because in Carlo she found a patient, kind and dedicated husband, and a good father who cared for his daughter Barbara and his son Mauro, beaming proudly as he helped push them around the College Cortile in strollers and miniature cars. One came to know the family best when, after the heat of the day on summer evenings, Arrigo and Rita would put up a folding table in the cortile and preside over a family gathering where Carlo and his family, and often also Arrigo's son, Enzo, and his wife Carla, would share antipasti, pasta and a glass of wine. Germano and Nella, two other stalwarts who contributed so much to the life of the College in the 1960s, '70s and '80s, would also sometimes join them – as would I too on occasion. These people were Roman to the core and I learned more from them about life in our local Roman neighbourhood than from any other source.

The fact that Carlo was seen by neighbours as a decent *local* man points to a dimension of Carlo's contribution to the College of which the students were probably unaware for the most part. Over the years one was able to go to him, and to his brother-in-law, Enzo, for suggestions about where to go for something and who to see, or not to see: the market traders who in their view could be trusted, delivery men, helpers, etc. One would often ask Carlo for his opinion, based on local knowledge, and this could be very helpful – provided of course one remembered it would be necessary to hear other views as well! As the shrewd Italian saying has it, *bisogna sentire tutte le campane* – "you need to listen to all the bells".

There were a number of challenges for Carlo in the latter stages of his life and, in particular, he never really recovered from the death of Simonetta. As I write these few words in memory of Carlo, I remember him with gratitude and, yes, with respect for the man he was and for the contribution he made. May he and his beloved Simonetta rest in peace.

Cormac Murphy-O'Connor

Report of the Friends of the Venerable

THE 2014 ANNUAL Meeting was held at the parish of St Thomas More in the Styvechale district of Coventry. This is the parish church of our past Chairman, Jo Barnacle, and many thanks are due to her for making the splendid arrangements.

We were joined by the Vice Rector, Fr Mark Harold, and the Senior Student, Rev. Matthew O’Gorman. The audio-visual presentation given by Fr Mark again gave us an interesting view of the many aspects of life as a student at the College.

The AGM was attended by only twenty-three members but the secretary received apologies from ninety-one members. Once again it was noted that age is taking its toll on our membership numbers. Although we had twenty-four new members, it is sad to relate that forty-five memberships were terminated on account of old age or death.

Hamish Keith had offered his resignation as Treasurer to the Committee, but fortunately we persuaded him to stay on for another year in order to allow a successor to be located. (I am pleased to report that we have found both a new member and a new treasurer in one go!). During 2013, the committee took the decision to change the financial year and so the Financial Report was for the seven months up to 31 March 2014 showing a surplus of expenditure over income of £838.00 giving a total balance of £12,485.00. The next Financial Report will be for the full year 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. The accounts were approved and accepted by all present.

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were re-elected and as there were only six nominations for the seven places on the committee, a ballot was not required.

The committee comprises Louise Bradley, Mary Ewing, Sarah Gough, Jeremy Hudson, Louise Sage, and Barbara Smith. During the year Leo Gooch offered his services and was co-opted onto the committee. We also enjoy the expertise and experience of Frs Thomas Wood and Anthony Coles who are also co-opted on to the committee.

After the AGM, Rev. Matthew gave us an amusing presentation on the lighter side of College life. Matthew wanted to show us how the students spend their leisure time. He told us about the College bar, cycling, football, cooking, car trips to Foligno, Norcia etc., and much else. Matthew also wanted us to know how much the Friends’ support, both spiritual and financial, means to the students and thanked us all on their behalf.

In my first report as Chairman last year I noted the numerous visits I had made to Rome, representing the Friends at significant events in the life of the College. This year, my contacts with the students have been limited to attending the ordinations of four of the five priests who were ordained during the summer of 2014. Sadly I could not attend the ordination of Fr Marc Homsey in Leeds as I was in Clifton (at that time my home diocese) attending Fr Colin Mason’s ordination. It is important to me that we are represented at all the priestly ordinations. Our Secretary, Jim Holroyd, represented the Friends at Fr Homsey’s ordination.

As I write this report, I reflect on the visit last weekend of twenty-three members of the Friends to Buckfast Abbey for an “away weekend”. Buckfast provided us with fantastic accommodation in the newly refurbished Northgate and during the weekend Fr Abbot gave us a detailed presentation on the history of the Abbey, which is soon to celebrate its millennium as a religious site.

The group attended the monastic liturgies on Friday and Saturday, with a little relaxation in the form of a steam train ride along the beautiful Dart Valley. On Saturday evening, there was a semi-formal dinner at which the guest speaker was the Rt. Hon. Ann Widdecombe DSG. All in all, a very successful weekend; I hope to extend the principle of it over the coming years.



MICHAEL LANG is Chairman of the Friends of the Venerabile.

Friends of the Venerabile

(The Venerable English College, Rome)



Join us to help the College Students by Prayer, Support and Funding

Benefits of membership

You will:

- Receive a copy of *The Venerabile*, the annual College journal.
- Receive the *Venerabile View Newsletter* with news and items of interest about the College and Palazzola.
- Be able to take part in our highly enjoyable outings, pilgrimages and annual gatherings held in different locations round the UK.
- Be kept in touch with the College and its students, helping them in their formation as priests.

What we do

We contribute towards additional facilities at the College and Palazzola. Recently we have provided a new Wi-Fi system and a new car for the students and this year we will be renovating the furniture in the Student Common Room.

For further information

Please visit our website: www.friendsoftheenglishcollegerome.org.uk

Contacts

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Secretary: Mr Jim Holroyd,
11 Fairfax Road,
Bingley, W. Yorks. BD16 4DR
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Email: JHGlenewes@aol.com

House List 2014-2015

Staff

Mgr Philip Whitmore, Rector
Fr Mark Harold, Vice-Rector
Fr Chris Willis, Spiritual Director
Fr Bruce Burbidge, Academic Tutor
Fr Martin Kelly, Pastoral Tutor

3rd Cycle

Fr John Poland, Liverpool

2nd Cycle (Year II)

Fr Anthony McGrath, Shrewsbury
Rev. Sean Crawley, Leeds
Rev. Matthew O'Gorman, Southwark
Rev. Anthony Rosso, Leeds

2nd Cycle (Year I)

Fr Andrew Chase, Rockhampton
Rev. Kevin Athaide, Nottingham
Rev. Tao Quoc Bjørn Nguyen, Oslo
Guido Amari, Westminster
Philip Andrews, Southwark
Thomas Cunnah, Shrewsbury
Michael Deas, Salford
David Howell, Southwark

1st Cycle Theology (Year III)

James Barber, Plymouth
Andrew Bowden, Westminster
Richard Howard, Salford
Mark Paver, Salford
Peter Stoddart, Hexham & Newcastle
Elliott Wright, Leeds

1st Cycle Theology (Year II)

Tristan Cranfield, Arundel & Brighton
Ryan Day, Middlesbrough
Gary Dench, Brentwood
Adam Dora, Westminster
Daniel Etienne, Lancaster
Richard Marsden, Middlesbrough
Francis Murphy, Southwark
Antonio Pineda, Westminster
Michael Rakowski, Northampton
Michael Vian Clark, Plymouth
Benjamin Woodley, Westminster

1st Cycle Theology (Year I)

Marco Egawhary, Birmingham
Benjamin Hilton, Leeds
David Irwin, Shrewsbury
Ryan Service, Birmingham
John Waters, Birmingham

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year II)

Albert Lawes, Plymouth
Haris Roberts, Nottingham
Peter Taylor, Middlesbrough

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year I)

Alexander Balzanella, Westminster
Andrew Clarke, Nottingham
Dominic Jenkinson, Hallam
Simon Jones, Portsmouth
Matthew King, Portsmouth
Piotr Wygnanski, East Anglia

Anglican Exchange

Darcy Terry, Ripon College, Cuddesdon

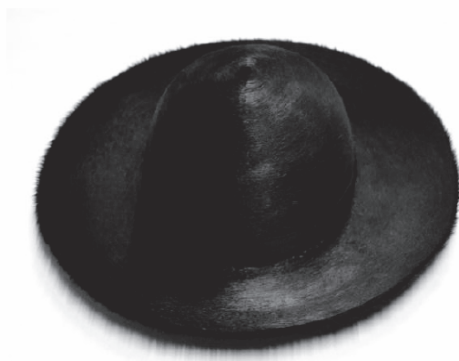
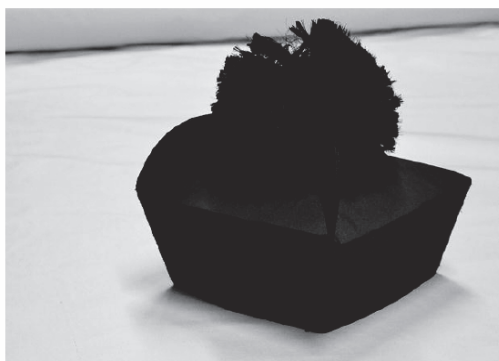
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The Roman Association Trust

(Registered as a Charity no.1085919)

The Trust: what it is

The Trust manages a fund invested in a portfolio of stocks and shares. Its sole purpose is to make regular donations to the English College to help it continue the work of training talented men to serve as priests in England and Wales.

The current Trustees, all voluntary, are Rev. Thomas Wood, Rev. Anthony Wilcox, Rev. Michael Cooley, Rev. Paul Daly, Rev. Gerard Skinner, Mr Peter Purdue

What it does

In the past 15 years the Trust has given £450,000 to the College, to support projects such as making all student rooms en suite, refitting the *portineria*, providing a portable pipe organ and setting up the College website.

How you can help

By supporting the work of the Trust you are giving something back to the College that will benefit students for years to come.

We invite all Old Romans to think about leaving a legacy to the Trust when making your will. This is simple to do and there is a brochure available "Remembering the English College, Rome in your Will" that explains the simple steps involved when drafting or revising your will. Copies available from Mgr Anthony Wilcox, Fr Thomas Wood or from the College.

Or you can send a donation to the address below, payable to the "Roman Association Trust".

Find out more

Please contact us to find out how you can help:
Mgr Anthony Wilcox, tel. 07976 359 565, email: alwilcox19@gmail.com

Rev. Thomas Wood, Our Lady's Presbytery, Southport Road, Lydiate, Merseyside, L31 4HH,
tel. 0151 526 0362, email: redmondwood@gmail.com

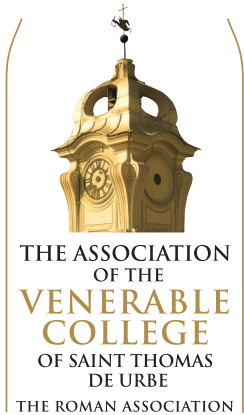


Photo: Nicholas Hudson



Photo: Nicholas Hudson

Palazzola Awaits You

POPE FRANCIS has declared 2016 a Holy Year and Rome is bound to be swamped with visitors and pilgrims. Accommodation in the city is expensive so the perfect solution for your school or parish pilgrimage is to make Palazzola your base. We can organise a coach to bring you and your group down to the city for the ceremonies so you can visit the basilicas and the main sights and we'll then whisk you back up to Palazzola in time for dinner.

There are fantastic group deals available outside the peak season and since the Holy Year starts on 8 December 2015 you can avail of very special rates right up to 20 December.

Apart from that, Palazzola is always a good option for a break, a holiday, a retreat, as part of a sabbatical or just for some time out. You can perfect your culinary skills with lessons in Italian cookery, visit a market in one of the nearby Castelli towns, head to Rocca di Papa (within easy reach) or take a stroll round the lake to Castel Gandolfo for a coffee or hop over to Nemi to sample its celebrated *fragolini*.

Our St Edmund's Conference Room is much in demand for meetings, conferences and seminars. An added bonus is that the lake view from St Edward's Terrace is one of the best in the Villa.

Don't delay, inquire today and plan your next visit to this delightful spot.

Villa Palazzola, Via dei Laghi km 10.800,
00040 Rocca di Papa, Italy

