



# *The Venerabile 2016*

VOLUME XXXVI NO.1





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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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**2016**

VOL XXXVI

NO. 1

# The Venerabile 2016



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**Front cover:** Relics of St Ralph Sherwin at the Veneration of the Relics on Martyrs' Day 2015.  
Photo: Piotr Wygnanski

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

Please visit our websites: [www.vecrome.org](http://www.vecrome.org) and [www.palazzola.it](http://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.

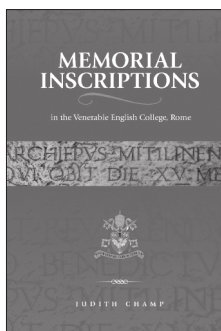
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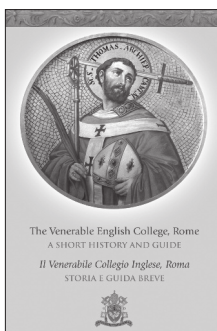
Each is a delight to read and in purchasing them you are helping to support the College.



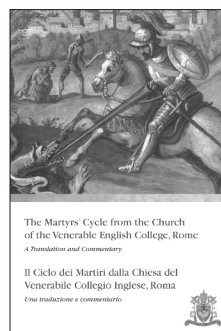
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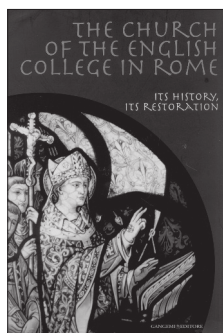
*Memorial Inscriptions*, Judith Champ, €10



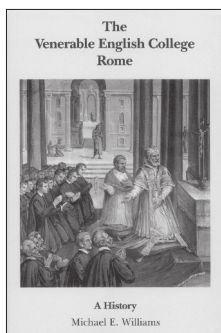
*The Venerable English College, Rome: A Short History and Guide*, Mark Langham, €10



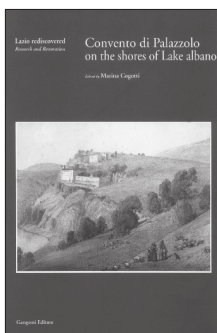
*The Martyrs' Cycle from the Church of the Venerable English College*, Paul Keane, €10



*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 jubilarians and for that special birthday or Christmas gift.*  
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Some back issues of *The Venerabile* are also available at €15 per copy including postage and packing.

# Welcome to the 2016 edition of *The Venerable*

EDITORIAL - PETER TAYLOR



**WHEN FATHER RECTOR ASKED** me to take on the role of editor of *The Venerable* for 2016, I must confess I was very apprehensive. Becoming the first editor not from the Archdiocese of Southwark since 2011 and the first editor from the Northern dioceses in many years, I had some rather large shoes to fill. However, through several generous submissions of articles and the tireless efforts of my team I am delighted to present this year's edition to you.

This academic year has been one marked by many important events in the Church: the end of celebrations marking 50 years since the Second Vatican Council, the Extraordinary Jubilee year of Mercy and the Synod on the Family to name but a few. In light of this, it is only fitting that we mark these important events in *The Venerable* 2016.

The first article on Human Trafficking has been something very much at the forefront of the mind of the College, since the House was given a Spiritual conference on the subject by Sr Eugenia Bonetti, chairperson of the anti-trafficking organisation "Slaves No More". The fight against this practice is brought to the fore by this article by Piotr Wygnanski on how each one of us, and Parish Priests in particular, can help destroy this modern-day slavery.

Our second article is the first submission by a professor known to many who study at the Angelicum and especially those who are studying Philosophy. Fr Dominic Holtz OP gives a little taste of his flair for teaching what can be a very difficult subject to understand: Metaphysics, with his question *Can God make a better world?* With his unique wit and interest in comic book heroes, he explores how Thomism can be useful for contemporary metaphysics.

Our third and fourth articles are by Professor Maurice Whitehead, Director of the College Archive Project and Schwarzenbach Research Fellow. Professor Whitehead gives us a glimpse into life in the College shortly before the Second Vatican Council through the letters of Fr Gerald Creasey of Leeds Diocese. In his other piece he explains further about his work as resident archivist and the work that has been done on the archive to modernise it through the generous benefaction of the Schwarzenbach family and the generous donations to the archive by Old Romans.

Our fifth article is a piece by Mgr Peter Fleetwood, who through his work with the Bishops' Conference on the Year of Mercy gives us a little flavour of how the Holy Father's call of Mercy is being received by the Church across England and Wales.

Our sixth piece is something of a reprint. *The Venerable* 1987 published a transcript of a spiritual conference given by Mother Teresa. Given that she will be canonised this September, it is fitting to once again reflect on her powerful words of mercy and holiness, which are as apt now as they were in 1987.

Our final article is of particular importance as it reflects on the role and vocation of the family in light of the Synod and the canonisation of the Martins. Laura Cunniffe, a secondary school teacher and her fiancé, Brenden Thompson, a coordinator for *Catholic Voices* and former



Brentwood seminarian, explore the importance of the canonisation of the first married couple and the significance this has had on their vocation to marriage.

I would like to express my thanks to all who have contributed to *The Venerabile* this year and those of you who are reading this magazine and have continued to support the work of the College, in some cases for many years. I would like to extend particular thanks to my team: Antonio, Dominic and Albert, for without them, this magazine would certainly not be possible, and I wish every success to next year's editor and his team. I would also like to thank the Rector, Mgr Whitmore and Fergus, our publisher, for their guidance and efforts to make sure that this magazine is a worthy continuation to those editions that have come before.

Finally, I have an important request: Please pray for our students, those who have left this year and gone on to work in the Lord's vineyard, and those who are still members of the community. I wish you all the very best.

In Domino,

Peter Taylor  
 Editor of the *Venerabile* 2016



**PETER TAYLOR** is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year seminarian for the Diocese of Middlesbrough studying Theology at the Gregorian University.

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# The Role of the Pastor in Combatting Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

PIOTR WYGNANSKI



SHORTLY AFTER POPE FRANCIS was elected, Archbishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, the Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and Social Sciences, wrote the customary message to the new Holy Father, presenting the services of the Academies, and asking for his guidance on which issues the Academies should be studying. Pope Francis replied with a simple handwritten note:

*"Marcelo,  
I think it would be good to examine human trafficking and modern slavery. Organ  
trafficking could be examined in connection with human trafficking.  
Many thanks,  
Francis"*

In this way, the Pontifical Academies joined an ever-growing movement of New Abolitionism and began its work to help eradicate human trafficking and modern slavery. Since 2013, the Academies have been hosting a series of events to this end, bringing together expertise and leaders from around the world, as well as a series of youth symposiums. These workshops are intended to build a global network of young people working in any capacity against slavery and human trafficking, that they might share knowledge and experiences, and support one another in their work. The students from the Venerable English College were invited to observe in the second symposium.

Entitled *Real Love Chases Away Fear, Greed and Slavery: Young Leaders Must Pave the Way*, the second youth symposium was held on 7-8 November 2015 and it will likely be one of the most inspiring and challenging weekends of my life. It became immediately evident that I had to abandon any preconceptions about the symposium being a "youth" event. I may have entered a room buzzing with joyful young people, but it was when we took our seats, and proceedings began, that I realised I was sat amongst the future of the global anti-slavery movement. The room was filled with founders and presidents of international NGOs (non-governmental organisations), leading anthropologists, political activists, lawyers and theologians. In short, the brightest, kindest and most driven young people I have ever met. As the first speaker began, I remember thinking that all I could do was pay attention and try to keep up as best I could. Over the course of two long days, we heard a host of perspectives on modern slavery, starting with a global overview, so vital to understanding the issue.

In the Palermo Protocol,<sup>1</sup> "trafficking in persons" is defined as the "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of

vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation". The best contemporary statistical information on the issue comes from a landmark publication, The UN's Economics of Forced Labour report<sup>2</sup> and the Global Slavery Index.<sup>3</sup> Even though methodological issues of measurement result in a tendency to a lower figure, the number of victims is estimated to be 45.8 million people, which is more than there has ever been before in human history. The UN's report estimates that human trafficking generates an estimated annual profit of €150 billion with a trafficker earning an average annual income of €70,000. Unsurprisingly, most victims of slavery are women and young girls and 22% of victims are in sex slavery, with 26% of slaves under the age of 18.

As the symposium continued, we heard from a young English lawyer who had worked in the Philippines for International Justice Mission, helping prosecute those who trafficked children in the sex trade. Having returned to London to work for one of the ten largest law firms in the world, he encountered an enormous, untapped resource within the corporate world of law. He told us of the dormant hunger for meaning that he meets every day, from lawyers who want to do more than just earn money, lawyers who want to share in that profound connection with those who suffer in today's world. He told us that the ten largest law firms in the world give over \$23 million worth of *pro bono* work a year to charities. He now works to bring together counter-trafficking NGOs, with relevant experience and feet on the ground, with global law firms, which have vast material and human resources. This is resulting in enormous change.

We heard from a Mexican anthropologist who worked for five years with women coerced into prostitution. She told us of a country harrowed by physical and sexual violence against women, considered as common and acceptable by the society she lives in. She talked about her research which brings to light the established structures of sexual exploitation and normalisation of violence. She related areas of Mexico where pimping is a lifestyle, where young men are recruited and trained as pimps and taught the practical use of sexual abuse to gain power over vulnerable women. She told us of a culture that has twisted a reverence of Mary, the immaculate and spotless Virgin, which is used to paint a young woman's humanity as dirty and defiled. Visibly angered and frustrated from years of seemingly fruitless work, she described a corrupt and patriarchal society, where any legal development changes nothing, because a paradigm of the subordination and coercion of women is so deeply embedded.

We heard from a young woman who was trafficked into Italy from Nigeria in 2013. After graduating from university with a degree in computer science, she could not find work and so trained in computer repair, working mostly for local Christians. One day, a local Christian woman told her that her brother ran an African computer shop in Spain and offered her a job there. Delighted by this opportunity, she accepted, received documents including a two-year working visa, and began her journey. At the Spanish airport she discovered her visa had been falsified, and she was only released by the immigration officers when an unknown man came to collect her. She was told there had been a change of plan, and that she was to work in Naples instead. When she arrived in Italy, a woman who was to become her "madam" met her. The woman told her that she owed €65,000 and that the only way she could pay it back was by working on the streets.

We heard from a young woman from Mexico who travels from school to school with a team of liberated survivors, educating teenagers about the reality of prostitution and human trafficking. We heard from a young Ghanaian man who was trafficked for hard labour by his brother. We heard from a young woman who campaigns for legal justice in Bolivia where between 2008 and 2014 there were 1,750 reported cases of trafficking but only 12 convictions. We heard from a young man

who works with national hotel chains in the US to eradicate hotel-based prostitution by educating staff. We heard from a young woman from Ecuador who was sold into sex slavery by her uncle after her parents were killed in a road accident. The weekend continued as we heard from many more whose lives had been destroyed, and from those who work determinedly to end modern slavery.

How can one respond to such testimonies, if not with a desire to bring about change? The Catholic Church of England and Wales can play a significant part, and this is pertinent as this global reality very much affects the UK. In 2014, the Home Office reported that there were an estimated 13,000 victims of modern slavery in the UK,<sup>4</sup> mostly from Albania, Nigeria and Vietnam, but also a significant number of British nationals. In broad strokes, that means that on average there will be over four slaves per parish in England, Scotland and Wales: four people who are forced, by physical or emotional abuse, into domestic service, hard labour, prostitution or other criminal activity.<sup>5</sup>

What can the Church do to help these people? The message from the youth symposium was clear: efforts to educate, prevent and criminalise in countries of origin will never be successful, as long as developed countries continue to create demand for cheap labour and prostitution. This demand sustains the trafficking of people, and as long as it exists, human trafficking and slavery will be profitable, and as long as it is profitable, it will continue. By challenging normative attitudes, by raising awareness of the importance of opposing ignorance and apathy, we can begin to create conditions under which human trafficking and slavery can be rendered unsustainable.

There have been many examples of fields where normative attitudes have been successfully changed within living memory. Margaret Archer, a British sociologist and president of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, considers the change in attitudes towards drink driving or smoking amongst the public in the UK.<sup>6</sup> In these cases, increased legal pressure was vital, but effective only as a part of a wider system of education and stigmatisation. The government educated the people and peers began to challenge one another. Meaningful sociological change began when stigmatisation occurred, simultaneously, across every level of society.

I believe that a methodology which describes the role of the Catholic pastor, co-operating in a wider context of seeking social change, is put forward effectively by liberation theology. After all, if we are to make the effective and Christian liberation of the oppressed, by bringing about social change, our project, then liberation theologians may have much to teach us. Leonardo and Clodovis Boff describe how liberation theology occurs on three, interconnected levels, namely the *professional*, *pastoral* and *popular*.<sup>7</sup> By considering the pastoral level, and its interrelation with the other two in the context of combatting slavery and human trafficking, we can see the part the Church in England and Wales can play.

As awareness around the issue of slavery and human trafficking has grown, the *professional* efforts, the political, legal and academic are significant and their fruits widely available. Globally, the United Nations have committed to “*take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking*”<sup>8</sup> in their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), working through agencies and programmes across the globe. On a national level, the UK government’s response to modern slavery is exemplary, spearheaded by the first Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Kevin Hyland and the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Within the Church, Pope Francis has made clear that we are to play a pivotal role in ending slavery, and the Santa Marta Group and the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences are continuously working to make this a reality. The role of the pastor is to learn from the *professional* action, to internalise the great wealth of strategies and intellectual

developments that are made available, and serve as a bridge to communicate them practically to people.

In a pastoral context, the people can be subdivided between parishioners, NGOs, and any potential victims in the local area. The latter may seem fanciful, but recalling that, on average, there are four victims of human trafficking per parish in the UK, it is vital that those in a position of pastoral responsibility are able to recognise the “red flags”: abnormal anxiety (particularly at the mention of law enforcement), poor physical health, signs of physical or sexual abuse, inability/hesitance to speak for oneself, inability to contact friends and family, a loss of sense of time or numerous inconsistencies in one’s story. Pastors must be able to identify these, and act accordingly, and prudently, with the knowledge and courage to ask follow-up questions, and to help victims find the assistance they need via a local and appropriate *first responder* agency, such as the UK Human Trafficking Centre, or a similarly competent NGO. Pastors should also proactively learn about NGOs working locally, and consider creative ways of supporting their work, financially or otherwise.

The homily is a unique opportunity to help combat modern slavery. Informed preaching which raises awareness and builds support for an end to these crimes is perhaps the most significant tool the clergy of the Catholic Church in England in Wales have. By simply speaking about these issues – explaining that people’s everyday actions can combat slavery, and by urging the faithful to inform and challenge their peers in the same way – the Church plays its part in bringing about that cultural change of awareness and compassion. Slavery is perpetuated by ignorance and a false sense of powerlessness amongst ordinary people. Through informed and cognisant preaching, the Church is able to help dispel both.

Once the reality of slavery is truly “seen”, it cannot be unseen by people of goodwill; communities begin to talk about it, to challenge peers, and to take action in whatever way they can. Students form groups, business leaders and lawyers take the issue into their professional environment. One homily can make a parishioner mention slavery in a pub. One conversation in a pub can make a man think twice about paying for sex. When enough men think twice about paying for sex, then one fewer young girl from Southeast Asia will be abducted from her home and family, and trafficked half-way across the world for sexual slavery. Every Catholic in England and Wales registering as an organ donor would have a significant impact on the demand for trafficked organs into the UK, and so save lives in the developing world.

If the Catholic clergy in England and Wales are to play a part in ending modern slavery and trafficking, pastoral ministry must be prepared to go beyond an individualistic model, focused on one-to-one, responsive, interactions. Pastoral action is only able to impact social structures, and so proactively prevent very real suffering, for very real people, if it is allowed to have a wider perspective and range. We all strive to follow the example of the Good Samaritan, but perhaps we could also do something, with greater long-term fruition, by addressing the crime rate on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Ultimately, we are working to protect and liberate concrete lives, memories and human relationships, echoing the words of Pope Francis regarding the current refugee crisis:

I ask my brothers and sisters in the faith and all men and women of good will for a decisive choice to combat the trafficking in persons, in which slave labour exists.

Pope Francis  
General Audience  
Wednesday, 1 May 2013



*“Behind these statistics are people, each of them with a name, a face, a story, an inalienable dignity which is theirs as a child of God.”*

By gaining this empathic knowledge of the suffering that victims of slavery endure, we see past the statistics. We see people with names and faces, and so undergo a conversion of life to solidarity with the oppressed, and from solidarity comes a commitment to act, a refusal to be a bystander. In a culture overflowing with issues where the Church is ever more the last voice calling to protect the inherent dignity of the human person, slavery is an issue where that dignity is still commonly understood. By joining our voices with that of the wider world, we not only work to bring a great evil to an end, but also spread that message of inherent dignity in a way that is much more likely to fall, not amongst thorns, but on good, receptive, soil.

A sentiment commonly expressed by those working to affirm the intrinsic value of human life is that if all the work one ever does amounts to one person being saved, or one fewer person being trafficked, then it is worth it. We too must adopt this stance, because modern slavery will only end when all of us do so.

### Further Information

#### **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**

See: Human Trafficking Knowledge Portal, and SDG's <https://www.unodc.org>

#### **International Labour Office**

See: The Economics of Forced Labour Report [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

#### **Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences**

See: Catholic Resources on Modern Slavery, and Events <http://www.endslavery.va>

#### **UK Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner**

See: Strategic Plan 2015-2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/independent-anti-slavery-commissioner>

#### **Home Office: Modern Slavery**

See: Spot the Signs, and Reporting Guidelines <https://modernslavery.co.uk/>



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### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime is the main international instrument in the fight against this type of crime. The Convention is supplemented by three Protocols, the first of which is the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Known as the Palermo Protocol, it is the first global legally binding instrument with an agreed definition on trafficking in persons.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Economics of Forced Labour*: (International Labour Office, Geneva, 2014)
- <sup>3</sup> *The Global Slavery Index Report*: (Walk Free Foundation, Broadway Nedlands, 2016)
- <sup>4</sup> *Strategic Plan 2015–2017*: (Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, London, 2015)
- <sup>5</sup> Based on 2,566 parish churches in England and Wales and 500 in Scotland
- <sup>6</sup> *Accompanying Recommendations to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences from the 17-21 April 2015 Plenary Session on 'Human Trafficking: Issues beyond Criminalization'*: (Margaret Archer, Vatican City, 2015)
- <sup>7</sup> *Introducing Liberation Theology*: (Burns & Oates, Leonardo & Clodovis Boff, Tunbridge Wells, 1987) p11
- <sup>8</sup> *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*: (United Nations, 2015) Target 8.7

# Can God make a better world?

FR DOMINIC HOLTZ, OP



Lord who made the lion and the lamb,  
You decreed I should be what I am.  
Would it spoil some vast eternal plan  
If I were a wealthy man?  
(*Fiddler on the Roof*, 1964)

IT'S EASY ENOUGH TO imagine the world to be different than it is. We do it all of the time, after all. Perhaps we imagine ourselves being in better shape, dropping a few pounds or toning our muscles. Perhaps we think of trivial differences, like having hair of a different colour. We might, on the other hand, imagine much larger-scale differences, such as a world with a different history, say one in which Harold had won the Battle of Hastings in 1066 or Lord Cornwallis did not surrender to the Americans in 1781. We can, if we like, even go further. What would the world be like if, as the proverb goes, pigs could actually fly? What if the things we read about in comic books or science fiction were really true, and men bitten by radioactive spiders could climb walls or machines could send us forward and backward in time? What if the moon were really made of cheese? What if there had been no life at all, and the whole universe was simply a single ball of rock?

Much of this may well seem like just daydreaming and not worth serious consideration. However, we do find ourselves confronted by the kind of question that Tevye asks in the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, "Would it spoil some vast eternal plan / If I were a wealthy man?" That is, among the ways we can imagine the world to be *different*, at least some of those ways seem, for all we can tell, to be decidedly *better* than the world as we know it. For those who hold that the world really could have been otherwise than it is, in ways both trivial and profound, and who furthermore hold that God made and sustains the world as it is, then the fact that we can imagine a better world poses a further question: Could God make a better world?

It might look at first glance as though we can dismiss this question without much effort. God can do whatever he likes, we might say, so there's no reason he couldn't make a better world. However, it's just then that, to the philosophically-minded, a worry arises. If there's a better world that God could create, why didn't he make that world instead of this one? After all, when we fail to do our best, we generally ascribe that failure to some kind of limit on our part: a lack of time or resources, not enough energy, ignorance of what is truly best, or perhaps even malice or lack of due consideration. We imagine, in other words, that if we could know what was best, or at least better, and we had nothing preventing us from bringing it about, then we would surely do so. At the very least, we think we ought to do so, and hold it to be a fault that we do not.

Anyone following this line of thought would see immediately that there is a problem here. God, surely, is not limited as we are. It does not make any sense to suggest that God wanted to make something better, but that he ran out of time, or didn't have the resources he needed, or didn't think of a better option until it was too late. Likewise, we surely don't want to hold that God

knew perfectly well that he could make a better world, or make this world better than it is, and that doing so would be something worth doing, but he simply decided not to do so. Indeed, it is along this kind of logic that the famous philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) argued in his work *Theodiciée* (1710) that this world is, in a phrase famous in its own right and famously satirized by Voltaire in his novel *Candide*, the “best of all possible worlds.”

While Leibniz’s argument is richly detailed, the basic idea is this. When we imagine that the world could be better than it is, we usually think of some specific evil or set of evils and imagine them to be diminished or removed, and for all we can see, the world would not be worse without them, only better. Or, we imagine some goods not present which, if added, would, for all we can see, make things better, in no way worse. Or, we think of actually existing goods which, if increased, would again, so far as we could see, only improve the world. Leibniz, however, challenges us to justify our claim that our not being able to see how any given change, how any diminishing or eliminating of this or that evil, inclusion or increase of this or that good, would result in the world being any worse actually entails the conclusion that it would not be worse. We are certainly aware of the law of unintended consequences, even in small-scale features of things within our ability to know. Can we, asks Leibniz, assert with any confidence that the world we think we can imagine would in fact be better, or indeed possible?

Furthermore, Leibniz asks us to consider what measure we are using to judge the goodness of the world. Without any such measure, claiming one world to be better than another, which is to say having more goodness than another, would be without meaning. On the other hand, if we do choose a measure for goodness, what justifies our thinking that our *human* measure would be the best measure for the goodness of the *world*? Minimally, might we not reasonably hold that the goodness which God is aiming at for the whole of the world, for the best balancing of goods and evils in it, would not be the same kind of goodness that I might aim at when I redesign the world in my own imagination? If the goodness God aims at is, as we have every right to insist, richer, deeper, more comprehensive of all of the parts of the world, and related to manifesting the very goodness of God himself, how can we even begin to propose any other world, even any other possible world, as better than this one?

What animates Leibniz’s view is the *principle of sufficient reason*. The principle of sufficient reason is the notion that for anything contingent, whether it be an existing thing or an event, there is some thing or set of things that accounts for its being so. On this principle, nothing except what is necessary “just is”. According to Leibniz, even God acts for reasons; he does not merely cause things to occur for *no* reason whatsoever. We don’t know all of God’s reasons, and likely we cannot know them all, but since God is supremely wise and supremely good, we can know that whatever he does, he always does for the best of reasons and in the best way. There could never, then, be a better arrangement of good and evil in the world than the arrangement that we find in the world as it is (including as it has been and as it will be). That we cannot see how it all fits together does not, according to Leibniz, lessen our certitude that God cannot “underperform”, he cannot fall short of doing the best things and in the best way, and so our confidence that any world God has made would be the best of any he could make. On this view, it is precisely because there is *no* better world, not even one *possibly* better, that we can deny that God can make a better world.

Not all philosophers have been convinced by this line of thought. Many who have rejected Leibniz’s argument have done so from a position of *unbelief*. Specifically, they take it as unproblematically obvious that things could be better than they are in fact. Said differently, there are possible worlds (different arrangements of this world, or even worlds with features notably different from the actual world) that are better than this one. What these philosophers then argue



is that, following Leibniz's logic, God would surely have made the best world. Since this world is manifestly not the best world, given that we can easily think of any number of possible ways it could be better, but if there were a God he would never create a suboptimal world, it follows that there must be no God, and the world, imperfect as it is, just *is*, without explanation or cause, a suboptimal brute fact.

It might be surprising to hear that St. Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274), the great Dominican theologian of the thirteenth century whose writings have sustained an unbroken line of inquiry in both theology and philosophy for over seven hundred years, is, in an important respect, in agreement with these unbelievers. According to Thomas, our world is decidedly not the best of all possible worlds. On Thomas's view, there are innumerable, indeed infinite, other worlds that, had they existed, would have been better than this one. At the same time, Thomas does not see this as an argument for unbelief. On the contrary, it is *because* of what we know about God and his goodness that we cannot think of this world, or for that matter *any* world, as being the best.

To see why Thomas thinks this way, it will be helpful to recall something of what Thomas takes a world to be. First of all, a world, and everything within it, is something *created*, brought into being and sustained in being solely by the infinite power of God. While a world might be in some numerical respect infinite — say, infinitely divisible, or without temporal beginning or ending — every created thing is necessarily *finite*. Were it infinite in the proper sense, it could not be some specific thing, could not have any limit whatsoever, would need to be just Being itself; in short, only God is infinite. As a “created God” is a contradiction (since whatever is caused by something else cannot be ultimate, and thus cannot be God), then all created things are finite.

Even so, on Thomas's view, every created thing, as well as all created things taken as a whole (i.e. the world), are *patterned* off of the infinite. While a human maker designs what he makes based ultimately on things in the world, God, according to Thomas, creates what he creates, and orders his creation, down to the most particular detail and simplest event, as patterned on his own divine being. While God is supremely simple, supremely something one and unified and in no way divided, he knows the manifold ways in which finite things can be “modelled” after, and participate in, his infinite goodness and being. Every tree, every frog, every skyscraper, every rainfall, every sunrise, just is what it is because it is a particular participation in, and finite likeness of, God himself. Indeed, not merely each thing in particular, not only each event considered in isolation, but the web and network of all of these, down to the most minute fact, is a particular, unrepeatable image of the goodness of God.

However, God's goodness, his very being, is infinite. This means that there can be no created thing, nor any set of created things, however large or however varied, that can even begin to exhaust the goodness of God. Since any created thing is only, and necessarily, a finite likeness to God, there is in a manner of speaking always “more” of God, indeed *infinitely* more of God, that the creature does not manifest. Moreover, however good or excellent a creature, or set of creatures, may be, necessarily there would be infinitely more divine goodness unexpressed in *that* or *those* creatures, which some *other* creature would be able to express. This means, then, that for any and every created thing, there is always, and necessarily always, a better creature (i.e. one that more perfectly manifests the divine goodness) that could have been made. What is true of each creature is also true of all creatures, and all possible arrangements of those creatures. In short, there is, because there can be, no best world, possible or otherwise. Absolutely speaking, every world, however perfectly it is patterned off of the goodness of God, however richly varied in its goodness, is always less perfect, has less goodness, than infinite other worlds that God might have made, had he wanted.

Note that Thomas can thus avoid the worry that God, in making a world that is not “best”, at least absolutely speaking, underperformed or acted in a suboptimal way. Since there is no such, and could be no such thing, as the best world God could make, it hardly counts against God’s goodness or wisdom not to have made it. Likewise, since no world can ever exhaust God’s goodness, it follows that, in deciding to create a world at all, God does not choose the best among possible worlds, but rather in accord with his own good pleasure chooses to make a world with his own being as its exemplar, and any such world will be good; indeed, it may even be, as Genesis reminds us, *very good*.

Does this mean that, for Thomas, there is no sense in asking why the world is the way it is? In one sense, yes, but in another sense, not quite. Clearly, we cannot, according to Thomas, argue why, of all of the many things God might have made, he chose to create the ones he did. The answer will lie in God’s goodness and his freedom, which is to say, in God himself. There is no external standard, no standard at all other than the divine goodness to judge God’s works, and thus to judge the world. However, there is a way, says Thomas, that we can think of any given world as best, and he asserts that we must think of God as always making the best world in this second sense.

For Thomas, when we ask whether God can make a better world, we are really asking two different things. This is because, as Thomas sees it, the main idea of a “world” is something like a given set of certain kinds of things (what Thomas would call *essences*). So, we could ask whether God might make a different world, and that would mean God making different kinds of things. Or, we could ask whether God might make any given world better, and that would be to ask whether there is a better way to order and arrange some particular set of things. As we have seen, there can be no best world in the first sense. There are always other, and more perfect, beings that God might have included in his creation. Indeed, he might have created a world in which nothing that exists in the actual world was brought into being, but rather other (to us inconceivable and unfathomably more perfect) beings exist. Nonetheless, in the second sense, Thomas does

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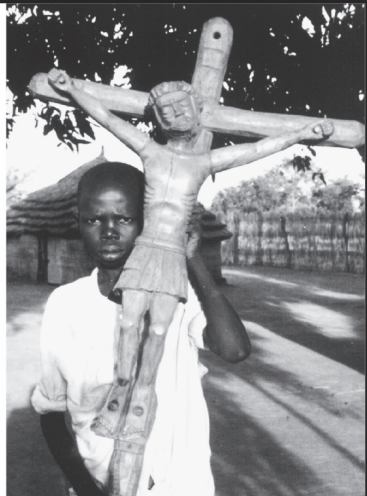
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think we can reasonably talk about better worlds, because in this sense we mean more precisely better or worse ways for the actual world to be.

Consider, for example, a world with tigers. If God is going to create a world with tigers, then he will create a world in which tigers, at least for the most part, flourish. Tigers are predators, and their flourishing entails the destruction of prey, e.g. goats. What this means is that in wanting a world with tigers, God also wants a world with goats, and a world in which at least some of those goats are killed and eaten. If God made tigers, but did not give them prey and a fitting environment in which to stalk their prey, then they would be made uselessly, unable to be in any but the most minimal sense what they are, and that would count against the wisdom of the creator. We cannot solve this by saying that God might have made tigers who didn't need to eat the flesh of other animals, because such a creature, while superficially resembling a tiger, would not be a tiger at all, but something else. Tigers are carnivorous predators, and any world with tigers made by a wise and good God will have fleshly prey to be eaten. God need not create a world with tigers of course, but note that would be a world different from this one, not the same world better or worse.

The case of the tiger can now be expanded universally, and down to every particular. Given a world, that is some particular set of kinds of things, there are in fact better or worse ways for them to be ordered, even as there are worlds fit for having tigers in it and worlds unfit for them. Some orderings of the parts of a world would more perfectly disclose the goodness and glory of God than others. Since the world is finite, and has finite things in it, there are only so many ways any particular world can be ordered, and from this it follows that it would be possible to rank those orderings, some better than others. On Thomas's view, this also means that some order must be the best, the way of ordering a certain set of things that most perfectly manifests the goodness and wisdom of God. This means, then, that the world as we know it, while not the best world that could be, is nonetheless the best way this world could be. Said differently, while God could make a better world, he cannot make this world any better.

To have a sense of what Thomas is claiming here, it may help to see what his argument does not entail. First of all, in claiming that this world cannot be better, Thomas does not think that whatever is, was, or will be is therefore the best *for that thing*, nor even good at all *taken in isolation*. When a tiger mauls and consumes a goat, this may be the best thing for that particular tiger, but it is hardly under any meaningful description best for that particular goat. When the sons of Israel betrayed their brother Joseph and sold him into slavery, and when Potiphar's wife later tried to seduce him and, failing at that, accused him of attempted rape and had him thrown into prison, these things taken as such — betrayal, seduction, false witness — are simply bad.

What Thomas wants us to see, rather, is that a world with tigers and goats in which some goats are sometimes eaten by tigers is, in view of the whole, a world worth having. Likewise, a world in which Joseph is sold into slavery and falsely accused, in which a terrible drought drives his brothers in desperation to Egypt, but also one in which the evils inflicted on Joseph set him up as best able not merely to aid his family in their need, but many others besides, and even more with his having learned to forgive and the brothers to repent — such a world is especially worth having. In such a world, with these sorts of persons in it, doing the good they do and the evil they do, we do not see merely a net goodness, but a richer goodness, one that we can easily see as better manifesting God's goodness and wisdom than one missing any of those elements, or ordered in any other way.

Does this mean that Thomas thinks we can, like Voltaire's Pangloss in *Candide*, explain for any and every evil the good for which God has ordered it to produce this "best of all possible worlds"? Not at all. On Thomas's view, for us to see how the world is ordered in the best way, we

would need both to know comprehensively the goodness of God (of which the world is a likeness) and the mind of God (in whose goodness, wisdom, and good pleasure alone we can account for the creation of this world). In this life, indeed even in the Beatific Vision, no created mind can exhaustively know either God's goodness or his mind, which of course amount to the same thing, since God is supremely One. God can, if he choose, reveal his will to us, and this is precisely what we believe him to have done in many and varied ways through the prophets, and in these latter days through his Son, Jesus Christ. However, this is precisely the domain of *theology*, to consider what God has revealed about himself and about all else as it relates to him, and consider that precisely *as revealed*. While God has revealed much about his will for man and for the universe as a whole, questions of particular providence, how this or that good or evil fit into God's providential order, are for the most part not part of the deposit of faith. The philosopher thus has, at best, a general account of the world, an overall sense of how a world with the sorts of things, the goods and evils we encounter, would be a good way to manifest divine goodness and wisdom. More than that is beyond the scope of the philosopher, and his duty would be better served by silence than by facile justifications for the ills suffered in the vale of tears.

Finally, does Thomas's account entail passivity before the evils of the world? That is, if this world is ordered, past, present, and future, in all of its details, in the best way such that there could not be a better way, would it be wrong to try to improve things, to right wrongs? Absolutely not! On the contrary, among the things in this rightly-ordered, indeed optimally-ordered world is our reason, and with it our sense of what is right. When I see suffering, and I try to relieve it, my desire to do so, and, if I should succeed, my success in doing so would be among the things God has ordained for this world. By the same token, I can rightly regret the wrongs I have done, understanding that my seeing past deeds as wrong and seeking to set them right is also a good that God has ordained for this world.

Seeing how the actual world is the best way, taken as a whole, for this world to be should relieve us from useless worry. For enjoyment or distraction, I might imagine how it would be better if I could fly, see through walls, and leap tall buildings with a single bound like the Last Son of Krypton, but I can be confident that the good that I am meant to do is a properly human good, that in fact I would not be better to be anything other than what I have been made by God to be. I can, in other words, recall that while there are infinite beings that have never been made and never will be made that would, if made, in countless ways be more perfect than I am, nonetheless it is I, and not they, who have been creatively loved into being by God. You, I, and this world we inhabit with its whole mixed history of weal and woe, of loss and triumph, is the one, unrepeatable good way God chose to manifest his wisdom, goodness, and glory. It is in this singular fact, this world that cannot be better, that our philosophy can speak to our troubles, hopes, and dreams, and prepare us to receive a better teaching, not the teaching of human wisdom, but that which comes from above.

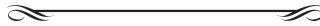


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# *Student life at the Venerable English College on the eve of Vatican II: some glimpses from the Creasey Papers (1955-1962)*

PROF. MAURICE WHITEHEAD



ONE OF THE GREATEST pleasures in looking after the College Archives is having the opportunity of showing former students material in the collections and seeing their eyes light up as they recall happy memories of their years of study at the College. An equal pleasure is receiving new deposits of archival material relating to aspects of the College's history.

It was therefore a particular delight to receive in 2015 from Fr Gerald Creasey, now a retired priest of the diocese of Leeds, the donation to the College Archives of a substantial collection of personal papers from his student days at the VEC, from 1955 to 1962.

Thanks to very considerable help from Dr Fergus Mulligan, the collection was fully catalogued between the autumn of 2015 and the spring of 2016: these details have since been entered into the new, emerging electronic catalogue of the College Archives, a key element of the current archival development project, 2015–18. The collection is now officially designated as the Creasey Papers [*Archivum Venerabilis Collegii Anglorum de Urbe (AVCAU), Scrittura 160*].



"At the Greg", 1956: Richard Pring, Gerald Creasey, Michael St Aubyn and Peter Cunningham

Educated at St Michael's College, Leeds, his native city, and at Hatfield College, Durham, where he graduated in History in 1955, Gerald Creasey entered the VEC for the diocese of Leeds in October 1955. He secured from the Pontifical Gregorian University a Licentiate in Philosophy in 1958 and a Licentiate in Theology in 1962, followed by a Certificate in Education at the University of Cambridge the following year. Throughout his university days as well as during his time at the VEC, he was a keen sportsman. At the University of Durham, he played in the same cricket team as the legendary Frank "Typhoon" Tyson (1930–2015), while at the VEC he acted first as Secretary to Football in 1958 and then Secretary to Cricket in 1959, before becoming Captain of Football for the year 1960–61. At Cambridge, he played soccer for Christ's College (where he was awarded his colours), as well as cricket. Ordained priest in Rome on 29 October 1961 by Cardinal Luigi Traglia (1895–1977) in the church of the Sacro Cuore, Piazza Navona, Fr Creasey returned to the diocese of Leeds after completing his studies in Rome in the summer of 1962 and his studies at Cambridge the following year.

In a pre-Internet age, when students at the College were expected to keep in regular contact with their family at home by letter, weekly letter-writing was the norm. Happily, Fr Gerald's parents, George and Margaret Creasey, kept all of the 350 letters that he wrote weekly, and sometimes twice-weekly, between October 1955 and July 1962, either from the College, or, during the summer each year (between July and September), from Palazzola. The only break in the sequence occurs during the summer of 1958 when, after three years in Rome, Gerald Creasey returned home for the Philosophers' holidays. Three later letters, written after his ordination and sent to his parents from a holiday at Palazzola, are dated 7, 12 and 19 August 1965.

Each of the letters has been preserved in its original envelope, together with its postage stamp. Fr Gerald's father carefully annotated each envelope with a short summary of the contents of each letter – and many of the letters have enclosures, including concert programmes (principally of the VEC and of the North American College), postcards, photographs of



The VEC XI who played against a British Navy XI, October 1956

Back row: Peter De Rosa, Peter Cunningham, Anthony Buckle, Michael St Aubyn, Christopher Lightbound (captain), Timothy Rice. Front row: John Allen, Thomas Walsh, Brian McNamara, Anthony O'Neill, Gerald Creasey

pantomimes, football teams, *gite* (excursions), press cuttings, tourist guides and drawings. All of these items have been retained with the original letters and have been catalogued as integral parts of the collection. Taken as a whole, the papers, written through the eyes of a trained historian, throw much interesting light on student life at the VEC in the years leading up to the Second Vatican Council.

The circumstances leading to the donation are worth recording. In 2013, Fr Creasey first mentioned informally to the Assistant Secretary of the Roman Association, Fergus Mulligan, that all the weekly letters he had written home to his parents during his time as a student at the VEC had been preserved, and that he had inherited them. Immediately asked if he would consider donating them to the Archives, Fr Gerald welcomed the suggestion.

During the Roman Association meeting at Stonyhurst in 2014, Fr Gerald called Fergus Mulligan over to his car, opened the boot and handed him a small suitcase. "There you are", he said, "you asked me to give these to the Archives and *that's* what I'm doing!"

For practical and logistical reasons, the collection of letters was temporarily stored in the Archives at Stonyhurst until they could be safely dispatched to Rome – and, in this context, the VEC is grateful to Janet Graffius, curator of the Collections at Stonyhurst, for her help.

Many of the letters provide valuable first-hand accounts, comments and critiques of life at the VEC: these include the rhythm of academic life at the Gregorian University; the spiritual life of the College; the annual round of plays, concerts, sports events, excursions, and the summer *villeggiatura* at Palazzola; and the comings and goings of visitors, both clerical and lay.

Writing to his parents at the end of his first month at the College, Gerald Creasey noted that there were (he thought), 122 steps from the ground floor to his room and, besides regular negotiation of the staircases keeping him fit, he reported that one bright fellow student had worked out that, in seven years of study, he was likely to climb "a height equal to three times the height of Mt. Everest".<sup>1</sup> On his first Christmas Eve at the College, the BBC came to record Midnight Mass: as he reported to his parents, "this was not the actual Mass but extracts from the Mass which was actually at Midnight. The previous evening there was a recording of us singing the *Salve Regina* before the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary which is on the steps leading up to the second floor".<sup>2</sup> The recording subsequently elicited a letter of thanks from the BBC to the College, praising the quality of the singing which was later broadcast: a copy may well survive in the BBC Sound Archives at the British Library in London.

Routine sports fixtures with teams from other colleges in Rome were occasionally interspersed with special fixtures, sometimes arranged at short notice by naval teams from the British Mediterranean fleet, ashore in Rome for brief visits, and keen to organise an impromptu game of soccer. The letters convey the warm post-match hospitality offered by the College to naval teams visiting for supper, or, in the case of a visit in 1958 of a football eleven made up of men from *HMS Alamein* and *HMS Corunna*, for tea and conversation in the Common Room – and the unanticipated connections made as a result of these occasions as some students met navy personnel hailing from their home territory.<sup>3</sup>

Visiting guest speakers provided students with fresh perspectives on a range of topics, as well as a welcome break from a busy academic routine of lectures at the Gregorian University and study back at the College. In October 1958, for example, Group Captain Leonard Cheshire, VC (1917–1992), gave "an excellent talk" about his work in setting up his international network of Cheshire Homes. He was then already working with Sue Ryder, with whom he had just created the Ryder–Cheshire Foundation, a joint mission for the relief of suffering: he and Sue Ryder had not yet married, but were to do so six months later, in Bombay Cathedral. In March 1960,

Douglas Hyde (1911–1996), who, in 1948, prior to becoming a Catholic, had very publicly resigned both from the Communist Party and from his position in London as news editor of the *Daily Worker*, visited the College to talk about Communism.<sup>4</sup>

The correspondence is punctuated with important references to world events. Letters in November 1956 express grave concern about what was then happening to the people of Hungary caught up in the Hungarian Uprising, about Italy's passing a motion at the United Nations condemning Russian aggression in Hungary, and about preparations for a large anti-Communist demonstration in Rome on 9 November 1956, just five days after a large Soviet force had invaded Budapest and other regions of Hungary.<sup>5</sup>

Correspondence for October 1958 contains detailed accounts of the death and funeral of Pope Pius XII, and the numerous solemn Requiem Masses in various churches in Rome which preceded the funeral; details of arrangements for the Conclave which followed; and graphic accounts of the problems encountered by those responsible for the burning of Conclave ballot papers. On several occasions during the 1958 Conclave, white smoke appeared, only to be followed by black smoke. This caused considerable confusion among the many thousands of waiting spectators in St Peter's Square, as well as among the many radio, television and newspaper journalists covering the papal election, before the eventual announcement of the election of Pope John XXIII. All of this is carefully recorded in Gerald Creasey's first-hand accounts, as is his subsequent description of an impromptu private audience with John XXIII, requested by Cardinal William Godfrey (1889–1963), Archbishop of Westminster, who had been made a cardinal less than two weeks earlier. The audience was granted by the new Pope to members of the Venerable English College, and the then Rector of the Beda College, on 28 December 1958.<sup>6</sup>

Visits of heads of state to Rome and to Vatican City also feature in the correspondence. A letter of December 1958 describes the ceremonial attending the arrival of the Shah of Persia,<sup>7</sup> while another, six months later, provides a vivid account of the visit to Rome of General Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970), then newly elected as President of France and the effective founder of the new (and today still current) Fifth Republic, inaugurated on 4 October 1958:

After the exam yesterday I was fortunate enough to see General de Gaulle arrive at the French Embassy ... in the Farnese Palace close by the College so we had a very good position. The Italians have given De Gaulle a wonderful reception and his portrait hangs from many shop windows. In their heart of hearts I fancy that the Italians would like a strong Government in Italy for their politics are very similar to those in France before De Gaulle rose to power.

Again informed by the eye of the trained historian, Gerald Creasey's evocative account of the unusual and special nature of the event, and his appreciation of it, is reminiscent of accounts of spectacular events in Rome penned by British Grand Tourists of the mid-eighteenth century:

Last night there was the wonderful spectacle of the whole giant façade of the Farnese Palace illuminated by countless hanging oil-lamps. Outside in the Square people came merely to gaze at the impressive sight which used to be a fairly common occurrence some three centuries ago in Rome. At night the white uniformed Italian policemen look even more impressive, with revolvers hung from their pockets!<sup>8</sup>



Equally interesting is his account of how the election of John F. Kennedy (1917–1963) as 35th President of the United States, and the first US Catholic President, was received, particularly by seminarians at the North American College; and, in the same letter, how Pope John XXIII summoned to St Peter's Basilica, on Monday, 14 November 1960, the several thousand clergy and seminarians then resident in Rome for a special meeting to explain the nature and purpose of the General Council of the Church (the Second Vatican Council). The latter had first been announced on 25 January 1959 and was to be convened from 11 October 1962 until 8 December 1965.<sup>9</sup>

As Gerald Creasey was to leave the College in July 1962, following his ordination to the priesthood the previous October, the correspondence does not cover the progress of the Council. His letters do, however, cover the major event which occurred in his final months at the College – namely the celebrations attending the 600th anniversary of the foundation of the English Hospice in Rome on the site of the present College: these included a radio feature on the Hospice and College, broadcast on the BBC Home Service, and a special private audience with Pope John XXIII, solely for members of the College, which he describes as “a memorable termination to my years in the Eternal City”.<sup>10</sup>

Gerald Creasey's years at the Venerable English College were in many ways the end of an era, as the Second Vatican Council was to open up a new chapter in the history of the Church. As a result, his letters from Rome are a precious record of a real turning point both in the history of the College and the history of the Church. While the present article cannot do full justice to the range, scope and interest of the many hundreds of thousands of words contained in the 350 surviving letters, Fr Creasey's generous donation of his papers to the College Archives – the largest single archival deposit to date by any *alumnus* of the College – is much appreciated and greatly to be welcomed. The catalogued papers, now fully searchable by proper name, event, concert, place, sports or College name are freely accessible for consultation by any interested reader. It is hoped they will inspire others to donate relevant material in the future, further to enrich the College's historical collections.



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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> AVCAU, Scrittura 160/4, 30 October 1955

<sup>2</sup> Scr. 160/14, 12 January 1956

<sup>3</sup> Scr. 160/56, 18 October 1956, Scr. 160/57, 25 October 1956, and Scr. 160/124, 24 January 1958

<sup>4</sup> Scr. 160/153, 30 October 1958; Scr. 160/225, 25 March 1960

<sup>5</sup> Scr. 160/58, 9 November 1956, and 160/59, 17 November 1956

<sup>6</sup> Scr. 160/151/1, undated account of *circa* 17 October 1958 concerning the death and lying in state of Pope Pius XII; Scr. 160/152, 23 October 1958; Scr. 160/153, 30 October 1958; Scr. 160/163, 4 January 1959

<sup>7</sup> Scr. 160/158, 4 December 1958

<sup>8</sup> Scr. 160/187, 27 June 1959

<sup>9</sup> Scr. 160/259, 16 November 1960

<sup>10</sup> Scr. 160/341, 7 June 1962 and Scr. 160/342, 9 June 1962 (mention of BBC broadcast)

# News from the College Archives, 2015-16

PROF. MAURICE WHITEHEAD



**IN FEBRUARY 2015** I was invited by the College trustees to direct a new three-year heritage project, funded jointly by Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach and by the VEC. It aims to take the College Archives into the next stage of their development.

The project builds upon decades of sterling work by student archivists who have done much hitherto to preserve the College's rich documentary heritage. The latter extends from before the foundation of the English Hospice in 1362 down to the present day, making the collection the oldest British archive outside Britain.

With the appointment in June 2015 of a professional archivist, Dr Orietta Filippini, as project archivist, work began on a range of fronts, not least the enormous task of updating, refining and extending the existing outline catalogue of the College Archives. Compiled in 1978, shortly prior to the 400th anniversary of the granting of the College's bull of foundation by Pope Gregory XIII in 1579, that catalogue was the work of a student of the College, Jerome Bertram (now Fr Jerome Bertram, of the Oxford Oratory). Since 1978, there have been nearly forty years' worth of accessions to the Archives and huge advances in technology and, as a result, a new catalogue is sorely needed.

Since at least 1773, if not before, the contents of the Archives have been organized by *type of document*, rather than by subject matter, into three sections – *Libri* (bound volumes), *Scrittura* (unbound papers) and *Membrane* (parchment documents). In any new cataloguing initiative, it would be inappropriate to alter an arrangement which has been in place for so long, and in which archival documents have been cited in many books and articles according to their present arrangement and numbering system. However the current project is aiming to restore, *virtually*, as far as possible, the intellectual coherence of the collection.

The aim now is to generate a new electronic catalogue which will facilitate future research through more detailed descriptions and cross-references than has hitherto been possible. Following many months of surveying of the collection in detail, and careful planning, an "archival tree" has been created, providing more than twenty new virtual archival series of documents into which every existing document can be fitted. By way of illustration, the new virtual category entitled *Constitutions* will bring together electronically (but not physically) for the first time catalogue references to any documents concerned with the constitutions of the College, be they located in the *Libri*, *Scrittura* or *Membrane* sections. This new development will potentially transform the use of the Archives, making searches very much easier than they have ever been. In due course, it is hoped to add into the new system digital images of the more significant or more fragile documents in the Archives.

Conservation considerations form an important strand of the current project. In this context, it has been essential to prioritize matters, as there is much to be done. The 1579 bull of foundation has now been rehoused in a bespoke archival box, and the *bull* or seal of Pope Gregory XIII has

been protected in a *Melinex* polyester sleeve inside a new perspex box. The high grade polyester, which is chemically inert and totally stable, makes viewing possible without removing an item from the enclosure, safeguarding it against damages ranging from fingerprints to atmospheric pollutants. Sleeves of this material have also recently been used for protecting the 19 fragile letters of Blessed John Henry Newman (1801–90), located in the *Scrittura* section of the Archives.

The College register of students, or *Liber ruber* (so called because of the red leather binding of the earliest volume) has been maintained continuously since 1579 down to the present day and is now in its ninth volume. However, six of the volumes, covering the period from 1818 to 2004, were either in a poor state of conservation, or bound in acidic material. During the spring of 2016, these were carefully disbound at the long-established Rome-based family firm, *Legatoria Scura*, rebound in red half-leather and then rehoused in individual bespoke cases to provide for their long-term conservation.



The first volume of the *Liber ruber* (1579–1783) in its new storage case

recent work has included the saving of fragile documents relating to Caravaggio, in Milan. The plan was then gently cleaned and inappropriate post-War repairs carefully removed and replaced with material conforming to the highest archival standards.

The restored plan was then professionally photographed and the resulting images processed at the laboratories of the Rome-based firm, Graphicolor, where a double-sided facsimile of the original was reproduced on high-quality (310gsm) Hahnemuhle German Etching board. The resulting image was then replaced in the frame in the Third Library and the original plan can now be carefully stored for posterity in the Archives, away from damaging heat, light and humidity. This part of the conservation project has been a great success and the excellent quality of the facsimile has already been much admired.



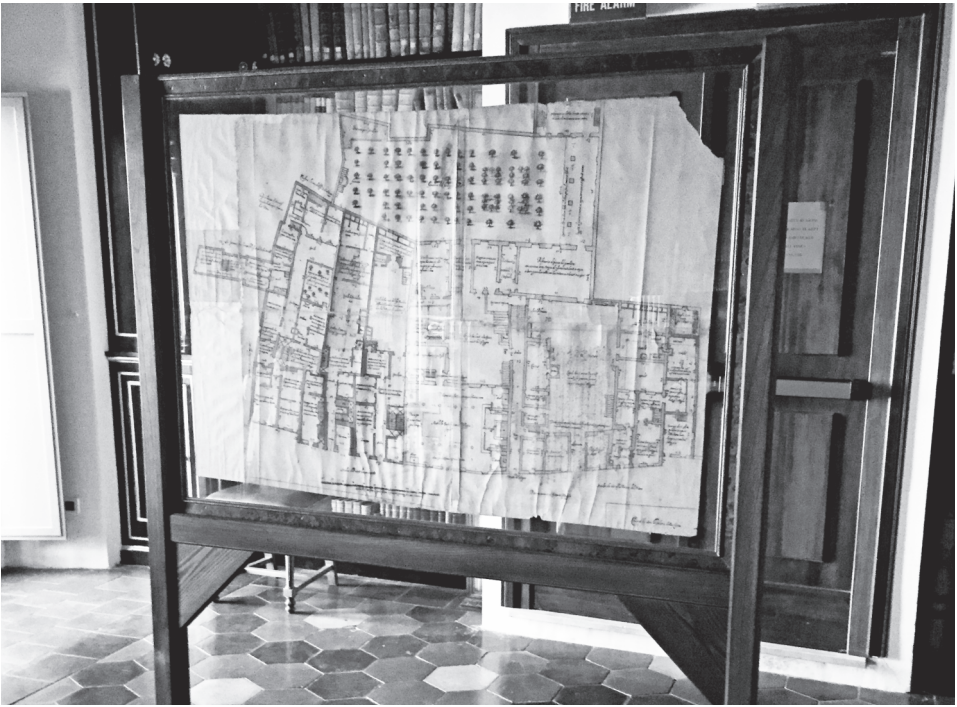
The 1579 bull of foundation of the College housed in its new storage case

The magnificent 1630 plan of the College, commissioned by the rector Fr Thomas Fitzherbert, SJ (1552–1640), from the then College architect, Orazio Torriani (1578–1657), has long been housed in a special frame in the Third Library. Imperfectly restored at some stage following the Second World War, the plan has been showing significant signs of distress, largely owing to fluctuations of temperature throughout the year.

Following professional advice from the Museo di Roma, the original plan was carefully removed from its frame at the conservation laboratory in Rome of Manuela Panucci, whose



The nine volumes of the *Liber ruber*, showing the six rebound volumes covering the period 1818–2004



The 1630 plan of the College in its unrestored and distressed condition, photographed in May 2015



The facsimile reproduction of the restored and cleaned original of the 1630 plan, photographed in June 2016

The trustees of the College have taken a close interest in all these developments and their commitment to conservation is such that they have called for the drawing-up of a long-term plan for the conservation of treasures from the Archives. This work is currently in hand.

All of this work is co-ordinated from the archival project office, located beneath the archival storage room beyond the Third Library. There, Orietta Filippini and I are currently building up a reference library on the post-Reformation history of the English and Welsh Catholic community to help support the on-going work of the project and the work of future users of the Archives. With invaluable help from the College Librarian, Sr Mary Joseph, OSB, these books are being catalogued into the database of the College Library and are freely available for consultation.

In this context, generous donations of relevant books over the past year, detailed below, have been much welcomed and further donations of books would be gratefully received. We are particularly keen to build up our collection of the *Catholic Directory*. The College does not possess any copies prior to 1948 (*how wonderful it would be to have to hand a complete run of Catholic directories for England and Wales from the late eighteenth century onwards, as no such set exists in Rome as far as we are aware!*) – and we are missing the issues for 1963–73 inclusive, 1975, 1991, 2011 and 2014.

Runs of regional Catholic history journals would also be welcome: at present, we do not have any, apart from *Essex Recusant* (Vols 1–6, 8–21, 23, 24 and 25).

Any reader who may be able to help in any of these regards is kindly asked to contact the author in the first instance ([schwarzenbachfellow@vecrome.org](mailto:schwarzenbachfellow@vecrome.org)). The College is immensely grateful to the many students, former students, members of staff and friends who have helped the archival project in various ways during the past year.

## *Donations and accessions to the Archives, 2015-16*

### *Archival items*

- Annotated libretti of Gilbert & Sullivan operettas performed at the VEC (early to late 20th century). Deposited by Albert Lawes
- Choirmasters' diaries and papers, c.1965–91. Deposited by Fr Bruce Burbidge
- College Church music records, c.1965–c.2012. Deposited by Albert Lawes
- Papers of VEC's delegate to the Pontificia Università Gregoriana, c.2000–c.2012. Deposited by Marco Egawhary
- Personal papers, 1955–65. Donor: Fr Gerald Creasey
- Scrapbook of newscuttings from *The Times* newspaper, relating to the Second, Third and Fourth Sessions of the Second Vatican Council, 1963–65. Donated by the Dean and Chapter of Hereford Cathedral, via Hereford Cathedral Library.
- Set of 20 postcard views of the Venerable English College, 1935. Donor: Canon Michael Cooley

### *Books*

- Anstruther, Godfrey, *The Seminary Priests* (4 volumes, 1968–77). Donor: Mgr Anthony Wilcox
- Burrieza, Javier and Peter Harris (eds), *La misión de Robert Persons: un jesuita inglés en la antigua corte de Valladolid/Robert Persons Mission: An English Jesuit in the old Court of Valladolid* (2010). Donor: Mgr John Pardo on behalf of the Trustees of the Royal English College, Valladolid

- Burrieza Sánchez, Javier, *Una isla de Inglaterra en Castilla (Exposición)* (2000). Donor: Mgr John Pardo
- Burrieza Sánchez, Javier, *Los milagros de la Corte: Marina de Escobar y Luisa de Carvajal en la historia de Valladolid* (2002). Donor: Mgr John Pardo
- Burrieza Sánchez, Javier, *Valladolid, tierra y caminos de jesuitas: presencia de la Compañía de Jesús en la provincia de Valladolid, 1545–1767* (2007). Donor: Mgr John Pardo
- Burrieza Sánchez, Javier, *Virgen de los ingleses entre Cádiz y Valladolid: una devoción desde las guerras de religión* (2008). Donor: Mgr John Pardo
- *Britain and the Holy See: A Celebration of 1982 and the Wider Relationship – Proceedings of the 2012 Rome Colloquium* (2012). Donor: His Excellency Nigel Baker, HM Ambassador to the Holy See
- Cano Echevarría, Berta & Ana Sáez Hidalgo, *The Fruits of Exile/Los frutos del exilio: Emblems and Pamphlets from the English College at Valladolid/ Emblemas y panfletos del Colegio de los Ingleses de Valladolid* (2009). Donor: Mgr John Pardo
- Champ, Judith, *A Seminary Goes to War: St Mary's College, Oscott, and the First World War* (2015). Donated by the author
- Costello, Michael & John G. Moor, *St Richard's, Slindon* (2015). Donor: Fr Anthony Churchill
- Davidson, Peter (ed.), *The Celebrated Museum of the Roman College of the Society of Jesus* (2015). Donor: Janet Graffius on behalf of the Trustees of Stonyhurst College
- Fitzgerald-Lombard, Charles, *English and Welsh Priests, 1801–1914* (1993). Donor: Canon Michael Cooley
- Harris, Peter, *The Blackfan Annals/Los anales de Blackfan* (2007). Donor: Mgr John Pardo
- Roche, Paul, *O Pale Galilean* (1954). Donor: Dr Fergus Mulligan
- Rope, H.E.G., *The Schola Saxonum, the Hospice and the English College in Rome* (1951). Donor: Canon Michael Cooley
- Wheeler, Philip B.T., *Biddulph Old Hall: A History Rediscovered* (2015). Donated by the author
- Whittaker, Charles, *Sacred Heart Parish, Henley-on-Thames: A Pugin Legacy* (2012). Donor: Mgr Anthony Wilcox
- *Who's Who in Catholic Life* (2002–05, 2007–09, 2015). Donor: Professor Maurice Whitehead
- Wiseman, Nicholas, *Preces pro conversione Angliae quae in Collegio S. Thomae de Urbe quotidie recitantur* (Preston: Typis J. & H. Platt, 1943) – a now very scarce publication used at St Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst, during the Second World War 'exile' of the College). Donor: Fr John Metcalfe



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# The Face of the Father's Mercy

MGR PETER FLEETWOOD



**JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS** last year, *La Civiltà Cattolica* and nine other European Jesuit journals published the same editorial, entitled “A Merciful Church for a Wounded World”, in an unprecedented gesture of solidarity with each other and as an endorsement of what Pope Francis hopes the current Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy will achieve. There are five points in the editorial that I think can help us to get “under the skin” of the current Jubilee Year. The first three are expressions the Holy Father has used: here the simplest thing is to quote the editorial *verbatim*:

On 17th March 2013, at the first Angelus after his election as Pope, Jorge Mario Bergoglio mentioned a book by Cardinal Kasper, *Mercy: The Essence of the Gospel and the Key to Christian Life*,<sup>1</sup> and said, “This book has done me so much good, so much good...”. At that point, not many people could have guessed the importance of this theme for his pontificate.

Equally unknown at that point was the meaning of his episcopal motto *Miserando atque Eligendo*, which Francis himself later explained during the interview which appeared in our magazine.<sup>2</sup> The Pope said, “the Latin gerund *miserando* seems impossible to translate either into Italian or into Spanish. I like to translate it with another gerund that does not exist: *misericiandi*”.

The third point comes from that same interview, when Pope Francis said clearly that “the thing the Church needs most today is the capacity to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful, closeness, nearness. I see the Church as a field hospital after a battle.”<sup>3</sup>

The fourth point I want to mention is the importance of the human face in much of what Pope Francis has said and written on mercy, above all in his choice of the title for the Bull of Indiction of the Year of Mercy, *Misericordiae Vultus*, in which:

We are all invited to keep an eye out for our brothers and sisters, to attend to their situations and needs, to discover their faces, to recognise our common humanity. As the Franco-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas showed, the face of the other (his look = vultus) creates an ethical obligation: “the face speaks to me and in this way invites me into a relationship.... The face opens the primitive discourse whose first word is a duty”<sup>4</sup>.

The fifth point from the editorial identifies what Pope Francis sees as the heart of the Year of Mercy. Unsurprisingly, the editorial refers to St Ignatius of Loyola, who “stressed that ‘love ought to be shown more in deeds than in words’. The works of mercy are our response to the call of a wounded world”<sup>5</sup>. The Holy Father himself makes this clear in §15 of *Misericordiae Vultus*:

It is my burning desire that, during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty. And let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy. Jesus introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples.

He goes on to list the fourteen works of mercy, the seven corporal works and the seven spiritual ones, which we learned at school but had escaped me until I read this document. I know that the Holy Father intends to give a catechetical address on each of the fourteen works of mercy, probably after his thoughts on mercy in Sacred Scripture. After listing the works of mercy, he writes, starkly:

We cannot escape the Lord's words to us, and they will serve as the criteria upon which we will be judged.

The key Gospel passages in what Francis has written in his papacy so far are *Matthew* 25:31-46 (the Last Judgment), *Luke* 10:25-37 (the Good Samaritan) and *Luke* 15:11-32 (the Prodigal Son). The Last Judgment text is the one from which the corporal and spiritual works of mercy have been taken, and Pope Francis does not hold back in his insistence that we must take them very seriously if we think we really deserve to be called Christians. They are the practical heart of the Holy Year of Mercy. The text from St Ignatius quoted in the Jesuit joint editorial underlines our call to "walk the walk" and not just to "talk the talk", and along exactly these lines the Holy Father concludes §15 of *Misericordiae Vultus* with words he attributes to St John of the Cross: "as we prepare to leave this life, we will be judged on the basis of love".

The parable of the Prodigal Son is the key to what Pope Francis wants to say to priests in their role as confessors in §17 of *Misericordiae Vultus*:

Every confessor must accept the faithful as the father in the parable of the prodigal son: a father who runs out to meet his son despite the fact that he has squandered away his inheritance. Confessors are called to embrace the repentant son who comes back home and to express the joy of having him back again.... May confessors not ask useless questions, but like the father in the parable, interrupt the speech prepared ahead of time by the prodigal son, so that confessors will learn to accept the plea for help and mercy pouring from the heart of every penitent.

In preaching about the parable of the prodigal son in recent years, I have often pointed to the father's interruption of his son's speech. It is as if he were saying, "Son, I don't care. I am just so delighted you have come home". More recently, it has struck me that the father saw his son from far away. Perhaps he looked out every day along the road the son had taken when he first left home. That has convinced me even more that in the parable Jesus is stressing the boundless mercy of our heavenly Father. Pope Francis keeps coming back to this parable, and I believe he wants priests (but not only priests) to do the same, not in words alone but chiefly in their attitude. With the Sacrament of Reconciliation much hangs on the welcome a penitent receives. It has nothing to do with going easy on serious sins, but everything to do with priests letting people know they really are welcome and reminding themselves that "the confessional must not be a torture chamber but rather an encounter with the Lord's mercy which spurs us on to do our best".<sup>6</sup>



The parable of the Good Samaritan is more deeply embedded into the Holy Father's vision of the Church. Two years ago, Cardinal Gerhard Müller, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, published a book on the poor Church for the poor which Pope Francis mentioned when he thanked the journalists who had covered the Conclave in 2013.<sup>7</sup> What you discover when you open the book is that it has four authors. Cardinal Müller wrote the two main articles, Pope Francis wrote the preface, and there are two chapters by Gustavo Gutiérrez and one by Fr Josef Sayer. In his second contribution, Gutiérrez offers a reflection on the spirituality of Vatican II. The springboard for his thoughts is the talk given by Pope Paul VI at the end of the Council, on 7 December 1965: "The old story of the Samaritan has been the model for the spirituality of the Council.... Errors were condemned, indeed, because charity demanded this no less than did truth, but for the persons themselves there was only warning, respect and love.... The modern world's values were not only respected but honoured, its efforts approved, its aspirations purified and blessed...". At the opening of the Council's second session, Pope Paul had said that the Church's clear intention was "not to dominate the world but to serve it, not to look down on it but to enhance its dignity, not to condemn it but to offer it comfort and salvation". Gutiérrez is convinced that this is what we really learn from the parable of the Good Samaritan: "the supremacy of the other and the need to abandon the path we are on to be close to him...; our neighbour is not the one who is close to us, but the one to whom we come close.... We pass from our world to the other's and this is the nucleus of the parable". This makes the key person in the parable not the one who does good but the man who was attacked. The one who was insignificant and whose name we shall never know becomes the focus, and this is the model for the Church to follow; our ability to change focus and make the person in need the centre of our attention is what will make us into a Samaritan Church. This idea of the Samaritan Church was a key motif at Aparecida - where the president of the committee redacting the final document was Cardinal Bergoglio - and in some of Pope Francis' writings, notably his message for World Communications Day in 2014. Those who are familiar with the thought of Emmanuel Lévinas will have noticed that Gutiérrez gladly uses the idea that a human face is what reveals the close proximity of the divine - in Lévinas' terms - or of God - to use ours. The ecclesiology of the Samaritan Church is based on its ability to look into the faces of the people of today, to take seriously their joys and hopes, their griefs and anxieties, and be moved to respond with compassion.

I think these three Gospel texts give us the framework for understanding the Holy Year of Mercy. The Last Judgment in *Matthew 25* shows each of us what to do to live a merciful life, to be "merciful like the Father", which is the motto or aim for the year. We are urged in the clearest terms possible to re-learn and put into practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The parable of the Prodigal Son sums up what people need from the Church, particularly from her priests, and so calls for a serious renewal of commitment to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The onus is on priests to make the sacrament more available, and to make penitents welcome. The Samaritan Church is very much the one described in the Aparecida document<sup>8</sup> and in Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*: missionary, outward-looking and confident enough to invite every woman, man and institution on the planet to experience God's mercy and to learn to be merciful like the Father.<sup>9</sup>

So what has actually happened in the dioceses of England and Wales? Holy Doors have been solemnly opened in cathedrals and shrines, as well as designated churches where coming to the cathedral could be difficult. There have been special celebrations of the Jubilee of Mercy for different groups of the faithful, including Catholic schools and organisations. The Holy Father asked people to organise "Twenty-Four Hours for the Lord" in Lent, specifically from 4 to 5 March, with surprisingly good results. Only the hour between 5 am and 6 am was devoid of penitents in a well organised event in Holy Cross church in St Helens in Lancashire, for example. There are also

pilgrimages for different deaneries or pastoral areas throughout the year in most dioceses. Marcin Mazur, the official photographer of our Bishops' Conference, has recorded various events in the Year of Mercy on the Bishops' *Flickr* stream.<sup>10</sup> He came to Liverpool first because we, of course, had to be different. Our Door of Mercy was opened on 6 December, a week before most others, beaten only by Pope Francis, who solemnly opened the Door of Mercy in the Cathedral in Bangui a week earlier on 29 November, during his visit to the Central African Republic! That day he said: "Today Bangui becomes the spiritual capital of the world. The Holy Year of Mercy starts early in this land of Africa". I wonder if that makes Liverpool the spiritual capital of Europe.

If you look at the "Albums" page on the Bishops' *Flickr* photo stream, please scroll down to the album entitled "Mercy Bus in Bolton". Here you will find an assortment of photographs ranging from one of a dog that looks as though it is asking to go to confession, to those of Bishop John Arnold in the driver's seat of a double-deck bus.<sup>11</sup> Bishop John said: "the Mercy Bus is a way of reaching out to people who might not otherwise have contact with the Church. We are going to them, rather than expecting them to come to us". Wherever the bus has gone, a team of helpers including priests have invited passers-by to respond to Pope Francis' invitation to "Be Merciful like the Father", with a particular emphasis on praying with people and offering them the opportunity of going to confession on board the Mercy Bus. The idea seems to have come from a former student of mine who was ordained in 2014, Fr Frankie Mulgrew, a dynamic character heavily involved in the Northern Catholic Conference, an annual event in Liverpool. Frankie even managed to get a photograph of himself grinning next to Pope Francis in the Paul VI Audience Hall, holding up a cardboard cut-out of the Mercy Bus. This seems to be the most imaginative event - *so far* - of the Holy Year in the English and Welsh dioceses, and all reports to date say it has been a success. I asked Frankie to present the Mercy Bus project in his own words:

The Mercy Bus is a specially modified double-decker bus, with priests on board available for confessions, blessings or simply to chat to, that parks up in town or city centres and shopping centres. Young adult volunteers accompany the bus, playing live music, handing out Miraculous Medals blessed by the Pope and engaging passers-by in conversation about what is available on board the bus. The Mercy Bus concluded its tour of Salford Diocese in Holy Week; during its eight stops over 1400 people stepped aboard for a blessing or confession, or to speak to a priest. Over 12,000 Miraculous Medals were given out. Some people came back to the Sacrament of Reconciliation after being away for 30 or 40 years. There are also powerful stories of people returning to Mass because they felt they encountered God's mercy on the bus. The Mercy Bus hosted people from various faith backgrounds as well as people who had never been baptised and others who could not remember whether they had. Many of them told the volunteers their visit to the Mercy Bus was an "amazing" experience.

Not everyone has been brimming over with enthusiasm about the Year of Mercy. Some comments on social media sound a bit like the boys at the back of a school classroom who pour scorn on every suggestion, sensible or otherwise, made from the front by the teacher. Perhaps even they will smile if I mention one of mercy's greatest admirers, Friedrich Nietzsche. In his *Genealogy of Morals*, he suggests, quite counter-intuitively, that only the powerful can afford to be merciful: "It is not unthinkable that a society might attain such a consciousness of power that it could allow itself the noblest luxury possible to it - letting those who harm it go unpunished.... This self-overcoming of justice: one knows the beautiful name it has given itself - mercy; it goes without saying that mercy remains the privilege of the most powerful man."<sup>12</sup>

This may well be the reflection of Nietzsche, the well-educated European, on one of Europe's greatest poets and playwrights, who may - or may not - have been a Catholic. It is the obvious Shakespeare quotation for this year, but one we never tire of hearing:

*The quality of mercy is not strained,  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blessed;  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes  
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;  
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,  
The attribute to awe and majesty,  
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;  
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,  
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,  
It is an attribute to God himself,  
And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
When mercy seasons justice.<sup>13</sup>*

I would be very surprised if Nietzsche had not read these last few lines. And it is clear that mercy is for strong men, not for weak.



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#### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Mahwah NJ (Paulist Press) 2014. Philippa Hitchen's *Radio Vaticana* interview with Cardinal Kasper may still be available at: [http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/04/10/cardinal\\_kasper\\_on\\_significance\\_of\\_holy\\_year\\_of\\_mercy/1135801](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/04/10/cardinal_kasper_on_significance_of_holy_year_of_mercy/1135801)
- <sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Spadaro, "Intervista a Papa Francesco", in *Civiltà Cattolica*, 2013 IV (449-477). The phrase is taken from Homily 21 of Saint Bede [CCL 122, 149-151], which includes this remarkable sentence: *Vidit publicanum et, quia miserando atque eligendo vidit, ait illi: Séquere me*. Translating it is a tall order [PF].
- <sup>3</sup> From "A Merciful Church for a Wounded World", an editorial in *La Civiltà Cattolica* 3971, 12th December 2015, published more or less simultaneously in these other European Jesuit journals: *Anoichtoi Horizontes*, *Brotéria*, *Choisir*, *Études*, *Razón y Fe*, *Signum*, *Stimmen der Zeit*, *A Szív* and *Thinking Faith*.
- <sup>4</sup> "A Merciful Church for a Wounded World", quoting Emmanuel Lévinas, *Totality and Infinity, An Essay on Exteriority*, The Hague (Martinus Nijhoff) 1969.
- <sup>5</sup> "A Merciful Church for a Wounded World", St Ignatius' words are from *Spiritual Exercises*, 230.
- <sup>6</sup> Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24 November 2013, §44.
- <sup>7</sup> Gerhard Cardinal Müller, *Povera per i Poveri, La Missione della Chiesa*, Vatican City (LEV) 2014.
- <sup>8</sup> Fifth General Assembly of the Episcopal Conference of Latin America, Aparecida (Brazil), 13th May 2007.
- <sup>9</sup> see note 6 above.
- <sup>10</sup> On the "albums" page - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/catholicism/albums/> - Marcin has photographs of various events in the Archdiocese of Westminster including the opening of the Holy Door in the Ukrainian cathedral, Liverpool and Salford.
- <sup>11</sup> For Aaron Spinelli, myself and others who need to know these things, it is a Dennis Trident 2 / Plaxton President registered W562 RSC, formerly of Lothian Buses, but hired by the Diocese of Salford from its current owner, a company in Accrington suitably named "Moving People"!
- <sup>12</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, Essay II, 10.
- <sup>13</sup> William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act IV, scene i

# *The Holy Priest and the Poorest of the Poor: A Spiritual Conference given in the English College by St Teresa of Calcutta on 15 May 1987*



**LET US ASK OUR** Lady to give us her heart, so beautiful, so pure, so immaculate, her heart so full of love and humility, that we may be able to receive Jesus, the Bread of life, to love Him as she loved Him, and serve Him in the distressing disguise of the poorest of the poor.

We read in the Gospel that God loved the world so much that he gave Jesus to the most pure Virgin. And on receiving Jesus, she went with haste to give Him to others. She went to Elizabeth's house, just to do the humble work of a maidservant. There, something very strange happened. When she went in, the little child in the womb of Elizabeth leapt with joy. God used an unborn child to proclaim the coming of Christ. St Joseph did not know. Nobody knew. But that little one, that little unborn child, was chosen to become the first missionary, to proclaim the coming of Christ. We know how today that the unborn child is being killed, destroyed by its own mother. We know how abortion has become the greatest destroyer of peace, because it is destroying the image of God, and the presence of God. It is destroying two lives at the same time: the life of the child, and the conscience of the mother. So this is why I think it is good for all of us, just for a second, to thank our parents for giving us the joy of living, for wanting us, for loving us, and for giving us the opportunity to be wanted and loved and cared for.

Jesus came to the poor. The other day I was thinking of this coming of Christ into the world, and I realised once again that today it is the poor who are bringing the rich to Christ. I see this every day in our work. We work for the poorest of the poor. In our Congregation we take a fourth vow: to give wholehearted, free service to the poorest of the poor. And I find that many people whoever comes into contact with our people, with the dying, with lepers, are being brought to Christ. I see that now we have opened homes for Aids victims in the United States, in New York and Washington; and that so many people, who before were afraid to look, who would cross over to the other side if they saw an Aids victim coming towards them, are now changing. Even parents! They are throwing their sons out of their families, and so on. But now, my sisters are telling me, many, many volunteers are coming to serve our people night and day. You can see again how the poor have brought something beautiful into the lives of many, so that now they are seeking Christ.

That is why we want to prove that we are precious to Him, and that God has a special love for each one of us: that the man in the street, this child who died, the cripple, the mentally-handicapped, the sick. This is something we must realise more and more. And especially you students for the Priesthood! One day, you will be a priest of God. How pure your life must be! How holy you must be, to be able to receive the sinner who comes to you, full of sin! He comes to you, and gives to you all that is within him, and leaves the confessional a sinner without sin. And it is your hands that hold the Precious Blood! How holy you must be in your heart to be able to say, "This is my Body, This is my Blood"! How holy you must be to join lives together, husband and wife!

For each sacrament, you have the power of Christ within you. How holy you must be!

I think the world has never, never needed holiness so much as today. And especially holy priests. We are now working in 77 countries, and I find that everywhere there is a tremendous hunger for God. A tremendous hunger to come to know Him, to love Him. It is there, but we need holy priests to guide us. And how does this apply to religious? I remember when I was asked to speak at the Synod, the first words I said to the Holy Father were: "Holy Father, give us holy priests, and we religious and our families will be holy."

We need to be shown the saintly way, the holy way. We need to be taught how to be holy, and how to grow in holiness. For without Jesus we can do nothing. This is something we must realise more and more, because holiness is not the luxury of the few. We have been created for that. We have to be holy as the Father is holy. This is not the luxury of the few. It is the simple duty of each one of us, and especially of the priest, because what you can give no-one else can give.

I remember a man in New York where we have a home for Aids – 30 of whom have died already. They come to us so broken, so miserable, so full of despair, because the majority, when they hear the doctors telling them they have the disease, think first of suicide. They know they are unwanted, a throwaway of society. To see these people after some time in our homes, when we have prayed together! We have the Blessed Sacrament right amongst them, with them, we pray together with them, being so close to Jesus. And after confession, and after Holy Communion, they are different, completely, completely different. And that is something no-one can give except the priest, no-one except the priest.

So I think this is something for you really to hunger for: to be like Jesus. To allow Jesus to lead your life, so that when the people look at you they see only Jesus. [Blessed] Cardinal Newman has made a beautiful prayer about radiating Christ:

*Let them look up and see only Jesus! The light, O Jesus, will be all from Thee; none of it will be mine. It will be Thou shining on others through me. Let me thus praise Thee in the way you live best, by shining on those around me. Let me preach Thee without preaching, not by my words but by my example.*

And this is something specially important for you priests. We all need to be holy, but I think in a very, very special way it is your duty to grow in that holiness: to be more and more like Jesus, to be His presence, His love, His compassion. The world today has so much suffering, so much suffering! Unbelievable suffering – and not only material poverty! We are working in so many places in Europe, and in the United States. They have food to eat, though in most places we have a big soup kitchen. There is one in London, and here in Rome we have one where about 200 people come and eat. We have built a new house in Washington. We are in all those big cities. Only today, our Holy Father was very anxious that we should have a home for the sick and dying, for the very destitute people, in the Vatican. So today I was able to get the land, and I hope that some of you, when we have the home, will come and take care of all those people.

Near the station, we have a big night shelter, where 200 people come and eat, all street people. We can only take in about 40, and the rest have to go back to the streets to sleep, specially during those terrible cold nights. The sisters go out at night to bring food to them, lying in the streets, covered up by a little bit of plastic. That is where tender love is necessary. And this is what I hope, that one day, when we have a home in the Vatican, you will contribute not by how much you give, but by your touch, your kindness: coming into the home with them, that presence with them, to make them feel wanted, make them feel loved. This is what you have become a priest for, to be that presence, that compassion, that forgiveness.

One of the young men in our homes, of all those young people that have died of Aids, one of them, a young man, was dying, and yet he could not die. He was struggling, and struggling, and struggling. And one of the sisters asked him what was disturbing him, why was he struggling with death like this? And he looked at her, and said, "Sister, I cannot die until I ask pardon from my father". And so she was able to find out where the father was, and she brought him to the home. It was like a living Gospel: father and son, the father embracing the son and forgiving him, and the son beginning to be forgiven. The tender love that went between the father and the son helped the boy to die after two hours. Do you see that forgiveness? The forgiveness, the joy that comes from a pure heart.

So, who will be the best person to help you to become holy? To be only all for Jesus? Mary! The mother of Jesus. Learn from her, pray to her, cling to her. And you will see that she will be the one to help you grow really holy. Really holy! – and to be that holiness, that love to all with whom you come in contact. Many people will look up to you, with that longing to be brought to God. And this is something that is missing so much today: you must bring people closer and closer to God.

I remember some years back, I was invited by the President of Yemen, a completely Muslim country, to open a house there. For many years there had been no religious congregation there, no church, no tabernacle, nothing. And no priest either, or anything like that. When the President asked me, I said I was not willing to allow my sisters to go there, except on the condition that he would allow a priest to go with us. Without Jesus, I refused to go. And then he decided that we should come, and that the priest could come as well. And it was a real, real miracle for me. The moment that a priest came, there was a tabernacle, there was an Altar, and there was Jesus. I had never realised what a great gift it is: a priest, a holy priest, in a country where there was nothing. Now we have the tabernacle, we have the sisters in three places, and this is something so real, so beautiful to see, what a holy priest can be, and what a holy priest can give to the people.

We pray very much for priests, and on the eve of every first Friday, we have Adoration from 11 to 12 for holy priests. Because we see the tremendous need: the people are hungry for God. And you are the only people who can give God to them. And so you are precious to God. You have that beautifully in scriptures, where it says, "I have called you by your name, you are mine" – you are precious to Me, I love you. Just think: what man or woman or child clings to you full of sin in confession, and goes from confession without sin. A sinner without sin! Wonderful! But for that you need a deep oneness with Christ, that real presence of Jesus.

The last time I was in the Philippines, a Bishop told me of about 30 priests who had gone up into the mountains, and joined the rebels. I could see the great sorrow of the Bishop, and the loss that they were to the people there. So I made an offer to that Bishop, I said give me all the names, and I will give one priest to every community, and we will pray, and offer up penances for the priest. You must have a love of penance also: we offer penance and ask Jesus for everything. So every community has now taken one priest, and with Our Lady we are joining all our forces to help those Fathers come back: they have joined the rebels, and gone up into the mountains. So, I am asking for your prayers too: pray for them! For we must help them, to bring them back. Most of them are very young priests indeed, and it is a big number, 30 of them. So let us ask, and I ask you too to join us, to obtain that grace for them to come back. The priest is such a great gift of God, and such a great loss to the Church. I am sure that with your prayers and sacrifices we can join together to obtain the grace necessary for them to come back.

Again I say to you: the world has never needed holy priests so much as it does today. So we pray for you, that you really will become holy priests. And you pray also for us, that we may be able to be holy, so that we may obtain the graces our people need. In our homes for the dying in Calcutta, we have picked up 50,000 people from the streets. And 23,000 have died with a ticket for St Peter – because he won't let them go in without one! We call baptism a "ticket for St Peter"! And they die

such beautiful deaths. They will obtain many graces for the people of India, and especially for Calcutta. So let us pray that this home, that we are going to have here, will be a real gift of God for Rome, and for these people. Let us pray that it be a real "open Calvary". That our homes for the sick and dying be a real open Calvary, and that the Passion of Christ be with the dying. So then, pray for us, and we will pray for each other.

Our main strength is that we try to make our communities deeply contemplative because of the words of Jesus, when he said: "You did it to me". So we are with him 24 hours a day, feeding him, clothing him, taking care of him, and so on. Jesus said: if you give a glass of water in my name, you give it to me. If you receive a child in my name, you receive me. And again, even at the hour of death: I was hungry, you gave me to eat; I was naked, you clothed me; I was homeless, you took me in. And we are doing just that: feeding him, clothing him, giving him a home. That is what makes us deeply contemplative, right in the very heart of the world. And we are intensely Eucharistic. Again, that is where the priest comes in, for without priests, there is no Jesus. We would not have the Blessed Sacrament if we did not have priests to say the Holy Mass for us. So again, we can be intensely Eucharistic only with the help of a priest. This is something like a bible picture: the aim of our Congregation is to satiate the thirst of Jesus on the Cross for love of souls, by working for the salvation and sanctification of the poorest of the poor. And so this is something very clear, the reason for our existence – to satiate the thirst of Jesus.

And so you pray for us, that we may remain faithful to this gift of God; to satiate this thirst. In our society we have a fourth vow, to give whole-hearted free service to the poorest of the poor. We depend solely on Divine Providence. We don't accept government grants, or church maintenance, or salaries, and up to today, we have never had to send anyone away. I will just give you one beautiful example of that, something that happened only recently. A man came to our house, and he said that his only child was dying. And the doctor has prescribed a medicine that cannot be got in India but has to be brought from England. Now I have permission to bring life-saving medicine from anywhere in the world if necessary. But as we were talking a man came with a basket of medicines – we have people who go from house to house to gather all the left-over medicines in the families. And so he came just at that time, and right on the top was that medicine! If it was inside, I would not have seen it, and if he had come before or after, I would not have connected them! As I stood in front of that basket and looked at that medicine, I thought of the millions and millions and millions of children in the world, and I saw the tender concern of God for that little child in the slums in Calcutta. To send the man at that time! To put the medicine on that basket! And when I looked into it, it was exactly the number that the doctor had prescribed. This is the tenderness of God's love: that little one is precious to him. And I think that this is something we need to be convinced of, you and me: that we are precious to him. He has a tender love for us.

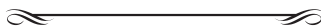
We have in our Constitutions a sentence about chastity which says, "Jesus offers life-long, faithful, personal friendship, espousing us in tenderness and love; and to make that love more living, more real, he gives the Eucharist". So, again, you see where the priest comes in, because it is thanks to the priest that Jesus is given to us. Our gratitude to you is our prayer for you: that you may grow in holiness and be Jesus' presence: that whenever people look up, they see only Jesus in you, and through you. And you please pray for us also that we may bring his love, his compassion, to the people we serve.

Let us say a little prayer for the poor people:

Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world, who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them, through our hands this day, their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.

# *The Family and the Universal Call to Holiness: In light of the Martins*

LAURA CUNNIFFE AND BRENDEN THOMPSON



*"The future of humanity passes by way of the family" (Familiaris Consortio §86)*

ST THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX is patroness of the missions, doctor of the Church and affectionately known as the little flower. Her autobiography *The Story of a Soul* has sold millions of copies worldwide and her "little way" has inspired generations of Catholics to strive for holiness by doing ordinary daily tasks with great love. Less well known are her parents, Louis and Zélie Martin. In the recently published Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis says that "no family drops down from heaven perfectly formed." Equally, one can see how indebted Thérèse was to her parents for the example and witness of Christian life they provided. Something of their beautiful witness and holiness in marriage inspired not only Thérèse to enter religious life but also all four of her sisters.

The lives of Louis and Zélie are worthy for thoughtful consideration in their own right, especially in relation to our thoughts here on marriage and the family. They were the very first married couple in history to be canonised together. The timing of their canonisation was significant as well, it was during the final Synod on the Family in October 2015. Amidst all the discussions on the family, a concrete example of what holiness in marriage looks like was subtly being offered to the Church. My fiancé and I were there along with 80,000 other pilgrims in St Peter's Square to reflect on the gift of this couple to the Church.

As a young Catholic couple about to get married, Louis and Zélie set an example that is an inspiration to us and we feel a deep connection to them. Their example struck us so much that Lisieux seemed to be an ideal location to begin the work of forging a holy marriage. Therefore, it was in the crypt of the basilica in Lisieux, kneeling by the relics of the soon to be saints that my fiancé proposed! We had just asked for their intercession for our relationship, when Brenden turned to me and said those four words, "Will you marry me?" – he had planned it perfectly. Unfortunately I was caught a little off guard and my first words were "are you joking?" – but as the shock subsided I said yes.

A few months later Pope Francis announced the canonisation of our new patrons and we couldn't resist travelling to Rome to witness this moment. At their canonisation, Pope Francis asked families to entrust their joys, dreams and difficulties to SS Louis and Marie Guérin Martin. But who are Louis and Zélie and what lessons can they teach us about marriage and family life?

Louis was born in 1823 in Bordeaux. He had at first hoped to enter religious life but this was not meant to be, and when this door was closed to him he became a watchmaker. Marie "Zélie" Guerin was born in 1831. She, too, hoped to become a religious, but eventually she too understood that it was not God's will and she became a lace-maker. Richly talented, creative, eager, and endowed with common sense, she started her own business and became successful.



A providential and romantic meeting united these two young people who were both thirsty for God. One day, as Zélie crossed the Saint-Léonard Bridge, she passed a young man with a “noble face, a reserved air, and a demeanour filled with an impressive dignity”. At that very moment, Zélie heard a voice speaking within her, “This is he whom I have prepared for you.” The identity of the passer-by was soon revealed and, after a three-month courtship, Louis and Zélie were married in 1858. For almost a year the couple lived as celibates, wanting to reflect the example of the Holy Family but the advice of a confessor changed their minds and they decided to raise as many children as possible for the glory of God.

The family lived a comfortable lifestyle, but they also suffered greatly over the loss of four children at an early age and had to deal with a rebellious daughter. Their devotion however never wavered and these sufferings intensified the love Louis and Zélie had for each other. They poured out their affections on their five surviving daughters: Marie, Pauline, Léonie, Céline, and their baby; Marie-Françoise-Thérèse Martin. “We lived only for them,” Zélie wrote, “they were all our happiness.”

The couple lived modestly, reached out to the poor and the needy, and led daily prayers in the household. Their family and entire lives reflected the deep and abiding desire for holiness. Thérèse would later write: “God gave me a father and a mother who were more worthy of heaven than of earth.” In 1877, at age 45, Zélie after some time of suffering died of breast cancer leaving Louis to raise their five daughters alone. In the opening pages of *Story of a Soul* St Thérèse wrote: “God granted me the favour of opening my intelligence at an early age and of imprinting childhood recollections deeply on my memory. Jesus in His love willed perhaps, that I know the matchless mother He had given me, but whom His hand hastened to crown in heaven”.

After the death of Zélie, Louis and his daughters moved to Lisieux. Gradually his daughters left one by one to enter the convent. Despite his loneliness he said: “It is a great, great honour for me that the Good Lord desires to take all of my children. If I had anything better, I would not hesitate to offer it to Him.” Louis died in 1894 after suffering greatly, including a three-year stay in a psychiatric hospital. Of her father Thérèse wrote “I cannot say how much I loved Papa; everything in him caused me to admire him”.

In the lives of Louis and Zélie one sees a great deal of ordinary experiences of family life as well as an extraordinary abandonment to the will of God. Saints in every age and culture teach us how to be more Christ-like and Louis and Zélie in particular show us what this might look like in marriage and family life. It is encouraging that in this couple we see them face difficult situations that many would identify with. The Martins knew the sting of not just one but many deaths in the family; they knew what it was to be in a single parent household; they knew the effect of mental health issues in old age; and they knew so much more. In Louis and Zélie we not only see how to love, but how to suffer as well. Growing in love and being courageous in suffering was as pertinent for that 19th-century French couple as it is for any 21st-century couple today.

Our culture is suffering in so many ways. Children and spouses are suffering from the breakdown of marriages. As a result, there is a rising number of couples who are giving up on marriage altogether, asking what difference it really makes. Surely “it’s just a piece of paper?”. As a couple about to embark on the journey of marriage we cannot help but identify with this sense of trepidation. Will our marriage be different? What is the secret to a marriage that is loving and faithful until death? The Church makes clear that the stakes could not be higher. Good marriages are essential for our world because, as Pope Francis reminds us, “the welfare of the family is decisive for the future of the world and that of the Church” (AL §31). Of the many

things one can learn from the lives of Louis and Zélie, two essential components stand out: that holiness is possible; and that we should see all of our life in the context of our heavenly homeland. These two components are intimately connected, but let us just begin with the idea that holiness is possible.

At first glance this may seem so obvious as to appear rather mundane. However, it seems that there is a gulf between theory and practice, between the high ideal of the universal call to holiness and most people's ordinary experience. The problem is that people do not think holiness is possible at all, or at least possible for only a few. Sainthood in this view is an elite club for the few to whom God has given a natural disposition towards the holy life, while the rest of us ordinary folk will have to settle for spiritual mediocrity. Even Catholics who may have a great devotion to the communion of saints, aware of our sinfulness, see it as something far removed from their own experience. For many, it is one step too far to imagine that it might be possible for us to be saints, let alone to strive for a holy life.

We could call this the crisis of holiness. In light of this crisis individuals like Louis and Zélie do not contribute anything new, but rather remind us of something we have forgotten or neglected. Our joys and trials should not be seen as obstacles to holiness but precisely the means God wants us to use for our sanctification. It is clear that the Martins had this supernatural sense of spiritual realities, particularly the reality of heaven. Louis and Zélie exemplified in their lives what the Church teaches, that our vocation is a path to heaven. In the case of marriage, each spouse has a practical and spiritual role in preparing the other for heaven. Certainly, Louis and Zélie saw their role as parents as "populating heaven". This conviction of the reality of heaven was particularly evident in the trials faced by the Martins.

## Remembering the College in your Will

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

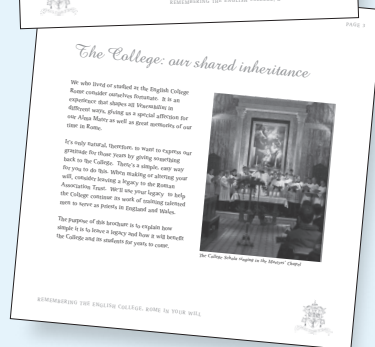
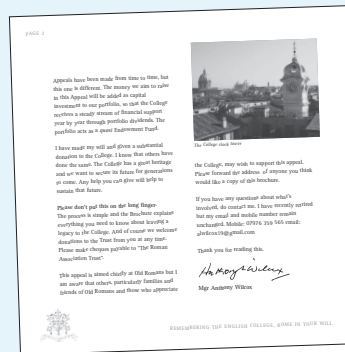
The Roman Association has sent all its members a brochure, "Remembering the English College in your Will", which explains everything you need to know about leaving a bequest to our Alma Mater.

Further copies are available from:

Mgr Anthony Wilcox, tel. 07976 359 565, email alwilcox19@gmail.com

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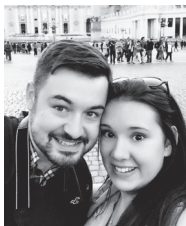
Often when people get married they, naturally, focus on the joy: the love they feel for each other, the excitement of starting a family and the joy of raising children. In these situations we certainly experience a tangible sense of heaven. Louis and Zélie encourage us all to persevere in this mindset in the midst of suffering. Even when despairing at the loss of her daughter Zélie wrote "my children were not lost forever; life is short and full of miseries, and we shall find our little ones again up above." Pope Francis speaks of this in *Amoris Laetitia* when he writes: "marital joy can be experienced even amid sorrow; it involves accepting that marriage is an inevitable mixture of enjoyment and struggles, repose, pain and relief, satisfactions and longings, annoyances and pleasures, always on the path of friendship" (AL §126).

We receive a wide variety of messages about marriage and family life from films, TV, music and books which sometimes offer competing narratives of the essence of marriage and family life. We often overlook the vocational dimension of this state of life. In our own preparation for marriage it is easy to get caught up in the wedding day preparations; from the cake and clothes, the flowers, and favours ... the list goes on. In the flurry of activities one can forget that this is the means God wants to use to lead us both to heaven. Marriage is not simply a social institution; it is a sacrament where Christ invites the couple to mirror His own love for His Bride, the Church.

God does not leave us, His children, spiritual orphans, but He desires to strengthen the love of a couple through the gift of the sacrament of marriage to lead holy lives. Louis and Zélie serve as excellent reminders of this. From the first moment they laid eyes on each other they trusted that God was calling them to holiness through His sacrament of marriage and they never lost sight of the vocation they had to raise their children for sainthood. Louis and Zélie are not only an inspiration in preparing for marriage but in living it as well. When one reads *The Story of a Soul* a very moving subtext one can see is the small ways Thérèse's parents sanctified their home through activities undertaken as a family.

There is a book within Thérèse's masterpiece and it could be called "*Parenting with Louis and Zélie*". It would include such wisdom as: teaching your children to make little sacrifices and offering them as prayers, having holy toys, taking individual walks with each child and visiting the Blessed Sacrament, teaching children to say prayers, having prizegiving days with secular and religious categories, celebrating liturgical feast days, taking great care not to say anything to destroy childlike simplicity, and blessing your children. These are just some of the many practical insights Thérèse offers us from the memory of her parents.

If you are a couple preparing to get married or have been married for many years, a priest or seminarian with pastoral oversight for families, you would benefit from looking at the lives of this holy couple. These two ordinary people, Louis and Zélie, sought to lead each other and all their children to heaven and their influence through their daughter is incalculable. In short, one holy marriage can change the world.



**LAURA CUNNIFE** is a secondary school teacher in London and **BRENDEN THOMPSON** is a Co-ordinator for *Catholic Voices* and a former Brentwood seminarian.

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# Nova et Vetera

DOMINIC JENKINSON

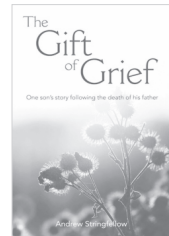


**OLD ROMANS AND FRIENDS** of the College have produced some fascinating resources recently. These short reviews draw on promotional material provided by the publishers.

## The Gift of Grief

(Redemptorist Publication) by Fr Andrew Stringfellow

This book courageously faces the real shock and horror of the dying and death of a loved one. Based on the author's own journey into experiencing grief, it pulls no punches, bringing the reader into the inmost experience of loss. Without neat answers or short cuts, Fr Andrew attempts to help others see the gifts that lie at the heart of profound loss. This book is ideal for people involved in pastoral ministry or bereavement counselling; anyone who has experienced bereavement, particularly of a parent, as an adult.



## Miracles (DVD)

(St Anthony Communications) by Frs Marcus Holden & Andrew Pinsent

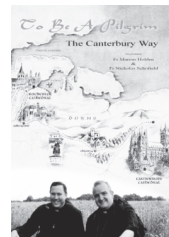
What are miracles, do they happen and, if so, what is their purpose? The exploration of miracles raises some of the most fascinating spiritual, intellectual and personal questions that we face. An understanding of miracles is important for catechesis in parishes and in the home, for personal, spiritual and intellectual growth, for devotions, as well as many courses in religious studies and the humanities in general today.

This film explores these questions from a Catholic perspective, informed by historical and modern discussions in science, philosophy, and theology, as well as cases of particular miracles, ancient and contemporary.

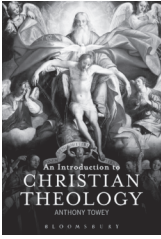
## To Be a Pilgrim: The Canterbury Way (DVD)

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

An ancient trail of pilgrimage runs through south-east England, a pathway along which so much of English identity converges. It is the way of St Thomas Becket, the martyr who stood up to a King, inspired Christendom and who would become a patron Saint of the Venerable English College Church in Rome. It is a route that drew countless pilgrims in ages past, captured the imagination of Chaucer and is reviving in our own times.



This film follows Fr Marcus Holden and Fr Nicholas Schofield as they journey from London to Canterbury. Along the way they discover the story of St Thomas and some fascinating traditions: the Rood of Boxley, the splendour of Rochester, the "second Carmel" at Aylesford and many more. By retracing the steps of the medieval pilgrims, this film draws out the rich Christian heritage of England and reflects on what it means "To Be A Pilgrim".



### An Introduction to Christian Theology

(Bloomsbury) by Dr Anthony Towey

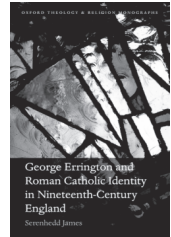
A comprehensive introductory level textbook. Dr Towey provides an excellent grounding in theology for both students of the discipline and the general reader. The work explores key “tools” for the scientific study of theology, endeavouring both to affirm the rationale behind Christian thinking, and also to familiarize the reader with significant contrary positions. As well as the emergence of doctrinal orthodoxy and the later disagreements which have

shaped contemporary Christianity, the reader will become familiar with the dimensions of current Christian thinking in its dialogue with post-modernity.

### George Errington and Roman Catholic Identity in Nineteenth-Century England

(Oxford University Press) by Dr Serenhedd James

Whilst not an Old Roman himself, Dr Serenhedd kindly gave the house a Wiseman talk in January 2016 and this work is based on research from the VEC Archive. The book examines the life and work of George Errington, Vice-Rector of the College and Archbishop of Trebizond, and delves into some of the most intriguing controversies in English Catholic history, a fascinating insight into the English Catholic Church of the nineteenth century. James highlights that matters of policy were clouded by issues of personality, and that politicking, as much as prayer, was an integral part of its way of life.

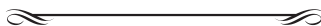


**DOMINIC JENKINSON** is a second year student from Hallam diocese.

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# Schola Report

FR BRUCE BURBIDGE



**THE PAST YEAR WILL** stand out for me among all the years of my association with the Schola Cantorum, because of the seeming ease with which this group has produced consistently excellent performances of whatever they have been asked.

Our first performance after the summer break was a piece after Communion on Martyrs' Day. We learnt a new piece for the repertoire, "Lapidaverunt Stephanum" by Matteo Asola.

The Advent Meditation this year was ably devised by Albert Lawes on the theme "Christ, the Light of Creation". We began with the antiphon "O Oriens", then processing in to Charles Wesley's "Come, Thou long-expected Jesus". The Creation account of Genesis 1 was followed by the hymn "Conditore alme siderum", plainsong alternating with verses set by Tomás Luis de Victoria. A prophecy from Isaiah (9:1-7) was followed by a semi-chorus rendering of William Byrd's energetic "Surge illuminare" from the tribune. The Gospel of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) was answered by the medieval carol "Of one that is so fair and bright" set to music by Francis Duffy. St John's Prologue (1:1-18) was answered with an arrangement of a setting by Michael Praetorius of the carol "How bright appears the morning star". The final reading, from a Christmas homily by St Gregory Nazianzen, led into Edward Caswall's "See amid the winter's snow", to John Goss's traditional musical setting arranged by the Schola master. After the Rector's address and blessing we finished on a joyful note with Lowell Mason's setting of "Joy to the world".

The Lenten Station Mass at San Lorenzo in Damaso came early this year with the early date of Easter: 8 March, to be precise. We sang the two-part "Qui sequitur me" by Orlando di Lasso.

This year's rendition of the Good Friday Passion, using the William Byrd crowd parts setting, I thought particularly polished. The three superb chanting deacons were Tom Cunnah (Narrator), David Howell (Christ) and Michael Deas (Synagoga). A reduced Schola of two people per part (Phil Andrews, Andrew Coy, Tristan Cranfield, Sean Elliott, Michael Vian Clark and Benjamin Woodley) gave a fine account of the Byrd.

Our main new offering for St Peter's Square on Easter Sunday morning this year was a setting of the "Regina coeli" by Costanzo Porta in four parts. We also resurrected the "Reading Abbey Easter Carol", a setting of Latin words on an Easter theme, "Perspice Christicola...", to the tune of "Sumer is icumen in". (The text is thought to have been devised to justify the inclusion of a secular song among the Abbey's manuscripts.) Adding to the hitherto familiar hymns "Jesus Christ is ris'n today" and "This joyful Eastertide", we gave the first performance of a new arrangement for men's voices of Ronald Knox's translation "Battle is o'er" to the tune by Gregory Murray.

On 1 May, Professor Maurice Whitehead kindly invited the participation of members of the Schola at the second Schwarzenbach lecture. We sang a very beautiful four-part motet by Agostino Agazzari (who was Maestro di Cappella at the Collegio Romano and nephew of the College's first Jesuit Rector), a setting of the Introit for Trinity Sunday "Benedicta sit sancta

Trinitas". The opportunity of a repeat performance during the College Mass on Trinity Sunday itself was not lost. The singers were Sean Elliott, Tristan Cranfield, Benjamin Woodley and Michael Vian Clark.

Founders' Day this year fell on Pentecost Sunday, 15 May. The Schola sang Tomás Luis de Victoria's three-part setting of the verse "Accende lumen sensibus" from the "Veni Creator". And finally, at the Chiesa Nuova House Function on the feast of St Philip Neri, we resurrected Colin Mawby's dynamic motet "Iam non dicam".

I must add a note of profound gratitude to the members of the Schola. I do not remember a single performance all year which was not, in my view, of the highest standard for a choir of this kind, and this is entirely due to the talent, hard work and commitment of each and every one of the singers.



**FR BRUCE BURBIDGE** is a priest of East Anglia diocese and Academic Tutor 2015-16.

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The Schola gathers outside the church.



# Sports Report

JOSH DIXON



**IN NO SMALL PART** due to the investment of recent years, the VEC continued its sporting renaissance in style by winning the annual Fr Ragheed Ganni tournament, which is hosted by the Irish College in memory of the Iraqi martyr who studied there. Although the prising of the cup from Irish hands was an exceptional team effort, a few names deserve a special mention for their part played in this clean sweep of victories. Captain Richard Marsden, whose cat-like goalkeeping proved invaluable, demonstrated his usual strategic and incisive genius in directing the squad. Fr Jorge Lopez of Argentina and Hai Nguyen of Vietnam (training for the diocese of Norway), brought both flair and energy to the pitch in a lethal partnership which terrorised and outclassed all before them. David Howell, a veteran of the tournament, once again proved to be a stalwart defender, frustrating even the most talented of opponents. The consistent awareness and passing acumen of Marco Egawhary in midfield also deserves special praise. Finally, Alexander Balzanella's sublime touch line support, vocal motivation and excellent photography not only roused the players to victory but also recorded their success for time immemorial.

The game against our Scottish brethren proved to be particularly fierce. We were able to triumph only by a narrow 2-1 lead and after much difficulty. Despite the competitive dimension, the day was characterised by a jovial and fraternal atmosphere, which is the typical spirit of the Irish College. Before reciting Vespers together in their striking College chapel, they kindly provided refreshments and delicious pizza, even for the winners! Thanks to them for all their magnanimity, hospitality and friendliness towards all who took part.

The gym seems to be proving more popular than ever, with an estimated third of the College now using it on a regular basis. Some higher estimations may even place infrequent gym usage as high as 50% of the student population, cementing the VEC's reputation as one of the healthiest of the English Church's seminaries. Some new equipment has been ordered, including a new pull-up bar, extra weights, mats and a few other bits and pieces.

Football has enjoyed massive expansion this year with almost weekly Tuesday evening games taking place, consisting of mixed-teams at the Pontifical Beda College. So popular have these evenings proved to be that the esteemed Canon Philip Gillespie of the Beda College even graced the pitch with his rectorial presence on one occasion. Similarly, momentum has built for football on Saturdays at the Irish College, but this proves trickier to attend consistently because of various events and it being the day off in the respective Colleges. Nevertheless these developments have been welcomed by all and have allowed new friendships to flower across Rome. A new and improved croquet pitch is in germination at Palazzola and should be ready in time for the *Villeggiatura*. The infamous North vs South football game remains a fixture of our time at the Villa and the way things are looking it might well be the South's year for once! Time will tell.

Several keen runners have emerged in the College leading to a few group runs around Rome; the most popular of which features a breath-taking view of St Peter's and the glorious

snow-kissed mountains in the distance. Alexander Balzanella's impressive feat (feet?) of running up to the Villa remains unparalleled in College history, with the only challenger spectacularly failing due to injury just shy of Marino. At present Alex is in training for a Triathlon which will enrich his already impressive list of sporting achievements. It is hoped that an occasional basketball game, once again to be hosted by the Beda College, will soon be up and running too.

The sporting reputation of the Venerable English College remains intact for another year: who knows what other impressive feats will be accomplished in the year ahead?



**JOSH DIXON** is a 1<sup>st</sup> year seminarian from the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

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# The Year in Pictures 2015-16



The New Men enjoy the Vatican Gardens with Fr Rector and Fr John during their induction in October. Photo: Josef Ottersen



Fr Rector joins the Jubilarians from England and Wales in the College church. Photo: Alex Balzanella



Dominic Jenkinson approves of the newly unveiled portrait of Cardinal Vincent Nichols at the reception of the English-speaking Fathers of the Synod on the Family. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Above: Fr Andrew Chase and Benjamin Hilton have a deep and meaningful conversation on Martyrs' Day. Photo: Alex Balzanella

Right: Joshua Dixon provides musical entertainment at the New Men Show. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Fr Bruce directs the *Schola Cantorum* for the Advent Meditation. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Reverends Thomas Cunnah and Guido Amari keep the mystery alive as Dr Watson and Sherlock Holmes respectively at the Advent Show. Photo: Piotr Wagnanski



Bishop Richard Moth with the new Candidates: Benjamin Woodley, Antonio Pineda, Gary Dench, Andrew Bowden, Tristan Cranfield, Richard Marsden and Michael Rakowski. Photo: Reynor Santiago



Canon Philip Gillespie, Rector of the Beda College, thanks the staff and students of the Venerable English College for their hospitality. Photo: Antonio Pineda



The staff and students of the College are joined by the staff and students of St John's Seminary, Woneresh for lunch.  
Photo: Antonio Pineda



Hai Nguyen enjoys the Cascata delle Marmore, just one of the beautiful locations visited during the College gita.  
Photo: Marco Egawhary



The House photo 2016





Rev. Thomas Cunnah shares festive cheer with Fr Anthony Doe and Fr Rector on Founders' Day. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Bishop Philip Egan and the newly instituted Lectors: Matthew King, Hai Nguyen, Josef Ottersen, Piotr Wagnanski, Alex Balzanella and Dominic Jenkinson. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Cardinal George Pell centre, with Abbot David Charlesworth of Buckfast Abbey and the newly instituted acolytes: Haris Roberts, Michael Vian Clark, Albert Lawes and Peter Taylor. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Archbishop Paul Gallagher with the newly ordained deacons: Reverends Elliott Wright, Peter Stoddart, Mark Paver and Andrew Bowden. Photo: Alex Balzanella



**ANTONIO PINEDA** is a 5<sup>th</sup> year student for Westminster diocese.

# The Venerable Diary 2015-16

TRISTAN CRANFIELD



## Monday 28th September

A curtain of rain sweeps in over Lazio and forces the relocation of the Ben Tornati party from the terrace to the Garden Room; hopefully the New Men feel no less welcome as a result. They are: Andrew Coy (Northampton), Joshua Dixon (Liverpool), Sean Elliott (Leeds), Matthew Goggin (Portsmouth), Alan Wasowski (Leeds), Oliver Welsford (Portsmouth), Henry Woodhouse (Hallam), Josef Ottersen (Oslo), Steven Leightell (Middlesbrough), Fr Jan Nowotnik (Birmingham), Fr Jorge Jesús López and Fr Stephen Fawcett (Birmingham). Welcome one and all – or, in the case of Steven Leightell, welcome back!

Meanwhile, five of the seven Candidates-to-be settle in at Palazzola for the first day of their extended retreat, dining in unaccustomed elegance in the Library with Retreat Leader Fr Gerry Whelan, as the rain thunders away outside.

## Tuesday 29th September

The rest of the House (except those on Extended Pastoral Placements) arrive at Palazzola to begin their silent retreat tomorrow. Unfortunately, a mix up in the kitchens means that the Candidates-to-be (already observing silence) end up dining with their still loquacious brethren. Dominic Jenkinson warmly greets them with an exuberant snatch of a love song as he takes their plates, before realising the reason for their deathly reaction.

## Monday 5th October

Back in Rome, lectures recommence and Greg students attend the Academic Mass at Sant'Ignazio. With the exception of the New

Men, who are already seasoned diners, the community begins to adjust to the new Refectory arrangements. Splendid round tables have magically appeared, along with attractive new panelling around the walls. But the new set up sparks debate. How should food be passed? How are the condiments to be reached without mishap? Is stretch-and-grab permissible in today's society? Are Lazy Susans a valid response? To quell the tide of questions, Deputy Senior Student, Michael Deas, after swift negotiations, affixes a notice about the new suggested "Refiquette" to be observed, ironing out teething problems nicely and ending speculation. *Collegium locutum est!* In the evening, Alex Balzanella organises what apparently is known as a "fun" run with several of the keen athletes among the New Men taking part. Most of the rest of the House opt for a somewhat less exhausting drink in the Common Room, having a chance to properly meet newer members for the first time.

## Wednesday 7th October

Horror-struck, students find themselves with no open bar after dinner; this seems to be due to a combination of factors rather than union action on the part of barmen Michael Vian Clark and Ben Hilton. Bar Perù becomes the emergency watering-hole and the New Men must wait a few days more for their introduction to that most esoteric part of the College buildings.

## Thursday 8th October

The first Spiritual Conference is given by new director of souls Fr Anthony Doe, beginning a series of talks concentrating on Christ as the

priest's identity. We then proceed to adore the Blessed Sacrament for a short period before Vespers, initiating a new look to the timetable as concerns our weekly House Groups. From now on, one Thursday a month, the groups will make way for communal Adoration and Benediction; two Thursdays will be devoted to *lectio divina* in the groups, under the supervision of the deacons of the House, and the remaining Thursday will be free for the group to pray and share their faith and companionship in other ways.

### Sunday 11th October

Students join Fr Rector in St Peter's Square for the weekly Angelus with Pope Francis, who gives our New Men a shout-out. The ensuing roar of approval from the English far outstrips the cheers of the German College, to general satisfaction.

In the afternoon, for the first time in several years, the House returns to the shrine of Santa Maria del Divino Amore, to dedicate the year to the protection of Our Blessed Mother. Before we get there, the new Spiritual Director intimates that the architecture of the basilica may not be everyone's cup of tea.

### Monday 12th October

Various guests are in the House this week, including Fr Gerard Byrne and Sr Cait O'Dwyer (formators in Human Development) and the Rectors of other English seminaries here for their termly meeting. Work continues apace on the painting of the facade of the building, and the Martyrs' Chapel windows receive a new lick of paint. Indeed, we are surprised by the presence of a painter clinging to the inside of one of said windows during the daily Visit to the Blessed Sacrament, which gives the whole thing the feel of the first act of *Tosca*.

### Saturday 17th October

A selection of students from the dioceses of Middlesbrough, Birmingham and Leeds serve the Nuptial Mass at which Guy Schwarzenbach, son of College benefactors

Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach, marries Michelle Ackerman. Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor presides in his titular church. Six other students assist with the music, including William Byrd's Mass for Three Voices. They are led ably by Fr Bruce Burbidge, now back with us, and, moreover, now a British citizen! Congratulations to Guy and Michelle and a hearty "Rule Britannia" to you, Fr Bruce!

### Sunday 18th October

The final addition to the House, Hai Nguyen, from the Diocese of Oslo, makes his entrance, and the cast of New Men is at last complete. Welcome, Hai!

### Tuesday 20th October

A reception is held in College for the English-speaking Synod Fathers, and we are awash with cardinals quicker than you can say "Falanghina Beneventano". The kitchens rise to the occasion setting out a glorious spread and ten plucky students sign up to act as waiters and barmen for the evening; the sight of Dominic Jenkinson and Matthew King gliding through the garden with trays quivering with gins and tonic is a formidable sight; the Garden Room table groans with dainties. Barbara Donovan interrupts His Beatitude Fouad Twal to check who he is: "only the Patriarch of Jerusalem" is his tongue-in-cheek reply. The climax of the evening is the unveiling of the new portrait of Cardinal Vincent Nichols, to be added to the line-up of prestigious men on the eponymous corridor.

### Thursday 22nd October

Sacred purple turns to summer whites for the second guest event of the week. This time, the College plays host to H.E. John McCarthy, Australian Ambassador to the Holy See, The Pope's XI (the Vatican cricket team, whose skipper is our very own Fr Tony Curren) and their "arch"-rivals The Archbishop of Canterbury's XI. Fearing another buffet, those who were on Extended Placements during the summer flee with Fr Anthony Doe, hot-footing

it to San Vito Romano and the safety of their spiritual retreat. They travel in convoy, Andrew Bowden driving one car, following Marco Egawhary, with nothing else but an untrustworthy “sat nav” and the Pole Star to guide them.

Meanwhile, back at the home ground, the cricket teams, and the seminary community, listen to a lecture by Sr Eugenia Bonetti, chairperson of the anti-trafficking organisation “Slaves No More”. Sr Eugenia’s presentation on the plight of young women sold and transported as sex slaves, and the global extent of this abominable trade, is passionately given and most moving to hear. After praying Vespers together, filming commences in the Church for a BBC *Songs of Praise* feature on this sportive, ecumenical initiative. The cricketers – Catholic and Anglican alike – are relieved to be caught on camera rather than at the slips. After light levels are taken, everyone retreats to cow corner (a.k.a. the Garden Room) for hot food, cold drink, warm conversation and mild sledging. Howzat!

### Sunday 25th October

The retreatants still being absent, the rest of the College community dashes about covering all the jobs they are unable to exercise. Senior Student Tom Cunnah seems particularly busy, covering for the MC and deaconing for Archbishop Patrick Kelly who is presiding at Mass today.

### Wednesday 28th October

The New Men give the rest of the College a well-needed break from them by going on the annual “R&R” trip to Palazzola after supper. Unfortunately, they find the Villa rather crowded with guests for their taste and opt to return on Saturday, a day early.

### Friday 30th October

A Free Weekend begins and the College, blissfully quiet as it is without the first years, empties even further. Among the wanderers from the fold are Ben Hilton and Francis

Murphy who take to the silver skies and fly... all the way to Naples. There they bump into Ryan Service, Fr Jan Nowotnik and Alex Balzanella, who had gone for the extraordinary option of taking the train.

### Tuesday 3rd November

Terror strikes the community. A note appears on the board from Guido Amari, detailing a product recall on a kettle that he purchased and subsequently placed on the Throw Out Table. The upshot is that Alex Balzanella, now the owner of the kettle, has put himself in mortal peril. A drawing of a stickman engulfed by flames appears next to Guido’s note bearing the caption “Too late!” (At the time of writing, Alex has not yet spontaneously combusted, for which we are quite thankful.)

### Thursday 5th November

The House welcomes the fifty-one priests celebrating Ruby, Gold and Diamond Jubilees this year. Among them is the Bishop Emeritus of Portsmouth, Crispian Hollis, who presides at Mass in celebration of what amounts to over 2000 years’ worth of pastoral experience. As ever, it’s a great opportunity for the students to be inspired and grateful for the example of these faithful priests. *Ad multos annos, Fathers!* Also the occasion is noteworthy, as Fr Rector points out in his address, for being the first test of the new Refectory arrangement with large numbers of guests – a test which is passed with flying colours.

### Friday 6th November

The highlight of the College’s social calendar, and obligatory rite of passage, the New Men Entertainment. Little did we know what we were in for; but you, dear reader, merely have to endure its retelling in a few brief sentences, or else pass with alacrity – as I highly recommend – to the next entry. The evening begins as usual with Vespers and drinks (not at the same time) on the ground floor corridor, which prove little aid to understanding Benjamin Hilton’s somewhat prolix description

of what was about to transpire in the Ref. Here, too, you must permit a little digression. As is well known, in the past, the oblong tables had permitted the Ref. to be rearranged and dressed in such a way as to mark the solemnity of this yearly occasion, to facilitate fraternity and to delight the eye. Sadly, the round tables, while proving themselves adequate to the Jubilarians' supper, stubbornly refuse all such co-operation; how might they be rearranged? A new solution was suggested, whereby the New Men each commandeered a table, playing simultaneously both "host" and "guest of honour" at it for the evening. Meanwhile, the other men assigned to their table would, after each course, of which three were served, bid them adieu and sally forth *en bloc* to the next table. A bell was to be rung to indicate each time this motion was to take place. Most importantly, each man (excluding, of course, those New Men, both "guests" and "hosts" at table), was to make sure to take with him fork, knife, side plate, glass (*not* spoon) for employment at the next course. To make things crystal clear, a list of rubrics was to be provided days in advance on the Notice Board. On the night the choreography goes well. The Ents Committee does a good job of decorating the niches of the Ref. with the flowers, candles, busts and in the centre, Our Lady of Walsingham.

Act Two: the Show. "Refiquette" behind us for another day, we clamber up the stairs to the Common Room, and thus begins "The Longest Night". No such night has ever been, nor will it be known again, we pray. To be fair, the acts are all enjoyable. Henry Woodhouse and Andrew Coy demonstrate the North-South divide to great effect. Joshua Dixon, dressed like an extra from the film *Amadeus*, takes a few hours to play dreadful clarinet pieces, interspersed with appalling jokes for our delectation. Matthew Goggin gives a turn on the fiddle, with Steven Leightell and Fr Vice-Rector on guitar. Alan Wasowski wows us with a Polish song, and Fr Jorge Jesus Lopez introduces us to the vast terrain of his

former parish in rural Argentina, and to the antics of one naughty little dog. Oliver Welsford remembers his Anglican roots and gives us a stirring homily on the text "My brother Esau is a hairy man", with a little help from Alan Bennett. Sean Elliott keeps everyone looking lively, and co-ordinates a group rendition of "Ten Little NAC'er boys", poking fun at our dear brother seminarians on the Janiculum. In summary, then, just as in Agatha Christie's play, the whole House was present for the party, but none lived to tell the tale. Curtains.

### Sunday 8th November

The College takes its turn in leading the liturgy for Remembrance Sunday, shared with our compatriots, at San Silvestro in Capite.

### Monday 9th November

Canon James Cronin, of Missio, Tom O'Connor representing CAFOD and Mill Hill Missionary Fr Liam Cummins come to speak to the House about the potential benefits of missionary placements abroad. Gary Dench, whose view of Africa, by his own admission, had been previously solely informed by the works of Joseph Conrad, also contributes an encouraging account of his time spent with the Mill Hill fathers in Kenya last summer working with local communities.

### Wednesday 11th November

Just as the students thought that they couldn't get any more visitors, a panel in the Ref. wall slides open and in step a number of UK politicians from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the Holy See. Fr John Metcalfe, despite his protests to the contrary, clearly relishes preaching on today's First Reading: "Hearken, you who are in power over the multitude and lord it over throngs of peoples!" (Wis 6:2). After supper, the guests form a coalition with the community in our very own "Strangers' Bar" and enjoy a good chinwag.

### Thursday 12th November

In the morning gloom, Assistant Sacristan Francis Murphy yawns, wipes his bleary eyes and then starts as his feet crunch over a strange substance on the sacristy floor: cornflakes. It seems that Fr Mark has not in fact installed a breakfast nook there for the convenience of the sacristy team, so the nature of the grain offerings is laid aside as a wondrous mystery.

### Saturday 14th-Sunday 15th November

The last Human Development Weekend of the year! The calendar year that is; naturally, there'll be many more to come next semester. (I had you worried there, didn't I?) All decamp to Palazzola as usual. Fr Neil Ritchie plays an audio presentation to those in Years 3-5, during which a disembodied Irish voice recounts a Cherokee parable about the two wolves that apparently live inside each of us. "Which wolf are you hearing inside you today?" the voice asks, at which point the Diarist's stomach rumbles loudly.

### Sunday 22nd November

Christ the King. Those students attending the Angelus note the heightened security, following the terrorist attacks in Paris on Friday 13<sup>th</sup>. Each person is individually searched on entering St Peter's Square, a sobering indicator of the growing sense of risk in the Eternal City posed by radical Islam. Pope Francis' address reminds us of the ever greater need of a sense of Christ's kingship in our world.

### Thursday 26th November

US Vice-President Joe Biden, who for reasons beyond me, is spending Thanksgiving Day in Rome, spots Elliott Wright in the Campo. He calls to him, "Father!" Elliott waves and strides away, confused, but flattered, while Biden savours his brush with greatness.

### Saturday 28th – Sunday 29th November

*Quarant'Ore* is observed in the House, to greet Advent Sunday. Most students keep their agreed slots watching before the Blessed Sacrament,

although a few men end up having a longer vigil than planned in the night! Fr Alexander Sherbrooke gives inspiring spiritual conferences for this year's Recollection on the importance of evangelising today's increasingly secular culture in England. There are a few surprises from the Sound Effects department: bells begin to be rung from here on in at Mass and Fr Rector's voice resounds from the pulpit in the Refectory as he reads to us during lunch.

### Tuesday 1st December

Before we are allowed to get comfortable with the idea of a new liturgical year, Martyrs' Day is upon us and the principal celebrant at Mass is Cardinal Prosper Grech. Students and staff alike busy themselves with the usual preparations: Mark Paver and the sacristy team doing a sterling job, and the Martyrs' Chapel is decorated especially beautifully by Michael Vian Clark, who also reads, at the Veneration of the Relic, the story of St Polydore Plasden. Fr Rector gives a very moving homily on the martyrs' devotion to the Mass. In the orchestra pit, Choirmaster Benjamin Woodley and his cohort, and Fr Bruce Burbidge and the Schola, provide wonderful singing. Only the organist (your Diarist) is dismayed. The organ spends the morning sounding notes of its own accord, leaving one manual redundant, and its player entombed inside it with no tools but a torch and a box of hay fever tablets.



David Howell and Luke Buckles OP enjoy a drink before Lunch on Martyrs' day

## Tuesday 8th December

In Rome, Pope Francis inaugurates the Year of Mercy, opening the Holy Door at St Peter's. Many students join the throngs of pilgrims in the square (only getting mildly wet), while a somewhat smaller crowd gather to watch the event from the comfort of the Hinsley Room at Palazzola, where the traditional Holly Cam is taking place. After the Pope and Pope Emeritus have crossed the sacred threshold, our brave lads venture forth into the Forbidden Forest, armed this year with a new toy – an axe. Axewielding proves exciting as both a pastime and a spectator sport; some remember the real reason we are there and grudgingly scavenge for holly. The Diarist is allowed to hold the bin liner. The axe is flourished skilfully by Peter Wygnanski, and less so by others. Who knew that it would take a whole hour to chop one small log? No wonder woodcutters see so little of their families. The fun is put to a decisive end once the Diarist nearly loses an eye to a chunk of bark sent spinning towards him by a cack-handed, yet zealous, Francis Murphy. Stomachs are swollen with the lovely pie that forms our lunch, and hearts by boisterous carolling at the table.

## Friday 11th December

Angelicum students throw a "Philosophers' Dinner" in the Common Room, to which all are invited. Matthew King, Peter Wygnanski, and Albert Lawes show off their considerable culinary expertise; conversation is anything but philosophical.

## Saturday 12th-Sunday 13th December

It's here again: the Advent Meditation and Christmas Show. Surprisingly little preparation seems to go on during the run-up, but it actually all comes together more smoothly than usual at the dress rehearsal under John Waters' watchful eye, assisted by Ben Hilton and Peter Wygnanski. The eyes of the Schola rest on Fr Bruce Burbidge – most of the time! – as they perform pieces to accompany Scriptural and Patristic readings

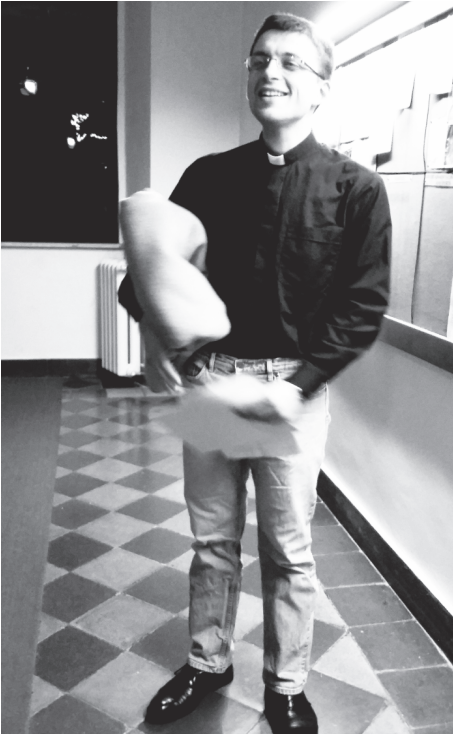


Ben Woodley and Steven Leightell prepare for the Advent meditations

chosen by Albert Lawes. Upstairs in the Common Room, having gorged themselves on Christmas cookies freshly prepared by the floury-faced triumvirate of Alex Balzanella, Gary Dench and Michael Vian Clark, a packed house enjoys Tom Cunnah and Guido Amari as Dr Watson and Sherlock Holmes finding various things "elementary" (or was it "a lemon tree"?). Oliver Welsford is our charming compère. Benjamin Woodley, Fr Rector and Fr Bruce play a stunning piano trio. Steven Leightell shows his guitar playing and singing abilities, once with Fr Mark, and once with Peter Wygnanski, Andrew Coy and the Diarist who serve up some contemporary numbers. Peter Taylor introduces the audience to the difference between the English and their ever friendly neighbours in the British Isles, with the help of some technical wizardry from Antonio Pineda. The Polish contingent: Fr Jan Nowotnik, Mike Rakowski, Alan Wasowski and Peter Wygnanski sing beautiful carols in that language. David Howell, Oliver Welsford and Tom Cunnah show us the true story at the origin of the Christmas favourite *Good King Wenceslas*. Joshua Dixon plays a muddled lawyer to Fr Jan's patrician judge and Ryan Service's charming Man in Docks.

A final act shows us what University Challenge might look like if the Pontifical universities took part, starring Richard Marsden as Jeremy Paxman, Andrew





David Howell is seen sporting a new look at the Advent show

Bowden as The Posh Voice, and, playing for the Gregorian: David Howell (as French College student Dominique Richelieu), Francis Murphy (Giuseppe Marsupio, Jesuit novice), the Diarist (William Accrington-Smythe, VEC); and for the Angelicum, Dominic Jenkinson (Chuck Briggs, NAC), Peter Stoddart (Angus McJachie, Scots College) and last, but not least, Marco Egawhary (Brother Boniface, Congregation of the Holy Tabernacle Key of Blessed Stanislowz Zumnor).

### Friday 18th December

Bishop Richard Moth presides at Mass, conferring Candidacy on seven students: Andrew Bowden, Gary Dench, Richard Marsden, Antonio Pineda, Mike Rakowski, Benjamin Woodley and the Diarist. A beautiful occasion for all concerned, and a most pleasant way to end the first leg of our term, before the Christmas Vacation.

### Thursday 7th January

Its residents having returned fat and rested after the break, the House lurches into gear again, ending the day with the yearly trip to the Epiphany Party, held as usual in that mythical place beyond the Rector's Study: the Salone. With the help of balls of twine in hand, the students find their way out again without too much difficulty.

### Saturday 9th - Sunday 10th January

We are beamed up to the Villa for Human Development. Meanwhile, back in College, Fr Kevin Athaide has an unexpected visitor to his room: a Labrador.

### Monday 11th January

Ordinary Time commences and super-fast Internet appears in the College; Haris Roberts wonders whether this really means super-fast dial-up. The new Wi-Fi certainly has a strange effect in Andrew Bowden's room; instead of connecting him to the Internet, it causes his switched off radiator to burst into action of its own accord, the room becoming, as he puts it, with no trace of bitterness, a "wireless, Wi-Fi-less sauna".

### Tuesday 12th January

A Wiseman Society talk is given by Dr Serenhedd James of the University of Oxford, on the important, and sadly little known, career of one of the College's 19<sup>th</sup>-century Vice-Rectors, Archbishop George Errington, especially focussing on his role in shaping re-emergent English Catholicism, and his long and fascinating relationship with the man whom he never was to succeed in Westminster, Nicholas Wiseman.

### Monday 25th January

Examtime begins.

### Tuesday 9th February

Fr Andrew Chase celebrates the anniversary of his ordination with an early Mass at St Peter's Basilica. Those present are surprised to see

such a huge crowd queuing to enter the church, even given the heightened security arrangements and the possibility of entering by the Holy Door. Inside, the reason for the hubbub is revealed not to be Fr Andrew's popularity, but the presence of Pope Francis, and in front of the Altar of the Chair, the bodies of SS Padre Pio and Leopold Mandic displayed for veneration. As the music of the Papal Mass re-echoes around, Fr Chase celebrates quietly at the altar of St Josaphat, his elevation exactly in time with that of the Holy Father. Many blessings, Father!

### Wednesday 10th February

Lent begins.

### Thursday 18th February

All day long, seminarians are seen gathering nervously around the door to the Rector's office. The reason for this turns out not to be a mass rustication of the student body, but the distribution of new House Jobs, ending literally months of speculation. Cries of commiserations, muttered congratulations and envious glances ensue. The "top" job (or should that be poisoned chalice?) of Master of Ceremonies is snatched greedily by power-hungry Steven Leightell. I'm joking, of course: the only characteristic Steven definitely shares with Machiavelli is a love of Yorkshire Tea.

### Sunday 21st February

The House meets in the Garden Room before Evening Prayer, thus inaugurating the term of office of the new Senior Student (Mark Paver), and the new Deputy Senior Student (Peter Stoddart) after an election campaign which was, in every sense of the word, bloodless. *Bravi!* The accession of Mark and Peter means an end to the benevolent reign of Tom Cunnah and his minion Michael Deas; both are thanked for the tireless service they have given to the community over the previous year. We hope and pray that the Paverian Dynasty will bring continued prosperity to this, our fair Egypt.

### 22nd February

The feast of the Chair of St Peter is especially memorable this year for the group of students who have the privilege of serving for, or being deacon to, the Holy Father at the Solemn Mass at St Peter's Basilica.

### 25th February – 28th February

"Beating a hasty (spiritual) retreat" is a frequent duty for those in formation; this time it's those to receive ministries in the summer who vanish, to immerse themselves in silence in the quiet glades of Santa Severa for a few days. Meanwhile, a somewhat noisier group – if you can imagine such a thing – tries to shatter their tranquillity.

### Sunday 6th March – Wednesday 9th March

The Bishop Trustees of the College make their annual visitation.

### Saturday 19th–Tuesday 22nd March

Members of the House head up to Palazzola on St Joseph's Day for the usual Holy Week retreat, this year given by Mgr Keith Bartrop. Mgr Bartrop celebrates a fine Mass on Palm Sunday beginning with the traditional blessing of the palms on the hallowed purlieu of the Volley Ball Court. Choirmaster Gary Dench does a great job organising the music, and Michael Vian Clark leads us singing the always moving *Christus factus est*, which the cantor group rehearse several hundred times before they are satisfied. Meanwhile, Fr Rector attends Mass in Denmark – having travelled by plane, (rather than via the *donum bilocationis*) to the ordination of our former comrades Kasper Baadsgaard and Jan Hansen to the Sacred Priesthood. Congratulations to the Danes!

### Thursday 24th March

The Easter Triduum begins and slowly, the College fills with members of seminarians' families and other guests, and Guest Masters Ryan Service, Michael Vian Clark and Dominic

Jenkinson roll up their sleeves for what represents their busiest period. The guests' notice board appears on the ground floor corridor bearing, white on a black background, a sinister legend: "*We Are Your Guest Masters*"; underneath this, a dread, triple blazon in the form of headshots of the team. But our guests are made of sterner stuff than to be frightened off by that. Nor can the food critics dampen their spirits. At supper on Maundy Thursday, faced with a rather strange omelette, Benjamin Woodley encourages the Wygnanski family by extolling the lesser appreciated qualities of the repast. "We're good at texture here", he beams, before hacking off another tranche for his plate. Across the hallway, there is prepared a happier scene, the Martyrs' Chapel splendid, florid, readied for the evening liturgy by Benjamin Hilton, where a large number of the staff, the students and visitors will keep watch with the Lord until midnight.

At the Mass of the Lord's Supper, Fr Rector preaches inspiringly on the meaning of priestly service, before washing the feet of members of the congregation of both sexes, different ages and states of life (following the recently promulgated provisions). Oliver Welsford is struck by the accidental similarity of the psalm response to the famous Cadbury's "Flake" jingle. More successful from the cantor group is Peter Wygnanski's haunting choral setting of the antiphons during the Washing (of which this is the second performance).

### Friday 25th March

Good Friday. Fr Anthony Doe presides at the afternoon's liturgical action, during which Fr Bruce Burbidge leads a tuneful *turba parva* in singing, once again, William Byrd's setting of the Passion reading. David Howell ably sings the part of Christ, and special kudos is due to Tom Cunnah as *Chronista*, and Michael Deas as *Synagoga*.



Michael Deas, Fr Anthony Doe and David Howell at the celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday. Fr Anthony is with his trademark grin.



The College Schola and members of the Beda join the other choirs to sing for the Holy Father and the congregation for Easter Sunday Mass.

### Saturday 26th March

Ben Hilton's waxy brow drips with concentration as he puts the final touches to the stunning Paschal Candle, this year decorated with Our Lady attendant at the Cross, set beneath Mary Magdalene meeting the Risen Christ, in early medieval style and pigmentation. John Waters and the Sacristy Team buzz with preparations for the final liturgy of the Triduum. A busy bourdon, too, rises from the Diarist and Andrew Bowden who flit about the College Church festooning it with flowers recovered from the Altar of Repose. The Gary Dench Brigade sing with honeyed tongues, tripping only occasionally over their words. But there is a sting in the tail: on cue, the organ breaks down again, showing its ever increasing sensitivity to the College calendar (see 1<sup>st</sup> December). The packet of hay fever tablets left inside it by the Diarist is recovered by the organ builder. On the sacred night, Steven Leightell does a great job in conducting the liturgy smoothly, aided this year in no small part by the weather, which for the first time in two years, permits the community to gather outside in the Garden for the *Lucernarium*; over this and the Mass, Fr

Bruce Burbidge presides. Philip Andrews heralds in the memorial of the Resurrection with an *Exsultet* of great beauty and conviction. Christ is Risen!

### Sunday 27th March

In order to get the "Flake" jingle out of everyone's heads, the Schola goes to St Peter's Square to sing before the commencement of the Holy Father's Mass. After the *Urbi et Orbi*, exhausted and happy, everyone flops down to a festive lunch back at College.

### Saturday 9th – Sunday 10th April

The House decamps to Palazzola once more for Human Development – or at least, all except the deacons and deacons-to-be do (they enjoy an unexpected free weekend, but are left humanly under-developed as a result). The Sunday sees the anniversary of Fr Anthony Doe's ordination, and in the Church bathed in golden sunshine and the light of the Paschal Candle he celebrates a beautiful, yet unusually deacon-free, Mass. The MC takes this absence in his stride while the sacristans pack away dalmatics and mutter, as all sacristans are wont to do.

### Saturday 16th April

A good number of students and priests gird their loins and make the traditional pilgrimage walk to the Seven Basilicas, following in the footsteps of St Philip Neri. Both the weather and pilgrims behave themselves, and the atmosphere is prayerful and good-natured despite blisters and a slightly late finish time. This was mainly provoked by a Byzantine rite Mass over-running in the chapel the group were to use at St Peter's in the morning. The celebrant, seemingly of African origin, speaks in liturgical Greek and Italian, very thoughtfully stopping his chanting several times to invite us to join him, before finally striking up conversation of almost frightening enthusiasm for that time of the morning. He turns out to be from Basildon.

### Thursday 21st April

Sadly for us, but happily for him, David Irwin spends his last full day at the VEC, having discerned a change of direction, taking him back to Blighty and the world of work. He will be missed. We say our goodbyes to him over a few pints in a certain local Irish hostelry, as a guitarist soothes our grief with a medley of traditional lays from the Emerald Isle, and

"Purple Rain", by Prince, who has just died. *Arrivederci, David; RIP, Prince.*

### Saturday 23rd April

St George's Day saw one of Fr John Metcalfe's now famous *gite* (this Italian word, as far as we can tell, means an excuse to travel for the purposes of seeking a good *trattoria*) with Fr John, Fr Anthony Churchill and four students (including the Editor) setting off for the towns of Norma and Sermoneta. With typically English weather, in the spirit of St George, they soldier on to see what was advertised as a panoramic view in Norma, but which turns out to be a wall. The day is nearly ended by even greater disaster as *en route* to Sermoneta the car strikes a large rock, blowing out a tyre. In an emergency phone call to the Vice-Rector, Fr Anthony Churchill (the only one to have his number) is asked about the state of the rims of the car to which he can only reply: "You're getting too technical, Mark; all I know about a tyre is that it's round and it moves". Incredibly, such technical ignorance cannot deter our plucky gang and they manage to change it successfully. The intrepid explorers made it to their *tratt* after all, and then on – safe, home to the College – some with wild stories about



How many seminarians and priests does it take to change a tyre? John Waters and Albert Lawes show off their skills changing a tyre on the way to Sermoneta while Fr John Metcalfe, Fr Tony Churchill and Matthew King look on amazed.

dragons and the devil attacking the car filled with "holy people", all of which was to the honour of England's patron.

### Tuesday 26th April

Lightning strikes the College. Although divine displeasure cannot be ruled out as a cause, the major casualty is no iniquitous seminarian, but the "public fridge" in the Student Kitchen. Fr Mark posts a notice announcing the installation of a "pre-electric fridge" to stand as substitute until it can be fixed or replaced. In other words, a cupboard.

### Wednesday 27th April

The Guest Masters look roused for battle as the Church overflows with a tide of visitors at Mass, largely composed of students and staff from the Beda, who also join us for supper, in a belated celebration of St George's Day. Fr Rector confidently informs us at the start of his homily that it is the first time that the two Colleges have been together under the roof of Via di Monserrato 45 since 1918, only to retract the statement during his after dinner speech. The other Fr Rector, now Canon Philip Gillespie, reminds us of Leo XIII's wish in founding what was to become the Beda, that the students of both Colleges should enjoy the same refectory, but not the same funding; pleasant squabbling ensues amongst the seminarians over the advantages and disadvantages of attending either College. Bar.

### Thursday 28th April

A strange bout of kleptomania seems to be sweeping the College, with anxious messages concerning missing items blossoming all over the notice board. Among the wayward ephemera are carafes from the kitchen, a copy of "Denzinger", various chairs that hitherto kept lonely sentinel in the corridors or in the stores, and most shamefully of all, Andrew Bowden's hair. This, happily, is quickly restored to him, when someone tacks up a wig from the props department on the board.

### Sunday 1st May

Professor Maurice Whitehead gives the second Schwarzenbach Lecture to the patrons of the eponymous fellowship which he currently holds, to their guests and to the House. Having shared some of the fruits of his tremendous work in the increasingly modernised College Archives with students by giving various tours during the year, it is interesting to hear a fuller exposition of his research into one important, although perhaps less familiar, aspect of the College's history, namely its long administration under the Society of Jesus. We hear, too, of new discoveries from the archive that may shed greater light on how so many priests were able to mix among the faithful laity undetected upon their return from European seminaries during the time of persecution.

### Saturday 7th May

Little did the House know, on setting out for the annual *Gita*, that it would be celebrating an early Christmas. Yet this is what was to happen when arriving at Greccio, site of St Francis' institution of the tradition of the *praesepe* or manger scene. Steven Leightell and Peter Wygnanski provide Italian hymnody for a Mass of the Nativity presided over by Fr Mark Harold for all the staff, students and members of the *personale* there present, but sadly no carols, crackers or figgy pudding are forthcoming. Instead, the College family enjoys the sunshine, the sumptuous views and the chance to visit the shrine where both St Francis and St Bonaventure spent many hours in prayer. The tedium of the coach journey to Greccio is relieved (or, for some, exacerbated) by a quiz, in Italian, cleverly devised by the Deputy Senior Student, Peter Stoddart, to play on the ignorance of both language groups of the other's culture. Triumphant is Barbara Donovan, showing her deep familiarity with both nations. After Greccio, the coach whisks us to the nearby "*Nido del Corvo*" ("Crow's Nest") restaurant for a delicious tasting menu of local cuisine. Full and content, the party is



John Waters, Peter Stoddart, Hai Nguyen, Mike Rakowski enjoy the sunshine at Greccio on the College Gita.

delighted to find that there is another treat in store, as we make our way to the impressive *Cascata delle Marmore*, an enormous waterfall created by the ancient Romans. As we pick our way along to the viewing path that eventually winds up the rocky cliff to give closer access to the fall, high up above, two tiny figures are spotted; somehow Antonio Pineda and Dominic Jenkinson, showing unexpected nimbleness, have already scaled the torrent and teeter on the edge, thumbing their noses at the thundering cataract. Feeling like extras from *The Mission*, many join them for a walk under the exhilarating spray. Michael Rakowski, among others, is content to be electrified by the gift shop. A wet coach ride home; a great day out!

### Saturday 14th May

The House enjoys the annual Barbecue organised by the Ents Committee (or the Entmoot, as I prefer to call it). Andrew Bowden and Mark Paver serve as our lean, mean, grilling machines.

### Sunday 15th May

Founders' Day. Fr Mark Harold celebrates Mass and officially thanks all those who work for and contribute to the running of the College throughout the year with the traditional lunch.

### Tuesday 17th May

The second Wiseman Society talk of the year is given by Fr Stephen Brock of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. Asking why, if God is indeed utterly good, we should need to ask



Andrew Bowden and Mark Paver with help from Fr Mark Harold try several times to erect a gazebo for the annual College barbecue.

him for things, Fr Brock expounds the divergent theories of two Englishmen (C.S. Lewis and Peter Geach) and an Italian (St Thomas Aquinas) on the causality of petitionary prayer. Sufficient proof of God's fatherly foresight is given to the Diarist afterwards, when he is locked out in the Cortile and readmitted by Fr Rector, guided providentially to the scene.

### Thursday 26th May

The College once again animates the liturgy at the Chiesa Nuova for the Feast of St Philip Neri, this year celebrated by Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

### Sunday 5th June

Several students assist at Solemn Vespers at San Lorenzo in Damaso in honour of our newly canonized neighbour St Mary Elizabeth Hesselblad, O. Ss. S., at which Cardinal Angelo Amato presides. Bridgettines from around the world flock to Rome to ask the intercession of their modern foundress.

### Sunday 19th June

The House is pleased to play host to our brothers from St John's Seminary, Womersley, who have come to Rome to end their year with a pilgrimage, followed by a retreat in Nemi. Both sets of students and staff enjoy catching up and comparing notes in the Roman sunshine and then in the Ref., on what is reckoned to be the first time the two Colleges have been together under one roof for such a meal.

### Wednesday 22nd June

Fr John Metcalfe leads another *gita* – this time to Viterbo. The crowd are very restrained and barely touch their enormous lunch, in preparation for the evening's repast back in College, which today takes a slightly different form. After the usual Mass, another of those barbecues is held in honour of Benjamin Woodley, who is due to take his leave the next day, to discern his vocation elsewhere. We have the pleasure of listening to him and Andrew Coy play a few, final duets on the piano in the

Garden Room at the end of the evening. His music will be missed, but more so, his friendly presence in the House. His eventual "BW-exit", as Fr Rector comes to dub it, coincidentally falls on the same day as the referendum in which the United Kingdom votes to leave the European Union, terminating one phase of debate in the College's daily discourse, and immediately starting another.

### Tuesday 28th June

With Evening Prayer, *Villeggiatura* 2016 begins. Francis Murphy, henceforth "The Villa Man", quickly settles into that role, which apart from anything else affords him an unrivalled opportunity to indulge in one of his favourite hobbies: making elaborate notices, affixing them to the notice board, and taking them down again almost immediately once they are defaced. In this and his other duties he performs an admirable job and everything runs remarkably smoothly. The evening is notable for being the first time that every member of the College community (well, almost!) has been together since the first Angelicum students started their early exam period back in mid-May.

### Wednesday 29th June

The *Villeggiatura* begins in earnest, with the celebration of Morning Prayer and Mass for SS Peter and Paul. In the afternoon, Salford's Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Dawn Lundergan, makes her second visit of the year to give the House an update on the work of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse or ("Goddard Inquiry") with which various organisms of the Catholic Church in England and Wales will be co-ordinating. After supper, a touch of levity: Croquet Masterclass with Josh Dixon. Josh demonstrates a preternatural patience in monitoring his eager charges, while Philip Andrews and Fr John Metcalfe place the safety barrier of the privet hedge between themselves and the tyros, who have no problem discovering the intrinsic viciousness of this classic English pastime.



Although not in and of itself much of a spectator sport, it is, as Phil notes, “worth staying, just for the vitriol!”. Benjamin Hilton is heard to chastise another player with the phrase: “You’ve touched that ball already; it’s just like chess!” demonstrating a prodigious acumen for the game.

### Thursday 30th June

Two days of pastoral classes for the students ensue: Mgr Tony Wilcox offers advice to the deacons on the transition from seminary to priestly pastoral ministry; Mrs Bernadette Broderick helps the deacons-to-be and Fifth Year with Pastoral Counselling skills; Mgr Kevin McGinnell discusses Catholic Education and Schools with Years 3-4, and the First and Second years receive media training from Mr James Abbott. Once the classes are over and the sun begins to sink in the sky, many students are drawn by an ancient instinct to the pool. There the law of the jungle predominates. “Polly”, an inflatable, floating parrot, proves herself no mere ornament, but an effective cosh.

### Friday 1st July

The Annual Quiz, cunningly crafted and conducted by Peter Stoddart, takes place in the evening, with the so-called Peter Stoddart Appreciation Society (or “PSAS”) sweeping to a comfortable victory, which is about as suspicious as Fr Rector’s team’s success two years before. Although Fr Rector is not present to participate this year in person, he nonetheless features as the answer to the very final question, being the author of *Unpremeditated Art: The Cadenza in the Classical Keyboard Concerto* (available from all good stockists).

### Sunday 3rd July

Bishop Philip Egan celebrates Mass for the community and confers the ministry of Lector on six students: Alex Balzanella, Dominic Jenkinson, Matthew King, Hai Nguyen, Josef Ottersen, and Peter Wygnanski. Although enjoying an excellent homily from the bishop, and a pleasant lunch in the shade with outside

guests, the day is nonetheless overshadowed with injury and disease: first, John Waters being whisked off to be treated for an infection, and later, Gary Dench plunging to disaster *en route* to the “umbrella tree” on the woodland path. The accident apparently occurred during the curiously named “Over-Sixties Walk”, devised by Andrew Bowden as a pleasant, post-prandial stroll through the forest for those of a gentler constitution. Near teenage Over-Sixty Alan Wasowski helps the unfortunate Gary stagger back to the Villa to have his swollen ankle iced and his cuts patched up by Marco Egawhary, who has only just got his driving gloves off having returned from the hospital with John during lunch. Who will be next to succumb to malady, and to the *Villeggiatura’s* curse?

Something for which there is sadly no cure is the traditional Folk Festival which flares up on the terrace after supper. Andrew Bowden, unusually intact by this point in the week, except for a minor backache, is the *compère* beyond compare. Among the revels provided we find Peter Wygnanski and Steven Leightell with a funky up version of Oasis’ “Wonderwall”, Peter and the Diarist with a newly composed Brexit-themed ballad, Josef Ottersen displaying his bilingual singing, guitar-playing talents, and Andrew, Albert Lawes, Richard Marsden, Haris Roberts, and the Villa Man show what sports they are by each singing, in classic Radio 4 style, “One Song to the Tune of Another”. The final mention must go to Fr Mark Harold, veritable *doyen* of the festival, who takes to the floor with Guido Amari for some valedictory numbers in both English and Italian, including the inevitable “Brown-Eyed Girl”. He also shines in the spontaneous, unrehearsed rendition of “Delaney’s Donkey”, without which no self-respecting Folk Festival should be considered complete. *Bravo a tutti!*

### Monday 4th July

The new AstroTurf surface on the tennis court above the Villa has been completed just in

time for the North of England to rout, once again, the South (and Norway) in the annual football match. Cries of "Take 'im down!" (North), "*In perpetua vincere!*" (South) and Nordic fury shake the forest from its afternoon slumber. Meanwhile, down at the pool, the incessant beats emanating from Haris Roberts' iTunes make waves. The evening sees the third excursion of the year into barbecue territory; Mark Paver and Benjamin Hilton immolating great quantities of flesh already lovingly pre-cooked by the ladies in the kitchens, with the assistance of tongs and pokers taken from the Library fireplace. Delicious.

### Tuesday 5th July

An early start for those foolish hearties who brave the Tusculum walk led by Tom Cunnah, including the extra leg over Monte Cavo via the Via Sacra to reach Rocca di Papa the long way round. Morning Prayer is celebrated halfway up on this first stage, and it is completed with *cappuccini*, *cornetti* and an encounter with the world's largest dog at an outside café that would not look out of place in Hoxton. After prayers before the Blessed Sacrament in the nearby church, the gang picks up steam again on the next stage up hill and down dale towards the site of the hill-top altar. Struggling up the penultimate slope in the fearsome heat is assisted by a somewhat gruelling recitation of the Rosary: even the usually indefatigable Mark Paver (who does not seem to need to sweat, unlike your unhappy Diarist) is briefly stymied by the climb, ending up reciting what he later calls the "Sadduceean Creed" at the beginning.

At the destination, a team of archaeologists continue their laconic skulduggery without the slightest disturbance from the ghostly crew of breathless, owl-eyed Englishmen that suddenly haunts the groves around them. Fr Rector and the lazier, cleverer students who came up by car, now materialise after their brief ascent to the summit, but seem empty-handed: where is our lunch? where our wine? A sidelong glance and a smile from the Rector and lo! a Land Rover, temporarily commandeered from some

wayfarer, idling nearby, gives up the spoils. After a Votive Mass of the Transfiguration, at which the Rector preaches on the particular relevance of Beauty, among all the classic transcendentalists, as the doorway for the evangeliser to the heart of post-modern, agnostic man, we eat and drink and reflect in the shade. Frascati is the stop for beer, coffee and ice-cream on the car ride home.

### Wednesday 6th July

Josh Dixon, David Howell and Marco Egawhary are the designated drivers for today's trip to the local Pallavicini winery, not far from Monteporzio. Our kind and well-informed guide, a native of Buckinghamshire, plants them in a shady corner of the vineyard before placing the rest of us in full sunshine to acquire colour, and under her tutelage, character. Three wines are sampled and the Villa Man makes sure the drivers are rewarded for their unselfish use of an afternoon with bottles from the gift shop.

### Thursday 7th July

The Lake *Gita* takes place. The students return in the same number in which they set out.

### Friday 8th July

In the evening, Fr Mark Harold celebrates a Mass for all those who are leaving our number this year, including, from the staff, Fr Bruce Burbidge and himself. At the instigation of *Capo* Choirmaster Gary Dench, the musicians that do his bidding (whom he has dubbed his "sprites") reprise, and surprise, with "*Lo spirito del Signore*", previously sung at Fr Mark's ordination, a thoughtful gesture which touches him. Looking back over his own ministry, he reminds all present of the need for priests to be, above all, kind. At supper, Fr Rector picks up this theme too in his farewell address to the Leavers, who also include Guido Amari, Philip Andrews and "Opus Dave" Howell. For Fr Bruce and for Phil, he also has a surprise in store; more sprites perform a Palestrina-esque polyphonic fragment entitled *O Schola Master, thank you*

for the music adapted by the Rector for the occasion, and for Phil, a no less magisterial interpretation of *Laudate* Hymn Number 999, that African-inspired favourite of the future Fr Andrews. On behalf of the leaving students, David Howell thanks, and asks pardon from both staff and students with his characteristic gentleness. After the singing of the *Salve*, everyone takes up their places for the Photo Review of the Year, which Antonio Pineda has put together with brilliant technical skill, plus a little assistance from Mr Bill Gates. The Villa Man and Dominic Jenkinson gild the lily with a commentary of devastating brachylogy. Among those harpooned by the Jenkinson quill, is our ailing brother from Coventry: for Death Himself, we are told, "once had a 'near-John Waters' experience."

### Sunday 10th July

His Eminence Cardinal Pell confers the Ministry of Acolyte on Albert Lawes, Haris Roberts, Peter Taylor and Michael Vian Clark. Fr Anthony Churchill celebrates his 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination, presiding at Benediction that afternoon.

### Monday 11th July

The Rector addresses the House with announcements concerning next year, and the names of the New Men to arrive in September are finally revealed. To complement the excitement, a contingent of students, along with ex-Spiritual Director Mgr Phil Carroll, head down to the local bowling alley. David Howell is foremost among those who demonstrate an uncanny aptitude for this American equivalent of darts, but it is Albert Lawes who achieves the overall highest score. Meanwhile, the Villa Man



**TRISTAN CRANFIELD** is a 5<sup>th</sup> year seminarian for the diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

almost breaks the lane barrier with an embarrassing mishap that he shall not forget in a hurry, nor be allowed to.

### Wednesday 13th July

Andrew Bowden, Mark Paver, Peter Stoddart and Elliott Wright are ordained to the diaconate by Archbishop Paul Gallagher, a most joyful occasion for the House, for all their friends and family members present, and indeed, for the Church. Early in the morning before the Mass, members of the College congregate to adore the Blessed Sacrament and pray for their brothers. After lunch, the now Reverend Wright gives a painstakingly memorised speech from behind his dark glasses, fluent in both English and Italian, to thank all those who helped prepare for the day both physically and spiritually, including, of course, all those students involved in the sacristy and in the music of the liturgy who have been noticeably busy in the run-up. Fr Rector exhorts us to pray for the new deacons, and also for Philip Andrews, David Howell, Michael Deas, Tom Cunnah, and our absent friend Richard Howard, who will also receive priestly orders this summer, for which we all thank God. After the buzz of excited chatter, the clatter of dirty crockery and the strains of the *Ad multos annos* have faded from the sunlit garden, to be replaced by the rumble of the coach to take the student body back to Rome, and thence home, the Diarist thanks God, too, for all the many blessings He has given the seminary community this year as, like quicksilver, it divides and streams in its different directions. The author hopes that his Diary – part gossip column, part medieval bestiary though it may be – has entertained, edified and not offended. He prays his successor will be kind to him, even though the labourer deserves his wages.

# Leavers' Profiles



## Phil Andrews

Absolutely fabulous. These are the words that spring to mind when I think of Phil, and for more than just the fact that he is a man brilliant in his uncensored behaviour and satirical humour, legendary in his gin measures, and with outrageous panache. Phil in fact might be described as the “Eddy and Patsy” of the English College: a neurotically self-obsessed, past-the-prime fashionista Buddhist, who claims not to remember anything prior to 1968, and not to have eaten anything since 1973. While there are certain characteristics of Eddy and Patsy that Phil certainly wouldn't share, he definitely personifies their sense of fun and loyalty.



Phil has been generous to many people in the house on occasions too numerous to mention. Whether over a freshly ground coffee or Earl Grey tea and biscuits, pre- or post-dinner drinks, a film, or a conversation in competition with a Stock Aitken and Waterman (SAW) cassette mixtape, Phil has been constantly attentive, and has constantly put himself out, to offer hospitality to others. He certainly looks forward to getting fresh at the weekend with friends, with many a person having found an invitation in their inbox to one of his room functions, pizza or a meal out. Phil's cheery and welcoming disposition moves him to see the glass as half full, usually with a G&T, cocktail, or Coke Zero for the occasional teetotaler. Ice and a slice completely optional. For his guests, his room is, we might say, an ode to “fusion decoration”, moving from traditional and classic, to slightly kitsch in a single glance. It is a room which is to be appreciated in that knowing way, for in it is to be found a portrait of the Queen, Pope Benedict, and a sarcastic Sheriff of Nottingham.

In all seriousness, it's a mark of Phil's generosity that he extends an invitation to various cross-sections of the house, but he also has many friends and contacts outside the College with whom he has become the best of friends and for whom he has offered much support. I can recall myself that Phil was unhesitating in his “of course” to my request that he organise the music for my ordination. I know that he has helped people with the formatting of their licence *tesine*, has proof read the draft of an entire book for a professor at the Greg, provided technical assistance for wayward computers, and offered advice or a friendly ear. This in addition to the usual things that life throws in one's way in a seminary, such as formation ... and a licence in Spiritual Theology from the Angelicum.

Phil is also a fabulous and talented singer. He has been choirmaster and both a regular presence in many music groups at mass and a key singer in a variety of Schola pieces. Offering his own inimitable style to any music that he performs, he has always been one to bring a rococo end to many solemn College events. His musical interests range from the most high-brow of polyphony, through Bach and Mozart, to 1980s SAW. His talents in this area have complemented his work at Vatican Radio and his various media appearances.

There have been sad moments in Phil's life while at the College, and none more so than the death of his aunt Elizabeth. The photo on the wall of his bedroom of his aunt is testament to the close relationship he had with her. Elizabeth had traits similar to the legendary character Auntie Mame played by Rosalind Russell in the film of the same name: a flamboyant, exuberant, and fun-loving free spirit who had obviously had a huge effect on Phil's own outlook on life. Many of us

will remember her visit to the College during Holy Week a few years ago, and her passing naturally had a deep impact on Phil. I'm sure that his aunt will always be close to his heart as he moves forward to the next stage in his life and ordination to the priesthood. His faith, fairness, open mindedness, tolerance, and, yes, his sense of fun and generosity, are things which will be absolutely invaluable to him in the future.

To our very own Eddy and Patsy, I'd like to wish the best of everything, because he will be a fine priest, a great asset to the Diocese of Southwark, and an absolutely fabulous pastor to those whom he encounters in his ministry.

Fr John Poland

## Guido Amari

Several years ago at dinner a staff member affectionately said: "You know, Guido really is one of the characters of the house!" In its own vague way this statement gets to the heart of Guido's time at the English College. Guido as a "character" is something I have often had cause to reflect on. Guido and I started at the VEC together in the summer of 2007. We first met at Hinsley Hall in Leeds, where our year group was having an introductory weekend before heading over to San Giovanni Valdarno later in July. I bumped into Guido on my way to evening prayer and, as I was about to head down one particular staircase, Guido suggested that actually that wasn't the right staircase and we should try another. Not knowing Guido as well as I do now, I followed his advice and we ended up in total confusion as to where the chapel was. In fact the original staircase had been the right one after all. Amidst the confusion I could tell that his heart was in the right place and had the staircase episode not occurred we might not have become such good friends. This incident became the pattern of our friendship and over the years we have ended up in some rather chaotic and bizarre situations. This is part of life with Guido, and I wouldn't have it any other way. Well, sort of. In so far as I have understood any of it that is.



It is hard to do justice in this space to the impact that Guido has had on this house, in two different periods, spanning nine years in total. There is plenty we could say about his engagement with formation, his pastoral work in the prison and parishes, his academic ability and his engagement with academic formation at the Gregorian. We could also talk about his attendance at all of the lectures and willingness to interact with the professors: whilst sitting at the front of class recording their words for posterity and asking the odd question. This academic journey has culminated in a delighted "Woohoo!" being written on the front page of his Fundamental Theology licence *tesina* about the development of doctrine (he owes a particular debt of gratitude for this achievement, which I am sure he would want me to mention, to Archbishop Mark Coleridge). However this does not completely capture Guido as we know and love him.

For this we must look to some of the more bizarre and stratospheric episodes in Guido's life at the College. Given that there are so many I shall limit myself to those which spring immediately to mind. There was Guido's introduction to the community at the New Men's Show and Christmas Entertainments. This involved a jazz act on the saxophone, despite Guido not being able to play the saxophone and never having had a lesson on how to play it (the sax, bought by Guido before coming to Rome, spent a summer at Raffaella's house before being shipped back to the UK, never to be seen again). And who could forget Guido as Santa? So unforgettable was this act that a condition of his reprising it the following year was that he "tone down his Santa" for fear the show would become "adults only". There is a tradition in the College of singing "Happy Birthday" at

breakfast as and when birthdays come around. Guido, of course, not realising the subtleties of this particular tradition, clinked his glass in the ref and started a rendition of "Happy Birthday to me!" I have also been told on good authority that it was believed by some that Guido once had a firing range in his room – make of that what you will.

There is also a fond memory of a bright blue hat which Guido wore through Manchester Airport, having spent a night in Zurich airport following plane cancellations and a snow storm, to the bemusement of those standing by. Bemusement is perhaps a key characteristic in many of these stories. Guido, for example, once randomly bought Archbishop Patrick Kelly an egg cup which Patrick, although perhaps slightly bemused at the time, was grateful for and has never forgotten. As for the rest – well, just ask anyone who knows him. As a "character" I'm sure anyone who has ever met him will have their own personal favourite stories.

Even all of this does not fully capture Guido's time here. He has been a high profile presence and even something of an institution and not just because of the more amusing stories. Guido is a man of great depth and integrity. He has a desire to please and help others. His rapport with the native Italian and non-English speakers who work in the College is a good example of this: Guido is well-loved amongst the Bibos staff. He has a great loyalty which he has consistently displayed. He is a man who likes to be a little bit cheeky, but never wants to offend anyone. And he is a man who thinks very deeply about decisions and sometimes agonises over the right way to go. This has been evident more so than ever in his incredibly brave and honest decision to postpone his ordination. Guido is a man who desires an intimate relationship with God and I know that this will be at the heart of whatever path he takes in the future. More recently a seminarian said that he thought of Guido as "a real seminary treasure". What more could be said? In whatever way we describe Guido – a character, a seminary treasure – it is certainly undisputable to say of him that once met, never forgotten. *Allegria!*

Fr John Poland

## Ben Woodley

"Do you have a timepiece?" I knew that Ben and I were going to get along from the moment he asked me this question in July 2011 when we took part in the Diocese of Westminster's annual pilgrimage to Lourdes. Ben and I had just been accepted for seminary formation and the pilgrimage was one of the pre-seminary activities that the diocese wanted us to do. Ben's question got me intrigued and I wanted to know more about this person who had a fancy term for the word "watch".

I certainly got to know Ben a great deal during that week in Lourdes. Ben and I shared a tiny room in one of the town's ubiquitous three-star hotels and we were part of the team working at the Saint Frai hospital looking after pilgrims from our diocese who had physical or mental disabilities. During that week, I was witness to Ben's many qualities: his musical talents, his undying optimism and tendency to see everything as "marvellous", his ability to see the best in people, his enthusiasm for the simplicity of life, and, most importantly, his great love of God and neighbour. I saw how deeply he cared for the sick pilgrims, so much so that when he landed back in England he wept. That compassion, that desire to ease a person's suffering, I have come to see as one of Ben's trademarks.

Always patient and always supportive, Ben was my constant friend and companion from Day 1 of our formation in Rome. As any seminarian would tell you, adjusting to seminary life, with its many challenges and trials, is a difficult thing. I was one of the lucky ones because I had a ready-made support network in Ben who gave me the courage to carry on, especially at times – and there were



many – when all I wanted to do was catch the next flight back to England. From our demanding Italian language course in Tuscany when we first started, to my utter inability to understand Philosophy at the Angelicum; and from the many struggles of community living, to the times when I faced doubts and insecurities, Ben was always the first to knock on my door and give me that smile that seemed to say, “Everything will be okay.”

He was there during the good times too. My favourite moments in seminary include our frequent and impromptu coffee breaks in one of the College’s favourite hangouts. We would end up talking for hours before finding ourselves rushing back to the College for vespers or a meal because we had lost track of time. Then there were the times when he would longingly show me videos on YouTube about monasteries and the fascinating lives of monks. And who could forget that proud day in February 2014 when we both served for Pope Francis at our very own Cardinal Vincent Nichols’ Consistory Mass?

I also remember fondly our three-day trip to Assisi, following our exams at the end of our first year. I recall how he would insist on entering every church we saw (Ben has no vices but he does suffer from an addiction to churches) and how he insisted that we made the long, uphill and very hot climb to the Hermitage of the Carceri, where St Francis had often prayed. Having short legs and not a frequent user of the gym, I was ready to abandon the steep walk several times, to turn around and go back to our accommodation. But, as ever, it was Ben’s encouragement that gave me the will to carry on. He was, once again, proved right: everything turned out okay and we were rewarded with a few hours of tranquillity and prayer in that beautiful and sacred place.

I am by no means the only recipient of the gift that is Ben. There isn’t a single person in the English College who has been untouched by his kindness, generosity and fraternal love. Ben is the kind of person who is impossible not to like, the sort of person who always has time for you (and if he does not, he will make time), and the type of person who is slow to anger and quick to forgive. It is not surprising, then, that those he encounters, whether in seminary or at the pontifical universities, will invariably come out of that encounter feeling that they have just found a new friend, just the way I did when I first met him five years ago.

As Ben left the English College in June 2016 to discern a monastic vocation, it would have been all too easy for me to give in to a great sense of loss. But I refused to do that, and instead celebrated the fact that my dear friend was no longer just settling for YouTube videos about monasteries but was going to be out there to be a part of it all. And I knew that where he went, a new community was going to be blessed by the presence of someone who touched everyone he met, someone who was as passionate about people as he was about music. As he himself would say, “It’s marvellous.”

Antonio Pineda

## David Howell

David came to the College having read Classics at Christ Church, Oxford, a degree that would serve him well as he went on to complete a challenging Licence in Patristic Sciences at the Augustinianum in two rather than the expected three years.

To encourage Marian devotion among the student body and to prevent scurrilous gossip, he promulgated the “Imposary”, which functions in a very simple manner: when any student begins slightly risqué or heretical conversation the imperative “let’s say a rosary” is followed immediately by, preventing any response, “I believe in one God...” It has been utilised very effectively against the author several times.



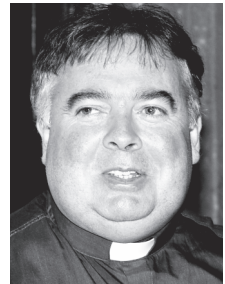
David's Candidacy in 2013 was a great relief for many fashion-conscious members of the community. What can only be described as an incredibly eclectic yet dire wardrobe was retired to be replaced by the omnipresent black clerical attire. However, his choice in hats did not improve and one member of the community cast one hat to the depths of Lake Albano as an act of charity.

David's commitment to all aspects of community life is unequalled: he sings with great gusto in the Schola; he enthusiastically plays for the football team (and has picked up two winners' medals at the Pontifical Irish College); he eagerly performed excruciating sketches at the New Men and Advent shows; and, being proud of the College, regularly invites guests from all around Rome for meals. Sometimes he chooses to demonstrate his, in all fairness, excellent Italian but often chooses to sit in silence!

On a more serious note, David has been an absolute exemplary seminarian in terms of his commitment to prayer and all aspects of his formation. A very considered, reflective and wise man, he has been a very calming influence on the house. I have often sought his advice and he will be greatly missed. I wish David every guaranteed success as he goes to labour in the Lord's vineyard.  
Elliott Wright

### Fr Mark Harold

There are few doubts why Harry found himself in Rome again. Palazzola's cricket pitch, this time at least, might not have been enough to entice him away from Rochdale. Memories of a love of life in Rome – its food, its culture, its football, its language (the language learnt, I understand, to aid his love specifically of football) may have played a part. He may even have been tempted by a reprise of his role as a pirate (last seen in his pantomime performance in *Peter Pan* in 1994). But it's not the whole reason.



I first met Mark during the *Villeggiatura* in 2008 and little did we know then – speaking to each other on the terrace that July – that we would spend the next eight years in the College together. Mark's ministry in the community would see him spend two years as pastoral director and a further six years as Vice-Rector, helping to oversee many improvements to the College. He managed the much-welcomed renovation of the Monserrà corridor, the refurbishment of the refectory, the installation of air conditioning in the library, the installation of new windows and shutters in student rooms, the introduction of wireless internet in the house, extensive work on the outside of the College, and a new toaster for breakfast. This, combined with various projects at Palazzola, is witness to the seriousness with which he has approached his work here.

Of course his contribution goes well beyond the material aspects to College life, as important as they are, and as much as they dominate the life of a Vice-Rector. We could talk about the pastoral classes he's given, the pastoral work he's coordinated, the welcome he's offered to new seminarians, the friendships he's made, the house groups he's led, the meals that he's bought, the spiritual conferences he's given, and the *gitas* that he's helped to organise. He has a great acting skill. Who could forget his role as a guard in the College production of *Twelve Angry Men* in March 2009? His musical talents never failed to entertain when his group *Harry and the Whales* performed on stage. He's a fan of U2 (as I discovered on a visit to Pompeii with him in May 2013). He helped to establish the justice and peace group. He's played on the College football team. He was the leading act at the revival of the Palazzola folk festival in July 2010. And he's played a little golf. Thus proving that it was never *all* about work for Mark.

The best of Mark's character is seen perhaps in no better environment than with his family, who have become well known to the community. I had the privilege of meeting Mark's dad Jim



several years ago and the community felt Mark's loss when Jim sadly died in October 2010. This was followed not long after by the tragic death of his nephew. Mark was able to talk about the impact of these experiences candidly and openly, turning them into a source of hope in some memorable and inspirational homilies: "the best is yet to come." His homilies, in fact, are a testament to the depth of his pastoral wisdom. They are challenging and moving, sometimes talking about love, sometimes about law, sometimes both as "L" words, but all the time presented in a "typically engaging" style, to quote one diarist. And they all point to one thing: his relationship with the Lord.

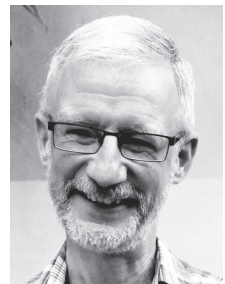
In one memorable Sunday homily in the College Mark said that we are called to constantly take the Lord as our reference point. It was Mark's own relationship with the Lord that brought him to the College – twice over – and has driven him in his ministry. He also said that we should seek moments of awe and wonder in our lives each day "for there are many." I hope that Mark has been able to experience some of that during the past eight years; I know that he's been able to bring his love of the Lord and his own inspiration to the community as a member of staff.

So there we have it. There are few doubts why Harry found himself in Rome again because, quite simply, his generosity of spirit and love of the Lord led him to accept a call to form a future generation of priests. Rome was again the scene for Mark. But unlike as a seminarian this time the focus was less sport and more formation. Sort of. My overriding thoughts of Mark, to conclude, actually take me to two places: Manchester and Old Trafford. No, I hadn't forgotten Manchester. This isn't always a good place to be taken to for someone ordained in the last area in which Mark would want to be seen, Anfield, in Liverpool. And yet seen there he was. By the Shankly statue. Luckily for both of us my knowledge of football is grossly lacking and so the long standing city and football rivalries pass me by somewhat. But even if the kop was a spiritual home for me, and King Kenny was a role model, I wouldn't be so facile as to continue the rivalry. All I'll say is that I'm glad that I've been able to get the word "Anfield" – *home of football* – "kop", "King Kenny" and, for the sake of absolute neutrality, "Shankly" into the leaver's note of a staunch Red Devil. For a Red Mancunian Mark you're not so bad. Cheers for all your help, support, and encouragement over the years. Mark – *you'll never walk alone!*

Fr John Poland

### *Fr Bruce Burbidge*

*In 2008 Bruce was interviewed by Phil Harris for his then leaver's profile after his first stint as academic tutor. Eight years on, and after a second stint in the same position, Bruce unstintingly agreed to a second interview, in which he shares some more of his thoughts.*



#### **Bruce, you came back to the College in September 2013. Had the College changed?**

Looking back now, my perspective on College life has been influenced not just by the 16 years that I've lived here over a period of 28 years since I first arrived in 1988, but also by countless anecdotes by Old Romans whose experience stretches back many decades. What emerges is a fascinating spectrum of a human community in gradual evolution. The last 60 years have seen dramatic change within the Church and within society, and yet the basic human reality underneath it all is the same. I think the same can be said of the College. A seminary is a place where those priests responsible for formation try to share their experience and wisdom with a new generation. But that takes place in the context of an institutional life which, warts and all, preserves a remarkable continuity from year to year.

### **What's the role of the seminary in the contemporary world?**

Life is about growth, as individuals and as a community, and I believe the Gospel brings a new light and energy to that growth process for ourselves and for each other. One of the most important questions for a seminary concerns the broader community which we're called to serve. What is it like? What are its strengths and weaknesses? How would Jesus relate to today's world? We need to avoid simplistic answers. As a seminary we need to be shaping our programme of formation in constant dialogue with the broader Church, and as individuals we need to keep growing in our love and knowledge of our fellow human beings inside and outside the Church so that we can be effective instruments of God's love. Our dialogue with others is in the context of the paschal mystery, the saving reality at the heart of our faith. Priesthood—and therefore all we're about as a seminary—brings people into contact with the love Jesus showed us on the cross, especially through the celebration of Mass and through our subsequent living out of what we celebrate, in lives of service.

### **Could you reflect on your role as a member of the formation staff?**

I feel I've learnt a lot about education over the years. There can be a temptation for us educators to decide for other people how they ought to be and then try to help them to get there. The way Jesus works in the Gospel is different. He allows people's personality to emerge and develop in a context of loving acceptance. "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Being ourselves, being fully the people God made us to be, is the only way to real fulfilment. That doesn't mean that life will always be easy. Part of our mission is to walk alongside others and interact with them in their own journey of growth. That is where the cross can come in. Our cross in life—dare I say it, in seminary—does not consist in trying to be someone we're not, forcing ourselves into an uncomfortable mould and putting up with it. The cross, it seems to me, is the flack we have to take when others find themselves challenged by our striving to live with integrity.

### **What are the concrete issues facing the Church today?**

The Church is facing challenging times. The language of her tradition is difficult for so many of our contemporaries to understand or to appropriate. This calls us to more effective communication: to listen, to reflect, to clarify the reasons. "Always be prepared to make a defence to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). Philosophy has an important part to play in the ongoing dialogue between faith and culture. Christian anthropology tells us we are made for communion with God and with each other. I believe we need to bring our Christian language of communion into dialogue with the language and experience of relationship of the people of our time.

### **What are you going to miss about Rome?**

I love the culture here. I love how relaxed people are and how much they enjoy life. Places are all about people. Friendships made in College have certainly been some of the most important of my life. I shall really miss my daily interaction with colleagues and students. However, leaving Rome does not bring these friendships to an end. Many of us here will continue our friendships in England in later years. I shall particularly miss the Italian residents I've got to know and love, especially my Italian teacher and the College *personale*. During the past year I've started singing with a great choir, the New Chamber Singers, and I will miss their companionship and musicianship.

**Any final words of wisdom?**

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord" (Isaiah 55:8). God is always waiting with a surprise around the corner!

*Bruce, thanks very much and the best of English College luck for your time at Oscott!*

Fr John Poland

**Fr Stephen Fawcett**

Fr Stephen Fawcett came to the College at the start of the 2015/2016 academic year, to spend a semester working on his doctorate, having already spent two years in Rome living at the Casa and bringing a ministry of British common sense to the Americans there (he also completed a moral theology licence at the Alphonsianum during that time; a task many might consider to be far less onerous than the fact of living as the one Englishman at the Casa...).



During his six months with us, Fr Stephen established himself as an encouraging friend, a challenging preacher and a kindly presence always keen to help a student to appreciate the other side of an argument or to see things from someone else's point of view. He was a particularly good example to the community in his commitment to study and in the obvious joy that he took from researching his topic; the spiritually fertile person in Christ. A fixture in the library throughout his time, his presence was particularly welcome as he is a great tea drinker and would always be sure to offer to make a cuppa for anyone else who happened to be in the library at the same time.

As with so many good priests who have added so much to the College community whilst in residence for further studies, Fr Stephen was always willing to share with the seminarians the benefit of his own pastoral experience; his evening talk on ministry to young people was well attended and much appreciated. For all this, however, the crowning moment of Fr Stephen's time with us, and the image by which he will surely be remembered, comes from his performance in the Advent show. Replete in a white tuxedo, Fr Stephen fulfilled what he told the audience had been a lifetime ambition since he watched Italia '90 as a seminarian by performing *Nessun' Dorma*.

So, we thank Fr Stephen for his time with us and we wish him a fruitful ministry as he returns to the UK as Parish Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes, Cradley Heath and to teach at Oscott; and, taking account of his Pavarotti-like performance, and the fact that he wrote his licence tesina on a Catholic understanding of the moral significance of money, we are able to assure the Diocese of Birmingham that, from their investment in Fr Stephen's studies over the past two and a half years, they can be sure that they are at least getting back a tenor.

Tom Cunnah



This year we also say goodbye to **Fr Kevin Athaide**, a priest of Nottingham Diocese who joined the College after completing his studies at Allen Hall. Having successfully finished his Licence in Biblical Theology at the Angelicum he is returning to Nottingham to work as a curate at Nottingham Cathedral. Ad Multos Annos Fr Kevin.

Peter Taylor

# The Council of the Roman Association



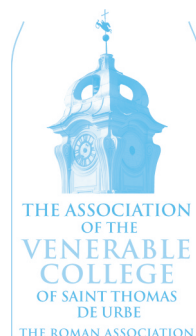
**Chair:** Mgr Provost Seán Healy (until 2017)

**Secretary:** Rev. Paul Keane (until 2018)

**Treasurer:** Mr Peter Purdue (until 2018)

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), Mgr Anthony Wilcox (until 2019).

**Rector:** Mgr Philip Whitmore

and the following elected for three years:

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

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

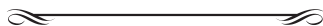
**until 2019:** Dr Fergus Mulligan, Rev. Matthew Habron, Rev. Aaron Spinelli

## *Association of the Venerable College of St Thomas de Urbe (Roman Association)*

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

The present Trustees (with year of retirement) are: Rev. Paul Daly (2017), Rev. Gerard Skinner (2018), Canon Michael Cooley (2019), Rev. Thomas Wood, Chairman (2020), Mr Peter Purdue, Treasurer (2021), Rev. Paul Keane, Secretary (2022).

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# The Minutes of the 147th Annual General Meeting of The Association of the Venerable College of St Thomas de Urbe - The Roman Association

HINSLEY HALL, LEEDS, TUESDAY 3 MAY 2016



**THIRTY-THREE MEMBERS** of the Association gathered on 3 May 2016 at Hinsley Hall, Leeds. Three other Old Romans had attended the dinner the night before but were unable to remain for the AGM: Rt Rev. Marcus Stock, Rev. Paul Daly and Mr John Ainslie.

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

The meeting began at 10 am, with 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 Paul Gallagher, Bishop Crispian Hollis, Bishop Nicholas Hudson, Bishop Christopher Budd, Bishop John Hine, Rev. Anthony Barratt, Canon Michael Brockie, Mr Bernard Connelly, Canon Tom Dakin, Dr P J Fitzpatrick, Canon Brian Frost, Rev. Tom Creagh-Fuller, Mgr Michael Jackson, Mgr Clyde Johnson, Rev. Edward Koroway, Rev. John Metcalfe, Rev. Anthony Myers, Rev. Robert Reardon, Rev. Michael Tully, Rev. Mark Woods,

Miss Jo Barnacle, Mr Peter Purdue, Mgr Kevin McGinnell, Rev. John Guest, Rev. Dennis Cassidy, Rev. Petroc Howell, Rev. Christopher Lightbound, Mgr John Allen, Rev. Michael Burke, Canon Mervyn Tower, Rev. Christopher Lough, Mgr Philip Holroyd, Mgr William Steele and Mgr Peter Anglim.

## 3. Minutes of 146<sup>th</sup> 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 Mr Paul Moakler (formerly Brentwood), Rev. Dominic Round (Birmingham), Mgr Michael Williams (Birmingham), Dr Bernard Linares (formerly Gibraltar), Rev. Ernest Sands (Shrewsbury), Rev. Dominic Rolls (Arundel and Brighton), Rev. Adrian Chatterton (Nottingham), Canon John Formby (Westminster), 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: Sr Amadeus Bulger, Bryan Chestle, Nicholas Coote, Michael Corley, Martin Coyle, Paul Grogan,

Anthony Jones, Jack Kennedy, Michael Koppel, John Morris, Terry Rogers, Alexander Sherbrooke and Michael Smith.

## 7. President's Remarks

Mgr Anthony Wilcox celebrated the work of the Roman Association and the on-going work of the College. He then invited Rev. Thomas Wood, Chair of the Roman Association Trust, to talk about its work.

Brochures have been sent to the members of the Roman Association to encourage them to donate or leave legacies to the Roman Association. So far, £350,000 has been promised.

All the paperwork is now in place to combine the Trust of the Roman Association with the Roman Association Trust. The future trustees of the one Trust will be those present ones of the Roman Association Trust, who, as now, will be elected for a six year office and one of whom will be replaced every year.

The meeting endorsed the work of the Trust and future changes.

## 8. The Secretary's Report

The Council had met twice since the last AGM to plan this AGM and to support the on-going 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.

## 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 and following leavers were elected: Rev. Mr David Howell, Rev. Mr Philip Andrews, Rev. Mr Guido Amari and Rev. Kevin Athaide.

## 12. Election of Officers and Councillors

- a). Mgr Canon Seán Healy was elected as Chairman.
- b). Dr Fergus Mulligan, Rev. Mark Habron and Rev. Aaron Spinelli were elected as Councillors for three years.
- c). Rev. Paul Keane was elected to serve as a Trustee of the Roman Association Trust until 2022.

## 13. 148<sup>th</sup> AGM

The 148<sup>th</sup> AGM will be held at Palazzola on Tuesday 16 May 2017 at 11.30 am, with the option to stay at Palazzola from Monday 15 – Friday 19 May.

## 14. 2016 Martyrs' Day gatherings

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

## 15. Any other business

Diocesan Representatives were encouraged by a few of those attending the AGM to add more "colour" to their entries in *The Venerabile*.

The members of the Association who attended the AGM were: Mgr Anthony Wilcox, Mr John Ainslie, Rev. Thomas Atthill, Rev. David Bulmer, Canon Michael Cooley, Canon Stephen Coonan, Rev. Francis Coveney, Rev. Sean Crawley, Rev. Gerald Creasey, Rev. Paul Daly, Rev. John Deehan, Mr Hugh Ellwood, Canon Kevin Firth, Mgr Peter Fleetwood, Mgr Timothy Galligan, Rev. Matthew Habron, Mgr Seán Healy, Rev. Marc Homsey, Rev. Paul Keane, Rev. Patrick Mileham, Rev. Leo Mooney, Dr Fergus Mulligan, Rev. Gerard Murray, Mgr John Nelson, Rev. Nicholas Paxton, Rev. James Robinson, Rev. Gerard Skinner, Rev. Andrew Stringfellow, Mgr Andrew Summersgill, Mgr Adrian Toffolo, Rev. Francis Wahle, Prof. Maurice Whitehead, Mgr Philip Whitmore, Rev. Thomas Wood and Canon William Young.



# Rector's Report to the Roman Association



WE WERE ENCOURAGED by the arrival of 10 new seminarians in September 2015. One had been at Valladolid, 3 were transferring from other seminaries and 6 were starting out. They came from Hallam, Leeds (2), Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Northampton, Oslo (2) and Portsmouth (2). This meant that we began the year with 39 seminarians in residence.

At the start of the year we also had 6 student priests, or "priests in ongoing formation" as we are encouraged to call them now. Fr Andrew Chase (Rockhampton, Australia) and Fr John Poland (Liverpool) were joined by newly-ordained Fr Kevin Athaide (Nottingham), who stayed on to complete his licence, Fr Jan Nowotnik (Birmingham) who came out to begin a licence in Ecumenical Theology, Fr Stephen Fawcett (Birmingham) who spent one semester with us as he began his doctorate, and Fr Jorge Jesús López (San Luis, Argentina), in the midst of his doctoral studies in philosophy.

Fr Jorge Jesús plans to spend part of the year 2015-2016 and part of the year 2016-2017 with us. In between, he has a heavy teaching load back in his native Argentina, where the academic year runs from March to December, a little out of kilter with ours.

There are 5 men due to be ordained Priest in the summer of 2016 – Deacons Michael Deas and Richard Howard for Salford, Deacons Phil Andrews and David Howell for Southwark and Deacon Tom Cunnah for Shrewsbury. At the end of the *Villeggiatura* this year, 4 are due to be ordained deacon – Andrew Bowden for

Westminster, Mark Paver for Salford, Peter Stoddart for Hexham and Newcastle, and Elliott Wright for Leeds.

We have had a few changes on the formaton staff. In September 2015 we were joined by Fr Anthony Doe (Westminster), who took on the role of Spiritual Director, and Fr John Metcalfe (Hallam), our new Pastoral Director. Fr Bruce Burbidge, our Academic Tutor, was successful in applying for British citizenship, but he is leaving us this summer, to take up a post as lecturer in philosophy at St Mary's College, Oscott. We are also saying good-bye to our Vice-Rector, Fr Mark Harold (Salford). His place will be taken from September 2016 by another Salford priest, Fr John Flynn.

With regard to the role of Academic Tutor we have arranged cover for the year 2016-2017, but we anticipate that a permanent appointment will be made with effect from September 2017. During the coming academic year, we will have the assistance on a part-time basis of Fr McLean Cummings (Baltimore, USA) until Christmas, then in January 2017 Sr Margaret Atkins OSA will be taking up residence in the College until June.

We began the year with 14 seminarians in 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Theology at the Gregorian University; 3 in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle Theology; 1 in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle Canon Law. At the Angelicum we had 11 seminarians in 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Philosophy; 4 in 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Theology; and 2 in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle Theology. We had 1 seminarian in 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle theology at *Santa Croce*, 2 in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle Theology at the *Augustinianum* and 1 in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle Scripture at the *Biblicum*.

The year began with a 6-day directed retreat. The team of directors, led by Fr Gerry Whelan SJ, also included Sr Daniela Stirpe, Fr Anthony Doe, Fr Peter Verity and Fr Lawrence Murphy SJ. In preparation for Advent we had a short retreat led by Fr Alexander Sherbrooke. Once again, 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. Mgr Keith Bartrop came to lead the Holy Week retreat at Palazzola. Those seminarians preparing for ministries or orders had an opportunity for a further retreat in late February 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 5 separate weeks with us every year, meeting with students individually. He continues to work alongside 2 other psychologists – Sr Cait O'Dwyer and Ms Rosanna Giacometto – who are also available to meet students individually. St Luke's led 3 residential Human Development weekends in the course of the year on a variety of topics. This year, for the first time, we began to incorporate the national Safeguarding curriculum into the Human Development weekends – the intention is that every student spends at least one weekend a year working through the material that has been prepared for seminarians by the Bishops' Conference and CSAS.

For Pastoral Formation, we continue the pattern of short courses during the *Villeggiatura*, leaving the students free to devote most 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 emphasize the pastoral skills that are needed in our particular English and Welsh context.

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. A good number remain committed to the Missionaries of Charity. During the summer, most of the students are given pastoral placements in their home dioceses and every effort is made to visit them while they are there.

Last summer, following on from an initiative taken by two students the previous year, we introduced the possibility of missionary placements for 4th-year students. Gary Dench (Brentwood) spent a month with the Mill Hill Missionaries based at one of their parishes on the outskirts of Nairobi, while Tristan Cranfield (Arundel and Brighton) and Michael Rakowski (Northampton) went to assist Caritas in Jordan. It is hoped that these missionary placements will become a regular feature of the students' pastoral formation.

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 recognize 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.

The Archive Project is now in its second year and we are blessed to have the continuing services of Professor Maurice Whitehead, our Schwarzenbach Fellow, overhauling the catalogue and addressing issues of conservation and storage. In January 2016 a group of experts was convened to give thought to the post-2018 management of the Archives. This group included Professor Eamon Duffy, Dr Judith Champ and Dr Carol Richardson. Not long afterwards, we received a visit from Sir Anthony Kenny, himself an Old Roman and former student archivist. He was delighted to see the work that is being done and pronounced the facilities to be such as would be the envy of many an Oxford College.

We have been pleased to see our great friends and benefactors, Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach, on a number of occasions in the course of the year. Their son Guy was married in Santa Maria sopra Minerva in October. The celebrant was Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor and the College provided deacons, servers and musicians. In December, I was able to be present at the dedication of the church they have built in the grounds of their estate just outside Henley. And then in May they joined us in College, together with an invited audience, for the Second Schwarzenbach Lecture, given in their honour by Maurice Whitehead. For his theme he took the period during which the College was under Jesuit Administration: 1579-1773. We learned, among many other things, that one of the Jesuit Rectors permitted the students an occasional lie-in: until 5.30am!

The *Friends of the Venerabile* continue to support the College generously through their annual donations. This year, they paid for the restoration of the tennis courts at Palazzola, thanks in part to a generous legacy from Gerry Murphy. They are also enabling the installation of a loop system in the Church and the Conference Room at Palazzola.

At Palazzola, some major works are in progress. In November 2015 a quinquennial inspection report was commissioned on the

buildings and site. It highlighted certain essential maintenance work, which is already in hand, together with a number of desirable improvements to be implemented over the coming years. The façade facing the garden and terrace has been rendered and painted, the roofs, gutters and downpipes have all received attention. The most noticeable change, however, is in the rockface above the garden. Vegetation has been completely removed, the walls have been pointed and in part rebuilt. The area above the garden rockface, known to Old Romans as "the Wiggery", has been completely cleared of overgrowth; earth has been removed from the wall and pushed back up the hill with a small retaining wall to keep it in place. This has created a very attractive two-level natural garden area, which is much easier to maintain and provides wonderful views over the garden and the lake. We are delighted that this extensive work undertaken since January 2016 has addressed most of the urgent issues raised in the report.

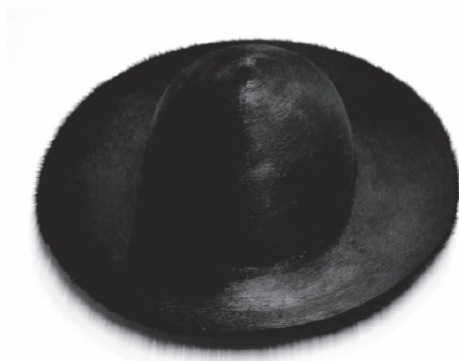
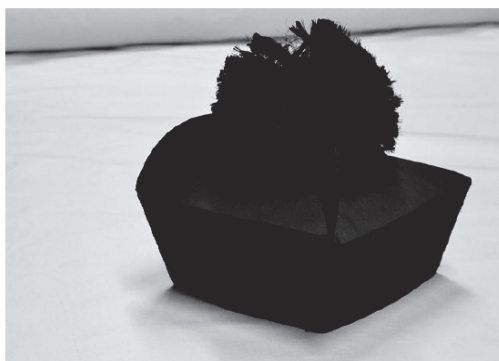
Special offers for clergy continue to be available during low season at Palazzola. So do think of taking advantage of this for a post-Christmas break. The Villa is also a good option to consider when organising a parish pilgrimage, a clergy support group or retreat. The Director, Joyce Hunter, will be happy to provide the necessary information.

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 4 men who are to be ordained deacon this summer at Palazzola, and the 5 men who are to be ordained priests back in their home dioceses.

Mgr Philip Whitmore, Rector

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# News from Old Romans



## Arundel and Brighton

By the time this will be published, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland could be in or out of the European Union. My former parish priest always used to say that A&B was the furthest north in Europe that he would like to work. Even Surrey was a push!

So in or out, Brexit or Brexin, there will be much to reflect upon! So in the midst of all this excitement, I present a year that has brought about much change for Old Romans in this part of the Church of God.

Earlier this year, we sadly lost a brother in the priesthood way before his time: Fr Dominic Rolls whose obituary appears elsewhere in this publication. Dominic died on 29 April in Edinburgh, he will be sorely missed by all in the diocese and beyond. I knew him when he was a curate in Eastbourne, he was always kind, gentle, generous, fun and always had an encouraging, wise word to say. His Requiem Mass took place at Worth Abbey and was attended by many old Romans as well as priests from many dioceses, the church too was filled with many former parishioners and friends from The Faith Movement. Cardinal Cormac – who ordained Dominic – performed the Final Commendation.

Bishop Richard's first year has seen a few moves. Chris Bergin has swapped the Surrey Hills for the King George V's favourite resort: Bognor Regis. Tony Bridson remains in Full-Time Ministry to Priests living in Crawley. Bryan Chestle is still at St George's Park in Ditchling. I had the joy of visiting Tony Churchill post-Easter: he appeared to be thriving on sabbatical in the Eternal City. Tony returns home this summer. Canon Bill Davern is still Parish Priest of Epsom Races. Stephen Dingley continues at Wonersh. Kevin Dring is at Sacred

Heart, Hove. Rob Esdaile is across the water from Hampton Court at Thames Ditton, he celebrated his Silver Jubilee this year. Simon Hall is settling in as Parish Priest at Oxted and Warlingham. Stephen Hardaker continues at Uckfield. Raglan Hay-Will is still in Eastbourne. Jonathan How completes his long stint at Wonersh and becomes Parish Priest at Cobham in the summer. Michael Jackson celebrates his Ruby Jubilee this year and resides in Hove. Terry Martin continues as Vocations Director but has the added responsibility of Parish Priest of Worthing. Tony Milner is Parish Priest in Dorking, taking over from Dominic Rolls. Andrew Moss was recently inducted as Parish Priest of Camberley, Camberley North and Bagshot along the A30. David Parmiter continues at Bexhill-on-Sea. Aaron Spinelli becomes Parish Priest of Horsham, West Sussex. Bruno Witchalls continues down in Brighton at Preston Park and finally Mark Woods continues as Diocesan Communications Officer and is Parish Deacon at Worthing.

There was a healthy A & B presence in Rome last December as Tristan Cranfield was admitted to Candidacy for Holy Orders by Bishop Richard Moth. It was an evening of great joy and hope. We look forward *Deo volente* to his ordination to the diaconate next summer.

Aaron Spinelli

## Birmingham

At this stage of the year there do not seem to be many changes from the report given last year.

David Doran is serving as assistant at Mount Carmel, Redditch. Christopher Miller is at St Joseph's, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent. Paul Moss teaches at St Mary's College, Oscott. David Gnosill is at Corpus Christi in Coventry. Joseph McLoughlin is at SS Peter and Paul,

Pype Hayes in North Birmingham and is the Judicial Vicar. Patrick Mileham is chaplain at Birmingham University. Robert Murphy continues in his important role at the Secretariat of State in the Vatican. Richard Walker is at St John's, Banbury. Stephen Wright is at St Modwen, Burton-on-Trent. Eddie Clare is the director of the Maryvale Institute.

Timothy Menezes is Vicar General and lives in Sutton Coldfield. Gerardo Fabrizio is at Our Lady of the Wayside, Shirley. Mark Crisp is at St Peter and Paul's in Wolverhampton. Patrick Broun is at Our Lady and St Hugh, Witney, Oxfordshire. John O'Brien has charge of two parishes in East Birmingham, Guardian Angels, Shard End and St John the Baptist, Kingshurst. Harry Curtis is chaplain at Warwick University and parish priest at nearby St Joseph the Worker, Canley. Bruce Harbert is at St Mary on the Hill, Wednesbury, Staffordshire. David Evans is at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Rednal in South Birmingham.

Mervyn Tower is back in action as parish priest of Corpus Christi, Headington, Oxford. John Osman is at St Birinus, Dorchester on Thames. Gerard Murray has care of Sacred Heart, Bilton, and English Martyrs, Hillmorton, both in Rugby. + David Mc Gough continues as auxiliary bishop with care of the north of the diocese. Danny Mc Hugh is at St George and Teresa's, Dorridge. Patrick Kilgarriff is parish priest at St Joseph's, Malvern and has just celebrated his Golden Jubilee of Ordination. Ad multos annos. Anthony Wilcox is now actively retired and living in Henley-on-Thames. Petroc Howell has retired to Aston Hall, near Stone, Staffordshire. We are sad to recall the death last year of Dominic Round, parish priest of Upton-on-Severn. May he rest in peace.

Gerard Murray

## **Brentwood**

The names of Brentwood Old Romans involved in changes in 2016 are underlined. 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 or taking leave of additional responsibilities in the Diocese – even when they have not moved parish.

- Michael Butler (1963) PP The Assumption, Old Harlow (2001)
- Michael Corley (1963) The Chimes, Weeley Road, Aingers Green, Great Bentley, Colchester, Essex CO7 8NB (retired 2003)
- George Stokes (1976) Has now retired as Diocesan Director for Catholic Education (1991) but still 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) From PP St John's, Ingatestone (2005) to PP Braintree (2016)
- Philip Denton (1994) PP Corpus Christi, Collier Row (2011)
- Jean-Laurent Marie (1994) Still working as a priest overseas (2015)
- Andrew Headon (1995) PP Ss Peter & Paul, Ilford (2010). Also Episcopal Vicar for Administration (2015)
- Paul Fox (1998) PP Our Lady of Ransom, Rayleigh (2015)
- Martin Boland (1996) Dean of Brentwood Cathedral (2009)
- Thomas Saunders (2000) PP South Ockendon (2015). Also Episcopal Vicar for Evangelisation (2015)
- Dominic Howarth (2002) Parish Priest in the Basildon Team Ministry (2010). Also Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Formation (2015)
- Paul Keane (2003) Vice-Rector of Oscott College (2014)

- Mark Reilly (2009) PP Assumption of Our Lady, Maldon with St Cuthbert's, Burnham-on-Crouch (2015). Also Chairman of Liturgical Commission (2015)
- James Mackay (2009) PP Royal Docks (2015)
- Neill Brett (September 2010) PP Our Lady of Compassion, Upton Park (2015)

Francis Coveney

## Cardiff

Liam Hennessy is parish priest of Abertillery and Brynmawr. Bob Reardon is taking a sabbatical for eighteenth months to pursue some studies. He will be living in the diocese and undertaking weekend supplies.

Robert Reardon

## Clifton

The Diamond Jubilee of Ordination of our Diocesan Archivist, Canon Tony Harding – by Cardinal Carlo Confalonieri in the *Dodici Apostoli* on 27 November 1955 – was celebrated at St John's Bath, where he lives in one of the flats, on 28 November 2015. The October 2015 edition of *The Downside Review* (Vol 133 No 470) was a tribute to Tony with an article by him on Lord Alfred Douglas and six by other local historians and archivists on topics of Clifton and wider Church interest. In a Foreword our Bishop, Declan Lang, writes, "To know one's story is to discover one's identity. Canon Harding keeps the story of this diocese alive, and has a sense of communion with those who have gone before us – both those whose names are still widely known, and the vast number of ordinary people who have been salt of the earth and light of the world."

Bishop (Emeritus of Portsmouth) Crispian (Sam) Hollis, living at Mells, continues to supply widely round the diocese.

The La Retraite Sisters' Emmaus House, where the resident chaplain is Michael Healy, still PP of Withywood (Bristol) and Chew Magna, has moved out from

Clifton to Whitchurch on the Somerset edge of Bristol.

Michael Robertson has gone from St Bonaventure's, Bristol, to Fairford and Cricklade on the upper reaches of the Thames. From that parish Philip Beisly has crossed the Cotswolds to Dursley and Nymphsfield and Alex Redman has left there for the seaside parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Weston-super-Mare.

And finally, Colin Mason completes his second year at St Osmund's Salisbury, and many places in the four (old) counties of the Diocese, including a tent at the Glastonbury Festival, are supplied from time to time by your correspondent.

Thomas Atthill

## East Anglia

There are some changes to report this year for the East Anglian clergy. Mgr Eugène Harkness has been appointed Rector of Our Lady and the English Martyrs in Cambridge. Martin Hardy has been incardinated into Nottingham Diocese, remaining as PP of St Patrick's Leicester. I have just been asked to move from the VEC to Oscott to lecture in philosophy, starting from September. Sadly Mgr Tony Philpot has died and I was glad to write his obituary, see p.105. Michael Griffin has once more been recalled from retirement, to take care of the parish of Fakenham. The rest are as last year: Simon Blakesley remains as PP in Newmarket, Sean Connolly is still PP in St George's, Norwich, and Mark Hackeson continues as PP in Bury St Edmunds.

Bruce Burbidge

## Hallam

Not only do the Hallam Romans swap news, they even swap parishes: Mark McManus (1988) is going to St Joseph's, Handsworth, and Adrian Tomlinson (2003) will replace him at the Annunciation, Chesterfield. Peter Kirkham (1966) at Worksop has just

celebrated his golden jubilee and will receive a student from the College (we have two) on a summer placement this year. John Ryan (1978) based at St Bede's, Rotherham, continues to try to educate the clergy and laity of the diocese; and Craig Fitzpatrick (2005) at Oldcotes has been appointed Chancellor on top of his job as Officialis. Anthony Towey (1986), teaching at St Mary's, Twickenham has added a new member to his family; and Kevan Grady (1990) has added another year to his teaching at All Saints, Sheffield. Tom Clarke (left 1967) carries on looking after grandchildren (with Bernadette), but did find some spare time to make a surprise visit to the College (his and her first) this year.

Your correspondent (1973) has completed a year as pastoral tutor, and has just about mastered the ever-varying timetable, though exam-tide presents new challenges in this regard. It's amazing how many of the old *tratts* are still functioning – and some of the old waiters, too!

John Metcalfe

### Hexham and Newcastle

We have gained a priest in the form of Fr William Agle, currently an official at the Congregation for the Clergy and a quasi-resident of the College, who has incardinated into the diocese from Southwark. Fr William also undertook his Canon Law Licence studies at the VEC. Welcome to him. In addition, Fr Andrew Downie is to become PP of St Cuthbert's Durham and chaplain to Durham University, the English Dominicans having withdrawn from this ministry. Fr Stephen Watson remains PP of Ashington but has also become chaplain to Northumbria NHS Trust, his term as Episcopal Vicar for Northumberland having ended.

Lee Barrett

### Leeds

*Ad multos annos!* Jubilarians this year are: Tim Swinglehurst (Silver).

In the list of clergy which follows, 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): **St Joseph's, Barnoldswick**
- 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): **Sacred Heart and St Patrick's, Sowerby Bridge**
- David Bulmer (1990): St Patrick's, Birstall
- Tim Swinglehurst (1991): **Episcopal Vicar for Education**
- Dennis Cassidy (1992; further studies at VEC): St Joseph's, Keighley
- Paul Grogan (1994): **St Winefride's, Bradford (Parish of Mary, Mother of God)**
- Stephen Brown (1994): **St Wilfrid's, York**
- John Wilson (1995): **Ordained 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016 as an auxiliary Bishop of Westminster, with the Titular See of Lindisfarne**



- Gregory Knowles (1998): **First Martyrs, Bradford (Parish of St Cuthbert and First Martyrs of Rome)**
- Steven Billington (1999): English Martyrs, Huddersfield (Parish of the Immaculate Heart)
- Martin Kelly (2001; further studies at VEC). **St Mary's, Halifax**
- Matthew Habron (2005): **Bishop's Secretary, Leeds**
- Michael Doody (2012): **St Winefride's, Bradford (Parish of Mary, Mother of God) and Vocations Director**
- John Carlisle (2013): **St Peter and St Paul, Yeadon**
- Marc Homsey (2014): **Leeds Cathedral** (Parish of Mother of Unfailing Help)
- Tony Rosso (2015): **St Patrick's, Huddersfield** (Parish of Holy Redeemer)
- Sean Crawley (2015): **Immaculate Heart of Mary, Leeds** (Parish of St John Mary Vianney)

Matthew Habron

## Liverpool

The recent months have brought change for a handful of the Old Romans in Liverpool. Peter Fleetwood moves from Southport to a house in the shadow of Aintree Racecourse to become Assistant Chaplain at the University Hospital, and also Chaplain to the Carmelites at Maryton Grange. The Augustinian Convent at which Brian Murphy was Chaplain has closed and he moves to a house in Crosby grandly titled "The Whitehouse" from where he will continue to commute to the Tribunal as Officialis. John McLoughlin steps down from the Department of Pastoral Formation to become Parish Priest of St Stephen's in Warrington, and Andrew Robinson leaves Chorley to take up residence at St Mary's, Oscott. Jack Kennedy is poorly these days and, sadly, we have bid farewell to Roger Daley. May he rest in peace.

Thomas Wood

## Malta

The Maltese Old Romans are:

- the Rev. Dr Joe Mizzi (parish priest of the Parish of St Lawrence in Vittoriosa)
- Fr Stefan Bonanno (Director of the diocesan Media Centre)
- Rev. Dr Mark Sultana (Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Malta)
- Rev. Dr Jimmy Bonnici (Rector of the Archbishop's Seminary)
- Fr David Muscat
- Rev. Dr John Berry (Lecturer in Theology at the University of Malta)
- Fr Brendan M. Gatt (Judge at the Metropolitan Tribunal)
- Fr Kevin Schembri (Lecturer in Canon Law and Defender of the Bond at the Tribunal)
- Canon Jonathan Farrugia (Assistant in the Parish of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, Senglea), and Canon Nicholas Doublet (Diocesan Archivist)

It is with great joy that we note that since last year's edition of *The Venerabile*, Frs Schembri and Farrugia have presented (and defended with flying colours) their Doctoral Dissertations in Canon Law and Patristic Studies respectively, thereby successfully concluding this chapter in their lives. God-willing, Fr Doublet will be doing likewise in the coming months in his field of Church History.

Brendan Gatt

## Menevia

In the last 12 months there hasn't been much change in the positions of Old Romans in Menevia, save for a few notable exceptions! Mgr Clyde Hughes Johnson continues to relax in retirement while Fr Liam Bradley takes up the post of Parish Priest at Haverfordwest; the parish where he's already spent two years as Curate. He continues as Vocations Director along with his other chaplaincy roles. Fr Michael Burke, formerly of St Benedict's Parish in Clydach, has moved to St Mary Magdalen's

Parish in Altamonte Springs, Florida. Fr Michael has established links with this parish over many years of summer visits and will be resident for 5 years. The 12,000 strong parish, which has its own school, is staffed with 4 priests, 6 deacons and a team of lay workers. It will certainly be a change for Fr Michael, and we wish him well.

Liam Bradley

## Middlesbrough

The news from the Diocese of Middlesbrough:

Mgr Anthony Bickerstaffe has responded well to having to move from the Mercy care home where he was, after it had to close owing to dwindling numbers of sisters to manage the place. He is now comfortable in the Holy Name Care Home where there are a few other priests he can mix with.

Mgr David Hogan is still in Nunthorpe and struggling with his health from time to time. He continues to be a "presence" wherever he is and shows no signs of mellowing. He has done a great deal of supportive Canon Law work in the background for priests and dioceses around the country.

Canon Alan Sheridan is enjoying life as Dean of the Central District of the Diocese (more commonly known as the Dean of York – at least by him!). Still PP in St George's, York the parish is going from strength to strength and Sunday Mass attendance is booming. As is attendance at Il Paradiso del Cibo, a popular little Italian *ristorante* round the corner... A silver Jubilee this year, who'd have thought it?!

Fr William Massie is currently PP in Scarborough, although he will soon take up a new role as chaplain to the University of Hull as well as returning to his old role as Vocations Director. He is still encouraging young people and vocations, especially through the Faith movement. In his typically elegant and understated way he is a quiet strength in that part of the Diocese.

Fr John Paul Leonard is ministering in Nottingham Diocese in Burton-on-Trent and seems happily settled.

Fr Stephen Maughan is still enjoying being Chancellor and Officialis of the diocese, roles he combines with being the PP of the Sacred Heart in Middlesbrough. Always cheerful in spite of many aches and pains, he brings a certain *je ne sais quoi* to everything he does.

Alan Sheridan

## Northampton

Ad multos annos to Fr Paul Hardy who celebrated 40 years of Priesthood this year. And congratulations to Mgr Seán Healy who becomes the new chair of the Old Romans Association. That's all from us this year; except that this correspondent jumped out of an aeroplane over Northamptonshire, skydiving for charity. A highly recommended experience for Old Romans of any age.

Michael Patey

## Nottingham

There have been two significant events in the Old Roman calendar this year: chronologically, the first was the celebration at English Martyrs' Church in Alvaston for Martyrs' Day. Bishop Patrick McKinney presided and preached at the mass which was well attended; there followed a reception in the presbytery and lunch in the church hall at which the following were present: Bishop McKinney, Bernard Brady, Bruno Bradley, Mark Brentnall, Peter Burke, John Cahill, Andrew Cole, Brian Dazeley, Frank Fallon, John Guest, Martin Hardy, Edward Jarosz, John Paul Leonard, Bernard Needham, Anthony Pateman, and Michael Stappard. The lunch consisted of the usual simple fare: a selection of Italian antipasti, courgette and stilton soup, cannelloni, venison stew and Sicilian style chicken, a selection of desserts and cheese and biscuits; all concluded before 4.00 pm!

The second was the funeral of Fr Adrian Chatterton which took place at Ashby-de-la-Zouch on Tuesday 5 April; Bishop McKinney presided at the Requiem Mass and the Homily was given by Fr Colin Patey, the Parish Priest of Ashby. As well as diocesan clergy there were a

number of Old Romans present from outside the diocese. Fr Adrian died on 3 March at Stansted Airport on his way to Palazzola, a place he had loved since being a seminarian in Rome, and which he continued to visit either as guest or chaplain for many years. Adrian was ordained in the College on 30 October 1960; for the first four years of his ministry, as a priest, he worked at St Barnabas Cathedral. He studied Catechesis for one year, after that, at Corpus Christi College in London. Adrian was formed and energized by the Second Vatican Council; impatient for reform and genuine change, especially in how we understand our personal role in the Mystical Body of Christ. He served as parish priest in several parishes: Clowne, Staveley, Hucknall, Oadby, and Cotgrave with Keyworth. After a period of serious illness, Adrian assisted and managed a number of parishes before retiring to the Sacred Heart Convent at Rearsby in 2001. Adrian was a familiar figure to the seminarians of the College and the many visitors to Palazzola, engaging and interested in their experiences and faith stories. He made many long term friends chatting on the terrace at Palazzola. He will be missed!

Mark Brentnall

## Portsmouth

Quite a few moves occurred last September but there are virtually none this year involving Old Romans. Bishop Philip Egan (1984) announced the moves on the Solemnity of SS Peter and Paul this year. The only move for the coming year is for Mgr Jeremy Garratt (1975), who will be having a sabbatical after having been the Rector of St John's Seminary, Wonersh, for the past ten years. David Forrester (1972) is retired and is now living in Cumbria.

Perhaps the most dramatic news of the year was the fire at St Thomas More's, Hartley Wintney where Simon Thomson (1994) is Parish Priest. The fire unfortunately destroyed the church roof and so the church is currently out of use. Please keep him and the parishioners and those of the sister church at Yately in your prayers.

Bruce Barnes (1997) is currently Parish Priest at Wash Common, Berkshire and Director for Religious and chaplain to the diocesan Spiritual Formation team. Marcus Brisley (1994) is currently Parish Priest of Crowthorne and Sandhurst parish in Berkshire. Gerard Flynn (1999) continues as Vocations Director and is now the Parish Priest at Leigh Park in Hampshire. Canon Alan Griffiths (1974) is Assistant Priest to St Swithun Wells parish, being resident at Bishops Waltham, Hampshire, and is the coordinator of the Patrimony Department and a member of the Diaconate Department for the diocese. Mgr John Nelson (1984) is the Parish Priest of St Swithun Wells which includes Eastleigh, North Baddesley, Fair Oak and Romsey. He is also on the College of Consultors and Secretary to the Diocesan Trustees and Finance Council. Paul Haffner (1981) is still lecturing in Rome. I (2010) am now in my second year as Parish Priest of Didcot and Wallingford in Oxfordshire and am Chaplain to the Marriage and Family Life team. Peter Hart (1980) is Coordinating Pastor of Hampshire Downs Pastoral Area, Parish Priest of Alton, Hampshire and Director of the Permanent Diaconate Department. Our Bishop Emeritus, Bishop Crispian Hollis (1965) continues to be active in his retirement in Somerset. Mgr James Joyce (1971) is Parish Priest of Tyxford, a member of the College of Consultors and Chair of the Diocesan Council of Priests. James McAuley (2010) continues as Bishop's Secretary and is Assistant Priest at the Cathedral as well as being Editor of Communications, on the Bamenda Committee (we are "twinned" with the Diocese of Bamenda in Africa), leader of the New Evangelisation Team, Chaplain to Caritas, leader of the Social Research Unit, leader of the Justice, Peace & Social Responsibility Team and Chaplain to the Charities & Outreach Team. Mgr Canon Cyril Murtagh (1957) continues as the Parish Priest in Liphook, Hampshire. Benjamin Theobald (2013) is now entering his second year as Assistant Priest in Jersey, Channel Islands.

Phillip Pennington Harris

## Salford

Life in the Diocese of Salford is in a time of change. Bishop John, our senior Old Roman (transferred from Westminster), and the whole Diocesan family have been reflecting on everything from the age of Confirmation and the Permanent Diaconate to the number and configuration of parishes. For that reason, we are all pretty much where we were last year, but next year's entry might be a little longer! However, Salford still supplies the Vice-Rector for the College, John Flynn taking over from Mark Harold. We welcome Mark back to the Diocese and wish John well in his new *incarico*. We congratulate our Provost, Mgr Canon Michael Quinlan on his Golden Jubilee and Fr James Manock on his Silver Jubilee. In the Bishop's new sharing of responsibilities across the Diocese, Fr Paul Daly has been appointed Episcopal Vicar for Formation and is delighted to have, as members of that team, Frs Chris Lough (RCIA/Sacramental Preparation), James Manock (Liturgical Formation) and Andrew Stringfellow (Parish Development and Youth Ministry). Andrew has stepped aside from the parish in Gorton and is living and working with Chris Lough in the parish at Whitefield while working to develop ways to support parishes in this time of restructuring.

Sadly we have to record the death of Fr Tony Grimshaw, his obituary appears on p.106. Tony Dearman is recovering well from recent surgery and is living with John Allen at Prestwich. John Marsland continues at Ushaw and also with his involvement with the YCW. Robert Lasia is the lead Chaplain at HMP Forest Bank; his contemporary David Quiligotti ministers in Urmston and Davyhulme and Geoffrey Marlor in Whalley Range. Nick Paxton continues to support other busy priests by offering supply cover while pursuing various academic interests. Ian Farrell is parish priest at Longsight in Manchester, Paul Daly is still in Heywood and James Manock still in Radcliffe. Philip Caldwell has become parish priest in Reddish and is neighbour to Christopher Dawson, also in Reddish. Gerard Byrne continues his ministry at the St Luke's Centre

in Manchester and Joe Gee is Sub-Dean of the Cathedral. We await the ordinations of Richard Howard and Michael Deas on 16 July. Michael will return to his Scripture studies while, at the time of writing, Richard's appointment is known only to God and the Bishop. This concludes the whereabouts of those brethren presently in active ministry in the Diocese or imminently returning to it. Please keep us, and our brethren not listed here, in your prayers. If your scribe has missed any brother out of the list, he asks your pardon.

Paul Daly

## Shrewsbury

Friday 17 June, just home in Chester from joining Chris Brooks in Chingford for a wedding, Essex marrying Cheshire, and time to settle down to write this year's account of Old Romans in the Shrewsbury Diocese. But good to reflect that our friendships span not only inside our own Dioceses but wherever we find a fellow Old Roman, and talk goes back to the Monserrà and Palazzola, different generations but so much in common.

Looking back over previous Shrewsbury Reports, it's interesting to see that in my first, in 2002, there were 23 Old Romans; this year there are 21. Apocalypse Postponed rather than Now? So time for a quick survey, with Dates of Ordination. Three are retired, Frank Rice (1954), Chris Lightbound (1955) and Jim Robinson (1960). Fifteen are still on active service: Tony Myers in Timperley (1966); John Rafferty next door in Altrincham (1969); Rod Strange at St Mary's Twickenham (1969); Chris McCurry in Cheadle (1970); Peter Burke in Macclesfield (1971); Michael Morton in Sandbach (1975); Stephen Coonan in Heswall (1978); David Long in Wallasey (1984); Simon O'Connor in Winsford (1989); Nick Kern in Birkenhead (1990); your scribe in Chester (1992); Jonathan Brandon now also in Chester (2005); David Charters in the Vatican Diplomatic Service, in the Central African Republic (2008); Michael Coughlan also in Wallasey (2013); and Tony McGrath in Romiley (2014). One has Moved Up Higher (Philip Egan, Bishop of Portsmouth, 1984); one

is still on the Sick List and very much kept in our prayers (Paul Simmons, 2003); and one is about to jump on board (Tom Cunnah, ordained Priest, God willing, on 3 September this year).

News of individuals this year? Tony Myers is celebrating his Golden Jubilee – congratulations from all of us! – Stephen Coonan has been appointed an Ecumenical Canon of Chester Cathedral, and David Long has stepped up to become Diocesan Pilgrimage Director, for both Lourdes and a number of other places in recent years. In a mini-reshuffle in February, Jonathan Brandon left Hale Barns to join us here in Chester, with the task of bringing two adjacent parishes – St Columba’s and St Theresa’s – together into one, whilst continuing his work as Diocesan Vocations Director. *Deva felicissimus sis!*

In February, I was lucky enough to lead a Pilgrimage from the University of Chester CathSoc out to Rome for four days, and our twelve students had a wonderfully warm welcome to the College from Philip and all the team there. We saw all the main sights of Rome, but they said afterwards that what had stuck most in their memory was the College Mass they attended and the quiet time we had together in the Martyrs Chapel, seeing a little of the path that brings anyone to Priesthood. Perhaps this is something we just don’t share enough?

Sad to have to record the death of Ernie Sands in April. He studied his Philosophy at the English College in Lisbon, coming to the VEC in 1969 for Theology and the Greg and a Licence in Liturgy at Sant’Anselmo, returning to the Diocese in 1974. A personal sadness for me to mark the passing of Fr Michael Koppel (Plymouth) and Fr Dominic Rolls (A&B) in recent months, two excellent friends from my time. Michael, two years below me, was Chaucer’s very perfect gentle knight. Dominic, the year below, a wonderful friend and support. He was a fine Orsino in a College production of *Twelfth Night*, and I was a little surprised when Fr Marcel Chappin, the Church History Prof, stopped me in the Aula at the Greg to congratulate me on my performance in this role. Dominic was horrified when I told him. “What did you say?” he

demanded to know. “Oh, I just said it had been a pleasure...”

Good to be at St Joseph’s Dorking for his Vigil Mass, Tony Milner presiding. I knew I would arrive late and have to stand at the back, which was itself a privilege in such a packed church. And afterward to sit quietly with John Cahill in one of the pews, John calming me down as always, memories of our final Gita in Rome, summer exams over, the three of us going to find St Thomas’ birthplace at Roccasecca. We climbed up the hill to the ruined castle, demolished the excellent *cestino* the Nuns had packed for us, with the statutory bottle of wine, and in the heat of a Lazio June, the three of us fell soundly asleep. Sleep in peace, Dom.

Paul Shaw

### *Southwark*

When Pope Francis eventually ratified with Episcopal Ordination the recent ministry of Paul Mason in the county of Kent, one striking symbol of continuity in mission was when John Hine handed him his pastoral staff, while standing in the wings Michael Bowen, frail but smiling gently, looked at the priest he had ordained in 1998. Among the assembled cardinals and a large gathering of bishops were Paul Hendricks and Nicholas Hudson, still at heart a Southwark priest, who occasionally re-crosses the river to revisit us.

While that ceremony demonstrated movement forward, the overview of Old Romans in Southwark suggests a multiplicity of Unmoved Movers, if that is philosophically possible – not, of course, in any Stoic sense, especially during this Year of Mercy – but rather intense pastoral activity in the same location.

John Hine keeps in touch with Bryan Chestle and recently circulated this report among College contemporaries. “I was with Bryan last week. He appears to recognise me still although he hardly says anything. We spent some time looking at some old photos of College life and gitas which he enjoys, while scoffing chocolates with almost childlike glee. I talk about all sorts of things which might possibly be of interest to him – he looks

interested but I am not too sure whether he is following my monologue at times. When he has had enough of me, he picks up his morning paper and starts to scan it (although sometimes holding it upside down), and if that fails to get rid of me, he turns the television on! We watch together for a time, with the odd comment from me about what we are seeing. As I get up to leave, he comes to life again, and smiles and nods when I tell him I will see him again fairly soon. Driving back home I feel sad that I have largely lost one of my closest friends, but also treasure the few moments when our communication was joyful for him."

There is, of course, another perspective on movement, especially at a time when we are witnessing major changes in the Church: the continued ordination of *Venerabilini* for Southwark over the years. Michael Bowen and Leo Mooney, still parish priest on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells, were both ordained in 1958. Bryan Chestle and John Hine were ordained in 1962, the same year as myself, having had to wait until I was old enough. David Standley, at the College with us, but older and now living in active retirement, was privileged to have lived in Rome throughout the Second Vatican Council - as did Chris Larkman, a very active, mobile and dedicated Old Roman.

The 1970s are represented by Tim Galligan and David Gummett, both still parish priests in SW11 and SW15 respectively, both ordained in 1979.

The sending forth of priests from Rome for the Southwark Mission was more steady in the 1980s and, as it happens, currently offering a particular area of ministry. Michael O'Dea is the Chapter Canon with the Canon Theologian portfolio. Tim Finigan and Paul Hendricks were in the same year. Tim Finigan, although recovering from heart surgery earlier in the year, still commutes from his parish in Margate to teach at Wonersh. There he meets up with Simon Peat, ordained four years later, who also commutes from his parish in Wimbledon and is also coping nobly with a

medical condition. Between the two of them, in 1986, Charles Briggs and Victor Vella arrived in Southwark from Rome. They remain close to each other in Chislehurst and Orpington respectively. Finally, from the 1980s we have Stephen Langridge, one of the few moved movers, now parish priest in Richmond, having left his House of Discernment in Whitstable, but still involved in Vocations Ministry.

Martin Edwards was ordained in 1991 and Stephen Boyle in 1992, both firmly established in their parishes of Wandsworth and Dartford. Unfortunately, Paul Connelly, of 1995 vintage, is not at all well and currently in hospital. Bill Agle and Paul Mason, ordained three years later, have gone their separate ways, Paul, as above, while rumour has it that Bill, still working in Rome at present, has transferred his canonical allegiance to another diocese. Which brings us to Dominic Allain, ordained at the close of the decade, still extremely and variously active pastorally from his base in Raynes Park SW20 as a writer, giver of retreats, spiritual guide for *Grief to Grace* and school chaplain . . . and, I must add, correcting my misinformation of last year, in very good health.

The new millennium gave us Thomas Creagh-Fuller, still in Forest Hill, still heavily involved with *Marriage and Family Life*, despite his failing eyesight. The next year Richard Whinder arrived from the College and is still parish priest in Mortlake. Marcus Holden, ordained in 2005, is making his mark in Ramsgate, restoring St Augustine's Abbey, establishing a Pugin Centre, and blessing the sea where Augustine came ashore. And last but not least, after a gap of ten years, we return to St George's Cathedral for the ordination of Matthew O'Gorman during the summer of 2015, followed by his appointment to the parish in Purley, close to where he grew up and even closer to where he attended a diocesan school.

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 of Westminster
- + **John Wilson: Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster — ordained January 2016**
- Charles Acton: Allen Hall, Theological adviser emeritus
- 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
- Antony 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: RIP 25 November 2015**
- Michael Garnett: Santa Apolonia, Cajamarca, Peru
- Stefan Kaminski: Assistant priest, *St Paul the Apostle*, Wood Green
- **Roger Kirinich: Retired and living in Clifton diocese**
- 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, Hemel Hempstead parishes**
- Paul McPartlan: Professor, Catholic Univ. of America, Washington DC
- Shaun Middleton: PP, *St John Fisher*, North Harrow
- Philip Miller: PP, *St Augustine*, Hoddesdon
- **Peter Newby: PP, St Margaret's, Twickenham; chaplain to St Mary's University**
- James Neal: PP, *St Gabriel*, South Harrow, and *St Bernard*, Northolt
- Seamus O'Boyle: PP, *St John the Evangelist*, Islington
- **John O'Leary: PP, St Mellitus, Tollington Park**
- Jim Overton: PP, *St Michael*, Ashford
- Terence Phipps: PP, *Immaculate Conception & St Joseph*, Hertford
- Dermot Power: Associate Spiritual Director, Allen Hall
- **F. Javier Ruiz-Ortiz: PP, Our Lady & St Catherine, Bow; 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; and 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 Mary, Moorfields; and Director of Agency for Evangelization**
- Frank Wahle: Retired, Baker Street
- Stephen Wang: Senior University Chaplain in the Diocese of Westminster
- Philip Whitmore: Rector of the *Venerabile*

# Obituaries



## *Fr Dominic Rolls, 2 July 1963 - 29 April 2016*

Dominic was born in Liverpool on 2 July 1963, and grew up in Arundel and Brighton diocese, attending school in Woking, at St George's Weybridge, and finally at Worth. He studied history at St Andrews, and his time there was very formative, for it was there he met his great friend Patrick Burke, became involved with the Faith movement, and also discerned a call to the priesthood, three things which, while not necessarily dependent on each other, were closely linked. After a period as a housemaster at Westminster Choir School he arrived, in September 1987, at the Venerable English College in Rome, to begin the journey towards priesthood. As it happens Patrick was in the same city with the same objective, but at the Scots College.



Having completed his baccalaureate in Theology, Dominic went on to a licence in Biblical Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. However Dominic did not do things by halves, and in order to make the most of his studies he opted to prepare by embarking on the notoriously rigorous propaedeutic year in Greek and Hebrew at the Pontifical Biblical Institute. Dominic was ordained Deacon in July 1992, and he was ordained priest, at Arundel Cathedral, by (then) Bishop Cormac, on 25 July 1993. Because he had taken the extra year studying languages, he remained another year in Rome, returning to the diocese in the summer of 1994, to take up his appointment as assistant priest in St Joseph's Epsom. One testament to the effect of his ministry there is the number of people from that parish who, 20 years later, wanted to contact him when they heard he was ill, and who were present at his funeral.

After serving as assistant in Eastbourne and in Bagshot, Dominic became parish priest of Dorking in 2003. There he served 12 years of happy and fruitful priesthood, and was much loved by his parishioners. While there Dominic also taught Scripture at St John's Seminary, and the students appreciated his scholarly and faith-filled approach to the Bible. Dominic also continued to play a significant role in the Faith organisation, and through that inspired many young people.

As mentioned above, Dominic did not do things by halves. He would get a big idea, sometimes on impulse, and then go with it. This included making the full Ignatian 30 day spiritual exercises for his 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2003, running a marathon to raise funds one year, and making the 500-mile pilgrimage to Santiago for his 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013. It also gave him the vision to convert the patch of unused land south of his church of St Joseph's Dorking into a peaceful memorial garden, now also adorned with a beautiful statue of St Joseph, which also came from his inspiration.

When Dominic was diagnosed with cancer in February 2014 he took that with similar positivity, accepting the treatments with courage, and refusing to let his illness stop him doing things. Thus he managed trips to both Canada and Australia in those last couple of years. Part way through 2015 he became aware, somewhat reluctantly, that he could not give his parish the care he believed it deserved while continuing to receive treatment. However, once again not doing things by halves, he decided to fulfil a desire to return to Scotland in order to give something back to the Church in the place where he first discerned his vocation. Accordingly, in November he joined his friend Patrick Burke, now administrator of the Cathedral in Edinburgh. Dominic had hoped the treatment would arrest the disease and that he would be able to give several years' service. That was not to be the case however and shortly



after Easter he was told that there was nothing more that could be done. He accepted this with great faith and trust in God, and those who saw him in those last days, including myself, were very struck by how much he was at peace.

He died peacefully, fortified by the rites of the Church he loved so dearly, in St Columba's Hospice, Edinburgh, on 29 April 2016. And as Fr Patrick put it at the end of his homily at the funeral: "Dear and gentle friend may you rest in peace. Amen."

Fr Anthony Milner

### *Mgr Michael Edward Williams, 10 August 1922 - 1 February 2016*

Michael Williams was a priest whose rich pastoral work was done, in the main, amongst students, and in the classroom. He appreciated that good theologizing could take place during the cut and thrust of discussion around the dining table, and over a good bottle of wine. His somewhat impish sense of humour gave him the ability to communicate complex ideas in an attractive and novel way, making him an excellent communicator, and fine preacher.

Michael Williams, son of Francis and Ann Williams, was born in Handsworth, Birmingham on 10 August 1922, his uncle being Thomas Williams, Archbishop of Birmingham from 1929 to his death in 1946. Michael attended school at St Augustine's, Solihull, and St Wilfrid's College, Cotton, before entering the Venerable English College, Rome, first in exile during the Second World War at St Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst, then, after its return, back home in Rome itself. He obtained a Licentiate in Theology *cum laude*, going on to complete his doctorate *summa cum laude*, taking as his study Gilbert of Porreta's theology of the Trinity, both at the Gregorian University, Rome. He was ordained priest at the Church of the Twelve Apostles, Rome, on 19 July 1947.



After his return to England in 1950, he was for three years assistant priest at Our Lady of the Rosary, Salford, Birmingham, and was also Director of Studies of the Birmingham Catholic Evidence Guild (1952-1953). Soon, though, he was back in an academic environment, being appointed Vice-President and Professor of Systematic Theology, History of Theology and Liturgy at the English College Lisbon (October 1953 to December 1966). Here he enjoyed the wider, expatriate scene, lecturing for the British Council in Lisbon and Coimbra, and as a member of the Aquinas Society at the Irish Dominican Priory in Lisbon.

Archbishop Dwyer was translated from Leeds to Birmingham in 1965, and, retaining an interest in the newly-planned Trinity and All Saints College in his former diocese, persuaded Michael to take the post of Principal Lecturer in Theology there from January 1967; he became Head of Studies in Theology the following year. Trinity and All Saints, a mixed College of young men and women, was his ideal metier and he flourished there.

The College was a pioneer in Media Studies, and introduced a multi-disciplined Foundation Course for all students. This enabled Michael to indulge his love of film and he contributed to several courses on the cinema including *The Roman Catholic Church and the Contemporary Cinema* and *Bunuel's Surrealism*. He was able to travel widely to various European Film Festivals after being appointed the United Kingdom's Representative to the International Catholic Cinema Organization by Agnellus Andrew (1977). Michael delighted once in naughtily teasing the English and Welsh Bishops by showing a very provocative extract of the Monty Python film *The Meaning of Life* at a meeting of the Catholic Theological Association (1987). A former student and friend reflecting on his legacy said: "Michael enjoyed delivering the cinema course even more than we enjoyed being on the receiving end. Michael's great talent as a teacher shone here too – showing us how to look at and appreciate a film as film – as a human creation that can speak to us and tell us something about the human situation and ourselves."

He was challenging, often provocative – resolutely refusing to give us answers rather enabling us to find our own.”

From Bunuel to Benny Hill from Kierkegaard to Katherine Tate – he observed and relished all that was new, creative and sometimes (often in fact) a little off beam! He was able to comment incisively on so many areas of modern life because he had such a keen grasp of what had gone before. But like Kierkegaard he also understood that life “must be lived forwards” and live it he did. Many of his students from Trinity days became firm friends who enjoyed his sense of fun, friendship and support over a very long period of time. It was no surprise that one of his favourite films was Gabriel Axel’s 1987 film *Babette’s Feast*. Michael knew well the transformative power of sharing the fruits of the vine and the work of human hands, that good food and wine around a table with people could result in problems shared and perhaps solved, ideas explored, progress made, and friendships cemented.

During this time at Trinity, which Michael described as among his happiest, he also became a Member of the Faculty of Education in the University of Leeds (1969-76) and received the Brownlow Award at St Edmund’s House, Cambridge (Easter Term 1974). He also served on the National Theological Commission of the Bishops’ Conference (1973-1983) and on other bodies. He was an active member of the Catholic Theological Association, the Catholic Archives Society, and the Catholic Record Society, generously endowing for the latter a research fund to support students studying the historical connections between Catholicism in England and Wales and other countries on the European mainland. In 1997 he was created a Prelate of Honour.

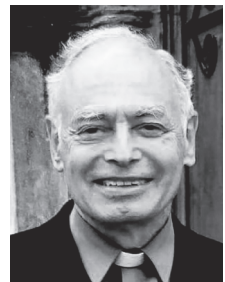
Michael delighted in his links with the Iberian Peninsula. For forty years he offered courses in Church History to the Auxiliaries of the Apostolate in Lourdes, travelling on to the English Seminary in Valladolid for a few weeks, where he kept a pair of slippers in waiting. Here he relished the wide range of cinemas, and, especially, the art house picture houses available in the city. His published writings were extensive, both in the fields of Theology and Church History, though many of Michael’s writings focussed on aspects of Catholicism in Spain and Portugal and on the English Colleges there: he published *St Alban’s College, Valladolid: Four Centuries of English Catholic Presence in Spain* (1986), and wrote several important articles on aspects of the English College, Lisbon. He also wrote *The Venerable English College, Rome* (1979 and 2008), in preparation for the fourth centenary of its opening.

Michael retired from Trinity and All Saints in the summer of 1987, remaining very much part of the community and living in his house just off campus, until ill-health determined the necessity of a move to Aston Hall, Birmingham, in 2006-7. In 2011, in need of additional nursing care, he moved to Nazareth House, Manchester, but still delighted in meeting and chatting to old friends, getting frailer with the years, but his eyes retaining that familiar impish and challenging sparkle. He died there on the morning of 1 February 2016, and was buried in the cemetery at Oscott after a funeral in the College Chapel, presided over by Archbishop Longley, and attended by many family and friends, on Thursday 25 February 2016.

Fr Peter Phillips

### *Fr Michael Koppel, 30 July 1946 - 18 May 2016*

Michael came to the English College in 1988 at the age of 42 years, having already behind him distinguished undergraduate studies at Oxford and a successful career in accountancy with Price Waterhouse. In some ways a very shy man, his dry humour and exceptional self-discipline enabled him to put a brave face on what must have been a difficult adjustment to institutional life. He threw himself into his studies and other duties with characteristic generosity and thoroughness.



Two particular contributions to College life spring to mind. First, he had an extraordinary facility for producing accurate and VERY concise course notes at the Greg, and these were, needless to say, invaluable to his classmates. Secondly, his financial expertise meant that he was an obvious choice to be College banker, a role that he undertook with enviable good humour and competence. Despite a somewhat formal exterior, Michael had a rare depth of humanity and during his time at the College, there could have been no doubt in anyone's mind that he would flourish in pastoral ministry. His intellectual ability was the stuff of legend—I can testify very personally to that, having tapped into his store of knowledge and wisdom countless times—yet he wore it with an equally legendary lightness.

After ordination, he served faithfully in the Diocese of Plymouth in a number of appointments: Curate at Sacred Heart, Exeter; Parish Priest of Okehampton and Chagford and finally Parish Priest of his hometown of Axminster together with Seaton and Lyme Regis, where he was able to look after his elderly mother until her death at a great age only a few years ago. He also fulfilled roles in the Diocese as Priest-in-Charge of the formation of Permanent Deacons and as Episcopal Vicar for Finance and Administration. He was for many years a Diocesan Trustee, sharing his professional expertise.

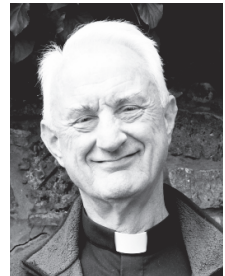
Adrian Toffolo writes: "To all of these duties he brought a quiet professionalism, and was able to use his very English sense of humour to good effect. His funeral at Axminster was a warm and affectionate occasion, and revealed how much people had taken this quiet and reserved man to their hearts."

Michael bore his final illness with characteristic fortitude. He died peacefully at his sister's home on 18 May 2016. He will never be forgotten by those of us who had the privilege of being counted among his friends.

Fr Bruce Burbidge

### *Mgr Anthony Philpot, 24 March 1935 - 16 July 2016*

It is a daunting task to pen an appreciation of a man like Tony Philpot: a man of rare greatness, brought into greater relief by his almost excessive and very genuine humility. Hundreds of thousands of Catholic folk, whether cleric or lay, have been privileged at one time or another to sample his masterful spiritual talks. These revealed him as a man of extraordinary faith, of great culture, of subtle humour and of profound human empathy. But he was outstanding too in other ways: as a polyglot linguist, a gentle and sensitive pastor, a lecturer in spirituality, a wise spiritual director... the list could go on.



My earliest personal memories of Tony go back to the mid-eighties, when (as a university student) I would often go to him for confession. There were at that time many priests I could have approached for the sacrament, but there was something about his personal witness and compassionate wisdom that drew me to him. Within five years of that time, I had entered seminary for the Diocese of East Anglia of which he was Vicar General. During my years in seminary he found many ways of giving me and my fellow seminarians practical support, which went far beyond the call of duty: he was not our vocations director, he was merely living out his vocation to build up a brotherhood among the priests, something on which he has written inspiring pages and in which he believed with a passion.

The years of my closest association were those when we were both on the formation staff of the College. He had been Director-Chaplain of Palazzola from 1997, and then became Spiritual Director to the College community from 2001-2006. I joined the staff in 2002. Tony's amazing weekly conferences were delivered in the midst of a punishing schedule of one-to-one spiritual direction sessions for many of the College students and many more from outside, lectures at the Beda, and periodic retreats which he was invited to give elsewhere. But what was most important to me was his deep, uncomplicated friendship: he was the living embodiment of priestly fraternity.

I was to benefit even longer from Tony's extraordinary friendship and faithful support when, on leaving the VEC in 2008, I became Parish Priest in Peterborough, where Tony then lived. In a characteristically generous (not to say heroic) vein, during his final year at the VEC, by dint of furious study, he added Portuguese to an already impressive list of fluent foreign languages. He did this in order to be able to minister to the Portuguese community in the western part of the Diocese – a spontaneous initiative arising from the recurrent appeals in the *Ad Clerum* for a Portuguese-speaking priest to come forward to undertake this work. The Portuguese community was not the only thing to take up his time: he was frequently away doing supplies for other priests, giving talks in many places up and down the country and further afield, and continuing his work of spiritual direction. While still in Peterborough he began regular visits as adjunct Spiritual Director to Allen Hall, a role he would retain until prevented by his final illness.

Gradually over the years I picked up snippets about the earlier years before I had met him. He went to seminary at 17. His legendary learning was the fruit of his studies at the Gregorian University and his assiduous and extensive subsequent reading. He was clearly a conscientious seminarian, and he took that conscientious attitude with him to his priestly ministry. From time to time he would tell me stories about how rigidly he had applied Church discipline in those early days without yet having acquired the knack (so he thought) of encouraging the weak. He always did whatever was asked of him, in the diocese or elsewhere. I am not able to give details and dates for his early appointments. They included a curacy in Bedford, and time as PP of St Mark's, Ipswich and Our Lady and St Etheldreda, Newmarket. He generously spent time in South America with the Society of St James.

In 1980 he became Parish Priest of Our Lady and the English Martyrs in Cambridge, where he remained until 1994. At that point he was surprised to be re-appointed to St Mark's, Ipswich, on the departure of the Franciscan community which had been keeping the parish warm for him for twenty years. He was there only for a short time, until he undertook the role of Director-Chaplain at Palazzola. He served for a time as International *Responsable* of the Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests and he kept up a long and fruitful friendship with the whole spiritual family of Blessed Charles de Foucauld.

Tony always underestimated the affection in which he was held by countless people. As he struggled with health issues in recent years, it seemed his only concern was not to be a nuisance to anyone. He was extremely grateful for the opportunity to move to St Anne's Home in Stoke Newington two years ago and for the care he received there.

The loss of such a man leaves a very big gap in the life of our national Church. His contribution to the faith, hope and love of countless present-day Catholics is incalculable. No doubt he will, like little Thérèse, "spend his heaven doing good on earth". Our prayers and love go with him.

Fr Bruce Burbidge

### *Fr Anthony Grimshaw 28 November 1936 - 13 August 2016*

Anthony Grimshaw should not have made it to ordination. Just months before he was ordained the car in which he was travelling went over the edge of the new road down to Lake Albano. It did one and a half turns down the cliff side before coming to rest upside down against an obliging tree. Tony had the presence of mind to switch off the ignition. He recalled the incident in his obituary notice of Alfredo Piacentini:

*When I arrived in my over-laden car on 27 February 1988 to come and live at Palazzola, Alfredo popped his head from his door and took one deep and searching look at me and shouted, over his shoulder, to Fernanda his wife: "Hey, Fernaaa, è vero, è lo studente del incidente!" The incident being in my last Villa in 1961. I*



was one of the three students who with a member of staff nearly rolled the College Austin car right down to the lake!

Tony omitted to mention the sequel. Those of us who were at the Villa that summer remember it well! When the Rector, Mgr Gerard Tickle, paused – for once lost for words in the loud rollicking he was dealing out in the salone – Tony prompted him with: “It’s all right, Sir, get it off your chest!” The subsequent rectorial explosion was surely audible in Rocca. Perhaps it was no bad thing that Tony’s uncle was the Archbishop of Birmingham. It should be added that the Rector never held grudges. The very next morning Mgr Tickle sent for Tony to ask him to drive some friends to the airport, using another College car.

What could have been a fatal accident would have deprived the Church and the world of a splendid priest. Tony was to serve at home and abroad; in the inner-city and in the countryside; in college and in parish. To all his appointments he brought a very personal combination of happiness and contagious enthusiasm for the Catholic Faith, attracting people in many walks of life and in many places.

“I have been most wonderfully happy all the time in Chipping”, Fr Anthony Grimshaw said on his retirement last year. He could have added: “and everywhere I have been.” Mgr Stephen Rossetti’s study *Why Priests are Happy* published in 2011 showed why the Catholic priesthood remains among the happiest of vocations. Fr Tony Grimshaw was living proof of that.

Born in Ancoats, Manchester in 1936, where his parents kept a post office, Tony was the eldest of five children. At first he thought of being an electrical engineer. That was until the Lent of 1953 when he attempted to “bribe God”. At school in St Bede’s College, Manchester, and aged just 16, his promise to attend Mass and communion each day and to do the Stations of the Cross on his way home from school in return for God getting him through his O levels led him to discover his calling. “I declared this before Lent was over to my parents, parish priest and rector of the college,” Tony recalled. He went on to become a boarder at St Bede’s to learn Latin, adding that he also learnt a lesson never to bribe God – failing half his O levels. He did, however, successfully re-sit them, also passing three A levels before “the real test”: seven years of philosophy and theology at the Greg. He came to the Venerabile in 1955 where his electrical bent came in useful. He was the College “bodger” and electrician; he designed and made for the College stage the electrical apparatus named “Avancinus” – the fruit of much meditation – which served for many generations of students. Who can forget the gusto with which he pioneered the use of tape recorders in the College? Grundig became a household name for many a non-technical student. An ardent and hardy swimmer Tony insisted on keeping the College tradition of opening the tank on St Gregory’s day – then 12 March – as well as swimming the lake during the *Villeggiatura*. His frame supported a great tenor voice and he made many an appearance in Gilbert and Sullivan.

Ordained priest on 29 October 1961 he returned to the Salford Diocese the following year. Subsequent reunions with his year, together with those from the Scots College, became a regular event, eagerly supported, as he did the annual northern Mass on the feast of the College Martyrs – to which he always brought a bottle of Punt e Mes, insisting on making the College cocktail properly. His rousing rendition of *Ad multos annos* will be missed.

Taking up his first appointment at St Bede’s College on his return to the diocese he again found his skills in demand; staff with a mechanical problem would always turn to him. For four years at St Bede’s he was choirmaster and prefect of discipline. His horizons then broadened when Bishop Holland acceded to his request to go to Africa as a *Fidei donum* priest. Seven years in Kenya – mainly in Kisumu and Nyabondo – gave him the missionary outlet he craved and enlarged his vision. The locals there gave him the sobriquet of “the one who smiles”. While at St Bede’s he had shown great care and personal interest in every one of the boarders. Now from Kenya he regaled them with stories from the

missions; they listened enthralled to the long tapes he sent them. It seemed natural that on his return from Africa he should be appointed in charge of Overseas Mission for the Salford Diocese and then for CAFOD, based in Soho.

His parochial appointments in the Salford Diocese ranged from the inner-city to the quiet countryside: Higher Broughton, Collyhurst, Longridge, Todmorden, Blackley, Bolton and finally Chipping. Parishioners speak of his humility but especially of his down-to-earth approach which was able to translate doctrine and morals into understandable, homely terms. For some time he was an enthusiast of CB radio: his call was "Gaffer of a God-box"! One man whom he contacted through CB says: "He saved my life and my soul when I was 17." They remained friends ever after, the man naming his son after Fr Anthony and flying from South Carolina to be present at his funeral. When mobile phones came in later Tony wholeheartedly embraced them. He advertised his numbers so that he could be available to his people at all times.

In between those parochial appointments, and of special import to the Venerabile, came his ten years as director of Palazzola. Warm and welcoming to everybody, he spent himself generously there and did so much of the preparatory work that turned the place round. From being used for just a few summer months, and therefore not viable in the long term, Palazzola became a comfortable Villa that welcomed guests all year round. His memory is revered there still and some still use his word for *l'ascensore: Tiramisu*. Giuseppe recalls Fr Tony's "generosity, his love for the family and for the place, for food (Fernanda's and Julie's pasta) and his special devotion to the College, as well as his friendship with all the pilgrims and staff. Lots of people still ask for him."

Celebrating his golden jubilee of priesthood, Tony recalled that being able to grant forgiveness through the sacrament of reconciliation had given him the most fulfilment. He said this was one of the aspects of a priest's job that was perhaps the least spoken about and one of the most satisfying things, when someone "returned to God's love." "I have been in Kenya, in London, in Longridge, in Italy; I have heard confessions in Italian. People are just so happy to have forgiveness. Seeing the joy that comes to people who confess some misdeed is wonderful," he said. "They go away truly rejoicing. People go for years without confessing. It may be having hit their own mother or father. Penance is the sacrament of reconciliation." After a triple bypass operation in 2008 Fr Tony went to St Mary's, Chipping, as parish priest. Difficulty with mobility – he attributed it to riding his "piki piki" (motor bike) over rough roads in Kenya many years before – did not deter him. He became a well-known figure on his electric scooter on the lanes around Chipping and even up Longridge Fell. The BBC did a memorable television programme about him in 2012. In December 2015 Fr Tony retired to live at Cathedral House in Salford. This once passionate cook, rail and tramway and CB enthusiast, who enjoyed music and computers, cycling, swimming and rugby, was finally coming into harbour. He lost some of his "bounce" and he gently went to God in North Manchester General Hospital on Saturday 13 August 2016. One of his last actions while on his death bed was to bless some water and ask his brother Peter and me to sprinkle it around the ward for the benefit of the other patients.

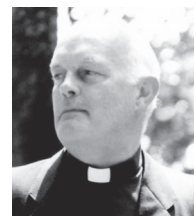
His body was received into Salford Cathedral on 30 August 2016 with his Requiem Mass the next day and he was buried in St Mary's Cemetery, Wardley.

How we will miss the company of this man of humour and devoted priest! May his great soul rest in peace!

Mgr John Allen

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As *The Venerabile* was going to press we learned of the sad death of former College Rector and Liverpool priest, **Mgr Jack Kennedy** who died on 13 September 2016. He was Rector from 1984 to 1991. A full obituary will appear in the next issue.



# Report of the Friends of the Venerable

MICHAEL LANG



**THE 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL** Meeting returned to London making use of excellent facilities provided by Our Lady of Victories in Kensington. The meeting was delayed from its usual September timing into October to enable us to welcome the Rector, Mgr. Philip Whitmore, (on his first visit to a **Friends** AGM) and also the Director of Villa Palazzola, Mrs Joyce Hunter. Additionally we also welcomed the new Auxillary Bishop of Westminster, Bishop Nicholas Hudson.

Mgr Philip presented the last year at the College by talking through a series of photographs which included two outstanding events – the visit to the Turin Shroud exhibition and also the very moving pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

The Chairman and Secretary were re-elected and Mr Adrian Rogers was elected as Treasurer. We welcome Adrian, who is the Assistant Accountant for the Clifton Diocese, to the **Friends** and thank him for taking over from Hamish Keith.

Mr Jeremy Hudson announced his desire to stand down from the committee assuming there were sufficient volunteers and subsequently the committee was re-elected with the addition of Mr Paul Smith.

During the meeting it was announced that the Friends are the recipients of a £25,000 legacy and as a result we would be funding the renovation of the Tennis Court at Palazzola. Jeremy Hudson recalled that a previous **Friends** project some 25 years ago was the resurfacing of the Tennis Court.

Following the success of the Buckfast “away weekend” the committee was asked to consider a similar event in 2016 – see below.

In the afternoon, Joyce Hunter presented a series of slides showing the changes which have happened during recent times at the Villa.

The day was completed with Holy Mass celebrated by the Rector.

Sadly, due to the delay of the meeting, we were unable to welcome the Senior Student, Rev. Tom Cunnah, as he needed to be in Rome for academic reasons.

Once again, the **Friends** were in attendance at the Westminster Diocese “Towards Advent” festival which, sadly I was unable to attend due to illness. However, I am told it was very successful and I would like to thank all those who attended.

At our first meeting Louise Bradley and Anthony Coles volunteered to organise an “away mid-week” based around a visit to Prinknash Abbey in Gloucestershire. This was arranged for May and included a wonderful tour of Gloucester Cathedral, a visit to the Docks’ retail complex and a trip along the Gloucester – Sharpness Canal on a boat which had taken part in the Dunkirk evacuations during the Second World War.

And now as I write this report, I am looking forward to attending the various ordinations during the summer. Sadly, once again two ordinations take place on the same day, thus I will not be able to attend them all, but as usual I hope to be able to circulate the transcripts of the homilies when we distribute the next issue of VV.

Despite continuous efforts by the committee we have been unsuccessful in our membership drive; this gives me cause for concern because as our numbers drop so does the bank balance and we are unable to provide the level of financial support to the various projects which help to improve the facilities available to the students.



**MICHAEL LANG** is Chairman of the Friends of the Venerabile.

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# 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 paid for the resurfacing of the tennis courts at Palazzola and for the installation of a loop system in the church and the conference room.

### For further information

Please visit our website: [www.friendsoftheenglishcollegerome.org.uk](http://www.friendsoftheenglishcollegerome.org.uk)

### Contacts

**Chairman:** Mr Mike Lang,  
St Angelo, Grange Road,  
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Tel: 01364 644811  
Email: [mikelang537@btinternet.com](mailto:mikelang537@btinternet.com)

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Tel: 01274 568500  
Email: [JHGlenewes@aol.com](mailto:JHGlenewes@aol.com)

# House List 2015-2016



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle (Year II)

POLAND John (Liverpool)

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle (Year I)

FAWCETT Stephen (Birmingham)

LOPEZ Jorge (San Luis, Arg.)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle (Year II)

AMARI Guido (Westminster)

ANDREWS Philip (Southwark)

ATHAIDE Kevin (Nottingham)

CHASE Andrew (Rockhampton)

CUNNAH Thomas (Shrewsbury)

DEAS Michael (Salford)

HOWELL David (Southwark)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle (Year I)

BOWDEN Andrew (Westminster)

NOWOTNIK Jan (Birmingham)

PAVER Mark (Salford)

STODDART Peter (Hexham & Newcastle)

WRIGHT Elliott (Leeds)

## 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Theology (Year III)

CRANFIELD Tristan (Arundel & Brighton)

DENCH Gary (Brentwood)

MARSDEN Richard (Middlesbrough)

MURPHY Francis (Southwark)

PINEDA Antonio (Westminster)

RAKOWSKI Michael (Northampton)

VIAN CLARK Michael (Plymouth)

WOODLEY Benjamin (Westminster)

## 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Theology (Year II)

EGAWHARY Marco (Birmingham)

HILTON Benjamin (Leeds)

IRWIN David (Shrewsbury)

LEIGHTELL Steven (Middlesbrough)

SERVICE Ryan (Birmingham)

WATERS John (Birmingham)

## 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Theology (Year I)

LAWES Albert (Plymouth)

NGUYEN Hai (Oslo)

OTTERSEN Josef (Oslo)

ROBERTS Haris (Nottingham)

TAYLOR Peter (Middlesbrough)

## 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Philosophy (Year II)

BALZANELLA Alexander (Westminster)

JENKINSON Dominic (Hallam)

KING Matthew (Portsmouth)

WYGNANSKI Piotr (East Anglia)

## 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Philosophy (Year I)

COY Andrew (Northampton)

DIXON Joshua (Liverpool)

ELLIOTT Sean (Leeds)

GOGGIN Matthew (Portsmouth)

WASOWSKI Alan (Leeds)

WELSFORD Oliver (Portsmouth)

WOODHOUSE Henry (Hallam)

## KEY

Student Priests	6
E & W Seminarians	37
Other Seminarians	2
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS</b>	<b>45</b>
TOTAL SEMINARIANS	39

# *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. Michael Cooley, Rev. Paul Daly, Rev. Gerard Skinner, Mr Peter Purdue, Rev. Paul Keane.

## **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](mailto:alwilcox19@gmail.com)

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

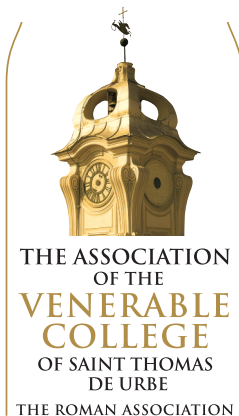
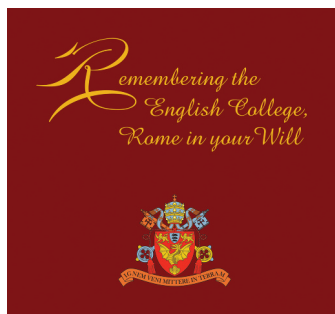
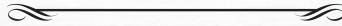


Photo: Bishop Nicholas Hudson



# THIS YEAR IN PALAZZOLA



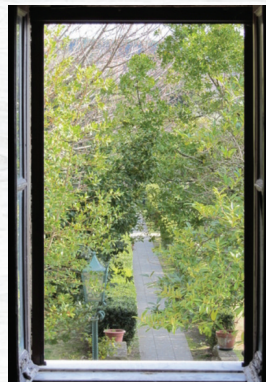
With the evenings drawing in, wouldn't it be great if there was a way to shorten the winter? What better than to plan a low-season visit to Palazzola. It's fantastic value, you'll have bright, clear late autumn or early spring days, the Villa is less busy, airfares are lower and you'll avoid the crowds if you decide to go down to Rome.

The Villa is the perfect place for a break with friends or for a year reunion, a chance to relax and share stories and memories of your College days in this much loved *anticamera di Paradiso*. There you'll enjoy hearty meals and sleep soundly in comfortable, refurbished ensuite rooms with central heating.



There are lots of off-road walks nearby. Take a gentle stroll up to Rocca di Papa, wander round the lake to Albano for a cappuccino (short detour needed via the Sforza) or if you're energetic, head for Nemi. Just the thing to work up an appetite for lunch. Palazzola can even book a taxi for the return journey.

There is always a warm welcome for *Venerabilini* so check your diary, invite a few friends, gather a few of your year or visit on your own. Then log onto the Villa website, [www.palazzola.it](http://www.palazzola.it) and book yourself that well deserved break. You'll return relaxed, refreshed and ready for anything life throws at you.



*All photos from Palazzola website*

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