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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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Editor: Andrew Coy (Northampton)

Deputy Editor: Oliver Welsford (Portsmouth)

Secretary: Anthony Fyk (Portsmouth)

Business Editor: Toby Duckworth (Birmingham)

Photographers: Alexander Balzanella (Westminster), Antonio Pineda (Westminster), Richard Marsden (Middlesbrough)

Publishing Consultant: Fergus Mulligan Communications; email: fmcomms@icloud.com; www.publishing.ie

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To contact the Editor please email thevenerabile@googlemail.com.

Venerabile Collegio Inglese
Via di Monserrato, 45
00186 Roma, Italia

Tel. +39 06 686 8546

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Front cover: Detail of a window on the College staircase depicting St Ralph Sherwin - the College's first martyr. Photo: Alexander Balzanella.

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

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

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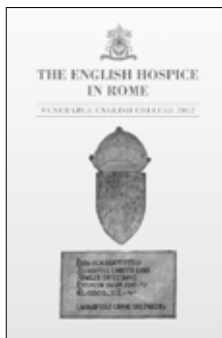
Recent books on the English College

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

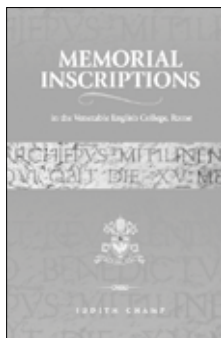
They can be purchased by callers to the College or ordered by e-mail from this address:

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



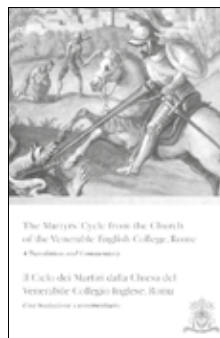
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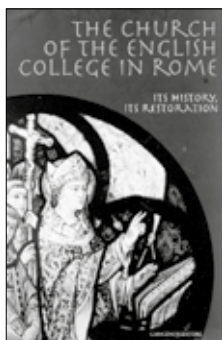
Memorial Inscriptions,
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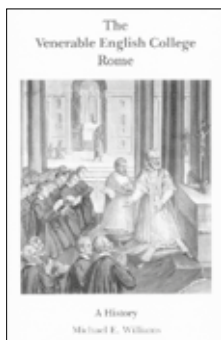
The Venerable English College, Rome: A Short History and Guide, Mark Langham,



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



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



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



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

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.

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

Editorial

ANDREW COY



"We do not want, as the newspapers say, a Church that will move with the world. We want a Church that will move the world...It is by that test that history will really judge of any Church whether it is the real Church or no."

These oft-quoted words of G. K. Chesterton ring truer today than ever before. The Church has always been called to be a witness to the Truth throughout the ages. One of the many lessons that history can teach us is that the Church has often triumphed, in the most authentic sense, through adversity. The Venerable English College is certainly no exception to this rule. Our seminary's history is rightly a source of great pride for all those who are associated with it - in particular, the noble tradition of the martyrs. Yet, this tradition is not just about finding a sense of identity. The martyrs are a powerful expression of the extent to which we are called to be faithful to our vocation and to live lives rooted in Christ and his Church. They are, in the truest sense of the word, a "living" witness. Our challenge is not to distance ourselves from our past by admiring it from afar as an age of valour and virtue that can no longer speak to a Britain characterised by comfortable indifference. Rather, we are called to en flesh it in our own lives of faithful service. It is in this way that we may truly form a Church that has the capacity to move the world.

This year's edition, therefore, is a celebration of history, and the Church's continued mission to the world. With a history as long and as rich as ours, any given year is bound to provide reason to commemorate the extraordinary events and people associated with the College. Nonetheless, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that 2018 is a year of considerable significance. According to the year given in the breviary, we mark the 900th year of the birth of St Thomas Becket, to whom the College church is dedicated. We also celebrate, along with all English seminaries, the 450th anniversary of the founding of the English seminary at Douai. Finally, we mark the 200th anniversary of the re-opening of the College after the devastation afforded it at the hands of Napoleon's army.

The importance of the College martyrs to the Church in Britain today is something taken up in our first article, written by eminent historian, Professor Jack Scarisbrick. Here, he explores how the memory of the martyrs can inspire a renewed fervour in the New Evangelisation and an authentic spirituality of sacrifice and selflessness.

One of the great challenges in the early Church was how Christian believers should relate to the pagan world in their everyday lives. This is certainly something we witnessed at first hand in the magnificent ruins of the libraries, theatres and gymnasiums of pagan civilisations scattered throughout Turkey during the pilgrimage with which we started the year. In our second article, Fr Mark Paver draws upon his wealth of knowledge from his Scriptural studies to shed light on some of the mysterious passages of Revelation which inspired our visit to the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse.

In our third article, Michael Wee explores some of the challenges that face the Church today in responding to the perversities proposed by modern anthropological and philosophical thought. This is particularly poignant as this year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of that

great and prophetic encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, as well as the canonisation of Pope Paul VI.

The theme of martyrdom is once again taken up in our fourth article: Archbishop Di Noia's stirring homily, delivered on Martyrs' Day 2017. Here, Archbishop Di Noia traces martyrdom throughout the history of the Church and draws us into an understanding of what it was which enabled such individuals to bear the ultimate sacrifice for their faith.

In our fifth article, Canon John Udris meditates on the life of G. K. Chesterton, and, in particular, the way in which he was so inspired by St Francis of Assisi. At the time of print, the Cause for Chesterton's canonisation has been gaining momentum, and this offers us an insight into one of the greatest influences on his spirituality.

The next two articles are, in many ways, a fruit of the anniversaries we celebrate this year. Our sixth article is an account from Edward Hauschild of a symposium which was held in Rome, featuring a number of renowned speakers, and exploring various aspects of the history relating to the English seminaries in both Rome and Douai.

Following on from this, the College was invited to a private audience with the Holy Father. Here, his address to the College is printed, in which he presents his "foundation stones" for good living.

Finally, we look to the future and the ways in which the Church can continue to minister to the needs of the world and be an authentic witness to the Truth. Sr Bernadette Reis explores the ways in which the Church has communicated to the world in the past, and what may need to change in order for this to be successful in the years to come.

While it has been a joy and a privilege to serve this year as Editor, it would not have been possible without the contribution of a great many. I extend a heartfelt thank you to all those who have contributed to this year's edition, especially those who have written articles. Thanks also must go to Oliver Welsford (Deputy Editor), Toby Duckworth (Business Manager) and Anthony Fyk (Secretary) for their work throughout the year. A note of gratitude also goes to our Diarist, Dominic Jenkinson, who has ensured that the key moments of the year, from the sublime to the ridiculous, have been noted. I am grateful, also, to all who have contributed photographs, which have enabled a pictorial chronicle of the past year. A particular thanks must go to Alexander Balzanella, who, in his role as house photographer and also as Editor Emeritus, has been generous in his time and resources - particularly in guiding me through the world of technology, which, to me, might as well be magic. I should also like to pay tribute to the phenomenal amount of work done by Professor Maurice Whitehead over the past year - much of it unseen, though a glimpse can be afforded in his report from the College Archives. Finally, thanks to Fergus Mulligan, our publisher, whose support and guidance have been invaluable, and to Fr Rector, who has accompanied the compilation of this edition throughout the year.

I do hope *The Venerabile 2018* speaks something of the Church's mission to the world, past and present. The future, however, is an uncertain one, and not a little daunting for those of us preparing for priestly ministry. I ask our readers, then, to keep us in your prayers - those of us still in training, and those who have returned to the mission in our home countries.



ANDREW COY is a fourth-year seminarian for the Diocese of Northampton, studying theology at the Gregorian University.

Why Our Martyrs Matter

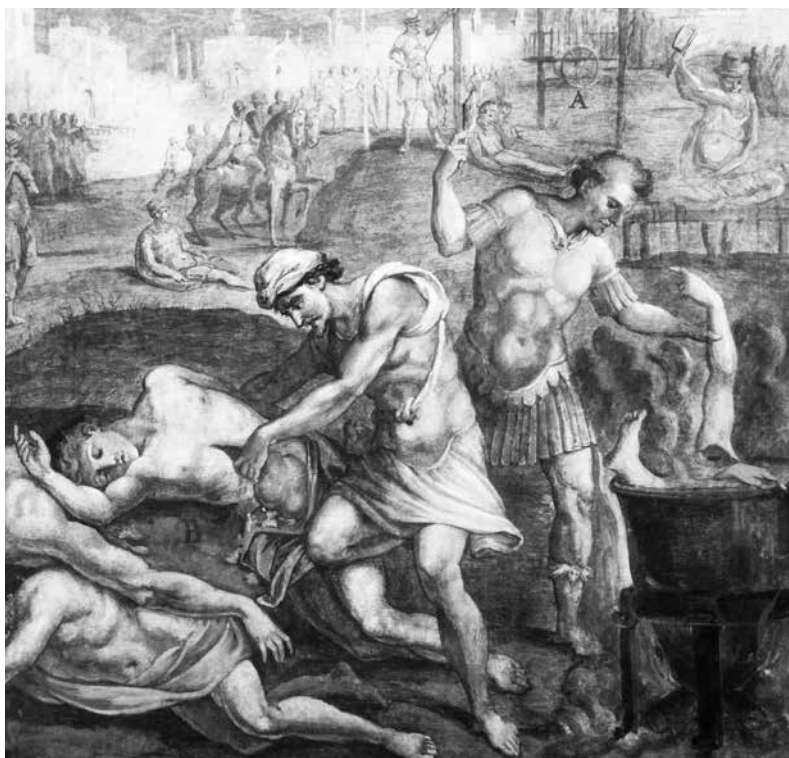
PROF. JACK SCARISBRICK



How true is that famous dictum about the blood of martyrs being the seed of the Church! It has been so since the beginning. Nothing inspired, secured, or confirmed the early Christian community more deeply than the horrifying persecution that it repeatedly endured and which, as the early martyrologist Eusebius tells us, could often see scores of followers of Christ, young and old, male and female (including all the early popes and the seven Roman women whose names are recited in Eucharistic Prayer 1), joyfully facing fearful penalties, such as public scourging, beheading, red-hot gridirons and lime pits, cauldrons of boiling oil or hungry lions.

Such heroism was richly rewarded. Again and again it was the witness of martyrs – lay men and women, priests and bishops, that won converts; and it was but ten years after the Great Persecution under the emperor Diocletian that Constantine in 313 granted what had hitherto seemed an impossibility, namely, an imperial edict of toleration of the new creed. True, there was more persecution to come. But martyrs had played a decisive role in founding Christendom.

From earliest times their mortal remains were cherished. Their places of burial quickly became shrines. Martyrs everywhere helped greatly to spread the Faith across Europe and



A depiction of the martyrdom of Edmund Campion and Ralph Sherwin in the College church. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

beyond. Think of what St Denys and his companions (let alone Joan of Arc) have meant to France, or martyr-king Wenceslaus and St Stanislaus to Polish Catholicism, for example. And then there were Roman Britain's St Alban, Anglo-Saxon martyr-kings Ethelbert and Edmund of East Anglia and St Edward, and Winifred of Holywell (not to mention our shadowy St George). Their shrines were famous centres of pilgrimage - but later outmatched by one of the greatest in Western Europe, namely, Thomas Becket's in Canterbury.

So, England was already a land rich in martyrs when the Reformation broke out and produced its uniquely rich harvest: led by John Fisher, the only cardinal ever to win the martyr's palm, even though cardinals wear red to remind them that they should be prepared to shed their blood for the Lord. He and Thomas More, of course, have long been held in high esteem by the English Catholic community. Less well known are the other martyrs of Henry's reign, who include three Benedictine abbots, Observant Franciscans, 18 Carthusians and seven secular priests - among them the headmaster of Eton - and Margaret Pole, the mother of Reginald Pole, the last Catholic archbishop of Canterbury.

Then came the extraordinarily rich harvest of martyr-priests who, trained in the new seminaries in Douai/Rheims, Rome, Valladolid, Seville and eventually (in 1627) in Lisbon, returned to their homeland to nurture an indomitable English Catholic community after England had been returned to the Protestant fold under Elizabeth I. Between 1568 and 1603 over 800 priests were ordained in these seminaries. No less than 123 were martyred - the first, of course, St Cuthbert Mayne, who was butchered in Launceston on 30 November 1577. And bloody persecution would continue intermittently for generations thereafter, ending in 1680, when 19 priests, including five seculars and eleven Jesuits, fell victims of the wicked fabrications of Titus Oates.

The Venerable has rightly held in highest esteem its 44 heroic martyrs. The effect their martyrdoms had on their contemporaries cannot be overstated. Perhaps the most powerful instance of this is the effect the martyrdom of Edmund Campion had on Henry Walpole. A fleck of blood from Edmund Campion's body while he was being disembowelled at Tyburn fell on Henry Walpole and so changed his life that the latter decided to enter the Society of Jesus - and would one day undergo similar martyrdom. It was witnessing the execution of a seminary priest at Tyburn that the future martyr Richard Newport, in his own words, "a heretic...was so moved therewith that presently [he] resolved to become Catholic and priest". So he told the large crowd when, together with a Benedictine priest, he was himself brutally killed at Tyburn on the eve of Whitsun 1612. And his martyrdom, widely reported, in turn inspired others.

Heroic layfolk did likewise. One Margaret Gage and her husband John of Croydon, Surrey, were both condemned to death for "harbouring" - and reprieved (but suffered severe loss of property). She was sentenced a second time and again pardoned. In the meantime they produced three priest sons. When Margaret died, John re-married and had two more sons who became priests.

Again and again we hear that young men who entered the English seminaries in Douai and Rome, etc. had parents who had endured prison or suffered heavy fines and loss of property on account of their recusancy. Both parents of Fr Vavator (Venerable student 1581-6), for instance, died in gaol for the faith; fellow-student John Fowler's father had likewise "constantly" endured prison. Similarly, both parents of the martyr Thomas Maxfield were in prison in Stafford when he was born (c.1585).

"Come rack, come rope": the tales of heroism and daring abound. But few outmatch that of the Venerable martyr, Thomas Tichborne. Ordained in 1592 and sent to England in 1594, he



The relics of St John Southworth in Westminster Cathedral. Photo: Flickr/CatholicWestminster

twice escaped capture: once from prison with his brother's help and then while being escorted by a gaoler through a London street, when a certain Thomas Hackshot knocked the gaoler down and allowed the priest to get away. Thomas was eventually arrested a third time, having been betrayed by an apostate priest, and martyred at Tyburn on 20 April 1602, together with two other priests (both of whom had had heroic careers); his brother and Thomas Hackshot having been caught and executed in the previous August.

We all know about the Tower of London and Tyburn (and the long painful journey, tied - often head downwards - to a hurdle, from Newgate prison down today's Holborn and Oxford Street to Marble Arch). But executions by beheading or the unspeakable ordeal of hanging and disembowelling took place in at least eight other places in the capital, including Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn Fields, St Paul's and Mile End Green, as well as Southwark and Isleworth.

We may know about the martyrdoms in York, Winchester and Lancaster - but not know that executions took place all over the country, including Andover, Beaumaris, Canterbury, Cardiff, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Chester, Chichester, Derby, Doncaster, Dorchester, Exeter, Gateshead, Gloucester, Hereford, Ipswich, Isle of Wight, Kingston-on-Thames, Launceston, Leominster, Lincoln, Newcastle, Norwich, Oakham, Oxford, Ripon, Rochester, Ruthin, Salisbury, Stafford, Usk, Warwick, Worcester, Wrexham.

All these places should have their shrines. Some do. Relics of some of those who bore the ultimate witness to the Lord are treasured: a piece of bone, a cloak, a walking-stick. The remains of the Bl. Thomas Maxfield mentioned above found their way to Spain and have long been venerated there. And we have the entire body of St John Southworth, a seminary priest who was hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn in 1654. His severed body was bought by the Spanish ambassador from the hangman, stitched together, embalmed, smuggled out of the country and buried in Douai. In 1927 it was disinterred and now lies in Westminster Cathedral for us all to venerate.

There were traitors and apostates, of course - some of whom did terrible damage. There was lamentable squabbling within the Catholic community, even at the height of persecution. To make matters worse, when St Pius V excommunicated Queen Elizabeth I in 1570 he may have helped to clarify issues and halt "drift", but he played right into the hands of an embittered queen and bitterly anti-Catholic ministers like Francis Walsingham. Things were made yet worse when England found itself at war with the country that saw itself as the supreme champion of the Faith, namely, imperial Spain. In truth, many - if not most - English Catholics were eager to be Elizabeth's loyal subjects, if only she would let them, and would have helped to fight off any Spanish invader. But it was easy for a Protestant queen to believe that a good Catholic could not be a loyal subject, especially when plots against her - real, contrived or imagined - were uncovered or conveniently "discovered".

Yes, Catholic Mary Tudor had persecuted ferociously. Death was the penalty for most crimes in those times; and many whom Mary burned would have burnt their fellow-victims if they had had the chance - so vehemently did they disagree among themselves. What above all "drove" Mary, as it did the heroic priests and Catholic layfolk of post-Reformation England, was the sure knowledge that they were the true heirs to centuries of English Christianity, that theirs was the authentic religion of the land. Thomas More had rounded on the arrogance, the audacity of those who claimed that Christian truth had lain hidden for centuries and now suddenly uncovered by them. The famous later Catholic challenge: "Where were you before Luther?" simply made the same point.

In the celebrated sermon which he preached to mark the restoration of the English Hierarchy in 1850, Bl. John Henry Newman asked:

Can we religiously suppose that the blood of our martyrs, three centuries ago and since, shall never receive its recompense? Those priests, secular and regular did they suffer for no end?...Oh my God, are they to have no reward? Are Thy martyrs to cry from under Thine altar for loving vengeance on this guilty people, and to cry in vain? Shall they lose life, and not gain a better life for the children of those who persecuted them?

As Newman hoped, our martyrs did indeed do much to inspire that great renewal of English Catholicism which the cardinal was predicting. This was a Catholicism which in immediate post-Vatican II days would seem to some to be triumphalist, un-ecumenical and so on. But to think thus is misguided. We must cherish our heroic past. We must pray that that heritage be enriched by the blood of new martyrs.

We must do so because we live today amidst an increasingly aggressive neo-paganism. The Established Church no longer acts as the nation's moral guardian - indeed, cannot. Other Christian bodies are in similar decline. Only the Catholic Church can challenge our post-Christian culture and liberate our society from its present blindness and confusion. The battle will be a furious one. Blood will be shed.



PROFESSOR JACK SCARISBRICK MBE is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Warwick. A specialist in Tudor history, he has written acclaimed works on Henry VIII and the English Reformation. He is also the co-founder, with his wife, Nuala, of the Life charity.

“You hold fast my name”: the VEC Pilgrimage to the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse

FR MARK PAVER



Thanks to the generous benefaction provided by Nicholas and Pamela Coote, the College was able to start the year 2017-2018 with a pilgrimage to modern-day Turkey to the “Seven Churches of Revelation”: recipients of “letters” as described in chapters 2 and 3 of the Book of Revelation:

I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, “Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.” (Rev. 1:10-11)

Were one to imagine that there might be a church building at any of the sites we were to visit, one would be disappointed. There isn’t. Indeed, there wasn’t even at the time of writing of the letters. The Greek word for Church, Εκκλησια, comes from the combination of the preposition εκ, meaning “out” or “from”, and the verb καλέω, meaning to call. Thus the Church of Christ were those people called out to gather together in the name of Christ. They did this in each others’ homes amidst the society in which they lived. Any churches that were built on these sites, as happened in most cases, came later, after Christianity was decriminalised in the Roman Empire by the Edict of Milan in 313 AD. As such, the sites visited during our time in Turkey were mostly remains of pagan cities in which had grown 1st century Christian communities: “churches”.

Smyrna

After two flights from Rome, we arrived in the Turkish City of Izmir (formerly known as Smyrna) on the Turkish Aegean Coast. It is the third most populous city in Turkey, after Istanbul and Ankara, with almost three million inhabitants. Here we met the guide who would be with us all week - Mine - whose name, amusingly, was used on signs to designate which tables in the hotels were for our use. As Fr Rector, with characteristic perspicacity remarked, the signs should really have read “Ours”.

The pilgrimage began in earnest with a visit to the Church of St Polycarp in Izmir. St Polycarp, a disciple of St John the Evangelist, was the first bishop of Smyrna and was martyred at the age of 86 in 155 AD. His successor, the current Archbishop of Izmir, Lorenzo Piretto, welcomed us to the church which was built in the 17th century and restored in the 19th. All of the churches we would visit are found in his archdiocese.

The Christian population of Turkey is low - around 2%. While it is officially a secular country, the matter is controversial and sensitive, and public worship is not recommended.

Consequently, Mass was celebrated within the hotels on three of the six days. On our first day however, we were able to celebrate Mass at the Cathedral of Izmir, dedicated to St John the Evangelist. After Mass, our group, weary from our travels, made our way by coach to our hotel for a late dinner and an early night.

Pergamum

“And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.’ ‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is; you hold fast my name and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.’” (Rev. 2:12-13 RSV)

Wednesday began with Mass in the hotel, followed by our first introduction to the extravagance of the Turkish resort hotel breakfast. Stuffed vine leaves, exotic fruits and delicacies of all shapes and sizes abounded. Fully satiated, the group headed off for a full day tour of Pergamum.

Here we took a cable car up to the old city where a spectacular theatre could be found cut into the hillside. We also witnessed what was left of the Temple of Athena, the “Agora” or Forum and the Altar of Zeus. What it might have looked like on the hillside in Pergamum was left to our collective imaginations, with almost the entire site now residing in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. A theme began here that developed throughout the week: those countries willing to pay to do the excavation work at various sites claimed the right to first pickings on the riches discovered. Over the decades, much has also made its way to the British Museum. Whatever the politics involved it is incontrovertible that what is left behind is impoverished and what has been taken incomplete and detached from its context.

Much of what St John writes to the Churches in the Book of Revelation is to warn against pagan practices. In the case of the letter to Pergamum, we may speculate that the “Satan” referred to in verses 12 and 13 might be a direct reference to the Altar of Zeus, pagan god *par excellence*. With the warnings of St John ringing in our ears and a good lunch sitting on our stomachs, an increasingly sleepy group made their way around the medical centre of Pergamum - Asclepium - in the afternoon, the sun beating down ever stronger from the blue sky. In the late afternoon we returned happily to our hotel for a rest and a good dinner.

Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia

Thursday was the busiest day of the pilgrimage. We visited three of the Seven Churches - Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia. After Mass in the hotel we headed quickly towards Thyatira. Here there was little left of the town from the early Christian era and after a reading of Rev. 2:18-19, most of the group took the chance of a mid-morning Turkish coffee in the nearby bars. Back onto the coach for the drive to Sardis, where we found the ruins of a Byzantine church as well as the Synagogue. After lunch we had another long drive in store, but this time we were strengthened by the words of St Melito of Sardis (2nd century), on which we had just meditated, “It is he who endured every kind of suffering in all those who foreshadowed him.” As the day was drawing to an end, we reached Philadelphia, the last of the day’s sites. Here we were temporarily delayed because of a political rally of sorts which had spilled onto the streets,. Eventually, however, we found our way to quite modest remains, principally made up of the 6th/7th century Basilica of St John.

Hierapolis and Laodicea

The next day began with Mass in the hotel before hitting the road again to two more important sites. The first was Hierapolis. Not one of the Seven Churches, Hierapolis is mentioned in St Paul’s letter to the Colossians and is very close to the ancient site of Colossae as well as

to Laodicea, the second of our pilgrim sites for the day. Hierapolis has a stunning and well reconstructed theatre, but of greater interest to Christian pilgrims is the fact that the hillside town is traditionally understood to be the location of the martyrdom of St Philip. Thus, we were able to visit the spot high up the hillside where his martyrdom is believed to have taken place and the nearby place of his burial before he was transferred to Rome, where he remains in the Basilica of the *Dodici Apostoli*.



The ancient theatre at Hierapolis. Photo: Andrew Coy

Making our way back down the hillside, many of the pilgrims took the chance to soothe their pilgrim feet (although most of the travelling on this pilgrimage had been done on their pilgrim rear ends) in the warm water pools for which the area is famed, and a popular pursuit amongst the many Russian tourists, most of whom appeared blissfully unaware that the first resting place of one of the Twelve Apostles was just a stone's throw away. I wonder if St Philip had bathed in the pools himself? Judging by the rave reviews from our group, I suspect he would have.

After a hearty lunch we headed to Laodicea, the seventh of the Seven Churches in the order in which they appear in the book of Revelation. It is the Church which receives perhaps the most stern warning of all from St John:

I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. (Rev. 3:15-16)

The warm water pools of Hierapolis and the reputedly cold water of Colossae lead some to read into this passage a geological reference in this admonishment of Laodicea compared to those other Churches. While that may be the case, the Church was encouraged further on by the words that would inspire William Holman Hunt's famous painting,

Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

Ephesus

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands. I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear evil men but have tested those who call themselves apostles but are not, and found them to be false; I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.'" (Rev. 2:1-3)



The House of Our Lady at Ephesus.
Photo: Richard Marsden

The day in Ephesus was an undoubted highlight of the pilgrimage. It began, after the customary hearty breakfast, with a tour of the old town. More than any other on this pilgrimage, the ruins of the town have been excavated and preserved to an extent that one

truly experiences the feel of the ancient community. Among the remains are houses which can be explored through various levels of glass walkways guiding through the careful excavations that have taken place and giving an unrivalled insight into the life of some of the more well endowed inhabitants of this ancient city. St Paul spent three years at Ephesus, estimated by scholars to be from 54 to 57 AD, from where he is believed to have written the letters to the Galatians, Philippians, Philemon and the first letter to the Corinthians. It is evident from the remains, as well as from the accounts in the Acts of the Apostles, that Ephesus was a thriving town. It was, of course, pagan, and the local deity, Artemis (also known as Diana of the Ephesians), had a Temple dedicated to her that was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, until it was destroyed in 401 AD. At the time of Paul, there was a healthy economy revolving around the production of hand made statues dedicated to her honour. When the living of the artisans who made these statues was threatened by the spread of Christianity, the riotous scenes described in Chapter 19 of Acts followed. These scenes centred on the theatre, which has been substantially reconstructed and our group was able to explore it. Other highlights of the town include the Library, the third biggest in the Ancient World after Alexandria and Pergamum.



Detailed carvings indicate the former splendour of Ephesus. Photo: Andrew Coy

A little away from the main sites and the flow of tourists, we were able to explore in relative privacy the site of the Council of Ephesus (431), where the Church declared the dogma of Mary Θεοτόκος, "God-bearer", or more commonly, "Mother of God". A basilica was subsequently built there, but was destroyed in the earthquakes that have plagued this region over the centuries. Before lunch we were able to visit the (also destroyed) Basilica of St John where we venerated the Evangelist's tomb.

In the afternoon the pilgrimage reached its high point with a visit to the house held by tradition to have been home to Our Lady and St John. Here we had the opportunity to visit this holy house and to celebrate Mass, giving thanks for the pilgrimage experience and the graces received. The house is away from the city itself, on a hill, in a tranquil setting tucked away among trees which shelter it from the sun. As we celebrated Mass, the sun was beginning to descend, causing the shadows of leaves to dance across the façade of the house in the breeze. Several seminarians commented on being struck by an overwhelming sense of peace, and we were all left deeply moved by the beauty of the place.

"When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold, your son!' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home." (John 19:26-27)

Istanbul

Our final day of the pilgrimage began, as the first, with an early start, a quick breakfast and a trip to the airport. This time to Izmir for a flight to Istanbul where we would spend a rainy but full and enjoyable day seeing some of the jewels of this fascinating city. The highlight was the Museum of Αγία Σοφία, Holy Wisdom. This site was home to a Christian church from as early as the 4th century when the original church was built under Constantius II. The current building, however, was opened in 537 under Justinian I, who triumphantly declared upon first



Hugh Logan, Jorge Lopez and Tristan Cranfield bathe their feet in the salty streams at Pamukkale. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

entering: "Solomon, I have outdone thee!" The church was an Eastern Orthodox cathedral and seat of the Patriarch of Constantinople for most of the period from 537 to 1453, at which point, with the rise of the Ottoman Empire, it was turned into a mosque. In 1931, the building was secularised and opened as a museum. Since then, many of the mosaics, covered at the time of the conversion of the church into a mosque, have been restored, giving a hint of its original beauty. The scale of the exterior is immense and, ironically, the shape of its domes eventually became the model for all mosques.

Passing by the impressive Blue Mosque, but without time to stop, we headed for the Sultan's Palace, where we spent time admiring the grandeur of this home to the sultans and the views of the Bosphorus it afforded. The afternoon was slightly more calm and, after lunch, we were able to celebrate Mass at the church of St Maria Draperis, a beautiful church tucked away off a busy street in the centre of the city. A chance to draw breath, give thanks and pray for all those who had made this pilgrimage possible. In just a few hours in Istanbul it was easy to sense how it has been a place of such cultural and strategic importance for world affairs, literally where the East meets the West, and in much more than just the geographic sense.

Rome Sweet Home

At just after 1.30 am on Monday 2 October, the coach drew up on the Lungotevere and a tired but enriched group of travellers descended and scurried, silently and with definite purpose, across the Via Giulia towards a longed-for bed. Much had happened in a short but crammed six days. Much that will be remembered for long to come. Much that will feed the mind and the soul throughout the upcoming year and beyond. Much to be thankful for. Much to praise God for. Amen.



MARK PAVER is a priest of the Diocese of Salford. Having spent a number of years living and studying at the Venerable English College, he completed his studies with a licence in Biblical Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

Human Dignity for Our Time

MICHAEL WEE



Human dignity is a concept that both attracts and eludes many. As Jacques Maritain said of his work in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “Yes, we agree about the rights but on condition that no-one asks why.”¹ The same might be said of the concept of human dignity. There is at least partial agreement about how it matters, but it is a difficult idea to explain. Yet, it is precisely when human dignity is threatened, as it is today by a wide array of practices – ranging from human trafficking and slavery to euthanasia and eugenics – and we point to the word “dignity”, as that which articulates the inarticulable value at stake, that we begin to see why the term still exerts such a pull on our moral imagination.

To better understand this word, we might do well to begin *in medias res* – in the midst of the contemporary attack on dignity – before returning to examine the principles.

I

During last year’s general election campaign in Britain, one of the most significant issues that came up was the controversy surrounding the “dementia tax”. The Conservative Party had proposed that people should contribute more towards the costs of social care from their own pockets, though the Prime Minister later promised a cap on such payments, which prompted accusations of a “U-Turn”.

Quite understandably, the dementia tax had been widely derided, but in the week following Theresa May’s announcement, the writer and former Conservative MP, Matthew Parris, wrote an article in *The Spectator* defending the original proposal and lamenting the new payments cap. He wrote: “the so-called dementia tax would, over time, have become a euthanasia bonus. And that would be a good thing.”² For Parris, morality was really the consequence of an innate Darwinian tendency in society, and he suggested that if this “will-to-survive” were allowed to evolve naturally, we might begin to feel a “dawning obligation to make provision for our own deaths”, flowing from the realisation that we might one day become too much of a burden on our families and our friends.

The subject of euthanasia, of course, is one often associated with talk about dignity – euthanasia is considered by many to be an affront to human dignity, yet it is also frequently spoken of under the guise of “dying with dignity”, such that those who oppose it are thereby thought to lack compassion. Yet Parris’ piece is bold because it makes even those who are not morally opposed in general to euthanasia uncomfortable. Many euthanasia advocates, who usually argue on the basis of individual autonomy in choosing one’s death, would probably like to give reassurances to the elderly and the terminally ill that euthanasia legislation would not leave them feeling like they were a burden on others if they did not opt for euthanasia. For that is surely not the picture of autonomy, or “dying with dignity”, they want to promote.



Pope Paul VI greeting Archbishop Karol Wojtyla of Krakow.

But there is a chilling realism about Parris' analysis. As many have warned, the "right to die" can quickly become the "duty to die". And, if like Parris you have a view of ethics that is essentially Darwinian, you would probably have little time for a fuzzy-sounding concept like dignity. Indeed, you might even find the idea of a "duty to die" appealing.

Must we, then, be social Darwinians in order to explain morality? As Christians, we need only to look, for example, at the Beatitudes to see how radically different the values of the Gospel are from the "will-to-survive". Nonetheless, the Christian can agree with the Darwinian on at least one thing: the question of "What rules does society need to survive and, indeed, prosper?" is not a bad starting point for moral reflection, at least from a philosophical perspective. After all, the moral virtues that our faith enjoins us to practise – honesty, humility, patience, temperance, justice, to name a few – are qualities that will help society survive and truly flourish. As Christ says, you can judge a tree by its fruit.

We might then say this to the Darwinian: that a form of morality which allows the weak and defenceless to be discarded because they are too burdensome is not the only recipe for survival. It is one kind of survival, of which there are echoes in the Ancient World and its practice of infanticide, but arguably not the best. Of course, this is dependent on what notion of flourishing we hold. But it is not wildly implausible that a kind of morality where we have compassion for the helpless is a better recipe for long-term survival and flourishing. Otherwise, once we start saying that one category of persons is eligible for euthanasia, an inevitable sense of arbitrariness begins to surround the law's unequal protection of human life.

The Catholic vision of the common good of society is hence a much needed antidote to the moral confusion of our time, which elevates individual autonomy yet is often blind to the way in which our choices are shaped by our neighbours'. The common good, which is foundational to Catholic Social Teaching, is not a matter of adding up all the goods that each individual seeks. Rather, it springs from a recognition that because of the kind of beings we are, we can really only reach the good in community. As the Catholic bishops of England and Wales write, "because we are interdependent, the common good is more like a multiplication sum, where if any one number is zero then the total is always zero. If anyone is left out and deprived of what is essential, then the common good has been betrayed."³ The common good helps us to discover what virtues – broadly speaking, character traits or dispositions that help us aim at the good – are needed by society, among which must surely number compassion for the vulnerable, such as those living with dementia or who need various forms of social care.



Pope Benedict XVI visits a care home during his visit to Great Britain in September 2010. © Mazurwww.thepapalvisit.org.uk

II

All this, no doubt, is but a partial answer. There is, to be sure, a world of difference between the Catholic conception of the common good and the utilitarian formulation "the greatest happiness of the greatest number". Yet if we focus too much on the kind of societal flourishing we are aiming at, without reflecting on the foundations of that picture, we risk falling prey to a utilitarian mindset as well.

The great English Catholic philosopher, Elizabeth Anscombe, gives us a helpful distinction in her discussion of the virtue of chastity between the utilitarian part of virtue and the mystical

part. The utilitarian part has to do with what keeps order in society and helps it to function well; but the mystical part is more difficult to define.⁴ Still, it seems to me that the notion of the dignity of each person is at the core of our sense of the mystical, and thus can shape the way we think about the virtues that we need for our flourishing as a community. Our flourishing in happiness and holiness is the end, but human dignity speaks to our beginnings as persons. We cannot consider one without the other.

Let me illustrate the point rather simply. "Thou shalt not kill" is a good, thoroughly useful rule for society, as far as public order goes. But we humans, in our inventiveness and in our fallen state, have often been able to find some excuse to exclude a particular unfavourable group, for some utilitarian reason or another. Whereas if we have a more mystical or spiritual appreciation of the worth of each person and their life, then we might approach something of a fuller picture of the moral life. And that is where human dignity comes in.

Nonetheless, in thinking about dignity, certain difficulties immediately present themselves. Apart from how dignity can often sound like a woolly or indeterminate concept, perhaps rather surprisingly to some, the word "dignity" hardly occurs in the Scriptures. If you scour the Latin Vulgate, you will not find more than eleven references to the term – and all are in the Old Testament. One of the most memorable of them is Ecclesiastes 10:5–6, which the King James Version renders as follows: "There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler: Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place." After extolling the words of the wise man, the author of Ecclesiastes then continues, "...but the lips of the fool swallow up himself. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is mischievous madness... Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child".

At first glance, this does not seem like a promising start to reflecting on the importance of dignity. But let us look closer.

The dignity of high office is, in fact, one of the ways in which we come to understand the notion of dignity. Walter Bagehot, the 19th century essayist, famously spoke of the "dignified" and the "efficient" branches of the English Constitution, represented by the monarchy and the government respectively. And if a particular leader – president, king, prime minister – somewhere seems to conform to those verses of Ecclesiastes quoted above, then we quickly say that "so-and-so is acting in a very undignified manner for his office". We say that because in the first place we believe that their office has a particular dignity attached to it, and that is why its occupants can act in a more or less dignified way in relation to the more fundamental dignity of the office they hold.

The point I am making is that even though there are different ways of using "dignity", they tend to point towards a more intrinsic or inherent sense of the word, in the light of which judgements about its more exterior manifestations make sense. Of course, certain offices like that of the Prime Minister are created by society, but most fundamentally, intrinsic dignity means that something has dignity simply because of the kind of thing it naturally is – in our case, human beings made in the image and likeness of God. It is this innate dignity that explains why we are not to be used as mere instruments, and why innocent human life must always be protected.

What are the other ways of using the word "dignity" besides the intrinsic sense? In an essay entitled "The varieties of human dignity", the American Catholic bioethicist Daniel P. Sulmasy gives us names for two more categories of dignity.⁵ One he calls "attributed dignity", which refers to a kind of dignity that is recognised by oneself and by others. This could be the dignity we attribute to those with certain talents, or people high up in society – whom we

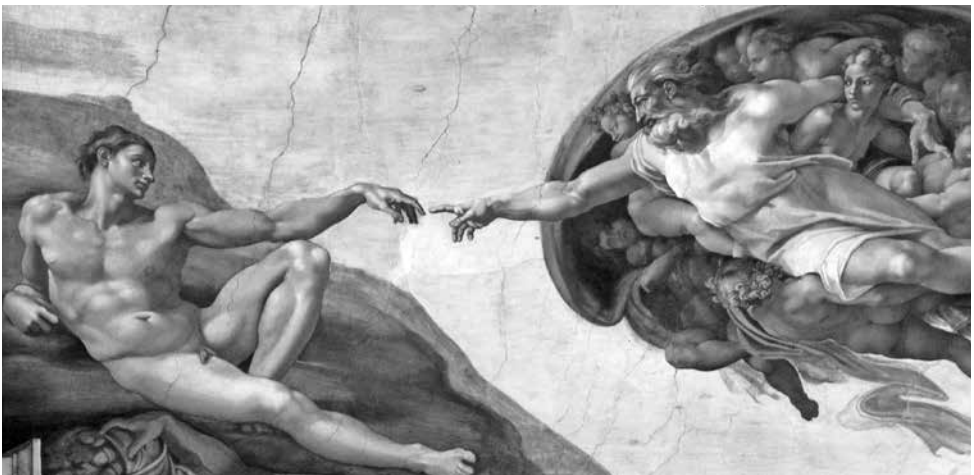
might call “dignitaries” – or also to living conditions and physical settings, which we often call “dignified” or “undignified”.

It is the attributed sense of dignity at work when advocates of euthanasia invoke “dying with dignity”. To be fair, we can agree with them in saying that there is something very undignified about someone dying in a lot of pain, or having an extended period late in their life where they lose control over certain aspects of their lives and have to be fed and cleaned and supervised. But we recognise it to be undignified only because in the first place these situations have to do with a being who has intrinsic dignity, and therefore deserves to be treated in a better, more dignified way. As Christians, we *do* want people to “die with dignity” in the proper sense of the phrase – to die surrounded by loved ones, to have adequate pain relief, to receive the Last Rites, and so on. After all, we are traditionally taught to pray for a good death. But euthanasia can never be a truly dignified death because it goes against the intrinsic dignity of the human person.

The other kind of dignity that Sulmasy names is “inflorescent dignity”. What is this dignity that, as its name suggests, flowers or blooms? Inflorescent dignity is the dignity of virtue. It is to this form of dignity that the writer of Proverbs 6:31–2 refers when he writes, “old age is a crown of dignity, when it is found in the ways of justice. The patient man is better than the valiant: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh cities.”

Although many of us probably first learn the word “dignity” through its attributed or inflorescent senses, these two really point us back to its fundamental meaning, which is the intrinsic dignity of the person. It is just like the word “health” – we learn about a “healthy diet”, or that “smoking is not healthy”. It is not that the food or the cigarette *in themselves* are unhealthy; they point back to the more fundamental meaning of the word “health” in these contexts, which is the health of the body.

Words often evolve, of course, and it is sometimes through their evolution that we discover the deeper meanings of concepts in words, just like the word “person” which is very closely tied to the concept of dignity. It comes from the word “persona”, which meant “mask” in Latin, referring to masks worn on stage – and remember, only nobles and aristocrats were really represented as characters in plays at the time, not the common man. “Persona” then meant, in Roman Law, someone who had rights under the law. Later, it became used to recognise persons of rank, including ecclesiastical rank, so the word “parson” in English actually has the



same root as “person”. But it also came to be applied to all humans, to express the rational nature we all share.⁶ It is the great irony of modern bioethics, however, that while it was originally Christian thinkers who popularised the term “person” because of the Persons of the Holy Trinity, today the term “person” is used precisely by those who deny the rights of the unborn or even the very elderly, by saying they are “potential persons” or someone who has lost their personhood.

III

How do attributed dignity and inflorescent dignity teach us about the meaning of our intrinsic dignity? We can learn something from how ordinary people sometimes use dignity language to express their feelings and concerns in healthcare settings. This is often dignity in the attributed sense, and it is hardly surprising, for it is when you are denied something particularly basic or intimate – for example, the simple freedom of putting on your own clothes or cleaning yourself – that you are reminded of what things are supposed to be like. Attributed dignity, in short, gives us a visible or tangible picture of intrinsic dignity, which would otherwise be invisible.

We might thus understand the phrase “image and likeness of God” in the following way. What do we see of God in Genesis?

Here God shows us quite a lot of himself. He initiates, makes, speaks, commands, names (and endorses man’s naming of things), divides and generally taxonomises, delegates, creates beings in his own image, provides for his creatures, endorses other creative processes, stands back and appreciates his handiwork and rests.⁷

As creatures created in God’s image and likeness, we find that we, too, are capable of such a range of activity. That original picture of our intrinsic dignity speaks of our creative freedom and intelligence – our rational or intellectual nature, as philosophers call it. We are the kind of creatures that can make our own choices, and that is why when circumstances prevent us from fully exercising this, we feel a lack of dignity in the attributed sense.

But our intrinsic dignity is never lost – not even when we lose the ability to perform some of those functions particular to our intellectual nature due to some form of cognitive impairment. The modern philosophers of “personhood” who deny rights to certain kinds of human beings – say, those with advanced dementia – do so on account of function. Underlying this attitude is an anthropology that conceives of human persons as little more than a kind of a mind trapped in a body; if the mind is no longer functioning rationally, then the body ceases to matter.

The Catholic view of the human person is, by contrast, the union of body and soul, so even where there is a lack of cognitive function, the rational, human soul is still present, from conception until death. The question for Catholics is thus, “What *kind* of being is this?” – and we must not let a disease define a person.

The inflorescent sense of dignity – the dignity of virtue – points to another aspect of our intrinsic dignity. Dignity is more than just about making free choices: the goal of our whole Christian life is union with God. We are given our intellectual nature, alone among the visible creation, in order to know and love God, who is the source of all happiness. We are made for a distinctive kind of goodness; we are marked out as God’s own and nobody else’s (that is why slavery and murder are against the moral law). This is the meaning of the image and likeness of God we bear – dignity is dynamic, and because we are made in God’s image, and we can become more like him.⁸ When we flourish in a life of virtue, we can call that a kind of dignity, because we are answering the call of our deepest nature: to be like God.

IV

We began by talking about what society needs to survive and flourish. From that we can deduce some of the most important moral virtues – honesty, justice, respect for life, compassion, for example. I suggested that we, nonetheless, need a sense of the dignity of the individual person to arrive at a more complete picture of flourishing. In a way, the thread that links both these concepts together is our innate dependency on others as humans. It is not in our nature to flourish alone, but to flourish together, though this in no way detracts from the inviolability of individual dignity.

When I discussed the creation of man in Genesis earlier, I missed out one very crucial part of the story: “It is not good for man to be alone” (Gen 2:18). This does not seem to be a weakness in God’s creation, but rather an incompleteness. Here we see the biblical foundations of our dependency – or rather, our interdependence – being laid. A key part of respecting dignity is therefore solidarity with others, in particular the most vulnerable. Without a true sense of solidarity, respect for dignity could otherwise “lead to a kind of neglect – respect for autonomy as a form of abandonment”.⁹

As we continue to live in a society where the dignity of many, especially those who are unable to speak for themselves, is at risk of being compromised, we need to find ways of appreciating anew the dignity of those who seem helpless, such as by meditating on the spirituality of disability and of old age. Then our practice of the virtues might be not simply useful to the community but also take on a mystical aspect, as we live in full awe of the eternal mystery of the human person.



MICHAEL WEE is the Education Officer of the Anscombe Bioethics Centre, Oxford. He also teaches bioethics at St Mary's College, Oscott and has tutored the subject at Blackfriars Hall, Oxford University.

Endnotes

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Homily for Martyrs' Day 2017

ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH AUGUSTINE DI NOIA OP



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we give thanks to God today for the blessed martyrs, illustrious alumni of this College, who attained that perfect configuration to Christ for which he himself commanded all of us to strive: "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me" (Lk 9:23).

With the martyrdom of Fr Ralph Sherwin, who was the first, a pattern of ritualized violence was established from the start. Upon receiving the sentence of death, he was inspired to intone the Easter antiphon *Haec est dies*: "This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad." On the day of his execution at Tyburn, Fr Sherwin proclaimed that, "if to be a Catholic, if to be a perfect Catholic, is to be a traitor, then I am a traitor." As he was dying, he gasped, "Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, be to me a Jesus." As he passed from this world, the crowd exclaimed: "Good Mr Sherwin, the Lord God receive your soul". Procession to the gallows, prolonged public humiliation, the harangues of their accusers, their protestation of their faith in Christ, brutal death by hanging followed by mutilation of their bodies, the jeers or the prayers of the crowd: over the years these elements repeat themselves in the martyrdom of Sherwin's fellow Venerable alumni.

The pattern of ritualized violence that we discern in the martyrdom of these 44 mostly young English priests between the years 1581 and 1679 offers striking parallels with that of thousands of martyrs in the first three centuries of the Christian history. In the *Acts of the Martyrs of Lyons and Vienne*, for example, the author (possibly St Irenaeus) wrote: "The governor brought the blessed martyrs before the tribunal to make a show and spectacle of them before the crowds," and "though their spirits endured much throughout the long agony, they were in the end sacrificed" (quoted in Robin Darling Young, *In Procession Before the World*, pp. 36-7).

Repeated many times in every part of the Roman Empire, this public *spectacle* became for Christians a kind of "public *liturgy* ultimately aimed at the defeat of powers opposed to God and at the conversion of the world" (*ibid.*, p.59). At the centre of this public liturgy was the re-enactment of the sacrifice of Christ. "[E]arly Christians commonly thought of martyrdom as a reproduction of the Passion of Jesus, so much so that they brought out so prominently in their martyrologies all the detailed similarities between the death of the martyr and that



A depiction in the Church Tribune of seminarians obtaining the pope's blessing. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

of Christ: the essential core of martyrdom is the proclamation of faith in Jesus as the Son of God—that is, the Christian's adoption of Jesus' own testimony about himself" (Servais Pinckaers, *The Spirituality of Martyrdom*, p. 47).

Moreover, Christ is so absolutely central to the liturgy of martyrdom that he is made present—as a eucharistic sacrifice, in effect, to the eyes of faith. In the words of Karl Rahner, "If in the liturgy of the Mass the death of the Lord, and our death in him, is mystically celebrated and if, in this celebration, the Church attains the perfect ritual fulfilment of her nature, the same thing happens in death by Christian martyrdom in which the Lord continues until the end of time to suffer and to triumph...." (*On the Theology of Death*, p. 105). Just recall Sherwin's final words: "Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, be to me a Jesus."

Martyrdom in the Church must thus be distinguished from any other type of voluntary death for an ideal, an ideology, or a cause. Christian martyrdom is not merely one of the many cases in the world of "defending one's convictions to the death". Nor is martyrdom simply an instrument for the dissemination of the Christian message of the faith or for the consolidation of the identity of the Christian community. "In martyrdom...we have an indissoluble unity of testimony and what is testified, guaranteed by God's gracious dispensation. Here there is accomplished with absolute validity and perfection what is testified: authentic Christian life as victorious grace of God. The testimony makes present what is testified and what is testified creates for itself its own authentic attestation" (*ibid.*, p.104).

The liturgical and indeed quasi-sacramental character of Christian martyrdom opens up for us something massively important at the core of our celebration and our appropriation of the mystery of this great feast. Not for nothing did the story of the martyrs of this College begin with the words of the Easter antiphon on the lips of the first martyr: *Haec est dies quam fecit Dominus, exultemus et laetemur in ea*. For in martyrdom we have not only a praiseworthy heroic witness to the faith, but, "in procession before the world," a witness in which the very content of the witness is made present. Thus, in Christian martyrdom the perfect configuration of the martyr to Christ is by grace both achieved and revealed.

As we celebrate today the martyrdom of St Ralph Sherwin and his fellow Venerable alumni, we can see in the spirituality of martyrdom the primordial spirituality of all Christian life. To all Jesus said, "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, that man will find it. What gain, then, is it for a man to have won the whole world and to have lost or ruined his very self?" (Lk 9:23-25). Here Christ is addressing not only potential martyrs, but all of us. Only the perfect image of God, who is the Person of the Son, could constitute the principle and pattern for the transformation and fulfilment of every human person who has ever lived. And the more we are conformed to his image, the more authentically do we become our true selves.

"The Christian ideal of sanctity emerges directly from the spirituality of martyrdom" (Pinckaers, p. 34). It is this profound truth that is not merely witnessed to, but is actually realised and made manifest in the death of Christian martyrs. To become sharers in the



The Arch of Constantine seen from within the Colosseum. Photo: Andrew Coy

communion of divine life we must become like the Son, so that the Father sees and loves in us what he sees and loves in Christ. We become conformed to Christ in order to be "at home" in the shared life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Above all, "if you can have some share in the sufferings of Christ be glad, because you will enjoy a much greater gladness when his glory is revealed" (1 Peter 4:13). Certainly during episodes of suffering, trial and self-denial, but not only in them, taking up the cross each day encompasses the whole of every Christian's life. Throughout this continuous *sequela Christi*, the Holy Spirit is at work shaping in us—Christian martyrs and all the rest of us, as well—a transformation that is finally nothing less than a perfect configuration to Christ. This is the meaning of Christian sanctification.

Rightly could Origen say to his community in Alexandria: "I have no doubt that in this community there are a number of Christians—God alone knows them—who before him, according to the testimony of their consciences, are already martyrs, who are ready, as soon as it is asked of them, to shed their blood for Christ. I have no doubt that there are amongst us many who have already taken their cross upon themselves and have followed him" (*Hom. In Num.* 10:2). And rightly, too, may a preacher make Origen's words his own today in the chapel of the Pontifical Seminary of Martyrs. "Your feast day is not indeed in the calendar," declared St Augustine, "but your crown is ready and waiting for you" (*Sermon* 306E).



ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH DI NOIA OP was born in New York, and ordained a priest for the Order of Friars Preachers in 1970. He is currently Adjunct Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, and Titular Archbishop of Oregon City.

Carry the Cross

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God's Jester: G. K. Chesterton's Favourite Saint

CANON JOHN UDRIS



If we can be known by the company we keep and the friends we choose, this is surely true of our favourite saints, too. Because that attraction is never accidental. The call of God is in that chemistry. Our personal patron saints spark something in us and it is always worthwhile asking "what?" and "why?" Because they often spell out the specific direction in which the Lord wants to lead us. They can trace the contours of the sanctity to which he is calling us. In that way Gilbert Keith Chesterton's favourite saint can give us a powerful insight into his own holiness and an appreciation of the profile of his own sanctity. And, of all the saints he admired and wrote about, his favourite was someone we might at first find puzzling, or at least intriguing: Francis of Assisi.

Even from his childhood he was captivated by this saintly figure. One of his earliest poems, published in a school magazine, was all about this saint. In 1900, more than twenty years before he became a Catholic, he wrote an article about him in *The Speaker*, in which he says:

[Francis] expressed in loftier and bolder language than any earthly thinker the conception that laughter is as divine as tears... He never forgot to take pleasure in a bird as it flashed past him, or a drop of water as it fell from his finger: he was, perhaps, the happiest of the sons of men.¹



The window commemorating G. K. Chesterton in St Teresa's Church, Beaconsfield, depicts his favourite saint.

Here, in his mid-twenties, Chesterton was pondering the mysterious idea that humour is holy. That laughter is literally divine. That joy is a vital part of who God is and therefore who we are. For Chesterton, Francis was happy to be a fool, so focussed was he on what was not himself, that he forgot himself. Have you noticed that whenever we laugh we momentarily leave ourselves behind? We look ridiculous (a word that has its root in the word to laugh) but at the same time we look so attractive too? Because we are never so fully ourselves as when we forget ourselves. And laughter, especially the ability to laugh at ourselves as Chesterton loved to do, is proof of the truth of that. There is something holy about hilarity. That's what

Gilbert sensed about St Francis, whom he loved to call "the jester of God". And, in turn, it is what we sense in Chesterton, whose verbal jesting has jolted many into the light of faith - just like the paradox he once famously said was a truth standing on its head to attract attention.

Significantly, when he became a Catholic, Gilbert took the confirmation name Francis. And the first book he published as a Catholic was a tribute to his favourite saint. Many of its themes tell us why Chesterton found Francis so attractive. Moreover, they are all tell-tale features of Chesterton's own holiness - for example, courtesy. Chesterton quotes these lines from his friend Hilaire Belloc:

*Of Courtesy, it is much less
Than courage of heart or holiness
Yet in my walks it seems to me
That the grace of God is in Courtesy.²*

In my mind's eye, I imagine Belloc walking with Chesterton as his inspiration for that verse (Belloc, ironically, was not known for his courtesy!). In context, here Chesterton is telling the story of how Francis was languishing in prison with his fellow companions, having failed miserably in their military adventure against the Perugians. There was in that prison someone everyone else shunned. Perhaps it was the person whose mistakes or cowardice or whatever had lost them the battle? Or whom they felt was somehow to blame for their predicament? But, while everyone else avoided him, Francis treated that person just as he treated everyone else: with that profound courtesy which Chesterton describes as "a deep tide driving out to uncharted seas of charity."³ He explains:

[Francis] liked as he liked; he seems to have liked everybody, but especially those whom everybody disliked him for liking...He acted out of an unconscious largeness.⁴

Here again, without meaning to, as well as describing his favourite saint, Chesterton's words betray his own attitude towards others. Because one of the things his opponents were struck by was that, no matter how fierce he was in debate, he never disrespected his adversary. There was never any rancour. He would always seek the truth in their arguments and he could always see the good in them, and not in a patronising way. What a role model Chesterton can be in this way for authentic dialogue between believers and atheists or agnostics. He may prove a real patron for the Courtyard of the Gentiles, for inter-religious dialogue, and for the new evangelisation. All without ceasing to be at the same time a searing, uncompromising apologist. Because his clarity was always accompanied by charity.

Chesterton points out that the word "courtesy" comes from the word "court". But, with his customary word-conjuring, he writes, "whereas in a court there is one king and a hundred courtiers, in this story there was one courtier moving among a hundred kings."⁵ Francis treated each person and, indeed, each thing as a king and as a reflection of the King. He honoured everyone. That profound reverence marked his approach to everyone and everything. And the same was true of Chesterton.

Twenty years ago, when I was parish priest in Chesterton's home parish of Beaconsfield, there were still a couple of parishioners alive who remembered him. One was Lucy who told me a story about how as a little girl she had been out mushroom picking for the Chestertons. Having delivered the mushrooms to the kitchen door, she was skipping up the garden path when Mrs Chesterton called her back, saying that her husband wanted to meet her. Lucy remembered being quite overawed at the prospect of being introduced to this great man. But,



Chesterton sitting in his garden. Source: Wikimedia Commons

when ushered into his study, she was struck by how he respectfully got up out of his chair, as if royalty had just entered his room. She never forgot how he seemed so much more honoured and overawed to be meeting her. He made her feel that she was the real celebrity.

From the Pope to the beggar from the sultan of Syria to ragged robbers there was never a man who looked into those brown burning eyes without being certain that Francis Bernadone was really interested in him...that he was being valued and taken seriously.⁶

This was true of Chesterton, too. All of which ushers us into another aspect of Francis' sanctity (and of Chesterton's, also): he didn't want to see the wood for the trees. In the sense that it was each tree that mattered. Francis never spoke of "Mother Nature" in that generalised way. Instead he spoke of our Mother earth in that specific way. His relationship was not to birds in general but to this one or that one in particular. His love was not for the brotherhood of man in general, which is fairly easy let's face it, but the brother right in front of him right now, and appreciating the reflection of God that person was. And, for Francis, that brother was also the sun, those sisters were also the moon and the stars. Chesterton puts it this way:

A bush could stop him like a brigand. And indeed he was as ready to welcome the brigand as the bush. St Francis was a man who did not want to see the wood for the trees. He wanted to see each tree as a separate and almost a sacred thing, being a child of God and therefore a brother or sister of man.⁷

That's what the poetry of St Francis is all about. And what the poetry of G. K. Chesterton is all about, too. Seeing the wonder of each thing in all its uniqueness and unrepeatability. In his poem, *A Second Childhood*, he talks about a child's blessed ability to stare at things and be surprised and bowled over by them. It was an ability Chesterton never wanted to lose, indeed which he wanted only to grow as he got older. Here's how it begins:

*When all my days are ending
And I have no song to sing,
I think I shall not be too old
To stare at everything;
As I stared once at a nursery door
Or a tall tree and a swing.⁸*

So there is revelation in everything when we look out at the world like a child, like a Chesterton, like a Francis, with wonder and awe:

*A thrill of thunder in my hair:
Though blackening clouds be plain,
Still I am stung and startled
By the first drop of the rain:
Romance and pride and passion pass
And these are what remain.⁹*

This is what St Francis meant to Chesterton: that childlike saint helped him look at things and see things in a new way. And that's what Chesterton in his turn helps us to do and wherein lies his holiness. "He gives a sort of halo to the edges of all earthly things", he says of his favourite saint.¹⁰ Many would say that is precisely what this devoted disciple of God's jester does for us, too.

Towards the end of his biography of St Francis, Chesterton introduces one final characteristic of his personal patron saint which is a golden thread running through all of his own writing: thanksgiving. Indeed, someone has described Chesterton's spirituality as a mysticism of gratitude. Even in his agnostic days he couldn't quite bring himself to believe that there wasn't anyone to give thanks and praise to for the wonder of existence. In one of his early notebooks, written in his early twenties, we find these remarkable lines:

*You say grace before meals
- all right
But I say grace before the play and the opera
and grace before the concert and pantomime
and grace before I open a book
and grace before sketching, painting,
swimming, fencing, boxing, walking,
playing, dancing
and grace before I dip the pen in this ink.¹¹*

In other words, be sure to say grace before everything, because everything is surely a grace. Gratitude is the way we stay open to all the Lord's providence pouring out in the present moment. This is a fundamentally Franciscan attitude. He learned it from his favourite saint:

[Francis] was above all things a great giver; and he cared chiefly for the best kind of giving which is called thanksgiving. If another great man wrote a grammar of assent, he may well be said to have written a grammar of acceptance; a grammar of gratitude. He understood down to its very depths the theory of thanks; and its depths are a bottomless abyss...¹²

Yet again that description of St Francis of Assisi is one in which the author of those words gives himself away. Just as John Henry Newman wrote a grammar of assent, Gilbert Keith Chesterton has written a grammar of gratitude. He is someone who teaches us to thank our way through each day and experience the transformative effect of that. This has certainly been the most obvious area of his influence and intercession in my own life.

In his wonderful little book on Thomas Aquinas, the first part of which is actually a further rhapsody on his favourite saint, Chesterton writes, "It is the paradox of history that each generation is converted by the saint who contradicts it most."¹³ What he means is that Francis found his way into the hearts of people in Edwardian England precisely because he appeared as the polar opposite to what society at the time seemed to be applauding. He continues:

*The saint is a medicine because he is an antidote. He will generally be found restoring the world to sanity by exaggerating whatever the world neglects, which is by no means always the same in every age.*¹⁴

Here Chesterton is hinting at the fact that the root meaning of the words "sanity" and "sanctity" are the same. They are both about wholeness. He says of Francis: "The great saint was sane..."¹⁵ Might not this be Chesterton's own gift to us? Might not his holiness be an antidote for our own particular age? Might not his distinct form of sanctity and sanity be the perfect tonic for our time?



CANON JOHN UDRIS is a priest of the Diocese of Northampton, and Spiritual Director at St Mary's Seminary, Oscott. He is also the priest in charge of investigating the possibility of opening the cause for canonisation of G. K. Chesterton.

Endnotes

1. G. K. Chesterton, *Twelve Types* (London: Arthur L Humphreys, 1902), p.74.
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3. *Ibid.*, p.50.
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5. *Ibid.*, p.111.
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10. G. K. Chesterton, *St Francis of Assisi*, p.80.
11. G. K. Chesterton, *Collected Works, Volume 10* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1994), p.43.
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Memory, Martyrs and Mission: the symposium

EDWARD HAUSCHILD



Early in the second semester 2018, the College community gathered with a host of invited guests at the Pontifical Institute for Sacred Music for a symposium on the history of the English College and seminary formation for English and Welsh students abroad. The symposium was held to mark three auspicious anniversaries: the birth of St Thomas of Canterbury in 1118, the opening of the English College at Douai in 1568, and the re-opening of the English College in 1818 after the French occupation. Notable attendees included Archbishops Arthur Roche and Bernard Longley, as well as Bishop Michael Campbell, less than a week into his retirement as Bishop of Lancaster.



Photo: Alexander Balzanella

In the shadow of a rather glorious organ in the well-appointed main aula, Fr Rector welcomed our guests and invited speakers to the symposium and thanked Schwarzenbach Fellow, Professor Maurice Whitehead for “working like a Trojan” to make the event a possibility, as well as Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach (also in attendance) for their kind benefaction and support for the College Archives.

Fr Nicholas Schofield (*Archdiocese of Westminster*) a former Editor of the *The Venerabile* and Student Archivist, now archivist for the Archdiocese of Westminster, opened the symposium with a lecture on the centrality of St Thomas of Canterbury (Thomas Becket) to English Catholics during the Protestant persecutions and the “second spring” of the 19th century.

The lecture opened with a brief summary of the highlights of Becket’s life and eventual martyrdom, and the early cult which sprang up around him. His importance to Catholics at the time of the Reformation was discussed at length, especially with reference to a sermon by Thomas Stapleton at Douai, in which Becket was described as a martyr for doctrinal truth. The image of our Martyrs’ painting was illustrative of his importance to English Catholics during the persecutions: St Edmund and St Thomas kneel at the foot of the Trinity as respective representations of true (Catholic) monarchy, and those who would stand up to the pretensions of the crown to a higher authority.

The third act of Fr Schofield’s lecture centred on Becket’s role as a bridge between the newly emancipated Catholics and the *Romish* Anglicans of the 19th century. Becket came to

embody the Victorian ideal: a great Englishman, a patriot, and a democrat. An example of his role in that time was that Cardinal Manning (then an Anglican) first visited Rome (with Prime Minister Gladstone) on the feast of St Thomas, which was at that point the great “Red Letter Day” in the College calendar.

The lecture concluded with a quote from Cardinal Manning’s homily on the 700th anniversary of the Council of Clarendon that “the cause of St Thomas triumphed through the world, but the cause of Henry II has triumphed in England since” and the clarion call that it was the “duty of all Catholics to honour the martyr of their liberties”. While some modern discomfort was noted at honouring a seeming sacerdotalist who set priest above king, Fr Schofield concluded with a clarion call of his own: that every generation needs a St Thomas Becket to stand up for the faith without compromising in an attempt to be popular, who would preach the Gospel without bowing to pressure, and who would not be deafened by aggressive voices.

Jane Stevens introduced the second lecture, by noted Church historian **Prof. Eamon Duffy** (*University of Cambridge*), hailing him as a “game-changer who got people to show interest in Catholic History.” Prof. Duffy’s talk, entitled *The Idea of the Tridentine Seminary* focussed on the early years of the English College at Douai (in many ways the first Tridentine seminary). He noted Douai’s status as a centre for an Oxbridge exodus, with many academics of the great universities taking up residence there in squalid houses known as “Oxford” and “Cambridge” (which the writer of this article can only describe as an improvement on their previous residences in England).

The picture of the life of a Tridentine seminarian painted by Prof. Duffy seemed a world away from the life of a seminarian at the English College today: aspirant priests were taken from their families at the age of twelve, tonsured, soutaned, and given elocution lessons in order to take them as far out of their local setting as possible. If one were to look around the English College today, one would see (for the most part) full heads of hair, and not a soutane in sight (outside of infrequent trips to the Bridgettines or St Peter’s Basilica), and anyone who witnessed the *Four Jubilarians* sketch in the Advent Show would know that elocution lessons have been far-off the curriculum.



Professor Eamon Duffy presents during the Symposium.
Photo: Alexander Balzanella

A facet of life at Douai which would not be unfamiliar to us is the presence of foreign students: the Douai seminarians were joined by a contingent of Belgians. Unlike our current group of Norwegians, these students seemed to lack the heroic fortitude necessary for the austere life of an English seminary and eventually left after a short sojourn in the College.

The overall picture of the early days of English Tridentine seminaries was of a harsh and rigorous academic environment, designed to equip seminarians with the necessary tools for the spiritual warfare (and very present dangers) awaiting them upon their return to England.

Presenting the other side of life at the English colleges abroad was **Prof. Peter Davidson** (*University of Oxford*), who described the seminaries as being cultural centres for the English Catholic diaspora: intensely lively, dynamic, and influential in their own way. The lecture noted the colleges’ place as an “England in exile” which produced striking works of art and literature in opposition to the regime (such as the paintings of Saxon sovereigns, the *Vulnerata Icon* in

Valladolid, and, of course, the Martyrs' painting). Much was made in this talk of the imagery employed by the communities abroad, and how it was used to construct an alternative version of history to the Protestant propaganda of the English crown. Special attention was given to St Robert Southwell, and his poetic works which were (then, as now) highly regarded.

After a lunch break, featuring the interesting combination of breaded potato-balls and raspberry coulis, **Dr Carol Richardson** (*University of Edinburgh*) commenced the afternoon session with a lecture on the Venerable Bede and how his Ecclesiastical History of Britain was used to generate the works of art we had heard about in the previous lecture.

Dr Richardson drew our attention to the visual polemic of our fresco cycle (now in the church tribune, but previously in the church itself): where Protestant propagandists painted English Christianity as separable from Rome, the fresco cycle exposed this for the lie it was. The story told by the fresco cycle is of the "three conversions" of the British Isles (the mission sent to the Britons by St Peter, Eleutherius sending a mission to the Celts, and the mission of Augustine of Canterbury to the Saxons) and the commissioning of the new seminary community by Pope Gregory XIII as the seeds of a "fourth conversion" in the footsteps of the others.

The story of mission and martyrdom told by the cycle is a familiar one to any current student of the Venerabile, but received an excellent re-telling by Dr Richardson.

Following on from Dr Richardson was **Rev. Dr Peter Phillips** (*University of Durham*) who lectured on *The Restoration of the English and Welsh Seminaries in the Aftermath of the French Revolution*. The lecture traced the problematic history of the English College at Douai, from persecution at the hands of the state and the mob in revolutionary France, the exile from France (and eventually also from Rome), and the bitter divides in the community, until the location of eventual homes in County Durham and the South-East for the fractured community. This rather unedifying chapter in the history of seminary study received its somewhat happier end in the restoration of the English College in Rome and of the return of the Douai community (for the most part) to England.

With a title promising to turn from unhappy past to hopeful future, the final lecture of the day was given by **Prof. Judith Champ** (*St Mary's College, Oscott*) on *Harnessing the Power of History to Renew Priestly Formation*. Prof. Champ described the exile in almost idyllic terms, with priests working with the laity in informal networks with what she described as a culture of localism and shared missionary zeal. Contrarily, the restoration of the hierarchy brought with it (according to Prof Champ) an urban and working-class strain of Catholicism under the direction of "authoritarian" priests. Her description of the seminary culture of the time was one of separation from the laity, and from the universities and mainstream academic thought, with an emphasis on apologetics and a centre on ideals of duty, obedience, and self-reliance. The culture was described as lonely, depressed, and bullying, forming a clerical rather than priestly identity.

Moving from this sobering beginning to challenging middle, Prof. Champ outlined the post-Vatican II crisis in priestly identity leading to a large-scale abandonment of public ministry. She further described the increasingly individualistic tendencies arising from the 1980s and their contribution to a rejection of the institutional Church for a "self-authenticating" faith. While Prof. Champ noted that it's "in our DNA" as Catholics to cherish and care for our priests, she concluded the middle part of her talk by summarising the devastating effects of the clerical abuse scandal, and how it undermined the trust between the clergy and the laity.

Prof. Champ's proposed solution to these crises lay in a change to the way we form priests, stating that "we cannot afford formation for the past" to deal with new challenges. She noted the failure of traditional sources (the family and the parish) to produce priestly vocations, noting that the new profile of a seminarian was an older man who is usually a convert or

a revert to the faith. The young Catholic-raised seminarian is becoming an increasingly rare sight. These new men typically present themselves having had more connection to a movement than to their own diocese.

Prof. Champ highlighted the particular challenges of seminarians today, noting that they were more experienced but often not mature, unable to deal with confrontation, dependent on online contact, and more likely to present with mental health problems. She suggested that formation for these men was hampered by the rarity of seminarians, leading to their being placed on pedestals when out on placement, and on the lack of involvement that lay people had with their formation.

The answer given by Prof. Champ was that the laity in parishes needed to be more involved with the human formation of seminarians, accompanying them in their vocation. The model proposed by Prof. Champ highlighted the opportunity such a programme would present in involving women more in the formation of priests. Prof. Champ concluded by echoing Pope Francis' call for priests to be close to the people they serve.

The Symposium closed with a word of thanks from Archbishop Bernard Longley, and the unveiling of a new portrait of our benefactors, Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach. This portrait is to be placed in the new Schwarzenbach Reading Room in College, the space where the bar used to be having been transformed into an area in which visiting scholars to the College can consult the many riches contained within the archives. Fr Rector then invited those present to an advanced viewing of the exhibition in the crypt - especially those who were shortly to leave Rome and be otherwise unable to see it.

At the close of the day, the community and guests gathered in the College church for a spectacular concert by Cappella Fede, directed by Peter Leech. While this writer, tired from a day of lectures, was only able to enjoy the first half before retreating to his cell, the Editor and vast majority of the guests were still raving about the performance by the close of the year.

Excerpts from the programme included hauntingly beautiful pieces from the medieval era in honour of St Thomas of Canterbury - providing a striking opportunity to witness some of the cultural manifestations of popular piety to the saint mentioned by Fr Schofield earlier in the day. Also on the programme were *Five Absolutions* composed by Sebastiano Bolis, Master of Music at our parish church of S. Lorenzo in Damaso from 1778 until the early 1790s. Bolis was a composer who benefited from the patronage of Cardinal Henry Benedict Stuart, and another item on the



A silver statue of St Thomas of Canterbury, displayed in the Exhibition. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

programme was a beautifully joyful *Ave Maria* by Giovanni Battista Costanzi, also patronised by the Cardinal-Duke of York. Most of the music which emerged as a fruit of this particular lover of music has escaped the notice of most musicologists, but Peter Leech has been bringing it to the fore in recent years, having been captivated by the vivacity and quality of composers such as Bolis and Costanzi. It was especially thrilling to hear such recently rediscovered music performed within the parish boundaries of the church it was composed for! The real highlight of the concert, however, was the stunning *Gaudeamus Omnes*, composed by Peter Leech in honour of St Thomas of Canterbury and written specifically for the Venerable English College. The performance at this concert was its premier performance, but most certainly not its last. It having enthralled everyone present, it also came to the attention of the BBC through the medium of social media, resulting in a new commission of a setting of *Adam Lay Ybounden* by Peter Leech for the BBC Singers' 2018 Christmas Concert.

The combination of symposium, exhibition and concert thus enabled us to reflect a little more on our history, and explore new areas of it which have previously remained in relative obscurity. But it will also serve as a part of our continued history, and certainly will be a memory treasured by all those who witnessed Memory, Martyrs and Mission.



EDWARD HAUSCHILD is a second-year seminarian for the Diocese of Portsmouth, studying philosophy at the Angelicum.

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Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Venerable English College, 21 April 2018

POPE FRANCIS



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I welcome the staff and students of the Venerable English College in this year marking a number of significant anniversaries in the life of the Church in England and Wales. I thank the Rector for his gracious words. Our meeting today gives me an opportunity to speak to you directly, as a father, from the heart! As you continue your journey of responding to the Lord's call, I would like to share with you some words of encouragement. Above all, I pray that you will grow ever more deeply in your relationship with the Lord and in your attentiveness to others, especially those most in need. Love of God and love of neighbour: the two foundation stones of our lives (cf. Mk 12:30-31).

First, love of God. It is good to see young people preparing to make a firm and life-long commitment to the Lord. But this is harder for you than it was for me, because of today's "culture of the temporary". To overcome this challenge, and to help you make an authentic promise to God, it is vital, in these years in seminary, to nurture your interior life, learning to close the door of your inner cell from within. In this way your service to God and the Church will be strengthened and you will find that peace and happiness which only Jesus can give (cf. Jn 14:27). Then, as Christ's joyful witnesses, you in your turn can become recipients of the tribute paid by St Philip Neri to your martyr forebears: *salvete flores martyrum!*



Pope Francis delivers his address to the College community in the Sala del Concistoro.



The VEC community gather in the Cortile di San Damaso after the Papal Audience. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

Second, love of neighbour. As you know, we do not witness to Christ for our own sake, but for others, always in service. And we seek to offer this service not out of mere sentiment, but in obedience to the Lord who kneels down to wash the disciples' feet (cf. Jn 13:34). Nor is our missionary discipleship offered in isolation, but always in cooperation with other priests, religious and lay men and women. At times, loving our neighbour is difficult, which is why, for our ministry to be effective, we need to be "firmly grounded in God who loves and sustains us. From this inner strength it is possible to endure... with patience and constancy in doing the good" (*Gaudete et Exsultate*, 112). This *inner strength* – this fidelity of love – characterised the lives of your College martyrs, and it is essential for us who seek to follow Jesus, who calls us in our poverty to serve his majesty, and who reveals his majesty in the midst of the poor.

One of the ways in which our love of God and neighbour will grow is through living in community. It can be no coincidence that it was your seminary community that formed the lives of 44 martyrs, enabling them readily to take the missionary oath, made for the first time by St Ralph Sherwin in 1578 on the Feast of St George. With these saints to guide and inspire you, I hope you will be able to develop that "fraternal love capable of seeing the grandeur of our neighbour, of finding God in every human being, of tolerating the nuisances of life in common..." (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 92).

In our Christian life, there is a considerable obstacle that all of us face: fear! But we can overcome it with love, prayer and a good sense of humour (cf. *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 126, and the prayer attributed to St Thomas More). So I hope you will not be afraid of difficulties and trials, and the continuous battle against sin. I also encourage you not to be afraid of yourselves. By following the example of your heavenly patron, St Thomas of Canterbury, who did not allow his past sinfulness or human limitations to stop him from serving God to the very end, not only will you be able to overcome your own fear, you will also help others overcome theirs.

Finally, by nurturing friendships, good and wholesome relationships that will sustain you in your future ministry, I trust you will come to cherish your real friends, who are not simply those who agree with us, but are gifts from the Lord to help us on the journey to what is true, noble and good (cf. Phil 4:8).

It is with affection that I offer you these thoughts, to encourage your faithful love of God, and humble service to your brothers and sisters. Entrusting you to the maternal intercession of Our Lady of Walsingham, I assure you of my prayers for you and your families, and for all who support the mission of the Venerable English College. And I ask you also, please remember to pray for me each day.

Thank you!

The Church's Call to Communicate the One Word

SR BERNADETTE MARY REIS FSP



God said: Let there be light, and there was light (Genesis 1:3).

In the beginning was the Word. ... He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him (John 1:2-3).

These Scripture verses provide us with an essential key for understanding how the Church must communicate. Building on a Semitic cultural and anthropological reality, the Church inherited the experience of a people who knew divine intervention. God acted directly in their history. This action was recorded orally, and eventually in writing. The memory of the event was preserved and communicated through language.

As humanity drifts further and further away from the Word through whom we are made, communication becomes difficult. Scripture recounts this reality in Genesis 11. The confusion of human speech is understood as a divine event: "Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that no one will understand the speech of another" (v. 7). Human communication is a participation in the eternal dialogue between the Three Divine Persons. Separated from that dialogue, from that original Word, all we are capable of is misunderstanding.



A statue of St Paul outside the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

Human communication is restored to its original purpose through another divine event: Pentecost. The gift of the Holy Spirit allows the Apostles to speak different languages. This event "confuses" all who hear. Unlike the confusion that took place at Babel, which led to misunderstanding, this confusion led to understanding one single message. From that day on, the *kerygma* preached by the Apostles is like a mantra: Jesus, ... commended by God, ... handed over, crucified, died, buried, and risen on the third day (cf. Luke 24:7, Acts 2:22-24; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). The ability to fully participate in the divine dialogue destroyed by sin has now been restored through the outpouring of the gift of God's Holy Spirit.

Eventually the Apostles understood that the divine event they had participated in not only fulfilled all previous events recorded in Sacred Scripture, but that in Jesus is contained

all other divine interaction in human history (Luke 24:25-27, 44-49). As the Apostles grappled with what they had witnessed, they finally understood that Jesus is the Word through whom God created the Universe (John 1:2-3). There is a close relationship in biblical understanding between an event and the words expressing the event. God's word not only creates, but also acts in human history through events. Therefore, it is also through the one Word of God, Jesus, that every divine intervention in human history has taken place. Thus, the mission bestowed on the Church is that of pronouncing that one Word with the Father through whom all things were made and through whom the Father acts in human history. The unpronounceable name is now the name of Jesus understood as the essence of existence itself.

It became then necessary to communicate Jesus and the Event of events wrought through him for future generations (cf. 1 John 1:3). As the first Christian communities grew and expanded, they began to communicate over distances. Paul is the first to use a medium to communicate "my Gospel" (Romans 2:16; 2 Timothy 2:8). That Gospel, according to Paul, is marvellously expressed in the opening paragraph of the Letter to the Romans (3:3-6). For Paul, the Gospel *is* Jesus.

The concentration found on the person of Jesus in the New Testament texts continued through the period of the Apostolic Fathers and on into the Middle Ages and Renaissance. One means of communicating Jesus was added to another: liturgy, music, drama, icon, stained glass window, statue, homily, etc. Many masterpieces of Western art were commissioned precisely in order to communicate the mystery of Christ and all of revelation. Born to communicate that message, the Church found ever more noble means with which to express it, making it attractive yet capable of conveying the message to those destined to receive it. The fact that the first book published by Gutenberg on the printing press was the Bible is a testimony to the importance that the Word of God held in society.

As we know, Western society began to consume messages other than the Gospel. The institutional Church was, and is no longer, the primary source of the messages being communicated through new technologies. At first, the Church's response was defensive. Her gaze shifted from its concentration on Christ to defending herself.

At the dawn of the 20th century, Pope Leo XIII wrote, "The most important duty of the Church, and the one most peculiarly her own, is to defend and to propagate throughout the world the Kingdom of the Son of God, and to bring all men to salvation by communicating to them the divine benefits, so much so that her power and authority are chiefly exercised in this one work" (*Tametsi Futura Prospicientibus*, 2). Only by communicating Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life could the Church adequately respond to the "evils" present in society. In the words of his contemporary, Blessed James Alberione, Leo XIII "spoke of the Church's needs, of the new means of evil, of the duty to combat the press with the press, organization with organization, of the need to penetrate the masses with the Gospel" (*Abundantes Divitiae Gratiae Suae*, 14).

Pius XI's Encyclical *Vigilanti Cura* "On Motion Pictures" (1936) promoted the Legion of Decency, an organization committed to identifying objectionable content in films. While lamenting the portrayal of "sin and vice" (art. 2), Pius XI also wrote that all the products of the "sciences and of human technique and industry...are all true gifts of God" (*ibid.*, art. 1). He desired that they "may be ordained to His glory and to the salvation of souls and may be made to serve in a practical way to promote the extension of the Kingdom of God upon earth" (*ibid.*).

In his successor's Encyclical, *Miranda Prorsus*, "On Motion Pictures, Radio and Television" (1957), which contains source material for Vatican II's *Inter Mirifica*, we find a more positive approach. Pius XII numbers film among "the most important means by which the ideas and

discoveries of our times can be made known" (art. 2). The Church is beginning to retrieve the call she has received to proclaim the Gospel and adapt it to the current situation: "in order that the cinema may remain a worthy instrument *by which men can be guided towards salvation*, raised to higher things, and become really better, it is absolutely necessary [that all those involved in the film industry], exercising a true sense of responsibility...cooperate readily with each other to produce and distribute films which can win approval" (*ibid.*, art. 2, emphasis added).

With the Second Vatican Council's *Inter Mirifica*, "Decree on the Media of Social Communications" (1963), the Church expressed her own need to embrace the new means of communication for the proclamation of the Gospel. "The Catholic Church, since it was founded by Christ our Lord to bear salvation to all men and thus is obliged to preach the Gospel, considers it one of its duties to announce the Good News of salvation also with the help of the media of social communication and to instruct men in their proper use" (art 3).

But it is to the implementing document of *Inter Mirifica*, *Communio et Progressio* (1971), that we can turn for inspiration, a theology of communication and pastoral direction regarding the Church's understanding of how to proclaim its message today. "While He was on earth Christ revealed Himself as the Perfect Communicator. Through His 'incarnation', He utterly identified Himself with those who were to receive His communication and He gave His message not only in words but in the whole manner of His life. He spoke from within, that is to say, from out of the press of His people.... He adjusted to His people's way of talking and to their patterns of thought. And He spoke out of the predicament of their time" (art. 11).

Pope John Paul II, a master-communicator, formed in literature and drama as well as philosophy and mystical theology, gave us in the Great Jubilee a preeminent model of how the Church is called to communicate. All of the events of that Jubilee were meant to communicate the Incarnation of the Son of God. "Paul's presentation of the mystery of the Incarnation contains the revelation of the mystery of the Trinity and the continuation of the



Pope St John XXIII
processes into St Peter's
Basilica to open the
Second Vatican Council.

Son's mission in the mission of the Holy Spirit" John Paul wrote in *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (art. 1). "The great Jubilee at the close of the second Millennium has a pneumatological aspect, since the mystery of the Incarnation was accomplished 'by the power of the Holy Spirit'. It was 'brought about' by that Spirit—consubstantial with the Father and the Son—who, in the absolute mystery of the Triune God, is the Person-love, the uncreated gift, who is the eternal source of every gift that comes from God in the order of creation, the direct principle and, in a certain sense, the subject of God's self-communication in the order of grace. The mystery of the Incarnation constitutes the climax of this giving, this divine self-communication" (*Dominum et Vivificantem*, 50; quoted in *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 44).

If we apply this truth to the communication of the mystery of Christ, we can conclude that the bold and zealous proclamation of the Gospel always leads to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (cf. also Acts 10:44-47). A proclamation devoid of Christ is fundamentalist and causes division. Anyone who communicates the Gospel is faithful to the Church's mission only when the message is focused on Jesus. Otherwise, we contribute only noise to the already boisterous cacophony filling the airways and digital highways. Worse, we contribute to the creation and dissemination of "fake news". True Good News leads to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, generating unity. The division being fomented by those purporting to communicate the Gospel is an indicator of those who are distorting their ability to communicate (cf. Message of Pope Francis for World Communications Day, 2018, Introduction).

Every Christian has received the vocation of proclaiming his or her experience of "God's saving love" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 119). This is what the new evangelisation is all about. The Christian disciple cannot but proclaim that experience to others: "We have found the Messiah" (John 1:41); "I have seen the Lord" (John 20:18). The heart of the disciple's proclamation is Jesus. It is to him that we are to direct others.

The institutional Church has lost the authority it once had over messages that are created and communicated both in society at large as well as within the Church. It is not a matter of technology, but one of content by which the Church can once again regain its authoritative voice. In this sense, the Church can look to the Apostle Paul as a model of authentic communication. "Paul took the Gospel that he had profoundly meditated on and then he adapted it to the world, to the needs of his time and to the needs of the various nations.... Thus, we have to apply the Gospel to our times and give the Gospel to the present world with the means which progress presents to us as capable of transmitting the thought and doctrine of Jesus Christ" (Blessed James Alberione to the Daughters of St Paul, 1954).

Amid the competing voices vying for people's attention, the Church must find its voice once again and proclaim one, integrated message, that one Word, the one Gospel, that Good News that has been entrusted to the disciple. "Made in the image and likeness of our Creator, we are able to express and share all that is true, good, and beautiful" (Message of Pope Francis for World Communications Day, 2018, Introduction). Raised to the dignity of child of God, communication takes on a divine dimension. It is by this mystery that we are able to communicate the Truth: Jesus Christ.



SR BERNADETTE MARY REIS, FSP is a member of the Daughters of St Paul. Having been involved in media ministry in Boston, she currently lives in Rome and works for Vatican News.

News from the College Archives, 2017–18

MAURICE WHITEHEAD, SCHWARZENBACH RESEARCH FELLOW



In the College Archives, the academic year 2017–18 has been one of intense activity on virtually every front. Much time has been devoted to preparations for *Memory, Martyrs and Mission*, a symposium and concert held on 14 April 2018 to mark three major anniversaries:

- the 900th of the birth in December 1118 of the patron of the Venerable English College (VEC), St Thomas of Canterbury;
- the 450th of the founding of the English College, Douai, the first English seminary, in September 1568;
- the re-opening of the VEC in December 1818 after its twenty-year closure during the French Revolution.

These anniversaries were commemorated visually by a special exhibition which was open to the public and which ran in the College Crypt from 16 April to 11 May 2018. Also entitled *Memory, Martyrs and Mission*, the three themes of the exhibition focussed on key periods in the history of the English Hospice and Venerable English College in Rome; the life and work of the martyrs associated with the VEC; and the lives and work of those who have served the mission in England and Wales since 1579.

The exhibition was a collaborative venture between the VEC Archives, St Edmund's College, Ware, Hertfordshire – one of the lineal descendants of the English College, Douai – and the Stonyhurst College Collections. Its aim was to bring together, in 21 sections, a wide range of documents and artefacts from the three institutions: these illustrated selected aspects of the history of the English Hospice and the Venerable English College in Rome from 1362 to the present day.

Given their inter-connected histories, the three institutions made fitting partners, not least because:

- the earliest students of the VEC were those unable to find a place at Douai, so heavily over-subscribed was the latter new seminary in its earliest years;
- the English Jesuit college at Saint-Omer in the Spanish Netherlands, the lineal antecedent of Stonyhurst College, was founded in 1593 by Fr Robert Persons (1546–1610), then soon to be appointed Rector of the VEC for a second time: in the seventeenth century, St Omers College, as it was popularly known, provided fifty percent of the students of the VEC;
- Ushaw College, Durham, another lineal descendant of the English College, Douai, provided the first students of the restored VEC in December 1818.

A number of the artefacts today preserved at Stonyhurst come originally from the VEC. These were salvaged at the time of the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773 by the English Jesuit antiquarian, John Thorpe (1726–1792), who spent most of his life in Rome. Prior to his

death, Thorpe bequeathed these precious objects to the English Academy at Liège, to which place the staff and students of St Omers College had migrated, via Bruges, in 1773. When the Academy at Liège was forced to flee the French Revolution in 1794, it moved to Stonyhurst, where the treasures have been preserved ever since. Many of these returned to Rome for the exhibition for the first time since 1773.

Among the treasures on display was the VEC's oldest literary text, a fourteenth-century manuscript life of St Thomas of Canterbury, dating from *circa* 1350. This was displayed alongside two other exhibits: a fragment of one of the hair shirts, which the saint is famously known to have worn, preserved for centuries afterwards at the English College at Douai; and a magnificent silver statue of St Thomas of *circa* 1666. The latter, commissioned from the great Liégeois silversmith, Henri Flémalle (c. 1614–c. 1686) for St Omers College to house a relic of St Thomas of Canterbury, is today preserved at Stonyhurst.

The Douai-Rome connection was explored through a number of treasures. The *First Douay Diary* – the earliest manuscript student register of the English College at Douai, today preserved at St Edmund's College, Ware – was displayed in Rome for the first time. Demonstrating clearly the enormous number of students enrolled at Douai in the mid-1570s the manuscript shows graphically how the English Hospice in Rome simply had to be transformed into a seminary to accommodate candidates for the priesthood unable to find room to study at Douai.

Perhaps *the* most extraordinary exhibit was a small silver casket containing the eye of Blessed Edward Oldcorne, SJ (1561–1606). A medical student who came to the VEC to study for the priesthood, Oldcorne became a Jesuit following his ordination and was afterwards sent to serve on the English mission. Following his capture, his execution at Worcester in 1606 involved being hanged, disembowelled, and quartered. The final part of his execution involves the parboiling of his body parts, at which point the eye became loosened from its socket, only to be preserved by a Catholic bystander as an extraordinary relic of martyrdom.



The exhibition was not only about the past: present-day VEC students prepared, as the final section of the display, a series of visual images outlining the range and scope of the life and work of the College today.

Preparation for the exhibition required detailed planning, negotiation and collaboration between Fr Peter Harris, honorary curator of the collections at St Edmund's College, Ware, Janet Graffius, Curator of the Stonyhurst Collections, and myself, with invaluable support from Lorna Goggins and Joe Reed who work as curatorial assistants at Stonyhurst. Much midnight oil was burnt over many months applying for export licences, arranging air freight, preparing descriptive exhibition panels, having them professionally designed and printed, devising individual display labels for each item and preparing publicity information.

Happily, the exhibition and the associated symposium and concert all secured the moral support of the Pontifical Council for Culture, whose logo was used on all our publicity. The exhibition was visited by hundreds of visitors and it soon became clear, both from verbal comments and the many positive comments recorded in the visitors' book that many were deeply moved by the objects on display.

Digitization

Thanks to support from the Roman Association in producing and making available to the Archives a fully word-searchable digitized version of *The Venerabile* from its inception in October 1922 down to the present day, the research work of the Archives has been greatly facilitated during the past year. Whereas the absence of an index in individual issues of the College magazine has long made *The Venerabile* difficult to use for research purposes, the digitized version provides a revolutionary new research tool. This now retrieves and reveals, with lightning speed, all sorts of historical details and invaluable nuggets of information which would not otherwise easily come to light. Many thanks to Peter Purdue for bringing this project to a successful conclusion.

To help the College Archives take its own early steps in digitizing and making available to scholars significant documents from its collections, the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, has provided invaluable support during the year. This has come through the good offices both of its General Secretary, Fr Christopher Thomas, and of Alexander DesForges, Director of its Catholic Communications Network. Together they kindly made available, for a four-day period in November 2017, the services of Marcin Mazur, the official photographer of the Bishops' Conference who was visiting Rome anyway on other business.

Having together transformed the Archive room into a temporary photographic studio, with an array of lightboxes and other top-class professional equipment hired from Studio 154 in Rome, Marcin and I began identifying and photographing in high definition many hundreds of documents. These are gradually being processed, as time allows, and stored on a secure website for future use.

Much work remains to be done, even with the images already captured, to ensure their long-term conservation and availability to scholars, but a very useful start has been made and much learned in the process. This work could never have begun without the help of the Bishops' Conference or without Marcin Mazur's huge expertise as a photographer – and the College is immensely grateful for this support.

Meanwhile, the excellent work begun last year by the informal student-led working party on digital photographic preservation for the future, reported upon in last year's edition of *The Venerabile*, has continued. Thanks to the efforts of Antonio Pineda and his colleagues last year, and those of Antonio, together with Joshua Dixon, Toby Duckworth, Alexander Balzanella, Anthony Fyk and Trym Hellevig during this past academic year, the status of the group has been raised. Following the drawing up of a set of constitutions on 6 March 2018, a Student Archives' Committee has been set up as a formal student committee of the VEC, reporting to the Vice-Rector. I am immensely grateful to the students for their initiative, enthusiasm and support in taking this work forward.

In order to help the College better to keep abreast of rapid development in the field of digitization, I have attended two important seminars in recent months. The first, entitled *Digital Cultural Heritage: Long-term Preservation and Open Access, Cross-fertilization and Inter-cultural Partnerships*, hosted at the British School at Rome (BSR) on 13 January 2018, brought together a team of researchers from the BSR, the European Space Agency and DBSeret in Rome to showcase ways in which cutting-edge technology can help preserve cultural heritage.

The second seminar, held at the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, on 30 May 2018, was co-hosted by the Bodleian Libraries of the University of Oxford and the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (BAV, or Vatican Library) and entitled *Digitization and Libraries: the Future of the Past*. This day-long seminar demonstrated the many positive ways in which, with appropriate financial support, institutional partnership and digitization can produce remarkable results.

Between 2012 and 2017 the Bodleian Libraries and the BAV joined forces in a landmark digitization project, funded by the Polonsky Foundation, with the aim of opening up their repositories of ancient texts. More than 1.5 million pages from their remarkable collections have been made freely available online to researchers and to the general public at <http://bav.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>. A happy outcome from the seminar was that one of the key speakers there, Dr Kristian Jensen, Head of Collections at the British Library, asked to visit the VEC Library and Archives on 31 May 2018, and has subsequently kindly offered to help and advise the College in this area as needed in the future.

Protection and conservation of the Archives

In view of the bicentenary in 2018 of the reopening of the College in 1818, following its 20-year sequestration and closure in 1798, during the Napoleonic era, priority on the conservation front over the past twelve months has been given to the most significant documents connected with events of 1818.

These items include the great *Tabella* or parchment table which Robert Gradwell had drawn up for the sacristy of the College Church following his appointment as Rector in 1818. This detailed document carefully re-established a comprehensive listing of the obligations for Masses to be said in the College Church for the repose of the souls of benefactors of the English Hospice up to 1579, as well as for those of post-1579 benefactors of the College.

Also recently restored are two magnificent estate maps detailing two College vineyards in Rome which were reclaimed as College properties in 1818. These images, which had long been in a pitiful state of decay, have now been expertly restored in the Rome laboratory in the Via Pandosia of Manuela Panucci who has already successfully saved and restored numerous precious documents from the College Archives previously in peril. Though a great deal of archival conservation work remains to be done, as and when funds permit, solid foundations in conserving precious documents in the Archives have now been laid.

Donations of archival material relating to the VEC and donations of books

The College Archives have been enriched over the past year by a number of donations. These include:

- a small collection of photographs relating to the VEC during the period 1936–39 belonging to Francis O’Leary (1918–2003), a student at the VEC in Rome from 1936 to 1940, and at St Mary’s Hall, Stonyhurst from 1940 until his ordination for the diocese of Clifton in 1943. The photographs were donated by the O’Leary family in March 2018.
- A further small collection of papers of the late Bishop Alan Clark (1919–2002), former Vice-Rector of the VEC. These complement existing material left to the College by Bishop Clark and presented to the College Archives in 2003 through the good offices of Fr Russell Frost. In his current role as Archivist of the Diocese of East Anglia, Fr Frost was responsible for making this further donation in May 2018.

A number of benefactors have contributed during the year to the continuing building up of a growing research collection of books on the history of the post-Reformation English and Welsh Catholic community to support the work of the Archives and to facilitate the work of visiting researchers. The donations include:

- a further gift of books from Salford Diocesan Archives, through the good offices of the Reverend Dr David Lannon;
- a small collection of books from the Faithful Companions of Jesus presented through the good offices of Sr Mary Campion McCarren, FCJ: this donation resulted from the bringing together of the FCJ Generalate Archive and the FCJ British Province Archive;
- the donation by Brentwood Diocesan Archives of a number of duplicate late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century volumes of the *Catholic Directory* for England and Wales not already held at the VEC.

Thanks to the sterling work of the College Librarian, Sr Mary Joseph, these donations are being entered into the Library catalogue – and each volume is being given its own bookplate recording the donation.

Research and scholarship in the College Archives

The past year has witnessed a steady stream of researchers coming to use the Archives, often with interesting results. Following a visit to the VEC, the art historian, Fiorenza Rangoni, from the *Dipartimento di Studi storico-artistici, archeologici e sulla conservazione* at the Università degli Studi Roma Tre, has had published in the January 2018 edition of *The Burlington Magazine* an important article entitled “Anthony van Dyck and George Gage in Rome”. This concerns Van Dyck’s friendship with George Gage, who was secretly ordained as a priest in Rome in 1614 by Cardinal Robert Bellarmine: remarkably, Gage’s ordination certificate survives in the College Archives.

Equally remarkable was information retrieved from the Archives in May 2018 by Lady Caroline Egerton, widow of the late Sir Stephen Egerton (1932–2006), British ambassador to Italy from 1989 to 1992. Visiting the VEC for the first time since 1992, Lady Egerton was researching the presence in Rome more than 450 years ago of her late husband’s ancestor, Ralph Egerton, who in 1566 had his name inscribed in stone twice – at the top and at the bottom of the interior of Trajan’s Column.

Lady Egerton suspected, but had no documentary proof, that Ralph Egerton might have stayed at the English Hospice during his time in Rome. Her hunch proved correct: consultation of the Hospice account books in the College Archives revealed beyond doubt that Ralph Egerton was resident at the Hospice from February to March 1566, probably as part of his Grand Tour. Our visitor was duly impressed at the high levels of record-keeping both in 1566 and in 2018!

Visits and visitors

In addition to welcoming scholars to the Archives, there has been much activity in welcoming groups interested to learn more about the Archives as a collection. Each group has been welcomed with an introductory talk, followed by a visit to the Archives and Library.

These groups include:

- 7 November 2017 – the Association of English-speaking religious archivists of Rome.
- 29 November 2017 – visit of 35 Jubilarian priests from England and Wales ordained in 1957, 1967 and 1977.
- 6 December 2017 – the Pilgrim Libraries research group, led by Professor Anthony Bale of, Birkbeck College, University of London. This international group of some twenty scholars is working on a project entitled *Pilgrim libraries: books and reading on the medieval routes to Jerusalem and Rome*. They were shown a selection of surviving books and manuscripts from the library of the English Hospice in Rome.
- 23 April 2018 – the Association of Francophone religious archivists of Rome (*talk given in French*).
- 11 May 2018 – The Ashby Patrons of the British School at Rome, led by Professor Stephen Milner, Director of the BSR.
- 5 July 2018 – 22 Master's students from the Royal Netherlands Institute, Rome, studying archives in Rome, with a particular emphasis on *identity*, with their tutor, Dr Arnold Witte. The talk that I gave them was entitled "Multiple identities: the Archives of the English Hospice and the Venerable English College, Rome, 1362–2018".

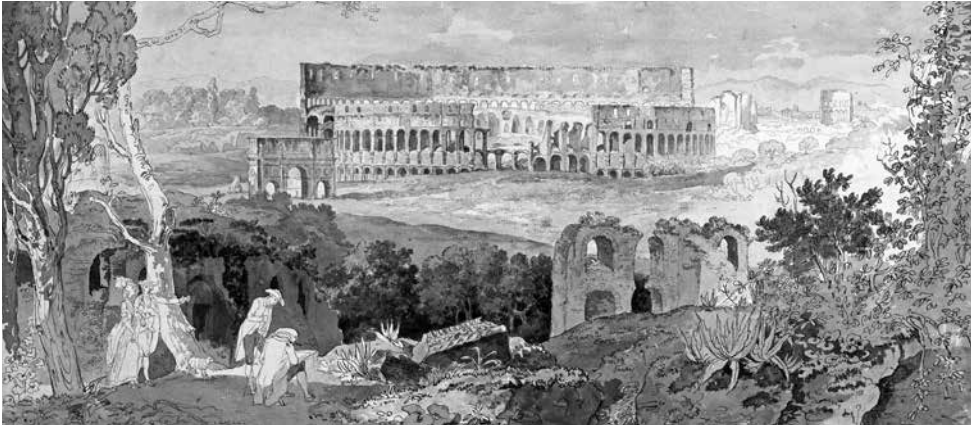
Though the visit of the Ashby Patrons of the BSR – major benefactors based in Britain who help maintain and develop the work of the British School at Rome as a major centre for research – was the first by this group, it renewed a happy link between the BSR and the VEC. The Patrons are named after Thomas Ashby (1874–1931), the first student of the BSR on its foundation in 1902 and subsequently its Director from 1905 until 1925.

Ashby was a friend of Mgr (later Cardinal) Arthur Hinsley, Rector of the VEC from 1917 to 1929 – and, with Hinsley's encouragement, a regular guest speaker at the VEC in the 1920s on the history of Rome. Indeed Ashby published in instalments in *The Venerabile* in 1924 and 1925 his research into the history of Palazzola from ancient times onwards.

Shortly following the visit of the Ashby Patrons, one of their number, Timothy Llewelyn, Chair of The Burlington Magazine Foundation, kindly alerted me to the fact that a new exhibition entitled *Artists at work* at the Courtauld Institute in London might be of interest: it included a watercolour from *circa* 1770 executed in the gardens on the Palatine Hill then belonging to the Venerable English College – part of a vineyard property subsequently lost in the nineteenth century. The watercolour, entitled *The Colosseum seen from the Palatine Hill, Rome, a pair of tourists with their cicerone, and an artist sketching*, by the Roman artist, Carlo Labruzzi (1748–1817), had been loaned to the Courtauld from the Katrin Bellinger Collection at the Munich-based Tavolozza Foundation. Though the watercolour is unfinished, it provides a rare view from a lost VEC property. The Venerable English College is indebted to the curator of the Katrin Bellinger Collection, Dr Anita Sganzerla, for permitting us to reproduce the watercolour below:



Visit of Master's students from the Royal Netherlands Institute of Rome, 5 July 2018



The future of the VEC Archives

The three-year archival project which has been running since 2015, and which has just come to an end, has hopefully demonstrated beyond any doubt the significance, importance and continuing future potential both for the VEC and for the wider field of academia in developing the VEC Archives as a research resource.

The trustees of the VEC have monitored the progress of the project closely over the past three years and, happily, are convinced of the importance of the heritage collections held at the College. Accordingly, at the end of the *Memory, Martyrs and Mission* symposium on 14 April 2018, the chair of the VEC trustees, Archbishop Bernard Longley of Birmingham, launched a major appeal for the future of the VEC Archives. The aim of the appeal – involving the raising of £5 million – is to allow the collections to be maintained, developed and preserved in perpetuity by means of a designated endowment fund, without recourse to College finances. This would then allow the development both of a long-term programme of conservation and of a small research facility closely associated with the College Archives and Library, allowing the College itself and visiting scholars to make the best possible use of these unique resources which contribute particularly to the post-Reformation history of the English and Welsh Catholic community at home and abroad.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my thanks are due to Joshua Dixon and Toby Duckworth, currently Student Archivist and Deputy Student Archivist respectively. Joshua's maintenance of the *Liber Ruber*, in particular, and Toby's work in maintaining and updating the scrapbook in the Third Library together keep the Archives developing as a living entity and an integral part of College life. I should also like to thank the Rector, Vice-Rector, the staff and students of the College, the Finance and General Purposes' Committee, the Trustees and the VEC's many friends without whose support for the Archives none of the work undertaken over the past year would have been possible.



MAURICE WHITEHEAD is the current Schwarzenbach Research Fellow at the Venerable English College. He is also a Research Fellow at the British School at Rome, Honorary Professor of Catholic Studies at Durham University and Emeritus Professor of History at Swansea University.

Nova et Vetera

ANTHONY FYK



The Rosminian Mission

Sowers for the Second Spring – John Michael Hill

In the story of the dramatic revival of Catholicism in Great Britain in the nineteenth century, the role of the pioneer Rosminian mission is often overlooked. The zeal of these pioneers and the enormous impact that they had is impressive – there were literally thousands of converts. The Rosminians were to play a major role in the development of the Church in Ireland and Wales, as well in England.

Fr Michael Hill explores the English background to mission, an England already hugely altered through the effects of Irish immigration, that was only to accelerate in the aftermath of the Great Famine. He introduces the founder of the mission. Antonio Rosmini, and explains the Italian enthusiasm for the conversion of England. Pope Gregory XVI himself was to come on board the vessel carrying the first three Italian missionaries led by Aloysius Gentili in 1835 and bless them before they sailed. Gentili and the Anglo-Irishman, Moses Furlong, were to preach fifty parish missions; two other Italians, Fortunatus Signini and Angelo Rinolfi, over thirty years preached around 250 parish missions and dozens of retreats to clergy and religious or school communities.

From extensive research in England, Ireland, Wales and Italy, the author examines the new parish foundations made by the Rosminians, including Loughborough, Rugby and St Etheldreda's, London in England and Newport and Cardiff in South Wales (with ten Catholic schools in Cardiff alone). Then there was the Catholic public school, Ratcliffe College, industrial schools and orphanages in Ireland, England and Belgium. Alongside this came the work of the Rosminian nuns, especially in education.

John Michael Hill, IC was born in Yorkshire and educated by the Rosminians. He studied at Cambridge before entering the Rosminian Order, and was ordained priest in Rome in 1964. He lives in New Zealand where his ministry has been mostly spent – teaching in Rosminian schools, and later working for the Bishops' Conference in adult Education in Faith, and in a Retreat Centre in Christchurch. For twenty years he edited Catholic magazines in Dunedin. He has also written *Antonio Rosmini: Persecuted Prophet*.

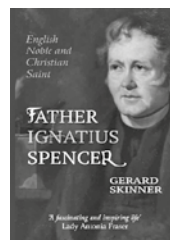


Father Ignatius Spencer:

English Noble and Christian Saint - Gerard Skinner

The Spencers reached the peak of their wealth in the eighteenth century; in the nineteenth they achieved the commanding heights of political power; by the end of the twentieth century they knew the extremes of celebrity.

Ignatius Spencer (1799-1864), great, great, great uncle of Princess Diana, renounced his wealth and position in society in order to serve the poor, begging his way around the British Isles and beyond, wearing the rough black habit of the Passionists, the austere religious order he had joined. He was welcomed by popes, cardinals and aristocrats, and loved by the poor and destitute,



particularly in Ireland where, even during the famine of 1845-52, and against the rising tide of Irish nationalism, this son of a former First Lord of the Admiralty, brother to both the governess of Queen Victoria's children and to a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, aroused the warmth and admiration of tens of thousands of the Irish as he travelled the length and breadth of Ireland preaching in hundreds of churches and chapels.

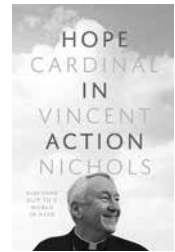
This is the story of a remarkable figure who for some was "a dirty, mad mendicant" and for others no less than a saint. Today Ignatius Spencer, already recognized for his life of heroic virtue, is under consideration for canonization.

Gerard Skinner studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Venerable English College in Rome. A priest of the Archdiocese of Westminster, he has written, edited or contributed to a number of books including *Newman the Priest*, *The Pallium - A Brief Guide to its History and Significance*, and, with co-author Fr Nicholas Schofield, *The English Cardinals* and *The English Vicars Apostolic*.

Hope in Action

Reaching out to a world in need – Cardinal Vincent Nichols

At a time when many feel defeated by the world's problems, Vincent Nichols reminds us why we need to hold on to hope - and how we can offer genuine hope to those who need it most. With questions for reflection at the end of each chapter, this stirring book will encourage people of all faith backgrounds to come together and work towards a better future for all. This book arose from a series of talks and lectures Cardinal Nichols delivered during the Year of Mercy (8 December 2015 to 20 November 2016) declared by Pope Francis.



Cardinal Vincent Nichols was born in Liverpool in 1945, and studied for the priesthood in Rome. He was ordained in 1969 for the Archdiocese of Liverpool and then served in parishes in Wigan and Toxteth. In 1992, he became an auxiliary bishop in Westminster and then Archbishop of Birmingham in 2000. In 2009, he was installed as the eleventh Archbishop of Westminster and hosted Pope Benedict during the Papal Visit to the UK in 2010. On 22 February 2014, he was created cardinal by Pope Francis.



ANTHONY FYK is a seminarian for the Diocese of Portsmouth. He is currently spending a year at Portsmouth Cathedral, before returning to the English College in the new academic year.

Schola Report 2018

REV. TRISTAN CRANFIELD



Another busy year for the Schola, and a year of transition too, seeing the end of your author's tenure as Schola Master and the passing of the baton (musical, not sportive) into the hands of a new director.

It was a great pleasure to see the Schola numbers increase to 25 members at the start of the year, including all of the New Men, and our two Anglican exchange students, with us for Martyrs' Day and the Advent Meditation. This was a great source of encouragement for me, and, along with a good number of experienced singers and other musicians in the ranks, allowed us to explore an ambitious repertoire.



Fr Rector conducts the Schola during the Mass for St Philip Neri at the Chiesa Nuova. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

For Martyrs' Day, we performed Kevin Allen's *Paratur nobis mensa*, based on the words of Psalm 23: "A banquet you have spread in the sight of my enemies". The Advent Meditation this year was devised by Daniel Ferguson (Portsmouth), combining music and readings around the theme of Jn 1:14 "And we beheld His glory". The idea was to reflect on those various individuals in Palestinian countryside who, according to the Scriptures, were privileged to be the first to hear of the imminent entrance of the Word into the visible world, and the first to see him in the flesh. We began with Palestrina's *Matin responsory* for the 1st Sunday of Advent ("I look from afar, and lo! I see the power of God coming and a cloud covering the whole earth") by way of a prologue, before hearing the story of the annunciation to Zechariah (Lk 1:5-17), paired with a polyphonic setting of part of that text (*Gabriel Angelus*). This latter piece by 16th century Flemish composer Matthias Werrecore, who was *maestro di cappella* of Milan Cathedral, was previously unknown to me, but its rich, melismatic texture proved great fun for the small ensemble who performed it (Aidan Bartlett, Andrew Coy, Toby Duckworth, Sean Elliott, Benjamin Woodley and Piotr Wygnański). In it, we tried to capture the atmosphere of Zechariah the priest at the altar of incense, receiving with fearful reverence the angel's joyful greeting.

Another group to hear first of the coming of the King of Peace were, of course, the shepherds. Their story was told in a musical setting of Lk 2:10-11 by Maurice Greene (1696-1755) entitled *Behold, I bring you glad tidings*, for which Sean Elliott sang the solo part with great aplomb, accompanied by Benjamin Woodley, before the rest of the Schola responded with a chorus of "Glory to God on high!" Another English, albeit more modern, carol performed was Peter Warlock's *Bethlehem Down*. The Schola excelled themselves in letting air, light and warmth into this lullaby for Mary and Joseph, as they gaze on the infant Lord. The Mother of God was also honoured in another piece, paired with the tale of Gabriel's proclamation to

her: where the Schola did well to capture the simple joy of the early English *There Is No Rose*. A more reflective mood was sought in a solo organ piece, played by the Schola Master: the Communion from the Mass of the Immaculate Conception, from Charles Tournemire's cycle for the liturgical year *L'Orgue Mystique*. The soft, muted colours and slowly building harmonies of this short piece proved a fine pairing for that central text of our faith, St John's prologue, the profundity and sublimity of which cannot be adequately captured by any human art.

The final piece to be performed was Victoria's glorious *Conditor Alme Siderum*, which was well known to longer serving Schola members, from when it was performed during the audience which was granted to the College by Benedict XVI, in Advent 2012. The Schola Master who introduced that piece to the College was, of course, our now Rector, Mgr Philip Whitmore. It was fitting, then, that this should be the last piece we were to perform before it was revealed that it would be none other than he, who, after an absence of some years, was to temporarily take up the reins as Schola Master anew.

Seeing Fr Rector back at the helm at our rehearsals was a nostalgic moment for me and our longer-serving singers, but a new experience for most! However, it was foreseen that there would be occasions in the liturgical calendar where it would be difficult as Rector (who has not yet, I think, been granted the gift of bilocation!) to perform his duties to both Schola and College. Therefore, the decision was made that the new Schola Master would have an assistant to conduct on his behalf, and take rehearsals when necessary. This assistant was Andrew Coy (your Editor), who has made a great *début* to his conducting career, directing the Schola on Founders' Day in College. Andrew now prepares to take on the role as the new Schola Master, beginning in October 2018.

At San Lorenzo, the Schola performed Palestrina's *lesu Rex admirabilis*, and for the Vice-Rector's feast, *This Joyful Eastertide*, reprised from the usual highlight of the year: the performance in St Peter's Square on Easter Sunday (this year: in blazing sunshine). Mgr Whitmore oversaw the troops on that occasion, and a fine sound resounding in the piazza during our performance of the usual Easter carols and hymns. The final event of the Schola year took us to the Chiesa Nuova for the patronal solemnity of St Philip Neri. Here, Andrew Coy showed us his versatility on the organ, with beautiful improvisations on the proper chants, led by Choirmaster Sean Elliott and a small group of singers. Mgr Whitmore guided the rest of the choir through the deceptively difficult *Cantate Domino* by Hans Leo Hassler (1564 - 1612), to great effect, with its changes of time signature and high register. A great end to our labours for yet another year.

Having passed the Schola into a very safe pair of hands, it is also time for me to reflect on seven years' worth of singing in the ranks, as I prepare to leave the College to go into priestly ministry back in the diocese. It has been an enormous pleasure for me to be able to play a part in the musical life of the College, both in directing and being directed by others. I hope that in both I have done nothing but help others to do what is required to give glory to God in our voices. And I know that the Schola, always blessed by the generous contribution of its members, both experienced and less experienced, will continue to go from strength to strength in the future – and will continue to complement, here below, the angels' work.



TRISTAN CRANFIELD is a priest for the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. Having completed his licence in Thomistic Studies at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum), he has now returned to the diocese to begin his priestly ministry.

Sports Report

CONNOR HEY



The Fr Ragheed Ganni Memorial Cup has become the focal point of the College's sporting calendar, and this year was no different. On a warm Roman winter's afternoon, teams representing seminaries from across the Eternal City gathered together at the Pontifical Irish College for the annual football tournament. The day was characterised by joy, laughter and fraternity; but unfortunately for the Venerabile, not victory this time around. The lack of time available for training, combined with being placed in the more testing of the two groups, left us on the back foot. Nevertheless, we gave a strong account of ourselves, and battled very hard in the November sun. After a strong opening fixture in which we secured a draw (though it easily could have been a victory), there was a great air of optimism amongst our seminarians. However, it was our game against the Irish College (the eventual tournament champions) that would be the defining hurdle against us progressing through to the knockout stages. We started very positively and the game was tensely poised at 1 – 1 for the majority of the match, until the Irish managed to secure themselves a 2 – 1 lead, courtesy of an unfortunate deflection (well, unfortunate for us!). As the game approached its dying embers and we desperately tried to salvage a draw, the Irish hit us on the counter-attack and scored what would be the final goal of the game. In the end, the Irish deserved their victory, but perhaps 3 – 1 was a little flattering.

Despite our early exit, there were some very strong performances from our seminarians; too many for me to name and do justice to here. However, I cannot let our leavers go unmentioned. Richard "The Leaping Salmon" Marsden has served the team faithfully between the goalposts over the years, and he did a wonderful job of it this year too. Similarly, our captain, leader, and inspiration, Mark Paver, played sublimely; if only we had a few more players of his quality, it would have been us lifting that trophy this year. There is no doubt that he will be an asset that we will struggle to replace any time soon.

At the conclusion of the sporting component of the day we all gathered for pizza, before celebrating Solemn Vespers together in the chapel at the Irish College. A fitting end to the day, which reminded us why we were really there; to celebrate and commemorate the life and memory of the great Fr Ragheed Ganni, whose cause for canonisation is now under way.

In other news, the arrival of some wonderful new gym kit, including a state of the art collection of free weights, has made it more difficult for students to justify themselves staying away from the gym. It would be no exaggeration to say that the majority of students have ventured to the gym at least a handful of times over the course of the academic year. Whilst some prefer the comfort that privacy and air-conditioning provides whilst exercising, there are others that enjoy making the most of the beautiful weather and sites. Catching sight of a fresh-faced student in sportswear leaving the building, or a sodden looking one returning, usually indicates that they are part of the reasonably large group of students that enjoy combining exploring the city and burning a few calories through the medium of running.

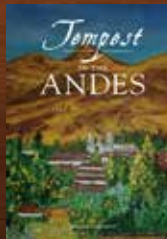
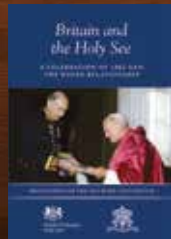
Finally, with the departure of Elliott Wright last year, it seemed as if the English College would no longer be represented in the Vatican cricket team. Fortunately, I received the call-up rather swiftly after arriving in Rome, and so I dusted my spikes off and allowed order to be restored. The team has had a very strong season since I joined them, only losing one fixture (even though that was to the Archbishop of Canterbury's XI!). The popularity and fame of the team seems to be only increasing; indeed, the team is truly living up to its name as an international one as we have plans to (hopefully) tour Argentina this coming Christmas, and the West Indies during the following summer.

All in all, it has been a good sporting year for the Venerabile; though with a few scores to set right, watch this space for next year's report!

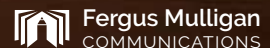


CONNOR HEY is a second-year seminarian for the Diocese of Salford, studying philosophy at the Angelicum.

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The Year in Pictures

OLIVER WELSFORD



Seminarians gather round the tomb of St John the Apostle in the Basilica of St John, Ephesus. Photo: Richard Marsden



On pilgrimage: Tristan Cranfield takes in the view, while Alex Balzanella captures it for posterity. Photo: Richard Marsden



Joachim Teigen and Fr Brian O'Mahony perform the "Dead Parrot" sketch at the New Men show. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Members of the community gather at the College vault at Campo Verano on 14 November.
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The Jubilarians gather after Mass. Photo: Antonio Pineda

Hai Nguyen, Benjamin Hilton and Matthew King on Martyrs' Day. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Tristan Cranfield conducts the Schola during the Advent Meditation in the College church. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Fr Rector brings the Advent Meditation to a close with a few words. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Fr Rector offers a few words of thanks at the end of the Advent Show, held in the College crypt. Photo: Antonio Pineda



Our new Academic Tutor, Fr James McAuley of Portsmouth diocese.



New candidates, James Barber and Peter Taylor, with Bishop Paul Tighe. Photo: Antonio Pineda



The familiar view from the second floor corridor transformed overnight. Photo: Alexander Balzanella



Seminarians and student priests gather in front of St Peter's Basilica after a snowball fight on 26 February.



Matthew King, Marco Egawhary, Alan Wasowski, Andrew Coy, Theo Sharrock and Sean Elliott gather round the Paschal fire during the Easter Vigil. Photo: Alexander Balzanella



Fr John Metcalfe blesses the palms before the procession through the Villa gardens on Palm Sunday. Photo: Alexander Balzanella



The new statue of Our Lady with the child Jesus in the College Garden. Photo: James Neal



Benjamin Hilton and Richard Marsden assist while Fr Rector blesses the water during the Easter Vigil.
Photo: Alexander Balzanella



Students and guests enjoy the College garden after lunch on Easter Sunday. Photo: Alexander Balzanella



Cardinal Vincent Nichols celebrates Mass in the College church, flanked by Tristan Cranfield and Mike Rakowski.
Photo: Alexander Balzanella



Fr Jan Nowotnik meets Pope Francis during the College's private audience.



Pope Francis greets the members of staff during the private audience.



Fr John Flynn and Fr Rector present Pope Francis with a cast model of the College.



Pope Francis sits with the College community during the private audience.



Paola Caiati, with Sean Elliott, Edward Hauschild, Connor Hey and Joachim Teigen on Founders' Day.
Photo: Alexander Balzanella



Alan Wasowski and Toby Duckworth enjoy the College gardens on Founders' Day. Photo: Alexander Balzanella



Antonio Pineda and Francis Murphy deacon at the Philip Neri Mass at Chiesa Nuova, under the watchful eye of MC, Anthony Fyk. Photo: Alexander Balzanella



Toby Duckworth and Anthony Fyk with Bishop David McGough after the Lectorate Mass. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

New candidates: Piotr Wagnanski, Matthew King, Dominic Jenkinson and Alexander Balzanella. Photo: Theodore Sharrock



New candidates, Piotr Wagnanski and Matthew King. Photo: Theodore Sharrock



New acolytes, Oliver Welsford, Anthony Fyk, Andrew Coy, Joshua Dixon and Sean Elliott with Archbishop Kelly.
Photo: Alexander Balzanella



The seven deacons-to-be at their ordination Mass at Villa Palazzola. Photo: Alexander Balzanella



The Venerable English College community, 2017-2018



OLIVER WELSFORD is a fourth-year seminarian for the Diocese of Portsmouth, studying theology at the Gregorian University.

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The College Diary 2017-18

DOMINIC JENKINSON



Sunday 24th September

The Diarist arrives back at College and is greeted in the corridor by Senior Student, Richard Marsden. He launches into an ode to the wonders of Yorkshire and news of the culinary craze sweeping the Ridings and Dales: Yorkshire Pudding Wraps. We only left the Shire a few hours ago and are a long way from gravy dinners now, Richard!

Monday 25th September

The year begins with departures. Michael Vian Clark announces that he is heading off for a pastoral year in America and the community waves him off after lunch. News eventually filters through that Henry Woodhouse will also be undertaking a prolonged spell in a parish this year, in the equally exotic location of Hallam. But there are also new arrivals: three seminarians from England, two from Norway, two Anglican exchange students, Fr Brian O'Mahony (Westminster) and our new Academic Tutor, Fr James McAuley (Portsmouth). Welcome to one and all!

Tuesday 26th September – Sunday 1st October

After one night back in College the whole community embarks on a pilgrimage to the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse in Turkey. As on our visit to the Holy Land three years ago, we are accompanied by Pam Coote, Sr Mary Joseph, John Tangney and our tour guide, old Roman and living encyclopaedia of all things ancient and biblical, Fr Mervyn Tower. On our first day in Turkey we are warmly welcomed to Izmir by His Excellency Lorenzo Piretto, Archbishop of *Archidioecesis Smyrnensis*. The second day involves a trip to Pergamum to see the Acropolis, Great Theatre, Temple of Athena, Agora, Altar of Zeus and ancient



Fr Anthony Doe soaks up a little ancient history in Turkey. Photo: Richard Marsden

medical centre of Asclepium. Day three takes in three of the Seven Churches: Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia. The fourth day begins with a visit to the stunning ruins of Hierapolis, including the original tomb of St Philip the Apostle. The day ends with a visit to Laodicea and then Kuadası. The penultimate day is the highlight of the pilgrimage, a full day visit of Ephesus. We walk in the footsteps of St Paul and enjoy one of the most impressive and largely excavated sites in Turkey. In the afternoon Mass is celebrated at an outdoor altar next to the house where Our Lady lived with St John. We also visit the Evangelist's original resting place at the ruins of the Basilica of St John. The final day of the trip takes in Istanbul and the Hagia Sophia.

The pilgrimage was a remarkable success and will provide us with happy memories for many years to come. Memories of quintessential Englishmen, Oliver Welsford and Peter Taylor, strolling amongst the ruins under the protection of thick black umbrellas to avoid the sun. Memories of the dust of archaeological sites being washed off with regular dips

in thermal mineral baths, bubbling calcium pools and the Aegean Sea. And memories of the various Turkish delights sampled along the way, including strong local coffee and delicious cuisine. The long journeys were whiled away playing competitive "Angry Birds" on our decidedly "high-tech" coach. At the end of the trip Fr Rector conveyed our thanks to "Marvellous Mervyn" for his expert commentary throughout the pilgrimage. The triennial pilgrimage is proving to be a great addition to College tradition. "Hurrah!" for the Friends of the Venerabile, who paid for two of our students to take part, and for the Coote benefaction, which enabled the rest of us to go.

Monday 2nd October

Lectures begin and College life kicks into its regular routine. There have, however, been a few changes over the summer. In a monumental alteration to student life, the notice board and pigeon holes have been moved from the second floor corridor into the Common Room! The stage has been removed and the student social area now appears cavernous. Furthermore, post-Mass refreshments are no longer to be held in the downstairs corridor but in the *Salotto*. It is announced that henceforth the New Men Show, Advent Show and Spiritual



The new layout of the Common Room, with the stage gone, and artwork chosen by an 'Arts Committee'. Photo: Francis Murphy

Conferences will all take place in the crypt. Making all these alterations easier to swallow is a snacks and drinks vending machine placed against the far wall of the Common Room. Your Diarist wonders if this ever-present distributor of goodies is a helpful utility or an extra test of willpower. A good question to ponder over a late night can of pop and a pack of peanut M&M's.

Wednesday 4th October

The first official function of the year sees the Friends of the Venerabile join us for Wednesday evening Mass and supper. In a first for their annual get-together they have come to Palazzola for the week, a move which they inform us has gone down a storm. It is great to see (very recent) Old Roman, Fr Phil Andrews, serving as their chaplain. During supper Fr Rector thanks the Friends for their spiritual and financial support of the College. Chairman Mike Lang and Sr Assumpta Walsh respond with affirmations of their dedication to the College's mission and pledges of prayer for more workers to be sent into the vineyard.

Sunday 8th October

We visit the Basilica of St Mary Major to dedicate the year to *Nostra Signora Salus Populi Romani*. Pope Francis visits this same chapel to pray to Our Lady after all his trips abroad.

Sunday 15th October

The annual IKEA *gita* takes place. After buying a shoe rack Senior Student, Richard Marsden, shares a wise proverb: "Always spend most of your money on shoes and a bed, as that is where you will spend most of your time."

Tuesday 17th October

A year ago this week, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor was with us at the College to celebrate sixty years of priesthood. This evening a Memorial Mass is held for him in the

College Church, presided by Archbishop Paul Gallagher. Amongst those present is the British Ambassador to the Holy See, Her Excellency Sally Axworthy. The Irish Ambassador to the Holy See, Her Excellency Emma Madigan, and Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for promoting Christian Unity, are also present. Amongst the ecumenical guests is newly appointed Director of the Anglican Centre, Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi, from Burundi. Archbishop Arthur Roche preaches and speaks with great warmth about the late cardinal and his great friendship with the College.

Friday 3rd November

The much-anticipated First Year Party provides the perfect opportunity to introduce the New Men. There are five new seminarians: Edward Hauschild (Portsmouth), Connor Hey and Theo Sharrock (Salford), Trym Hellevig and Joachim Teigen (Oslo). We also have two Anglicans on a six-month VEC taster: Aidan Bartlett and Christopher Rogers. There is one priest beginning further studies, Fr Brian O'Mahony (Westminster). After Evening Prayer the new chaps have pride of place at an Italian Fish'n'chip supper, which even has oodles of *piselli molli*. There follows a drinks reception at which *The Venerabile 2017* is launched. In all the excitement Joshua Dixon manages to spill a gin and tonic onto a thankfully empty archivist's display cabinet. Perhaps it is fitting that a Gordon's and Schweppes drips down onto the red velvet where memorials of College life in years gone by are oft displayed. Either way, we descend to the crypt for the New Men Show, which is a suitably nonsensical fusion of Gilbert and Sullivan, River Dance, Monty Python, and patriotic Scandinavian anthems. Welcome aboard, first years!

Sunday 12th November

The College joins the Irish Pallottines community at San Silvestro in Capite for Remembrance Sunday Mass. Bishop William Nolan of the Diocese of Galloway gives an impassioned homily on peace and nuclear disarmament. Music and servers are provided by the Pontifical Scots College.

Tuesday 14th November

Deceased members of the College community are remembered at the annual Mass at Campo Verano. As several members of the community seem unsure of the location of the College vault within the cemetery, Fr John Metcalfe volunteers to cycle ahead and act as guide. Upon arriving, he finds everyone already gathered at the vault (having driven up) and indignantly cycles back. Fr Anthony Doe presides at Mass, and preaches beautifully on the eternity of the priesthood. After Mass, Fr Brian O'Mahony is separated from the main party during a visit to the nearby basilica of San Lorenzo. As darkness falls, he is found wandering the streets. Asked why he had not waited by the car, he explains "I assumed you'd all be in one of these local bars." Concerns are raised over the Editor's driving, though fortunately the only victims are two wheelie bins and a bucket of flowers.

Sunday 19th November

A special treat at Sunday lunch in the form of a birthday cake (in honour of Edward Hauschild, whose birthday was yesterday). A red-faced Edward is invited to come up and cut the cake, to the sound of singing and applause. The community are grateful to Edward's mother, who provided the chocolate treat.

In a moment reminiscent of a scene from *Pride and Prejudice*, Sean Elliott informs Fr Rector that he feels a "change of air" will do him good as a free weekend approaches.

At a house meeting before Vespers, it is suggested that students no longer keep reserved spaces in the library, and keep desks as free as possible. After dinner, Tristan Cranfield is spotted in the library filling a suitcase with books.

Monday 20th November

Oliver Welsford decides to leave his en-suite Mayfair room and move onto the dark and uninhabited 44 corridor. According to a note from the Vice-Rector, this is for "safety and security reasons". According to Oliver Welsford, it is in order to blast Wagner from his speakers without disturbance.

Thursday 23rd November

The Wiseman Society hosts an event in the crypt. Christopher Lamb, Rome correspondent for *The Tablet*, gives a talk entitled "Reporting the Papacy in the Age of Fake News". Christopher and his young family are regular worshippers at the College. He gives us an interesting behind-the-scenes peek into reporting on all things papal and takes questions from the floor. The new president of the Wiseman Society, Oliver Welsford, thanks the outgoing Francis Murphy.

Wednesday 29th November

This evening the College welcomes more than thirty priests from England and Wales who are celebrating 40, 50 and 60 years of priestly ordination. The Jubilarians joined the College community for Mass presided by Canon Michael Brockie, of the Archdiocese of Westminster, who celebrates his 50th anniversary this year. After Mass, a festal supper is enjoyed with the experienced priests encouraging the seminarians in their vocation. A running theme over the years is the joy that the Jubilarians take in renewing old acquaintances and making new friends as they spend a week together up at the Villa. Addressing a very full refectory, Fr Rector reminds us what seminarians and Jubilarians have in common. For one, both look at each other and think: "That's the future!"

Friday 1st December

Martyrs' Day. The Most Reverend Joseph Augustine Di Noia, OP, Assistant Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, presides at Mass at 11:30 am. The Bronx-born Archbishop gives an impassioned and stirring homily on martyrdom. Mass is followed by the traditional festal lunch and celebrations continue in the evening with veneration of the relics, attended by many friends from the North American College.

Saturday 2nd December

Fr Iain Matthew OCD makes the short journey across town from the Teresianum to lead our Advent Recollection Weekend. Reflections from the Carmelite Mystics are interspersed with silence and Eucharistic Adoration as the house celebrates the 40 Hours Devotion.

Friday 8th December

The thud of an axe and cries of "timber!" suggest that this year's HollyCam is getting out of hand. In the mud and the rain, clutching a bin-bag and a broken umbrella, the Rev. Tristan Cranfield laments the destruction of his "liturgy shoes". A hearty lunch of pasta, meat pie and apple crumble puts everyone to sleep for the afternoon, before an hour of adoration and rosary to mark the solemnity.

Meanwhile, back in Rome, Alan Wasowski is seen parading around the Polish Church in a mitre and cope. His claim that he is dressing as St Nicholas for the children is met with suspicion.

Saturday 16th - Sunday 17th December

The Advent Meditation and Entertainment weekend is a roaring success. The *Schola Cantorum* sing beautifully between Gospel readings and a homily by St John Chrysostom. The theme this year is "And we beheld His glory" (John 1:14), devised by Rev. Tristan Cranfield (Schola Master) and Daniel Ferguson. From the church, guests are ushered into the refectory for lashings of panettone, chocolate and fiery mulled wine. Breaking decades of tradition this year's show is moved from the Common Room to the crypt, decked out with new lighting and a sound system. The show is produced by Andrew Coy and Theodore Sharrock and directed by Piotr Wygnanski and Edward Hauschild. The atmospheric location, high quality production and stellar performances combine for a fantastic evening's entertainment. Benjamin Woodley stars as an unlikely member of the "Four Yorkshiremen" in a twist on the classic Monty Python sketch. Our "Four Yorkshire Jubilarians" take turns trying to outdo each other with reminiscences about how hard seminary life was "back in our day". Things get carried away and at one point Woodley declares, "Well, we had it tough. We used to have to get up out of the shoebox at twelve o'clock at night, and lick the cobbled road clean with our tongues. We had half a handful of freezing cold gravel to last breakfast, lunch and tea, studied the *Prima Pars, Prima Secundae, Secunda Secundae, Tertia Pars* and the dear old *Supplementum...* for twenty-four hours a day... in the original *Aramaic* mind you!" Guests from seminaries and institutes across the city, including the British Ambassador to the Holy See, express their thanks for a grand old night of entertainment.

Wednesday 20th December

On the final evening before we head home for Christmas, the community Mass witnesses James Barber and Peter Taylor admitted to Candidacy for Holy Orders by Bishop Paul Tighe, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Culture.

Thursday 18th January

The first celebration of the New Year is an evening Mass and Festal Supper for the Dedication of the College Church. Fr Rector presides.



Hai Nguyen, Dominic Jenkinson, Benjamin Woodley, Anthony Fyk and Edward Hauschild enjoy a moment in the refectory. Photo: Francis Murphy

Friday 19th January

Several taxis head up the Via Cassia for Burns Night at the Scots College. As always, they prove to be excellent hosts and in the speeches manage to give us a bit of stick in return for the ribbing they got at our Advent Show.

Tuesday 23rd January

The pressures of exam-tide begin to take their toll. The Rev. Tristan Cranfield's towel goes missing, and the optimistic sum of €5,000 is offered for its return. Despite the swift return of the towel, no money is exchanged.

Tuesday 30th January

Fr Jorge Jesus Lopez (San Luis, Argentina) successfully defends his doctorate thesis in Philosophy at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross. *Felicitaciones!*

Saturday 3rd February

This week we say goodbye to our two Anglican exchange students: Aidan Bartlett and Christopher Rogers, who were with us for one semester. Aidan and Chris have been active members of the community, joining the Schola, helping out around the house and playing key roles in the New Men and Advent shows. The idea for Anglican students to join us for an experience of Roman seminary life dates back to 1971. Ronald Coppin, Secretary of the Committee for Theological Education for the Church of England, and Bishop Alan Clark (at that time auxiliary Bishop of Northampton and Co-Chairman of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission) approached the Rector of the English College, Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, with the idea. The first two students were admitted in September 1973.

Wednesday 14th February

For some a day of romance, the English College instead dutifully marks Ash Wednesday with fasting and abstinence. Francis Murphy finds himself deaconing a Mass in Polish at the shrine of Czestochowa, though, thankfully, he does not proclaim the Gospel.

Wednesday 21st February

Today we learn that Benjamin Woodley has been voted in as Deputy Senior Student by the house. Who better to enforce "refiquette" and the prompt signing of lists than the man for whom everything from Bach to the most tedious chores and even plates of wilting chicory are simply "marvellous"? Yesterday we were introduced to our new Senior Student, Marco Egawhary. The community is in safe hands.

Monday 26th February

The "Beast from the East" cold wave brings a rare blanket of snow upon the city. The first snowballs are launched in the garden soon after breakfast, the student body having unanimously declared that the Pontifical universities have closed. News later arrives that the Gregorian, along with many other Roman institutions, has, indeed, shut down for the day. The lads head down to St Peter's Square for a mass snowball fight against the Pontifical North American College. The *Venerabile* are slightly outnumbered, but rally round as James Barber gets a rendition of *God Save the Queen* going. CNN News International captures the Battle of St Peter's, which soon goes viral online: a fitting record of one of the most enjoyable days in seminary history! Meanwhile, the Angelicum inexplicably decides to carry on its programme of studies, only to close the following day as the thaw kicks in and the Gregorian reopens.



Sean Elliott and Andrew Coy make the most of the snowy weather. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

Thursday 1st March

We enter deeper into the Lenten season and various year groups begin retreats in preparation for ministries and ordination. A week ago the lectors-, acolytes- and candidates-to-be headed to Santa Severa for a few days of silent prayer, though the weather proved relentlessly wet. Also wet were Oliver Welsford's only pair of trousers, which were soaked through after being caught by high tide on a post-prandial walk. Today the deacons- and priests-to-be head to Bagnoregio. Unfortunately the weather here proves wintry, and one of the cars gets stuck. Mike Rakowski comes to the rescue by pushing the car out of the snow... in flip-flops and socks.

Friday 2nd March

More drama from Bagnoregio, as Fr Anthony Doe manages to lock himself out in the garden after Compline, during what sounds like a thunderstorm. His cries for help are heeded... eventually.

Tuesday 13th March

The College welcomes our Bishop Trustees on their annual visitation. Bishop Mark O'Toole presides at the San Lorenzo in Damaso Station Mass, where we provide servers and singers. Fr Rector resumes his position as Schola Master, leading the Schola in Palestrina's *Jesu, Rex Admirabilis*.

At lunch, Fr Doe asks Joachim Teigen whether the Norwegians still live in igloos.

Friday 16th March

Pope Francis invites all seminarians and priests studying in Rome to an audience in the Paul VI Audience Hall. It is an opportunity to discuss the new *Ratio*, with questions posed by Church students from all over the world. The Pope speaks of the importance of the priest being a father, rather than a functionary.



Frs Brian O'Mahony, Mark Paver and Andrew Chase wait with Peter Taylor for the Holy Father to arrive at the papal audience for seminarians and student priests in Rome. Photo: Richard Marsden

Saturday 17th- Sunday 18th March

The College heads up to the Villa for a Human Development weekend. One group focusses on "mindfulness", which involves - amongst other things - sitting in silence and examining a raisin.

Tuesday 27th March

The College once again heads up to the Villa - this time to begin Holy Week in the customary way with a silent retreat. Fr Mark Butlin OSB leads the talks, sharing with us deep spiritual insights, a lifetime of prayer and monastic experience and a wonderful *joie de vivre*. He highlights the need for us to have intimate and obstinate recourse to the Gospel, to live the liturgy and to dance with the Lord.

Thursday 29th March

Family and friends begin to arrive at the College for the Holy Week celebrations. Fr James McAuley presides at the Maundy Thursday Mass, expertly guided by new MC, Anthony Fyk. After Mass, the community process to the Martyrs' Chapel, where Benjamin Hilton and Sean Elliott once more provide a magnificent Altar of Repose - this year featuring pillars wrapped in climbing ivy. Tristan Cranfield for the last time leads a small group in the singing of his hauntingly beautiful *In Monte Oliveti*.

Friday 30th March

Fr Anthony Doe presides over the Good Friday liturgy, as storm clouds gather outside. The Passion is sung by three deacons - Tristan Cranfield (narrator), Richard Marsden, and Francis Murphy (Christ) - with a Schola providing the crowd parts, and Fr Rector conducting.

Saturday 31st March

Musicians spend the day rehearsing in the Church, reducing the organist to an irritable wreck. Nature provides a fitting backdrop to the beginning of Easter, however, as a large rainbow appears over the city at sunset. Quiet descends on the College as the Easter Vigil begins. The Paschal fire is lit in the entrance to the Garden Room for fear of rain, and Deacon Tristan Cranfield sings the most beautiful Exsultet we are ever likely to hear, "Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice, arrayed with the lightning of his glory, let this holy building shake with joy, filled with the mighty voices of the peoples."

Sunday 1st April

Tired but happy seminarians head over to St Peter's to sing for the Easter Sunday morning Mass celebrated by Pope Francis. As usual, communication is a problem and the Schola - led by Fr Rector - is silenced first by a brass band and then by the cutting off of microphones. Nonetheless, the sun shines (unlike previous years) and the lads head back for DBLs and a festive lunch, before heading off - some back to England.



Trym Hellevig and Benjamin Woodley at St Peter's Square on Easter Sunday. Photo: Richard Marsden

Sunday 8th April

College life resumes in the normal fashion after an all-too-brief holiday. Although returning from a cold and snowy England to the sunny climes of Rome isn't all that bad...

Monday 9th April

The College celebrates the transferred feast of the Annunciation with an Evening Mass. It is undoubtedly the first and, hopefully, the last time *Joy to the World* is heard as a hymn in the College church during Easter-tide.

Saturday 14th April

The College hosts a Symposium covering 900 years of Catholic history, over at the Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra, Piazza Sant'Agostino. Students man the doors in-between lectures from professors such as Eamon Duffy and Judith Champ. The day concludes with a stunning concert in the College church performed by the *Cappella Fede* and directed by Peter Leech, featuring music composed between 1100 and 1967 - much of it in honour of St Thomas of Canterbury.

Monday 16th April

An exhibition opens in the crypt called "Memory, Martyrs and Mission: aspects of the history of the English Hospice and the Venerable English College, Rome, 1362-2018". Amongst many fine artefacts on display are the rope used to lead St Edmund Campion to his martyrdom, a corporal used in the Tower for the celebration of Mass by five martyrs and a magnificent silver statue of St Thomas of Canterbury.

Wednesday 18th April

The Beda community join us for Mass and supper in celebration of the hundred-year anniversary of their moving out from sharing premises with us. In recent years it has become a common occurrence for the *Venerabile*, Beda, Irish and Scots Colleges to visit each other for Mass and shared meals. These are good occasions for a bit of friendly banter and to encourage each other in the shared mission of the New Evangelisation.

Saturday 21st April

A day of great excitement as the College meets Pope Francis for a private audience in the Apostolic Palace. Fr Rector opens by telling the Holy Father of the jubilees celebrated by the College this year. The Pope then addresses us, speaking of the importance of love for God and neighbour as the guiding principle of ministry, as well as the importance of authentic friendships and a sense of humour in the formation process. Finally, the Pope encourages us to "banish fear", and entrusts us to the



Richard Marsden, James Barber and Edward Hauschild prepare to meet the pope. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

care of Our Lady of Walsingham. After the address each member of the house is able to greet the Pope personally and is presented with a papal rosary. In an especially poignant moment, the Holy Father speaks with Fr Jan Nowotnik and presents him with a special rosary for his mother, who, a few days later, passes away, strengthened by the blessing of the Holy Father.

Monday 23rd April

Shortly after meeting Jorge Mario Bergoglio, A.K.A the Pope, we celebrate St George's Day with Mass, evening meal and the singing of the national anthem. Fr Vice-Rector preaches powerfully on the need for us all to kill the dragon within us. The kitchen pulls out all the stops with a fine roast beef and gravy dinner - though judgement is passed on the stodginess of the Yorkshire puddings. After dinner, the clash of rapiers is heard coming from the refectory, as some students get a little carried away with the decorative ornaments so carefully laid out by the Entertainments Committee.

Thursday 26th April

There is an excited hubbub in the Common Room as students gather to see the official photographs of the moment they met the Supreme Pontiff. Hilarity ensues when we come across the moment Theo Sharrock grinned straight down the lens of the camera whilst shaking the Pope's hand.

Wednesday 2nd May

The community is invited to Mass and supper at the Pontifical Irish College. Alexander Balzanella decides to save time by cycling there, but sadly meets with an unfortunate accident and arrives at the Irish College bruised, bleeding and clutching his ripped trousers in a plastic bag (new ones having been bought along the way). After Mass, supper takes place in the refectory and Fr Rector compliments the community on their round tables. Drinks afterwards, during which Sean Elliott is overheard loudly praising the "ad orientem bar" set up for our use. Alexander Balzanella bravely, and perhaps foolishly, cycles back to the Via di Monserrato.

Saturday 5th May

Recent attempts to bully Senior Student, Marco Egawhary, into disclosing its secretive location having proved futile, it is with a great sense of anticipation that members of the student and staff body along with the *personale* of the College set out on the annual College *gita*. This year, we head to Alatri, Lazio, for Mass in a church featuring a renowned image of Our Lady of Constantinople. Afterwards, a tour of the town, featuring its megalithic acropolis, ancient ruins, and a typically Italian wedding at the cathedral. One or two seminarians find the historical narrative a little dense, and are distracted by a nearby playground. After the tour, a characteristically big lunch by nearby Lago di Canterno. Two large tables are formed: one for meat-eaters, the other for fish-eaters. Both are equally delicious - though diners are distracted by Alan Wasowski, who insists on taking unflattering photographs of people eating.

In the evening, Oliver Welsford puts on a screening of *Roma Città Aperta*. A very moving film, though laughter is provoked by the appearance of blankets in this 1945 film that feature the exact pattern seen on College blankets.

Sunday 6th May

Fr Anthony Doe, Spiritual Director, blesses a beautiful new statue of Our Lady of Consolation in the garden. Afterwards the house gathers for a meeting where Fr Rector makes an important



Sr Mary Joseph and Ryan Service on the College *gita*. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

announcement regarding the formation schedule. Ordination to the diaconate may now take place at the end of the STB, and ordination to the priesthood at the end of the first year of the Licence. In effect, this means that ordination comes a year sooner than it has in recent years. For the diarist and his year group, with just over a year left of undergraduate studies, things suddenly become very imminent!



Fr Anthony Doe prepares to bless the new statue of Our Lady in the College garden. Photo: Francis Murphy

Saturday 12th May

The Entertainments Committee host their annual BBQ - a great success, thanks to chefs Toby Duckworth and Connor Hey. Less successful is the Editor's attempt to contribute to the festivities by cooking two kilos of rice, which, being totally inedible, sadly end up in the bin.

Sunday 13th May

Founders' Day. Fr Vice-Rector hosts a celebratory Mass and festive lunch, with a particular focus on thanking the support staff who make the College work behind the scenes. Tonino and his team of builders deserve a special mention for their fantastic work on the façade. Fr Flynn has driven through an array of projects since arriving, with no sign of letting up. The latest addition is a structure on the roof terrace to provide shade from the beating Roman sun in summer months. The only problem now is the gigantic *gabbiani* that have colonised the roof space, squawking at intruding students whilst devouring unfortunate pigeons. Suggestions to solve the problem include installing a mock bird of prey, or an Alan Wasowski, to scare them away.

Wednesday 16th May

The College comes together for a celebration Mass and supper in honour of the Silver Jubilee of ordination to the priesthood of Fr Rector and his year group. Present for the occasion are the Rector's contemporaries: Fr David Barrett (Northampton), Fr Kevin Dring (Arundel and Brighton), Canon Eddy Jarosz (Nottingham), Fr Paul Milarvie (Glasgow), Fr Tony Milner (Arundel and Brighton), Fr Michael Robertson (Clifton), Mr John Sargent (Liverpool) as well as Archbishop Charles Scicluna, alongside the College community. A fine and festive occasion ends with speeches, where Fr Vice-Rector notes Mgr Whitmore's love for all things musical. He deduces that, were the Rector to be any particular piece of music, he would have to be a fanfare: "colourful, joyful and, above all, very short." Gifts include a Panama hat, a Parker pen and an empty box. The student body give him the full orchestral score of *The Marriage of Figaro*, and a small Schola sing Palestrina's *Sicut Cervus*, arranged by the Rector himself.

Saturday 26th May

For the Solemnity of St Philip Neri at Chiesa Nuova the College provides servers and the Schola. Mass is presided by Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signature. The Schola are once more ably conducted by Fr Rector, with your Editor at the organ.



Members of the Schola gather with Fr Rector after the St Philip Neri Mass. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

Sunday 27th May

Trinity Sunday: Bishop Philip Egan presides and in his homily speaks of St Elizabeth of the Trinity and the indwelling of the Holy Trinity. According to annual tradition, the doors to the College church are flung open and a very short entrance procession, of a few metres, takes place on the Via di Monserrato.

Saturday 9th June

The Senior Student takes a group of Italian First Holy Communion children on a tour of the College. He introduces them to Fr Metcalfe, and shortly afterwards they visit the Tribune, where Marco tells the young ones about the martyrs. One of the children asks, "Was Don Giovanni around at the time of the martyrs?" Another retorts, "He *is* old, but not 500 years old!"

Sunday 10th June

Already deep into exam-tide and Sunday dinner conversation turns to funeral plans and wills. John Waters informs the brethren that a quarter of his estate will go to the maintenance of his two favourite steam trains.

Tuesday 12th June

Accident-prone Alexander Balzanella takes another tumble - this time, on a run. Many are suspicious after this left-handed student with an exam in Sacramental Theology that same day returns from the hospital with his left arm in a cast, but otherwise intact.

Wednesday 13th June

Former VEC student Fr Sandy MacDonald returns to the English College to celebrate Mass. Inspired by the reading for the day, in which Elijah confronts the prophets of Baal, Fr Sandy preaches on the need to set the world on fire. Fr Tony Currer takes this rather too literally and sets himself on fire in the bar later on that evening, after leaning over a tealight.

Wednesday 20th June

Once again, Mass is celebrated by a recently ordained VEC alumnus: this time, Fr Joakim Breeding. Four days earlier, he was ordained in Stockholm, with a number of staff and students present. He preaches beautifully on the need for a contemplative spirit in every aspect of our lives. After Mass, many marvel at the quality of his ordination cards, with Francis Murphy momentarily turning green with envy.

Saturday 23rd June

The VEC continues to foster friendship with the Scandinavian countries as a good number attend the ordination of Josef Ottersen to the priesthood in St Olav's Cathedral, Oslo. Fears of Norwegian prices and/or bankruptcy are quickly abated by the generous hospitality of the hosts. After a beautiful Mass, a fine dinner is enjoyed, during which those members of the VEC present sing *Ad multos annos* to Fr Josef. Later in the evening, Francis Murphy is seen hitting the dance floor - a shock to many! During the trip, Richard Marsden's legendary love of butter reaches the ears of native experts, much to his embarrassment.

Wednesday 27th June

The Seven Churches' Walk takes place - a little later this year. Many are still scarred by memories of the torrential downpour that brought last year's attempt to an abrupt, and very wet, end. This year, however, unusually cool temperatures and dry conditions prove ideal

for the pilgrimage, which is led by Tristan Cranfield and Piotr Wygnanski. Theo Sharrock is unfortunately eaten alive by mosquitoes at Campo Verano, and his forty-odd bites are on display for the next couple of weeks, he being insistent on wearing shorts. Your Diarist prepares a meal of chilli con carne in the student kitchen for the weary travellers, before all head to the bar for a well-earned drink. Fr John Flynn marks the final evening of the bar in its current location (it will move to the Garden Room over the summer) by offering a drink on the house. Cue: the finishing off of the most expensive whiskies!

Thursday 28th June

The *Villeggiatura* begins, and students head up on the coach with, as ever, more clothes than they will ever need. A few days of pastoral classes are to be had, however, before the holiday can really begin.

Friday 29th June

Fr Rector presides at Mass for the Feast of SS Peter and Paul. Later in the afternoon, preparations for ministries and ordinations are seen taking place unusually early, as Benjamin Hilton tours Albano seeking hair product, while Sean Elliott receives the “best haircut to be had in Lazio”.

Sunday 1st July

Toby Duckworth and Anthony Fyk receive the ministry of Lector from Bishop David McGough. Particular thanks are given to Bishop David at lunch, having faced a particularly trying journey resulting in very little sleep.

Tuesday 3rd July

The VEC once more hits the bowling alley in Ciampino for an evening of friendly competition. Alan Wasowski considers it an opportune moment to test out his new GoPro camera, though not everyone agrees. Fr Andrew Chase is the champion - which Francis Murphy attributes to bowling being considered “high culture” in Australia.

Wednesday 4th July

While our brothers across the pond celebrate Independence, the VEC marks a more community-focussed celebration. Alexander Balzanella, Matthew King, Piotr Wygnanski and your Diarist are made candidates at an evening Mass presided over by Archbishop Patrick Kelly. Supper is had outside, during which Fr Rector notes that this is the first time that Candidacy has been held at the Villa this millennium. The setting sun certainly makes for a pleasant celebration!

Thursday 5th July

Recent VEC tradition is once more cast aside with reckless abandon as the South win the North-South football match! This may have had something to do with the fact that James Abbott, who is leading one of the pastoral courses, is recruited for the southern team.

Sunday 8th July

A double-dose of Archbishop Patrick Kelly, as he presides at Mass for the ministry of Acolyte for Andrew Coy, Joshua Dixon, Sean Elliott, Anthony Fyk and Oliver Welsford (or, as Archbishop Kelly put it, “Joshua and his friends”). As ever, a splendid lunch afterwards, and the customary singing of *Ad multos annos!*

Saturday 14th July

Preparations for the diaconate ordinations have been taking place, and there is a sense of buzzing expectation at the Villa. Richard Marsden adds to the excitement at dinner by cutting into his fruit to find a large earwig - a clear sign of the benefits of using cutlery to eat fruit! Later in the evening, we are treated to a review of the year in the infamous Photo Review on the terrace. This year it is put together by Alexander Balzanella (for the first time), who commentates with Piotr Wyrnanski, bringing out the more humorous side to seminary life.

Sunday 15th July

Diaconate day, and the usual early morning mayhem of packing up one's room before 8:30am, stressed musicians, servers trying to find the right sized albs and last-minute ordination cards being written. Of all people, it is the MC who seems the most laid back, who is overheard asking what time Mass starts earlier that morning. Bravo, Anthony! Mass begins at 10:30 am, with Archbishop Bernard Longley presiding, and seven of our community are ordained deacons: James Barber, Marco Egawhary, Benjamin Hilton, Hai Nguyen, Ryan Service, John Waters and Benjamin Woodley. A number of seminarians comment after Mass that they were moved to tears several times during the liturgy - a testament to the beauty of the liturgy and the joy of seeing such good men surrendering themselves to the Lord's will.



Deacons-to-be Benjamin Woodley, Ryan Service and Benjamin Hilton smile during Archbishop Bernard's homily. Photo: Alexander Balzanella

A truly marvellous lunch is had after Mass, during which the Norwegian table bursts into song, causing heads to turn. The Editor is thanked for sacrificing his *Villeggiatura* for the sake of the *Venerabile 2018*, and Connor Hey is announced as the new Editor. Bravo, Connor! After lunch, a tired but happy community head back to the Via di Monserrato before heading home for the summer. It has been a long and very eventful year, but one filled with many treasured memories. *Deo gratias!*



DOMINIC JENKINSON is a fifth-year seminarian for the Diocese of Hallam, studying theology at the Angelicum.

Leavers' Profiles



Sr Margaret Atkins

"Live in such a way that you spread abroad the life-giving aroma of Christ". So reads the twelfth principle of the Rule of St Augustine, "Freedom Under Grace", to which most of us were introduced by Sr Margaret. As Pope Francis teaches in *Evangelii Gaudium*, "realities are greater than ideas"; so it is good when a principle is seen in practice, when an idea becomes real. While I am sure it will be to her great embarrassment that it is said, we have all witnessed something of the making real of this principle during Sr Margaret's stay. Sr joined us in



January 2017 as a temporary academic tutor and quickly found herself close to the heart of the community in more ways than one. Determined to make the most of her time in Rome, she has thrown herself into the life of the community and the city: her enthusiasm has been infectious. Naturally, her contribution to the academic life of the College has been particularly significant: she has devoted much of her time to teaching Latin and Greek to a range of abilities, initiated a philosophical reading group, and, beyond the formal academic lessons, she has contributed more broadly by her engaging conversation, listening, encouragement and counsel. Great as her academic contribution has been, Sr's presence here will be missed in many other ways. We have been treated to challenging and thought-provoking spiritual conferences, she has organised several day trips at weekends and walking pilgrimages in and around Rome which have helped others appreciate their surroundings all the more. She has been a committed and devoted part of the College's pastoral work with the S. Egidio community, a community she was introduced to during her first stay in Rome. During her weekly visits to their soup kitchen, her sincere compassion for those less fortunate was given expression, and thanks largely to her enthusiasm, we hope to expand our activities with S. Egidio next year. Moreover, Sr has brought along and generously shared her hobbies. To mention specifically is birdwatching, with which she has invigorated a latent interest in the Vice-Rector, among others, culminating in her successful search for the song of the nightingale at sundown in Rome.

Sr's diet was of course a central concern even before her arrival. At the meal following the installation of new candidates in December 2016, the MC, sacristans and deacons were put on alert that our new arrival would require low-gluten hosts. By the time she left us six months later, we had a system whereby the distribution of holy communion could occur largely hitch-free, other than the occasional last-minute exchange of the paten between the principal celebrant and the deacon at the crucial moment. Sr, when you come back, we are ready for you...but bring your own hosts! Perhaps the only members of the community for whom there is an upside in Sr's departure are the kitchen staff, who will no longer have to play the daily game of what today's meal will be "senza": *senza primo, senza secondo, senza verdure* - have all been regular annotations to the lunch register, all "*senza glutine*" of course! Whether it is out of her aforementioned identity with the poor, out of dietary necessity or a matter of taste is not clear but Sr's breakfast generally consists of a bowl of white rice with oil. The austerity is not total however, since, it is said, she has an insatiable appetite for (gluten-free) ice cream, even, on occasion, eating two in a single day!

Before we pigeon-hole Sr into “just another” brilliantly intelligent, endlessly curious, compassionate, patient, kind and inspiring (albeit with slightly quirky dietary needs) member of the Venerable English College, we must not forget her sporting interest: Sr is a Manchester United fan. For many this would be at best insignificant, and at worst objectionable, but for your current author it is both significant and most endearing. The community of sports fans here have delighted in her occasional membership of the Senior Student’s Snug Sports and Social Society (SSSSSS) to watch United games, even adding an extra “S” to the acronym in her honour. She was a welcome, and at times, calming, addition. So, Sr, thank you for all you did during the six months you were with us. You will be greatly missed. I am sure I am not alone in hoping that, rather than marking the end of a relationship, this is merely the end of the introduction to an ongoing friendship.

Mark Paver

James Barber

From atheism to Holy Orders in just over a decade – such has been the “transformation wrought by grace” for this “Pius XII style” bespectacled Plymothian. One day, walking through his home city as a student, James suddenly became aware of the truth of God’s presence and that he was calling him to the priesthood. Having no understanding of what this all meant, James found his way to Plymouth Cathedral and asked to be baptised. The rest, as they say, is history.



Invited to come to Mass the next Sunday, he remembers realising during the Eucharistic Prayer that what was going on at the altar was “the most important thing in [his] whole life,” despite not fully understanding what was happening at that stage. James persevered, went through the RCIA, and received the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil of 2008. Shortly afterwards, he spent a whole day in the cathedral to discern whether the priesthood truly was God’s will for him and describes receiving five signs of affirmation, centred on a new-found devotion to the Sacred Heart and the mystery of the Cross. James then enrolled onto a part-time divinity degree at the Maryvale Institute, before deciding to switch to a full-time theology degree at Heythrop College in London. Throughout these years, James describes his calling to a priestly vocation as “crystal clear”. His enthusiasm for theological study early in his conversion resulted in him only completing five years of study at the VEC, in between a fruitful year-long placement back in the Diocese of Plymouth.

Considering that we usually associate converts in the seminary with those from Anglicanism or from other Christian communities, this grace-filled conversion from disbelief in God to a faithful commitment to him has certainly marked James out as unique at the VEC. His personal experience of the non-religious environment in the UK has given him a particular insight into how to engage with that culture armed with the saving teachings of Christ and his Church. This is an area of expertise which has been enriched particularly by his licence studies in moral theology, a discipline he is passionate about. But, James’ “uniqueness” at the English College has not just been characterised by his conversion and his knowledge of the traits of secular culture...

Barber, or “Jimmy B” as he is also affectionately known, has been a source of immense entertainment to his brothers. Specifically, he has shown that he is not afraid to express an opinion, particularly in the refectory, about a wide range of topics, and often in fairly straightforward manner. In fact, it is remarkable how such a blunt talking bloke is actually from the far south of England and not from northern parts of the country most commonly associated

with “no-nonsense” conversational styles. His more direct observations, commonly described as a “Babs bomb” being dropped, have been regularly met with great hilarity. At times, there is a more curious phenomenon to James’ conversations. All of a sudden, he can slip into the imaginary world of his beloved hobby: Warhammer. Talk of battles between competing fantasy races in games and novels baffle all except those who engage in a similar pastime.

Jimmy has taken full advantage of Italian cuisine as well as other international dishes on offer in Rome. The frequency of his visits to *Balestrari*, a traditional VEC pizzeria favourite, meant that the waiters stopped asking what his take-away order was, being aware of James’ glee at tucking into their *Spaghetti alla Carbonara*. In addition, local Chinese restaurant *Kuriya* cashed in on Jimmy’s love of their “all-you-can-eat” buffets, and in particular, the sushi options. In contrast to his enthusiasm for good food, Jimmy’s assessment of his pontifical theological nourishment from the Gregorian University was significantly less emphatic. Despite benefiting much from Fr Carola’s “Patristic Synthesis of Theology” seminar, his overall judgement of the Greg’s orthodoxy, or lack thereof as he saw it, was savage. James felt much more at home at the Angelicum, where he particularly enjoyed studying the fundamental principles of Thomistic moral theology during his licence, a programme which culminated in his presentation on the voluntariness of the human act at his *Lectio Coram* exam.

Opting to undertake the year-long parish placement in the Plymouth Diocese between his first and second cycle studies, James found exposure to a pastoral setting important and enriching to his discernment and formation. So much so, he also chose in the following summer to go to the far reaches of the world to Guyana as part of the College’s suggestion of “missionary placements”. Working with a Jesuit mission, he was able to make valuable observations as to how the Gospel is proclaimed to those who have never heard it before, giving him ideas for evangelisation to people closer to home. It’s to those people he now returns to bring the message of Christ as a deacon, and please God very soon, as a priest of Jesus Christ - a way of life he had no notion or understanding of twelve years ago.

Richard Marsden

Rev. Tristan Cranfield

It is difficult for me to remember meeting a more gifted person than Tristan Cranfield. His God-given talents stretch across numerous disciplines: academics, foreign languages, and music, to name the most prominent ones. Even the fields Tristan himself would not claim to be an expert in, he still often manages to make a good go of: scoring a rare goal for the “South” in the annual football clash with the “North” at Palazzola by “chesting” the ball into the net from close range springs to mind. Of course, the great test of a gifted person is the extent to which their expertise is used for the benefit of others. In this regard, Tristan also excels. His organ-playing and singing have heavily contributed to the beautifying of the liturgy in his seven years at the VEC. He even wrote a Mass setting for the College, noble in its simplicity, in honour of Blessed Edward James, a College martyr who was captured off the coast of Tristan’s native county of Sussex. In his two years as College Schola Master, one year as head choirmaster, and throughout the time in between, Tristan used his passion for sacred music to bring out the best in other students’ singing. There have also been many (including myself) who have benefited from his help and encouragement in periods of struggle with philosophical and theological studies. All these talents combined, along with the generosity in sharing them to assist others, are bound to serve him very well as a priest.



A common feature, however, of someone who “works hard” is that they also enjoy “playing hard”! It’s no secret that Tristan has enjoyed his time in Rome. As a reward for hard labours, he’s been keen to enjoy a meal out or a bottle of wine in the company of others, sharing his dry wit and never failing to contribute to conversation on a wide range of topics from the Catholic faith, to politics, to the life of the College. His ability to entertain has been manifested on stage at the annual Advent Show, from taking the mic in a funky live band, to playing hilarious characters in satirical sketches. Perhaps the most memorable came in the “(Pontifical) University Challenge” skit, with his accurate attempt at caricaturing the average VEC student in the form of William Accrington-Smyth, a rather colourfully dressed, gin-swiggering, and (less than) part-time student of the Gregorian, a stereotypical English Roman trait that Tristan himself, being a diligent student, certainly did not live up to!

Before coming to seminary, Tristan was no stranger to travelling. Having studied Arabic and French at Oxford, he spent time working in the Middle East, including in Syria and Turkey. This enthusiasm for exploring new places continued in his seminary years. Rather than head for the obvious destinations on free weekends, Cranfield was adventurous in going off the beaten track to quiet and picturesque towns and villages where tourists were nowhere to be seen. Going further afield, he took the opportunity to return to the Middle East to do what turned out to be a very adventurous summer missionary placement in Jordan. His efficiency in Arabic came to the rescue when, arriving in the country with fellow seminarian, Michael Rakowski, it became clear that the parish they were meant to be serving in denied all knowledge of their existence, let alone their intention to work there for several weeks! With Tristan’s ability to communicate in the native language, the risky business of being stranded far from home was averted and another parish was found to provide the pair with a fruitful pastoral experience.

Back in Rome, Tristan’s language skills were also put to great use in his pastoral work. As well as helping with parish catechesis, his assignment for his last two years at the VEC was to the Jesuit Refugee Centre. The placement, which involved helping to process applications for asylum seekers from several war-stricken places, gave him a useful insight into one of the most prominent social issues of our time. As well as a varied pastoral outreach, Tristan has drunk deeply from the devotional opportunities the Eternal City offers. For several years, he led the annual group of intrepid walkers from the College around the seven basilicas of Rome, a tradition begun by the holy friend of the College, St Philip Neri. He rarely missed an opportunity to pray at the tomb of a saint on their feast day, or to visit the Lenten station church of the day.

Tristan’s love of all things Aquinas was increased with his enrolment on the “Thomistic Studies” licence at the Angelicum. His academic endeavours, involving a heavy programme of exploring all corners of St Thomas’ significant works, culminated in a theologically intriguing *Lectio Coram* presentation: “Can a mouse eat the Body of Christ?” With such a solid theological foundation as the Angelic Doctor of the Church, and with his many God-given gifts and a devotional spiritual life, as well as his taking advantage of the wide-ranging experiences of what Catholic Rome has to offer, Fr Cranfield has the armour ready to set out on the mission of evangelisation along the south coast.

Richard Marsden

Fr Jorge Jesús Lopez

Since October 2016 we have been blessed to have, perhaps for the first time in recorded history, an Argentinian staying at the Venerable English College! Marking a new phase in diplomatic relations between the two great nations, Fr Jorge's presence among us has been a gift both to our venerable institution and to international relations. Fresh from the valleys surrounding the Sierras Grandes mountains, Fr Jorge joined us as a priest of the Diocese of San Luis to pursue doctoral studies in the philosophy of language and social thought of American philosopher, John Searle. Although Fr Jorge was habitually absorbed in a steady routine of prayer and study – for which he spent long hours at the library of the Santa Croce university – the community was soon to discover that it was not only in the intellectual field that Fr Jorge excelled. At the New Men show, his presentation of his pastoral work in San Luis prior to coming to Rome revealed a vast plethora of apostolic labours in which he had been engaged prior to further studies, and which included the building of a new parochial church for his ministry to the poor of the San Luis peripheries. Fr Jorge's integration into the VEC was complete when he rose to local fame in his stellar performance at the international Ragheed Ganni Football Tournament at the Irish College. Under the sturdy leadership of Captain Richard Marsden, Fr Jorge stood out by his quick-footed abilities up front as he helped the VEC to a memorable victory that has yet to be repeated. Although his fellow nationals may have been apprehensive as to the speed and depth of his integration into English culture and life at the VEC, their fears were laid to rest when at the aforementioned football tournament, Fr Jorge revealed that, true to his origins, he had been wearing an Argentinian football shirt underneath the glorious yellow of the VEC football kit.



The array of Fr Jorge's football and pastoral abilities continued to show itself throughout his time in Rome. He became a committed assistant to Fr Fabio Rosini in the *Dieci Comandamenti* and *Sette Segni* programmes for the youth of Rome, hearing many confessions and even accompanying them on retreats involving catechetical sessions at three o'clock in the morning! In the world of football, the VEC was unfortunately unable to keep hold of Fr Jorge's talent: in his penultimate year in Rome, Fr Jorge had been headhunted by the Brazilian College's football team for the Clericus Cup, even making an appearance on national Brazilian News where he was lauded as a living "bridge" between the two nations. Fr Jorge's time in Rome culminated with his doctoral defence on 30 January 2018. The fruit of three years of dedication and rigorous academic research was on full display as, after a confident and well-argued presentation, he was awarded his doctorate *summa cum laude*! During his short time at the VEC Fr Jorge gifted us with an example of joyful, faithful, apostolic, and dedicated priestly ministry. Thank you, Fr Jorge, for your contribution to life in the College. We offer you our prayers through the intercession of Our Lady of Luján, to whom you have great devotion, as you continue your work in the vineyard of the Lord and of Argentina.

Marco Egawahary

Rev. Richard Marsden

You can take the boy out of Yorkshire, but you can't take Yorkshire out of the boy. This statement could not be any truer for Richard, whose no nonsense, down-to-earth Yorkshire upbringing has served him well and kept him grounded as he travelled for the best part of a decade through the Mediterranean - which can be, at the best of times, a place of hot-blooded temper and drama. The best illustration of Richard's English sensibilities helping him to navigate the tumultuous daily chaos of life in Italy is his sensible driving skills. Not only does he refuse to use all the lanes provided, he steadfastly resists the peer pressure to match the speed of the drivers around him. However, Richard cannot take all the credit for avoiding the deplorable habits of the surrounding Italian drivers - as he is constantly and helpfully reminded by all his passengers: "Richard! Mind the pedestrian."



Richard - also known as "Tricky Dicky Marsden", or "Tricky" for short - has, however, had to make some concessions and adapt some of his Yorkshire habits so as to better integrate in to Italian life. He now drapes his Lyle and Scott jumpers delicately around his shoulders, reminiscent of Gregory Peck in *A Roman Holiday*, while the pint of bitter in his hand has now been replaced with a glass of dry white wine. He very much looks the part and not at all like an Englishman abroad.

It is not only the Italian lifestyle that Tricky has thrown himself feet-first into, but also the academic life of seminary. After completing the STB at the Gregorian University, Tricky returned - having already studied philosophy at the Angelicum - to the tender embrace of the Dominicans to study for a licence in Moral Theology. Although he had publicly stated on various occasions that he was concerned about starting a licence, it has been an inspiration to see the amount of dedication and effort he has put into his studies. There is a great temptation in the seminary to see the studies as a means to an end. However, it is clear that Richard has used his time studying Moral Theology to prepare himself as much as possible for pastoral life and has seen the licence as a tool for his future ministry. Tricky finished off his licentiate with his fabulously successful *Lectio Coram*, which was attended by a great number of devoted friends and well-wishers from the College community. The title of the *Lectio Coram* was as matter-of-fact and to-the-point as any great Yorkshireman would have wished it to be: "Magisterial teaching on homosexual acts and tendencies."

From the very beginning Tricky has been one of the most popular characters at the VEC and this was proved when he was voted Senior Student with what has been described as a land slide majority. However, Tricky's tenure as Senior Student was not without its controversy. What was expected to be an era in College life reminiscent of the Pax Romana turned out to be quite the opposite. It has been documented that during Tricky's time as Senior Student the College saw one of the greatest exoduses of students - we must note under Tricky's watch - "discerning out".

Joking aside, I speak not only for myself, but all members of the College community when I say that Richard has been one of my greatest friends and confidants during my time in the seminary. He has brought a refreshing balance of light-hearted humour and radical prayer and spirituality to the community and has only taken his spirituality seriously and not himself. It is with a heavy heart that we bid farewell to Tricky Dicky Marsden, but it is most certainly a fond one. May God bless him and keep him during his future ministry.

Benjamin Hilton

Fr Mark Paver

Mark Paver's arrival at the English College marked the latest chapter of a fascinating journey. The prime of his youth was taken up playing football to semi-professional level. This was followed by a career in accounting over in the Big Apple. When the call to priesthood was discerned, an application was made to the Archdiocese of New York. After initial formation in Cardinal Dolan's "hood" Mark was sent over to the Pontifical North American College in Rome. Sometimes mistaken for an Australian by our Yankee brothers, the boomerang came full circle when Mark decided to swap Manhattan for Moss Side and join the Diocese of Salford. Next stop, the *Venerabile*.



The community benefited immediately from the high profile transfer. A dedicated student and athlete, Mark set a great example to his fellow students, many of whom have benefited from his listening ear and dedicated friendship. Mark was duly elected Senior Student and became inaugural President of the Snug Sports and Social Society. Most importantly, the Northern football team found in their midst the most talented star to ever grace the hallowed Astroturf of Villa Palazzola. The annual North-South match saw perennial comfortable victories for t'North turned into goal laden massacres as red lightning pounded the Southern goal. A former Clericus Cup Winner with the NAC, Paves has also turned out for the Greg in recent times. No doubt upon his return to England top scouts from the local Church and Over 35s Leagues will be vying to sign him up. In the words of Manchester United legend and philosopher, Eric Cantona, "When seagulls follow the trawler, it is because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea."

Academically, Mark took the challenging route of a Licence in Biblical Theology at the Gregorian University. Two years into the three-year course our brother was ordained priest and the VEC community have been blessed to have him back at the College for the final year of studies. In his last year of Roman life Fr Paver served as a chaplain to the Missionaries of Charity and worked with fellow students to begin a soup run for the homeless of Rome, in conjunction with the Sant' Egidio Community.

Early on in his time at the *Venerabile*, Mark preached on a novel theme proposed by Pope St John Paul II. Ministers are called to be a floor by which the faithful can approach Christ. After such a rich and engaged formation we are sure that the Diocese of Salford is now blessed with a solid pavement for the faithful to make their pilgrimage on.

Dominic Jenkinson

Rev. Antonio Pineda

Antonio and I first became properly acquainted with each other in Lourdes. We shared a "delightfully" small room in our pre-seminary days as helpers in the Saint-Frai. That week laid the foundations of an honest friendship, which has, thanks be to God, become something very special. Later, at the end of our first year in seminary, Antonio and I went to Assisi to pray at the the great basilicas of St Francis and St Clare. We were also able to visit St Damiano and the Eremo delle Carceri, where St Francis would depart from the busyness of Assisi and spend some quieter moments with God and his fellow disciples of the Lord Jesus.



The walk up to the Carceri was arduous: the temperature was truly sweltering; the incline of the roads steep and relentless; neither of us knew how much further we needed to travel. Antonio exhibited consistent tenacity and perseverance. These virtues have been a laudable reality throughout his time at the English College.

Antonio is also blessed with a prodigious facility regarding all things technical. For at least five years he would prepare the end-of-year photo review where, on the main terrace at Palazzola, in the pure evening light on the densely forested sides of Lake Albano, the community would settle down, sometimes adorned with blankets, to be guided through some of the year's memorable events. Antonio would be seen quietly sitting in front of his laptop making sure that the various presentations were seamlessly synchronised with the compères.

The amount of preparation that went into his photo collages was inspiring: a plethora of photographs, original underlying themes - Facebook, Dallas, The Hobbit, to name but a few! - eclectic musical choices. These essential elements all combined to produce things of beauty. There was clarity, proportion and integrity. He always sought to present as many of the students and staff as possible and so a balanced and true picture of College life was portrayed. He presented a family.

A chronological glance at Antonio's life in seminary reveals a thread which steadily became more beautiful; a silken thread is, indeed, now visible. His view of seminary was always directed to service of the people of God in his beloved Westminster. That focus on the temporal goal of our seminary life is supported by an honest, humble and blossoming love of God. On many occasions he would tell me how his licence in spirituality at the Angelicum University had led him to appreciate a deeper awareness of God's grace working through his life - many strands being uniquely combined to produce a holy thread ready to mend, strengthen and teach those souls placed before Antonio in his future life of priestly service.

Antonio has a heart of gold. His desire to serve faithfully and selflessly has never waned. It has been a joy and a privilege to witness a steady flowering over these past seven years. He has risen above all the many challenges that priestly formation can present with honesty, thoroughness and humility, rooted in a willingness to serve the Lord. That rootedness is the source of his vocation and, I have no doubt, will serve him well in his new life as assistant priest at both St Teresa of the Child Jesus and St John Fisher and St Thomas More, Borehamwood. You go with our prayers and deep gratitude, dear Antonio.

Benjamin Woodley

Peter Taylor

Peter Taylor has no need of proving his determination and perseverance, for after five years at the VEC he has remained as the only surviving member of his year group. Perhaps these qualities originate from his Northern upbringing, which he happened to mention to other members of the community on the odd occasion. Despite these same qualities, Peter Taylor remained something of an enigma. Whilst usually coming across as possessing an affable, positive and joyful character, there were only a few who were not subject to a barrage of mocking sarcasms and derogatory jeers at the annual Advent Show. Without fail, Peter Taylor managed, in systematic fashion, to insult almost every demographic grouping imaginable in just under ten minutes. From Southerners, Irish, Scots, Welsh, French, Germans, Americans, to even *both* Jesuits and Dominicans, to name but a few, no group escaped his witty rebukes (except fellow Northerners). However, I soon realised that this apparent show of malevolence was in fact a sacrifice that Peter made, willingly or unwillingly, of his charitable disposition for the sake of the community's entertainment. In fact, getting to know him more personally over the course of the years, it became clear that Peter was in fact a model of patience and politeness, perpetually providing a peaceful influence to the pervading pontifical environs in which he lived. Peter was thus a fitting employee



for the *Ufficio Scavi*, the office in charge of overseeing visits to the Necropolis and Tomb of St Peter under the Vatican basilica. Known for his erudition and insightful presentation, Peter would speak movingly of the history of his patron saint, inspiring his tour groups with devotion, be they close to the Church or otherwise. Within the community, Peter shone forth as both a reliable choirmaster and assistant sacristan; as then *Capo* sacristan, he provided great consolation to the then MC who could rest assured that anything he had forgotten would be covered by Peter, ever prepared for any unforeseen liturgical eventuality.

It is thus with great sadness that we must bid farewell to Peter Taylor, who leaves after only five years at the VEC to return to his beloved diocese of Middlesbrough for a period of pastoral ministry and, please God, diaconal and priestly ordination. It is expected that he will then embark on a licence in Canon Law in Ottawa, where the good people of Canada are sure to give him a warm welcome, despite the cold climate. Peter – thank you for your time with us, and may St Peter, close to whom you have lived and worked, continue to guide your steps as you return to your local Church of Middlesbrough.

Marco Egawhary

Alan Wasowski

Dan Brown made millions peddling bad fiction predicated on the idea of Rome as a city of ecclesiastical intrigue and dark secrets, so one imagines he would find much by way of vindication in the inscrutable Alan Wasowski's years at the VEC.

That Alan was determined to keep his cards close to his chest became apparent on his arrival in 2015. To speak to the new man from Leeds was to enter a parallel universe. The bizarre and surreal dominated, such that it seemed impossible to take his offerings at face value. The difficulties encountered by cows descending stairs; the health risks faced by slow-swimming sharks; the relative merits of different ketchup varieties... we marvelled at these references exotic and banal. Alan's fondness for making strangled bird noises at irregular intervals did little to dispel the suspicion that much of his communication was encrypted at source.

Coded language often serves to conceal secret purposes, and so naturally enough we began to consider the wider question of Alan's mission in our midst. In whose service was it being carried out? We knew of his involvement in a local Polish parish; we saw him appear unexpectedly in the environs of St Peter's; we heard tell at third hand of his fêting of ambassadors and his serving at Masses celebrated by curial officials. But then we saw him at the heart of community life, performing house jobs admirably - the occasional tray-load of smashed glasses notwithstanding - and our wonder increased. What was he up to?

Alan being a generous host given to showering guests with Polish snacks and sweets, many ventured into his room only to find that where they might have expected to encounter some pivotal clue as to his goals, more questions were raised than answered. His one-of-a-kind bunk-bed communications hub - with hinge-mounted screens and glowing banks of electronic devices - suggested the nerve centre of a global criminal enterprise, an effect only slightly undermined by the "contemporary praise and worship" music he so enjoys.

It seems likely that the deepest Wasowski Mysteries must remain unsolved, but not everything about Alan is obscure. In the course of his three years at the English College he has shown himself a man committed to the life of the Church, a faithful and good soul devoted to God's truth, a cheerful presence, a happy warrior. There can be little doubt that he will prove a tremendous asset to the local Church in Poland, and he leaves behind a community of friends who wish him the very best.

Francis Murphy



The Council of the Roman Association



Chair: Fr Paul Daly (2019)
Secretary: Fr Aaron Spinelli (2022)
Treasurer: Mr Peter Purdue (*pro tem*)

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 (2017), Mgr Anthony Wilcox (2019), Mgr Seán Healy (2021).

Rector: Mgr Philip Whitmore

and the following elected for three years:

until 2019: Fergus Mulligan, Matthew Habron, Aaron Spinelli

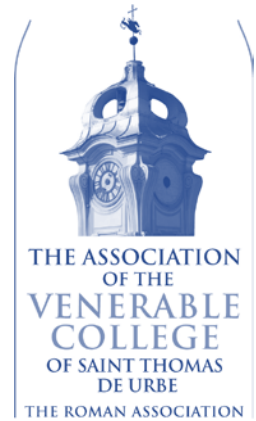
until 2020: Michael Cooley, Kevin Firth, Gerard Murray

until 2021: Philip Andrews, John Fegan, Mark Harold

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: Canon Michael Cooley (2019), Mgr Provost Séan Healy (2020), Mr Peter Purdue, Treasurer (2021), Rev. Paul Keane, Secretary (2022), Dr Fergus Mulligan (2023), Rev. Aaron Spinelli (2024).



The Roman Association Diocesan Representatives



Arundel and Brighton: Rev. Aaron Spinelli, St John the Evangelist, The Presbytery, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2PJ, fr.spinelli@yahoo.co.uk

Birmingham: Rev. Gerard Murray, Sacred Heart, 17 Lime Tree Avenue, Bilton, Rugby, CV22 7QT, gpbmurray@gmail.com

Brentwood: Fr James MacKay: The Presbytery, 1 Berwick Road, Custom House, London, E16 3DR, 020 7474 1687 james_m79@hotmail.com

Cardiff: Mgr Canon Robert Reardon, St Mary's Parish, Ewenny Road, Bridgend, CF31 4ES, rreardon76@gmail.com

Clifton: Canon Thomas Atthill, Stoneleigh Cottage, Pound Lane, Oakhill, Radstock BA3 5BG, thomasratthill@gmail.com

East Anglia: Rev. Bruce Burbidge, St Mary's College Oscott, Chester Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B73 5AA, bruce.burbidge@gmail.com

Gibraltar: Mgr John Pardo, Cathedral of St. Mary the Crowned, 215 Main Street, Gibraltar jpardo@gibraltar.gi

Hallam: Rev. John Metcalfe, Venerabile Collegio Inglese, Via di Monserrato 45, 00186 Roma, Italia, jhf.m@tiscali.co.uk

Hexham and Newcastle: Rev. Lee Barrett, St Paul's, Dewley, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 6EF, leebarrett79@hotmail.com

Lancaster: Rev. Michael Murphy, St Mary's Presbytery, 34 Kemp Street, Fleetwood, Lancs, FY7 6JX, michaeljmurphy@hotmail.co.uk

Leeds: Rev. Matthew Habron, St Gregory's Presbytery, Swarcliffe Drive, Leeds, Yorks LS14 5AW, smhabron@gmail.com

Liverpool: Mgr Peter Fleetwood, 8 Cleveley Park, Liverpool, L18 9UT, 0151 222 7828 peterfleetwood@hotmail.com

Malta: Rev. Brendan Gatt, 427 Main Street, Mosta MST1016, Malta, brendissimo@gmail.com

Menevia: Rev. Liam Bradley, 9 Fountain Row, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA61 1SX, haverfordwest@menevia.org

Middlesbrough: Canon Alan Sheridan, St George's Rectory, 7 Peel Street, York YO1 9PZ, alan.sheridan1@btinternet.com

Northampton: Rev. Michael Patey, St Martin de Porres' Catholic Church, 366 Leagrave High Street, Luton LU4 0NG, mbpatey1979@yahoo.co.uk

Nottingham: Rev. Mark Brentnall, The Presbytery, Hollis Street, Derby DE24 8QU, revmarkbrentnall@hotmail.com

Plymouth: Mgr Adrian Toffolo, The Presbytery, 19 Fosse Road, Kingsbridge TQ7 1NG, 01548 852670 adriantoffolo@yahoo.co.uk

Portsmouth: Rev. Phillip Harris, English Martyrs' Presbytery, 15 Manor Crescent, Didcot, Oxon. OX11 7AJ, phillippenningtonharris@yahoo.com

Salford: Rev. Paul Daly, St Joseph's Presbytery, Mary Street, Heywood, Lancs OL10 1EG, paul.daly@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

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

Southwark: Rev. Philip Andrews, St Anselm's Presbytery, 9 Tooting Bec Road, Balham, London SW17 8BS

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

Wrexham: Rev. Antony Jones, Flat 3, Seren y Mor, 8 Caroline Road, Llandudno, Conwy LL30 2YA, aj@serenymor.fsnet.co.uk

The Minutes of the 149th Annual General Meeting of The Association of the Venerable College of St Thomas de Urbe

- The Roman Association -

HINSLEY HALL, LEEDS, TUESDAY 1 MAY 2018



Thirty-four members of the Association gathered on 1 May 2018 at Hinsley Hall, Leeds. One other Old Roman and a distinguished guest had attended the dinner the night before but were unable to remain for the AGM: Revd Timothy Swinglehurst and Prof. Judith Champ.

It should be noted that the evening before the AGM, Prof. Judith Champ gave an excellent talk to the Roman Association on the future formation of priests. Her talk - which she had delivered at the Symposium in Rome a few weeks earlier (see pp. 33-4 above) - was very well received.

The meeting began at 10 am, with Mgr Seán Healy in the Chair.

1. Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Mgr Seán Healy welcomed all in attendance and led the meeting in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

2. Apologies

Archbishop Michael Bowen, Archbishop Patrick Kelly, Archbishop Arthur Roche, Bishop Crispian Hollis, Bishop John Wilson, Revv. Philip Andrews, Anthony Barratt, Austin Bennett, Chris Beirne, Michael Brockie, Paul Bryant-Quinn, Michael Burke, Tony Churchill, Edward Clare, Bernard Connelly, Peter Cookson, Stephen Coonan, Tom

Creagh-Fuller, Brian Dazeley, Kevin Dring, Frank Fallon, Peter Fleetwood, John Flynn, David Forrester, Michael Jackson, Clyde Johnson, Gregory Knowles, Edward Koroway, Christopher Lough, Kevin McGinnell, Peter McGrail, Tony Myers, John Osman, John Pardo, Anthony Pateman, Stephen Porter, Robert Reardon, Paul Rowan, Paul Simmons, David Tanner, Simon Thomson, Adrian Toffolo and Anthony Wilcox.

3. Minutes of 148th 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 John Magill (formerly Liverpool seminarian), Cormac Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor (Westminster), Mgr Michael Kirkham (Lancaster Diocese), Mr Lloyd Gath (former priest of Leeds), Canon Digby Samuels (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: Bryan

Chestle, Bernard Connelly, Nicholas Coote, Philip Holroyd, Petroc Howell, John Kelly, Frank O'Loughlin, Francis Rice, Michael Tully and Anthony Wilcox.

7. Chairman's Remarks

At the invitation of the Rector, Mgr Healy attended the most recent Martyrs' Day celebration in Rome. He appreciated the warm welcome to a most beautiful celebration. He was moved by the veneration of the martyrs' relics, to which many outside visitors came.

At a meeting of the Trustees in February, it was agreed to give the College £20,000 for improvements to the gym and for furniture for the roof-top patio.

9. The Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer was unable to provide accounts to be approved as certain matters remain to be updated, including bank mandates.

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: James Barber, Tristan Cranfield, Richard Marsden, Antonio Pineda, Michael Rakowski and Peter Taylor.

12. Election of Officers and Councillors

- a). Rev. Paul Daly was elected as Chairman.
- b). Rev. Philip Andrews, Mr. John Fegan and Rev. Mark Harold were elected as Councillors for three years.
- c). Rev. Aaron Spinelli was elected as Secretary for four years.
- d). Mr Peter Purdue was elected as Treasurer *pro tem*.

- e). Rev. Aaron Spinelli was elected to serve as a Trustee of the Roman Association Trust until 2024.

13. 148th AGM

The 150th AGM will be held at Palazzola on Tuesday 14 May 2019 at 11.30 am, with the option to stay at Palazzola from Monday 13 – Friday 17 May.

It was discussed whether there could be some form of liturgy in Rome, apart from the College, such as at the *Chiesa Nuova* or *San Gregorio*.

14. 2018 Martyrs' Day gatherings

Details of this year's gatherings will be sent to members nearer the time. It is to be noted that there will be a new additional gathering for Martyrs' Day: Leeds.

15. Any other business

As Peter Purdue will kindly continue *pro tem* as the Treasurer, members of the Association were asked to consider who might follow him.

The members of the Association who attended the AGM were: Bishop Christopher Budd, Mgr Seán Healy, John Ainslie, John Allen, Thomas Atthill, Judith Champ, Michael Cooley, Gerald Creasey, Paul Daly, Tony Dearman, John Fegan, Kevin Firth, Timothy Galligan, Matthew Habron, Mark Harold, George Hay, James Holroyd, Paul Keane, Fergus Mulligan, Gerard Murray, John Nelson, Seamus O'Boyle, Nicholas Paxton, Peter Purdue, James Robinson, Aaron Spinelli, William Steele, Andrew Summersgill, Timothy Swinglehurst, Adrian Towers, Francis Wahle, Philip Whitmore, Mark Woods, William Young.

Rector's Report to the Roman Association 2017-18



We began with a slightly larger intake than last year: there were five new seminarians, two from Salford (Connor Hey and Theo Sharrock), one from Portsmouth (Edward Hauschild) and two from Oslo (Trym Hellevig and Joachim Teigen). This meant that we had 30 seminarians at the start of the year.

We also have six student priests, or "priests in ongoing formation" as we are encouraged to call them now. Fathers Jan Nowotnik (Birmingham), Andrew Chase (Rockhampton, Australia) and Hugh Logan (St George's in Grenada) were joined by newly-ordained Fr Mark Paver (Salford), who stayed on to complete his licence. Fr Jorge Jesús López (San Luis, Argentina) completed his doctorate in philosophy to great acclaim in January. The one newcomer was Fr Brian O'Mahony (Westminster), who joined us for the first year of a two-year fundamental theology licence at the Gregorian.

There are four men due to be ordained Priest in the summer of 2018 - Deacons Tristan Cranfield (Arundel and Brighton), Richard Marsden (Middlesbrough), Francis Murphy (Southwark) and Antonio Pineda (Westminster). At the end of the *Villeggiatura* this year, seven are due to be ordained deacon - James Barber (Plymouth), Marco Egawhary, Ryan Service and John Waters (Birmingham), Ben Hilton (Leeds), Hai Nguyen (Oslo) and Ben Woodley (Westminster). Joakim Breiding was ordained a priest in Stockholm on 16 June and Josef Ottersen in Oslo on 23 June.

We welcomed our new Academic Tutor, Fr James McAuley (Portsmouth) to the formation staff in the autumn.

We began the year with six seminarians in 1st Cycle Theology at the Gregorian University; one in 2nd Cycle Social Studies; one in 2nd Cycle Canon Law. At the Angelicum we had eight seminarians in 1st Cycle Philosophy; four in 1st Cycle Theology; and eight in 2nd Cycle Theology. We had one seminarian in 2nd Cycle Scripture at the Biblicum and one in 3rd Cycle Philosophy at the Gregorian.

The year began with a six-day pilgrimage to the Churches of the Apocalypse in Western Turkey, led by Canon Mervyn Tower. At Smyrna (modern Izmir) we were welcomed by the archbishop, an Italian, who made us feel at home straight away. After visiting the sites at Pergamon, Sardis, Thyatira, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Hierapolis and Ephesus, we returned to Rome via Istanbul, where we were able to visit Hagia Sophia and the Topkapi Palace. It was an action-packed week! In preparation for Advent we had a short retreat led by Fr Iain Matthew, OCD. As in previous years, we arranged Forty Hours of exposition, beginning on the Saturday morning and continuing all day and all night. The Advent recollection began after supper on the Saturday and concluded with Solemn Vespers and Benediction on the Sunday evening - the end of the Forty Hours. Fr Mark Butlin OSB came to lead the Holy Week retreat at Palazzola, including a moving Palm Sunday celebration. 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.

Rosanna Giacometto does sterling work for the one-to-one human formation work. Early in the year, we were able to call upon the assistance of Fr John Sakai SJ from the Gregorian University, but he has since returned to his native Japan. Fr Antonio Delfau SJ from the Jesuit Curia has kindly offered his services as well as Fr John Breen from the Beda.

At our Human Development weekends, led by personnel from St Luke's Manchester, we had the services of Dr Steve Hoole and Fr Matthew Pittam in addition to Fr Gerard Byrne. Joining us for the Safeguarding training was Jane Jones from Birmingham.

For Pastoral Formation, we continue the pattern of short courses during the *Villeggiatura*, 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-language news desk at the Vatican and some work at the *Sant'Egidio* soup kitchen. A new initiative this year, under the overall guidance of *Sant'Egidio* community, is a soup run provided by our students for homeless people in the area on Tuesday evenings. Some assist with catechesis in local parishes, some teach English at the Jesuit Refugee Centre, while others assist 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, James Barber (Plymouth) went on a missionary placement to Guyana to work under the auspices of the British Jesuits there.

Financially, the College is still able to meet its running costs, although the declining number of students has brought its challenges. Rents received from the tenants in the various College apartments continue to provide a useful additional source of income.

This has been a year of significant anniversaries for the College. St Thomas of Canterbury was born in 1118 (according to the Roman Breviary at least!), the first English seminary (at Douai) was founded in 1568, and our own College was restored after the Napoleonic wars in 1818. To mark these significant milestones, a one-day Symposium took place on 14 April, organised largely by Maurice Whitehead, our Schwarzenbach Fellow. Papers were delivered by Fr Nicholas Schofield, Eamon Duffy, Peter Davidson, Carol Richardson, Fr Peter Phillips and Judith Champ. In the evening a concert of music "in honour of St Thomas of Canterbury" took place in the College Church, sung by *Cappella Fede* under the direction of Peter Leech. For the following four weeks an exhibition was held in the College Crypt, exploring these moments in our history, and featuring many treasures drawn from our own Archives and from those of Stonyhurst College. On the Saturday following the Symposium, 21 April, the whole College community was received in Audience by the Holy Father.

It is hoped to arrange a London showing of the exhibition during the next academic year, with a view to increasing awareness of the significant part played by our College in English Catholic history. We hope also to attract funding for our Archives, so that work of this kind can be developed further.

Another anniversary falling this year concerned me personally - my Silver Jubilee

of ordination to the priesthood. Those of my year group who are still living came out to Rome for a week of celebrations in mid-May, in the course of which we joined the Holy Father at his early morning Mass in *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. There was also a Wednesday evening Mass of Thanksgiving in College, followed by a festal supper.

The *Friends of the Venerabile* continue to support the College generously through their annual donations. Through their pilgrimage fund they paid for two students to take part in our pilgrimage to the Churches of the Apocalypse in September. Since then, they have paid for a loudspeaker to be installed close to the organ in the Tribune, so that the organist can hear more clearly what is being said in the church downstairs. They have also given generously to the work on the students' social spaces (see next paragraph).

The cleaning of the various façades is now finished! Tonino and his men took down the scaffolding in the Garden by Easter and moved on to pastures new. We decided to adapt a defunct doorway in the middle of the garden wall facing the refectory for a beautiful statue of Our Lady, which Fr Anthony Doe blessed with due solemnity in early May. The building looks bright and clean, and we are indebted to Urs and Francesca Schwarzenbach for their generosity. The stage in the Common Room has been removed and stored (in blocks) in the crypt. The Common Room itself has been redecorated, and the pigeon-holes and noticeboard have been put there. As a result, the room gets a lot more use than it has had in recent years. An interesting feature is that it is now divided by a curtain so that the area previously occupied by the stage can be employed for informal meals and the like. The crypt is now the venue of choice for spiritual conferences, Wiseman Society lectures and entertainments; the new hi-tech sound-and-lighting system there is very effective. On the terrace above

Old St Joe's, a wooden structure covered in canvas provides shelter from sun, wind and rain for those wishing to enjoy the view and the fresh air.

Building plans for the next twelve months include the creation of a "Schwarzenbach Reading Room" (complete with portrait of the couple) in the room which has hitherto served as the student bar, the building of cloakroom facilities for visitors to the Archives, the installation of the bar in the Garden Room, and the building of a gym under the Garden Room through the generosity of the Roman Association (the gym had been in that position up until about eight years ago). This means that the Gradwell Room can become a meeting / study room once again. LED lights are gradually replacing the current bulbs throughout the building. We may even try and get rid of the seagulls once and for all; plans about how to do this include fake owls and wire. The wifi is going to be completely overhauled in the next twelve months.

At Palazzola, the rock-face has been cleared of debris, and a protective fence has been put beneath the rock-face between St Edward's and the garden. This was deemed necessary after a small rock-fall caused by the freezing conditions in early 2018. The St Edward's roof is about to undergo repairs.

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 seven men who are to be ordained deacons this summer and the four men who are to be ordained priests back in their home dioceses.

Philip Whitmore

News from Old Romans



Arundel and Brighton

I begin this year's contribution as I return from the diocese's annual on-going formation overnight, which took as its theme "Our Diocese: The Mission of the Church Here and Now". Talks from Bishop Mark O' Toole, Frs Rob Esdaile and Richard Madders from our diocese and Fr Jim O' Keefe and Mr Tony Sacco from Hexham and Newcastle helped us reflect on the future of the diocese and the work of the pastor, parishes and lay faithful in the Evangelising Mission of the local church in A&B.

The venue was one of those peripheral airport hotels reminiscent of the hotel featured in that ITV classic "Crossroads" (for those who can remember that far back!). And indeed we, together with the Church in England and Wales, are at a crossroads. By 2030 we will have only 25 priests under the age of 65, your scribe being one of them! This sobering figure draws us to reflect and think afresh the mission to which we were entrusted by Christ. The Church will look very different indeed in 12 years' time. But for a snapshot of this year - in order of ordination vintage - with our relative superabundance of clergy I am pleased to report the following:

Mgr Bryan Chestle continues to be looked after at St George's Park in Ditchling. Canon Tony Churchill is parish priest of Ashstead, Surrey and is Episcopal Vicar for Ecumenical Affairs and has recently been appointed Catholic Co-Chair of ARC (Anglican- Roman Catholic Commission).

Our retired Bishop, Kieran Conry, is in Hampshire. Mgr Michael Jackson is retired, but helping out occasionally in the Hove area. Tony Bridson has recently been inducted as parish priest of Redhill, Reigate

and Merstham. Raglan Hay Will is parish priest of Eastbourne. Canon Kieran O' Brien is now Episcopal Vicar for Formation and remains parish priest of St Joseph's, Brighton and has acquired the colourful parish of St John the Baptist, Kemp Town, Brighton.

Rob Esdaile is parish priest of Thames Ditton and Dean of Weybridge. Jonathan How continues as parish priest of Cobham. Tony Milner continues as parish priest of Dorking and in the midst of completing some more further studies.

Kevin Dring goes to seminary - this time it's Wonersh, on the staff with the care of Human Formation. Stephen Dingley continues at Wonersh but takes up a parish appointment in the summer. Stephen Hardaker and Terry Martin are at Oxted and Worthing, respectively, as parish priests.

In Surrey, Simon Hall becomes assistant priest at Woking and David Parmiter continues at Godalming.

Andrew Pinsent is at the Ian Ramsey Centre at Oxford University.

Bruno Witchalls is in Brighton as parish priest of Preston Park. Aaron Spinelli continues as parish priest of Horsham. Andrew Moss has left the diocese to work in sunnier climes: Shrewsbury.

Mark Woods is parish deacon at Worthing and continues his sterling work as the Diocesan Communications Officer.

And finally Tristan Cranfield will, *Deo volente*, join the amassed ranks this summer after his ordination to the priesthood at Arundel Cathedral - his home parish.

Aaron Spinelli

Birmingham

There have been a few changes, but many Old Romans remain in the same parishes at present. As is the way, some have been given additional parishes to look after.

David Doran has moved and is now assistant at St Thomas More, Sheldon, Birmingham. Christopher Miller has charge of St Joseph's, Burslem, and Sacred Heart, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent. Paul Moss has moved to Rome to work in the Secretariat of State. 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 has moved to St Mary's, Warwick. 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 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 multitasking in Wolverhampton as parish priest at St Peter and Paul's in Wolverhampton, sharing pastoral care for St Michael's, Penn and St Bernadette's, Wombourne and is also chaplain to Wolverhampton University. 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, near Wolverhampton. David Evans is at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Rednal in South Birmingham.

Mervyn Tower is 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 McGough 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. Anthony Wilcox is now actively retired and living in Henley-on-Thames. Petroc Howell has retired and is now living at St Joseph's Home, Coleshill. Gerard Murray

Brentwood

No Brentwood Old Roman has been given a new appointment since last summer, including eternal rest.

James MacKay

Cardiff

Liam Hennessy continues as parish priest of Abertillery and Brynmawr. Bob Reardon is on a sabbatical doing further study.

Robert Reardon

Clifton

There have been no moves of Clifton Old Romans this year.

War memorials in Catholic churches of the diocese are among the topics now being pursued by our Diocesan Archivist, Canon Tony Harding, resident at St John's flats, Bath.

Michael Healy continues as parish priest of Withywood (Bristol) and Chew Magna, Michael Robertson of Fairford and Cricklade on the upper reaches of the Thames, Philip Beisly across the Cotswolds of Dursley and Nympsfield, Alex Redman of Our Lady of Lourdes, Weston-super-Mare, and Colin Mason of Westbury-on-Trym with Henbury, Bristol.

Parishes across the diocese are still being supplied from Mendip as necessary by Bishop (Emeritus of Portsmouth) Crispian (Sam) Hollis, and your correspondent.

Thomas Atthill

East Anglia

Once again there have been no new appointments for the East Anglian Old Romans. Michael Griffin continues to enjoy

blessed retirement, whilst also supplying as and when. Eugène Harkness is Rector of Our Lady and the English Martyrs in Cambridge and Chancellor of the Diocese. Simon Blakesley is parish priest in Newmarket, and continues to run the Tribunal. Sean Connolly is at St George's, Norwich, and Mark Hackeson is in Bury St Edmunds and Vice Chancellor. I am continuing at Oscott as Dean of Philosophy.

Bruce Burbidge

Gibraltar

There are no changes to report from Gibraltar this year.

John Pardo

Hallam

Hallam remains as Hallam was:

- Peter Kirkham (1966) - Worksop
- John Ryan (1978) - St Bede, Rotherham
- Mark McManus (1988) - St Joseph, Handsworth, Sheffield
- Adrian Tomlinson (2003) - The Annunciation, Sheffield
- Craig FitzPatrick (2005) - Oldcotes
- John Metcalfe (1973) - VEC Rome
- Tom Clarke (left in 1967) and Bernadette - retired, and now living in Doncaster
- Anthony Towey (1986) - teaching at St Mary's, Twickenham
- Kevan Grady (1990) and Helena - teaching at All Saints, Sheffield

John Metcalfe

Hexham and Newcastle

Fr Peter Stoddart is assistant priest in Hexham, covering a wide swath of west Northumberland, including Corbridge, Otterburn and elsewhere.

Fr Lee Barrett is about to become parish priest of New Hartley in addition to continuing here in Cramlington and as hospital chaplain.

Lee Barrett

Lancaster

No report received this year.

Leeds

Congratulations to Mgr Basil Loftus who celebrates his Diamond Jubilee and to Rev. Peter Nealon who celebrates his Golden Jubilee this year. *Ad multos annos!*

- Bishop Marcus Stock
Bishop of Leeds
Bishop's House, 13 North Grange Road, Leeds LS6 2BR
- Archbishop Arthur Roche
Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments
00120 Città del Vaticano
- Bishop John Wilson
Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster
Archbishop's House,
Ambrosden Avenue, London,
SW1P 1QJ
- Mgr Basil Loftus
'Braeval', Helmsdale, Sutherland,
Scotland KW8 6HH
- Mgr William Steele
Mount St Joseph's Home, Shire Oak Road, Leeds LS6 2DE
Giver of retreats, Spiritual Director, supply ministry in local parishes – not bad for the oldest 'Roman' in the Diocese. Billy also keeps up his friendship with Mgr George Hay (Plymouth). An article on the students in the College in the 1950s would be interesting!
- Rev. John A Kelly
4 Hinsley Court, Leeds LS6 2HB
Recently retired, John has moved in as a neighbour to Gerry Creasey. John continues to have difficulty walking.

- Rev. Gerald Creasey
5 Hinsley Court, Leeds LS6 2HB
Archbishop Emeritus Patrick Kelly, Mgr Brian Dazeley, Canon Michael Cooley and I continue to experience a very active ministry in "retirement". It is interesting to experience the liturgy in different parishes.
 - Rev. Peter Nealon
St Malachy's Presbytery, Nursery Lane, Ovenden, Halifax HX3 5NS
 - Mgr Philip Holroyd
St Wilfrid's Presbytery, Coltsgate Hill, Ripon HG4 2AB
 - Canon Kevin Firth
St Joseph's Presbytery, 22 Gisburn Road, Barnoldswick, Lancashire BB18 5HA
In 1147 twelve monks left Fountains Abbey to found a new monastery in Barnoldswick. For some reason they took up sticks after only five years and moved to Leeds (Kirkstall Abbey). I am hoping to beat their record and stay longer before retiring to Leeds or some other retiring spot.
 - Rev. Christopher Willis
Real Colegio de Ingleses, Calle Don Sancho 22, 47002 Valladolid, Spain
 - Mgr Andrew Summersgill
St Stephen's Presbytery, Castle View Terrace, Skipton BD23 1NT
 - Rev. Russell Wright
St Patrick's Parish, 7900 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota, FL 34241, USA
 - Rev. Malachy Larkin
Sacred Heart & St Patrick's Presbytery, Bolton Brow, Sowerby Bridge HX6 2BA
 - Rev. David Bulmer
St Patrick's Presbytery, Low Lane, Birstall, Batley WF17 9HD
 - Rev. Timothy Swinglehurst (Episcopal Vicar for Education)
'Ashlea', Hinsley Hall, 62 Headingley Lane, Leeds LS6 2BX
 - Mgr Paul Grogan
St Winefride's Presbytery, 54 St Paul's Avenue, Wibsey, Bradford BD6 1ST
 - Rev. Stephen Brown
St Wilfrid's Presbytery, Petergate House, 11 High Petergate, York YO1 7EN
 - Rev. Gregory Knowles
First Martyrs' Presbytery, 65 Heights Lane, Heaton, Bradford BD9 6HZ
 - Rev. Steven Billington
English Martyrs' Presbytery, Teddington Avenue, Dalton, Huddersfield HD5 9HS
 - Rev. Matthew Habron (Private Secretary to the Bishop)
St Gregory's Presbytery, Swarcliffe Drive, Leeds LS14 5AW
 - Rev. John Carlisle
St Peter and St Paul Presbytery, 23 New Road, Yeadon LS19 7HW
 - Rev. Marc Homsey (Director of Youth Service)
Cathedral House, Great George Street, Leeds LS2 8BE
 - Rev. Sean Crawley
Parish of St Martin de Porres, St Austin's Presbytery, 6 Wentworth Terrace, Wakefield WF1 3QN.
 - Rev. Michael Doody (Vocations Director)
St Augustine's Presbytery, Harehills Road, Leeds LS8 5HR
 - Rev. Anthony Rosso
St Joseph's Presbytery, 40 Pakington Street, Bradford BD5 7LD
 - Rev. Elliott Wright
Parish of the Holy Redeemer, St Patrick's Presbytery, 34 New North Road, Huddersfield HD1 5JY
- Matthew Habron

Liverpool

Not a lot has changed since last spring. Just for a change, I'll mention people in reverse alphabetical order. Thomas Wood is in Ainsdale. The local parish priest is Tony Slingo, who is finding incredibly imaginative ways to shepherd his sheep there and in Woodvale. Paul Rowan is teaching and ministering in Jersey. Andrew Robinson is educating the next generation of preachers at Oscott. Paul Robbins is enjoying retirement but still busy as a freelance canon lawyer. Canon Aidan Prescott is keeping canonical order in the chancery and looking after his flock at St Clare's. David Potter is the Catholic pastor of Stockbridge Village. John Poland reappeared for a while in Childwall, but vanished again to London to finish his doctorate (I know the feeling); we expect him back before you read this. Michael O'Dowd is the archbishop's right hand in the world of schools, and parish priest in Eccleston. No news about Michael O'Connor, so I guess he is still in Canada. Kevan O'Brien is soldiering on in St Helens. St Edmund Arrowsmith's Holy Hand is still being looked after by Brian Newns in Ashton-in-Makerfield. Our *officialis* is still Brian Murphy, who lives in his own version of the White House. Tony Murphy I see occasionally. He looks, and agrees that he is, in better health than last year. Because of recent deaths and so on, Francis Marsden seems to be running several parishes in Chorley. John McLoughlin has settled in Warrington's eastern suburbs, but sadly his sister Margaret is now too ill for him to look after alone. Theology and philosophy at Liverpool Hope University are in the safe hands of Peter McGrail. Sir Anthony Kenny is retired but active in Oxford. Archbishop Patrick Kelly is on a cruise down (or up?) the Danube as I write, still reading voraciously and communicating his thoughts on it all to many people around the globe. I think Jonathan Jones is still inspecting educational institutions. Canon Philip

Gillespie has established himself as Rector of the Pontifical Bede College and laps up his role as host to lots of visitors. Just down the road fellow-diocesan Archbishop Paul Gallagher is steering the Holy See between the Scylla and Charybdis of international diplomacy. It seems Canon John Gaine is enjoying retirement in Formby, but my guess is it will be strange after such an active ministry. Mgr John Furnival is the leader of the Crosby Pastoral Area - again. Mgr Peter Fleetwood is juggling three jobs: chaplain at Maryton Carmel, chaplain no. 2 at Aintree Hospital and philosophy lecturer at Oscott. He is also supposed to be revising contracts between the archdiocese and the various National Health Trusts. Paul Crowe is retired in Prescot with Bernadette. The cathedral benefits enormously from the quiet stalwart presence of Mgr Peter Cookson. Last, but certainly not least, Gerald Anders still lives next to the River Ribble in Tarleton and looks after Mawdesley, but I guess he will be somewhere else by the time you read this. We have one current *Venerabilino*, but more of Josh elsewhere.

Peter Fleetwood

Malta

The Maltese Old Romans are the following:

- Rev. Dr Joe Mizzi (parish priest of the Parish of Pope St Pius X in Santa Lucija)
- 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 (Director of the Pastoral Formation Institute)
- Fr David Muscat (Rector of the church of Our Lady of Hope, Mosta)
- Rev. Dr John Berry (Head of the Department of Fundamental & Dogmatic Theology, Faculty of Theology, University of Malta)
- Rev. Canon Brendan M. Gatt (Judicial Vicar)

- Rev. Dr Kevin Schembri (Lecturer in Canon Law and Defender of the Bond at the Metropolitan Tribunal)
- Rev. Dr Jonathan Farrugia (Assistant in the Parish of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, Senglea, and Lecturer in Patristics at the University of Malta)
- Rev. Dr Nicholas Doublet (Diocesan Archivist)

Brendan M. Gatt

Menevia

There's not been much change in Menevia during the past year; Fr Michael Burke continues to exercise his ministry in Florida and Fr Liam Bradley continues as parish priest at Haverfordwest. Mgr Clyde Hughes Johnson has, however, moved and now resides at 6, Abbeyfield House, Camden Road, Brecon, LD3 7RT.

Liam Bradley

Middlesbrough

There are no changes to report from Middlesbrough this year.

Alan Sheridan

Northampton

Seán Healy is now parish priest of Beaconsfield & Bourne End, the parish of G.K. Chesterton. We look forward to welcoming a new Old Roman - Michael Rakowski - back to the diocese, following his ordination.

Michael Patey

Nottingham

In post:

- Kevin Athaide, St Barnabas Cathedral, Nottingham
- Mark Brentnall, English Martyrs, Alvaston
- John Cahill, St Peter's, Leicester
- Andrew Cole, St Mary's, Grimsby
- John Guest, All Saints, Ashbourne
- John Hadley, St Pius X, Narborough
- Martin Hardy, St Patrick's, Leicester

- Peter Harvey, St Thomas of Hereford, Ilkeston
- Edward Jarosz: appointed to St Peter & Paul, Lincoln and Vicar General
- John Paul Leonard, St Joseph's, Burton-on-Trent
- Christopher Thomas, Eccleston Square, London
- Peter Vellacott, Sacred Heart, Loughborough
- George Woodall, Rome

Of the retired: Brian Dazeley, St Peter's, Leicester; Bernard Needham, Chesterfield; Anthony Pateman, St Peter's, Leicester, and Michael Stappard at Sutton in Ashfield, and who will celebrate his Golden Jubilee on 22nd June this year.

Mark Brentnall

Plymouth

There have been no significant changes among the Old Romans of Plymouth Diocese this year. Kevin Rea, Michael Downey and George Hay have resigned from Ecclesiastical Office, although George in particular is still active in helping out in Newton Abbot parish, where he lives.

Adrian Toffolo continues as parish priest in Kingsbridge and Episcopal Vicar for Safeguarding and Pastoral Services, although in his Golden Jubilee year he will be released from some of his diocesan duties.

Robert Draper continues as a Vicar General (there are now two) and Moderator Curiae, as well as parish priest in Sherborne.

Michael Wheaton is Chaplain at Exeter University and priest-in-charge at Crediton.

We now await James Barber to join the old Romans as he will be spending a diaconate year at Plymouth Cathedral.

We can also mention those who spent some time at the VEC: Mark Skelton, who is now parish priest in Teignmouth and Dean of Torbay Deanery, and Guy de Gaynesford who is Rector of the School of the Annunciation at Buckfast Abbey.

And we don't forget Robert Plant who is now a Russian Orthodox priest in Exeter going under the name of Hieromonk Porphyrios, together with an abundant beard!

Adrian Toffolo

Portsmouth

The Diocese of Portsmouth is blessed with many Old Romans, including Bishop Philip Egan (1984). The bishop's vision for the diocese is very much that of "bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church." There are many positive initiatives and encouraging signs, not least the number of men we have in seminary and those applying.

There is only one significant move that has been announced regarding an Old Roman: Mgr John Nelson (1984) who has been parish priest of St Swithun Wells, which covers Eastleigh, Bishops Waltham, North Baddesley, Fair Oak and Romsey. He will soon be taking up a new role as Chaplain to the 2nd Battalion Mercian Regiment and Catholic Chaplain to the British Forces' community in Cyprus. He is also on the College of Consultors and Secretary to the Diocesan Trustees and Finance Council.

Other Old Romans and their current positions are: Fr Bruce Barnes (1997) continues as parish priest of St Francis de Sales, Wash Common in Berkshire, Coordinating Pastor for the West Berkshire Pastoral Area, Director for Religious in the diocese and is also Chaplain to the Spiritual Formation team; Fr Marcus Brisley (1994) continues as parish priest of Holy Ghost in Crowthorne and The Immaculate Conception in Sandhurst; Fr Gerard Flynn (1999) is our Vocations' Director and parish priest at St Michael and All Angels, Leigh Park in Hampshire; Fr David Forrester (1972) is retired in Cumbria; Mgr Jeremy Garratt (1975) remains parish priest of Sacred Heart and St Peter the Apostle, Waterlooville; Canon Alan Griffiths (1974) continues as

assistant priest to St Swithun Wells parish with particular responsibility for Our Lady Queen of the Apostles, Bishops Waltham, Hampshire, and is the coordinator of the Patrimony Department and a member of the Diaconate Department; Fr Paul Haffner (1981) is teaching in Rome; Fr Phillip Pennington Harris (2010) is parish priest of English Martyrs, Didcot and St John the Evangelist, Wallingford and is on the Bishops' Conference Marriage and Family Life team; Fr Peter Hart (1980) is continuing as parish priest of St Margaret Mary, Park Gate, Dean of St Wilfrid Deanery, Southeast Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and Director of the Permanent Diaconate Department.

Our Bishop Emeritus, Bishop Crispian Hollis (1965), is retired in Somerset; Mgr James Joyce (1971) is parish priest of St Thomas More, Twyford and Our Lady of Peace, Wargrave and is a member of the College of Consultors and Chair of the Diocesan Council of Priests; Fr James McAuley (2010) is continuing as Academic Tutor at the English College, Rome; Mgr Canon Cyril Murtagh (1957) continues as parish priest of The Immaculate Conception, Liphook; Fr Benjamin Theobald (2013) continues as assistant priest in St Thomas, Jersey, Channel Islands and Fr Simon Thomson (1994) continues as Judicial Vicar and parish priest of St Swithun, Yateley with St Thomas More, Hartley Wintney.
Phillip Pennington Harris

Salford

John Marsland has been appointed parish priest at St Edward's, Lees, Oldham, where his predecessor served a mere 48 years. He is also still President of Ushaw and continues his strong involvement in the YCW. Joe Gee has been appointed Chaplain to the Royal Blackburn Hospital. He also manages, I am pleased to say, to work in fostering spiritual formation across the diocese, not least in building strong

links with the Jesuit Outreach team, which has been training prayer guides across the diocese. Mark Paver will be returning to the diocese this summer and awaits the news of his first appointment.

John Allen is our senior Old Roman and continues as parish priest at Our Lady of Grace, Prestwich, where he is joined by Fr Tony Dearman. Your scribe remembers vividly a Maths lesson at St Bede's on "binary maths" because of the way in which Tony engaged the class not just in hearing but in seeing and in participating.

Michael Quinlan has stood down as Provost of the Chapter but remains as parish priest of the Heaton. Chris Lough continues in Higher Openshaw and in Adult Faith Formation. Nicholas Paxton carries on a very much appreciated ministry of supply and was a welcome participant at the AGM. David Quiligotti, too, continues his priestly ministry in Urmston.

Geoffrey Marlor is awaiting an appointment at this time. Ian Farrell is still parish priest at St. Joseph's, Longsight, and James Manock is still in Radcliffe.

Mark Harold, up in Bamber Bridge, now has to take our newer priests under his wing. Gerard Byrne cares and forms priests new and old from Whalley Range.

Christopher Dawson balances all matters canonical, procedural and matrimonial from the Chancery.

John Flynn does the wide ranging *incarico* of Vice. Richard Howard is still assistant in Horwich and Michael Deas has survived a year with the toughest parish priest in the diocese.

We have also been blessed by contact with lay Romans within the diocese, among whom I call to mind Peter Purdue, Anthony O'Neil and Andrew Hulse.

Paul Daly

Shrewsbury

Good to welcome Tom Cunnah to the diocese last summer, and to wish Tony

Myers a long and very happy retirement. As long as we can keep up "one in and one out", the Shrewsbury cohort of Old Romans will march strongly on. Tom took up his appointment at Holy Apostles & Martyrs, Wallasey at the beginning of September. Good to hear from him this week, now early June, organising the Junior Clergy summer get-together for July and wanting to show them some of the old ruins of the diocese. Thought immediately of St Werburgh's Chester and its parish priest. Most kind, Tom.

Tony retired last summer as parish priest of St Hugh & St John's, Timperley and is now at 8, Kenilworth Avenue, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 8JX (telephone 01565-228425) as active as ever. Chris Lightbound also has a new address: Flat 14, Hallwood Court, Bridge Street, Neston CH64 9UT (telephone 0151-336-5943). Otherwise, only one move to record this year: David Long leaving Wallasey to go to Our Lady and the Apostles, Stockport, my own second parish and another striking Edmund Kirby church, this time in red brick.

Many congratulations to Stephen Coonan in Heswall, celebrating his 40th Anniversary this summer. My own year celebrated their Silvers last year. I was too miserable, of course, to do anything here in Chester, but I surprised myself how much I enjoyed going to my classmates' bashes, all over the country, and seeing them so happy in their own parish contexts. Our year were never going to be poster boys for the VEC, but in terms of solid support, they were invaluable. Couldn't go to them all, of course, but did manage Steve Boyle's down in Dartford in Kent, John Cahill's in his home parish in Nottingham, and John O'Leary's in Tollington Park, North London. Perhaps it was good being the eternal spectator, not trying to compare with anything I'd organised myself. It allowed me to be overwhelmed by a sense of how cherished all three were in their parishes

and how much they loved their folk in turn. I'm sure all of us would acknowledge what we owe to our year group, and how we wouldn't be here today without them: John Cahill was my Study Buddy for Theology, that Faustian pact many of us must have signed on the way to the Greg, "I'll promise to go to these blessed lectures if you will", and John O'Leary did the same priceless service during our Licence years together. Congratulations, John, on being appointed Canon Theologian for Westminster Diocese: you couldn't get anyone sharper.

I love the way you bump into Old Romans all over the place wherever two or three... Taking our University of Chester CathSoc students on retreat to Ampleforth in February, who should we meet there but members of the Faith Symposium, so many wonderful friends from yesteryear? Luiz Ruscillo, Dave Barrett, William Massie, Stephen Dingley, Stephen Brown, Hugh Mackenzie and, for the second time in twelve months, Steve Boyle. We both agreed we had to stop meeting like this. They were there to discuss the Higher Theology. I soon put a stop to that. My bemused students asked me more than once: "Why are you lot laughing so much?"

And I love the way Old Roman memories come back to us in the unlikeliest places. Like the Liverpool Blood Donor Centre near Moorfields Station. Shedding my blood for the fatherland recently and passing some milestone or other, the rather bored young nurse asked me how it all started. Tell him about the Monserrato, and Jack Kennedy urging us to give blood as a gift to the *personale* who worked in the College, setting off early one morning with the Infirmary to Tiber Island? No, perhaps not. I said I couldn't possibly remember.

Paul Shaw

Southwark

When Canon Michael Cooley suggested I might take over the reins for providing news of Old Romans in Southwark, I was rather heartened by the challenge. However, at the time of accepting, I hadn't stopped to consider what a tough act his would be to follow. Despite his general self-effacing demeanour, very little passes by this hugely erudite and well-connected chap. It's for that reason, I've asked him if this year's entry might be a "double act", as I shall be drawing upon much of his considerable wealth of knowledge in this report. Meeting with Michael, however, gave us both an opportunity to enjoy a good natter about all things Roman, from people and places, to the "*alzare*-ing of the old *gomito*". This all occurred over one of my parish priest's now famous *tasteful Tooting teas*, complete with hot buttered crumpets. Indeed, it should be noted that although Michael is supposedly enjoying something of a semi-retirement as chaplain to St Peter's Residence in Vauxhall — the house run by the Little Sisters of the Poor (how many of us recall pastoral work, or even *Corpus Domini* processions, at their house adjacent to *San Pietro in Vincoli*?) — he has many irons still in the proverbial fire. As soon as I reached out to him for help, he was down the Northern Line *like the clappers*, armed with reams of helpful information. However, even so, he could only spare a couple of hours, as he had a school meeting to attend later that evening. Something tells me dear Michael will continue to give his all to Christ and his Church, retirement notwithstanding! *Euge serve bone et fidelis!* ... and thanks for all the help!

Unlike Canon Cooley, I can't claim to have first met our Archbishop Emeritus, Michael Bowen, on the steps of Archbishop's House in 1955, but I can report that he continues to enjoy retirement.

Having previously referred to my own parish priest (and his "notoriety" as

the diocesan doyen of afternoon tea), I was pleased to note that both he and Leo Mooney appeared together in a smashing photo from November 2017, celebrating the conferral upon them both of Honorary Canonries in our Metropolitan Cathedral Church. Canon Mooney remains parish priest of Southborough. Bravo!

Along with a number of my contemporaries, I've enjoyed many an enjoyable evening at "The Kiosk" above Palazzola, in the company of Bishop John Hine. Being a bottomless source of anecdotes from his own years at the College, he never ceased to keep us amused (nor, indeed, "fed up, and agreeably drunk" — with homage, there, to Gerard Hoffnung). I think my personal favourite tale involved his *villeggiatura* horse riding exploits, whilst attired in full clerical habit! Bishop John is another Southwark Old Roman who can't retire gracefully, as he is currently serving as parish priest of St Andrew in the Kentish town of Tenterden. *Cin cin, Monsignore!*

Bishop John was succeeded a few years ago in the Kent area by another Old Roman, Paul Mason, who has brought to his episcopal ministry a wealth of experience in parochial life, chaplaincy, and ongoing formation. Paul Hendricks continues as auxiliary bishop with responsibility for deaneries in the south-west of the diocese; whilst Bishop Nicholas Hudson has responsibility for those parts of central and east London, which fall within Westminster... an honorary East Ender, *Cor blimey, guv'nor*. Whilst dallying in Westminster, Luke de Pulford is doing sterling work with the *Arise! Foundation*, which works to end slavery and human trafficking around the globe.

One of the greatest raconteurs in the history of our diocese, Bryan Chestle, is still in Sussex, and receives regular visits from Bishop John, who lives just over the border.

A *marque* of Southwark Old Romans in recent years has been their pastoral immutability; however, whilst most remain

simply "shakers", there is one mover: Richard Whinder found himself translated from Mortlake to become parish priest of Balham, "Gateway to the South" (as Peter Sellers once praised it).

Of those who shake-in situ: David Stanley continues to enjoy retirement, although he is still active in numerous pastoral organizations. Paul Connelly remains resident within the parish of Tooting Bec, where he enjoys almost superstar status as a much-loved member of the parish family, having wooed the locals with his Mancunian charms over the past few years; nevertheless, Paul's health remains very fragile, and would appreciate the prayers of Old Romans.

Tim Galligan has done his best to break the tradition of immovability down at Clapham Common; but it was all a bit smoke and mirrors. He successfully, and quite sensibly, had his parish re-designated from "Clapham Common" (the church is quite a way from the tube stop which most people imagine when they hear that name), to "Battersea, Altenburg Gardens". At a deanery meeting when this matter was discussed, your scribe did suggest something with "Lavender Hill Mob" in it, but for some unapparent reason, this was rejected out of hand by unanimous decision.

David Gummett remains parish priest of Merton, and by happy coincidence, Chris Larkman — a key player in the early days of Palazzola Holidays — resides within his parish.

The benefit of having Michael Cooley's notes for reference enables me to see how the lives of Old Romans have intertwined over the years. Of those who were sent to Michael on placement, Charles Briggs continues to take full advantage of his beautiful church at Chislehurst; and Stephen Boyle, whilst still at Dartford, is also involved with both the Archconfraternity of St Stephen, and Faith. Meanwhile, Marcus Holden keeps undertaking the most audacious of projects, and pulls them off with stunning panache...

whether this be in the realm of catechesis, media, patrimony and devotion (as with the Shrine Church at Ramsgate), or pastorally. *Ben fatto, bravi tutti!*

Another Southwark Old Roman whose work in the vineyard has yielded a tremendous harvest in recent years is Dominic Allain. Inspired to found the British branch of *Grief to Grace*, a charity which seeks to bring healing and wholeness to survivors of trauma and abuse; Dominic is now its International Pastoral Director, as well as overseeing the programme's work in the UK.

In recent years at the College, the cry, "Fr Creagh-Fuller's in town", would send students (as well as staff, and curial clergy) into a spin of stratospheric joy. Notwithstanding the fact that Thomas Creagh-Fuller is responsible for the twice-yearly Red Cross parcels of F&M chocs; when in Rome, he entertains all *diocesi Southvarcensi* — students and clergy-in-residence alike — to dinner at a swanky Roman restaurant, such is his concern for, and generosity towards his brothers, stationed in a far off distant land! Despite serious issues with his eyesight, Tom remains parish priest of Forest Hill.

Simon Peat remains parish priest of the parish of Wimbledon South — ideal for the theatre — and just down the road, Michael O'Dea continues as parish priest of Putney. Over on the Isle of Thanet, Tim Finigan is parish priest of Margate; whilst in Richmond, Stephen Langridge remains parish priest, as ever, with a very proactive approach to the New Evangelisation. **Victor Vella** is still in Orpington, which is also the home parish of the ever-popular Steven Greenwood, who after his time at the VEC, found a niche for himself at City Hall.

At the risk of sounding like an election night broadcast, there remains no change in the leafy suburb of Purley (**Matthew O'Gorman**), Tooting Bec (**Phil Andrews**), Brixton Hill (**David Howell**) nor, indeed, Wandsworth East Hill (**Martin Edwards**);

except, that is, to note, Martin has been made a Canon of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem; and yours truly is the new chaplain of the *Friends of the Venerabile*. So, please, encourage friends and parishioners to support this tremendous group of men and women who have done so much over the years to help students of the College... application forms are available from Mike Lang.

But the greatest news of the year is that we have a new priest! Fr Francis Murphy was ordained priest at Southwark Cathedral on 21 July 2018, and celebrated a first Mass at his home parish of St Thomas More in Dulwich the following day. He will return to Rome for a final year in order to complete his doctorate. *Ad multos annos*, Francis!

Phil Andrews

Michael Cooley

Westminster

Recent changes in **bold print**

- + Vincent Nichols: Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster
- + **Cormac Murphy-O'Connor: RIP 1 September 2017**
- + John Arnold: Bishop of Salford
- + Nicholas Hudson: Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster
- + John Wilson: Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster
- Mark Anwyll: PP, *Our Lady of Muswell*, Muswell Hill
- Keith Barltrop: PP, *St Mary of the Angels*, Bayswater
- David Barnes: PP, *SS Anselm & Cecilia*, Lincoln's Inn Fields
- **Andrew Bowden: Assistant priest, Westminster Cathedral**
- **Michael Brockie: Retired as PP; remains Provost of Cathedral Chapter**
- Gerry Burke: Retired — Feltham
- **Dominic Byrne: Sabbatical**
- 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, *Our Lady Help of Christians*, Kentish Town**
- Anthony Doe: Spiritual Director at the *Venerabile*
- Pat Egan: Retired — Ann Arbor, Michigan
- Michael Garnett: Santa Apolonia, Cajamarca, Peru
- **Daniel Humphreys: Sub-administrator, Westminster Cathedral**
- Roger Kirinich: Retired — 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 University of America, Washington DC
- **Shaun Middleton: PP, *St Mary's*, Cadogan Street, Chelsea**
- 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 and Vocations Director
- Jim Overton: PP, *St Michael*, Ashford
- Terence Phipps: PP, *Immaculate Conception & St Joseph*, Hertford
- **Antonio Pineda: Assistant Priest, Borehamwood parishes**
- 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, *Holy Redeemer*, Chelsea**
- **Digby Samuels: RIP, 17 March 2018**
- 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*

Philip Miller

Wrexham

There is nothing to report from Wrexham; the situation remains as it was last year. There are only two Old Romans in the Diocese - Rev. Charlie Lloyd and Rev. Antony Jones - and we are both sufficiently old to be in retirement. And, like most such persons, our health varies from day to day, but we are both still very much alive.

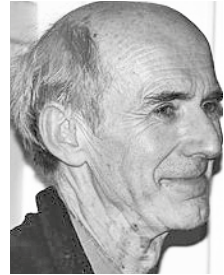
Antony Jones

Obituary



Canon Digby John Samuels

Very soon after the sad news of the death - on 17 March 2018 - of Canon Digby Samuels was sent to the priests and parishes across the diocese a response was received from a priest: "the diocese has lost a saint". Canon Digby will be remembered with gratitude by many priests, religious and lay people for helping them to grow in holiness, in sanctity. To be holy is to be close to God, the source of holiness, and Digby was close to God throughout his life. Canon Digby was ready to go to God as he endured physical frailty in his final weeks, cared for in St Anne's Home by the sisters and staff and the friends who visited him and sent him messages of encouragement and assurances of prayer.



Born on 8 May 1948 in Bovington, Dorset, the son of Major Frederick and Anna Maria Samuels, Canon Digby wrote, "My mother was Catholic, my father nominal Church of England. Not surprisingly it was my mother who taught me my prayers and introduced me to Mass, sharing her own faith with me". The young Digby was educated at Ampleforth College. Known as "Dig", he enjoyed his school years, while also experiencing what he described as "the turbulent years of early teens and the transition from one boarding school to another". He had a sense of the closeness of God and a one-to-one relationship with Jesus in prayer. The influence of the Benedictine monks, and their way of life, made a deep and lasting impression. Dig wrote home regularly, giving details of his studies, sporting and social activities. In 1967 he left Ampleforth to undertake studies in law at Aberdeen University and was awarded LLB in 1970. He applied for, and was accepted as, a student for the priesthood for the Diocese of Westminster. He studied at Allen Hall in Ware and at the Venerable English College, Rome. As a student he was popular and very much liked. On 17 July 1976 Digby was ordained as a priest by Bishop Gerald Mahon MHM at the church of Our Most Holy Redeemer and St Thomas More, Chelsea.

Fr Digby served as assistant priest at Muswell Hill from 1976 to 1978, when he was appointed to Hertford. In 1980 he moved to the parish of St Francis of Assisi, Notting Hill as assistant priest and then on to More House as chaplain from 1983 to 1989. This was followed by a time of sabbatical leave until he went to the Shrine at Walsingham to serve as Chaplain to Pilgrims from 1990 to 1993. He then spent two years at Potters Bar, doing retreat work, before returning to Ampleforth Abbey to explore the possibility of a monastic vocation. It was discerned that this was not to be. In 1997 Fr Digby was appointed assistant priest at St Charles Square, where he served until 1999. He was then appointed parish priest at St Patrick's Church, Wapping. At Wapping Fr Digby found stability and purpose. He grew in his knowledge and love of the East End and the people there. He appreciated their faith and spirit. He was appointed Dean of Tower Hamlets in 2001 and in January 2006 he was appointed as a Canon of the Chapter of the Metropolitan Cathedral, Westminster. He was to become the Canon Penitentiary. In 2012 Canon Digby moved from Wapping to have a few months' sabbatical leave, spent with Carmelites and then Jesuits, until January 2013 when he took up his appointment as resident Chaplain at St Anne's Home in Stoke Newington. Failing

health meant retirement from that role last year. He remained in residence, continuing his ministry of spiritual direction and accompaniment and as a confessor to priests, religious, seminarians and lay people.

Canon Digby was a man and priest committed to prayer. He described prayer as a deep listening to God, to discern God's purposes. He talked openly about the spiritual life, and helped others to deepen their relationship with God. He did so with sensitivity and wisdom. While characteristically gentle, Canon Digby was able to quietly challenge others, with his sincerity and goodness, helping others to grow closer to God and responsive to God's will for them. His outwardly cheerful and breezy disposition allowed him access to the hearts and minds of many people, as he was able to endear himself to the strong and weak alike through the immediately imparted sensation that he was in touch with the inner self of the other. He remained a spiritual seeker himself, at times intensely so, and sometimes experiencing periods of darkness and desolation but remaining faithful, trusting that the light of God would continue to shine on him. Through his ministry, marked by empathy and compassion, the light of God shone into the lives of others. His friends appreciated his loyalty and his kindness, and helped him to take himself less seriously than he might have been inclined, and moments of joy and laughter will remain memorable. To his family – his sister Jacqueline and her children – Digby was an uncle first and a priest second, sharing times of recreation including playing golf and tennis and watching sport, especially rugby, and country walks. For Digby, trekking for long distances could constitute "some of life's best experiences", he wrote. Gifts at Christmas would come from the CAFOD catalogues, helping poor people and bringing joy to the recipients. His family were proud of him and were inspired by Digby's generosity and his ability to relate to people young and old, rich and poor, seeing the person before anything else, and seeing something of God in them. Canon Digby was a priest through and through, and rather ascetic, but never "clerical". A close priest-friend described Canon Digby as having "the heart of a child", a person of joy and innocence. He saw everyone as a child of a loving father, the God in whom he had profound and transparent trust. May he rest in peace in the presence of the God he knew, loved and served.

Mgr Martin Hayes

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.friendsofenglishcollegerome.org.uk

Contacts

Chairman: Mr Mike Lang,
St Angelo, Grange Road,
Buckfast, Devon, TQ11 0EH
Tel: 01364 644811
Email: mikelang537@btinternet.com

Secretary: Mr Jim Holroyd,
11 Fairfax Road,
Bingley, W. Yorks. BD16 4DR
Tel: 01274 568500
Email: JHGlenewes@aol.com

Report of the Friends of the Venerabile

MICHAEL LANG



Early in 2017 the Committee took the decision (some said it was a risk) to book the Villa Palazzola as the location for the 2017 Annual Gathering and the 30th AGM. Usually, we get together for a day or so, but on this occasion a group of 51 Friends gathered together at the Villa for the first week in October.

This proved to be a truly happy and successful week, during which the older ones amongst us reminisced and shared our memories of the Villa during the recent four decades:

Initially in the '70s and early '80s as a "Do It Yourself" holiday centre, then for 20 years as a retreat centre and place of prayer under the auspices of the Sisters of Mercy and latterly since 2004 as the place of rest and recreation that we (and I understand most of the seminarians) have come to love.

The committee decided to take advantage of the vast experience of Anthony Coles and left the organisation of the week in his hands:

- **Monday** - *The group visited the Benedictine Abbey at Subiaco.*
- **Tuesday** - *It was a trip to see the Apartments and Museum in the Papal Palace at Castel Gandolfo, followed by a guided tour of the Palace Gardens.*
In the evening the group assembled to listen to a very interesting presentation by Maurice Whitehead on the College Archives.
- **Wednesday** - *The highlight of the week - It was a visit to the English College in Rome. We received a presentation by Deputy Senior Student, Francis Murphy, on the students' recent pilgrimage to Western Turkey. We then joined the staff & seminarians at Mass before enjoying their hospitality at dinner.*
- **Thursday** - *it was time for the AGM.*
We welcomed our new Chaplain, Fr Philip Andrews.
The Rector presented his report on the past year at the College by talking us through a series of photographs showing the highlights of the College year, Mgr Philip referred in particular to the celebrations of Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor's 60th anniversary of ordination. This subsequently became very memorable as it was the last time Cardinal Cormac visited the College.
Also memorable was the visit of Cardinal Vincent Nichols when celebrating his Silver Jubilee of Episcopal Ordination.
But, topping all the Events of last year was the visit to the College of HRH the Prince of Wales. This was the first visit to the College by an heir to the throne, and the Prince was particularly interested in the history involved, and the Archives contents relating to Henry VIII and the Reformation.

A detailed AGM report can be found in the Newsletter (VV - Autumn 2017) on our website www.friendsofenglishcollegerome.org.uk.

Before supper Sr Assumpta gave an emotional account of her life as a Sister of Mercy (for details see website in VV - Spring 2018).

- **Friday** - *We drove 70 km south of Rome to visit the Anzio War Graves. It is always both a humbling and moving experience, and a privilege to see how beautifully the site is tended and cared for by the War Graves Commission. We then moved on to Nettuno to visit the St Maria Goretti Shrine, followed by a delicious, freshly caught, seafood lunch!*
- **Saturday** - *To finish off the week it was north-west to Ostia Antica to visit the ancient seaport.*

As always, our thanks to Anthony. His final challenge was the day of departure when all the roads around the Villa - and most of the Castelli it seemed - were closed off for the Tour d'Italia cycle race, and our various trips to Fiumicino and Ciampino at times began to appear doubtful! But Anthony, as ever utterly unflustered, managed to get us on our way! Although it was a somewhat hectic week, it was a great success in so many ways and much enjoyed by all. Requests were made to repeat the experience

During the year the local meetings in the South-West have continued and Alice Reeve has held the first local meeting in the West Midlands.

The new Seminarian Pilgrimage Fund has proved to be popular and supported two seminarians during the 2017 visit to Western Turkey.

Members of the Committee ensure that our membership is represented at every ordination each year, and we hope to continue contact with the newly ordained priests, through whom we might hopefully attract new members for the Friends.

It continues to be a privilege for us to support, however we can, the College staff and seminarians and, of course, Dear Old Palazzola!



MICHAEL LANG is Chairman of the Friends of the Venerabile.

House List 2017-18



Staff

- WHITMORE Philip (Westminster), Rector
- FLYNN John (Salford), Vice-Rector
- DOE Anthony (Westminster), Spiritual Director
- METCALFE John (Hallam), Pastoral Director
- McAULEY James (Portsmouth), Academic Tutor

3rd Cycle (Year III)

- LOPEZ Jorge Jesús (San Luis)

3rd Cycle (Year II)

- CHASE Andrew (Rockhampton)

3rd Cycle (Year I)

- NOWOTNIK Jan (Birmingham)
- MURPHY Francis (Southwark)

2nd Cycle (Year III)

- PAVER Mark (Salford)

2nd Cycle (Year II)

- BARBER James (Plymouth)
- CRANFIELD Tristan (Arundel & Brighton)
- LOGAN Hugh (St George's-in-Grenada)
- MARSDEN Richard (Middlesbrough)
- PINEDA Antonio (Westminster)
- RAKOWSKI Michael (Northampton)

2nd Cycle (Year I)

- EGAWHARY Marco (Birmingham)
- HILTON Benjamin (Leeds)
- NGUYEN Hai (Oslo)
- O'MAHONY Brian (Westminster)
- SERVICE Ryan (Birmingham)
- WATERS John (Birmingham)
- WOODLEY Benjamin (Westminster)

1st Cycle Theology (Year III)

- FYK Anthony (Portsmouth)
- TAYLOR Peter (Middlesbrough)

1st Cycle Theology (Year II)

- BALZANELLA Alexander (Westminster)
- JENKINSON Dominic (Hallam)
- KING Matthew (Portsmouth)
- WYGNANSKI Piotr (East Anglia)

1st Cycle Theology (Year I)

- COY Andrew (Northampton)
- ELLIOTT Sean (Leeds)
- WASOWSKI Alan (Leeds)
- WELSFORD Oliver (Portsmouth)

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year III)

- DIXON Joshua (Liverpool)

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year II)

- DUCKWORTH Toby (Birmingham)
- FERGUSON Daniel (Portsmouth)

1st Cycle Philosophy (Year I)

- HAUSCHILD Edward (Portsmouth)
- HELLEVIG Trym (Oslo)
- HEY Connor (Salford)
- SHARROCK Theodore (Salford)
- TEIGEN Joachim (Oslo)

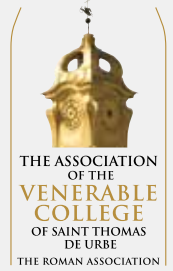
Anglican Ordinands

- BARTLETT Aidan
- ROGERS Christopher

Student Priests	6
E & W Seminarians	27
Other Seminarians	3
Anglicans	2

Total Students	38
Total Seminarians	30

Help the English College by supporting the Roman Association Trust



When you make a donation or leave a bequest to the Roman Association Trust you are supporting an endowment fund that benefits current and future students of the College. Through experienced fund managers, the Trust invests its accumulated capital in a spread of funds offering the best returns with minimal risk.

Every year the Trust makes a substantial gift to the College to fund a specific project, such as improving social spaces for the students like the gym and the common room.



Photos: Bishop Nicholas Hudson



To help us continue this work and to give something back to our beloved College, please consider including a bequest to the Trust in your will. We have produced a booklet which explains the simple steps involved in this: "Remembering the English College, Rome in your Will". This is available from any of the Trustees listed on p.94 or from the two individuals below.



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

Fr Paul Keane, St Mary's College Oscott,
Chester Road, Sutton Coldfield, B73 5AA,
tel. 0121 321 5010,
email: theromanassociation@gmail.com



SPECIAL OFFER AT PALAZZOLA FOR ALL OLD ROMANS

“THE BEST VIEW IN ITALY”, WAS HENRY JAMES’ DESCRIPTION OF PALAZZOLA AND WHO COULD ARGUE WITH HIM?

This autumn is the perfect time to visit with fantastic offers open to all *Venerabilini*, clerical and lay. Book your stay between 4 November and 20 December 2018 and you’ll get an amazing rate of €45 per person per day for an ensuite room including three meals a day with wine. It would cost more to stay at home.

Plan a getaway at Christmas or New Year and there are fabulous deals for you to spend this special time in the Alban Hills, with the Christmas liturgy celebrated in the lovely chapel of Our Lady of the Snows. Come with friends, family or on your own, you’ll receive a great welcome.

You can visit the Christmas markets in nearby towns, take a walk around Lake Albano, make a trip to Rome, play pool and table tennis or just relax in the Library with a good book in front of a huge log fire. All your meals will be cooked for you with no washing up. What could be better?

Bring home a taste of Palazzola with a copy of the Palazzola Cookbook, available to order for €13 inc. p&g. Go to www.palazzola.it to order your copy and to avail of the special offers for autumn this year and early 2019 just mention *The Venerabile*.



Villa Palazzola, via dei Laghi km 10.800, 00040 Rocca di Papa (RM), Italy
Web: www.palazzola.it Email: palazzola@palazzola.it Tel: 0039 06 9474 9178

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