

Ordinations

On Easter Saturday, April 14, Bishop Crispian Hollis ordained Br Christopher Greener as deacon and Br Hugh Somerville-Knapman as priest. This was the first time for many years that we have seen these two orders given at the same celebration. There was a large congregation of friends and relatives of the two ordinands and of the community.



The ordination Mass. Concelebrants from left to right Fr Leo Arkwright, Fr Alban Hood, Fr Paul Gunter, Fr Benedict Thompson, Fr Alexander Austin, Fr Romuald Simpson. At the altar: Br Christopher Greener, visiting deacon, Abbot Edmund Power, Fr Hugh Somerville-Knapman, Bishop Crispian Hollis, Abbot Geoffrey Scott.

Br Christopher joined the community in 1999. He was born in Oxford and was brought up in Wantage, attending King Alfred's School West, but was living in our former parish of Cheltenham when he came here. He had gained a BA in History at Cheltenham College of Higher Education. Since becoming a monk Christopher has studied theology at Blackfriars, Oxford, has gained an MA in Ethics at the University of Louvain and is currently working for an MA in Spirituality at Heythrop College, University of London.

Br Hugh arrived on New Year's Eve 2000, having had an earlier postulancy in 1995-6. He was born in Sydney, Australia, was educated by the Jesuits and became a Jesuit novice for two years, following which he obtained a BA in History at the University of Sydney. He

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Bishop Crispian ordains Br Christopher as deacon.

Douai Abbey Newsletter





Brs Christopher & Hugh listen to the bishop's homily

came to England in 1994, worked for a year in Douai School, entered the novitiate in 1995 and subsequently left. Back in Australia he worked for three years with the Communications Branch of the NSW Police Service.

Since rejoining Douai Abbey he has completed an MA in theology at the University of Sydney by distance learning as well as study-



Br Crispian ordains Br Hugh as priest.

ing at Blackfriars, Oxford. This autumn he will go to study patrology in Rome.◇



Br Christopher gives communion to his mother at the ordination Mass



Fr Hugh gives communion to his brother.

Book Launch

On May 31, Abbot

Geoffrey hosted a book launch in the Douai Guest Refectory at which a volume he has been preparing for seven years with three Dutch scholars,

Prof. Frans Korsten, and Drs. Jos and Frans Blom, was launched. The book is the collection of the correspondence of James Peter Coghlan (280 letters), and is published by the Catholic Records Society.

James Peter Coghlan (1731-1800) was the chief English Catholic printer, publisher and bookseller of the second half of the eighteenth century. It was mainly through him that English Catholics were provided with an extensive polemical, catechetical, pastoral and devotional literature of their own. Coghlan was also a pivotal figure in the infrastructure and logistics of the Catholic community, acting as a middleman between the various layers and segments of that community. In the turbulent days of the Catholic Committee after 1785, he found himself uneasily in the



midst of the fray. He corresponded with dozens of British Catholics, at home and abroad, and his letters, pious, shrewd, dedicated, garrulous and eminently practical, yield a fascinating insight into the day-to-day working of Catholic book production as well as the behind-the-scenes life of the English Catholic community.

Frans Korsten, Jos Blom and Frans Blom teach English Literature at Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Among those attending the launch were members of the Council of the Catholic Record Society, representatives of families and institutions associated with Coghlan, and Professor Michael Twyman of the Department of Typography and Graphic Design at Reading University. ♦

Conference on Mabillon

A conference on Dom Jean Mabillon was held at the Abbey of St Pierre, Solesmes, France, on May 18 & 19 2007 to celebrate the third centenary of his death at Saint-Germain-des-Prés in Paris in 1707.

Mabillon was the greatest of the French Benedictine Maurist scholars and an historian of international repute. His principal published works related to the history of the Benedictines and to establishing the guidelines for authenticating

charters and other legal documents which he gave in his *De Re Diplomatica* of 1681.

Among the papers given was one by Abbot Geoffrey on '*Mabillon in England and the English Benedictines*', which prompted a lengthy discussion.

Abbot Geoffrey was subsequently invited to give the same paper, to the community at Quarr Abbey in the Isle of Wight and to the Douai Community. ♦



Dom Jean Mabillon

Community Notes *Icons of a New/secular Monasticism*

Maison St-Benoît

Our dependency in Douai, France, continues to flourish. Fr Louis, who has resided there for a year studying Heidegger, is due to return to Douai, England, in August. During May Frs Finbar and Peter joined a group of Douai citizens on an official visit to Recklinghausen, near Munster, one of the towns with which Douai is twinned. Also during May the 'William Allen Association' held its AGM. The abbots of Douai and Downside were present as well as the President of Ushaw College and representatives from St Edmund's College, Ware. A Mass was celebrated in the newly restored chapel of Wadigny Hamage, a former Merovingian monastery near Douai. Madame Nicole Corteel, a Douai *confrater* who helped establish, and was the first President of, the William Allen Association has resigned on the grounds of age. We owe her a great debt as she was principally responsible for our return to Douai after 102 year absence.

Guest House Development

By Easter most the monks, some of whom had been in the same room for forty years, had moved from the south Benet Biscop block into the refurbished north block. Contractors were then able to start refurbishing the first floor of the vacated south block to prepare it for use by guests. This has entailed complete re-decoration, installing fire-resistant doors to each room,

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During the weekend of July 20-22, Monos, the centre for the study of monastic culture and spirituality, held a conference at Douai, 'Icons of a New/Secular Monasticism'. The start of the conference had to be delayed till Saturday morning as the heavy rains on the Friday had disrupted road and rail travel, and some of the participants were prevented from coming.

The speakers included Esther De Waal, who gave a talk entitled 'Why does monasticism have such an appeal for the laity today?' She spoke about how she came to know of St Benedict through being wife of the Dean of Canterbury and searching out the origins of the Cathedral and its water system. Some of the community had met her at Canterbury in 1978 when she entertained us to lunch, on the occasion of a gathering of monks to sing Vespers in the Cathedral. Bishop Dominic Walker OGS, bishop of Monmouth, spoke about living a Christian life under a vow of consecrated celibacy in the world today. Fr Dermot gave a paper on 'Holy toil and holy leisure', explaining the Benedictine understanding of work and showing how this is a valuable insight for people today. Dr Jonathan Wooding of the University of Wales, Lampeter, spoke about *peregrini* in history and their counterpart today. Paula Pearce spoke about Franciscan spirituality, and Michael Woodward, leader of the Lay Community of Benedict, introduced and led a period of *Lectio Divina*. ◇

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The fountain playing in the guest court outside the guest refectory.

and fire-resistant doors at the entrances to the staircases. The work was completed in early July and the refurbished rooms were fully in use for the *Icons of a New Monasticism* conference.

We now have 22 rooms for guests, many of them twin bedded; half are fully *en-suite* and the rooms in Benet Bis-

cop are *demi-en-suite*, having individual showers but not WCs.

The top floor of Benet Biscop now provides rooms for those monks not permanently resident at Douai and some rooms which can be used for visiting monks. The novitiate is also to be established on that floor and has its own conference room.

The ground floor is to be developed as the monastery infirmary, and this work will begin shortly. ◇

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