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Cover: The figure of the Risen Christ, carved by Thomas Mpira at Kungoni Centre of Culture and Arts in Malawi, and now in the library at Douai Abbey.

Contents

From the Abbot

I AM CONCENTRATING IN THIS, MY ANNUAL LETTER for *The Douai Magazine,* on what you will all be expecting me to consider: the pandemic which has affected the world and this country for nearly a year, and which continues to be a serious threat to society and individuals. It has been astonishing how this plague, which came from the Far East, has affected every sphere of our lives because it has attacked that unique gift that humans possess, the power to communicate personally with each other on a variety of levels, and which can be defined in terms of human love. Christians, conscious of their belief that God became man in the person of Jesus Christ, believe that this human love comes from God. As St John said, with his usual disarming simplicity: "God is love."

One of the church's greatest saints, Francis of Assisi, combined a love of his fellow brothers and sisters with a love for the natural world. St Francis has appealed to every age because of his joyful poverty, shown in his contempt for riches and for not possessing any trace of our anxiety to achieve security through material possession. Francis was carefree, always full of joy, and he had a strong belief in the beauty and wonder of the created world about which he composed a famous hymn. Its first line was used by Pope Francis (note the name he took on becoming pope) as the title for one of his recent encyclical letters, *Laudato Si'*, which encouraged all men and women to take seriously the care of our planet and the natural order. His encyclical begins with a quotation from St Francis' hymn:

> O Most High, all-powerful, good Lord God,
> to you belong praise, glory,
> honour and all blessing.
> Be praised, my Lord, for all your creation
> and especially for our Brother Sun,
> who brings us the day and the light…

Pope Francis' letter has become well known across the world because it emphasises that we all have a responsibility to protect, and not exploit, the world's limited resources.

Both St Francis and Pope Francis expound a positive view of our earth, but stuck in the restrictions, and aware of the pain and mortality produced by COVID-19, we probably do not share much of their joy at this moment. I was reading the Holy Father's letter at the very time that

a particular photograph of him appeared. Such photographs usually show him speaking to the cheering crowds from a balcony in St Peter's Square. This photograph was not the usual one distributed. Here, the pope, in his Mass vestments, had his back to the camera, and was standing on the pavement, in pouring rain and facing a square empty because of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Thus, there were no joyful crowds eager to listen to him, no joy, just a profound sadness. It was an odd contrast to be reflecting on his encyclical letter about joy found in the world in the context of a spreading deadly virus emerging from, and engulfing, creation.

With huge numbers of deaths recorded, our churches closed and the faithful deprived of the sacraments, together with the suspension of normal relations in work, travel, education, and recreation, we shall be forced to reassess ourselves, our society, and even our faith as a result of what we have all been through. Traditionally, whenever Christians have been threatened by such catastrophes as we have experienced in the pandemic, they have turned to the Apocalypse, the Book of Revelation. Written by St John, this work begins full of darkness, with attacks from evil agents, and the experiences of suffering and cosmic catastrophes. The Apocalypse seems, then, to be quite the reverse of St Francis's hymn to the universe. And yet, in the midst of all this torment, its principal message is one of hope, somehow surviving in the midst of the pain, and pointing forward to a future vision of the Church, and indeed the world, as the New Jerusalem, in which death and suffering will have no place.

As Christians and members of the Church, sharing a common faith and hope with us, Francis, the poor man of Assisi, Pope Francis, and the Apostle John all subscribe to the same belief: that the universe is certainly a thing of beauty and created by God, but it is, at the same time, a finite thing, and imperfect. Creation is ambivalent—the pandemic shows that clearly—but in hope we strive towards that perfection promised in a new creation, "where death shall be no more."

GEOFFREY SCOTT OSB

In Between Coffee and Chocolate: the Prime Minister and the Monk

THE BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY OF ST EDMUND at Paris, founded 1615, revived at Douai in France in 1818, and translated to Woolhampton in Berkshire in 1903, had few monks down the centuries who were members of the British gentry or aristocracy. Its sister community at the abbey of Lambspring, near Hildesheim, in Germany, founded in 1643, had monks who belonged to the Howard family some of whose members were Dukes of Norfolk and the Mordants, some of whom were earls of Peterborough. Nevertheless, St Edmund's, Paris, because of its chapel being the resting place of the exiled King James II, who was laid to rest there in September 1702, and because it was situated in the heart of the French capital, did enjoy many visits from travelling members of the British nobility. There were, however, two baronets who became monks of St Edmund's in its long history. The first, who is the subject of this article, was Sir William (in religion, Joseph) Kennedy (1665-1738) of Mount Kennedy, Co. Wicklow, Ireland, and the second was the baronet Sir John (in religion, Bede) Swale (1808-87) from the West Riding of Yorkshire. There might have been a third lordly monk of St Edmund's. Father James Forbes of Ampleforth Abbey, who enjoyed the company of upper crust English Catholics, was given his private motto by the undergraduates of St Benet's Hall, Oxford, where he was Master in the 1970s. The motto came from the line in the psalm, "Common folk are only a breath," although sometimes there was added to it by cheeky undergraduates the next line of the psalm: "Great men an illusion." Father James published a pamphlet on St Alban Roe, one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales canonised in 1970, and a saint shared by present-day Ampleforth and Douai. St Alban Roe was martyred in 1642 and Father James commented in the first line of his pamphlet, "Not a great deal is known of his early years but he seems to have come from a gentle family."

With William Kennedy (1665-1738) we are on much firmer noble ground. For details of William's early life and career and for the transcription of some of his original correspondence I am indebted to Therese F. Hicks of Newtownmountkennedy in County Wicklow, who is in the process of publishing a book on this Kennedy family. William was the son of Sir Richard Kennedy, knight and baronet, a lawyer and

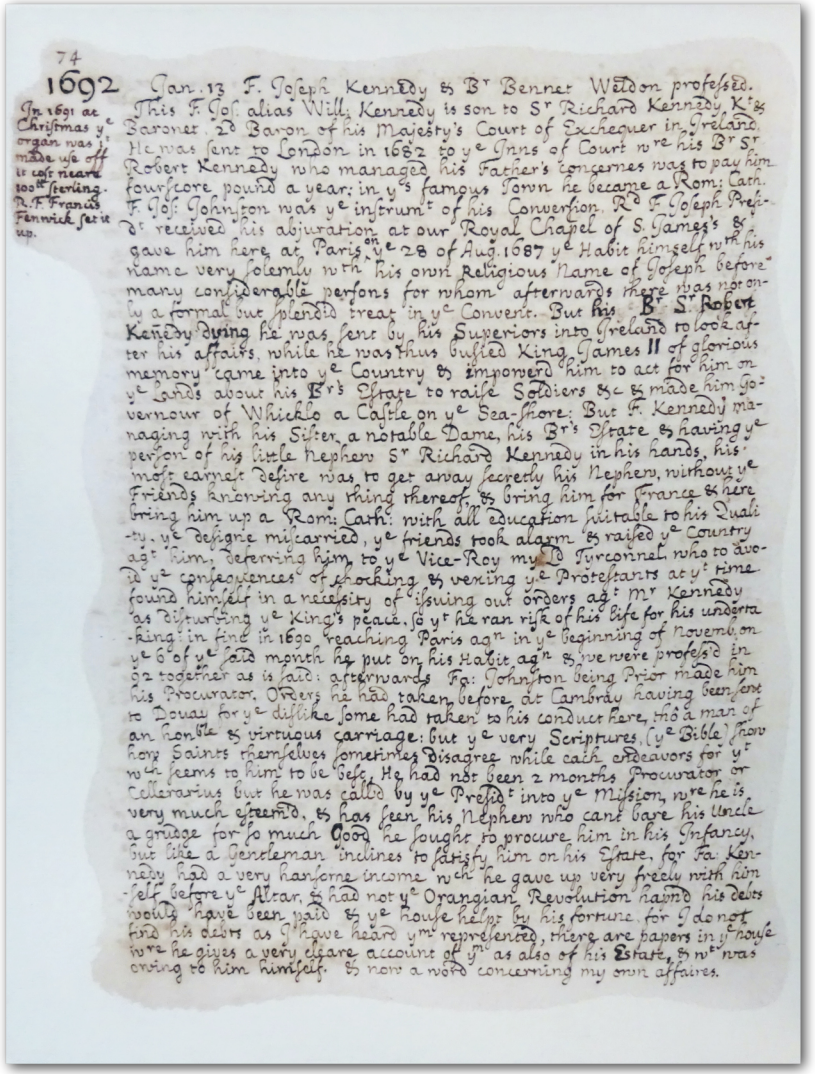
second baron of the King's Court of the Exchequer in Ireland. The family seat was Mount Kennedy in Wicklow. The family's wealth had come from William's grandfather, Robert, who was the Chief Remembrancer of the Exchequer in Ireland, and who had acquired much land in Co Wicklow in the 1620s and 1630s. The Kennedys were Anglican and had espoused the royalist cause in the English Civil War. William and his elder brother, Robert, attended Trinity College, Dublin, before William moved in 1682 to Lincoln's Inn in London to study law as had his father and uncles. On the death of his father in 1684, he inherited some of the family property in Dublin. At the beginning of James II's reign in 1685, the king had established an English Benedictine community of fourteen monks attached to the Queen's Chapel at St James's Palace in London. This was the chapel in which the body of Princess Diana lay in state before her funeral and it is much the same today as William Kennedy would have known it. Among the Benedictine community serving this royal chapel were a number of monks from Paris, including Joseph Johnston (1674-1723), himself a convert from Anglicanism, and a Yorkshireman who had worked as a herald and whose preaching had helped Kennedy's decision to convert to Catholicism. Johnston received the young Kennedy into the church in the Queen's Chapel, and from this point, he acted as an influential patron of Kennedy. A number of Johnston's converts, including William Kennedy were persuaded by Johnston to try their monastic vocations at St Edmund's priory in Paris. So it was that William Kennedy, aged twenty three, was clothed as a novice at St Edmund's, Paris, on 28 August 1687, taking Joseph as his religious name, after his patron in London. There were many "considerable persons" at the ceremony and they joined the monastic community after it for "a formal but splendid treat."

Joseph Kennedy's novitiate year was disturbed following the death of his brother on the Isle of Man in 1688. He had to return home to sort out his brother's heir, the young Sir Richard Kennedy, then three years old, who succeeded his father to the baronetcy. Once in Ireland, Joseph was in no hurry to return to the monastic life in Paris, and became an Irish agent for James II who made him governor of Wicklow Castle, a paper appointment since he would have been unable to take up the post. Joseph, with all the fervour of a new convert, was determined secretly to take his nephew back to France and have him brought up as a Catholic. But while he was on his way with the boy, his design was exposed, and they were pursued and captured. The king, fearing Kennedy's kidnapping would antagonise Irish Protestants, took action against him

for disturbing the peace. James II himself fled to exile in France at the end of 1688. The English crown was accepted by his daughter Mary and her husband, William of Orange who became William III. Given the change in his fortunes, as a Catholic and a Jacobite (a supporter of James II and the Stuart dynasty), Kennedy returned to Paris and put the monastic habit on again. He was professed at St Edmund's, Paris, in January of 1692. However, his conduct in the monastery aroused some criticism and he was transferred to the English Benedictine sister monastery at St Gregory's, Douai.

Whilst in Douai and in the year of his ordination at Cambrai in 1694, Kennedy was attainted by the English government for his Jacobitism. Soon after returning from Douai to Paris in 1696, he was sent onto the English mission and became chaplain at the Florentine embassy where, given his priesthood and his status in Irish society, he would have invoked diplomatic immunity. He moved into the limelight after his nephew, Sir Richard Kennedy, had been killed in a duel in 1710, and the monk thus became the fifth baronet, though the attainder prevented him being legally recognised as such. In March the same year, he was arrested and put in solitary confinement in London for his treasonable views at a time when there were government spies everywhere searching for Catholic Jacobite agents. Despite the promises made to Irish Catholics in the Treaty of Limerick in 1691, the Irish parliament sanctioned a series of repressive measures against Catholics between 1695 and 1710 which aimed to weaken the Catholic gentry and favour Anglican supremacy.

This revival of the penal laws explains the contents of two letters Joseph Kennedy had written from prison in March and April, 1710. He speaks of the spy whose information led to his arrest and imprisonment. This was a fellow Irishman called Captain Burke. Smuggling a letter to his old patron, Joseph Johnston, then prior of St Edmund's, Paris, and another to a "Mr Dobson," perhaps Charles Middleton, Secretary of State to the Old Pretender (1649/50-1719), Kennedy provided a precise description of the spy in order to alert other Catholic Jacobites. He told Johnston that he had been seized as a result of a warrant issued by Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, for treasonable practices against Queen Anne and her government, and his papers had been confiscated. Many others were taken up at the same time upon suspicion of being Irish bishops or priests. Kennedy told "Mr Dobson" that Burke had alleged Kennedy was Archbishop of Dublin (the genuine archbishop was in hiding at the



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1692

In 1691 ae Christmas ye organ was 1st made use off it cost neare 100li sterling. R.F. Francis Fennick fecit up.

Jan. 13 F. Joseph Kennedy & Br Benner Weldon professed. This F. Jos. alias Will. Kennedy is son to Sr Richard Kennedy Kt & Baronet, 2d Baron of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer in Ireland. He was sent to London in 1682 to ye Inns of Court wre his Br Sr Robert Kennedy who managed his Father's concernes was to pay him fourscore pound a year: in ys famous Town he became a Rom: Cath. F. Jos. Johnston was ye instrumt of his Conversion. Rd F. Joseph Presd received his abjuration at our Royal Chapel of S. James's & gave him here at Paris, ye 28 of Aug. 1687 ye Habit himself wth his name very solemly wth his own Religious Name of Joseph before many confiderable persons for whom afterwards there was not only a formal but splendid treat in ye Convent. But his Br Sr Robert Kennedy dying he was sent by his Superiors into Ireland to look after his affairs, while he was thus busied King James II of glorious memory came into ye Country & impowered him to act for him on ye Lords about his Brs Estate to raise Soldiers &c & made him Governour of Whicklo a Castle on ye Sea-shore. But F. Kennedy managing with his Sister, a notable Dame, his Brs Estate & having ye person of his little Nephew Sr Richard Kennedy in his hands, his most earnest desire was to get away secretly his Nephew, without ye Friends knowing any thing thereof, & bring him for France & there bring him up a Rom: Cath: with all education suitable to his Quality. ye designe miscarried, ye friends took alarm & raised ye Country agt him, referring him to ye Vice-Roy my Ld Tyrconnel, who to avoid ye consequences of shocking & vexing ye Protestants at yt time found himself in a necessity of issuing out orders agt Mr Kennedy as disturbing ye King's peace, so yt he ran risk of his life for his undertaking. in fine in 1690 reaching Paris agn in ye beginning of Novemb. on ye 6th of ye said month he put on his Habit agn & we were profess'd in 2 together as is said: afterwards Fa: Johnston being Prior made him his Procurator. Orders he had taken before at Cambray having been sent to Douay for ye dislike some had taken to his conduct here, tho a man of an honble & virtuous carriage: but ye very Scriptures (ye Bible) show how Saints themselves sometimes disagree while each endeavors for yt wch seems to him to be best. He had not been 2 months Procurator or Cellerarius but he was called by ye Presidt into ye Mission, wre he is very much esteemed, & has been his Nephew who cant bare his Uncle a grudge for so much good he sought to procure him in his Infancy, but like a Gentleman inclines to satisfy him on his Estate, for Fa: Kennedy had a very handsome income wch he gave up very freely with himself before ye Altar, & had not ye Orangian Revolution ruined his debts would have been paid & ye house helpt by his fortune for I do not find his debts as I have heard yt represented, there are papers in ye house wre he gives a very clear account of yt as also of his Estate, & wt was owing to him himself. & now a word concerning my own affaires.

The account of Kennedy's profession in Weldon's Annals

time) and that he had been with "James III," the Old Pretender, the previous summer. Kennedy provided five aliases which Burke assumed, and he described him minutely: "He is a man about my size, not altogether so fat, full of the small pox, and very light hair, wares good Perriwiggs, and has a cloath suit richly embroidered with silver, a Cloath suit trimmed with silver buttons and holes…Has plenty of mony with which he may gain credit, and admittance into any conversation; he wants not natural parts, tho' I am told he can neither read nor write…His father was hanged for stealing at Mullingar in Ireland." Burke, Kennedy continued, had turned informer on the Irish Catholics who had brought him up.

By 1716 Kennedy had been released from prison and had been transferred back to St Gregory's, Douai, probably because his presence in London had become an embarrassment to the English Benedictines. At Douai, he became a councillor, and in 1718 he returned to his old monastery of St Edmund in Paris. At some point, Kennedy transferred again to the English Benedictine South Province in England and returned to working as a Jacobite. In 1724 he was reported to the government for actively recruiting Irishmen in London for the Jacobite army in France. A Benedictine missioner in the East Riding voiced his concern over Kennedy's "mismanagement" since it would bring the "highest contempt" upon the Benedictines because "being placed to shew the way of justice to others, we act in opposition to it." The "mismanagement" is not explained, but it may have related to one of two issues. Firstly, there might have been anxiety in London about Kennedy's Jacobite recruiting drive, and secondly, he had become involved from 1727 in a well publicised dispute within his family, involving the widow of his nephew, also the mother of his grandniece and her husband Sir William Dudley, about ownership of the Kennedy estates in Ireland The widow's second husband, a younger son of the Duke of Norfolk, had died in 1727, although she still commanded significant influence in aristocratic circles.

To escape controversy, Kennedy returned to Paris. In 1735 four letters of Kennedy, now in the Stuart papers in Windsor Castle, were addressed from Paris, and sent to "James III." They reveal much about Kennedy, aged 70 by this time, and reveal the complex context in which he had been active. From 1716, as the possibility of a Stuart restoration became increasingly unrealistic, serious attempts were orchestrated to formulate a compromise oath which English Catholics could take to the English crown and yet still remain supportive of the papacy. This

campaign weakened traditional Jacobite loyalties, and divided English Catholics and the English Benedictines between those favouring a compromise with the English government and those maintaining their Jacobite adherence. Despite his staunch Jacobite past, Kennedy moved very unusually towards favouring compromise with the whig Hanoverian government led by Sir Robert Walpole, Prime Minister from 1721 to 1742. Kennedy portrayed himself as a key intermediary between the Stuart court, in Rome by this time, and the English government of the Hanoverian George II. Walpole had an obsessive preoccupation with Jacobitism, but he was a wily politician and was prepared to appear sympathetic to anyone attached to that interest if it helped to weaken a united Jacobite front. While he was lulling Kennedy into a false sense of security, Walpole was actively trying to break up a European Catholic alliance opposed to Protestant Britain. He shrewdly attempted to divide the European Catholic alliance by detaching the Empire and isolating France, while appearing to be sympathetic to the Pretender who in a mood of despondency turned to him in 1732 as an (unlikely) supporter of a Stuart restoration.

These diplomatic manoeuvrings lie behind the detailed account found in Kennedy's letters to James III of meetings between the monk and the prime minister during 1735. Kennedy, unlike many of his fellow monks, was not particularly francophile. He was Irish, he had received legal training in London, and had, significantly, never been offered, as far as we know, a benefice in France. He had, moreover, begun to doubt the genuine commitment of the French to the Jacobite cause. Kennedy was introduced to the Pretender, then resident in Rome, by John Paul Stafford (1700-62) who had been under-governor to Prince Henry, the Pretender's younger son (1728-30) and who would become the fourth earl of Stafford in 1751. Kennedy explained his delay in writing to the Pretender because he had a severe cold which had affected his eyes and he had been forced to dictate the letter to a trustworthy priest friend. Kennedy was well over 70 by this time. He thought the Pretender would be impressed by the diplomatic approaches he had made to Walpole, and he described these in detail to James III.

Some time in the late 1720s, after his grandniece had come of aged and had legal possession of the Kennedy estate, Kennedy had met an old friend called "Mr Shortiss" by accident in a coffee house close to Walpole's residence, to whom he had done a good turn when Shortiss had visited Paris. Shortiss was obviously a government spy, but not recognised as such by Kennedy. He persuaded the monk to go and see

Walpole's famous picture collection, boosting his self-esteem by telling him that he was a good judge of fine painting. The pair found Sir Robert in his sitting room, and the Prime Minister was told who Kennedy was. Walpole assumed a sympathetic guise, telling Kennedy that he knew all about his quarrels over the family estates in Ireland with the rest of the family from the press and debates in the House of Commons. He told the monk to stay as long as he wished in his residence so as to admire the art collection, and giving "a very civil bow, retired to his closet." Shortiss told Kennedy he knew about the persecutions the monk had endured because of his Catholicism, and about his earlier imprisonments for treason, but assured Kennedy that he would continue to ensure that his concerns were kept fresh in Walpole's mind. Walpole thus became Kennedy's latest patron. The Prime Minister sent his lawyer to accompany Kennedy, together with the papers relating to the quarrel over the family estates in his legal process. Walpole asked to keep the papers until he had time to read them, and put them on his mantlepiece so that they were "daily in his eye." This, the lawyer told Kennedy, was "a very singular favour" granted him, unheard of before this time, and this deeply impressed the monk.

Later, at Shortiss' house, Kennedy drank a toast to Sir Robert Walpole as "his brother" and Shortiss burst out laughing, retorting that the Prime Minister thought so much of Kennedy that he was prepared to make him duke of Northumberland or duke of Albemarle, both of these having latterly moved from being Jacobites to being supporters of Walpole and the Hanoverian regime. This flattery emboldened Kennedy and he openly admitted that his intention was "to secure and preserve these Kingdoms from inevitable Slavery," by having the Stuarts restored. Both friends drank heavily for two hours, Shortiss disingenuously admitting how pleased he was to hear such sentiments and of the service Kennedy was performing on behalf of the Pretender. He went on to assure the monk that as his patron, Walpole would use his parliamentary influence to restore him to his Irish estates. Kennedy told Shortiss that he was happy for him to report their conversation to Walpole, and they parted company, agreeing to meet at the coffee house next morning.

That night, Kennedy began to have qualms of conscience and an anxiety attack, fearing he had said far too much under the influence of alcohol. Having trained as a lawyer, he realised that what he had said could be counted treasonable and had put Shortiss himself in a risky position. Having "slept not a wink that night," he was even more

concerned to find that Shortiss had arrived at the coffee house before him and left word that he should go to Walpole's house. When he arrived alone at the Prime Minister's house, he was told by the porter that Shortiss had arrived earlier and was having a long private conversion with Walpole "in his closet." The pair then emerged and surprised a nervous Kennedy by their apparent pleasant disposition: "Sir Robert came to meet me & took me by the hand (the first time he ever did me that honour)." He drew a chair next to Kennedy close to the fire, and appeared sensibly concerned about the growing opposition to Kennedy over the latter's intention to demand an annuity of £100 out of the family estate, but promised that he would do all in his power to help the monk. Walpole seemed to have been impressed by the modest amount Kennedy was demanding. Aware of the value of having influential patrons, and before Kennedy left, Walpole introduced him to Charles Fitzroy, second duke of Grafton, who had been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1720-24), who told the monk he was already aware of the quarrel over the Kennedy estates.

For his valuable diplomacy, according to Kennedy, Walpole soon rewarded Shortiss with a new post, "Searcher of the Baggage" at the Customs House which led him to seizing a port-mantle addressed to "Mr Jerningan" (the Catholic Jacobite Sir George Jerningham, 1680-1774) and which contained treasonable Jacobite papers about a planned Jacobite insurrection. The irony was not lost on Kennedy, who knew the Jerninghams: "I told Mr Shortiss in rallery (raillery), Heaven had Done this to Reward his Charity to me." He was beginning to realise, however, that he had been cornered by Walpole. Soon afterwards he was dragged by Shortiss to a meeting with the Prime Minister who interrogated him on the suspected Jacobite plot involving Jerningham. Kennedy protested his ignorance and his innocence, and pointed out that the dates on the documents relating to a plot were prior to his decision not to continue promoting any Jacobite plot. Walpole, "with a Smile took me by the hand and said you are a very honest man, I know all you say to be truth." Walpole then rang the bell and ordered chocolate for Kennedy's breakfast. Later, the monk was introduced to the Duchess of Hamilton, a great friend of Walpole and a crypto-Jacobite. Further introductions to other supposed Jacobite sympathisers followed. By April 1735 Walpole's crucial patronage of Kennedy in Parliament was paying off, for he had all bills thrown out which were brought in against Kennedy by members of his family. This forced them to make a more reasonable settlement with him.

By the end of 1735 Kennedy had returned to the safety of St Edmund's in Paris. His fellow monk, William Hewlett, writing the annals of the monastery in 1742, described Kennedy's accidental death on 8 January 1738. Aged seventy three, Kennedy had retired to bed but left his candle alight by mistake. This set fire to papers on top of the bedside table and Kennedy was asphyxiated. It is a curious coincidence that the cause of Kennedy's death closely resembled that of his monastic contemporary, Brother Benet Weldon (1647-1713), the great annalist of the seventeenth-century English Benedictines, with whom he had been professed on the same day in 1692. On 23 November 1713, Weldon had also been asphyxiated in his cell by fumes from a pan of hot charcoal. With Kennedy's death the baronetcy became extinct.

GEOFFREY SCOTT OSB

The Identity of the 'Cufaude'[1] Nun in the Portrait at The Vyne

The Vyne National Trust property in Hampshire contains an eclectic collection of fittings, furnishings and art works which were acquired almost entirely by its owners from the early 1500s to the mid-1950s,[2] but, as with such collections, the provenance of many items is unsubstantiated or not known. One of those items is the fine portrait of a nun entitled "Winifred Cufaude." Circumstantial evidence suggests the portrait was acquired by John Chute, owner of The Vyne from 1754 until his death in 1776. In 1769 John purchased the neighbouring property of Cufaude Manor which had, since 1157 at least, been owned by the Cufaude family.[3] It is a reasonable assumption that the portrait was acquired by John as part of that transaction.

In about 1540 the Cufaude family was used to exclude Maria Pole, daughter of Sir Geoffrey Pole and granddaughter of Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, from any claim to the throne. She was obliged to marry William Cufaude, the younger son of a William and Ann.[4] The offspring of William and Maria determinedly stuck to the Roman Catholic faith through the English Civil War, with one being described as a "notorious papist"[5] and another being defined a recusant.[6] At least two males became Jesuits[7] and several of the women became nuns and are relevant to this article.

THE PORTRAIT

The portrait is a three-quarter length depiction of a young nun in choir dress, with a rochet, and with her right hand resting on a skull [*fig.1*]. On its frame there is a label which states that it is of "Winifred Cufaude by La Belle, 1707." The Parisian artist, Alexis-Simon Belle, (1645-1734), is sometimes referred to as La Belle.[8] In her biography of Belle, Dr Fabienne Camus says "his portrait of Winifred Cufaude stands out because of its vigorous technique, the balance of its composition and subtlety of expression, even though the head does not quite go with the rest of the body."[9]

C.W. Chute mentions the portrait in his book, *The History of the Vyne*. He stated that it was Winifred, the nun of Cufaude, depicted in the habit of a canoness of the Order of St Augustine.[10] Abbot Geoffrey Scott of

Figure 1— Portrait of a nun, known as Winifred Cufaude, by Alexis Simon Belle, dated 1707, at The Vyne National Trust property. Reproduced by kind permission of the National Trust, image 23552.

Douai Abbey has confirmed that the nun's habit is that of an Augustinian nun.[11] Her habit can be compared to that shown in the portrait of Anne Throckmorton who was a canoness of the order of St Augustine at the English convent of Our Lady of Sion in Paris, and was prioress there from 1720-28 [*fig.2*]. This portrait was commissioned by Sir Robert Throckmorton and was painted by Nicolas de Largillière (1646-1756). However, no nun of the Augustinian order bearing the name of Cufaude has been identified. Further confusion over the identity of the subject of The Vyne portrait arose in 2019 during cleaning of the painting when a note on the back of the portrait was discovered which said that it was of "Mrs Winifred Cufaude dressed as St. Claire."[13] It seems appropriate to investigate whether more light can be cast on the subject of this portrait.

ENGLISH AND WELSH NUNS IN THE PERIOD

In the 17th and 18th centuries, any English or Welsh woman who was a nun, or aspired to be one, had to go to continental Europe. English convents were established there from 1600 and the names of the nuns that were in those convents have been collected together in a database by Queen Mary University, London, through the "Who were the Nuns? Project."[14] The database reveals that there were four nuns with the surname Cufaude.

Briefly, the details of the four are:

Constance, 1600-1664, a member of the Poor Clares' convent in Gravelines, Southern Netherlands;

Ann, 1657-1684, a canoness of the Holy Sepulchre in the Sepulchrine convent in Liège, Belgium;

Winifred, 1661-1706, a nun at the Poor Clares' convent in Rouen, France;

Dorothy, 1664-1688, probably the sister of Winifred and joined the same convent as Winifred.

When trying to understand the family backgrounds and relationships of the nuns it soon became obvious that there were errors in the Cufaude family tree as published by the "Who were the Nuns? Project." A family tree based on primary sources such as wills and other contemporary legal documents, wherever possible, has been constructed here by the author. In addition to the nuns listed above there were male members of the family who entered religious orders.[15]

Figure 2—Portrait of canoness Anne Throckmorton of the English Augustinian Convent of Notre-Dame-de-Sion in Paris, dated 1729. Reproduced by kind permission of the National Trust, image 1185888.

THE IDENTITY OF THE NUN IN THE VYNE PORTRAIT

Of the above mentioned four nuns, the only credible candidate for the subject of the portrait is Winifred. The others were dead before well before 1707. She had the same name as that on the portrait frame and she died only a year before the date of the painting. But she was a member of a Poor Clare convent and would have worn the habit of a Poor Clare nun which is distinctly different from that worn by the sitter in The Vyne's portrait[16] [*fig.3*]. Furthermore, she was 45 years old in 1706 and consequently would have looked older than the woman depicted in the portrait. Also, it is most unlikely that she or her living blood Cufaude relatives would pay for the portrait. Her brother, John, moved to Scarisbrick, Lancashire in 1688 and became a member of the Society of Jesus.[17] He renounced his claim to the Cufaude estate in favour of his uncle John for a sum of £250.18 Incidentally, Winifred benefited from this agreement with an annuity of £50. After the death of her uncle John in 1701, Henry Cufaude, a distant cousin of Winifred, took over the estate. He spent most of his time in his London home and is on record as having little interest in the Basing estate.[19] Also, there followed legal disputes within the family over the final settlement of the Cufaude estate for many years.[20]

Figure 3—The portrait of The Vyne Augustinian nun (left) is reproduced by kind permission of the National Trust, Image 23552; that of the Poor Clare nun Constance Bagnall (right) is reproduced courtesy of the Abbot of Douai.

It could be argued that La Belle made a mistake with the habit. But it is most unlikely that he made such an error because:

a) There were several convents in France and Paris of the various orders and he would have been well aware of the distinct difference in habits.

b) In recent times two more portraits of nuns in Augustinian habits have been attributed to him.[21] One of the portraits, that of Anne Stonor, was certainly of an Augustinian. The sitter in the other portrait is unknown, but she too was a member of the Augustinian order.[22]

c) La Belle was the official portrait painter to the Jacobite court in exile at St Germain-en-Laye near Paris at the time The Vyne nun portrait was produced, and was well regarded for his portraits of the Jacobite royal family and courtiers.[23] He and his wife had moved to St Germain-en-Laye in 1702 to be near the court and he soon became assimilated into the British community there.[24] The royal family, including King James II, were regular visitors to the English Augustinian convent of Our Lady of Sion in Paris.[25] Thus, La Belle moved in elevated circles that had close connections to an Augustinian convent and its nuns. So, it is most unlikely that he would make a mistake regarding the habit.

Having eliminated the nuns of Cufaude blood and the possibility of error on the part of the artist, it is necessary to test the credibility of the sitter being a Mrs Winifred Cufaude as mentioned in the note found recently on the back of the painting. There was a Mrs Winifred Cufaude who was the wife of Matthew Cufaude. But as she was born about 1620,[26] she was too old to be the subject of the portrait. In any case it is most unlikely that, as the wife of a recusant, she would put herself on display wearing a nun's habit. Further, the note found on the back of the painting says that she was in the "habit of St Claire" which is not the habit worn in the portrait.[27]

To see if there were any other credible candidates, the wider Cufaude family tree from the mid-17th century was examined, when Simon Cufaude was the owner of the Cufaude estate.[28] The fact that Fabienne Camus and others accept that Belle was the artist who painted the portrait implies that the portrait was painted in or around Paris in the early part of the 18th century. This reduces the scope of any search to that period.

This approach identified a potential solution. Simon had a younger brother, John, who was referred to in contemporary legal documents as "John the Uncle,"[29] and a son also called John who was referred to as "John the Nephew." Following the death of Simon in 1693 the Cufaude estates in Sherborne St John were inherited by his son, "John the Nephew." But as stated above, "John the Nephew" had by then moved to Scarisbrick, Lancashire to become a Jesuit. In 1697, he sold the Cufaude estate to his uncle John. In 1696[30] this John was pledged to marry a young girl, Ann Hunt, when she turned 21, which happened in 1700.[31] Ann was the daughter of Roger Hunt, a recusant[32] of Chawston in Bedfordshire.[33] Ann had a twin sister, Mary. They were born in 1679. In the marriage settlement for John and Ann, John took half the Chawston estate. He died in 1701[34] leaving his Basing estate to his cousin, Henry Cufaude, but the Chawston estate went to Roger Hunt's co-heirs, Ann and Mary,[35] who sold it in 1705.[36]

Because of the girls' age in 1707 and the closeness to the Cufaude family, one of them may have been the sitter for the portrait of the nun at The Vyne. The case for each is laid out below.

MARY HUNT

She was the sister-in -law to the John Cufaude who died in 1701, and a member of the English Augustinian convent of Our Lady of Sion[37] in Paris from 1696, and professed as a nun in 1697. She stayed there until her death in 1763.[38] She was in the right age bracket, being 28 years old when the portrait was painted in 1707. She belonged to an order and convent which did not discourage members from having their portraits painted. The founder of the convent who died in 1677, Lettice Mary Tredway, had her portrait painted which [*fig.4*] is now housed in St Augustine's Priory, Ealing.[39] It would have been surprising if others had not followed her example. After 1707 four of the best-known surviving portraits of English nuns were of members of that same convent: Frances Wollascott (from the recusant family of Woolhampton), Anne Stonor, Anne and Elizabeth Throckmorton.[40] Also, there are portraits from other English Augustinian convents, some of which have survived. An example is the portrait of Margaret Clement, now housed at Douai Abbey, a nun of the English Augustinian convent in Louvain. Her portrait dates back to the late 16th century.[41]

Mary Hunt was connected to the convent in Paris through her guardian. It is not surprising that one of the Hunt girls would end up in

Figure 4—Portrait of Lettice Mary Tredway, founder of the English Augustinian Convent in Paris. Courtesy of St. Augustine's Priory School, Ealing, London.

the convent of Our Lady of Sion because of the involvement of their mother, Ann Hunt, and her brother, Edward.[42] Ann was a widow when she made her will made in 1691. Edward, a secular priest, taught rhetoric at the English College in Douai, France. From 1680 until at least 1692, he was on a mission in Hampshire and lived with a local worthy recusant, Edmund Perkins of Winkton near Christchurch,[43] who had connections with the Paris convent. So, when Ann was looking for a suitable guardian for her daughters it would be natural for her to appoint someone like Edmund Perkins to carry out the duty until the girls came of age in 1700.[44] He was a descendant of the Perkins family of Ufton Court, Berkshire,[45] which is only about seven miles from Cufaude, the home of the recusant Cufaude family.[46] He spent most of his life in Hampshire and became Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the county in 1688.[47] In February 1691 he, and two others, were appointed by King James II to "promise a pardon to such subjects as shall return to their

duty."[48] Ann died sometime between 1691 and December 1694. In December 1604 Edmund duly became the guardian of the two girls after swearing before the vicar of Christchurch, Hampshire (as it was then, now in Dorsetshire) the following oath:

> *Yow shall likewise well and faithfully educate, maintaine and bring up Ann Hunt and Mary Hunt, the children of the said deceased, with sufficient meate, drinke, lodging, apparel, and schooling and all other necessaries during theire minorities according to their degrees and qualities, soe help yow God.*

In 1696 he was party to the marriage settlement between John Cufaude and Ann Hunt.[49] So, there is little doubt that he had a hand in the move of Mary Hunt to the Paris convent in the same year. In mid 1695 he was appointed by King James II to be one of the two under governors for the Prince of Wales.[50] Around this time he moved from England to the Jacobite Court in St Germain-en-Laye, near Paris.

Edmund was connected to the convent of Our Lady of Sion through his family. His sister, Eugenia, was professed there in 1656 and was prioress from 1694 to 1698. His sister, Mary, was professed there in 1661, and one of his daughters, another Mary, was professed in 1678.[51] Edmund died unexpectedly in 1697 and was buried at the convent.[52] Thus, Edmund Perkins provided the pivotal connection between the Hunt and Cufaude families and the English Augustinian convent in Paris.

After Edmund's death, his son, also called Edmund, was given power of attorney in his father's stead,[53] and was a party to the final marriage settlement between John Cufaude and Mary's sister, Ann, when she came of age in 1700. Presumably, he acted as guardian to Mary until she was of the same age and inherited her share of the Hunt estate.

This inheritance would have made her relatively wealthy in English law, although as a religious vowed to poverty, she would have been unable to inherit it. It is recorded that she discussed with her uncle Edward, a priest from Douai College, the transfer of some of her wealth to her sister, Ann and to other relatives. Some indication of Mary's wealth is given by the £1000 dowry she gave to the convent. Most dowries at that time were in the order of £200-£400. (£1000 equates to over £200,000 today).[54] In addition, her estate helped the convent to purchase a town house and a silver water pot.[55] It was not unusual for affluent families which included nuns to commission portraits of nuns as a mementos.[56] Thus it is probable that one of Mary's beneficiaries,

her widowed sister, Ann, who was living in England commissioned a portrait painted by a recognised artist.[57] Mary was probably aware of the artist La Belle as he was a painter of members of the Jacobite court, who often visited the convent of Our Lady of Sion during their stay in France. Mary stayed in the Paris convent until her death in March 1763 at the age of 84.[58]

MRS ANN CUFAUDE (NÉE HUNT)

The case for Ann being the subject of the portrait is much weaker. After her husband died in 1701, she still carried the Cufaude name when the portrait was painted. She was about the right age and had the resources to pay for a portrait from an annuity of £150 from the Cufaude estate and her share of the Chawston Bedfordshire estate sale. But she was never a nun. It is very unlikely that she would sit for a portrait dressed as "Saint Claire" or any other nun in jest, considering her background and environment. She was raised in a recusant family,[59] married into a recusant family, had a twin who was a nun and had a Jesuit priest as a nephew-in-law. That said, she may well have been the vehicle by which the portrait entered into Chute possession.

Ann Cufaude remarried. Her second husband was John Fincham of Bedfordshire. They had a son, John, who held the Cufaude estate in Basing through trustees, then in his own right from the death of Henry Cufaude in 1736 until 1754.[60]Thus, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the painting came from Mary through Ann, his mother, to Cufaude Manor and remained there until it was sold to John Chute in 1769.[61]

There is another possible route which might explain how the portrait reached The Vyne. From 1708 until 1754 Edward, Anthony and John Chute were in turn trustees of the Cufaude estate until it was sold by John Fincham.[62] One of them may have been given the painting for their efforts.

This research both identifies the sitter in The Vyne nun's portrait as Mary Hunt, sister-in-law of John Cufaude (†1701) and its provenance at The Vyne.

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DR JOHN M. JENKINS

☞ *After a career in scientific research and its management, Dr John Jenkins became interested in the life of William, 1st Baron Sandys and the early Tudor palatial mansion he built, The Vyne, now a National Trust property. He has given lectures and written several historical articles for The Vyne's own magazine on the house, its contents and the Sandys family. He was lead author of a book on the painted glass of Lord Sandys in The Vyne and the Basingstoke Holy Ghost chapels. His book,* The King's Chamberlain*, on the life of the 1st Baron Sandys, will be published this year.*

NOTES

1. The family name was spelt in many different ways. In this article all the spellings are standardised as Cufaude.

2. M. Howard, *The Vyne*, The National Trust, 1998.

3. Hampshire Record Office 31M57/170; 31M57/171; "Parishes: Basing or Old Basing," in *A History of the County of Hampshire: Volume 4*, ed. William Page, London, 1911, pp.115-127. http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/hants/vol4/pp115-127 [accessed 16/6/20].

4. R.C. Toogood, *The History of Bramley, Hampshire*, Bramley Shell Publications, 1993, p.14; T*he Antiquary*, Vol. V, January to June, London 1882, pp.239-244.

5. W. Emberton, *Love Loyalty: The Close and Perilous Siege of Basing House*, Emberton, 1972, p.123.

6. Calendar of Committee for Compounding, 1643-1660, paras 1487-1488.

7. H. Foley, *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus,* Vol VII, Part 1, Burns and Oates, 1882, pp.186-188; Part 2, p.1405.

8. E. Corp, *The King over the Water,* National Galleries of Scotland, 2001, p.103.

9. F. Camus, trans C. Lloyd Morgan, "Alexis-Simon Belle portraitist de Cour (1674-1734)," in *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français*, 1990, pp.27-70; p.32, fig. 16.

10. W. Chute, *The History of the Vyne*, Winchester, 1888, p.147.

11. There are portraits of English canonesses of St Augustine of Louvain exhibited in the Douai Abbey library.

12. F.M. Cedoz, *Un couvent de religieuses Anglaises à Paris de 1634 à 1884*, London, 1891, pp. 217-222.

13. Dominique Shembry, House Steward, The Vyne National Trust, private communication to author.

14. Database of the "Who Were the Nuns?" Project. https://wwtn.history.qmul.ac.uk/

15. J.M. Jenkins, "A Note on the Descendants of William and Ann Cufaude, Family of Cufaude, Old Basing, Hampshire, showing those in Religious Orders," Hampshire Record Office: Genealogy/249.

16. G. Scott, "Cloistered Images: Representations of English Nuns, 1600-1800," in C. Bowden & J.E. Kelly, eds, *The English Convents in Exile, 1600-1800*, Farnham, 2013, chapter 11; W.M. Hunnybun & J. Gillow, "Register of English Poor Clare Nuns at Gravelines 1608-1837," *Miscellanea IX*, Catholic Record Society, London, 1914, p.25f.

17. H. Foley, *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus,* Vol VII, Part 1, Burns and Oates, 1882, p.187.

18. Hampshire Record Office 31M57/141; 31M57/143.

19. R.E. Scantlebury, ed, *Hampshire Registers Volume 1: The Registers and Records of Winchester,* Catholic Record Society, Vol XLII, London, 1948, p.127.

20. The National Archives C/389/30 1707.

21. E. Corp, *A Court in Exile,* Cambridge, 2004, p.195.

22. Private communication to the author.

23. E. Corp, *The King over the Water*, Edinburgh, 2001, p.103.

24. E. Corp, ibid, p.46.

25. Winifred's birthdate is inferred from her marriage date of about 1637, Hampshire Record Office 31M57/169.

26. Hampshire Record Office 31M57/138.

27. Hampshire Record Office 31M57/138.

28. Hampshire Record Office 31M/57/143.

29. Ibid.

30. Hampshire Record Office 31M/57/169.

31. Hampshire Record Office 31M57/144.

32. Hampshire Record Office 31M5/169, entry for 22 November 1696, HSA1677/S/47; HAS 1681/S/17.

33. Hampshire Record Office 31M57/144 and 31M5/169, entry for 22 November 1696.

34. F. J. Baigent & J. E. Millard, *A History of the ancient town and manor of Basingstoke in the county of Southampton with a brief account of the siege of Basing House, AD 1643-164*, Basingstoke, 1889, pp.169-170.

35. November 1696 Hampshire Record Office 31M5/169, entry for 22 November.

36. Chawston Manor "Parishes: Roxton," in William Page, ed, *A History of the County of Bedford,* Vol 3, London, 1912, pp.218-222. http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/beds/vol3/pp218-222 [accessed 27/6/20].

37. Database of "Who Were the Nuns?" Project, op.cit.

38. A.F. Allison, "The English Augustinian Convent of our Lady of Syon at Paris," *Recusant History*, 21, 4, 1993, pp.451-496.

39. St Augustine's Priory, Ealing, London.

40. https://wwtn.history.qmul.ac.uk/search/search

41. Personal observation.

42. Edward Hunt, alias Edward Colbeck (Colbecke).

43. P.R. Harris, ed, "Douai College Documents, 1639-1704," *Catholic Record Society*, Vol 63, London, 1972, pp.48, 53, 55, 59, 67, 71. J. H. Pollen & E. Burton, eds, *Biographies of English Catholics in the Eighteenth Century by the Rev. John Kirk*, London, 1909.

44. Bedfordshire Archives and Record Service, ABP-W1694-99.

45. A.M. Sharp, *The History of Ufton Court*, 1892, p. 112 (reprint).

46. J.M. Jenkins, "The Perkins Families of Ufton, Berkshire and Winkton, Hampshire," Hampshire Record Office: Genealogy/250.

47. E K Timings, ed, *Calendar of State Papers James II*. 1688. 1032, p.189, James II, Vol 3: April 1688, London, 1972, pp.180-194. http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/jas2/1687-9/pp.180-194 [accessed 28/7/20].

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49. Hampshire Record Office 31M5/169, entry for 22 November 1696.

50. Massue, op.cit., p.247.

51. Cedoz, op.cit., p.157.

52. *Collectanea and Topographica*, Vol VIII, 1843, p.30.

53. A.M. Sharp, *The History of Ufton Court*, 1892, p.225 (reprint).

54. Bank of England, Inflation Calculator, https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator

55. A.F. Allison, unpublished *Diurnall of the English Regulars of St Augustine's order established in Paris upon the Fosse of Sant Victor*, Westminster Archive, entries for 5 April, 1698, 9 October, 1700, and 25 October, 1700.

56. M. Thoefner, "Absence made present: portraying nuns in the Early Modern Low Countries," in S. Moran & A. Pipkin, eds, *Women and Gender in the Early Modern Low Countries 1500-1700*, Leiden, 2019, pp.128- 166, especially p.141, note 19. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004391352_006

57. The National Archives, C/389/30.

58. Jenkins, "A Note," op.cit.

59. Bedfordshire Archives and Record Service, HSA 1681/S/11, HSA 1677/S/47.

60. Hampshire Record Office 31M57/165.

61. Hampshire Record Office 31M57/170.

62. Ibid.

A Tangled Web: the Prosecution of Cardinal Pell

George cardinal pell has been a flashpoint for deep divisions in both Australian society and the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, he is not readily pigeon-holed. On the one hand, there is his uncompromising orthodoxy in matters of faith and morals. On the other, there is his sharp criticism of the Australian government's treatment of asylum seekers at the beginning of this century, as well as his reforms of the Vatican's opaque finances, all of which were undone in the wake of his departure from Rome to face trial in the Australian state of Victoria for historic allegations of child sexual abuse.

The guilty verdict for sexually assaulting two boy choristers, and the subsequent appeals against it, dominated the news in Australia, reaching a final climax as the Covid crisis struck in the West. Overshadowed by the ongoing pandemic, it has not been forgotten, and other factors have emerged subsequently which have cast further doubt on what was already a most dubious affair.

First is the role of Victoria Police (VicPol) in the prosecution of Pell, not least in the conduct of the task force which investigated him, especially when seen in the light of other scandals besetting this least inspiring of Australia's several state police forces. Secondly, there is the emergence into the public eye of developments in Rome over the last few months, such as the enforced resignation from the dignity of cardinal by Angelo Becciú, and the discovery that Vatican funds had been transferred into Australia, for purposes that are unknown to the Australian bishops and remain clouded in mystery.

Beneath all this, and enabling the whole sorry saga of his prosecution, was the poisoning of the public perception of Pell by some of the mainstream media, not least the taxpayer-funded Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), and through supposedly authoritative books such as Louise Milligan's book, *Cardinal*. It is not irrelevant that Milligan works for the ABC. It is probable that through such media, which capitalised on Pell's countercultural moral convictions and the child sexual abuse crisis afflicting the Church, an atmosphere was

created in which Pell would always have struggled to get a fair trial or, after his conviction, a fair appeal. Indeed, in light of the judgment of the High Court of Australia on 7 April, this probability approaches certainty.

The fundamental issue at stake is not Pell as a bishop or a person, nor the record of the Catholic Church in the matter of child sexual abuse. As Pell himself said after his acquittal, his trial was not (or should not have been) a referendum on the performance either of him or of the Catholic Church; the trial was about whether he committed the crimes of which he had been accused. It is a barely conceivable, and highly preventable, tragedy that the case against Pell ever came to trial, a tragedy certainly for him and probably for the complainant, *J*, of whom we know so little. You can read the full details of the case against Pell elsewhere. It is certain aspects of Pell's prosecution that will be discussed here.

In March of 2013 VicPol launched Operation *Tethering*, informally known within the force as *Get Pell*, in order to gather evidence against Pell with a view to prosecution. Not one complaint had been received. Two and a half fruitless years later, in December 2015, VicPol advertised in the media for complainants to come forward regarding any sexual abuse in Melbourne's cathedral between 1996 and 2001, the exact term of Pell's service as archbishop of Melbourne. It seems that, unable to find complainants, VicPol was forced to advertise for them. It is easy for the significance of this to be clouded by the general, and more than justifiable, revulsion we feel at the whole subject of child sexual abuse. A police investigation was launched against a leading figure in society without any complaint having been received, and when it could find nothing on which to base a prosecution, the investigators publicly invited people to make a complaint.

Unlike the "Nick"/Carl Beech affair in the UK, in which police responded (with pathetic credulity as it turned out) to explicit allegations of sexual crimes, and even murder, against prominent people with a disastrously inept investigation, VicPol began, of its own

initiative, to investigate not an alleged crime, but a person, without any allegation to justify such an investigation. It is no surprise that some commentators have likened this to the activity of a police state.

Having finally found one complainant, *J*, a chorister who alleged he and a fellow chorister were abused by Pell immediately after one of his first solemn Sunday Masses as archbishop in Melbourne's cathedral in 1996—in a busy sacristy, while Pell was fully vested, after the two boys had allegedly slipped away, robed but unseen, from the choir as it processed from the cathedral, all in a window of opportunity that the prosecution conceded could last in total no more than six minutes. By the time of Pell's trial in 2018, *J*'s alleged fellow victim was dead, but not before affirming that he had *not* been abused by Pell. For most police forces in the free world these factors would have been enough to apply the brakes to any prosecution, and reassess its investigation. Yet VicPol had not yet interviewed any other other chorister, or altar boy, or sacristan, or concelebrant present at the Mass in question.

Thus, it is no surprise that on two occasions the Victorian Office of Public Prosecutions (OPP), the equivalent of the Crown Prosecution Service in England, returned the VicPol's brief, having decided not to proceed with the prosecution because the evidence provided would not support a conviction, based as it was on the uncorroborated word of one person. Nevertheless, VicPol pursued the prosecution itself, at its own expense, before the County (ie Crown) Court in Victoria. In the Australia's various state jurisdictions, the police act as prosecutors only in the magistrates' courts; the director of public prosecutions prosecutes in the higher courts. In Victoria, however, the *Jury Directions Act* of 2015 enabled VicPol to disregard the OPP's advice that there was no reasonable prospect of convicting Pell.

It should be remembered, also, that there were two separate prosecutions against Pell resulting from *Tethering*, one centring on his time as archbishop of Melbourne and another relating to his time as a young priest in the diocese of Ballarat, also in Victoria. This latter prosecution collapsed as the lack of evidence gave way beneath it. The former went to trial, and resulted in a hung jury which—we now know—was 10-2 for Pell's acquittal. Since a majority decision was not acceptable, the judge decreed a mistrial. In the retrial, after several days of deliberation, the jury returned a unanimous decision to convict Pell. There had been no new evidence submitted in this retrial.

Above, I wrote "we now know" because these trials were conducted under a suppression order. There was no daily reporting of the trial's

proceedings as would have been usual in such a high-profile case, no information presented for public scrutiny about the evidence presented and the arguments offered against it. The first public news was the guilty verdict of the second trial.

An appeal was inevitable given the incredulity of the legal profession, and the apparent surprise of the trial judge, at the jury's verdict. This incredulity was magnified when the Court of Appeal of the Victorian Supreme Court rejected Pell's appeal, in a 2-1 majority decision (majorities acceptable here) that focused not on the only evidence against Pell, the word of one accuser, but on the accuser *J* himself. Setting to one side his evidence, two judges found *J* to be "credible." Mr Justice Weinberg, the only judge of the three appeal judges with a background in criminal law, wrote a comprehensive dissenting opinion that took up two-thirds of the published judgment.

Probably the sheer force and logic of Weinberg's dissenting opinion was a significant factor in the decision of the nation's highest court to hear Pell's further appeal. On 7 April 2020, employing the formal and terse detachment that is a mark of this court, all seven judges of the full bench of High Court of Australia (HCA) unanimously decided for Pell, finding that the trial jury had failed to assess rationally the evidence put before it, and that the appeal court itself had erred in not recognising this, despite its own reasoning leading inevitably to such a conclusion. It struck down Pell's conviction and ordered that a judgment of acquittal be entered for all the charges against him. Pell was to be released immediately; two hours later he was.

The HCA's decision was monumental for more than one reason. Unanimous decisions of its full bench are extremely rare, both because the full bench does not always hear cases, and because the questions of law put before it are usually abstruse and readily admit of more than one interpretation. They are very often arguments about technicalities. The HCA's judgment on Pell's appeal was not based on technicalities. Its judgment merits reading—it is freely available online—but some points are worthy of note. It agreed that *J* was credible, in that he was speaking what he believed was the truth. The HCA, however, found that 23 other witnesses, many of them prosecution witnesses, whose

evidence did not support the complainant's, were at least as credible. What is more, the prosecution never disputed the evidence of these 23 witnesses. Unchallenged, such evidence stands, and it cast more than merely reasonable doubt on Pell's guilt. The HCA found that the Victorian Court of Appeal should have concluded this themselves, since those judges had explicitly noted that the other witnesses' evidence was undisputed.

Fr Frank Brennan SJ, an Australian Jesuit, a professor of law, and a prominent social justice advocate who has publicly disagreed with Pell in the past, offered a damning critique of the case against Pell in a television interview with SkyNews, asserting that the HCA effectively found that the state appeal court's decision had been "appalling." It is disturbing that the two majority judges who rejected Pell's first appeal are the two most senior judges in Victoria: the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the President of the Court of Appeal. That their more senior federal colleagues found their judgment so fundamentally flawed begs the question of why they remain in post.

Does this necessarily imply that the complainant must have lied? Not at all. *J* seems to have believed entirely in his evidence, and was believable in his presentation of it. However, some troubling issues emerged about *J*. The jury was not allowed to be told that *J* had a history of significant mental illness. Even worse, and ominously, *J*'s story changed multiple times. It is almost inevitable in historic cases that memories can be hazy and imperfect, especially if trauma is involved. However, the changes in *J*'s story raise questions not about *J* himself, but about VicPol's use of him. *J*, for example, described with great accuracy the priests' sacristy and the alcove in which he allegedly found the wine he and his companion claimed to be drinking when allegedly discovered and abused by Pell, who normally used a separate sacristy, and who was still in his pontifical vestments, in an otherwise mysteriously empty cathedral sacristy. The problem is that *J* described the sacristy as it is now, not as it was in 1996. In 1996 the alcove was a vestment wardrobe. This strongly suggests that *J* was coached by VicPol.

If so, such manipulation of a vulnerable person must itself constitute abuse.

Despite the howls of outrage from the mob at the decision to acquit Pell—including the vandalism of the cathedral in Melbourne with satanic graffiti—some elements of the mainstream media in Australia have begun calling for an enquiry into the Pell prosecution, especially the role of VicPol and its extraordinary Operation *Tethering*, the role of media such as the ABC in undermining the principle of innocence until guilt is proved, and the failure of the Victorian Court of Appeal to uphold reasonable doubt as the standard of criminal judgment. These three factors, at heart, constitute a failure in the rule of law. In the interview cited earlier Professor Brennan SJ observed that the rule of law must extend from the highest in the land to the lowest, from the cardinal to the aboriginal in remote outback Australia, and posed the question: if the cardinal was denied the rule of law, what hope has the aboriginal?

Yet there is likely more than a mere failure in the rule of law in the Pell debacle. It is striking that the Victoria Police, not the prosecutor's office, pursued a prosecution against Pell themselves, an extraordinary act arising from the extraordinary VicPol Operation *Tethering* against Pell, established before any complaint had been identified, let alone received. At the very same time, we now know, VicPol was striving mightily to limit the damage arising from the public revelations that in many of its recent successful prosecutions of major crime figures, the defendants' barrister, Nicola Gobbo, was acting at the same time as a police informant. What better way to distract both media and public could there be than the high-profile prosecution for child sexual abuse of a prominent and unpopular citizen?

Unfortunately for VicPol, in December 2018, as Pell's trial came to its first climax, a Royal Commission into the Gobbo affair was established. The Victorian Labor government's hand was forced after the HCA upheld the decision of the Victorian director of public prosecutions to reveal the role of their defence barrister to a number of convicted persons represented by Ms Gobbo. The damning final report of the Royal Commission was released on 30 November 2020. As a direct result, two weeks later one of these convicted persons, the infamous drug trafficker Tony Mokbel, had his conviction for drug importation quashed by the Victorian Court of Appeal. He can expect a sizeable compensation pay-out from Victorian taxpayers, especially as he

suffered a serious assault in prison in 2019. To date, the convictions of two others have also been overturned.

The Liberal opposition in the Victorian state parliament has called for a second Royal Commission into VicPol, this time to investigate its prosecution of Pell and the conduct of Operation *Tethering*. This call will only have been bolstered by recent developments in the Vatican. On 24 September 2020 Pope Francis demanded, and received, the resignation from his high curial office of Angelo Cardinal Becciú, as well as Becciú's renunciation of the privileges and dignity of cardinal. Becciú had been the prime mover in obstructing or reversing Cardinal Pell's reforms to Vatican finances in recent years.

The immediate cause of Becciú's demise in late September were the increasingly public allegations of embezzlement and nepotism directed at him in his previous senior role at the Vatican's Secretariat of State, in which role he actively and quite openly obstructed Pell's financial reforms. The scandal centred on disguised loans totalling over US$200 million for the purchase of a luxury property in London's Chelsea, for which an Italian financier had already been arrested by the Vatican Gendarmerie in June. Earlier, in October 2019, five officials at the Vatican Secretariat of State, including two monsignori, were suspended as the investigation into Chelsea property transaction gathered momentum. The home of one of these officials, Monsignor Alberto Perlasca, was raided by the Vatican Gendarmerie.

If this were not enough of a headache for Becciú, in October 2020 his dealings in Australia came under scrutiny. That month, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) announced they had begun to investigate allegations that Becciú had sent €700,000 to Victoria to "help" Pell's accuser, *J*. Moreover, the AFP has referred certain aspects of their investigation to Victoria's Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC). The same month, Cecilia Marogna, Becciú's "security consultant" for what is being described as his "parallel diplomacy," was arrested by the Italian Guardia di Finanza, who were executing an international arrest warrant issued by a Vatican magistrate.

At the time of editing this article in early 2021, the AFP revealed that only A$7 million of a total of A$9.5 million transferred to Australia from the Vatican between 2014 and 2020 could be adequately accounted for. The remaining A$2.5 million were included in the AFP's ongoing investigations, with money laundering and fraud suspected, as well as the possible use of these funds in an attempt to pervert the course of justice in the trials of Cardinal Pell.

In short, there was an unprecedented VicPol operation targeting Cardinal Pell, established without any hint of an allegation and which took years to produce one, and then only after publicly advertising for complainants. The investigation of the resulting two allegations has been shown to be deficient, and the evidence it produced so flimsy that one prosecution was aborted. The other prosecution, pursued by VicPol independently of the public prosecutor and against its advice, led to a secret trial held in an atmosphere poisoned against Pell by the media, relying on evidence so defective that it almost beggars belief, and resulted in a mistrial after a hung jury found 10-2 in favour of Pell. The re-trial, also conducted under a reporting suppression order, which considered no new evidence but was beset by procedural shortcuts, led to a unanimous jury verdict against Pell. This verdict was met with incredulity by the legal profession. Pell's appeal to the state's supreme court was rejected 2 to 1 by the judges of appeal, with the dissenting judge offering a devastating critique of the case against Pell. Pell's further appeal to the nation's highest court was allowed in a rare unanimous verdict of the court's full bench. Fr Brennan SJ, a law professor and no partisan of Pell, said the HCA's judgment clearly implied that the verdict of Victoria's two most senior judges in rejecting Pell's appeal was "appalling."

Then there is a wider context: the revelations of misconduct by VicPol so serious as to warrant a Royal Commission, with the subsequent quashing of the convictions of a number of criminals in the wake of the Commission's findings; the possible interference in Pell's trial by the curial cardinal who had previously obstructed and reversed Pell's reforms of Vatican finances; the dismissal of that same cardinal by Pope Francis for financial misconduct; the ongoing investigations by

Vatican, Italian and Australian authorities into various suspect financial dealings by the Vatican Secretariat of State when the fallen cardinal was second-in-charge there; and the referral to the Victoria's anti-corruption authority, IBAC, of various matters arising from the ongoing investigation of these Vatican transactions by the AFP.

There appears to some observers something of poetic justice in the fact that the Vatican's Secretariat of State, the murky financial independence of which Becciù fought so hard to preserve by obstructing Cardinal Pell's reforms, had lost most of its financial power by the end of 2020. It had lost control of an investment portfolio worth up to €1 billion. It lost control, too, of Peter's Pence and the pope's private discretionary fund. Most ironic of all, the Secretariat of State's budget must now be approved and overseen by the Prefect of the Economy, Pell's role when he tried in vain to reform Vatican finances.

All in all, it is a most tangled web of what the evidence suggests to be widespread and serious professional misconduct, if not corruption, on an international scale. The investigations are ongoing, and the web has not yet been fully exposed to view. The affair will surely sap the confidence of Catholics in the administration of the Church, and the confidence of Victorians in the administration of justice in their state. The miscarriage of justice in the prosecution of Cardinal Pell will do no favours for survivors of child sexual abuse, whose legitimate cases may be tainted as a result. Yet the unravelling of this tangled web now underway should strengthen the faith of both Catholics and Victorians that, in the words of the Christmas carol *I Heard the Bells*, "the wrong shall fail, the right prevail."

HUGH SOMERVILLE KNAPMAN OSB

☞ *For those who wish to substantiate the deficiencies attending Pell's trial and appeal in the Victorian courts identified above, are encouraged to read the various analyses made by British academic, Dr Chris Friel, all of which are freely available to read on his Academia page at https://independent.academia.edu/ChrisFriel. Dr Friel forensically refutes the evidence produced against Pell, as well as noting disturbing parallels with other proven miscarriages of justice. The first volume of Cardinal Pell's prison journal,* The Cardinal Makes His Appeal*, has been published by Ignatius Press.*

The Scarisbrick Family's Vocations in the 17th and 18th Centuries

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ARTICLE is to look at the vocations of members of the Scarisbrick family in the 17th and 18th centuries, and so highlight the contribution this family made to the preservation of the faith, not only in this part of Lancashire but beyond.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Scarisbrick, the most extensive village in West Lancashire, is situated in flat open country between Ormskirk and Southport, covering an area of almost 8,400 acres. It is a collection of several small hamlets, with a population of only 1,035 in 1798.[1] Until the advent of canals and the railway it was a remote area of mosses and mists, yet it has a long and strong Catholic tradition. The 1767 recusant lists show that Catholics made up over 20% of Scarisbrick's total population at that time.[2]

The Catholic tradition in Scarisbrick can be traced back continuously to the 12th century when Gilbert de Scarisbrick, then lord of the manor, and Walter, his son, made grants of land to the Norbertines at Cockersand Abbey,[3] founded in 1190.

When Burscough Priory was built for the Augustinian order in 1189 under the patronage of Robert Fitz-Henry, lord of Lathom, the Scarisbrick family endowed it with lands in the surrounding area. The connection between the family and the priory continued: Hector, son of William de Scarisbrick and nephew of Sir Henry de Scarisbrick (who had been knighted at Agincourt) was prior from 1488 to 1504,[4] and members of the family were buried in the family chantry there.

The first mention of a chapel in Scarisbrick, at Scarisbrick Hall, is in 1420 when Joan Scarisbrick obtained permission from the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry to hold "divine services in a low voice." The presence of the chapel is confirmed in the will of Thomas Scarisbrick in 1530 when among its contents are listed:

> …two vestments, two chasubles, two albs, a chalice, a corporal, a supra altar, altar cloths, two mass books and twelve images in closed boxes and two images not enclosed…[5]

With the dissolution of the monasteries and the Elizabethan church settlement, the period from the 16th through to the 18th centuries were bleak times for English Catholics, who faced decades of harassment and persecution. Throughout this time a Catholic presence was maintained in Scarisbrick despite the exceptional measures taken by the government to ensure Catholics conformed. About this time we find many examples of people showing outward signs of conformity while remaining loyal to the old religion. For example, in 1571,

> …Edwarde Scarisbrick, Justice of the Peace, seldom communycateth, his children trained up in popery and his daughters never come to church…

and in 1590:

> …Edwarde Scarisbrick of Scarisbrick Esq in Ormeskyrke parish of faire and ancient living, conformable he but not his wife…[6]

When the new Hall at Scarisbrick was built in the 16th century a chapel was included. According to Brother Foley this chapel was "about 30 feet long by 20 feet wide, with a room off it for the family, and wainscoted in dark wood. The people heard Mass on the landing and staircase as best they could."[7] In his diary of 1732 Robert Scarisbrick describes: "ye seats in ye chapel made from green citterminster stuff not carpet…"[8]

Throughout Lancashire, Catholicism held a tight hold on the gentry. In 1613, out of 129 gentry families, 65 were Catholic; in 1639, out of 82 Mass centres in the county, 75 were provided by the gentry. Nevertheless the Catholic gentry were heavily outnumbered by commoners. In 1641 the 616 recusant gentry made up only 7% of the Lancashire Catholic community which exceeded 8,000, the majority of whom were women (over 5000) and a significant number were husbandmen (over 2000).[9]

During the 17th and 18th centuries the priests resident at Scarisbrick Hall[10] were from the Jesuit order. At this time the Jesuits ran a clandestine school for sons of the Catholic families of Lancashire, to prepare them to go to the Jesuit school at St Omer in France. Many books used by the boys were left at the Hall and they contain their names and written comments. These books are now in archives at Douai Abbey.

SCARISBRICK FAMILY PRIESTS

From the early 17th century, because of the restrictions on Catholics, the boys of the Scarisbrick family were sent abroad to be educated at the Jesuit college at St Omer (now at Stonyhurst in Lancashire). Whilst some returned home others stayed and became Jesuits (SJ), most of whom were ordained priests (see Table 1).[11]

While most served on the English Mission and have left little trace of their work, we do have some details for three members of the family, due either to their role in the Jesuit order or because they served at Scarisbrick Hall.

Once an individual joined the Jesuits each took an alias, so that it became more difficult for the authorities to identify him when he returned to work on the mission in England. In the case of the Scarisbrick family, the alias was Neville.

	Parents	*Born*	*St Omer*	*SJ*	*Ordained*	*Died*
Edward	Edward & Frances (Bradshaigh)	1639	1653-59/60	1659	1672	1709
Henry		1640/1	1655-61	1661	1670	1701
Thomas		1642/3	1657-63	1663	1672	1673
Francis		1643	1659 (*or earlier*) -1663	1663		1713
Edward	James & Frances (Blundell)	1663/4	1678 (*or earlier*) -1682	1682	1690	1735
Joseph, *or* **Thomas Joseph**		1673	?-1692	1692	1701	1729
Edward	Robert & Anne (Messenger)	1698	1710-16	1716	1725	1778
Henry		1711	1725-29	1729		1744
Francis		1703	1714-22	1722	1735	1789

Table 1—Scarisbrick family priests from three successive generations

Edward Scarisbrick (1639-1709) was educated at the English College at St Omer and joined the Jesuits, assuming the alias Neville. After completing the studies for the priesthood at Liège he was ordained there. He had already taught humanities at St Omer from 1664 until 1670 and he returned there as prefect of studies in 1675. In 1679, he was named by Titus Oates as one of his intended victims. He returned to Lancashire in 1680 as a missionary, but in 1686 he was in London and in 1687 was living at the newly-opened Jesuit college in the Savoy and was

appointed a royal preacher. Two of his sermons—*A Sermon Preached before Her Majesty the Queen Dowager* (1686), on spiritual leprosy, and *Catholick Loyalty: upon the Subject of Government and Obedience* (1688)—were published in London with the sermons of other royal preachers, in *A Select Collection of Catholick Sermons* (1741). In 1688, at the outbreak of the "Glorious Revolution," he succeeded in escaping to France and soon after his arrival, if not before, he began writing *The life of the Lady Warner of Parham in Suffolk, in religion called Sister Clare of Jesus–written by a Catholick gentleman*. Printed on the press at the English College at St Omer, it was published in 1691. After a year at the English Jesuit house at Ghent he returned to Lancashire in 1693, and either then or later, became chaplain to the Culcheth family at Culcheth Hall, where he remained until his death.[12]

Henry Scarisbrick (1640-1701), Edward's brother, was the priest at Scarisbrick Hall from 1679 to 1688. Bulbeck reports that his pocket book for 1688 survived and contained a number of entries such as Mass intentions and day-to-day expenses.[13] Henry's brother James, who was lord of the manor, had died before Henry came to Scarisbrick Hall and as his nephew was a minor, Henry acted on his behalf. He left Scarisbrick in 1688, at the time of the "Glorious Revolution," but is not thought to have left the country.[14] Bulbeck comments that Henry sent considerable sums of money to Peter (or Cornelius) Beaugrand, who he states was the assistant procurator of the English Jesuit Province, though the record in volume 70 of the Catholic Records Society refers to him only as a lay brother. In August 1688 these sums amounted to £216. The money was received from various sources and sent on to specific individuals, some at convents on the continent. For example, 20 shillings was received from Mr John Urmeston for his sisters, Margaret and Mary, at the Benedictine convent in Bruges; and £2,10s from Mr Blundell for Mrs Blundell at Gravelines.[15] All these entries cross refer to nuns in the "Who were the Nuns? Project" database, and indicate that Henry was a channel for transferring funds to support religious houses, and part of a chain of people who enabled Catholics to travel to the continent in safety at a time when it was illegal to do so.

Francis Scarisbrick (1703-1789) was ordained in 1735 and in 1740 reached to the grade of "Professed Father." In 1759 he was appointed rector at St Omer, and was still rector when the college was seized in 1763. Oliver states: "He was a good Religious man, and a polite Gentleman; but a love of truth compels us to say he was ill qualified to be the Pilot that weathers the storm."[16] After moving to Bruges he left

the community there and became rector of the community at Liège in 1764, and lived to see the suppression of the Jesuit order. Oliver again reports a letter from Fr John Thorpe, after Francis' death in 1789, in which he writes, "Good Fr Scarisbrick has left a void in innocent and entertaining conversation."[17]

In the Scarisbrick papers at the Wigan Record Office there is an unsigned letter from Rome dated 18 August, 1773 which describes the events of 16 August when all the Jesuit churches and convents in the city were surrounded by soldiers and guards.[18] Francis had been at the English College in Rome from 1742 to 1750,[19] so this letter may have been sent to him, and then by him to his brother at Scarisbrick. The letter shows the involvement of the family in the Jesuit order and their knowledge of events occurring on the continent.

Miniature of Scarisbrick Hall by William Havell RA, painted in 1804

Other members of the family had less prominent roles but all worked locally. **Thomas** (1642-1673) was chaplain to Sir Thomas Clifton at Lytham. The two families came together in 1784, when Thomas Scarisbrick married Eleanor Clifton (née Eccleston) at Lytham. Thomas died at Scarisbrick Hall[20] and was buried in the family chancel at Ormskirk parish church. **Edward** (1698 -1778) served in several places on the English mission and returned to Scarisbrick as an invalid in 1771, dying there and buried at Ormskirk. Bulbeck notes that a parishioner

"says her grandfather used to speak of him in the warmest terms." Like Thomas, he was buried in Ormskirk parish church, with the burial register listing him as "priest." The family must have been respected locally by Anglicans for this to have been possible, the patronage of the earls of Derby being probably an important factor.

SCARISBRICK FAMILY NUNS

All the Scarisbrick nuns were professed at the Franciscan convent in Bruges. Their basic details are summarised below in Table 2.[21]

Over the 200 year period when the convents were in exile, 378 young women from Lancashire entered them, representing 11.7% of all English women's vocations to these houses. The most popular convent was the Poor Clares' at Gravelines with 80 professions, while the Franciscan convent in Brussels, where the Scarisbrick girls were professed, had 31 professions. The majority of these occurred after 1630, the 1720s being the decade with the highest number of Lancashire-born professed.[22]

	Parents	*Born*	*Probation*	*Profession*	*Religious Name*	*Died*
Elizabeth	Edward & Frances (Bradshaigh)	1652	1672	1673	Barbara Ignatius	1691
Elizabeth	Robert & Anne (Messenger)	1704		1723	Elizabeth Abraham	1733
Frances		1707	1726	1727	Frances Cecilia	1736
Mary		1714	1730	1731	Mary Stanislaus	1790
Ann	William & Elizabeth (Ogel)	1745	1763	1764	Ann Cecilia	1811

Table 2—Scarisbrick family nuns

WHY BRUGES?

In his book on English convents on the continent, James Kelly states that female candidates often chose a particular convent for one of three reasons: a family member was already there; the influence of the missionary clergy; or family patronage.[23] With these reasons in mind we can consider the Scarisbrick women's choice of the Franciscans in Bruges.

The Scarisbricks had close family members in convents abroad: the Messengers at the Benedictine convent in Ghent; and the Bradshaighs at the Poor Clare convent at Gravelines; and the Masseys, mainly at the Poor Clare convent in Rouen but with one family member, Anne Massey, with the Franciscans in Bruges. Anne, whose religious name was Constantia Francis, was a cousin of Elizabeth Scarisbrick (†1652), Anne's mother being Dorothy Bradshaigh, sister of Elizabeth's mother, Frances. Although Anne was professed 30 years before Elizabeth, her membership of this community could have been one reason for Elizabeth's choice.

Kelly states that, "frequently priests, covertly ministering in England, were involved in the transfer of postulants to mainland Europe." So who were the priests at Scarisbrick Hall at this time? The missionary clergy in Scarisbrick were almost exclusively Jesuits. In the period before Elizabeth entered the convent on probation the priests at Scarisbrick were Ferdinand Poulton SJ, alias Palmer, (1648-1666), and Peter Bradshaigh SJ (1666-1673). The latter was born in Lancashire in 1610[24] and was brother to Frances Bradshaigh, Elizabeth's mother, and so was Elizabeth's uncle. This seems to support the argument that the Franciscan convent may have been chosen because of the Bradshaigh family connection.

Regarding family patronage, no direct references to patronage of the Franciscan convent have been found, however its location in Bruges may have been an important factor. The Scarisbrick sons had been educated at St Omers from as early as 1653, when Elizabeth's brother entered the college. Between 1653 and 1729, 17 members of the family were educated there, with nine continuing into the Jesuit novitiate. Journeying to a convent or school abroad at this time was illegal, and required an established network for safe passage. Kelly comments this was often accessed through a missionary priest or a family member, so this too could have been a major factor in the choice of convent.

DOWRIES

No evidence has been found among the Scarisbrick papers for specific dowries associated with the girls joining the convent. Kelly states that in the 1670s dowries were often in excess of £400, although

there could be a significant reduction, for example for a girl who was a particularly good musician.

To date no specific legacies to the convents have been found in the wills of the girls' fathers. When Robert Scarisbrick died in 1737, only his daughter Mary was still alive, and he left her a gold cross and crucifix.[25] She was also left £50 by her sister, Anne Palmes.[26] When William Scarisbrick died in 1767, he left his daughter Ann an annual legacy of £10 until her death.[27] These sums would almost certainly have gone to the convent rather than the individual because of the strict vow of poverty the women took on entering the convent.

CONVENT LIFE

There is little record of the day to day life specifically experienced by the Scarisbrick nuns, although Kelly gives an overview of convent life as strictly one of enclosure, embracing vowed poverty and prayer.

Mary Stanislaus seems to be the only member of the family to have held a significant position of responsibility within the convent. She was, for several years, listed as "discreet," which means she was an appointed member of the convent's council. This body acted as an advisory team that supported the abbess, for example when deciding whether to accept someone for profession after their novitiate. The remaining nuns are listed as being "grate sisters" or "choir nuns". The most detailed information is given about Ann, the youngest of the Scarisbrick girls. Not only was she an organist and composer of vocal music, but she was part of the group of 38 nuns and lay sisters who left the convent at Princenhoff on 15 June 1794, fleeing the French revolutionary army. They arrived in England, via Rotterdam, on 23 July the same year.

CONCLUSION

The records of these individuals, though limited, show the commitment of the Scarisbrick family to the Catholic faith. Their willingness to support and sustain it in times of persecution is demonstrated by the family's willingness to operate a clandestine school at Scarisbrick Hall, and for several of its members to return to work on the English Mission. The fact that Henry Scarisbrick was instrumental in channelling funds to the convents abroad, and the vocations from the wider family (Messengers, Bradshaighs, Irelands, etc), further emphasise the role the family played in preserving the Catholic faith in this corner of Lancashire.

MARY ORMSBY

NOTES

1. 1798 Scarisbrick Census, Lancashire Record Office, DDSC/26/26.

2. Calculated from the number of Catholics in the 1767 recusant list (cf E.S. Worrall, *Return of Papists for 1767*) and the local population from 1798 census.

3. A. Ferrey & B. Brownbill, *History of the County of Lancaster,* Vol 3, Lancaster, 1983, pp.265-276.

4. A. Ferrey & B. Brownbill, *History of the County of Lancaster,* Vol 2, Lancaster, 1983, pp.148-152.

5. F.H. Cheetham, *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society,* Vol 24, 1906, pp.76-104.

6. W.A. Abram, *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society,* Vol 2, 1886, p.222.

7. F.O. Blundell, *Old Catholic Lancashire* (*1550-1850*), Vol 3, London, 1941, p.53.

8. Ibid.

9. J.A. Hilton, *Catholic Lancashire*, Bognor Regis, 1994, pp.19-20.

10. Ibid.

11. Cf G. Holt, *The English Jesuits, 1650-1829: A Biographical Dictionary,* Catholic Record Society, Records Series Vol 70, 1965, passim.

12. G. Holt, "Scarisbrick [*alias*] Neville, Edward," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19931 [accessed 14 January 2021]

13. W.A. Bulbeck, *Scarisbrick Hall and Family*, nd, Lancashire Record Office, DDSC/19/45.

14. Abram, op.cit, pp.211-254.

15. Bulbeck, op.cit.

16. G. Oliver, *Collections towards illustrating the biography of the Scotch, English, and Irish members, of the Society of Jesus*, London, 1845, p.187.

17. Ibid.

18. Scarisbrick Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence 1608-1872, Wigan Record Office, D/DWr/C4/10.

19. Holt, *The English Jesuits*, op.cit, p.221.

20. Bulbeck, op.cit.

21. cf "Who are the Nuns?" Project. https://wwtn.history.qmul.ac.uk/

22. Ibid.

23. J. Kelly, *English Convents in Catholic Europe, c.1600-1800*, Cambridge, 2020, pp.21-50.

24. H. Foley, *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus,* Vol 1, London, 1875, p.228.

25. Lancashire Record Office, DDSC/42/5.

26. The National Archives, Prob 11/1160.

27. Lancashire Record Office, DDSC/42/12.

Thomas Golwyne's List of Things

In July 2019 the writer was invited by a friend from his university days to accompany a group touring monasteries in North Yorkshire. This involved visits to various ruins, including Rievaulx, Whitby and Byland, as well as two introductory lectures on monastic buildings. In addition to the Benedictine and Cistercian sites, the group visited the Carthusian priory of Mount Grace, just next to the A19 and, by happy chance, in the former Ampleforth parish of Osmotherley.

The distinguishing feature of Carthusians was, and still is, that they live a mixed life, known as semi-eremitical. They came together for prayer in the church but nearly everything else happens in their cells, which were small individual houses in which they would eat, pray, and work, with gardens where they would grow their own vegetables and herbs. Mount Grace has a reconstructed cell which gives a very good idea of Carthusian living conditions. [*See over*] There was usually a communal refectory but this was only used occasionally, perhaps once a week. In some house there was a library, but often not, and we can assume that the monks kept at least some books in their cells.

THOMAS GOLWYNE'S JOURNEY 1519

The research for the lectures unearthed a fascinating document which gives some insight into Carthusian life at the beginning of the 16th century, some 20 years before the cataclysm of the dissolution of the monasteries.[1]

Dan (equivalent to the Benedictine usage of Dom) Thomas Golwyne was a monk of the London charterhouse who was sent to Mount Grace in January 1519. He compiled an inventory of everything that he was taking with him, "by the lycens of the honourable Fader Prior of the sayd howse of London Dan Wylliam Tynbegh." No reason is given for his move, although such a change did happen from time to time within the Carthusian order. Normally a monk would stay in the house of his profession, but Carthusians were in some ways a more centralised order and did not have the same sense of stability which is found in Benedictine houses. Golwyne dated the document: "All these thyngis under written the xxv. Day of Januarii the yere of owre lord, M.cccccxix." (Henceforth in this article modern spelling will be used for easier

The interior (above) and private garden and cloister (below) of a reconstructed Mount Grace monk's cell

comprehension). His only other appearance in the written record is when his death is recorded at the Carthusian General Chapter for 1521, when he is described as a monk of the London charterhouse, but living as a guest at Mount Grace. He had only lived in his new home for two years.

The list includes various items of clothing, including habits ("three as they come"); three pairs of new socks and three pairs of old; three old hair shirts and a loin cloth; a pair of blankets and two good pillows and two little pillows, and cushion to kneel on. This last item does not fit in with the conventional view of the severe nature of Carthusian life and one wonders if the "honourable Fader Prior" really knew what his spiritual son was taking with him. He made sure that he was not going to be cold in the early morning office in this bleak valley in Yorkshire: "a pair of new felt boots and three pairs of lined slippers for matins". Dan Thomas also refers to "a wide mantle, furred to put over all my gear of the gift of my Lady Conway" and "a new mantle by the gift of Sir John Rawson, Knight of the Roods." Clearly he had high-born patrons who did what they could to alleviate the hardship of his way of life. The Carthusians had traditionally attracted rich donors who seemed to think that the prayers of these holy men for their souls and those of their families were particularly efficacious. In many cases their churches (including Mount Grace), which would otherwise have been plain and simple, were extended and enriched in order to incorporate the tombs and monuments of their benefactors.

Golwyne's list goes on to list various kitchen utensils and refectory ware: "two pewter dishes, two saucers and a small bowl and a little square dish for butter." Again he acknowledges the generosity of friends: "a new brass chafing dish given to us and two new tin bottles given by a kinsman of ours…a brass pan of a gallon given to us likewise." The size of this last vessel gives rise to the question: were these items for the community, rather than for Thomas' own use? This suggestion is reinforced by the inclusion of two much larger objects: "a complete frame for to weave with courses and 19 pulleys of brass and 19 plummets of lead with two swords of iron to work with in the frame" and "a double still to make with aqua vitae that is to say an alembic with a serpentine closed both in one." It seems that the monks of La Grande Chartreuse who first made the green and yellow liqueurs to which they gave their name in the eighteenth century were not the first monks of their order to be distillers. Surely Thomas was not going to distil his favourite tipple in his own cell; this must have been something from which the whole community would benefit. On the other hand a loom is one of the few

objects which the English Heritage curators have placed in the reconstructed Cell 8 in Mount Grace as we see it today.

A loom in reconstructed cell 8

But most interesting are the books. Scholars have attempted to identify the books which Golwyne lists, but this is mainly conjecture. There seems to be a mixture of books which could have been for private devotion and study in the cell and others which would have been used in the church or consulted in the library. The following may have been books for the community, sent by Prior Tynbegh, who knew the community at Mount Grace needed them. This was a common practice among the different charterhouses and other lists of such books survive:

> Item a fair written diurnal made by the cost of Master Saxby [*who had also given Thomas a new fur gown*] having a clasp of silver and an image of St Jerome engraved therein, the second page of Advent begins: Jerusalem alleluia.
>
> Item a book written containing masses with the canon of the Mass and a calendar in the beginning of the book with a fair image of Jesus standing before
>
> Item a large fair book written with the lessons of Dirige and the psalms of burying and the litany and the Response therein noted

Perhaps the following books were for Thomas' own use:

> Item a little penance book written
>
> Item a written book of prayers of diverse saints with images and Dirige written therein
>
> Item a written book of paper with diverse stories of ars moriendi therein

ST BENEDICT AND HIS FOLLOWERS

Golwyne's inventory refers to the permission given him by his superior to take these various items with him. This brings to mind the still-extant monastic practice of the poverty bill, or *memoriale paupertatis*, in which a monk lists all the things that are in his possession, or rather those things which are provided for his use. In some of the older office books at Douai the phrase "ad usum," or its abbreviation "a u," can still be found before the name of a monk who now, we pray, rests in peace.

This tradition of course starts with the Rule in which St Benedict reserves some of his most severe strictures for the vice of private ownership. Thus, in chapter 33, on "Monks and Private Ownership:"

> Above all, this evil practice must be uprooted and removed from the monastery. We mean that without an order from the abbot, no one may presume to give, receive or retain anything as his own, nothing at all-—not a book, writing tablets or stylus—in short, not a single item, especially since monks may not have the free disposal of their bodies and wills.

Further, in chapter 55, on "The clothing and footwear of the brothers:"

> The beds are to be inspected regularly by the abbot, lest private possessions be found there. A monk discovered with anything not given him by the abbot must be subjected to very severe punishment. In order that this vice of private ownership may be completely uprooted, the abbot is to provide all things necessary: that is cowl,

> tunic, sandals, shoes, belt, knife, stylus, handkerchief and writing tablets. In this way every excuse of lacking some necessity will be taken away.

Much of Benedict's Rule is based on the *Rule of the Master*, written slightly earlier than Benedict's. Usually Benedict is less harsh than the Master, but in relation to this "evil practice" he is more extreme. The Master, in his chapter (16) on the bursar, has a more positive phrase, not used by Benedict: "everything found in the monastery belongs to everyone and to no one."

ST BEDE'S CASKET

Even though, historically, many monasteries have become extraordinarily wealthy, there has always been an emphasis on the poverty of the individual monk. The account of St Bede's last day (26 May 735) comes from a letter written by Cuthbert (later abbot of Wearmouth) to Cuthwin, another of Bede's pupils:

> One of us remained with him, who said: "There is still one chapter wanting of the book which thou hast been dictating, and it seems hard for thee to be questioned further." "Nay," said he, "it is easy, take thy pen, and mend it, and write quickly," and he did so. But at the ninth hour he said to me, "I have a few treasures in my casket, that is some pepper, napkins, and incense; but run quickly and call the priests of our monastery to me, that I may distribute to them such gifts as God has given me." And in great agitation I did so.

Not many monks then or since would have had such a meagre list of personal possessions.

THE 18TH CENTURY

Almost exactly one thousand years later the following poverty bills have survived from two English Benedictine monks of the eighteenth century.

John Bede Potts (1674-1743) was professed at Lambspring in 1691 and sent on the English mission in the Northern Province in 1701. He was stationed at York, Whenby and, finally, Everingham in the North Riding, where he died in 1743. Mr Stourton referred to below was Dom John Stourton, who was a near neighbour at Gilling Castle:

> 1733/4 1 March
> Persuant to your order by Mr Stourton concerning our memorials, mine is as follows: 3 coats, 1 waistcoat, a new night gown, 2 riding coats, 2 pairs of breeches, 4 pair of stockings, all old, 4 pairs of shoes, a Mare, a watch, a pair of silver shoe buckles, 2 silver spoons, a pen knife and some bad knives, forks, a candlestick, lanthorn, 3 wigs, 3 combs, a hat, 12 holand shirts, of which 6 old, 6 new, 8 coarse shirts, all old…Dom Bede continues to list various cash transactions and loans. He lists 15 books, mainly scriptural and theological, but including only one secular book: Corker's Arithmetick…Rituals, Oyle boxes and pix. A little crucifix, a silver cross with Inscription, a little clock, 6 muslin cravats, 15 cambrick stocks, a silver stock buckle
> All which with myself I resign to your Reverence's discression and disposal.

John Benet Simpson, alias Daniel (1713-1775) was professed at St Lawrence's, Dieulouard (now Ampleforth) and served on the English mission from 1743 until 1769, when he became vicar of the nuns at Cambrai (now Stanbrook) until his death. Dame Angela Ingleby, who provided his salary of 250 livres, was abbess of Cambrai from 1769-1789.

> 1772 2 June Dom Benet Simpson, alias Daniel's Bill of Poverty
>
> Clothes, Both Linnen and Woollen a very moderate sufficiency
> Furniture or Utensils: A large fire screen, 4 window screens, a writing and bed table, A hand brush and bellows, 2 old trunks, a tea pot and other trifling crockery ware. Also an English saddle & bridle and a pair of Boots and old plated spures
>
Cash: Had in Depot when I came hither May ye 17th 1770		15.8.0
Recd. since for masses		128.7.6
From Dame Angela by way of salary		250.0.0
Very Reverend President's Benefaction		96.0.0
From England		533·7
	Total recd.	1243.4.6
Disbursed		771.3.0
Lent to Mrs Greenwood on a pawn		264.0.0
To Mr Swinburne		48.0.0
Have now in Fund		135.3.6
	Total	1239.6.6

> [*NB the above figures are in livres, sols and deniers, not pounds shillings and pence*]
>
> In Mr Wright, A Banker's custody, 77 pounds 5 shillings
> All which I humly resign to ye disposal of Very Rev. Father President Dom Placid Naylor this 3rd day of June 1772
>
> Dom Be. Daniel qui supra

Two hundred years later, we find in the Douai archives a blank poverty bill pro-forma which Abbot Sylvester Mooney (1886–1988, abbot 1929-1969) sent to the mission fathers in 1936. This includes columns listing the receipts and expenditure of the parish and is followed by a section headed "Articles allowed for personal use." The first category is books, which is divided into ecclesiastical books and books "of General Literature." Then come clothes, and finally "Other Articles—specify those of the value of £1 and upward." The document also asks the monk to specify when and where his annual retreat was made and how many theological conferences he had attended.

Before signing the bill, the monk makes this declaration:

> These and all other articles that are allowed for my personal use, together with myself, I place humbly at the disposal of the Superior.

The inclusion of the phrase "together with myself" shows that poverty is seen primarily as a function of the vow of obedience, by which the monk has surrendered his own will. This is emphasised by Abbot Cuthbert Butler of Downside in his important work *Benedictine Monachism,* and closely follows St Benedict's insistence "monks may not have the free disposal of their bodies and wills." It is also seen in the last line of Bede Potts' poverty bill:

> All which with myself I resign to your Reverence's discression and disposal.

What of the poverty bill in our own days? Fr Abbot still issues at the beginning of Lent a blank form for each member of the community to complete. Clothes and books probably make up the majority of the items, but nowadays computers, printers, and mobile phones will also find their place. While the 16th century Carthusian and the 18th century Benedictine could fulfil their vocation and mission with books, pen and paper, the demands of modern life and evangelisation in a digital age require a different "list of things."

OLIVER HOLT OSB

NOTE

1. A transcript of the full text of Thomas Golwyne's inventory, with original spelling, can be found at https://archive.org/stream/reliquaryandill00unkng00g#page/n127/mode/2up.

The original document is at the National Archives: State Papers Domestic, SP 1/19. fol.16

Kungoni Centre of Culture and Arts

Culture is regarded as the many manifestations of the human intellectual achievement which encompasses religion, language, food, arts, music, dance, and more. The members of any particular human society are always fond of their own culture and it is considered as something to be treasured. It is with this view, and having fallen in love with the Malawian people and their rich culture, that Fr Claude Boucher Chisale [*right*], a member of the Society of the Missionaries of Africa, founded the Kungoni Centre of Culture and Arts.

Chisale is a local name given to Fr Claude when he was initiated into the local tradition and culture. It was necessary for him to be initiated in order to have deep knowledge of the Chewa culture, as anyone who is not initiated into the Chewa culture is considered a child and only general aspects of the culture are known by such a person. Due to his initiation into the culture, Claude was granted access to deep secrets of the Chewa traditional customs. Thus he was able to fully understand the meaning and secrets of the *Gule Wamkulu,* a traditional dance in the Chewa culture, thereby helping to bring understanding where there was uncertainty and suspicion, especially among Christians. And the dance which was previously considered to be bad, so that Catholics who participated in them were excluded from the sacraments, is now seen as something cultural. Now Christians who participate in the dance, mostly for entertainment and for the purpose of experiencing their cultural heritage, are no longer excluded from the life of the Church and its sacraments.

Kungoni Centre of Culture and Arts is located in Malawi. Malawi is also popularly known as "The Warm Heart of Africa" due to the cheerfulness and the welcoming spirit of Malawians. Kungoni is situated at Mua, in the Dedza district of central Malawi. It was founded in 1976 with the aim of celebrating Malawi's cultural and artistic heritage, and also to safeguard the culture. It started as a team of wood carvers from all over Malawi, carving artefacts that depict their various cultures for the purpose of cultural expression, and also for sale. Later came a request from the bishop of the diocese of Mua to build a school

to teach art and craft. This request was accepted by Fr Claude, and he started the school in collaboration with the already existing team of carvers. Thus Kungoni started as a school of art and craft, and has evolved into what it is today.

Kungoni has helped the Catholic Church in Malawi to integrate successfully certain aspects of the local culture into the Catholic liturgy, such as choirs singing in their native languages, and making use of drums and other local musical instruments, which was not the case before. It has also helped the people to understand the sacraments better, when explained through elements that already exist in their culture. A clear example of this are the sacraments of initiation, most especially the sacrament of Confirmation. Initiation is an important aspect of the Chewa culture which, when completed, signifies that one is no longer a child but an adult.

Today Kungoni houses cultural elements and artefacts from all over Malawi, but it deals primarily with the Chewa culture. Kungoni has a gallery and showroom where all the artworks which are being produced are displayed for sale. It has a museum housing pictures and cultural elements which depict the history of Malawi, the history of Christianity in Malawi and also the history of the Chewa, Yao and Ngoni peoples of Malawi. Kungoni also organises cultural displays, such as dramas and dances, for visitors and tourists. It has become, over the years, one of the most important places to visit for both Malawians and foreigners. Furthermore, Kungoni has crafted many sculptures and art works that now adorn many churches in and outside of Malawi, including the library at Douai Abbey.

It is important to emphasise that Kungoni is not a profit-making enterprise, with most of the revenue from artworks going to support the artists who use Kungoni to showcase their works. Apart from those mentioned above, other activities at Kungoni include leading tourists and visitors on guided tours in the museum. It also serves as a resource centre for cultural courses, especially for expatriates working in Malawi who seek to understand the culture of the people so that they can better relate to and work with them. It is important to say that the great work of Fr Claude Boucher in Malawi has been recognised both locally and internationally, and he has been awarded honorary doctorates in culture and social anthropology by ShareWORLD University and the University of Mzuzu in Malawi.

MICHAEL UKUNOLA

☞ *Michael Ukunola, a Nigerian Missionary of Africa student, has completed two years of pastoral work in a parish, and is enduring a Covid lockdown in Malawi.*

Handing Down the Memory: *ut cognoscat generatio altera* (Ps 77:6)

THANKS TO ABBOT EDMUND OF ST PAUL'S OUTSIDE-THE-WALLS, Rome, and Abbot Geoffrey Scott, Douai Abbey played a part in the foundation ten years ago of a school of liturgical spirituality and Gregorian chant at the Abbey of Santa Cecilia, Rome. The first major course, "Cantantibus Organis: A Liturgical Year 2010-2011," opened at the beginning of Advent 2010. The title is drawn from the first words at Vespers on the feast of St Cecilia.

WHAT SETS THE COURSES AT THE "CANTANTIBUS ORGANIS" SCHOOL APART

Our aim is to offer tuition in *ars celebrandi*: professional training in musical and liturgical skills within a liturgical, rather than an academic, setting. Cantors, choir directors and organists in monasteries, parishes and other places of public worship are particularly in mind. However, the courses are open to anyone showing serious interest. The context is the liturgical year, highlighted at its key moments. Thus, while Abbot Edmund was at St Paul's, we joined forces with the monks on Good Friday to sing the Lamentations from Tenebrae.

DEVELOPMENTS

The year-long course has been transformed into a flexible four-year curriculum. This enables us to welcome talented and motivated pupils who lack the necessary groundwork for advanced musical studies, and also to train organists. Those who are more proficient can be inserted into the programme at any stage. It is possible to combine certain subjects with studies at a pontifical university, as some seminarians and doctoral candidates are doing at present, or to follow a single course.

THE SYLLABUS

The approach is twofold, spiritual and practical. Over four years, participants are taught the theology, spirituality and history of liturgy; spirituality of the psalms; music in the liturgy and its history; also the Latin language.

In the field of music Gregorian chant is given "pride of place," in accord with the 1963 constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Participants study the interpretation of neums in the light of the latest research, which has transformed our understanding of the chant, and become familiar withe the repertoire for Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours. Frequent singing of polyphony, together with sessions in aural training, voice technique and choir direction, complete the choral training.

Proficiency on a musical instrument is expected. Piano lessons in the first year, for those who need to build up a keyboard technique, are succeeded by organ lessons. Those who wish can also learn to play the guitar, zither, flute or violin. The study of harmony, fundamental to accompaniment and composition, begins in the second year.

Each summer the students are examined in all subjects. Those who have attended the full four-year programme of studies are awarded a diploma. Others are granted a certificate of attendance. We have not sought validation by an institute of higher learning, to avoid administrative burdens and excessive costs. Instead we rely on engaging tutors of a high calibre, well-known in their field.

THE TUTORS

Sr Dolores Aguirre is an outstanding tutor and director of the chant. Pupil of Dom Cardine of Solesmes, she directed the liturgical programmes on Vatican Radio for twenty years, taught for five years at Sant'Anselmo, and was till recently Vice-President of the International Association for the Study of Gregorian Chant.

Among other members of staff, Sabrina Cortese, one of the prizewinners of the 2015 European Community competition for young singers, teaches vocal technique. The piano tutor is Daniele Ruffino, concert pianist and accompanist at rehearsals of the Sistine Chapel

Choir. Luca Incerti, choral and orchestral conductor, is responsible for music theory, aural training and the history of music.

We are fortunate to have the services of professors who have retired from teaching liturgy at Sant'Anselmo, notably Abbot Ildebrando Scicolone and Monsignor Crispino Valenziano. Fr Giovanni Odasso, an outstanding biblical professor and retreat-giver, opens up the spiritual depth of the psalms; no-one wants to take the break offered at the end of the first hour of his sessions. Latin is taught by Nico de Mico of the Accademia Vivarium Novum, where students speak Latin throughout the day and study the literary, historical and philosophical legacy that formed Western civilisation.

OUR STUDENTS

Though the majority of pupils are usually Italian, the courses are international in character and have attracted students from Argentina, Austria, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Congo-Brazzaville, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Fiji, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Latvia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tanzania, the United Kingdom, the United States, Venezuela, Vietnam and Zambia.

In 2015 a priest in Cerveteri, an historic Etruscan town north of Rome, asked us to introduce the singing of the chant in his parish. Once a month for a year his choir spent Saturday at Santa Cecilia. Under the guidance of the basilica organist, Luigi Pastoressa, they were able by Christmas to sing the Proper for the Day Mass, and to do the same at Easter. One of our tutors now goes regularly to Cerveteri. Each Christmastide "Cantantibus Organis" students sing a programme for the parish.

THE CHALLENGES

Many of the students come from non-Western cultures. Fortunately this poses less of a difficulty than might be expected. They will already know some basic Italian, and the pronunciation of Italian and ecclesiastical Latin is virtually the same. A musical ear transcends national boundaries. A Benedictine sister from Tanzania, enthralled by hearing Gregorian chant sung by the monks of Hanga Abbey, was determined to come, despite her ignorance of music and Italian. She is now teaching music in two seminaries in Tanzania.

The commitment and vitality of students who come from far-flung parts of the Church, such as Indonesia and the Philippines, more than compensates for a lack of cultural background. It is a privilege to hear firsthand tales of the persecuted Church in Cameroon and China, and the difficulties faced in coming to Rome. One of our Chinese students on arrival at Xi'an airport was placed for a day in a locked room, without light or food.

The greatest challenge is musical ignorance. Many young people are familiar only with the parody of music that streams out in public places. The best singers are often Korean; from an early age Korean children learn to sing with their families at home.

THE UNEXPECTED MOMENTS

In 2020 the final examinations of our fourth-year students were held online. After a break in teaching from March, owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, then in May the resumption of lessons online, we wondered how they would fare. They revealed they had become proficient organists, competent to serve in their community or a parish. For the oral Latin examination, they had chosen to study the Marian antiphons. Each in turn parsed the words, and with bright eyes explained the

literary and poetic structure of the text. The familiar chants had come alive.

The eagerness of little children to learn can take one by surprise. A seven-year-old, summoning all the courtesy she could muster, recently pleaded, "Please may I ask you something? Can you give me a longer piano lesson next time?"

FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Almost every July, thanks to the generosity of the Archdiocese of Paderborn and Frauenwörth Abbey in Bavaria, a group from the Scuola "Cantantibus Organis" has gone to Germany for a week. A course of *Gregorianik*, with the opportunity to sing Lauds, Mass and Vespers, attracts a number of participants and puts our students on their mettle.

Summer courses are held at Santa Cecilia in August and September. Sessions in the chant are taught by Fr Mariusz Białkowski, who serves on the board of the International Association for the Study of Gregorian Chant and is President of the Polish section. In 2020 a number of bookings from south-eastern Italy led to a new development: a course, directed by Sr Dolores, at Lecce Abbey in Puglia. At about the same time a Benedictine oblate who holds the chair of guitar studies at Rome's Conservatoire of Santa Cecilia asked for guidance in the

accompaniment of the chant on the guitar, played as a harp. She wants her pupils to know how to accompany simple chants, from the *Our Father* to the *Salve Regina* and *Regina Cœli*, in order to teach them to children.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

October 2020 saw the beginning of a new venture, the Pueri di Santa Cecilia. On Saturday mornings boys and girls between the ages of six and twelve attend a singing session here with Raimundo Pereira Martínez, a cantor in the Sistine Chapel Choir. Piano lessons are already given to a few children.

A request from Sweden for help in singing and accompanying the Ordinaries of the Mass, resulted in an invitation to hold a course in Gothenburg. Covid-19 prevented the visit, but it is hoped that 20 music directors will be able to travel from Sweden in March 2021 to attend a course at Santa Cecilia.

The activities of past pupils are always of interest. This winter one religious sister is introducing the singing of some Gregorian tones for the psalmody, a courageous step as the liturgical repertoire sung by her congregation was composed in-house.

THE ROLE OF THE SCUOLA "CANTANTIBUS ORGANIS" IN THE CHURCH

Successive popes from Pius X called for the establishment of institutes of sacred music. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council reiterated the appeal. Today, because of a loss of musical understanding and the development of a vast variety of liturgical styles, there is a pressing need for points of reference: centres of study that provide objective training, offering a yardstick against which to measure actual liturgical practice, and ensuring genuine transmission of the Church's spiritual and cultural patrimony.

Christian culture lifts nations, races and countries to a new level of being, of diversity within unity. Without the sustaining power of unity, diversity fragments into division, varying from political nationalism to religious sects. The liturgy has an essential role to play in fostering that unity. "Every liturgical celebration is a sacred action surpassing all others," *Sacrosanctum Concilium* reminded us. We are given privileged access to the sacred and enter into an inward reality beyond our normal

powers of perception, as we sense at the beginning of a new season in the liturgical year. The liturgy is at the heart of the Church; indeed it is the heart of the Church, sending life-giving blood to the body of Christ, and bringing health and salvation, the other meaning of the Latin word *salus*, to its members.

Entering the realm of the sacred through the liturgy, we become aware of a further dimension: an eschatological thrust onwards and upwards towards the heavenly Jerusalem, where angels and saints sing a new song under the direction of the Lamb.

Through our liturgical celebrations in this world, we are being prepared for those of the next, and in privileged moments we are given a foretaste, a glimpse or echo, of the heavenly liturgy.

MARGARET TRURAN OSB

☞ *Sister Margaret Truran OSB, for many years organist and choirmistress at Stanbrook Abbey, helped to establish the "Cantantibus Organis" School of Liturgical Spirituality and Gregorian Chant in Rome.*

Pilgrimage to South India 2020

MADURAI WAS OUR DESTINATION, and on Friday 28 February in this memorable pandemic year of 2020, just two weeks before lockdown at home, we landed there, 150 miles north of the tip of India where the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean come together. They say it is the oldest city in the Indian peninsula and one of the most ancient continuously-inhabited cities of the world, with a rich Tamil cultural heritage. In India it is known as "the city that never sleeps."

Since Greeks and Romans started visiting the Pandya Kingdom of south India around 300BC, trade connections with Europe flourished right up until 1000. Madurai was the magnificent capital of the Pandya kings, the "Athens of the East," sought out by travellers such as Pliny (77), Ptolemy (140), Marco Polo (1203) and Ibu Batuta (1333). It grew up around a huge temple begun about 500BC and is famous for its scholars during the renowned Sangam period (c. 100 BC-300AD) of Tamil culture.

A dozen of us from the Woolhampton parish around Douai had come on a kind of pilgrimage to visit *Reaching the Unreached of Village India* (RTU), the organisation we had been supporting through our parish outreach for the last three years. We had been invited to open a new "Douai Hostel" for their teenage boys which our parish had managed to fund. We began by visiting the enormous Meenakshi temple complex at the centre of Madurai, guided by a wise, devout Hindu friend of RTU, and then went on to the Gandhi Museum, before travelling to the RTU centre itself [*below*], some 40 miles to the west of the city.

RTU was founded in the 1970s, by Br James Kimpton of the De La Salle Brothers, to serve the poorest of the poor in Tamil Nadu. I had visited Br James and RTU in the 1980s on my first visit to India, and I was delighted, myself now its priest, that our parish had chosen to support RTU, having done so also in previous years. Some 40 years ago Br James, who died recently, began by providing a home for the many street orphans and for boys of the most destitute families. Today RTU continues to respond to the many-faceted needs of the very poorest people, providing not just stop-gap aid, but rather an integrated development programme for the rural poor, each of whom has a right to a decent life. It supports especially women and children, the old, the sick, the homeless, the unemployable, and those in need of a roof over their heads or drinking water to hand.

A people-centred rather than a project-centred organisation, RTU is at the service, in substantial and ongoing ways, of the poorest people who live from hand to mouth. It sees the support it receives, whether finance, equipment or even fixed assets, as in fact belonging to the poor themselves, and the staff as receiving salaries thanks to them. Thus RTU understands all enabling funding as coming from the very hand of Divine Providence, so requiring it to be administered carefully.

We visitors from Berkshire spent a marvellous week living at RTU, getting to know Fr Antony Paulsamy OFM, the present director who was himself once a boy in the care of RTU, visiting its schools, kindergartens and training projects, joining the daily Masses and interfaith prayers (most children are Hindu). Warmly welcomed in RTU "Children's Villages" and homes (each of ten children with a foster mother), we toured the main campus, visited the dispensary and clinic, the central kitchen, workshops and administration, and wandered through the local village of Genguvar Kallupatti, viewing there the teenage hostels.

Later there was a chance to see the external work of RTU, visiting water projects, women's village awareness groups and a girls' tailoring class, a mobile science lab and an Aids hospice, and being shown simple brick dwellings under construction for villagers, some sponsored by our parishioners. RTU has currently around 2,000 young people in education, 2,000 women in self-help groups, offers 30,000 medical consultations each year, and has to date constructed about 9,000 village homes and over 2,500 wells.

In September Fr Anthony described the disastrous situation in South India under COVID-19 lockdown, with schools and RTU campus closed and all children sent home, so that RTU was unable to care for even the

Above: the opening of the Douai Hostel

Below: Sriranganam Temple

poorest of them. The continuous lockdown restricted the movement of the poorest people for any sort of work. The livelihoods of a large number of families surviving on daily wages were shaken up in the rural villages where RTU is present. For a family, obtaining sufficient food for even one daily meal was extremely tough. So, with the generous help of donors, they continued to supply emergency dry rations to many vulnerable families. For example, in August they had distributed supplies to over 800 families in 16 rural villages in the local Dindigul and Theni Districts, mostly to abandoned elderly people, but also to Self-Help Group members, widows, those with HIV or otherwise chronically ill, those with disabilities, and daily-wage labourers. It should not be forgotten that, at the time of writing in November, India had in excess of eight million COVID cases and had suffered 128,000 deaths.

But, how to describe Tamil Nadu itself? It is a mix of dry desert land, lush palm forests, teeming towns and cities, villages and hamlets, and everywhere people, people, people, even in the remotest countryside. There are miles of cultivated and irrigated fields of rice, maize and pulses, and the cash crops of cotton, sugarcane, oilseeds, coffee, tea, rubber, coconut and chillies. Markets are overflowing with vegetables recognisable and not, with bananas and mangoes and many other fruits. Agriculture predominates, and 70% of the population depends for a livelihood on that and allied activities. Following our visit to RTU some of us were fortunate to be able to spend some time experiencing the extraordinarily vibrant life and culture of the Tamil state, the deep spirituality of its people, and to discover also the place of Christians in this predominantly Hindu society.

Tamil culture existed far back in the Bronze Age and became rich in literature and customs during the Sangam period (100BC-300AD). This culture is very much alive today. From the time of the emperor Ashoka, in the mid-third century BC, right through to the arrival of the British, Tamil Nadu was independent from the rulers of the rest of India such as the Moghuls. Today, Tamil culture informs not only villagers, struggling with basic living, but also the lives of the educated and more prosperous classes, city folk engaged in modern business and travelling the world. Tamil is a classical Dravidian language, its literature being of considerable antiquity and ranging from lyric poetry to works of ethical philosophy. Remarkably different from the literature of other Indian languages such as Hindi, Telegu or Kanneda (there are 14 major Indian languages), Tamil represents the oldest body of secular literature in south-east Asia. Since my first visit to India 40 years ago, I have been

fascinated by this Tamil culture, and I wish I had followed my original instinct to learn this beautiful, musical language. Tamil Nadu also has its own style of music, from which current Carnatic music evolved, and its own dance style, Baharatanatyam, which was first described around 2,000 years ago.

But the most visible aspect of this ancient culture is Tamil sacred architecture, and throughout Tamil Nadu there are today perhaps 33,000 ancient temples. Some are modest, simple village temples, others stunning architectural temple complexes on ancient sites and thronged with pilgrims day after day. Many of these are 800 to 2,000 years old, and the most magnificent of these are a match for the great Christian cathedrals of Europe. Some are even contemporaneous with our cathedrals, similarly constructed over centuries and inspired by a comparable faith and devotion, a comparable sense of reverence and worship of the divine.

So, Tamil Nadu is one of the few places in the world, perhaps the only place, where the ancient native culture has existed for 2,000 years or more and still remains authentic for its contemporary citizens. Let us explore some prominent examples of this magnificent temple tradition.

Where better to start than the Meenakshi Temple of Madurai, a towering landmark marking the centre of the ancient city. This temple is mentioned in Tamil Sangam literature around the time of Christ, and also in sixth-century texts. The large temple complex, covering 14 acres, is dedicated to the goddess Meenakshi, consort of Shiva. It was reconstructed around 1200 by the Pandya kings, an extraordinary royal dynasty spanning centuries. The contemporary temple is the result of renovation begun by late mediæval rulers who rebuilt the core and reopened the temple in the 16th century; it was again rebuilt in the 19th century. This temple is a major pilgrimage destination within the Shaivite tradition and attracts an estimated 15,000 to 40,000 visitors per day. During the annual ten-day Meenakshi festival the temple can draw over a million pilgrim visitors.

Travel some 85 miles north of Madurai, and you arrive at the Sriranganam Temple near Tiruchirappalli on the holy Kaveri river. It is dedicated to Vishnu, who is for Hindus another form of their supreme god. As one of the most illustrious Vaishnavite temples in south India, rich in legend and history, it grew to importance around 1100AD, when the holy ascetic Ramanuja came to Sriranganam, controversially advocating devotion to a personal god. Until then the *advaita* teaching

of Shankara in the eighth century on the non-duality of all things, the unity of creator and creation, held sway. This temple is mentioned in Tamil literature of the Sangam era, and archæological evidence for it is found on stone inscriptions dating it to between the 9th and 16th centuries. The temple covers an area of 155 acres, with 81 shrines, 21 towers, and 39 pavilions. Many water tanks are also integrated into the complex, making it the world's largest functioning Hindu temple.

Take the road east and after 40 miles you come to Thanjavur. Here the stunning Brihadishvara Temple, built in just a few years from 1003 to 1010AD, is dedicated to Shiva and is one of the largest south-Indian temples constructed in the Dravidian architectural style. The original monuments of this eleventh-century temple were built around a moat, with sculptured gateways, main temple, massive tower, inscriptions, frescoes and sculptures, in Shaivite and other traditional Hindu styles. In following centuries other monuments were added. Built of granite, the tower above the sanctum is one of the tallest in south India; at the time of its construction it was probably one of the tallest structures in the world. Today the temple falls within the site of UNESCO World Heritage Living Chola Temples.

From Thanjavur we traveled north 160 miles to Tiruvannamalai, half way on the road to Chennai. Here is the site of the magnificent Arunachaleswarar Temple, at the foot of the holy mountain Arunachala, where Hindu hermits dwell in caves to this day. Among them once was the saintly Sri Ramana Maharishi, who lived here all his life until his death in 1950, and whose followers came, and still come, regularly in their hundreds from all parts of the world. The Tiruvannamalai Temple is dedicated to the god Shiva, widely revered today and particularly revered in the *Tevaram*, a seventh-century Tamil Saiva canonical work of Tamil poet saints. The ninth-century Saiva saint and renowned poet Manikkavasagar composed his *Tiruvempaaval* here. The temple complex covers ten hectares, and is one of the largest in India, with four gateway towers (*gopura*). The eleven storeys of the 127-foot eastern tower make it one of the tallest temple towers in India. Within there are many shrines and halls, notably the thousand-pillared hall. The present structure was built during the ninth-century Chola dynasty, and later additions are attributed to the Vijayanagara rulers (c.1350-1550).

Now we returned to Madurai, 200 miles south again, and the focus of our pilgrimage journey. It must be said, our journey had been inspired by the moving account of a much more extensive pilgrimage tour of

Above: Temple at Thanjavur
Below: Temple at Tiruvannamalai

Tamil temples by Michael Wood in his *A South Indian Journey* (Penguin, 1995) which is well worth reading. As guests of Fr Stephen, a monk of Asirvanam Benedictine monastery at Bengaluru (Bangalore), who has a small monastic Tamil outpost at Sivagangai to the east of Madurai, we paid a visit one evening at the vesper hour—also the *puja* prayer time—to an exquisite village temple at nearby Nattarasankottai. This Shakti temple, well known for its architecture, is said to have been built in the mid-18th century, and the deity there is renowned for healing eyesight ailments and other illnesses. We were made warmly welcome at the *puja* by the brahmin priests, who blessed us (not without a cash offering!), and by a colourful busload of pilgrims who happened to turn up in time for the *puja*.

But we were on a Christian pilgrimage which had started at RTU, so what of Christianity in India? The Christian heartland of India remains the deep south, particularly in Kerala on the west coast, though Christians are not negligible in Tamil Nadu either. Christianity came early to India, attested by the strong tradition that St Thomas the Apostle himself arrived in about 52, and he is reputed to have preached and even died a martyr at Chennai on the east coast, precisely at St Thomas Mount near the present-day airport. Today Christians account for just 6% of the 77 million total population of Tamil Nadu. About 88% are Hindu, while Muslims are reckoned to number 5.5% of the state's population.

Between 200 and 400, various Christian groups arrived in Kerala from other parts of Asia, and gradually the East Syrian Christian tradition from Edessa started to flourish more persistently there. Tradition has it, according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, that even Alfred the Great of Wessex sent gifts in 883 to these Mar Thomas Christians in south India by the hand of Sigheric, bishop of Sherborne. It was only with the arrival of the Portuguese Vasco da Gama around 1500 that Latin Catholic Christianity was introduced in India, and became established through the missionary movement which accompanied colonial expansion. Such figures as St Francis Xavier (†1552), and in the following century John Britto (†1693) were in the vanguard. Attempts were made also, for instance by St Francis' Italian contemporary Roberto di Nobili (†1559), to give the Christian Gospel an Indian cultural expression, largely in vain. Today Christians in Tamil Nadu number some five million souls spread over many denominations. Most are Latin-rite (Roman) Catholic or Syro-Malabarese Catholics (autonomous, but in communion with Rome). Many others belong to Orthodox churches and Protestant denominations.

In the 19th and 20th centuries people began to realise that Christianity could indeed recognise and relate to, where possible, the ancient spiritual tradition of India. Furthermore, in order to make headway in India, Christianity would do well to try to see the essence of the Gospel of Christ clothed somewhat in the ancient Indian culture. Among many initiatives in the latter part of the 20th century was the Christian ashram movement, and the Shantivanam Ashram was founded near Tiruchirappalli, associated with Bede Griffiths, an English monk, and before him with two Frenchmen, Fr Jules Monchanin and the Benedictine Henri Le Saux, the latter known also, in Indian style, as Abhishiktananda, meaning "the bliss of the anointed one."

A few of our group were fortunately able to pay a short two-day visit to this remarkable Christian ashram. I had originally spent a year with Fr Bede there in the 1980s. Now we found the ashram off the main road, just by the village of Tannirpalli, set in a small forest glade of coconut trees on the banks of the enormous river Kaveri, which at this point is about a mile wide. But at this season it was no more than a dry sandy waste laced with trickling rivulets. Warmly welcomed by one of the monks, we surveyed the low and simple buildings scattered in this lush garden paradise, and were taken to our simple rooms. As dusk suddenly fell, we found our way to the chapel, strikingly designed in the form of a south Indian temple, colourful representations of Christ and the saints adorning the roof, just as the great Tamil temple *gorpuras* are adorned with the saints of Hindu myths.

The evening vespers was familiar, the usual English psalms and prayers, but embellished with Sanskrit chants and Tamil *bhajans*, and concluding with the *arati*, the fire blessing passed between us all, then raised in worship of the sacramental Presence on the altar dimly within. The evening meal was simple rice and modest curry, served in metal dishes and taken in silence by hand in the Indian way, we being seated on the floor or on low stools. We all retired early, the forest alive with sounds around us. Next morning it was prayers and Mass in very simple form, again marking the Indian spiritual context with Sanskrit chants and a rite of placing flowers around the offerings. Fr Dorathick, superior of this small community of Camaldolese monks, generously gave us time and shared with us his vision of Christian monastic life, finding illuminating parallels in the Indian scriptures and its monastic spiritual traditions. It was inspiring to see how Indian Christian monks do gain strength and confirmation from the venerable spiritual traditions of their own land.

Above: Temple at Nattarasankottai

Left: Hermitage at Shantivanam

Below: Chapel at Shantivanam

For us, this pilgrimage had brought three strands together. First, we saw the concrete work of Christian outreach to the poorest of the poor at RTU. Secondly, we had found a Christian presence in the Tamil state concerned to be truly Indian by seriously embodying the Indian spiritual tradition. Lastly, there was the authentic Tamil culture, both contemporary and centuries old, bringing these two together. The three converged for us in greater harmony than ever on this journey, as it became a pilgrimage in which we saw their inner cohesion. Here was a unique, ancient culture, unbelievably still experienced as viable in these modern times, flourishing still today in this lovely country. What a privilege to explore these riches and be inspired ourselves by them!

Our pilgrimages to RTU and our discovery of the Christian presence in today's Tamil culture were coming to an end. Fr Stephen joined us briefly at Shantivanam, and at his small Benedictine monastery gave us his own warm welcome. He then celebrated a last festal meal with us, and brought us to the airport for our return home. A last memorable moment en route to the airport was to stop in the midday heat at a wayside stall for a final refreshing coconut drink. The vendor perilously yet deftly opens up the coconut shell for you with a machete, presenting you with the cool, refreshing coconut milk, and then slashes open the empty shell to reveal the delicious white flesh within. Taste of Tamil Nadu par excellence, a taste by which, once home, to recall the mystery of India!

PETER BOWE OSB

☞ *For a video presentation of this article, with commentary, please request the internet access code from* peter@douaiabbey.org.uk.

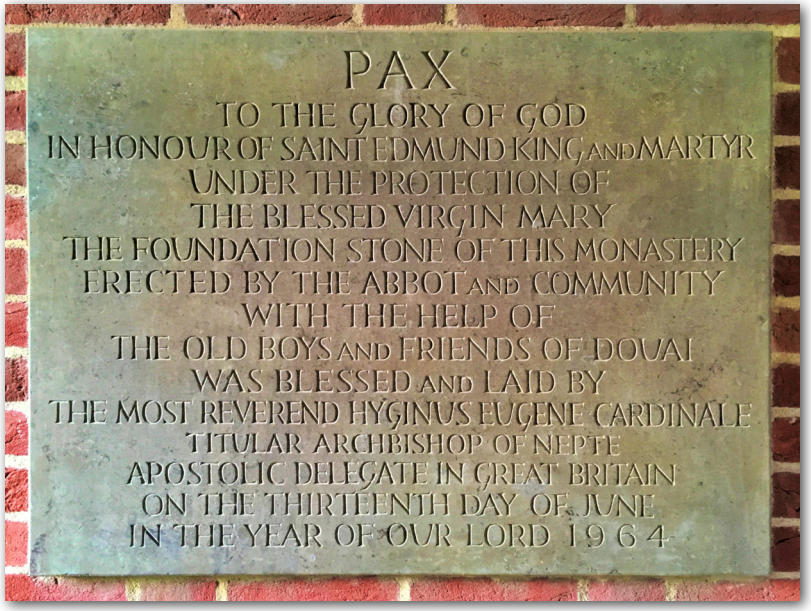
An Unrecognised Treasure

In early september 2020 an email arrived from John Neilson, a letter-cutter from Shropshire, asking about some lettering cut on a tablet at Douai by Ralph Beyer "some time before 1988." John said that he was writing a book on the artist. The only possible tablet that came to mind was the foundation stone of the new monastery, which was laid on 13 June 1964. John thought this was rather early, but when he was told that the architect was Sir Frederick Gibberd, he immediately remembered that Beyer had worked on various commissions with Gibberd. When asked whether Beyer was well known, John replied that his most famous works were the "Tablets of the Word" in Coventry Cathedral.

A photograph of the stone was sent to John Neilson for inclusion in his book. The stone is outside our calefactory (recreation room) which all the monks pass ten or more times a day, but which most people will have had no chance to see. Further investigation in the archives showed that Ralph Beyer was indeed the letter-cutter. A handwritten note from Fr Wilfrid, then secretary of the Monastery Appeal Committee, in the margin of the minutes for one of its meetings, asks: "Should we invite Ralph Beyer?" There is also a letter from Gibberd to Abbot Sylvester recommending Beyer, saying that he had just done some very good work at Coventry. Sadly the official programme for the laying of the foundation stone makes no mention of Ralph Beyer, although the text on the stone is printed in full. There is also no record of whether Beyer attended the ceremony.

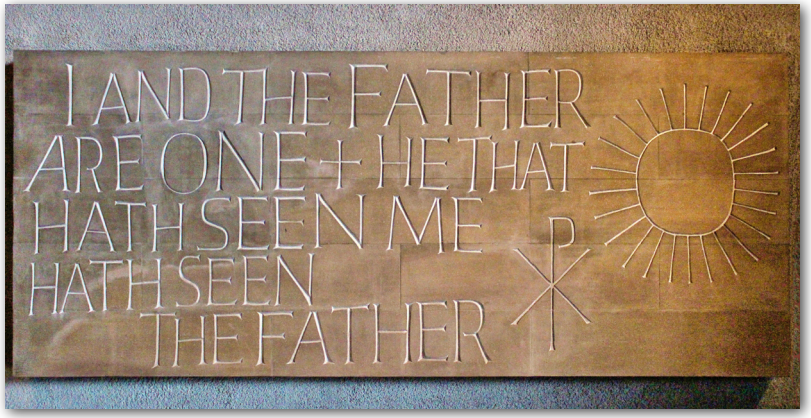
Thus it appears that Douai has a work by this outstanding craftsman whose work at Coventry and elsewhere has been widely acclaimed. The Douai foundation stone was executed just after this important commission, yet nobody in the community seemed to be aware of the value of this fine example of 20th-century letter cutting.

Ralph Beyer (1921-2008) was the son of Oskar Beyer, a scholar of early Christian writing and art in the catacombs. It is perhaps not surprising that, under his father's influence, Beyer invented a style of lettering which suggests the crude, graffiti-like inscriptions in the catacombs. At Coventry he used this "primitive" style together with scratched pictures of important symbols like the Good Shepherd and a radiant sun. Ralph came to England in 1937 as a refugee from Nazi Germany and for six months was apprenticed to Eric Gill. He also worked with another Catholic artist, David Jones and was taught by Henry Moore at the



Above: Beyer's lettering on the foundation stone of the new monastery at Douai Abbey

Below: One of Beyer's tablets in Coventry's Anglican cathedral.



Chelsea School of Art. In 1940 he was interned as an alien in the same camp as Nicholas Pevsner, the famous art and architecture historian, by whom he was greatly influenced.

In John Neilson's obituary of Beyer in *The Guardian* (7 March 2008) he quoted another letter-cutter, Peter Foster: "Whereas I was trying to get a perfect v-cut and tidy shape, Ralph was playing with light—he would chop into one side more than the other, deepening some places, widening others, cupping his hand over the letters to see how the light fell. He would be refining it right up to the moment the lorry arrived to take it away."

The monks of Douai might look again at their foundation stone whenever the light falls across this symbol of the renewal of our monastic life in the 1960s.

OLIVER HOLT OSB

☞ The Inscriptions of Ralph Beyer *by John Neilson will be published in January of 2021 by Lund Humphries.*

A Swarm in June

SIT AND WATCH THE ENTRANCE OF A HIVE and you can learn to read the bees; there is a lot happening even at the entrance. The short history of beekeeping at Douai Abbey is poorly documented, with opportunities for research hardly more than the smallest entrance to a hive, but behind the smallest point of entry one can begin to reconstruct a fascinating and intriguing history.

In my first year as beekeeper, I knew very little. I made mistakes that year, but one success was catching and hiving a wild swarm, with a little encouragement from YouTube. The swarm issued on a hot Friday afternoon, from an air brick at the top of Kelly's Folly, the 1923 building once intended as the chapter house under Abbot Edmund Kelly. The large swarm settled inconveniently in the guest garden just as weekend guests were arriving.

I hived the swarm and kept them for two years, but found them too defensive. I re-queened them. As the colony's temperament comes from the queen, they calmed down. Yet that was not the only change; the bees also changed in appearance. They had been black, very black, but re-queened from my lighter start-up Buckfast strain, the wild colony became lighter. I thought no more about it until a midsummer visit to Highgrove in 2018 where I saw Prince Charles' hives. I was told that he had Anglesey bees. I had never heard of Anglesey bees, so I did some research. Anglesey bees, I discovered, are a strain of the native British black bee *Apis Mellifera mellifera* (*Amm*) which was thought to have become extinct after World War I, but had evidently survived. I recalled my first swarm from Kelly's Folly. I started to wonder if Douai Abbey had native black bees on our doorstep. Unfortunately, a year or so earlier the roof of Kelly's Folly needed work, while bees were also coming into the bursar's and parish priest's offices, so the decision was made to destroy the nests and to seal up the air bricks. I lamented it at the time, because honeybees are not pests. Now I lament their passing because I think we have possibly lost a heritage bee, and a bee that might be regarded as part of Douai Abbey's history. To make my case, let us go right back to the arrival of honeybees at Douai Abbey.

With my own inept beginnings as a beekeeper, I was in good company with the first beekeepers in the community, though I had the advantage of better equipment from the start. When beekeeping as a monastic hobby commenced at Douai Abbey in June 1933, it was

embraced with all the comical incompetence and crude improvisation of an episode of *Dad's Army*. *The Douai Magazine* narrates how the bees arrived in a June heatwave, having been promised to Fr Michael Young in 1932, presumably by a mission father in one of our South Wales parishes. An old hive was requisitioned, minus its frames. On the arrival of the "swarm," the monks deferred the task of hiving the ill-tempered package until dusk, mistakenly thinking that bees will not sting at night. At 9pm, they finally approached the task, protective bathing suits on their heads and smouldering cigarettes with which to blow smoke at the bees. The operation proved rather hazardous, ending with the cautionary note: "Bees are wonderful little animals, but when roused...!"[1]

They were undaunted by this perilous start. In its first year the hive produced 30lbs of honey. By 1934 their stock had increased to seven hives, with the aim of producing one hundred colonies and a substantial honey crop. "As time goes on, it is hoped to establish this new industry on a firm foundation that the production of honey may eventually become a notable feature of the abbey."[2]

Meanwhile, at Buckfast Abbey in Devon, a highly competent and gifted Br Adam Kehrle had been in charge of the apiary since 1919 and was already some years into his controlled breeding programme to produce the Buckfast bee.

When fragile health compromised the work assigned him to help build the new abbey church, Br Adam was given work in 1915 assisting the beekeeper, Br Columban. At that time the bee most commonly kept in Britain was the native European dark bee, or British *Amm*, though Buckfast also had some Italian bees, *Apis Mellifera ligustica*, of the darker Ligurian type. Then, in 1915-16, something extraordinary happened while Br Adam was learning his new craft. In the spring of 1916 bees across Britain began leaving their colonies in huge numbers and congregating under the hives, flightless and dying. The phenomenon had begun as early as 1906 in the Isle of Wight and was named "Isle of Wight Disease," which was not a specific disease and has never been satisfactorily identified with any particular pathogen. Br Adam later claimed that Isle of Wight Disease was caused by the parasite *Acarapis woodii*, or tracheal mites, now called acarine, and that 1915 was the last year native bees were kept at Buckfast.

Br Adam and many others believed that this epidemic completely wiped out the native black bee, *Amm*. By 1919 when he took charge of the apiary, the Isle of Wight event had made him determined to breed a

honeybee resistant to disease and with all the desirable traits of the best honeybee. At the beginning of the film *The Monk and the Honeybee*, a BBC production by David Taylor (2005), Br Adam stated that there was no such thing as the perfect honeybee and that it had to be created. He made this his life's work.

The basis of his "super" bee was the Italian Ligurian bee, one of two Italian subspecies, crossed with the native black bees, the only bees to survive in Buckfast's apiary in 1916. Ligurian bees come from the Ligurian Alps in northern Italy and were deemed by Br Adam to have the best characteristics. This, and the fact that Ligurian bees were the only survivors of the Isle of Wight phenomenon, led to their use as a foundation bee in Br Adam's breeding programme. Meanwhile, after World War I, other beekeepers in Britain had to resort to imported queens to restock, which were most commonly Ligurians.

The account of the 1933 package of bees is interesting because it describes the extremely defensive temperament of that swarm. This is not a characteristic of the docile Italian bee, even with inept handling in the worst conditions. Moreover, Ligurian bees would have been unlikely to swarm. Our first bees were defensive and described as "a swarm."[3] Although it is speculation, I am intrigued by the thought that they might have been native bees, survivors of the Isle of Wight event. That is not as implausible as it might appear, because Br Adam's critics maintain that his assessment of the so-called Isle of Wight Disease and its consequences was incorrect.

Dr Leslie Bailey debunked the theory that it was a specific disease in his 1967 paper, "The Isle of Wight Disease: The Origins and Significance of the Myth," proposing that the phenomenon had been the result of many complex factors, not least sensationalised newspaper reports. Citing Rennie, who in 1923 asserted that the "disease" included several different illnesses, Bailey also pointed out that Rennie had identified the *Acarapis woodii* mite in 1919, but that evidence suggested the mite was not pathogenic. Moreover, there were many beekeepers in the 1920s writing in the *British Bee Journal* who also challenged views such as Br Adam's about the Isle of Wight Disease. Some of these beekeepers had colonies in managed hives that were unaffected by the alleged disease. As for Br Adam's assertion that no native black bees remained in Britain after 1915, he simply could not have known this. He could not have known about every managed colony in Britain, or about wild colonies living in remote places such as church roofs and barns.

Of course, this is hardly conclusive proof that our first bees were *Amm.* Br Adam maintained that after 1919 any black bees in Britain were imported French and Dutch European dark bees, closely related to the British black bee. Our bees could have been this imported stock simply looking like native bees. On the other hand, if Br Adam was wrong in his assertions about black bees after World War I, our bees might well have been native *Amm* stock.

Beekeeping at Douai Abbey prospered, spreading to the school by 1936 under the care of Fr Anthony Baron, helped by Fr Andrew Gibbons, the apiary sited where Abbey Gardens now exists. Interestingly, in 1936 the British government imposed sanctions on Italy, which diminished the importation of Italian queens before ending them altogether during the war. Douai's apiary therefore would have necessarily comprised local British stock (or European dark bees) from the very beginning, re-queened from our own colonies rather than with introduced queens such as the Italian *Apis Mellifera ligustica*. They probably continued being as feisty as the first colony and at some stage would have swarmed.

There was a setback in 1937 "owing to a strange mortality among the bees,"[4] reducing the apiary from 13 hives to 5. The apiary was taken over in the spring of that year by Br Philip Robinson, who increased the stock from 5 to 9 hives by 1939. Although the apiary is not mentioned more than in passing thereafter in the community notes in *The Douai Magazine*, there are occasional comments revealing the monks' appreciation of their bees and their honey. When World War II broke out, they were "glad to hear that special allowance will be made for beekeeping in the rationing of sugar."[5]

The war years seemed to have fostered an appreciation of rustic manual labour, which included beekeeping, that has not generally been a prominent feature of English Benedictine life: "When the War ends, we shall have to make use of our newly and hardly acquired skill and experience. Our farm work, together with our keeping of bees and hens, are beginning to make us feel quite rustic."[6]

The report from 1945 of Fr Anthony Baron, perched on a chimney as he tried to catch a stray swarm of bees, testifies to this rugged characteristic of the community at that time. Stocks of bees were still increasing too, by dividing the colonies descended from the original 1933 colony and by catching wild swarms. No doubt, the bees, which are polyandrous, were hybridising with local apiaries and probably wild colonies too. By the 1940s, with the ban from 1936 on imports of foreign

queens, the famous beekeeper L. E. Snelgrove observed that British bees were becoming darker. Snelgrove surmised that this was good evidence that managed colonies were hybridising with surviving populations of the native black bee *Amm*.

In 1948 when one of the monks began spraying the orchard trees, the apiary was moved to the south side of the abbey church, overlooked by Kelly's Folly, where I am informed that wild bees lived at least from the 1980s until 2017. Our maintenance man, Martin O'Hagan, tells me that he saw Kelly's Folly swarms issuing regularly from his arrival in 1998, and that when the roof was replaced in 2017 there was a colony behind virtually every air brick (at least ten colonies). It is unlikely that these swarms came from any of the Douai apiary sites, as they were all too close to the building. According to American Professor Thomas D. Seeley's research, honeybees seldom choose nest sites less than 300 metres from the parent colony.

Not much is recorded about the apiary until 1951 when Fr Anthony Baron's mead-making was described as "a little dry."[7] By the early 1950s, however, a giant of Douai's beekeeping tradition arrived when Fr Robert Biddulph ("Biddy") transferred his vows from Ramsgate Abbey. By 1956 there were two apiaries and two beekeepers, Fr Robert and Fr Daniel Ruane. The records state that "Both the Douai apiaries are at present flourishing."[8] At least one of them was on the same site as the present apiary.

While I assume that Fr Daniel kept the local stocks that had been maintained since 1933, Fr Robert had become rather high-tech, experimenting in 1956 with artificial insemination. There could only be one reason for this. Br Adam used this method to control his selective breeding programme at Buckfast. Fr Robert was clearly keeping a different kind of bee that required selective breeding. Interestingly, Fr Gervase tells me that Fr Robert once said that the Buckfast bee did not do well at Douai. Was he interested, I wonder, in breeding a Douai Abbey bee to rival the Buckfast?

I found some answers by accident in the back of a manual he had started typing in 1942, which was left buried in the apiary room. It also contained some meticulous handwritten records he had made in 1956, which I had always missed when flicking through the manual. They recorded data such as weather and hive weights, but at the top of some of them was written "Ligurian." I realised that in the 1950s Fr Robert had been keeping Ligurian bees, the northern Italian subspecies so esteemed by Br Adam.

This was fascinating, not least of all because by 1977 when he returned with his bees from parish work where he had been since 1962, he had apparently abandoned Ligurians. Perhaps the demands of parish work and the need for specialist equipment had frustrated his ambitions. Whatever the reasons, Fr Gervase informs me that Fr Robert was collecting swarms from Kelly's Folly throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Indeed, Fr Benjamin recalls a swarm caught in Fr Edmund Power's office in the top of the building in 1989, which Fr Robert caught. Why? He would not have done this if he had still been keeping Ligurians, while they are unlikely to have been Ligurian swarms, with their disinclination to swarm and the close proximity of the apiary. Conversations I have had with Fr Bernard, Abbot Geoffrey and Fr Gervase suggest that Fr Robert's bees at this time were "swarmy," so Fr Robert must have reverted to local stock. I am fascinated to know why he changed to what many might view as an inferior bee compared to the Ligurian. Perhaps the Lugurian did not do well either. Despite its superior qualities, it overwinters in large, loose clusters that make temperature regulation difficult, requiring large winter stores. In short, they are not the best-adapted bee for Britain's climate. Maybe Fr Robert recognised that the perfect bee for Douai Abbey was the one best-adapted to local conditions.

My research through Fr Robert's notes uncovered another paper that perplexed me. Fr Robert had written a page and a half, condensing "A few rules...from one who has kept bees for over fifty years!"[9] The very first rule he wrote was: "NEVER take swarms which are not from your OWN hives, if you want to keep free from disease."[10]

As I have explained, it is unlikely that the swarms from Kelly's Folly had come from the Douai apiary. It is more likely that they issued from the building. Why then would Fr Robert apparently break his own rules by collecting them? I can only assume that he concluded that these bees must have been disease resistant to have survived so many years in Kelly's Folly. This conclusion might well support my own theory that wild colonies had survived in the building long before the 1980s when Fr Robert returned to Douai.

I can only speculate why he changed this direction of his beekeeping, but an experienced beekeeper like Fr Robert must have seen some merit in the local swarms he was collecting, and I would suggest that this merit lay in their hardiness and perhaps also their disease resistance. Recalling that first swarm I collected, they formed a small winter cluster, which survived on smaller stores, so were less likely to starve in the winter. This fits the profile of *Amm*. They built up well in the spring, but did not produce huge brood nests, unlike Buckfasts or Ligurians. Again, these are traits of *Amm*. Super-fecundity is a problem today because the pandemic *Varroah* destructor mite, that first appeared in the 1980s, lays its eggs on the brood, so more brood means more varroah. Wild bees with native traits have smaller brood nests and breaks in brood rearing, and without beekeeper interventions are perhaps better able through natural selection to develop some immunity to varroah, as suggested by studies made in the U.S.A. by Professor Thomas D. Seeley. Such natural selection, he observes, can happen within five years. It is pure speculation, but I cannot help wondering if Fr Robert [*below*] realised that the bees he caught at Douai were related to native *Amm* bees and that they might have a better resistance to disease, having survived in Kelly's Folly so many years. This is supported by a note in his manual, about why swarming should be prevented: "Wild colonies harbour varroah and disease."[11]

Fr Robert died in 1995 and varroah did not appear in Britain until 1992, so varroah was not yet a problem for his beekeeping, but it seems clear to me that he had realised that the bees in Kelly's Folly could only have survived so long without beekeeper interventions had they been healthy and resistant to other diseases. Otherwise, why would he have collected them? A swarm only settles for a while before moving off, so these swarms could have been left alone.

What did he do with them? I suggest he probably united them with his own colonies, to boost their populations of workers, increasing the honey production. It is a recognised use of swarms, and would have helped, given that local stock has smaller populations than the Buckfast or Italian.

After Fr Robert, the bees were managed for a few years by others such as Fr Peter Bowe and Br Christopher Greener, until about 2000, but largely due to the pandemic *Varroah* destructor mite, the apiary was closed down. After this the only bees that continued at Douai Abbey were the wild bees in Kelly's Folly. Given the growing problem of varroah in those years, it is remarkable that these wild bees survived without any management or intervention. This is largely what makes them so interesting.

Over the years the Buckfast colonies with which I started have interbred with local drones (males), and our bees are now considered hybrid local stock. I have also become as dismissive of the Buckfast bee at Douai Abbey as Fr Robert was, but for different reasons. It would take a book to elaborate why I consider the Buckfast strain no longer the perfect bee for a world that has changed for honeybees and for us. I disagree with what some view as the legacy of beekeeping orthodoxy left by Br Adam. I disagree with his fundamental principle that "the perfect honeybee does not exist."[12] It does; Mother Nature has taken 30 million years to perfect the Western honeybee, adapting its various subspecies such as *Amm* in subtle ways to its local environment. I also take issue with his underlying principle that the honeybee can be domesticated. Domestication relies on the ability to control the breeding of a species and to alter its genetics, but polyandry in honeybees frustrates this necessary goal. Artificial insemination in the laboratory is not only abhorrent to me, but practically does not allow the natural selection of the best and strongest drones for mating. In chickens or sheep, the breeder can make a judgement based on certain characteristics in the maternal and paternal lines, and build a fence around the selected breeders, but this is impossible to replicate with

drones. In my view the honeybee will always be wild, while the Buckfast is at best semi-domesticated. When we lose a swarm, it does not become feral, as feral animals are by definition domesticated escapees. I maintain that both escaped swarms and managed colonies are both fundamentally wild.

There are countless questions that remain unanswered in my quest to fill the gaps in the fascinating history of Douai's apiary and its bees. Were those first bees in 1933 native black bees? Did their swarms escape as early as the 1930s and find some nests in Kelly's Folly? Or were the bees in Kelly's Folly native black bees, but how and when did they get there? Were they pure *Amm* or did they have a high percentage of *Amm* genes? If so, where did the *Amm* genes originate?

I have a theory (which would take a whole book to explore adequately) that our first bees, or local wild bees, were indeed native black bees that flooded the local area with *Amm* drones. These and all drones from local hives or wild colonies meet in areas called drone congregation areas, and these have been found to be stable locations for decades, perhaps a mile or two from apiary sites. Either our bees or local *Amm* bees must have saturated these drone congregation areas with *Amm* drones over many years, which then mated with queens and increased the *Amm* genetic pool in local populations, including the bees that found homes in Kelly's Folly. That, I suspect, is why my first captured swarm contained black bees. I believe these genes have now found their way into our present apiary, as new queens each year mate at the same drone congregation areas.

I can only speculate, but I can say with certainty that I have made the same observation in the last few years that Snelgrove made in the 1940s after Britain had stopped the importation of Italian queens in 1936. He noticed that British bees became darker, leading to his suspicion that *Amm* was flourishing after all, despite the myth of its disappearance. Douai Abbey's bees are becoming darker too. A large percentage of each colony are indistinguishable from native black bees. Of this much I am certain. Looking particularly at drones in colonies headed by queens from two or three years ago (which are genetically closer to the original Buckfast stock) most drones are light-coloured. Drones from last year's queens are now all black.

Whether or not they are pure *Amm*, they seem well suited to our local conditions and probably hold the key to stronger, more disease-resistant stocks in the future. In the Arnot forest of New York state, Professor Seeley has found wild colonies that had survived since 1978,

despite having varroah. Through natural selection and without human intervention they had developed the ability to live with varroah, just as we hope to be able to adapt to living with Covid-19. I suspect the wild bees in Kelly's Folly had evolved in a similar way to have survived the years before there were treatments for varroah. That, for me, is the perfect bee for these times. The perfect honeybee does not have to be created. It exists here at Douai Abbey.

GABRIEL WILSON OSB

NOTES

1. *The Douai Magazine*, VIII 1, 1934.
2. Ibid.
3. *The Douai Magazine,* X, 1938.
4. *The Douai Magazine,* X, 4, 1939.
5. *The Douai Magazine,* XII, 2, 1942.
6. *The Douai Magazine,* XVI, 3, 1951.
7. *The Douai Magazine,* XIX, 1, 1956.
8. Robert Biddulph, *Beekeeping Notes.*
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. *The Monk and the Honeybee*, BBC film by D. Taylor, 2005.

Michael Randle: Dowegian Author and Peace Campaigner

BOARDING SCHOOL. THE VERY PHRASE can reduce grown men of a certain age to a pulsing mass of melancholia and indignation. The wounds are raw, etched on the body by a litany of humiliations: the cane, the slipper, the chilly, wind-racked, "playing" fields, the absence of mum and dad, the lack of privacy.

Fortunately, the author and peace campaigner, Michael Randle, the subject of this short paper, has no such overwhelming memories. During his time at Douai School, Michael was more exercised by the injustice meted out to his co-religionists across the Irish Sea than to himself or to his fellow schoolboys. In other words, he took such hardships as came his way in his stride. Consequently, his memories are benign, sunny even.

A few years ago, I seized the opportunity provided by my forthcoming book of interviews with Michael to ask him about his time at Douai. Some of his recollections follow, but first, a bit more about Michael in general terms.

Michael was born in 1933 to a comfortably-off Anglo-Irish couple, his father with roots in Nottingham, his mother from Dublin. He grew up to be a confident, resourceful child, who, until the Blitz forced his removal out of England, lived in the comfortable north Surrey town-cum-village of Cheam; in other words a couple of miles from Sutton and about six miles from Croydon.

In 1951, inspired in part by one of his father's friends, a West Indian doctor named Errington Kerr, he decided to follow his pacifist convictions and to register as a conscientious objector.

Thereafter, he led a controversial and sometimes very public career as an anti-nuclear activist, peace campaigner and academic, ending his career at the University of Bradford, which now houses his archive.

In 1956, he set off on a one-man "peace walk" from Vienna to the Austrian border with Hungary to show his support for the non-violent resistance to the Soviet invasion of Hungary. Then, during the first months of 1958, he co-organised the first of the subsequently world-famous Aldermaston Marches.

Indeed, you could say that he was a bit of a rebel during the 1950s. You could say that. But then you would have to add that he was also a bit of a rebel during the 60s, the 70s, the 80s, and the 90s!

One very notorious example of his peace activism which did not concern nuclear weapons was his involvement in the "springing" of George Blake from one of Her Majesty's prisons—the same George Blake (1922-2020) who spied for the Russians and who, in 1961, was sentenced to 42 years imprisonment.

Michael's association with Blake began when they were both in HMP Wormwood Scrubs, Michael for having co-organised a mess trespass of RAF Wethersfield in Essex by a vanguard of "Committee of 100" anti-nuclear protestors, a violation of the Official Secrets Act which earned him 18 months imprisonment.

The "springing" was one of the signal events of 1966, thus inspiring headlines around the world and a huge manhunt, which ended with failure for the authorities and a further five decades of freedom for Blake, whom Michael and his wife smuggled out of England in a campervan to East Germany.

Yet, it is important to add that neither then, nor at any time afterwards, has Michael ever expressed any sympathy for Soviet-style communism, or indeed for any sort of authoritarianism. He helped Blake because he was a friend, and because he thought that the length

of his sentence was unjust. But most of all because he believed that the British state, while pretending to a purer vision of international relations, itself often acted treacherously.

Indeed, Michael's extraordinary singleness of vision is one of the things that drew me to him in the first place. When he settles on a course of action, he pursues it unswervingly. Yet he is neither particularly sanctimonious nor a sea-green incorruptible—at least I don't think so! But a man who tempers his resolute nature with kindness, humour, selflessness and generosity.

Michael was not the first Randle of his generation to attend Douai, but the second, as he was preceded by his brother, Arthur. He joined the school during the autumn term of 1945. He was, therefore, part of the first postwar intake.

1945 was towards the latter end of the long period when Fr Ignatius Rice led the school. Consequently, it was still overwhelmingly clerical in outlook and more than a little old-fashioned. Nonetheless, change was clearly already in the air, perhaps best illustrated by Fr Ignatius' appointment of Oliver Welch, one of a small number of extraordinary lay people, who helped drag the school—screaming and kicking in some quarters—into the second half of the 20th century.

Both men are remembered fondly by Michael, Fr Ignatius for his intellectual achievements (he was, as many of the readers of this article will know, a close friend of G.K. Chesterton and Ronald Knox), Welch for his knowledge, his skill as a schoolmaster and for his humane, if not downright heretical, interpretation of some of the central tenets of Catholic dogma.

Here is how Michael remembers Welch's treatment of the penalty of excommunication:

> On one occasion, we were studying the mediæval popes' habit of excommunicating their political and religious rivals, when one boy put a question which, I think, was troubling many in the class. The boy asked: "What effect did the excommunication have on the individual concerned?" Welch looked puzzled for a moment, then, realising what the boy was driving at, replied, 'You mean on the future of his immortal soul? Oh, none whatsoever!"

As this example suggests, Welch taught history, a subject at which Michael excelled as he also did at English. Indeed, one of the pleasures of looking through *The Douai Magazine* for the period in question is to see how regularly his name appears in the ranks of school debaters.

Possibly, Michael's interest and success in both subjects had something to do with the influence of various family members, not least his mother, who vividly remembered the Easter Uprising of April 1916 and the civil war which followed it. During one of our interviews, he told me how, as a young woman sitting at home in Dublin, she had struggled not to look at a picture behind which her father had hidden some important documents as the house was searched by British soldiers and how she had listened to the shots from Kilmainham Goal as the leaders of the uprising were executed.

One of his perhaps less estimable habits at Douai was to taunt the more conservative of his classmates with Irish Republican ballads, such as the following:

> God's curse be on you, England, God strike your London Town, and cursed be every Irishman alive or yet to live, who'll e'er forget the death they died, who'll ever dare forgive.

On one occasion, he even challenged Fr Ignatius on the subject. Michael recalled:

> He put forward an English point of view about the Ulster settlement. I think his line was that the north of Ireland was underpopulated, so it was reasonable for Scots and English people to settle there. I put forward an Irish republican position. But then, later that day, when I was walking in one of the cloisters, he tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Someday you should talk to Mr Welch about Ireland. He's just been destroying all my theories."

Besides Fr Ignatius and Oliver Welch, Michael also has strong memories of Fr Dunstan Cammack, Fr Norbert Bill and Fr Vincent "Dixie" Deane, the first not for any scholastic or intellectual achievements, but because of his friendly personality and his fondness for the horses!

Like many other boarding schools at this period, the school hosted regular film shows and one of Fr's Dunstan's responsibilities was to operate the projector, which, as Michael remembered, was "great when it worked," not so great when it did not, which was regularly.

As for Fr Norbert, he was in charge of the junior part of the school in which capacity he was a noticeably more orthodox figure in his religious convictions than Mr Welch. This was brought home to Michael in the following way. Having asked Fr Norbert if people who lost their Catholic faith were destined to go to hell, Fr Norbert responded with the following words: "We always have to trust in the mercy of Almighty God. But it is a grim outlook!"

Fr Vincent, he told me, used to call him "Karl Marx'" which of course was a direct hit at his rebelliousness.

Michael left the school in 1950, when he was 16, though interestingly he told me that he would have preferred to have stayed on into the sixth form. Why? Because he was keen to play rugby for the school's first team. This was hardly the sort of argument to impress his father, however. So, like other young men then and since, he was forced to look for a job, which in his case, led to an entirely inappropriate one with a wholesale clothing company in the City of London. Nonetheless, he stayed in touch with the school, appearing regularly on the rugby field for the Old Dowegians.

Perhaps some of Michael's former teachers found themselves wondering what influence they had had over him. Had they been a force for the good, or for the bad? Had they made him, or ruined him?

Certainly, off as well as on the rugby field, the school did not find it easy to forget him, as witnessed by the following item from the Spring 1959 issue of *The Douai Magazine*:

> Michael Randle has graduated from an editorial post on Peace News to the Chairmanship of the Direct-Action Committee Against Nuclear Warfare. At the time of writing, he is tramping along a road somewhere between Aldermaston and Trafalgar Square.
>
> MARTIN LEVY

☞ *In May 2021 Martin Levy's book on Michael Randle*—Ban the Bomb: Michael Randle and Direct Action Against Nuclear War—*will be published by Ibidem Press of Stuttgart in Germany.*

☞ *Photo courtesy of the Estate of John Hopkins.*

The Pandemic at Douai

In early March 2020 three of the brethren met to draft a Risk Assessment for Douai in response to the growing number of cases of COVID-19 in the UK. Holy water stoups in the church were emptied and the sign of peace at Mass was discontinued. With the news of the first death from the virus, in our nearest general hospital in Reading, it was decided to suspend concelebration at Mass indefinitely, which meant that only the celebrant would receive from the chalice.

On 19 March the Abbot's Council met and it was decided to close the Guest House until at least Easter Week 2020. The following day it was announced that churches would be closed for public worship and on 23 March the government announced a national lockdown which not only urged everyone to stay at home but closed places of worship until further notice.

Life in the monastery, like elsewhere, was transformed. The resident community began to experience an enclosed monastic life as already lived by many other monks and nuns across the world. We quickly became used to having no guests, no congregation at Mass and the Divine Office, no going out to celebrate Mass, meet friends or family, no other trips out and no holidays away from the monastery. Yet we counted ourselves extremely lucky that, unlike many other people, we had plenty of space both inside and outside the monastery to recreate. Most of the staff (with the exception of Sarah Hill, our catering manager and Nick Nutley, our groundsman) were put on furlough and the community soon got used to doing more cleaning, washing-up, and to undertake the vital task of regular disinfecting door handles, seats and other surfaces.

At a time when many others were deprived of their churches, worship and the sacraments we were extremely fortunate to be able to pray in our abbey church and to celebrate the liturgy, especially Mass, each day. Some changes had to be made—in choir we were socially distanced, with Mass no longer concelebrated, and celebrated entirely in the sanctuary. The Easter ceremonies were stark—no foot-washing or procession to the Altar of Repose on Maundy Thursday night, a simplified Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday afternoon, and no fire or sprinkling of water at the Easter Vigil.

The funerals of Fr Louis and Fr Bernard, who both died during the lockdown, had to be simplified. Their Requiem Masses had to be celebrated in the absence of both their bodies and their families, but thankfully the burials in the monastic cemetery were live-streamed to enable members of their families to participate.

It was sad that the planned celebrations for the Golden Jubilee of Ordination of Fr Peter Bowe and Fr Godric Timney on 15 April had to be postponed, but Fr Peter was celebrant at conventual Mass on the day, and there was a celebratory lunch afterwards.

We discovered that our patron, St Edmund, King and Martyr, is also the patron saint invoked against epidemics. At the beginning of lockdown in March we therefore began concluding midday prayer by invoking his intercession for the end of the pandemic and by singing a Marian chant, *Stella cæli extirparvit*, also being sung by the Benedictine nuns of Santa Cecilia in Rome, therefore invoking the two patrons of the abbey church. The chant was composed by the Poor Clares of Coimbra in Portugal in 1317 to seek Our Lady's help during an epidemic of plague across Europe. The English translation of the text is as follows:

> O star of heaven who gave your milk to feed your Lord: You destroyed the plague of death which Adam, the first parent of mankind, planted here below. May this star hold the evil forces in check who attack your people by a mortal sickness. O kindest star of the sea, save us from this plague. Hear us, O Lady, for your Son never denies you any honour. Save us, O Jesus, from whom your Virgin Mother, asks these favours.

Social distancing was also put in place in the refectory, and we soon became used to more rigorous hand-washing before meals. We were very fortunate that Sarah still came into cook for us five days a week. Fr Gregory generously agreed to cook on the other two days. Fr Alban and Fr Benjamin were appointed to do essential shopping and to collect prescriptions from the surgery.

Despite the slower pace of life, it was business as usual for some members of the community, especially the officials of the monastery. Novitiate classes continued most mornings, involving Fr Abbot, Fr Alban, Fr Gregory, and Br Aidan, who had begun his novitiate in January. The parish priest, Fr Peter, worked hard to communicate with parishioners via the weekly newsletter, telephone calls, emails and online parish meetings and presentations. Fr Alban and Fr Benjamin assisted with sick calls and funerals. Fr Gabriel continued to be busy with the poultry and bees, and supplied eggs both to our kitchen and to people in Newbury with the help of John Scott and Gill Hughes. Fr Gervase kept in close touch with oblates through more regular editions of the Douai Oblate Newsletter. Br Christopher facilitated a forum on

Christian Mindfulness with Martin Zetter on two Saturdays: these included talks on the Desert Fathers, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, The Sacrament of the Present Moment, as well as a presentation by a craftsman restoring wooden sculptures at English Martyrs in Reading. Also, throughout lockdown, every Tuesday Br Christopher ran a Monastic Mindfulness course which included Fr Augustine Baker's teaching on prayer. At the beginning of Advent Br Christopher also ran an online retreat with assistance from Fr Gervase, Fr Peter and others.

Various lockdown projects were initiated, such as the cleaning and re-stocking of the large pond in the monastery garden with Douai-bred goldfish. Gravel was laid in the strip outside the library, on the site where the architect, David Richmond, had designed a long, low wall which was to have been inscribed with the text *In principio erat Verbum*, "in the beginning was the Word," from St John's gospel. At the main reception, a glass door and screen was fitted as an insulation barrier in an area which was formerly very draughty in winter. Fr Gregory created a "bug hotel" in the monastery garden, made from the large Leylandii tree which was felled earlier in the year. With lots of different-sized gaps between the logs it provides a habitat for a variety of insects and smaller wildlife; already a toad and some native frogs have taken up residence. Fr Oliver designed and created several metal planters to be used outside the library. The monastery's new Instagram account was created and continues to be updated regularly. It can be accessed from the purple Instagram icon on the Douai website. The pandemic allowed us to harvest our plentiful fruit crop, the highlights included the 200+ figs picked from the one tree, and a bumper crop of apples. The rhubarb crop did well and provided several crumbles which were enjoyed at lunchtime.

Like the rest of the world, life in lockdown forced monasteries to seek new means of communication, so we discovered the benefits of Zoom, by which we were able to continue the ministry of spiritual direction, as well as the regular meetings of the Abbot's Council and the Douai Abbey Parishes Trust. Restrictions also prevented us from having a community retreat with the non-resident fathers in residence, and we were very grateful to Bishop Michael Campbell, an Augustinian and emeritus Bishop of Lancaster, who gave us deep and insightful conferences via Zoom based on the spirituality of St Augustine. Fr Abbot, Fr Alban, Fr Oliver and Br Christopher benefitted from participation in webinars for superiors, bursars, guestmasters and infirmarians. Due to restrictions because of the virus, Abbots Geoffrey

and Edmund were unable to carry out in person the visitation at Ampleforth in October, and had to conduct it virtually, which posed a number of challenges.

Most of the resident brethren and some parish fathers also joined other members of the English Benedictine Congregation across the globe for several online conferences, led by Australian Cistercian Fr Michael Casey OCSO, Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP, Fr Columba Stewart OSB of Collegeville in the USA, Br Colmán Ó Clabaigh of Glenstal in Ireland, Fr Roger Dawson SJ, and Professor Eamon Duffy. The series was an initiative of the Continuing Formation Commission of the English Benedictine Congregation and more conferences are planned.

The lifting of some of the lockdown restrictions in early June enabled us to re-open the abbey church for private prayer on Sunday afternoons, and to welcome individuals for conversation and spiritual direction in the grounds. Some of the brethren were able to take short holidays away from the monastery. Fr Abbot had been due to attend the Abbots' Congress in Rome in September, but the postponement of this due to the virus enabled him to enjoy a leisurely break there, based at Sant'Anselmo, where he was able to meet our own Abbot Edmund as well as the Abbot Primate, Fr Gregory Polan, and other friends in the city. During August, following the further lifting of restrictions, Fr Peter, the parish priest, was able to resume the celebration of Mass in the churches of the parish whilst continuing to live-stream parish Masses from the abbey church. A number of the brethren were recruited to assist him to continue the weekly series of video presentations for parishioners. Fr Peter and a group of parishioners held several online meetings to prepare for the safe re-opening of our churches, and the recruitment of a team of stewards enabled us to re-open the abbey church for the Sunday 11am conventual Mass in mid-September.

The resident community continued to hold regular meetings on Monday mornings and were grateful to Sheila Huelin, a parishioner and nurse, for coming to speak to us on 27 July about the virus and the precautions we needed to take as a community.

During the November lockdown our spirits were lifted by the daily "Lockdown Laughter" pictures posted on the main noticeboard by Fr Gregory.

The pandemic has brought to light previously hidden talents in the community, notably the poetic skills of Fr Benjamin who wrote the following for the Solemnity of the Annunciation, which we celebrated only days after the beginning of the first lockdown in March:

Today is the Feast of the Annunciation.
Today the Archangel Gabriel came with great expectation.
Today the great Gabriel bows in adoration.
Today he gives Mary a heavenly invitation.

Today we celebrate the Annunciation.
Today we are all in self-isolation.
Today we feel scared and alone—ponder, meditate.
Today, like Mary, what new world does await.

Today we stand two metres apart.
Today we social distance—such an accomplished art!
Today we are forbidden to shake hands or touch.
Today infection and virus is all around—O God, why is there so much?

Today I can hear birds on the wing.
Today my new friends are singing in Spring.
Today on the hills there will be lambing.
Today, tomorrow, a new world is dawning.

Today is the Feast of the Annunciation.
Today Mary said yes with, at first, apprehension.
Today, like Mary, we place all our hope in his invitation.
Today we are together in self-isolation!

ALBAN HOOD OSB

The Pandemic and Parish Life

MONKS FROM DOUAI HAVE BEEN OFFICIATING in the parishes of St Anne's in Ormskirk and St Elizabeth's in Scarisbrick for hundreds of years. While most parishioners know of the contact with Douai, many others are still puzzled as to how monks are living and working so far from their monastery. They seem to forget that it was St Augustine and 30 fellow monks who brought Christianity to England in the seventh century and there is a long tradition of monks leaving their monasteries for works assigned to them by the Church authorities. The English Benedictine Congregation has a particularly long history of working in parishes away from the monastery.

In March 2020, when something like a week's notice was given that the country would be in lockdown because of the Covid-19, it came as no surprise that Fr Boniface and I at St Anne's were urged by some parishioners to return to the monastery for our own safety. Initially, because of the uncertainty as to what "lockdown" would mean, returning to Douai seemed quite attractive. But after reflecting and talking to Fr Abbot, it was decided that it would be best for us to stay in Ormskirk.

At once, messages of thanks were received. "Thank you for staying with us. We realise that contact is limited but knowing that you are here supporting us, brings us great comfort." It is fascinating that while so much of today's values depend on output—what one does—people still appreciate "presence," just being who we are. That is a very important element of monastic life when so many in our world cannot make sense of men and women who live cloistered, community lives, spending much of the day in prayer and study and caring for one another. The charism of community life does filter down into parish life.

St Anne's is generally regarded as being a thriving and lively parish. At the centre of parish life is, of course, the celebration of Mass and the Sacraments. From these founts of prayer emerge all the familiar activities: prayer groups, organisations to support the young, the elderly, the poor and vulnerable, and the usual parish social activities. Once lockdown descended—silence! A closed church; occasional telephone calls to the priory but very few callers; a closed pastoral centre; schools without pupils; deserted streets.

As the first few months passed, the bishops announced that the obligation to celebrate Mass on Sundays would be lifted until further

notice. First Holy Communion Masses had to be postponed, baptisms were deferred, those preparing to join the Catholic Church had to wait till the end of the year to be received. Baptisms were only allowed in an emergency and funeral services in church had to give way to graveside burial services or services at the local crematorium.

As the summer months passed some of the restrictions concerning public worship were lifted. Even so, the vulnerable and those who were unsure about their personal safety were asked to consider carefully the wisdom of returning to Mass too soon, and many, especially elderly parishioners, followed this advice. Initially, information regarding the "cautious reopening of some churches for private prayer" was received from the archdiocese. However, people were still unable to call in to say a prayer in church. Health and safety were paramount. Official "welcomers" greeted parishioners with hand-gel and then they were taken to a designated place. On leaving, a volunteer would immediately sanitise the occupied place. These wonderful stewards were to become the key people in deciding how often Mass could be celebrated, since benches had to be sanitised after anyone had occupied a place. One-way systems were in place to ensure the two-metre distancing. Whereas St Anne's can hold about 400 people comfortably the maximum number of people permitted began with 60, and even then people were encouraged not to prolong their time of prayer in order to make way for others who might be waiting to come into church. How "un-Catholic" to be so restricted, but these were exceptional circumstances!

Holy Week was unreal. The bustle of church cleaning, choir practising, altar servers rehearsing for the ceremonies, the chrism Mass in the Metropolitan Cathedral, phone calls asking for the times of services—all absent; the Church, silent. Not quite so bad at Christmas when public Masses were allowed, though with limited numbers. Whereas about 1,600 people attend the Christmas Masses in normal years, this year fewer than 300 were able to be accommodated because of the need to implement social distancing.

Even before people were allowed to attend Mass in church it did not take too long for many priests to discover a new world of Zoom and Facebook and live-streaming. Fr Hugh, based at St Elizabeth's, has the technical knowledge to be able to livestream and this has taken place from the start. St Anne's used the goodwill and expertise of skilled parishioners to enable live-streaming to take place with a minimum of expense. The use of the parish website and Facebook, together with the weekly parish bulletin, became important means of communicating

with parishioners. Even the telephone came into its own as a means of individuals contacting parishioners unable to access the social media.

Pope Benedict XVI may have clarified the Catholic Church's understanding of Limbo but it would not be too far-fetched to describe the months of 2020, from March onwards, in a parish as living in a kind of limbo with everything on hold, yet within a pervading air of expectation and hope. Yes, for present generations, hope has been one of the key Christian virtues that has kept the Church alive. From the time of the apostles, the Church and the world have lurched from one crisis to another, and in every age She has had to face up to internal struggles while preaching the Good News to a world sorely in need of God's saving love.

What of the future? How will Covid-19 impact on parish life? Who knows? There is little point in speculating, when living with uncertainty and surprises prevail more than predictability and certainty. As parish priests reflect on this past year, however, some common patterns have become more recognisable. Celebrating Mass in an empty church, for example, is not the ideal way of being a Catholic Christian. The very word "Church" is about "the assembly," the "gathering of people" to give thanks and praise to God through Jesus Christ. Through coming together physically we are able to grow in faith. Yes, the celebration of Mass, no matter how many or how few are physically present, is a valid gathering of the communion of saints; but the proximity of one person to another, listening to the Word of God and celebrating the Eucharist, is itself a symbol of what the Church is. We have come to see that welcoming those who, in time, will be able to come to church, will become more essential than ever in order to foster the life of the parish community.

While parishes have been slow to engage with the social media it has already become evident that cameras and computers in church are here to stay. They will be an important part of parish outreach and evangelisation.

In the 19th century a number of English Benedictine monks working in parishes in the heart of Liverpool were not deterred by the danger of ministering to the Irish poor when disease was rampant in the city. Priests in parish life today are equally prepared to embrace whatever difficulties arise.

GODRIC TIMNEY OSB

The Renovation of Saint Gregory's Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

Saint Gregory's, Stratford has always been a beautiful church, designed by one of Victorian England's finest architects, E. W. Pugin, and of an ideal size, intimate yet spacious, neither too large nor too small. However, until recently there was a mystery at its heart. All lines led up to the roof of the apse at the east end but there was nothing there. It was an architectural and visual vacuum. There must certainly have been something more substantial there originally.

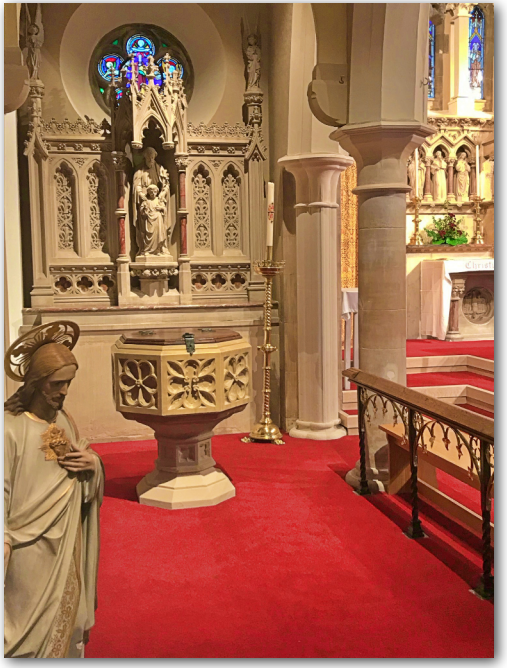
For the 150th anniversary of the church there was an appeal for photos and items for a small exhibition to celebrate the event. A postcard of the church in the 1930s which turned up solved the mystery. It showed that there had indeed been something more substantial—extremely fine Victorian stencilling provided a rich and most attractive decoration of the space. It made architectural sense of the building. Rather than just a blank space it had in fact been highly ornamented. The postcard was sadly only black and white but later physical research on the roof and the walls revealed enough colour to enable a reconstruction of the scheme. Originally it had been hoped to reveal the stencilling and restore it but as it had been painted over with no fewer than four coats of hideous dark brown gloss paint which had set like concrete, this proved impossible and the whole scheme had to be re-applied from scratch.

The missing stencilling focus was not the only problem. The sanctuary had been re-modelled in the 1970s, but it was not very satisfactory. The altar was not very prominent and rested on an undistinguished and very utilitarian base, and the lectern was similarly rather bulky and dull. The sanctuary was not much higher than the nave and was divided from it by unusually high altar rails which were something of a barrier between priest and people. The whole was lit by two extremely incongruous skylights which had been inserted into the roof during the remodelling and must have completely changed the feel of the original building. Today it would be impossible to get planning permission for them. Needless to say it all did not work terribly well liturgically.

Apart from liturgical and aesthetic need, two things spurred the renovation project to re-order the sanctuary, to restore the Victorian stencilling of the apse, and to redecorate the church. First, the fact that at the quinquennial inspection it was reported that the church was in urgent need of redecoration, which would entail the whole of the building being scaffolded. Secondly, the parish was financially extremely blessed, due to the good management of the previous parish priest, Fr Austin Gurr, the sale of the old priory, and two large bequests from Marjorie Youatt and Pat Elliot. The rents from the old school, from the flats in the converted priory stables, and income from car parking also helped. Without such financial security a project such as this would have been impossible. The money and the required scaffolding gave the parish the confidence to proceed.

It took some courage as it was rather a daunting project. In a world where poverty abounds and where there is such real human need, spending money on church buildings could seem extravagant and misguided, but offering the very best we can to God has always had a place in Christian spirituality and life. A lovely church like St Gregory's is worth spending money on, as beauty is a great aid to worship and prayer as well as mediating God and giving him glory. A beautiful church not only raises the spirit, but enriches worship and aids prayer and evangelisation, especially in a place like Stratford which receives so many visitors. It speaks to us of heaven. As Shakespeare wrote, like love itself, "It give the very echo to the seat where love is throned"(*Twelfth Night*, Act II, Scene 4). Jacob's words in Genesis 28:17, often written over continental church doors, are highly appropriate.: "This is the house of God and the gate of heaven."

The architect who carried out our quinquennial inspection, Steven Matthews RIBA, was the obvious choice for the job. We knew him and he is locally based. He has wide experience in working with churches, and is extremely sound and good to work with. It was decided to create a new altar from the old by duplicating the two marble front legs to replace the concrete wall that had previously supported the back of the altar. It was to be raised to a higher level to tie it in to the original reredos and the other levels altered accordingly. The steps were faced with limed oak to give a more contemporary feel and strong horizontal emphasis. The original, very substantial font was moved from the back corner of the church, where it had long been neglected, to St Joseph's chapel at the front, making a baptistry to balance the Lady chapel on the other side. The altar rails were moved to divide these side chapels from the main sanctuary and so to open it up and make it appear much bigger. A newly constructed, very simple, and contemporary glass



screen replaced the clumsy wooden one and made a much more open and inviting entrance. The sound and heating systems were updated and new radiators installed. An entirely new, state of the art, and highly effective and adaptable lighting system was put in place. A new Victorian brass eagle lectern was purchased on eBay and the attractive president's chair retained, but sanded down. Finally, the columns of the side aisles were all cleaned and lightened by sanding down and the entire building re-painted with a new colour scheme of warm beige walls to tie in with the extensive woodwork of the roof and pews, and light cream arches and windows to articulate the architecture. The sanctuary and central aisle were re-carpeted with a rich deep red carpet and all the rosettes of the roof re-gilded. A splendid new antique sanctuary lamp was acquired and hung centrally. Throughout all this the Victorian stencilling was re-created in the apse to magnificent effect.

The renovation moved extremely slowly at first due initially to its complexity and to the original stencilling artist holding up proceedings for six months before finally resigning due to ill health. There were also some missed planning deadlines. However, the building work finally began on 3 February 2020, just before the dreaded pandemic struck. Remarkably, it was full steam ahead. An excellent team was assembled. The builder was Sibbasbridge Ltd, run by St Gregory's school and altar-server Chris Golding. The stone masons were I. Ward & Sons, a fine group of traditional, old-English craftsmen who looked after the altar and font, and the modern Michelangelo stencil artist was Garry Ness of Pro Murals. Local electrical firm Elektra, led by Mike Neath, installed the new lighting, designed by smart London-based firm, Lighting Design Studio, and Warwick Glass produced the new entrance screen. All the original quotes were reduced substantially after some very hard bargaining by the architect.

The coordination and timing of all the different elements was extremely difficult and complex. First, the stonemasons removed the altar for reconstruction and re-positioned the font. The new heating and sound systems were then installed after which the scaffolders moved in. Luckily, Sunday masses could still be celebrated with the congregation seated rather uncomfortably amidst all the metalwork. Weekday masses were celebrated in the Parish Room. Next came the electricians, installing the lighting system. Then came the builders, removing the altar rails and the 1970 skylights and altering the sanctuary levels. Finally, the stencil artist began his long and laborious creative work.

The work progressed extremely quickly once started, but inevitably ground to a halt at lockdown in March and it looked as if things were going to fall seriously behind schedule and that the whole thing would take months to finish. Luckily, Garry, the stencil artist, came in every day during lockdown and worked his socks off to finish miraculously on time. After the scaffolding was taken down at the beginning of May, Pete Janes, our regular builder and handyman, also came in every day with his son to sand down the stone columns, an extremely slow and labour-intensive process. The stonemasons returned to install the new altar, sleeping in the parish room during the process, and the painters finished the paintwork. Finally, the carpet was laid. The fine central antique sanctuary lamp was hung, and everything was completed just in time for the re-opening of the churches after lockdown, miraculously on time and within budget. The first Mass was celebrated and live-streamed on Corpus Christi, 14 June, our parish IT expert Con McHugh having installed a webcam in church and facilitated the live-streaming, so important during the pandemic. The church was re-opened for private prayer on 21 June, and the first Mass with a returned congregation on 5 July.

The response to the renovation has been extremely positive and the parishioners were thrilled with the result, thank goodness. The finished result is spectacular with the new lighting showing off the sanctuary, altar and stencilled ceiling to superb effect. The interior is now far more harmonious, hanging together better, appearing more authentic and making far more architectural sense. St Gregory's now looks more like a minor basilica than a parish church and judging by the reactions of people who see it for the first time, it certainly has the wow factor! It has been quite a transformation and something of a triumph.

The Spirit certainly moved throughout the project. Initially, we were going to have to sell investments to pay for the work, just as the stock market crashed and stock prices plummeted. Luckily, we discovered that our investment managers had retained sufficient cash that we could receive on a monthly basis so we did not need to sell anything. John Elliot, our parish financial genius, oversaw this process, and all payments, with immense rigour and skill. The fact that the artist Garry was able to come in every day during lockdown to finish, and also managed to escape the virus, was another miracle. Had he not done that, the whole project would have been delayed for a considerable time. The antique sanctuary lamp, the bit of icing on the cake and little jewel in the crown, supplied by a dealer friend in Germany and which I

had not seen, arrived in the nick of time and was perfect. The carpet, the last piece of the jigsaw, at the very last minute was going to be a month late because of lockdown, but the CEO of the manufacturers made us a priority and it arrived on time. The rosettes on the roof were originally to have remained un-gilded, but Garry agreed to gild them for next to nothing while the scaffolding was still up. The rosettes in the side aisles were to be left till later but a friend saw them and arranged for them to be completed at his own expense. It was quite remarkable how big problems were solved and how things just fell into place.

The renovation cost a great deal of money, time and effort with endless meetings and decisions but was a great challenge, a lot of fun and, I think, well worth it. Thankfully the parish agrees and hopefully the physical renewal of the building will also assist the spiritual renewal of the parish, which is actually the most important project. Uplifting us by helping us to worship and pray better and to think about heaven is at least a good start.

ALEXANDER AUSTIN OSB

My Time at Douai Abbey

When I was put forward for studies towards ordination, going to the Dominicans at Blackfriars, Oxford was chosen as the most suitable place of studies in my particular case. Wanting to stay in a monastic environment whilst studying at Oxford, the most suitable and obvious place to live in during term time was Douai Abbey. Abbot Geoffrey was kind enough to grant permission for me to come to Douai, and it was made known to me that members of his community had experience of travelling into Oxford, so they would be able to offer advice on the best method of travelling to and from Blackfriars for lectures.

Having agreed to begin studies in October 2019, I was invited to meet the vice-regent at Oxford during the summer before term started, in order to discuss chosen courses and any concerns that there might be, face to face. This seemed a good opportunity to learn the route to Douai, and then to work out the best route to Blackfriars College itself. I travelled to Douai in September, also using this trip as an opportunity to take items such as textbooks and spare clothing that could be left at Douai until term began in October. It had seemed possible that it might be necessary for me to use the Park & Ride facilities, so I had researched their use, but in the end this proved to unnecessary. For my journey into Oxford I was accompanied by a member of the Douai community, who navigated the quickest route into Oxford, and also directed me into the carpark at the back of Blackfriars, which I feel I would have struggled to find on my own. Avoiding the on-street parking charges of Oxford, and learning how to find the private off-street parking on this trip was a great success, making it much less stressful than it might have been if I had been on my own.

I returned to Douai the week before lectures began at Blackfriars, travelling up every day for the various meetings and induction courses that are necessary before starting at every new place of studies. Meanwhile, at Douai, it was a case of getting to know the community, as well getting used to the different horarium and customs of my new abode. There were a few occasions when I did forget where I was and remained on Buckfast time. It had been my intention to travel back to Buckfast once or twice during term, but in the end it seemed easier and less disruptive to studies to stay at Douai Abbey through the whole term. The first term passed by very quickly it seemed, and after the

Christmas holidays I returned to Douai for the second, and as it turned out, the last term for quite some while.

It was during this term that Covid-19 began to make changes to the way most things were usually done. Social distancing began to be the norm in the monastery, people started to avoid touching surfaces with their bare hands, and there was the increased practice of hand-washing and use of hand sanitiser. Liturgically, the effects were also noticeable, such as the receiving of Communion under one kind, and not from the chalice. Preparations were also made at Blackfriars to go to distance learning, and the message came out that Blackfriars would indeed go to all online teaching after Easter whilst I was still returning to Buckfast for the Easter holidays.

The disruptive effects have continued into my second year, preventing my return to Douai for the Michaelmas term of 2020. Although vaccines against Covid-19 now appear to have been found, it seems likely that the disruption caused to what used to be the normal routine will continue well into 2021. This means that it is also very likely that I will not be back at Douai, or going back to Blackfriars, until after Easter of 2021, with a whole year spent away. It is quite an extraordinary set of circumstances that I should go away for studies, only to be forced home in order to complete them!

ANDREW PRICKETT OSB
Buckfast Abbey

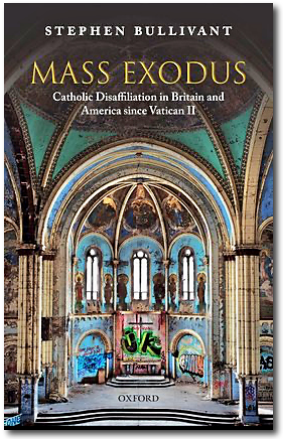
Book Reviews

Stephen Bullivant, *Mass Exodus: Catholic Disaffiliation in Britain and America since Vatican II*, Oxford UP, 2019, pp.309, ISBN 978-0-19-883794-7 (h/b & p/b)

In his nostalgic and loosely autobiographical novel, *Lake Wobegon Days*, Garrison Keillor describes a late 1950s/early 1960s celebration of Memorial Day in the fictional Minnesota town of Lake Wobegon. What will be a single procession forms from two halves, "the Catholics at Our Lady and everyone else at the Lutheran church, and the Catholics are definitely the flashier outfit." Be-caped and be-plumed Knights of Columbus, tricorns on their heads and swords at their sides, accompany the vested priest, while five nuns from the parish school lead the children, "including the flutaphone band in red capes, tooting 'Immaculate Mother,'" and the boys of the Catholic bugle and drum corps are decked out in white-fringed purple sashes, their honour guard carrying a dozen flags (including that of St Benedict). As the non-Catholics pass by, headed to their Lutheran assembly point, they see their Catholic neighbours as "a wonder to behold," and one of the latter "gives a nod to us poor Protestants slouching by." For the Lutheran half of the procession is no more than "a bugler, two flags, the Sons of Knute, and a big crowd." Despite his father's defensive protestation that "Christians don't go in for show," the narrator is clearly impressed, even admiring, and holds that though the two sides had roughly equal numbers, if the Catholics were to attack, "they would roust us in a minute." Indeed, later on in the cemetery, itself divided into "Catholic and Us," the boys of "Us" would jump the spiked dividing fence and launch an incursion into the Catholic side, chased off by a Catholic boy shouting "You can't come here...This is holy. Get the hell out." An frank exchange of views ensues: "'Catholics stink'...'You stink so bad, you make flowers stink'...'The Pope is dumb, he can't even speak English'...'You're so dumb you're going to hell and you don't even know it.'"

Though writing fiction, Keillor clearly draws on his own Minnesota upbringing in a Plymouth Brethren family. Keillor would later drift to the Lutherans, and by the early years of this century had come as far as the Episcopalians. At 78, he still has time to complete a transformation from puritan Protestant to showy Catholic; he is on the threshold. Keillor himself, and his novel, encapsulate so much of what theologian

Professor Stephen Bullivant reveals and examines in the post-conciliar Catholic, and to some extent wider Christian, world. *Mass Exodus*, however, is not a work of critical theology but of sociology. His lens is not one of ecclesiastical polemic but of statistical analysis. This is what makes his book so arresting: he analyses no arguments on doctrine and liturgy, but illuminates the Catholic post-conciliar experience using objective, and often bracing, sociological data. His presentation is pregnant with implications, which he will identify, but he does not induce them to birth by any advocacy for a programme for action. His few conclusions are objective deductions from the data he provides in ample detail.



For those unversed in the sociological approach to religion, there is a new, mercifully modest, vocabulary to be mastered. At the very least, the reader must comprehend: plausibility structures, social network theory, CREDs and CRUDs.

Plausibility structures denote "the complex social and cultural architectures which shape and support specific worldviews" (p.96); the example in focus is the Catholic sub-culture, often caricatured as a "fortress," that prevailed to the early 1960s, in which family, friends, social circles, entertainment, and reading all created a distinctively and confidently Catholic milieu which shaped and supported Catholic belief. *Social network theory*, to put it simply, examines the interaction and relations not only of the members within such a structure, but also between different structures. Northern Ireland in recent history offers a pointed example of relations between Catholic and Protestant social structures.

Lastly, the reader must understand the role and effect of CREDs—*credibility enhancing displays*—and CRUDs—*credibility undermining displays*. The former is based on the premise that people will more likely accept something if its proponents are seen to embrace willingly its costs. The ultimate example is the witness of the martyrs: there is no "display" more enhancing of the credibility of one's Christian faith than to die for it. Others would include Friday or Lenten penance, the Eucharistic fast, or taking a midnight slot in Forty Hours' adoration. With this in mind, CRUDs are easily understood as the opposite: behaviours which work against the acceptability of that which is proposed. Bullivant cites the child sexual abuse crisis as the pre-eminent contemporary example.

With this small lexicon of terms in mind the reader will be able to comprehend both the import of the statistics that Bullivant details, and the scope of valid deductions to be made from them. The breakdown of the Catholic sub-culture that began in earnest after the Second World War, as social and geographical mobility became widespread and with it the desire to be in harmony with one's neighbour, as well as the advance of mixed marriages, technology and further education, all extended Catholic horizons and experience beyond the so-called Catholic "ghetto." With this growth in the scale, diversity and complexity of Catholics' social networks there came a corresponding weakening of Catholic plausibility structures, as Catholics were more and more exposed to non-Catholic influences and world-views. The same is true for most other Christian denominations, as all religious believers were exposed above all to the increasing secularisation of society and its values, with artificial contraception a memorable flashpoint. The loss of various CREDs, especially of Catholic devotions and traditions, and the looming spectre of CRUDs such as the defection of clergy and religious after the Second Vatican Council, and even more the contemporary horror of child abuse, have all helped to undermine the foundations of Catholic life and faith in Britain and the USA.

Mass Exodus bids us look more than merely nostalgically at the Catholic culture that prevailed before the Council, a culture and its wider context so engagingly portrayed by Garrison Keillor. He helps us see that, Council or no Council, social forces were already at work in the postwar world that would inevitably have confronted Catholicism and wider Christianity. The seedlings of decline were already sprouting for any who cared to notice, which is precisely why John XXIII identified the need for an ecumenical Council. Bullivant gives us material to help us evaluate the role of the Council itself, and its subsequent interpretation and implementation, in the Church's attempt to read and to address the much-vaunted "signs of the times."

Bullivant examines with a fairly light hand the assertion that, given all of mainstream Christianity has suffered in the period following the Council, Catholics cannot rightly blame the Council for the decline in Mass attendance or the continued growth in the disaffiliation of cradle Catholics. In response he points out that only the Catholic Church chose the turbulent flux of the 1960s as the time to initiate a myriad

formal and universal changes, changes expressly intended to meet the needs of the world of the 1960s. By rights it should have weathered the secular storm much better, but it did not. His discussion of the liturgical changes in the light of the Council's evangelical agenda, as well as the crisis surrounding *Humanæ vitæ*, are must-reads, and provide both substance and perspective to any personal opinions on these touchstone issues and their role in the decline of Catholicism in the last 60 years.

Needless to say, the situations of the UK and the USA are not exactly the same, though they are shown to share the same basic shape. For example, in the USA the increasing number of those who cease to identify as Catholics—to disaffiliate—often end up as converts to other religious groups; in the UK they are far more likely to end up as "nonverts" who tick the *No Religion* box on the census form. On both sides of the Atlantic the clear trend since the Council has been for cradle Catholics to cease the practice of their faith, however much some continue to identify reflexively as Catholic—or even worse, for cradle Catholics to dissociate entirely from the Church.

In his epilogue, Bullivant asks the question, did the Council fail? He does not seek to answer this question in theological, or even strictly ecclesiological, terms. His answer is sociological, based on his statistical analysis, which he places next to the Council's avowed aims and intentions to reinvigorate the life and mission of the Church. You can read his answer, guarded though it is, yourself.

Though Bullivant's analysis is based on a goodly volume of statistical data from diocesan records and various surveys and studies in both the UK and the USA, which he lays before the reader with decent comprehensiveness. For a presentation of statistics this ranks as one of the less intimidating, yet it still provides a challenge for the non-specialist to comprehend fully. Thankfully, only the specialist need worry about that; the non-specialist can be content that evidence is provided for the conclusions Bullivant will draw. He is fond of socio-cultural references that will resonate with most readers and serve to lighten the mood and make the content even more accessible. There is, indeed, a particular Bullivant humour that is threaded through the book, though he avoids the puns that are a defining feature of the work of Scott Hahn.

That said, for this reader Bullivant's exposé, for that is what *Mass Exodus* is if it is anything, highlights serious ecclesiological issues. In clear relief there emerges the inescapable distinction between the

Council *per se* and its implementation. Given the decline Bullivant charts, and the failure to realise the conciliar aspiration to reinvigorate the Church in the face of the world of its day, one must ask: was there a problem with the Council itself, or does the problem lie in the integrity of its implementation? The repackaging of the Council as an open-ended event, with an ongoing and ever-developing programme for change beyond the letter of its decrees, is ecclesiologically and historically novel, to say the least.

Mass Exodus offers, moreover, ample evidence that this approach has demonstrably failed in general terms. The only valid ongoing agenda in Christianity emerges not from any one council, but from Christ's Great Commission to make disciples of all nations—to make the world reflect the Church, not make the Church a copy of the world; in other words, to sanctify the world for Christ. Before Vatican II, ecumenical councils had been called only to address doctrinal crises. John XXIII sought to address a pastoral crisis with what was termed a "pastoral council." Bullivant's work raises the question as to whether an ecumenical council is the right tool for the job. Will the "signs of the times" any new council might seek to address have already evolved into substantially new issues, needing different solutions? After all, witness how quickly has the Church had to confront the Covid crisis. Even with modern transport and communications technology, it is highly doubtful that a council would have any chance of finding a timely solution. Some issues need time, and the fuller perspective which time brings, to address fruitfully. Take the many churches now rushing to install expensive, and often unsightly, video equipment for live-streaming the liturgy; will such merely serve to institutionalise the Real Absence of the congregation from the Real Presence of the Lord at Mass?

For all the challenging questions it may provoke in this reader and others, *Mass Exodus* seeks to understand the post-conciliar decline in the Catholic Church in sociological, not polemical, terms. Nevertheless, Bullivant is not afraid to identify some obvious consequences, even conclusions, which emerge from the data he analyses. Both the data and its analysis are required reading for anyone who seeks to engage fruitfully with recent ecclesial decline. Thankfully, having here rubbed our noses in the bad news, Professor Bullivant is working on a sequel which will examine the signs of hope which may reveal new tools for the task John XXIII set for Vatican II, or maybe even rediscover some old ones, already tried and found true.

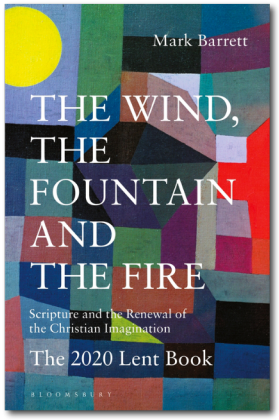
HUGH SOMERVILLE KNAPMAN OSB

Mark Barrett OSB, *The Wind, the Fountain and the Fire,* Bloomsbury, 2019, pp.181, ISBN 978-1-4729-6837-1 (p/b)

How do we view the Bible? Perhaps we see it as a library rather than a single volume. That description is, of course, correct but can leave us a little daunted – who is up to digesting a whole library?

In his 2020 Lent book on Scripture, Fr Mark Barrett, following St Ambrose, presents us with a more inviting image of the Bible as a series of intermingled water courses, sometimes separated...sometimes commingled...occasionally still pools...and often springing heavenward (p.110). Drawing on many years of monastic experience of both hearing and pondering the Word of God, Fr Mark proves a skilful navigator through these scriptural waters.

After a brief, personal introduction, the book unfolds in five chapters which follow the Sunday Gospels for Lent, preceded by a Prelude designed to help the reader "step into" scripture. The tone throughout is pastoral.



Within this clear structure each chapter is wonderfully unsystematic, following the monastic/patristic approach which sees the New Testament scriptures concealed within the Old and the Old Testament revealed and clarified by the New.

Judicious use is made of the Psalms as bridge texts which help us move between these two great Testaments. For example, we are invited to pray Psalm 139 as an extended personal meditation on the relationship between God the Creator and ourselves as creatures (pp.48-53).

There are surprises in store... Are you familiar with the creation story in Ezekiel? This was new to me. And Fr Mark's take on the famous encounter between Elijah and the Lord in 1 Kings 19: 9-14 will make you think!

But, for me, the real strength of the book lies in its handling of biblical images. We live in a highly visual age: our devices, iPads, phones and computers, are saturated with images which leave little work for our imaginations to do—so this precious faculty can become "flabby." This means that the Bible, without pictures but full of images which make it teem with life, colour and movement, can seem heavy going, even boring. We are perhaps less literate than earlier generations in reading and interpreting the images which bring the Bible to life.

This is where Fr Mark's facility with the metaphorical is so invaluable. From the dust of creation in Genesis to the renewed cosmos of the Book of Revelation, we are led through a feast of symbols and images: fire, light, wind, fountains, wells, mountains and the tomb combine to make the story of salvation leap off the pages.

Such an image-centred approach not only brings the Bible to life, it also enables us to view that rather daunting collection of ancient texts as a unified whole. For the imagination has the power to unite disparate elements in a coherent whole. Further, it has the capacity to bring us closer to what Coleridge called "the primary Imagination"—God (*Biographia Literaria*, ch. XIII): hence *lectio* becomes prayer.

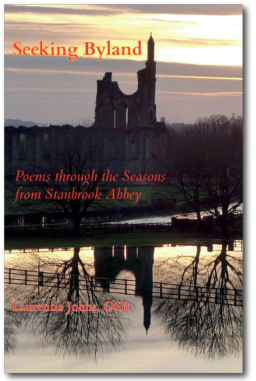
Nor do these imaginative forays take us away from action in our daily life, as Fr Mark explains:

> Salvation in Christ does not exist in abstract—our concrete lives are its locus. And it is from the pictures we form in our minds, the scripts we learn and then carry into our everyday encounters, that our best selves can be moulded by the word of God. God's pictures make powerful precepts. (*p. 72*)

If you missed this book in 2020, do read it for Lent 2021. Or, if you wish to plumb the depths of scripture in fewer than 180 pages, do not wait until Lent to start!

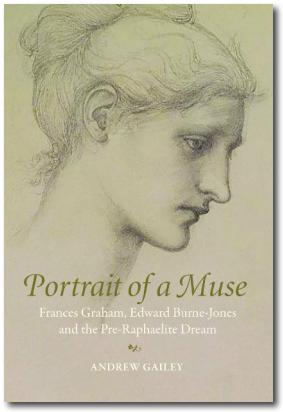
LAURENTIA JOHNS OSB
Stanbrook Abbey

☞ *Sr Laurentia's new book of poetry,* Seeking Byland: Poems through the Seasons from Stanbrook Abbey, *published by Gracewing, ISBN 978-0-85244-965-3, and is available via Stanbrook Abbey Bookshop, bookshop@stanbrookabbey.org.uk, at a cost of £9.99+p&p.*



Andrew Gailey, *Portrait of a Muse: Frances Graham, Edward Burne-Jones and the Pre-Raphaelite Dream,* Wilmington Square Books, 2020, pp.448, ISBN 978-19-1339440-0 (h/b)

In this scholarly book, Andrew Gailey weaves into a lucid narrative the complex story of a remarkable woman, born in Scotland in the middle of Queen Victoria's reign, who moves with her parents to London, is acclaimed the finest embroiderer of her age, sought after by artists, poets, religious leaders, intellectuals and politicians, whom she meets as a member of a salon group called the Souls, and who through marriage finds herself chatelaine of an ancient manor house linking the great matters and events of the reigns of Victoria, Edward VII and George V with its own pre-Reformation history.



The story is traced through the book's many characters and their devotion to Frances Graham (1854-1940). "Francie Graham of Glasgow" is the daughter of William Graham (1817-1885), an entrepreneur and port importer, Liberal MP, art collector, patron of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and especially of Edward Burne-Jones. He and his wife Jane, a talented pianist, both firm Presbyterian Sabbatarians, keep a house at Grosvenor Place in London which they stock with Pre-Raphaelite art. It is here that Frances, as a daughter of new commercial wealth, is introduced to a world in which art, religion, social ambition and politics overlap. Once the painter Burne-Jones has met the daughter of his patron, life is never the same for him again. For 25 years he seeks intimacy with Frances, but she (as far as can be ascertained) never obliges him.

John Francis Fortescue Horner (1842-1927), who marries Francie in 1883, is the descendant of Thomas Horner, who in the dissolution trials set up by Thomas Cromwell in 1539, testified in the show trial against Richard Whiting, the last abbot of Glastonbury. Glastonbury was, after Westminster, the richest monastery in the land, with estates stretching from Devon and west Somerset to Wiltshire and Oxford. Glastonbury Abbey had acquired Mells Manor in 1197. Thomas Horner was its steward at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and

immediately upon Whiting's death, asserted his land rights, styling himself Thomas Horner of Mells. Such land acquisitions were a feature of Cromwell's purge.

Frances Graham's salon is not confined to artistic and religious figures only. She has a place in the world of politics too, conducted after her marriage to Jack Horner at 1 Buckingham Gate, SW1. Not only is she the confidante of Prime Minister Asquith, she includes in her circle Arthur Balfour, Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Curzon, Sir Edward Grey, R.B. Haldane, Christopher Hollis, Reginald McKenna, and the Earl of Roseberry—all come under her aura.

Francie's social and intellectual life is lived between London and Somerset. She is Burne-Jones' muse of the book's title: he draws her obsessively and hers is the face in many of his pictures. She copies into embroidery many of his drawings and enriches the ambience of Mells with the soft furnishings of William Morris. Francie forms close male friendships, particularly with Asquith and, after Jack's death, with the Irish clergyman James Hannay, writer of satiric novels who, as patron, she appoints to the incumbency of the parish church of Mells. She has long since moved from the Presbyterian to the Anglican stripe, and exhorts Hannay to curb Katherine's attraction (notwithstanding the powerful influence of her grandmother) to Catholicism. It is the Asquith element of the story that readers of this magazine will find of particular interest.

Raymond Asquith (1878-1916), presented here as a particularly attractive character, is killed in action during the Great War, leaving Katherine (1885-1976) with three children: Helen (1908-2000), Perdita (1910-1996), and Julian (1916-2011). Katherine and her mother develop Mells as a Pre-Raphaelite haven, hanging there pictures from their distinguished collection brought down from London, attracting an eclectic array of intellectual visitors. Among the Catholics are: Hilaire Belloc, whose "brash triumphalism stirred up long discarded evangelical loyalties" (p.338) in Frances, resulting after a time in his being banned from Mells until after her death; Fr Martin D'Arcy SJ, who secured Frances' support for the building of Campion Hall in Oxford, designed by her friend Sir Edwin Lutyens and opened in 1936; Mgr Ronald Knox, whose translation of the Bible was completed at Mells; and Evelyn Waugh, author of a biography of Dante Gabriel Rossetti published in 1927. Others are the sculptor Eric Gill (who carved a plaque with a Latin inscription in memory of Raymond Asquith, installed by Frances in Mells parish church), J.M. Barrie, Lytton Strachey, the Poet

Laureate Robert Bridges, Siegfried Sassoon (another poet-convert to Catholicism), and the famous Dean Inge of St Paul's Cathedral (not Westminster Abbey as Gailey mistakenly attributes), who brought an astringently anti-Catholic voice to Mells discussion. Albert Einstein paid a visit and survived a boring lecture on Relativity delivered by his host R.B. Haldane, to mark the opening of the reading room Frances had built for the miners in the neighbourhood, after which Einstein delighted Frances by playing the violin. His dreamy eyes and gentle manners gained for him inclusion in her pantheon of Pre-Raphaelite saints. In 1939 Queen Mary grandly appeared, the first royal visitor since Charles I: after greeting 200 refugees assembled for her by Frances on the lawn, she called for tea and a cigarette and then, having undertaken a tour of the house upstairs, descended to chide her lady-in-waiting, the Duchess of Beaufort, that she had "missed the quilts" embroidered by Frances. Frances died the following year.

In 1923 Katherine Asquith was received into the Catholic Church, much to her mother's dismay, completing a conversion that had been in gestation from as early as 1906. Increasingly, Katherine began to attract a confraternity of like minds, and Mells became a place of gathering for the faithful, "an elect drawn together by religious mystery" (p.378). Helen followed her mother into the Catholic Church while at Oxford, for which she is rebuked at a ball at Cliveden by Lady Astor, who interrogates her, as recorded by Conrad Russell (Oxford friend of Raymond Asquith and Katherine's devoted supporter): "Was it Maurice [Baring] did it?...Was it that drunkard Mr Bellock?...You don't think Mr Bellock seriously tries to follow Christ do you?" (P.360). And Julian was sent to Ampleforth, thereby renewing a monastic link at Mells. Soon after Frances's death Katherine had a Catholic chapel built at the manor house.

Frances Graham will be a new name to many. Andrew Gailey traces her relationships, replete with a galaxy of artistic, political and social talent, with great skill, but even by the end of this account remains somewhat enigmatic and in the final analysis has not quite endeared herself to the book's reader; but then, perhaps a capacity for endearment might have dimmed her aura. Hers was a life spanning two world wars, three monarchies and massive cultural change. The list of *dramatis personæ* at the beginning of the book is both helpful and necessary. Gailey writes with clarity and sensitivity, shielding the reader of this detailed biography from the asphyxia often inflicted by books of this kind. The book includes black-and-white photographs of many of

the characters, and good colour reproductions of Mells and its portraits and artefacts. Notes pertaining to each chapter are copious and arranged at the end of the book. The research among primary manuscript sources is extensive, including papers in the Horner family archive at Mells itself. It is a pity that the text is occasionally marred by typographical error (though few in proportion to its length), but it is handsomely produced and deserves a distinctive place on the shelves of those interested in this rich period of English cultural, religious and intellectual history.

DR RALPH TOWNSEND

☞ *Dr Ralph Townsend is President of Keio Academy of New York, and Chairman of The Cothill Trust. He was Headmaster of Winchester College from 2005 to 2016.*

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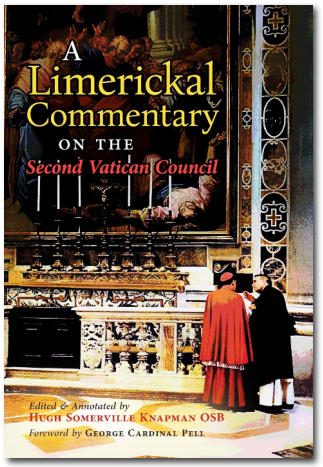
Hugh Somerville Knapman, *A Limerickal Commentary on the Second Vatican Council,* Arouca Press with the Weldon Press, 2020, pp.71, ISBN 978-1-989905-18-0 (h/b & p/b)



The Chinese have a pithy, almost epigrammatical way of expressing wisdom. The *Analects* of Confucius are full of such turns of phrase as "The first thing to be done is the rectification of names," meaning that until you have an agreed vocabulary, communication of truth is impossible. Even in everyday speech, one encounters this manner of speaking. A friend of mine, commenting on the tendency of a certain prelate to preach at great length on any and every occasion, said to me just the other day, "A short poem says more than a long speech." Whether the limerick can properly be called poetry or ought to be described as doggerel is a question to be left to the literary scholars and the Confucians. Nevertheless, this short volume of limericks, written by a small

number of anglophone bishops at Vatican II—besides being at once amusing and charming—yields a rich harvest of primary material regarding just what those prelates thought was going on in Rome between 1962 and 1965.

Whilst the limericks do, as George Cardinal Pell observes in his short foreword, provide a glimpse of "a world that has vanished," they also provide eloquent testimony to a sharpness of mind and wit, together with fluency in Latin (if not in strict metrical composition) at which the modern reader, familiar with the awkward circumlocutions of Magisterial texts, can only marvel. It takes little or no time to read this book and hardly any longer to begin to identify favourite verses. My own favourite is, in fact, the very first: a limerick composed by John Patrick O'Loughlin, Bishop of Darwin. It combines faultless metre (both in the English original and in Bishop Bernard Ward's Latin translation) with humour and—given how things worked out—more than a little pathos:

Of Rahner and Congar and Küng	Rahneri, væ! Kunghi, Congari
the praises are everywhere sung;	audimus iam laudes cantari;
but one bello domani	at iubebis cras mane,
Lord Ottaviani	mi Octaviane,
will see all three of 'em hung.	mox laqueum istis mandari.

Among the half-started projects cluttering my study are photocopies of the letters that the then Abbot Christopher Butler wrote to his own monastery each week of the Second Vatican Council. These, together with his diaries of the period, form part of a project I agreed to undertake some five years ago, that of producing an edited and annotated edition of Butler, to sit alongside the brick-like tome of Yves Congar's *Journal*, Henri de Lubac's two-volume *Vatican Council Notebooks,* and a host of other primary and secondary literature on the Council. For those of us compelled by such academic work to labour through the letters, diaries and journals of the participants at the Second Vatican Council—to say nothing of 64 volumes of the conciliar *acta*—it is often hard to come by light relief; still less, to find anything both humorous and relevant to our task. In bringing out this slim volume, Dom Hugh Somerville Knapman has provided the needful. What may have been conceived as a light-hearted diversion from his own work on what he calls "the liturgical first-fruits of the Council," has, in the event, put into the public domain something of real value.

REV DR STEPHEN MORGAN
Rector
University of St Joseph, Macau

Edmund Power, *Graffiti di Roma. Riflessioni spirituali,* Series Mane Nobiscum, Lateran University Press, 2019, pp.98, ISBN 978-8-84651265-9, (p/b)

THE RISE IN ACADEMIC INVESTIGATIONS concerning Roman graffiti acknowledge that "street art" carries significance at a number of levels. Works have appeared on the literary nature of graffiti, using examples of evidence to address themes of authorship, politics and gender. There has also been a developing interest in metrical graffiti, as well as in how its poetic metres cast a series of optics on ancient authors and their literary styles. Folklore is attached to contemporary graffiti artists, even reverence for graffiti artists in our own land, such as for Banksy. Yet, more often nowadays, graffiti carries stigmas of vandalism and illegality. Less frequently is it remembered that in ancient Rome, graffiti was not forbidden, so it is not surprising that it is still being uncovered in a variety of settings, sacred and profane. For example, it is not unknown for proprietors in some Roman restaurants to write messages and calculate bills on tablecloths, which decades ago would have been written on the tables themselves, until they were repainted after there was no space left. Graffiti is an accepted part of Roman life, however much it is legislated against, and a public declaration of daily lives.

The book series *Mane Nobiscum* publishes populist works of spirituality that encourage meditation and reflection for those who wish to deepen their lives of faith, while not shirking the existential questions that attend them. The author of *Graffiti di Roma: Riflessioni Spirituali* has fulfilled these criteria imaginatively, by means of a selection of twelve decipherable examples of Roman graffiti of different genres, acknowledging that Rome is unfortunately littered with them, frequently defacing existing art.

On page 8, Edmund Power outlines his method of enquiry. He begins by envisaging himself in the place of the graffiti artist. Then, empathetically, he accompanies the reader in a dialogue with various textures of invitation, challenge, exhortation and consolation. He

reflects on a word or phrase and allows its spark to guide him in whichever direction fits the context of the word or phrase chosen: etymological, philological, philosophical, historical or biblical. The Christian yet specifically Benedictine approach to *lectio divina*, assists this trajectory for a gentle unveiling of wisdom, in a prayerful receiving of a treasure that is necessarily unhurried.

What does the graffiti artist communicate amid citations providing the sources of interpretations; at once, entertaining or lyrical, poetic and political, earthy or satirical? One of the strengths of this work is that its choices are selected to reach out towards a variety of temperaments, to encourage these conversations that are both pastoral and prayerful. This breadth offers commentary, respecting the minds of the artists and of the reader, addressing among others, questions of human longing, relationships, fear and love.

Edmund Power draws from expansive literary traditions and schools to encourage participation in reflection. One that caught my attention was his chapter on worms. Though not depending on the Rule of St Benedict directly in this, he dwells on the christological reading of Psalm 21 (22) which inspired St Benedict's seventh step of humility. The patristic parallels for this theme are enlightening. For example, on page 81, quoting St Jerome: "Christ is both worm and man. In his nativity, he is as worm, since the worm is born in wood [...]"

In his final chapter on silence, it could be perceived that the epilogue to the thought developed by the author throughout the entire work appears on page 91. His words need no commentary. They demonstrate the Godward movement towards which living beings tend and with whose human condition the author in this book has engaged: "We can read [a] miracle also as a Paschal proclamation: the condition of the deaf mute is a symbol of death, of profound silence in the tomb. With sacramental gestures, Jesus opens his ears and his mouth, rendering him capable of welcoming the word of life and of proclaiming the praises of God."

PAUL GUNTER OSB

Obituaries

FR BERNARD SWINHOE OSB, 1931-2020

Our much loved father bernard slipped away into the hands of the Lord on Maundy Thursday night. It was no surprise; he had long been failing with gentle dementia, then a two-week stay in hospital over Christmas was followed by some weeks in a care home. What a fitting, peaceful end for a gentle, kind and sensitive monk.

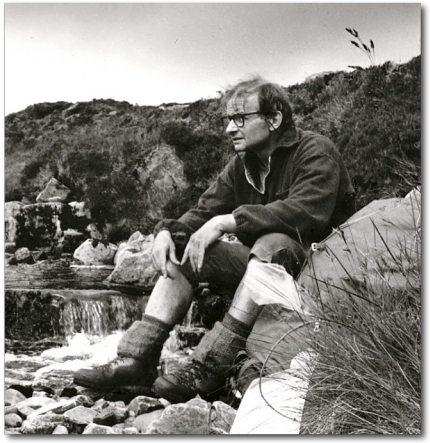
Charles Swinhoe was born in Rochester on 20 June 1931. His father was an army colonel in India, so he spent time there as a child. He was then some years at St Richard's prep school at Little Malvern. He and his sisters and younger brother lived with their mother in a number of rented houses during the war years. Family was always important to him; mother, sisters and brother mattered a lot.

In 1944 he came to Douai School, where he distinguished himself in many sports, captaining the rugby and cricket teams. After National Service as a commissioned officer with the King's African Rifles in Kenya, he joined the monastic community in 1952, taking the name Bernard. He was professed in 1953, obtained an English degree at Oxford and was ordained priest in 1961. He was, however, always somewhat less comfortable as a priest than as a simple monk. His mastery of English stayed with him all his life and he loved painstakingly to hone his writing. His sermons were always beautifully crafted and elegantly delivered. One of his brethren once cheekily quipped that his university degree was in punctuation.

Quintessentially a monk and full of life, Bernard was quietly self-effacing. Deeply rooted in the Douai soil, where he belonged for 67 years (or 72, including school days) he is now buried in that earth. *Stabilitas loci!* He was faithful to the end to the community and to the round of Divine Office, the praise of God. In his last fading months at Douai he especially loved sharing the night prayer of Compline. And he naturally accepted his final lot in hospitals and care homes, remaining ever appreciative of the nurses' attentions.

Bernard's genuine self-deprecation was not false humility, rather reticence, scrupulosity, and dissatisfaction with himself. Mindful of the dangers of self-satisfaction, to which most of us are prone, St Benedict in chapter seven of his Rule strongly insists on turning from this undermining vice. It has been said that "the secret of one person's

success is another person's success remaining a secret; some people would not prove so pivotal in your life had they been more concerned with their own." And this was Bernard's humility, mixed, as has been observed, with a measure of quiet roguishness, for he enjoyed subversion of expected values. One remembers his merriment recounting somewhat scurrilous anecdotes heard in an august commission on which he sat. For one former pupil Bernard "did not suggest or rely on a hierarchical relationship with us as boys, he displayed an openness both to his own uncertainties and to your possibilities."



Bernard was a master photographer, taking pictures with an ancient camera, developing them by night in a home-made darkroom. His magnificent photos are works of art, testimony to his eye for detail and his artistic vision. He looked, and he marvelled at the sweep and detail of nature before him, that which escapes the unobservant eye of a mere passerby. Since his death we have much enjoyed perusing these albums of family and community gatherings, of scout camps in the Lake District and Wales, of expeditions to the Austrian and Pyrenean alps, even to the Moroccan Atlas Mountains and communist eastern Europe. There are also magnificent views taken on solo holidays by bicycle and on foot, with a tiny tent in the wide open spaces of Scotland and Ireland, and of his return by bicycle from a monastic course in Rome, sleeping mostly under bridges and hedges. In his photos one can catch Bernard the explorer of nature, of limits and of depths, quietly peeking into the heart of all he observed.

He was shy of authority, not one for top jobs but best as second-in-command where he cast his influence above and below him in a pastoral way. Following some time in Morpeth in Northumberland, then a Douai parish, and then at the Douai prep school at Ditcham Park, he was in turn assistant bursar, school housemaster, twice novicemaster, acting headmaster for a term, twice prior of the

community, and for many years a member and secretary of the abbot's council. He also ran the school tuckshop for a long while.

Another pupil well remembers being helped, aged 9 or 10, at Ditcham to make a simple model. Bernard demonstrated, he later said, "his wonderful ability to give you time as an individual when at prep school you felt just one of a herd. I felt overwhelmed that he had bothered helping me; he showed how to take time and care over even a small and insignificant job. In my final year at Douai he would often say: 'Why do I faff around and never get anything done?'—unaware that he was just doing what he was master of, making time for others, being really concerned about them, subtly guiding, aiding, and resolving difficulties and giving encouragement."

Bernard had the inestimable gift of being ever available and accessible to all, boy or fellow monk. He would repair your rugby boots, fix your watch, mend your lock and make you a key, fill a gap to play untaught the double-bass in the school orchestra, bind the monastery books, or paint the missing oil portrait of a long-deceased abbot he had never met. For years he was the monk sought out by a stream of wayfarers. It was Bernard they wanted, for he welcomed you and discreetly provided food, spare clothes, a bed for the night—and even, let it be admitted, some cash for your "bus ride to Glasgow!" A former pupil described him as a kindly, decent man, upright, reasonable, full of zest for life. His natural curiosity about everything, his many interests, his enthusiasms and skills, his practical knack and unremitting generosity remained with him to the end. He has left a mark on us all.

Fr Bernard died quietly on 9 April, during the Covid-19 lockdown, and was buried simply in the monks' graveyard, after a private Requiem celebrated by the community on 17 April 2020. May he rest in peace.

PETER BOWE OSB

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FR LOUIS O'DWYER OSB, 1935-2020

Fr Louis O'Dwyer, who died after receiving the Sacrament of the Sick and Viaticum on 31 March 2020 had, during his last years, suffered progressively from ill health, both physically and with Alzheimer's. He had had a period in the monastery infirmary, before spending several weeks in hospital, and then living his last few months

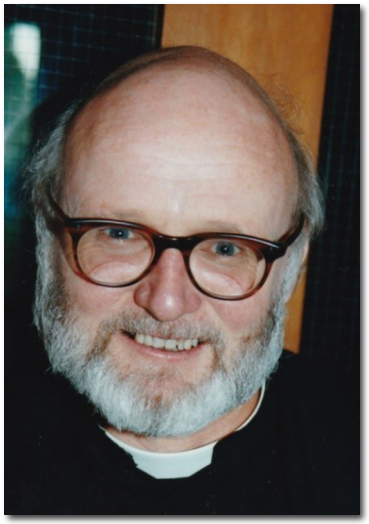
at a nursing home in Newbury. He was a quiet studious person, always happiest when left alone with his books.

He was born Michael John O'Dwyer of Irish parents in Manor Park, Essex where his father was a G.P., on 2 May 1935 and was baptised by the local parish priest, Fr John Carmel Heenan, who later became Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. During the Second World War Michael was evacuated to Galway where he became a Gaelic speaker. In later years he always spoke fondly of his childhood in the west of Ireland. Back in London he went first to a grammar school, and then in 1947 to Douai School, which he left in 1953 with A-level Mathematics for Science with distinction, and winning the sixth form mathematics prize.

At school Louis had developed an interest in sport, especially in London for boxing. Later he would reminisce that in an inter-school contest he boxed with one of the Kray twins. At Douai School he gained prizes for swimming every year, and was noted for cross-country running and tennis, as well as rugby football, playing in the first team in 1952-3, receiving his colours. Later he played rugby at Oxford, and in Louvain, where he once played for the Belgian national team. Another interest was cycling, one year even cycling from Louvain to Rome, staying at monasteries on the way. He arrived on Maundy Thursday, too exhausted to take part in the liturgy. In later life he played golf and was sometimes seen hitting balls around on the meadow until a year or two before his death.

Louis joined the monastery, his novicemaster being Fr Ambrose Crowley, and was clothed on 20 September 1953. His first profession followed in 1954, and solemn profession on 30 September 1957. He began his ecclesiastical studies in the monastery, until he went to St Benet's Hall, Oxford to read mathematics in 1957, gaining a MA. In 1960 he went to Louvain to continue his theological studies. He was ordained priest by Archbishop John Henry King on 11 July 1964, and returned to Louvain to follow a major course in philosophy, which led to his gaining a licentiate. Then, in 1966, *The Douai Magazine* reported that he had "managed to tear himself away from his beloved Louvain to study for a year at Munich University. We hope some day to read his elucidation of the thought of the great theologian and philosopher Paul Tillich. We hope he won't frustrate our desires by writing in German." Sadly, that book never got written. In 1967 he returned to become professor of philosophy in the monastery, and to teach mathematics and physics in the school.

Louis' ten years away at universities had a great effect on his way of living. Often he effectively turned night into day, which did not coalesce well with the monastic horarium, although the school authorities made use of it by inviting him to act as a kind of nightwatchman, occasionally patrolling the premises during the night.



From 1977 to 1983 Fr Louis looked after the Burghfield area of the Woolhampton parish, and was chaplain at H.M.S. Dauntless in Burghfield, an establishment for W.R.N.S. Sometimes, when the community came down for Sunday Matins, they would find Louis drinking copious cups of weak tea in the refectory, having been up all night perfecting his homily. He was fondly remembered by his parishioners. He had a great care for anyone in trouble or with a problem, and could spend hours with such a person, the young as well as the old. Once when a distraught widow wished to see her deceased husband's corpse the night before the funeral, Louis went with her to the undertakers, gaining entry so that her wish could be granted. This did not involve any damage as it was one of the old type of country builder/undertakers sheds. Louis had a parish car which was given to him by a departing parishioner which had two back rows of seats, in which he often drove large numbers of young children to catechetics, or for a day's outing.

In 1983 he was sent as curate to Ormskirk, and from 1988 he was at Cheltenham until 1992, when he returned to the monastery so as to concentrate on reading. In 1999 he was appointed monastery infirmarian. One of his areas of expertise was the psalms, which he taught to the novices. When members of the community were engaged in teaching at the School of Continuing Education at the University of Reading he gave a course on the psalms in the autumn of 2002, and was due to give a course on biblical Hebrew the following autumn, but was prevented as he was sent to be parish priest of Scarisbrick in Lancashire.

Ever the eternal student, in September of 2006 Fr Louis began a year residing at the Maison Saint Benoît in Douai, France, while researching

in the library at Lille University and elsewhere, with the aim of writing a book on the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. This too, alas, was never completed. May he rest in peace.

GERVASE HOLDAWAY OSB

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MICHAEL HALL, 1939-2020

Michael James Rooke Hall, always Mike to the family, was born into challenging times, just before the Second World War, to Dr James (Jimmie) and Mrs Cynthia Hall of Walmer near Deal, Kent. He acquired his father's name and the (incorrect) belief that Jimmie was a descendant of Admiral Sir James Rooke who captured Gibraltar in 1704; Admiral Rooke had no children. Jimmie was a remarkable man—a true polymath, an excellent surgeon, musician, choirmaster, lover of Handel's music—founding the Deal and Walmer Handelian Society—and parish organist. His mother Cynthia was a strong and capable woman, and loved Michael dearly.

War interfered with Michael's childhood fairly dramatically. In 1940, Cynthia and the children had to evacuate from the Kent coast, a probable invasion point for Hitler. Jimmie had to stay behind to care for the people based at the Royal Marine Depot and Betteshanger coal mine, and other essential staff in the area and, as the "Lifeboat Doctor," attend to the many patients on board vessels quarantined inside the Goodwin Sands off Deal. Michael accompanied his father on several trips at a very young age, and the writer recalls meeting Michael and their father coming back from American ships, bringing rare "goodies" that were unavailable during the rationing in England after the war. At some stage Michael acquired the family nickname Bumble.

Cynthia, Michael, and his older sister Christine decamped to Wiltshire in 1940 to stay with Florence Goddard, a one-time nanny in the Hall household before the war, and older brother Martin was packed off to St Richards prep school in Little Malvern, where Michael followed in 1947. By that time, a younger brother, Quentin had arrived in 1944. His memory of Michael was always warm—the strong and attractive older brother who always seemed to be superman. Early memories include being introduced to tobacco and being told the facts of life (neither of which appealed to the younger sibling at the time), and being taken on exciting bike rides.

Michael did not excel educationally at school. He was probably dyslexic, but he was popular and good at sports. He failed his Common Entrance exam to Douai Abbey School in 1952, and was forced to repeat a term at St Richards, and to take his kid brother there with him. In those days we would be put on a train at Walmer Station, given ten shillings (50p today) for a taxi across London to catch the school train from Paddington—not something you would expect an eight-year-old to do today. It bred self-reliance at an early age. While at Douai, Michael took part in school dramas and somehow gained the nickname *Slicksy*.

As a consequence of meagre results, Mike left Douai in 1956 with minimal qualifications. Through a family connection he was employed in Lloyds of London, the Insurance Centre, and began commuting to London, two hours each way by train, to work in the mailroom of Leslie & Godwin Insurance Brokers. He soon found himself under the wing of George Stewart of Stewart Smith & Company, learning the aviation insurance business. In short order, Michael became a broker at the Lloyds of London marketplace, and was placing insurance for high risk businesses around the world. He revelled in life in London, and shared a flat in Knightsbridge with his cousin Dick Seed and their friend Dick Smith. The writer loved his visits there, while still at Douai. An abiding memory was that there was never any food in the flat, but this was compensated by being introduced to the delights of beer at the Nags Head in Kinnerton Street.

In 1962 Michael met and married Jane Brocklehurst in London. They bought a house in Hythe, Kent, and Jane was soon pregnant. In 1964, with a green card and an offer to be the aviation insurance manager at the San Francisco-based brokerage company Cravens Dargan, Michael emigrated to America with his wife Jane (who predeceased Michael), and eleven-month-old son, Rupert. In 1969, Michael met Stocktonian Don Stewart, who backed Michael's launch of I-West Insurance Managers and influenced Michael's move to Stockton that year. Following some challenges with partners, in 1972 Michael founded the brokerage that bears his name. M.J. Hall & Company began brokering aviation risks for Howard Hughes Corporation, Beech Aircraft, and high-risk events, such as Evil Knievel's famous jump at Caesar's Palace. In 1978, Michael founded Golden Bear Insurance Company to meet the demands for aviation insurance. Michael's two businesses started in a small office with two employees and a dog, but now employ over 150

people throughout nine offices in multiple states. Business acumen was only a part of Michael's story.

Meanwhile on the family front, Michael and Jane had four more children: Greg, Dominic, and twins Debbie and Suzie. He had acquired the house on Argonne Drive in Stockton, which over the years was extended to house his growing family. Despite many difficulties, following Jane's death, Michael arranged for all his children to have excellent educational opportunities. Domestic stability came in 1986 when he married Karen Montgomery, who has been a wonderful wife and companion to Michael, caring for him in his last two years of declining health with great compassion right up to Michael's death at home on 21 April.

Thanks to our parents' strong faith and the example of the Benedictines at Douai, Michael remained a lifelong Roman Catholic, and was fully committed to the Church. Over the years, he served on the board of the Diocese of Stockton, the Serra Club, and various Catholic organisations. He was made a Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and made numerous pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Michael worked and met directly with various popes in this capacity, as he dedicated much of his retirement to supporting Catholic efforts towards peace in the Middle East.

Like his father, Michael was a fan of the composer Handel. He loved classical music and supported the Stockton Symphony and the University of the Pacific's Conservatory of Music. Michael could often be seen, and likely heard, on Sunday mornings as an unofficial member of the choir at the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Stockton. Michael was also an avid tennis player and installed a tennis court in his garden. He enjoyed fishing in Alaska with his sons. Although Michael travelled the world, he called Stockton home for over 50 years. He was a wonderful and magnanimous host and loved having guests. He loved his wine, and kept a well-stocked, quality cellar. He gave great support to his daughter Suzie and her husband Steve Reynolds as they set up their, now well-known, Reynolds Family Winery in Napa.

He was a fierce advocate for the Stocktonian community and served on the boards of many charitable and educational organisations. Michael was extremely generous to family and friends. He and Karen loved to travel, particularly to Europe, New Zealand and Australia, where they acquired a condominium in Toorak, an upmarket suburb of Melbourne. Following his partial retirement from full-time work, Michael and Karen would decamp to Melbourne for three months at

the end of December, principally to enjoy the Melbourne tennis tournaments. They delighted in having guests to stay with them, and built up a strong friendship with Fr Brendan Hayes, the local parish priest at St Peter's on Toorak Road. Regular guests included two Douai monks, Fr Godric Timney and Fr Alexander Austin, both tennis fans. On their last trip in January this year, Fr Alex was a source of help and support for Michael.

Michael never forgot his attachment to Douai, and was a great supporter of the school till its closure in 1999, and then the monastery. Michael has an amazing life, and in spite of many challenges and difficulties, never lost his faith. It was a great comfort to him and to those he encouraged. He would readily have acknowledged the motto of Douai Abbey: *Dominus mihi adjutor*—The Lord is my Helper. May he rest in peace.

QUENTIN HALL

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KEVIN MURPHY-O'CONNOR, 1931-2020

IT IS NOT EASY TO TALK ABOUT A MEMBER of my own family, even more so when Kevin and I, and my younger brother, Declan, have lived more than half our lives in other countries.

Since he was so much older than the two of us, I have very few memories of him at home in Caversham in Reading. One memory I do have is from 1954. I was ten years old and Kevin was preparing to go into the army for National Service. He was painting the army trunk to go off on military manoeuvres with the Royal Berkshire Regiment. Kevin went with the regiment to Suez and the canal zone during the crisis in 1956. I remember he came home with an Egyptian fez, the red hat with tassel. Incidentally that trunk is in Medellin, Colombia today, with a nephew of mine. It obviously remembers how the first owner used it so well.

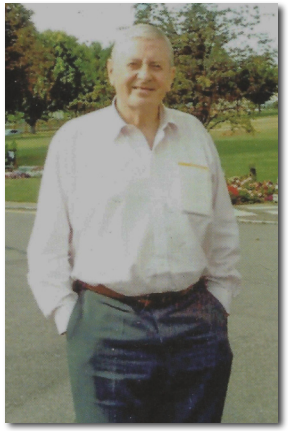
Kevin, the eldest of the siblings, now follows the youngest of the family, sister Mairead, who tragically died in 1984 aged 31, and another sister, Maeve, who died in 2005, aged 68.

Kevin was born in Reading in 1931. His early childhood in Reading changed for the good at the start of the war in 1939. I say for the good, because my parents left him in Ireland with my grandparents, and probably we can say Kevin caught the contagious element of the Irish

way of life. He was extremely happy with the Christian Brothers in Cork. It would be true to say that Kevin was more Irish than the Irish themselves. He loved being in Ireland, on holiday with our vast amount of Irish cousins, the rugby clubs of UCC and Cork Constitution, retracing the footsteps of the playing days of his dad and uncles there.

Kevin returned to Reading in 1941 and two years later went to Douai School. He left in 1950. He was extremely fond of the school and monastery, and remained a loyal servant to the Old Dowegians till his dying day. He was President of the Douai Society, went back to the school for the annual general meetings, was a vocal supporter of all the sports sides, and had lifelong friendships with many Dowegians.

I made reference earlier to his Irishness, living in a foreign country. He dearly wanted to be an Irish citizen and bemoaned the fact that he never got around to getting his Irish passport. The Brexit process exacerbated this feeling even more. After finishing his military service, he went to study medicine at St Mary's in London, but left after only a year to enter the insurance business. At the same time he joined London Irish Rugby Football Club. He was on home ground there, the start of a lifelong interest in the club, but principally in the years when the club was based in Sunbury and before the new professional era.



He captained an extraordinary Extra A side, the fifth side of the club. I played a year in that team, and the word "team" is the key word here. That team punched way above their weight. Kevin was the leader to whom everyone looked up. You had to have a life-threatening excuse to cry off at the last minute for a match. The team's major achievement was to beat all the other opponent sides in London. He liked to get his own back on "foreign opposition." He was very proud of that and deservedly got the honours cap. He put down his best rugby fantasy as Ireland winning the Rugby World Cup. It may be wishful thinking, but I would not put it past that he will have a word with someone Up There about "getting that done," to coin a now well-known phrase. His bookshelves were littered with a wide span of Irish history.

Kevin had a long working life in Lloyds of London from 1954 until his retirement in 1999 He endeared himself to many of the insurance

brokers. I have a vivid memory of the Underwriting Room and the booths, before the internet and digitalisation. We used to meet up there. I was amazed at the personal interaction of the way business was made. Kevin never lost that personal trait. Indeed while his brothers had to learn and use the interactive technology, Kevin never wanted to. In many arguments I had with him about the changing world of business and technology use, his answer would always come back "I DON'T WANT TO USE IT."

Kevin was, until he died, the oldest surviving male Murphy-O'Connor. It is for the second generation of Murphy-O'Connors to continue the kindling of close friendships, the art of being a colourful raconteur and of having a deep passion for everything Irish.

So ends a long life, although with an unexpected end. Kevin suffered from a loss of mobility towards the end of his life, but never lost an alert mind. He died on 11 July. May he rest in peace.

From a eulogy by his brother
FINBAR MURPHY-O'CONNOR

✢

COLIN HUNTLEY, 1942-2020

COLIN HOBART HUNTLEY PASSED AWAY on the 31 March 2020, a proud Old Dowegian, having been ill for some time. Colin's life was embraced by two significant dates. He was born on 15 March 1942, the Ides of March on the Roman calendar, identified in Shakespeare with the assassination of Julius Caesar. He was cremated in the Christian holy week of Easter. This would have pleased him enormously..

Colin was born in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), his parents having fled Singapore as the Japanese invaded in February 1942. His Viennese mother worked for the St John's Ambulance, and his father was a Royal Navy Reserve Volunteer.

After his parents divorced in 1948, he settled in London with his father and paternal grandparents. It must have been difficult for a single father to work and rear a child, but with the generous help of the Catholic Church, Colin was educated at the preparatory school affiliated to Douai at Ditcham Park.

His mother sadly died in Kenya when he was just 12. At 13 he became a boarder at the senior school of Douai run by the monks of Douai

Abbey, which was the first place Colin received a real sense of stability, home and consistency.

His most cherished early years were spent at Douai where he grew to love and excel in rugby, together with cricket and hockey. He conveyed this lifelong passion for sport to many. Colin's name and the Arsenal Football Club, as many of his friends will know, are forever linked. In spite of living behind rival lines, in the North, Colin managed to convert a significant cohort of friends and colleagues to become staunch Gunners supporters. No mean feat!

In addition, it was through Douai he developed an appreciation of education, discipline, history, culture and learned the values which guided him through life. He looked back with nostalgia and fondness on these formative years and never tired of his daughters' delight in reading aloud to him his own Douai school reports.

As an adult, he returned to Douai with family and took pleasure in being reunited with familiar faces of some monks he remembered from his youth. As a member of the Douai Society, he maintained lifelong friendships, enjoying the Old Dowegian events and, more recently, supported the Old Dowegians Cricket Club with the opening of the Douai Room on the site of the old school cricket pavilion.

After graduating in law from Leeds University he became a very proud adopted Yorkshireman, finally settling in Halifax where we have lived and raised our three wonderful daughters.

Colin's career was a great part of his life. His colleagues will remember him as determined, sometimes unconventional in his approach, and a force to be reckoned with on occasions.

Retirement did not leave Colin idle. He became clerk to two local charities, successfully managing 16 almshouses for over 30 years as clerk to the trustees in Halifax and Bradford, where he worked with relentless dedication until the day of his death.

Cursum perficio. May he rest in peace.

From a eulogy by his wife
JAN HUNTLEY

SUSANNA MARGARET WESTMEATH, 1941-2020

Susanna Margaret was born on the 12 June 1941, at Ilfracombe, to Judge J. C .Leonard and Barbara Leonard, the middle child between James and Robert. Susanna was educated at Our Lady's Convent in Abingdon. She starting working at St Andrew's School in Pangbourne in 1961, one of only two Catholics on the staff. Through church she came to know William Anthony Nugent, Lord Delvin. They married in 1963 at St Etheldreda's in Holborn, and had two children, Sean Charles Weston and Patrick Mark Leonard. In 1971 she became Countess of Westmeath, when her husband succeeded as Earl of Westmeath at his father's death.

Susanna achieved her first teaching qualification for music in July 1974, for the recorder, and a Teacher's Certificate in August 1976. In August 1989 she gained her Bachelor of Music degree with Honours at Goldsmiths College, and in December 1991 gained a Master of Musicology degree at the University of Reading. In 1994 she started Rosewood Publications, and this continued until her death.

Susanna's life was marked by a passion for music, from the time she learned how to play to teaching and, eventually, to preparing music for others to play. Her instruments of choice were the piano, organ, recorder, clarinet and double bass. Chamber music was a great love of hers, especially with friends and colleagues within the teaching profession. Playing music for parish churches was also a regular activity which she enjoyed, most often at St Luke's in Theale where she was organist since the 1990s, and was involved in the purchase of a new church organ there. On one occasion there was a power cut, and without blinking she rummaged in her handbag, pulled out a recorder, announced "verse three," and continued with the hymn. It was through her activity at St Luke's that she also became involved in parish activity at Douai Abbey during which her suggestion, "let's have some proper coffee," became well known.

For many years Susanna was a peripatetic teacher, primarily of recorder and clarinet, at a number of schools around Berkshire including the Blue Coats, Elstree and St Andrew's. However, she also made time to teach older students privately at home. Somehow during her long career teaching she also found time to study for her degrees in music and along with teaching qualifications, which were achievements in which she quite rightly took great pride.

From 1994 Susanna's life was marked by founding and running her own business, Rosewood Publications. The aim of this business was to find long lost or forgotten chamber music, re-arrange it and bring it back into modern use. Using her contacts in the music industry, who sometimes had to delve into strange libraries and collections, especially in the days following the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, Susanna was able to bring such music back into use by both amateur chamber groups and some professional musicians around the world. Another string to her bow, she also designed and managed the parish website.

To the family's consternation Susanna was diagnosed with cancer in late January, and was told that it was terminal unless chemotherapy reduced the cancer so that an operation was possible. In February worse news followed, as further scans showed that the illness had spread. She found chemotherapy difficult to tolerate, and by the time a form of the treatment she could tolerate was found, the cancer was too far advanced. She accepted that the end was inevitable and came off treatment. Throughout her illness Susanna was buoyed up by her family and her faith, receiving much welcome support from Douai despite these troubled times. She had a remarkable, matter-of-fact approach towards living what time she had left to the fullest possible, and referred to her cancer as "the bugger" that was holding her back. She made great efforts during the Covid-19 lockdown to keep in touch with family and friends by email, Facetime on her iPad, and by phone.

Sadly, as Susanna's illness progressed it was clear that she would not be able to continue Rosewood Publications and ownership of the catalogue was passed over to a fellow music publishing business in April of 2020 to ensure it would still be available to people who are interested, asking in payment only a charitable donation to the Nordoff-Robbins music charity, which aims to make music accessible to the deprived or people with special needs.

Only weeks later, Susanna went into hospital with complications caused by her cancer on 24 June. Sadly, she was not to come home and died in one of the Newbury Community Hospital's Rainbow Rooms on Sunday, 5 July 2020, with family at her bedside. Susanna had accepted her death with sadness, but also with great stoicism and fortitude and, in spite of Covid-19 restrictions, she had been determined to make the best of the time she had. Susanna will be missed by many. May she rest in peace.

PATRICK NUGENT &
BENEDICT THOMPSON OSB

Community Chronicle 2020

JANUARY

The year opened quietly enough, though two of the brethren were by now in care: FR BERNARD in Alton Community Hospital, and FR LOUIS in a care home near Newbury. The community busied itself ensuring that both of them were visited regularly to offer spiritual and fraternal comfort. A few days into January Fr Bernard was transferred to West Berkshire Hospital, much closer to Douai.

In a change to the normal practice, Fr Prior stepped aside this year as the principal celebrant at the Mass on the solemnity of the Epiphany. The Abbot President, FR CHRISTOPHER JAMISON, accepted the role, accompanied by the polyphony of the Douai Abbey Singers, who held a drinks' reception in the guest refectory after the Mass. Epiphany marked the end of the community's holiday period.

Two days later, the holiday now over, the community's semi-annual CHURCH CLEAN was undertaken, bringing down all the Christmas decorations in the process. The day before was taken up with a community review and discussion of the preliminary report on the monastery's safeguarding procedures by the independent American consultants, Praesidium, who are inspecting all the monasteries of the EBC before the next General Chapter.

On 8 January, the Abbot President's REGIMEN met at Douai. With apt timeliness, seen in hindsight, Abbot James of St Anselm's in Washington DC attended "virtually," via Skype. Though the increasing use of Skype had been envisioned already as a means to save both money and the planet, little did we know that soon most meetings would become largely virtual, Skype giving way to an unheard of things called Zoom. Like Skype and Google, that name would become a verb in daily speech.

Meanwhile, life continued as normal, with the abbot visiting on business the convents at Oulton and Colwich in Staffordshire, dropping in on Fr Benedict at Studley during the trip. Guests were in the guesthouse again. The renewal of the lease with the current tenants of the monastery land in Greyfield Wood was agreed. Beenham Investment Group do a fine job maintaining the area for public access.

On 20 January our postulant, Br Thomas Messenger, was clothed in the habit and so began his novitiate. Fr Abbot conferred on him the monastic name of Aidan. Please pray for him as he progresses through his initial formation.

FEBRUARY

BISHOP PATRICK MCKINNEY of Nottingham and a contingent of his clergy arrived at Douai on 10 February to make a five-day retreat under the direction of Fr Gerard Skinner. On the same day Fr Abbot and Fr Alban attended the launch of *The Way of Benedict* by Sr Laurentia Johns of Stanbrook Abbey. The book was reviewed in the previous edition of this magazine.

On 13 February the monks' CAR PARK, outside the north block of the monastery, was graded and re-gravelled; in recent years rain would turn the area uncomfortably muddy. The renovation will save the monks' shoes and the cleanliness of the cloisters.

The abbey church was the scene of more improving action on 18 February when MORE FURNISHINGS BY GEORGE PACE were installed in the sanctuary of the abbey church. In late 2018 Fr Hugh had arranged for the Pace choir stalls, and other furnishings, formerly sited under the octagon in Ely Cathedral, to come to Douai. The Pace furnishings,

modernist-gothic in style, had been had been superseded by newly-commissioned furniture at the cathedral, but remained in very good condition. More surplus Pace choir stalls have been accepted by Fr Oliver from the church of the Precious Blood in Southwark. That church had in fact received the furnishings some years earlier from the Anglican St Alban's Cathedral which, like Ely, was a pre-Reformation Benedictine house. These two sets by Pace match well in the sanctuary, and provide the community with increased adequate seating near the altar. The new arrivals are in a cooler shade of oak [*below*].

Fr Abbot was on the road a few times, once for the launch at Birkbeck College in London on 21 February of Dr Carmel Mangion's book, *Catholic Nuns and Sisters in a Secular Age: 1945-90,* published by Manchester University Press. From 23 to 25 February he was in the north west to take the funeral of Angela Brown, which allowed him to spend time with the brethren at our parishes in Ormskirk and Scarisbrick.

By the end of the month the ominous advent of a new and contagious coronavirus, called COVID-19, had begun to capture space in news' bulletins. The bishops' conference issued some precautionary guidance, which saw some liturgical changes at Douai adopted out of prudence: the communion from the chalice was restricted and the exchange of peace omitted. At the same time the holy water stoups were emptied.

But of course, much more was just around the corner...

MARCH

On 5 March came news of the FIRST DEATH in the UK attributed to Covid-19. The lady, in her 70s, died only ten miles from Douai, at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading. This was alarmingly close to home. The community decided to implement more precautions, and so concelebration at daily Mass was suspended indefinitely.

Nevertheless, life carried on. On 11 March Fr Abbot met with Archbishop Longley, Bishop Kenny and Fr Evans from Birmingham archdiocese to discuss the work of our three parishes in the diocese. Next day the Historic Churches Committee met at Douai for the day. During that week tree surgeons were at work in the monks' garden trimming or felling trees in its more overgrown sections.

With the news not improving, the community decided to CLOSE THE GUESTHOUSE on 14 March, until 20 April. This end date would prove to be innocently optimistic to say the least. The whispers of impending government restrictions on movement and gathering were getting louder by the day. A concert scheduled for 28 March was the first major victim of this decision.

A two-day meeting of the trustees and abbot's council went ahead on 18 and 19 March, but such were the media prognostications of a LOCKDOWN that Fr Paul did not come down from Alcester, and Fr Hugh beat a quick retreat back to Scarisbrick soon after the meeting finished. On 23 March, the national lockdown was indeed declared. The abbey church, with all other churches, was closed to public access. Only funeral liturgies survived the cull of public worship, though these were restricted to brief services at graveside or crematorium, with no more than a dozen mourners, all having to keep their distance from each other. The guesthouse closure was extended indefinitely, and the monastery closed to all visitors.

People very soon began to discuss how to attend Mass "virtually," using online platforms. In Dowegian terms, Fr Paul was first off the mark, STREAMING MASS from Alcester on 20 March using YouTube. A few days later Fr Hugh was streaming daily Mass from Scarisbrick on Facebook. A new pastoral reality was suddenly upon us, and both Church and monastery were scrambling to adapt to it.

We discovered that our own patron, St Edmund, King and Martyr, was one of the patron saints for epidemics, and the community began to invoke him in this capacity at midday prayer every other day, alternating on the intervening days with the singing of the Marian chant *Stella cæli extirpavit.* In this way we called upon both the titular patrons of the abbey church. The community had to revise the logistics of its worship, not least to accommodate social distancing in the choir stalls.

Outside of the abbey church, sanitising gel was quickly ubiquitous, and social distancing accommodated in both the monks' refectory and calefactory. Fr Benjamin was designated to go out shopping for any items the brethren might need. Most of our staff were put on extended furlough rather than laid off, thanks to the government's assistance package. Quite suddenly, Douai had become more of an ENCLOSED MONASTERY in the classical mould.

The Abbot President led an endeavour to bring spiritual guidance for the lockdown that was released to the public at the end of the month. Called *Alone Together*, it was based on a website offering various free resources and video presentations, many of which were filmed at Douai. It continues to be accessible at www.alonetogether.org.uk.

So it was somehow, if not quite fitting, then at least apposite that our FR LOUIS died in the early afternoon of 31 March, aged 84. The community had to confront now the challenges of celebrating his funeral in Covidtide. Fr Louis' obituary can be found earlier in this magazine.

APRIL

Just a few days after his death, Fr Louis was buried in the monastic cemetery on 3 April, in a simple Covidtide service that was shared by Facetime with his family, who were absent due to the restrictions. Beforehand the monks had celebrated a Requiem Mass in the abbey church, though without his body present. May he rest in peace.

Six days later, during the evening of 9 April, Maundy Thursday, FR BERNARD joined Fr Louis in the next life. Having been in West Berkshire Hospital he had been moved on Ash Wednesday to a nursing home in Whitchurch. His funeral, on 17 April, was held under the same restrictions as his confrère's a fortnight earlier. His obituary also appears earlier in this magazine. May he rest in peace.

About the same time the monastery launched a community INSTAGRAM account, under the username *douaiabbey*.

By now the life of the monastery had settled into the quiet, uneventful routine that attends the more enclosed style of monasticism the community had been forced to embrace. The highlights were mainly supplied by the liturgical calendar and the liturgies of the dead. Towards the end of April the community streamed its first liturgy, Friday Compline from the abbey church. The Woolhampton parish also embarked on streaming Mass regularly.

MAY

The community's cyber-migration to virtual reality continued with the DOUAI ABBEY PARISHES TRUST, which met via Zoom, the monastery having invested in a Zoom business account. It was agreed that, from now on, two of the three trustees' meetings each year would be held remotely, and only for the remaining meeting would they gather in person and share a meal. With England now in a third full lockdown at the time of writing, this gathering remains a desire yet to be realised.

On 6 May, the Zooming continued with the SUPERIORS of all the various monasteries of the EBC meeting online to discuss the impact of Covid-19 on our monasteries thus far, and to begin to comprehend what effect it will have on the English congregation's future.

About this time Fr Abbot revealed that the eyes of the statue of Our Lady in the cloister had been seen to weep shortly before Covid-19 struck. Such apparently supernatural phenomena are rare at Douai, and therefore all the more notable.

With the community's active horizons much narrowed by Covidtide, more attention was able to be lavished on DOMESTIC PROJECTS. The pond in the monks' garden, which has experienced ongoing renovation in recent years, was stocked with Douai-bred goldfish. With insufficient funds to devote to the task, the area set aside for the long, low wall intended by the architect to accompany the path to the library was gravelled over. On this wall were to have been engraved in large lettering the opening words of St John's Gospel, in Latin: *In principio erat Verbum*. Maybe one day it will come to pass. Also, installation began of a new wood and glass door and screen at the monastery's reception, which

should insulate the area from the draughts that regularly afflict it. With local footfall so drastically reduced, our poultry's excess eggs began to be distributed in Newbury by the abbot's brother, John. With the risks entailed from visitors reduced, the ducks were allowed to range freely.

Nearby, work began to restore the Westminster and Whittington chimes of the eight-foot tall GRANDFATHER CLOCK at the reception. This clock was bought by our Fr Bede McEvoy in 1900 while he was on the mission at our parish of St Augustine in Liverpool. Built by the Liverpool clockmakers Morath Brothers, who were finding it difficult to sell due to its physical grandeur, it came into Fr Bede's safe hands after he made Morath's an offer they could not refuse. It has graced this part of the monastery for over a century now.

At the end of May the ABBOT'S COUNCIL entered the Zoomosphere for the first time, with a six-hour meeting at which our financial advisors were also (virtually) present. It went well, not least due to the advanced facilities of the Abbot President's curial office at Douai, which were graciously allowed for the council's use.

JUNE

After the pontifical Mass for Pentecost Sunday, the community enjoyed a BBQ prepared by our catering manager Sarah, and her daughter Hannah. It offered the brethren something of a spirit-lifting departure from routine, if you will pardon the pun.

Domestic projects had not yet exhausted the interest of the brethren, with Fr Oliver beginning to design and build WOOD AND METAL PLANTERS for the newly-gravelled area outside the library. Once finally completed their design was seen to be in substantial harmony with the library itself. The first of them is pictured at right.

Also early in June was the first in a series of ONLINE CONFERENCES organised by the EBC's Continuing Formation Commission. Given by the well-known Trappist

monk and author from Tarrawarra Abbey in Australia, Fr Michael Casey, who offered suggestions for a spiritual approach to dealing fruitfully with the Covid-19 crisis. The communities of our monasteries, and their missioners, were able to assemble together via Zoom for the sort of formational input that the congregation would have been unable to share as widely otherwise. Another session occurred on 20 June, led by Fr Columba Stewart of Collegeville in the USA.

On 12 June a group of ARTISTS, socially distanced of course, gathered outside the abbey church in order to capture it on their canvasses in watercolours.

When a wild SWARM OF BEES appeared in the monastery grounds on 16 June, Fr Gabriel managed to "tang" it and add half of it to the monastery's hives. "Tanging," by the way, is what beekeepers do to call dibs on a wild swarm. Fr Gabriel's article on bess at Douai appears earlier in this magazine.

Not content to rest on his planters, Fr Oliver began investigate the possibility of reopening the OLD WATER BORE near the meadow (which Old Dowegians know as the monastery pitches). Sealed in 1959 after a few years of disuse, it had been surmounted by a water tower [*right*] near where Fr Wilfrid's radio mast would rise, both of which have since gone the way of all mankind's works. The bore's restoration would allow us to water the gardens without resort to the mains, especially useful in times of hosepipe bans.

The mission fathers were busier than usual with funerals, and death returned close to home with the death of long-time parishioner, Celia Heron. About the same time, the Abbot President's mother, Beverley, passed away, aged 110 years. May they rest in peace.

As June faded into the summer's haze, our POTAGER was seen to be flourishing, supplying a bumper garlic crop and the prospect of a bountiful harvest of fruit. Two areas of lawn near the abbey church were left un-mown to allow the bees the chance of clover blossom. A kind

parishioner gave the community another lockdown project by donating a 6,000-piece jigsaw of the ornate ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. We were also able to open the abbey church to visitors for private prayer for an hour on Sunday afternoons.

JULY

On 3 July was the last in the first series of EBC online conferences, this time given by Br Colmán Ó Clabaigh of Glenstal Abbey in Ireland, who looked back to find lessons from the BLACK DEATH of the 14th century. The same day, the Zoom account was busy again as Fr Abbot joined a meeting of the Douai Foundation Trust, an outgrowth of the Douai Society that seeks to aid Benedictine-sponsored projects in less prosperous lands.

The beginning of July saw our faithful employee Graham Giles able to RETURN TO WORK, if only part-time, for the first time since the onset of lockdown. Fr Gregory had stepped in to shoulder some of Sarah's load in the kitchen, a burden of which Graham now largely relieved him. In thanks, he community gave Fr Gregory a garden centre gift card, since he was free again to focus on the gardens.

On 5 July, TWO PARISH STALWARTS passed away after long illnesses: Lady Susanna Westmeath, whose obituary can be found earlier in this magazine; and Marie Piero, wife of our former, long-serving, monastic houseman, Donato, and very active in Woolhampton parish. A few days earlier came word of the death of Fr Anthony Meredith SJ, a well-known Jesuit scholar, and a contemporary of Fr Gervase when they were pupils at Cardinal Vaughan School in London. May they all rest in peace.

By mid-July England was beginning a tentative emergence from the rigours of full lockdown, which enabled Fr Abbot to attend a trustees meeting at OULTON ABBEY in Staffordshire, after which he went on to spend a few days with the brethren at Ormskirk. We learned, about the same time, that COLWICH ABBEY, not from Oulton, was to be affiliated to Stanbrook Abbey. With the recent death of their Sr Monica, the nuns had been reduced to a number which brought them under the provisions of the recently enacted Roman brief, *Cor orans*. We pray that both communities prosper in this new relationship.

As further evidence of limited emergence from lockdown Fr Richard Finn OP was able to resume on 20 July his regular visits to the monastery library to pursue his research in the English Dominican archives held at Douai. On 25 July Fr Henry Wansbrough of Ampleforth visited to swap Ampleforth's duplicate books with ours.

Near the end of July the monastery took delivery of a bench, given as a memorial to her late husband Vernon by parishioner Monica Morris. It will probably offer some welcome comfort for visitors to the Calvary out by the meadow.

On 27 July, SHEILA HUELIN, a nurse at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading and a member of the monastery parish at Pangbourne, addressed the community on the prevailing situation of Covid-19 and outlined precautions the community should be taking in light of this.

AUGUST

The community's SUMMER HOLIDAY month was much quieter than usual for reasons which must be plain enough by now. As expected, there was plenty of work for those willing and able to pick fruit. More than 200 figs were picked from a single tree, and there was a bumper crop of apples. In mid-August Fr Boniface was able to take advantage of a relative lull in Covid restrictions to come down for a week with the community before its annual retreat began.

The demands of Covidtide required that, this year, the other mission fathers did not come to the monastery for the ANNUAL RETREAT. Instead both they and our retreat master, Bishop Michael Campbell OSA, the emeritus bishop of Lancaster, attended remotely thanks to the Zoomosphere. A preached retreat delivered via Zoom presented some new technical challenges to face, but at the conclusion of the retreat Fr Abbot noted that Zoom, with its close up vision of Bishop Campbell, had the effect of making him seem nearer to the listener than if he had been sitting, as normally, at the head of the room. A member of the Augustinian order, Bishop Michael's retreat was aptly anchored in the writings of St Augustine.

Towards the end of August came more EBC news, namely the decision of the BRETHREN AT DOWNSIDE to move from their historic home, with its splendid minor basilica for an abbey church. The oldest community

of the EBC, Downside's move caused considerable sighs and wonder. We pray they prosper in their fine tradition wherever they pitch their new tabernacle.

The month's end saw also the publication of Fr Hugh's new book, *A Limerickal Commentary on the Second Vatican Council*, published by the Canadian Catholic publisher, Arouca Press. A review of the book can be found earlier in this magazine, as can a review of Fr Edmund's 2019 book of reflections on Roman graffiti. By the time this magazine is off the presses Fr Hugh will have a second book out with the same publisher, *Father Brown Reforms the Liturgy*, the first publicly available edition of a 1939 anonymous tract on liturgical reform by Old Dowegian, Mgr John O'Connor, on whom G.K. Chesterton based his famous clerical detective, Father Brown. Far from a dry and dusty religious work, its humour and tone will explain the author's original anonymity. All these books can be ordered through Amazon and other bookstores.

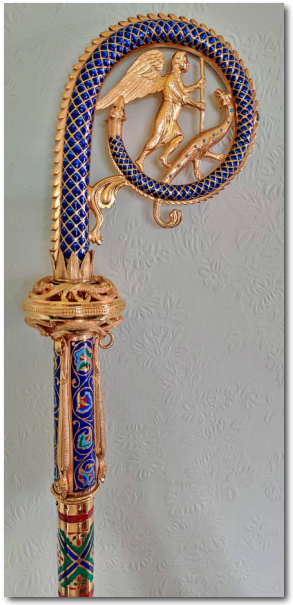
SEPTEMBER

With the advent of autumn came the first glimmerings of the advent of LIFE AFTER COVID. The community began to plan for the limited re-opening of the guesthouse in early October. From 20 September the Sunday conventual Mass in the abbey church was reopened to limited public attendance, naturally subject to the official conditions.

Early in the month Fr Edmund was able to come to the monastery from Rome, to prepare to act as co-visitor with the Abbot President for the canonical visitation of EALING ABBEY in London, which began on 7 September.

Also in early September Br Aidan brought to a successful completion the labour of almost two years, in compiling an ELECTRONIC INVENTORY of the community's many paintings. This will not only be an important comprehensive record of our artworks, but will greatly facilitate their proper care and insurance.

Having been delayed by the coming of Covid, the restoration of ARCHBISHOP BENEDICT SCARISBRICK'S episcopal crozier was completed, through the good services of Ormsby's of Scarisbrick. Archbishop Scarisbrick (†1908) was one of several Douai monks to serve as bishops of Port Louis in Mauritius. After he retired from the diocese, Scarisbrick



was raised to the personal dignity of archbishop. The crozier's provenance is not precisely known but it is likely to have been made in Belgium. Covidtide has prevented Fr Hugh from returning it to the monastery as yet.

In the middle of the month Fr Abbot undertook a planned trip to ROME, originally intended to enable a visit to the Vatican archives. These being closed due to the pandemic, Fr Abbot allowed himself something of a holiday, catching up with Fr Edmund, back in Rome from visiting Ealing, Abbot Primate Gregory Polan and other friends in Rome. While he was away Fr Alexander came to Douai for a week's private retreat, though the timing was purely coincidental.

September saw some more of the ONLINE CONFERENCES organised by the EBC Continuing Formation Commission, with talks from Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP, former Master General of the Dominicans, Professor Eamon Duffy of Cambridge and Fr Roger Dawson SJ, director of St Beuno's in Wales.

OCTOBER

The intended re-opening of the guesthouse on 6 October was not possible, so further planning had to be undertaken. Likewise, Fr Abbot was unable to celebrate Mass at Bl Hugh Faringdon School in Reading, instead giving the pupils a video presentation on the life of St Benedict. He was able celebrate Mass at WINCHESTER COLLEGE, in the newly-renovated St Michael's chapel, now a flexible worship space. Even though all Sunday worship in the college had been made voluntary for Covidtide, 33 Catholic boys still came to Mass, more than attended the service in the main chapel in this overwhelmingly Anglican school.

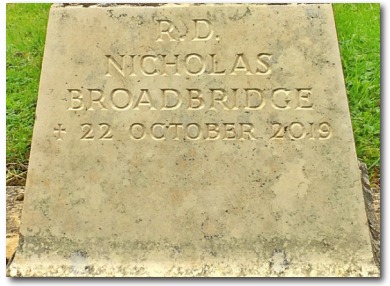
In the middle of the month Fr Gregory progressed into the JUNIORATE. Fr Peter was appointed Junior Master, in place of Fr Finbar who had retired from the role.

On 18 October, the community began to take SUNDAY'S LIGHT SUPPER of sandwiches in the calefactory rather than the refectory, another Covodian effect. The calefactory fire makes for a warmer experience, both literally and figuratively, during the colder months.

From 13 to 15 October the EBC superiors' meeting, originally intended to take place physically at Douai, was convened virtually via Zoom. Among the topics addressed was the recent papal encyclical, *Fratelli tutti.*

Fr Abbot began the daunting task of transferring Fr Louis' extensive library to the main library. The greater part of it is comprised of philosophy books, including an impressive collection of texts relating to Martin Heidegger.

The engraving was completed on the GRAVESTONES of our three brethren who had died in the past twelve months.



On 19 October, Fr Abbot and Fr Edmund, began the CANONICAL VISITATION OF AMPLEFORTH. Due to the pandemic, this visitation of the EBC's largest community was conducted via video. This allowed the visitors to remain at Douai and Rome respectively, and those brethren of Ampleforth serving elsewhere were able to take part without travelling back.

During October community discussions continued on the re-opening of the guesthouse, as well as the practicalities of more in the pastoral programme through live-streaming. It may be that the community will move to invest in the necessary equipment should it prove feasible.

NOVEMBER

LOCKDOWN 2.0 was imposed for a month from 5 November. Thus, all public access to services in the abbey church was discontinued, though it was opened to the public for private prayer from 2 to 3pm on Sundays.

As a result of the lockdown, things returned to near-Carthusian quietness apart from the occasional bonfire night firecracker. We learned of the death of Caroline Mayr-Harting, wife of faithful Old Dowegian Professor Henry Mayr-Harting. Fr Abbot led her Covid-restricted funeral in Oxford on 19 November. May she rest in peace.

The community's patronal feast of St Edmund on 20 November was kept with the customary solemnity, though without guests due to the lockdown. Covidtide also put an end to our proposed joint celebration with Ampleforth of the 50th anniversary of the canonisation of ST ALBAN ROE among the 40 Martyrs of England and Wales. St Alban was clothed as a monk of the community now at Ampleforth but died a monk of the community now at Douai.

At Mass on St Edmund's Day, the abbot and community formally conferred CONFRATERNITY with the community on Greg and Celia Primavesi. Members of our parish at St Luke's, Theale, both have been faithful friends of the community: Greg has served the community as *de facto* clerk of works in place of Fr Wilfrid since his death in 2003; Celia was for many years sacristan at St Luke's. *Ad multos annos!*

On 28 November, with the help of Br Christopher, the first of two Advent Zoom sessions for oblates and parishioners was held. An oblate and a parishioner gave presentations followed by discussion.

On 30 November the conventual chapter voted to ADMIT BR AIDAN TO FIRST PROFESSION OF VOWS. Due to the pandemic a date has not yet been set for the profession Mass. *Ad multos annos!*

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS PLANNING required more attention than usual as December rolled round, and England moved out of Lockdown 2.0 in the first week of the month. The logistics of offering public liturgy at Christmas were inevitably affected by advice from both government and the local

Church. After originally planning to allow public attendance at our Christmas Eve and Day Masses, the deteriorating situation impelled the community to close public access to our Christmas worship. In its place Fr Peter offered Mass for the local parish via Zoom on Christmas Eve.

On 5 December was the second of the Advent Zoom sessions, led by an oblate and Fr Gervase.

Fr Abbot managed the feat of celebrating the last, and in fact only the second, Mass of the term at WINCHESTER College on 6 December.

The next day, Fr Edmund in Rome offered, via Zoom, an insight into the work of the AGENDA COMMITTEE preparing for the quadrennial EBC General Chapter to be held (Covid permitting) this summer at Douai.

Old Dowegian ADRIAN STRICKLAND left the community a significant collection of books relating to Malta. Fr Abbot began the process of integrating it into the monastic library as a discrete collection.

From 15 to 18 December, Fr Alban assisted the Abbot President in the canonical visitation of our brethren at Belmont Abbey, near Hereford.

In the middle of the month news came of the death of FR FINBAR'S SISTER, ANNE. May she rest in peace. Fr Finbar flew out to Dublin for the funeral and stayed on for Christmas to spend time with his family. On his return he had to self-isolate as a precaution given his travels.

CHRISTMAS DAY found Berkshire under Tier 4 restrictions. It was community only throughout the period, and Fr Gregory led the effort in the kitchen. The abbey church was decorated as usual, but this year the crib was not erected. Fr Abbot dug out from the archive the lush red velvet cloak that had been used in old Douai by Father Christmas. Decorated with embroidered bees, Fr Abbot ie keen to know its provenance and original use. One possibility is that it had been ceremonial dress for a member of the house of peers in the French parliament. If you know more, or better, please let him know.

HUGH SOMERVILLE KNAPMAN OSB

Monastic Community 2021

Rt Rev Geoffrey Scott, abbot since 1998, is also librarian and archivist. He teaches church history at Blackfriars Hall, Oxford and is President of the Catholic Archives Society, annalist of the EBC, and member of *The Douai Magazine* committee.

Very Rev Alban Hood is prior, novicemaster, choirmaster, member of *The Douai Magazine* committee, and a censor of books for the EBC.

Rt Rev Finbar Kealy is abbot emeritus and Cathedral Prior of Canterbury.

Rt Rev Edmund Power is titular Abbot of St Albans. He teaches at Collegio Sant'Anselmo in Rome, and also serves as Roman procurator for the English and St Ottilien congregations.

Fr Gervase Holdaway is subprior, director of our oblates, baker and jam-maker, and manager of our bookshop.

Very Rev Godric Timney is Cathedral Prior of Worcester, and parish priest of Ormskirk and Scarisbrick (Lancs). He is also Episcopal Vicar for Religious in the Liverpool archdiocese.

Fr Peter Bowe is parish priest of Woolhampton, and sits on the abbot's council.

Fr Boniface Moran is assistant priest at Ormskirk and Scarisbrick and chaplain to the Douai Society.

Fr Austin Gurr serves as parish priest of Andover (Hants).

Fr Oliver Holt is bursar and guestmaster, sits on the abbot's council, and is the community's liaison with the Douai Society.

Fr Alexander Austin is the parish priest of Stratford-on-Avon (Warks).

Fr Francis Hughes is the parish priest of Kemerton (Glos), and serves on the Marriage Tribunal for Clifton diocese.

Fr Richard Jones is the parish priest of Fishguard and St Davids (Pemb), and edits the annual *Ordo* for the EBC.

Fr Paul Gunter is parish priest of Alcester (Warks), and sits on the abbot's council. He is also Secretary to the Department of Christian Life and Worship of the Conference of Bishops of England and Wales.

Fr Benedict Thompson serves as parish priest of Studley (Warks).

Fr Benjamin Standish is assistant priest in Woolhampton parish and assistant guestmaster.

Br Christopher Greener is infirmarian and assists in the pastoral programme.

Br Simon Hill serves as properties' manager, and assistant to both the bursar and the infirmarian.

Fr Hugh Somerville Knapman lives in the parish of Scarisbrick while pursuing doctoral studies, sits on the abbot's council, and is publisher and webmaster.

Fr Gabriel Wilson is pastoral programme director, vocation director, and keeps our bees and poultry.

Br Aidan Messenger will soon complete the first year of his novitiate.

☞ *This list does not necessarily include all of the work undertaken by members of the community.*

Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus

THE DOUAI MAGAZINE

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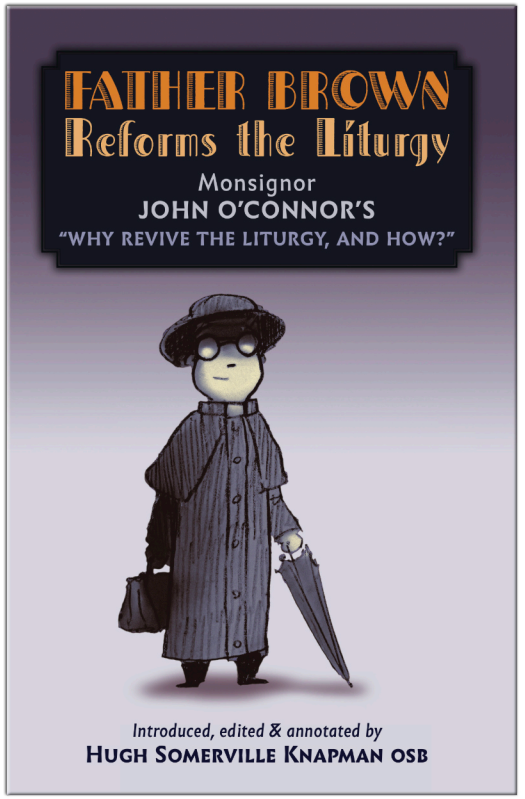

Published, privately and anonymously, by Mgr John O'Connor, an Old Dowegian and the inspiration for G.K. Chesterton's *Father Brown*, this daring, opinionated and amusing diatribe on what *Father Brown* felt was wrong with the Mass—and how to fix it—has been edited and annotated by Fr Hugh, who also corrects the assumed dating of the tract. By turns prophetic and confounding, the real *Father Brown* is never dull.

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