



Dowry

(N°22, Summer 2014)

“O Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gracious Queen and Mother, look down in mercy upon England thy Dowry.”(Cardinal Wiseman)



(Bishop Athanasius Schneider O.R.C., Auxiliary bishop of Astana, Kazakhstan, offered Mass at St William of York in Reading on Sunday 18 May 2014. Bishop Schneider was born in Tokmok, Kirghiz SSR in the Soviet Union. In 1973, shortly after making his First Holy Communion by the hand of Blessed Oleksa Zaryckyj, priest and martyr, he left with his family for Germany. Based on his experience under Communist persecution and on the Fathers of the Church, his book *Dominus est* advocates the traditional manner of receiving Holy Communion.)

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Editorial: Our last canonised Popes

Even before death, two men were canonised with remarkable celerity by Our Blessed Lord Himself. One was His Precursor, about whom He declared: “there hath not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist” (Mt 11:11). The other was the Thief, hanging at His side: “And Jesus said to him: Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise” (Lk 23:43). No two saints could have led more different lives, as one was confirmed in grace in his mother’s womb; whereas the other lived in sin and embraced grace at the last minute. We rejoice as we see that it is never too late to convert and repent, although neglect of previous graces lessens our chances of seizing the last, which is not even owed to us. The Church does not pronounce on the damnation of souls in particular, but refusing grace is possible, leading to eternal death, as Our Lord Himself implied, referring to Judas: “None of them is lost, but the son of perdition” (Jn 17:12).

Notwithstanding the contrasted itineraries of saints, canonisations are first of all a reminder of our personal duty to strive for holiness, making effective use of the means of salvation granted us by Divine Providence here and now. Day after day, we children of the Church want to correspond always more faithfully to God’s manifold grace. This is what the saints have done. Their examples inspire us. Depending on the circumstances of our lives, we will be closer to some saints than to others. The better they are found to have developed the virtues connected with their station in life, the more exemplary and helpful they are to us. On 20 August, the Church will celebrate the centenary of the death of St. Pius X, up to last month the latest canonised pope. Amidst many trials, he guided the flock of Christ wisely and firmly, providing for all through canon law, sacred music and liturgy, through a wider access to the Holy Eucharist, and most prophetically through diagnosing the modernist heresy. His legacy endures. It is much too soon to assess what impact his two now canonised successors will have. Those attached to the Extraordinary Form of the Roman rite will find a further confirmation of the sanctity of their cherished worship, now referred to as ‘the Missal of Saint John XXIII’, although most of it remained substantially unchanged from the time of Pope St Gregory the Great (590-604).

Our Fraternity will not forget that Saint John Paul II was personally involved in our foundation during the summer 1988, when he met with our founders in Rome, supported their initiative and found for them our first seminary and motherhouse in Bavaria. On 2 July 1988, he wrote: “To all those Catholic faithful who feel attached to some previous liturgical and disciplinary forms of the Latin tradition I wish to manifest my will to facilitate their ecclesial communion by means of the necessary measures to guarantee respect for their rightful aspirations. In this matter I ask for the support of the bishops and of all those engaged in the pastoral ministry in the Church” (Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei*, #5). He praised the Traditional liturgy again in his address to the Plenary Meeting of The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (21 September 2001): “The Roman Missal, promulgated by Saint Pope Pius V, and the various Eastern Liturgies, contain many very beautiful prayers with which the

priest expresses a profound sense of reverence and humility before the Sacred Mysteries. These prayers reveal the very substance of every Liturgy.” Several magisterial statements by St John Paul II proved particularly opportune and helpful. *Veritatis Splendor* – “The Splendor of Truth” (6 August 1993), warned against moral relativism; *Evangelium Vitae* – “The Gospel of Life” (25 March 1995), provides an accurate distinction between the culture of life and the culture of death; *Fides et Ratio* – “Faith and Reason” (14 September 1998), insisted on the legitimate use of the intellect for a genuine service to the virtue of faith.

His last encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* – “The Church from the Eucharist” (17 April 2003), offers a reflection on the mystery of the Eucharist in its relationship with the Church. Its theme is of particular interest to those who meditate on the axiom ‘lex orandi, lex credendi’. Saint John Paul II wrote: “It must be lamented that, especially in the years following the post-conciliar liturgical reform, as a result of a misguided sense of creativity and adaptation there have been a number of abuses which have been a source of suffering for many. A certain reaction against “formalism” has led some, especially in certain regions, to consider the “forms” chosen by the Church’s great liturgical tradition and her Magisterium as non-binding and to introduce unauthorized innovations which are often completely inappropriate” (#52). “How can we not admire the doctrinal expositions of the Decrees on the Most Holy Eucharist and on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass promulgated by the Council of Trent? For centuries those Decrees guided theology and catechesis, and they are still a

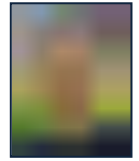
dogmatic reference-point for the continual renewal and growth of God’s People in faith and in love for the Eucharist” (#9). Saint John Paul II further affirmed the terminology defined at Trent as “perennially valid” (#15) and he clearly reiterated the necessity of preparing one’s soul for Holy Communion (#36). We give thanks for the fact that since then, his call to his brother bishops is better heard, and implemented more fruitfully: “I invite the Bishops also, fraternally, to understand and to have a renewed pastoral attention for the faithful attached to the Old Rite and, on the threshold of the third millennium, to help all Catholics to live the celebration of the Holy Mysteries with a devotion which may be true nourishment for their spiritual life and which may be a source of peace” (Audience on St Peter’s Square on the Tenth Anniversary of the Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei*, 26 October 1998).

May our three last canonised popes intercede for their successors our shepherds, and for us all members of the Flock of Christ, that they may feed us with the splendour of the Truth, Who is Christ Himself: “In exercising their duty of teaching – which is conspicuous among the principal duties of bishops – they should announce the Gospel of Christ to men” (cf Council Vatican II, *Christus Dominus*).

Wishing you a blessed summertime,
Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP □

Superior of the English FSSP Apostolate,
St John Fisher House, Reading,
Ascension of the Lord, 29 May 2014

The better they are found to have developed the virtues connected with their station in life, the more exemplary and helpful they are to us.



Degrees of Certainty in Church Magisterium

By Fr Matthew Goddard, FSSP

Living in a technological age in which news and information flows like the proverbial river, it is very easy to lose sight of the true gravity or levity of words and actions. In this article we shall, first, explore what are known as the degrees of theological certainty, in order to provide perspective to ecclesiastical decrees and the words of senior churchmen. We shall then consider how canonisations fit into this scheme, given the recent canonisations of Saints John XXIII and John Paul II.

In the next few paragraphs I will be drawing heavily from one of the standard reference books in FSSP seminaries: "Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma", by Dr Ludwig Ott. As explained on its cover, 'Ott' is: "A one-volume encyclopaedia of the doctrines of the Catholic Church, showing their sources in Scripture and Tradition and their definitions by Popes and Councils."

It remains a valuable resource to me as a priest, and I highly recommend it to brother clergy, and indeed to all who are serious about educating themselves in the Faith. After quoting a pronouncement of the Church's Magisterium (teaching authority), Ott specifies the degree of theological certainty assigned to the particular

teaching. The highest degree of certainty appertains to the truths of

Revelation – the doctrinal truths contained in Scripture and Tradition, which together comprise the Word of God. We are bound to believe these on the authority of God who reveals them (*fides divina*). If the Church, through her teaching, asserts that a truth is contained in Revelation, then one's certainty is then also based on the infallible teaching authority of the Church (*fides catholica*).

If truths are defined by a solemn judgment of faith – a "definition" – of a Pope or of a General Council, they are considered '*de fide definita*.' Venerable Pius XII's *ex cathedra* definition of Our Lady's Assumption and the Council of Trent's declaration that the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ are truly, really and substantially present in the Holy Eucharist are both cases in point.

These doctrines require the 'assent of theological faith' by all members of the faithful. Those who obstinately place them in

doubt or deny them are liable to fall under the censure of heresy.

Next in the degrees of certitude are 'Catholic truths' or 'Church doctrines', on which the infallible teaching authority of the Church has finally decided. These truths are to be accepted with a faith which is based solely on the teaching authority of the Church (*fides ecclesiastica*), but are considered to be just as infallibly certain. One contemporary example is the teaching promulgated in St John Paul II's apostolic letter, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, "...that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgement is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful." Similarly, in moral teaching, we can recall the doctrine on the illicitness of euthanasia taught in his encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*. He confirms that euthanasia is "a grave violation of the

law of God" and declares that "this doctrine is based upon the natural law and upon the written Word of God, is transmitted by the Church's Tradition and taught by the ordinary and universal Magisterium."

This last quotation underscores the fact that doctrine can also be infallibly proposed for belief by the Ordinary and Universal Magisterium. Here we refer to the

constant and repeated teachings of the Pope and Bishops in communion with

him across the world. We should note that when something has been continuously taught in the past by the Ordinary Magisterium, then its infallibility is not lost if a later generation comes to doubt or deny it. What is true in one generation cannot be false in another!

There are also truths connected to Revelation which manifest themselves in particular moments of the Church's history, which are to be held definitively, but cannot be declared to be divinely revealed. A Doctrinal Commentary of 1998 [henceforth "the Commentary"], promulgated by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the "CDF"), includes these examples: "the legitimacy of the election of the Supreme Pontiff or of the celebration of an ecumenical council, the canonisations of saints (*dogmatic facts*)." We shall return to this point later.



(St John Paul II blesses the Foundation stone of our seminary in Bavaria presented to him by then-Superior General Fr Josef Bisig, FSSP; and a crucifix for our other seminary in America, presented by then-General Assistant Mgr Philippe Tournyol du Clos, FSSP – 12 September 1999.)

Comparing the assent owed to definitive Catholic truths to the assent owed to revealed truths, the Commentary states: “[I]t is important to emphasise that there is no difference with respect to the full and irrevocable character of the assent which is owed to these teachings. The difference concerns the supernatural virtue of faith: in the case of [revealed] truths, the assent is based directly on faith in the authority of the Word of God (doctrines *de fide credenda*); in the case of the truths [‘Catholic truths’ to be held as definitive], the assent is based on faith in the Holy Spirit’s assistance to the Magisterium and on the Catholic doctrine of the infallibility of the Magisterium (doctrines *de fide tenenda*).”

Next in the degrees of certainty is ‘teaching proximate to Faith’ (*sententia fidei proxima*). This is doctrine which is regarded by theologians as belonging to the truth of Revelation, but which has not yet been formally promulgated by the Church. One example I discovered in Ott, is the teaching that the outward sign of the sacraments comprises of two essential parts – what we today refer to as matter and form. The Church firmly believes this, but her Magisterium, apparently, has not formally declared it.

A teaching ‘pertaining to the Faith’, or ‘theologically certain’ (*theologicæ certæ*) is one upon which the teaching authority of the Church has not yet definitively pronounced, but whose truth is guaranteed by its intrinsic connection with formally revealed truths – what we could call ‘theological conclusions’. For instance, considering the doctrine of Original Sin, it is theologically certain that the human race can be traced back to a single pair of common ancestors (Adam and Eve). Similarly, deducing from the Church’s doctrine

around the Holy Eucharist, it is theologically certain that the Blessed Sacrament, as spiritual food, increases the supernatural life of the soul in a state of grace.

‘Common teaching’ (*sententia communis*) is teaching which is generally accepted by theologians, but around which there is freedom of opinion, unless or until the Church’s Magisterium speaks more authoritatively. Examples include the teachings that the punishment of the damned is proportionate to their individual guilt, and that the purifying fires of purgatory will not continue after the General Judgement.

Then there are theological opinions of lesser grades of certainty called probable, more probable and well-founded (*sententia probabilis, probabilior, bene fundata*). The least degree of certainty is possessed by the tolerated opinion (*opinio*

tolerata), which is only weakly founded, but nonetheless tolerated by the Church.

With respects to the non-definitive teachings of the Church’s Magisterium, the Commentary tells us that we are to assent with “religious submission of will and intellect” to teachings presented as “true or at least sure”; while doctrinal propositions contrary to them are to be viewed as “erroneous or, in the case of teachings of the prudential order, as rash or dangerous.” Recognising that levels of teaching can vary according to the mind and will manifested, we are pointed to the nature of the documents, the level of repetition of the particular teaching and the tenor of verbal expression, in order to gauge the degree of adherence expected of us.

This leads us to consider the place of words, isolated actions and comments which until the age of the internet we often would never have heard, such as the unscripted content of the

Holy Father’s daily Mass homilies, off the cuff comments made by Cardinals to journalists, breaches of liturgical discipline, or details of alleged telephone calls made by senior prelates to private individuals regarding their personal circumstances. Frankly, when considered in the context of these degrees of theological certainty, they do not even register. They may or may not give accurate glimpses into the thinking of the churchmen concerned, but nothing more. Furthermore, many comments of senior churchmen are going to be private rather than public, and when they express theological viewpoints privately, we are free to disagree with them. Pope Benedict affirmed this in the preface to his book, ‘Jesus of Nazareth’, which he wrote as a private theologian.



(Pope St Pius X on his deathbed on 20 August 1914.)

It is all too easy to read such things, become alarmed, inadvertently investing them with a disproportionate ‘quasi-authority.’ We would do well to reflect on the indefectibility and infallibility of the Church: that no matter what battles and storms she has to endure, ultimately she will always remain the vessel of salvation, founded and headed by Christ, who in her doctrine can neither deceive nor be deceived.

The level of theological certainty of Canonisations

Since the early 1200s it seems the majority of theologians have held that canonisations constituted infallible papal acts. An expert in the area of sainthood, Professor Donald Prudlo, in a recent article in *Crisis Magazine* states: “Between the late 1300s and the 1600s, there are only four thinkers who

dissented from [this] teaching. After Pope Benedict XIV's (r. 1740-1758) definitive 7-volume work on canonization, there was total unanimity." Prudlo also mentions various Popes since the 1300s that explicitly cited their infallibility in the contexts of their own acts of canonisation, while arguing that the principles underpinning the medieval practice of canonisation laid the foundation for the doctrine of the personal infallibility of the Pope. By the

year 1300, he claims, "it was clear to everyone that to deny the sanctity of a canonised saint in the Church was a heresy."

Benedict XIV, in his definitive work, favoured the thesis that canonisations are *de fide*, but nonetheless added: "Before a judgement of the Apostolic See, it does not seem that the mark of heresy should be branded onto the contrary opinion." In the following century, the First Vatican Council's declaration on the doctrine and limits of papal infallibility, *Pastor Aeternus*, only speaks of *ex cathedra* definitions directly regarding faith and morals as possessing infallibility. At first sight this would seem to constitute an authoritative judgment *against* the infallibility of Popes in canonising!

But *Pastor Aeternus* did not stop Pius XI, in 1933, referring to a decree of canonisation as infallible. How could this be? Ott states that it is 'theologically certain' that the Church could not discharge her task as 'guardian and teacher of the revealed Word of God' if she could not infallibly decide regarding doctrines and acts which are intimately linked with Revelation



(Pope St John XXIII talks to a First Communicant; and has his hand kissed by an American Apache Indian on pilgrimage to the Vatican on 16 May 1961 - © AP.)

– what theologians have long referred to as the 'secondary objects of infallibility.' These include the "dogmatic facts" which the CDF's Commentary mentions: the legitimacy of papal election, the celebration of an ecumenical council, and the canonisations of saints. The issue is simple: if those "dogmatic facts" are capable of being erroneous, then how could the Church authoritatively declare a papal election or the celebration of an ecumenical council to be legitimate, or that a saint is truly in heaven? How could we have confidence in such judgments?

In stating that canonisations are to be held '*de fide tenenda*', does this Commentary represent an official recognition of what theologians have long considered, regarding the infallibility of such secondary objects? The CDF's role is to promote and safeguard the doctrine on faith and morals in the whole Catholic world, so it can certainly speak with authority; while the tenor of its Commentary is authoritative. On the other hand commentaries are not generally thought of as documents of great gravity. One way or another, it cannot be simply written off.

There has been a further development which I believe helps clarify the mind of the Church when it comes to the question of the infallibility of canonisations. In 2012 Benedict XVI – whom as Cardinal Ratzinger published the Commentary – promulgated a revised rite of canonisation, which is very similar to that used prior to Ven. Pius XII. One element that stands out in this rite is the following petition addressed to the Pope before he pronounces the actual formula of canonisation:



“Most Holy Father, Holy Church, *trusting in the Lord's promise to send upon her the Spirit of Truth, who in every age keeps the Supreme Magisterium free from error*, most earnestly beseeches Your Holiness to enrol these, her elect, among the saints.” In response to the second petition addressed to him, the Pope says: “Let us, then, invoke the Holy Spirit, the Giver of life, that he may enlighten our minds and *that Christ the Lord may not permit his Church to err in a matter of such importance*” [emphases mine]. Here, within the Church's actual rite, we now find two explicit references to the Church and her Magisterium's immunity from error!

Considering this continuous theological understanding of many centuries, the authoritative texts and the problems caused by holding the opposite, it would seem to me to be at the very least rash and dangerous – “temerarious” to use a word of Benedict XIV – to call into question the validity of a canonisation!

Doubts

I am aware that faithful Catholics have been disturbed and scandalised by certain words and actions, particularly of St John Paul, and are now left wondering how to square their concerns with the recent canonisations.

Some have explicitly stated that they simply cannot accept that they are valid! Speaking more generally, I regretfully concur with many others, that canonisations today often have something of a political feel to them and a sense that they are about canonising individuals'

works and ideas, rather than being a response to a long-established cult of veneration to a person who exhibited great sanctity and miracles. It is also my personal opinion – we are free to hold such views – that the number and speed of canonisations of this post-conciliar era is regrettable. The Church formerly recognised the importance of a ‘cooling off period’ after death, in order to get a more objective understanding of a person through the perspective of history. Such views do not, however, touch on the question of the validity of canonisations!

Let us consider what an act of canonisation *objectively* is and what it is not. The culmination of a canonisation ceremony is the solemn declaration by a Pope that an individual is “enrolled in the catalogue of the saints” and “commanding that they be held among the saints of the Universal Church, and to be invoked as such by pious devotion.” We should note that it is *not* a declaration that the person concerned was without sin, did

not make mistakes, or that all he said and did is now somehow ‘infallible.’

Nor does a decree of canonisation guarantee the accuracy of the canonical process preceding it. Some have expressed grave reservations regarding the revisions to this process made by St John Paul in 1983, suspecting that they have left it flawed and defective, incapable of leading to a sound prudential judgment and therefore to a valid canonisation. There is particular concern regarding the fact that the role of the Promoter of the Faith – popularly known as the Devil's Advocate – was abolished. While we are free to hold the opinion that these changes were not for the better, ultimately only the Church's legitimately constituted hierarchy can judge for certain whether the current procedure is truly fit for purpose. To play Devil's Advocate (pun intended!): while John Paul simplified things, nonetheless his revised procedure is detailed, provides clear elements of internal monitoring and involves scrutiny by a number of different panels of theologians and experts from relevant fields. Furthermore, adversaries are still called to testify in causes. Famously, the author and polemicist, Christopher Hitchens, who wrote scathingly of Blessed Teresa

of Calcutta, was called to testify *against* her beatification in 2002.

In fact, the Church's procures around canonisation have changed many times over the centuries, while Devil's Advocates arrived rather late onto the scene: the first formal mention of such an officer does not occur until the reign of Leo X (1513-21) and his role was only made mandatory by Urban VIII in

1631. Ultimately, if the Church orders us to consider canonisations to be *de fide tenenda* judgments of her infallible Magisterium, then we have to assume that God is sufficiently involved in the process to guarantee that acts of canonisation are valid!

Some are suggesting that these particular Popes could not have been validly canonised, because their track records in office demonstrate major failings. For instance, the Church historian, Professor Roberto de Mattei, has argued that when the Church proposes a saint, she holds them to be a model of heroic virtue to be emulated, according to their particular state, “...as a perfect religious, pastor, father of a family, and so on. In the case of a Pope, to be considered a saint he must have exercised heroic virtue in performing his mission as Pontiff.” He then argues that it is impossible to accept such a proposition in the case of St John XXIII whom he studied in depth, and whose pontificate in his opinion was “not of benefit to the Church.”



(Karol Wojtyla offering Mass as Bishop in Poland; Pope Paul VI wearing the tiara, on the sedia.)

He concludes that “it is impossible to speak of sanctity for him.”

Professor Prudlo rejects de Mattei’s claims in his article: “...Any number of saints were failures in their tasks, sometimes miserably, and yet they persevered in heroic virtue until the end, which is what makes a saint. Further there are any number of saintly bishops and popes whose tenure damaged sections of the Church. St. Peter Celestine was a *horrible* pope, but he was an exceptionally saintly man. His papacy was a disaster (he is the Pope of Dante’s “Great Refusal”), yet he was canonized for his sanctity...” Indeed, St Peter Celestine, “Pope and Confessor,” was canonised just 11 years after his death, according to the Matins reading of his feast day!

De Mattei maintains the possibility of invalid canonisations by arguing that ‘dogmatic facts’ such as canonisations do not fall directly under the infallibility of the papacy, as defined by Vatican I, and that the infallibility of the glory of the saints “...in a diachronic sense (developed over time) stems from the universal cult that the Church has bestowed on them and not by a judgment of canonisation in itself. The Church does not deceive in its

universal Magisterium, but one can admit a mistake on the part of ecclesiastical authorities constricted in time and space.”

Putting aside the theological subtleties, the bottom line is that the *mens ecclesiae* – the ‘mind of the Church’ – from time immemorial has been that when a Pope solemnly enrolls someone in the catalogue of saints they are then

definitively considered to be in heaven. On 27th April 2014, Our Lady, the saints and the Holy Spirit having been invoked and the *Veni Creator* was sung – as before any other solemn definition – and after a third petition imploring the Pope to enrol the saints, in the Name of the Spirit “who in every age preserves the supreme Magisterium from every error,” Pope Francis then pronounced the ancient words of canonisation, which according to Prudlo are the prototype for all dogmatic definitions:

“To the honour of the Holy Trinity, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith, and for the increase of the Christian life, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and our own, after due deliberation and having implored the Divine Assistance by prayer, and by the counsel of many of our brothers, we declare and define Blessed John XXIII and John Paul II to be saints, and we enrol them in the catalogue of the saints, commanding that they be held among the saints by the universal Church, and to be invoked as such by pious devotion. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

De Mattei’s argument just does not resonate with the mind of Church. Furthermore, if in her practice the Church can err in defining such ‘dogmatic facts’, as he maintains, her infallibility is then undermined. But as St Thomas Aquinas argues (*Quodlibet 9, q. 16, contra 1*) “In the Church there cannot be a damnable error. But it would be a damnable error if she would venerate a saint who was a sinner, because anyone knowing their sin, might believe the Church to be false; and if this were to happen, they might be led into error. Therefore the Church is not able to err in such things.”

If we find ourselves rocked in our faith by events in the Church’s life, or by actions of her clergy, then let us remember that we are called to exercise the gift of Faith and with child-like simplicity place our trust in Our Lord. In Paschaltide we reflect upon the encounter between Our Risen Lord and the ‘doubting Thomas.’ From this encounter we derive a greater understanding of God’s ways. Whereas He often gives consolations and more or less palpable signs of His presence to those who are wavering, He often leads by obscure paths those on whose faith He can count. He tells Thomas – and us – “Blessed are they that have not seen but have believed.” With

St Paul, He wants us to unreservedly affirm “I know in whom I have believed and I am *sure* of Him.” This degree of faith is meritorious because it is founded solely on God’s Word: it is entirely supernatural. It shows greater honour to God, because it gives Him full credence without demanding any proof, and because it perseveres even in the midst of the most disconcerting of events.

Faith is a virtue which resides in our will. It is something we adhere to by act of will. That is not to say that faith should be blind. God would not have given us intellects if He did not want us to use them. In our mental decision-making processes, which culminate in decisive acts of the will, our wills are informed and educated by means of our intellects, which identify and examine evidence and from this evidence deduce conclusions. When it comes to matters of faith, we should always remember that we can never fully fathom the great mysteries of Christ and His Church, given the infinite divide between us frail creatures, with minds darkened by Original Sin, and our infinite God. That is why, recognising Christ’s foundation of the Church, we turn to her Magisterium – her *infallible* teaching authority – to guide us, and her sacramental life – particularly Holy Mass and Confession – to sustain us. We know, also, to stay close to Our Heavenly Mother: she through whom all graces flow, as both ‘Mother of the Church’ and ‘Help of Christians.’ If, with child-like trust, we keep our eyes fixed on her, rather than on problems we perceive in the Church her Son has founded, then all will be well! □

Noah: Is the film faithful to *Genesis*?

“Après nous, le fromage”: review of the recent film *Noah* (Darren Aronofsky, 2014), by a Dowry reader and Guest Contributor.

“A righteous man, blameless in his generation” (Genesis 6:9) is not the most obvious description of Hollywood hero material. That’s not a problem for Darren Aronofsky’s film, in which the protagonist is not really the biblical Noah. The usual disclaimer in the credits that the story and characters are fictitious may seem ludicrously out of place, but there is much more truth in the denial than you might think! Brian Godawa and Brian Mattson have argued cogently that Aronofsky’s treatment of the story is a gnostically-inspired subversion of the biblical narrative. Central to this treatment is the snake-scale relic from Eden, possibly a vehicle for the gnostic view of the serpent as mankind’s friend and liberator. But there is another level on which the film can also be read, and on which it ultimately disappoints. As a parable of environmentalist misanthropy in conflict with common humanity, it is wrecked by the cheesy moralizing to which Russell Crowe’s muscular Noah is subjected by the post-deluvian community’s head girl (Emma Watson). One more film that thunders in its pathos and whimpers in its anagnorisis.

The thundering is at times quite impressive. The starkest moment of the cataclysm is a grim scene in which victims cling, screaming, to a jagged black rock jutting out of the sea. A wave washes over them, and they are still there. But another wave is coming. Poignantly, Noah’s grandfather Methuselah (Anthony Hopkins) finally gets to taste one of the berries he has been craving before giving himself up to the torrent. Noah himself, after seeing mankind at its most degraded, has concluded that “the wickedness is in all of us,” even in himself and his family. He is convinced that they have been chosen only to save the animals, and that once that task is done the human race must die out with them. How he becomes reconciled to the fact that mankind gets a new start is the goal of the drama. And the sermon preached to him by his daughter-in-law Ila is a lousy way to achieve it. Like Portia, she has a brief for mercy, but without the poetry, or the grace – and, arguably, without reference to the same God.

The film is also beset with a number of inconcinnities. When Ila, as a child (Skylar Burke), is first found left for dead, she

has a nasty cut on the abdomen which Noah’s wife (Jennifer Connolly) takes as a note infallible of future infertility. If the girl’s wound is so deep that you can tell that just by looking, why isn’t she dead? Later, the problem of how to keep the peace in the ark among such diverse beasts is cleverly solved by the application of some soporific incense – but how do the non-hibernators survive without eating, especially given that they spend more or less nine months in the ark (in this version)? And how does the thuggish Tubal-Cain (Ray Winstone) break into the vessel as a stowaway without causing a fatal leak? Near the end of the film, the motif of Noah’s drunkenness is introduced, but without the pioneering viticulture which, in Genesis, explains it. Here the incident cannot result in the cursing of Ham’s son, Canaan, since Canaan’s future mother is only a newborn. Instead, Ham (Logan Lerman) decides to take himself and his guilty conscience into exile after failing to cover Noah’s nakedness – which, in fact, is the least of what he has been up to.

The intrusion of Tubal-Cain (who, I’m told, is also a significant figure in Freemasonry) enables Noah to recover the serpentine heirloom taken from his murdered father Lamech (Marton Csokas) at the beginning of the film. This relic, the skin shed by the serpent in Eden, is literally a bearer of light (luci-fer), glowing when a Sethite father touches his progeny with it. Compare that with the gnostic version of the flood story reported in the late second century by St Irenaeus of Lyon. The villain is Ialdabaoth, who according to the story is the evil maker of the material world, posing as the supreme God:

Ialdabaoth, again, being incensed with men, because they did not worship or honour him as father and God, sent forth a deluge upon them, that he might at once destroy them all. But Sophia opposed him in this point also, and Noah and his family were saved in the ark by means of the besprinkling of that light which proceeded from her, and through it the world was again filled with mankind. (*Adversus Haereses*, I, 30, 10) “Sophia,” in this system, is the divine mother who “cunningly devised a scheme to seduce Eve and Adam, by means of the serpent, to transgress the command of Ialdabaoth” (*ibid.*, 7), and some



even assert “that Sophia herself became the serpent; on which account she was hostile to the creator of Adam, and implanted knowledge in men, for which reason the serpent was called wiser than all others” (ibid., 15).

Although the glowing snakeskin relic seemed bizarre, I confess it wasn’t what I first identified as theologically most objectionable. After all, doesn’t Moses turn the image of the desert serpent into an antidote to its poison? But what was clearly impossible was the rehabilitation of the errant angels known in Jewish tradition as the Watchers. The film, in fact, conflates the Watchers with the Nephilim (“fallen ones”) or “giants” (as the Septuagint calls them) whom the biblical narrative places on earth at the same time. Now the Old English for “giant” is *ent*, and Aronofsky’s Watchers mimic Peter Jackson’s rendition of Tolkien’s Ents, except that they are rock-giants rather than tree-giants. Ludicrous, but not pointless: the return of these angels from their earthbound shapes to their original forms of light is another gnostic motif. (The same goes for the luminous forms of Adam and Eve in the Eden sequence.) The rehabilitation of the Watchers seemed less offensive at first than any hypothetical restoration of Satan (a notion condemned as heretical at the synod of Constantinople in 543). Why less offensive? Because in the film the Watchers, on the face of it, are not aligned with the tempter: they just went AWOL and helped mankind, especially Noah. However, Dr Mattson finds that the restoration of the Watchers echoes Kabbalistic notions that even the serpent will one day be rehabilitated. Moreover, helping mankind is precisely what the serpent himself (or herself!) is all about in the heretical Eden and flood narratives reported by Irenaeus.

Now if we accept Mattson’s thesis that “the Creator” in the film is really the evil demiurge who wants to wipe out the whole human race, why would he forgive the Watchers? Is the answer that by building the ark the Watchers have helped to



save the animals? Or is the release of their spirits just a consequence of death in battle, and nothing to do with “the Creator” at all? (Godawa argues, with some plausibility, that an atheist reading of the film is also possible.) Or are the writers just playing with Gnostic and Kabbalistic ideas, without committing themselves to a coherent theological (or anti-theological) stance?

Whatever the answer, it’s probably just as well that Noah’s dramatic effectiveness ultimately drowns in bathos. The ending is off-putting, even if one has failed to recognize all the film’s subversive references. The cheese force-fed to Noah – and to the audience – at the dénouement is quite enough to spoil one’s appetite for eating from this particular tree. □

This review was originally published on-line in May 2014 at:
<http://thingsinmotion.bgacademic.com>.

Further reading (selected Internet resources):

Patristic: Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* I, 30:

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103130.htm>

Debate on the film: Peter Chattaway,

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/filmchat/2014/04/no-noah-is-notgnostic-say-that-ten-times-fast.html>

(A defence of the film against Brian Mattson.)

Brian Godawa,

<http://godawa.com/movieblog/subversion-god-noah>

<http://godawa.com/movieblog/subversion-serpent-aronofskys-noah>

Brian Mattson,

<http://drbrianmattson.com/journal/2014/3/31/sympathy-for-the-devil>

(Replica of the Ark at the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky, U.S.A.;

Noah entering the Ark, painting by Hans Jordaens III - c.1595-1643)





Being an Acolyte

In this issue of our 'Chronicle from our seminaries', we are glad to publish the thoughts of Rev. James FSSP on the order of Acolyte (the last of the Minor Orders). James entered the International Seminary of St Peter in Bavaria in 2009, and was ordained an Acolyte in February 2013, the duties of which he describes here. Please God, he should be ordained a Subdeacon and a Deacon next year.

Acolyte means 'one who follows' (ἀκόλουθος) and it is Jesus Christ Whom we follow. Bishop Athanasius Schneider has said that all four Minor Orders configure us to Christ¹. Jesus was *Ostiarius* (i.e. Porter), he explained, ejecting the money changers from the Temple. Jesus was *Lector*, reading Isaias in the synagogue. Jesus was *Exorcist*, expelling countless demons and defeating Satan. And as for *Acolyte*, Jesus Himself is the Light of the World. So Minor Orders are grounded in Christ's own powers, as remote participations in His priesthood.

A letter from Pope Cornelius in 251 A.D. records that Rome had "46 priests, seven deacons, seven sub-deacons, 42 acolytes, and 52 exorcists, lectors and porters". If Minor Orders arose to provide assistants for priests, it was a natural development that such orders should become a general preparation for the priestly office itself. Being conformed to Christ is, of course, beyond the power of any man, it being a work of grace. Yet since we are called to cooperate in this work, it has long seemed good to the Church that for that huge leap to the

priesthood, candidates be allowed to gain through Minor Orders, as it were, something of a run up.

The prayers of the ordination ceremony for an Acolyte identify his three principal tasks, namely to carry candles in procession, to light candles in a church and to bring water & wine to the altar during Holy Mass². The ceremony's prayers then point to the meanings of these rites, which serve as material rich for meditation.

In regard to carrying candles the bishop prays: "*let us humbly beseech God, the Father Almighty, to bless these His servants in the order of acolyte, that as they carry the material light in their hands, they may also send forth a spiritual light by their conduct...*" Former sins, the old man, must be put off. The prayers acknowledge: "Once you were darkness, but now light in the Lord" (*Eph 5:8*). Candidates are exhorted to be solicitous for all goodness, justice and truth. These three are by nature diffusive, manifest and splendid, thus like light self-propagating, so that through them others too may be set on fire with the love of God and then the whole Church brightened³.





And is this not symbolised in the Acolytes' task of lighting candles in the church? Even Moses and Aaron anticipated this task⁴.

What, though, is the full scope of pursuing goodness, justice and truth? To spare the environment is certainly praiseworthy, as we are called to be stewards of creation. To care about animal welfare, says St Thomas, develops our aversion to cruelty against humans. And to defend human dignity is necessary, as we are indeed our brothers' keepers. Yet all these concerns find their full context and ultimate purpose only in God. In fact proper worship of God is a pre-requisite, a necessary condition, for these other endeavours. It is what enables good fruit in all fields. Worshipping God is universally good, just and true. Therefore disorder in this regard means that human beings will not be able to find peace with others nor within themselves, nor shrink from cruelty to animals, nor restrain themselves from devastating the environment. These visible disasters are not worse than going to hell, but they are more immediately obvious, and therefore serve as early warning systems of that everlasting death which is the ultimate consequence of sin. To avert all these, the priority of the Acolyte is his service at the altar. This is transparently true once we see that the whole cosmos is integrally one, that all being is inter-connected in an ordered way. God, moreover, is its beginning and end, and it is His Cross which stands in the middle.

But why cannot society rise higher than the order, harmony and tranquillity which reign in the sanctuary? Principally because right worship, flowing from a contrite heart, pleases God Who

blesses His creatures. Secondly because if we will not respect God's rights, nor do what is in itself easier to do properly (e.g. follow the rubrics), then why should we respect the rights of lesser beings, or do what is right in more difficult fields (e.g. politics, business)? If we are not moved by our highest motive, how can lesser motives be correctly prioritised? And if in the liturgy, boundaries are eradicated and roles confused, then boundaries and roles will not hold out in society. If we will not even distinguish between the sacred and the profane, if God's sanctuary is violated, then nowhere is safe. Aware of these things, the Acolyte learns to take responsibility for others, to bear burdens which can only be borne by prayer.

As for carrying water & wine to the altar of sacrifice, the prayers inform us that an Acolyte is only worthy of doing this if, by God's Mercy, his own life is made a sacrifice through chastity and good works⁵. This call to sacrifice is essential to the charism of the FSSP. Our Superior General, Fr John Berg, recently wrote that as religious orders derive their charismas from a particular aspect of the Life of Our Lord (for example poverty for the Franciscans), the FSSP's charisma is rooted in Jesus Christ's Priesthood and its essential action, Sacrifice. Our Constitutions read: "§3 *The Fraternity has a special devotion to Jesus Christ, Sovereign Priest, Whose whole existence was and is priestly, and for Whom the Sacrifice of the Cross was the reason for His Incarnation.*" And: "§2 *The members of the Fraternity will live with the conviction that the entire effectiveness of their apostolate flows from the Sacrifice of Our Lord, which they daily offer.*"

(The new Acolytes touch the cruet which will serve to present the wine. Archbishop Haas blesses the congregation after the ceremony.)



By the sacrificial embrace of chastity, those who serve at the altar can change the world. For the practice of chastity disposes us to an even more refined purity, one concerning incorporeal goods, including that purity of intention which insists, “*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed Nomini tuo da gloriam*” (Ps 113:9). God’s servants truly serve when they make no attempt to steal His glory for themselves. Or what else sterilises the Church like clerical ambition? It makes her barren, while purity is spiritually fruitful, because purity is necessary for an interface with the Infinite⁶. Alas, a religious who collects indecent images, a seminary rector who sits candidates on his lap, a prelate who does with priests that sin of the Pentapolis, these produce desolation. We all sin, but the cleric should be especially terrified of committing such sins, for he injures thereby not only his neighbour but also Christ’s Bride. An Acolyte who is unchaste should tremble at the prospect of major orders, even withdrawing from them. The impure cannot

offer a sacrifice pleasing to God, for they are strangers to selflessness, contradicting Calvary.

The ceremony’s prayers, while calling for good works, also warn against serving works of darkness⁷. The call to holiness is universal (cf *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter 5), but for clergy the obligation is *ex officio*, which means it is easier to be more fruitful but also that it falls under a stricter judgement⁸.

A final consideration for Acolytes: while it is good to see ministers move reverently in the sanctuary, it is especially edifying when the two Acolytes move in harmony, mirroring each other. As symmetry of structure and co-ordination of colour are (sub-consciously) pleasing to the eye, so, in regard to movement, do measure and harmony offer sweet rest for the soul. Perfection is not something each achieves alone, but in balanced relation with others and for others.

In summary then, an Acolyte is one who has heard Christ calling, “Follow Me”, and does not want to miss a step. □

1. Homily at Ordination Mass, Wigratzbad, 9th Feb 2013
2. “Acolythum etenim oportet ceteroferarium ferre; luminaria Ecclesiae accendere; vinum et aquam ad Eucharistiam ministrare.”
3. “Eratis enim aliquando tenebrae, nunc autem lux in Domino... Fructus enim lucis est in omni bonitate, et iustitia, et veritate. Estote igitur solliciti in omni iustitia, bonitate et veritate, ut et vos et alios et Dei Ecclesiam illuminetis.”
4. So the bishop prays: “Domine sancte Pater omnipotens, aeternae Deus, qui ad Moysen et Aaron locutus es, ut accenderentur lucernae in tabernaculo testimonii, benedicere dignare his famulos tuos, ut sint Acolythi in Ecclesia tua...”
5. “Tunc etenim in Dei sacrificio digne vinum suggeretis et aquam, si vos ipsi Deo sacrificium, per castam vitam at bona opera oblatis fueritis, quod vobis Dominus concedat per misericordiam suam.”
6. An immaterial soul, insofar as it is pure, can be united with the Divine Spirit, because while God is Infinite Act, an immaculate soul is infinitely receptive. But if there is any spot in the soul, it is no longer proportioned to the infinite, for, as St Bonaventura teaches, there can be no division (or measuring point) within infinity. Said differently, until a soul is absolutely transparent to itself, then it cannot enjoy the beatific vision, for the Light of God’s Glory will not bear obstacles.
7. “Non enim Deo placere poteritis, si lucem Deo manibus praefereutes, operibus tenebrarum inserviat, et per hoc aliis exempla perfidiae praebeatis. Sed sicut Veritas dicit: Luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant opera vestra bona, et glorificent Patrem vestrum, qui in coelis est. Et sicut Apostolus Paulus ait: In medio nationis pravae et perversae, lucete sicut luminaria in mundo, verbum vitae continentes...”
8. Cf Epistle of St James 3:1. In 1972 the ancient order of Acolyte was replaced by a new ministry also called ‘acolyte’, and also ordered to the Holy Eucharist, defining the acolyte as being its extraordinary minister. However this ministry, although reserved to men only (see *Ministeria quaedam*, §7), is specifically a lay ministry, while the traditional minor order of Acolyte is specifically clerical.





Clergy Retreat in Bavaria

By Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP

From 5th to 9th May 2014, twelve clergy from various dioceses across England gathered at the Marian shrine of Wigratzbad in Bavaria for a silent retreat on the theme: “The priest and the Blessed Virgin Mary”. Two more priests booked in had had to cancel. We had all travelled together from Stansted Airport, with Fr de Malleray, FSSP who organised the retreat, and Seminarian James, FSSP, coming back from his Easter vacation in England. On arrival, we breezed through customs at the small regional airport of Memmingen, and immediately boarded a minibus hired for the occasion, which drove us in 45mn to Wigratzbad.

We were staying at ‘Pilgerheim St Joseph’, the shrine hostel for pilgrims. There were two 1-hour conferences a day, private

Masses and Compline sung in common, plus many occasions to adore the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, as ongoing exposition takes place at one of the chapels. The meals were taken in common in a separate room of the hostel. Table readings on Marian theology and spirituality included authors such as St Alphonsus Liguori, St Louis de Montfort, Rev. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange O.P. and Rev. Ignace de la Potherie S.J..

Maps of the area with coloured itineraries were distributed, allowing for refreshing walks across the surrounding woodlands and countryside, a good occasion to meditate and take some exercise. Wigratzbad is also home to the International Seminary of St Peter, motherhouse of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter. Because the main shrine church, normally used daily by the seminary, was still undergoing major refurbishment, our group was not able to find space in the overcrowded seminary chapel and pray Lauds, Vespers and Compline at the same time as the seminarians. However, we enjoyed a tour of the buildings, from the library to the refectory, and from the barber’s room to the recreation one – with a tempting billiard table! – but it was not meant for us retreatants...

Seminary Vice-Rector Fr Hubert Bizard, FSSP came to greet us. He thanked us for coming to Wigratzbad and said that it was edifying for the seminary community to see diocesan clergy travel from England to Bavaria to spend five days on retreat. Fr Bizard apologised for the inconvenience caused by the work at the main church and said that if we came again

next year we would be able to share more actively in the liturgical life of the community. He even said that, depending on the size of our group next year, the seminary could provide accommodation within its own walls, adding that we could always come and stay individually for a private visit, as some of us had already done.

Diocesan Shrine Rector Fr Meier also came to greet us and offered to each of us a candle adorned with a picture of the statue of Our Lady, venerated here under the title ‘Mother of Victory’. This follows an apparition to visionary Antonie Raedler before WWII, during which that pious young girl heard angels saluting the Mother of God as ‘Mutter vom Sieg’ – Mother of Victory. Hundreds of pilgrims come to Wigratzbad

every month to pray to the Mother of God, especially in reparation for the offenses against the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart.

Some of our priests who knew FSSP clergy from England were glad to be able to spend time with them. So they met up with Fr Brendan Gerard, FSSP who teaches Latin and Greek at the seminary after graduating from the Biblicum in Rome, and Seminarian Marcus, FSSP, now an ordained Acolyte in Wigratzbad.

The conferences focused on Mary as the New Eve, Associate of the

New Adam in the work of our redemption, just as the first Eve had been the first Adam’s fatal collaboratrix in our fall. Quotes from the Holy Bible, from the liturgy and from theologians illustrated the theme. At the end, we prayed the Litanies of Loretto and the Blessing with plenary indulgence was imparted, as granted by the Church to those who have completed the spiritual exercises. Some of us had attended a similar retreat in Wigratzbad last year, on the theme ‘The priest and the Holy Eucharist’, while others had come the year before for a Marian Pilgrimage organised in Bavaria. Two priests from our group chose to stay on for a day of tourism and visited the Lindau Peninsula on Lake Constance and the Baroque Abbey of Ottobeuren with Fr de Malleray and Seminarian Marcus. The feedback from priests attending was encouraging, with several having already booked for our next retreat. It will take place from 4th to 8th May 2015 (Easter and Pentecost 2015 fall on 6th April and 24th May), also in Wigratzbad, on the theme: “The Four Last Things”.

Mary, Mother of priests, pray for us! □





Juventutem celebrates its 10th anniversary

Juventutem is the international youth network fostering sanctity among young adults through the Roman traditions of the Church. They have just completed the first decade since their foundation in 2004.

The name «*Juventutem* » (the accusative of the Latin word for « youth ») is a reference to the *Prayers at the foot of the Altar* in the Roman Missal revised by Pope Saint John XXIII in 1962. « Youth » as intended by *Juventutem* is not in essence a matter of age, but rather of familiarity with the grace of God. We now quote from the *Juventutem* Charter.

Our circumstances:

We live in difficult times. Whereas the number of well trained pastors is lowering, worldly devices to allure our souls are multiplying. Particularly in so-called “developed countries”, being a Catholic is objectively more difficult nowadays than it used to be some decades ago. We especially, as young adults, are targeted by false guides presenting pleasure and independence as an end in itself, instead of the only freedom and joy found in answering God’s call to holiness!

Most of our fellow baptized Catholic youths have deserted the churches, have no time for Catholic devotions and scorn Catholic doctrine. The liturgy, the doctrine and the apostolate most of them have been presented with, failed to attract their interest. Most modern youths find that too often, those acting in the name of the Catholic Church are not convincing. We can’t see why we would sacrifice various earthly satisfactions to answer an invitation where transcendence does not show.

Thanks be to God, there are signs of a renewal. We know for certain that the Lord does not abandon His Church. We give Him thanks for the grace of having been put, without any merit on our part, on board that Ark of salvation governed by our Holy Father Pope Francis.

Our means:

Our common aspiration as *Juventutem* members is to draw our sanctification from the traditional liturgy and spirituality of Holy Mother Church. Having discovered what a valuable support the 1962 Roman rite is to our souls, as well as the doctrinal presentations of the divine truths so eloquently expressed by that very special form of the Roman rite, we desire to use them always more fruitfully. To which end we require the support of prayer,



friendship and learning. Those values we expect to use and share through *Juventutem*, as much as it pleases Our Blessed Lord and His Mother Immaculate. The more we will assimilate the Roman traditions of the Church, so as to be sanctified in them, the more God will touch other people through us. Thus we will find our fulfilment in humbly and joyfully helping to forward God’s grace across His Creation.

Friendly relations between young members of *Juventutem* will help effectively and eloquently in their sanctification. Their friendship is sustained by their shared interest in the traditional liturgy and doctrine of Holy Mother Church. They love and practise these with all the more joy and fruitfulness as they discover the beauty of

them together. The members of *Juventutem* will not however present themselves as liturgists or theologians, merely as young believers, happy to practise their religion together. Thus humour and love, camaraderie and fraternal charity will inspire their behaviour. Relations between young men and women within *Juventutem* will be cordial and spontaneous, with no impropriety. Courtesy, the fruit of charity, will be most important. Healthy prudence will be found there. Through good example, through prayer and friendship, the young members of *Juventutem* will encourage each other in the practice of the virtues of faith, hope, charity, patience, fortitude, justice, temperance etc.

They will accord pride of place to the virtue of charity, following the example of St Thomas Aquinas: «charity is the life of the soul, as the soul is the life of the body ». They will cultivate this virtue by practising kindness to their neighbour in a spirit of truth and, as far as possible, by works of corporal

(First meeting of *Juventutem* delegates in the U.S.A., Chicago, 16 March 2014.)





and spiritual mercy.

Young members of *Juventutem* attach great importance to the virtue of purity. They will practise it in their souls as well as in their bodies. To that end, they will avoid certain activities and conversations incompatible with purity. Their language, clothing and comportment will demonstrate the same desire for purity with simplicity and conviction.”

The International *Juventutem* Federation is pleased to announce that His Eminence George Cardinal Pell, Prefect of the Secretariat for Economy, has kindly accepted its invitation to be the Celebrant at a Pontifical Solemn High Mass according to the Missal of St John XXIII on Friday 24 October 2014, 6:30pm, at Santissima Trinità dei Pellegrini, Parish Church of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter in Rome, Italy. The Holy Sacrifice will be offered in thanksgiving for the tenth anniversary of *Juventutem*. After Vespers in Düsseldorf at WYD 2005, Cardinal Pell gave the following encouragements to the young *Juventutem* pilgrims: “I am happy to be here because the old Latin rite is one of the most beautiful things in the entire Western civilization. And I am very glad that this ancient rite has its place in the Church today. I am happy because this rite helps you to love God and to love one another.

In this ancient rite we always see that our prayer is an act of worship. It is impossible to see a celebration like these Vespers as something horizontal. We have one Church only, whose Head is the Successor of Peter, with the Bishops as successors of the Apostles, and this unity is very important for the life of the Church”.

Members and supporters of *Juventutem* are cordially invited to make arrangements to be in Rome and attend the Mass, which will be preceded by other *Juventutem* activities (full schedule to be advertised soon). All pilgrims in Rome are naturally invited as well, regardless of their involvement with *Juventutem*. The event will be part of the *Populus Summorum Pontificum* Pilgrimage 2014. The following day, on Saturday 25 October, His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, will celebrate a Solemn Pontifical High Mass according to the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite in Saint Peter’s Basilica, at 12:00 noon.

Contact: www.juventutem.org; President: George Steven (an Englishman again, after Gregory Flash some years ago): president@juventutem.org; Secretary (from the US): Paul Schultz: secretary@juventutem.org. There are groups on several continents, and in the UK. □





Ongoing ministry

7 March: On that first Friday in Lent and until Passion Week, we had Stations of the Cross before Mass every Friday evening. Led by the priest, young and old – once as many as 50 attending – were able to follow fruitfully the meditations of St Alphonsus Liguori printed on booklets. Stations lasted 35mn each time, concluding with prayers at the Holy Father's intentions. With the Rosary, no devotion is more essential to Catholicism and more profitable: "Adoremus Te Christe et benedicimus Tibi – Quia per sanctam Crucem Tuam redemisti mundum". Fr de Malleray remarked that it also is a very ecumenical devotion, as Christians of every persuasion can unite in commemorating the redeeming sufferings of Christ.

10-11 March: A diocesan priest friend stays at our House for a spiritual break.

12-16 March: Fr de Malleray in Nebraska to discuss formation and encourage our seven English seminarians (two more study in Bavaria). On Saturday 15, Fr de Malleray assisted as Deacon at the ordination of our senior English vocation Rev. Mr Ian Verrier, FSSP to the Diaconate (cf picture above).

16-18 March: Fr de Malleray stays in Chicago with the Canons of St John Cantius and attends the first North American gathering of members and representatives of the *Juventutem* youth movement. About 50 of them participated in the day, some of them having travelled from other States. Fr C. Frank Phillips, C.R., Founder and current superior of the Community, as well as local Parish Priest and Chaplain of the local

Juventutem group, gave a presentation of the parish and explained how his (massive) church which was due to be pulled down 28 years ago was saved and made to flourish through traditional liturgy and devotions. The size and splendour of the church are breathtaking. Fr de Malleray was able to offer Mass in a side chapel which contains a detailed copy of the three-story-high altarpiece in the basilica of the Virgin Mary's at Krakow's central Grand Square, the largest Gothic sculpture in the world. This one-third scale copy only would be a treasure and focus in any major cathedral. It is the largest and most detailed work of its kind, and was



26 March: Frs de Malleray and Goddard attend a Safeguarding Session with nearly 60 other priests and deacons from the diocese of Portsmouth.

26-27 March: A diocesan confrere stays at our House.

28 March: About 25 French adults attend a conference by Fr de Malleray in London on: "Ne nous laissez pas succomber à la tentation".

29 March: Fr de Malleray gives a day of recollection at St Philip Neri's Church in Uckfield, Kent, actively welcomed by Fr Stephen Hardaker, P.P., who even served at Benediction. The day, attended by about 30, had been organised by a committed member of the Confraternity of St Peter, also a parishioner at Uckfield.

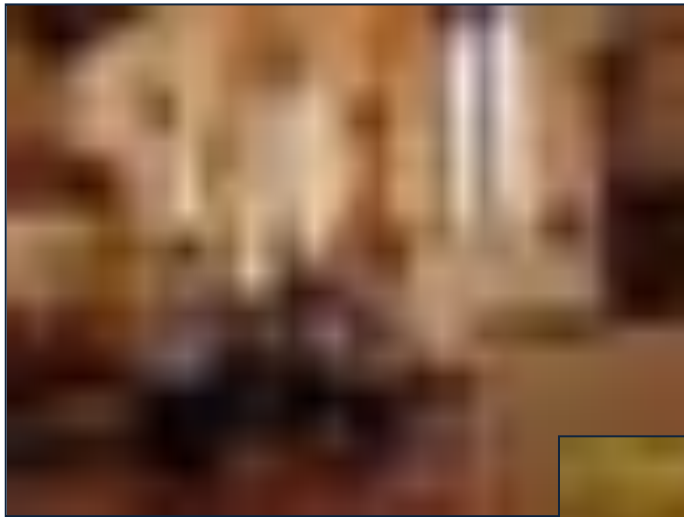
29 March: Fr Goddard attends a prayer vigil organised by Amanda Lewin outside the Oxford abortuary as a Pro-Life Witness in reparation for abortion, offering prayers for all

unborn babies, their mothers and fathers. It takes place the last Saturday of each month: next one on 26th June. Venue: Entrance to the John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Oxford.

We stand just in front of St Anthony of Padua Church (Car park available). Refreshments available afterwards. Email Amanda on: littlepetal@gmail.com. We present here the beautiful sculpture by Martin Hudáček of Slovakia, who inspiringly draws attention to the devastation abortion can bring to the woman, and to the fact that through the love and mercy of God, reconciliation and healing are possible.

1-2 & 3-4 April: Guest priests





what they could do and they decided. Even though both were unable to see that well, one of them still managed to win both times. When our stay was over, the ladies whom we had been playing with said that they had really enjoyed themselves and appreciated our help while playing the game and hoped that we might come again.” Joseph, another adolescent of the group, added: “Although it took me a few minutes to get used to it, I really enjoyed talking to the people there, playing conversational games with those who weren’t able to play board games. I also learned quite a bit by simply chatting – I very much enjoyed it, and I hope they did too!” A late parishioner of ours used to go and sing lovely songs at Old People’s Homes. They enjoyed it very much. Perhaps our younger singers will include this in their next visit.

stay at our House.

6 April: Fr de Malleray baptises young John Carey at Chesham Bois, the son of Francis and Julie Carey, indefatigable organisers of the Pilgrimage of Christendom from Paris to Chartres every year at Pentecost (chartresuk.blogspot.co.uk) and of the Rosary Crusade every October in London (rosarycrusadeofreparation.blogspot.co.uk): inspired by such parents, one may expect that young John will develop a deep love for Our Lady!

8 April: Fr Goddard hears confessions at a parish Penitential Service in Sussex.

9 April: Frs de Malleray and Goddard attend a Clergy Day of recollection run by the Opus Dei at Wickenden Manor in West Sussex.

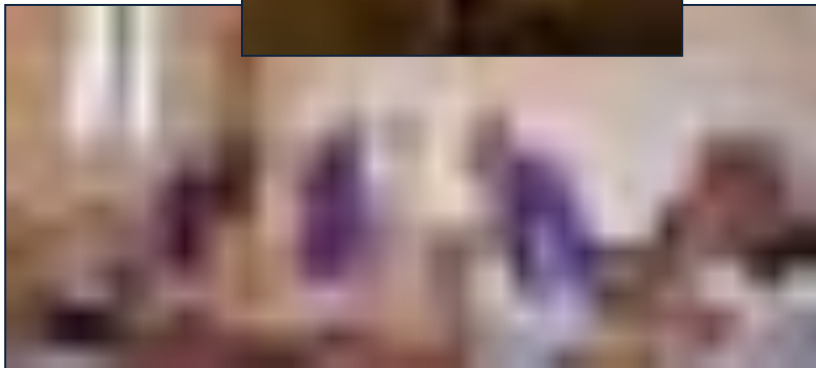
11 April: Sung Mass of funeral and burial of Miss Jo Rueth, from Caversham. Jo fought with great courage a battle against cancer. She was cared for day and night by her family at home, a blessing for terminal patients. In return, her relatives were edified by her faith and supernatural outlook. Frs de Malleray

and Goddard were also able to visit her regularly and bring her the sacraments. Jo had sowed the tabernacle veils and frontals at St William of York in all five colours: they remain as precious expressions of her generous and unassuming soul. May she rest in peace.

12 April: Fr Goddard takes his monthly adolescents’ group to meet elderly people at a nearby Retirement Home. Stella, one of the young adults present, said: “When we arrived at the Home, we found that the nurses had put a pile of different games on a table for us to set up, and then play with the elderly ladies. While we were setting them up, the nurses started bringing in the elderly that lived there and sat them down in front of various tables. We played various games such as snakes and ladders, I spy, dominoes as well as others. I was sitting at a table with one of my friends and two elderly ladies, who were both unable to see that well. So that they could actually enjoy themselves without being able to see, we commented on the game (Frustration) as we played it, so that they knew what was happening. They rolled the dice and made decisions on where to move their pieces. We just told them

15 April: Frs de Malleray and Goddard attend the Chrism Mass at Portsmouth Cathedral, praying together with fellow clergy and receiving Holy Communion from one of them (kneeling and on the tongue). The lunch following is the occasion to meet up with many priests from all across the diocese. The Holy Oils consecrated by Bishop Philip Egan are used soon after at our Pascal Vigil for the blessing of Baptismal Water (the matter of the Sacrament of Baptism used during the following year) and for the unctions at Baptism, as well as for the Anointing of the Sick.

16-20 April: Rev. Marcus, FSSP (our seminarian from Bournemouth) flies over Hadrian’s Wall to Edinburgh to assist Fr John Emerson, FSSP and Fr Brendan Gerard, FSSP for Holy Week at our Scottish apostolate ([cf fsspScotland.org](http://cf.fsspScotland.org)). On the same dates,



Rev. James, FSSP, comes to spend the Sacred Triduum at St John Fisher House, soon joined by five young men from various parts of England (cf 4 pictures on previous page). Our ceremonies are prayerful and well attended. In particular, our Tenebrae attract this year more people than usual, once up to 40 in total. This improvement is due to well printed booklets, to a made-to-measure Tenebrae hearse (the 15-candle triangular stand) and to the dedication of our Gregorian schola, led by Jacques Perriere (whose website www.gregorianbooks.com provides abundant and rare links and expertise on the history and meaning of chant). Our budding polyphonic choir, led by Jacquie Martinez, was an inspiring addition to the solemnity and beauty of those Holy Days. We thank all those who dedicated themselves so generously, cleaning the church, practising for the complex liturgies, doing the flowers, taking pictures and helping in various ways. Fr de Malleray was the Celebrant in Reading on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday; and Fr Goddard at the Easter Vigil and on Easter morning.

24-26 April: Fr de Malleray and Rev. James, FSSP stay at the FSSP apostolate in Venice for a much enjoyed Easter break. They assist Fr Konrad zu Loewenstein, FSSP – our Chaplain in Venice and another English vocation to the FSSP – at a Solemn High Mass at San Simon Piccolo, the FSSP church in the Serenissima (cf both pictures – larger one © Flickr 2012). On Saturday 25

April, the two priests and FSSP seminarians attend the pontifical Vespers led by the Patriarch at St Mark's Basilica, on the patronal feast of the Evangelist. Among other devotions, they venerate the bodies of St Joachim, Father of Our Lady, of St Athanasius and of St Lucy of Syracuse. We very much encourage pilgrims to visit our website (venezia.fssp.it) ahead of their journey, so as to be sure to come and pray at our church, most conveniently located opposite the railway station. 27 April: First Communion administered by Fr Goddard in Chesham Bois.

1 May: Rev. James travels with the Dominicans from Oxford to attend the Mass of installation of Archbishop Malcolm McMahon in Liverpool.

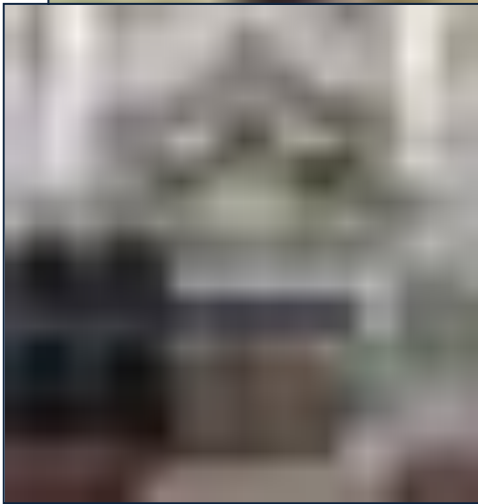
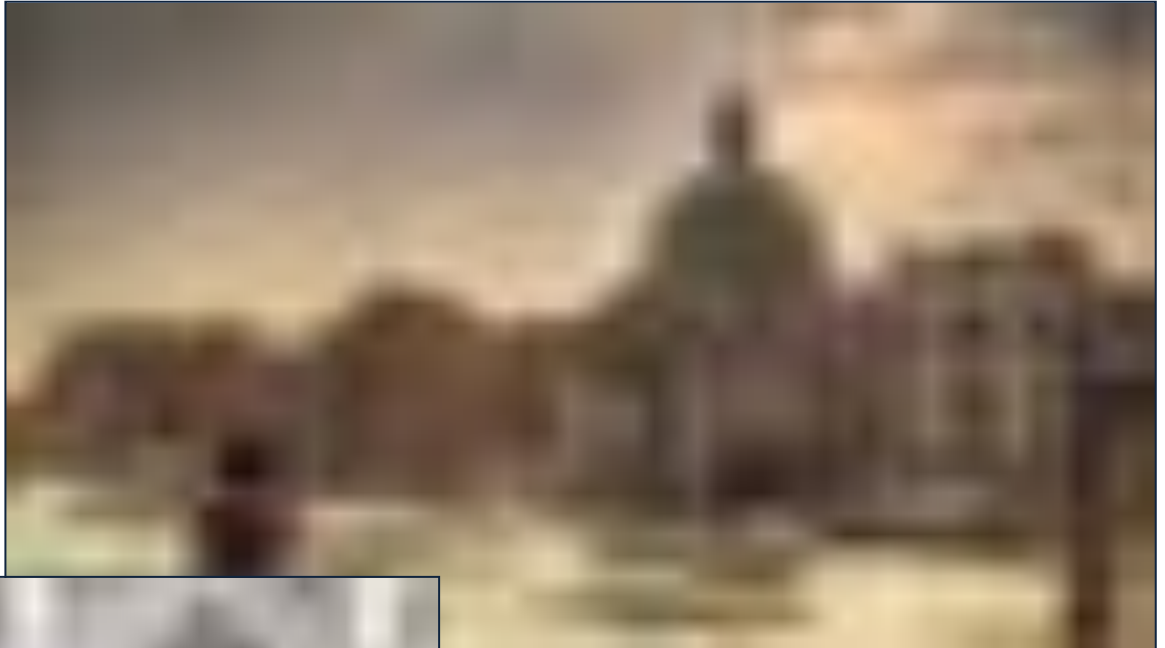
3 May: At St William of York in Reading, Fr Goddard baptises young Toby Black – a relief for all his family as the baby had

been taken to hospital due to serious health issues soon after birth.

4 May: Good Shepherd Sunday is a yearly occasion to foster vocations. Rev. James assists as Lector at a Sung Mass in Chesham Bois; and in Reading as Subdeacon for a Solemn High Mass, with Fr Goddard acting as Celebrant. At both Masses, Fr de Malleray preaches on the priesthood and vocations. The collections are donated to our seminary in Wigratzbad, where two Englishmen are on formation (a third one having left in January). The Mass ends with a May Crowning of the statue of Our Lady.

5-9 May: Fr de Malleray preaches a retreat in Bavaria to twelve clergy from various English dioceses (cf article).

12 May: Fr de Malleray stays on in Wigratzbad, Bavaria, for a meeting with the French-speaking and German-speaking



Chaplains of the Confraternity of St Peter.

9-14 May: Fr Laurent Demets, FSSP leads around London pupils from his school of St Etienne in France.

13 & 20 May: Frs de Malleray and Goddard provide liturgical training to a missionary priest on his way back to Africa.

15 May: Fr de Malleray gives a talk on Beauty and Evangelisation at the University Chaplaincy in Oxford, on behalf of the Newman Society. About 30 young adults attend the talk, which includes quotes from St John Paul II's *Letter to Artists*, and pictures from painting by Georges de La Tour, Raphael and Noah Buchanan.

17 May: Fr Goddard assists Bishop Athanasius Schneider as Deacon at a Pontifical Solemn High Mass organised by the Latin Mass Society at West Grinstead in West Sussex (cf picture next page).

17-18 May: Bishop Athanasius Schneider stays at St John Fisher House and offers a Pontifical Low Mass on Sunday at St William of York. The Newman Consort sings beautiful motets. Refreshments are served after Mass, and the congregation meets with Bishop Schneider and thank him for his courageous witness.

21 May: With about 30 other clergy, Fr de Malleray attends a conference by Bishop Schneider at St Patrick's Church in Soho, London.

22 May: Fr de Malleray attends a diocesan Day for Religious at St Peter's Parish in Winchester. The FSSP is not a religious order as its members, like secular clergy, don't take vows, although committing to poverty, chastity and obedience. But as a Society of Apostolic Life, we are under the same Vatican dicastery as the religious communities. We have a common



charisma, inspired to our own founders and validated by the Church; we follow our own Constitutions and Directories, referring, among various practical aspects, to the habit of our Fraternity and to communal life. Our status is similar to that of the Oratorians, half-way, so to speak, between secular diocesan clergy and professed religious. Fr de Malleray was glad to meet with our neighbours in Reading, the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus, and with one of the Sisters of St Marie Madeleine Postel. It was also good to meet up with the Franciscan Sisters of Cold Ash, where we give retreats, and with the Dominican Sisters of St Joseph in the New Forest where we visited and with whom we attend the yearly *Evangelium Weekend* in Woodcote. Also represented were the Mill Hill Fathers and other communities. Fr John Chandler gave a good talk on fostering vocations to religious life. Fr Bruce Barnes described his role as new Vicar for Religious and Canon Paul Townsend explained his mission as the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. At the end, Bishop Egan gave benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and greeted all the representatives.

24 May: On the feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, Fr de Malleray offers Mass for all the past and present members and supporters of the *Juventutem* youth movement, on this its 10th anniversary (cf article).

24 May: Fr de Malleray and Goddard attend the Conference Day organised by the Latin Mass Society in London. In the afternoon, Fr de Malleray gives a talk at the Victoria & Albert



Museum on “The Beginning of the Church as displayed in the Raphael Cartoons”, attended by about 20.

30 May: At the London Oratory, Fr de Malleray attends the Solemn Requiem Mass of Prince Rupert zu Loewenstein, father of FSSP confrere Fr Konrad zu Loewenstein. Prince Rupert was a Patron of the Latin Mass Society and a benefactor to his Oratorian parish and to the Order of Malta. Prince Rupert’s other son, also a priest (in the English Province of the Order of

Preachers), gave the eulogy, while Fr Konrad officiated as Celebrant at the Mass. What a grace for the deceased (and his family) to have prayers offered by two priests his own sons. R.I.P.

31 May: On the feast of Our Lady Queen, Fr de Malleray blesses and imposes scapulars on eight members of the faithful, children and adults, who had prepared with a novena. Later in the morning, Fr de Malleray attends a diocesan Safeguarding training session in Reading.

Unreported here is our day-to-day ministry, such as Fr Goddard’s recurrent week in Ireland; our daily Masses and confessions at St William’s of York, spiritual direction, writing of articles, preparation to the sacraments and instruction of converts, visits to the faithful and clergy; plus our regular monthly activities: Men’s Group, Women’s Group, Adolescents’ Group, Family Catechism Day and Holy Hour with Benediction: please visit our website for information and updates.

Ad majorem Dei gloriam. □

Forthcoming events

[Our monthly Groups – picture right: Women’s Group – will resume in September.]

Eucharistic Days of Recollection

led by Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP

- Saturday 21 June; 10:00am to 4:00pm. St Therese Hall, St. Mary’s, High Street, Ryde, Isle of Wight. Organised by St Mary’s Parish. All enquiries/booking: 01983 812127.
- **Saturday 19 July; 11:00am to 4:00pm. St. Edmund’s College Chapel, Old Hall Green, Ware, Hertfordshire SG11 1DS. With FSSP priests and seminarians.** Organised by The Latin Mass Society. All enquiries/booking: erichafriar@gmail.com or 07792 766103.

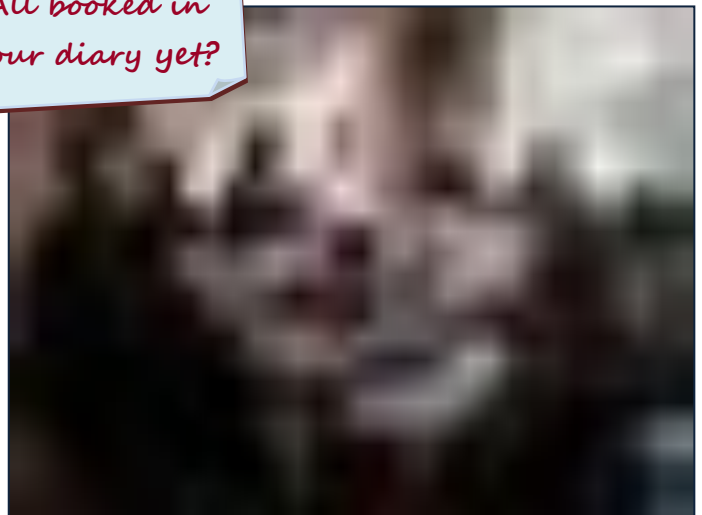
Summer Camp St Peter for Boys at Douai Abbey, RG7 5TQ: 27-31 July. Organised and run by FSSP priests and seminarians (fully booked).

Evangelium Conference, Reading Oratory School: 1-3 August. Cf www.evangelium.co.uk.

LMS Walsingham Pilgrimage: 22-24 August, with FSSP seminarians.

Confraternity of St Peter Pilgrimage across England, 23 August to 1 September. Theme: The English Martyrs. With Fr James Fryar, FSSP, and Seminarian James, FSSP. All information on www.syversentouring.com/confraternity. UK Confraternity members are welcome to meet fellow CSP

*All booked in
your diary yet?*



members from the USA after our **11am Mass in Reading on Sunday 31 August**.

YCA-Juventum Week-end for young adults at Douai Abbey: 19-21 September. Cf www.youngcatholicadults.co.uk.

Summorum Pontificum Pilgrimage to Rome, **23-26 October**. Cf unacumpapanostro.com.

Advent Retreat at Douai Abbey: 9-11 December

Lenten Retreat at Douai Abbey: 24-26 February 2015

Clergy Retreat in Bavaria on The Four Last Things: 4-8 May 2015 □



Support our seminarians & our apostolate

Help us form more good

priests for tomorrow. Our 10 seminarians from England last October are down to 9 (including one taking a gap year). The good news is that 4 more have applied this spring. Please pray that all administrative obstacles (US visas in particular) be overcome in time. With your help and through the grace of God, it could be a dozen seminarians from England in formation with our Fraternity this autumn. Pray for those already admitted, that they may be safely guided in their formation to the holy priesthood. If they persevere, from next spring, we will have one FSSP priest from England ordained every

year: in 2015, 2016, 2017 and more, please God. Please pray that more Bishops in England will ask for our services, that we may find work for our seminarians from England once they get ordained. With churches, convents and even seminaries sadly closing down across England, your prayers for vocations are more needed than ever. What you can do: pray; advertise; donate.

Pray: Irrespective of your financial support, please consider joining the Confraternity of Saint Peter, our prayer network for priestly vocations. Members (Catholics from 14, laity and clergy alike) commit themselves to pray for vocations daily (one decade of the Holy Rosary and the short *Prayer of the Confraternity*); and once a year to have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered for these intentions. More information on our website under “Confraternity”.

Advertise: Make sure you visit our website and make it known to others. All the 22 issues of our quarterly *Dowry* are readable online. Many articles of spirituality and theology are of lasting interest and can be read, quoted and forwarded for free. Let your friends know. The website is to be further developed in the coming months. Already available is a new Audio section. We plan to provide easily downloadable audio files of homilies and conferences. Again, please make sure you make use of it and forward the links to your friends. Lastly, FSSP England now has its own Facebook page: www.facebook.com/fssp.England. Please visit it and make it known. Thank you!

Donate: The encouraging prospect of more seminarians and priests has a cost. The needs of ‘FSSP England’ for your financial assistance are increasing. Please consider committing to our ongoing *Labourers for the Vineyard* Campaign. Thank you so much! Please continue to give, that we may train tomorrow’s priests, for you. In particular, monthly standing orders, even of a couple of pounds, are enormously helpful for us to plan ahead. Thank you for your great support.

With our prayers and those of our seminarians from England and Wales for a blessed summertime for you and your family, Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP and Fr Matthew Goddard, FSSP

**Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter,
St John Fisher House, 17 Eastern Avenue,
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