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## Contents

# Editorial

In the various and distinct contributions that make up this issue of *Catholic Archives* a thread has spontaneously appeared, bringing the contents together into a more or less homogeneous whole. Perhaps this apparently quite by chance occurrence is an implicit indicator of the function of archives as the memory store of the Church. It warns us of what *not to ignore*. The implicit theme is that of 'the ordinary person' and the 'ordinary parish'. John Davies in his article on the use of *Hansard* in the writing of the history of the Catholic community shows this is one source where the 'voice from the pews' maybe heard. Fr Nichols Schofield advises where to look when writing a parish history: not ignoring what is before our eyes and under our noses. Currently archivist at Westminster, he has written an appreciation of Fr Ian Dickie RIP; many will remember Fr Ian as, in Fr Schofield's words, 'he presided over the Westminster Diocesan Archive between 1989 and 2005'. A further article is based on the work of yet another former Westminster archivist – Fr Philip Hughes, who, too, asked, 'And in all this where was the heart and mind of the ordinary man'? He pointed to the *Catholic Directory* as an invaluable source for the historian. The archives of the Church are, as Paul VI said, 'echoes and traces of the passage of the Church...of *transitus Domini* in the world'. They bear witness to the struggles and strifes of the Church, this we see in Jan Graffius's article on the relics of Bishop Oscar Romero. That the Church cannot be but affected by the vicissitudes of its worldly existence, and not least those pertaining to politics, is further evidenced by Daniela Nori's article concerning the archives of the Roman Oratory. As well as the ordinary, there are at times the extraordinary; one such was Fr Adrian Fortescue, and Fr Adan Nichols OP tells of how this scholar priest put his love and sense of history at the service of his parishioners.

# Order, Order: the Catholic Community in *Hansard*

by

John Davis

Historians of the Catholic Community have benefited greatly in recent years from the greater access to Catholic archives, whether they be those of the dioceses or of the various religious congregations. Inevitably, in many of these archives the predominant voices are clerical; and lay voices, the views from the pews, are often only heard at second hand. One of the attractions of many of the congregational archives has been that the voices of women can be directly heard. As a result a developing strand of Catholic history has been that of 'the new nuns' story' which has been told by historians such as Edna Hamer (Sister Dominic Savio), Susan O'Brien and Janet Hollinshead, among others.[1] Oral history techniques have also been used to recover the lost voices of many of the Catholic laity.[2] One source for the views of the Catholic community that has perhaps been under-used is that of the parliamentary record we know as *Hansard*, the official record of parliamentary speeches and business. This may be remedied to some extent now that *Hansard* is available online.[3] The historian Phillip Dixon, for example, has used *Hansard* extensively in preparing

[1] Edna Hamer, *Elizabeth Prout, 1820–1864: A Religious Life for Industrial England* (Downside, 1994), (revised edition, Gracewing, Leominster, 2011), Susan O'Brien, 'French Nuns in Nineteenth Century England', *Past and Present*, No. 154, February 1997, pp. 142-180, Janet E. Hollinshead, *Women of the Catholic Community: The Blundells of South Lancashire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Wigan, 2010).

[2] John Davies, 'A View from the Pews: The Roman Catholic Church in England before Vatican II', *North West Catholic History* vol. XXXII (2005), pp. 77-93.

[3] *Hansard* online – www.hansard.millbanksystems.com

his biography of the Catholic politician and controversialist, Christopher Hollis.[1]

One example of the light thrown on the concerns of the Catholic community by *Hansard* can be found in the debates on the 1944 Education Bill/Act. The evidence from *Hansard* complements that which we have from other official sources.[2] Two prominent Catholic contributors to these parliamentary debates were Richard Stokes, MP for Ipswich, and J.J. (Joe) Tinker, MP for Leigh, Lancashire. Neither of them was a member of the official Catholic delegation led by Archbishop Richard Downey. Both of them, however, although they were from widely different social and educational backgrounds, were vigorous defenders of Catholic interests in the Education Bill debates. In the process they also tell us much about the Catholic community and the views of lay people, as they considered the future of the Catholic community in the post-war period.

J.J. (Joe) Tinker, as MP for Leigh, was perhaps best known as a widely respected defender of the living and working conditions of the Lancashire coalmining community which he represented. However, as a working-class Catholic Labour MP, he made a significant contribution to the presentation of the Catholic case during the debates on the 1944 Education Bill. Tinker's contribution was important largely because it is through it that the voice of lay Catholics, particularly working-class Catholics, can be heard. From it we get at least a partial 'view from the pews'. In much of the presentation of the

[1] Information from the author.

[2] John Davies, 'The Catholic Church and the 1944 Education Act: Material in the Public Record Office, Part I', *Catholic Archives*, No 18, 1998, pp. 43-54, 'Part II', *Catholic Archives*, No 19, 1999, pp. 60-74.

Catholic case for increased funding for voluntary aided, denominational schools, we have the views of the Catholic Hierarchy and those of the Catholic elite, mainly from the Catholic aristocracy and gentry, who made up the membership of the Catholic negotiating group that was led, after the death of Cardinal Arthur Hinsley in 1943, by Archbishop Richard Downey of Liverpool. Despite vigorous lobbying by James Chuter Ede, R.A.B. Butler's deputy at the Board of Education, Downey had not been prepared to include the 'blunt, unsophisticated British working man', Tinker, in the negotiating group.[1] Having been rebuffed in this way there would have been no surprise if Tinker had taken umbrage and absented himself from the Education Bill debates, but whatever hurt he felt, he ignored and continued to speak on behalf of lay Catholics.

In the early months of 1944 the Education Bill was making its way through its parliamentary stages. In discussion at the Committee Stage of the proposed financial aid to voluntary, denominational schools, Tinker praised the 'fair' approach of the President of the Board of Education, Butler, and was happy that it should be left to 'the will of the House' to decide on the level of financial aid to be given. He stressed that in such matters he had always been a 'democrat'. He merely asked that he and his fellow Catholics should be allowed to put their case, 'without any restrictions', for increased aid for their schools. He

[1] John Davies, '"A Blunt Unsophisticated Working Man", J.J. Tinker and the 1944 Education Act,' *North West Catholic History*, XXI (1994), pp. 27-35. Downey argued that if Tinker were included the claims of Richard Stokes, Catholic MP for Ipswich, would have to be recognised. Stokes was regarded as something of a loose cannon.

was prepared to accept the verdict of the House not necessarily 'with pleasure', but nevertheless he would accept it.[1]

Tinker was given the opportunity he had requested in a debate on the contributions that the State would make to the maintenance and repair costs of voluntary school buildings. The greatest beneficiaries of increased aid would, he readily accepted, be Catholic schools. In presenting his case, Tinker drew on his own experience and that of the largely working-class members of the Catholic community in south Lancashire. Catholics, he argued, because of what they had endured in the past, were 'perhaps more keenly interested' in this question of increased financial aid from the state than other denominational groups. In spite of 'all the hardships' Catholics had 'not given up' any of their schools; they had continued to make the necessary sacrifices to keep their schools.[2]

There was an argument, Tinker conceded, that the Education Bill gave the Catholic community an opportunity to rid itself of the burden of maintaining its schools: it could simply hand them over to the state. However, he reiterated, whatever decision was taken by Parliament on this question of financial aid, Catholics would 'not give up their schools'. If they did not succeed in their attempts to achieve a 'lessening' of their burden, they would simply continue doing what they had done in the past. They had tried to meet national requirements by improving their school buildings. They accepted that such improvements were necessary because all children needed 'proper school buildings'. In some cases, however, Catholics had failed in their attempts at improvement: 'Many of the

[1] *Hansard*, 28 January 1944. Education. Money.
[2] *Ibid.*

schools have fallen into a state which one cannot very well approve'.[1] In spite of that Catholics had clung on to their schools.

After explaining the extent of the financial demands on them, Tinker gave a graphic account of how working-class Catholics experienced the attempts to fund and maintain their schools. Any one of these Catholics knew what happened:

> When we attend Mass the priests say, "We have to make certain alterations in our schools. We hope the congregation will be generous and help us in our difficulty". It is a good appeal and we respond to it. I always feel, when I am asked to do so, that I am giving something to my people and I never object.[2]

Tinker estimated that when the Education Act eventually came into force, it would cost the Catholic community almost £10 million to fulfil its requirements and those left over from the 1936 Act, which had increased the opportunities for secondary education. Catholics could see a 'stupendous figure' facing them, which it would be 'well nigh impossible' to meet unless extreme sacrifices were made. Some of Tinker's Catholic constituents thought that right and justice demanded that Catholic schools receive 100% financial support. He had never encouraged them in this demand. He had always accepted that if Catholics valued their faith, they should be prepared to make sacrifices and not expect special privileges. Nevertheless, he agreed with his constituents that the 'present costs' resulting from the proposed Act were much greater than 'our people

[1] *Hansard*, 28 January 1944. Education. Money.
[2] *Ibid.*

could reasonably bear' for they would involve extraordinary sacrifices.[1]

Drawing on his own experience as a child of a Catholic working-class family, Tinker attempted to explain just how important schools were to the Catholic community. The Catholic working class was largely 'descended from Irish stock'. He described himself as an 'Irish Catholic' although he had never been to Ireland. He was merely one of many whose families had migrated to England but who were still in 'lowly circumstances', he being one of ten children. Although the nearest Catholic school was two miles away his parents saw to it that he and his siblings walked to school regardless of the weather or the season.

> That shows what we will do for our faith and we did, besides giving all the money we could to keep the school going.[2]

That attitude was 'typical' of Catholic working-class people.

Such Catholics, although wanting to cling onto their own schools were, however, he insisted, as loyal as any other of the country's citizens. They recognised that they lived in a 'good country' and that it was their duty to be loyal citizens. They were now appealing to Parliament to be a little more generous than had been the case in the past. Tinker was very much aware of the strong objections of many in England to the dual system of education. He accepted that if he were attempting to introduce it in the mid-twentieth century he would have grave difficulty in doing so. However, it had been agreed that the dual

[1] *Hansard*, 28 January 1944. Education. Money.
[2] *Ibid.*

system would in fact continue. He appealed, therefore, to those who felt strongly on the issue, but who had nevertheless accepted as a compromise that the dual system should continue in order to get the Education Bill on the Statute Book, for a 'little more generosity'. To be a little more generous would not compromise their principles but it would enable a lot of working people to 'carry on'.

The Government White Paper that preceded the Education Bill had agreed that voluntary schools should not be abolished and that Catholics had for several generations voluntarily spent considerable sums in providing and maintaining school buildings. Tinker agreed with this view that the dual system should continue, but also that those who enjoyed its 'privileges' should be prepared to pay 'something towards carrying it'.[1] Catholics, he claimed, did not object to doing so. They merely appealed for a spirit of toleration and generosity. He strongly supported the reforms promised in the Education Bill: principally the opportunity of secondary education for all pupils. A better education system was needed and he believed the bill would help to bring that about: 'When it goes forward I want all sections of the community to join together in believing that fairness has been given to everyone.'[2]

A little later, during the parliamentary progress of the Education Bill, Tinker repeated his plea for greater financial help to be given to Catholic schools. The Catholic community, he emphasised, was anxious to implement the programme set out in the Education Bill. Indeed it intended to do this in the

[1] *Hansard,* 28 January 1944. Education. Money.

[2] *Hansard,* 25 February 1944. Clause 15 (Education Bill). Classification of auxiliary schools or controlled, aided or special agreement schools.

Catholic education sector as far as it could. The Catholic case was a reasonable one. Catholics were not trying to avoid or shirk their responsibilities. Tinker repeated, 'I have said we must pay something for our religion.'

Tinker concluded by referring to one of the last statements of the late Cardinal Hinsley, leader of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, which stressed the contribution that Catholics had made and were making to the war effort to ensure victory and their wish to avoid the controversies of the past. These loyal Catholics were willing to make financial sacrifices for 'conscience sake', but there were limits. The burden was becoming 'too heavy to carry'. Tinker agreed that the reforms promised in the Education Bill were overdue, but every section of the community should receive a 'fair deal'. To his mind it was simply a matter of giving a little more financial aid to the Catholic community.[1]

Richard Stokes, possibly because he had a reputation as something of a maverick, was not a member of the group of influential Catholics who, under the leadership of Archbishop Richard Downey of Liverpool, negotiated with the Board of Education prior to the introduction of the 1944 Education Act. The Catholic position was one that welcomed the broad aims of the Act, which promised secondary education for all, while being concerned about the financial cost to the Catholic community, which the Act might bring. As the 1944 Education Bill made its way through its parliamentary stages, it was carefully scrutinised by a group of Catholic MPs from both

[1] *Hansard*, 4 April 1944. Clause 95. (Education Bill). Maintenance contributions payable in respect of aided schools and special agreement schools.

sides of the House of Commons. Despite not being a member of Downey's negotiating group, Stokes played a significant role in these parliamentary proceedings. Generally, but not entirely so, Stokes did not make great statements of principle in these Education Bill debates, but concentrated on some of the Bill's details and their implications for the Catholic community.

In the February 1944 debates on the early clauses of the Bill, Stokes expressed some of his worries about the relationship between local education authorities and the governing bodies of Catholic schools. Some 'arbitrary' local authorities, he feared, might, without consulting school governors, insist on developments or improvements that the governors were unable to deliver. He reiterated that Catholics wanted the best for their children, but they did not want to see their schools arbitrarily closed because of some 'perceived deficiency'. If a local authority claimed that the Catholic school authorities were failing to implement the Education Act, there should be the fullest enquiry before any decisions were taken about the schools involved.[1]

Another issue that could effect the Catholic community, even if only in a relatively small number of cases, was that of the so called 'single school area', usually sparsely populated rural areas where only one school, controlled or voluntary, would be funded by the government. Stokes argued that the Catholic community was prepared and willing to hand over any such schools to the local education authority, provided that provision was made for the 'proper religious instruction' of Catholic children. The best solution, he suggested, was that the

[1] *Hansard*, 16 February 1944. Clause 10 (Education Bill). Development plans as to primary and secondary schools.

children concerned should, if it were at all possible, be transferred to other Catholic schools that were not too far away from their homes. Catholics were fully prepared to make that contribution 'in order to assist'.[1]

A much more pressing issue for the Catholic community was the proposed right of local education authorities to appoint and dismiss teachers in aided, denominational schools. This, Stokes argued, interfered too much with the rights and responsibilities of the governors of these schools. The Catholic community accepted the right of the local education authority to insist on the appointment of teachers of the right standard and quality, but did not accept that boards of governors should become mere rubber stamps of the local authority. Governors should be given as much latitude as possible to make the necessary appointments. They were, he insisted, the best people to judge such matters in their own schools. Similarly, when it came to content of religious instruction, Catholics were not prepared to accept the 'provisions for controlled schools'.

Stokes accepted that in general terms Catholics would derive very great advantages through the Bill's provisions. However, he feared that the Catholic community might not be able to pay for the higher standards of education, rightly demanded by the government, and the advantages they would bring. He had a lurking fear that some time in the future it would be possible for an 'unpleasant' government to close some Catholic schools because the Catholic community had insufficient funds to pay for the standards demanded. As their core demand from the Bill, Catholics wanted schools that were

[1] *Hansard*, 24 February 1944. Clause 14. (Education Bill). Classification of auxiliary schools as controlled schools.

funded by the state but in which there were Catholic teachers: 'It is absurd to suggest that we want anything different from that.'

There was, he sensed, a 'vague and airy feeling' that Catholics had a vast community chest on which they could draw at will. This was definitely not the case. Every penny spent on education by the Catholic community came out of the pockets of the workers. Catholics were tired of running whist drives to raise money to pay for their children's education. They felt that they paid for this through the local rates but in return all they were offered was a type of education to which they could not 'conscientiously submit their children'. This was not fair or just. Money for Catholic schools came from the working man. There were no grand dukes and landlords 'to cough it up' for them. By and large, Catholics were among the poor of the country. They often had large families and great burdens to bear.[1]

A further concern of the Catholic community was the funding of new schools in the new housing areas, which would be developed once the war was over. There was no provision in the Bill, as it stood, to pay for the building of these 'brand new schools'. Currently the Catholic population was growing and would continue to do so in the foreseeable future. The Catholic community would need new schools in the new housing areas. Stokes was convinced that unless the issue was dealt with it would become 'a running sore', and would remain so in every election and by-election.[2]

[1] *Hansard*, 4 April 1944. Clause 95 (Education Bill). Maintenance contributions payable in respect of aided schools.
[2] *Hansard*, 9 May 1944. Education Bill. Amendment.

Despite the reservations he had expressed in the previous months, Stokes congratulated the President of the Board of Education, R.A.B. Butler, and his deputy, James Chuter Ede, on their handling of the Bill. In the Bill's progress through the House of Commons there had been a surprising degree of tolerance and goodwill and an absence of the bitterness that had marked the debate on such questions in the past. Catholics recognised that they had got 'a great deal' out of the Bill if perhaps not as much as they had wanted. They did agree, however, that so many obstacles had been substantially overcome by the changes in the Bill which the government had accepted. Stokes believed that if it was 'properly worked' in the spirit in which it had been intended the new Education Act would be of tremendous advantage to the country and the beginning of a really sound and lasting system of education.[1]

The contributions of Tinker and Stokes, and those of other Catholic MPs, to the debates on the Education Bill in 1944 provide us with an independent lay perspective. These two Catholic Labour MPs came from very different social and educational backgrounds. Tinker having been a pupil at a Catholic parochial school, but only until he went to work at the pithead when aged ten; Stokes was educated at the English Benedictine school at Downside, where he was the first head boy when the public school prefect system was introduced. They were both, however, ardent defenders of Catholic schools. Although neither were parents themselves they presented the views of Catholic lay people concerned about their education of their children. These lay views complemented the official voice of the Hierarchy and of Downey's negotiating group. The now easy availability of *Hansard* online enhances the case for the

[1] *Hansard*, 12 May 1944. Education Bill. Third Reading.

parliamentary record to be used alongside those sources that historians find in official Church archives.

# The Archive of the Roman Oratory
by

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This article does not pretend to be exhaustive, but rather to focus upon the history of the Archive of the Roman Oratory (ACOR) as an important example of the sudden process of dissolution of the archives of religious congregations following the confiscation of ecclesiastical patrimony.[2] By tradition, the constitution of the Archive of the Roman Oratory[3] arose from the decree emanating from the 'congregation' [chapter] of 4 May 1582 when it was established that 'an archive be made of all the documents of the Congregation [of the Roman Oratory] under the custody of Niccolò Gigli.'[4] In actual fact, it had already been decreed in 1580 that the documents relating to the Congregation should be put in order and assigned to the care of one of the

[1] Translation from the Italian is by Rev. Stewart Foster.

[2] Cf. The *acta* of the Convention 'Le Soppressioni delle Istituzioni Ecclesiastiche in Europa dalle Riforme Settecentesche agli Stati Nazionali: Modelli Storiografici in Prospettiva Comparativa' held in Rome 28 February-2 March 2011. In particular see Gianpaolo Romanato, 'Le Soppressioni degli Enti Ecclesiastici Italiani (1848-1873).' The expression 'confiscation of ecclesiastical patrimony' refers to the effects of two post-Unification laws, viz. Royal Decree 3036 of 7 July 1866 on the suppression of religious orders and corporations (in execution of the law of 28 June 1866 n.2987) and law n.3848 of 15 August 1867 for the liquidation of ecclesiastical assets.

[3] The Congregation of the Roman Oratory, established by St Philip Neri, was canonically erected on 15 July 1575 by the Bull *Copiosus in Misericordia* of Pope Gregory XIII. For the history of St Philip and the birth of the Congregation see A. Cistellini, *San Filippo Neri, L'Oratorio e la Congregazione Oratoriana* (Brescia 1989).

[4] ACOR, C I 2, *Libro Primo de'Decreti*, c.20. For Niccolò Gigli see C. Gasbarri, *L'Oratorio Romano dal Cinquecento al Novecento* (Rome 1962), p.147.

[Oratorian] Fathers.[1] This was, without any question, the task undertaken by Gigli in the first ordering of the papers, but it is not so clear where the archive was located at this time.[2] Certainly after July 1638 the archives were collected by Father Virgilio Spada in rooms designated for the purpose as part of Francesco Borromini's building plan for the Roman Oratory.[3] The original order of the documents was preserved, together with appropriate and suitable modifications, until the eighteenth-century inventories compiled immediately after Pope Benedict XIII's Bull *Fideli* of 1728 with its directions regarding archives. To this day these scrupulously edited inventories bear witness to how, at that time, the concern to preserve Oratorian material resulted in the provision of conditions for storage fully in line with contemporary archival standards: i.e. division into properly numbered volumes and separation into uniform series and fonds according to what would have been documents of an administrative or legal nature relating to the foundation of the Congregation and its

[1] ACOR, C I 2, cc.1, 6-10, 38-39. For the period from 1580 to 1647 we have a list of some of the archivists who had custody of the papers of the Roman Oratory. It may be noted how often the duties of the archivist were associated with that of legal procurator, and how in some years the procurator-archivist had a number of assistants and how in other periods he was left to carry out his duties on his own. See also G. Finocchiaro, *Vallicelliana Segreta e Publicca*, Leo S. Olschki, 2011.

[2] ACOR C I 6, *Libro V de' Decreti*, c.115, n.2 refers to how in 1626 the room of a deceased Oratorian, Francesco Maria Onorati, was designated as accommodation for the archives. This could be an indication of how perhaps the location of the archive had not always been the same, probably also because of the increased quantity of material over the years.

[3] ACOR C II 6, *Opus Architectonicum*: Father Virgilio Spada defines the room designated to accommodate the archives as 'that which has vaults above and below and is far from chimneys and the danger of fire.' This volume was edited by Spada between 1648 and 1656 (but not printed until 1725).

history.[1] This structure remained unaltered until 1870-1876, the period which witnessed the completion of the sequestration of the archival patrimony.

The dismantling of the Oratorian archive was the result of two simultaneous pressures: on the one hand, that arising from the Fathers of the Roman Oratory themselves who, fearing the loss of their precious history, removed for safekeeping what were considered the most important documents; on the other hand, the pressure applied by the institutions of the state which pressed ahead with the confiscation of material decreed by the new legislation but which did not have the means to administer it correctly.[2] In fact, the Oratorian papers which found their way

[1] ACOR, A V 14, B VI 3, *Index Congregationis Oratorii* MDCCXVII; B VI 14; C II 18; C II 18a. It is relevant to explain how an appraisal of the papers of the Congregation on questions of patrimony had been carried out in 1625 by means of the compilation of a register of property (A V 14), but one needs to look to the eighteenth century for a truly accurate inventory drawn up by Father Francesco Cavallini (C II 18). At this juncture it is important to refer to the fate of the parochial material from Santa Maria in Vallicella (the Chiesa Nuova) from the sixteenth century to the present day. The history of the parish is reconstructed in M.T. Bonadonna Russo, *La Parrocchia Vallicelliana Attraverso i Secoli* (Rome 2005). I will limit myself to mentioning the present distribution of the papers between the Archive of the Roman Oratory (ACOR) and the State Archive of Rome (ASR): cf. in ACOR C I 27; C I 29; C I 30; C II 2; C II 20; C II 23; C II 24; in ASR, *Atti dello Stato Civile Napoleonico, Appendice, Libri Parrocchiali*, reg.3 & 4.

[2] Article 24 of the law of 1866 (reconfirmed in 1873) stipulated that the books, manuscripts and technical documents preserved in the buildings of religious houses were to be deposited with the state. The Committee for the Liquidation of Ecclesiastical Assets took possession of the property belonging to the Congregation of the Roman Oratory on 16 December 1873 and in 1876 did likewise with regard to its archival material. The complete inadequacy of the facilities for receiving the confiscated papers on the part of the Committee is also evident in the words of Girolamo Lioy in his report to Biagio Miraglia, Superintendent of the State Archives of Rome (21

into the State Archive of Rome were accompanied by a rough note of their contents, but not by any inventory (analytical or otherwise) made at the time of transfer, so that this material came to be housed by the State Archive in a confused and disorganised fashion. It would have to wait until the 1960s for the State Archive to arrange for an inventory to be drawn up - from an analysis of which it is clear how some series were very incomplete, and how entire groups of documents had never been deposited, e.g. the registers of decrees, the musical collection, and the *acta* of the process of canonization [of St Philip Neri] etc.[1] Since the end of the nineteenth century the Archive of the Roman Oratory has thus been divided between the present archive housed by the Oratorians at Santa Maria in Vallicella (the Chiesa Nuova), the State Archive of Rome, the

April 1876). Cf. ASR, Archivio della Soprintendenza, b. XI, fasc.14, 'Religious Corporations: Report of the State Archive of Rome.' That part of the archive retained by the Oratorians, having been hidden in a hurry, underwent numerous forms of dispersal, theft and not least damage caused by humidity: in fact, for many years the Fathers of the Oratory, not having anywhere else to store their papers (and having themselves been deprived of their house and forced to move into private accommodation), kept their documents in the vaults of the church, and thus in an environment lacking in due care, where the effects of the weather, animals and careless visitors each contributed to the further dispersal of the archive.

[1] Cf. Anna Maria Corbo, *L'Archivio della Congregazione dell'Oratorio di Roma e L'Archivio della Abbazia de S. Giovanni in Venere*, Quaderni della Rassegna degli Archivi di Stato 27 (Rome 1964). The failure to produce an adequate inventory in 1876 made it all the more possible, if not probable, that like the material retained by the Oratorians, that deposited in the State Archive of Rome could have suffered losses over the course of time as well as integration into other collections right up until the compilation of the inventory of 1964. Moreover, according to the archival principles of the time, many papers were removed from their original series and inserted into different categories: e.g. this happened in the case of the parchments.

Biblioteca Vallicelliana, the Vatican Apostolic Library, the Deputazione di Storia Patria di Roma and a number of private collections where documents were obtained either by purchase or by chance recovery. The whole process has been termed 'the shipwreck of the Oratorian archives'.[1]

Among the conclusions to be drawn from the inventory compiled by Anna Maria Corbo (cf. p.17 n.1 above) of the material preserved in the State Archive of Rome, the most consistent would seem to be that that material to some degree completes the archival series which is currently held at the Roman Oratory itself and which has itself been re-structured according to the various archival criteria pertaining in the 1950s, viz. the time when the papers remaining under Oratorian custody were reorganised.[2] From this brief analysis of the history of the Archive of the Roman Oratory and likewise from

[1] The material in the State Archive of Rome comprises 522 archival items (folders, volumes, parchments, registers) with file numbers from 1 to 522. The Biblioteca Vallicelliana, in addition to the entire library of the Roman Oratory, holds some series of documents, e.g. the Fondo Falzacappa. The letters in private hands were noted in a periodical article by a Basilian monk, Don Antonio Rocchi: ACOR, *San Filippo Neri* nn.3-4 (1894), p.9. Rocchi refers to two autographed documents of St Philip Neri in the custody of the family of Signor Guido Rocchi of Grottaferrata, a town near Rome. In the Vatican Apostolic Library there are two pamphlets which appear to be of Oratorian provenance: cf. Patetta MSS 2232 & Vat. Lat. 14598.

[2] ACOR N III 13, Miscellaneous Collection of Information Bulletins of the Roman Oratory, where in *L'Oratorio di Roma* 1(January-February 1957), p.2 we find a short notice about a re-ordering in progress in the historical archive of the Oratorians at the Chiesa Nuova. The work, which was undertaken by the Oratorian Father Carlo Gasbarri and Giovanni Incisa della Rocchetta, did not result in a single inventory; nor did the standards adopted during this re-ordering turn out to be strictly archival - the most obvious example being that of the classification system (see n.16 below).

the information gathered from 2005 onwards, it is beyond doubt that on the one hand the original consistency has been permanently lost over the course of time; while on the other hand, it may be safely said that, happily, since the work of re-ordering and listing the archival patrimony of the Roman Oratory (which is still in progress) began in 2006, the material has retained its organic structure when comparison is made with the eighteenth-century inventories that reflect the original structure.[1]

The present-day Archive of the Roman Oratory comprises 72 linear metres of listed material and 23 linear metres of unlisted documents. The whole collection is stored in cabinets bearing the letters of the alphabet. The archival material may be divided into three main sections: the first section is formed by cabinets A,B,C,N,O,P and Q; the second section is formed by cabinets R,S,T,U,V and Z; and the third section comprises cabinet I. With regard to the first section and the manner in which the papers had been housed, the first few months of re-ordering confirmed the need to effect a general revision of the material described in the only recent inventory that had assimilated the modifications made during the re-ordering of 1956.[2] The analysis of this first section, by comparison with the inventory of 1978, has revealed inconsistencies, divergences and omissions in the latter and how the criteria used in describing the archival material are not the same throughout. In fact, only a few series were described while others were given only a cursory listing, thus resulting in an archival aid which was only

[1] Of all the inventories from this period, certainly the most useful is that of Cavallini (ACOR C II 18).

[2] Cf. G. Morello & F. Dante, *L'Archivio della Congregazione dell'Oratorio di Roma alla Chiesa Nuova*, Richerche per la Storia Religiosa di Roma, 2 (1978).

partly useful for research on account of its descriptive inconsistencies and also the lack of an analytical index.[1] The second and third sections, which were barely mentioned in the work undertaken in 1978, are still being listed.[2] This material comprises miscellaneous bundles, correspondence, invoices, accounts, annals, and manuscripts covering a period from the sixteenth century to the present day.[3] It is undergoing a process of re-ordering, dating and calendaring where items lacked the original numeration, all of which is recorded in a descriptive schedule giving information about the state of conservation, which will be incorporated into an overall plan of restoration. An analytical inventory is being made for these sections.[4] As a result of this work, it has been possible to reintegrate some series, reconstruct archival unity which was known to be incomplete, and to locate documents which are important in terms of the history of the Congregation of the Oratory.[5] As a concrete example of this work, one may mention how the

[1] There is a brief index at the end of the 1978 inventory, but it is not exhaustive. Moreover, the index obviously lacks any reference to the unlisted material. Thus one of the aims of the current project is to analyse the inventories of the items in the State Archive of Rome and the Biblioteca Vallicelliana with the aim of reconstructing the original composition of the series.

[2] The classification system of the archival material is given by the combination of alphabetical letters which indicate the cabinet, Roman numerals which refer to the level within the cabinet, and the Arabic numeral which indicates the order of volumes within the particular level. The limits of this type of classification are clear and are encountered when, for example, it becomes necessary to reintegrate the series.

[3] The archive continued to collect material of various types throughout the twentieth century.

[4] In the case of the Archive of the Roman Oratory, the need for an analytical inventory is linked to the need to know what the collection holds given the dispersal of material, even in recent times.

[5] The unity currently reconstituted is located at ACOR C II 19 & B VI 18.

construction of a database of all the signed financial receipts from 1587 to 1643 has resulted in the identification of a hitherto unrecorded autograph of St Philip Neri himself.[1] For the sake of completion, to this material has been added the music archive formerly kept in cabinets D,E,F,G,H and L.[2]

Thus the work which is being undertaken in the Archive of the Roman Oratory, looked at in terms of its long-term fulfilment, seeks to provide a wide range of aids and equipment essential to the scholars who visit the archive in order to conduct advanced research into the St Philip Neri, the history of the Congregation of the Roman Oratory, and the historical and artistic environment in and of which it plays a such an important part.[3] The project at the Archive of the Roman

[1] The bill of payment (6 July 1591) is to be found at ACOR I II 4, section III, c.24, where the original document remains in an archival volume marked with the classification of that era. The volume in question was successfully identified and the signature compared with others in order that it could be confirmed as that of St Philip Neri but not included in ACOR B III 1 bis, Autographs, nor cited in A. Cistellini (edit.), *San Filippo Neri: Gli Scriti e le Massime* (Brescia 1994).

[2] This series is found in A. Bertini, *Inventario del Fondo Musicale dell'Oratorio*, I-IV (Rome 1968-1971). Today the music archive, after the restoration that began in 2006, is held in the Archive of the Roman Oratory, maintaining Bertini's classification system. Cabinets D,E,G,F,H and L, which had deteriorated, have been replaced by modern equipment adapted to the conservation of paper.

[3] For the pastoral function of archives cf. (1) the *Circular Letter* of 15 August 2001, Chapter 1; (2) *Enchiridion* of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, pp.464-465; (3) Pope John Paul II, 'L'importanza del Patrimonio Artistico nell'Espressione della Fede e nel Dialogo dell'Umanità' - allocution to the participants at the 1st Plenary Meeting of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, 12 October 1995, n.3 (**L'Osservatore Romano** 13 October 1995, p.5).

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## Fr Adrian Fortescue
## by

**Fr Aidan Nichols OP**
(Archivist of the English Province of the Order of Preachers)

Adrian Fortescue was born in 1874, in London, into an extended family of land-owning gentry, senior clergy and dons, from whose social and financial resources he was largely sundered by the conversion to Roman Catholicism of his parents, though he retained the high cultural and professional aspirations typical of his background. His father, who had been provost of the Scots Episcopal cathedral at Perth, died when Fortescue was three, his mother when he was twelve. He reacted to these losses by developing a sturdy independence of mind and policy, already exhibited in the diaries of his student years now preserved at Downside (Downside Archives IX, AF).

After a private education at Catholic schools (initially in France) he entered in 1891 the Scots College in Rome, where his eye became sharp for both natural beauty and clerical foibles. It was there that the foundations for a lifelong dislike of the ways of the Roman Curia were securely laid. In these years, the interest he took in following the Greek Liturgy and learning the (recently purified and revived) Latin chant foreshadowed his later work as Orientalist and liturgist (see, most pertinently, his *The Divine Liturgy of our Father among the Saints, John Chrysostom*, London, 1908, and *Latin Hymns*, Letchworth, 1913). A man of formidable energy, as witness not only his stream of publications but the recreational activities described in his diaries and surviving correspondence (the most important holdings of the latter are in the Westminster Diocesan Archives, Series 20, and in the Cambridge University Library, MS Additional. 9812/D/90). Fortescue was a scholar-author who

was also very much a doer, a man of action. He not only read about the Oriental churches and their worship, he actively sought them out by travelling alone and at considerable personal risk through an under-policed Ottoman empire. And he became sufficiently competent in the practice of the Byzantine rite to orchestrate its highly public celebration in connexion with the consecration of Westminster Cathedral in 1908.

Fortescue's transfer for theological studies proper to the Canisianum at Innsbruck in 1895 gave him yet another language (his linguistic gifts became legendary and his interest in comparative grammar, a sure sign of the born philologist, suggests his reputation was well-founded). He also took from his time in Austria a lasting admiration for Germanic scholarship, the probably always unrealistic but nevertheless long cherished hope of securing a chair in Oriental languages at Vienna, and a sympathy for the Habsburg Empire and for German culture (though not for the Hohenzollern dynasty) which raised some eyebrows in the columns of *The Tablet* during the First World War. In fact, despite the (comparatively brief) Scottish sojourn of his father and mother and his own exposure to Scots in Rome in his years as a seminarian-philosopher, he was deeply English: well-read in the classics of English literature, knowledgeable about English painting, and a stalwart of the Arts and Crafts movement in its English incarnation: here again, he was an actual practitioner, through calligraphy and illumination (skills just reborn through the work of Edward Johnston at the London County Council's 'Central School'), in designing his own vestments, and, towards the end of his life, by way of collaboration in fine printing with the Cambridge University typographer Stanley Morison. His penchant for polemical exchange with Anglicans (not least through the

medium of such Catholic Truth Society pamphlets as *An Anglican on Reunion*, 1910, *The Branch Theory*, 1911, *Catholic because Roman Catholic*, 1917, and *The Date of the Anglican Schism*, 1917) was bound up with his awareness that Anglicans (especially High Anglicans) and English Roman Catholics were rivals in their claims to be the rightful possessors of the historic soul of Christian England. Even his Jacobitism might be considered quintessentially English in its romantic espousal of a lost cause. Yet this Englishness, though expressed negatively in superficial ways, notably in dislike of Italianate ways in the Church (such as the use of the title 'monsignor', and the ecclesiastical pronunciation of Latin (cf. his *How to Pronounce Latin*, Letchworth, 1908), was never a bar to an extraordinarily wide-ranging and well-informed concern for Christians elsewhere - at any rate if they were members of the Catholic Church, Latin or Oriental, or of the separated Eastern Churches.

On ordination to the priesthood in 1898, Fortescue's first appointment in the diocese of Westminster was to the German church in Whitechapel, a location which enabled him to establish a familiarity with the British Museum library, crucial to his scholarly work. Though the job involved the pastoral visiting of German Catholics throughout the London area, their numbers were not so great, nor their demands so heavy, as to deprive him of time for properly focussed reading. Not till 1908, however, did he really find congenial circumstances for priestly life. That was partly because some of his short-lived curacies were set in dreary or downright grim areas or institutions (like one of those Swedish abominations, an 'industrial school') that he found tolerable only with difficulty. But it had more to do with not being - until, that is, he became the rector of a mission - fully his own man. It was at Letchworth Garden City that for the first time he could set out

in completeness his sacerdotal stall, which turned on not only regular visiting, but also intelligent catechesis and the provision of a classical style of Catholic worship for whose celebration nothing was too much trouble, no effort of craftsmanship, in artefacts, ceremonial, or music, disproportionate or misplaced. Surviving objects, notably vestments now at St Edmund's College, Ware, and monumental accoutrements of his 'church of St Hugh', to be found in either its parish hall or its successor building, as well as, in written form, in contemporary accounts of congregants, leave little doubt as to the excellence of this lovingly crafted and thoroughly rehearsed ensemble of elements devoted to the glory of God. On its miniature scale, it was in fact comparable with the worship of Westminster cathedral, or the Benedictine abbeys, or the better known Anglo-Catholic London churches. And its influence was enhanced by Fortescue's growing reputation as an author on liturgical topics - the first edition of his *The Mass. A Study of the Roman Liturgy* was published in 1912, but a stream of articles on related subjects had appeared in the ambitiously conceived American enterprise *The Catholic Encyclopaedia* from 1907 onwards. His name became synonymous with ritual best practice: only private letters reveal how distasteful he found the work of describing the detail of complex choreography which went into the making of *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described* (London, 1918), which, twice revised at other hands, and boosted by the 'liberation' of the Traditional Latin Mass through the 'motu proprio' *Summorum pontificum* of Pope Benedict XVI, achieved a fifteenth edition in 2009.

Though Fortescue's book on the great doctors of the Eastern tradition - *The Greek Fathers, their Lives and Writings*, London, 1908 - is still worth reading as a entertaining introduction to its subject, for it is written in a style which

combines robustness with charm, and Fortescue's ship-borne or horse-back visits to a number of ancient patristic sites add a dimension absent from more standard accounts, it is, rather, his great trilogy on the Eastern churches on which his reputation as a Catholic Orientalist chiefly rests. It might be thought that its scholarship has long since been overtaken, and in an obvious sense this is true, since a plethora of relevant monographs on various facets of a huge subject has made possible much fuller overall accounts, whether from individual authors, or, more likely, in multi-authored works. But what Fortescue furnishes, in *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, London, 1907, *The Lesser Eastern Churches*, London, 1913, and the fragmentary *The Uniate Eastern Churches*, left unfinished at his death but posthumously published (London, 1923), apart from an imaginatively invigorated reading of the subject (and there is for that, in historical method, no adequate substitute) is a snapshot of the communities he describes taken at a particularly important moment in their modern history: namely, on the eve of the dissolution of the Tsarist and Ottoman empires, after which life, for many of the churches involved, would never be the same again. Fortescue's sense of justice made him serious about political wrongs suffered by the historically Christian ethnicities (no reader of his section on the Armenians in Anatolia would have been surprised by the atrocities that followed the outbreak of the Great War). Contrastingly, his sense of humour kept him alive to the occasionally comical features of the situations he described (such as the contemporary love affair between the Nestorians and the Church of England). But what is likely to strike the reader most strongly is the pathos with which Fortescue depicts much-reduced churches, marginalised in their environments, chiefly by the advent of Islam, and which drew from him some of his most eloquent writing, such as the closing peroration of the chapter in *The Lesser Eastern Churches* entitled

'The Copts in our Time'. There is, moreover, in the trilogy, along with a vigorous assertion of the need for a global centre of communion for the churches (and a deep-seated mistrust of Russian Orthodox intentions), a genuine ecumenical sensibility. This is most clearly marked in Fortescue's unwillingness to deprive Oriental schismatics of their ecclesial dignity (these are, for him, *churches* and not simply collections of heretics) and the several accolades he pays them for their persistence under persecution, and (though this would not be the case for the Nestorians) their high Christology and devotion to the Mother of God.

In a later period, which looked back with sometimes deceiving nostalgia to a more self-confident Catholicism, conscious of its own impressive growth in terms of schools and hospitals, churches, monasteries and convents (and, not least, publications) and intent on 'the conversion of England' without the demurrals that political correctness now renders seemingly necessary, Adrian Fortescue came to appear as an icon of not only orthopraxy - in the Liturgy, as a parish priest, and, more widely, as a public apologist for the faith, private correspondence - notably with the Jesuit polymath Herbert Thurston - reveals a somewhat different story. The difficulties of maintaining the full historicity of the Old Testament's narratives had been brought to his attention by typically forthright articles in late Victorian journals by the Liberal Catholic scientist Jackson St George Mivart - who had eventually come a cropper with ecclesiastical authority, being deprived of Catholic rites at his burial in 1900. This penalty, though hard, was subsequently withdrawn, and the Mivart affair seems a mere bagatelle when compared with the Modernist crisis which came to its head in 1907. But the factor of continuity was the demand for assent to the unqualified

inerrancy of sacred Scripture, which in that precise form dated from Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*. The anti-Modernist instruments promulgated by Popes Pius X, required, through the taking of a canonical oath, the public adhesion of the parish clergy. This created for Fortescue a real difficulty in conscience, which he could only resolve by a highly sophisticated exegesis of the key Latin words of the oath's preamble in order to evade the sense they would have for plain persons - a strategy he was uncomfortably aware he had excoriated when it was Newman employing it in *Tract XC*. Now he had a bigger bone to pick with the Papacy than his usual objections to petty tinkerings with the Roman Liturgy by the curialists of the Congregation of Rites. Despite helpful advances of clarification in the pontificate of Pius XII, it is not a problem that has yet been thoroughly resolved in Catholic doctrine as the hesitations of a recent Roman Synod of Bishops on the Word of God make clear. Misery about this issue compounded Fortescue's occasional misgivings about his suitability to the pastoral life in the Latin Church and made him look longingly to both the Melchites of Jerusalem and the Benedictines of Melk, in Lower Austria. Both of these were vocational changes to which he gave serious consideration.

Divine Providence, however, had other ideas, and the undiagnosed and, it would seem, largely painless cancer which took him away in February 1923 at the comparatively young age of forty-nine, also ensured the survival of his by no means unmerited image as a paragon priest of the Roman Catholic Church in England: courageous both intellectually and physically, voracious for knowledge and ecclesially productive knowledge at that, zealous for the faith and for beauty of holiness which reflects in earthen vessels the glory of God.

# 'A Great Museum of Unwritten History': Exploring our Parish Heritage[1]

by

**Fr Nicholas Schofield**
(Westminster Archdiocesan Archivist)

I often go back to a sermon preached in 1948 by one of the most erudite of Westminster priests, Mgr Ronald Knox. The church of St Thomas, Fulham was celebrating the centenary of its consecration and in the sermon, Knox said:

> Do not be deceived into thinking that history is the record of wars or crises, of social developments or changing fashions of human thought. Such things are only the backwash on the current. History is the life of John Smith, of the parish of Fulham, his birth, his marriage, his death. All that you will find set down in parish registers; and always with the priest's name appended...so, year after year, the ruling moments of human destiny stand dispassionately recorded. And meanwhile, how many secrets, these last hundred years, have been breathed through the grilles of those confessionals, and died with the priest who heard them! How many resolutions have been made, prayers granted, before that Lady statue! How many graces, unfelt, unseen, have been received at those communion rails! A church like this is a great museum of unwritten history; the history that really counts.

[1] This article was originally read as a paper at the Building on History Seminar, Westminster Cathedral, 28 November 2012. I am grateful to Fr Schofield for his kind permission to reproduce it here.

Knox, of course, was not a professional historian; and some may very well criticise the way he disregarded 'social developments or changing fashions of human thought', but he makes an important point: every parish has a story that is worth telling.

Speaking for myself - and I suspect the same goes for most clergy and parishioners - we become so focussed in parishes on the here-and-now (although with an eye firmly fixed on eternity), we become obsessed with the next page of the diary, on the current liturgical season or the latest project, that it is easy to forget that our parishes are indeed museums of 'unwritten history'. As Knox reminded us, much of this exists on an invisible spiritual level, not really the concern of a historian and often inaccessible in terms of research, but even in the most seemingly ordinary parish, a little bit of historical investigation will reveal interesting connections and fascinating characters. So often we take these things for granted and perhaps miss all the clues that point to our heritage - clues that may indeed be staring us in our face!

In my work as diocesan archivist I have been involved in researching and writing a number of parish histories - Welwyn Garden City, Willesden, Kingsland, Spanish Place, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and Uxbridge, my present parish. I would like to say a little about how we can go about this task (though I suspect many of those reading this are experts already) and what we can learn.

Researching parish history can seem rather daunting. Where do you start? A good rule of thumb (suggested by the Building on History project) is to follow the sequence: **Look - Listen - Read - Research**

**Look:** historical evidence is often staring us right in the face. The church building is an obvious starting point. What does the church say about its first parishioners? What sort of statement was it making in the local area? How does it compare to other churches of the same period and what is known about the architect? Some churches, of course, lend themselves especially to this approach. Whole books could be written about the interior of, say, Westminster Cathedral or the Holy Name in Manchester. But even in humbler buildings much can be learned from foundation stones, inscriptions, war memorials, stained glass windows, signs of rebuilding and reordering, vestments and sacred vessels in the sacristy, even the choice of images in the church. An old statue of St Patrick, for example, would obviously suggest that the parish had a substantial Irish population, while saints of a particular religious Order would point towards the local involvement of that congregation.

In Uxbridge, an inscription on the wall revealed that two stone statues (later removed - though I have managed to restore one of them) had been placed there in honour of William and Margarita Gilbey, local wine merchants and uncle and aunt of the famous Cambridge chaplain, Mgr Alfred Gilbey. This indicated that they were benefactors of the church when it was built in 1931. A flick through the Baptism Register revealed that there had been several Gilbey baptisms at Uxbridge, including that of Peter Hubert Gilbey in 1914 - who not only went on to became a monk of Ampleforth but (through his mother) Ninth Baron Vaux was the first Catholic monk to sit in the House of Lords since 1559. For an ordinary suburban parish like Uxbridge, that's not the sort of story you expect to find!

It is also important to look for records that might be gathering dust in some dark corner of the presbytery or sacristy - or elsewhere. Before arriving I was told that there was virtually no parish archive at Uxbridge but a happy afternoon in

the presbytery attic uncovered several boxes of old papers, photos and Notice Books. Likewise at St Bonaventure's, Welwyn Garden City a parishioner had carefully kept a copy of every newsletter for the last few decades (very few of which had been kept by the parish!).

**Listen**: it is important to listen to long-standing members of the parish. Such memories may sometimes be vague or exaggerated; they may express a particular viewpoint or prejudice; but they do reflect the collective memory of the community. I find anecdotes particularly fascinating since they can tell us things seldom recorded in official documents, even if they are not 100% historically accurate. We have, I think, a great duty in recording this oral history, before it disappears for good. One particularly fascinating source would be to collect together memories and stories of older priests.

**Read:** there may be parish magazines or previous histories that can be very helpful, as well as books of local and ecclesiastical history. A particularly noteworthy publication is the *Victoria County History,* much of which is now available online. I have also found the *Tablet* to be very useful (also now online); up until the 1930s this journal had extensive reports from parishes, especially if there was a special occasion (like an opening, consecration or public lecture).

**Research**: parishes sometimes assume that all relevant records will be kept at the diocesan archive, everything tidily boxed and catalogued. Sadly that is not the case (at least in this diocese) since we only have the papers which have been deposited with us! There may be some items of interest (in terms of episcopal correspondence, for example, or the letter books of the Diocesan Financial Secretary) but most papers

relating to parishes will actually be found in the church or presbytery itself. It is also worth doing an appeal directed at parishioners - this can be especially fruitful in collecting together old photographs.

These parish-based resources can be supplemented by other archives, including the diocesan one and the local studies centre. When I was researching the history of Our Lady and St Joseph, Kingsland, I focussed on the early years of the mission when it was run by Fr William Lockhart, one of Newman's disciples. He belonged to the Institute of Charity, an Italian order, and so I found myself in the Institute's archive in Stresa, on the shores of Lake Maggiore, thumbing through letters describing Catholic life in Victorian London. Such was the richness of that archive that what began as a modest parish project turned into a biography of Fr Lockhart, published in 2011. You never know where research is going to lead you! A trawl through the average presbytery reveals not only the amount of rubbish that has been kept but the amount of significant material that has sadly been destroyed over the years. It just takes one enthusiastic priest or secretary to do some vigorous spring-cleaning for the written record of the parish to be lost!

Parish history, however, should never be purely 'parochial' - seeing the parish as a self-contained bubble removed from the rest of reality. Reference should be always made to political and socio-economic developments in the area, as well as the experiences of other denominations. Often the foundation of a new Catholic parish was due to urbanisation and the building of railways. The Church in Metroland, for example, is closely linked to the extension of the London Underground.

I personally like to place a parish's history in the context of the area's wider ecclesiastical history. Rather than starting a parish history with its foundation - normally within the last 200 years - it is fascinating to look for links with recusant Catholics and get some idea of the activities of the medieval Church locally. That way, the parish is seen in terms of continuity, in the on-going Christian history of the area. And perhaps this also helps forge ecumenical links with the local medieval church.

In writing the history of Our Lady of Willesden, it was necessary to do this because the Catholic shrine, restored at the end of the nineteenth century, can only be understood with reference to the medieval shrine, which flourished in the years leading up to the Reformation. This continuity was able to be expressed in a new sign placed outside the church, showing two canonised saints who had made the pilgrimage to Willesden, one before the Reformation and one in more recent years: St Thomas More and St Josemaria Escriva.

Likewise in Uxbridge, exploring the parish's 'pre-history' uncovered not only local guilds and chantry chapels before the Reformation but interesting connections with Elizabethan Jesuits (including St Edmund Campion), gunpowder plotters and even an indirect reference in Shakespeare's King Lear.

Researching parish history can be very rewarding and involves looking, listening, reading and researching on many different levels. I've certainly found that exploring our past can help and inform present ministry.

First, it helps parishes understand their unique identity - with their own traditions, their own story, and their own heroes. Some of these factors can be re-discovered and used by

the parish in the present. For example, since St Edmund Campion spent several weeks in Uxbridge in 1580, we celebrate a Mass on his feast day, keeping alive his memory and witness.

Secondly, previous generations can inspire us in our current mission. We will often encounter dedicated laity and tireless priests who built churches and schools and raised the money for them. I always think of Fr Henry Hardy (a relative of Lord Nelson's Hardy), who founded five parishes and, as soon as one mission was established, would move on to found another. At his ordination in 1878, Fr Hardy had asked Manning to send him to the obscurest part of the diocese - and so he was duly sent to Harrow-on-the Hill. From Harrow he founded a church in Rickmansworth; moving to Rickmansworth, he was able to open a chapel at Boxmoor; when he eventually moved there, he started Berkhamstead and, finally, turned his attention to Tring. As his obituary noted:

> Thus, single-handedly and depending mainly upon his own resources, most carefully husbanded, and by living in unusual simplicity and abnegation, he exercised an apostolate in western Hertfordshire in which he has diffused the beauty of the Catholic faith.

I always get a real sense of standing on the shoulders of giants.

Thirdly, parish history informs us, it helps us understand what really happened in the past and why things are as they are (where we have come from). It can also question long-held assumptions and historical myths, which can sometimes hold us back.

Finally, researching parish history can create a feeling of *déjà vu*, of having been there before. History reminds us that there is nothing new under the sun. Many of our concerns and challenges today are remarkably similar to those of a century

ago. Modern priests signing school reference forms are not the first to have pondered how you define a 'practising Catholic'. The past was not necessarily a golden age of universal religious practice and all the nuances of human nature that we experience today existed in previous generations. There is a sense, too, of continuity. Thankfully, many Catholic parishes in London are currently growing thanks to the creation of more houses and immigration. Thus, in Uxbridge we currently have a weekly average Mass attendance of 715, with people from 71 countries around the world. When the mission was first founded in 1891, numbers and ethnic diversity would have been much more limited but the same process was going on: Catholic provision was needed because of urbanisation and the influx of Catholics from Ireland. It is interesting to look at how the Church responded to these factors in the past and to compare them to the present. A look at parish history helps us deal with change and continuity in the present and planning for the future.

It is good also to help parishioners have some sort of 'ownership' over their history and to bring it to their attention not only in books but on the website, in displays and referred to in homilies and talks. Thanks to Building on History, St Mary's school in Uxbridge has been engaged in several projects to explore Catholic history locally. Year 6 have been looking at a school report from the 1950s; other classes have been exploring the church building (asking how it has changed since it was built in 1931) or imagining how a First Holy Communion celebration would have been different in the past.

Speaking as a diocesan priest, I always think we are at a disadvantage when it comes to remembering our history. Religious Orders are very good at handing down the family tradition. They will have their own saints and *beati*, whose lives

express the spirit of the congregation. They will have customs and celebrations that are particular to them. They often have well-kept archives; indeed, many convents record all the comings and goings in an official Journal. Each house will be very aware of those who have gone before and their names are recorded in the Necrology read during the Divine Office. This is especially the case for enclosed Orders practising monastic stability. One Benedictine monk wrote:

> We soak in the timelessness with the air we breathe. In fact the air is actually an atmosphere that is part chemical and part historical. And when we walk down great vaulted and stone-paved corridors, we see our monastic ancestors walking ahead of us along the same stones to the church for Matins...and we realise that we are part of one ageless moral person.[1]

It would be great if we could say the same about our parishes, that 'we realise that we are part of one ageless moral person', not only by discovering our past but by making sure the present is preserved for posterity. Presbyteries are not expected to be mini-versions of the National Archive but common-sense tells us to keep newsletters, orders of services of important events, significant correspondence and e-mails, photos, and so on. Some parishes keep scrap-books or photo albums so that this can be done.

In an often-quoted speech, Pope Paul VI once said to a group of Church archivists:

[1] W. Mork, *The Benedictine Way*, (1987).

> It is Christ who operates in time and who writes, He Himself, His story through our papers which are echoes and traces of this passage of the Church, of the passage of the Lord Jesus, in the world. Thus, having veneration for these papers, documents, archives, means having a veneration for Christ, having a sense of the Church; it means giving to ourselves and those who will come after us the history of the passage of this phase of *transitus Domini* in the world.

In other words, even the most mundane details of parish history - an old account book, say, or a musty newsletter - tell us something of the *transitus Domini,* 'the passage of the Lord Jesus' at a particular time in a particular corner of the Lord's vineyard. An archive, seen with the eyes of faith, is a record of the work of God in time and a monument to the power of Him who preserves the Church despite her many human weaknesses and tensions. Let us keep our eyes open to the great museum of unwritten history that lies in front of us; let us discover it, use it and learn from it!

## The Relics of Oscar Romero and the Martyrs of El Salvador

by

**Jan Graffius**
(Curator, Stonyhurst College)

'This is the voice of justice, this is the voice of love, this is the cry that the church takes up from so many wives, mothers, homes, forsaken ones, in order to say: this should not be, return these sons and daughters as the law of God, the law of the Lord, demands. This is to cry out against sin. This is what the church is doing, crying out against the sin that enthrones itself in history, in the life of the nation.'
(Homily, 4 March 1979)

'Christ invited us to not be afraid of persecution, because, believe it, brothers and sisters, the ones who commit themselves to the poor have to share the same fate as the poor. And in El Salvador, we already know what the fate of the poor means: to disappear, to be tortured, to be captured, to be found dead.'
(Homily, 17 February 1980)

'Blood only negates love, awakens new hate and makes peace and reconciliation impossible. What is most needed here today is an end to the repression.'
(Homily, 16 March 1980)

'Brothers, you are of the same people; you kill your fellow peasants. No soldier is obliged to obey an order that is contrary to the will of God. In the name of God, then, in the name of this suffering people, I ask you, I beg you, I command you in the name of God: stop the repression.'
(Homily, 23 March 1980)

All the above are deeply moving words. They were Oscar Romero's most powerful weapon against the injustice which was inflicted daily upon the poor of El Salvador during his time as Archbishop between 1977 and 1980. His actions spoke volumes to his people - the actions of a shepherd, relieving the poor, reassuring the frightened, grieving with the bereaved, burying the dead - but it is chiefly through his words that Romero reached the world. His Sunday homilies were broadcast live from his cathedral pulpit throughout El Salvador, and far beyond, giving hope and calling his government to account with authority and conviction. The world listened to his homilies and helplessly watched the horrifying news reports showing a country slipping into civil war; a government repressing, with breathtaking brutality, its own people. Barely twenty-four hours after his passionate plea of 23 March, he was murdered by a lone gunman, on the orders of the government, while he stood at the altar celebrating the sacrifice of the Mass. His last words, spoken seconds before he was shot, were prophetic, like so many of his pronouncements:

> May this body immolated and this blood sacrificed for humans nourish us also, so that we may give our body and blood to suffering and to pain - like Christ, not for self, but to teach justice and peace to our people. So let us join together intimately in faith and hope at this moment of prayer.

His homilies, letters and diaries have been transcribed and published in many languages, and they continue to spread his words of profound love of justice and the poor, rooted firmly in the teaching words of Jesus Christ. I am a curator, concerned chiefly with solid, tangible objects, not words, but I know, through long experience, that objects, too, have their own story to tell. I have been privileged over the last five years to work to

preserve the possessions of Archbishop Oscar Romero, murdered on 24 March 1980, and of the Jesuits of the University of Central America in El Salvador, killed on 16 November 1989. The Jesuits' offence had been to work for reconciliation between government forces and left-wing rebels, engaged in one of the most vicious and pitiless civil wars of recent history. Romero and the Jesuits were repeatedly traduced as Marxists and traitors by the official voices of the press and the government, who refused to deal with the rebel demands. Their words live on to belie that smear, and the few small possessions they left behind have their own story to tell. In the course of this work, on behalf of the Romero Trust and aided by Jesuit Missions, I have encountered people and objects which have brought me to a deeper understanding of the tragedy of the civil war in El Salvador.

Curators are trained not to discriminate between the objects in their care, treating everything, humble and priceless alike, with equal consideration. In many ways, museum professionals spend their lives trying to delay inevitable decay, to extend the life of objects which demonstrate a perverse and ungrateful determination to return to the dust from which they came. In Spanish, the language of El Salvador, the word *curador* means both 'healer' and 'curator', and it is easy to see the role in terms of a medic in an intensive care unit striving to keep ailing artefacts going just a little bit longer. It takes on a deeper poignancy in the context of the tragedy of El Salvador.

The unremarkable personal belongings of Oscar Romero and the Jesuits of the UCA have a deep and profound importance; they are truthful witnesses to courageous lives lived in the light of the Gospel, and to violent deaths in the service of Christ and His poor. They play a vital role in a

country where official distortion and lies were commonplace, and in a world which often struggles to understand integrity, courage and holiness. Curators rarely get to deal with objects that speak as powerfully as these.

Stonyhurst College, where I work, cares for a unique collection of objects which illuminate the history of English Catholicism from the time of Bede onwards, and, in particular, the work of the Society of Jesus as missionaries, priests, teachers and martyrs in the 16th and 17th centuries. It was working with this important collection, partly the property of Stonyhurst and partly that of the British Province entrusted into the College's care, which led to my involvement in El Salvador. As this project has progressed, I have been repeatedly struck by the parallels between the 20th century Salvadoran martyrs and the English Catholic martyrs of four hundred years earlier. Both were in conflict with established authority, both denounced entrenched injustice, both were declared traitors, both struggled to work as pastors under constant fear of death, both were executed on official orders, and the relics of both were, and are, treasured and preserved, giving hope to those who suffer similar injustice and repression.

Community memory is preserved in material artefacts, and we have an entrenched, human need to keep things which belong to those we have loved; ask any mother about baby shoes, locks of hair, handmade birthday cards and the like. The early Church collected what shattered fragments it could from those first martyrs, and built its first altars over the blood-soaked earth consecrated by the deaths of Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia and so many others. And my work with pupils at Stonyhurst has shown me that nothing emphasises the reality of sacrifice

and devotion quite like a sliver of bone or the skin or hair of a human being who has died for his beliefs.

Following Oscar Romero's death in 1980 the Salvadoran government lost all sense of restraint, it got away with the murder of an Archbishop at his own altar. The way was clear to inflict violent and relentless retribution on all who opposed them, safe in the knowledge that Romero had been silenced. In December 1980 Salvadoran soldiers abducted, tortured, raped and murdered four American churchwomen. In December 1981 the biggest obscenity of the civil war took place in El Mozote. Death squad soldiers of the Atlacatl Battalion systematically separated the old and young, men, women and children, into groups in a mountain village close to where rebels were operating. Over four days they tortured, raped, mutilated and murdered 1,000 people, over half of whom were children. Of the entire village, only two escaped - a woman and an eight-year old-boy. Three months later, soldiers returned to take trophies - children's skulls - for candle holders and paper weights. In a world grown wearily accustomed to such acts, it still stands out in infamy.

Yet who now has heard of El Mozote? The massacre was first reported at the time in the US by the *New York Time*s and *Washington Pos*t reporters who had independently reached the scene, and came during a congressional debate over whether to continue military aid to the Salvadoran armed forces. Following a 'certification' by the administration of US President Ronald Reagan that no massacre had taken place and that Salvadoran forces were working to respect human rights, the Democratic-controlled Congress agreed to continue military aid. So successful were the Salvadoran and US governments in covering their tracks that it has taken a UN forensic operation in

1992, following the civil war ceasefire, to uncover countless skeletons, to prove to the world that the massacre happened at all. This one incident alone underlines the crucial importance of material evidence to point towards the truth in the face of political propaganda and obfuscation.

The objects I worked with were divided between two sites in San Salvador: the tiny house where Romero lived as Archbishop and the Sala de los Martires in the UCA. On both sites, I recorded, photographed, catalogued, carried out basic conservation, made new supports for fragile vestments and artefacts and gave advice on display methods, light levels and environmental control.

Romero's house consists of three small rooms and a bathroom. It contains books, a desk with his typewriter and tape recorder, a single bed, a few chairs, a wardrobe, and his much-loved white cotton hammock slung across the smallest back room. Most of his possessions are now, necessarily, behind glass to prevent damage by the many pilgrims who visit daily. Outside, in the drive, sits his beige Toyota Corolla, once a familiar sight in the city. Visitors are struck by the simplicity of his accommodation and his sparse possessions. Some have the power to move, such as his personal diary with bookings and appointments scribbled in for the weeks following his murder, or his instantly recognisable spectacles. His clothes, many handmade, are immaculately pressed and hung in a glass-fronted wardrobe. Romero was aware that as an archbishop he had a duty to be appropriately dressed, but he achieved this without excess or lavish expenditure (although there is a particularly beautiful charcoal grey suit with an apricot silk lining, bought in Rome, which made me smile, so incongruous it seemed amongst the black soutanes and grey shirts). While

recording his clothing I was surprised to find that there were only three pairs of socks, and was told by one of the sisters that he would wear one pair, have one in the laundry and one in the drawer - the bare minimum needed for decency.

Most visitors come to see the Martyr Vestments, as they are known. In a glass-fronted case in the back room hang a simple purple cotton chasuble, a white alb and cincture, a grey cotton shirt and a pair of black woollen trousers - these are the clothes he was wearing when he was murdered while saying Mass. At first glance, one's eye is drawn to the alb, which is shockingly stained with quantities of blood. A large area of cloth around the chest is missing altogether, hacked away by doctors trying to get to the bullet wound. The chasuble seems unstained, but this is because the purple cotton makes it difficult to see the blood. What you do see though, is a tiny opening, barely a centimetre in length and more of a cut than a hole, directly over the heart. A single, high velocity bullet entered almost without trace, but once in his body it expanded causing massive, irreversible organ damage, guaranteeing death. This tiny incision speaks of a professional gunman, cool enough to walk into a crowded church and aim his rifle at a priest saying Mass, needing only one shot to kill.

The environmental conditions in El Salvador are far from ideal for the preservation of organic materials. The temperature is considerably in excess of the desired 18-20°C, and the humidity levels are dangerously high. I recorded levels of over 90% regularly; the optimum is 55% and at 70% spontaneous mould growth appears. The Romero Trust installed a dehumidification and cooling system in the house, which has helped considerably, but constant vigilance is necessary as nature has a way of circumventing human ingenuity. Mould

spores attack fabric fibres, weakening the structure of the cloth until holes develop. Indeed it was during a minute examination for mould on the black woollen trousers that I had my most moving insight. They were covered with a white, speckled deposit, formed into circular pools, which at first sight appeared to be some kind of mildew, although it did not resemble anything I had come across before. Under magnification it became clear that these were salt crystals - the residue of a sudden and profuse sweat. According to eyewitnesses at his last Mass, Romero suddenly flinched, having seen the gunman at the door of the church. Whether or not he had time consciously to realise that death was imminent, his body reacted and sweated heavily. One cannot but think of the Garden of Gethsemane.

For me, such a revelation was profoundly moving, reminding us that martyrs are also mortals. Romero was very aware of the risks he ran in opposing the Government; how could he not be, with death threats landing on his desk almost weekly? He persevered in his fight against injustice strengthened by his deep love for Christ, and his total commitment to the cause of the poor and the voiceless. But he feared the prospect of death, as is shown by his personal record of a conversation with his private confessor about a month before his murder:

> My other fear is for my life. It is not easy to accept a violent death, which is very possible in these circumstances, and the apostolic nuncio to Costa Rica warned me of imminent danger just this week. You have encouraged me, reminding me that my attitude should be to hand my life over to God regardless of the end to which that life might come;

> that unknown circumstances can be faced with God's grace; that God assisted the martyrs, and that if it comes to this I shall feel God very close as I draw my last breath; but that more valiant than surrender in death is the surrender of one's whole life- a life lived for God.

The Sala de los Martires is a powerful record of the sufferings endured by so many Salvadorans during the Civil War of the 1980s, when some 75,000 were murdered. It stands on the site of the murder of six Jesuit theologians, murdered by the death squads on 16 November 1989. The Sala contains many artefacts relating to the civil war, and Oscar Romero. One of the murdered theology professors, Fr Ignacio Ellacuria, wrote that the entire people of El Salvador had been crucified along with Christ, and the objects and stories told in the Sala reflect the many painful stories of the years between 1977 and 1989. One case contains army mortar shrapnel, spent bullet cases and numerous fragments of bone gathered from the village of El Mozote. Another holds the bullet-riddled shirt of Fr Rutilio Grande, the first Jesuit to be murdered by government soldiers in El Salvador in 1977, and another some of the clothing of the Maryknoll Sisters and churchwomen raped and murdered in 1980. These items have been on display since the Sala was set up in the early 1990s, the labels identifying the victims, and clearly telling the story of their deaths at the hands of the death squads in the face of official denial and harassment. As far as incidents such as El Mozote, it is one of the few sources of information and evidence of the massacre on public view.

The Sala is dominated by a large, central glass case containing the clothing worn by the six Jesuits on the night they were murdered in 1989, and a single bloodstained white shoe

belonging to Celina, the 16-year old daughter of Julia Elba, the Jesuits' housekeeper; mother and daughter were both killed so as to leave no witnesses. The circumstances of all of their deaths at the hands of the infamous Atlacatl Battalion, who were also responsible for El Mozote, are made clear in a breathtaking, unbearably graphic collection of photographs taken on the morning that the tortured and shattered bodies were found, by Julia Elba's husband.

Like Oscar Romero, these were men who lived simply, as their clothing bears out. Dragged from their beds in the early hours of the morning, tortured and shot, their pyjamas, dressing gowns and vests are stained with blood and body fluids, slashed with machete cuts, holed by machine gunfire, ground into the dirt. Such things are hard to deal with objectively, and many times during my work I had to turn away. I remember spending hours carefully removing dust from a pair of green rubber flip flops, avoiding disturbing the blood and dirt caked onto their soles. In need of a break I wandered over to the supermarket opposite the university gates and there, among the bags of coffee and sachets of frijoles, were exactly the same flip flops, on sale for $2, over twenty years later.

For me, the most powerful objects in the Sala are six simple glass coffee jars, seemingly containing some earth, twigs, leaves and the odd button. Each is labelled with the name of one of the Jesuits. They contain the brains and blood of the men, scraped from the earth where they fell. At Stonyhurst is a famous relic, encased in silver. It is the right eyeball of Edward Oldcorne, a gentle Jesuit missionary working in Worcestershire, martyred in 1606. A distance of some four hundred years has dulled the horror of the death of a man condemned by the state to be dismembered while still alive, and whose parboiled remains

were collected by those who loved and respected him. The glass coffee jars, now arranged into a simple cruciform display, bear witness to the fact that such things still happen today. The importance of these stark, human exhibits is underlined daily by the groups who come to learn and pay respect, guided by students of the university who tell heartbreaking stories with simplicity and honesty. Many visitors are from the US, students and young people who have come to learn the truth of what happened. These things matter, and must be preserved.

**The altar in the Hospitalito Chapel, where Romero was murdered**
(Photograph courtesy of Jan Graffius)

# Fr Philip Hughes
# 'Archivist of Westminster'

by

M. J. Broadley
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The Salford Diocesan Archive holds a small yet significant number of letters written by, and addressed to, Hilaire Belloc. His correspondent in this instance was the future church historian Philip Hughes who, at the time the correspondence took place, was a twenty-two year old student for the priesthood for his home diocese of Salford. Hughes is, of course, best known and remembered for his trilogy, *The Reformation in England* (published 1950-54). What little material there is relating to him in the archives marks both the dawning of his career as a historian - the correspondence with Belloc, and the closing of his life - the valedictory note written on his death-bed to the Bishop of Salford; for he was, and always remained, a Salford diocesan priest. Among this material is a copy of the homily preached at his funeral. It alludes to the suffering he had to bear in his life as a historian; a life that was also, for Hughes the priest, a personal search for Truth. The letters relating to him being made a domestic prelate in the 1950s, when read in the light of the circumstances hinted at in the obituary noted above, lead one to see this event as being not only a recognition by the Church of his scholarship, but also as being a kind of tacit 'rehabilitation'. His approach to the history of the Church and the way he thought this ought to be written and presented: with upmost transparency and honesty, was not always well received 'by those in authority'.[1] Philip Hughes was born in Manchester in 1895. After attending the local parish school he went to St Bede's College. The opening of this

[1] For a clear example of this approach cf., Philip Hughes, Rome *and the Counter-Reformation in England* (London, 1942), p.8.

'commercial college' - as opposed to a 'grammar school' - caused Herbert Vaughan, the bishop of Salford, to be locked in dispute with the Jesuits over their alleged rights to open colleges without the prior permission of the local Ordinary. The Jesuits nonetheless asserted this right and, albeit briefly, opened a grammar school adjacent to their church of the Holy Name, Manchester. Hughes's family had from the beginning been involved in this venture. His maternal grandfather, in order to deflect any potential anti-Catholic feeling, acted as agent for the bishop in purchasing the properties in the Alexandra Park area of the city - two houses and the Manchester Aquarium, which Vaughan wanted to convert into a college. The little local difficulty between Vaughan and the Jesuits took on much wider ramifications and was instrumental in the formulating of the decree, *Romanos Pontifices*, governing the relationship between bishops and religious orders in missionary countries. Hughes described the dispute as a 'Homeric struggle...the last battle of the long war that opened with Richard Smith's defeat'.[1] He thought the account of it given in J.G. Snead-Cox's biography of Vaughan,[2] 'a model of the way a controversy should be recorded'.[3]

From St Bede's, Hughes went to Ushaw College to continue his studies for the priesthood. There, in the *milieu* of John Lingard, he sharpened and focussed his interest in history. The admiration he held for this scholar-priest led his fellow students to dub him with the sobriquet 'Lingard'. In an interview given on American television *circa* 1957[4] (he had gone to live there in 1955), he spoke of the first

[1] Hughes, *op. cit.*, p.402.n.2. Richard Smith, titular bishop of Chalcedon, Vicar apostolic to England; represented the secular clergy in the archpriest controversy in Rome; engaged in disputes with the regulars over their claims vis-à-vis the ordinary.

[2] J.G. Snead-Cox, *The Life of Cardinal Vaughan* (London, 1910), vol. 1, p. 305ff.

[3] Hughes, *op. cit.*, p.202. n.2.

[4] Television interview, cd copy courtesy of Mrs Audrey Badger

stirrings of his life as a historian. He had always loved history; in his last year at St Bede's he read simultaneously, and quite by chance, Cardinal Gasquet's *Eve of the Reformation*, and James Gairdner's, *Lollardy and the Reformation*. Whilst both presented the same reality and were sympathetic to the Catholic Church at this particular juncture, two differing, contradictory pictures were nonetheless being drawn. The desire to resolve this problem of contradiction, of how from one and the same source two divergent streams could emanate, he acknowledged to be for him the introduction to history as a mental discipline and the dawning of his life as an historian. A second stage was when writing a paper on St Augustine; after having used a well-worn phrase, such as: 'St Augustine was one of the greatest minds of Western Europe', or some other similar description, Hughes asked himself, 'but why, and what made him so'? It took a long time for him to find an answer; from this musing, further questions emerged, ones that would span his whole life. Therein lies what I believe to be the particular strength of his scholarship: Philip Hughes was not a discoverer, he did not quarry archives and repositories (an exception being the time he spent in Rome)[1] in search of hitherto unused primary sources waiting to be brought to light. He was, however, an explorer, a searcher; one who, by his method of interrogation, read and interpreted published primary sources which had long seen the light of day. The newness of Hughes's historical writing lay in the way he viewed these sources; it differed in perspective from how they had commonly been used and interpreted. He tried to emulate the principle set down by Lingard in the preface of his *History of England*: to observe the events narrated 'with the coolness of the unconcerned spectator.' [2] It is these factors that mark Philip Hughes out as an

[1] The fruits of this research are to be found in, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in England*; Hughes recognised how in writing this book he had also relied on published secondary sources.

[2] John Lingard, *History of England* (Dublin, 1888), p.xiii.

important moment in the historiography of the Reformation, and particularly in the history of Catholic scholarship.

Having transferred to the Leeds diocesan seminary in 1917 - a result of domestic-staffing difficulties created by the war, and aged only twenty-two, he wrote to Hilaire Belloc - then at the height of his career - asking 'for advice on a point of studies' regarding 'the best use I could make of the time which is not given to what I may call professional studies'.[1] Hughes earnestly recognised how, 'much good time can easily be wasted in studying history. This is what I am anxious to avoid, and as I regard with suspicion almost all our 'classic' English historians, especially the more modern school, could you give me a few working principles in the matter'? He was already demonstrating an acute historical acumen: he regarded the Reformation as having falsified the perspective of later writers to such extent that he had 'come to think that, with very little exception, English History has never been written.' Hughes asked Belloc if he would write an article, for example, in the *Dublin Review*, so as 'to give those...who are interested in the matter and willing to do the work, an idea of how to begin.' His opinion of how history was taught at Ushaw was low: 'fellows read the anti-Catholic history which fills the shelves of the reading-room, regarding Lingard as biased and unreadable because a priest and rejecting the Catholic point of view when they come across it, for similar *a priori* reasons.' Hughes acknowledges a certain fear: 'What I am afraid of is getting on the wrong lines to begin and like the rest, developing a mental squint.'

Belloc's reply was to say: 'It is possible to get a true view of history by a certain habit of mind. It is not possible to obtain it by a regular course of reading, simply because all the modern authorities

[1] Boston College Archive, Belloc Papers, Belloc to Hughes, 19 May 1917.

you can get are anti-Catholic.'[1] He went on to suggest 'one or two rules by which [the] vicious effect' of those in sympathy with the disruptive forces of the Christianisation of civilisation 'may be corrected'. The first rule is for Hughes to make himself 'thoroughly acquainted with the main lines of the Dark Ages, from say 350 to 1000...And carefully follow on the map the retrocessions and expansions of Christendom...Next concentrate upon three or four critical points, such as (a) the period when Catholicism officially triumphed over Paganism...(b) Comprehend the numerical insignificance and at the same time the character of the barbarian element...(c) Concentrate upon the iconoclastic quarrel which is the great point of rupture between West and the East...Lastly, when you have got some of this ground work, then read in no matter what brief extracts all the original authorities you can.' As a rule of thumb he suggested that Hughes 'question and even to negate in your mind as you read, any anti-Catholic authority'. Belloc ends by laying emphasis on the most important piece of advice he has to offer, i.e. the reading of the original authorities: 'The importance of getting hold of the origins is that once you possess them your mind is fixed in the right direction and you will understand all further developments.' Hughes replied by saying that the advice offered him was just what he had been looking for and was most practical, for 'before I was lost in a maze you have at any rate shown me very earnestly the way out'.[2]

When he later asked Belloc as to why did he not provide references, Belloc replied: 'But I am not an historian, I am a publicist.'[3] Fr John Vidmar OP, views Hughes's acknowledging of sources as the

[1] Salford Diocesan Archive, Box 193, Belloc to Hughes.
[2] Boston College Archive, Belloc Papers, Belloc to Hughes, 12 June 1917.
[3] Robert Speight, *The Life of Hilaire Belloc* (London, 1957), p.392.

making respectable of Belloc's thesis on the Reformation.[1] This view however, fails to take into sufficient account Hughes's originality of approach, his meticulous treatment of primary sources, and his efforts to demonstrate how the English Reformation was a very complex matter. Furthermore, Hughes did not try to emulate Belloc's apologetic approach to history, far from it. In all his published work no reference to Belloc is to be found. In a review of Belloc's, *A Shorter History of England*[2], Hughes pinpointed several inaccuracies and generalisations. The critique, and its implicit criticism of Belloc's methodology as an historian, drew a ten-paged, venomous reply, in which, scarcely veiled, Belloc attempted to ridicule his reviewer.[3] Hughes's riposte was simply to observe how, despite the strong indignation of the ten-page reply Belloc had still failed to substantiate his claims.[4] In summary, I would say that Hughes rated Belloc as an apologist and as a writer, not as a historian. It is interesting to note how, when asked about the origins of his historical scholarship, no mention was made of the advice he had received from Belloc.

A formative figure of Hughes's early life was his then bishop, the scholarly Louis Charles Casartelli, himself an accomplished Orientalist. Casartelli was keen to have educated clergy in his diocese. Such an ideal was not always the case, as Hughes would later discover. Having completed his studies for the priesthood, but not yet of canonical age for ordination, Casartelli gave Hughes the option of further studies at either Cambridge or Louvain. Never having been abroad he opted for Louvain, where he arrived with, in his own words, 'my mind full of history'.[5] The scientific method in

[1] John Vidmar OP, *English Catholic Historians and the English Reformation, 1585-1954* (Brighton, 2005), p.143.
[2] *Clergy Review*, vol. viii, December 1934, p.480ff.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. ix, February 1935, p.122ff.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. ix, April 1935, p.317ff.
[5] Television interview, copy courtesy of Mrs Audrey Badger.

which the subject was taught helped to order the knowledge he had acquired and provide him with a sound methodical and scientific approach, thus giving him that 'habit of mind' of which Belloc had previously spoken. His tutor, Alfred Cauchie, for whom Hughes maintained a life-long reverence, was a specialist in the investigation and critique of sources. Other than that he passed examinations with 'great distinction', and that the experience there shaped and moulded his historical instinct, nothing else is known about those years. A tantalising reference to what his specialism might have been is to be found in a letter from his bishop; as well as granting leave for a further year's absence in order to pursue his studies, he adds: 'as regards subject of a dissertation to study, by all means narrow it down to an immediate area e.g. Litchfield with one or two neighbouring dioceses.'[1] In 1956 Hughes's *alma mater* conferred on him an honorary doctorate. This followed the publication of the third volume of his trilogy, *The English Reformation.* In a letter of appreciation for the honour conferred on him he noted how: 'It has always been a matter of regret to me that I never completed my doctorate...and now, in its generous gesture, the faculty completes it for me.'[2] He also apologised for his delay in acknowledging the accolade; the University had sent the letter of notification to Ushaw - he had not lived there for the past forty years. The citation for the doctorate *honoris causa* reads:

> The Revd Philip Hughes, Professor of the University of Nôtre Dame du Lac, Indiana, has acquired a great reputation for himself by his publication of the monumental three volume history of the reformation in England, which has shown him to be a careful and diligent investigator in the acquisition of historical knowledge. Repelled by any conventional and rashly constructed account of the times, he has drawn a picture

[1] SDA, Box 164, Casartelli to Hughes, 2 March 1920.
[2] Louvain University Archives, Hughes to Rector Magnificus, 7 February 1956.

of the men and events of that time which is entirely free of point-making. Moreover, he is extremely well-formed in that theology which is necessary for this genre of historical study, and so he has gone to the heart of the matter as he explains the real issues at stake in studying the reformation.[1]

Louvain was followed by two year's research in Rome, amidst the archives of Propaganda Fide, the Vatican Library and the Vatican Archives. This was the only time Hughes investigated unpublished primary sources; sadly, the fruits of this investigation were never fully written up. Was this to have been the material for his never-to-be-completed doctorate, one wonders? In *Rome and the Counter Reformation in England* (published 1942), Hughes intended to present, as the title suggests, a history of the role Rome played *vis-à-vis* England and the Counter-Reformation. With the first two thirds written, treating of Cardinals Pole and Allen respectively, the onset of the Second World War prevented him finishing what he had set out to do. In an explanatory sentence he writes: 'For the last twelve months the important archives of the Archbishop of Westminster have been buried behind protective sandbags and the writer of these pages has been living seventy miles away from libraries as well as from these all but essential archives.'[2] Rather than abandon the project entirely he decided 'to set out some of the fruits of researches made many years ago now in various Roman archives'. These unpublished primary sources contained a picture he described as being 'one of the *Ecclesia Anglicana* in its supreme hour of desolation.'[3] By necessity he was presenting fragmentary evidence, told from one side only; however, he hoped that one day it may be of service to a future researcher. The sources in question relate to the agitation of the Secular clergy for the appointment of Catholic bishops in the

[1] 'Annuaire de l'université catholique de Louvain, 1954-1956, p.699.
[2] Hughes, *op. cit.*, p.274.
[3] *Ibid.*, p.275.

period 1606-1624; the difficulties and the controversy surrounding Richard Smith, consecrated titular bishop of Chalcedon 1625, and his dispute with the regular clergy. Hughes maintained that Rome's failure to appoint bishops was a leading cause in the Counter-Reformation's failure in England.

After his stay in Rome the Archbishop of St Paul, Minnesota, invited him to go and teach there. Finally, after being there only one year, and due to a need of priests in his home diocese, i.e. the need for second and third curates, he was recalled to parochial work; he served several curacies in Manchester. He published his first book, *The Catholic Question*, in 1929. The following year, Cardinal Bourne asked leave for Hughes to be allowed to assist in the foundation of a Catholic Institute of Higher Studies to be opened near to Westminster Cathedral. Fr John Baptist Reeves OP was among the others involved. Although this venture fizzled out within a short space of time, Hughes remained in London, never to return to his native diocese. He became acquainted with that circle of Catholic intellectuals whose members included: Frank Sheed, Tom Burns, Douglas Woodruff, Richard O'Sullivan (the founder of the Thomas More Society), and Stanley Morison.[1] Hughes invited Christopher Dawson to read and comment on drafts of his work. Several Dominicans also became friends; of them, Fr Vincent McNabb is said to have had the most influence on him. Sadly, no correspondence relating to those days has survived. Hughes undertook the role of chaplain to a convent of nuns, as well as being Westminster diocesan archivist in order to provide himself with a living. Reviews and articles for the *Clergy Review* and the *Dublin Review*, became a regular feature. His association with the *Clergy Review* brought him into contact with a young priest of the Augustinians of the Assumption, Fr

[1] This community was the subject of James R. Lothian's *The Making and Unmaking of the English Catholic Intellectual Community 1910-1950* (Indiana, 2009).

Andrew Beck, with whom he was to enjoy a warm and life-long friendship. It was Beck, who as Bishop of Salford secured a domestic prelature for Hughes. An earlier attempt at a similar honour in recognition of his scholarship had been blocked by Archbishop Griffin; he had also refused to support a recommendation that Hughes be given an honorary doctorate. Dom Christopher Butler, among many others, was delighted that the Church, albeit late in the day, had at last given him recognition. Although he made light of it, to Hughes it signified a great deal.

Between 1934 and 1942 seven books flowed from Hughes's pen: two volumes of *A History of the Church*; a biography of Pius XI; *The Faith in Practice* - a book on Catholic doctrine and life; *Meditations for Lent* - taken from St Thomas Aquinas; *A Short History of the Catholic Church*, and the already mentioned, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in England*. We might add to this list a preface written for a new edition of *An Early Life of John Fisher*. These were productive yet difficult years; a fact recognised in the eulogy preached at his funeral in 1967. The preacher referred to them as the time, 'when he amassed his store of learning, polished his historical tools, and formed his views in all kinds of difficulty - poverty, lack of sympathy and understanding, absence of recognition, isolation'. An instance of lack of sympathy and understanding is when Hughes's then bishop - no longer the scholarly bishop Casartelli of his youth - Henry Vincent Marshall, on being presented with a copy of his latest book, is reputedly to have retorted: 'so this is what you have been wasting your time on.'[1]

When the Cenacle Convent, where Hughes had been chaplain for eight years, closed and evacuated to the countryside, his services

[1] This recollection recounted by Mgr James Cricthon to Fr John Sharp, archivist of Birmingham Archdiocese.

were no longer needed. In reply to his letter informing Cardinal Hinsley of its closure, Hughes was informed: 'I am sorry to say we are not in a position to continue your *honorarium* as archivist. We have to face these inevitable consequences of the present disaster, and must say *Fiat voluntas Tua.*' On Hughes's letter Hinsley scribbled a pencil-written instruction to his secretary: 'leave free to go elsewhere with extended permission of own ordinary'. Hughes was informed by his own diocesan bishop that that he had no work for him. It was agreed that he could remain outside his diocese, but Salford would have no responsibility for his keep. He wrote articles for the *Tablet* as one means of earning some money. Thanks to the recent digitisation of past copies of the *Tablet,* dating from 1840, these articles are now available online.[1] He wrote on a myriad of subjects, nearly always of an historical nature but also on more specifically spiritual themes. Numerous book reviews also make up this *corpus*. In 1943 he suffered a serious heart attack. His diocesan file records that from this date until 1954 he was on sick leave. Between 1950 and 1954 he was to write his *magnum opus, The English Reformation.*

In 1955 the University of Notre Dame offered him a permanent, full-time academic post. Now, for the first time in his life, he was to receive recognition, and a decent salary which enabled him to be in an environment conducive to study and research. In the 1957 television interview referred to above, he told the interviewer what a great bonus it was for him to be living for the first time amidst an academic community. Most of his books were written in 'intellectual solitude'; being surrounded now by fellow scholars allowed him to gain a good view of the state of historical teaching without the need of research.

[1] Available at: **tablet.archive.netcopy.co.uk**

In the same interview Hughes spoke of how an historian in his approach to history must have in mind the ordinary man, for it is he who primarily makes history. Above all he believed history to be a story, and one that should be told well by the historian writing a good story. Hughes confessed to never having much occupied himself with the theory and nature of historical investigation, as to whether history belonged to the arts or to sociology, etc. His preference was to write about the 'problems of humanity' rather than write technically about 'historical problems'. He envisaged the task as being one of reconstructing humanity's past. In doing so his golden rule was that of Lingard: 'to observe the events he narrates with the coolness of an unconcerned spectator'. A historian, Hughes maintained, must always be asking himself to what extent is he achieving this ideal; allowing this axiom to be the constant interrogator he will, he concluded, 'be bound to exercise all the principles of historical criticism'.

'But what of the ordinary man'? This was what, or better said, who, Hughes was really concerned with; the history of the ordinary man as the creator of history. He raised this question in his Reformation trilogy: 'the most important detail of all...what idea...the ordinary man had about what religion is supposed to be, is perhaps an impossible task to discover', for it is to move outside historical certitude and historical hypothesis.[1] Indeed, he ends the trilogy with the evocative - lapidary even - statement: 'And in all this, where is the mind and heart of the ordinary man?'[2] This was written prior to what John Bossy has described as, 'the revolution in English local archives' thus making available chantry accounts, burial records, tax returns, church census reports, etc.[3] Bossy, writing

[1] Philip Hughes, *The English Reformation* (1953), vol.ii, p.187.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol.iii. (1954), p.404.
[3] John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850* (London, 1975), p.3.

twenty-five years after Hughes, was thus in a position to pursue what had once proved elusive - 'what I have been after is the religious and social experience of the average Catholic'. Others, in particular Eamon Duffy, have pursued further this revisionist line. It is not, I think special pleading, to state that in many ways the hereditary line of the later history can be traced to the reoccurring theme which Philip Hughes voiced much earlier.

The centenary edition of the *Catholic Directory* for 1937 carries a preface written by Hughes. He took the opportunity to draw the reader's attention to how the directory was, for much of its early life, coterminous with that of the Victorian Age. This promoted him to raise the question:

> What has been the fate, during the rise and fall of Victorianism, of the Catholic Church in the land of the Victorians? It would be interesting to trace, were the materials available, the interplay of such contrary forces as the religion of Jesus Christ and the genius of Victorian England, to see how each affected the other and what kind of Catholic...emerged...from the last one hundred years.
>
> The difficulty in writing such a history lies in the scarcity of sources.
>
> It is a story that no one has yet written, and from the nature of the case there is less material in diocesan archives from which to write it than lies to hand for ultimately less important matters. Let Wiseman fail to agree with Errington, his chosen coadjutor...and immediately the documents begin to pile up in the desks and cupboards of the respective litigants.

This last point is well illustrated by the books reviewed in this issue of *Catholic Archives*, in which a plethora of primary sources have been

used to describe the work and lives of Bishop Clifford by Canon J. A. Harding, and Cardinal Heenan by James Hagarty. Finding sources for the history of the 'ordinary man', in this instance the men and woman who make up parish life, is explored by Fr Nicholas Schofield in his aptly titled article, 'A Great Museum of unwritten History', also to be found in this issue. Hughes highlights the *Catholic Directory* as an invaluable source in the search for the religion of the ordinary man. In fact he believed that,

> ...to a large extent the *Directory* is the only accessible record of [the Catholic Church in the Victorian period], and the book destined for the most ephemeral of use finds its place as a most valuable permanent record. To it the historian of Catholicism in modern England must turn if he is ever to study that real Catholic life, compared with whose depths the *personalia* that loom so large in the classical biographies of the Victorian Cardinals are but transient and fleeting surface eddies. The careful study of the wealth of statistics which the *Directory* provides through all this century, the relation these innumerable data to geographical distribution, to the general growth of the country, and to the varied growth of its several parts; or again, the study of the Catholic mind and spirit as revealed in the rich store of advertisements which, through a hundred years, continue to be not the least interesting section of the *Directory* - all these will throw a light on the past, that is to say on the causes of the present, undreamed of by the famous men who wrote those classic biographies and whom familiarity with the ordinary facts of life blinded, at times, to their relative importance. He who knows how to read the *Directory* - and not least how to read between the lines - will come near to being the historian of the century's Catholicism.

> Fortunate indeed, then, the Catholic library that holds the whole file of the *Catholic Directory*! Thither must ultimately go who ever would know the Catholicism of Victorian England.

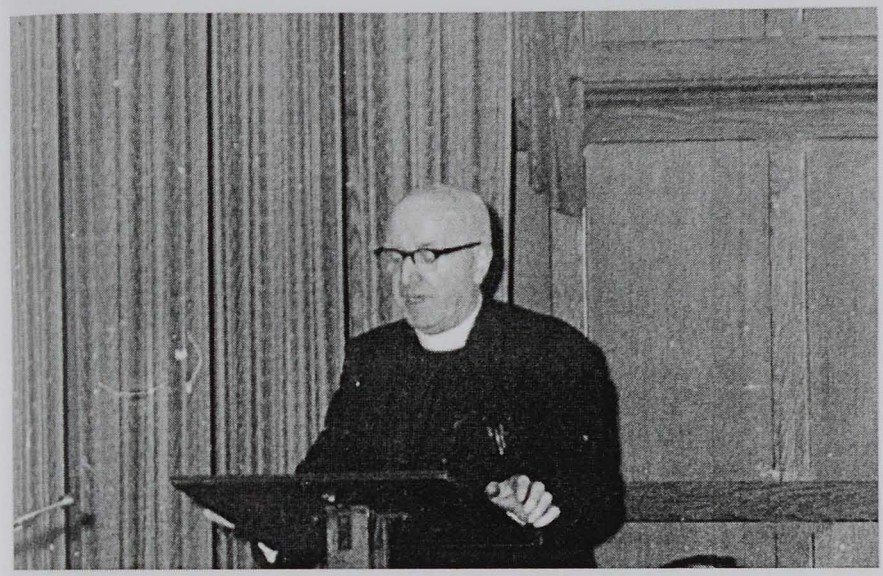
In the above, the apposite phrase is: '*how* to read the *Directory* - and not least how to *read between the lines*'. Philip Hughes was, and remains, a master of such a technique.

Overleaf

Philip Hughes lecturing in America.

Conferment of the degree Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, University of Notre Dame.

(Photographs courtesy of Mrs Audrey Badger)



## A Tribute to Fr Ian Dickie RIP
by

**Fr Nicholas Schofield**
(Westminster Diocesan Archives)

Fr Ian Dickie presided over the Westminster Diocesan Archive between 1989 and 2005. He took great pride in this role; ever since seminary he had been passionate about the history of the Archdiocese, especially the traditions that were passed down from Douay to his beloved *alma mater* at Old Hall Green.

As archivist Fr Ian was instrumental in adding to the collections; including several boxes of Manning papers which he was able to transfer from Angers, and sorting out material that rightly belonged in other places (such as the Brentwood Diocesan Archive). He was a well-known figure on the Catholic history circuit. The Catholic Record Society conference was an annual fixture in his diary and for many years he served on that Society's Council.

Fr Ian will be remembered especially for the support he gave to researchers, which went well beyond the call of duty. This clearly comes across in the way that he is acknowledged in many books. Not only did he share with scholars his considerable knowledge but a visit to the archive almost inevitably involved a trip to a local restaurant. As someone who benefitted from this hospitality, I know how appreciated it was despite the consequent limiting of research time.

One regular researcher, Professor Michael Questier, said that Fr Ian was 'genuinely a bibliophile, one of those people who actually read the books they purchase. Also, his phenomenal memory meant that as an archivist he could supply

in that way for the absence of modern electronic finding aids.' Just as well, for he distrusted modern technology and refused to buy a computer during his time at the Archive!

Fr Ian's love of books was obvious when you visited him at home. He would always take you with great pride to his 'book room' and talk about what he had been reading. His interests covered many subjects: not only ecclesiastical history but politics, literature, art and the medieval mystics. I always thought it a pity that Fr Ian did not put his pen to paper more often, although he was full of ideas for other people. He once mentioned writing a book on the Church in deepest Hertfordshire and a parish history of Buntingford but alas, as far as I know, these were never started.

On moving to Buntingford in 2005, Fr Ian realised that regular commutes to London would be impractical - not only did he lack a car but there was not even a railway station within his parish boundaries. I will always be grateful that he suggested my name to Cardinal Cormac and that I was duly appointed as his successor, despite only having been ordained two years. He remained incredibly supportive in subsequent years although he never again visited the Diocesan Archive - in fact, his visits to London became rare and he was most likely to be seen on the Hertfordshire lanes, walking along with his pipe and his dog. He will be truly missed by his friends and colleagues. *May he rest in peace.*

## Homily Preached at the Requiem Mass for Fr Ian Dickie

by

Canon Michael Brockie

We've gathered here in the Chapel at St Edmund's College, at Ian's express wish, to do for him what the Church does in the face of death. He loved his time here and it is fitting that it is here that Ian's fellow priests, parishioners and friends should join his family whom I welcome again, surround him with our love and prayers, and confidently commend him to Almighty God as we accompany him, as it were, from death to the new life that was his hope and humble expectation, and ours too. We pray that God will have mercy on him. We do so within the context of the Holy Mass - the centre of the life of the Catholic Church. Not to be able to say his daily Mass for which he had a profound love, was a great loss to Ian as the disease that was to claim his life advanced.

The liturgy of today's Mass, especially in its first Reading from Lamentations powerfully echoes what must be in the hearts of his family, parishioners and friends as we re-call Ian's sufferings over the last few years; first of all in his withdrawal from ministry, and then, when after his welcome return to ministry, the new anxiety of at least the last twelve months and probably more, in respect of his medical condition.

> My soul is shut out from peace; I have forgotten happiness. And now I say, 'My strength is gone... brooding on my anguish and affliction is gall...My spirit ponders it continually and sinks within me.

Ian faced both of the setbacks of the last few years with what I would call a kind of Christian stoicism. In his illness he was fearful of what was to come but he never lost his sense of humour and his faith. He kept about him relics of the martyrs and must have reflected on the path God had permitted for him. He must have felt close to the English martyrs whom he deeply revered. Surely, in the light of this, we can repeat what Lamentations goes on to say in that Reading:

> This is what I shall tell my heart, and so recover hope: the Lord's favours are not exhausted; every morning they are renewed; great is his faithfulness My portion is the Lord says my soul and so I will hope in him.

The Gospel of St John reflects on the death of Jesus, of the glory that would be his, and of the future glory those who are faithful to Him are called to share. Ian served the Lord, and followed him not only throughout his ministry but also in the way of suffering. May Ian's fidelity and share in the way of the Cross bring him to eternal glory.

He was born in Hillingdon, the second of six children. After schooling in West London he underwent work experience and somewhere around this time he became a Catholic. He burst onto the diocesan scene when he was accepted as a candidate for the diocesan priesthood and commenced studies at Allen Hall then situated here at St Edmund's.

After ordination to the priesthood in 1977, Ian served as an assistant priest in a number of parishes of the diocese: at Tottenham, East Acton, Northwood, Kingsland, Hoddesdon and Ponders End and here 'back on the staff' of St Edmund's, as he was fond of saying. In 1996 Ian was asked by the late

Cardinal Hume to be the diocesan archivist succeeding the formidable Miss Elizabeth Poyser. Although without any formal training he was very proud of this appointment and on certain days of the week he presided at the offices of the diocesan Archives; by then transferred from Archbishop's House to their current centre at Our Lady of Victories Church in Kensington. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of all that was preserved there and often presumed to suggest topics for a B.Litt or doctoral thesis to researchers already working in the Archive on topics of their own, and to others he thought capable of it.

I first got to know Ian well when he went to Swiss Cottage as parish priest in the early 1990s and I was his next door neighbour in Hampstead. He loved the company of other priests and was forever having priests and lay friends to lunch or dinner. He truly had a gift for friendship. His great generosity of spirit led him very early on to invite Canon Peter Phillips, then recently retired from Kingsbury Green, to go and live in the presbytery in Maresfield Gardens; where they lived very contentedly together. Ian had always remembered Peter's kindness to him when he was a student in training.

He was delighted to be appointed parish priest of the church and parish there, dedicated to St Thomas More; for he had a great devotion to the English martyrs and his knowledge of recusant history was extensive and his retentive memory formidable. One important fixture in his diary was always the annual conference of the Catholic Record Society. Whilst at Swiss Cottage he commissioned a triptych for the church there in honour of St Thomas More and St John Fisher to mark the diamond jubilee of the parish, and as a Memorial to its Founders. He also enthusiastically supported a CD recording in his church, of a Mass for St Thomas More and St John Fisher, of

Byrd's Mass for Four Voices and a selection of motets and Gregorian chant.

Many of us will miss what I can only call Ian's bluff and bluster, and his facility of unlimited utterance, together with his somewhat idiosyncratic vocabulary that he rarely deviated from. So, for example: his fellow priests were invariably referred to as the 'college of clergy'. We were all 'on the mission', and appointed to 'this mission' or 'that mission'. He might almost have been talking of the time of the Vicars Apostolic - a period he knew a great deal about. Many of the Vicars Apostolic of the London District are buried in the vaults underneath this chapel or in Mortuary Lane, which we would have passed on the way in.

His love of the past also reflected a certain disdain for many modern innovations that most of us apparently can't live without. The world of the computer, mobile telephone, tablets and ipads, tethering, texting, twittering, face book, skype, ebay and all the rest, passed him by. They were for him a foreign country, a country he most emphatically did not wish to inhabit or even visit. Although he was happy enough to ride in a motor vehicle and affected to know all the road numbers and their *termini ad quem*, the workings of the internal combustion engine and its hybrid successors were not such an attractive proposition as to have made him want to purchase a car or even want to drive one. This may possibly have had something to do with the rumour that some years ago he was unsuccessful in persuading the examiners from the Ministry of Transport that he would be safe in charge of a moving vehicle. His appointment, therefore, to Buntingford, Old Hall Green and Puckeridge as parish priest, with their three churches, the latter being some five miles from the mother church, left a number of

us scratching our heads. It was through the generosity and kindness of his parishioners who ran a kind of taxi rota, that he was able to say Mass in all three, often with the help of Father Pinot de Moira from St Edmund's, together with two retired priests, Fr Peter Dwyer of our diocese, and latterly Mgr Peter Wilson a retired priest of the Northampton diocese, living with his sister in Buntingford. All three are happily present today.

Fr Ian came to love Buntingford, with its very English titular (St Richard of Chichester), its English architectural style, its foundation by Mgr Robert Hugh Benson, another convert, and its people. He was very touched by the concern of his parishioners and friends in his Calvary year, as he called it, three years ago, and their kindness and practical help during his recent illness. Nothing gave him more pleasure that to be out walking in the Hertfordshire countryside with Bella his companion Springer spaniel dog at his side, and the comforting thought of a pipe of tobacco on their return and, on high days and holidays, lunch or supper, of a haunch of venison in company with his friends Maureen and Claude Giret and Duncan Gallie and others, many of whom are with us today.

Pastorally Ian had a strong belief in the understanding, good will and common sense of our people and their ability to draw all their spiritual nourishment from the liturgy, and from the Word of God and from the Sacraments and sacramentals of the Church. He had little patience with all the initiatives that pour out of the various agencies of the diocese. He had, too, a deep understanding of the foibles of humanity and a compassion for the weakest among us.

Some years ago Monsignor Francis Bartlett, Provost of the Chapter was interviewed on a Sunday night religion

programme on television on the subject of the priesthood. I can remember him saying that for his generation, priests were ordained 'to read'. It seemed odd put like that, but he went on to explain how important it was for priests to be men of culture and learning, and to keep abreast of the arts, history and literature, as well as theology and spirituality. Ian was one of the few priests I have known who not only had a book-lined study but also a properly designated book room both at Swiss Cottage and at Buntingford, complete with desk and library chair. He knew where every book was on those shelves and what is more, and without exaggeration, he had read every one of them. He was a true bibliophile, sometimes purchasing several copies of the same title generously donating them to anyone expressing a genuine interest. Historical information and detail literally poured out of him when he was prompted, and he never needed much prompting. As a friend of Ian's said: 'He could talk for England', and frequently did. He was a voracious reader and his knowledge of English and European history of the last 300 years was impressive and all the great characters of the day, political and ecclesiastical, were re-called as if he had known them personally.

Ian embraced the Catholic Faith at the age of 18 and for him this was a true conversion of mind and heart. In the opening words of the Apostolic Letter - *Porta Fidei* - accompanying the solemn opening of the Year of Faith last October, Pope Benedict describes the door of faith as being always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God. This we must never presume, and the black vestments requested by Ian for his Requiem Mass and the sung Latin serve to remind us that our principal task today is to pray for him, to commend him to Almighty God, and to ask forgiveness for anything that may need to be forgiven through human frailty.

We ask, too, for the consolation of Almighty God on Ian's family.

May the soul of dear Ian go through his *porta fidei*, his door of faith and may he be ushered into communion with his Lord and God.

## Catholic Archives Conference
## 28 - 30 May 2012

**Jenny Smith**
(Archivist, Union Sisters of Mercy GB)

Monday 28 to Wednesday 30 May saw the annual conference of the Catholic Archives Society take place at Buckfast Abbey, Devon. The conference had an attendance of over forty participants. Delegates were provided with a range of sessions covering topics of potential practical and research interest for archivists charge with the care of Catholic-based collections.

Sister Clare Veronica Wyman began the conference with an account of the life of Monsignor Thomas John Capel, and her search for the truth behind this man by the use of archives and contemporary papers. Monday evening also saw a presentation by Sister Barbara Jeffery and Jenny Smith (Archivist for the Union Sisters of Mercy GB) on 'Telling the Mercy story - past, present and future'. Sister Barbara explained the rationale and processes behind the setting up of a Mercy Heritage Centre at St Mary's Convent in Handsworth, Birmingham. Jenny Smith then took this further to discuss the day-to-day running of the centre, from attracting visitors to practicalities of mounting displays on a smaller budget. Throughout, the roles and challenges of the archivist were considered.

Over the next two days delegates enjoyed sessions from Dr Eddie Jones who spoke about the Syon Abbey Collection, recently deposited with Exeter University. This linked in well with the visit to the University Archive, where there was an opportunity to see selected pieces from the Syon Abbey Archive. During his talk, Dr Jones discussed the history of the

Bridgetine Order, of Syon Abbey itself, and aspects of its recordkeeping.
As well as the interest groups - including Exeter University Archive, Exeter Cathedral and the Royal Albert Memorial Museum - there was a tour of Buckfast Abbey church, and a session with a textile conservator at the church; during which delegates took the opportunity to ask very practical questions of a professional textile conservator. This was extremely useful for those of us without regular access to the knowledge of such a conservator.

At the Open Forum on the final day, the issue of outreach by the Catholic Archives Society was discussed. It was decided that a publicity flyer would be produced so that more people may find out about the existence of the Society and its activities.

There was also a useful discussion on the proposed standardising and raising of the closure period for Sacramental registers for 100 years. It was suggested that the Catholic Archives Society, possibly in conjunction with Bishops' Conference, and including the taking of Canonical and Civil advice, produce related guidance for Diocesan archivists and Local Record Office archivists on this issue.

The conference ended with a session on Architectural Conservation by Andrew Rathbone, a landscape architect. Mr Rathbone highlighted the need to understand the history of a building to inform the process of design. An account was given of his own project and use of archives, including contemporary maps, photographs and deeds. This talk highlighted the potential use of archives by perhaps 'non traditional' archive users and helped us to consider the use of archives for building history and design.

This was my third CAS conference, and again I found the opportunity of coming together with others involved in the care of Catholic archives extremely useful. The wide range of topics covered ensured various interests were held, and the significant issues that arose in the Open Forum highlighted the importance of coming together in this way and having an arena for discourse on pertinent workplace issues.

Thank you to all involved with organising the conference.

## Book Reviews

*A Peculiar Kind of Mission: the English Dominican Sisters 1845 - 2010*

Anselm Nye (Gracewing, 2011)

A Peculiar Kind of Mission was published in 2011, 166 years since the foundation of the Congregation of St Catherine of Siena in Coventry (later Stone) under Mother Margaret Halleran. In 1929, about halfway through this period, the Stone Congregation and four others amalgamated to form the Dominican Sisters of the English Congregation of St Catherine of Siena. The five congregations were the Congregation of St Rose of Lima, Stroud, Gloucestershire (founded 1857); the Leicester Community of Our Lady Help of Christians (founded 1866); the Harrow, Middlesex, Congregation of Our Lady of the Rosary (founded in Ghent, 1868) and the London Congregation of St Vincent Ferrer (founded 1896) and Mother Margaret's nuns at Stone, Staffordshire.

In this book Anselm Nye uses material from manuscript and printed sources, especially the archives at Stone, and from interviews with present members of the Congregation to guide the reader through its pre- and post-formation history. It starts with an overview of the development of the groups of women who followed the Rule of St Dominic in his lifetime into the Dominican Third Order Regular, through the changes brought about by the Council of Trent, the numerical decline of the 18th century and the regeneration in the 19th century.

This regeneration was led in England by Mother Margaret Halleran; Anselm first considers her life and the early years and growth of the Stone Congregation. He then describes the history and mission of the other groups, the factors leading to and arising from the amalgamation and its subsequent life and development.

Post-1918 adaptation to political, social, ecclesiastical changes, the different characters of the different communities, the complications and controversies of bringing them together, their growing together despite internal and external difficulties, disputes and departures are all considered; as are the anxieties and excitement generated by the Second Vatican Council. Administrative and business matters are also dealt with and devotional and apostolic life is described thoroughly.

Most of the chapters are structured with an introduction and conclusion and a central narrative describing and commenting on the events and people of the period. While an historian reviewing a book will consider the historical context and comment on the narrative, an archivist-reviewer will draw attention to the availability and use of sources. For this book, the archives supply information from annals, chapter papers, council books, histories, letters, memoirs, registers and other papers. The archives of the original Stone Congregation are extensive, those of the other groups are less so and Anselm points out both strengths and gaps; for example: Leicester annals do not begin until 1892 and the Harrow congregation seem not to have kept any. He also uses the archives to question established versions of events, e.g. the early years of the Stroud community.

Archives in other Dominican convents and in diocesan archives are also used, plus the national census but rarely the press or journals, Catholic or otherwise. Dominican constitutions are another source as is a comprehensive range of 19th-21st century publications. Archives are cited in endnotes and their whereabouts identified in the bibliography, which also includes lists of constitutions and published works.

There are three appendices, giving the names of the major superiors of the five original and the combined congregations;

all their houses including their past and current (2010) use; and the names of sisters pictured in group photographs.

Anselm, a highly regarded authority on the history of women religious, ends his introduction by saying that the world would hardly have enough space for all the books that could be written using the extensive archives of the English Dominican Sisters. I recommend readers of *Catholic Archives* find space for this one.

**Margaret Harcourt Williams**

*Cardinal John Carmel Heenan: Priest of the People, Prince of the Church*

James Hagerty (Gracewing 2012), pp 370., £20

This is the first full-length study of Cardinal Heenan, and James Hagerty is the ideal man for the job. Heenan's rather coy and selective volumes of autobiography, which conclude with his arrival in Westminster, acted, as one early reviewer had it, as 'a pre-emptive strike against an official biographer'. Already the author of a fine biography of Heenan's mentor, Cardinal Hinsley, Hagerty takes up the challenge. He tells the story of this East-End priest who rose quickly through the ranks: a parish priest at 32; re-founder of the Catholic Missionary Society; Bishop of Leeds, before becoming Archbishop of Liverpool, and succeeding Godfrey in Westminster a few days before the opening of the second session of Vatican II.

Heenan was one of the most well-known priests in England, helping to draft Hinsley's war-time addresses, and becoming a familiar figure on radio and television. He made a secret trip to Russia in 1936, unbeknown even to his own bishop, in order to get the feel of the country for himself, and was fervent in his opposition to communism; yet, on a later visit to America, he worried that attacks on communism took up so much of the energy of Catholic speakers and writers, and was to

speak out against McCarthyism. He was a man of relentless energy; swift, sometimes too swift, in making decisions, but always prepared to acknowledge his mistakes.

Never much interested in theology, which he claimed bored him during his studies in Rome, he had a clear view of a priest as father of his parish, something he lived out in war-torn Manor Park, and promoted in his many writings and subsequent appointments. He looked for priests 'with guts but not necessarily with degrees', as he remarked in 1942. It was a model of priesthood, authoritarian and paternalistic, very impressive in its own way, but which could not survive the challenges that the 1960s brought to a newly vociferous and articulate Catholic community, something to which he found it hard to reconcile himself. As Hagerty points out, his last years were a time of spiritual and emotional turmoil during which he never really came to terms with many of the challenges offered to the authority of Church teaching and its ancient liturgy in the aftermath of the Council.

Always a conservative at heart, Heenan's pastoral pragmatism allowed him a cautious openness to new ideas. He discovered ecumenism during the air raids 'where people learned not only to suffer together but to pray together' and later he was to form a warm and fruitful friendship with Archbishop Ramsey, although he thought the time not ripe for him, as a Catholic prelate, to attend Ramsey's enthronement at Canterbury. In 1960 Heenan was appointed member of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, and, as Congar points out in his Council journal, made a 'sensational' intervention at the Council, marking 'an official declaration of conversion to ecumenism and to dialogue on the part of the English hierarchy'.

Heenan also caused consternation amongst the Council Fathers by an outspoken attack on the Council theologians. It is

a shame that Hagerty does not quote the delightful Virgilian quip, which attests both his quick-wittedness and sense of fun: *Timeo peritos adnexa ferentes'*(I fear the experts and the appendices they bring), a clever play on Laocoön's remark as the Trojans discover the Wooden Horse apparently left behind on the beach by the Greeks. But the theologians would be his own Trojan horse in the years after the Council.

Hagerty depicts with care and sensitivity Heenan's last ten years from the Council's ending to his death in 1975. Dogged by increasing ill health, Heenan faced problems both within the Catholic communion and at a national level. One cannot help feeling profound sadness for Heenan as he struggled with issues such as the laicization of priests, problems relating to the catechetical college, Corpus Christi, and, of course, the response to *Humanae Vitae*, matters which he was temperamentally and intellectually unable to deal. Heenan was on firmer ground in his support for the Catholic Institute for International Relations (now Progressio) and his firm stance against the Biafran conflict. For many commentators, Heenan's Westminster years rather overshadow his earlier achievements. Hagerty is correct in stressing that these years should not be allowed to undermine Heenan's considerable contribution to the building up of the Catholic community in England and Wales in the period after the Second World War.

**Peter Phillips**

***English Monastic Litanies of the Saints after 1100, Volume I, Abbotsbury - Peterborough***

Henry Nigel J. Morgan, ed., Bradshaw Society, vol. 19, for 2007 (London, 2012).

The Henry Bradshaw Society was founded in 1890 for the editing of rare liturgical texts, and this volume is the first of a two-volumed work, its subject is the analysis of standard

litanies of saints principally found appended to English medieval psalters and which were probably used daily in the Divine Office in monasteries. The majority of those discussed originated in Benedictine male houses, but some nuns' monasteries and a single Carthusian house are also represented. The earliest example dates from 1100 and the latest is a litany printed by John Scolar in Oxford for Abingdon abbey in 1528. The largest number of those litanies surviving once belonged to the abbeys of Norwich and Peterborough, and to the cathedral priory of Norwich. The distinguished editor, Nigel Morgan, alphabetically lists one hundred and ten examples with their present locations, incorporating earlier research by M. R. James, Francis Wormald, and Michael Lapidge. These litanies are now widely dispersed, from San Francisco to Stockholm, though the bulk remain in Oxford, Cambridge, and London. Each entry is accompanied by detailed notes which pay particular attention to unusual saints. Litanies varied, and the inclusion of local saints in many of them points to the development of the cult of a local saint in a particular monastic house or neighbourhood, where relics might have kept. These local saints were often given a double entry; sometimes these entries help to identify the original provenance of a manuscript, and the omission of St Thomas of Canterbury's name in a number of litanies usually means these pre-date his canonization which took place in 1173. Sometimes a litany provides proof of a manuscript's migration; thus a Winchester Benedictine manuscript seems to have ended up with the nuns at Amesbury (Order of Fontevrault) by the fifteenth century. Some Benedictine monasteries seem to have begun revising their litanies in the late twelfth/early thirteenth centuries. Sometimes the litanies throw light on key events; thus a mutilated psalter of Christ Church, Canterbury of *c.* 1210-20 is a hybrid, the result, Morgan argues, of the papal interdict (1208-13), when King John exiled the Christ Church monks and other

monks were transferred from St Augustine's, Canterbury. An early Ely litany of *c.*1100 shows the scribe still using an Anglo-Caroline hand, and its inclusion of a double invocation to St. Alban reflects Ely's claim to have his relics rather than the rival abbey of St Albans. 'Luxury' Benedictine litanies from Ely and St Augustine's, Canterbury, contrast with the 'classic Cistercian plainness' of one from Fountains. For Catholic archivists, the entries reveal how many manuscripts were once in Catholic hands: a Kirkstead Psalter belonged to Beaumont College and a Norwich Psalter was once at Ushaw College, while another from Norwich came to Douai Abbey via the English Benedictine priory at Dieulouard. The volume has useful appendices of litany texts, grouped in families, and whose length must surprise the modern reader, and of lists of especially significant saints. There is a comprehensive bibliography which also acknowledges some English Catholic involvement, for listed in it are Nicholas Roscarrock's 1621 manuscript of the lives of the Cornish saints and John Wilson's martyrology of 1608.

**Geoffrey Scott OSB**
**Douai Abbey**

*'The End Crowns the Work': George Leo Haydock (1774-1849)* Michael A. Mullet, (North West Catholic History Society, 2012), 69pp., £12

Parts of the final chapter of this booklet, describing Haydock's building of the Catholic mission in Penrith, have already appeared in North West Catholic History's Festschrift for J. A. Hilton, *Obstinate Souls*. Here Professor Mullet explores, although very briefly, the whole career of this important priest, complementing perhaps, but certainly not replacing, the material Joseph Gillow gathered together in *The Haydock Papers* (1888) and *Bibliographical Dictionary*, vol. 2 (1888). Haydock, like his contemporary, John Lingard, was one of those priests who

marked the transition from the recusant period to the flowering of nineteenth century English Catholicism. As Mullet relates, George Leo was one of the last of a long line of Lancashire recusant stock, which included a namesake, George Haydock, executed in 1584 and beatified by John Paul II (not, as Mullet says, Paul VI) in November 1987. The family also included the Jacobite, William Haydock, who joined the army of the Pretender and died an outlaw, presumably of wounds received at the battle of Preston in 1715.

In 1785, the eleven year old, George Leo Haydock joined his brother in the English College, Douai; here he was caught up in the events of the French Revolution and the closure of the College, whence he escaped back to England through war-torn northern Europe in 1793. After a spell with his family, Haydock continued his studies at Old Hall, Ware, before being called to join the northern exiles from Douai at Crook Hall by Bishop William Gibson, where he was ordained in 1798. For the next few years he was on the staff at the College. It was here he began his scholarly pursuits, publishing his first works, and beginning to study the Scriptures and Fathers of the Church.

Haydock moved as missioner to Ugthorpe, near Whitby, in 1803, where he rebuilt the chapel and constructed a presbytery. It was here he worked on his great commentary on the Bible, published in fortnightly (later, weekly) parts by his brother. Although eventually published in various editions, and popular in the United States, the project was a financial disaster, costing Haydock himself £3,000. In 1816 Haydock moved to Whitby, taking over and continuing the work of the French priest, Nicolas-Alain Gilbert, in experimenting with English hymns and texts to accompany the liturgy.

Although Haydock had contributed much of his own money to the building of the new chapel at Ugthorpe, Nicholas Rigby, who had come to the mission in 1827, charged him with

a debt of about £284, which he refused to pay. Bishop Penswick, though admitting faults on both sides of the dispute, clearly sided with Rigby, and the dispute became increasingly acrimonious. Penswick moved Haydock to the Fylde in 1830, summarily suspending him from priestly duties the following year. Haydock spent eight years at his family home, studying and working in his extensive library. He was reinstated without explanation in 1837 after Penswick's death, and spent his last years building a new church in Penrith, sadly dying in November 1849, seven months before its opening. He had become a respected figure in the town, successfully intervening to calm rioting between the rival gangs of navvies in the town in 1846.

This well-produced booklet, with bibliography and index, serves as a useful introduction to a significant figure in the shaping of nineteenth century Catholicism in northern England.
**Peter Phillips**

**St Anthony's, Scotland Road, Liverpool: A Parish History 1804-2004**, Michael O'Neill (Gracewing, 2010), 512pp., £20

Michael O'Neill has done a tremendous job over the last twenty years in gathering together a huge collection of archive and printed material relating to the parish of St Anthony's, Scotland Road, Liverpool. Founded by the French émigré priest, Jean Baptiste Antoine Gerardot, in 1804, this was the first chapel in secular hands in Liverpool. The book is divided into two parts: the concluding section contains extensive archive material from school log books; records of burials in the chapel vaults; parish statistics; notes on the organ; and other material. The first part of the book focuses material around the sixteen incumbents of the parish, some chapters very brief, others more extensive.

Known as 'the French chapel' when it opened, a small chapel for French émigrés and a fast growing Irish community

was a private initiative funded by Gerardot, who offered it to Bishop Gibson of the Northern District. In fact he never did hand it over to the bishop: a series of letters bears witness to an acrimonious debate about the status of the church, and tensions between the clergy of the area, secular and religious. On Gerardot's death in 1825, the chapel was left to a layman and would have to be sold to the bishop to ensure his control over the building.

The chapel was indeed bought, but only to be knocked down and replaced by a larger building. This was to be the St Anthony's, well know today, and opened by Revd Peter Wilcock in 1833. Wilcock was a former student of the English College, Lisbon, and he records the life of the parish in a series of letters to Edmund Winstanley, rector of the College, and preserved in the Lisbon Archives now housed at Ushaw. Much of the subsequent archive material records problems of repaying the debt on this fine new church. Wilcock's successor, Canon Thomas Newsham, was forced to resign in 1858 for his failure to manage finances, but a series of letters collected by O'Neill record other serious moral failures. Newsham's nephew, Canon William Newsham, parish priest from 1893 to 1926, sorted out the debt, going about the parish collecting money, wielding his walking stick. He was a born cadger: one parishioner recalls him taking the local boys' football ground Saturday entrance fees, telling them to 'walk on and slope in'.
From William Newsham onwards we move into living memory, and O'Neill adds to his accounts of the parish a series of very useful, and sometimes long, oral accounts collected from parishioners and clergy. These oral histories restore the parishioners to the centre of the picture. Gathering his material around the clergy has its disadvantages. This is particularly the case with his account of the nineteenth-century incumbents, but not only these: the twenty-year period of James O'Reilly's

incumbency (1968-1989) is dealt with in five pages. There is surely more to be said about these years following Vatican II, which bore witness to huge social change in Liverpool. St Anthony's could have been set more firmly within the general picture of the development of Catholic Liverpool, and although there are some wonderful vignettes depicting the community of the parish, greater analysis and interpretation of archive material would have enriched the book: chapter 9, the local community on 1891, consists of a brief page of text and thirty-six pages of census material. Such gaps need greater explication.

O'Neill gives a very moving account of the typhus epidemic of 1847 in which ten priests died in the town, working amongst the most destitute, the appropriately named 'martyrs of charity'; these include Peter Nightingale of St Anthony's. The priests serving in the mission during this year conducted over 2,000 funerals, and 1,339 baptisms. Canon Thomas Newsham alone anointed over 6,000 people, his thumb becoming infected and turning black, perhaps a telling recompense for his financial failings. A hundred years later, although sanitation in the city had improved considerably, conditions in the parish were still bad, as a war time reminiscence of Fr Walker records: 'some of the houses were infested with fleas and bugs and all sorts; some of the houses near the church, the terraced houses, had no floor - just a dirt floor - non tiles or carpet or lino - so you can imagine the conditions; if you went into a house. Never put your hat down, and you only sat on a chair if it was a hard chair.'

Such reminiscences give a vivid picture of life during the Second World War and its aftermath. These personal accounts are one of the great strengths of the book. Many things began to change after the war but there were still tensions: Fr Flynn gives a dramatic account of the Orangemen's stoning of Archbishop Heenan during a visit to the parish in March 1958. Such tensions

generally remained under the surface: people had to live together, but Cream Soda always replaced the favourite orange drink consumed by Saint Anthony's parishioners on July 12th.

This is a very well produced volume, with an excellent index, and some interesting photographs. O'Neill deserves to be congratulated on his perseverance in collecting such a wide range of archive material vividly illustrating an important mission in the changing heartlands of working class Liverpool.
**Peter Phillips**

*The Path of Mercy: the Life of Catherine McAuley*
Mary C. Sullivan (Catholic University of America Press, 2012), ISBN: 978-0-8132-1873-1, plates, maps, bibliography & index.

Although the Sisters of Mercy have never had a single central government, the membership of the various congregations and the few remaining independent houses form the largest group of women religious in the English speaking world. Their founder, Catherine McAuley, is one of the most celebrated of Irish women and from 1992 until Ireland's adoption of the Euro in 2001 her portrait appeared on the Irish £5 note. It is, therefore, somewhat surprising that no major biography of McAuley has appeared since Sister M. Bertrand Degnan's *Mercy unto Thousands* published in 1957. No one could be better placed to prepare a comprehensive biography than Mary C. Sullivan, a sister of Mercy of Rochester, New York state, who has spent much of her religious life researching the life and times of her founder. She has already published *Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy* (2000), a collection and analysis of writings by and about Catherine McAuley and edited a well documented collection of the founder's letters in *The Correspondence of Catherine McAuley, 1818-1841* (2004). In this biography Sullivan makes ample use of this source material to paint her portrait of McAuley.

The author does not confine herself to an analysis of chronological facts but investigates the affect on Catherine McAuley of the loss of her adored father in infancy, her almost incomprehensible attachment to a hardly understood Catholic faith when her widowed mother, submitting to pressure from her Protestant relatives and the social milieu of Ascendency Dublin, conformed to the established religion. Sullivan also demonstrates the mutual influence of the Quaker Callaghan couple, with whom she lived and for whom she cared in their last illnesses, and their young friend and heiress. When the Callaghan's died they left McAuley a considerable fortune and she chose to spend it on the establishment of a House of Mercy where servants out of work could find a home, where the young could receive instruction in secular subjects and the truths of the faith, and which could serve as a base for relief of the poor.

Eventually, in 1830 McAuley made the decision, although it had not been her original intention, to form her work into a religious institute. Many of the brief accounts of the founder's life which appeared in the 1980s have interpreted this as a deviation, though Sullivan does not take a partisan view. Relying on the sources, she shows that, at the age of 52, McAuley embraced this call bravely and willingly when she entered the noviciate of the Presentation Convent, Geroge's Hill. In drawing up the legislation for her new congregation, however, she drew on her own experience when adapting the Presentation constitutions. One who had always looked men in the eye when addressing them would hardly retain the injunction "when spoken to by men...they shall observe and retain the most guarded reserve...' nor did her own constitutions remind her sisters that they 'carry this most valuable treasure [i.e. their chastity] in brittle vessels'. It is clear she wanted strong women, not brittle vessels! Her crowning legacy to the Sisters of Mercy was the chapter in the

constitutions 'On unity and charity', a synthesis of Johanine and Augustinian theology. Although McAuley eschewed much of the formality of established religious life, normally signing herself M. C. McAuley, having her sisters address her as 'Friend Kitty' when travelling, delighting in exchanges of humorous verse and playing practical jokes; though she also placed emphasis on the dignity of choral prayer and 'loved to look upon the religious habit'. She was also a great publicist for her new congregation and each new foundation coincided with a public ceremony of reception of the habit attracting an over-subscribed attendance. The most imposing was that at Bermondsey where Lady Barbara Erye was clothed as Sister M. de Sales, her hair having been arranged with diamonds and feathers by Mr Trufitt, couturier to the Court of St James.

Sullivan shows in a delightful and engaging manner the way McAuley responded to family traumas, financial disasters, the difficulties of making new foundations, disputes with outraged clerics too convinced of their prerogative of power, the sorrow of the early deaths of so many of her sisters, including a niece and godchild. Her practical sense is shown in her reaction to Pugin's designs for the convents in Bermondsey and Birmingham, while her desire to make the works of mercy for which she founded the congregation instruments to transform the lives of the poor are demonstrated. McAuley's observation that education led to good order and prosperity shows that she understood this work, above all, as a means for systemic change.

When I was a young lad I remember hearing a venerable Sister of Mercy, exasperated at the constant reminder from the younger members of her community of 'what Mother McAuley would do if she were alive now' make the cutting response, 'What would Mother McAuley know, she was only in the congregation ten years!' Had both parties been able to imbibe

this rich, multifaceted biography, they would certainly have found an ample basis for informing themselves on the spiritual, historical, social and psychological factors which influenced the development of the founder's work. In just a decade Catherine McAuley founded a dozen convents in Ireland, two in England, and within a decade of her premature death the Sisters of Mercy were established in Newfoundland, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland and, a further five years later, amongst the Irish diaspora of Buenos Aires.

The path of mercy depends on extensive use of archival collections including those of the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin, Bermondsey and the early foundations, the archives of the Archdiocese of Dublin, and those of the Irish Jesuits, but also the National Archives, the archives of the Apothecaries' Hall and Royal College of Physicians in Dublin. There is a comprehensive bibliography and an excellent index with particularly useful thematic entries.

**Anselm Nye**

*Clifford of Clifton (1823-1893) England's Youngest Catholic Bishop*

J. A. Harding (cf. The Finance Office, Alexander House, 160 Pennywell Road, Bristol, BS5 0TX, 2012), vi & 522 p., £16.99 + £3 pp. ISBN: 978-0-9560617-9-9

This study of Bishop William Clifford began life as a doctoral thesis submitted to the University of London in 1992. Therefore it has all the advantages of its writer having drawn upon primary sources from numerous archives in Britain and abroad: the Vatican Archives, Propaganda Fide, the *Venerabili*, the English College Valladolid, the Jesuit Archives (Rome and London), the Franciscan Provincial Archives, eleven English and Welsh diocesan archives, the National Archives and the Clifford Family archives, Ugbrooke Park.

Despite being a leading figure in the nineteenth-century English Catholic Church, Clifford has never been the subject of a full biography. Harding makes no claim to have written such a book. What he has written is a detailed account of Clifford's thought at important events in his life; among them the controversy of who was to succeed Wiseman and the Vatican Council are the most important. By making available many important primary sources, some for the first time (the appendix amounts to some twenty documents) he has succeeded in satisfying one need. At the same time, he acknowledges how there is still room for a biography. Anyone starting on such a project will find an invaluable quarry in this present book; indeed, its importance is by no means restricted to Clifford alone, whatever one's interest in the nineteenth-century Church, both at home and in its wider sphere, this is an invaluable book.

Careful and detailed attention is paid to Clifford's interventions during the debates of the Vatican Council. His contribution to these debates - theologically sound, orthodox and practical - was greater than the sum of the other English bishops. He considered the declaration of papal infallibility to be inopportune; he absented himself from the final session of the Council. The book envisages him as in some ways pointing to the direction of later developments in the Church, notably with regard to episcopal collegiality and ecumenism. It is understandable why one might take this view, especially if one reads the sources that are presented here in retrospect of Vatican II. Clifford's views on collegiality and the position of the universal episcopate did not, however, emerge from a vacuum; they must be seen in their context - one in which the authority of the bishops *vis-à-vis* the papacy was in need of clarification. Pope Paul VI would later refer to the question as 'the broken threads of Vatican I', ruptured by the closure of the

Council due to the Franco-Prussian war. That said, the claim that Clifford would have been comfortable with Vatican II's approach to collegiality is a reasonable supposition.

He became the third bishop of Clifton in the wake of Archbishop Errington having been temporarily appointed by the Holy See to sort out the financial difficulties of the diocese, largely caused by the issues arising from Prior Park. Entering into a hierarchy that had only been established seven years previously, and still 'finding its feet', there was a need to formulate a *modus agenda*. However, establishing this was made difficult by Cardinal Wiseman controlling the bishops' meetings with an autocratic and un-business like approach. Here Clifford's skills as a canon lawyer and his theological competence proved invaluable. He was instrumental in securing from Rome a resolution that the bishops' meetings were to be run according to an agenda and that matters would be settled by majority vote.

The role played by Clifford in the succession controversy at Westminster (1868) is subject to yet more detailed treatment. Some considered him a suitable successor to Wiseman. His approach to *Quanta Cura* and the Syllabus of Errors, and his support for Catholics being allowed to attend the ancient universities won him favour among the liberal-minded Catholics. But his open support for Archbishop Errington scotched any possibility of his succeeding Wiseman - despite his name being on the *terna*.

Clifford was a prudent man, as is demonstrated by his approach to certain 'private' questions discussed at the Vatican Council. Fully aware that the Catholic Church in England was in the minority, Clifford advocated that statements arising from those 'private' discussions should remain so: issues such as the Small Catechism, Concubinage of the clergy, and Papal Infallibility.

His part in the discussions which led to the decree *Romanos Pontifices* is explored - here gain we see Clifford's skill as a canon lawyer coming into play. How he approached the University Question and his writings on the intricate matter of the 'Days of the Week and Creation' evidence an open, highly intelligent mind, and one that contributed significantly to the local and universal Church. As we approach the fiftieth centenary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council interest in it is heightened. *Clifford of Clifton* is an invaluable resource for anyone wishing to investigate and compare how such matters as collegiality and papal infallibility were dealt with in the two Councils.

**M.J.B.**

*Belmont Abbey Celebrating 150 Years*, Andrew Berry OSB (ed.) (Gracewing 2012) 229pgs., 40bw & 28 colour plates, £24.99
ISBN 085244 730 7

Abbot Paul Stonham notes in the Preface how the history of Belmont Abbey is unique. This present work, edited by Dom Andrew Berry OSB, is by its nature more of *Feschrift* than a straight forward history, as such it is better suited to accurately reflect the monastery's uniqueness. Twelve chapters, arching from a general monastic history to 'the future and beyond', tell of Belmont's foundation, its architecture, its significant characters, events in its story, its service to the local community and to the universal Church. *Belmont Abbey* will appeal to those who are already acquainted with its history, no less so will it appeal to those interested in monastic history and in the general history of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Chapter One provides the reader with a bird's eye view of monastic history *via* an imaginary history tour of the subject, beginning in the side chapel of the Abbey church. Thus one is immediately

located simultaneously in both local history and a much wider story. The story continues with the spiritual tradition of Benedictine monasteries, whose roots lie in the universal call to holiness; the purpose of which is to enable one 'to live as radically as possible the call given...in baptism' (p.41). Chapter three deals with the foundation of Belmont Abbey: the first new monastic foundation in England since the Reformation. It is a pity that no references are provided for this chapter, especially given its historical nature; but this is a minor matter and does not detract from the chapter's content. The chapter dealing with Bishop Thomas Joseph Brown demonstrates the wide appeal of this book, for it treats of the struggle between the Regular and Secular clergy in 19th century England and Wales, in doing so it highlights the struggles faced by 'an emerging Church'. In 1860 Belmont was established as the common novitiate and house of studies for the English Benedictines. It fulfilled this role for over fifty years and 'succeeded in maintaining English Benedictine unity by accepting the traditional inherent tension in the English Benedictine vocation between contemplative community life and an external apostolic vocation' (p.73). Yet toward the end of its time as the common novitiate, Abbot Geoffrey Scott notes how: 'it gave birth to a group of reformers who were determined to break the tension which the monastery had so studiously cultivated and to advocate a narrower 'primitive' Benedictinism' (p.73). Polarity lies at the root of Belmont: its founder Francis Richard Wegg-Prosser wanted a monastery with plainchant, and at the same time insisted that the brethren be involved in parochial duties. Similarly, Bishop Joseph Brown wanted Belmont to be a house of studies and for the abbey church to be the pro-cathedral for the diocese. This polarity has ensured Belmont of having possession of an 'enduring monastic and missionary character' (p.73). This was particularly personified in Norbert Sweeney, Belmont's first

prior, who did so much to encourage the study of the life of the English mystical writer Dom Augustine Baker. Interest in the latter was accompanied by a further interest in liturgy. Belmont's development in the field of education coincided with a wider debate about tertiary education for Catholics, who were prevented from attending Oxford and Cambridge by a ban supported by Rome and the bishops. In response to this situation, investigations were made into the possibility of creating a university-type curriculum at Belmont. Among several scholars of note associated with Belmont Bishop Cuthbert Hedley stands out; he 'wanted to see English Catholicism come out of its ghetto and enjoy the benefits of Oxbridge' (p.94). In 1908 Belmont ceased to be the common novitiate; in 1914 the church lost its pro-cathedral status. Belmont became an independent abbey in 1920. In the 20th century was a microcosm of the English Benedictine Congregation, where monastic issues and the wider missionary paths 'reacted and overlapped' (p.102). The dynamic nature of the abbey's history is further traced by Abbot Aidan Bellenger; he notes how 'the development of Belmont's identity can only be properly understood in the context of the monastery's place in the wider debate among the English Benedictines about the role of mission'(p.110). During its history Belmont has made a considerable contribution to the mission of the Church, both locally and farther afield. This story is well told in chapters dealing with the abbey's pastoral commitment both on the 'home mission' and the 'foreign mission'. The influence of Belmont includes what we might call a 'material' element. Dr Roderick O'Donnell, in his detailed description of the monastery buildings, tells of how its architecture was a formative influence on the English Benedictine Congregation. E. W. Pugin, Belmont's architect, was only eighteen years-old when he got the commission. It is thus an important monument

in his own life: 'the church allows one to study the development of E. W. Pugin's style in one building of at least four phases' (p.125). Liturgy has, needless to say, been at the centre of Belmont's life. Of significant importance in this field is Abbot Alan Rees, who contributed to both the abbey's, and the wider Church's, liturgical life in the post-Vatican II period. 'The history of Belmont is the history of the Church in microcosm' (p.227); this being so, *Belmont Abbey*, is a highly recommended read for anyone interested in the Church's history and the part played by those whose charism is a polarity of contemplative community life and an external apostolic vocation.
MJB

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