

FR ABBOT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

Our Easter was marked in a special way this year by the passing of Br Bernard. He died on the Tuesday of Holy Week and was buried, amid the white snow, on the Tuesday of Easter Week. On another page appears the homily preached at the funeral. We still miss that brave, spindly figure going about his monastic day.

With the death of Br Bernard, we have now lost five monks in the last five years. A whole generation is going to its reward. On the other hand, we had the joy of seeing six men in the grey habits of postulants and novices over that same Easter. Three were with us merely for a month's trial, but three are still with us and others are due to join. The monastic life is always young.

This year, in preparation for the millennium, is dedicated to the Holy Spirit. To help deepen our awareness of the mysterious and fascinating Third Person of the Trinity, "the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son", Dr Patrick Sherry of the University of Lancaster gave this year's well-attended Pentecost Lectures on "The Rediscovery of the Holy Spirit". We are grateful to him for taking us deep into this Trinitarian terrain.

Currently, we look forward to the great feasts of the summer: Corpus Christi, the Sacred Heart, the birthday of our patron St John the Baptist, Ss Peter and Paul, St Benedict – with the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary to crown the summer. We look forward also to hosting the diocesan pilgrimage on the last Sunday of June, and beyond that to our own Golden Jubilee of refoundation on 8 September. At that public Mass in 1948, a young local boy was among the servers. He is now our bishop, Mario Conti, and will be with us 50 years on.

Our new organ, to which so many have contributed so generously, is due to be installed in July.

Yours in Christ.

+ Fr Hugh, Abbot

THE EDITOR'S JOTTINGS

On 8 May 1897, Pope Leo XIII issued his Encyclical on the Holy Ghost. He did more than that. He asked for a novena of prayer in every parish church each year between the feast of the Ascension and Pentecost, just as the Apostles had prayed with Mary in the Upper Room, the Cenacle, waiting for the coming of the Holy Ghost. It was the first and only official novena of the Church. The Holy Father asked that this yearly novena should be offered for the unity of the churches of East and West. So it is fitting that we have here an article about the Studite nuns of Ternovil who work and pray for unity in Russia and the Slav countries and who suffered and died for their cause under communist occupation. Dom Augustine recalls the talk given to us by Abbot Mark Dilworth on Pluscarden at the time of the Reformation.

May the Holy Spirit bring reconciliation and unity to us all.

Yours devotedly

Dom Alfred

BR BERNARD (SIDNEY) MORGAN OSB

1920-1998

Fr Abbot's homily at his funeral mass

Br Bernard was an eccentric and a misfit. In monastic terms, the 8th step of St Benedict's ladder of humility was one he never quite managed. He had almost a genius for being different. And, of course, one could, from within, illustrate this at length – and it would be entertaining! (There was the statio for Vespers for example, at which he was so regularly, punctually last...) But what of him when he came to die? What was so impressive was that this time, the really important time, the last Vespers one might say, he wasn't late at all. He was ready, he was there. "Keep death daily before your eyes" is one of St Benedict's counsels. And Br Bernard, especially during the last few years, when he had suffered a lot, when he had suffered from not being always clear as to what the cause of the suffering was Br Bernard had kept death very much before his eyes. In the end, it came a little suddenly, and, naturally speaking, Br Bernard was someone easily flustered. But this time he wasn't. He was on time. It fell to me, early on the day he died, to give him, so to speak, his last obedience; to tell him that he was now about to pass from this world to the Father. So I asked, Do you want to be absolved? "Yes". And then, do you want to be anointed? "Yes". Do you want to receive viaticum? "Yes". Those 3 "yes-es" remain in my mind. "Let what you say, be simply 'yes' or 'no'." Three "yes-es" to the sacraments, to the Lord, to passing from this world to the Father. And then an almost solemn, stately last act of contrition. Ten hours later he died, without great pain, two of his brethren and a friend of the community present, as the prayers for the dying were being said. He made a "holy end"; his death was a *transitus*.

Sidney Morgan was born in Cheltenham on 13 March, 1920. As a child, he was adopted. And he was old enough, when this happened, to know it was happening, and that there was

someone who didn't want him, wouldn't have him. He left school at 14, and became an assistant to a grocer. Then the War came. And in the fateful month of May 1940, when the Low Countries and France fell and he would have been 20, he became a Catholic and was called up, joining the Army. Br Bernard would spend almost the next 6 years in the Royal Engineers, and the experience marked him for life. He was in a sapper regiment attached to the 7th Armoured Division, then in Egypt, and pretty well the most famous British division of the War. Br Bernard was with it all the way from Alexandria to Berlin, via Sicily, S. Italy, France, Belgium, Holland. As Sapper Morgan, in the humble role of a Radio Operator, he was actually part of an epic. He was almost killed 4 times. The worst occasion was when a shell landed, killing all the men around, he being saved from the full blast by being in a bren-carrier. But he carried shrapnel in him to his dying day. And it was these experiences that explained his nervousness. Another time, still in N. Africa, the 8th Army had just received 200 new Sherman tanks. The Germans destroyed them all at a blow, Br Bernard's unit had to make its way through the wreckage and carnage, with charred bodies and limbs sticking out of them. "It took me 6 months to get over that sight," he said. Br Bernard, to his dying day, was typical of that generation schooled by the War. He knew life was about doing what has to be done, not about doing what one feels like doing. He had the capacity to accept hardship. And through it all, as with many others too, the desire to give himself to God grew. And prayer grew too. One of his mates wrote this: "When we were going through Belgium, whenever we stopped for a cup of tea, a brew-up as we called it, our Sid would hold up one finger or two, and off he would go, for 5 or 10 minutes. If orders came unexpectedly to start up again, I would always know where to find him. I just had to find the nearest church. He was my wireless operator, and a first class wireless operator too. I called him 'our Sid'. He was a lovely man." An account of his war years must include what might have gone down in history as Morgan's Mutiny. The King was visiting the troops.

So the order came to wash the tanks down with petrol. Petrol, of course, was priceless, and such waste for mere appearances was too much for “our Sid”. He made a formal protest. This was in character.

After demobilisation, he applied for the priesthood, beginning some studies at Osterley. But it wasn't his way – a fact he could never quite fully accept. Eventually, after a time with the London Oratory and then studying with the Premonstratensians in France, he came to Prinknash. He didn't have an easy entry: His time in the novitiate was extended. His time in temporary vows was extended. Abbot Wilfrid Upson sent him to Pluscarden in 1956, while he was still a junior, and it was solely thanks to the Abbot that he was finally professed at all. Fifteen days from now would have been the 40th anniversary of that profession. And here at Pluscarden he worked in the stained glass department, in the refectory and shop, and then in the book bindery. His perfectionism was sometimes an obstacle, but his good work was good. For many years too, it was his task to prepare the vegetables. More important was his willingness. A Cellarer could ask him anything and he would give it a go. This “lame duck” was a “game bird”. And always, in his different, “singular” way, he was truly seeking God, truly praying.

Br Bernard would sometimes say that he wasn't happy as a monk. To those around him, it was clear the real unhappiness was with life, was with himself, not with the monastic life. And it was clear too that out of this unhappiness, out of his temperament and childhood and wartime experiences, there came a real sensitivity to the unhappinesses of others. This lonely man wrote many letters, but he didn't just write them to ease his own loneliness; he wrote them to ease that of others. And he did. The sick, the prisoners, the suffering: these were the people he instinctively turned to, and touched. And the Lord helped them through him. A former IRA letter-bomber, now doing nothing but good, told me how much he owed to him during his time in prison. How many others have said or would say the same: “He was my life-line”; “You have been a

real brother to us.” And there were those long lists of names to be prayed for...

What strange creatures we are! Br Bernard told me once he couldn't understand why God had made him. It seemed such a waste of time. But then he'd quote from Cardinal Newman's memorable meditation: "God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission ... I have a part in this great work; I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do his work." All unwittingly, in the War, he had found himself part of an epic. But something of the same holds for his life as a monk. This strange man, who thought himself so unlovable, in fact inspired great love. This man, who found it difficult to believe God loved him, asked that his requiem not be a requiem, but a votive Mass of Christ's Sacred Heart in thanks for all the graces given him throughout his life. This can't be 'done in the Easter Octave. But instead the Lord has given him His resurrection. This man who thought he was a Lazarus, spiritually dead and decomposing, wrote in his notes during last year's retreat: "I think I've been freed." This man, who thought he was a rotten monk, has even in his dying been a witness to the Paschal Mystery, Christ's death and resurrection. And what else is a monk supposed to be?

Tu nobis, victor Rex, miserere, we're singing this week. Christ the Conquering King, how he conquered in Br Bernard! May he have mercy on him, and on us.

And to end, a prayer that Br Bernard wrote himself, about himself – some 15 years ago: "Lord Jesus, I have passed the 60 line and I do not know how long it will be before all the things in this small room will be rummaged over by others. I think of my death and hope that by Your mercy I shall be permitted to make a holy end. But I am not sure of this because there is a pattern of sin which never seems to fade out and I'm little better than 50 years ago. I ask that my death may be a *transitus* from this life into Your

eternal presence. If to do this I must suffer much, give me, please, the patience I shall need. I'm not sure, but I think I am not afraid of death itself but of uncertainty. I'm not sure if my faith in You and in eternal life is strong enough. I'm not sure if I love You. The only thing I think I am certain of is Your love for me. Give me the grace to hold on to that whatever else may happen and help me to love You now. Amen."

A VISIT TO THE ORGAN WORKSHOP

With the completion date of our new pipe organ rapidly approaching, it was with great excitement that I was able to make a visit to the workshop of Kenneth Tickell and Company, and see how things are progressing. The premises are located in a modern factory unit in Northampton, housing all the working areas for the construction of the organ, with sufficient roof space for the organ up to about 25 feet high. As I entered the workshop, I was met by the sound of whining bench-saws, electric drills and hammering, which seems at first rather incongruous with the idea of the end product; until one realises that most of the work involved in the building of a pipe organ consists of skilled joinery and cabinet-making. Tickell's have eight full-time workers, with some independent craftsmen subcontracted at certain times.

Greeted by Kenneth Tickell, I saw his own office, where he produces the designs for the organs on computer. Computer-aided design has been an immense boon to organ-building, enabling accurate working drawings to be produced speedily, and allowing the numerous changes which take place in the design process to be incorporated immediately. Full-size plans and templates can be printed straight out. The result is the almost complete elimination of unforeseen inaccuracies and "bodging" to make things fit.

It was a great delight to see craftsmen at work which they so obviously enjoyed and took pride in, while I was shown the workings and assembly of our organ. Alongside our organ was a

much larger organ, of some 30 stops, being built for a church at Nesbyen in Norway. Effectively their first foreign commission, it is a healthy sign of Tickell's increasing reputation.

Our organ should be completed by the beginning of June, and will remain at Tickell's until July, when it is due to be installed at Pluscarden. Interested parties can phone Tickell's at 01604 768188. We hope to have an inaugural recital for the organ in early September, for which the date should be finalised by the end of July. Anybody interested in this should contact us from early August. Meanwhile, as work continues, donations are still very welcome.

D M de K

CENTENARY MASS

This year sees a number of anniversaries for the Community here at Pluscarden. It is six hundred years since the election of Alexander of Pluscarden as Prior, a notable event because of the full records in the Register of the Bishop of Moray. The former Prior, Thomas Fullonis, wrote in 1398: "We have elected Alexander of Pluscarden, a monk of this house. He is a man gifted and discreet in spiritual matters and circumspect in temporal affairs. He has been professed according to the Rule of our Order. He is a priest and of canonical age; born in wedlock, having knowledge and power to defend and improve the rights and possessions of our Priory, which are now poor and meagre, also to repair the ruins of the Church and Monastery... All of us have approved this election, and immediately we conducted the monk of our choice to the High Altar, where a Te Deum was chanted."

At that time the community were Valliscaulian Benedictines but a more important anniversary to the present Community is the Golden Jubilee of the restoration of monastic life here in 1948. We had a quiet family celebration on Easter

Monday, the day that the first monks arrived, and a much grander affair is planned for the 8th September, the day of the formal opening of the Monastery.

A restoration like this does not just happen, one can trace the workings of Providence and see the human effort involved in this undoing of the work of the sixteenth century enemies of monastic life. Pride of place in the network of grace must go to John Patrick, third Marquess of Bute, who purchased the Priory in May 1898 from the Duke of Fife. Pluscarden was then back in Catholic hands for the first time since 1595 when Alexander Seton sold the estate to Kenneth Mackenzie of Kintail. On the 5th May 1898 Lord Bute organised Mass in the ancient Prior's Chapel in the Priory and we have recently celebrated the centenary of this historic event. It was probably not "the first Mass since the Reformation" as there is evidence that at least one of the monks who remained in residence at the Priory, Dom Thomas Ross who died in the 1590s, got himself into trouble for illegal baptisms. If he was prepared to celebrate one sacrament in defiance of the new Church, then he is likely to have continued to say Mass. There is also the fact that Seton was known to have sheltered Jesuits in his properties. One can safely say, however, that it was the first Mass for three hundred years and that it marked the start of a new era in the history of this holy place.

The priest invited by the Marquess was Dom Sir David Oswald Hunter-Blair, a monk of Fort Augustus Abbey on Loch Ness, who was also a Baronet. The congregation consisted of Lord and Lady Bute and their daughter, and the event was commemorated in a painting by H.W. Lonsdale which now hangs in the Prior's chapel (known to the community as Czestochowa on account of an icon of Our Lady by the Altar). Dom Hunter-Blair later became Abbot of his community and to recall this connection we were very pleased to welcome Abbot Mark Dilworth from Fort Augustus, who came here on the 5th of May to preach at the Conventual Mass. Abbot Mark is the leading scholar of pre-Reformation Scottish Monasticism, a Scottish David Knowles, and

after Mass he gave a very interesting talk on mediaeval Pluscarden to the Community in the Chapter House, the same room in which the monks had assembled in 1398.

At Mass Abbot Mark spoke of the Eucharist as the link between Pluscarden in the Middle Ages, the Mass of 1898 and the congregation gathered here today. At his talk he shared some insights from his recent researches on Pluscarden in the 15th and 16th centuries. The later mediaeval period was certainly not one of the high points of monastic history, the influence of the feudal system, the appointment of non-monastic Commendators as Superiors, and the abuse of the system of papal provisions all hindered the normal working of monastic life. The monks of 1398 elected one of their brethren as Prior, the normal method of the Rule, but a few decades later monastic Superiors were "provided" by the Papacy. This was a convenient source of revenue for Rome and gave a route to promotion for ambitious monks who could petition the Holy See for lucrative positions. A Cistercian monk of Deer Abbey became Prior of Pluscarden in this way and used it as a stepping-stone to return as Abbot to Deer, whose revenues were more than twice those of Pluscarden. Another example of outside influence is the way powerful local families could get their grip on a Community. The Dunbar family became Bailies of the Priory, responsible for aspects of secular administration, by the start of the sixteenth century. Previously in 1479 Gavin Dunbar, later Bishop of Aberdeen, had tried and failed to become Prior. The family interest was rewarded in 1531 when Gavin's nephew Alexander emerges as Prior. Not very edifying; and Abbot Mark pointed out that the Monastic Order is in a much more healthy state today.

Another question is how did Pluscarden's union with Urquhart Priory in 1045, making it a dependant house of Dunfermline Abbey, affect our Priory? Peter Anson, in his *A Monastery in Moray* (1959) gives the impression that in its relation to its mother house it was the same as Pluscarden in relation to Prinknash Abbey before independence in 1966. In fact it seems that Pluscarden enjoyed a large degree of independence, Priors

were provided independently of the Abbot of Dunfermline, as indeed were Officials within Dunfermline itself! Dunfermline names in the Pluscarden community lists do however show that the union was more than a fiction.

A final point concerns the monks themselves. It is clear from the numbers signing legal documents that in terms of recruitment the Priory was in a healthy state in the half century before 1560, as was the Cistercian Abbey at nearby Kinloss. There were however financial restrictions on the acceptance of novices as there could only be as many monks as there were “portions” or allowances. One of the actions of the reforming Abbot of Kinloss, Robert Reid, was to increase the number of portions and thus the number of monks. This practice, involving as it did a form of private property or at least a departure from monastic community of goods, was contrary to the teaching of the Rule. It is interesting to note that the abolition of such allowances was one of the key principles of the 19th century monastic reform of Dom Peter Casaretto which produced the Cassinese Congregation of the Primitive Observance, now the Subiaco Congregation, to which Pluscarden belongs today. With the secularisation of religious life in the past few decades we have seen the return of this abuse in some Orders and Congregations. To return to the sixteenth century it is interesting to note that while there were 10 monks at Pluscarden in mid 1560, only 5 portions are recorded as being paid in 1561 (monks continued to receive their portions for decades after the Reformation, even if they were hostile to the new religion). Were there monks of Pluscarden on half-portions or did they in fact still follow the Valliscaulian practice and not have individual allowances? If the latter is true they would have joined the Carthusians of Perth as the only monks in Scotland not to have portions. It is unlikely that half the community would have died in a few months and, while they might have left in the religious turmoil, even this is less probable because the “portion” represented a respectable income. It seems clear that, unlike other Monasteries, no member of the Pluscarden community served the

new Kirk as Reader or Minister.

The talk provoked many questions from the community and any readers who wish to discover more about late mediaeval Scottish monasticism should read Abbot Mark's book, based on his Rhind Lectures of 1993, *Scottish Monasteries in the Late Middle Ages*, published in 1995 by Edinburgh University Press.

DAH

BOOK REVIEWS

ANALECTA CARTUSIANA

More volumes in this series have been received from Dr Hogg at Salzburg. Two deal with the English spiritual writer Dom Augustine Baker O.S.B. (1575-1641). On the back cover of one of these volumes it states that his writings have been "dismissed by some of his Benedictine brethren as the best known cure for insomnia". His works, like those of the more famous Carmelite Doctors of the sixteenth century, are certainly far from the brief lapidary style of the sayings of the Desert Fathers. Baker is however important as continuing the tradition of the late mediaeval English Mystics in the changed situation after the Reformation. The manuscripts of his works remain in the archives of the English Benedictine Abbeys which have their roots in penal times but he is best known through *Sancta Sophia*, a distillation of his teaching prepared by his confrere Dom Serenus Cressy from forty different treatises. The Rev. John Clark has taken on the task of producing critical texts of the major treatises over the next decade. Mr. Clark is well known to readers of *Analecta Cartusiana* for his labours in editing the Carthusian *Chartae* and we have just received volume 4 of the *Urbanist Chartae*. It is good to see that the Anglican tradition of learned Parsons producing works of excellent scholarship while engaged in the pastoral ministry is still alive.

The first treatise to be published is Baker's *Secretum*

which was produced while he was Chaplain to the nuns of Cambrai, now at Stanbrook. It is in two parts and is ostensibly a commentary on the *Cloud of Unknowing* although it contains much autobiographical material. The ms. of the *Cloud* that Baker used was said to have belonged to the English Capuchin Fr. Benet Canfield (1562-1611) and to have been copied from a text brought into exile by the English Carthusians. The Capuchin spiritual writers Canfield and Constantin Barbanson also provide supplementary material for Baker, as does the Benedictine, Blossius (1506-66). Clark hopes to follow this volume with another giving a theological introduction and commentary on the *Secretum*. Although this is an important work for students of Spirituality, the language is obscure, because it is an edition, and the ordinary reader who wishes to learn from Baker's teaching would be better off seeking out a copy of *Sancta Sophia*. The second Baker volume that we have received is a reprint of Dom Justin McCann's 1933 edition of *The Life of Father Augustine Baker O.S.B.* by his two contemporaries DD Peter Salvin and Serenus Cressy. This gives important background material for Clark's project and is worth reading on its own account as an insight into the heroic age of our Martyrs. Although Baker is an important and controversial figure in the history of the English Benedictine Congregation, he also has links with our Congregation as he received his monastic formation in the Abbey of St Justina, Padua.

The two other *Analecta Cartusiana* volumes received are both studies in German of Carthusian manuscripts. *Die Münsteraner Handschrift 894* by Ulrike Otto studies a copy of the lives of the Carthusian saints Bruno and Hugh of Lincoln written in 1522-23 for the Lay-Library of the Cologne Charterhouse. *Das "Erfurter Kartäuserregimen" : Studien zur diätetischen Literatur des Mittelalters* by Manfred Peter Koch is an edition with commentary of a mediaeval Carthusian document, *Tractatus de regimine sanitatis virorum spiritualium ac devotorum, ut deo in sanitate mentis et corporis servire valeant*, which teaches one how to be a happy, healthy and holy Carthusian.

It also discusses the genre of *Regimina*, mediaeval “healthy living” treatises, of which we have about 130 examples.

DAH

ST JOHN CASSIAN

At the end of his Rule in Chapter 73, St Benedict gives a short reading list for those who wish to go on to “the perfection of monastic life”. It includes the *Conferences* and *Institutes* of the Fathers, the former of which he has already suggested for the daily reading before Compline. These two works are by St John Cassian (c.360-c.435), a monk fluent in both Greek and Latin who began his monastic life in Palestine, spent time in Egypt, and then moved to Gaul where he wrote to interpret the monastic teaching of the east to the nascent monasticism of the west. The 24 *Conferences* are written in the form of dialogues with various Fathers of the Egyptian desert and, although rooted in historical reality, they convey Cassian’s own brilliant synthesis of monastic theology. As Augustine can be seen as the Father of western theology, so Cassian is surely the Father of western spirituality, although his influence is less widely recognised as he had the temerity to correct the excesses of the great Doctor of Hippo in his teaching on grace.

The recent publication of a new translation of the *Conferences* and of a serious study of his life and works is thus an important event for the monastic world. ***John Cassian: The Conferences*** (1997) translated and annotated by Boniface Ramsey OP, no. 57 in the series *Ancient Christian Writers* published by Paulist Press, (£30) is the first complete translation of the *Conferences* to appear in English and its advent has been long awaited. The publisher hopes to bring out a companion translation of the *Institutes* in the next couple of years. The translation of the *Conferences* by Fr Robert of Mount St Bernard (1867) was a paraphrase and the translation of all Cassian’s works by Edgar Gibson in the series *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, which is still in print after more than a century, omitted all sections dealing with

matters sexual. In his version of the parts Gibson left out, *Cassian on Chastity* (1993), Terence Kardong notes that “we need a new translation of Cassian”. The work of Ramsey fills this need. It is faithful to the rather difficult style of Cassian’s Latin, renders key words consistently by one English equivalent, and has useful notes which are kept to the end of each Conference. It is sure to become a standard text both for study and monastic *lectio divina*, and one would recommend it to all who are serious about spiritual reading. It is sometimes better to go to the pure sources rather than to drink from tributary streams.

Cassian the Monk (1998) by Columba Stewart OSB, published by OUP at £46, is a worthy companion to Ramsey’s translation. The publisher’s blurb states that it “will undoubtedly become the standard work on Cassian’s life and teaching” and one suspects that this is true. One can’t always trust publishers, though; the *Fathers of the Church* translation of the *Commentary on John* by Origen (c.185-c.254) claims that it was written at the request of St Ambrose of Milan (c.340-397)! Dom Columba, a monk of the Abbey of Collegeville, USA, has established a reputation as one of the foremost modern scholars of early monasticism. He is aware that a purely secular and academic reading of the ascetic texts of Late Antiquity can lead a scholar to misunderstand their true meaning and he starts this book with the words, “I write as a monk about a monk.” He also finds “Cassian’s teaching to be often stunningly relevant for modern monastic Christians who take monasticism seriously as a way of life for the world and not against it.” Thus although this is a work of impressive erudition, which will replace Chadwick’s *Cassian* (2nd ed. 1968) as a standard work, it is also a book which will be of use to all who wish to live and understand the monastic tradition. As Cassian is so fundamental to the whole of western Christian spirituality, the circle of those who would find it useful is in fact even wider. In seven chapters the author examines Cassian’s life and writings and concentrates on his teaching about the theology of the monastic life, chastity, grace, prayer and the Bible, and the experience of

prayer; ecstasy and tears. One sees what a vast tradition and what richness of teaching Cassian mediated to St Benedict, and through him to us. Half of this book of 286 pages consists of notes, but what may at first appear daunting is in fact an advantage as it enables the less academic reader to benefit from the text without the burden of references to the niceties of Greek ascetic terminology. Dom Columba concludes with the thought that, “in the end Cassian’s importance is greatest not to the historical theologians who puzzle over his thought but to those of both East and West who recognize in him the great charisma of Teacher”.

DAH

WILLIAM BYRD

This 4th July is the 375th anniversary of the death of the composer William Byrd, whom many have called the greatest writer of music ever to have been born in England. Although his death date is known, there is much discussion about when he was born. The guesses range from 1535 to 1543. Although a court musician he was a lifelong Roman Catholic, who, later in life, left the court to live in seclusion so as to practise his religion. He was friendly with a number of important recusant families, and the Jesuits on the English mission influenced him greatly, a number of whose martyrs he knew personally (e.g. he wrote two works on the death of St Edmund Campion, and some have suggested he might have attended Campion’s execution.)

However, this article is not about Byrd’s life and music but about a new venture in the recording of his music. Although many recordings of his music exist, his complete works have never been recorded. The group, The Cardinall’s Musick, is changing this. They are in the process of recording all Byrd’s compositions. The recordings are being made in the Fitzalan Chapel at Arundel Castle. The son-in-law of the 12th Earl of Arundel was John Lord

Lumley, one of William Byrd's patrons. The first CD (of a projected 33) came out last year, and the second was published on May 1st 1998 (ASV Gaudeamus CD GAU 170 & CD GAU 178). The group is directed by Andrew Carwood, who is Director of Music at the Brompton Oratory; the research work and performing edition's are done by Cardinal's Musick's resident musicologist, Dr David Skinner, who is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the British Academy at Christ Church, Oxford. Anyone interested in this first recorded survey of the complete works of any major Renaissance composer can write to Cardinal's Musick, PO Box 243, Oxford or email: post@cardinal.demon.co.uk

DBK

MONASTERIES OF THE EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES NO 6

The Studite Nuns of Ternopil in the Ukraine

It was Metropolitan Andrew Sheptycky (1865-1944), Archbishop of Lviv, who founded the Studite monks and nuns. At the age of 34 Pope Leo XIII appointed him Archbishop. On his visits to Italy and Venice in search of Slavonic books he would call on Cardinal Sarto, Patriarch of Venice and later St Pius X. Later, as Pope, Pius X, in a private audience, gave him unprecedented rights, not only for the Ukraine, but also for the whole of Zussia. They amounted to Patriarchal rights, power to nominate and consecrate bishops without asking confirmation from Rome for his decisions. He was given seventeen documents authenticated by certain Cardinals, one being Cardinal Mercier. They were later confirmed by Pope Benedict XV (H. S. Ostoyan *Eastern Churches Quarterly* Vol 9 No 8).

In 1897 a group of pious peasants banded together on a small farm in Galicia to lead lives fully given to God and guided by the Gospels. The Archbishop visited these good people and saw

there the beginning of a monasticism in a way that appealed to their Eastern and Slav mentality. He gave them a Rule, that of St Theodore, Abbot of Studium – whence their name. By 1909 they numbered 36. Vocations increased. The Archbishop's brother, Clement, became their Hegumen. He later died in a Russian prison in Siberia in 1948. Their work included icon painting, a printing press, a farm, an orphanage and a choir school.

Foundations were made in Croatia and elsewhere. By 1939 they numbered over 200. They were known as the monks and nuns of Union. Their proper task was not to adjudicate over separated brethren by apostolic treaties and missionary work but through their contemplative life and example to give to all the proof that in the Catholic Church there exists the genuine possibility of a truly Oriental monasticism and a life of Orthodox piety. This was also the wish of St Pius X.

The entry of Soviet troops into Galicia was the end of the Studites who were imprisoned or put to death. But a little group made its way to Bavaria and later Cheyenne in Belgium. Today they are back again in the Ukraine, as well as Italy, Croatia and two houses in Canada.

The people of Bavaria continue to help them, especially the Benedictine nuns of the Abbey of Füssen, founded about 770 by a daughter of King Ludwig. It is on an island in the Chiemsee. Abbess Domitilla has kindly sent the pictures of the nuns of Ternopil.

GREGORY'S ANGELS

A useful and entertaining coffee table book with photographs and detailed travel directions (even by sea!) to the monasteries in the British Isles and their overseas foundations. Published to celebrate to 1400th Centenary of the arrival of St Augustine in Kent in 59 and written by Dom Gordon Beattie, for some years the chaplain at our local RAF base. As Cardinal Hume writes "Each year since

1968, Fr Gordon visits over sixty British and Irish monasteries and parishes, thus gaining a unique source of knowledge of each house within this book. With the exception of one house founded in 1996 in India, he has also visited (travelling over 50,000 miles) all the overseas houses founded by Benedictines from the British Isles. It is through his dogged determination, and in the face of considerable odds, that *Gregory's Angels* has been produced to remind the people of these shores that we should not be 'Angles but angels'." HB 320pp, £25 plus post. From Gregory's Angels, Ampleforth Abbey, York YO6 4EN or Gracewing Books, tel. 01568 616 835.