

Pluscarden Benedictines

No. 181 News and Notes for our Friends Lent 2018

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Cover: Apple Blossom at the Abbey by Fr Matthew Tyler OSB

FR ABBOT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

We are once more at the beginning of Lent. This year, on the first Sunday of Lent, we hear St Mark's summary of Jesus' preaching: "He proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come,' He said, 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'" (Mk 1:14-15)

We might render 'repent' as 'do penance'. This is how the old Douai-Rheims translation has it in the corresponding passage of St Matthew's Gospel: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say: 'Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" (Mt 4:17) This translation makes it easier for us to make the connection with Lent, the special time of penance. However, we are not to think of 'doing penance' as something confined to Lent. Lent is a time when we regain our Christian focus through special acts of penance, but penance is something that Christians do all the time.

Another advantage of 'do penance' over 'repent' as a translation of what Jesus is saying here, is that it clarifies that we are not talking about only one moment of change, as we might think when we hear 'repent'. Jesus' preaching is not only about one moment in our lives, one experience of conversion. It is about how we live the whole of our lives.

A limitation of the phrase 'doing penance' is that we might think of penance only as occasional external actions, fasting, almsgiving etc. "Bear fruits that befit repentance," says John the Baptist to those coming to receive the baptism of repentance. Repentance is shown in works of penance, but is not reduced to those works. The word used by the authors of the Gospel that we translate as 'repentance' or 'penance' is '*metanoia*'. This means a change of mind and heart that results in a change of one's way of life. Specifically, in Jesus' call, it is that change of mind and heart that is made possible by His coming and by our faith in Him.

Just before the end of his Gospel, St Luke describes Jesus appearing to his disciples after His Resurrection and opening their

minds to understand the Scriptures, asking, “Was it not thus written that the Christ should suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem?” The Church will proclaim the same Good News that Jesus has proclaimed: *metanoia*, repentance. Only now it is clarified that this *metanoia* is bound up with the suffering and Resurrection of Christ. Later in the Acts of the Apostles St Luke will show us Peter and the Apostles preaching in Jerusalem, in these words: “This Jesus God raised to his right hand as leader and saviour, to give to Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins.”

Repentance is a gift coming from the Resurrection. The Gospels associate the first call to penance, issued by John the Baptist, with a text from Isaiah, quoted most fully by St Luke: “A voice of one that cries in the desert: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight! Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be levelled, winding ways be straightened and rough roads made smooth, and all humanity will see the salvation of God” (Lk 3:4-6, quoting Is 40:3-5). This is a description of the new creation that is brought about by the coming of the Messiah. Penance is at the heart of this gift of new creation in Jesus. It is the new creation beginning in the human heart. The shape this takes in us is best expressed in St Paul’s words: “Make your own the mind of Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:5).

In Lent we should certainly undertake the exterior works of penance, and we should accompany them with a new listening, to open our hearts to the gift contained in the Gospel. St Luke prepares us to hear the Gospel by showing us the perfect listener. Mary, contemplating the new life that came into her and into the world in Jesus, “treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Lk 2:19). May our Lent bring us a rediscovery of the treasure given to those who believe in Jesus.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

+ Fr Anselm

FROM THE ANNALS

NOVEMBER 2017

9th: Funeral of Dom Adrian Walker. The funeral Mass of Dom Adrian took place this morning at 11.30. Bishop Hugh Gilbert presided at the Mass and preached. Before Mass the community prayed the remainder of the Psalter in turn in pairs before the coffin and they also sang Office up to and including Sext.

Bishop Hugh brought with him Br Thomas and Brothers John Bosco and Martin de Porres of Thiên Phuoc Monastery in Vietnam; they had stayed with him overnight after arriving at Aberdeen Airport yesterday evening.

Several people who had known Dom Adrian attended the Mass, though at 91 he had outlived many of his contemporaries. There were also some relatives present. Bishop Hugh had been Dom Adrian's abbot for two decades and his homily did not skirt Dom Adrian's eccentricities, but also brought out his perseverance in monastic life.

After the Mass there was a buffet lunch in the east cloister. Rita Sim had prepared this and also served it.

William Watson, the undertaker, brought two statues, nearly life-sized, which he had had at his funeral parlour, one of St Joseph with the child Jesus and another of Our Lady of Lourdes. They are standing in the calefactory.

11th: Fr Mark went to a Society of Bookbinders' workshop. Fr Giles spent the day at Greyfriars in Elgin at a young women's retreat run by the Dominican nuns.

12th: THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME. Vandals had come during the night and had driven cars over the front lawn, scoring it deeply. Br Michael has informed the police.

Fr Abbot returned from hospital today about lunchtime. He is not mobile as his feet are swollen and he still suffers from his chest infection which he informed the community was pneumonia. He is not coming to any offices for the time being.

13th: There was sleety snow this morning and the weather has been cold and raw. Fr Martin returned from Rome and the International Congress of Oblates.

19th: THIRTY THIRD SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME.

This afternoon we had a food-safety and hygiene presentation for all members of our community who work in the kitchen.

21st: Memorial of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This feast is the feast of oblates. Several local oblates came to Conventual Mass and after it they renewed their oblations.

23rd: Memorial of St Clement. Today it snowed during the day and it lay, allowing the Vietnamese brethren to see their first real snow.

24th: Memorial of the Vietnamese Martyrs. Today's celebration is important to the Vietnamese brethren.

26th: SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE UNIVERSAL KING. Fr Benedict presided at Mass and Office in place of Fr Abbot who is still unwell.

29th: We began the Novena of prayer in preparation for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception with the singing of the *Inviolata* chant and the prayer.

30th: SOLEMNITY OF ST ANDREW. Fr Benedict presided and preached at Conventual Mass. Lunch was a Vietnamese style meal prepared by Br Thomas with Brothers John Bosco and Martin de Porres.

DECEMBER 2017

2nd: Fr Prior gave a conference.

7th: We heard that John McLaughlin, brother of both Rita Sim and Fr Martin of Prinknash died in Irvine. R.I.P.

8th: SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

Fr Abbot presided and preached at today's Mass, the first for some time. He is still clearly under the weather.

9th: Fr Abbot and Fr Giles set off today, Fr Giles to spend a week supplying as chaplain at the Bernardine monastery at Hynning, and Fr Abbot to spend a week with his mother at Bebington to convalesce. Fr Prior gave a conference.

10th: At six o'clock we joined with the congregation of Pluscarden Kirk for our annual joint carol service. This year the service took place at the abbey. We had a decent crowd here, both from the Kirk and from our own regular congregation. Padre Paula Baker was the minister for the Kirk and Fr Prior stood in for Fr Abbot. As part of the service Br Thomas and the two Vietnamese brethren sang a Vietnamese hymn to Our Lady. After the service we served the congregation with biscuits, fruit loaf, and tea.

17th: THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDETE SUNDAY). This is also *O Sapientia* when we begin to sing the series of the great O antiphons up until 23 December. Fr Abbot with Fr Giles returned this afternoon. After supper we had our usual *O Sapientia* celebration in the calefactory. There was a fire burning and many candles in various candelabra. We invited the Dominican Sisters from Elgin to the celebration.

18th: Fr Prior gave a conference. He read from the English translation of Abbot Xavier Perrin's book on the Immaculate Conception. Abbot Xavier is abbot of Quarr.

20th: The funeral of John McLaughlin took place today. Fr Martin of Prinknash presided at it and Rita and Colin were present.

21st: We hear that Val Farrelly died this morning in Ireland. She was the wife of Martin Farrelly who used to work in the glass shop here in the late 1970s and early 1980s. She had been diagnosed with lung cancer only two days ago. Martin has now moved to a care home.

22nd: Fr Giles and Br Michael attended the funeral of Catherine Bonnyman this morning. She was the widow of Jim Bonnyman who was a mason here for many years. His initials are carved on corbels above the door from the east cloister into the porch at what is now the front door.

23rd: The Christmas decorations were put up today.

24th: FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVE. Today's liturgy is a mixture of the fourth Sunday of Advent and of Christmas Eve. The Office is that of Christmas Eve, while Mass is that of the 4th Sunday. Terce was followed by the necrology and solemn singing of the Christmas martyrology in the

chapter house. Fr Abbot then gave a sermon on the Our Father, connecting it with Christmas. At 4.15 we celebrated first Vespers of Christmas at which Fr Abbot presided in choir. The now traditional buffet supper of hot chocolate or Horlicks, muesli, cheese and jam began at 5.15.

25th: CHRISTMAS DAY. Vigils began at 10.15 pm. There was a sizeable group of laity in the public chapels for Vigils. Mass began at about Midnight. Fr Abbot presided and preached at Mass which ended at about half past one.

27th: ST JOHN'S DAY. Today was a wintry day with snowfalls. While doing something else, Br Michael checked the wood store at the boiler house in passing. He found that it was almost empty. He phoned Colin who duly obliged and filled the store, taking tractor loads from the store opposite the south range to the boiler-house.

28th: Feast of the Holy Innocents. Bishop Hugh came and we had an informal gaudeamus in his honour, having missed his name day in November.

30th: Recollection Day. As tomorrow is a Sunday and the feast of the Holy Family, we held the year-end recollection day today. At his conference Fr Abbot considered the subject of death in the light of the deaths of Br Meinrad in January and Br Adrian at the very end of October. Before Benediction we sang the *Te Deum* in thanksgiving for the blessings of the past year.

JANUARY 2018.

1st: SOLEMNITY OF MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD. At noon we had the New Year Congratulations in the Calefactory. Lunch was a talking meal, as is usual on this day. Vespers and Benediction were at 4.30, before the New Year gaudeamus at which we saw a DVD of the film *The Lady in the Van*.

8th: THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD. Monday. As yesterday was the Sunday of the Epiphany and was after 6th January, we celebrated the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord today. The crib and decorations remain in place until tomorrow. Apart from the Festal liturgy, it was a normal working day. Br Thomas took Brothers Martin de Porres and John Bosco to Forres where they took part in

an English class for speakers of other languages. There were six or seven participants. Apart from themselves the other students were Syrian.

11th: Fr Matthew went to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary for a pre-operation examination. He is suffering from cataracts.

12th: Br Cyprian has been suffering from an undiagnosed ailment for several weeks. At first he thought it was a late attack of the virus that affected several people in October. He had two appointments this morning for more tests.

13th: Feast of St Mungo. This morning Brothers Simon and Daniel went to Greyfriars' Convent in Elgin. After Mass they sat exams for which the Dominican sisters acted as invigilators. They are doing an on-line theology degree with a Dominican University.

20th: This evening we had chocolates at recreation to celebrate the feast day of Br Cyprian-Prosper of Kristo Buase Monastery who is with us. He is named after Blessed Cyprian Tansi, rather than St Cyprian of Carthage.

21st: THIRD SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME. At Compline a group of young men were in the south laity chapel as we processed into church. When the liturgy started, they left the chapel. James Gillick, the father of a family staying at St Scholastica's, noticed them leaving. He went out and saw them going up the night stairs and into the seniors' dormitory. He followed them and challenged them. The young men turned and came back down the stairs, out of the building, into a car and away.

22nd: John McMurray arrived to spend a few weeks here as a pre-postulant.

23rd: We heard that Margaret McLaughlin died this evening at 7.40. She and her family, including Rita and Fr Martin of Prinknash, lived at Torehead when the monastery had previously owned it in the 1980s.

24th: The weather overnight was wet and windy. The rain died out early, but the wind continued to blow a gale. At some time shortly after Mass, it ripped the lead flashing from the top of the wall along the rear of the south cloister where it abuts the west wing.

The flashing ended up on the roof of the south cloister. The cellarer contacted Colin Thomson to ask if he could fix it.

Later there was a power cut at about 11.20; all lights and electrical appliances failed. Br Aelred was the cook and succeeded in making a good lunch without electricity.

Colin and Davie Thomson came before lunch to fix the roof. Some time after their arrival a team from the electricity company came to reconnect the power cables.

26th: After supper we greeted Br Timothy for his feast day.

27th: **Memoria of Ss. Timothy and Titus.** Fr Abbot gave a conference before Vespers. After supper we ate chocolates at recreation to celebrate Br Timothy's feast day.

28th: **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME.** This is Education Sunday. After the Post-Communion Prayer a letter from Archbishop Tartaglia for Education Sunday was read out.

29th: The Vietnamese brethren have settled into a rhythm of going to their English classes in Forres on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Colin and Rita Sim departed for Coatbridge for Rita's mother's funeral on Wednesday.

30th: After supper we greeted Br John Bosco of Thiên Phuoc for his feast day. There were chocolates at recreation.

31st: Br Thomas is preparing to visit his parents in New Zealand tomorrow. During his stay, his mother will be celebrating her 90th birthday.

Silence

“Never before has the world spoken so much about God, about theology, about prayer, and even about mysticism. But our human language lowers to a paltry level everything that it tries to say about God. Words spoil anything that surpasses them. Now, mystery is by definition that which is above our human reason.”

From *The Power of Silence* by Robert Cardinal Sarah

NEWS FROM ST MARY'S MONASTERY

On November 1st, we were pleased to have two monks from Mount Saviour Monastery in Pine City, New York, stay with us for two days – Br John, the Prior, and Br Gabriel. It gave us a chance to learn more about life at Mount Saviour, and likewise they were able to experience our monastic life here at St Mary's.

The next day, on All Souls Day, we made our annual trip to the cemetery to visit the graves of the deceased members of our communities. As we reported in the last issue, we now have our own cemetery on our property. Immediately after Mass we went in procession to the cemetery, singing chants as we went. After the ceremony at the cemetery we processed back into church singing more chants. It was a nice change to have a procession to the cemetery, since for many years we had to hop into cars and drive to the town cemetery. The lay people who attended Mass were also invited to the graveside ceremony, joining in the procession.

Starting on Friday, November 3rd, we had another Monastic Experience Weekend. Two young men joined us in choir and experienced our life for a few days. Once again it was very successful and fruitful for both the lay participants and the monks.

On November 12th, we were pleased to have another instalment in a series of talks being organized for us by Carol and Phil Zaleski. This time we welcomed Professor Joseph McVeigh, a professor of German Studies at Smith College in Northampton, who gave us a very interesting lecture on Martin Luther. The topic was chosen since 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Joe spoke about Luther's lasting influence German culture, thought, and history.

On December 3rd, a confirmation class from St Michael's parish in Brattleboro, Vermont, came to visit us. They attended Sunday Mass and afterwards had a question and answer session with Mother Mary Elizabeth and Br Isidore. Their teachers and many of their parents also came.

Later the same day, Fr Dunstan also met with a group of young people. He was invited by Deacon Brian Gadbois to

celebrate Mass at St Joseph’s Chapel in Barre, Massachusetts. The event took place in the evening at 6:00 p.m. and was followed by a snack and a talk by Fr Dunstan in the basement of the church. This is part of a monthly program organized by Deacon Brian, who is the Director of Religious Education for St Francis of Assisi Church in Barre, as well as St Thomas À Becket Church and St Joseph’s Chapel. About forty teenagers were present for the Mass and talk.

Finally, we are pleased to report that our sisters of St Scholastica Priory now have another novice. On Saturday January 13, 2018, Elena Ainley received her habit and white veil, along with her new name – Sr Maria Mechtilde. However, she will be known simply as Sr Mechtilde. And very soon, postulant Kate Gagnon will begin her retreat in preparation for her clothing as a novice in February.

DIC

Silence

“To refuse silence filled with confident fear and adoration is to refuse God the freedom to take hold of us by his love and presence. Sacred silence allows man to place himself joyfully at God’s disposal. It enables him to overcome the arrogant attitude that would claim that God is at the disposal of all the whims of his children. What creature can boast of possessing the Creator in this way? On the contrary, sacred silence offers us a way of leaving the profane world and the incessant turmoil of our immense metropolitan cities so as to allow God to take hold of us. Sacred silence is truly the place where we can encounter God, because we come to him with the proper attitude of a man who trembles and stands at a distance while hoping confidently.”

From *The Power of Silence* by Robert Cardinal Sarah

THE FOUR CATHEDRALS OF MORAY: 1. BIRNIE KIRK

Birnie Kirk sits on top of a natural drumlin about five miles east of Pluscarden Abbey on the far side of the River Lossie. A Romanesque building some eighteen metres by five and a half and built of square, dressed freestone blocks, it consists of a nave and a square-ended chancel. Small as it is, this was once the cathedral of the medieval diocese of Moray, its first cathedral.

Alexander I founded the diocese in 1107. The original bishops chose to set their diocesan seat first at Birnie, then at Kinneddar, then at Spynie and only finally, in 1224, at Elgin. Perhaps they chose Birnie as the first cathedral because it has the reputation of being the oldest Christian place of worship in the area. Local tradition says that *Birnie* refers to St Brendan the Navigator, the sixth century Irish saint. Some scholars contest the dedication and say that before the thirteenth century Birnie was *Brennach*, a name that refers to the marshy ground by the River Lossie. However another ancient ecclesiastical site, *Pulvrenin*, (St Brendan's Pool) lies on the River Spey roughly south of Birnie, so perhaps there was a local St Brendan.

The oval boundary of the kirkyard indicates its antiquity. A weathered, incised class one stone from Pictish times stands between the kirkyard wall and the path. This could date from the fifth to the seventh centuries AD. The symbols on it (an eagle above a Z rod and a notched rectangle) are almost impossible to make out now but they are reproduced in the modern stained glass window of St Ninian in the south face of the chancel. At Birnie there were pieces of a massive ninth or tenth century Pictish slab carved with a cross, but they were lost in the twentieth century. An eighth century iron bell called the Ronnel Bell sits behind a polycarbonate screen in front of the St Ninian window inside the kirk. This is the largest bell of this kind in Scotland, and the only one still associated with its parish. Such bells did not have a clapper inside but were hit on the outside with a stick like a West African *gong-gong*.

Nothing remains of any previous building. The present building dates from the early twelfth century. Although there have been changes over the years, this is substantially the same structure built then. A stone church was an innovation as Celtic churches were traditionally constructed of wood. Perhaps we can see a change in local attitudes to what was considered appropriate for a cathedral. This building is Romanesque, and so connected to then contemporary European styles, but is small to our eyes to act as a cathedral. By 1224 the new cathedral in Elgin resembled other European cathedrals in size, style, situation and use.

The bishops' palace was about a mile to the east on top of a small knoll called "Castlehill", but no traces of it remain. Bishop Simon of Tosny (1171-84) lies buried in the kirkyard. After his death the seat of the bishopric moved to Kinneddar. The narrow modern road from palace to cathedral was once a main highway.

The axis of the kirk lies east to west. The building comprises a nave and a square ended apse without a window in the east end. The south wall of the building faces the sun and also the line of the old road. Nearly all the windows and the main door are on this, the show face of the building. The round-headed windows date from the 1960s. There was an earlier restoration in 1890 from which time dates the present roof. The west end of the nave was shortened in 1734 by a couple of feet. The date is carved on the belfry built then.

The interior of the building is largely unadorned. An impressive twelfth century archway divides the chancel from the nave. Half pillars rise from moulded bases to patterned caps and support the inner arch. This is flanked by an outer arch. A stone Baptismal font, contemporary with the kirk, sits nearby on a Victorian stone stand. In the south east corner of the chancel irregularities in the stonework show the positions of the medieval piscina and the bishop's seat.

The windows on the south side of the nave are of clear glass. All the other windows have stained glass made at the Abbey. St Ninian on the south and St Brendan on the north flank the chancel in narrow, round-headed windows. These windows have splayed

embrasures with polycarbonate sheets attached to the inside walls. This allows the display of the Ronnell Bell, a coronach bell and a Bible of 1773 bound in calf with the hair on. St Columba stands in the prow of a boat in the west gable. Crear McCartney made these windows, while Martin Farrelly made the figure of Christ in the gothic window in the south of the chancel.

After Bishop Simon's death the seat of the diocese moved to Kinneddar. Birnie became a common kirk: the cathedral chapter possessed the patronage of the kirk and, after providing for a vicar, the free income of the parish went to the chapter. After the Reformation, the kirk continued as a parish church in the Church of Scotland. Today it is part of the joint charge of Elgin High with Birnie and Pluscarden. There is a service there on alternate Sundays through the year.

DMS

Welcome

The Pluscarden community is very pleased to welcome two new Vietnamese brothers, who have come to stay amongst us for two years.

They are Br Martin de Porres Pham Dinh Hung, and Br John Bosco Nguyen Tran Anh Tu. Both are from the monastery of Thiên Phuoc in Vietnam, which belongs to our Congregation. They are the third pair of brothers we have had now from Thiên Phuoc. Currently their community numbers around 85 monks. Their aim, while with us, is to improve their English, and also to become familiar with our own somewhat more traditional and established style of monastic life. In that they are helped especially by our Br Thomas, who has some facility in the Vietnamese language, and has himself visited Thiên Phuoc several times.

THIÊN AN MONASTERY

On a hill some six kilometres from the city of Huế is the Benedictine monastery of Thiên An. The city of Huế lies almost in the centre of Vietnam, near the narrowest point in its S-shaped landmass. Huế was once the capital of Vietnam under the Nguyễn dynasty, which united Vietnam, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the territorial shape we recognise today. Huế is a small and sleepy town in comparison with Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, so being six kilometres from it means the monks are not disturbed by urban noises. In fact the impression one has of Thiên An when looking down from its high bell tower, is of a hill-top monastery floating in a sea of pine trees and forested mountains curtaining the eastern skyline.

The monastery of Thiên An is the longest established house of the Subiaco-Cassinese Congregation in Vietnam. Its foundation is due to Abbot Fulbert Gloriés and the community of La Pierre-Qui-Vire responding to a request from Vietnamese Bishops in 1932, to establish a Benedictine house in Vietnam. The first monks were sent out in 1935 and 1936: but not to Huế. Initially, land was purchased in the Central Highlands near the city of Da Lat but, when Fr Romain was appointed superior of the small community in 1938, land was purchased at the present position of the monastery outside Huế; and foundation at Thiên An officially commenced in 1940. At present, the community numbers approximately 101 monks, including those at a daughter house near Hanoi and those studying overseas. The community, like most others in Vietnam, has large numbers of young monks and very few monks of venerable age. Fr Antoine Đức is the prior administrator at the time of print; the results of a recent abbatial election are still forthcoming.

Like their Mother house, La Pierre-Qui-Vire, the focus of life at Thiên An is *Ora et Labora*. Much time is given to *Lectio Divina* and the careful celebration of the Divine Office. Peace and silence are the characteristic features of Thiên An, and these arise from the spiritual heritage bequeathed to them by their founding fathers.

The community of Thiên An has had a turbulent history at times. During the infamous 1968 Tết Offensive, the monastic buildings were severely damaged and the community scattered. Two of the community were martyred by the communist forces: Urbain David and Guy du Pont. Then, following the fall of South Vietnam in 1975, there was a dearth of vocations until 1988, along with on-going difficulties with the local communist administration. Land has been taken forcibly by the authorities, notably a large lake created by the monks; this was turned into a theme park, which has since collapsed financially and been left derelict, but the authorities still refuse to return the lake. Police and Communist Party pressure is still on the monastery as the authorities want to take more land for “economic development”. During daylight hours two plain-clothes policemen are always on duty on the entrance road to the monastery and there is another contingent of police at the lake – failed theme park. In June this year, the police and government sent in two hundred thugs and plain-clothes police to attack the monks and destroy a crucifix at the end of the property. The idea was, and is, to threaten and intimidate the monks into surrendering their land.

But life goes on and the monks of Thiên An refuse to give up their land. Their energy is impressive, and the many industries into which they plough this energy bear witness at Thiên An: orange, lychee and dragon fruit orchards; a vegetable garden; wood and metal workshops; health tablets factory and a factory to distil oil from leaves for medicinal uses. There is, of course, a very large shop and retreat centre. The community benefits from its proximity to the national shrine of Our Lady of La Vang, as many bus-loads of pilgrims stop off at the monastery, on their way to and from the shrine, and visit the monastery shop. In addition, the monastery runs a drug rehabilitation house near the shrine of Our Lady of La Vang.

Under the administration of Fr Antoine Đức, the brothers have recently constructed many new buildings; and they have also installed a concrete road from one end of their property to the other, a length of about two kilometres. The most notable of the

new buildings is a new, separate novitiate house whose interior, especially the lacquered wooded columns and roof beams, is reminiscent of the imperial Huế.

Through the grace of God and the prayers of Our Lady of La Vang, may our Community continue to thrive.

Br Nguyễn Bình Thường (Translated)

Last Letter from Fr Stephane (monk of Thiên An) in March, 1975:

“Terrible things have happened in these last few weeks, plunging the people of Vietnam into untold suffering.

“Fr Corentin and Br Joseph stayed at Thiên An, Hue; the others took refuge in Danang, where, at enormous expense, they bought air tickets for Saigon, but before they could leave, the city fell to the Vietcong. We know for certain that most of the community is in Danang, newly occupied by the Communists. Only one, Br Alphonse, has arrived at Saigon. It is said that Fr Romain has left by plane for Germany, but this is not certain.

“Up to now, we know very little about what is happening to the Fathers and Brothers of Thiên Hoa. Some say that Fr John, the Prior, was leading the orphans and the Community to safety but that he was forced to go to Ban Me Thuot. Others say that Vietcong tanks destroyed the monastery of Thiên Hoa.

“There are 3 Fathers and 2 Brothers at Saigon at present, we form a small fraternal community, living the monastic and liturgical life with all our hearts, while waiting for better times. The monks of Vietnam have been well tried – this is the third time that the monks have had to abandon their monastery, February 1968, May 1972, and now, March, 1975. We rely greatly on all your prayers, so that, purified in the fire of suffering, we may truly be sons of God.”

A CUP OF WATER

Canon Bill Anderson, a much loved priest of the Diocese of Aberdeen, died on the Eve of the Epiphany, the day before his 87th birthday. He had taught many of our priests in Scotland, at Blairs Junior Seminary, Aberdeen, and in the Scots Seminary, Rome, many of whom concelebrated at his Funeral Mass. A renowned preacher and confessor, he also penned dozens of what he called “sermonettes” for the local daily newspaper, in their “Saturday Pulpit” column. He had great admiration for the Benedictine Community at Pluscarden, often referring to the monks as “saints”, and we include here a little piece in which he mentions their Benedictine rule of hospitality.

A HABIT of welcome is one of the features of Aberdeen city. Its very motto, *Bon Accord*, bears this out.

What a surprise we'd get, however, if the welcome we received from a friend were to be: “Come on in; enjoy a nice cup of cold water.” We might well be irritated, too.

A pleading letter arrived recently from a charity whose sole concern is the provision of clean, safe water for countless people in the developing world. Evidently, statistics show that more than one billion human beings have their health, if not their lives, endangered through lack of good drinking water.

Now, supposing we were able to say to people like that: “Have a nice cup of cold water”, can you imagine their eager delight? Difficult to picture, perhaps, for us lucky ones, blest all our days with the availability of pure, clean water.

Some of us have met the problem in hospital, where patients have been obliged not to drink after certain surgical procedures. They can hardly describe how delicious their first tiny sip of water has been after a period of deprivation.

Water is mentioned in many places in the Old and New Testaments. My old Cruden's Concordance takes a page-and-a-half of very small print to include them all. They abound, from the

Creation narrative to the Psalms to the book of Revelation with its “sea of glass like unto crystal”.

Perhaps the most beautiful passage comes in St John’s account, graphic and penetrating, of Our Lord’s meeting with the woman of Samaria at the well, where he tells her that “no one who drinks the water that I shall give will ever be thirsty again”. Shortly afterwards, he reveals his identity. He had welcomed her into his fellowship.

In the 10th chapter of St Matthew’s Gospel, we have Christ’s commendation of the person who gives a cup of cold water to the needy. In this connection, maybe the monks of Pluscarden Abbey (near Elgin) can offer us some practical guidance. They are members of the Order of St Benedict, whose pious founder insisted that his followers should include, among their solemn undertakings, the duty of hospitality.

Thus their community graciously combines within their regulated life the provision of spiritual support for its innumerable visitors, but also a genuine welcome with sustenance and accommodation. *Pax* (Peace) is their motto.

As for ourselves, it is of great importance that our care for others should be as free from condescension as that of the monks. A wise warning to us upon our duty of graciousness comes from the pen of another of the Church’s early saints, Augustine of Hippo, who states: “We must take care that, while eating pure herbage and drinking pure water, we do not perhaps trample down God’s pasture, so that the weak sheep have to eat what has been trampled on, and drink what has been muddied.” Indeed, a welcome without compassion would be as fruitless as a waterless wasteland.

They drank the water clear,
Instead of wine, but yet they had good cheer.¹

Canon Bill Anderson, 13.07.02

¹ Robert Henryson, *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*

BOOKS RECEIVED

**The Radiance of her Face by Dom Xavier Perrin OSB:
Second Spring, Angelico Press, 2017; PB, 93pp.**

Foreword

The long awaited publication in English translation of Père Xavier's little work on Mary Immaculate is an event very much to be welcomed. The original was first published in French in 2006. Many who were lucky enough to have read it then have longed, with earnest desire, for it to be made available in the English speaking world. Happily, the intervening years have allowed the author to add two chapters, now seeing the light for the first time.

There are many books about Our Lady, but I know of none that can compare with this. Here we find ourselves privileged participants in a contemplative gaze. The French title, so difficult to render adequately in English, refers to this gaze: "*Regards sur l'Immaculée*". It's a gaze that's both steady and serene; a gaze full of love and wonder; informed by faith, and rooted in scholarly knowledge of the Scriptures and the Tradition of the Catholic Church. While the author never once speaks of himself, we cannot fail to sense also how profoundly personal is this gaze. The text is full of interesting information, yet above all it flows from a heart aflame with love for Mary Immaculate. And it is marked, inevitably, by the training and tradition of the author. He writes as a Benedictine monk of the Solesmes Congregation, from Brittany in France; as one whose life is given up to the worship of God, especially in the solemn liturgy; as a lover of art and music, especially sacred art and Gregorian Chant; as a theologian, and a contemplative; as one whose instinct is to stay quietly out of the limelight, but also as one who has something important to say; above all, as one whose life has been touched by a vision of radiant beauty.

Those who already rejoice in fervent devotion to Mary will find their love for her here nourished, stirred, refreshed, confirmed,

given new impetus. But perhaps for many the mystery of the Immaculate Conception remains somewhat abstract, remote, inaccessible: doubtless well formulated theologically, its truth guaranteed by the Church, but not so very relevant in the daily life of faith. If such there be, Père Xavier's book will open up a new vista of understanding: for he shows how this mystery has an essential place in the history of salvation, and in the life of the Church, and in our own Christian and human lives. Perhaps also this book might fall into the hands of some who hitherto have lacked the confidence to turn to Mary; who feel they do not really understand how we can pray to her, or relate to her, or love her. Surely for such these pages could be truly liberating, even life-giving; offering access to a new dimension of the Christian life; inviting entry into a prayer that is deeper, more confident, more free, more effective.

Yes, it's true that there are some rather bold statements to be found here. Anyone entirely committed to the cause of the sixteenth century Reformers will scarcely find them easy to swallow. Yet there is nothing here of controversy, or polemics, or antagonism to anyone or anything. Nor, as a matter of fact, is there any exaggeration, or excess. What is taught here can withstand the most rigorous theological scrutiny; it is simply an unfolding of one of the truths of our faith.

"Turning our eyes to Mary Immaculate", according to the excellent sub title given by the English translators, we find ourselves crying out, with the Swedish translators of the original Title: "*Vad du är skön Maria!*" – "How beautiful you are, Mary!"

A contemplative gaze at Mary Immaculate has the power to change us, to convert us, to soften our hard hearts, to open us up to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit; to help us renounce all resistance to Christ's redemptive work, so that it may have its full effect in us, as it did in her.

Here then is a book to be savoured, to be read slowly and repeatedly; to be passed on to others. May it be a blessing for all who encounter it, and may it help us all to identify ourselves wholly with the Blessed Virgin, who magnified the Lord with the

whole of her being, in gratitude and joy, and who teaches us to do the same.

Dom Benedict Hardy OSB, Prior of Pluscarden Abbey
22 August 2017, Feast of the Queenship of Mary

Egyptian Art by Bill Manley; 320pp, 274 colour illustrations; Thames & Hudson “World of Art” series; 2017; £12.95.

We are eased into this scholarly volume – densely detailed but shot through with illustrations of startling beauty – by a piercing observation from G. K. Chesterton which might have been penned for it:

“Now, there is a law written in the darkest of the Books of Life, and it is this: if you look at a thing nine hundred and ninety-nine times, you are perfectly safe; if you look at it the thousandth time, you are in frightful danger of seeing it for the first time.”

That cautionary verse recalls the great philologist and historian/archaeologist Massimo Pallotino who disturbed fellow academics by proving that the faddish foundation of their solemn science was a net of conjectural balloons which, inevitably, discovery deflated; though often only to inflate them again. Pallotino also debunked the sacrosanct dogmas of the then illustrious Professor Momsen. Thus, I suspect some people reading this book will see something for the one thousandth time but finally *see* it.

Dr Manley’s style is never as strident. It is non-emphatically persuasive! Former Senior Curator for Ancient Egypt at the National Museums Scotland, and teacher of Egyptology and Coptic at the University of Glasgow, he is tall and athletic, and his manner conforms to his carriage: an ambling, easy gait. His delivery is economically taut and lean. These 300 odd pages are so

crammed with glittering detail and impressive minutiae that the reader may find he has ambled over the remains of yet another sacred cow, only to realise the fact a few pages later on. It's a "keep flicking back again" sort of book.

One of the publication's more delightful features is the product of Manley's own artistic sensibility; luxurious art plates interspersed throughout and headlined "Masterpiece". In fact, *Egyptian Art* is multi-layered, so if we are to follow academic protocol slavishly, a comprehensive review would require, at least, four specialists from four separate disciplines other than Art critic: Theologian, Architect, Engineer, and Archaeologist. Forming an orderly queue behind could come the Philologist, Historian, Political theorist, Sociologist, and Psychologist. This is NOT art for art's sake!

In fact the Art of ancient Egypt is synonymous with Worship. And its art is so inextricably bound into every element of that civilisation (which seemed hell bent on outliving time itself) that any specialist would find the word limit allotted to this mere journalist a challenging exercise in synopsis.

Warning!: if you are one of those people who assesses the skill and intelligence of ancient peoples on the primitive scales of 19th century evolutionary ideology ... well, read on anyway! By the way, no decently educated Christian should neglect such an authoritative account to have "come out of Egypt". After all, Abraham sought refuge from the Pharaohs; Solomon borrowed his political agenda from them, even employing their scribes. Joseph with his patch-patterned coat was dumped there by the big brothers to become something of a vizier. Moses was born Egyptian and educated in Pharaoh's court. The angel of God dispatched St Joseph to Egypt as God's chosen refuge for the Virgin, and to safeguard the infant Jesus until He should call his Son "out of Egypt!" One wonders if the Child's early school primer was in hieroglyphs.

Egypt was getting old when Homer's ancient Greece was learning to have a word for it. Rome might have been built in a day by comparison. Then, as suddenly as the fall of Jerusalem, Egypt

was baptised Christian. As Dr Manley writes: Coptic means Egyptian and Pharaoh stands more for Pope than for king.

Joseph Barrett, Oblate OSB

***The Incarnate Lord: A Study in Thomistic Christology* by Thomas Joseph White, O.P.; The Catholic University of America Press, 2016; 534 pp.**

The Bible, repository of sacred answers to the world's woes, is also a treasury of compelling questions, posed by a gallery of sinners and saints. "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Cain); "If a man should die, shall he live again?" (Job); "What must I do to inherit eternal life" (a ruler, left unnamed); "What is truth?" (Pilate). But the Bible's most important questions are posed not by saints or sinners but by the Lord, and of these questions there is one that overwhelms the rest, one of such truly exceptional power that it allows no prevarication, no refusal, no jesting or stepping aside, nothing but unadorned truth, for it is a matter of life or death, a demand that each of us must answer at the time of judgement, when we come before the Lord: "*Who do you say that I am?*" (Mark 8:29, Matthew 16:15, Luke 9:20)

In the Gospel texts, Jesus poses this question just after restoring sight to a blind man. Like all placement of events in the New Testament, this is no archival slip or literary accident; the sequence is designed, through divine inspiration, to send a vital message. We too are blind, we too must have our sight restored, our minds enlightened, our hearts awakened, our faith rekindled: and this healing comes through Christ, precisely by opening our eyes to his true nature. The great answer to the Lord's question depends not on reason, emotion, or any human quality, but upon divine revelation; when Peter responds "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus replies, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven." Peter's answer leads immediately to the

founding of the Church: “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church.”

Jesus’ question has occupied the world since it was first posed two millennia ago. The New Testament provides the answer; the early councils of the Church, especially those of Nicaea, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, illuminate the New Testament’s teachings, setting the foundation for the discipline of Christology, the elucidation of the person of Jesus, especially in light of ontology. This is a vitally important project: for the nature of Christ, if mistakenly grasped, leads to heresies that produce an impoverished spiritual life and may even imperil our eternal souls, while if grasped firmly and completely, in devotion and purity of heart, in union with the mind of the Church, a true Christology will enrich our earthly life, bring us nearer to the Lord, and may guide us into heaven. As Fr White neatly puts it at the outset of his work, “an understanding of the ultimate meaning of human existence is possible only in light of the mystery of Jesus Christ.”

Interest in Christology has been booming since the early 20th century. Almost every major modern Christian theologian from Bultmann to Balthasar has dived into the subject; Christological understanding (or misunderstanding) can be discerned in a multitude of cultural artifacts, from Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ* to Toibin’s *The Testament of Mary*, and even Andy Warhol’s silkscreens of *The Last Supper*.

I’m happy to say that Christology is not only booming but blossoming. To wit, all Catholics can rejoice in the recent publication of an important new Christological work, Thomas Joseph White, O.P.’s *The Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology* (The Catholic University of America Press, 2017). Fr White’s study, massive (534 pages) and magisterial, constitutes a successful effort to place the Church’s current understanding of Christology squarely within the classical Christian metaphysical tradition – a tradition that Fr White correctly believes has been poorly served by much theology in recent centuries, beginning with the writings of the German Protestant Friedrich Schleiermacher, who devalued the nature of divine-human union

in Christ, reducing it from an ontological reality – based in the very being of the Lord – to a matter of Christ’s self-awareness.

Fr White presents his case (or, really, portfolio of cases) by following the thought of St Thomas Aquinas, and in so doing restores to Christology its traditional saving wisdom – a wisdom “that surpasses ourselves, and which redeems our human history and our personal lives in time, but which also orients us toward the world to come.” He deftly organizes a tremendous amount of material by loosely matching it to the structure of Part Three (*Tertia Pars*) of Thomas’s *Summa theologiae*, the portion devoted to exploring the nature of Christ. Most of the more important and contentious Christological issues roiling today’s theological landscape come into focus in a series of brilliant chapters: the very possibility of a modern Thomistic Christology, the nature of the hypostatic union, the relationship of Christ’s human and divine natures; the legitimacy of natural theology as a tool for Christological investigation, Jesus’ beatific vision while on earth; the obedience of the Son to the Father; the meaning of the Lord’s “cry of abandonment” on the Cross; the descent into hell; and the nature of the Resurrection.

To those unversed in Christian metaphysics, this may sound challenging, and so it can be. But close reading of the text always sheds light; Fr White is a remarkably lucid writer, with a true teacher’s gift for unravelling complexities, establishing context, and highlighting the essential. The result is a densely packed book of high metaphysical thought that readers will find not just informative but enjoyable, even riveting, even on several occasions – and I choose this word carefully – *thrilling*. St Thomas, that most humble of saints, must be beaming with pride and joy.

Philip Zaleski, Oblate OSB

Read in the Refectory:

Reformation Divided - Catholics, Protestants and the Conversion of England, by Eamon Duffy; Bloomsbury Continuum; London, 2017; HB; 441pp.

Cambridge History Professor Eamon Duffy is a very fine scholar, who also has the gift of making his recondite researches accessible and interesting for the general reader. When he really gets the bit between his teeth, his writing is informative, entertaining, pugnacious, luminous, convincing: in a word, perfect for refectory reading! The publication of this book was prompted by the fifth centenary of the Protestant Reformation, sparked by Martin Luther in 1517. We are presented here with a collection of essays, more or less revised, written by Duffy over a long period between the 1970s and the present day. Because of that provenance, the Chapters are somewhat loosely bound together. The treasure hidden within, though, is Duffy's close look, specifically from the Catholic perspective, and with revisionist eyes, at the English (not Scottish, or European) Reformation, its aftermath and consequences. Other essays included here one might well have wished omitted, or anyway published elsewhere. That aside: the tale he tells is definitely worth reading. Fascinating, often thrilling, edifying, tragic; full of high drama and outstanding personalities: yet in great part, it is very little known. And to Duffy's evident professional satisfaction, much of the period covered has been hitherto obscured by ideologically biased reporting, with crucial evidence insufficiently examined, or inadequately assessed, or even entirely disregarded. No longer. True to previous form, Duffy's contribution to our understanding of English Catholic history is decisive and of lasting value.

The first part of the book is devoted to St Thomas More. Duffy's concern is above all to respond to allegations that have been levelled against More from his own time and ever since. So: an all-too popular account makes the humanist scholar and friend of Erasmus undergo a change once established in political power, to become the obsessive heresy hunter, even the ruthless torturer.

More has also been depicted as an anguished misanthropist, whose tangled and tormented conscience sprang in reality from a morbidly repressed and disordered sexuality. All of which Duffy disposes of, over three rather lengthy Chapters. He makes close and detailed reference to all of More's writings: not only the famous *Utopia*, but also the apologetic works against the Reformers. These amounted to over a million words in a series of books; now usually dismissed unread, presumed to be merely boring, or embarrassingly vitriolic. But reading this literature against the background of the faith of Christendom, as then commonly accepted, and also in context of the conventions of humanist rhetoric, Duffy demonstrates it to have been both formidably coherent and highly effective.

One friend and unqualified admirer of St Thomas More was Reginald Cardinal Pole (1500-1558). He emerged as a prominent leader of the reforming party within the Catholic Church in Italy; presided at the opening of the Council of Trent, and came within a single vote of the Papal election in 1547. On the accession of Queen Mary in 1553, he was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury and Papal Legate. Yet his reputation as a leader in the attempted English Counter-Reformation has been tarnished by accusations of lack of commitment, and of imagination, even of courage; of having been lukewarm in the Catholic Cause. Worse: Pole is supposed to have distrusted preaching in principle, and for that reason to have refused to allow the Jesuits to establish missions in England. In spite of his life's work against the Reformers, Pole's Augustinian theology certainly placed him under suspicion in Rome of being a bit too close to Luther; perhaps even somewhat sympathetic to the whole Protestant cause. All of which accusations Duffy vigorously counters. None of them can be sustained. Pole's political and strategic decisions can certainly from his own perspective be defended. Far from being a marginal figure, his legacy was both positive and enduring in subsequent English Catholic thought. As for preaching: Pole considered it the first duty of any pastor. He even wrote a treatise, alas now lost, on the art of preaching. Duffy devotes considerable space to an

examination of Pole's surviving sermons, which astonishingly have been neglected by historians and even biographers. He finds in them plenty of clues about Pole's priorities and leadership style.

Allen Hall seminary in Chelsea is named after William Cardinal Allen (1532-1594), who after the accession of Protestant Elizabeth almost single-handedly established the Catholic seminaries abroad. From 1574 Allen sent a stream of young Priests from his Colleges to England, in many cases to prison, torture and execution. Allen wrote, says Duffy, some of the best prose of the Elizabethan age. He was one of the principal driving forces behind the Douay-Rheims Bible. Two generations of saints, martyrs and confessors looked to him as their spiritual inspiration, their protector, and spiritual father. Yet this man, who was courted and honoured by princes, popes, politicians and plotters, has been portrayed as a rather dull schoolmaster, who in any other age would have lived out a harmless and uneventful life in tranquil obscurity.

Dull? As Duffy presents Allen's career, we encounter tremendous creative energy, radical thinking, persuasive power, academic and organisational professionalism. And with all his zeal for the Catholic cause went a truly ferocious rejection of Protestantism. To compromise in any way with heretics was, in Allen's mind, to sup with the devil himself. So Allen consistently repudiated "church-papistry", whereby faithful Catholics would occasionally attend Protestant service, in order to avoid fines and other penalties. Considerable attention is paid in this essay to Allen's multiform political entanglements and manoeuvrings. He always believed that England would be converted if only Queen Elizabeth could be removed. He therefore unambiguously supported the idea of Spanish invasion, while also rejecting any charge that he and his Priests were guilty of treason. Duffy concludes that Allen's pastoral resource and vision were on a par with that of St Charles Borromeo in his own generation, or St Vincent de Paul in the next. Because of him, English Catholicism was given a surer, clearer sense of its own identity: because of him, it survived.

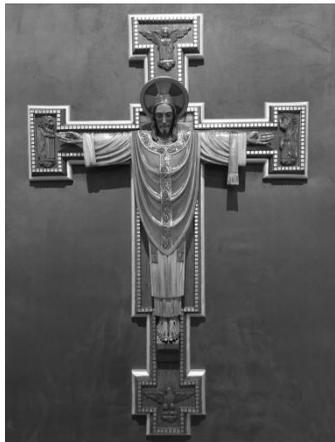
Gregory Martin died in 1582 aged only 42. Duffy is convinced that the importance of Martin's career has been consistently underestimated by historians. A profoundly learned scholar, under Allen's directions he translated the whole Vulgate Bible, always with reference to the Hebrew and Greek originals, working at the breakneck speed of two chapters a day. He also produced many polemical and apologetic tracts or pamphlets. But the work of Martin which Duffy expounds in most detail is his book "Roma sancta". Here are celebrated the glories of the City of Rome, where Martin spent eighteen months during the Pontificate of Gregory XIII. Against Protestant claims that papal Rome had fallen away from primitive purity to become the seat of antichrist himself, Martin depicts it as the true custodian of the early martyrs, and now the centre of deeply inspiring and holy Counter-Reformation energy. Martin addresses his readers in tones of excitement, marvelling admiration, enthralled reportage, personal testimony. When opportunity suggests, he discusses in detail what he has seen in Rome of popular devotions, religious works of charity, treatment of the sick, response to prostitution, institutions of religious life and of sacred learning, and he returns ever and again to instructions on aspects of the Catholic Faith. Twenty pages are devoted to a eulogy of the Jesuits, and all their works and missions. Martin concludes with a description of the holy lives and outstanding generosity of two notable Cardinals, then still living. Duffy presents this book as a uniquely valuable window into the world and outlook of English Catholics of the Reformation period. Had it ever appeared in print, it would surely have been a powerful apologetic tool. But as a matter of fact, most remarkably, it remained unpublished, appearing into the public light for the first time only in 1969.

Duffy offers interesting Chapters on the devotional books or Primers of the English recusants, and on the History of the Reformation, as written by English Catholic historians, especially in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Let this review end, though, by noting two Chapters on the conflicts between the Secular and Regular, especially Jesuit, clergy, in the post

Reformation period. If ever you worry about factionalism and party spirit to be found within the modern Catholic Church, perhaps it could be strangely consoling to know that in the past the situation has been much worse. The conflict became particularly nasty in the context of the Jansenist crisis, and in the subsequent battle for control of the Seminaries. In support of the secular clergy, especially of the seventeenth century, Duffy sets himself to unpick a presumption of many historians, that they were “trapped in a sterile wilderness of unreality”: impervious to the best currents of Counter-Reformation spirituality; antiquarian and insular; jealous of their territorial jurisdictions; aiming always above all at the fantasy of a restored Catholic hierarchy within a converted England. Comparing these men with their Dutch counterparts, Duffy finds their attitudes defensible, and he proves that they could indeed be considered as faithful followers of the Tridentine Reforms. Nevertheless, especially after the Revolution of 1688, they became ever increasingly associated with the Jansenists, and their war with the Jesuits became open and declared. These quarrels spilled over among the laity, so that “bakers, lawyers’ clerks, cobblers and bodice-makers argued vehemently about attrition and contrition, efficacious grace and irresistible grace, limited or unlimited atonement, the doctrinal irregularities of Pope Honorius, and the question of papal infallibility.” When the Jesuit party had gained the upper hand with the Roman authorities, a group of secular clergy in 1709 considered turning to the secular Power. Even as the Catholic Church in the country continued to labour under severe official persecution, they addressed a petition to the House of Lords, asking that all Jesuits be banished from the Kingdom. All this, says Duffy, has been “the disgrace, as well as the fascination of English Catholic history”. Was it all a storm in a very small ecclesiastical teacup? Its consequences would anyway long endure, and would leave their mark on many subsequent generations.

DBH

“YOU HAVE COME TO MOUNT SION”
THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIMAGE IN THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS
Four talks by Father Richard Ounsworth O.P.



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- 4. Thursday 19th May at 10.15 am
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