



# Dowry

(N°5, Winter 2010)

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



(Picture: Your priests tomorrow? Well, rather than seminarians, these are altar servers processing at the priestly ordination of Rev Mr Jose Zepeda, FSSP by His Excellency, The Most Reverend Salvatore Joseph Cordileone (Bishop of Oakland) at St. Jarlath Church, Oakland, California, on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2009 – (© www.garciaimages.smugmug.com). Please God, some among them may be called to the priesthood. Let us pray for numerous saintly priestly vocations.)

In this issue:

**Editorial: the great service of education**

***Et in Arcadia ego*: British deacon's fond memories of FSSP seminary in Bavaria**

**Parents' rights and duties to educate their children**

**American deacon's ministry in traditional boarding-school in Normandy**

**Education for boys at St Gregory's Academy, PA**

**Priestly spirituality: the office of governing**

**Prefects of two main Roman dicasteries to visit FSSP seminaries**

**A discreet convert, Johannes Vermeer**

**Charter of the Confraternity of Saint Peter**

**Ongoing ministry**

**Forthcoming events**

**Work now started at FSSP house in Reading**



# Editorial: the great service of education

Dear Reader and Friend,

What to build first in a village: the church or the school? ‘Build the school first’- was the reply made by the Curé of Ars when asked this question. His statement is all the more striking when one remembers the outstanding dedication with which the holy Curé would fulfil his priestly functions in his little village church, either at the altar or in the confessional – not to mention the many hours spent in silent contemplation before the tabernacle. With so deep a desire to put the service of God above all things, how could this same holy pastor put the building of a church second only after the building of a school?

He knew that people’s assiduousness at the church would but express their understanding of their human condition as rational creatures in need of redemption. The order of creation then, the correct use of reason, the principles for the morality of our actions, etc – all this needed to be taught first (a logical precedence, not a chronological one). Souls would adhere to the truths manifested in the liturgy, they would join in devotional activities – inasmuch as the intellects would have been equipped to grasp the articulations and meanings of the sacred Drama of the Creation, Fall and Redemption.

As a boy, young John-Mary Vianney had been deprived of that right to education, when the French revolutionaries, forgetting that the Church among other achievements had invented the university and free primary education, had confiscated Its teaching mandate. In the name of ‘freedom’, these stern ideologues were promoting their atheistic agenda. If the new ‘enlightened’ State indeed was to become the ultimate authority, then it could not tolerate an institution – Holy Mother Church – who taught that every power comes from God.

Thankfully, in our democratic countries, schools normally don’t teach atheism as such. But does it make a difference since in most cases they consider the existence of God irrelevant to teaching and at best a private opinion? It sounds like teaching astronomy without mentioning there is a sun. Surely grammar, mathematics, history, literature, biology etc. do not refer to God in an explicit manner as is proper to catechism in general and to the various branches of theology in particular. However, an education that specialises whatever deeply in diverse fields without showing to man his actual place in the universe may give to our world expert and

encyclopedical minds, but it will not give us religious souls, i.e. human spirits aware that their common Origin and Destination is a loving Person. On the contrary, knowing that all persons and things are relative to a unique God, and cannot be considered but in the divine light, is the best guarantee for social harmony and for responsible use of world resources. Sharing such knowledge is education.



We can be sure that the curriculum in the school built by the holy Curé in Ars had been designed so that, as future adult Catholics, the pupils would be: “equipped to hand on the faith to new generations comprehensively, accurately, and with a keen awareness that in so doing they are playing their part in the Church’s mission”, to quote the Holy Father’s *Address* to the Bishops of England and Wales (1<sup>st</sup> February 2010). In the same perspective, the *Constitutions* of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter (definitively approved by the Holy See) state that: “The members of the Fraternity will facilitate and eventually found schools, free, as far as possible, of all secular interference, in accordance with the law of the Church (see Can. 796 ff.). From these schools will come vocations and Christian homes” (§14).

Although we don’t have the means to start or run a school in England at this stage, we are actively committed to educating souls through retreats, conferences, sermons, catechism, articles and spiritual direction given by our priests. As part of the largest EF priestly community worldwide, we contribute according to our means to the great service of education, as you will find in this issue of *Dowry*. This involves dozens of actual schools where FSSP priests serve as chaplains, or indeed schools entirely run by our Fraternity. It also includes our two international seminaries, where we form future educators of souls who will bring the Good News of Salvation wherever the Church will send them, sub Petro et ad majorem Dei gloriam.

Yours devotedly in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

Fr Armand de Malleray,  
Superior of the English FSSP Apostolate  
2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010, St John Fisher House (Reading)



# *Et in Arcadia ego*: British deacon's fond memories of FSSP seminary in Bavaria

“I have been here before.” These are the opening words of Evelyn Waugh's classic novel *Brideshead Revisited*. These same words must have occurred to Fr. Bisig as he arrived in the sleepy hamlet of Wigratzbad, Germany in August 1988. Indeed he had! As trusted lieutenant of Archbishop Lefebvre he first came to Wigratzbad looking for a site for a German seminary for the Society of St Pius X. His return as Superior General of Fraternity of St Peter some ten years later at the invitation of the Bishop of Augsburg was not a case of *deja-vue*, but the fulfillment of a prophecy.

But whose prophecy? In the late 1930's Wigratzbad was home to Miss Antonie Rädler and a small Marian shrine under the titles of the Immaculate Conception and Mother of Victory. Later it developed into a site of international pilgrimage. This transformation has its origin in the extraordinary life of Miss Rädler. During the Second World War suffering at the hands of the Gestapo, she vowed that should she survive her persecutors she would build a Chapel in which to adore the Blessed Sacrament. Providentially she survived and built her Chapel. Over the years this Chapel with its Marian Shrine attracted an increasing number of pilgrims to pray and make acts of reparation to the Immaculate and Sacred Hearts. Fr Bisig remembers that Archbishop Josef Stimpfle of Augsburg was convinced that Miss Rädler was inspired by God. By the late 1950's Miss Rädler, guided by an inspired intuition, began praying for a seminary at Wigratzbad. But it wasn't until she was joined by Passionist Fr. Johannes Schmid, as Chaplain to the shrine, that the idea was given new impetus. Even then there were difficulties. Convinced that a seminary was needed Fr Schmid petitioned the Bishop to no avail. Reminiscing in 1988 Bishop Stimpfle said to Fr Bisig that Fr Schmid had once told him that Wigratzbad would one day be home to an international seminary from Rome, but the Bishop did not believe him. Less than a year after recalling this episode the Fraternity of St. Peter began construction of its seminary on the very site designated by Fr Schmid. Today the sleepy hamlet of Wigratzbad is not so sleepy with thousands of pilgrims visiting the shrine each year and the Fraternity of St.

Peter is shortly to begin construction to increase the capacity of its international seminary.

So what makes Wigratzbad so extraordinary and what is the connection with *Brideshead*? It was late September when I first arrived in the region and coming, as I did, from the Fraternity's other international seminary in Denton, USA, I was well acquainted with small rural towns. But situated on the ancient frontier of Bavaria and Swabia, a short distance from Germany's



(Rev Mr Harkins, FSSP and confrere visiting Ottobeuren Abbey near Wigratzbad, November 2009)

borders with Austria and Switzerland, Wigratzbad is a small town at the heart of an ancient Catholic kingdom. The Council of Constance (1414 – 1418), which condemned the heretics John Hus and John Wycliffe and elected Pope Martin I, was held only one hour away on the southern shore of the Bodensee (Lake Constance). Not far from Constance on the isle of Reichenau the skull of St. Mark the Evangelist has been venerated in the abbey church of SS. Mary & Mark since the 10<sup>th</sup> Century. Originally founded in 724 by the abbot and bishop St. Pirminius, the island of Reichenau flourished between the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, becoming an important centre of art and culture of the region and in the Holy Roman Empire. Of the twenty churches and chapels once on this small island, only three remain: the monastery church of SS. Mary & Mark, consecrated in 816; the church of St. George, built around the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, with mural paintings dating from before the year 1000; and the church of St. Peter and Paul, founded in 799 and rebuilt in 1134, with Rococo decorations dating from 1760. Visiting these sites on a cold and wet November's morning I got the impression that this place *was* Christendom. A Rome over the Alps so to speak since it had played such a decisive role in the cultural development of Northern Europe during the Middle Ages.

To the North West of Wigratzbad the ancient town of Weingarten was home to the Guelph family who built a magnificent church as a testament to their piety. It was shortly after the year 900 that Henry Guelph founded a convent on the site of a previously suppressed Benedictine abbey. Twice destroyed by fire, it was always rebuilt, and when transferred back into the hands



(The beautiful Baroque pulpit in Weingarten Abbey)

of the Benedictines it remained the richest and most influential of the Swabian monasteries. The current building dating from 1715-24 is in the Italian-German baroque style, and is the second largest in Wurtemberg region. It is truly an icon of the indivisible link between spiritual and temporal power. The greatest treasure of Weingarten is its famous relic of the Precious Blood, still on display in the church. Its legend runs thus: Longinus, the soldier who opened the Saviour's side with a lance, caught some of the Sacred Blood and preserved it in a leaden box, which later he buried for safe keeping. In 1048 it was re-discovered and solemnly exalted by Pope Leo IX in the presence of the Emperor, Henry III. It was divided into three parts, one of which was given to Henry, who in turn bequeathed his share of the relic to Count Baldwin V of Flanders, whose daughter Juditha married into the Guelph family. As a wedding present Juditha presented the relic to the people of Weingarten. The solemn presentation took place in 1090, on the Friday after the feast of the Ascension, and it was stipulated that annually on the same day, which came to be known as *Blutfreitag* (Blood Friday), the relic should be carried in solemn horseback procession through the town, as is still the case with over 2,500 riders (possibly the largest annual equestrian procession in the world) escorting the Relic carried by the Lord Abbot.

Weingarten however, is only one of a number of large Benedictine communities that surround Wigratzbad. In fact, Wigratzbad is encircled by these living relics of Catholic culture and art. Here, in these monasteries, the combination of temporal and spiritual power, embodied in the idea of the Prince Abbot, brought about an unprecedented expansion and comprehension of the good, the true, and the beautiful. Where better then to build a seminary for the "Mass of Ages" than amid such transcendence?

The search for the transcendent is also the connection with Evelyn Waugh. As a Catholic author, Waugh undoubtedly understood that it is through art (in all its forms) that we can better appreciate the Divine. This appreciation is not based on the enlightenment principle *ars gratia artis* (art for art's sake) but on the Catholic principle *ars gratia Dei* (art for the sake of God). For Catholicism, unlike the three great "religions of the Book", embraces art because it is human to do so. The Incarnation of Christ has enabled us to draw closer to God through our human nature. Not indeed by exalting our weakness, but by inspiring our comprehension of His sacrifice through liturgical and artistic representation. One only has to visit the Rococo church at Birnau (built between 1746 and 1749), on the northern shore of Lake Constance, to appreciate how art and architecture were put to use as catechetical tools enriching the senses and the soul.

Moreover, if man creates, it is only because God has already created. The highest and most genuine forms of art therefore will always express this truth most clearly. In the case of the great abbey churches of Weingarten and Ottobeuren we are constantly reminded that we give back to God what He has given us. *Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi?* (what return shall I give to the Lord for all that He has given to me?) At each of these magnificent seats of temporal and ecclesiastical power we give back to God the sacrifice of Christ represented in the most fitting manner that our human nature can comprehend – the Divine Liturgy. Words can not adequately describe the transcendent quality, the care and attention to detail, given to enriching the Divine Liturgy through the art of men in these sacred places.

(Deacons under monumental organ in Weingarten Abbey)





However, as we know, the contemplation of the Divine begins not with the abstract but with the concrete, and what could be more concrete than our sinfulness? Therefore before we can know God we must first know ourselves as we really are – fallen and wounded. This was Evelyn Waugh's greatest achievement in *Brideshead* – to paint a literary picture of a man's redemption amid a decadent and prodigal backdrop. Like Charles Ryder in the story each one of us is subject to the same selfish desires, but thanks to the economy of salvation, where sin abounds, grace doth more abound. The last chapters of *Brideshead* contain the best literary description of the action of grace upon an errant soul I have ever read. In like manner I have never seen a better pictorial representation of the economy of our salvation than the one adorning the ceiling of the Baroque church at Ottobeuren. Unlike Weingarten and Birnau, this monastery was designed principally not so much to foster the piety of the people of God, but to elevate the minds of His humble choir monks. Seated in the choir stalls, one's eye is first drawn towards the images of the church suffering and militant delicately carved overhead on the opposite stall, reminding us of our own personal sins and of the purgation due on their account. Then continuing upward we are confronted by the dramatic depiction of the fall of the angels. From there we are taken out of the heaven to earth by the majestic sweep of the transept copula where our part in salvation history begins with a similar expulsion. There, in the copula facing the tabernacle, some considerable distance away, the fall of mankind is depicted by an empty blue globe surrounded by the beasts and peoples of the world, representing the hierarchy of the fallen temporal order. Immediately opposite, directly over the altar rail, between the nave and the sanctuary, Our Blessed Mother stands amid a scene of the first Pentecost – an inspiring vision testifying to the singular role of Our Lady in salvation history. Above the splendor of the High Altar (the place of sacrifice) peace and harmony are restored, and order brought to the *cosmos*. Here all things are made new as Christ, His precious blood pouring forth, takes His place at the right hand of the Father who with the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove is adored by the heavenly choirs. It is here, amidst of this scene of



(British faithful and FSSP clergy by Lake Constance, June 2009)

perfect harmony irrigated with the blood of Christ that the same blue globe reappears in proportion to its objective significance (*i.e.* relatively small). This time however, it contains the figures of Adam and Eve previously omitted, depicting the restoration of the universal order brought about by the Incarnation. “For when your Only Begotten Son revealed himself to us in our human nature He restored us in the new light of His immortality” (from the Preface for Epiphany).

The church at Ottobeuren is a masterpiece of baroque art and architecture but also of Catholic Faith. Everyone visiting the region must see it. There the choir monks work out their own salvation amid the hierarchy of creation and a masterful panoply of art for the sake of God. Forty minutes to the south, at Wigratzbad the seminarians of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter workout their vocations encircled by a Catholic artistic and cultural heritage that dates back to Charles the Great. I will be sad to leave Wigratzbad at Christmas. I have enjoyed my time among my French and German confreres, but as the last line of *Brideshead* reads: “you are looking unusually cheerful today” – and I am, knowing that I will return to this place one day when I too can say: “I have been here before.”

By Rev Mr Simon Harkins, FSSP, December 2009, Wigratzbad.

## Catholic education: the rights and duties of parents

On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009, the Government presented for its First Reading a Bill which, in the words of one MP who opposed it, “...will for the first time in our history, tear away from parents and give to the state the responsibility for a child's education” (Mr. Graham Stuart, MP for Beverley and Holderness). These words should set alarm bells ringing for any Catholic, whether they have children attending school or

not, but they are particularly alarming for those parents who have taken full responsibility for their children's education by teaching them at home, outside of the school system. The UK has possibly the most liberal laws in the world when it comes to home-education, and this is what the present Government would like to see changed: they realise all too well that home-education is one of the last remaining avenues open to parents who do



(Mass at the FSSP boarding school in Normandy, 2009)

not wish to conform to the current secular, liberal, educational ideology of the state. If enacted in its entirety, the *Children, Schools and Families* Bill would make it increasingly difficult for parents to fulfil the perennial teaching of the Church regarding both their rights and their responsibilities in the education of their children.

It is all too easy to forget in this age in which the care and education of children has been largely taken away from the hands of the parents (often, it has to be said, with their full consent) that parents remain the *primary educators* of their children even if they choose to delegate part of that responsibility to a school or other institution or person. Even a cursory glance at Church teaching on this subject should be enough to remind us of this reality.

*Sapientiae Christianae*, Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical of 1890, states: “Let everyone be firmly convinced, first of all, that the minds of children are best trained above all by the teaching they receive at home [...]. By nature, parents have a right to the training of their children, but with the added duty that the education and instruction of the child be in accord with the end for which by God's blessing it was begotten. Therefore, it is the duty of parents to make every effort to prevent any invasion of their rights in this matter, and to make absolutely sure that the education of their children remains under their own control in keeping with their Christian duty [...]. The obligation of the family to bring up children includes not only religious and moral education but physical and civic education as well [...].” Note that these words are addressed equally to parents who send their children to Catholic schools: sending one's children to school does not obviate parental responsibilities regarding education.

In *Casti Connubii* Pope Pius XI commented: “[God] has given to those to whom He entrusted the power and right to beget (children), the power and also the right to educate them. Now it is certain that both by the law of nature and of God, this right and duty of educating their offspring belongs in the first place to those who began the work of nature by giving them birth, and they are indeed forbidden to leave unfinished this work [...]. In matrimony,

*provision has been made in the best possible way for this education of children”.*

*Divini Illius Magistri*, Pope Pius XI's great encyclical on education ('Christian Education of Youth') published in 1929, laments the modern trend (so much more widespread today), of sending very young children away from the home to be educated. “We wish to call attention to the present day lamentable decline in family education [...] for the fundamental duty and obligation of educating their children, many parents have little or no preparation, immersed as they are in temporal cares. The declining influence of domestic environment is further weakened by another tendency [...] which [...] causes children to be more and more frequently sent away from home even in their tenderest years [...] to be formed (or to speak more accurately, to be deformed and depraved) in Godless schools and associations [...]” Regarding the rights of parents versus the rights of the State, this Encyclical states: “In the first place comes the family, instituted directly by God for its particular purpose, the procreation and the formation of offspring; for this reason it has priority of nature, and therefore of rights, over civil society.” Furthermore: “The family holds directly from the Creator the mission, and hence the right, to educate the young, a right inalienable because inseparably joined to a strict obligation, a right anterior to any right whatever of civil society and the State, and therefore inviolable on the part of any power on earth.” Quoting St. Thomas Aquinas, the Pope continues: “It would be contrary to natural justice if the child [...] were removed from the care of its parents, or if any arrangements were made concerning him against the will of the parents. And as this duty on the part of the parents continues up until the time when the child is in a position to provide for itself, this same inviolable parental right of education also endures.” Even common sense would oppose the notion that children belong to the State before they belong to the family and that the State has no absolute right over their education. Finally, and of great significance in the present debate: “In the matter of education it is the duty of the State to protect by means of its legislation, the prior rights of the family as regards the Christian education of its offspring [...]”.

(Rugby at the FSSP boarding school in Normandy, 2009)





The *Declaration on Christian Education* of the Second Council of the Vatican more recently restated all this in even stronger terms: “*Since parents have given life to their children, they are bound by a grave obligation to educate their offspring, and so must be regarded as their primary and principal educators. Their role in education is of such importance that where it is missing, its place can scarcely be supplied.*”

The apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (1981) of Pope John Paul II proclaims that:

“*The right and duty of parents to give education is essential, since it is connected with the transmission of human life; it is original and primary with regard to the educational role of others. [...] it is irreplaceable and inalienable and therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others.*”

Again, in his *Charter of the Rights of the family* (1983), written mainly to support parents in their right to oppose sex education in the schools, John Paul II states that “*Parents have the original, primary right to educate their children and must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children....Parents have the right to educate their children in conformity with their moral and religious convictions.*” John Paul II's Encyclical *Catechesæ Tradendæ* re-iterates perennial Church teaching on these matters.

As can be seen from all these quotations, the mind of the Church remains consistent regarding both parental obligations and the powers of the state regarding the education of youth.

The recent Government proposals threaten not only the freedom of Catholic home-educators to teach their children as the Church suggests they should, but also, on a more fundamental level, threaten to undermine the principal that parental rights in the education of their children are prior to the rights of the state. Many Catholics, and indeed parents of all religious persuasions and none, have been vigorously opposing these moves over recent months, but ultimately, it is in the interests of all Catholics to oppose the proposed changes to legislation as they mark simply another attack on our Catholic beliefs and way of life. Perhaps, reading this, you will think that the legislation will not affect you since your children are in school, but I would ask you to think again: even if you have chosen to delegate responsibility for your child's education to a school, you will not remain unaffected by a change in primary legislation which would place the rights of the state over those of the parents in questions of raising and educating children. If this Bill is enacted, the day may well come when, faced with increasingly unwelcome Government intrusion into the way you raise your children, you will find yourself powerless to do anything about it.

*By Kathryn Hennessy, an Oxford graduate and a home-educating mother of seven, and editor of a supporting newsletter for Catholic home-educators. For information please contact michael.hennessy4@btinternet.com.*

## American deacon's ministry in traditional boarding-school in Normandy

‘**T**ruth within souls and souls within truth’ or in French: ‘*La vérité dans les âmes et les âmes dans la vérité*’ (Fr Berto).

These words succinctly explain the goal of the *Institut Croix-des-Vents St. Joseph*. This institute, situated in the rolling hills of the lower Normandy region of France, is a boarding school for Catholic boys, ages 11-18. Originally founded in 2001 by French parents seeking a Catholic

education for their sons, it is now completely under the direction of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter. The end of this institute is the formation of its students to be true Catholic gentleman; the means, an academic program faithful to the Gospel and to the perennial Tradition of the Church, along with a sound and balanced spiritual formation which underlies all that the students do.

(Spiritual conference at the FSSP school in Normandy, 2009)



This institute, to its great advantage, is constituted completely independent of any government contract or support, which allows it complete independence to form its students according to a true Catholic model.

The *Institut Croix-des-Vents St. Joseph* resides in the former major seminary of the diocese of Sées. The neo-classical buildings, built in the late 1930's, offer the boys a suitable environment for living and studies, though not seeking to ingratiate their senses by the excessive comforts of the modern

world. The grounds are likewise an ideal five hectares, which includes both a rugby pitch and football grounds. The institute is a less than 10 minute walk to the 12<sup>th</sup> century Gothic cathedral at the centre of the small town of Sées, whose bells are heard on the hour even within the school.

The formation of these young Catholic gentleman (human, intellectual, spiritual), at this institute is the duty of both clerical and lay professors. The



community of clerics of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter numbers six, four priests and two deacons. Their combination of priestly experience and youth gives the students proper Christian role-models. With six clerics members of the same Fraternity as part of the school staff, the *Institut Croix-des-Vents St. Joseph* is the largest apostolate of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter outside of its two international seminaries. From the moment of their rising in the morning, until the time of their going to sleep, the students are under the vigilant supervision of the clerics and staff.

The daily horarium of prayer, Mass attendance, lessons, private study, meals and mandatory recreation also aids the formation of the students, not only in their intellectual growth, but likewise in forming manly Christian habits. As the school days are sufficiently full, the students are able to leave the *Institut Croix-des-Vents St. Joseph* for their homes Friday afternoon, until the following Monday afternoon, fortnightly.

This facet of the academic year grants the students the benefit of remaining close to their families which is likewise a necessity for their healthy formation. Moreover, the time home saves on tuition costs. The scholastic program is organized also to give the students a two week holiday every six weeks, corresponding to the liturgical feast of All Saints, Christmas and Easter.

The tuition for a full pension student ranges from 4,200€ to 5,000€ annually with the possibility of discounts offered to multiple students from the same family.

As a North American who has witnessed the disastrous results of secular education upon young men particularly, I am well edified by the Catholic formation that the *Institut Croix-des-Vents St. Joseph* offers. This school not only gives its students what is true, but also those things which are necessary to counter the influences of an anti-Christian culture. I am charged this academic year with teaching Gregorian chant to the students and leading the liturgical choirs at the school. This task is more than just an exercise in introducing these young men to the Church's musical patrimony but an attempt to replace what is falsely beautiful, with true beauty.

Rev. Mr. Garrick Huang, FSSP

Access: Sées is located 90km (60 miles) south from Caen, with daily ferry crossings from Portsmouth; or 350km from Calais (218 miles). Also, Sées is less than 5 hours from London by train via Paris. Foreign students are welcome provided they can learn French and are happy to stay on some week-ends in French families if they cannot travel back home each time.

For more information regarding the *Institut Croix-des-Vents St. Joseph*, please contact:

Fr. Nicolas Bonechi, FSSP, Superior/Director  
 Institut Croix-des-Vents St. Joseph  
 55, rue d'Argentré, F-61500 Sées, France  
 Telephone : (+ 33) 02 33 28 43 80 ; [www.croixdesvents.com](http://www.croixdesvents.com)

## Education for boys at St Gregory's Academy, PA

**S**aint Gregory's Academy, founded in 1993, is a secondary boarding school for boys, grades 9 through 12, owned and operated by the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, located in Elmhurst, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. St. Gregory's offers a classical liberal arts education within the Catholic intellectual and spiritual tradition, by which, in cooperation with God's grace, the young are formed in the perennial wisdom and faith of the Church and receive a balanced education ordered towards their integral human development. Resident priests of the Fraternity offer Mass daily in the Extraordinary Form with the approval of the Bishop of Scranton. St. Gregory's is under the patronage of Pope St. Gregory the Great (540-604 AD), whose life reflected many of the ideals that direct the Academy's vision: fidelity to the Holy See, orthodoxy in doctrine, attachment to the traditional liturgy and sacred music, and the preservation of classical education.

The object of St. Gregory's Academy is taken from Pope Pius XI's *Divini Illius Magistri*: "The specific and immediate purpose of Christian education is to cooperate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian [...]. The true Christian, the product of Christian education, is simply the supernatural man: the man who feels, judges and acts always and consistently in accordance with right reason enlightened by the example and teaching of Jesus Christ." By emphasizing the

supernatural man the Holy Father did not mean to relegate the natural order to a position of unimportance. On the contrary, as he says, "the true Christian does not renounce the activities of this life; he does not stunt his natural faculties; but he develops and perfects them by coordinating them with the supernatural." To achieve this coordination, Christian education must be ordered to the whole person: it must consider his capacity for faith and participation in grace, for imaginative and emotional appreciation of reality and the arts, for a sense of history, as





where both the moral and intellectual virtues can grow, so that boys may leave St. Gregory's prepared to enter the world as men. Education addresses not the mind alone, but the whole man. Without the support of the moral virtues the intelligence and the imagination shrink or swell, warping the person, and often introducing errors and deviations. By contrast, in a well-formed character the constellation of moral and intellectual virtues bestows on the whole a beauty and splendour that is the mark of a certain perfection. St. Gregory's offers every student the opportunity to work on perfecting himself in virtue, while remembering that we live in an imperfect world, and that nothing is accomplished without God's grace.

well as for analytic and scientific habits of mind. But above all, schools must understand that their mission is not the mere purveyance of information, but rather the formation of character.

### Formation of Character

It often has been justly remarked that one of the defects of modern education is that although students are offered a large quantity of information taken from a wide range of subjects, they are seldom taught to think and to express their thoughts clearly. Presented with a new fact, they are unable to assimilate it or to refer it to what is already known, thereby giving their knowledge the unity of a coherent whole. Upon turning their consideration to a new subject they are unable to perform an elementary division of its parts or to distinguish a necessary demonstration from one that is merely probable, or detect an argument that is fallacious.

This defect in mental formation is attributable to the simple fact that such formation is not a serious concern of modern education. An unreasonable profusion of subjects weakens and distracts the intellect. The methods of defining, distinguishing, arguing, and expressing oneself clearly and richly have been left by the wayside, to be picked up by the student himself, if at all. But true education is more than the mere learning of subjects or the assimilation of facts. It is a cultivation of mind that, as the Venerable Henry Cardinal Newman says, "implies an action upon our mental nature, and the formation of a character."

Perhaps the greatest obstacle in restoring the traditional goals of education is the distorted and underdeveloped imagination so indicative of the modern mind. There is a tendency among good-willed Catholic educators, those who are concerned about correcting the intellectual errors of the day, to seek an intellectual development through the concentrated study of the more advanced areas of mathematics and science, including the supreme sciences of philosophy and theology. While this effort is laudable, it rarely is able to achieve the desired end without a prior concern for the imagination. We cannot correct a diseased imagination by the direct study of philosophy and theology, because anyone with a diseased imagination is incapable of studying philosophy or theology. We have all experienced the truth of this, if only because of those things to which we are involuntarily exposed. The more our minds are filled with imaginative abominations, the less we are able to contemplate God.

St. Gregory's provides a necessary retreat from the distractions of the world and many of its temptation in an environment

At St. Gregory's Academy our primary concern is the mental and moral formation of character so neglected to the detriment of both our nation and our Faith. Subjects we must certainly have, for the mind cannot develop in a vacuum, and the students need to gain information about the world. But those subjects are always viewed in a subordinate relation to the mental and moral development which is our true end. To attain this end our teaching is directed by traditional principles concerning the proper order of learning and the integration of knowledge.

### Teaching as a Species of Friendship

At St. Gregory's we place great importance on the teaching relationship as a species of friendship. Thus the teachers observe and willingly work with the strengths and weaknesses of the students in their care, and the students likewise, in charity and respect for their teachers, are moved to cooperate in learning. In our students, therefore, we wish for good hearts as much as good minds. The disciplinary approach at St. Gregory's is Salesian in spirit. Order and authority are necessary, but we hold with St. John Bosco that love and prevention are better motives to good behaviour than fear and punishment. "A master who is only seen in the master's chair," writes the St. John Bosco, "is just a master and nothing more. But if he goes into recreation with the boys he becomes their brother." By joining them in their moments of leisure, sharing their laughter and conversation, the bonds of friendship are formed that bind for years to come and will help all through teenage and after.

To receive an application package, obtain more information, or schedule a visit, please contact us:

St. Gregory's Academy, RR 8 Box 8214,

Moscow, PA 18444, U.S.A.

Telephone: + 1 (570) 842-8112

Website: <http://saintgregorysacademy.com>

(All three pictures: St Gregory's Academy for boys)





# Priestly spirituality: the office of governing

## St. John Mary Vianney the Pastor of Ars

The canonized saints are almost always known simply by their first name: St. Timothy, St. Matthew, and St. Agnes. For some saints a title is added to distinguish them from others bearing the same name: St. John the Evangelist and St. Stephen Protomartyr. It is perhaps significant that St. John Mary Vianney is more commonly known by his title than his name: the Curé d’Ars. A bit like his own patron, St. John the Baptist, he is named by his role almost as though he were completely defined by it. He is the Curé, the Pastor of the faithful of Ars, the shepherd of his flock.

Yet when one thinks of the Curé d’Ars it is most often as a preacher and confessor rather than in his direct duties as a pastor; his other pastoral activities; the directing of his parish. Each priest as an *alter Christus* participates in the offices of Christ as priest, prophet and king. All three of these offices are necessary for the priest, as an instrument of Christ, to lead the faithful entrusted to him to heaven. The last of the three offices is called by a number of different names. It is referred to as the *munus regendi* or office of



(Very Rev Fr Berg gives a conference to his priests in 2007)

governing, which underlines that a part of the Sacrament of Holy Orders is to establish the hierarchy and governance of the Church, the Pope at its head and the bishops and priests in union with him. In more recent documents of the Church this role of the priest is spoken of as that of “shepherding the flock” or as the “priest’s fundamental relationship to Jesus Christ, head and shepherd”.<sup>[1][2]</sup> In so far as the priest shares in the mission of Christ, he necessarily shares in His authority: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age”. The very idea of authority is not an easy one to accept or to exercise in our day and age. This can be seen in society at large, within the family and even within the Church. In the life of the Curé d’Ars we see that this aspect of the priesthood was even the most difficult for him. More than once he shrank before the prospect of the duties which shepherding his flock entailed and the responsibility for the souls in his care. The fact that St. John Mary Vianney more than once tried to flee his parish of Ars for a contemplative life is perhaps the

most surprising aspect in his life, but perhaps it also underlines this aspect of governing whose gravity is sometimes overlooked or underestimated. After all, this reaction can be seen in the *quo vadis* of St. Peter or the tears of St. Pius X in accepting his election to the papacy. The Cure d’Ars loved his duties as a priest, but frankly admitted that he found his pastoral duties a cross to be carried: “I do not regret being a priest and being able to offer Holy Mass, but I do not want to be a Pastor, this I regret having to do.”<sup>[3]</sup> On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Saint’s death, Mgr. Ancel, Auxiliary Bishop of Lyons, referred to this anxiousness on the part of the Curé for his duties as a pastor as a real mystery in his life which needs to be carefully considered:

“In considering the pastoral spirituality of the Curé d’Ars we encounter a particularly delicate point. We cannot completely comprehend it; we can only say that the fear which filled his soul when he thought about his pastoral responsibilities was, for him, an occasion of very profound spiritual purification, and this ought to be an opportunity for spiritual reflection for us [as priests] as well.”<sup>[4]</sup>

## Profound Understanding of Pastoral Duties

For St. John Mary Vianney his understanding of his pastoral duties was not simply something gathered from books of moral theology or on the priesthood. Certainly at his time he received a strong doctrinal formation regarding the duties of the priest towards his flock. He well understood that the duties of the priest were not simply to sanctify through the sacraments or to teach from the pulpit to the congregation as a body. He also needed to direct individual souls and at times state things which would provoke in them the same response that our Lord heard at times: “This saying is hard, and who can hear it?”<sup>[5]</sup> For him the former two duties were indeed a joy, but the third would always be a cross. “I only rest two times each day”, the Saint would say, “when I am at the altar and in the pulpit.”<sup>[6]</sup>

The profound understanding which he had of his pastoral duties was no doubt the fruit of his prayer and meditation. Certain expressions on the priesthood are characteristic of St. John Mary Vianney and show the great lights granted to him to comprehend the sacred priesthood. “If the priest were to really penetrate the greatness of his vocation, he would nearly die”<sup>[7]</sup>; “he holds the place of God, he is clothed with the powers of God.”<sup>[8]</sup>

Just as he viewed his priesthood as carrying out the sacramental acts of Christ and having the duty to teach only the teachings of Christ, he saw that his authority was the authority of Christ and not his own. This real and accurate understanding of the dignity of priesthood did not lead the Curé d’Ars to expect expression of it in titles, dress or acts of reverence towards him. It did not tempt him to see himself as having an authority which was to be lorded over others. Since it was Christ’s authority, it was the authority of one who came “not to be served but to serve.”<sup>[9]</sup>

But since it was the authority of Christ this carried a great and heavy duty to correct souls when necessary, to “be instant in season and out of season: reprove, entreat rebuke in all patience and doctrine.”<sup>[10]</sup> In our times some of the direction of the Holy Curé regarding dancing and other activities as occasions of sin might strike us as severe. But in his insistence it becomes clear how seriously he took his responsibility for



each individual soul, and given the gravity of his duty there could be no place for human respect. When he first arrived in Ars hardly a soul could bear to listen to his direction, but the Saint saw that in being seen as a fool he had another opportunity to imitate his Lord and Master.

The real key to his understanding of his pastoral duties, however, was to see all things first in reference to God. Sin was first and foremost an offense against God and therefore the greatest evil. Each individual soul had been created to be with God and only His grace could overcome the obstacles of the devil for the souls entrusted to him to arrive at this eternal life with God. God had chosen him as a priest to be an instrument, to be His chosen shepherd to direct each of these souls in his parish. When seen in these simple terms there could be no care for the opinions of others or natural comforts. There could be no place for human respect.[11] The authority which he exercised was not his own, he exercised it as an instrument of Christ in whose priesthood he participated.

### Self Immolation

The first consequence for the Curé d'Ars of his profound understanding of his pastoral duties was to offer himself like Christ for his parishioners. He saw from the start that his own natural capacities were insufficient to lead the flock entrusted to his care. He felt himself "incapable due to his ignorance and his little virtue to fulfil his duties as pastor." [12] If his direction were to be followed he saw that its force would not be found in his eloquence but rather in the grace of God which he begged through the penance he carried out. This is attested to in his words to a fellow pastor: "You have prayed, you have lamented, you have wept; but have you fasted, have you kept vigils, have you slept on the floor, have you disciplined yourself? Until you have done this, I do not believe that you have done everything." [13]

It is clear that St. John Mary Vianney was divinely inspired to carry out mortifications which exceeded human prudence. We can see through the torments of the devil that God allowed his servant to take on trials not given to most priests to suffer for his faithful. The degree of these mortifications does not, however, call into question the power of imitating Christ through mortification for the good of the souls that each priest serves. With such prayer and immolation as a foundation for his pastoral duties the priest will be greatly safeguarded from ever considering the fruits as being his own and will keep a profound understanding that his authority is one of service rather than one which is for his own benefit.

### A Living Example

These acts of prayer and mortification which went on unseen by his faithful were evident in their influence on the everyday life of St. John Mary Vianney. His faithful were led first by his example. Seeing the hours which he spent in prayer the faithful thought their Pastor seemed to live in the church itself rather than his rectory. They saw his hours spent in the confessional and could not imagine anything could be more important to him than the soul before him returning to God. Finally, they also saw that each soul was important to him. He did not seek this or that type of the faithful but simply what God gave to him in his parish. He favoured no one, but like the Good Shepherd sought always those who were lost.

His example is strongly attested to in a passing comment about his preaching while he was still the parochial vicar of Écully: "at that time he did not preach well yet in my opinion. Even so, when it was his turn to preach one would hurry to the church." [14] His very presence spoke volumes to the point that the example of the man speaking was even more convincing than the content.

How much souls benefit from living examples. The instruction of the priest can easily seem empty when it is not accompanied by a life which demonstrates conviction. In his letter opening this Year for Priests the Holy Father reminds us of this need for the interior conversion of priests and to have their lives as examples of holiness. The priestly scandals have done enormous damage, but he reminds us conversely what great good can be done by the strong example of the Church's pastors: "In today's world, as in the troubled times of the Curé of Ars, the lives and activity of priests need to be distinguished by a *determined witness to the Gospel*. As Pope Paul VI rightly noted, "modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses." [15]

### Care for His Parishioners

When we think of the pastoral care of the Curé d'Ars we think especially of his preaching from the pulpit. Here he never hesitated to speak the truth in its fullness and to expel error even if it at times made his auditors a bit uncomfortable. He saw this naturally as a right of the faithful to have the full truth preached: "Error must be combated, even for Christians. They have just as much right to the truth as others." [16] He used the following analogy: "The sun does not hide itself because it is afraid to inconvenience the birds of the night." [17] He even used the church as a permanent place of instruction.



(Picture: Cardinal Ratzinger preaching on Easter Sunday 1990 during EF Mass at FSSP motherhouse in Bavaria)

Over the side chapel in the church dedicated to his patron saint, John the Baptist, he had painted a phrase to remind all who entered of the dangers of both dancing and human respect: "His head was the price of a dance."

The confessional was the place where he dedicated the greatest part of his time. For the Curé d'Ars it was not a place simply to 'dispense' grace or absolve sins, but it was also a privileged place to direct souls. Here he instructed, encouraged and, when needed, rebuked like a true pastor. Here many attest to his mixture of severity and goodness as he saw fit for each soul. The true mark of the Saint was never to make a remark out of fatigue or to justify himself in any way. All was said in light of leading the soul closer to God. He was known to be demanding, but in no way mean towards his parishioners: "I have never been angry with one of my parishioners; I do not even think that I have even reproached them." [18] And parishioners echoed this testimony: "It happened more than once that he had to speak strongly, and I would even say almost severely. But he always avoided with care anything which would wound his parishioners. There was never anything personal in his instructions." [19]



In his letter to open the Year for Priests Pope Benedict XVI also stressed the sacrament of confession as being a particular area for each priest to re-evaluate his work. He admonishes priests to never be resigned to confessionals being empty. He encourages each one to consider it a privileged place for the direction of souls.

Finally, although these aspects of preaching and confession are the ones more often cited in the life of the Curé d’Ars, his pastoral work in the parish far exceeded these. He founded a school for girls; he built a school for boys and created ‘La Providence’. He also spent a great amount of time visiting his parishioners and had a particular care for the sick: “When he first came to Ars he frequently visited his parishioners, he spoke with them about their daily affairs. These good people were so pleased to have their Pastor take part in their work and interests. For the sick he gave them counsel, even in detail, for remedies.”[20]

It is easy to get a false picture of St. John Mary Vianney as only showing interest in the supernatural, as if he lacked human contact. These stories which are less often related show that he used all gifts both natural and supernatural to attract souls for Christ. He cared for the souls before him in every aspect. He did not approach them as a sort of mere ‘project for sanctification’ as if this had some sort of recipe. Like Christ, he loved them and cared for them in every aspect of their lives.

### Prayer for Priests

In the life of St. John Mary Vianney we can see that great need for a profound understanding of the responsibility of the priest in shepherding his flock. The seriousness with which the Curé took his duties of authority might lead us to think that he did so mainly out of fear, but here we need only remember his words about the priesthood: “If one fully understood the priesthood on earth, one would die not of fear but of love.”[21]

Given how difficult this pastoral duty was even for the Curé d’Ars we ought to be encouraged to pray for our pastors, the Holy Father first, bishops and all priests. In this time when false notions of freedom have caused authority to be so often misunderstood or questioned, these prayers are clearly even more important. During his homily for the ordination of bishops this last September Pope Benedict XVI asked in particular for three virtues in bishops and priests: goodness, prudence and fidelity.[22] The goodness and prudence with which St. John Mary Vianney directed souls is clear from the many stories of his life, but perhaps the most striking was his fidelity. Through

his many years as Pastor he was constant and tireless in shepherding his flock.

The words prayed by members of the Confraternity of St. Peter each day well summarize this need for fidelity in all priests which was found in the Curé d’Ars. May it serve as a reminder to us of the true source of this fidelity.

*O Lord Jesus, born to give testimony to the Truth, Thou who lovest unto the end those whom Thou hadst chosen, kindly hear our prayers for our pastors. Thou who knowest all things, knowest that they love Thee and can do all things in Thee who strengthen them. Sanctify them in Truth. Pour into them, we beseech Thee, the Spirit whom Thou didst give to Thy apostles, who would make them, in all things, like unto Thee.*

Very Rev. Fr John Berg, FSSP, Superior General;  
December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.



(Very Rev Fr Josef Bisig, FSSP kisses the Ring of the Fisherman during audience with Pope Benedict XVI, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009)

- [1] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* nn. 15 and 16.
- [2] Mt. 28:18-20.
- [3] Nodet, Bernard, *Le Sacerdoce, c’est l’amour du cœur de Jésus* in *Le curé d’Ars. Sa pensée – Son cœur*, 1966, p. 105.
- [4] Mgr. Ancel, *Conference for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of St. John Mary Vianney*, September 24, 1959.
- [5] Jn. 6:61.
- [6] Nodet, p. 109.
- [7] Nodet, p. 100.
- [8] Nodet, p. 100.
- [9] Mt. 20:28.
- [10] 2Tim. 4:2.
- [11] Cf. Trochu, Francis, *L’Ame du Curé d’Ars, Sévérité et Bonté*, pp. 61-79
- [12] Nodet, p. 105.
- [13] Mgr. Ancel
- [14] Nodet, p. 130.
- [15] Benedict XVI, *Letter Proclaiming a Year for Priests on the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Dies Natalis of the Curé of Ars*, June 16, 2009
- [16] Nodet, p. 127.
- [17] Nodet, p. 128.
- [18] Nodet, p. 213.
- [19] Nodet, p. 133.
- [20] Mgr. Ancel
- [21] Nodet, p. 100.
- [22] Benedict XVI, *The Church Is Not Our Church, but God’s Church*, Homily at Episcopal Ordinations September 12, 2009.



# A discreet convert, Johannes Vermeer:

Since 1978 James Tyldesley has been teaching at Central St. Martins (originally the Central School of Art and Design) which is now a constituent college of the University of the Arts, London. A Catholic painter himself and a father of five, he shares with us in Dowry his love for Vermeer.

It is well known that... not a lot is known about Johannes Vermeer. Art historians have always felt obstructed by the dearth of information about probably the second greatest Dutch painter after Rembrandt. At the very outset of the re-emergence of Vermeer's international prestige in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, he was gifted the epithet 'The Sphinx of Delft'. In spite of most of his paintings being invitations into the very core of domestic life, and having an unsurpassed effectiveness, he himself has always seemed unknown. We do not know with whom he was an apprentice painter, information which we have about scores of minor painters of that period. We have no utterances from him about painting, art in general, or indeed about anything at all.

It seems that our knowledge and understanding of the man must depend primarily on the work that he produced and on a few salient facts about his life. He was born in Delft in 1632 into what used to be called a mercantile family. At the age of 21 he married (5<sup>th</sup> of April 1653) a Catholic woman, Catharina Bolnes-Thins, a few months before being registered as a master with the Guild of St Luke, which entitled him to sell his own work and to teach.

He was a convert to Catholicism. He and his wife had 22 years of marriage and brought into the world 11 children. He died at the age of 43, probably from a stroke. When he died he and his immediate family were in dire financial straits; indeed throughout their married life Johannes and his wife and children depended very much on the wealth of his mother-in-law, herself one of an old and devout Catholic family. His wife's description of their financial situation and the effects of it upon her husband is in fact the fullest written information we have about him. We know nothing about the personal relations within their domestic situation but we do know that Maria Thins provided within her house not only accommodation for her daughter's large family but also large enough working space for Vermeer to use at least one spacious room as a setting for most of his well-known paintings. Living in that house may have also saved him from the tragic fate of Karel Fabritius and other artists domiciled in an area of workshops and studios in the near vicinity of the arsenal which blew up and devastated a sizeable part of the city on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 1654.

Vermeer's artistic output was small given a working life of approximately 22 years, a corpus of work comprising about 35 paintings; and gives us an approximate average of less than 2 paintings a year. By now it seems unlikely that there are many, if any, lost paintings. It could be observed that an output of less than two paintings per year is surely a guarantee of financial disaster, even for someone with far easier domestic commitments than those of Johannes. Even more curious is the fact that such a small body of work provided the painter with an artistic reputation and prestige at a time when so many of his contemporaries bore the greatest names in Dutch art. The local baker, Hendrick van Boyten, owned one of his smaller paintings and was given another two by Catharina shortly after Vermeer's death as payment for an enormous and presumably

long-standing bill, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 1676. Some twenty paintings were in the collection of a single owner, Pieter Claesz van Ruijven. He and his wife Maria were not only patrons, but had a close personal relationship with the painter. A Delft innkeeper by the name of Cornelisz de Helt was the owner of another of Vermeer's works, whilst the fabulous masterpiece, *The Art of Painting*, was still in the artist's possession at the time of his death. Its ownership was then legally transferred from his wife to her mother for obvious financial reasons. In short, it can be seen that Vermeer's work did not travel widely or find its way into the palaces of the super rich and powerful of his day.



(*Woman reading a letter*, by Vermeer)

Vermeer, in common with many of his contemporaries was also an art dealer and valuer and as such probably had numerous contacts and clients in most areas of the art world. Often enough artists worked together as valuers making judgements about the authenticity and value of all kinds of work passing through a very brisk and usually lucrative art market. Although the multi-faceted and sometimes interconnected endeavours in the science, art and philosophy of his times and the business of learning a living, are fascinating and have a special resonance for many of us today (and impinged substantially on Vermeer's life and work); it is altogether another aspect of his life which primarily interests us as Catholics. Although we first think of the beautiful and serene interiors as being the archetypal subject matter of his work, we must remember that Vermeer's first and last known paintings were religious in their subject. *Christ in the House of Martha and Mary* painted in 1654 clearly and beautifully illustrates



that well-known moment from the New Testament, a painting that can be understood and appreciated by any Christian. His last painting, *The Allegory of the Catholic Faith* is a work filled as its title suggests with all the profound iconography and significance of an artist putting all of his creative powers at the service of The Holy Church. It was very much a product of the relationship between himself and some very close neighbours who had been living but a few doors away from the family home for the last two years of his life, the Jesuits.

It would be, of course, impossible to fully explain the fact that Vermeer's work seems to be predominantly secular in its subject matter and yet begins with a very promising display of an ability to present religious ideas so effectively. Admittedly Vermeer's next two or three paintings after 'Christ in the House of Mary and Martha', do have a certain moral, if not religious character, and of course Vermeer's much older contemporary, Rembrandt, produced both religious and secular paintings throughout his long career. Although Dutch society in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was intensely religious, certainly by the standards of our own times, its art expressed its religious commitment in a variety of ways. Still Life painting was used effectively, albeit in a coded way, as a means of allegorising religious and connected moral ideas. Objects, flowers, plants, insects, books, maps and many others were understood to be symbols which could be used to construct sometimes very elaborate pictorial moral ideas. Beyond the obvious *memento mori* use of the skull, the scattered coins and jewellery, the extinguished candle etc, lay a world of much more refined and abstruse moral symbolism as often as not hidden within those beautiful and elegant flower paintings which we also much associate with the art of the Netherlands.

Most Dutch art of this period is replete with the underlying religious or moral message. Although Rembrandt was singular in his enormous output of overtly religious painting, and although there is obviously a massive difference between the predominantly religious spirit of Italy and the increasingly genre character of Dutch art, there seems to persist a strong desire to somehow manifest the Christian faith in art. The allegorical visual language used for this purpose was of course well understood by Vermeer, and his earlier genre paintings contain commonly understood moral allusions and inferences. But during the succession of his late paintings this language grows fainter and begins to be replaced by the unique spirit of his vision. The purely formal qualities of his painting, composition and arrangement, colour and light, seem to sufficiently create an almost religious spirit and atmosphere in his work. In that relatively small corpus of paintings, there develops somehow an atmosphere and a sense of rightness which illudes any attempt at precise explanation. Gerard Terboch, certainly an acquaintance and probably a friend of Vermeer's, produced some truly wonderful paintings of subjects very similar to those of Johannes and indeed until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was regarded as a superior artist. It is not

difficult to appreciate this judgement and yet for us today there lies a gulf between the achievements of the two men. It is something which we feel. Somehow the two small paintings of a single female figure in an interior to be seen in the National Gallery, 'Lady Standing at the Virginals' and 'Lady Seated at the Virginals', offer us a place of refuge and peace to be found in the work of few others in the entire history of painting. The exhibition of Vermeer's work held at the National Gallery in 2001 attracted huge numbers of people and seemed to satisfy, at least artistically, a very pressing appetite for that spirit of peaceful significance which his work contains.

As Christians, as Catholics, we should feel that the capture of this 'spirit of rightness' the sense of refuge and consolation to be found in the best of Vermeer's work, is no accident in relation to his personal religious commitment. As Christians we understand that our most profound desire to find spiritual and emotional peace in this life must remain unsatisfied, but we know that we will seek it anywhere and everywhere nevertheless. Many experience those rare and surprise feelings of 'rightness' so well expressed by C.S. Lewis in his book, *Surprised by Joy*. It is something which defies description.



(*The Art of Painting*, by Vermeer)

How can we explain the effects of Vermeer's tremendous masterpiece, *The Art of Painting*? Everything militates against its relevance, let alone its resonance to the modern mind and spirit. An artist in flamboyantly painterly attire sits making a painting of a young woman in rather contrived apparel; she wears a wreath of flowers on her head, holds a trumpet and a large book. They both inhabit a typical Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> century interior. And yet somehow this passing moment marooned unambiguously at a particular time and place in history, seems to contain a sense of timelessness and the spirit of the universal. Surely only a soul seeking such things could hope to find them. It is a piece of work, a relatively large piece by Vermeer's standards, which has an irrefutable presence.

Of course, we shall never know how many people have been moved and consoled by this piece of work but its power to provide consolation is justification enough for the art of painting.

Much has been made recently about Vermeer's use of the camera obscura, particularly well discussed and explored in Phillip Steadman's *Vermeer's Camera*, a very well-written, fascinating and convincing book. The camera obscura was used, as far as we know, initially more as an aid to cartography and in particular the production of panoramic views. The increase lens capabilities being developed pre-eminently in Holland at that time provided Vermeer with the opportunities which he made use of. Putting aside any consideration of the technical aspects of this matter, two points need to be made. Firstly, Vermeer's vision as an artist was helped and facilitated by his use of the device, he recognised its limitations and made allowances for them, he recognised the peculiarities of the optical information transmitted by the lens and used it - to poetical effect. The second point which needs to be made is



that great as is the visual truth of his paintings, we do not mistake them for colour photographs. The reason the paintings have such quality is because they are in the most profound sense, truer than photographs.

Coming to his last painting, *The Allegory of Faith*, we meet with his neighbours, the Jesuits. It is sometimes proposed that the work was indeed a Jesuit commission, but at the least it is generally accepted that Vermeer was, as it were, theologically advised by them. Italian books on iconography and their translations had long been used by artists as aids in devising and arranging religious subject matter in paintings and *The Allegory of Faith* uses many of the expected allusions for such a subject. At this point it might be convenient to quote Leonard J. Slatkes, *Vermeer and his Contemporaries*: “Recently some unusual elements of this complex allegory have been convincingly explained. The beautifully rendered glass ball suspended above the ecstatic personification of Faith and the ebony crucifix do not appear in Ripa and have long puzzled art scholars. Several Jesuit emblems, however, do use a similar combination of elements. The meaning of the magnificently rendered sphere in which the entire room is reflected is

convincingly explained by Willem Hesius’ 1636 *Sacred Emblems*: ‘A small globe encompasses endless skies/ And captures what it cannot hold. Our mind is large enough/ Though people think it small/ if only it believe in God, nothing broader than that mind; never can he who believes/ Appreciate the greatness of this mind./ The mind is larger than the largest sphere because it is human.’”

We have virtually no detailed information about Vermeer’s relations with the Jesuits though acceptable inferences could be drawn from his willingness to produce such an elaborate religious allegory. Obviously his conversion to Catholicism in the first place suggests a man seeking spiritual truth. Predictably, the majority of modern scholars have been dismayed by the subject matter of Vermeer’s last work and have not been slow to point out what they consider to be its faults. Unfortunately, the artist’s sudden death, in the space of a day and a half that is, has deprived us of what might have been a whole new stage of creativity. It could appear to be providentially disappointing until we remind ourselves of the unsurpassed work which he had already achieved.

## Prefects of two main Roman dicasteries to visit FSSP seminaries

In the course of the next four months, both FSSP seminaries will have the honour of welcoming a Cardinal Prefect of a Roman dicastery. On 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith William J. Cardinal Levada will attend the dedicace of the new chapel at Our Lady of Guadalupe international Seminary in Denton, NE, U.S.A. On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2010, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments Antonio Cardinal Cañizares Llovera will ordain FSSP priests at the FSSP motherhouse and European seminary in Wigratzbad. With the Secretariat of State, these two dicasteries are the most important ones in the administration of the Church. The fact their Prefects would travel long distances to visit our international seminaries in America and in Europe is an honour for our Fraternity and is also an eloquent sign of support to our service of formation of future priests for the Church.

Consecration of the new chapel: when was the last time you have heard of – let alone attended – the dedication of a seminary chapel? Nowadays, sadly, one rather hears of desecration of such chapels and of their being sold for secular purpose. Thank be to God and to your prayers for numerous priestly vocations, the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter is pleased to announce the Pontifical Consecration of its newly built chapel at Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary on Wednesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00am (CST). Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz will celebrate the Pontifical Consecration and Mass

according to the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite.

The five-hour ceremony will be held in the presence of a very special guest from the Vatican, William Cardinal Levada, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter is delighted to have the presence of one of the highest ranking officials in the Catholic Church. Cardinal Levada's presence is connected with his position as President of the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* established by Pope John Paul II and recently expanded by

Pope Benedict XVI to facilitate the full incorporation into the life of the Church of communities and individuals attached to the Extraordinary Form of the Roman rite.

Thanks to Thomas Gordon Smith, its architect, the seminary chapel reflects a contemporary rebirth in the rich tradition of classical Catholic architecture. Upon entering through its mahogany doors, the visitor will be immersed in the chapel's beauty and grandeur which include an elevated main altar, emphasized by a 31-foot marble canopy or “baldachino”, the chapel's seven side altars and liturgical choir stalls which seat 92 seminarians and priests. These are some of the integral qualities of this chapel which, on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, will be full of the people for which it was made.

Televised live on the *Eternal World Television Network* (EWTN): The Pontifical Consecration and Mass is open to all of the public. Any and all the faithful are cordially invited and are most

(Ceiling and columns in FSSP new seminary chapel, NE)





welcome to attend this joyful event and enjoy refreshments afterwards. Fr de Malleray, FSSP will represent the English & Welsh apostolate of the FSSP at this great ceremony and will forward the prayers of the British and Irish faithful for vocations. He will also bring a valuable set of gilded cruets with tray and lavabo bowl, plus a gilded ewer with basin for pontifical ablutions, both sets having been given by a diocesan parish priest in England for use at the new FSSP seminary chapel (hopefully Father's suitcase loaded with such precious items will not be confiscated at the customs). Due to the number of guests and limited space, rooms and television screens will be provided for those outside of the chapel who wish to participate.

The Pontifical Consecration and Mass will be televised live on the Eternal World Television Network (EWTN) at 11:00AM (EST). Watch the Pontifical Consecration and Mass Live online on [www.ewtn.com/audiovideo](http://www.ewtn.com/audiovideo). Founded by Mother Angelica, the EWTN Global Catholic Network, now in its 28<sup>th</sup> year, is available in more than 150 million television households in more than 140 countries and territories. EWTN is the largest religious media network in the world. For more information, please visit [www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com).

About *Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary*: Located in rural Denton, Nebraska, is the English-speaking international seminary for the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter. Men from all over the world, come to study for the priesthood in the seminary's seven-year program. A few represented countries include Australia, the French West Indies, England, Scotland and Nigeria. For more information, please go to [www.fsspolgs.org](http://www.fsspolgs.org).

*Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary* is also the centre of the world's largest provider of training resources and materials for priests who wish to learn the Extraordinary Form of the Roman

Rite. Since June of 2007, priests from over 70 dioceses in the United States have been personally trained. For more information, please go to [www.fssptraining.org](http://www.fssptraining.org).

The seminary building itself has a total of 100 seminary rooms and 13 priest suites. With construction on the seminary beginning in the fall of 1998, the Pontifical Consecration and Mass on March 3<sup>rd</sup> will crown the heart and jewel of the seminary, the chapel. See pictures from the phases of construction on <http://www.fsspolgs.org/chapel.html>.

Also, the General Council of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter has recently voted in favour of the construction of a further 30-room wing at the International Seminary of St Peter in Wigratzbad, Bavaria (each bedroom with ensuite shower room). Work will start in September 2010. When this new dormitory wing is completed, there will be room for nearly 100 resident seminarians and staff in Wigratzbad. In 2008, 46 seminarians were admitted in the First Year in our seminaries; in 2009, 40. We have ordained an average 12 priests per year since 2000.

Please pray for our 359 seminarians and priests (including eight Britons), and for the students and young professional who are currently discerning a possible vocation to the priesthood and have contacted us or may do so. If you would like to make your prayer for priestly vocations even more fruitful, please read (further below in this magazine) the *Charter* of the Confraternity of St Peter, our sodality whose 3,200 lay and clergy members worldwide pray for priestly vocations and ministry, and for each other as well. God bless you for your support.

## Charter of the Confraternity of St Peter



### The example of Our Lord.

*"Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the labourers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out labourers for his harvest." (Mt 9, 35-38)*

### What is the Confraternity of Saint Peter?

It is a society which gathers those who feel close to the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter and who wish to support its charism through prayers and sacrifices.

Thus the Confraternity contributes to the service of the Church, through supporting numerous vocations, the sanctification of priests and their pastoral endeavours.



### What does a member of the Confraternity of Saint Peter do?

Members commit themselves to

- every day: 1) pray one decade of the holy rosary for the sanctification of our priests and for our priestly vocations, 2) and recite the *Prayer* of the Confraternity;
- every year: 3) have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered once for these intentions.

[Thankfully these various intercessions will benefit priestly ministry and vocations also outside the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter.]



### What spiritual benefit do members receive from the Confraternity?

Their commitments place the members among our most faithful benefactors, and as such, among the particular recipients of our priests' and seminarians' daily prayers. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered each month for the members of the Confraternity in each area. Recollections and instructions in the faith are also foreseen.

### How does one become a member?

1. Fill in the enrolment form (for European resident) and send it back to us when filled out.
2. The Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter will send to you in return the certificate of membership. The commitments take effect with the reception of the certificate.
3. Members must be at least 14 years old.
4. Membership is purely spiritual and does not confer any rights or duties other than the spiritual support in prayer and charity in accord with the commitments described above.
5. By themselves the commitments do not bind under penalty of sin.
6. Membership and the commitments which follow it are tacitly renewed each year on the feast of the Chair of Saint Peter (February 22), unless expressly determined otherwise.

### How does one receive news about the Confraternity?

Our channels of information – bulletins and websites of the districts or of the houses – will provide news about the Confraternity.

**Prayer of the Confraternity of St Peter**, said daily by members.

*Following a decade of the Rosary:*

V. Remember, O Lord, Thy congregation.

R. Which Thou hast possessed from the beginning.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus, born to give testimony to the Truth, Thou who lovest unto the end those whom Thou hast chosen, kindly hear our prayers for our pastors.

Thou who knowest all things, knowest that they love Thee and can do all things in Thee who strengthens them.

Sanctify them in Truth. Pour into them, we beseech Thee, the Spirit whom Thou didst give to Thy apostles, who would make them, in all things, like unto Thee.

Receive the homage of love which they offer up to Thee, who hast graciously received the threefold confession of Peter.

And so that a pure oblation may everywhere be offered without ceasing unto the Most Holy Trinity, graciously enrich their number and keep them in Thy love, who art one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, to whom be glory and honour forever. Amen.

*Post decadem Rosarii dicant:*

V. Memento, Domine, congregationis tuæ.

R. Quam possedisti ab initio.

Oremus.

Domine Jesu, in testimonium Veritatis natus, qui usque in finem diligis quos elegeris, exaudi benigne preces nostras pro nostris pastoribus.

Tu qui omnia nosti, scis quia amant Te et omnia possunt in Te qui eos confortas : sanctifica eos in Veritate, infunde in eis, quæsumus, Spiritum quem Apostolis tuis dedisti, qui eos in omnibus Tui similes efficiat.

Accipe quod Tibi tribuunt testimonium amoris, qui triplici Petri confessioni benignus annuisti.

Et ut oblatio munda sine intermissione Sanctissimæ Trinitati ubique offeratur, novam eis propitius adjuuge prolem, et omnes jugiter in Tua conserva caritate, qui cum Patre et eodem Spiritu Sancto unus es Deus, cui gloria et honor in sæcula.

Amen.

Nihil obstat: Vic. Gen. FSSP, 05.II.2007; Imprimatur: Vic. Gen. Diœc. Laus. Gen. Frib., 28.II.2007

Three years after its foundation on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2007, the Confraternity of Saint Peter numbers over 3,200 souls, clergy and laity alike. No financial contribution is expected. Lay people young and old, sometimes isolated, and priests and seminarians as well, find it beneficial to join this growing traditional Catholic fellowship. The Holy See has granted plenary indulgences to the members.

Some members have asked if they could add further commitments. The superiors of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter will examine what could be prudently and fruitfully added for those who wish. Meanwhile, members may try and pray some of the Divine Office, in particular the canonical Hours of Prime and Compline. Daily meditation and frequent confession are also encouraged.

In general, members are welcome to partake in the various pastoral activities offered by the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter, such as regular Holy Masses, retreats, pilgrimages, doctrinal formation, Eucharistic adoration etc. The Priestly Fraternity of St Peter thanks the members for their support, including for their help with the practical organisation of our apostolates: maintenance of sacristy and sanctuary, publications, accounts, retreats and pilgrimages, etc.

(Picture: talk by General Chaplain of the Confraternity Fr de Malleray in Sydney, Australia, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008),





# Ongoing ministry

Towards Advent Festival of Catholic Culture: As in previous years, the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter took part in this event held in central London on 14<sup>th</sup> November last. A wide range of Catholic publishers, media, artists and charitable institutions were present. As far as we know, this is the only opportunity for diverse groups in the Catholic sphere to meet and explain what they do. In this perspective, it is strange that the event is not more supported than appears to be the case. The venue at Westminster Cathedral Hall is ideal and lectures on various important topics are delivered as well. His Grace Archbishop Vincent Nichols formerly opened the event and came to greet representatives at every booth, including the FSSP's. Blog: <http://towardsadvent.blogspot.com/>

Art for Souls at Tate Gallery: On Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December, we gathered at the Tate Britain Gallery for a tour delivered by Fr de Malleray, FSSP on the theme 'Mothers'. A presentation of various secular paintings was an occasion to reflect on the role and dignity of mothers in society.

Canonical visitation and visits to Bishops:



(Pictures : Fr Berg speaks with some faithful after Remembrance Sunday Mass at St William of York, Reading, 2009)

Our Superior General Very Rev. Fr John Berg, FSSP regularly visits our apostolates spread over 110 dioceses on four continents. A formal visitation is mandated by canon law to ensure that the apostolate is run satisfactorily as regards the communal life, the pastoral work, the finances etc. It is an important opportunity for the priests in our Fraternity to speak face to face with their own Ordinary – just like diocesan clergy would meet with their bishop. Thus Fr Berg spent four days with us in Reading from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009. He was the Celebrant on Remembrance Sunday at St William of York where he spoke with the faithful, before travelling to Flitwick again to address the faithful there. He and Fr de Malleray also met with Bishop Crispian Hollis (Portsmouth) and Bishop Peter Doyle (Northampton). In both case the meetings went well, both Bishops saying they were satisfied with the ministry of the FSSP in Reading and Flitwick respectively. Fr Berg also visited our house recently purchased in Reading and approved the plans.

The Catholic universe is focusing on the Venerable John Henry Cardinal Newman who is soon to be beatified, and the Reading Oratory School founded by him 150 years ago celebrated its anniversary with, among other festivities, a superb

performance of the *Dream of Gerontius*. The School Chaplain Mgr Antony Conlon kindly invited Fr de Malleray to the event on 15<sup>th</sup> November. This oratorio brings together two Catholic geniuses, John Henry Newman who composed the poem and Edward Elgar who put it to music. Deeply theological, the *Dream of Gerontius* is an inspirational meditation on the itinerary of a soul from death to purgatory, guided by its guardian angel.

Before Christmas, Fr de Malleray attended the Penitential service organised in the West Reading pastoral area at English Martyrs. Helping many souls to prepare for the Nativity of the Saviour was a deep grace. Confessions were followed with lunch for clergy at the presbytery. This is a happy opportunity to meet with other clergy.

Our request for a new car in the autumn edition of *Dowry* was most generously answered with two cars sponsored. Fr de Malleray now drives a Peugeot 207 (second hand with only 6,000 miles on purchase) and Fr Leworthy enjoys his new Renault *Clio*. Thank you so much.

In November Bishop Peter Doyle of Northampton invited Fr de Malleray and Fr Leworthy for lunch at Bishop's House in Northampton. We were very cordially entertained by His Lordship and shown the interesting architecture of the House as well as its various beautiful paintings.

Before Christmas, Fr de Malleray spent a week at the FSSP's European seminary in Wigratzbad to lecture on art for our English-speaking deacons. The immediate Bavarian vicinity provided ample illustration of Catholic art, since the seminary is surrounded with religious and secular Baroque architecture.

Fr Leworthy travels regularly to Ireland, offering Holy Mass in Ballymany (co. Kildare) one Sunday a month. Contacts are developing with Irish clergy and laity.

In Douai Abbey, Berks., during nearly four days, 23 people attended the Advent retreat preached by Fr de Malleray on 'The Holy Angels – who they are and what they do'. Such retreats require some organisation but it is truly encouraging to see the good response given by the faithful. There is nothing more beneficial to our Catholic faith than to attend a retreat one a year.





Priests do not only preach retreats, but like every Catholic soul they attend some, as indeed they are required to do by Canon law. One after another, Fr de Malleray and Fr Leworthy thus spent 5 days in places of retreat in December. They asked for the prayers of the faithful for the spiritual benefit of these Exercises and in return assured them of their own prayers for them during this yearly occasion of a deeper availability to prayer and contemplation.

Work has started at our new house in early January 2010. Some weeks before, the faithful had been invited to visit the place. They will be able to appreciate the amount of work done, when the whole project is completed. The house was blessed to ask for God's protection upon the workers.

Fr Leworthy regularly visits families to prepare children for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Although it may imply travelling some distance, since not all our faithful are local, it is also an opportunity to hear confessions and get to know the families better.

In November, Fr de Malleray was invited in East Anglia to offer an anniversary Mass of Requiem for the late Mrs Micheline Barrère at West Stow Hall. It was the last Mass offered in the house chapel before the property was to be sold. Professor Jean-Bertrand Barrère had bought it several decades ago when a Chair of French Literature was created for him at Cambridge. He and his wife Micheline had been generous supporters of the Traditional movement. May they rest in peace.

On his way to West Stow Hall Fr de Malleray visited a long time friend of the Fraternity of St Peter in Bury-St-Edmunds. Incidentally, this city is known to traditional French readers as being the last parish served by the late Fr Bryan Houghton before he left for France in voluntary exile in the Ardèche. His autobiographical books depicting his conversion from Anglicanism and his priestly attachment to the Mass of ages have been published in French and are still very much worth reading.

FSSP confreres visiting: in November our British deacon Rev Mr Simon Harkins came for a short trip to show London to two other FSSP American deacons. They were kindly welcomed by Fr Christopher Basden at St Bede's parish, Clapham Park (another well-known 'haven for clergy'). Many thanks to Fr Basden for his hospitality at St Bede's and for his friendly support over the years. In January Fr Louis Baudon de Mony, FSSP came to do a baptism in London. Snow prevented him from travelling to Reading and present his ministry in our mission in Columbia: hopefully another occasion will occur.

Our first altar servers' excursion had been efficiently organised by Fr Leworthy before Christmas. Sadly the heavy snowfall

made driving too risky and the trip was cancelled. Hopefully this is only postponed.

In January Fr de Malleray and Fr Leworthy were invited to attend a meeting held at the Anglican parish of Holy Trinity in Reading. The Reverend Elliott wished to discuss with his parishioners the Holy Father's offer presented in his apostolic constitution *Anglicanorum Cœtibus* (4<sup>th</sup> November 2009). The congregation was interested to hear how the Fraternity of St Peter was able to serve in full communion while retaining its particular charisma and with proportionate financial support from the faithful as far as they are able. Special prayers will be offered on the Feast of the Chair of St Peter, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, for a fruitful ecumenical outcome, as encouraged by Pope Benedict XVI: "I am convinced that, if given a warm and open-hearted welcome, such groups will be a blessing for the entire Church" (cf *Address* to the Bishops of England and Wales, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010).

In November, together with clergy from other parishes, Fr de Malleray took part in the blessing of graves at Reading cemetery, an event attended by many faithful. Praying for the dead is a useful and meritorious act of charity, which also strengthens our faith.

Fr Leworthy is a regular Celebrant of Holy Masses organised with the Schola Abelis between Oxford and Reading in beautiful churches or private chapels such as St Anthony of Padua, Mappledurham House, Our Lady and St Ann of Cavisham and Milton Manor.

In January, in accordance with diocesan guidelines, adults collaborating in the FSSP ministry in Reading attended a Child Protection training course, also with Fr de Malleray and Fr Leworthy. The session was instructive and, despite the gravity of the topic, it was also an opportunity to meet in a convivial atmosphere with catechists and other volunteers

from neighbouring parishes.

After nine and a half years as Parish Priest at St James-St William of York, Fr Dominic Golding has been appointed to Basingstoke. We are grateful for his kind welcome when our own Extraordinary Form Community arrived in his parish. We prayed for his future ministry. With hundreds of parishioners, Fr de Malleray and Fr Leworthy attended his farewell party at St Joseph Convent School, a successful and moving event. Canon John O'Shea has now taken over as our new Parish Priest. He is a priest of great experience, having recently celebrated his 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination.

In February, Fr Leworthy attended the session of ongoing formation for clergy in the Portsmouth diocese. The theme was 'St Thérèse of Lisieux'.



(Fr de Malleray at West Stow Hall, East Anglia, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009)



## Forthcoming events

In preparation for the Holy Father's visit in Great Britain in September this year, why not enrol in a rota of prayer at home to the Sacred Heart? To learn more about this reliable initiative from a member of the English faithful, please visit [www.sacredheartnightlydevotion.com/](http://www.sacredheartnightlydevotion.com/).

February 8-12, 2010: please pray for our group of 9 priests from England on pilgrimage to Lyons and Ars in the perspective of the Year for Priests. We will be staying at the FSSP St Padre Pio House near Lyons.

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010: please pray for British seminarian Rev Matthew M. who will be ordained a Subdeacon in Lincoln, NE, together with three other seminarians, including Australian seminarian Mr Damonn S. who spent some time on apostolate in Reading. Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz of Lincoln will confer the Order.

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2010: please pray for four other seminarians to be ordained Subdeacons in Wigratzbad, by Bishop Vitus Huonder of Chur. Among them will be Mr Marek G. who has served on apostolate in England (<http://www.stcatherinestrust.org/>).

Third anniversary of the founding of the Confraternity of St Peter (now 3,200 members worldwide and 120 in the UK) on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Feast of the Chair of St Peter. Members are requested to pray for the Confraternity on that day in particular and benefit from the plenary indulgence granted them by the Holy See on that day (cf <http://www.fssp.org/en/confratindulg.htm>).

**Lenten week-end of recollection: 5-7 March 2010** on 'The Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Hell and Heaven', by Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP. Holy Mass in the EF on Friday afternoon, Saturday and Sunday.

All Saints Conference Centre, Shenley Lane, London Colney, Herts, AL2 1AF.

Website: [www.allsaintspc.org.uk](http://www.allsaintspc.org.uk).

Starts on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at 5pm (later arrival possible) – ends on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at 4pm.

Price: £126 everything included (for: £116 as Centre's fees + £10 as FSSP fees).

Please bring your own towel and soap.

**Booking:** please send to us a £15 deposit cheque made payable to FSSP ENGLAND. Please kindly book *now*.

Easter Triduum: the definitive schedule is not ready at the time of printing this magazine, but it is assumed that we will have the full liturgy as we did last year. New Parish Priest Canon O'Shea told Fr de Malleray that although the work planned earlier in the kitchen and lavatories of St William of York had to be postponed due to the heavy snowfall in January, he would bear in mind our liturgical needs when rescheduling the work. Please check our website for a regular update on Mass times: <http://www.fssp.org.uk/england/pages/mass-times.php>.

Les rencontres Sacra Doctrina à Londres et périphérie pour les francophones se poursuivent chaque mois. C'est une occasion

rare en Angleterre offerte aux adultes d'approfondir leur foi dans un cadre convivial et en français. Après une prière, l'abbé de Malleray donne une conférence doctrinale d'une heure, puis répond aux questions éventuelles. Les échanges continuent ensuite autour d'un dessert. N'hésitez pas à nous contacter si vous êtes intéressé. Gratuit, ouvert à tous.



(Doctrinal talk in London by Fr de Malleray, December 2009)

We are glad to advertise the two following (non-FSSP) events: Pro-life witness in Oxford: Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February, Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Venue: The entrance to the John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Oxford. We stand just in front of St Anthony of Padua Church (car park available). Refreshments available afterwards. Organiser: Amanda Lewin – 01869 600638.

2010 Family Retreat - Easter Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April to Low Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2010. The Oratory School, Berks., outside Reading (RG8 0PJ). Organiser: <http://www.stcatherinestrust.org/>.

Art for Souls tour at the National Gallery in London, Trafalgar Square on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Fr de Malleray will make a presentation based on several paintings as an illustration of the theme: 'The saving Blood of Christ'. Duration: 1 hour. Open to all. Free entrance in the gallery. Meet in the entrance hall of the Sainsbury Wing at 1.45pm for start at 2pm.

Priestly ordination of several FSSP deacons, including British deacon Rev Mr Simon Harkins, in Lincoln cathedral, NE,

(Conference by Fr de Malleray during retreat at Douai Abbey, Berks. – Advent 2009)





U.S.A. on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2010, by His Excellency Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz, Bishop of Lincoln. Fr Harkins will offer his First Mass in Great Britain in early June 2010 (date and location to be specified later on).

Following the success of a British delegation to the ordination of Fr William Barker in Wigratzbad last year, come and join the British group travelling to the FSSP motherhouse in Bavaria for priestly ordinations by Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments His Eminence Antonio Cardinal Cañizares Llovera on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2010. A rough estimate of cost for 2 days and 2 nights is £200/person. This includes transportation with direct flight from London, and bed & breakfast accommodation. Departure will be on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, return on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2010. Follow in the footsteps of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger who, on Easter Sunday 1990, visited the motherhouse and first international seminary of the FSSP and offered Holy Mass. For all information, please contact Mr Mark Miles, again obligingly coordinating the group (markadm@catholic.org – tel.: 07739915213).

Summer silent retreat for all: 6-9 July 2010: on 'The Holy Eucharist: God with us'. Full board accommodation: £110 single room and £90 shared room (consisting of £95 or £75 for Douai Abbey expenses + £15 for FSSP expenses). Retreat Master: Fr Simon Leworthy, FSSP. Starts 2pm, ends 11am. Holy Mass in the EF each of the 4 days. Location: Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 5TQ, England - <http://www.douaiabbey.org.uk/>. Booking: please send a £15 deposit cheque made payable to FSSP ENGLAND to: FSSP Summer retreat, 179 Elgar Road, Reading, Berks., RG2 0DH. Inquiries: slwthy@hotmail.com.

Also at Douai Abbey: Young Catholic adults' week-end on 10, 11 & 12 September 2010. All students, young professionals are welcome for two days of prayer, social gatherings, doctrinal formation and beautiful liturgies. Contact Damian Barker at [juventutemcatholicam@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:juventutemcatholicam@yahoo.co.uk). We were up to 30 young adults last year and expect you to come along with new friends. Read more and see pictures on <http://www.youngcatholicadults.co.uk/>.

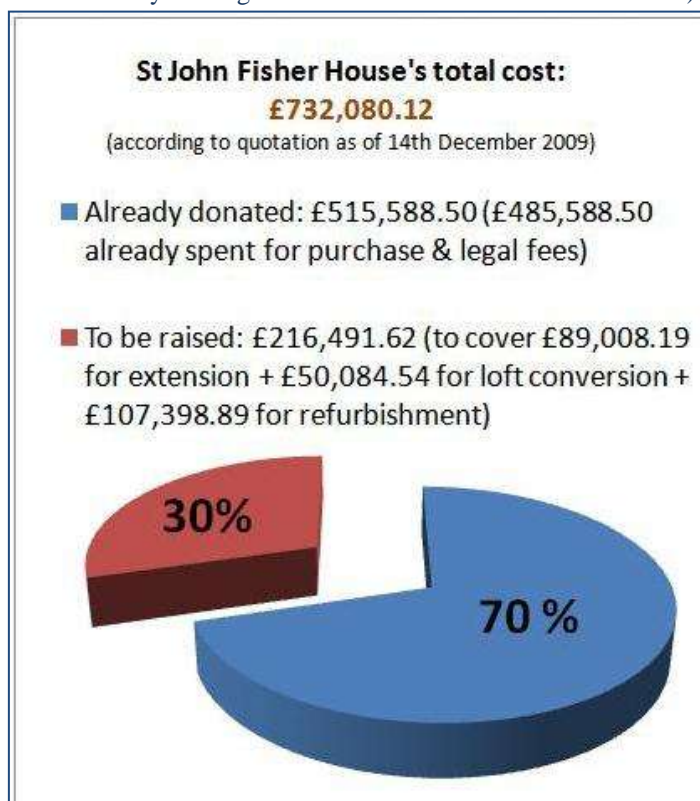
## Work has started at the new FSSP house in Reading

In early January there seemed to be only bricks and slates left after a busy team of workers had stripped the building of almost all its non structural features. Thanks to their zeal and to the expertise of our contractor, our Edwardian house is now undergoing appropriate refurbishment to meet our needs. However, we have revised our plans to better comply with some of our new neighbours' expectations that the familial and residential nature of the area should be preserved. Some expressions we had used in the last edition of *Dowry*, such as 'pastoral centre' and 'conference room' may have given the impression that we intended to run this new house as a busy retreat centre with frequent groups visiting, professional catering and minibuses possibly blocking the street every other day. Those who know the relatively small number of people involved in our activities (equivalent to a single parish stretched nationwide) compared with any diocesan institutions will understand that our 'Haven for Priests' is intended to be a sizeable presbytery rather than a pastoral complex, in accordance with the scale of our ministry and with our identity.

Even with fewer 'guest cells' than previously envisaged, we would like this house to be a family house where those who share the

spirituality of our Fraternity may feel welcome. St William of York (the nearby church where we serve daily), or diocesan pastoral centres designed for dozens of retreatants remain the adequate locations for our regular ministry. We plan to have three clergy bedrooms with ensuite and study, two guest rooms, an office, and community rooms (including a dining room, a library and an oratory). We will also have a 'Sacristy-Laundry', which does not mean that we will hire any laundry staff, since washing sacred linens is a clerical function (starting with Subdiaconal Ordination) according to our tradition.

Indeed, we pray that a third cleric may reside with us permanently, God willing, when the conditions are met. He could be one of these seminarians who come and help us for certain liturgical festivals. Being three instead of two would enable us to fulfil better the norms of our communal life with prayer in common as well as meals and work according to our vocation as members of a 'Fraternity' - cf *Directory of Common Life* §10-11: "In so far as they are places of ordinary residence, houses of the Fraternity must be adapted to the multiple needs of our common life [...]. It is particularly important that they are of a size adequate for the exercise of our mode of life, and, more concretely, that they contain areas for





*Campaign.* Nothing could have been undertaken without it. Since we do not have a wide fundraising network, large donations are vital for us; but comparatively smaller ones are also precious to us, since they are more frequent and predictable, thus enabling us to plan our activities and expenses securely.

While so many convents, seminaries, churches and presbyteries are being sold for secular purpose nowadays – what a statement of supernatural hope to do just the opposite and help us turn a secular building into a ‘Haven for Priests’ – and not only for priests but also for all the faithful who will want to visit us. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered at your

prayer (oratories), as well as for relaxation and for fraternal interchange. Wherever possible, parts of our houses should be reserved for the use of the community and for private rooms, inaccessible to those outside the community.” The same *Directory* begins with this meaningful quote from Pope St Pius X: “The annals of the Church show that at times when priests generally lived in a form of common life, this association produced many good results” (cf. St. Pius X, *Haerent Animo, Exhortatio ad clerum*, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1908).

We hope to move in by mid April, when hopefully we will have been granted planning permission to start building the extension and undertaking the loft conversion, which should take another three months. Please pray that this project may be completed in due course to the satisfaction of all.



intentions at least one Thursday per month, followed with a Holy Hour of prayer for priestly vocations and ministry.

**Bequest:** As well as sending us a donation, please kindly consider making a bequest to ‘FSSP England’. Please contact us for any information you need for donating and for putting our registered charity (Number: **1129964** –official name: **Fraternitas Sacerdotalis Sancti Petri Limited**) in your will. Why should you make a Will at all? Making a Will is the only way you can be sure that your property and belongings go exactly where you want them to go. If you have no surviving relatives and die without a Will, your estate would pass to the

We thank you for your generous support in the *Haven for Priests*



The 'FSSP ENGLAND' account details are:  
**Bank: Lloyds TSB Bank plc**  
**Branch: Southsea, Palmerston Road**  
**Sort code: 30-93-04**

**Account number: 01787153**

**Account name: FSSP England**

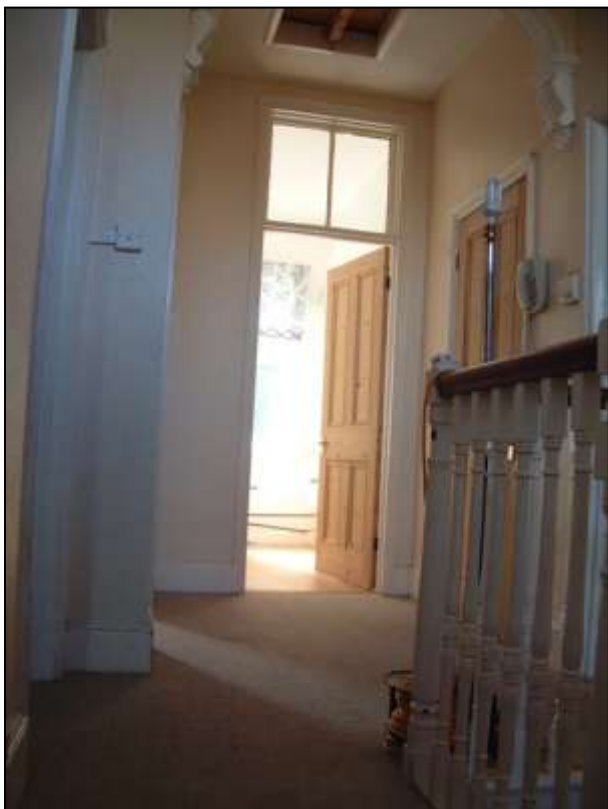
Cheques made payable to: FSSP ENGLAND (to be posted to: Priestly Fraternity of St Peter, 179 Elgar Road, RG2 0DH, Reading, England).

Funding from outside the UK also possible: please contact us.

Please note that all your donations will be used for the development of our ministry in England and Wales exclusively. We thank wholeheartedly all our benefactors for their trust in our mission. Since we are not financially supported by the dioceses at this stage, your donations and



state. Because 'FSSP England' is a registered charity, any legacy to 'FSSP England' will be exempt from Inheritance Tax and will reduce the overall tax liability of your estate. Please note that home-made wills, though they may be valid, can lead to court action and result in the frustration of the testator's intentions. You should seek legal advice and ensure that the appropriate wording is incorporated into your Will. Alternatively, please contact on our behalf Rev Mr Stephen Morgan, also a Trustee of 'FSSP England': Diocesan Office, St Edmund's House, Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth PO1 3QA, England. Telephone: 023 9282 5430.





your prayer are vital for us. May the good God reward you already in this life and surely in the next!  
With our prayers for a fruitful time of Lent,

Rev Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP –



and Rev Fr Simon Leworthy, FSSP.

**Contact:**

Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter  
179 Elgar Rd, Reading,  
Berkshire, RG2 0DH,  
England

Telephone: 0118 987 5819

Email: malleray@fssp.org;  
slwthy@hotmail.com

Internet : [www.fssp.co.uk](http://www.fssp.co.uk)



(Pictures: Statue of St Peter donated by benefactors;  
Holy Mass at St William of York, Reading;  
Fr de Malleray writes the list of benefactors on a scroll  
later put in the altar crucifix at St William of York)