

“O Blessed
Virgin Mary,
Mother of God
and our most
gentle Queen
and Mother,
look down in
mercy upon
England thy
Dowry.”

Dowry

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*Picture: St Peter's Summer
Camp for Boys in the Peak
District last August,
organised and led by FSSP
priests and seminarians.*

Editorial: Woodcarving As Worship



Genuine beauty is the splendour of the truth. The more directly a truth refers to God, the more splendid its illustration must be. This applies supremely to the sacred liturgy, combining the best of the fine arts and artisanship—architecture, music, poetry, vestments, goldware and silverware, glazier work, choreography, and, last but not least, paintings and sculptures. Since the holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the summit of the liturgy, Holy Church has enshrined with worshipful splendour the great mystery of her Spouse's own Sacrifice unbloodily re-enacted on her altars.

The loss of a landmark of liturgical beauty shocked the world when the French cathedral of Notre-Dame went up in flames during Holy Week 2019 in Paris. On watching the breaking news that fateful afternoon, millions who may not call themselves Catholics nor even believers of any kind yet mourned as orphans the most popular of sacred buildings in the world. Thankfully the walls and stained-glass windows were saved, as were most paintings and sculptures made in the ages of faith. The cathedral is due to reopen on the feast of the Immaculate Conception this year.

On a more modest scale in rural Mayenne (near Solesmes in western France) a religious community using the traditional Dominican rite has done more than restore a sacred artefact from the past. Rather, they have commissioned a brand new altarpiece that worshippers would assume dates back from medieval

times. Instead, the Marian triptych in the Dominican priory of Chémeré-le-Roi was created from scratch in a remote valley of South Tyrol. Master carver Remy Insam was already sixty-five when he hesitantly accepted the commission. After decades spent in arduous labours in his workshop at Sankt-Ulrich village near the Austrian border of northern Italy, the artisan was entitled to well-earned rest. Even though woodcarving is to Master Insam

*“woodcarving is
to Master Insam
much more than a job—
a calling rather to evangelise”*

much more than a job—a calling rather to evangelise through sacred beauty, the scale of the proposed Dominican altar was daunting.

Standing nine meters high by three meters wide, the altarpiece was to depict all the mysteries of the holy Rosary, including dozens of statues large and small, fitted in a monumental architecture of fretwork and soaring pinnacles, arches, and niches, all hinged, gilded, and painted by hand. Master Insam would need to rely on the combined skills of an architect, of a draftsman, and a cabinet maker, of a carpenter, of a gilder and painter, no less than of a woodcarver. In fact, nearly the

entire village of Sankt-Ulrich would need to become involved.

Thankfully, that had already occurred when creating also from scratch the altarpiece for the newly built Cathedral of Our Lady of Fatima in Karaganda, Kazakhstan, following a commission by Bishop Athanasius Schneider. Master Insam accepted the commission for the Dominican Priory, then, which he envisaged as the culmination of his career.

Father Jordan-Mary, FSVF explains: “The technique of gilding, Remy Insam’s main speciality, is *Branntweinvergoldung*, or tempera gilding, which allows the best quality. It requires first applying a coat of chalk, then three successive coats of Bologna red loam, mixed with rotten egg white, then sprinkled with brandy, which must be allowed to dry for a few minutes before applying the gold leaf.”

The new altar was consecrated a year ago on 30th September 2023 (cf. vincentferrer.org). It is a striking example of the revival of sacred architecture led by traditional communities and conservative prelates across the world. May they be rewarded by God for their witness to the truth offered to the eyes of worshippers as an anticipation of our encounter with Christ and Our Lady in heaven, please God.

24th September 2024,
Our Lady of
Walsingham.

*Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP
Superior of the FSSP England
Apostolate* □



A Queen For All Seasons

Aidan Harvey-Craig praises Queen Catherine of Aragon's courageous witness to the inviolability of marriage and to the Catholic faith as a timely example for our times of matrimonial breakdown and religious relativism.

Imagine being in a foreign country, abandoned by your spouse, stripped of your identity, your life in clear and present danger. And, at the same time, you hold the fate of English Catholicism in your hands. A decision that you alone can make might dictate whether England remains a Catholic country, or spends the next five hundred years with its spiritual heart ripped out. This is the position in which Catherine of Aragon found herself in the 1530s.

The decision was whether or not to accept Henry VIII's diktat that their marriage of over twenty years had been unlawful in the eyes of God. Accepting this meant that he would treat her well, sending her quietly off to a nunnery with as many comforts as she required. It would mean that she would be allowed to see her beloved daughter Mary who had been so cruelly kept from her. It would mean that Henry would no longer need to fight the Pope, and England could continue with the Catholic faith that the English people loved so deeply.

Rejecting Henry meant the opposite: never knowing if she would ever see her daughter again, or be moved again to another part of the country, or lose another of her dwindling number of beloved and loyal friends. It would mean never knowing if the rumours of her murder were well-founded and that this day might be her last. But most importantly to

Catherine, it meant opening the door to heresy in England and putting the souls of her husband and his subjects at risk.

To accept was so much easier. All she had to do was give up on the truth – admit that she had been nothing but Henry's concubine, and that her daughter was a bastard.

But the truth did matter to Catherine. That is why she had pushed so hard for the matter of the validity of the marriage to be decided by the Pope himself. Somewhat too late, she was vindicated by Rome and Henry's protestation that the marriage was invalid was utterly rejected by the Church.

What Henry had failed to take into account all along was that Catherine was no ordinary woman. She was, after all, the daughter of Isabel of Castille, herself a formidable monarch. Isabel took the crown of Castille on the death of her half-brother Enrique the Impotent. As the name suggests, he had been a weak monarch, leaving a country divided by factions and uncertainty.

Isabel presided over Enrique's funeral at San Martin's Church in Segovia. But the moment the funeral was finished, she stepped outside, dropped her black mourning cloak and revealed her brightly coloured and richly decorated garments beneath. The statement was clear – she was the queen. Having been

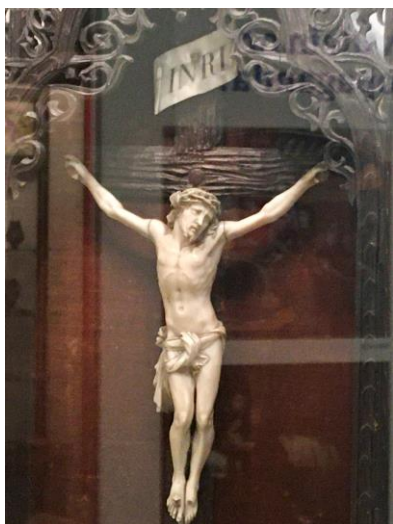
formally declared as such, she then processed through the town preceded by her *maestresala* who was carrying a bare sword by the tip, with the handle up. This was a Spanish custom, indicating to those present that the person coming towards them was someone who had the power to cut down the guilty with royal authority.

So audacious was this confident, dramatic statement of intent that even Isabel's husband Ferdinand, away at the time dealing with his affairs in Aragon, was shocked. He is reported as saying, 'I have never heard of a queen who usurped this masculine attribute.' Queen Isabel was not someone to be underestimated and the daughter who resembled her most was her youngest: Catherine.

Catherine was, indeed, her mother's daughter. As Queen Regent, while Henry was fighting in France, Catherine oversaw the defeat of the Scottish at the Battle of Flodden Field. Indeed, recently uncovered documents show that she was deeply involved in directing events leading up to this famous victory. For example, it was Catherine who ordered one thousand five-hundred sets of *almain rivets* – a light armour which covered the upper body and thighs – to be loaded into barrels and sent north for the army she was mustering as a second line of defence should the English army suffer defeat at Flodden.

*Portrait by Juan de Flandes thought to be
of 11-year-old Catherine. c. 1496,
Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid.
Wikipedia Public Domain*





Crucifix said to have belonged to Queen Catherine, left in Buckingham after her stay at Castle House in 1513 (picture for Dowry by S. Harvey-Craig). Stained-glass window in the chapel at Buckden Towers, the last-but-one place of internment of Queen Catherine (picture Malleray).

Catherine seems to have gathered this reserve force in Buckingham, and it was here that she received news of the great English victory at Flodden Field. Catherine was staying in Castle House, just a few minutes' walk from where I write this. She arrived on 14 September 1513 as an honoured guest of the Fowler family. It may even have been to this house that the Earl of Surrey sent part of the defeated Scottish king's coat of armour as a trophy and evidence of the victory.

However, Catherine was no war monger. Later on, when Henry was pressing her for a divorce, he was keenly aware that her nephew was the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. He was also Archduke of Austria, Lord of the Netherlands, Duke of Burgundy and King of Spain. With such vast power, Henry did not want to provoke retaliation for his mistreatment of his Spanish wife, who was also Charles' Aunt as his mother was one of Catherine's elder sisters. With such a connection

Catherine could have pushed for Charles to use force and at least threaten war in the face of her humiliation by Henry. Instead, she consistently moved in the other direction, often refuting the calls for war from her devoted Spanish friends and advisors. She displayed an astonishingly noble loyalty to her errant husband and her adopted country, borne of her deep Catholic faith.

It was not just in outward displays of strength that Catherine showed herself to be like her mother. Isabel taught herself Latin as an adult and ensured that all of her daughters learned the language to the extent that they could converse in it. So well educated was Catherine that Erasmus later stated, 'The Queen is well instructed – not merely in comparison with her own sex, and is no less respected for her piety than her erudition.' This is clearly why Henry VII, her future father-in-law, wishing to raise Catherine's spirits when she was feeling homesick on her first arrival in England, invited her to the new library he had built at Richmond.

However, of all the traits that Catherine inherited from her mother, the deepest one was surely her devotion to the Catholic faith. Isabel is known as the 'Catholic queen' and there has long been a call for her canonisation. She was officially given the title 'Servant of God' in March 1974 due not least to her constant devotion to the poor and her evangelisation of America. Isabel was a strong and compassionate queen, wife and mother because she allowed herself to be guided by her faith.

So it is little surprise that Catherine should display the same devotion.

Her journey to England was delayed significantly by her insistence on visiting Santiago de Compostela en route. And she was almost certainly the last queen to undergo a pilgrimage to the shrine of our Lady of Walsingham in thanks for the victory of Flodden Field. But perhaps most significantly, it was her devotion to her faith that meant she would rather die a martyr than betray the sacrament of marriage.

There lay her conundrum: she would always remain rock solid in her faith, but in doing so she knew that she might play a part in opening the door to heresy in England. As early as 1530 she was pleading with the Pope to make a swift judgement clearly stating that her marriage to Henry was valid. Failure to do so risked creating, 'a new hell that will be worse to mend than the one they have created so far.'

Catherine stood firm. All the weight of the English establishment – its monarch, its nobles, almost all of its bishops, its legal system, its parliament – could not force this one woman to give up her faith and to give up the truth. Shortly before she died, she wrote to Henry referring to him as, 'My most dear Lord, King, and husband.' She forgives him and asks that he look after their daughter, her three remaining ladies in waiting and her servants.

Catherine of Aragon, Queen of England, died on 7th January 1536. She had been married to Henry for over 26 years. Just nineteen weeks later, Anne Boleyn was beheaded. □

For further reading, we recommend *Catherine of Aragon: Henry's Spanish Queen*, by Giles Tremlett; and *Catherine of Aragon*, by Garrett Mattingly.



Queen Katherine a frequent pilgrim to Walsingham



Patron of Humanist scholars, talking to Saint Thomas More



The second refusal to swear the oath of Succession - May 1534



KATHERINE
Queen of England



The Duke of Suffolk is foiled in his attempt to remove Queen Katherine from Buckden - December 1533

Coercion and Belief: *Compelle Intrare*

Fr Brendan Gerard, FSSP holds a licence in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome

May we force people to become members of the Church? Antonio, the title character of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, thinks so. When the Jewish moneylender Shylock loses his property on the collapse of his lawsuit against Antonio, the merchant proposes that half Shylock's wealth be restored to him on condition that "he presently become a Christian." Hardly a free and unforced conversion.

But if that is not allowed, what are we to make of the sentence in the Gospel of the second Sunday after Pentecost, in which the host of a great feast orders his servant to apply pressure in order to secure guests? "Compel people to come in" (in the Vulgate, *compelle intrare*) "that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23 RSV).

The initial question is answered decidedly in the negative by the canon law of the Catholic Church: "No one is ever permitted to coerce persons to embrace the Catholic faith against their conscience" (can. 748 §2). This clearly rules out the forced conversion of non-Catholics. Those who are already members of the Church can, indeed, be subject to penalties aimed at inducing them to abandon heresy, schism or apostasy (can. 1364), but that is sharply to be distinguished from the application of coercive means to those outside the Church.

How, then, should we understand the parable's call to "compel people to

come in"? One answer to this question can be found on the narrative level of the parable. On the other hand, given that the parable tells us about the kingdom of God, we should also look into the symbolism of this trait of the story.

On the narrative level, Near Eastern conventions of politeness are at play here. In his book *The Parables of Jesus*, the distinguished Protestant scholar Joachim Jeremias comments: "Even the poorest people observe oriental courtesy and, out of modesty, struggle against hospitality until they are taken by the hand and brought into the house with gentle constraint" (my translation). To that one can add (with Wilfried Eckey): a single messenger would hardly be in a position to force so many people with "gentle constraint." Rather, the servant in the parable must simply insist that the poor people come to the feast despite the resistance that they offer out of modesty.

On the level of the symbolism, this "compulsion" expresses the earnestness with which God desires to draw humanity to himself. If the first-invited (Israel) neglect his call, God is none the less capable of filling his house (the Church) with poor people (the Gentiles). The Church has indeed no right to increase her membership by coercive means, but she certainly is charged with proclaiming to all men the urgency of God's invitation and the seriousness of what is at stake: nothing less than eternal salvation. □

(This article first appeared in German in the August 2019 edition of the newsletter of the Fraternity's German-speaking District.)

Quotes from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

#153 When St. Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus declared to him that this revelation did not come "from flesh and blood", but from "my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 16:17). *Faith is a gift of God, a supernatural virtue infused by him.* "Before this faith can be exercised, man must have the grace of God to move and assist him; he must have the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, who moves the heart and converts it to God, who opens the eyes of the mind and 'makes it easy for all to accept and believe the truth.'"²

#849 *The missionary mandate.* "Having been divinely sent to the nations that she might be 'the universal sacrament of salvation,' the Church, in obedience to the command of her founder and because it is demanded by her own essential universality, strives to preach the Gospel to all men" (cf. Mt 16:15): "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, until the close of the age." (Mt 28:19-20.)



Statue of Crusader King Richard I the Lionheart outside the House of Parliament in Westminster, London - © Malleray

Tintin and the Secret of the Elusive Priests

By Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP, Head of Tintinology at St Alban House, Bedford

Fictional Belgian reporter Tintin is possibly the most significant comic strip character due to his seminal influence over that pictorial genre worldwide, through the intrinsic genius of its author Georges Prosper Remi (1907–1983) better known as Hergé. It was a Belgian Catholic priest and journalist, Fr Norbert Wallez (1882–1952) who “discovered” young Hergé. As editor of the Belgian daily newspaper *The Twentieth Century* (in French, *Le Vingtième Siècle*) between 1924 and 1933, Father Wallez commissioned Hergé his first comic strips for his daily’s youth supplement *The Little Twentieth* (in French *Le Petit Vingtième*). Thus in 1928 Hergé illustrated *Flup, Nénesse, Poussette and Piglet*, a childish adventure story written by a colleague. It looks like a draft for *Tintin in the Congo*, since the children characters end up in the Belgian colony where a white missionary priest visits them after they have escaped cannibals. In this instance the priest is depicted as performing unmistakably Catholic ministry, blessing the children who throw themselves into his fatherly arms, and the natives in awe who kiss the hem of his cassock. The priest stays on at the village for a few days, evangelising the inhabitants. The text reads, describing the feelings of the priest: “His eyes shining with happiness.”

A few months after that first collaboration, Father Wallez asked Hergé to design his own character,

“with a dog companion, of which children are fond.” Tintin was created as the mascot reporter for the youth publication, with his pet companion Snowy, the most famous Fox Terrier in the world. However, given the Catholic background of Hergé in then staunchly Catholic Belgium, and the mentor figure of Father Wallez (who even matchmade Hergé’s marriage to Germaine Kieckens, his own secretary at the newspaper), clerics are strikingly absent from the *Tintin* comics. The only one is a missionary priest in *Tintin in the Congo*, the second episode of the series out of twenty-four albums. The unnamed priest, a bearded European missionary wearing a long white cassock, saves Tintin’s life twice. Despite his clerical garb, the priest is portrayed as an action man more than as theologian, building, hunting, civilising without any explicit Catholic or even religious design. When Tintin steps in at the mission school for a sick religious teacher, it is geography that he teaches, not catechism.

Again two Catholic priests, Abbés Courtois and Pihan involved in youth publications, asked Hergé to create a comic series with more “normal” characters, that is, with children depicted as part of a family, unlike parentless Tintin. Thus appeared the shorter series of *The Adventures of Jo, Zette and Jocko*, the two children of Mr and Mrs Legrand and their pet chimpanzee. It included only five albums published between 1951 and

1957. Priests are no more conspicuous in that latter series. In parallel with the White Father missionary in *Tintin in the Congo*, a polar missionary is given a cameo appearance in *Destination New York*, when he saves Jo and Zette after their crash-landing near the North Pole. The priest is depicted wearing a long black cassock underneath his thick fur jacket. Instead of a biretta his head is covered by a high black fur bonnet similar to those worn by Russian Cossacks. He is addressed as Père Francœur (which translates in English as Father Fairheart). In later versions of the album, though, the Catholic mission has become a scientific outpost, Father Fairheart is renamed Professor Nielsen, and a radio antenna has replaced the cross on the top of the small mission chapel. Like those of the African missionary in *Tintin in Congo*, the days of the polar priest are numbered if revisionist censors have their way.

Thus evaporates the already scarce priestly presence in Hergé’s pictorial world, a trend which he might not have deplored, since he had left his devout wife for her colleague Fanny Vlamynck, a colourist at his Studio Hergé, and had quietly distanced himself from Catholicism, feeling drawn to Buddhism, a popular shift in the 1960s and 1970s. Indeed the religion and its clerics granted by far the broadest exposure across all of Tintin’s adventures is Buddhism, depicted with warm appreciation in *Tintin in Tibet* released in 1960. By the time the final album *Tintin and*



Trompe-l'oeil with Tintin and Captain Haddock in Brussels – Photograph by Johan Mouchet – free use under Unsplash license

the Picaros was published in 1976, the absence of manifest clerical figures might have been a blessing in disguise. It might have spared Tintin enthusiasts the consternation of seeing a Liberation Theology padre lead the coup against right-wing General Tapioca, “all in the best interests of the people.” Hergé would have reached the opposite end of the political spectrum then, since his earlier mentor Fr Norbert Wallez had been imprisoned under the charge of collaboration with the German occupier during WWII. Put under investigation himself after the war, Hergé had felt deeply wounded by such suspicion. Suffering from depression, he seriously contemplated relocating to Argentina, sharing the fascination for Amerindian cultures of his friend Father

Gall, a Cistercian monk at Scourmont Abbey. When the latter (eccentric and somehow unbalanced) was devastated by the death of his pet goat, on 12th January 1983 Hergé wrote a letter to him expressing sympathy while pointing to the love of God as the *raison d’être* of Christians and of monks.

Was that letter the testament of Tintin’s father? Within seven weeks, Hergé had died of leukaemia. Let us hope that the former boy scout and playful Catholic who gave joy to millions of readers of all ages through lively characters such as Tintin, Snowy, Thomson and Thompson, and Captain Haddock, now rests in the peace of the divine Author. The soul of Hergé may have yet another priest as intercessor in



Photograph by Dmitry Novikov – free use under Unsplash license

the person of Dom Pierre-Célestin, a Benedictine monk at Saint Andrew’s Abbey in Bruges, Belgium. A former Premier of the Republic of China then known as Lou Tseng-tsiang (spelled Lu Zhengxiang in English), he had converted and ended his life as a Catholic monk. Tintinologues know that in *The Blue Lotus*, the mysterious initials L.T.T. signing an article in the *Shanghai News* (erroneously altered into L.G.T. in the English version) are Hergé’s hint at his convert friend Lou Tseng-tsiang (1871-1949).

J. R. R. Tolkien’s Catholicism was symbolically woven into *Lord of the Rings*; that of Hergé also implicitly defines the behaviour of his characters, especially Tintin, a brave, courteous, chaste, fair, and generous

young man. We don’t see Tintin kneel down in churches and yet, it is in one such place that he discovers the lost treasure, thanks to his Catholic learning. In *Red Rackham’s Treasure*, Tintin inspects the crypt under Marlinspike Hall and, pointing at a statue in a niche, comments to Captain Haddock: “Look, that’s St. John the Evangelist. We must be in an old chapel... He is always depicted with an eagle... And he’s called the Eagle of Patmos, after the island where he wrote his Revelation.”¹ St. John the Apostle is very much a priest, even a bishop and, in this album, he is also the guardian of the riches

buried in the underground church supporting Marlinspike Hall. In this happy mansion Tintin, Haddock and Calculus will come and live in blessed companionship: a fitting symbol for the discreet influence of priests supporting Hergé’s Catholic faith. □

¹ This is the most explicit and detailed Catholic exposition in Hergé’s work. In this context, it seems very likely that the phrasing of the Unicorn cypher “For tis from the Light that Light will dawn. And then shines forth the Eagle’s cross” is inspired from St John’s Prologue “and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness”, which Hergé would have heard at the end of every Mass until the late 1960s.

Why the Film *Nefarious* Is Atheists' Nightmare

By Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP

Blood-dripping walls and young girls talking netherworldly are not your cup of tea? Mine neither. But I was eager to see an atheistic doctor clinically try to persuade a possessed inmate that God and Satan don't exist. This is why I heartily recommend watching *Nefarious*, the remarkable film directed by Chuck Konzelman and Cary Solomon in 2023. This is not a horror film but a realistic, supernatural, thriller.

Nefarious includes nothing gory or visually frightening. It depicts serial killer Edward Wayne Brady on death row, claiming that he is possessed by an evil spirit called Nefarious. Brady will be spared if atheist psychologist Dr James Martin declares him insane. Dr Martin calls in Father Louis to see whether the Prison chaplain will uphold the claim of Brady's possession. The latter recoils in fear when the priest walks in (a man in his late sixties who wears a multicoloured stole above his Roman collar). But when Fr Louis states that he does not believe in devils, the demon speaking through Brady calls him his friend and wants to shake hands.

Christian clerics and theologians all across the spectrum confirmed the accuracy of the depiction of evil in *Nefarious*. Director Cary Solomon is a convert to Catholicism who takes high risks answering the needs of the times through films such as the acclaimed *Unplanned* (2019) about abortion. While still in the making,



Photograph *Nefarious* film, copyright whoisnefarious.com

Nefarious encountered a succession of strange hindrances. Solomon recalls that, among various incidents, "There were sounds or voices coming out of the couch; the light in the room was unexplainably flickering on and off; the cameras were digitally corrupted, and the sound machine just died." A priest was on site all along and once had to perform an exorcism. It thus came as no surprise when, once released, *Nefarious* met with fierce opposition from secular reviewers, perhaps owing to the statement made by the demon character equating euthanasia and abortion with murder, thus making psychologist Dr James Martin an assassin just as much as the serial killer he is meant to cure. Once during their battle of wits (atheist) Dr Martin objects to possessed Brady: "I didn't know this was a fight." To what Nefarious replies: "That's why you're losing."

Needless to say, I do not indiscriminately recommend

watching such films. Catholics don't need Hollywood to know that the devil exists and is busy leading souls away from their divine Creator and Redeemer, Jesus the Christ. However, the popularity of the genre demonstrates that, even outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church, a wide audience takes seriously the possibility of demonic possession and trusts that Catholic clerics are best trained to set souls free from it. Unhealthy fascination for evil is certainly to be avoided, but some knowledge of its impact on the lives of men, and of the Church's dedication in fighting it can benefit souls otherwise ignorant of the supernatural battle going on, as St Paul reminds us: "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and power, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places" (Eph 6:12). □

Spoiler Alert: Life Wins In The End

Young adult Sophia Rumpus took part in the March for Life, the largest event in the UK every year to celebrate the sacredness of human life, particularly in its unborn stage.

Last Saturday 7 September was the annual March for Life, a celebration of the pro-life movement across London, ending in Parliament Square. I attended as part of our pro-life community but also as a photographer to lend coverage to pro-life organisations and charities.

As a photographer, your thoughts are on achieving the best perspective to illustrate the emotions and rawness that are felt in person at such a high-intensity, and sometimes emotional event like March For Life. And so, during the ending stage presentations, I aimed to be as close to the action as possible—which meant being as close to the stage as I could get, right in the middle of the pro-abortion counter-protestors behind the police line. Last year, the pro-abortion line between the stage and the pro-life community was moved on, but this year, they stayed and heckled the presenters on stage.

The pro-life speakers included Dr Haywood Robinson, a former abortionist turned pro-life evangelist; Claire Culwell, an abortion survivor, and a young man named Anhill who gave his testimony as a father to an aborted child.

Something that is obvious from the footage taken at pro-life marches is how joyful those who live within the values of life and family are, versus those who live in and actively support the culture of death. Since I was standing amongst the pro-

abortion protestors to get some close-up shots of the speakers, they heckled them with ‘BORING’ trying to drown out their testimonies, and ‘Not a baby, a clump of cells’ and even ‘how are you here’ when abortion survivor, Claire Culwell was speaking.

Dr Haywood Robinson spoke of his time as an abortionist and the lies of the abortion industry, particularly that abortion renounces the Hippocratic oath of ‘Do No Harm’ as fifty percent of its “patients” do not survive the procedure (that is, the children die, their mothers being the surviving other half). He stated further that, “Abortion isn’t healthcare because pregnancy is not a disease.”

The other two speakers had emotional and personal testimonies, Claire spoke about her mother who became pregnant at thirteen and had an abortion that ended the life of her twin in the womb. Claire was adopted and did not meet her birth mother until twenty-one years of age. The young man, Anhill shared his experience of when his then-girlfriend became pregnant while both were students attending university. She aborted their child and he felt powerless as the father. Since returning to the faith he advocates for men to be voices for their unborn children. He says “The child in their womb is yours as much as it is theirs” to counter the “my body my choice” rhetoric.

We currently live in a society that demands abortion, because the values leading up to pregnancy are disordered. Sex is a recreational activity you can share with anyone. It is not viewed as something only done with the upmost respect, love and trust of someone you vow to be bonded for life with, one which lasts long enough to foster life into the world. Introduce contraception and sex is divorced from its procreative purpose and reduced solely to a recreational act. Foster this long enough in a society and a desensitisation of the purpose of sex in its entirety is lost. The gift of life is seen as a disease based on whether or not it is wanted. Therein lies a society that demands abortion.

The abortion issue is a much wider issue of how a society treats each other. We can set examples in our everyday lives of how every human should be treated as having intrinsic and unique value from God. We can set this example publicly in marches like March For Life and taking part in rosary crusades for ending abortion; and we can set this example privately in our own personal friendships and relationship discernments. □

(Image Credit and Author: Sophia Rumpus @sophiarumpus)
Find out more about this event on www.marchforlife.co.uk/2024-event-page. You may also visit www.40daysforlife.com and www.goodcounselnet.co.uk.



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Website: <https://fssp.ie/>
Support: finance@fssp.ie
Bank of Ireland; Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2.
Account name: Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter
Account No.: 40483756
IBAN: IE36BOFI90149040483756
BIC: BOFIE2D

FSSP SCOTLAND:

Fr Brendan Gerard, FSSP,
6 Belford Park, Edinburgh EH4 3DP.
www.fsspScotland.org
Tel.: 0131 332 3750;
Email: edinburgh@fssp.org
The Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter in Scotland is a registered charity (no. 1083419; no. SC038552).
Bank Name: Hampden & Co.
Sort Code: 83-91-55
Account Number: 11012475

Account Name: The Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter
Cheques should be made out to "Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter".
Gift Aid Forms on request.

LiveMass Apostolate:

Many people in and outside the UK benefit from our Warrington-based daily broadcast of Holy Mass with daily homily, especially under lockdown. We request your financial support for this worldwide apostolate. You can easily donate online via our Warrington/LiveMass 'Donate' button on <https://fssp.org.uk/donate/>. Thank you.

Homilies & Conferences:

St Mary's Warrington YouTube channel, with homilies for Sundays and feasts uploaded permanently: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_NVY7jpDIhANiwjng1gN0w
Also, conferences & homilies on <https://vimeo.com/livemass>.
More of them on the Juventutem London Video page: <https://www.facebook.com/londonjuventutem/videos>
Audio podcasts of clergy conferences by Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP: <https://radioimmaculata.org/various-podcast/fssp-conferences>

Pictures: browse through hundreds of amazing pictures of our liturgies, summer camps and other pastoral activities on the FSSP Flickr page: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/138056205@N08/albums>

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Photo: FSSP Summer Camp St Petronilla for Girls, 2024

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