

Dowry

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



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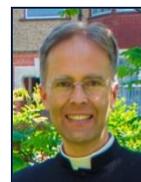
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Editorial: Our Kin Beyond the Seas



In America a fortnight ago, a young woman from one of our parishes in England was invested with the white habit, wimple and veil as a novice in a religious community. Anti-Covid-19 travel regulations prevented family and friends from attending the moving and simple ceremony, but they were pleased to watch it live via the Internet. A few days later, the new Sister Mari Caritas (a Welsh and Latin name) was beaming with supernatural joy when some of us were privileged to speak with her through a video application.

A few weeks earlier, another young woman from our youth group in London also became a novice at a Benedictine Abbey in America. Divine Providence allowed those two generous women to reach their religious havens last February just before the Covid-19 calamity would close harbours and ground aircraft. Less fortunate, three more young women from our youth groups were set to visit American convents earlier this year, and sadly were prevented by the pandemic from doing so. But they will not be deterred any longer, please God. Meanwhile, another two young women of our same groups joined two convents in Italy.

Yet another one came from abroad to Cornwall to try her vocation in a Carmel in this country. Only yesterday, a young Englishman flew to Germany to enter our international seminary in Bavaria, for a total number of six seminarians from the UK in formation with our Fraternity. Another young man, also from our youth group in London, was

admitted to try his vocation with the Redemptorists of Papa Stronsay in the Orkney Islands, in far north Scotland. Two more young men we met are about to start a year of discernment to the sacred priesthood. And surely there must be many more such courageous young adults whose stories are not known to us.

Friends, how comforting this new exodus! On the one hand, we should mourn the flight of our daughters and sons to foreign lands, for they wouldn't have needed to leave our shores if they had found what their souls sought among our few remaining English monasteries, convents, and seminaries. On the other hand, we must thank God Who provided them with solutions to answer their calling, albeit abroad. It wouldn't be the first time that British youths received religious formation beyond the seas. Under penal times, dozens if not hundreds of our best youths flew to the Continent, to France, to the Spanish Netherlands, to Italy and Spain for the sake of religious training. God rewarded their sacrifice within the same generation as many of those young priests and monks died as martyrs, healing English soil with their innocent blood, sometimes shortly after their return home. Within a few more generations, once the Church was allowed again in this realm, our daughters came back in the persons of their own spiritual progeny, when holy flotillas of women religious sailed for Mary's Dowry with humble determination, hailing at the white cliffs of Albion more jubilantly than the Conqueror of old. Thus, our daughters will come back, and our sons.

Are they truly gone anyway? Have they deserted us? No one is remote if he lives in God. For what is proximity in space when souls are estranged? Even married couples may experience this bitter truth (lovers don't, loving not). In truth, the one common dwelling is God's holy will. Anyone entering this spiritual inhabitation will find it resounding with the songs of innumerable kin, regardless of physical distance, as anticipation here below of heaven. Thank God then, for the young people just mentioned. Please God now, let many more be called! Let many more listen! Let many more answer! As to those whom God destines to rebuild his kingdom through founding families, let them take heart at the examples of two more of our young couples who, through much anxiety and after many prayers, were married this summer despite fierce anti-Covid-19 rules, and now expect their first children.

Friends, those various youths are the sparks of Catholic England. They are the ones rebuilding the waste land. Let us pray and sacrifice for more. Let us encourage those discerning. Let us comfort those not finding. If the world seems to us bleak, barren, or even hostile, let us retreat into the holy will of God, the only safe and blissful dwelling. Let us abandon ourselves to the Lord who made our country great through his grace, once, and *'whose gifts and calling are without repentance'* (Rom 11:29).

Malleray

Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP,
Superior of the English FSSP
Apostolate, 25th September 2020. □

English Rule in Paris



These paintings depict exile English Augustinian nuns at a Paris convent in 1729. Nicolas de Largillière who had famously painted both Louis XIV and James II was commissioned for this triple portrait. The three nuns belonged to the same recusant family, the Throckmortons. Their pictures were placed prominently alongside a contemporaneous Largillière portrait of Robin, by now fourth baronet and family head, in the family seat at Coughton Hall.

Anne Frances Throckmorton (top) was Prioress of the English Augustinian Convent of Notre-Dame-de-Sion, in Paris. Elizabeth Throckmorton (middle) was the daughter of Sir Robert Throckmorton of Coughton Court. She joined the convent where her Aunt was a member as a schoolgirl aged 14. In 1714 she took her vows with her sister Mary. Although not always in good health, Elizabeth Throckmorton was twice elected Abbess and her death was recorded as a great loss to the community. Her interest in reading and study is emphasised by the book in her hand. She died in 1760.

“The education of the Throckmorton daughters and their cousin Anne Woollascott is detailed in letters sent by their aunt, Sister Anne-Frances, to their father Sir Robert. The girls attended the school attached to the English Augustinian Convent of Our Lady of Sion in Paris where Anne-Frances was novice mistress and later prioress. Attending school at a young age was common among Catholics and so it likely had a formative effect on their behaviour”.

Now run by the National Trust, the Coughton estate in Warwickshire has been in the Throckmorton family since 1409. The Throckmortons and Coughton Court have since the Reformation been notable in their deep and continuous adherence to the Catholic faith, in spite of the costs (cf *Marriage Choice and Kinship among the English Catholic Elite, 1680-1730*, by K.L. Gibson, 2016, Sheffield University - <http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/97692/19/Autor%20Accepted%20Catholics.pdf>). Catholic priests were hidden at the house and Mass continued to be celebrated there in the Tower Room, which one can still visit.

History scattered the paintings far and wide: Aunt Anne Frances Throckmorton’s remained at Coughton Court, Warwickshire; but Niece Elizabeth Throckmorton’s is now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; while Cousin Frances Woollascott’s (bottom) ended up in the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. While on earth, the exile nuns remained closely united with their relatives in England through letters and prayers. We still have every reason to rely on their intercession for us, their spiritual kin in Our Lady’s Dowry. □

Safer-Than-Thou: The New Righteousness?

By Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP

It has been six months since unprecedented restrictions were imposed on the citizens of Great-Britain to counter the Covid-19 virus. Half a year is a long time. Restrictions were partly eased in August, but as we write a new peak in Covid-19 cases led local authorities to further limit movement and gatherings. Many people think: Not again! Not so soon! When will it end? When will we be able to socialise normally, to go about our lives and make plans? To shake hands or to hug? When will we simply be allowed to see the

faces of our friends, colleagues, or mere pedestrians? When will masks become unnecessary?

Even more than in wartime, restrictions to fundamental liberties apply and even increase, allegedly to protect the British population from the Covid-19 virus. The negative impact of such measures on the economy, on mental well-being and, most important, on the religious life of the nation is enormous. Authorised voices warn about the societal impact of the antiviral measures, which will harm

many more people than will be saved by prophylaxis. Nevertheless, most citizens comply dutifully with the norms imposed to counter the threat.

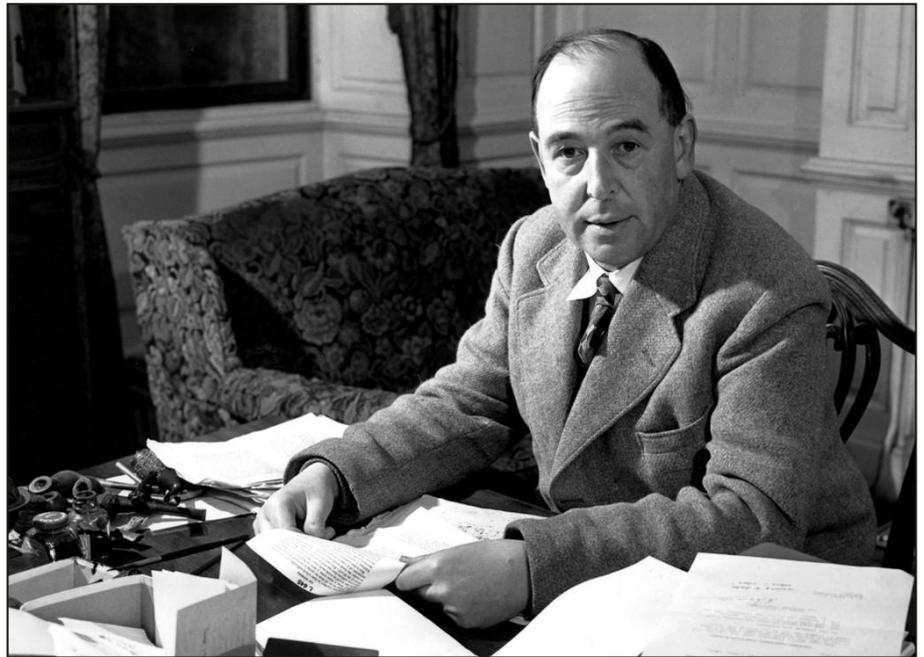
And yet, government [figures](#) tell us that less than 0.1% of the entire British population have died from the virus since its beginning last March. You read correctly, not 10% of the population have died. Not 1% has died. Not 0.1% has died. All UK Covid-19 deaths amount to 0.062% of the total population (cf. latest Government figures accessed on 19th Sept. 2020). By comparison, the leading cause of death in the UK in 2018 was dementia and Alzheimer's disease, accounting for 12.7% of all deaths registered. Even if doubling up the number of Covid-19 deaths recorded over the past six months (so as to provide us with an estimate over a one-year span rather than half a year), the number of British people having died of Covid-19 would still be 102 times less than those having died of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. According to Government statistics last June Covid-19 ranked similar to heart and lung diseases among causes of death, well below Alzheimer's. In addition, most of the Covid-19 deceased were 70 years of age or more, so that statistically they were very likely to have died within a year of some other cause. Sad as their passing is, and while sympathising with their families, based on yearly population records they can hardly be counted as *unexpected* casualties. This is very different from the Spanish Flu in 1918/1919, which targeted young adults in their 20s.



Furthermore over the past six months, twice as many British people have died from abortion as from Covid-19. Yes, you heard correctly, for each person who died of Covid-19 since last March, twice as many persons have died of abortion. Abortuaries were among the very few facilities allowed to remain open during lockdown, unlike churches. Those deaths by abortion were not caused by ageing or sickness; on the contrary, they were inflicted upon people who had every expectation to live.

Anyone will admit the discrepancy between the very low mortality rate of Covid-19 and the colossal curtailing of basic liberties worldwide. Why such discrepancy? Who knows the answer? Who will make sense of it? In addition, anyone should see the contradiction between the immense imposition on the country to counter Covid-19, and the total absence of concern for the twice as many victims dying of abortion daily. Why then is Covid-19 presented as if it were the major threat on the population, justifying unprecedented suspension of basic liberties?

It is nowhere near as deadly as the Spanish Flu. Then, a century ago, “Young adults between 20 and 30 years old were particularly affected and the disease struck and progressed quickly in these cases. Onset was devastatingly quick. Those fine and healthy at breakfast could be dead by tea-time. Within hours of feeling the first symptoms of fatigue, fever and headache, some victims would rapidly develop pneumonia and start turning blue, signalling a shortage of oxygen. They would then struggle for air until they suffocated to death. A quarter of the British population were affected and 228,000 died in Britain alone.” Worldwide, over 50 million people died of the Spanish



Flu a century ago, that is, 2.7% of the world population (which amounted to 1.8 billion at the time). Nowadays, about 57 million people die every year in the world. But over the past half a year, only 0.9 million deaths were recorded in connection with Covid-19 worldwide, amounting to only 0.012% of the world population today (7.8 billion today).

While taking proportionate precautions against Covid-19, how are we Catholics to understand this situation? We cannot help notice that the universal call to holiness seems to have been changed into a universal call to safety. Even in Catholic circles, righteousness, or superciliousness rather, seems to shift from holier-than-thou to safer-than-thou. Some pastors enforce anti-Covid-19 regulations with a sense of civic duty that one would love to see demonstrated in promoting moral safety. Indeed, the real safety is sanctity. Sanctity? Who praises it? Who remembers it? Alas, we must admit that divine and natural laws are trampled upon, especially in the western world, as never before. This affects us

collectively and individually. The natural and divine intermediaries between God and soul such as the family, the village, the parish and the fatherland are actively undermined. This weakening of institutions makes each person less protected, hence more vulnerable to manipulation, intimidation, and perversion. Souls forget God and their last ends; sin is glorified; and humanity is artificially modified. Is this not a much, much direr threat than the virus that killed 0.012% of the population? Is not the harm done to society and souls enormously greater?

One wonders what author C.S. Lewis (pictured above) would have written about this situation, perhaps in a further chapter of his *Screwtape Letters* if the book had been published today rather than during WWII (1942). In this epistolary novel, the senior demon Screwtape teaches his nephew Wormwood, a junior Tempter, how best to entrap human beings. One could imagine the following update:

“My dear nephew, you complain that leading humans into sin is much more difficult during the

present Covid-19 lockdown, because early closure of bars and nightclubs reduces promiscuity, while face-covering makes allurements much less effective. You are wrong. Can't you see that the current virus could be turned into a timely diversion from man's moral obligations? No man will boast of acting against his conscience, but all will adopt civic precepts that conceal the elephants in the room, namely, their sins to confess and their souls to reform.

"We could display the Covid-19 virus as a threat that we would control and inflate at will. The threat would evolve weekly and demand of everyone a constant updating of their social behaviour and a reassessing of domestic and professional rules. A new righteousness would thus be promoted to reward those abiding by the safety scheme. While its true moral value would be superficial, it would provide all with clearly identified criteria of honourability such as: 1) wearing a mask, 2) washing one's hands, and 3) social distancing. Most humans would adopt those three commandments, so much simpler to obey than God's Ten Commandments. Contraveners would be immediately sanctioned as complicit in the threat. Compliers would be honoured without needing in any way to reform their lives morally. Meanwhile, the real social and spiritual cancer would be allowed to spread further: abortion, contraception, adultery, pornography, inversion, genetic engineering, primary sexual initiation classes, Sunday working, religious indifferentism, and more. Needless to say, most of those involved would feel as if acting in good faith."

Dear friends, we know there is such a virus as Covid-19. For example, our seminary in Bavaria was badly

hit by it last spring. The risk of contamination does exist. Taking proportionate precautions against it is morally good. Those can involve such steps as sanitizing, face-covering and social distancing. Last month we advertised on our website a series of face-masks upon which very eloquent Catholic symbols were depicted, including a medal of St Benedict and Our Lady of Guadalupe (cf two examples displayed in this article, from redbubble.com). From the beginning, we priests have encouraged caution and awareness within our flock.



Our purpose here is different. The point is to examine our souls and to check the order of precedence. Do we acknowledge that the soul is more than the body? Truly? If so, do we protect our souls even more carefully than our bodies? Do we do our utmost to support people around us through caring for their own souls? If our souls are contaminated by sin, do we urgently seek absolution from the priest before Holy Communion? Do we train our souls in daily prayer? Do we muscle up our intellect through hearing sound Catholic conferences or reading good books on theology and spirituality? Do we implement these

saving truths through active care for our neighbours' concrete needs?

In the Holy Bible, the 'face' of man or of God is often synonym with 'presence'. On Mount Horeb, "*The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend*" (Exodus 33:11). "*Whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he would remove the veil until he came out.*" In the New Testament, St Paul writes that, "*We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing [...]. Whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away*" (2 Co

3:13;16). Dear friends, while taking reasonable precautions in proportion with the viral threat, let us Catholics display our hearts unmasked to God and neighbour. Let us fear sin far more than germs. Better than safe, let us be saints. Wider than gel, let us spread grace. Let us pray for our countrymen, that they may seek God's kingdom and his justice first, and every other goods and blessings will follow. May Our Blessed Lady guide us all through these difficult times, as loyal fellow-citizens on earth, and already as citizens of heaven, where we belong; where we are called. □

Poem – *The Seven Crowns*

By Victor Britton

Again I heard the Psalmist sing
another tune for Heaven's King
and in that song I caught the sight
of seven crowns of royal light
and ask I to the Virgin Queen
and all the hosts that shine unseen
to grant me words both wise and fair
to honour David's holy Heir
and call to mind what saw my heart
through Poetry's most noble Art

A crown of mystery then came
from that most blessed noble dame
Of roses fifty top the piece
and over that the cross of peace
and on the cross, as noble jew'l
the Star of David's holy rule
But born it was by humble head
that used a manger for a bed
A man, a lamb, a vine, a loaf,
a light to guide us from the wolf

A crown of stars I saw at first
when all was made as from a burst
when God created through his Word
from water's fish to heaven's bird
Then Sun and Moon adorned his head
as jew'ls more bright than rubies red
The stars, the Earth, both mount and ford
bowed down before th' Eternal Lord
and all Creation sang with glee
the coming of Reality

A crown of wreaths of evergreen
in garden first always pristine
I saw that day when Mankind fell
from mountain top to lowest dell
What sad reprise, what sad reprise
we have each day before our eyes
of that one moment of regress
when Satan called and Eve said yes
But God then promised to us all
that One would yet undo the Fall

A crown of waves then felled the fold
to doom and wipe out horrors old
The One in ire snuffed out the seed
of all that were of evil deeds
But one He kept to keep His Name
and everlasting is his fame
What sorrow fell to our blue Earth!
but in that sorrow hope gave birth
to Abraham and Israel
and from them both Emmanuel

A crown of flames I saw alight
on mountain top, a fire bright,
when Moses gave to Jacob's tree
the Law of the Divinity
and Israel was born anew
and there proclaimed that which they knew
that Lord there was of mount and sea
and all of which the eye could see
But fall they did, as did the Land
and then the Lord stretched out his hand [↑]



(18th century Coptic Ethiopian crown with Twelve Apostles and Four Evangelists, V&A.)

A crown of thorns I
saw in tears
between the
wicked's laughs and
cheers
A crown of pain, of
sin, of hate,
the husband's hand,
the sword of State,
the lover's oath, the
arrows hurled,
the blood that flows
from all the world,
the jealous rage, the
cheater's gaze,
the thieving eye, the
wicked phrase
All that I saw, upon
the head
of He whose blood
revives the dead

A crown of glory from the sky
I see before my weary eyes,
of hope, of light, of ever youth,
of song, of joy, of holy Truth
A crown engraved upon the chest
of those who eat of bread the best
A song it is, a holy hymn,
that turns to light all that is dim,
and brings about the final chord
when all the world will praise the Lord

I tremble with the sight sublime
that cannot be defined in rhyme
The time will come when seven hosts
will come together for the toast
When Heaven's Lord, upon the clouds,
will make unveiled all under shroud
and under light of golden hue
He everything will make anew
Let's pray then for Who loves us most,
the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. □

A Defence of Columbus and Christendom

By Dr. Matteo Salonia, an Assistant Professor in European and International History at the University of Nottingham Ningbo.

How are Catholics to make sense of the violent iconoclasm that we have recently witnessed in squares and streets across the United States and Europe? When we see statues of saints like Junipero Serra being vandalised and removed, we know that an anti-Catholic sentiment is motivating these acts. But what about statues of men whom we know were pious Catholics, yet have not been declared saints by the Church? Should Catholic be bothered by the systematic attack against Christopher Columbus? Here I will attempt to briefly sketch three lines of defence with regard to

Columbus, and more importantly the civilization that he represents: Christendom.

The first observation that I invite you to make is that the Black Lives Matter movement seems to be very selective in its outrage and condemnation of imperialism: the only imperialism that this movement is interested in is European imperialism. Yet, world history is characterised by the rise and fall of hundreds of empires across the globe. Surely, the Aztec empire was not a peaceful political project, and what today we carelessly call “China” is actually the product of centuries of violent expansion into

regions that had nothing to do with the Chinese empire, even as late as the 19th century. One of the reasons for BLM’s selective memory is surely the desire to reduce History (which is messy, contradictory and even paradoxical) to a simplistic, two-dimensional narrative of oppressors and oppressed. A key clue to the uses of such a narrative comes from the official website of BLM and many of the statements from its leaders: this is a Marxist organization, and as such its end goal is the destruction of Christianity, of the traditional family, and of private property rights. And what is the one civilization in world history that was born of Christianity, affirmed the sacredness of monogamous marriage, and spread around the world market institutions? Christendom, of course. To be clear: here I am not suggesting that massacres and injustices do not matter when committed by Christians; rather, I am suggesting an explanation for BLM’s apparently inexplicable conflation of Western civilization and injustice, as if only Western civilization had committed atrocities and built empires.

The second line of defence that I would recommend to readers is the following. Christendom did have something unique, but this was not violent colonialism: instead, it was a spirit of self-criticism coming from the Christian idea that each human being has dignity, because he/she is made in the image of God. So, while it is important to study the crimes



committed by Europeans in the course of colonial expansion (and I myself regularly teach and publish research about some of these crimes), it is even more important to realise that the moral compass with which we judge massacres and conquests, with which we defend the oppressed and seek justice for the poor, is itself coming from the religious and philosophical treasures given by Christianity, and which have been unique to Western civilisation for a very long time. Let's see an example of this with Columbus and Spanish empire-building. As soon as the Spanish Queen, Isabela, received the news of slaves being brought to Seville from the 'Indies', her conscience was torn, so much so that she stopped the selling of these poor souls and ordered a committee of theologians and legal scholars to look into the question. The committee, as early as 1500, outlawed the enslavement of peaceful 'Indians' in the Americas. Of course, laws and legal decisions penned in Spain were hardly applied and respected on the other side of the Atlantic, but Christian cosmology was impossible to silence. A few years later, on Christmas 1511, a Dominican friar named Antonio de Montesinos used his homily in front of the Spanish colonial elite living on the island of Hispaniola to accuse his countrymen of evildoing and gratuitous violence against the natives – crimes that would have made them end up in Hell. Montesinos then refused to give sacraments to such evil men unless they repented and stormed out of the church. This was the start of an extraordinary and long human rights campaign – led by churchmen like Bartolomé de Las Casas and Pope Paul III – which would last for decades and would force the Spanish Crown to abolish forced labour for 'Indians' in the colonies. Crucially, some of the arguments



used by the churchmen who defended the American 'Indians' in the 16th century would later be picked up again by the abolitionists who in the 19th century brought the Atlantic slave trade to an end. What is difficult to appreciate for us is the fact that these arguments for freedom that we take for granted were unheard of without Western civilisation.

Thirdly and finally, a few words specifically on Columbus. We do not have statues of Columbus because we consider him a human rights philosopher, but rather because he was one of the greatest navigators to ever live, and his enterprise changed the history of the world and deserves to be part of our collective memory. Moreover, while Columbus was not a perfect man, the accusations of genocide levelled against him are untenable and slanderous. The word genocide means the deliberate, planned, intentional extermination of a people. Neither Columbus nor the Spanish Crown committed such a crime. In fact, as explained also by non-Catholic scholars like Carol Delaney, if one bothers to read the historical documents in their entirety, what emerges quite clearly

is that Columbus wished to become friend with the native Taino people whom he first met. His core desire was not to murder innocent people or to enrich himself but rather to gather enough gold or open up a trade that would fund a crusade to finally liberate Jerusalem. With regard to the violence taking place in Hispaniola, one has to consider that Columbus was a Genoese with a Portuguese background, and as early as his second voyage he had lost control of the Spaniards, who despised him. Moreover, historians like Francisco Guerra have demonstrated that diseases (not violence) were killing most of the native (and Spanish) population, and these started as early as 1493 with a swine influenza. There would be much more to say about Columbus, his courage and his flaws, his stubbornness and his piety. But even from this brief historical sketch it seems clear that history is too complex to fit simplistic political narratives, and that Catholics should have the patience to join the public debate and defend both Columbus and his civilization, Christendom, which gave to today's world much of its hitherto unthinkable moral compass. □

Digital Communion: A Modern Invention

By Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP

Introduction

From Lent to summer 2020, for fear of a virus, guidelines forbade the faithful to receive Our Lord in the Sacred Host (or from the Chalice). Being deprived of sacramental Communion, people got used to spiritual communion instead. In spiritual Communion, those in state of grace commune from a distance with Our Lord in the Sacred Host, without consuming the Host or even touching it. But it is a third type of Eucharistic Communion that we would like to examine here. We call it *digital* Communion.

What is digital Communion? Is it about receiving Holy Communion online, as some people wished could be the case with sacramental absolution of sins? No, digital Communion has nothing to do with the Internet (even though its appearance in the Catholic Church coincided with that of the first personal computer some fifty years ago). Digital Communion is a modern invention; it never existed in Christian antiquity. It is when one takes the Sacred Host with one's fingers and puts it into one's own mouth. We call it *digital* because digital is the adjective derived from the word *digitus*, a *finger* in Latin,

which gave our English word *digit* (whence also the IT meaning of the same word *digit*: “any of the numerals from 0 to 9, especially when forming part of a number, following the practice of counting on the fingers”).

No fingers ever involved

Why a new expression, then? Digital Communion, you may think, merely describes Communion on the hand. If this were the case, there would be nothing new to add, since you were told that Communion on the hand had always existed.



Communion on the hand, you learnt, was used by early Christians.

So we assumed, like you did, until we read the short but enlightening study by a bishop from Asia. This little book is called *Dominus Est: It is the Lord* (2008, Newman House Press), by Bishop Athanasius Schneider, the Secretary of the Bishops' Conference in Kazakhstan. Holding a doctorate in Patristics from Rome, the author studied intensively the Fathers of the Church who tell us how things were done in early Christian centuries. In short, Bishop Schneider proves that never did our Christian forefathers take the Sacred Host with their fingers to put it into their mouth. For a few centuries, in some regions, the Sacred Host was laid by the priest into the right hand of the communicant (her hand veiled if a woman). The right hand was deemed nobler than the left one. At Holy Communion the communicant would bow his head low towards his right palm and would receive the Sacred Host directly with his lips and tongue, without using his fingers at all. In his latest book *Christus Vincit: Christ's Triumph over the Darkness of the Age* (Angelico Press, 2019), Bishop Athanasius Schneider describes palm-to-mouth Communion as follows: “[T]he practice had a different form in ancient times than it does today: the Holy Eucharist was received on the palm of the right hand and the faithful were not allowed to touch the Holy Host with their fingers, but they had to bow down their head to the palm of the hand and take the Sacrament directly with their mouth, thus, in a position of a profound bow and not standing upright.”

Why this? The reason is that using one's fingers to seize something denotes authority and power over



(Pictures: *Fra Angelico's Last Supper*; *First Mass of Fr Seth Phipps, FSSP*)

the thing. And this seemed disrespectful toward the Sacred Host who is God Himself. Only the priest celebrant at Mass consumes the Sacred Host from his own fingers, because he has just consecrated the Sacred Species. The celebrant is the only one acting in the Person of Christ as consecrator of the Holy Eucharist. This enables him to act later on as distributor of the same sacrament, by virtue of his identity as “sacerdos”, literally, “the one who gives the sacred”; and in direct fulfilment of Christ's mandate to his apostles in the multiplication of the loaves prefiguring Holy Communion: “give you them to eat” (Mt 14:16). Traditionally, priests attending Holy Mass wouldn't receive Holy Communion from their own fingers, but on their tongue from the priest celebrant. This is still the case for newly ordained priests who receive Holy Communion on the tongue from the bishop at their Mass of ordination in the traditional form.

Thus, rather than digital Communion, our Christian forefathers in antiquity chose a gesture that to them best expressed

reverence and the gratuitous gift from God communicating Himself truly to us under the externals of a little piece of bread. These early Christians knew very well that the presence of God in the Host is not imaginary or merely symbolic; but on the contrary, that it is true, real and substantial. They knew that from Consecration by the priest onwards, no bread whatsoever is left on the altar, but only the mere externals of bread. Similarly, they knew that from Consecration by the priest onwards, no wine whatsoever is left in the chalice, but only the mere externals of wine. Furthermore, time and again the Fathers of the Church drew attention to the fact that even small fragments of a Sacred Host are the Lord. Each fragment is God, literally. Using directly one's lips and tongue to consume the Sacred Host lying on one's palm was thus also more secure than using one's digits, since small fragments adhering to the palm would then be consumed as well rather than be lost on fingertips. Out of reverence for the Lord, the Fathers of the Church also insisted strongly on the washing of

hands necessary before such Communion in the palm.

From palm to digital Communion

Thus, we Catholics need to be more precise nowadays when speaking of ‘Communion on the hand’. Referring merely to ‘Hand Communion’ is too vague. For, what is a hand? The hand consists of the palm and the five digits (the four fingers and the thumb). Communion from one’s digits never existed anywhere at any time in the Church. Communion from one’s palm to one’s mouth did exist in some

places for a few centuries. Already in the first millennium, in many places Holy Communion directly into the mouth had become the norm. The Church had learnt from experience that it was safer for the Sacred Host, and also more reverent. The posture of adults being fed to their mouths shows very clearly that they are children before God. It is not childish, but childlike. Avoiding childishness, Christian adults should emulate childlikeness. The Lord Jesus warned us: “*Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*” (Mt 18:3). Receiving Holy

Communion from another – namely the priest, standing for Christ – directly into our mouth teaches us that we must aspire to spiritual childhood to be made acceptable to God.

But if hand Communion has always meant in reality Communion from one’s palm, not from one’s digits, where does *digital* Communion come from? In other words, if hand Communion was ever only palm-to-mouth Communion, who started digits-to-mouth Communion?ⁱ Holy Church did not invent *digital* Communion. John Calvin did. A minor cleric in sixteenth-century France, poor John Calvin (1509–1564) lost his Catholic faith. He thought that the Sacred Host was just a piece of bread. (Notably though, Calvin denied adulterers such ritual bread.)ⁱⁱ Calvin assumed that the eyes of his soul were not capable of seeing further than the eyes of his body. Because our eyes of flesh see only bread at Holy Mass, poor John Calvin decided that the Sacred Host was not Jesus, but only a sign of the love of God feeding us spiritually. When he started his own Calvinist sect, Calvin was consistent. He granted communicants freedom to handle the bread and wine as they preferred, provided it was not kneeling and on the tongue: “*In regard to the external form of the ordinance, whether or not believers are to take into their hands and divide among themselves, or each is to eat what is given to him: whether they are to return the cup to the deacon or hand it to their neighbour... is of no consequence*”.ⁱⁱⁱ In Calvinist Geneva, people got used to walking to the “table” and, standing, to take up the elements with their own hands. Calvin knew that receiving kneeling and on the tongue expressed the reality of the divine



presence. To fit his lost Eucharistic faith, Calvin suppressed these traditional gestures of reverence. Claiming to return to the original mode of Communion in force in the early Church, that is, palm-to-mouth Communion, Calvin invented digital Communion instead. But by then, sadly, he had already left the Church.

Let us quote further Bishop Schneider’s book *Christus Vincit*: “[T]he faithful take and touch the Host directly with their fingers and then put the Host in the mouth: this gesture has never been known in the entire history of the Catholic Church but was invented by Calvin — not even by Martin Luther. The Lutherans have typically received the Eucharist kneeling and on the tongue, although of course they do not have the Real Presence because they do not have a valid priesthood. The Calvinists and other Protestant free churches, who do not believe at all in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, invented a rite which is void of almost all gestures of sacredness and of exterior adoration, i.e., receiving ‘Communion’ standing upright, and touching the bread ‘host’ with their fingers and putting it in their mouth in the way people treat ordinary bread.” To help us visualise the difference between palm-to-mouth Communion and digits-to-mouth Communion, let us remember St Isaac Jogues (1607–1646). He was a courageous Jesuit missionary in North America. The ferocious Iroquois Indians tortured him, cutting off most of his digits. If, God forbid, Fr Jogues had lost his Eucharistic faith like poor John Calvin did earlier, he would have been unable to seize the host in his digits after the Calvinist invention, because his digits were no more. For him there could have been no



(Pictures: Anonymous Portrait of John Calvin;
Princess Grace Kelly receives Holy Communion during her nuptial Mass.)

digital communion to the bread, only palm-to-mouth.

Permitted by the Church

Fifty years ago the Catholic Church borrowed this novel rite of digital Communion from the founder of Calvinism. We say this with respect, acknowledging it is nothing personal: we all know fellow Catholics who strive for holiness while abiding by this new rite of Communion, in obedience to their pastors’ preferences, or because they assume that early Christians did so. Our purpose then is not to pass judgment but to state an historical fact. We should not fear examining it, especially as it pertains to the most sacred reality in the world, that is, the salvific

presence of Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Adopting the Calvinist gesture of Communion was not at all a unanimous decision within the Catholic Church. On the contrary, when Paul Pope VI asked all the bishops in the world if they wished digital Communion to be introduced, 567 said yes, but 1233 said no. Thus, two and a half more voted against digital Communion. One wonders how many among those who supported the proposal knew that it was not the rite of antiquity. Had they known, would they have approved it? This consultation was completed by March 1969 as reported in the Instruction *Memoriale Domini*, which logically concluded against the innovation: “Therefore, taking into account the remarks and the

advice of those whom ‘the Holy Spirit has placed to rule over’ the Churches, in view of the gravity of the matter and the force of the arguments put forward, the Holy Father [Pope Paul VI] has decided not to change the existing way of administering holy communion to the faithful.”

Paradoxically, an annexe to the same document allowed digital Communion where it had been started without permission: *“With regard to the manner of administering the sacrament, one may follow the traditional method, which emphasized the ministerial function of the priest or deacon, in having them place the host in the hand of the communicant. One may also adopt a simpler method, allowing the communicant himself to take the host from the ciborium.”* (*Memoriale Domini*, Annexe 4.) Bishops availing themselves of this tolerance were to report on the experiment six months later, by the end of the year 1969. Please note that what is described as “the traditional method” is in actual fact *digital* Communion, that is, the communicant seizing the Sacred

Host with his own fingers: it seems inaccurate to call this method “traditional” if one follows Bishop Schneider’s account showing how digital Communion was invented outside the Church in the sixteenth century. Since then, as we know well, digital Communion was allowed in the New Rite of the Mass. Of course, Holy Mother Church has the authority to regulate the Eucharistic rites: this point is not questioned. But the fruits of such a change and the way it was introduced call for examination.

Even so, digital Communion is not the norm but a mere permission. The norm is still to receive Holy Communion on the tongue, also in the New Mass. In the traditional Mass, there is only one way, and that is on the tongue. As to the *minister* of Holy Communion during Holy Mass, Bishop Schneider teaches that it always and ever had to be a priest. Not even a deacon was allowed to give the Sacred Host during Holy Mass. Deacons could help with distributing the Sacred Blood when Holy Communion was given under both kinds. But only the priest, not the deacon, could put the

Sacred Host on the tongue of the communicants. Of course, no lay minister was ever allowed to distribute Holy Communion at Mass. Outside of Holy Mass, in times of persecution for instance, when all priests were dead or imprisoned, the laity were allowed to rescue the Blessed Sacrament and to bring it to the people. A witness to this heroic tradition is St Tarcisus who was put to death rather than give away the Blessed Sacrament he was carrying in secret. Pope St Damasus I rightly praised the young martyr: *“When an insane gang pressed saintly Tarsicius, who was carrying the sacraments of Christ, to display them to the profane, he preferred to be killed and give up his life rather than betray to rabid dogs the heavenly body”*.

Let us recapitulate: never did communicants seize the sacred host with their fingers to put it in their own mouth. Only the priest celebrant at Mass would do so, then acting in the Person of Christ. Using one’s fingers denotes power and

(Picture: St Tarcisus, by Alexandre Falguière ca. 1880, MET, New York)





authority over God. This was felt unbefitting for the communicant and unsafe for the brittle sacrament.

At the Last Supper

Let us now ask ourselves how Holy Communion was administered the very first time, namely, by Our Lord to his apostles at the Last Supper in Jerusalem. Numerous ancient mosaics and parchment illuminations depict Our Lord administering the Sacred Host directly into the mouths of his apostles. This was the assumed mode of the very First Holy Communion ever, even though in this case the communicants were clerics and even bishops, just ordained by the divine Founder of the Church. Let us see whether the New Testament concurs with this pictorial tradition.

St John’s Gospel does not describe the institution of the Most Holy Eucharist. Only Sts Matthew, Mark and Luke do so in their three Synoptic Gospels, and St Paul in his first Letter to the Corinthians. Out

of eight descriptions then (four for the Host and another four for the Chalice), six do not mention the verb ‘take’ in the Greek original. Only two do so, St Matthew and St Mark, using the same Greek verb ‘labēte’ (imperative, second person plural) which can be translated as ‘take’ or as ‘receive’.^{iv} This word occurs seven times in Holy Scripture, always in the New Testament. Significantly, the very same verb is translated as ‘take’ when the intention is sacrilegious; but it is translated as ‘receive’, when the intention is pious. Thus in St John’s Gospel on Good Friday: “When the chief priests, therefore, and the servants, had seen him, they cried out, saying: Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith to them: Take him you, and crucify him: for I find no cause in him” (Jn 19:6). But in the next chapter, after the Resurrection: “Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive,

they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained” (Jn 20:22). No Evangelist, neither St Paul, mentions ‘taking’ for the chalice at the Last Supper. Thus, as we see, six times out of eight (equivalent to 75% of cases), there is no mention of taking Holy Communion, either from the Host or from the Chalice. In the two occasions when the Greek verb ‘labēte’ is used for the Sacred Host, it allows for opposite meanings: take if sacrilegious, or receive if pious.

This is not enough to rule out every possibility of the apostles having seized the Sacred Host with their own fingers to bring it to their mouths. But it makes a very strong case for the traditional assumption, namely, that the apostles received Holy Communion to their mouth from the Saviour Himself. There is no use deploring the absence of definitive certainty on this matter. Rather, this slight ambiguity should prompt us to examine our dispositions towards the Eucharistic Lord, as St Paul wrote to the

Corinthians: “*whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord*” (1Co 11:27-29). This observation invites us to ask ourselves what we mean to do when we come for Holy Communion. Do we take possession of what is ours by right? Or do we humbly beg for God’s gratuitous gift? Receiving directly to one’s mouth better fosters the correct disposition of heart but doesn’t dispense one from self-examination. After all, Judas received^v directly to his mouth and from the Lord Himself according to St John, a direct witness: “[W]hen he had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot. [...] Having received [Greek ‘*labōn*’] the morsel, he went out immediately” (Jn 13:26; 30). Because the morsel of bread

was soaked with wine, laying it in Judas’ hand would have been impractical; furthermore, it was a Jewish custom for the host to bring food directly to the mouth of his honoured guest. It is significant that it is the same verb, *labanō*, which is used here as later for Holy Communion, in this case clearly indicating ‘receive’ rather than ‘take with the hands’. The fact that Our Lord fed ordinary bread and wine directly to the mouth of this apostle makes it even more likely that He administered his Eucharistic Body and Blood in the same manner to all apostles that same evening.

Conclusion

Hand Communion has been justified over the last fifty years based on its alleged use in early Christian communities. This argument is insufficient for two reasons. First, a return to antiquity for the sake of it can be sheer regression since legitimate developments occur, both

doctrinal and liturgical, along Church history. Second, and directly relevant to our topic, the hand Communion promoted in modern times is not the one of antiquity. The modern one is from *fingers* to mouth, whereas the early one was from *palm* to mouth. The early hand Communion meant to express reverence, whereas the modern one fosters familiarity. Furthermore, non-digital Communion concurs with the biblical narratives of the institution of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper. But digital Communion was invented sixteenth centuries later and outside the Church, specifically to deny the Real presence of the Lord under the Eucharistic species. The expression “hand Communion” is thus misleading without further qualifying. Hence our suggestion to distinguish, within hand Communion, between palm and digital Communion.

It is worth noting that another equivocal appeal to Eucharistic traditions occurred in the same period about priestly concelebration, according to liturgical scholar Dom Alcuin Read OSB. In 1963 *Sacrosanctum Concilium* stated that “concelebration... has remained in use to this day in the Church both in the east and in the west” (Chapter 2: 57-1). But Alcuin Read remarked that, based on historical evidence, the type of concelebration which has always been in use in the Church is not the *sacramental* one but the *ceremonial* one. When priests and bishops were concelebrating, roughly up to Vatican II, what was meant and what was happening was not transubstantiating together. There was only one minister transubstantiating, normally the bishop, while all others were associated in his action ceremonially, including at the Chrism Mass (cf Preface to *The*





Holy Eucharist—The World’s Salvation by Fr Joseph de Sainte-Marie, Gracewing, 2015). Sacramental concelebration wasn’t unknown, but it was rare. And yet, over the past sixty years, most Catholics have assumed that systematic sacramental concelebration had always been the norm. The two clerics just mentioned offered a timely clarification to priests as consecrators of the Holy Eucharist. It seems no less opportune to do the same, this time for the laity’s benefit, as regards the distribution of the same sacrament.

Finally, digital Communion was introduced only fifty years ago as a concession to disobedience, while Communion on the tongue remains the norm. For over a thousand years, receiving kneeling and on the tongue has been the approved custom in the Latin Church. This mode of Communion is undoubtedly more reverent and safer than the palm-to-mouth Communion of antiquity, let alone digital Communion. When digital communicants in good faith realise this, they are likely to choose receiving Holy Communion on the

tongue, which better expresses and protects the Eucharistic presence. Admittedly, digits are the best-fitted limbs in the human body for probing and seizing. Our Lord made use of his digits to cure the deaf-mute (Mk 7:33-35), and of St Thomas’ digits to cure him from his unbelief (Jn 20:26-27). In both cases, digits allowed close physical contact between the Saviour and a sinner. This confirms that our digits are not *per se* unworthy of divine touch. But in Holy Communion, we abandon ourselves with humility and faith to the Saviour who enters our body under the guise of food, so as to feed our souls genuinely with his grace. Since the use of digits denotes power, non-digital Communion better expresses abandonment to and confidence in the Eucharistic Lord.

In the Temple of Jerusalem the old man Simeon prefigured the Eucharistic attitude when he received the Lord Jesus corporally. In supernatural faith he confessed that the Baby Jesus brought in by his parents was God. St Luke describes how Simeon “received *the child in his arms*” (Lk 2:28). The Greek verb chosen by St Luke is

déxomai – which means ‘to receive in a welcoming way’. This verb is used of people welcoming God’s offers and salvation. Finally, Our Blessed Lady is our surest guide in finding the best bodily posture and disposition of soul to receive Her Son, as she did at her Annunciation; and later on in Ephesus when receiving Him in Holy Communion from St John, his priest. □

Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP is the author of *Ego Eimi: It Is I—Falling in Eucharistic Love* (Lumen Fidei Ireland, 2018), and of *X-Ray of the Priest in a Field Hospital* (Arouca Press, 2020).

ⁱ For the sake of concision, one could term palm-to-mouth Communion ‘*palmoral*’ (combining ‘*palm*’ and ‘*oral*’), as distinct from ‘*digital*’ Communion (digits-to-mouth). But neologisms are to be used sparsely.

ⁱⁱ “*I excommunicate all idolaters, blasphemers and despisers of God, all heretics and those who create private sects in order to break the unity of the Church, all perjurers, all who rebel against father or mother or superior, all who promote sedition or mutiny; brutal and disorderly persons, adulterers, lewd and lustful men, thieves, ravishers, greedy and grasping people, drunkards, gluttons, and all those who lead a scandalous and dissolute life. I warn them to abstain from this Holy Table, lest they defile and contaminate the holy food which our Lord Jesus Christ gives to none except they belong to His household of faith.*” Cf *Exhortation for the Eucharist*.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Institution of the Christian Religion*, Chapter 17, No43.

^{iv} No knowledge of the Greek language is required to discover the fascinating explanations of the various meanings of the verb ‘*to take*’ (‘*lambanō*’) in the New Testament, as helpfully detailed on the website

<https://biblehub.com/greek/2983.htm>.

^v The morsel dipped in wine was not Holy Communion but belonged to the ritual Passover meal. Scholars affirm that there is room for debate as to whether Judas received Holy Communion afterwards.

From Satanic “Priest” to Apostle of the Rosary

By Henry Walker

Blessed Bartolo Longo was born in 1841 to a devout and wealthy Catholic family in Southern Italy. Yet despite a privileged upbringing, young Bartolo fell prey to spiritualism and anti-Catholic political ideas while he was studying law at the University of Naples. Many professors at the university during this time were apostate priests who espoused a vehemently anti-clerical and nationalistic ideology. Bartolo consequently began to doubt the Faith of his parents, and adopted a hatred for the clergy and the Church due to exposure to these dangerous ideas. Without the safeguard of the Faith, Bartolo was seduced by the popular “spiritualist” movement, which was prominent at that time. His thirst for meaning and spiritual fulfilment lead him to seek out “mediums”, who were believed to be able to commune with spirits. Bartolo began to attend séances and would eventually preside over them himself. He would follow this dark path into other occult practices until he became a practitioner of outright Satanism.

It is believed that Bartolo Longo was “ordained” a Satanic “priest”



after rigorous fasting and various occult rites. He gave himself over to a particular spirit who would act as his “guide”; this guide was undoubtedly a demon. Bartolo’s hatred of priests and religious increased, and he fostered an especial hatred for the Pope. He would preach against the Catholic Church in public, blaspheme God, and was almost entirely consumed by evil. Unsurprisingly, Bartolo’s life began to be affected evermore by depression, paranoia, and a terrible anxiety overtook him. As Bartolo began to attack the Church more venomously, he was confronted by a devout professor at

the University of Naples, named Vincenzo Pepe. Vincenzo asked him: “Do you want to die in an insane asylum and be damned forever?” These words must have penetrated deeply into Bartolo’s soul, as he subsequently agreed to meet with a holy Dominican priest, Fr Alberto Radente, who would be the man to hear his confession and reconcile him with the Church. Bartolo became a devout third-order Dominican after this conversion, taking the name “Brother Rosario” due to his special devotion to the Holy Rosary.

It is said that Bartolo almost turned his back yet again on the Faith. He considered that once a priest of the Catholic Church is ordained, he is a priest forever. This caused Bartolo to undergo a sudden and powerful temptation to despair, one which almost overcame him. Bartolo thought that just as a Catholic priest is consecrated for all eternity, he too was forever consecrated a “priest” of the devil. However, in the midst of this anguish, Bartolo recalled the words of the holy Dominican who had formed him in the faith, referring to the promise given by the Mother of God: “One who propagates my Rosary shall be saved.” It was after considering this

promise and believing it that Bartolo dedicated himself entirely to propagating the Holy Rosary.

It is known that after his conversion Bartolo returned to the places he had frequented as a Satanist, and while holding up the Rosary he publicly decried his former errors. Bartolo intensified this apostolic vigour after overcoming the temptation to despair. He powerfully exhorted all to pray the Rosary with his words and prolific writings. He commissioned the Basilica of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary to be built in Pompeii, where his apostleship of the Rosary truly flourished. Bartolo also went on to found orphanages and schools, as well as forming a friendship with Pope Leo XIII, who himself had a profound devotion to the Rosary. Blessed Bartolo Longo can also be said to have started the movement which led to the declaration of the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1950. The shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary in Pompeii remains to this day a popular pilgrimage site, many flocking to see the miraculous image of Our Lady of Pompeii, which Bartolo Longo procured from Friar Alberto and had restored himself. Bartolo Longo continued to propagate the Holy Rosary until his death at age 85. His last words were: *“My only desire is to see Mary who saved me and who will save me from the clutches of Satan.”* Bartolo Longo was beatified on October 26, 1980.

God has given us a powerful testimony to the efficacy of the Holy Rosary through the life of Blessed Bartolo Longo. Through the Rosary the Mother of God is able to rescue even the most destitute of sinners from the brink of the abyss. Blessed Bartolo

likewise bears witness to the truth of the fifteen promises of the Rosary, which the Blessed Virgin Mary gave to both Saint Dominic and Blessed Alan de la Roche, particularly Promise twelve: *“All those who propagate the holy Rosary shall be aided by me in their necessities.”* And Promise thirteen: *“I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of death.”* With these promises in mind, it is very important that we ourselves heed the call to propagate the Rosary, and become apostles of the Rosary in our own right.

There will be many saints in heaven who slipped through the fingers of the devil due to the prayers of the Holy Rosary; Blessed Bartolo is just one of them. There will be many souls raised to a sublime degree of glory in heaven due to their love and apostleship of the Holy Rosary,

as Our Lady promised: *“The faithful children of the Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in Heaven.”* This is why the Mother of God constantly reminds us to recite the Rosary and promote it to others. Through the power of the Rosary conversions can be effected that no amount of learning, eloquence, or talent can equal. Miracles can be worked, great sanctity can be achieved, and souls can be wrestled from the jaws of the enemy. Saint Louis de Montfort elucidates this truth beautifully in his book, *Secret of the Rosary*:

“It is scarcely possible for me to put into words how our Lady esteems the Rosary and how she prefers it to all other devotions. Nor can I sufficiently express how wonderfully she rewards those who work to make known the devotion, to establish it and spread it nor, on the other hand, how strictly she punishes those who work against it.” □



FSSP Anniversary & LMS Annual Mass Homily

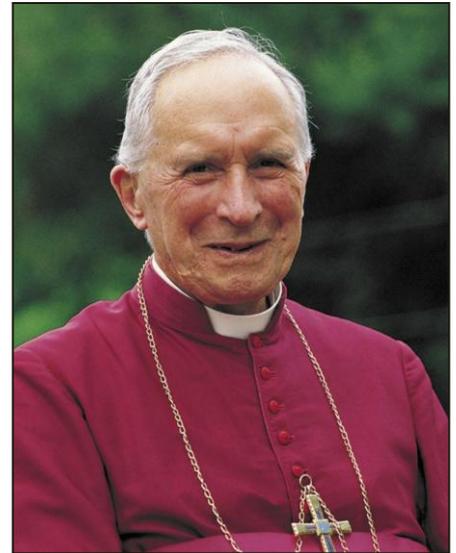
Homily by Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP at St Mary's Church, Warrington, on 18th July 2020.

Dear Friends,
Holy Mass today is offered for the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter and for the Latin Mass Society. The FSSP celebrates today the 32nd anniversary of its foundation. The LMS chose today's date for its annual event, taking place remotely. St Mary's Shrine is honoured to have been asked to host the annual LMS Mass, which is broadcast live on our LiveMass channel and on the LMS channel.

More and more people love the traditional Latin Mass. Why? Out of nostalgia? Out of elitism? Out of fear of modernity? Not in my experience. I was raised in the Novus Ordo Mass. I entered the FSSP motherhouse in Bavaria 25 years ago for doctrinal reasons, not liturgical. I was seeking a place of priestly formation where absolute orthodoxy was guaranteed. I looked at various conservative

communities. All had some very good aspects. But if joining the FSSP, I was told, I would have to attend and later offer Holy Mass always in the traditional form. I was perplexed, because that was alien to me. Then I compared the new missal in which I had been raised, and the traditional missal which I didn't know. Using my literary background from university, I concluded that the traditional missal expresses the fundamental truths of our faith with higher precision, strength and beauty than the new missal. Simply put, it is a much better instrument. I chose it then, and entered the FSSP. I was young, not old. I was hopeful, not nostalgic. I was average, not elitist.

In the modern struggle for our Catholic faith, we all learn and receive from other people of good will. I am indebted to the founders of the FSSP. This day in Switzerland, in 1988, 12 priests met at the Cistercian Abbey of Hauterive near Fribourg (cf picture



below). Most of them were former members of the Society of St Pius X. They had left the Society after hearing that Archbishop Lefebvre had withdrawn his signature from the Agreement recently reached with Rome. These priests were deeply indebted to Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre (cf picture above) for standing up for the Roman traditions of the Church, when nearly no other bishops in the world would speak up to save the treasure of the Roman traditions, which for centuries had been the backbone of the Latin Church. For his heroic courage at the time, we the FSSP profess deep gratitude towards Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. Anyone coming to value these same traditions will equally be indebted to the Archbishop.

But our founders could not follow him when he consecrated new bishops without permission from the pope. Traditional doctrine does foresee cases of necessity, when a



bishop or a priest might perform a sacrament without explicit permission from his ecclesiastical superior. But this is permitted under two conditions:

- Condition 1: The superior cannot possibly be reached.
- Condition 2: Approval by the superior must be assumed.

That 18th July 1988 in Hauterive, these twelve priests could not in conscience affirm that the two conditions were met to justify the episcopal consecrations at Ecône.

- As to Condition 1: The superior could be reached – Pope John Paul II.
- As to Condition 2: His permission to consecrate one bishop was granted as part of the earlier Agreement, the same Agreement since then rejected by Archbishop Lefebvre.

The founders of the FSSP wanted to keep alive the Roman traditions of the Church, but in full hierarchical communion with the Church. Humanly speaking, their move was madness. They were leaving a good institution where they had served with fruit and merit. They had no indication at all that the Vatican would welcome them. At best, they could expect to be assigned to various dioceses, with dire difficulties to continue and offer the Traditional Mass and sacraments exclusively. They acted in supernatural faith. Their courageous witness echoed deeply yesterday night when, in this very sanctuary, our five latest adult converts recited the traditional

formula of *Profession of Faith* including the following statement: “*I believe in the primacy, not only of honour, but also of jurisdiction, of the Roman Pontiff, successor of St. Peter, prince of the apostles, vicar of Jesus Christ*”. As Rector of this Shrine by appointment of the Archbishop of Liverpool, himself appointed by the Vicar of Christ, I received their profession holding the book of the Holy Gospels.

Dear friends, like many of you, including our many LMS friends, I give thanks for the huge achievements of the past 25 years.



By the grace of God, with the support of the sovereign pontiffs, and through the zeal of clergy and the laity, more and more people come to realise that the traditional liturgy is not about smells and bells. As sadly parishes are merged and seminaries and convents are shut down at an accelerating pace, in contrast, the vitality of the traditional movement becomes more manifest. As the number of children per Catholic family continues to drop and as family itself as an institution is undermined and often

collapses, more families look with hope towards the traditional Mass centres. As legal pressures increase against natural law and against divine law, many people of good will realise that doctrine, culture, philosophy, family morality and education are best conveyed, protected and enhanced through the traditional liturgy.

As more clergy retire, get sick or die out, more bishops discover that priests of traditional communities are worth inviting into their dioceses. For instance in this country where the FSSP arrived twenty years ago, we are officially established in the Archdioceses of Liverpool and Edinburgh, and in the dioceses of Portsmouth and Northampton. We are glad to bring the distinctive note of our traditional charism to the service of souls within the dioceses; and to develop good relations with the local clergy.

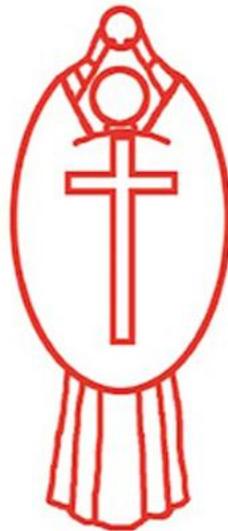
Our Fraternity and the Latin Mass Society worked hard to show that one can love the Roman traditions and be loyal to the hierarchy of the Church. Some would claim that it is not possible. That one is bound to choose one against the other. We are not saying that ours is always an easy path to walk. But that there is a path, anyone with eyes can see it. Looking back and remembering how difficult it was even twenty years ago to attend a traditional Latin Mass, one is amazed at the growth of Mass centres, served by diocesan clergy and by priests of traditional institutions. I invite you to visit the interactive map of Mass centres on our LiveMass.net page, or on the LMS webpage. It is encouraging. It shows that tradition

in communion is not only a possibility but a reality. This fact makes it possible for any Catholics of good will to overcome possible ideology and bias and to see for themselves what the riches of the Roman traditions are about.

Thanks to the efforts of the Latin Mass Society, the traditional Latin Mass has always been offered in communion with the Church hierarchy in this country. As to the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter, despite our limited numbers, our ministry shows that priests can serve in good standing in this country while offering always the Traditional Latin Mass. It is a fact. God granted this not only for the benefit of the LMS or for the benefit of the FSSP, but for all: to make the treasures of the Roman traditions available for all those who seek. This includes converts in growing numbers. Again, yesterday, in this very church, five adults were received into the Catholic Church. The same occurred here last year.

I know that many good Catholics still have no traditional Mass centre near them. Sometimes the bishop has not answered their needs, even though the Holy See asked that such needs be met fully; even though the bishop would know to invite traditional clergy if he wished, while empty churches are easy to locate. This makes it extremely difficult for these people. Some such families and individuals are earnestly considering relocating near firmly established Traditional Mass centres. I think they are wise. The times are awkward; some might say the times are evil. Episodes such as the current lockdown bode not well of what looms ahead. You can't be the salt of the earth if you are spread so thin that you lose your flavour. You can't evangelise if your basic Catholic needs are not

met. You can't transmit the faith if you are spiritually dying. Friends, we need to regroup and secure Catholic life as core communities, not as a matter of preference, but for sheer survival. The stronger we are as communities, the better we can evangelise. Yes, we want the Traditional Latin Mass. But it calls for the full range of pastoral support: catechism, spiritual direction, instructions of converts, vocations, school, youth groups such as *Juventutem*, and of course all the seven sacraments.



Am I a dreamer? I am not a dreamer. I saw it happen in more than one place. Here in Warrington, this beautiful church was to be shut down for want of priests. There was no traditional Mass precedent in this church or in town. Our Fraternity was invited to take over. Overnight, the congregation went from daily Mass in English to daily traditional Mass. They tried it. Many liked it. Now all love it. And more have come. This is the only parish church out of the entire country where even the sacrament of holy Orders has been administered – in the traditional form – on two occasions.

Our Archbishop Malcolm McMahon of Liverpool also comes every year to confirm our candidates, and again this afternoon to confirm nineteen more. Please pray for them. As you know, we have bought a sizeable building next door, the former St Mary's School. Please pray that we might raise the remaining amount this summer to complete the *Priory Campaign*. Allow us to do more. Invest with us in the Church of tomorrow. Fund the village.

Please pray for our priests and vocations.

- We need many more young men to answer the call, so that in ten years from now there will be fully fledged traditional Mass communities in every city.
- We need many more young men to answer the call, so that in fifteen years from now, there will be fully fledged traditional Mass communities in every town.
- We need many more young men and women to answer the call to religious life, the priesthood and matrimony, so that in twenty years from now, there will be fully fledged traditional Mass communities, convents, abbeys, friaries, hospitals and schools all across this *Dowry* of Mary!

Friends, shall we start tomorrow? Some started yesterday or longer ago like the LMS and the FSSP founders. Let us follow them if we came later on. Today we begin.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass today is offered for the members and supporters of the LMS and of the FSSP. May Our Blessed Lady guide and protect us all. □

Open Letter of Appeal to Downside Abbey

Fr Christopher Basden offers practical solutions to safeguard religious life in Downside Abbey and across Britain

The news that the monks of Downside Abbey in Somerset are to abandon their home of more than two centuries, including the fabulous Abbey Church which is one of only four Minor Basilicas in England, came as a shock to English Catholics. It is difficult to imagine them surviving as a separate community, and we know that many other religious communities are not far behind the monks of Downside in terms of declining numbers. Which will be the next to go?

Fr Christopher Basden, long-time Parish Priest of St Bede's Clapham Park, in South London, and now Parish Priest in Ramsgate and Minster in Kent, has written the following letter appealing to the community to think again. St Bede's has been a model of the integration of the Traditional Mass into a territorial parish, and demonstrates the way this can contribute to securing the future of a church. Decline is not inevitable: some monastic communities are growing today: those who have reconnected themselves with the roots of tradition.

Reproduced with permission.

(Picture: LMS priests session at Downside; next page: St Paul de Wisques Abbey.)

OPEN LETTER OF APPEAL TO DOWNSIDE

On behalf of untold people throughout the world I write to appeal against the monks of Downside surrendering to the current zeitgeist and leaving their monastery. Downside is part of the fabric of English Catholic history. The restoration of the Catholic Church and of monasticism is one of the great victories of Grace after the horrendous rape and interruption by Henry VIII in the 16th Century. We appeal against this decision in the face of a more insidious enemy: that of secularism, relativism and modernism which destroys the Church from within.

Surrendering does not solve the problem. We have faced enemies before and a flight or dispersal to another location(s) is simply the recipe for swift extinction as we have seen previously (Fort

Augustus and countless female communities). Have we no faith in the grace of God and the irresistible attraction to the consecrated life and the eternal truth of the Catholic Church?

Let us look at the success stories in the otherwise devastated vineyard of the modern Church. The French Abbey of Fontgombault have made five successful foundations in the last forty years; Randol, Triors, Pyrenees, Clear Creek in Oklahoma (which after twenty-one years is making moves for its own foundation) Wisques. What is the secret of Fontgombault? Simply - traditional Catholicism from observance to worship to belief. This is true also of the Benedictine Communities of Le Barroux (with its foundation near Toulouse), Norcia in Italy, Silverstream near Dublin and countless other smaller communities in the USA.

I can hear the immediate scornful



repudiation that this simply going backwards. In so many fields we have to go back to rediscover the genius of our respective traditions from Education to Architecture to Entertainment. We have to have the humility to admit mistakes in seeking renewal and modernity.

Look at the great Empire of American Catholic University Education. With the infamous “Land of Lakes” Agreement of 1967, Catholic universities in the name of renewal and academic freedom surrendered their distinctive Catholic identity to the forces of modernity and secularism. This resulted in a disastrous cessation of vocations and a complete erosion of the ordinary regular transmission of the practice of the Faith from one generation to the next. Fifty years later the great Catholic Universities are Catholic in name only, often benefiting by federal money but no longer bearing fruit for God’s Church. Starting again from scratch there are five Universities (Ave Maria in Florida, Steubenville, Christendom, Thomas More and Thomas Aquinas). What is the result? The transmission of a confident, orthodox faith to the younger generation and the spawning of Catholic marriages and a huge variety of consecrated and ordained vocations.

If you have an allergy to undiluted Catholic tradition, then distil it slightly. Go for orthodoxy and challenging observance. If you are wedded to the Second Vatican Council, then follow its central and novel precept: ‘The Universal Call to Holiness’. Sanctity and schools of The Lord’s Service are simply irresistible! There are so many dioceses and religious groups (Community of St. Martin in

France) which are merely conservative and not traditionalist. If we want to conserve the precious treasure of the Catholic Faith and all of its fruits, we simply have to move towards this direction even if not espousing it completely.

It is said that there is no unity in community today. We have to surrender our differing individual preferences to the Science of The Saints to ensure the hermeneutic of continuity and not of dissipation. We have to unite in order to preserve; we have to surrender our

The wisdom was that they were finished and that they would have to move. Thankfully, a higher wisdom intervened, Dom Cyril Pierce took over and as a remarkably successful Master of Novices at The Grand Chartreuse (twelve men to solemn profession) also oversaw a confident formation of new men. In addition to this he oversaw lottery funding to repair the sorry state of the monastery. Thirty years later they have twenty-seven monks. It takes but one man with the vision and determination and grace to succeed.



own wills to forestall the disintegration of the Institutions of the Catholic Church.

One example from our otherwise devastating English monastic scenario – Parkminster, our only Charterhouse. In 1990 my dear late friend, Dom Bernard O’ Donavon, then Prior, felt they simply could not go on. They were down to eleven old men. The buildings were crumbling all around them. Continual Postulants and Novices simply came and went with none persevering for almost twenty years.

Why do we have to see our Catholic Church in this country despoiled? Why do we have to despair in the face of secularism, so called modernity and the ugly rotten fruits of the sexual revolution which have infected and corrupted our morals and our minds? Many mistakes have been made. Can we not learn for our mistakes and proceed humbly towards a better future?

Fr Christopher Basden, Parish Priest of Ramsgate and Minster, England
□

A Fable from the *Sugarland Chronicles*

Prince Sugarhill and the Giant

Once upon a time in Sugarland, very far from here, there was a valiant young man called Prince Sugarhill. Prince Sugarhill battled for everyone to be free in Sugarland and abroad. Better than armour, he nearly always wore a collarless tunic called *teeshirt*. The teeshirt proved that Prince Sugarhill was free from conventions, traditions and any sort of oppression. Did Prince Sugarhill fight for freedom with a sword or with a lance, you ask? Neither. Prince Sugarhill's wonderful weapon was the magic sugarframe. The sugarframe displayed the faces of any inhabitant in Sugarland and abroad. The freer one was, the more often one's face showed on the sugarframe (or perhaps the other way round). Since everyone in Sugarland wanted to be free, they loved the sugarframe (or perhaps the other way round). In grave danger, one only needed shouting: "Prince Sugarhill, brave Prince Sugarhill, save us with your sugarframe!" And immediately Prince Sugarhill erased the danger on his sugarframe.

What a beautiful country Sugarland was! It was particularly renowned for its piety. Every day, many high and mighty knights escorted elegant dames to the sugarshrines for worship. The knights usually remained outside while the dames stepped indoors to offer with devotion exquisite sugarbuds to the sugargoddess. Some sugarbuds were bigger than others. In fact, many had already blossomed into magnificent

sugarflowers. How pleased the sugargoddess was with such precious offerings! Alas, alas, not everything was safe and sound in Sugarland. Worship was under threat. Attracted by the sugar offerings, hideous ants lay in wait by the sugarshrines. Their dreadful aspect and nauseous smell would deter many a dame from entering the sugarshrines. Ants crave sugar: they delighted in the sugarbuds.

sugarbuds. It was rumoured that, more than once, *expect-ants* had even gotten hold of some of the noble ladies and dragged them down into their dens, never to be heard of anymore near any sugarshrine.

Despite this most impious harassment, worship went on at the sugarshrines, thanks to the bravery of the knights. When a dame hesitated, understandably repelled



They hoped to snatch and carry away the precious votive offerings to their anthills and horribly feed on them, experts assured. The more common type of ant preying outside the sugarshrines was the *remn-ant*. *Remn-ants* would normally walk along the pavement waving their antennas, as if scouting the area. Much worse, but rare enough, were the *expect-ants*. They stretched their mandibles with fierce determination, trying to catch the precious

by the hideous aspect of the ants, her knight would persuasively guide her toward the door of the shrine, manly shielding the lady behind him. Don't ask me about the preposterous claims of children: no adult really took these seriously. Why, these little ones affirmed that a much more terrible kind of ant existed, whose name they whispered in dread, at night, under their duvets: the *gi-ant*! Help! Allegedly, *gi-ants* were not only of colossal

size, but also endowed with supernatural powers, like reading in a man's soul. *Gi*-ants also emitted a pestilential smell, children said; and spread on their victims' foreheads a substance called 'water', blasphemously dissolving the precious sugar, better to suck it. But all experts assured that evolution had long done away with *gi*-ants, whose fossils could not be seen even in museums.

And yet, what if children knew better? One afternoon outside a sugarshrine, a knight had valiantly scared off two *remn*-ants when a dreaded *expect*-ant jumped in, looking terribly voracious. The danger was such that the sugarshrine ministers asked for reinforcement. In haste, men of arms wheeled additional weaponry into the sugarshrine. The beast having reluctantly left, the courageous staff were giving thanks for their narrow escape, when... No! Under their feet, at slow intervals, the floor started shaking, less and less faintly. In the stables, horses neighed, as if terrified. Lampposts were now quaking rhythmically, while a pestilential smell spread along the street. Was it a...? No! Impossible! Surely this could not happen, not in Sugarland. And yet, slowing growing in size in the distance, horribly menacing and with paralysing stench as it crawled towards the sugarshrine, there appeared... A *gi*-ant.

The monster looked much worse than dinosaurs, plesiosaurs and even raptors. Its black shell rustled in many shiny folds exuding poisonous fluid, while its cruel little eyes left no doubt as to its murderous intention. No collarless teshirt for the *gi*-ant: on the contrary, a huge rigid collar – the dreaded symbol of oppression – ran around its neck. Even the knights lost their valiance

and ran for shelter into the sugarshrine, leaving behind one of the ladies, frozen with fear, until she retreated into her carriage. Then the beast slowly crouched, obviously preparing for a predatory pounce! Such a desperate situation called for radical action. All inside the sugarshrine started shouting "Prince Sugarhill, brave Prince Sugarhill, save us with your sugarframe!"

Alas, alas, after nearly an hour elapsed in dire anguish, the devilish creature still hadn't been erased. Worse, it had extracted from its shell a thread of tiny poisonous spheres – about fifty – held in its



arthropod legs. Whether those were eggs being laid or projectiles to be spawn across, the situation in the besieged sugarshrine was soon to be totally hopeless. What was Prince Sugarhill doing? In dire panic, the sugarshrine staff now envisaged the worst hypothesis: an invasion. Horribly, all across Sugarland, sugarshrines were possibly under simultaneous attack by *gi*-ants, and poor Prince Sugarhill was desperately trying to erase the thousands of monsters on his sugarframe. Knights were put to shame when a frail woman, risking her life, dared to walk out of the shrine carrying powerful bait for the

gi-ant. It was a cup of irresistible, creamy and warm chocolate. Our heroin had mixed the melted chocolate with beaten eggs, making its substance light and fluffy! Her master stroke against the *gi*-ant had been to spread cocoa powder and cane sugar on top, now slowly melting over the hot brown liquid... In case you wonder whether a marshmallow floated in the middle as a *coup de grace* (looking like a sugarberg, rather than an iceberg), well, these Sugarland Chronicles won't mention it. Having laid the tantalising cup at the far end of the street, the young woman ran for her

life all the way back into the sugarshrine whose thick door was slammed behind her. Safe at last!

Her spirit of self-sacrifice was rewarded. Thankfully, the effect on the *gi*-ant was immediate. Alerted by its sensors about the prodigious density of sugar contained in the cup, the beast scurried away with frightening velocity to the end of the street where, assumedly, it sucked the precious beverage and soon disappeared – for now. But what a narrow escape! The knights suggested that Prince Sugarhill was the one, rather than the woman, who'd erased the monster on his

sugarframe. But the shrine ladies guessed that the knights were only trying to minimise the girl's feat out of bitterness, their gallantry having proved cowardly in such dire straits. When Prince Sugarhill visited next, which version would he confirm: the ladies' or the knights'? Regardless, one would need him by the sugarshrine very soon, now that the *gi-ants* had located such a sacred venue. Please, for the sake of sugarpiety, that sugarworship might never be under threat again, not even merely slowed down! "Prince Sugarhill, brave Prince Sugarhill, save us with your sugarframe!"

- The End -

We offer the fable above in an attempt to understand our censors' point of view. Censors? Indeed, this tale is a fictional equivalent of a deleted post on social media. This is how it happened...

The beginning of Lent 2020 seems a long time ago, like any event that occurred before the COVID-19 lockdown. Sadly, some issues affecting our lives, even the very right to life for those in the womb, remain as pressing as before. As the Church's penitential season was starting, freedom of speech was undermined when a short pro-life post on a social network was suppressed without notice or acknowledgment to the owner of the account. It was surprising to see that post being deleted, because its contents were not far-reaching and because the page hosting it barely had a few thousand 'likes', making its influence very limited by social media standards (where followers are usually counted by the hundreds of thousands). Furthermore, the post was uploaded long after the Irish Referendum legalising abortion, an outcome facilitated by Facebook

CEO Mark Zuckerberg who publicly admitted to having banned pro-life ads to preserve the integrity of the Irish campaign. We now give the deleted post without further comment, only praying that our entire server will not vanish, nor our editorial team evaporate as by magic.



No hot chocolate at the abortuary!

That is, unless you are a self-styled 'Sister Supporter' (sistersupporter.co.uk) as my priest found out last Wednesday. Wearing his customary cassock, he went to pray peacefully outside the Manchester abortuary as part of the Lenten '40 Days For Life' effort to save unborn children. A middle-age couple stood next to him on the pavement, praying in silence. No one carried signs or banners; no chairs were set. He was on his knees the first thirty minutes. Directly opposite them, three youngish 'Sister Supporter' women wearing pink jackets with the sign 'Stop Harassment' were sitting on the low wall outside the abortuary. They kept chatting all the time, paying no attention to the 'customers' walking in or out.

Inside the building, from several windows, abortion staff took photographs to document the 'threat' involved by the prayerful

presence opposite. The pro-life couple left, having arrived earlier. The priest remained alone, still on his knees, with the three chatting women opposite. A police officer walked into the building, then left without asking the priest or the 'Sister Supporters' any question. A delivery man arrived, wheeling on a trolley three large metal bottles towards the rear door. The priest could not see if the bottles contained oxygen or gas, but what difference would it make to the babies?

As the priest was about to go, after an hour of silent prayer, the entrance door of the

abortuary opened and a female staff shouted towards the 'Sister Supporters': 'Hi ladies, you're not too cold out there, are you? Can I get you a cuppa? Coffee, tea?' Two answered 'yes'. The third woman ventured: 'Could I have a hot chocolate?' – 'Sure!'.

For some reason, my priest wasn't offered a hot drink. Perhaps, the staff knew that hot chocolate would not have flown easily down his throat while innocent blood was being shed indoors. Still, he was glad to be allowed to pray out there, since a pending resolution of the local borough council is to 'criminalise prayer' on this pavement. 'Criminalise prayer': not sure these two words often appear together on official media outside North Korea, Communist China and a few other unfortunate countries. At least, now we know where we stand – or kneel.

Signed: 'Brother Intercessor', as my priest calls himself. □

Parents as Primary Educators of their Children

SPUC shows that the new school curriculum in England gravely undermines this natural right of parents.

Important information for parents on Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) [extracts]

Two new compulsory school subjects are coming into force in all schools in England in September 2020. These are:

1. Relationships Education in all Primary Schools
2. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in all Secondary Schools.

Under the new legislation:

- Parents **will not be able to withdraw** their children from Relationships Education.
- Parents **will be able to withdraw** their children in Primary School from sex education.
- Parents **will not be able to withdraw** their children from RSE at Secondary School.
- Parents will only be able to request that their child be withdrawn from the sex education parts of RSE with the final decision being given to the head teacher. From the age of 15 the child has the right to override any parental request that they be withdrawn from Sex Education.

An additional compulsory subject, Health Education, will also come into force in all primary and secondary schools and may also be of concern to parents (for independent schools, this will be taught as part of PSHE which is already compulsory).

Although these compulsory new subjects officially come into force in September, due to the Coronavirus

situation, the Government is allowing schools, if necessary, to delay the full implementation of the new subjects until the start of the summer term (April 2021). This allows further time in many cases for parental consultation.

1. Do I have any say in how Relationships Education and RSE will be taught in my child's school?



In theory, yes. The Government's guidance states that schools are required to consult with parents when developing their policies for Relationships Education and RSE (cf *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers*; 2019).

However, the Department for Education has published a 14-page document titled 'Parental

Engagement on Relationships Education'. The main message in this publication is that schools should offer parents the opportunity to have their say, but ultimately the school decides what will be taught.

2. Will I be able to see the policy?

Yes, the policy on Relationships Education or RSE must be made available to parents. The policy must 'meet the needs of pupils and

parents and reflect the community they serve'. The policy must also include information about 'how the policy has been produced and how it will be kept under review, in both cases working with parents'. The policy must be published on the school's website.

...

4. Who has the final say about what is taught in Relationships Education and RSE?

The school. ...

5. But hasn't the Government said that parents are the primary educators of their children?

Yes. ...

6. Is it still worth engaging with my child's school?

Yes. ...

7. Can I still take my child out of sex education lessons in Primary School?

Yes. You will still have a legal right to do this after September 2020. The school governors must make sure that clear information is given to all parents about withdrawal from these classes.

8. Is there a clear distinction between Sex Education and Relationships Education in Primary Schools?

No. This has been a concern since the new compulsory subject of Relationships Education was announced. ...

9. Can I take my secondary age child out of the sex education component of RSE?

Yes, but only with the permission of the headteacher. You do not have an automatic right to do this and for three terms before your child's 16th birthday your child can go against your wishes and attend sex education classes.

10. Are schools required to teach pupils about marriage?

Yes. The Government has clarified that marriage must be taught as part of Relationships Education, even if this topic is covered in other areas of the curriculum, for example PSHE. The Government has stressed that marriage must be part of the Relationships Education policy 'and therefore **form part of the parental engagement process**'. (Emphasis added.) However, the Government's RSE guidance states that marriage is understood in law to include same sex couples. The

parental consultation is the opportunity for parents to speak out against any teaching which confuses children about the real nature of marriage.

11. Will my Primary age child be taught about LGBT relationships?

Not necessarily. The Government has stated that Primary Schools are 'strongly enabled and encouraged to cover LGBT content', but this is not stating that schools are legally

No. The Government is trying to sugar coat its policy on LGBT teaching by saying that the new compulsory school subjects 'don't "promote" anything, they educate'. Educating a child about LGBT relationships cannot be done in a neutral manner in the same way as, for example, teaching maths.

14. If my child goes to a faith school will he/she be exempt from Relationships Education and RSE?



required to do so.

12. Will my secondary age child be taught about LGBT relationships?

Yes. ...

13. Will the school simply be educating my child about LGBT relationships rather than promoting them?

No. These new subjects are compulsory in all schools in England, including faith schools. The Catholic Education Service has welcomed the Government's new subjects saying: 'The proposals announced by the Government...are compatible with the Catholic model curriculum'. You may like to raise this with your bishop if you are a Catholic. □

Priory Campaign Completed with £1m Raised

By Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP, with Fr Matthew Goddard, FSSP

Our heartfelt thanks go to God and all our benefactors for the success of the *Priory Campaign*. The Trustees of FSSP England are delighted to announce that the remaining funds needed to complete the purchase of Priory Court (Unit 1) and to undertake the necessary conversion work have now been raised and we have ceased fundraising.

Fr Goddard, our charity's Bursar, has written as follows: "This much needed addition to St Mary's Shrine facilities involves significant funding, and it would not have been possible without your financial support. At the time of writing, with a few final administrative checks still to be undertaken, we are fairly certain that the *Priory Campaign* final total stands at £957,917.48. This includes a legacy of £139,800.00 which the executor was



happy to put towards Campaign funds. When we add the expected Gift Aid rebates on some of your donations, along with other funds received towards hall facilities, this raises the total to about £1,019,300.00. With last year's purchase of Units 2 and 3, and some remedial works completed in recent months, roughly half of this figure has been spent. However, the remaining funds will allow us to comfortably buy Unit 1 and make

all the necessary conversion work and adaptations for Shrine use."

It seemed very fitting for us to try to buy back the old Priory and convent, both on Buttermarket Street, because they were part of St Mary's Parish – originally owned and run by the Benedictine monks of Ampleforth Abbey. Similarly, Priory Court stands on the site of the old parish school of St Mary's. But we started this Campaign two years ago in adverse circumstances. The owner – a large company letting office and industrial space nationwide – granted us three months, between 18th July and 18th October 2018 to raise the £1.5 million needed to make the purchases. However, with everyone going on holiday, including benefactors, this was the worst time in the year to launch a fundraising campaign. And yet, money started



being sent to us.

Articles in national media such as *The Catholic Herald* and some international blogs draw attention to the project. The *Priory Campaign* received official support from *The Latin Mass Society*, pro-life organisations such as *SPUC*, *40 Days for Life*, *Good Counsel Network*, and other prominent Catholics such as Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, Jacob Rees-Mogg and Viscountess Ashbrook.

The October 2018 deadline was extended over time and our scope had to be limited to the amount raised and to administrative constraints. After one year, in October 2019, we managed to buy two units of Priory Court, while allocating funds for the necessary conversion costs from office to our use. One year later, we are now completing the purchase of the final unit and can allocate space within the entire building for various needs.

Work should start shortly to make Priory Court a versatile venue for Catholic activities and events. We wish this venue to support Catholicism not only in Warrington but further afield through family activities and through liturgical, doctrinal, pro-life and artistic events. We thank wholeheartedly our benefactors, including those who offered sacrifices and prayers rather than or in addition to money, according to their means. From the start the *Priory Campaign* was entrusted to Our Blessed Lady. St Joseph was also regularly invoked, as well as the Servant of God Elizabeth Prout. The success of the Campaign demonstrates their blessing through the generosity of our benefactors and supporters. In happy contrast with the sad departure of the Benedictine monks

from Downside Abbey in the news recently, the success of the *Priory Campaign* speaks of the reclamation of part of Warrington's Benedictine patrimony. The Abbey of Ampleforth in Yorkshire used to run four parishes in Warrington. St Mary's was the last one they had to relinquish, due to lack of vocations. There is something symbolic in the saving of St Mary's Church from likely closure in 2015, followed by the reclaiming of the site of the old parish school next door. To English Catholics and to anyone in love with our Catholic heritage and faith, it speaks of hope, of ardour and of trust in the Lord and His saints, helping us rebuild Our Lady's Dowry.

Special intercessor:

Born in Shrewsbury, the Servant of God Elizabeth Prout (1820-1864) founded the female branch of the Passionists with Bl. Dominic Barberi. Her congregation served deserving families in the North West. The Sisters of the Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ arrived in Warrington on 3 January 1899. Their convent, 80 Buttermarket Street, was beside St Mary's Benedictine Priory. They came to teach, to visit sick and needy parishioners, to instruct converts and to help the poor. The Sisters taught in St Mary's girls' and infants' schools from 1899 to 1967. Her congregation now asks to be informed of any favour granted specifically through her intercession. This could lead to her beatification. In anticipation of the 200th anniversary of her birth this September, less than a month before the fundraising deadline for our Campaign, the following petition was suggested: "*Servant of God Elizabeth Prout, to further your work of Catholic education and assistance to Catholic families in our country so much in need of it,*



please obtain from God's Providence the successful completion of the Priory Campaign in Warrington, on the very location where your Sisters served for seven decades."

Dear benefactors, while the *Priory Campaign* is satisfactorily ended, please continue to pray and support us in our ongoing expenses. To give you a recent example, the cost of a necessary Visual Condition survey (N.B. not including yet any *repair*) of St Mary's church roof, tower and external areas amounts to £12,447.30 incl. VAT. The body of Elizabeth Prout lies at the Sutton St Helens Passionist Shrine, fifteen minutes from St Mary's, along the bodies of Bl. Dominic Barberi and Ven. Ignatius Spencer. What a grace if this saintly woman could be beatified soon and intercede even more powerfully for our service to souls at Priory Court and St Mary's. God bless you! □

Support Our Apostolate

Thank you for your generosity in support of our apostolate.

FSSP ENGLAND (& Wales):

Cheques in British Pounds payable to FSSP England, to be sent to: FSSP, St Mary’s Priory, Smith Street, Warrington WA1 2NS, England.

Bank transfers: Account Name: FSSP England •
Account number: 02027225 • Sort code 30-93-04 •
Lloyds Bank, Palmerston Road Branch

Are you a tax payer? Help us maximise your donation through Gift Aid. Please ask us for a Gift-Aid form. FSSP ENGLAND is a registered charity: number 1129964.

All other donations sent to us in England will finance our development and apostolate in England & Wales.

FSSP IRELAND:

Bank name & Address:

Bank of Ireland; Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2.

Account name: Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter

Account No.: 40483756

IBAN: IE36BOFI90149040483756

Contact for financial matters: Liam Kearney:

Lisieux, 20 Avoca Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin,

Ireland

Tel: 00353(0)872515434.

Email: liamkearney8@gmail.com

Website: fssp.co.uk/ireland

FSSP SCOTLAND:

Fr John Emerson, FSSP, 6 Belford Park,
Edinburgh EH4 3DP. Tel.: 0131 332 3750;

Email: fr.emerson@fssp.co.uk

The Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter in Scotland is a registered charity (no. 1083419; no. SC038552).

Cheques should be made out to “Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter”. Gift Aid Forms on request.

Website: fsspscotland.org

DOWRY Magazine

Is our shared printed medium all across these Isles. We therefore invite readers from Scotland and Ireland to make this publication more widely known, as well as in England and Wales. *Dowry* is given to you for free, but contributions are welcome since each copy of *Dowry* costs £2 to produce, print and post. Please also visit our websites, where you will find regular news and updates, and the full series of *Dowry* readable on-line:

Vocation Weekend of discernment 29-31 Jan. 2021, Warrington WA1 2NS - for Catholic men 18+
Clergy Retreat, 7-11 June 2021,
Douai Abbey, Berks RG7 5TQ
Both events subject to Covid-19 regulations

fssp.co.uk/category/dowry/. Email us your comments to be included in our forthcoming readers’ feedback section.

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(Picture: Fr Patrick O’Donohue, FSSP offering Holy Mass at the G.K. Chesterton Pilgrimage last July. Our prayers accompany him to Ireland where he now starts our permanent apostolate in Waterford, while Fr Neil Brett, a postulant priest from the Brentwood Diocese, succeeds him in Reading.)

Contact FSSP ENGLAND:

**Priestly Fraternity of St Peter,
St Mary’s Priory, Smith Street,
Warrington WA1 2NS
Cheshire, England**

01925 635 664

warrington@fssp.org

fssp.co.uk