

English  
Catholic



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Association

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**NEWSLETTER**

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Articles for publication are also welcome. Please send them by email to the Editor at the address on page 3 and, if possible, saved with file extension of .doc in Word, and photos in .jpg format.

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**COMMITTEE:**

**Chairman:** Tim Guile, Associate Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. Email: [chairman.echa@yahoo.com](mailto:chairman.echa@yahoo.com)

**Treasurer & Membership Secretary & Regional Co-ordinator for the dioceses of Birmingham and Shrewsbury:** Mr Vincent Burke, 16 Brandhall Court, Wolverhampton Road, Oldbury B68 8DE

**General Secretary (for all general enquiries):** Mr William King, Email: [sec.echa@yahoo.com](mailto:sec.echa@yahoo.com)

**Programme Co-ordinator and Regional Co-ordinator for the dioceses of Southwark, Arundel & Brighton, Brentwood and East Anglia:** Mr Bernard Polack, 4 Woodstock Grove, Farncombe, Godalming, GU7 2AX.

**Newsletter Editor:** Mrs Margaret Turnham  
Email: [newsletter.echa@yahoo.com](mailto:newsletter.echa@yahoo.com)

**Website Administrator:** Mrs Lynne Hunter Johnston. Email: [englishcatholichistory@gmail.com](mailto:englishcatholichistory@gmail.com)

**Regional Co-ordinator for the dioceses of Northampton & Nottinghamshire:** Mrs Sheila Mawhood, 21 The Retreat, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 0JG.

**Regional Co-ordinator for the diocese of Westminster:** Mr Nigel Parker, 17 Salcombe Gardens, Clapham Common North Side, LONDON, SW4 9RY.

**Committee members (with those above):** Andrew Fox, Angie Hodges, Robert Tickle

**Further REGIONAL CO-ORDINATORS**

**Regional Co-ordinator for the dioceses of Middlesbrough, Leeds and Hexham & Newcastle:** Mrs Lalage Robson, Dunelm, Black Dyke Lane, Upper Poppleton, York, YO62 6PT.

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**Regional Co-ordinator for Kent (part of Southwark diocese):** Mr Christopher Bull, 48 Reed Avenue, Canterbury, CT1 1ES.

**Regional Co-Ordinator for the dioceses of Clifton and Plymouth:**  
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**Website:** [www.echa.org.uk](http://www.echa.org.uk)

## **FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to our first Newsletter of 2024. When we look back on 2023, we can see that we have had an excellent selection of speakers for our online Zoom talks on a range of diverse topics by eminent scholars and speakers. We are very fortunate in being able to attract some of the best experts in their field. The numbers booking in for our talks via Zoom is very encouraging. We have got speakers booked up until the autumn of this year but are always looking for more. Our AGM at Farm St in October was very successful with a good number of people attending. Our speaker, Johanna Bogle, the well-known Catholic writer, talked about the social reformer, Caroline Chisholm. We have a website, Youtube channel, Apple Podcasts, Facebook group, X account and we are also on Linked-In. We hope you will join us for future talks and that you enjoy this Newsletter. Thank you to our committee who work tirelessly behind the scenes.

TJ Guile

Chairman ECHA

## NOTES AND NOTICES

**Centenary:** The next issue of the Newsletter in May will be the 100<sup>th</sup> edition. If anyone has any special memories of the newsletter they would like to contribute, please email the editor by the beginning of April at: [newsletter.echa@yahoo.com](mailto:newsletter.echa@yahoo.com)

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**Site Visits:** Before the Covid Pandemic, visits to places of Catholic interest were an integral part of the Association's activity. As a committee we would like to reinstate this work during 2024 and began with our in-person AGM and visit to the Jesuit Archives last October (see p.10). Ideas for visits currently include Holywell, Harvington Hall, Ely and Stonor House. Would be you be interested in attending visits to these places or do you have other suggestions? We have formed a Visits sub-committee to help organise and advise on visits and you can contact it via William King the General secretary of the Association at [sec.echa@yahoo.com](mailto:sec.echa@yahoo.com). Let him know ASAP if you would like to take part in a visit to one of the suggested places or have another suggestion to make.

## **What else do we do?**

Members of the ECHA are able to use their interest in Catholic history not only to extend their own knowledge, or help preserve our history but also to make new discoveries or solve a mystery. **Bernard Polack**, a long-standing member of the Association recently used his local knowledge and the intricacies of diocesan boundary changes for someone who had found our website ([www.echa.org.uk](http://www.echa.org.uk)) and got in touch to see if someone could help solve a mystery about a lost chapel.

### **Chapel at Bowlhead Green**

In 2021 a local historian, who had been studying the graves in the churchyard of the parish church at Thursley (five and a half miles SW of Godalming) had come across the grave of one Captain Rushbrooke of Cosford House, Bowlhead Green. Bowlhead Green is about one mile SE of Thursley. In a newspaper report from shortly after the date of Captain Rushbrooke's death he had read that Captain Rushbrooke's body had been buried in the churchyard at Thursley after a Requiem Mass in the Roman Catholic chapel at Bowlhead Green. Knowing that there was no Roman Catholic chapel at Bowlhead Green now, he was intrigued to learn that one had existed there. Having found the English Catholic History Association on the internet, he wrote to our Secretary enquiring whether our Association could provide any information on that chapel. That enquiry was circulated by our Secretary to the members of the Committee.

By coincidence, and by great good fortune so far as the enquirer was concerned, Thursley is in my parish of Godalming and, when carrying out research myself on the history of our parish, I had assembled a great deal of information about the chapel at Bowlhead Green. A shortened version of that information was passed to the enquirer.

I was able to consult, in the diocesan archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark (of which diocese Godalming was then a part) various fascinating letters from Captain Rushbrooke to the Bishop, which give valuable information about what happened and when regarding the chapel at Bowlhead Green. I was in touch in 1999, and again a few years later, with a Mr. John Swift, then living in Chapel Cottage. He said that part of his cottage (the living room) was formerly a chapel. He thought that the property had been

built in the mid-eighteenth century and had been extended over the years. The owner in the mid-nineteenth century was Isaac Kettle, who, in 1860, built a chapel on land next to the cottage. The chapel at that time was separate from the cottage but latterly (possibly in the 1970's) became part of the cottage. When Isaac Kettle died, the chapel (and cottage) passed to a relative, his wife having died previously. Mr. Swift said that, sometime after this, Chapel Cottage became part of the Cosford House estate (as was most of Thursley) and was said to have been lived in by the gardener of Cosford House, and then by Captain Rushbrooke's sister. He understood that, around this period, the chapel became used for services for the servants at Cosford House who were Irish Catholics.

The letters, dating from the very beginning of the twentieth century, demonstrate Captain Rushbrooke's wish to have Mass celebrated in or near his house for himself and his household. Until 1907 this service had been provided by visiting priests. However, on 22/05/07, Captain Rushbrooke wrote to the Bishop of Southwark "On 30th Inst is to be sold within 10 minutes walk of my house, a plot of ground consisting of an 8 roomed cottage and a chapel . . . The site would suit us admirably for a resident priest . . . Before bidding, naturally I desire to know if leave would be given me to start a mission of the kind . . . . I may add the little chapel at Bowlhead Green will hold 40 to 50 worshippers ."

Captain Rushbrooke had shown his correspondence with the Bishop to Father Hyland, parish priest of Godalming, with the result that, on 27/05/07, Father Hyland wrote a very long letter to the Bishop saying, among much else, "Capt. Rushbrooke thinks that a priest might live in this house and serve the chapel . . .Capt. Rushbrooke would pay the chaplain not more than £80 a year . . .The chapel itself is most unsuitable for Catholic purposes as it was never built for that object. The priest in charge would have a hopeless struggle to make both ends meet on 80 pounds a year . . .". The overall tone of Father Hyland's letter is to urge the Bishop not to "accede to Capt. Rushbrooke's request". On 04/06/07 Father wrote a short letter the Bishop "I believe Capt. Rushbrooke has secured the property in question. I am pleased to hear from your Lordship that it would not be a new missionary district."

Whatever the way in which the Bishop replied to Capt. Rushbrooke, the latter purchased the Chapel Cottage property, and, in spite of Fr. Hyland's opinion that it was unsuitable for Catholic purposes, either himself considered it suitable or himself had it made suitable for the celebration of Mass. Various correspondence in 1908 shows that Captain Rushbrooke was endeavouring to secure a resident priest for his new chapel.

A postcard, given to me by the Diocesan Archivist of Arundel and Brighton, describes the chapel in what appear to be answers to a standard series of questions:

*Bowlhead Green*

*"Style of Chapel" no style whatsoever*

*"When opened (month & year)" June 1909*

*"Accommodation" 40*

*"Noteworthy features" [nothing is written here]*

*"Catholic population of district" about 30 -included in Godalming*

*"Other items of interest" formerly dissenting chapel purchased by Capt.*

*W.H.Rushbrooke on demise of minister whose property it was & used by him as private chapel open to public.*

No further correspondence from this immediate period, regarding Captain Rushbrooke's search for a priest, was found but:

- The postcard quoted above says that the chapel was opened in June 1909
- The Catholic Directory for 1910 (which would have reflected the situation in 1909) lists the chapel at Bowlhead Green with a Father Brownrigg SC as priest.
- The Catholic Directory for 1911 (reflecting the situation in 1910) lists the chapel with a Father McCarthy SC as priest.

Father McCarthy was a member of the Society of Salesians of Don Bosco and the Provincial Secretary of that Society kindly provided me with some fascinating biographical details of Father Michael Henry McCarthy. During his earlier days at the Salesian school at Battersea he was renowned for his ability as a



carpenter, plumber and engineer. Is it not likely, therefore, that Fr. McCarthy, with those skills and at the behest of Capt. Rushbrooke, was the person who made that former Dissenting chapel "suitable for Catholic purposes"? Father McCarthy remained at Bowlhead Green until 1920. Capt. Rushbrooke must have had some influence with the Salesians, in order to obtain the services of Fr. McCarthy in the first place and in order to have the chapel served from Farnborough until the early 1940's.

Capt. Rushbrooke's efforts to find a resident priest as replacement for Fr. McCarthy do not seem to have been successful. The Catholic Directories for 1921 to 1945 say that the chapel at Bowlhead Green was served from Farnborough, those for 1947 to 1956 say that it was served by the Diocesan Travelling Mission (mobile priests who would visit churches or chapels situated in rural areas and without a resident priest to say Mass on, perhaps, a once a month basis), and those from 1957 onwards do not list the chapel at Bowlhead Green.

## VISITS

### Visiting the Jesuits

On a rather dull October afternoon the ECHA gathered for its 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting. The venue was the London Jesuit Centre in Mayfair. As we arrived for our meeting the ground floor was busy providing help for the homeless, a striking illustration of how charity is needed in even the most affluent of areas. As our first in person event for some time, the meeting was a welcome opportunity to catch up without having to click on a Zoom link first. After the business of the AGM was concluded, the noted author and broadcaster Joanna Bogle gave a talk on Caroline Chisholm. This name is almost unknown in Britain, but that is far from being the case in her adopted homeland of Australia. Dubbed “the Emigrant’s Friend”, Caroline Chisholm was an English born Catholic who welcomed female immigrants on their arrival in New South Wales. She provided them with accommodation and employment, even travelling with them in to the bush communities to secure jobs and a stable future in their new country. Her life is a dynamic tale of how one individual combined the roles of friend, counsellor and employment adviser all in one. By the end of the talk I had certainly come to respect the achievements of an individual who is not as well-known as she ought to be. Joanna Bogle is doing her best to remedy that and copies of her written biography on the subject were available to purchase.

Our Association then experienced a split (although not an acrimonious one), as we divided into two groups to visit the British Jesuit Archives and the Church of the Immaculate Conception. The archives are a real treasure house of documents. The story of the Society of Jesus in Britain is recorded from its beginnings until the present day. A selection from the archive had been put out for us. These included a letter written by one of the first English Jesuits in 1578 and examples of the extensive written output of members of the British Province over several centuries. Any budding researcher of Catholic history would most likely find enough to detain them for several days.

The adjacent church was opened as the Jesuit flagship church in London in 1849. It is lavishly furnished and contains several altars, the High Altar itself being designed by Pugin. Our guide was Fr Paul Nicholson SJ who explained how the church had grown over time and its current use today. Interestingly the church was not the home of a parish until 1966, meaning that marriages and baptisms could not be celebrated there. Instead, it became a noted centre of spiritual direction and was known for its work with writers and converts. The building today houses a very active parish and there are seven Sunday Masses. The visit ended all too soon and we dispersed much more knowledgeable about both Australian and Jesuit history than when we arrived. I found it very appropriate that our meeting was held at a location where the preservation of the collective history of Catholicism in Britain is taken so seriously. It underlines the importance of an active organisation such as ours and the many fascinating discoveries still to be made.



**The Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street**



## **The Archives and Entrance to the Jesuit Centre**

(Photos taken by William King with permission of the Society of Jesus)

## ARTICLES

### Why was St Thomas More Executed?

(Digest of a lecture given by the author in Bath on 27 January 2023)

Thomas More was executed on 6 July 1535 because he was not prepared to give up his belief in the primacy of the pope as visible head of the Church on earth. More's conscience, informed by the teaching of the Catholic Church which he believed expressed God's law, led him to believe that papal primacy underpinned and fostered universal communion.

Part of the answer to why More was executed is that Henry VIII relentlessly pursued him to the scaffold. Having promoted More step by step to the chancellorship in 1529, having admired More's defence of the Church against heresies, and having befriended him, Henry became increasingly disappointed and then angry with More for his refusal to be drawn into the marriage question.

When on 15 May 1532 the clergy capitulated to the King in regard to the succession, More resigned the chancellorship the next day pleading ill health (not untrue, as he had been severely over-working and suffered from angina, but the timing was significant).

Henry had More imprisoned on 17 April 1534 for refusing to swear the oath to the Act of Succession, because in the preamble to the oath there was a rejection of papal authority. More took refuge in silence but Henry construed that as being tantamount to opposition. Henry hoped that imprisonment would wear More down, and used every method short of physical torture to get More to come into line. An Act of Attainder was passed against More which condemned him to life imprisonment and to the forfeiture of his goods, with cruel consequences for his family.

Given More's standing in the country and across Europe, his submission mattered enormously to Henry. Furthermore, Henry's character was a mixture of dependence on others, volatility, and an

almost desperate need for support and agreement. When he thought those close to him had failed him or blocked him then he was ruthless in either demanding their total compliance or elimination. For Henry the lives of others were cheap, regardless of age or high moral reputation.

In November 1534 the Act of Supremacy declared Henry ‘the only supreme head on earth of the Church in England’. Then came the Treasons Act, making it treason, punishable by death, to disavow the Act. Thereby Henry extended treason to cover what people *believed* about the way the Church should be.

More was put on trial in Westminster Hall on 1 July 1535. Legally he won. He was defeated only by a show trial, pre-determined by the judges, and by the perjury of the main government witness, Sir Richard Rich, the Solicitor-General.

Thomas More was executed partly because he had developed thorough principles, precious to him, about the nature of the Church. After the expected guilty verdict, he at last discharged his conscience, delivering a forceful and well-reasoned repudiation of the notion that the Church could be under the monarch and not the pope. The relationship between the authority of the pope, the bishops and the rest of the Church was, in More’s view, an entirely reasonable subject for discussion. But he was absolutely certain that the *monarch* could not be head of the Church, as he saw no basis for this in Scripture or in the tradition of the Church.

Furthermore, the royal supremacy of the Church in England cut off the English Church from the universal Church and this separation wounded the body of Christ. The parliament of one country, he continued, could not ‘make a particular law disagreeable with the general law of Christ’s Universal Catholic Church.’ He contrasted the universal Church, what he called ‘the common corps of Christendom’, with what he saw as the narrow, national view of England’s king and parliament. The English bishops, with the great exception of Fisher, had submitted to the King and Parliament. More, therefore, looked to bishops in other parts of Christendom and bishops across the centuries.

More was a martyr to the Catholicism of the Church, its universality, which crucially included communion with the Bishop of Rome. In the 1530s it required great discernment and great courage to die for *this* principle. It showed a rare ability to distinguish the office of the papacy from its incumbents. All ten of the popes in More's life-time were unimpressive in almost all respects. They lacked the personal qualities and the moral authority to square up to the greatest crisis to hit the Church since the Great Schism of the eleventh century and the Arian heresy of the fourth century.

More fervently wanted to see reform of the Church from within not through splits. He would never have gone the way of Luther. Nor did he support those who argued that supreme authority in the Church should lie in a General Council, which could oversee the papacy. For him Christ had given Peter and his successors a special role and this remained, however resentful secular powers in Europe might be in regard to papal powers in legal and financial areas or however much Henry sought to give theoretical justification for his royal supremacy.

More saw the Church as a body with hierarchy, structure, discipline and jurisdiction, but he also saw it more deeply and at its best as a mystical and sacramental body, with Christ at its centre, fed by the sacraments, and guided and infused by the Holy Spirit since its foundation. The Church was not only the pope and clergy but the whole multitude of the faithful through the ages. Papal primacy was a crucial part of the mixture, especially because Henry VIII made it so, but it was only an integral part of the whole Church, and it was for the whole Church and its unity that More died.

Religious disunity, More also feared, would lead to social breakdown. History surely bears him out, as seen in the terrible sectarian conflicts in northern Europe over the next hundred years and more.

It is one thing, however, to have principles, but something much more to go to one's death over them, especially as More dreaded, until told otherwise at the last minute, that he would be hanged, drawn and quartered. Why did he not waver? We can never fully know. However, his prison writings, the so-called *Tower Works*, point us towards answers.

He was motivated by conscience, by the determination to uphold convictions he believed to be grounded in God-given truth. He was motivated by a longing for heaven and a dread of hell. He was motivated by St Paul's perspective, that this life is of little worth, rubbish even, compared to the life of heaven. He drew strength too from the solidarity he felt with his soul-mates, John Fisher, the Carthusians, Richard Reynolds. He also wanted to give an example as a public figure, standing firm on principles that were of life-and-death importance.

But, above all, he endured because of his relationship with his Saviour and his efforts to imitate Him. In *A Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation* he examined various temptations: giving up in the face of adversity (through despair, pusillanimity, scrupulosity or even suicide); pride, carrying on for the wrong reason; sinking one's heart into the things of this world, losing sight of the eternal goal; surrendering to the fear of losing all possessions and status (discussed in eleven chapters) or the fear of unbearable pain (nine chapters). He weighed these against the eternal loss of hell and the limitless joys of heaven.

He considered how fear might be overcome by reason, by anticipating the possible torments. But reason was not enough. Only strengthened by supernatural grace could one subject fear to the will, underpinned by complete trust in God. Fear can fall away only as the ardour of love increases towards immersion in the all-consuming love of God.

In his *Treatise on the Passion* and in *De Tristitia Christi* More expressed his meditations on the Passion. His belief in the profound interconnection of the Passion and the Eucharist was brilliantly set out in *A Treatise on the Blessed Body*: the unity of the faithful through the Eucharistic Sacrifice; the absolute need for proper preparation for the Sacrament and then the imperative, with God's grace, of acting out the consequences of the sacrament in one's life. Specifically, he could not receive Holy Communion and then sign the Act of Supremacy. In his *Devout Instructions, Meditations and Prayers* he explored the theme of forgiving one's enemies.



In his last work (*De Tristitia Christi*), he imagined Christ saying to all, like himself, who are called to martyrdom and are afraid:

O faint of heart, take courage and do not despair. You are afraid, you are sad, you are stricken with weariness and dread of the torment with which you have been cruelly threatened. Trust me . . . See, I am walking ahead of you along this fearful road. Take hold of the border of my garment.

Giles Mercer  
17 February 2023

### **An unlikely Champion**

Almost every issue of the ECHA newsletter either explicitly or obliquely mentions the impact that the Reformation had on the Catholics of all parts of Britain. Yet this country has been Catholic for a far greater time than it has been Protestant and the ECHA has had articles on Bede, Cuthbert and the Saints of Iona and Lindisfarne in times well before the ‘so-called’ Reformation.

Pure propaganda presented the Reformation as a triumph in all aspects, from the theological to the social. Nothing could be further from the truth as it was a disaster in every respect. It was not Eamon Duffy’s *The Stripping of the Altars* that first highlighted this in our times but a very unlikely source in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, namely William Cobbett. In a series of articles from 1824 to 1827 and later produced as a book *A History of the Protestant Reformation* he boldly contradicted the prevailing view that it was wonderful. The basic premise of Cobbett is that he refuted the theological claims and stressed the dire social effect that it had. Cobbett was a renowned and prolific journalist well before he wrote his History. He initiated the publication of PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE in 1806, a verbatim account of the proceedings of the Westminster Parliament. This was taken over by Luke Hansard (1752 – 1828) and even today Hansard means every word spoken in Parliament is recorded and written down.

Cobbett repeatedly returns to the fact that the real reason that motivated the break with Rome was not religious at all, but the greed of

the King (Henry VIII) and the aristocracy. The monasteries were destroyed so that the King and Lords of the realm could benefit from their riches. Out went the very stones of the monasteries so that the castles and mansions of the rich could be extended and enlarged. The number of beggars and homeless mushroomed and were now seen everywhere. Out went the care and help that the poor received from their local monastery. These are Cobbett's words. In fact, he calls it naked plunder that only the rich benefitted from. He says, the Reformation 'engendered a beastly lust' and he could not have been more vituperative. He mocks lying Foxe's book on the Protestant martyrs. He reinforces what was known already that Henry did not repudiate the Doctrines of the Catholic Church, and was against the errors (indeed heresies) swirling around, for he wrote against Luther's ideas and was awarded the title 'Defender of the Faith' by the Pope. This papal epithet the monarchy still uses today.

Cobbett died before England's full blown colonial spree began. He would have put it down to greed and not to helping other nations enjoy the rewards of the Industrial Revolution. Not that the ordinary person did well out of it here as Blake's 'dark satanic mills' suggest. Cobbett's 'history' was a masterpiece for the cause of justice for the Catholics of this country. It helped create the climate for the restoration of civil rights for Catholics in 1828 and ensure the Act of Parliament went through without the disturbances which had accompanied earlier attempts at reform. After lengthy research of the actual facts Cobbett concluded that the British public had been skilfully and wilfully deceived about the nature of the Reformation. He wrote, '*it was not the work of virtue, of fanaticism of error, of ambition, but of a love of plunder.*' He takes the reader through the arguments in a rather lengthy tedious study and like Dickens wrote his work in a series of monthly letters which may help to explain his excessive verbosity. Even now if you question the accepted view you will meet a lot of procacity.

But his work is of great significance and also helped in the eventual reinstatement of the Catholic Hierarchy in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It seemed at the time that Eamon Duffy's work unearthed something new. But, Fr John Lingard (1771-1851) published his History of England after years of careful study and research. The 13 volumes

appeared between 1819 and 1830 and were used as a major source for Cobbett's History, confirming his own perception, that the Reformation had disastrous consequences for the ordinary people of the realm. And finally, Chesterton, many years before Duffy, wrote in his 'A Short History of England', as follows, *the dissolution of the monasteries is seen in a large part as a means of a small elite enriching themselves.*

Christopher Bull

December 2023

## The 1549 Oxfordshire 'Commotions and Uproars' Under Edward VI

*"In the most parts of the realm sundry lewd persons have attempted to assemble themselves and, first seeking redress of enclosures, have in some places by seditious priests and other evil people set forth to seek restitution of the old bloody laws."*<sup>1</sup>

The summer of 1549 was a time of turmoil in much of southern England and in parts of the midlands which the government of Edward VI struggled to control. In East Anglia Kett's Rebellion was a largely agrarian revolt with a few religious demands. Poor harvests and poverty amongst the rural peasantry fuelled the discontent. Stoye points out that the agrarian unrest had largely different causes to those in the west of the country.<sup>2</sup> By 1548, there were directives from the bishops and the King's Commissioners to simplify church practices and to cease the church ales which had previously been a great social event for the parish as well as the main source of income for the parish. At the same time each parish had to contribute to the defence of the realm as a kind of tax. All these regulations had a draining effect on both church finances, the faith the people practiced and the social structures of local society.<sup>3</sup> 1549 was a pivotal moment in the history of the English church.

In the southwest, there was the Prayer book Rebellion which led to a siege of Exeter. The uprisings in the west could be said to be the last gasp of Catholic resistance in the south to the changes in the church

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf> p79

<sup>2</sup> Stoye, M 2022 p147

<sup>3</sup> Duffy, E, 2001 p124

brought about by Protestant reformers in pour in London. Duffy states that, “the essentially religious character of the revolts cannot seriously be questioned, and it should be noted that the rebels sought a restoration not only of the old Mass, but of the full ceremonial range of medieval Catholicism. They singled out the sacramentals of holy bread and water, the Lenten ceremonies of ashes and palms, the parish procession on Sundays, but included, ‘all other auncient olde Ceremonyes used heretofore, by our mother the holy Church.’<sup>4</sup> Duffy goes on to explain that it was not just the imposition of a new prayer book which antagonised the laity but also the, “determination to stamp out immemorial devotional customs,” and to stop those who disagreed with the authorities from receiving communion on church on Sundays. Thus, those who, for whatever reasons, opposed the new prayer book and prohibition of Catholic practices such as praying with beads, were to be ostracised and cut off from the community of reformed believers.<sup>5</sup>

The Pilgrimage of Grace in the north in 1536 and 1537 had opposed the closure of the monasteries and the religious changes under Henry VIII. Their banner was also used by the Prayerbook rebels in Devon and Cornwall in 1549. The Rising of the North occurred later in 1569 but was also unsuccessful. In Oxfordshire in the summer of 1549, dissatisfaction with enclosures of land and unhappiness with the religious changes and reform being pursued by the government. Some thought that the goods of the parish churches were about to be seized by commissioners for church goods as well as a ban on the Latin mass, images in churches and to the general imposition of Protestantism with all that that entailed.

With the commons rising in the west country and parts of the midlands. The Privy council had a big problem. The Privy Council blamed ‘Popish priests’ that is conservative clergy thought to be trying to hold on to the old ways.<sup>6</sup> According to Duffy, they blamed the judges and local gentry. Lord Chancellor Rich harangued the judges and stated that they were negligent and slack in imposing what he called ‘the King’s godly orders.’<sup>7</sup> He accused the judges of ‘looking through their fingers’

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<sup>4</sup> Duffy, 1992, p406

<sup>5</sup> Duffy 1992 p467

<sup>6</sup> Stoye, M 2022 p230

<sup>7</sup> Duffy, 1992 p468

and ignoring opposition to the Privy Council's orders. In March 1550, John Ponet declared that judges and Justices of the Peace were saying, "Believe as your forfathers have done before you," and that this the case for officials and even bishops who were 'popishly affected.' It was, he claimed, encouraged by priests hearing confession too. Duffy states that those tasked with maintaining law and order, were effectively, leading the discontent and disobedience to the lawful authorities. The old rites were even revived in Oxford.<sup>8</sup> Lord Grey imposed martial law and used the army to quell the insurrections. Stoye reports that there was damning new evidence linking priests with a much bigger insurrection in the west country.<sup>9</sup> One strategy was to try to use other clergy to persuade or threaten the priests who were suspected of supporting the uprising. John Moreman and Richard Crispin were two conservative canons who had been imprisoned in the Tower due to their doctrines and beliefs. They were released and told to talk to other clergy and change their minds. They were provided with 'certain livings' in the West Country so they could 'preache amonges us our Catholycke faith.' In other words, using them to put across the government's arguments.

In the summer of 1549, people in the west country and in the midlands rose against the government of Edward VI and Lord somerset, his Protector. It could be said to be a mixture of agrarian dissatisfaction mixed with defence of the Catholic faith and way of life of the people. Lord John Russell, 1st Earl of Bedford treated the rebels in the west around Exeter extremely harshly. He regarded priests as amongst the ring leaders for example Fr Robert Walsh, Vicar of St Thomas's near Exe Bridge. He had him hanged in chains in his "Popish apparel and had a holy water bucket and sprinkler, a sacring bell, a pair of beads and such other popish trash about him."<sup>10</sup> Thus, the Crown forces during the reign of Edward VI tried to suppress the Catholic traditions and the priests who they regarded as their enemies.

*"We had determind to send downe to you the Lord Graye with a band of horsemen and some hagbuters footmen. But that upon occasion of a sturr her in Bucks and Oxfordshire by sundry priests (kepe it to yourself) for these matyers of religion, we have been forced to kepe him a while and yet we trust that within a few days shall be*

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<sup>8</sup> Duffy, 1992, p469

<sup>9</sup> Stoye, M 2022 p 230-231

<sup>10</sup> Caraman, P, 1994, p 96

*chaystice them, and then shall we send him unto you.”*<sup>11</sup> (Lord Somerset letter to Lord Gray 12<sup>th</sup> July 1549).

On 18th July Lord Somerset was still deferring, 'partlye for the disorder of these parties ' the dispatch of the ' almaiynes ' that Russell so badly needed, but later in the same letter he writes. *“Ye shall be furnished of ayde of a skylfull man on horseback, the lord Graie, who by advertysment even nowe we perceyve to have chased the rebells of Bucks., Oxfordshire, and these parties to their houses, and taken cc of them and a dosen of the ring leders dehyverid unto him whereof parte at least shall suffer paynes of death to the example of all malefactors.”*<sup>12</sup>

The country was ruled by a tiny London elite which operated through wealthy landowners, gentry and local officials. This possibly constituted two percent of the population. When Robert Kett, a tanner by trade, demonstrated his ability to lead a disciplined force in East Anglia, the Privy Council was taken by surprise. In the West Country, a similar phenomenon arose of revolt against the government. The government had already imprisoned or executed some of the landowners such as The Duke of Norfolk in East Anglia and the Marquess of Exeter in the southeast. Had they still been alive and loyal to Edward VI, the rebellions may not have happened at all. It was only when nobility and gentry combined with clergy and peasants to lead a rebellion as had happened in the north with the Pilgrimage of Grace fourteen years earlier, that there was any real threat to the throne. In 1549, leadership from nobility and major gentry was lacking and the rebels stood little chance. Caraman asserts that, “the religious changes under Edward VI were as little loved as the government that brought them in.”<sup>13</sup> The first act of the new parliament at the start of the reign of Edward VI was the repeal of Henry VIII's Six Articles of Religion. There was opposition in parliament but nevertheless it was passed. Soon after this it was followed by the Chantries Act. Henry had appropriated some of the assets of chantries to pay for his war with France, but the new act went much further. It was a naked attempt by Protestants to do away with what they considered to be superstitious practices. They wanted to abolish the mass and prayers for the dead and they wanted to pillage the assets of

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<sup>11</sup> Pocock, N, pp 26-7 2017

<sup>12</sup> <https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf> p80

<sup>13</sup> Caraman P, 1994, p2

the chantries and any land they owned. It was a mixture of religious zealotry and avarice.

Based mainly on the fact that, unlike other rebels, he was later tried in London, it is probable that James Webbe, the vicar of Barford St Michael, was the captain of the Rising. Other ringleaders were a wealthy farmer, Thomas Bouldry or Bowldry of Great Haseley, and Henry Joyes, vicar of Chipping Norton. Unlike the rising in Devon and Cornwall, it does not seem that any gentry became involved, and most of those whose names were to be associated with the Rising were either farmers, artisans, or parish priests. The Rising's quick suppression meant that the rebels' specific demands have gone unrecorded, though they were probably similar to those of the Cornish rising namely reinstatement of the Six Articles and the Latin liturgy with the additional local grievances. Joyes, at Chipping Norton, appears to have joined the Rising because the effects of the Chantries Act had left him to minister alone to eight hundred parishioners. It is probable that local resentment at enclosures also played a part, particularly at Great Haseley, where Thomas Bouldry had been lessee of the demesne farm, and where the recently enclosed deer park of Sir John Williams at Rycote House was attacked by a mob who subsequently broke into his house and drank his wine and beer. There had been some minor enclosure riots or disturbances in Buckinghamshire the previous year, though the authorities' response was lenient.

Though the debate in Oxford on where the English church was heading was vigorous and lively, the rebellion began in the towns of Oxfordshire: Bicester, Bloxham, Chipping Norton, Combe, Deddington, Duns Tew, Haseley, Islip, Thame and Watlington. Most people lived rural lives living in largely self-sufficient communities where religion was bound up with everyday life and the passage of the seasons. Academic argument was not the concern of most people but the condition of their parish church and what they were allowed to do in it were of great importance to most people. Edward VI's Injunctions of July 1547 required the removal of all images of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints. It demanded that wall paintings be whitewashed over and stained-glass windows depicting saints were to be destroyed. Only two candles could remain on the altar. Rood screens and their crucifix and statues of Mary and St John were to be torn down. In some places,

notably in Devon, parts of Wales and east Anglia, some of these rood screens survived and have been restored to their former glory. One, a late fifteenth century rood screen at St James' church Somerton, survived intact in Oxfordshire probably because of the intervention of the Fermor family who were known to be sympathetic to the old faith. Older Latin texts were to disappear. Wall paintings, such as those at South Newington, were whitewashed over. The new church under Edward was to have a distinctly Protestant direction from now on. It is probable that many of the local parishes ignored the injunctions or followed them only partially.

The 1547 Chantries Act allowed the seizing of all chantries, their plate and any land associated with them. Hospitals and their associated schools, such as the Hospital of St John and grammar school, in Banbury, were closed down. This, according to Professor Clark of Exeter University adversely affected the people in different ways. Whereas the closure of the monasteries affected rural areas overall, the closure of chantries affected urban people more. Many local people had donated money and goods to the chantries which would have said masses for their dead ancestors and many resented their seizure and closure by the Crown. This must have led to worsening relations between government and the governed who had no say in what was happening to their way of life. Even Church Ales, a major source of church income according to Professor Eamon Duffy, a good source of entertainment for the villages, were banned.

The enclosing of common land by landowners, especially in the north of Oxfordshire, affected the commons greatly. This 'ingrossing' as it was known often left peasants with fewer opportunities for housing or employment. It had happened earlier in the century for example when the Abbot of Eynsham converted two hundred acres of land at Little Rollright to pasture. Twenty or more tenants were dispossessed. The same thing happened when the Prior of Bicester Priory did the same thing at Wretchwick near Bicester. It was said that the people "withdrew sadly, wandering about and seeking their bread elsewhere."<sup>14</sup> The Priory of St Frideswide in Oxford did the same thing at Binsey nearby so that it was said that the people "led an evil and wretched existence until life

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history/county-histories-progress/oxfordshire>



ended.” This was the background the people of Oxfordshire would have been all too familiar with. Landowners such as the Fermor family of Somerton Manor also tried to enclose some of their land and convert it to more profitable sheep farming. This family were mentioned in records of the uprising though no more details have been found. The family went on to become staunch though non-political, recusant Catholics who supported the local Catholic population in the area over several centuries.

The first clear evidence of an official response to the Rising is a letter from Somerset, the Protector, dated 10th July, in which he refers to persons "nuely assembled" in Buckinghamshire. On the 12th he described to Lord Russell - awaiting reinforcements to suppress the rising in the South-West - a "stirr here in Bucks. and Oxfordshire by instigation of sundery priests", adding "kepe it to yr. self".<sup>15</sup>

The Rising gained momentum and after a brief delay, forces were dispatched in mid-July under the formidable soldier William Grey, 13th Baron Grey de Wilton. Accompanying him were 1500 mainly German and Swiss mercenary soldiers, en route to suppressing the West Country disturbances. The place at which Grey's force confronted the rebels is often thought to have been Enslow Hill in Oxfordshire, although an encampment near Chipping Norton has also been suggested. King Edward noted the outcome in his journal for 18th July:

*“To Oxfordshire the Lord Grey of Wilton was sent with one thousand five hundred horsemen and footmen; whose coming with th'assembling of the gentlemen of the countrie, did so abash the rebels, that more than hauf of them rann ther wayes, and other that tarried were some slain, some taken and some hanged.” Grey sent many foreign troops such as Germans, Burgundians and Albanians.<sup>16</sup> Also with this army were Italian Hagbutters under a Genoese Captain Spinola. The army moved from the midlands into Oxfordshire and later on to Bristol, Somerset and Cornwall.<sup>17</sup>*

In the immediate aftermath of the troops' arrival, there were signs that the Privy Council was beginning to regret employing German landsknechts in Oxfordshire, as it was reported that people were threatening to leave not one foreigner alive in England.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://epdf.tips/1549-rebellions-making-early-mod-england.html>

<sup>16</sup> Stoye, M 2022 p183

<sup>17</sup> Stoye, M 2022 p182

The names of the prisoners appointed and ordered to suffer and the names of the towns where they shall suffer were issued. "George Raves, John White of Combe to be hanged at Banbury. Richard Tomson, vicar of Donstewe. S' Henrie Mathew, parish priest of Dedington, to be hanged at Dedington. John Brookyns, a craftsman, to be hanged at Yslypp. William Boolar of Watlington, to be hanged at Watlington. Two of the mo't seditious which are not yet apprehended to suffer at Tame. Two others of the most seditious to be hanged at Oxforthe. Richard Whyttington of Dedington, weaver, to be hanged at Bysseter. The vicar of Cheping Norton, to be hanged upon the 'teeple there. John Wade, parish priest of Bloxham, to be hanged on the steeple there. Bowldry of Haseley to be hanged at Oxford."<sup>18</sup> The orders given on 19<sup>th</sup> July by Lord Grey to his lieutenants make it clear there were a large number of summary executions immediately following the confrontation at Enslow Hill, but of the two hundred or so taken captive around a dozen ringleaders, a mixture of priests and yeomen, were ordered to be executed for treason in various towns. "First it is thought good by the said Lord Grey that these traitorous persons, whose names be underwritten, shall suffer execution in these several towns underwritten immediately, or else on the next market day following, according as the other like offenders have in other places suffered, and after execution done, the heads of every of them in the same towns to be set up in the highest place for the more terror of the said evil people. It is also ordered by the said Lord Gray that the said gentle- men shall be present with their aid to cause execution to be done accordingly."<sup>19</sup> The executions were to be carried out on the towns' respective market days and the victims' heads were to be set in the highest available spot "for the more terror of the said evil people". James Webbe was hanged, drawn and quartered at Aylesbury on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, and death sentences were carried out on Joyes, who was hanged in chains from his own church tower. However, not all those appointed to die were executed, including John Wade, the vicar of Bloxham, who had also been ordered to be hanged from his own steeple: he was spared and was still living at Bloxham in 1553. Several of the Buckinghamshire men were also spared, with the pardons issued to Thomas Kyghtley, George and

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<sup>18</sup> <https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf> p81

<sup>19</sup> <https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf> p80

Thomas Willatt, John Warde and Edward Barton being the only information remaining on the Buckinghamshire insurgents.

Despite the pardons extended to some ringleaders, the Rising in general seems to have been put down with the same pitiless force and brutality that characterised the response to the Prayer Book Rebellion, where large-scale massacres were alleged.

Lord Grey needed little encouragement to act with severity and many more executions took place than the dozen specified in his order of 19th July. Writing some years later under the pro-Catholic regime of Queen Mary, the poet William Forrest, who had been a monk at Thame (where at least two executions were carried out) around the time of the Rising, described a time in which:

*Downe went the Crosse in every countraye,  
Goddys servauntes used withe muche crudelytee,  
Dysmembred (like beastes) in th'open highe waye,  
Their inwardys pluckte oute and hartis wheare they laye*<sup>20</sup>

The countrywide disturbances of 1549 were to play a part in the downfall of Somerset later that year, as he was blamed by other Privy Council members for the discontent and criticised for his response, which varied wildly between the liberally tolerant and the draconian. In October 1549, Lord Somerset was forced out of power and imprisoned in the Tower of London by John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, and a group of privy councillors. He was later released and reconciled with Warwick (now Duke of Northumberland), but in 1551 Northumberland accused him of treason, and he was executed in January 1552. Somerset appears to have had a good deal of sympathy with protestors against enclosure, if not with the religiously inspired rebels, and many of those who threw down enclosures had been misled by his earlier pronouncements into believing that they were acting with the King's blessing. Lord Somerset remained a figure of hate for religious conservatives, and his final removal from power in January 1550 was greeted with joyous demonstrations in Oxford. In January 1550, an order was enshrined in an Act for the “defacing of images and the bringing in of books of

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<sup>20</sup> Vere Woodman A, <https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf>

Service in the Church.”<sup>21</sup> All the old mass books were ordered to be destroyed as soon as possible. These things were to be utterly abolished, extinguished and forbidden. All statues were similarly ordered to be destroyed by the first of June. Local officials would be fined or threatened with imprisonment if these objects were not surrendered. The Council had decided that there was to be no further compromise with the Catholic past that had now gone. On 27<sup>th</sup> January Leaders of the southwestern rebellion, Humphrey Arundell, John Wynslade, John Bury and Thomas Holmes were executed at Tyburn. It could not be denied in London that the rebels had died for the old beliefs and practices. Archbishop Cramner mocked the old religion as superstitious and backward in his vituperative writing. Lord Russel was rewarded by being given land and property and becoming the Earl of Bedford. He was given Woburn in Bedfordshire and Thorney in Cambridgeshire as well as Bedford House in Exeter. Some priests fled abroad where they were much safer and could be with their co-religionists. The suppression of the rebellion signalled the decline of religious devotion among the people which was symbolised by the banner of the Five Wounds in Exeter. As Caraman puts it, “After little more than a passage of a single lifetime, it was replaced by decent conformism, religious inactivity and widespread disinterest.”<sup>22</sup>

This was a turning point and a watershed in English church history. Catholic practices continued in Oxfordshire at a local level especially after Queen Mary I came to the throne in July 1553 when it became possible once again to practice the Catholic faith. When Elizabeth I came to the throne in 1558 on the death of her sister, the old faith was once again discouraged and gradually, following a series of laws, became almost impossible to practice. Catholicism however, survived in north Oxfordshire almost entirely due to the protection offered by the recusant Fermor family of Somerton and later Tusmore Park.

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<sup>21</sup> Duffy, E 1992 p469

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T J Guile

November 2023

## BOOK REVIEWS

### WHY STUDY THE MIDDLE AGES?

Kisha G. Tracy

**ARC Humanities PRESS 2022 Paperback 111pp £15.95**

While this book is cosmopolitan and interfaith, it duly describes medieval English social history, individuals, places, texts and manuscripts in libraries, also archaeology and medicine, as parts of the Catholic tradition. Between introductory and concluding chapters, chapters 1-3 describe the relationships between medieval studies and, respectively, the Humanities, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and the Social Sciences. Chapter 4 further discusses the parallels between modern living and the Middle Ages.

Instead of realities like cars, computers, dishwashers and mobile phones, the medieval world offers “imaginative possibility ... dragons sleep deep in the earth. Light pours out of the mouth of a rightful king. Skeletons give speeches”. This reviewer observes that an English example of a dead person talking is the Judge in the anonymous fourteenth-century alliterative poem *St Erkenwald*. Emphasizing worldwide medieval studies makes them less Eurocentric – notably, medieval Arabic translations of Greek texts facilitated developments in Arabic thought. As well as not being exclusively European, medieval studies are not confined to white people. Thus the Catalan Atlas is a medieval world map – thought to be by the Jewish illuminator Cresque Abraham about 1375 – of a *genre* of which, this reviewer comments, an English example is in Hereford cathedral. The Catalan map depicts the fabulously wealthy Mansa Musa, Emperor of Mali, then the centre of an economically important empire. “It is critical to note that he appears as similar in prestige and rank to the European kings on the map.” Also from the fourteenth century, Ibn Battuta, a Muslim scholar from Morocco, has reminded his readers of the presence of trade routes to Europe and Asia.

As to STEM subjects, these can return to medieval sources for present research. Thus a medieval English eye-salve is now successful as an antibiotic for MRSA. Such antibiotics can be important for further

study since present-day ones are becoming increasingly inefficient. Moreover, in England as elsewhere, medieval societal reactions to the Black Death help teach twenty-first-century people how to react to COVID.

Other memorable points are the reminders that weather conditions are far from constant throughout history and that domestic abuse was condemned in the Middle Ages, then as now. Towards the end of the book, there is material on Robert Grosseteste, the bishop of Lincoln and a figure of first importance in medieval thought, not only in England but in Europe, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The interdisciplinary bibliography is noteworthy, covering subjects as diverse as climate change, sexuality, gardens, hagiology and – topically – pandemics. This book helps readers see English medieval history in an international context.

*Fr Nicholas Paxton*

### **Remembering Pope Benedict XVI The Isle of Wight Catholic History Society**

The relevance of this pope to (recent) English and Welsh Catholic history is, of course, his visit in 2010 for the beatification of our great religious hero John Henry Newman.

Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) died on 31 December 2022, aged 95. As we approach the first anniversary of his death, the Isle of Wight Catholic History Society has assembled a panel of contributors, most, I think, members of the Society, to compile an 80-page booklet of articles considering various aspects of Benedict's long and fruitful life. A foreword by the Abbot of Quarr Abbey refers to Benedict as being a highly intelligent and articulate theologian as well as a very humble, kind, and gently charming man.

A short biography, over nine pages, covers the whole of Benedict's life, from his birth in Germany in 1927 to his death in Rome. The amount of detail indicates the amount of research that must have been done.

The State Visit of Benedict to the United Kingdom in 2010 (the visit of John Paul II in 1982 was a pastoral visit) had the particular purpose of the beatification of John Henry Newman (who has since been

canonised). The beatification ceremony in Cofton Park, Birmingham is well described and the details given must have relied to a great extent on contemporary news reports. A Benedictine nun from St Cecilia's Abbey, Ryde has given her own thoughts on the wonderful opportunity to attend the beatification ceremony.

A short chapter concerns Benedict and the New Evangelisation, a notion proposed by John Paul II and developed, as Pope, by Benedict. The essence is that every Christian is called to be an evangelist to the world in which he or she lives.

The IoWCHS has been fortunate to have as the contributor of the chapter on Benedict and *Anglicanorum Coetibus* a former Anglican Vicar of Ryde who is now a member of, and, since 2016, chancellor of, the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham. His description of the events leading up to, and the effects of, the publication of that Apostolic Constitution is a masterly summary of the situation.

The representative on the Isle of Wight of the Latin Mass Society has contributed a chapter on Benedict and *Summorum Pontificum*. He explains Benedict's thinking leading up to the issue of the *Motu Proprio* and says "Consequently, Benedict issued *Summorum Pontificum* in order to emphasise the continuity of the Church's liturgical tradition and to spiritually nourish those who are attached the 1962 Missal". He explains the implementation of the document and the effects of that implementation and concludes by saying "One can only speculate on Benedict's views regarding the 2022 reversal of much of his work in *Summorum Pontificum* by his successor".

The last two chapters concern major publications associated with Benedict. The first is the Catechism of the Catholic Church, specifically the reissue of the Catholic Catechism in 1992, which the contributor believes will be the abiding achievement of Benedict's life. He explains that John Paul II entrusted the overall compilation of the new catechism to Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith and states his view that the result is a treasure not just of doctrine and precise teaching, but also a warm and human document of art and culture.

The second major publication associated with Benedict is, of course, his own compilation, his trilogy Jesus of Nazareth. The contributor's ten



pages of commentary on these books explore many aspects of Benedict's profound reflections on the life of his Master.

*Bernard Polack*

**From Country House Catholicism to City Church  
The registers of the Oxford Catholic Mission 1700-1875**

Edited by Tony Hadland

Published by Boydell Press, Oxfordshire Record Society, Woodbridge  
2023

This scholarly work, complete with illustrations, charts the emergence of Oxfordshire Catholicism from the shadows of the sixteenth century when merely practicing the Catholic faith was frowned upon to the sunny uplands of the nineteenth century when Catholics were once again free to worship as they wished. The book is in two parts: a detailed introduction running to seventy-five pages and a translated, transcribed and tabulated record of the Oxford Mission covering 1700-1875. It tells the story of how Catholicism was centred on the country house and how Catholic lay people clustered around these centres for many years. Later, as Catholic Emancipation changed the religious landscape, Catholics. The Introduction sets the scene and clearly explains the background to the prohibition of Catholic sacraments which he had also previously done in his Thames Valley Papists. This well researched book analyses the existing records, some of them transcribed from Latin, and he gives us a snapshot of how Catholics lived in Oxfordshire and a window into their lives through the centuries. The Oratory's archive consists of registers from Waterperry House, the chapel of St Clement's, Oxford, and the church of St Aloysius Gonzaga, Oxford which is now the Oxford Oratory. The registers have been made accessible to researchers having been translated from the original Latin in many cases and tabulated into an easily searchable format. The book will be of interest to Catholic family historians and scholars of Catholic local history.

*T J Guile*

## Heavenly Embroidery

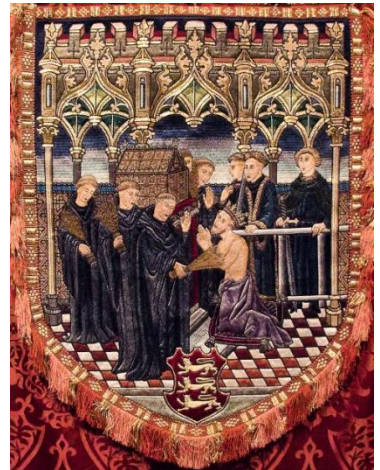
Gillian Grute

(publ. Gracewing, £14.99)

This is the remarkable story of the Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus and the even more remarkable story of their Catholic artistic legacy. The Order, founded in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Germany, was primarily concerned with the care of the poor and disadvantaged (which the Order continues to this day). More by chance than intention their work came to be funded by the production of elaborately embroidered church vestments. Following the initiative of an enterprising Scottish woman, Mary Edgar, the Order came to establish a house in the small town of Southam in Warwickshire in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century; the dual missions of care for the poor and artistic embroidery continued and flourished there. Through the 20<sup>th</sup> century Southam received many commissions for vestments, a large number of which, thankfully, have survived. The house at Southam sadly had to close in 2005.

And there the story might have ended but for the work of Gillian Grute. Her textile design studies in the 1990s brought her into contact with the community at Southam and since then it has become something of a mission to rescue their work from obscurity, to identify locations where the vestments have survived and to pay tribute to the extraordinary artistry of the Sisters. *Heavenly Embroidery* is the product of many years of study and research. Gillian Grute, while an expert in the field of textile design, writes in a readily accessible style about the journey that brought the Sisters to Southam and the work they undertook there. But crowning the content are the illustrations, which capture the vibrant colour and the intricate workmanship in the vestments (the illustrations accompanying this short review cannot do full justice). The book is a very high quality publication which, at £14.99, represents extremely good value. Gillian Grute and Gracewing publishers are to be congratulated for this splendid contribution to our knowledge of our Catholic history and heritage.

*Vincent Burke*



1. St John Fisher in the antependium
2. Chalice veil detail: St Oswald made for Erdington Abbey
3. St Thomas More, chasuble detail
4. Cope hood - Penance of Henry II at tomb of Becket- St Dunstan's Birmingham

(Photographs used with permission of Gillian Grute)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**TUESDAY 16th JANUARY 2024, 7.30pm** *Via Zoom*

Joshua Madrid: *"God Pickle You Gentlemen": Preserving English Catholicism in the Second World War*

**TUESDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2024, 7.30pm** *Via Zoom*

Dr Elizabeth Norton: *The Blounts of the West Midlands: An English Catholic family in the reign of Elizabeth I*

**TUESDAY 5 MARCH 2024, 7.30pm** *Via Zoom*

Professor Victor Stater: *Hoax - The Popish Plot that Never Was*  
*An analysis of the so-called Titus Oates plot and the subject of Professor Stater's recent book*

**THURSDAY 25 APRIL 2024, 7.30pm** *Via Zoom*

Dr John Jenkins: *"A National Repository of Saints":  
The relic collections of Westminster Cathedral 1895-1945'*

**MONDAY 13 MAY 2024, 7.30pm** *Via Zoom*

Dr Francis Young: *English Catholics and the Supernatural*

**TUESDAY 4 JUNE 2024, 7.30pm** *Via Zoom*

Professor James Clark: *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*

**THURSDAY 4 JULY 2024, 7.30pm** *Via Zoom*

Fr Richard Finn OP *The History of the Dominican Order in England*