VENERABILE VIEW

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FROM THE RECTOR'S WINDOW

Summer 2009

ORDINATIONS AT PALAZZOLA

It's Ordination Day; and from my window at Palazzola, I can see the families and friends of our two ordinands arriving to pray with us the Mass of Ordination and to stay at the Villa for a few days afterwards. They had an early start this morning, getting the coach up from Rome at breakfast time. They had been staying in or around the College, doubtless feeling the heat of Rome these last several days, while experiencing the joy of Rome's most important sights, many for the first time. I can see them savouring not only the view but also the cool of the air as they step off the bus!

As with so much else at Palazzola, one could say it was ever thus! Bishop Crispian Hollis of Portsmouth who has come to ordain our new Deacons, reminded us that he too was ordained priest in this same chapel 44 years ago yesterday: the ordination today will be the anniversary of his first Mass as a priest in that same place. It has been our honour to have Bishop Hollis as our guest these last few days, along with his Vicar for Formation, Canon Paul Townsend and the Vocations Director, Fr Gerard Flynn. The Bishop has come to ordain our Senior- and Deputy Senior-Students James McAuley and Phillip Harris as Deacons for his diocese; and they will study with us one further year until their ordination as priests next summer.

ORDINATIONS IN ENGLAND

After Mass, there will be the traditional *pranzone al fresco*, in the beautiful Villa garden. Then the community will scatter in different directions, but with many meeting up again next Friday in Crawley for the ordination, also as a Deacon, of Andy Moss by Bishop Kieran Conry of Arundel and Brighton. Andy left us a year ago to study Canon Law in Canada. The next day should see the English College Travelling Circus happily descend on Canning Town for the ordination of Deacon James Mackay as a priest by Bishop Thomas McMahon of Brentwood. James's is the first of two priestly ordinations for Brentwood this year, the other being Deacon Mark Reilly next September in Brentwood Cathedral. Meanwhile, the last weekend of July will see us gathered in St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle, for the ordination as a priest of Deacon Lee Barrett by Bishop Seamus Cunningham of Hexham and Newcastle.

PALLIUM MASS

The last day of term saw most of the College in St Peter's Basilica to be with the new Archbishop of Westminster, Vincent Nichols as he received the Pallium from Pope Benedict. Seven of our students were serving, including the three Westminster students. Afterwards, we feted the new Archbishop with a festive lunch which saw the refectory filled to capacity. It was with much pride that we saluted Archbishop Vincent as the eleventh Archbishop of Westminster and the seventh alumnus of the *Venerabile* to be appointed to that See, the others being no lesser personages than Cardinals Wiseman, Hinsley, Godfrey, Griffin, Heenan and Murphy-O'Connor. Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor was with us for the great celebration, himself making history as the first Archbishop Emeritus of Westminster to visit the English College.

MINISTRIES

We were delighted to have both the new and Emeritus Archbishops join us two days later at Palazzola for lunch after the Lectorate Mass. Bishop Thomas Williams, Auxiliary in Liverpool, was with us for the week, to institute as Lectors Guido Amari of Westminster, Marc Homsey of Leeds, Tony McGrath of Shrewsbury and John Poland of Liverpool; then, a few days later, as Acolytes Michael Coughlan of Shrewsbury, Edward Henley and Stefan Kaminski of Westminster, Steven Leightell of Middlesbrough, Sandy MacDonald of Antigonish and Ben Theobald of Portsmouth.

PARTENZE E ARRIVI

The only students leaving us this year are Fr Lee Barrett, who begins priestly ministry in Hexham and Newcastle next month; and Frs Brendan Gatt and John Berry who return to Malta after several years' doctoral studies with us. Frs James Mackay and Mark Reilly will return to the College next year to complete studies in Canon Law and Dogmatic Theology respectively. We have four seminarians joining us from English dioceses: for Liverpool, Adam Stewart; for Shrewsbury, Tom

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Cunnah; and for Southwark Luke De Pulford and David Howell. We also have two seminarians coming to us from the diocese of Reykjavik in Iceland, Oskar Thorsteinsson and Hjalmar Gudjonsson. We have two student-priests coming to live with us as well: Fr Jonathan Brandon from Shrewsbury; and Fr Craig Fitzpatrick from Hallam. It means we will have eight new men coming in total. This will give us a full complement of 33 students: 26 seminarians – 22 for England and Wales, two from Canada and two from Iceland; plus seven priests – making, with five staff-members, a community of 38 in total.

CHURCH REOPENING

When we return from the vacation, we will almost immediately head back to Palazzola to make a House retreat with Mgr John Armitage, Vicar General in Brentwood. The second week of term promises to be very memorable. Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor and Archbishop Nichols have both undertaken to be present for the reopening of the College church on 18th October. The church has been closed two years now. It has been exciting in recent months to see the scaffolding taken down to reveal the fruit of the restorers' labours. All the surfaces have been cleaned and made good; there is a new lighting system; and the frescoes in the Tribune restored to look as they must have appeared when first executed in 1888. Even without the lights on, one sees the frescoes from across the tribune in a way one has simply never experienced before. Most dramatic of all will be the restoration of the Martyrs' Picture to its rightful place at the east end of the church: with state-of-the-art illumination, it is going to be a revelation for all of us who have know the Martyrs' Picture all our adult lives to see detail hitherto unrevealed because hidden under centuries of street-grime and smoke-dust.

I am so pleased that many of the Friends are going to be able to share in our celebration of the church's refurbishment. Friends and Old Romans will be joining us at different times in the week to enjoy a variety of gatherings. One evening, we shall be entertaining all the Old Romans who are in town as well as all the Vocations Directors of England and Wales to a Mass and festive meal. Another evening, we shall be entertaining the Friends in a similarly festive way, with Evening Prayer followed by dinner in the refectory. It will be a particular pleasure to welcome the Chairman of the Friends that evening. We are delighted to have secured our three historian-friends, Professor Eamon Duffy and Drs Judith Champ and Carol Richardson, to come and lecture about the place of the church in the College's history. Several days of the week, there will be organ recitals, allowing us simply to contemplate the beauty and symbolism of the unique church that is *S Tommaso de Urbe*. It promises to be a great reunion: all the extant former Rectors are due to attend – Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor, and Monsignori Hay, Kennedy, Toffolo and Kilgarriff. Students will doubtless be amused to compare their likenesses to the portraits in the 1st Library!

REFURBISHMENT OF THE SALONE

Many will be the reminiscences over the *Grappa* and *Amaro* as we congregate of an evening in the Salone that week! That too the Rectors will find transformed, since our benefactors' generosity has allowed us to refurbish not only the church but also the guest accommodation in the Salone wing on the front of the College. That has been a year-long job - exciting as well with the discovery and restoration of frescoes in Cardinal Howard's 17th-century Palazzo which we simply did not know were there. We will be pleased at last to offer visiting bishops and other officials accommodation which is worthy and dignified.

FORMATION STAFF

These two projects owe an enormous amount to the vision and tenacity of the Vice-Rector, Fr Andrew Headon of Brentwood Diocese, who has managed them both with a scrupulous eye to detail. The College owes to him and, indeed, all the staff a deep debt of gratitude for all that has been achieved this year. I was pleased to report the arrival of Fr Mark Harold as Pastoral Director this time last year: 12 months on, it is difficult to believe that Fr Mark has not always been a part of us. I would say the same even more emphatically of our other two staff-members - Fr Tony Milner of Arundel & Brighton, Academic Tutor since September 2007; and Mgr Philip Carroll of Hexham & Newcastle, Spiritual Director since September 2006. Without these four, the College could certainly not function; and I remain very grateful to them for sacrificing being parish priests these years they are in Rome in order to prepare the future priests entrusted to us.

JUBILARIANS

Living in a seminary, the Year of Priesthood is particularly exciting. It felt very privileged to be in St Peter's Basilica on the Feast of the Sacred Heart to welcome the arrival of the relic of the heart of St John Vianney in the liturgy to inaugurate the Year. One initiative we have taken as a College this Year has been to invite a great number of Jubilarians from all the dioceses of England and Wales to come and spend a week in Rome and at Palazzola to celebrate Priesthood. We wrote to every Silver-, Golden- and Ruby-Jubilarian from every diocese; and I am delighted to say a great number responded and are going to be staying at Palazzola in the first week of November. They have come at our invitation, as the College's guests, as our gift to them in thanksgiving for all their years of priestly generosity. There will be many Old Romans among them but they are by no means all graduates of the College. They shall be visiting us for a Mass and festive supper in the middle of that week: it promises to be another memorable occasion.

YOUR PRAYERS

The longer I am a part of this community the more I realise our dependence on other people's prayers. I value the prayers of the Friends so highly: thank you for your faithfulness to us. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Annual General Meeting in Cambridge in September; and also in Rome in October. For those Friends who cannot attend either gathering, rest assured that we remain bound by the communion of prayer, as you pray for the staff and students of the College and we remember you – often - before the Lord.

Mgr Nicholas Hudson
Rector

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

by Jo Barnacle

We were all very sad to hear of the death of Elizabeth Usherwood who played such a large part on our committee. A few of us managed to attend her funeral.
Instead of flowers, we were asked to donate to the Friends of the Venerabile and the Friends of Westminster Cathedral. We were given a very generous donation of £200. All three members of our committee who have died recently were also Friends of Westminster Cathedral - Tanis, Ivan and Elizabeth.

May Elizabeth and all the Friends who have died recently Rest in Peace.

My visit to the college was very enjoyable. I spent a day mending vestments, a day at Palazzola and a day sightseeing. As it was the year of St Paul I went to see Carravaggio's painting of the Conversion of St Paul in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo; I also found another church on the Corso in which the Heart of St Charles Borromeo was venerated.

Work is going on apace at the College to get the chapel finished for the Grand Reopening in October. Will you be one of the Friends' party for this historic event in Rome?

The Chapel is starting to look resplendent with everything bright and fresh. You will be amazed at the detail that can be seen on the Martyrs picture now that it has been cleaned. I saw it standing on the floor in the Saloto, so was able to see it face to face.
As you will see from the report the visit to Mapledurham House was a great success; Elizabeth had arranged it before her death.

We are grateful to Anthony Coles who stepped in to lead the day.

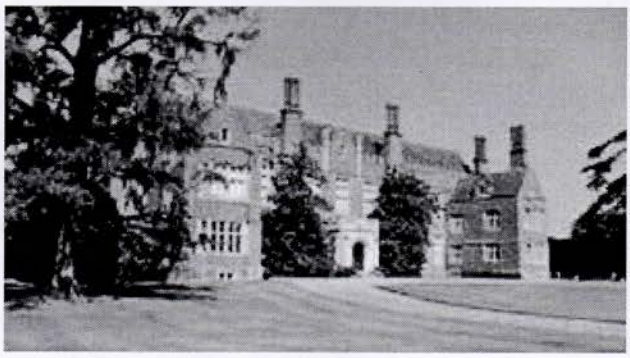
We are also grateful to Rodney Webb who has offered to produce the Venerabile View, which Elizabeth used to compile.

I hope to see many of you at our Annual General Meeting on Saturday 19th September in Cambridge. The meeting will take place in the Catholic Chaplaincy, Fisher House.
Our guest will be the College Rector and we will be hearing from the deputy senior student. Mass will also be celebrated in the historic setting of Fisher House.

Our Visit to Mapledurham House

by Anthony Coles

Some 36 of the Friends enjoyed a day out at the Mapledurham Estate. The late Elizabeth Usherwood originally arranged the day, which was undertaken by myself with the assistance of Yvonne Veale and Roseann McCrea.
After travelling along narrow country lanes we reached the haven of Maple Durham "the maple tree enclosure" mentioned in the Doomsday book - a manor house, with a church (now Anglican) and the only working water mill set by the Thames.



John Eyston, the current owner and descendant of the Blount family, along with his wife Lady Anne, greeted us at a small entrance to the manor house that led immediately into a small chapel where Father Marcus Stock was waiting. Here we celebrated Mass. We thought of past Friends of the College, our hosts and Father Marcus. There was a feeling of continuity, which permeated the small chapel; of Mass being celebrated in good times and bad, which was reflected in Fr Marcus' sermon reminding us of how the English and Welsh martyrs were examples of fidelity to the faith in season and out of season. Following Mass, we found a sunny place on the lawn overlooking the river to enjoy a picnic lunch. Then it was time for our private tour of the house by John Eyston and Lady Anne including the areas normally off limits to day visitors. These included the priests hole and the hiding places for books, vestments etc which required us to traipse through our hosts' daughters' bedrooms. Ingenious too were these hiding places, especially as they had only been rediscovered in the last century.

The church dedicated to St Margaret was interesting for having a double aisle; one used by the local Anglican community, the other the burial place of the Catholic Blount family since 1490 and despite this being contested during penal times, there has been no direct access between the two aisles for over four centuries.

Afterwards we were free to enjoy the house and grounds where there was a wonderful Judas tree in full flower reminding so many of us of Rome at Easter. The working flourmill was also of interest.

ELIZABETH ADA USHERWOOD
10th JULY 1923 TO 3rd APRIL 2009

Elizabeth was born in New North Street, Bloomsbury. She attended the Italian school in Clerkenwell and the Oratory School in Kensington.

Elizabeth joined the Bank of England in 1941 and, in addition to working at the Bank during the day, she joined the Red Cross during the war and was a part time nurse at Liverpool Road hospital.

After caring for her mother until her death, Elizabeth met and married Stephen Usherwood. Stephen was an author and BBC producer in the History Department. Together they researched various projects and they wrote many books together. She also wrote a book herself, "Women First: Biographies of Catholic Women in the Forefront of Change".

Whilst Elizabeth had no children of her own, she took great interest in young people. Elizabeth's faith was the most important influence in her life. Her dedicated service to the Friends of the Venerabile saw her serve on the committee for 15 years and she edited the "The Venerabile View".

She and Stephen also gave much support to the Friends of Westminster Cathedral and gave much help on the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1982 and the visit of the Queen in 1995.

It was a testament of her faith that five of her priest friends celebrated her funeral Mass and that Canon Digby Samuels gave the homily.

Elizabeth has left a legacy of happy memories. She will be sorely missed.

RFW

News From Palazzola

Why not join us with your nearest and dearest this year for **Christmas** (23 to 27 December) or **New Year** (29 December to 02 January) - or both? We have some great packages and, in keeping with the present climate, we are able to offer you last year's prices! In addition to this if you book before 15 September you will receive a 10% discount! The price is €295 (£260) in a standard room, €355 (£310) in an en-suite room for each package - and if you take both packages one of the nights in between (27/28 December), which is normally €70 (£60) standard or €85 (£75) en-suite, is free! Children under 6 years are free of charge and children 6 - 16 years are €200 (£175) when sharing with a full paying adult or child in standard room. Excursions are extra.

Have you ever thought of visiting Palazzola in the **autumn** or **winter**? We have some great offers! Book with us for a minimum of 3 nights between 15 October and 20 December and 10 January to 15 April and you will receive a voucher worth €50 for a further autumn and winter stay! The price of the three day offer is €150 (£130) in standard rooms and €180 (£155) in en-suite rooms. Children under 6 years are free of charge and children 6 - 16 years are €125 (£110) when sharing with a full paying adult or child in a standard room.

From 21 to 26 March 2010 we have our **Lenten Retreat** with Mgr Philip Carroll and Fr Mark Harold from the English College at €335 (£295) in a standard room and €415 (£360) in an en-suite room inclusive of all meals, retreat sessions, excursions and visits.

For further details, please see our new website at www.palazzola.it or contact Anthony Coles, 18 Maresfield Gardens, London NW3 5SX Tel: 020 7431 3414 / arctc@btinternet.com for further details and booking methods.

Joyce Hunter

FRIENDS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009

This will be held on **Saturday 19th September** at Fisher House the Catholic Chaplaincy at Cambridge University.
The guest speakers will be The Rector, Monsignor Nicholas Hudson, and the Deputy Senior Student Phillip Harris.

RFW

VENERABILE CUFFLINKS LIMITED EDITION

In association with the Friends of the Venerabile we offer you the opportunity to purchase a pair of sterling silver cufflinks, relief engraved, bearing the details of the shield of the Venerabile.

The cost is just £55, gift boxed and with free p&p within the United Kingdom.

The Edition is limited to 100 pairs with profits to the Friends of the Venerabile.

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