



# **The Beda Review**



Franciscan Missionaries of the  
Divine Motherhood

*2021 - 2022*

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## 2021 - 2022



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Pixelpress Ltd

## **Publishing Consultant**

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[www.publishing.ie](http://www.publishing.ie)

## **Front cover:**

The crest of the FMDM sisters

## **Back Cover:**

The Beda Association's Prayer for Seminarians and Vocations Prayer Calendar

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# Rector's Report 2021-2022

Canon Philip Gillespie



Dear friends,

Welcome to this Year's Edition of *The Beda Review*. My thanks to Jason Fernandes our Editor and Thomas Hiney, Assistant Editor, for the time and care which has gone into collecting articles and photographs. It was in November of 1852 that the first students were admitted to the Collegio Ecclesiastico – and so this year, 2022, marks the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Seminary! Ad multos annos – may the College continue for many years to give faithful service to the Church throughout the English-speaking world. Of course in those 170 years there have been many changes – not least in our name!



Collegio Ecclesiastico which soon became Collegio Pio in honour of our Founder, Pope Pius IX ( Pio Nono ) and then Collegio Beda in 1898 as Pope Leo XIII was about to declare the Northumbrian Monk, Bede, as Doctor of the Church.

Since our Edition of *The Beda Review* this time last year it feels as if much has happened - and yet much has stayed the same regarding the Covid pandemic and its effects upon the programme of formation in the Beda. While we would have hoped that in this year's publication we could have said that the past 12 months have been lived totally free from the restrictions of the Pandemic this is not the case and we are learning that Covid does indeed have a sting in the tail – perhaps slightly less debilitating than the first wave of the pandemic but nonetheless disruptive of plans and organisation.

Having been able to celebrate Diaconate Ordinations in the Papal Basilica in June of 2021, we then said farewell to 8 deacons of the top year who were to be ordained priest over the summer months: one for Wales, 3 for England, 2 for Australia and 2 for Sweden (Third Order Regular Franciscans).

The past year has thankfully seen some opening up both in the College and also in the city – but as you will be aware Italy (and the Vatican) have been slower to lift the obligation for the wearing of face coverings and the like that has been the case in the UK. With all due caution we have been able to extend hospitality to our external professors and to guests from Rome and beyond and also we are able to resurrect some of the internal practices which for all good reason fell into disuse at the height of the pandemic – 'free' seating in the refectory, single sittings at meal times , some liturgical practices and house gatherings such as the Beda Forum (albeit in a slightly reduced form). This has not been without its challenging moments and one or two

spikes of illness in the House but we have sought to deal with these as gently and without undue fuss as possible. It is hardly unexpected that the feel of the past year has remained one of living in a 'minor key' in that we are still living in a slightly 'in between' world. Italy did not renew the State of Emergency provisions at the end of March and during April and May it looked as if the requirements for face coverings in public transport and in enclosed spaces would be lifted – however not so soon! We are returning to a form of regularity – but only slowly. The Vatican were a little more reticent in their protocols and required the FFP2 face coverings through until the end of May

One of the drawbacks of a 4 year programme is that you soon lose the 'collective memory' of the years. It is only really the top year who have lived in what we could call pre-virus times and therefore carry with them 'the way things were' – with external presiders at liturgies of Advent and Lent, College feasts where students did the serving at tables and the washing up and re-setting of the tables.....all of these things have had to change due to the restrictions and protocols under which we have been living – and perhaps some things will and need not return to 'the way we were'.... Things develop and adapt and we run the risk as much as any institution or parish of living on the principle of 'we have always done it like this.'

We are still well served by some 16 external professors (male and female, lay and ordained) who come in to help provide the academic components of the Programme with our degree validated through St Mary's University Twickenham. Classes will normally be of a morning with afternoons left free for personal study, house obligations and free time for cultural visits and the deepening of *romanità*.

Saturday morning in the timetable has become not only an opportunity for 'catch up' when a professor has been unable to attend for his/her timetabled class but also an opportunity for *optional courses* in languages – firstly Italian but now also Latin, as one of the requests made by the current third year through the Beda Forum was assistance in presiding at the Mass using Latin (not a desire to use the 1957/62 Rite, but the 1970 Rite in Latin).

## **Moving on**

In summer of this year we bade farewell to Sisters Carmel, Bee and Mary Jean as the **F**ranciscan **M**issionaries of the **D**ivine **M**otherhood ended their ministry at the Beda. It was a sad moment as 62 years of their presence here in College came to a close; not only because they are a welcome presence as part of the resident community but also because of the work which they do both in the library and also supporting those for whom written work in English is not always easy. We took the opportunity of an evening reception in the garden on the patronal feast of St Bede this year to make a formal farewell to the sisters; members of the Leadership Team

from Ladywell came across to join us as did Mgr Brian Dazeley and Mgr Rod Strange, former Rectors of the College. In early June we took an overnight pilgrimage to Assisi and Greccio in recognition of the Franciscan 'touch' which the FMDM presence brings to our lives!

In summer we also said farewell to Mgr Peter Verity who will be returning to the Diocese of Lancaster having served the College well for 11 years as one of the Spiritual Directors. We are immensely grateful for the assistance of the Overseas Seminaries Committee in finding a new member for our Formation Team and in particular to Bishop Mark O'Toole for releasing one of his own priests to serve as Spiritual Director from September. We were greatly looking forward to welcoming Fr Louis Rieunier onto the Team of Formators. The Lord however had other plans and Louis passed away in May of this year after a short stay in hospital. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

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A great privilege during the year was the opportunity to help in the celebrations of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of full diplomatic relations between Great Britain and the Holy See. The Ambassador, His Excellency Mr Christopher Trott, kindly invited us to share in the preparations and the unfolding of the celebration, which took place on Tuesday 29 March. Mass at the Papal Basilica of St Paul was presided over by Cardinal Parolin, the Cardinal Secretary of State, and the Beda, along with the Abbey of St Paul, provided the serving team and a small *schola cantorum*. Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon were staying with us at College at the time, as were Archbishop Bernard Longley, Archbishop John Wilson and Bishop Mark O'Toole; the latter three Bishops were on the annual visitation to the College on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales while the Cardinal and Archbishop of Liverpool were making visits to the various Dicasteries and Congregations in their roles as President and Vice-President of the Bishops' Conference.

On the following day, the Wednesday of the 4<sup>th</sup> week of Lent, the Lenten Station Mass is held at St Paul outside the Walls and so we were 'on duty' again, animating the early morning Liturgy for the English Catholic Community of Rome. Cardinal Vincent presided and Archbishop McMahon preached.

All in all they were very busy but fulfilling and engaging days – a glimpse of the 'colour' of Roman life returning after many monochrome months of the lockdown and Covid restrictions.

I hope you enjoy the glimpses into Beda life and history which you will encounter in these pages. Thank you for your continued prayerful and generous support of the life, work and ministry of the Pontifical College of St Bede.

Ad multos annos...to us all !





# Editor's Note

*Dr Jason Keith Fernandes*

Choosing a theme for *The Beda Review* was surprisingly easy this year. In fact, it perhaps struck us, i.e. Thomas Hiney, the Assistant Editor of the *Review*, and myself, at about the same time, when Fr Philip, announced that the sixty odd year association of the FMDM sisters was to end this year. We both realised that if there was one thing that we would like to dedicate the bulk of the *Review* to this year it was to honour the memory of the FMDM sisters who have made the Beda College home for the many seminarians who have passed through its portals.

In fulfilling this desire our first thanks must go to Sr Teresa Mitchell, the Congregational Archivist to the FMDM who provided us with the rich trove of images that accompany the brief outline of the FMDM association with the Beda, and the list of the many sisters who gave their mite towards making the Beda a welcome space, both for the residents, as well as the guests. Indeed, reading through the former Rectors' tributes, I realised that so much of the famed hospitality of the Beda was in fact the hospitality extended by the sisters! In addition to the tributes from Mgr Dazeley and Mgr Strange, we were also fortunate to have two of the last FMDM sisters at the Beda, Sr Bee Kennedy and Sr Carmel Spratt, offer reminiscences of their lives prior to, and in, the Beda. Although we would have liked to see a richer tribute paid by former seminarians at the Beda, the *Review* contains just three which we received via the good offices of Fr Michael McLaughlin, former Secretary of the Beda Association. However, from what I understand, the sisters were flooded with personal messages ever since the news was announced. As such, we rest easy with these representative messages. The tribute to the sisters also includes the FMDM Congregational Leader Sr Jane Bertelsen's address to the Rector and the Beda community in residence at the reception on St Bede's Day. The tribute ends with the roll of honour, a list of the FMDM sisters who have served at the Beda and a request that you remember them in your prayers.

An introduction to the New Men at the Beda, just two of whom are in residence, follows the tribute, and close on its train is an adaptation of the talks preached by Fr Jim Walls at the Advent Recollections this past year. Both Thomas and I were so moved by Fr Walls' reflections, we were unanimous in our decision to include them for the wider Beda community, inspired also by Fr Rector's constant reminder that priestly formation continues even after our time at the Beda. Indeed, this focus on the priestly heart is a theme that runs through this issue.

What might a priestly heart be though? The newly ordained Fr Philip Bua through an offering of a narrative of his journey in love provides us some concrete insights into the contours of the priestly heart. May God bless him on his continuing journey.

After the confinement of the pandemic the Beda community's life was bookended by two *gitas*, one to Subiaco, inspired by the Benedictines, and the other to Franciscan Assisi and Greccio. We asked Dom Louis Osei, one of the new men and a Benedictine monk to share his experience of the first trip. This reflection is followed up by the reflection of another Benedictine monk who lived in the Beda, Dom Lodovico Torrisi Parisi, this one on liturgical beauty.

The FMDM sisters were not the only ones to bid adieu to their institutional association with the Beda. After eleven years as Spiritual Director at the Beda, it was now time for Fr Peter Verity to also return home and in parting he offers some interesting reflections and advice in the on-going formation of the priestly heart. The link between the priest and the altar was very movingly addressed by Bishop Mark Davies of Shrewsbury who presided over the diaconal ordination that closed the academic year at the Beda.

Before getting to the Beda diary, presented this year, as per tradition, by the Assistant Editor Thomas Hiney, we've inserted the list of those members of the Beda community who passed away this past year. The uneven quality of the obituaries results from their being received from diverse sources. I decided to retain this unevenness, even though there are a few about whom one could glean nothing even via brave forays into the wastes of the internet, since at the end of the day, we seek to direct your attention not only to their lives, but the care of their everlasting souls. Once again, as with the list of the FMDM sisters, we urge your prayers for these brothers from the Beda.

This issue closes with the Beda Association's Daily Vocation Prayer Calendar in the hope that you will join in with the Association's intentions in a focused prayer for all those involved in the call to the priesthood and religious life.

I wouldn't be able to end this note without a word of thanks to the Rector for his support, to Thomas Hiney for his solid camaraderie in the course of putting this issue together, and the various contributors to this volume. On all of these, and you, dear reader, peace.



# The FMDM Congregation in the Beda College over the years: A photo essay

*Sr Carmel Spratt FMDM and Sr Teresa Mitchell FMDM*

## General Facts:

The Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood, FMDM, have been a part of Beda life for 62 years. The Beda moved from the centre of Rome to St Paul outside the Walls in 1960 and the FMDM sisters were invited to help in the administration of the new Beda College from the very beginning. Initially the mandate was to fulfil the domestic responsibilities in the College. In reality, the FMDM sisters took on a far wider range of responsibilities from the outset.



The Community, 1964

Sr M Hynes, Sr M Anna, Sr M Louis, Sr M Sacre Coeur, Sr M Mercedes, Sr M Theophilis



Sister Seamstress at Work, 1967  
Sr M Sacre Coeur Thompson



Sewing Room, 1960

At the table: Unidentified

Left: Sr Isodore (Margaret Nolan)

At the sewing machine: Sr Mary Dolores Fitzpatrick

## From the beginning:

### College Administration

Mother Dolores fulfilled the roles of the **College Administrator/College Bursar** from the very beginning. We continued in this role until approximately 2001.

### Study Sisters

The College from the beginning kindly accepted, as part of the FMDM community, sisters who were studying in Rome at Regina Mundi which was an international college for women following religious studies, later given University status. **Sr Mary Annunciation** (later known as Sr June Shirville) was the first student sister at Regina Mundi. She was followed by other sisters either full time or part time, over many years. All the student sisters had domestic or other roles in the College, as well as their studies.



Off on an outing, c. 1975

Left to right: Joan Graham (Sr M Barbara), Bridget Martin (Sr M Giles), Catherine Smith (Sr M Immaculate Heart), Theresa Thomson (Sr M Sacre Coeur), Patricia Shepherd (Sr Virgo Fidelis), Therese C. Purvis (Sr M Grace), Diane C. Vincent (Sr Noel Chabanel), Veronica Coonan (Sr M Veronica)

### College Infirmarian

When there was no doctor or nurse among the seminarians, the sisters took on the role of **College Infirmarian**. Mother Dolores being a fully trained nurse, took on this role when she arrived in the Beda. In these early days, the doctor would come to the Beda personally and the Sister Infirmarian would accompany the doctor on his sick 'round', which often included several seminarians as the age range was higher in the sixties. The Sister Infirmarian would also administer any medication to the seminarians, including injections. In those days there were no disposable syringes and syringes were boiled up in the Convent bathroom! Sr Mary Benedicta (later known as Sr Monica Delaney) relieved Mother Dolores as College Infirmarian when she arrived in the College in 1964 to study at Regina Mundi.



## **Relationship of sisters with the professors and seminarians**

From the beginning there was a strict code of conduct regarding mixing with the professors and seminarians. The only sisters who spoke to the resident staff or seminarians were the local Superior and the Sister Infirmarian. For the rest of the sisters, it was considered a 'fault' if there was any social exchange. The back stairs were used by the sisters where possible. The front stairs were used when the professors and seminarians were 'safely' in the chapel or dining room.

## **Attendance at Mass**

The FMDM community had weekday Mass on their own in their own chapel. They were permitted to attend Sunday Mass and solemnities in the College chapel provided they used the Tribune, next to the organ. The sisters did not enter the main part of the chapel except to receive Holy Communion, returning immediately to the Tribune!

This strict segregation continued for many years.



The Chapel, 1964



Opening of Beda College by Pope St John XXIII. Sisters up in the tribune, not in order: Sr Carmel Kerins, Sr Nora O'Connor, Sr Immaculate (visiting the community), Mother Francis (Blanche Spring), Sr Mairead Hynes, Sr Mary Dolores Fitzpatrick, Sr Sacre Coeur Thompson, Sr Catherine Radstock (Sr Josepha), Sr Margaret Nolan.





In the Sisters' Garden, 1 June 1978  
First row, left to right: Sr Mary Elizabeth Share, Sr Sacre Coeur Thompson, Sr Cora Veale, Sr Marie Elise Tay  
Second row, left to right: Sr Giles Martin, Sr Catherine Purvis, Sr Assumpta Williams, Sr Margaret Seagrave, Sr Barbara Graham, Sr Janet Fearn

**1977** The ground-breaking decision was taken by the FMDM General Council and the Rector of the Beda to allow sisters to come to the Beda for a year of internal Spiritual Studies. The sisters chosen were Srs Assumpta, Mary Share and Janet Fearn. These sisters studied with the seminarians and a small group came each year for about 3 years. This experience radically changed the relationship between sister, staff and seminarians. For example, all the sisters started using the main stairs and spoke freely to the staff and seminarians, as appropriate.

Gradual integration continued and by the 1980s, socialising was an accepted part of life. Those seminarians who were drivers and had their own car would offer to take the sisters out, sometimes for a day, sometimes for an afternoon. Sisters also freely joined the College *gitas*. Segregation for all meals continued, except at Christmas time.

**25 December 1999:** With the mention of Christmas, it was on one such drive out to the country to bring a visitor to the Christmas lunch that **Sr Philippa Crofton-Sleigh** was killed in a tragic car accident and **Fr Brendan Soane** seriously injured. Fr Soane died about one week later. This accident was extremely tragic and was a shock to the entire Beda family.



Golden Jubilee of Sr Philippa Crofton-Sleigh, October 1999  
Left to right: Sr Maureen Halley, Sr Catherine Purvis, Sr Francoise Greening, Sr Assumpta Williams, Sr Philippa Crofton-Sleigh



Sisters' dining room, c.1978  
Sr De Luce Cashman, Sr  
Assumpta Cashman, Sr Sacre  
Coeur Thompson, Sr Cuthbert  
Mulligan, Sr Patrice O'Brien,  
Giles Martin, [student], Sr  
Monica Delaney

## Meals

Meals, except for the Christmas holidays, were separate right up to mid-2013, when the sisters in consultation with the Rector, Mgr Rod Strange, were invited to have their meals with the students. Prior to that time the sisters had their meals in the refectory during the holiday periods only. The sisters joined the students for the Divine Office in the College Chapel from mid-2013.

## Teaching

**1989 - 2013. Sr Assumpta Williams** started full time teaching (see how this developed in the separate entry for Sr Assumpta). Teaching was never envisaged in the original invitation in 1960!

**Mid 1980s. Sr Monica Delaney** was invited by Fr Sylvester Cotter to join some of his classes in Spiritual Direction. Sr Monica focused on the three vows taken by religious sisters, adapting the talks to show how certain aspects of these vows were also relevant for those preparing for the priesthood.

**2012 - 2022. Sr Carmel Spratt**, was invited to give some classes in healing as part of the Sacramental programme. She continued to share her knowledge and experience with the deacons.

With the help of Cezare and Gaetano, Sr Carmel worked to complete cataloguing the books in the library. This task was interrupted over the years, due to changes in personnel. All was completed for the opening of the refurbished and redesigned present library; it opened in September 2018.



## Librarian

Another item that was not envisaged in the original request was the role of **College Librarian**. At some point during the time when Mgr Drum was Rector, Sr Assumpta was asked to take on the role of College Librarian.

The sisters continued to fulfill this role until the conclusion of the relationship of the FMDM with the Beda.

## Catering

Cooking would have been seen as one of the tasks included in the original request for domestic work. However, Sr Louis and Sr Cuthbert brought catering to such a professionally high standard that a separate entry has been given to them both. Past seminarians from the Beda will look forward to seeing their names in the *Review* and their contribution recognized.



On duty in the Dining Room, c. 1979  
Left to right: Srs De Luce Cashman, Sacre Coeur Thompson, Giles Martin



## FMDM sisters living in the Beda but not working there

Some other sisters have lived in the Beda but not worked there, e.g., Sr Patrice O'Brien was there from 1982 to 1992. She was secretarial assistant to the Secretariat of State in the Vatican. Sr Anne Hawkins and Sr Margaret Segrave did similar ministry in the Vatican.

Sr Janet Fearn as well as being there as a student, returned to the Beda from 2003 – 2007, while working in Vatican Radio and her voice rang out to far distant places. Sisters in the Middle East were greatly comforted by Janet Fearn's early morning reflections.





## Visiting FMDM sisters

Tribute must be given to the way that the Beda has always welcomed FMDM sisters visiting the College. Many sisters, too many to count, have benefitted from being able to stay in the Beda while on sabbatical or on their way to Assisi.

## Significant FMDM sisters within the life of the Beda

### Mother Dolores Fitzpatrick

A part of Beda life from 1960-1971 and from 1985-1989, Mother Dolores was the first Superior of the FMDM community in the Beda. All local Superiors were called Mother in our early days.

On arrival in the Beda College Mother Dolores accepted the role of College Administrator/ Bursar as well as local leader for the sisters. Mgr Curtin, then Rector, would come to Mother Dolores Office each morning at 9am to discuss College business. Mother Dolores would drive to the Vatican weekly to buy bulk stores and to attend to College business at the Vatican Bank. Mother Dolores drove to and from the Vatican herself. A second sister would frequently accompany her to help load the stores into the car. Mother Dolores was a trained nurse so on arrival she also took on the role of Sister Infirmarian. In the early days the average age of the seminarians was fairly high and so sickness, especially during the winter months, was common. Mother Dolores would accompany the doctor on his visits and administer the medication.

Mother Dolores was a highly respected superior. She was kind and took her responsibility towards the sisters and the College very seriously. She was devoted to the Beda and worked very hard throughout her time as superior. She set a very high standard and, as she was fluent in Italian, she was loved by the Italian *personale* as well as by the English-speaking professors and seminarians. She returned in the mid-80s for a few more years as College Administrator/Bursar.



Market Day, 1967. Mother M Dolores Fitzpatrick, Sr M Louis (Mairead Hynes)



Sr Dolores Fitzpatrick's Golden Jubilee  
Pope St. John Paul II blessing Sr Dolores  
Left: Sr Sacre Coeur Thompson  
Right: Sr Monica Delaney



c. 1978

Front row, left to right: Sr Giles Martin, Sr Patrice O'Brien, Sr Margaret McNamara, Sr Dolores Fitzpatrick  
Back row, left to right: Sr Sacre Coeur Thompson, Sr Assumpta Williams, Sr Monica Delaney, Sr Mairead Hynes

### **Sr Louis**

A part of Beda life from 1960 to 1974 Sr Louis (later know as Sr Mairead Hynes) was also one of the first community members. She was a brilliant cook. On arrival in 1960 she took over full responsibility for the catering in the College. She and Mother Dolores had both come to Rome from Syracuse so, like Mother Dolores, Sr Louis spoke fluent Italian. Sr Louis learnt different menus from the Italian kitchen staff and she also taught them English recipes. The Beda owes its excellent combination of both Italian and English cuisine, to Sr Louis.

Carlo, who eventually became chief chef in the Beda, was only a young boy when Sr Louis arrived and she personally taught him not only first class cooking but also the extra responsibilities that go with catering, such as stock taking, ordering, planning menus etc. Sr Louis was keen to give the seminarians the best possible meals but the one thing they missed was English sausages. So undaunted, Sr Louis wrote to Walls for a recipe of their sausages, explaining the situation. Amazingly, Walls sent the recipe, provided Sr Louis used it only within the College and did not sell it! The seminarians nicknamed these sausages 'sausage Louise' and they became a favourite on the menu.

### **Sr Cuthbert Mulligan**

Fast Forward to 1980 and the arrival of a new sister to take over the catering, Sr Cuthbert, affectionately known as 'Cuthy'. Cuthy was also an excellent cook. She arrived at a time when there was greater contact with the seminarians than previously and Cuthy soon became a mother figure to many. Cuthy not only worked hard upholding the reputation for excellent cooking, but she also spent time listening, advising and encouraging seminarians during their four-year journey to the priesthood. Cuthy's gift was to make the Beda, and mealtimes in particular, feel more like home.



Both Sr Louis and Sr Cuthy were blessed with big hearts and warm personalities. This meant that both professors and seminarians benefitted from both a fantastic menu and a catering sister who cared for each one as an individual. Cuthy ended her ministry at the Beda in 1989.

### **Sister Sacre Coeur Thompson**

In 1960 Sr Sacre Coeur, affectionately known as Sacre was among the first members of the community. She deserves a mention as she gave almost 30 years of her life to the Beda, working quietly to fulfil the domestic tasks envisaged by the original invitation. Sacre's main responsibility was the laundry and general housework, but she also put her hand to any task.



The community in the garden, Rome, 1967  
Standing, left to right: Sr Eliza Hopkins,  
Sr Sacre Coeur Thompson, Sr M Dolores  
Fitzpatrick, Sr Mairead Hynes, Sr Hannah  
Naidu sitting: Sr M Theophilus, Sr Isobel  
Loong



In the laundry - Sr Sacre Coeur Thompson,  
undated (after 1977)

On feast days, Sacre could be seen preparing the professors' common room or overseeing the main dining room, ensuring nothing was overlooked. When anyone wanted anything practical, they would be told 'Ask Sacre' and sure enough, Sacre knew every inch of the College and Beda customs. Sacre worked efficiently and well with the Italian staff and was liked by them. The many professors and seminarians with whom she had contact over the years, held her in fond respect, sensing her enormous charity. A member of the community described Sacre as 'one of the most radiantly Franciscan people' she had ever met. Sacre returned to England in 1997 on account of ill health and died on the feast of St Bede 2001.

## **Sr Catherine Purvis**

Also known as Sr Mary Grace, she served in the Beda between 1968 – 1982, and later between 1990 – 2009. This was the beginning of her 33 years of commitment to the Beda. She was assigned to work in the Vatican in the Secretariat of State, English section, which she did for the next 14 years. Nevertheless, the Beda was her home. Cardinal Justin Rigali, writing in *The Beda Review* about Catherine's time in the Vatican, says 'she gave an example of extraordinary generosity, which was always accompanied by her Franciscan joy.'

On her return to the Beda for a nineteen-year stint, Sr Catherine received a very warm welcome. She promptly assumed responsibilities as College Bursar and Rector's Secretary. Her knowledge of Rome and her fluency in Italian

were invaluable. She loved the Beda and had a keen sense of what was best for the College. She was also a Mother figure taking an interest in every aspect of College life. She would greet the newest arrivals with a beaming smile and have time for the whole Beda family, professors, seminarians and Italian *personale*, as well as her own community of sisters. She was genuinely loved. Mgr Rod Strange often said that Catherine claimed that she was the 'memory of the College' having lived there for 33 years.

Sr Catherine handed over the roles of College bursar and Rector's secretary to committed lay people in 2001. She remained in the Beda as a supportive presence to all. She also began to reorganise the library and arrange the Beda Archives. Unfortunately, ill-health gradually took over and Sr Catherine returned to Ladywell in May 2009, where she died peacefully on 29 October 2010.



Sr Catherine Purvis and Sr Monica Delaney



## **Sr Assumpta Williams**

Like other FMDM sisters, Sr Assumpta formed part of the community at the Beda over two periods, the first between 1977-1978 and later between 1980 to 2012, 32 years in all. No words can really capture what a gift Sr Assumpta has been to the Beda. This *Review* can mention the major responsibilities that Assumpta was asked to take on, but her dedication and commitment to College life are beyond what can be captured in words.



Assumpta's Beda life began in 1977 when she, together with two other FMDM sisters, were invited to join the seminarians for a year of Spiritual Studies. From the FMDM's point of view, this new venture was a great success for Assumpta and was the year that her academic potential was really recognized. Sr Assumpta was assigned back to the Beda in 1980, first as College



Sr Assumpta Williams in the classroom  
From *The Beda Review*, May 1998, p. 30

Administrator and later as a student at the Gregorian University in Rome to study alongside the many seminarians from across the various Colleges in Rome. Besides studying Theology, Assumpta also became fluent in Italian, and studied Greek and Latin. By day, Assumpta would follow lectures at the Greg and in the evening she would fulfil her responsibilities as College Administrator. Fortunately, after some time she was finally relieved of the latter and was left to concentrate solely on her academic studies.

In 1989 Sr Assumpta obtained her Licenciata from the Greg and she became a full member of the teaching faculty in the Beda. For the next 23 years, Assumpta faithfully taught the following subjects: Introduction to Theology, Theology of Revelation, Patrology, Christology, Trinitarian Theology, Theology of Creation, Eschatology, Greek and Latin. In addition to these subjects, at the request of the Rector, Assumpta was also asked to be Dean of Studies for a year and Librarian for a number of years. Assumpta loved teaching and the seminarians gained a huge amount from her clear mind and her dedication in helping each one according to their personal capacity. Assumpta's desire to take her part in College life, went far beyond her teaching role. She would always be available to help with the many simple tasks undertaken by sisters in community, such as, putting on the early morning coffee machine for the College breakfast, helping wash the dishes

## *The FMDM Congregation in the Beda College over the years*

following Sunday lunch in the dining room, accompanying seminarians to the doctor if they needed an interpreter, as well as being an unofficial hospital visitor if a seminarian was admitted to an Italian hospital, not knowing any Italian!

In 2011 Assumpta herself started to feel unwell and she made several visits back to England for medical advice. She finally left the Beda in 2012 to join the La Verna Community in Ladywell, for sisters in need. Assumpta is still a member of this community today.

There have been a number of other FMDM sisters who have contributed not only to life at the Beda, but to the *Romanità* of the Eternal City, and whose presence is documented in the following images.



Sr M Giles Martin's Golden Jubilee,  
9 February 1988  
Also present, left to right: Sr Bernie Ghent,  
Sr Monica Delaney, Sr Cuthbert Mulligan



Beda Community with Pope John Paul II  
Left to right: Sr Mary Byrne, Sr Giles Martin,  
Pope John Paul II, Sr Bernie Ghent, Sr  
Monica Delaney, Sr Patrice O'Brien



Rome c. 2007  
Two sisters at back, left is Sr Fidelis  
Shepherd; right is Sr Assumpta Williams  
Towards the front, left to right: Sr Monica  
Jones, Sr De Luce Cashman, Sr Catherine  
Purvis, Sr Janet Fearn



Sr Patrice O'Brien in Rome, undated



# Reflections of a former Rector

*Mgr Brian Dazely*

On a fine winter's morning in early January 1991, I was sitting in a hotel room in Scarborough enjoying a post-Christmas break when the phone rang, and Bishop McGuinness told me that I had been appointed Rector of the Beda College in Rome and was to take up the post in four weeks. There wasn't much time but then there wasn't much to do. Two cases were packed, one with books and one with clothes. Train tickets were bought and off I went taking the train to Paris, and then the sleeper to Rome. In the morning through the train window, I saw the dome of St Peter's. That image stirred feelings of excitement, some apprehension, and memories too of a similar journey made in October 1955 travelling to Rome to begin studies for the Priesthood.

Arriving at the Beda Sr Catherine met me and took me at once into the convent to meet the sisters and enjoy coffee and cake. That was the beginning of a very happy relationship with the FMDMs, the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood. Without them I could not have done the work I was sent to do. They were a vital, an essential part of the work of formation. Priests came and went; students came and went; the sisters stayed for 60 years.

The spirit of the Beda I believe was, and is, the spirit of the FMDMs. Their spirit, their charism, was one of service, hospitality, and prayer. That spirit made the Beda a home for students and staff despite the inevitable challenges of seminary life. Sr Catherine always knew how to get things done and made everything look so easy. She cared for the sisters and the *personale* with great kindness and skill. Largely due to her care many of the *personale* stayed for years giving great service to the College and its community. She was responsible for the finances and for the maintenance of the building. A lot of building and maintenance work took place during the summer and the sisters took charge of that, putting up with the noise, and a great deal of dust, and made sure that everything was perfectly in order when we returned at the end of the summer holiday. I cannot remember the sisters ever asking for anything for themselves. Sr Catherine had worked in Rome for some years both for the Holy See and for the College. She knew how to get things done and did so without in any way claiming any credit or drawing attention to herself.

And then there was Sr Assumpta. Such a good teacher, modest too like all the sisters; a very valuable member of the academic staff, a much-appreciated contributor at staff meetings and, I'm told, a great help to students in a variety of ways. And could we ever forget Sr De Luce and Sr Sacre Coeur who did so much in

their quiet ways to make the College a home for all of us. I remember Sr De Luce sitting in the garden in the early morning no doubt praying for all of us. Sr Valerie and Sr Philippa joined the community bringing with them their own gifts and their fidelity to the charism of the FMDMs.

We owe so much to the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood for all that they have done for us over these 60 years but most especially for giving the College their special charism of service, hospitality, and prayer. That spirit makes the College the community, or rather the family it strives to be, and that spirit is at the heart of every priest's ministry. In that especially you have had a vital role in the formation of men for the priesthood. I will always be grateful to you dear friends and colleagues and thank God that I was called to share those precious years with the FMDMs.





## Reflection: Sr Carmel Spratt, FMDM

What sparked my decision to offer myself for the consecrated life? I vividly recall seeing a picture in the *Divine Word Magazine* when I was a young teenage girl, it was that of a sister sitting under a tree in Africa surrounded by very young children on the ground, all intent on what their teacher was saying. The thought came to me 'That is what I want to do - go to Africa to teach'! Well, as Providence would have it, I became a sister and a teacher but never went to Africa, my missions being in the USA, Australia and latterly Italy. Of course, there were other sparks that led me eventually to the FMDM Congregation, which I joined the day after my eighteenth birthday in 1955. My twin sister and parents drove me to Co. Galway, where I began as a postulant. After two weeks, along with five other young girls we went to England for further formation in the religious life.



My novitiate in England was very much pre-Vatican II. We had a strict regime and were kept well occupied with prayer, talks and manual labour. The mother house moved during that time from Guildford to Godalming as the congregation grew. There were 60+ of us young sisters in the novitiate, and since there was insufficient room, some of us had to sleep on board beds in what had been the cowshed. We froze during winter in that doorless shelter but thought it good preparation for the 'hardships of mission life'! We felt the cold but accepted it as part of Franciscan asceticism.

On completion of my novitiate, I studied for three years in London, obtaining my teacher qualification, after which I was sent to Regina Mundi in Rome as a full-time student. I stayed at the Beda, so have done the full round with fifty years in between! My first mission was to East Greenbush, New York State, where I was among a group of eight pioneer sisters who started a school in Holy Spirit Parish. It was there that I realized quite how many differences there are between cultures, even English-speaking ones. It was all very enriching, and I set myself to embracing the ministry. I remember saying to God: 'you called me here to New York so please help me on this new path'. It was the people that mattered, both inside and outside the community. I was involved in teaching and the administration of the school, and we worked hard, pursuing further studies, and enjoying life. I had some great and supportive friends and felt very blessed with their care and prayerful kindness. I felt sure that I was responding to God's call and that is what kept me going.

When we withdrew from the USA after 20 years, I was 'deported' to Australia. My first mission on that vast continent was in the outback of rural Victoria at St Mary of the Angels' College in Nathalia. What a contrast from upstate New York! Some sisters still say to me today, 'Carmel, remember your year of the fog'. It was a huge struggle for me at the beginning, but I grew to love the place and the people and the activities in my twelve years there. After that I worked in Melbourne for fifteen years, and then in Bendigo. I was very blessed, as the congregation gave me more responsibility, with opportunities to travel around Australia, Asia, and New Zealand as part of my ministry. In all I was thirty years in the Land of Oz.

What a joy to be sent here to the Beda College in 2012. It has been a privilege to be at the heart of Christendom, especially during the pontificate of Pope Francis. John XXIII was Pope when I arrived here in 1961-62 and I have a lovely memory of meeting him in St Paul's Basilica. I go weekly to talk to him at his tomb in the Basilica of St Peter and I am sure that he remembers me! From the Beda, there is an inspiring view of St Paul's and I visit it almost every day to pray for all on my list: family, sisters, and people I have encountered in my life and work. I pray especially for Beda men past and present, as well as for staff and *personale*.

That 'life is what you make of it' is a cliché with much truth to it. I am so grateful for the opportunities I have found for spiritual and intellectual enrichment, growth, and help. In all places there were possibilities for participating in courses on education and spirituality, as well as retreats and spiritual direction. I have known some wonderful people who were there to support me and give an empathic ear. I learned so much from my students and what a delight it was to see 'the light go on' when a struggler comprehended or solved a problem. There was joy and times of struggle, especially in my responsibilities, but it was my relationship with the Lord that kept me energized, and it has been a great privilege to work in his vineyard. I have been asked a few times how I would live my life again. I would make the same commitment and hopefully not the same mistakes is my answer.

Like others before me, I have been through many closures already and hopefully, with God's grace, I will have the courage to embrace the future after my blessed time here at the Beda. I am eternally grateful to God for my 85 years of life. Pope John XXIII said in 1960, when he visited the Beda: 'Before God the years do not count - only the intensity of the love with which we answer his call to serve him.'

I express my deepest gratitude to my family, sisters, the Rectors here, Mgr Rod and Canon Philip, and all the staff and students of the different educational institutions and parishes in which I have been privileged to serve. I have been blessed with an optimistic nature and have treasured the graces I have received. So, I look again with hope to the future, as I walk with the Lord, and with the support of sisters, family, and friends.



# FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES OF THE DIVINE MOTHERHOOD

## Some Reminiscences

*Mgr Roderick Strange*

The invitation in 1998 to become the Rector of the Beda came to me as an unwelcome surprise. I had enjoyed my seven years at the English College from 1963 to 1970 and loved Rome, but I had no desire to return for a further seven years which was what was then proposed. Indeed, I had been back only three times, briefly and on business, during those twenty-eight intervening years. A vital support in celibate priesthood is the circle of friends we form. After such an interval there was virtually no-one in Rome whom I knew. To be uprooted from my friends in England was not a cheering prospect. I thought about it, said my prayers, consulted wise people, and decided to refuse. I phoned my spiritual director and told him my decision. 'Wonderful,' he said immediately. 'Now you are free to accept.' And so I did and have never regretted it.

I had visited the Beda socially before, but, following my decision I went out for a few days at the start of June to see the lie of the land and meet the community. Arranging that visit, I received a letter from Sr Catherine Purvis, the Rector's secretary and College bursar. It was a warm, friendly letter, a good way to begin. And I moved to the College some weeks later, at the end of June.

At the time there were four FMDMs in the Beda. Besides Catherine, there was Sr Philippa Crofton-Sleigh, Sr Assumpta Williams, and Sr De Luce Cashman. My seven years as Rector became in time seventeen and so there were other FMDMs who came and went during that period, but let me just say something here about these four.

Philippa, though elderly and frail, was full of sparkle. The following October, in other words, in 1999, we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her Religious Profession. When the Lord took the initiative and called her to religious life, she had responded. She had worked in America, Australia, and New Zealand, in Singapore and Nigeria, in Ireland and in Italy. She had taught in New York State, in the Nigerian bush, and she had taught children with leprosy in Singapore. Then in 1979 she had begun her particular ministry in liturgy. As a liturgist, she would be especially irked when people were singing, for example, 'Praise, my soul, the King of heaven', and looking thoroughly miserable about it. 'When you are going to praise, praise,' she would say, 'look joyful.' The sparkle never left her.

All the same, she was becoming increasingly frail. When she did not appear of a morning for Office in the convent, Catherine would go and check on her, expecting perhaps, she told me on various occasions, to find that Philippa had died during the night. When she had her leg pulled about what a terrible long-term patient she would be, Philippa replied, 'Oh, I'm sure our Lord will take me quickly.' And, of course, he did. Philippa died following that tragic car accident on the evening of Christmas Day in 1999. Her final words were, 'Holy Mary, Mother of God,' which she kept repeating. Faithful to the end, she rests in peace.

Sr Assumpta who is Welsh and a convert, first came to the Beda in 1977 and remained enthusiastically for the next thirty-five years. When celebrating her Silver Jubilee in 1999, Fr Dixie Taylor, himself a long-serving lecturer at the Beda, wrote a piece about her in *The Beda Review* for that year, so there is much more valuable information that can be found there. Poor health forced her return to England and Ladywell in 2012. But what I recall in particular was that throughout those years, Assumpta was devoted to the students, caring for them. Her office was the room opposite the lift on the first floor. She was often to be found there and her door was always open. Men would drift in and chat to her. She always seemed to have time. And those who were in difficulty, for example, if they had to go to hospital, she was always ready to accompany and support. If they had to stay in hospital, she would visit them.

She has a fine singing voice that often enhanced our liturgies, especially on more solemn occasions. And, given her devotion to the Fathers, it was always a pleasure to hear her reading St Leo the Great during the Office of Readings at Christmas before the celebration of Midnight Mass – 'O Christian, be aware of your nobility – it is God's own nature that you share' – and she would usually read as well that extract from an ancient homily on Holy Saturday. I always think of her when those readings come round and often write to her, recalling them.

When Year Tutors were introduced in the College, she readily played her part, taking responsibility for the Second Year. She was as well an admired Theology lecturer. Professors from Roman universities who had known her and taught her, when I met them, would ask after her. They held her in high regard. And besides, many Beda men will remember her teaching them Latin and Greek which, they will also probably remember, was not the easiest of tasks.

At the Beda Assumpta was an early riser and would go to the kitchen to start preparing breakfast, but I will always remember in particular her enthusiasm for Chinese food. One evening after Christmas and Easter, as well as for Chinese new year, she would organize a meal to be brought in from a local Chinese takeaway. Her judgment of the quantities to be bought was astonishingly exact. She loved the whole occasion.

Since returning to England myself, I have sometimes been able to visit her which is a joy. I have not, however, been able to go more recently. Her health is becoming poorer. We must hold her in our prayers.



Mgr Rod Strange with Sr Bee Kennedy (left) and Sr Carmel Spratt (right)

What shall I say about Sr De Luce Cashman? If I write little, it is not because she was insignificant. Far from it. De Luce was one of the loveliest, kindest, sweetest people you could ever hope to meet. She had respiratory problems so the Roman climate was good for her and she stayed for twenty years, leaving us in 2007, when her health was sufficiently weak for Rome's climate to make little difference. She went to the Franciscan Convent in Ballinasloe in Galway. She had a great love for the students and indeed the whole community. She could often be found sitting on her chair outside the refectory, saying her rosary. She was praying for us all the time. Her gift to us was her presence. Catherine thought the world of her and appreciated her help and support. And De Luce could also be funny. One day after Catherine had been out on a big shopping expedition for the College, De Luce remarked, as Catherine retired to her office, 'There's Sr Catherine going to her office with that box of Kit-Kat, and we won't even see the silver paper.' And so to Catherine.

Catherine first came to the Beda in 1964 and returned later to study for a year at Regina Mundi. She returned again in 1968 and remained here until she went back to England in May 2009. She died in the November of that year. In *The Beda Review 2010-2011*, I described her as the mother and memory of the house. Between 1964 and 2009 she was absent for just six years, from 1982 to 1988 while she served on the FMDM General Council in Godalming. I wrote a long obituary for that edition and there are tributes to her from my predecessor as Rector, Mgr Brian Dazeley, and from Cardinal Justin Rigali whom she had come to know as a friend while she was working in the Secretariat of State from 1968 to 1982. I don't want simply to repeat that obituary. Let me recall just two incidents that capture something of Catherine. There was one in particular that amused her.

While she was working in the Secretariat of State, it was generally not possible for her to attend mass in the Beda and get to her office on time, so she would go to mass in St Peter's. After mass, going to her office, she would often find herself sharing the lift with Cardinal Jean-Marie Villot, the Secretary of State, who would be dressed simply in a black cassock. She admired him greatly and appreciated the courtesy he invariably showed her. One morning, as the lift with the two of them in it was about to

rise, a priest hurried in. The Cardinal greeted him, 'Buon giorno, padre.' 'Monsignore,' came the corrective reply. 'Mi scusi. Buon giorno, Monsignore.' When they reached their floor, the Cardinal, as he always did, stepped back to let Catherine leave the lift first, but the priest forced his way out in front of her. Catherine then left the lift, followed by Villot. As he emerged, of course, the Swiss Guard snapped to attention, 'Buon giorno, Eminenza.' The priest, startled, turned to Catherine. 'Who is that?' he asked. 'That's Cardinal Villot,' she told him. He buried his head in his hands. 'That's who I've come to see,' he said.

When Catherine returned after her six years on the General Council in Godalming, she became both bursar and College secretary. When she retired in 2001, two people were employed to continue the work she had done. She handed over her responsibilities perfectly, never interfering with her successors, although being always available to help if needed. But, besides that, she would work in the kitchen, notably for the main feasts when the indefatigable Carlo and Orlanda were away for a brief break. One Christmas the electricity failed in our section of Rome. At lunch, Catherine had prepared the usual fine spread of pasta and a cold buffet, but, she told me, 'If the electricity isn't on by 4 o'clock, it won't be possible to cook the Christmas dinner.' We were not going to starve, of course, but it would be a disappointment for those who had remained in the College over the holiday period and we had some guests coming as well. The afternoon wore on. No electricity. Shortly after 3 o'clock, feeling fairly despondent, I went out for a walk, heading for EUR. I turned back towards the College at about 3.45 and, as I was walking down Viale Marconi, the street lights came on. What a relief. And Catherine prepared as usual a wonderful Christmas dinner. Part of the routine each year was for me to go and see her, when things would be well on their way, so that I could start carving the turkeys. 'How are things, Catherine?' I would ask her and she would reply, 'It's about time for a gin and tonic.' And the G and T was duly supplied.

I planned to see Catherine in Ladywell on 5 November 2009, following a Rectors' Meeting at Wonersh. But she had died. I went on that same day, but it was for her funeral, the mother and memory of the house. How she loved the Beda.

So those are some memories of the original four FMDMs who were here at the Beda when I arrived in 1998. But in conclusion let me add one more.

In 2010 I attended the ordination of John Purnell in Broome. That was where I first met Sr Carmel Spratt who coincidentally was visiting Broome at that time. Two years later, of course, in 2012, Carmel came to the Beda and has worked here with dedicated care and love ever since. And now the decision has been taken for these Franciscans to leave the College. The decision is no doubt as necessary as it is sad, but what a gift and blessing they have been to us throughout these 62 years.

We thank all the FMDMs whose presence has meant so much to us. And who knows what further surprises the good Lord may have in store for them and for us.





# Snippets from a full and varied life

*Thomas Hiney and Sr Bee Kennedy FMDM*

As Sr Bee Kennedy and I sit at the café outside the Basilica San Paolo to discuss her 'active retirement', it is perhaps appropriate (given the apostle whose relics lie close by) that we start talking about Jerusalem, a place Bee knows well and cares deeply about. She is an advocate for various Arab-speaking Christians in the Middle East, while her only sister June, whom she considers 'my best friend in the whole world', is married to Tom, into a Jewish Christian family. Ever since Bee's first Middle Eastern posting with her FMDM community in the early 1980s, the people and places of the Biblical lands have been absorbed into 'my deepest heart'. 'I love the Holy Land,' she says, 'I love its people. My spirituality is a spirituality of the geography of the Holy Places. As well as a history, we have also inherited a geography of salvation.'

Bee, originally from Clonakilty, West Cork, began adult life at the Madonna College of Nursing, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway in the late 1950s, with her novitiate, placements and a year's midwifery course taking her over to England. Her parents were loving, strict but principled, her mother a committed nationalist, her father Cistercian-educated, kind, and gentle, who, in post-Occupation and Civil War Ireland, was insistent in the naming of the post-Independent Irish police as 'Guardians of Peace', An Garda Síochána. Proudly Irish language educated, it was an English teacher at her convent school who most inspired her: 'I would race to get a desk at the front; I can still tap into the energy of those literature classes'. A year delivering babies in Birmingham tested her idealism, as she found herself climbing back stairs in the inner city in the middle of the night to deliver babies amid all the social tensions of post-War, Windrush Britain.

But the determination to do something generous with her life was undimmed, fuelled by reading about St Francis of Assisi ('I continue returning to his life for inspiration'), St Damian among the lepers of Molokai, the Mercy Sisters and Florence Nightingale in the Crimea, as well as the stories of the inspiring, brave early FMDM sisters in China and Africa. Before she knew it, a vocation has crept up on her. 'I had a long-term boyfriend and just cannot remember that transition taking place. I was so taken up with these stories. My whole family had moved permanently to the States by then, but one of my five brothers (now all deceased) got hold of me on the phone and said: 'Have you gone crazy?' and I said: 'Well maybe I have, but I'm enjoying it!'

She enjoyed the FMDM noviciate from the outset: 'Others were critical of the way things were done; they were probably more mature than I, but I loved every minute it. It was all preparation for my life among the lepers, the sick and the needy!' Fellow novices turned into life-long friends. An older sister at a house where she later worked became a sterling mentor: 'She's 99 now, still gardening, painting, first up for everything. In all the ups and downs over the course of my life, and there were many, I have been able to discuss all troubling matters with her.' Some of those more serious downs related to the Congregation, which had grown so rapidly in the 1960s that its leaders needed to establish standard structures which inevitably worked better in some places than others. She found herself up to the 1970s doing long days and nights of professional work in hospitals, with little time off, the full Office in Latin (later in English) and living monastic practices and standards: 'It was all too much!'

She was rescued from this overload by her first mission overseas in places where practicality was incorporated into the rhythm of life, where a whole palette of new colours and different cultures opened up to her, and where Vatican II renewal was being encouraged. Pre-skyscraper Singapore where she managed a hospital and did further studies was picturesque. Some Asian sisters were novitiate friends. She remembers being warmly embraced by the families of the sisters who introduced her to the great Eastern religions, colourful temples and mosques, Chinese opera, orchid gardens, and local exotic spicy foods. But it also had its troubling edge, a very strict legal system with capital punishment compared starkly to the one her father had helped build up in Ireland.

It was on embarking on a subsequent posting to the FMDM Jordan mission where a sense of her life's purpose began to come into focus. Sent to a colloquial Arabic language school in Amman run by Mr Kelsey – a Baptist minister – and his wife, 'it was Arabic from the moment you entered. He was very strict with us, but he was quite right, it was the only way to learn.'

Soon able to hold her own in a predominantly Muslim culture, and in medical clinics and ancient church congregations across the Middle East, Bee's horizons broadened to include the biblical world of Isaiah and Mary, Jerusalem and Jericho, Damascus, Babylon, Baghdad, and her beloved Bethlehem. They were not only medical issues she and her sisters were facing here, for anti-Western and anti-Christian sentiment was stiffening throughout the Middle East. Nonetheless, as her knowledge of the region at its most grassroots level grew, so did her love of the place. The sisters knew everyone, from Arab rebels to the Jewish families she would visit in the Jewish settlements on the West Bank. The work was endless and, as war loomed between Iraq and the West, refugees started fleeing into Jordan. Bee and her sisters found themselves working around the clock, sometimes



sleeping on the ground in a refugee camp where she helped coordinate and convey food and medical supplies - both in the camps and into Iraq.

Since the 60s, Bee was inspired by Liberation Theology. Aware of its weaknesses, what she extracted from it, and advocated, was a biblically based practice for life and ministry of Action-Reflection-Action which she uses to this day. Later degrees, in Sociology and Health Education, were practice based, and gave her scope to reflect at depth on the link between daily life and ministry. She counts among the treasures of her life an ongoing friendship with the local Dominican sisters in Iraq and Kurdistan who later took over FMDM's Jordan mission and whose Bethlehem mission FMDM and Bee continue to support: 'They are so Christian! When ISIS took over their convent and started beheading people in Mosul, the Dominican sisters ferried Christians to Kurdistan, landing them safely over the border, night after night.' With ISIS now supposedly under control, those sisters have returned with the same people, rebuilding the Christian community, churches, schools, and homes: 'Their faithfulness under trial continually inspires me.'

In 1996, Bee returned to Europe as leader of the congregation's English region, after which the opportunity came to work in Belfast. The Troubles were still flaring, and she was engrossed in the situation, walking Catholic children through blockades to school, providing hospitality at the monastery, and studying ecumenism through Trinity College, Dublin. The FMDM community was living at the Poor Clare monastery, sharing daily Eucharist, prayer, and mission with what she describes as wonderful, contemplative women: 'It was here I tasted anew the restorative power of silence and my need for more contemplative time and space in my life.' For the people, the monastery was a haven of listening, accompaniment, prayer, and peace:



'I'd seen so much strife in Palestine but here on my own doorstep they'd also been through so much.' They had become a strong and generous people, she recalls, but many were war-worn, tired and weary. 'Praise God, the Good Friday Agreement began to take effect!'

After a phone call from her superior in 2012 she found herself back in England helping to care for sisters in the south and later leader at the Care Community at Ladywell, the congregation's Motherhouse. Many Western sisters were aging and returning from long years on the missions. The younger members were now mostly in Africa. 'Our Central Leadership Team was working tirelessly to meet the needs of this new reality, offering transformative spiritual leadership, changing timeworn practices and the work of their own roles to include lay partners, making extensive changes to property, and modernizing the Franciscan Ladywell Retreat Centre. It was a privilege for me to be asked to be part of the earlier challenges of those times.'

One morning after Mass in 2018 now well into her eighties – and Bee cautions me that she has shared only snippets of a very full and varied life – Bee was asked: 'Would you like to go to Rome for a year? A third sister is required at the Beda community.' That was four years ago. 'That happens! And what a special happening it has been! Being part of the Beda seminary community as well as enjoying the wonders of Rome and Italy has been the icing on the cake.'

'Our FMDM congregation leaves this year after sixty-two years of partnership with the Beda College. It has great sadness for many but deep down it feels right.' Bee concludes saying 'For friends made, and so much shared and learned, I send to all a prayerful thanks.'

Thank you, Bee, and all FMDM sisters past and present.



# Alumni reminiscences



## Fr Dominic Byrne

Greetings from Australia. This photo was taken of Sr Assumpta, who has a unique presence in the College. It was not too surprising to see her dive into a book while us students went swimming in something else.

God bless

*Fr Dominic Byrne*

St Mary's, West Wyalong; Our Lady of Lourdes, Lake Cargelligo-Tullibigeal;  
St Joseph's, Ungarie-Burcher; St Kevin's, Weethalle-Tallimba-Rankins Springs.  
NSW Australia

## Vytas Staskevicius

During my four year 'sentence' at the Beda (1997 - 2001) the sisters were:

- Sr Catherine Purvis - a superb administrator and solver of problems.
- Sr Assumpta Williams - 'the Ratzinger of the Beda'. She could make grown men tremble with fear as they went into an exam with her.
- Sr De Luce Cashman - a mother hen to all of us, her chicks. She worried about all of us.
- Sr Philippa Crofton-Sleigh - who tragically died at Christmas 1999. I remember her going on gitas with us.

Those of us who spent our Christmas holidays at the Beda got to know them really well and appreciated their efforts to make the holidays cheerful. Each was a person of prayer, unique and a shoulder to cry on when needed. I am sure that all the FMDMs prior to my stay and after my stay all had/have similar qualities. Their presence was a blessing to all at the Beda.

*Vytas Staskevicius*

## **Robbie O'Callaghan**

I was there from 2004-2008

1. I appreciated everyday **Sr Lucia** walking around the garden each morning saying the rosary whilst we were in the lecture rooms. She spent each morning praying for our success and wellbeing. To witness her simple hope journey each day gave us strength in the difficult times of exams.
2. **Sr Assumpta** taught us so much. Her office near the lifts was always a haven of help and guidance, academically and spiritually...and motherly. Her passion for the writings of the Church Fathers set the foundation of our vision of the Church. I particularly liked her debating course Saints and Heretics – it made us argue both sides in fierce debating. You needed to make sure every word you uttered was well researched, as there was no hiding from her knowledge.
3. **Sr Janet Fearn** for **Vatican Radio - English language service** – she was always a very interesting person to speak to. Leaving each day for her work at Vatican Radio she gave an insight into world issues and Curia happenings.
4. All the sisters were the beating heart of love and care within the Beda for us men living away from home.

I shall keep you all in my prayers as you journey through the year.

Kindest regards

*Fr Robbie O'Callaghan*

Parish Priest

Our Lady & St Joseph's Church

MATLOCK – Derbyshire.

# Farewell Address

*Sr Jane Bertelsen (Congregational Leader of FMDM)*



Thank you Philip for your kind words and for all you have planned and prepared to mark this moment on our shared FMDM Beda Community journey.

Can I begin by saying how sorry we are that Helen is not here this evening. Helen Doyle has been the link person from our Leadership Team for our community here at the Beda throughout our nine years in leadership. Her passport is in the Nigerian Embassy. All day yesterday we kept hoping it would turn up!

We are also sorry Mary Jean is not here either – she had so hoped to return for these final weeks but it was not to be.

Secondly, I would like to say how touched and honoured we are that our friends and former Rectors – Mgr Rod Strange and Mgr Brian Dazeley have come to share this day with us all.

There is much to say, to remember, to be grateful for, to laugh at, cry over and to treasure from our sixty-two years at the Beda. There is no doubt our community here has evolved in its purpose and presence – suffice to say when we arrived it was more in the capacity of contract cleaners and all that involved back in the 60s. At a later time, we served as administrators and teachers and in more recent times the focus was to offer a supportive prayerful feminine presence. Over fifty sisters have been missioned to this community each of whom has brought their unique gifts and made their own contribution.....and we have to admit added their own challenges and weak spots but such is community life! I know I should not single people out but I would like to mention Sr Catherine Purvis and Sr Assumpta both of whom were missioned here for thirty-four and thirty-three years respectively.

The Beda has also been a great gift to the global FMDM family. Sisters have been missioned here and worked in the Vatican, in Vatican Radio, studied in Rome and of course based themselves here and explored all the sights and sounds of Rome either with holiday or pilgrim hearts, eyes and feet. We will miss enormously our Roman base.

Our ministry at the Beda, as well as our missions in Bishop's House Storrington, Archbishop's House Southwark, and in St John's seminary in Womersley, has its roots in our Franciscan tradition.

St Francis and St Clare had a great love for and a deep sense of loyalty to the church and to priests. This love also led them to challenge and call the Church to an ever-greater authenticity in its witness to the gospel in their historical



time and cultural context and our sisters have always tried to offer this love and this call. Francis and Clare both lived in the post Fourth Lateran Council era (not unlike our post Vatican II era). We see in Francis' own writings his efforts to support the Church of his time in the reform it was seeking especially in relation to liturgy and reverence for God's word and the Blessed Sacrament – Francis does not mince his words in his Letter to the Clergy – it is worth a read – it is short! He also writes to Br Anthony about study and prayer – something Philip mentioned in the homily this morning:

*It pleases me that you would teach sacred theology ..... so long as in the study of this you do not extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion.*

As we come to the end of mission here we can look back and say yes we have lived our Franciscan vocation and have loved, called forth and encouraged all who have been part of the Beda community over the decades.

Our presence too has been missionary. At the heart of our Franciscan missionary vocation is 'to be sister' and our presence amongst people is more important than what we do. I know many who have passed through this place have been touched, supported and encouraged by our FMDM presence and we as FMDMs have been touched, shaped, called and encouraged in the same way. These moments, relationships and experiences are carried away with us and shape



The Rector with (left to right) Sr Bee Kennedy, Sr Carmel Spratt and Sr Jane Bertelsen at the St Bede's Day celebrations.

our lives wherever in the world we are called to serve. So often on my travels I meet priests who remember and are grateful for the small, often seemingly insignificant encounters they have had with our sisters here and their abiding memories of our presence amongst you.

We are sorry and sad that this chapter of our FMDM story is coming to a close in a physical sense but I know that, through the power and grace of God's Spirit our shared experience of sixty years of prayer, community, ministry, discernment, laughter and tears live on in the hearts of us all and, please God, our ministry and presence in the Church is richer for it.

A special word of blessing and thanks to our two intrepid current community members – Bee and Carmel. Thank you for being the FMDMs who have had to travel this journey of completion here at the Beda and know our love, support and prayers are with you in these final weeks. Make the most of it and keep enjoying life to the full!!

We look forward, Philip, to welcoming you to Ladywell sometime over the summer to mark this moment in our shared journey and to celebrate with our wider FMDM community and especially with our sisters who have been missioned here over the decades.

May St Bede intercede for us today and may the Spirit of God continue to call us, bless us and guide us as we seek to bring the gospel to the world of our time. Thank you.



# The Roll of Honour

In your goodness remember in your prayers the following sisters who have laboured at the Beda.

Name	From	To
Maura Bermingham	20 April 1965	01 January 1968
	03 March 2011	28 June 2016
Callister, Valerie (Valerie)	11 December 1983	11 March 1985
	25 May 1992	13 November 1996
Cashman, Mary Ellen (de Luce)	01 September 1986	16 April 2007
Chan, Theresa (Ter Lei)	01 September 1972	01 July 1974
Corless, Mary Teresa (Teresa)	01 October 1980	01 October 1983
Delaney, Monica Mary Bernadette (Monica)	16 August 1964	01 May 1968
	01 September 1983	31 December 1989
D'Silva, Selestine Bernice (Bernice)	01 January 1978	01 January 1979
Edwards, Yvonne June (Yvonne)	01 April 1968	01 February 1971
Ee, Geraldine (Geraldine)	01 September 1980	01 January 1981
Fearn, Janet Mary (Janet)	26 September 1977	01 July 1978
	26 January 2004	31 December 2007
Gleavey, Mary Patricia (Athanasius)	17 December 1968	02 September 1971
Graham, Joan Margaret (Barbara)	01 September 1974	01 June 1980
Halley, Mary Anne (Maureen)	01 November 1972	01 June 1973
Hatton-Hall, Charity Mary (Chiara)	01 September 1978	01 July 1979
Hawkins, Anne (Anne)	20 October 1980	31 October 1983
Hopkins, Elizabeth Margaret (Elizabeth)	01 October 1963	01 May 1965
Hynes, Mairead Delia (Mairead)	01 June 1960	31 December 1975
Hynes, Philomena (Ephraem)	15 October 1985	31 May 1986
Johnson, Dorothy Joan (Dorothy)	02 September 2016	17 November 2017
Jones, Margory Monica (Monica)	12 February 2002	31 March 2008
	13 February 2002	21 December 2012
Joseph, Isabella (Bibiana)	01 September 1972	01 June 1974
Kennedy, Mary Bridget (Bee)	15 November 1983	01 June 1984
	10 December 2018	22 June 2022



## *The Roll of Honour*

Name	From	To
Kow, Jacinta (Jacinta)	01 September 1978	01 June 1979
Loong, Isobel (Isobel)	25 July 1963	01 January 1965
McCoy, Anne (Anne)	01 January 1969	01 June 1969
Mulligan, Margaret (Cuthbert)	01 August 1980	01 September 1989
Murphy, Eileen Bernadette (Eileen)	01 September 1978	01 September 1980
Naidu, Veronica (Hannah)	01 January 1963	01 September 1966
Noordin, Mary (Antonine)	01 November 1989	01 July 1990
O'Brien, Ellen (Lena) (Patrice)	01 September 1982	10 August 1991
Patterson, Ann (Anthony)	01 January 1972	01 January 1974
Purvis, Therese Catherine (Catherine)	17 September 1964	15 July 1965
	01 August 1990	08 March 2010
Rogers, Mary Jean (Mary Jean)	01 May 1965	01 June 1966
	20 February 2018	
Scanlon, Felicity Eugenie Veronica Mary (Felicity)	30 September 2013	21 March 2016
Share, Mary Elizabeth (Mary Elizabeth)	01 September 1977	01 July 1978
Shepherd, Patricia Anne (Fidelis)	26 January 2004	09 February 2013
Shirville, June (Lilian Georgette) (June)	01 September 1960	01 July 1963
Smith, Lilian Catherine Joy (Catherine Joy)	01 July 1974	01 June 1977
Spratt, Josephine Carmel (Carmel)	01 September 1961	06 June 1962
	17 December 2012	22 June 2022
Tan, Margaret (Margaret)	01 September 1964	01 June 1966
Tan, Maria (Auxilia)	01 June 1966	01 January 1967
Tan, Teresa (Angelo)	01 September 1979	01 June 1980
Tay, Nancy (Marie Elise)	01 January 1978	01 June 1979
Thariyan, Mary (Sixtus)	01 January 1969	31 December 1971
Weedon, Monica Alice (Monica)	01 May 1996	30 June 1996
Welford, Dora Mary Josephine (Germaine)	01 September 1981	01 January 1983
Williams, Katharine (Assumpta)	01 October 1977	01 June 1978
	01 September 1980	02 June 2012



# The New Men

## Br Cassian (Priva) Shayo

I was born in Kilimanjaro, in the northeast of Tanzania in 1989 in a family of seven children (all boys). I received the sacrament of baptism in 1991, the Eucharist in 2003 and Confirmation in 2004. I lived with my parents until 2009 when I completed my ordinary secondary studies. My mother always advised me to think about my future life because my father wasn't interested in us studying. This meant that every day I had to study in a very difficult environment. Fortunately, I was able successfully to pass the ordinary level secondary exams.



In 2009 a brother from the Benedictine congregation visited my hometown for holiday. Then he started to look for young boys who were ready to be monks and later priests. I was one among the ten students who were selected to join the Benedictine Congregation (Ndanda) in Tanzania. In 2010 I proceeded with advanced level education until 2012, thereafter university education until 2015. While I was in university, I decided to leave the monastic life and to be a businessman. I started my own business in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, and ran it for two years (2015 -2017). In the interim, however my father started to pressure me to marry, arguing that I had enough education. This was a stressful period in my life, because I was not ready to do so. I took a lot of time to think, and my mother always played a great part in supporting this process. At this point I reflected on the proposal from my father to get married and meditated on my life for one week. Thereafter, I shared with my mother the idea of becoming a priest and starting a new life, my mother told me that it was the right thing to do.

In 2018 I wrote a letter to my Formator asking him if I could rejoin them. I resumed religious life in December 2018, but my older brothers started protesting, saying, 'Why has, Priva, who studied until university, now decided to go live religious life?' But my mother told them 'Please follow your own life, don't disturb my child.' I then proceeded with my life as a postulant in my community Ndanda. I took the Simple Vows in 2021, and while we waited for selection to go to Major Seminary, my Abbot called me aside and informed me: 'You are to go to the Beda College to study Philosophy and Theology.' I remember that day I went into the church to pray and to say, 'Why me and not the others?' I had never ever dreamed that perhaps one day I would go to study in Europe, and also study in the English language. But here I am, through the grace of God, and I'm so happy to be in the Beda College.

## **Br Oliver de los Reyes Abasolo, SMM**

I was born on 15 December 1972 in Cagayan de Oro, Philippines, as the third child of Silverio Lombay Abasolo Sr. and Teresita de los Reyes and was baptised on 10 June 1973.

I was educated at Xavier University (Ateneo de Cagayan) from my primary to university years, a school run by the Society of Jesus. After completing my secondary level in March 1989, I pursued a course in nursing and graduated with a degree in Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1993. I worked as a nurse in the Philippines for six years before I moved to the UK in 1999 as an Intensive Care Nurse.



At a very young age, my love and devotion to Our Lady was nurtured by my mother. Reading 'True Devotion to Mary' by St Louis-Marie de Montfort had a great impact in my life. I was in the Legion of Mary and joined the World Apostolate of Fatima (WAF) where I have served as an International Board Member since 2012. WAF International is based in Fatima, Portugal.

I have volunteered as a nurse to the sick pilgrims in Lourdes with the Catholic Association several times. I did serve in my local parish and became one of the Parish Pastoral Council members at St Pius X, Norbiton in Southwark. In 2012, I became the custodian of the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue (NPVS) of Our Lady of Fatima for Great Britain and was involved in actively promoting the message of Fatima in England and Wales.

Even with my active church involvement, there were several stages in my life that I had considered this vocation. I had joined the group called 'seekers' which is a gathering of young men to pray together and share one's life experiences and to nurture and answer God's call. However, being the breadwinner of the family, then, made it difficult for me to pursue my vocation.

After working as a nurse for 20 years in the UK, I joined the Montfort Missionaries (Company of Mary) in 2019 and had my 2<sup>nd</sup> renewal of temporary vows this year. I am so privileged to pursue my priestly formation here at Pontificio Collegio Beda. I truly believe that God has the perfect timing for me, never late, never early. It takes a little patience and a whole lot of faith but it's worth the wait. *Totus Tuus Maria!*

## **Dom Louis Max-Romeo Kwadwo Osei OSB**

'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart' (Jer 1:5)

The Lord through the ages calls people through various means and gives each a special mission/task; to reach out to creation, declaring the loving kindness and will of the Father, by the saving help of his Son and the driving force through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The call to priesthood had been with me since infancy.

Born in the year 1989 and being the youngest child of my parents, I was given the chance to choose to be or not to be Catholic. The sight of the selfless Spiritan priest at the Friday evening masses and how he expounded the scriptures, would always enthuse me. I received baptism at the age of eleven. This made my father very proud of me, because for him, I had made a good decision. My zeal for the work of God had different faces during school years. Involvement with several church activities and organizations both in school and home did help grow my faith in Him.

I fell in love with the monastic observance, even though I had no knowledge of any monastic community in Ghana. The mysterious encounter with an Olivetan monk, began my monastic journey. My faith became more rooted in the providence of God and true service in the monastic discipline. The Olivetan community folded. I was received in my present monastic community and for the past ten years, been learning in the school of the Lord. In November 2020, I made my perpetual vows as a monk.

Through my formative years in the monastery, the thought of priesthood had continuously presented itself one way or another, till my Prior posed the question. Through much discernment and careful thought, I arrived at a resolute resolve to follow that path of the cross.

Gratitude to the Bedas for the opportunity and their acceptance to help nurture this seed to become a fruitful tree. With continuous support and prayers, I thus remain in the debt of my Prior and community.



## **Leigh Daynes**

I first entered seminary 30 years ago, as a young 21-year-old. 'Two roads diverged in a wood,' as Robert Frost put it, and my path took an unexpected turn that led me to a long and mostly contented career in the international aid and development sector.

Mine was a privileged professional life in organisations like the international Red Cross. I have rugby tackled Japanese journalists trying to doorstep the Prince of Wales in Geneva. I've stress-tested the NHS with an Ebola-not-Ebola health scare after a visit to a treatment centre I was responsible for in West Africa. And I've wept with Syrian refugees washed up on Europe's embittered shorelines.

I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the people we were sent to help. They ended up helping us in ways I didn't know or care to see at the time such was their stoicism, resilience and bravery.

As for many of the Beda colleagues I have been excited to meet as a participant in the Church of England's international ecumenical placement scheme, the magnetic pull of Priestly vocation was irresistible. I am tremendously grateful for the opportunity to be back in seminary long after my first foray.

God willing, I will be ordained Deacon in September 2022, and serve my curacy in East London.

'I took the [road] less travelled by,' wrote Frost, 'and that has made all the difference.'

St Oscar Romero, pray for us.



## **Br Philip McMahon OFM**

I am an Irish Franciscan Brother of the order of the Franciscan Friars Minor of the Province of Ireland. I joined the friars in 2017 where I entered my Postulancy year in Killarney in County Kerry in the south-west of Ireland. I entered my Novitiate also in Killarney the following year in 2018. The Killarney Friary became the International Novitiate house for the Provinces of Ireland, England, Netherlands, Germany, Lithuania and Canada.



After completing my Novitiate, I then moved to live in Athlone friary in County Westmeath in the centre of Ireland. While I was living in Athlone, I began my studies in Philosophy in Maynooth University for two years. I then moved to Rome to begin my studies in Theology here in the Beda college.

Before I entered religious life, I worked in Tesco Ireland for about ten years. I took a career break from Tesco and went traveling for two years in Australia where I worked in construction. It was during these two years that I began to hear the Lord calling me into a deeper relationship with him.

When I arrived back from Australia, I got more involved with prayer groups in my hometown of Navan, by going on pilgrimages and attending prayer meetings, especially the charismatic prayer groups that held Life in The Spirit Seminars. All of these helped me in a very big way in my faith journey. The biggest influences in my spiritual development were my love for Eucharist Adoration and praying the Rosary.

It has been a great time of spiritual growth with the friars and now I am now looking forward to continuing this growth with my fellow Brothers in the Beda College.

St Francis of Assisi, pray for us.

### **Philip Thornley**

It was with some surprise that I arrived at the decision to request formation for the priesthood at the age of 46. It's not something that I thought I would do, having been convinced for many years that my vocation was to be a lay person giving my life to the Church. I'm the second of four brothers who grew up in Cumbria. From primary school we were altar servers, and it is perhaps natural that some people had expectations that someone in my family would become a priest. I was fairly determined to scrap that idea but it resurfaced at Nottingham University where I was reading Engineering and where others, including the chaplain urged me to consider it. In my mid-twenties I had a very strong experience of the Church when I lived within a lay movement in South America and it gave me every impulse to take the Church beyond the walls of the church building, something that I have been doing for twenty years through small, basic communities founded on *lectio divina* and through youth work.



However, a few years ago I felt drawn towards priesthood. I couldn't explain it, but echoes in my *lectio divina* and reflections on the eucharistic prayers made me begin to intuit this. I spoke with my spiritual accompanier about it who said that I couldn't ignore it and I would need to explore it carefully. I made a month-long pilgrimage to Rome and soon after returning I talked with my parish priest in Harrogate and later approached the vocations director for Leeds Diocese. The spiritual director that was appointed for me helped me to give time every day to contemplative prayer and work through the questions as they came up. My spiritual friendships also gave me space to talk through what I was thinking about and this finally led me to make my application.



# The Beda Year

## *House Photographs*



### **First Year Students**

Dom Louis Osei OSB, Canon Philip Gillespie, Philip Thornley



### **Second Year Students**

Thomas Hiney, David Gilles Chung, Brian McNally, Paul Henderson,  
James Boyle, Eamon Salmon, Anthony Kerr, Peter Shankland, Simon Marley,  
Canon Philip Gillespie



### **Third Year Students**

Gerard Moore, Robert McMahon, Maxwell Orkuma, Paul Moores, Sean Henry, Patrick van der Vorst, Jason Keith Fernandes, Andrew Bishop, Shaun Doherty, Wladimir Siwecki, Canon Philip Gillespie



### **Fourth Year Students**

Deacon Francis McKendry, Deacon Douglas Green, Canon Philip Gillespie, Deacon Ignatius Tan, Deacon Philip Bua





### **FMDM Sisters**

Sr Bee Kennedy FMDM, Canon Philip Gillespie, Sr Carmel Spratt FMDM



### **Formation staff**

Canon Philip Gillespie, Sr Patricia McDonald, Mgr Peter Verity, Fr John Carlyle,  
Fr John Breen



Beda College Staff and Students 2021-2022





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# Forming a Priestly Heart

Fr Jim Walls

If we could maybe start with a question: Why are you here? What is the purpose of seminary? I'm sure a variety of answers come to mind, but in paragraph 55 of the *Ratio Fundamentalis* – that lays out the norms for priestly formation – we're told that the purpose of seminary is 'To form a priestly heart!' And so, the rather verbose title of these talks: Forming a Priestly Heart. Or, as St John Eudes so beautifully put it: 'Our wish, our object, our chief preoccupation must be to form Jesus in ourselves, to make His Spirit, His devotion, His affections, his desire, and his disposition live and reign there.'

The *Ratio* lists the following as sure ways and sources of fostering and strengthening a priestly heart: 1. Silent prolonged prayer; 2. Listening to God's Word; 3. The Eucharist - Celebration and Adoration; 4. The Liturgy of Hours; 5. The Sacrament of Penance; 6. Spiritual Direction; 7. Retreats & Recollections; 8. Chastity; 9. Poverty (Simplicity of Life); 10. Obedience; 11. Mary, Joseph & the Saints; 12. The Church Fathers; 13. Pious Practises & Devotions; 14. And last, but not least, the Cultivation of Virtues (*Ratio* 101-114). These can be viewed as the essentials of the spiritual life: the very building blocks of a priest's relationship with God.

It might come as a bit of a surprise that the first spiritual exercise prescribed by the *Ratio* is silence and the second is listening, but a quick look at Jesus in the Gospels shows that he spent much of his time in quiet places listening to His Father, and these heart to hearts between the Father and the Son, these whispered reassurances of love formed the heart of Jesus, as the Beloved Son and the Good Shepherd.

Growing in the virtue of pastoral charity – that is, a genuine love for the people of God which flows from the lived knowledge being '*servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God*' (1Cor 4:1) – can be seen as **the** indicator that my heart is being formed after the heart of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and that I am truly docile to the action of the Spirit. Furthermore, according to the *Ratio*, through this growing intimacy with the Lord

**seminarians will be helped to recognise and correct 'spiritual worldliness': obsession with personal appearances, a presumed theological or disciplinary certainty, narcissism and authoritarianism, the attempt to dominate others, a merely external and ostentatious preoccupation with the liturgy, vainglory, individualism, the inability to listen to others, and every form of careerism.**



As you can see the *Ratio* expects that through configuration to Christ your hearts will expand to exhibit a heroic level of Christian living. This requires an ongoing conversion of heart, *metanoia*. As Fr Ron Rolheiser observes: 'In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus begins his preaching with the word "Metanoia", a word that implies infinitely more than what's connoted in its English translation, "Repent". Metanoia is an invitation to put on a higher mind, to be more noble of heart, and to leave paranoia, pettiness, and self-gratification behind.'

It is still a struggle to change our hearts, to truly adopt the feelings of Jesus. As St John Henry Newman says in one of his sermons:

**...for many reasons it is very unpleasant to us to change. We cannot change ourselves; this too we know full well, or, at least, a very little experience will teach us. God alone can change us; God alone can give us the desires, affections, principles, views, and tastes which a change implies... What then is it that we who profess religion lack? I repeat it, this: a willingness to be changed, a willingness to suffer (if I may use such a word), to suffer Almighty God to change us....**

The fact that you are here hopefully indicates that you are not tempted by wealth. However, worldly honour can be a great temptation to seminarians and priests. To be rightly given their place, their title, to be esteemed because of their learning or erudition, this is not an uncommon temptation for men of the cloth.

One member of the Communion of Saints has already pledged to help you: St Elizabeth of the Trinity. A Carmelite contemporary of St Therese of Lisieux who held much in common with the Little Flower, including dying in her 20's, St Elizabeth said: 'I think that in Heaven my mission will be to draw souls by helping them to go out of themselves in order to cling to God by a wholly simple and loving movement, and to keep them in this great silence which will allow God to communicate Himself to them and to transform them into Himself.'

Loneliness, failure, humiliation and contempt [can] be the antidote to worldly riches, honour and pride, if they're accepted and embraced in deep silent prayer. If, just like Jesus on the cross, we accept the wounds that life inflicts on us with open arms, and hold them patiently, agonisingly in our heart and allow the Spirit dwelling there to purify them into the 'sentiments and attitudes' of Jesus we too can become humble servants of God's love and forgiveness in the world. [I] have found that you don't need to go looking for loneliness, humiliation, contempt, or failure; the world will provide them, it's how you embrace them that matters.

I'm blessed to have a couple of nieces and a nephew. When the first niece was born, I made it a priority to visit the family, who lived in another city, every 5 or 6 weeks on my day off, this also coincided with visiting my spiritual director who lived in

the same city. Sometimes, given the nature of parish ministry, I'd miss a visit and I might go several months without seeing them. After one of those intervals, and when she was still very young, barely able to walk, they came to visit meet me and we met in a car park. As the little one clambered out of the car she saw me across the empty car park and ran full pelt with her arms wide open. I can safely say it's the most heart-warming welcome I've ever had! That's my image of God in prayer, but it's also my image of God in others. If we are to remain healthy, open, honest, priests we need both in our lives: the love of God in prayer and the love of God expressed through others be they family, friends, parishioners, brother priests, religious, or even strangers whom God sends as comforters.

Spending time in prolonged silent prayer helps us to become attuned to God, and the more we tune in, the more we practise, the quicker we capture that old familiar frequency. Much like listening to the radio **it is** about listening not speaking, it's about becoming familiar with that still small voice that spoke to Elijah outside the cave, that spoke with Samuel in the Sanctuary, and even more importantly spoke with Jesus before dawn, up the mountain, in the garden, after the crowds had departed. It was after Jesus had been praying in one of these quiet places that one of his disciples asked him to teach them to pray, and he taught them to pray 'Our Father'. If Jesus had said nothing else that would have been enough to enable us to pray well, because prayer is not primarily about words but rather about our disposition, our attitude, towards God, towards Our Father, towards Our Abba, towards Our Daddy, which means that when we come to prayer, we come as a child into the company of their Father, we come into the presence of someone who gave life to us, who cannot help but love us, who cares for us, and who longs to embrace us tenderly, to cradle us in His arms. Prayer is coming into the presence of a strong and trustworthy Father, it's resting in that embrace, it's feeling the warmth of His Presence.

# Loving with a bull's heart

Fr Philip Bua



My name is ORTAVERSHIMA PHILIP BUA, Ortavershima means: '*a man with a strong heart*' and Bua means '*Bull*'. I was born and brought up in Adikpo, Kwande L.G. Benue State, Nigeria. I am from a tribe known as the Tiv. Tiv people are located in the middle belt of Nigeria and they are predominately farmers with a total population of about 6.5 million across Nigeria and Cameroon. My mother tongue is therefore Tiv, which is spoken by about 7 million people, most of them in Nigeria. I come from a polygamous family and my late father Engr. John Bua Uti had five wives and fourteen children. Tiv tradition held that it was right to have many wives. In those days the number of wives, children, and farmland that one possessed show your wealth.

My parents were firm and formal people, especially my father; for example, he wouldn't allow us to go out and play with any of the other children on the street when he was around. We only played in the house, or at school, or after Mass on Sundays. I was very close to my parents - my father was a highly skilled man and he taught me how to work and, through his care, I acquired a lot of skills from him. On several occasions, I followed my mother to our farm and helped her prepare for the market. She taught me how to cook, take good care of my stomach, farm, and conduct business. Today, I am so grateful for the training and education I received from my parents. They built the foundation of my life.

One of the things that really contributed to my upbringing was the freedom from my parents to be close to God. Although during my youth, they were non-practicing Catholics, they never stopped me from worshipping God. Rather, they were so pleased to see me participate in the various activities offered by the Church.

## St Ann's Catholic Church, Adikpo

Being part of a big community of the faithful was enjoyable. I must say, participating fully in activities in the church was always my interest and any time there was anything to do in the church, I was there. When I joined St. Andrew's Secondary School my desire to be baptized as a Catholic increased although it was not an easy process. One had to register, attend catechesis classes, and sit for the exams. Candidates were made sure that they know what they were getting into. I was determined so joined the catechistical classes in the church and at school. The school was strict regarding religious activities; we had to identify with a religious group in the school (either Catholic or Protestant) follow all their activities, which was fine by me.

Every Wednesday at 11:30 am was Mass for Catholics and a service for the Protestants, and it was compulsory to be in the chapel for that. Then there was choir practice every Tuesday evening for the students who were interested (including me!) but when a new chaplain arrived, this was made compulsory. All this developed the religious discipline in me.

It was never my intention to be a priest as a young child, I wanted to be like my father, to marry and have many children, houses, and cars. In fact, I thought my vocation was to replace my father since I am just like him in appearance and many mannerisms! I was also imitating and acquiring very fast his practical skills, but my involvement in the church and my love for God's works made me desire to be a priest and to serve people in that way. Some of the leadership roles I held also motivated me to be a 'Marian priest' This was because of my love for Mary, Mother of God, and as a young man I was not interested in any societies apart from those associated with Mary. I was in the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary, Legion of Mary, Confraternity of the Brown Scapular, and then Confraternity of Mary Queen of all Hearts. It was not that I disliked other societies. I tried joining the English and the Charismatic choirs, but I was not comfortable and left after a few days. The holy rosary was, and still is, one of my favourite prayers. I enjoyed meditating on the mysteries and believed strongly that Mary would always be present to me in Jesus her Son. I used to follow all the obligations for those who wear the scapular, and I would carry out first Saturday devotions, attend the night vigil on every last Friday night of the month, which concluded with the Mass the following day and fasting for the first Saturday of the month. I tried to be very pious.



I must say Mary has contributed so much to my vocational journey. I don't remember how many decades of the rosary I have recited in times of need. My belief as a teenager was that the more that I recited the rosary the more graces and holy I would become, and I would go around in the night with the rosary in my hand inside the pocket reciting and walking slowly to my friend's house (James Yarkwan). Sometimes I would take a long path from my house to another friend's house (Christopher Amadu) and then back home, this was a common routine. Also, on my way from school, in the evening around 4 pm, I would go to the church to join the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary for prayer meetings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Everywhere I walked I recited my rosary! Most of the time the extra decades were my personal novenas that I decided to do. Fridays were Confraternity of the Brown Scapular and Sundays Legion of Mary; meeting after morning, Mass after Mass and of course Benediction which was one of my favourite prayer times. All this helped keep me on track during the exuberance of youth in habitual and (I would like to believe) supernatural ways.

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Another thing I enjoyed was visiting homes and hospitals. I found so much joy sharing the word of God with people and praying with and for them. These were the major duties of the Legion of Mary. We used to carry out the visitations in groups and give a report in the meeting on Sunday after Mass. For the Scapular Confraternity, one of the rules for those invested was to receive Holy Communion daily, therefore, I was

always in the church for Mass, mostly in the mornings before going to school.

In the midst of all this I tried to keep up the creatively practical skills I had learned at home, skills that might be helpful to the societies I belonged to. So, I used to print T-shirts; I made a statue of Mary which was on the altar of St Ann's parish from 1997 until 2017 when it was left outside during some rebuilding and got broken. Few people knew that I had made the statue and given it to the parish, but it meant the world to me. God had given me talents, and I wanted to use them for his glory. It was amazing to think that people who prayed in the front of my statue might receive the intercessions of Mary.

After my secondary school, I joined the Department of Fine Art at the College of Education in Katsina-Ala for a year, before leaving to join the Salesians of Don Bosco in 2003. My eleven years with them proved the beginning of a journey of discernment which would lead me to eventually landing at Glasgow Airport as a diocesan seminarian on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, with the support of the diocese and Scottish sisters in Kenya.

At Glasgow Airport, the vocations director Fr Michael picked me up and said: 'I want you to meet someone important in the diocese, who is not going to be with us for a long time.' He took me straight to the hospital to meet the late Fr Donald Mackay. It was a privilege to meet him, full of a sense of humour. I was touched

and I came to appreciate the question Fr Donald asked me when I was introduced to him. 'I hope you are not here for our money?' I was just there smiling and Fr Michael smiled and answered him on my behalf that Philip had a business in Nairobi and just completed his Masters. To be frank, it is a question that remains with me, and makes me remind myself why I am in Scotland; to serve God, to be an instrument of God. It also reminds me of what Timothy Cardinal Dolan said: 'The priesthood is a call, not a career; a redefinition of self, not just a new ministry; a way of life, not a job; a state of being; not just a function; a permanent, lifelong commitment, not a temporary style of service; an identity, not just a role.'

Thank you, Fr Donald for reminding me of that from the onset of this next stage, like a true father. Thank you, too, the Diocese of Argyll and Isles for trusting me and sponsoring me for priestly training and studies at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome, where I was elected Dean of Students and awarded a BA (Hons) in Theology and a Certificate of Post Graduate Diploma in Theology.





# The Cradle of Monasticism: the Encounter at Subiaco

*Dom Louís Oseí OSB*

The experience of Rome can be overwhelming, at a first glance. The exploration of its historical and religious sites can be amazing. The Beda College's *gita* to the cradle of monasticism at Subiaco, has left a profound memory.

Let's once more reflect on the encounter, this time, from the viewpoint of a Benedictine monk who comes face to face with the beginnings of the life he has lived for almost a decade.

The monastic goal of a monk, likewise a Christian, is to be able to combine a clear and inspirational spirit, that which enables one to be part of the creation of a harmonious living (coenobitic), with neighbour. Eternal life through the progress of Christian virtue, is through the grace we receive from God. This has been the aspiration in my monastic journey, which is not just being immersed in the activities of the monastery. It is to find oneself in the presence and love of God, to come to the realization of our role and purpose in the economy of salvation. The monk shares continuously in the experience of the cross, that which Christ admonishes us, to take up and follow him.

The first impression of the lone Benedict in the cave in that mountain does become personal, when I look back to the experience of being the only person during formation. As Jesus said to Thomas à Kempis, 'Son, I am the Lord, who gives strength in the day of trouble. Come to me when it is not well with you' (*The Imitation of Christ*). This might be similar words that echoed in the ears of the 16-year-old boy from Norcia. It has been my companion and should be for all Christians.

Monastic growth in my part of the world is evident as the monasteries are seen as a 'safe harbour' for all and sundry, in this emerging culture of noise and tumultuous world. This is possible because of the Fiat of little Benedict. He began a monastic movement which revived Christianity in its entirety, enkindling the fire of good zeal for the white martyrdom in believers.

SACRO SPECO spoke to my heart, as it continuously speaks to the heart of all Christians who visit. Our holy father, venturing into that thicket valley, all by himself sounds crazy. It is just like people asking, why monastic life/ Christianity/ belief in God? But then, we could equally ask, 'why not?'

The monk who saved Subiaco from being destroyed by the falling mountain, enlightened the thought of my heart with the Spirit which draws, moves, and leads



out into the wilderness (Matt 4: 1, Mark 1: 12 and Lk4: 1), before the radiant glory of God. That is why you get great figures and founders of various congregations like St Francis, St Ignatius, etc travelling to this holy place to affirm what they felt, with regards to their calling. These holy men and women through humble beginnings, became the instruments for God's revelation to the world. Subiaco, being the cradle of western monasticism reflects the vows of a monk, which are derived from these virtues, hope and courage, faith and love, self-discipline and perseverance and conversion of life.

It moves the Christian who visits the monastic cave on the mountain to humility of heart. The virtue one ceases to possess the moment they think it is in their grasp. It reminds believers of the Jacob experience of the angelic ladder (Gen 28: 12) but in this case the ladder of humility as set by the Venerable Father in his rule (RB:7). This indeed is a great legacy left through the redeeming power of Christ in his servant Benedict. The awe of the sacred grotto attached to the mountain in the valley of Subiaco, should lead us to silent contemplative hearts.

Let us resolutely lay bare our will before the transcendence. As a monk and as well as all Christians we should seek to perfect in the school of the Lord our focus and our desire for the heavenly bliss, the 'whys' and the 'whats' should not matter. We should strive and long to reach the eternal goal, though frail we may be. We need to be weak enough to be able to dwell and trust in the providence of him who would make us strong and inspirations for others in the quest of finding him.





# On Liturgical Beauty

Don Lodovico Torrisi Parisi OSB

'The Church evangelizes and is herself evangelized through the beauty of the liturgy, which is both a celebration of the task of evangelization and the source of her renewed self-giving'. – *Evangelii Gaudium* §24

This extract from *Evangelii Gaudium* helps us to understand how the irruption of the Mystery in our life happens *per viam pulchritudinis*, meaning through sensitive signs full of beauty, as the liturgical actions. But what is beauty? And how do we recognise it?

Liturgy and beauty are not based only on the aesthetic, or on what is perceived with our senses. It is not enough to celebrate in a beautiful church, nor to wear precious vestments and to use silver sacred vessels to feel the beauty of the celebrated faith. Pope Benedict XVI in *Sacramentum Caritatis* §.35 says:

**The beauty of the liturgy is part of this Mystery; it is a sublime expression of God's glory and, in a certain sense, a glimpse of heaven on earth. The memorial of Jesus' redemptive sacrifice contains something of that beauty which Peter, James and John beheld when the Master, making his way to Jerusalem, was transfigured before their eyes. Beauty, then, is not mere decoration, but rather an essential element of the liturgical action, since it is an attribute of God himself and his revelation. These considerations should make us realize the care which is needed, if the liturgical action is to reflect its innate splendour.**

Therefore, it is the beauty of Christ, his Gospel, his mysteries, of his living presence that makes the liturgy beautiful, good, and desirable. Without faith the beauty of the celebrated mystery remains subtle, and we reach faith through our senses which capture prayers, songs, silence, gestures. The liturgical experience happens through a regime of "*signa sensibilia*", or perceptible signs, says *Sacrosanctum Concilium* § 7. But which perceptible signs talk about beauty? We could say that everything that falls under our glance talks about beauty, meaning the beauty that we see in an image, sculpture, colours, vestments, decorations. Therefore, the eye is to be involved. But we know that in liturgy the Mystery celebrated is invisible to human glance. When the liturgical has not sense for us but we give importance to the pictures taken during the celebration then the beauty of the liturgical experience is at risk. The vision gained solely through our eyes can deceive us. The liturgical action is not beautiful or ugly according to what our eyes see as beautiful or ugly; evaluating: 'I like it – I don't like it'. There can be a beautiful liturgy in

an apparently non-beautiful environment and, contrarily, a tasteless liturgy in a beautiful church. The believer must be able to see and read the images so as to contemplate them in connection with the mysteries celebrated.

After the sense of sight, it is that of sound that talks about beauty and therefore the ear is to be involved with its capacity to hear and to listen and then to interiorise; I am thinking about the music and song that causes us to exclaim: 'How beautiful!'

It is through the eye and ear, that the beauty of the celebrated Mystery arrives at the heart. It is there where we experience the changes, conversion. Space and time, images and sounds, gestures and prayers, shapes and colours help to make the faithful the experience of liturgical beauty.

The beauty in liturgy goes through the ritual order and its wise accomplishment, with its rhythms, spaces, words, silences, actions and everything connects us to the Lord and the Lord to us. Liturgical action is not beautiful because its visible parts seduce us. No, liturgical action is attractive because it conducts us from the visible to the invisible Mystery. The appreciation of the beauty of the liturgy rests not just seeing or listening to something beautiful for the eyes or the ears, but in going beyond the viewing and the listening, and allowing the Mystery to penetrate the heart, to dwell in it.



# Endings and Beginnings

*Mgr Peter Verity, Spiritual Director at the Beda College*  
2011-2022

This short article offers a few reflections on ending my eleven years as Spiritual Director at the Beda College and on making a new beginning in 'active retirement' in my diocese of Lancaster.

## The Background Story

I was asked to come to the Beda in 2011 for three years, to 'complete my term of office as seminary Spiritual Director'. Since 2007 I had been the spiritual director at Ushaw College, the seminary for the north of England near Durham. Soon after the announcement in October 2009 that Ushaw College would close as a seminary in the summer of 2010, I was approached by my bishop, Michael Campbell, to say that the Beda was looking for a new Spiritual Director and asking if I was available. With his blessing I contacted the Rector, Mgr Rod Strange, who explained that the Beda had a vacancy for a Spiritual Director and that this would give me the opportunity to complete my term of office. I surmised that I could therefore expect to be at the Beda for two or three years.

When I arrived in September 2011, I found that my room had been used for three years as a visitors' room and needed a few touches to make it feel more homely. Although two or three years felt like a very short span of time, I could hardly live out of a suitcase like a passing visitor. To make it my 'home' I needed carpets and pictures at least. I wondered if it would be worth it for just two or three years but decided it was just possible that the two or three years might extend to four or, at a maximum, five years, and this would certainly make it worthwhile. I never dreamt that eleven years later Room 302 would still be my home! (The carpets and pictures have done me very well!)

I'm not sure how it came about that I stayed eight years longer than I anticipated. It just seemed to be the right thing to do at the time. You could say it was the fruit of on-going discernment. I've often helped other people to make a discernment about their future, and now it is instructive to reflect on my own process. Discernment is hard to describe. It wasn't as though there was a bright light from heaven or very strong feelings, rather it was a gentle but very peaceful sense that this was where God wanted me to be for the present. Alongside this there was the understanding that God's grace was continuing to support and work through me, I simply had to be open to letting God be there. In the absence of any indications to the contrary, the three years soon became eleven.

A further discernment in the last eighteen months has been about the time to move on and the answer to this also came gradually over time. When I thought of retirement and finishing at the Beda, the sense that this was where God was moving me became stronger. My golden jubilee of ordination to the priesthood is due this summer, and that felt like a good place to put the full stop. I began to sense also that new blood and new ideas will be good for the Beda and its future development. As the decision became clearer it was confirmed by a growing sense of peace and by the support and encouragement of others.

What I hadn't expected in my discernment was that it became not so much about an ending but also about a new beginning. This growing feeling is why I have called what I am going to next as 'active' retirement, and why I am approaching it with a sense of adventure. The new beginning could include many things – some I hope to be able to do such as retreat giving and spiritual accompaniment in the diocese; others are unknown to me at present but will be revealed in due course. The 'God of surprises' will have many things in store, I'm sure; I must just not get in the way.

## **Thankfulness**

I leave the Beda with an immense sense of gratitude for the privilege of being in the College and in Rome for eleven years. It has been a happy and fulfilling time in every way - a good place to live and work, excellent colleagues to work alongside, and the richness and variety of the many students who have passed through here in the past eleven years. I have particularly enjoyed the teaching and preaching and the interaction with students who are mature adults, strongly committed to Christ and to their vocation. I have learned so much from all of them.

In writing this article I decided to count how many students had passed through the College during my eleven years and it turned out that 153 have left, with a further 22 continuing in the College after this summer. Not all the 153 continued to ordination, but a good number of them did and are now working in dioceses, parishes and religious congregations all over the world. The number 153, after I'd reached it, struck me as an interesting number as it coincides exactly with the fish caught by the disciples in John Chapter 21. Make of that coincidence what you will!

## **The Future Adventure**

There are many dangers in taking retirement. At one extreme there is the temptation to sit by the fire watching daytime cookery and house renovation programmes and becoming the proverbial 'couch potato'. The opposite danger is to put too much emphasis on the 'active' part of retirement and end up running round like a headless chicken. A good friend warned me over Easter to 'play down the active part of it'. Wise advice, indeed, which I have heeded. It is advice that reinforced

the words of my bishop, Paul Swarbrick, when I saw him last summer, to spend several months after finishing at the Beda readjusting to a different life and not rushing into new commitments.

There are a couple of strategies I've put in place to help me to avoid these two pitfalls. I have started to write for myself a plan for retirement. This is a list of what I will try to do in order to get a balanced life. It seems to be important to do this from my perspective at this moment, while still in post in the Beda. I will look at this 'ideal' in six months' time and see what has worked out well and what modifications might need to be made.



On a practical level, a useful idea from a friend is to try to learn new skills or engage in new activities. Neurologically, apparently, this will help to keep those parts of the brain active which need new stimulation. My friend had set herself to do 75 new things by the time she was aged 75 (a period of about three years). Now that she has completed that list and passed 75, she has set herself to do a further 80 new things before she is 80. 'What sort of things do you mean?' I asked. The 'new skills', it seems, could include learning a new computer programme, attempting a different type of cookery, exploring some hobby or signing up for an online course. Each new skill can be put on a list on the computer. 'It's surprising how quickly the list builds', she explained, 'and before you know where you are, you will have surpassed the target number'.

The future does, indeed, feel like an adventure. I'll have to set up that list on my computer.





# Called to the Altar: Homily for the Diaconate Ordinations June 2022

*Bishop Mark Davies*

Ordination calls you to the altar, and at the altar, we might say, you will always remain. In a striking image, in the document *Ad Gentes Divinitus* §16, the Second Vatican Council declared, ordination binds us more closely to the altar bringing us into a new intimacy with the Mystery of the Eucharist. For it is the light of this sacrifice and sacrament that we must learn to imitate him who '*... came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*' (Mt 20: 28). The totality of Christ's self-giving in the Eucharist is the measure of the service to which we are called. As St John Paul II often reminded us, our vocation is found in the light of the Eucharist. And by returning to the altar every day, we find the inexhaustible source of our life and ministry.

By the grace of ordination, our lives become an offering in the availability of obedience and in the total consecration of our hearts in celibacy. A consecration renewed every day in the celebration and adoration of the Eucharist. Over four decades, I have worked alongside many priests – some of whom made this commitment back in the 1930's – and I witnessed their striving to the end with ever-renewed generosity in the calling which today is yours. By striving to give ourselves more and more – and this is the secret – we know a joy which never fades, a joy which grows greater with every passing year.

A bishop some 15 centuries before us, St John Chrysostom, reflected on the generous self-giving of the Apostle Paul, at whose tomb we celebrate your ordination. In a homily read in the Liturgy of Hours he describes St Paul's ministry with these memorable words: '*It was not that he looked for more, he looked for much more.*' The great Bishop of Constantinople recounted the lengths St Paul went to along the roads he travelled; the people he reached; the hardships and persecutions he suffered and finally the martyrdom he here endured. Yet, all these struggles simply expressed the desire of his heart to give himself more and more.

Today, the 'Beda Eight' may not be called to imitate St Paul's heroic ventures, yet you are certainly called to imitate his generosity as the Holy Spirit configures you to Christ the Deacon and Servant of all. This generosity is not found in an over-active diary, rather in the disposition of your hearts, a contemplative disposition renewed every day in the Eucharistic Sacrifice and before the tabernacle of His

Presence. It is expressed in concern for every soul for whom Christ gave Himself on the Cross: the one Sacrifice perpetuated in the offering of the Mass. St John Vianney had glimpsed this from his youth, in the clandestine Masses celebrated by the martyred priests of the French Revolution. The young John Vianney concluded that the call to ordination means being ready to give our lives in order to win many souls for God.

This ministry can never be about us, rather about Him who St Paul declared 'loved us and gave Himself for us' (Gal 2: 20). For you will offer the world not your own life experience or your most considered opinions, rather His saving Gospel which today is entrusted to you as herald and messenger. In this service you are called to put aside personal preferences, as the prayer of ordination reminds us, bearing only Christ's preferential love for the sick, the poor and the little ones of this earth. Especially, those found in great spiritual sickness and poverty today. In this ministry you set out to offer no merely human remedy for what ails humanity, rather the divine remedy of the grace of the sacraments. For Christ's Precious Blood – the price of our redemption – is from this day placed into your hands at the altar. For in the Eucharist is found the world's salvation and every day the source of this life and ministry of ours. The Curé d'Ars reflected that whatever goes wrong in this life of service, goes wrong because we were inattentive to the Eucharist. Let us finally ask Our Lady then, in the consecration of her Immaculate Heart, to help us have a heart more and more like her Son's, so in the words of the prayer of ordination you will always remain at the Altar *'strong and steadfast in Christ.'*



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**I SARTI**  
— DEL —  
**BORGO**  
— ROMA —

# Called to the Lord: Beda Obituaries



## **Fr James Leachman OSB**

Ordained: 1990

Died: 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Priest/Monk of Ealing Abbey

Lectured at Beda in Liturgy

Dom James was born and received primary education in Lincoln, after which he read biological sciences at Durham. He subsequently went to St Stephen's House, Oxford from 1969-1972 to train for ministry in the Church of England.

Influenced profoundly by the Religious Sisters of the Cenacle while working in Nashdom Abbey in Buckinghamshire, he was received into full communion with the Catholic Church on 21 December 1985, and subsequently accepted into the novitiate of Ealing Abbey on 26 April 1986.

Having obtained a Doctorate in Sacred Liturgy from the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy at Sant'Anselmo in 1992, Dom James was recalled to Rome in 2002 to teach at the Institute. It was in the course of this period that he also lectured at the Beda.

He was a tenured professor at the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy, a member of the editorial board of *Ecclesia Orans*, the bi-annual periodical of the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy, and was twice elected member for four year terms of the Council of the Dean of Liturgy. In 2007 he was partly responsible for the founding and direction of various projects and institutions dedicated to the study of the liturgy. Upon retiring from teaching at Sant'Anselmo in 2015, Dom James dedicated himself to studying Process Oriented Psychology which helped him to reach out to survivors of childhood sexual abuse by clergy.

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*



## **Fr Barrie Holmes**

Diocese of Leeds

Ordained: 26<sup>th</sup> March 1966

Died: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Having trained at the Beda College, Rome, Fr Barrie was ordained to the priesthood on 26th March 1966. His first appointment was to St Patrick's, Sheffield (1966-68). After a year's study in London, he was then sent to St William's, Bradford (1969-74) and Sacred Heart and St Patrick's, Sowerby Bridge (1974-1976). Upon completion

of some further studies (1976-1979), he went to St Matthew's, Bradford (1979-1983), then to St Theresa's, Queensbury (1983-1987), SS John Fisher & Thomas More, Burley in Wharfedale (1987-1993) and finally to St Robert's, Harrogate in 1993. Fr Barrie retired from holding parochial office in 1999.

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*



**Fr Louis Beasley-Suffolk**

Diocese of Clifton

Ordained: 26<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Died: 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*

**Fr Terry Perkins**

Diocese of Plymouth

Ordained: 31 March 1968

Died: 10 January 2022

Fr Terry was known for love of reading with a special leaning to history and enjoyed reading about the early Church. He spent over eighteen years in service at the parish of St Mawes which he spent getting to know not just the parishioners but the wider community as well.

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*



**Fr Michael Gallon**

Diocese of Leeds

Born: 4 January 1931

Ordained: 15 July 1956

Beda Staff: 1969-1974

Died: 1 March 2022

Fr Michael Laurence was educated at St Bede's Grammar School in Bradford before entering the seminary at Ushaw College in County Durham to study for the priesthood. He was ordained by Bishop John Carmel Heenan at St Mary's Church, Bradford on 15 July 1956.

From 1956 to 1960 Fr Gallon served as Assistant Priest in the parish of St Malachy, Halifax. Following this appointment he was to spend the next decade and a half working outside the diocese. From 1960-68 he was on the staff of the Catholic Missionary Society, based in London, where he worked on the Society's journal, the 'Catholic Gazette'.

In 1968 Fr Gallon went to St Edmund's House at Cambridge University to undertake further studies in theology. The following year he joined the teaching staff of the Beda College in Rome. He returned to Yorkshire in 1974 when Bishop Wheeler appointed him as Parish Priest of the Sacred Heart, Goldthorpe, near Barnsley (now a parish of the Diocese of Hallam). In 1975 he joined the newly established Upholland Northern Institute, near Wigan, which had been set up by the Bishops of the Northern Province as a centre for adult Christian education and in-service training for clergy.

Fr Gallon retired from St Joseph's Parish, Tadcaster, where he had been since 2000 in the summer of 2006. Sadly, much of his post-retirement life was marked by ill-health. He passed away in Bradford, where he had moved to be near to members of his close family.

At the time of his death Fr Michael was one of only twelve priests remaining in the diocese who were ordained before the start of the Second Vatican Council in 1962. As such he was part of that generation of priests who experienced unparalleled changes in the life of the Church in the decades after they embarked on their ministry and who, despite the many challenges of these times, remained loyal to their priesthood and to the Bishops and people they served.

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*



### **Fr John Morrison**

Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh

Born: 9 November 1936

Ordained: 30 June 1990

Died: 20 April 2022

Speaking of Fr Morrison, Archbishop Leo Cushley said: 'Fr John was one of our larger-than-life priests. He came to the priesthood in later life, and brought with him a great sense of people through a distinguished career in the prison service. He became an able and committed priest, and was much loved, giving over 25 years of his life to the Lord's service. After suffering a long illness, may the good Lord now welcome John into paradise.'

Fr John served as a priest in Broxburn, Jedburgh and Loanhead and stayed at St Margaret Mary's in Granton, Edinburgh, during his retirement.

He was ordained to the priesthood in 1990 at the age of 53. Prior to that he had pursued a very long and successful career in the prison service in both Scotland and England. His final posting was as Deputy Governor of Wormwood Scrubs in London. He then began his training for the priesthood at the Beda College in Rome in 1986.



Speaking on the occasion of his 25th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood in 2015 at St Margaret Mary's Church in Granton, he said: 'I've really enjoyed my 25 years. Yes, you get a few negative moments but not many. It's a very worthwhile vocation.'

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*



### **Fr Robin Ian Paul Sutton**

Diocese of Shrewsbury

Born: 7<sup>th</sup> November 1941

Ordained: 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1984

RIP: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Robin was born on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 1941 in Liscard, Wallasey and was later received into full communion with the Catholic Church on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1960. He was educated at Liscard Secondary Modern School and Wallasey Technical College before gaining Diplomas in Political Science; Secretarial Studies; Elocution and Public Speaking with Industrial Studies. He worked as a Junior Clerk/Consular Clerk/Administrative Assistant and Administrative Secretary at the American Consulate in Liverpool between 1957 and 1970. His next employment was as Personal Assistant to Regional Director for the National Federation of Building Trade Employees in Liverpool before becoming Secretary of the House Builders Federation.

Robin trained at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome and was ordained to the Priesthood at Saint Alban's, Liscard on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1984.

Fr Robin's Diocesan appointments began as:

Assistant Priest: St Peter's, Hazel Grove – 1984 to 1989;

Assistant Priest: Christ the King, Bromsgrove -1989 to 1991;

Priest in Charge: St Margaret Ward, Sale – 1991 to 1992;

Parish Priest: " " " " - 1992 to 1997;

Parish Priest: All Saints, Sale – 1997 – 2007

On his retirement in 2007 he moved to Sherbourne Road, Wallasey before moving into care at Nazareth House, Birkenhead during the last period of his life. Fr Robin died at Nazareth House, Birkenhead on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*



## **Fr Louis Rieunier**

Diocese of Plymouth

Ordained: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012

RIP: 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Eulogy given by Rene Rieunier, brother of Fr Louis

Louis had a very rich life after leaving school; a tailor in Saville Row; with the presentation brothers in Hereford; further education in Montreal, Quebec, Washington with the Marian Fathers. He was also private diary secretary for the Chief Medical Officer.

Then off to Rome to the Beda College to train for the priesthood. This person was a rumbling tour de force. Louis' life was dedicated to service; his service as a Parish Priest at Yelverton, Dartmoor prisoners chaplain and also hospital chaplain.

He suffered a serious life changing accident and spent many months recuperating. A year later he was back in the driving seat at Yelverton.

Louis moved his residence to Bexhill and all those who travelled with him by car knew the reason. It was the birthplace of British motor racing and also Sackville was its headquarters. He loved his little Volkswagen. December 21 he left to take a Sabbatical.

Archbishop Mark then offered Louis the role of Spiritual Director back at the Beda College in Rome. Louis was very excited by this. This new role with more caring, more service, was sadly not to be.

I was with him last year and we came back from a restaurant. And horizontal in his garden was a young man completely passed out on drink. He phoned an ambulance. The ambulance operator asked that we give this man CPR. Louis did so; he didn't know if the man was going to wake up at any time, not knowing what was happening. But Louis continued. This was the courage that Louis had. So he will be missed by all.

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*



### **Fr Christopher Lee**

Diocese of Melaka Johor

Born: 19<sup>th</sup> October 1965

Ordained: 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009

RIP: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Fr Christopher was born in Leicester, England on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1965 and was raised by a single mother. He grew up and completed his 6<sup>th</sup> form studies in 1984 at St Paul's Institution in Seremban. He pursued his studies in Law and obtained a Bachelor of Law degree from the University of London in 1991.

However, it was not his secular studies that shaped Fr Christopher's life but his faith and love for God. He desired to follow and serve God as a priest. His sense of vocation was planted in 1994 at a retreat organised by KLASE. Among his spiritual directors at that time was Fr Anthony Naden.

In 2005, he applied to Bishop Paul who sent him to the Beda College in Rome as he was a late vocation. This plan was enthusiastically supported by the late Fr John Gnanapiragasm whom Fr Christopher considered as his close friend and mentor.

After his studies, Fr Christopher returned to Malaysia in June 2009 and was placed in the Church of St Francis Xavier, Melaka under Fr Devadasen Madala Muthu. He was ordained to the ministry of priesthood on 31 August 2009 at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Johor Bahru together with Fr Cyril Mannayagam. In November 2010, Fr Christopher was placed under the then Chancellor, Fr Anthony Ng, to study with him Canon Law with special emphasis on the marriage tribunal.

Fr Christopher had a devotion to the Divine Mercy. He had often related that Christ's mercy accompanied him throughout his life. He also had a passion for Adoration and preaching the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

Among the impressions people have of Fr Christopher was that he was approachable and available, easy-going and helpful. He had a love for photography and used to take photographs wherever he went. He could spend hours showing anyone his pictures if they were willing to listen. More importantly Fr Christopher was loved by all those whom he served. He will be missed.

Rest in peace Fr Christopher and may the leap you made from this life be met by the embrace of God's love today.

*May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*



# The Beda Diary 2021-2022

## 20<sup>th</sup> October

Commemorating the (one-year COVID-delayed) 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formal opening of the present College building by St John XXII, at Mass the Rector recalled the words of the Holy Father on his visit to the College:

*You, my dear sons, witness to the fact that the response to the divine call may come at any age. For one, it is a question of a life given to the Lord from childhood, as it was for that great Doctor of the Church, your patron and compatriot, the Venerable Bede. For another it may be the lightning strike in the full vigour of manhood – the road to Damascus. Before God years do not count: only the intensity of the love with which we answer His call and serve Him.*

In the evening, guests at the reception held in the College garden included the Ambassadors to the Holy See from the United Kingdom and from Australia, Mr Christopher Trott and Ms Ciara Porro. Also present was His Eminence James Cardinal Harvey, Archpriest of the Papal Basilica of St Paul outside the Walls.

## 20<sup>th</sup> November

7 members of the College took part in the Ragheed Ghanni Memorial Inter-seminary '5-a side' football tournament in the grounds of the Pontifical Irish College.

## 23<sup>rd</sup> November

Lunch with 30 Jubilarians visiting Rome from England and Wales.

## 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> November

Advent Recollections led by Fr Jim Walls from the Scots College [see an abbreviated version of his talks included in this edition.]

## 1<sup>st</sup> December

Admission to Candidacy. For the first time since the pandemic, a number of outside guests joined us in the chapel for the Candidacy Mass, presided over by Cardinal Maurice Piat, Bishop of Port-Louis in Mauritius.

## 13<sup>th</sup> December

House Christmas Concert in the Common Room saw the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Years combining to entertain the house.



In the footsteps of St John Henry Newman in Rome: the Beda bunch on the Newman Walk, a Gita organised by Gita Man Paul Moores in association with the Sisters of the Spiritual Family of the Work

### **13<sup>th</sup> January**

Sr Carmel FMDM and six students went on a 'Newman Walk' with Sr Anna and Sr M. Christiane of the *Centro Internazionale degli Amici di Newman* [see photo above].

### **25<sup>th</sup> January**

Students attended the Vespers at Basilica San Paulo led by the Holy Father.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> February (Ash Wednesday)**

With the North American Collage resuming their Lenten Station Masses again this year, many students took advantage of being able to attend these 7am Masses at some of the most beautiful churches in the city over the following six weeks, joining others from Rome's English-speaking community.

### **14<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> February**

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Years went to Nemi for a retreat led by Fr David Glenday, former General of the Comboni Missionaries, while the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Years went to Bagnoregio with Mgr Patrick Kilgarri.

### **27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> March**

The Bishops' Annual Visitation of the College.

### **29<sup>th</sup> March**

Beda seminarians assisted at a Mass at Basilica San Paolo to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of full diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and the Holy See. H.E. Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State, presided and preached. Many dignitaries from Commonwealth and Anglophone countries attended.

### **30<sup>th</sup> March**

Students assisted at the North American College Station Mass at Basilica San Paolo, hosted by friend of the College, Cardinal Harvey, who invited all attendees to breakfast at the basilica's bar afterwards. Cardinal Nichols presided, and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, part of the just-completed Bishops' Visitation, preached.

### **13<sup>th</sup> April (Spy Wednesday)**

Students enjoyed the Seven Churches Walk as classes stopped for Holy Week.

### **17<sup>th</sup> April (Easter Sunday)**

The College schola choir sang at a memorable Papal Mass in St Peter's Square where, for the first time in two years, tens of thousands of worshippers could see each other's faces without masks.

### **18<sup>th</sup> May**

Joint institution of Lectorate and Acolyte. This year, these were held together, with many guests from across Rome attending both Mass and the dinner afterwards.

### **25<sup>th</sup> May (Saint Bede's Day)**

With many of the FMDM's friends in attendance, as well as teachers and other friends of the College, and at the start of what would turn out to be a long early heat wave in Rome, this was an opportunity for the College to formally thank the FMDM for their 'Maternal' presence, past and present, for their love and faithfulness to their mission. [Sr Jane Bertelsen's reply on behalf of the Congregation included in this edition.]

### **6<sup>th</sup> June – Leavers' Lunch**

The House formally bade farewell to its departing 4<sup>th</sup> Year deacons, Ignatius Tan, Mike Harwood, Philip Bua, Douglas Green, and Frank McKendry.

### **9-10<sup>th</sup> June – Rector's Gita in Assisi**

An overnight *gita* this year as the Rector combined it with an opportunity for the departing FMDM sisters to revisit the foundation of the Franciscan movement. Orietta and Anna-Lise represented the College's *personale* past and present on a *gita* that included Mass at San Damiano, followed by an evening meal at the hotel in the grounds of the basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli.

### **15<sup>th</sup> June - Diaconal Ordination**

Most Reverend Mark Davies, Bishop of Shrewsbury, presided at the ordination of eight deacons at Basilica San Paolo, followed by a lunch reception in the College gardens.





# Ordinations 2022

## Priesthood

Philip Bua	Argyll and the Isles	21 June
Douglas Green	Glasgow	15 September
Michael Harwood	Liverpool	15 July
Frank McKendry	Glasgow	22 July
Brian Mulling	Melbourne	15 July
Willaim Pillai	Melaka Johor	22 February
Ignatius Tan	Melbourne	15 July

## Diaconate

Andrew Bishop	Southwark	15 June
Shaun Doherty	Derry	15 June
Sean Henry	Shrewbury	15 June
Robert McMahon	Down and Connor	15 June
Gerard Moore	Killala	15 June
Wladimir Siwecki	Stockholm	15 June
Patrick van der Vorst	Westminster	15 June



# The Beda Association 2022

## **President**

Revd Mgr Roderick Strange

## **Vice-president**

Revd Canon Michael Buckley

## **Hon. Treasurer**

Revd Canon John Weatherill

## **Hon. Secretary**

Revd Fr John Peyton  
St John the Evangelist  
25 South Bar Street  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire  
OX16 9AF  
fr.john.peyton@rcaob.org.uk

## **Diocesan Representatives**

### **Diocese of Arundel & Brighton**

To be appointed

### **Archdiocese of Birmingham**

Revd Fr John Peyton  
St John the Evangelist  
25 South Bar Street  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire  
OX16 9AF  
fr.john.peyton@rcaob.org.uk

### **Diocese of Brentwood**

Revd Fr Joseph Tan  
Most Holy Redeemer Presbytery  
Petersfield Ave  
Harold Hill  
Romford,  
Essex RM3 9PB  
haroldhillmhr@dioceseofbrentwood.org

### **Archdiocese of Cardiff**

To be appointed

### **Diocese of Clifton**

Revd. Fr Michael Thomas  
Sacred Heart Presbytery  
8 Townsend Road  
Minehead  
TA24 5RG  
minehead@cliftondiocese.com

### **Diocese of East Anglia**

Rev Fr Paul Spellman,  
St Mary's Presbytery  
322 Woodbridge Road  
Ipswich  
IP4 4BD  
paul.spellman@rcdea.org.uk

### **Diocese of Hallam**

Rev Fr Patrick Harrigan  
St Joseph's Presbytery  
2 Carr Road  
Wath upon Dearne  
S63 7AA  
harriganpat@gmail.com

### **Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle**

Revd Mgr Andrew Faley  
St Edwards' Presbytery  
Coquet Ave  
Whitley Bay  
Tyne & Wear  
NE26 1EE  
ajfaley@yahoo.co.uk

**Diocese of Lancaster**

Revd Fr Andrew Broster  
St John the Evangelist Presbytery  
The Willows  
Ribby Road  
Kirkham  
Lancs PR4 2BE  
andrewtbroster@gmail.com

**Diocese of Leeds**

Revd Fr Michael McLaughlin  
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Presbytery  
Carmel House  
7 Wesley Place  
Silsden,  
West Yorkshire BD20 0PH  
michaelmclaughlin5@gmail.com

**Archdiocese of Liverpool**

Revd Fr Anthony Kelly  
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs  
& St Swithin Presbytery  
Stonebridge Lane  
Croxteth,  
Liverpool, L11 9AZ  
akelly2809@gmail.com

**Diocese of Menevia**

To be appointed

**Diocese of Middlesbrough**

Revd Canon Gerard Robinson  
St Mary's Cathedral  
Dalby Way  
Coulby Newham  
Middlesbrough TS8 0TW  
gerard.paul@btopenworld.com

**Diocese of Northampton**

To be appointed

**Diocese of Nottingham**

Revd Fr John Kyne  
St Philip Neri Presbytery

3 Chesterfield Road South  
Mansfield  
Notts NG19 7AB  
frjohnkyne@gmail.com

**Diocese of Plymouth**

Revd Fr Brian Kenwick  
St Mary's Presbytery  
Killigrew Street  
Falmouth  
Cornwall TR11 3PR  
brian.kenwick@prcdtr.org.uk

**Diocese of Portsmouth**

Revd Fr David Sillince  
St Boniface House  
413 Shirley Road  
Shirley  
Southampton, Hampshire SO15 3JD  
david sillince@yahoo.co.uk

**Diocese of Salford**

To be appointed

**Diocese of Shrewsbury**

To be appointed

**Archdiocese of Southwark**

Revd Fr Stephen Wymer  
St Simon Stock Presbytery  
5 Bleakwood Road  
Walderslade  
Chatham, Kent ME5 0NF  
frswymer@hotmail.co.uk

Revd Fr Philip Seed  
Peveril  
Fordoun Road  
Broadstairs  
Kent CT10 2BN  
philipseed@yahoo.co.uk

**Diocese of Wrexham**

To be appointed

### **Archdiocese of Westminster**

Revd Fr Tom Montgomery  
St Matthew's Presbytery  
32 Hallowell Road  
Norwood  
Middlesex HA6 1DW  
tommontgomery@rcdow.org.uk

### **Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh**

Revd Fr Jeremy Milne  
St John the Baptist Presbytery  
37 St Ninian's Road  
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Lothian EH12 8AL  
jeremymilne@googlemail.com

### **Diocese of Argyle & the Isles**

Revd Canon Roderick Johnston  
The Visitation Presbytery  
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Argyllshire  
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taynuilt@rcdai.org.uk

### **Australia**

Revd Fr Geoffrey McIlroy  
Parish of Melton  
10 Unit Street  
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Australia  
geoffmcilroy@gmail.com

## **The Beda Association**

### **Minutes and Report of the Annual General Meeting**

12<sup>th</sup> May 2022

This year celebrates the 96<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting which was held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at The Oblates Retreat Centre at Wistaston Hall in Crewe. Sister Anne Donnelly on behalf of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate welcomed those attending the AGM.

#### **1. Opening Prayer**

prayed by Mgr Rod Strange

#### **2. Apologies**

Frs Philip Smith, Barrie Cummins, Bruce Barnes [*Requests that the meeting be held in the wilds of the South of England – Portsmouth*], Patrick Harrigan [*Has Confirmation this evening and thought that the Bishop might note his absence as he is now PP*], Charles Waddell, Anthony Congliolo, Patrick Toohey [*Western Australia is a bit too far to travel from for a two day meeting*], Peter Ryan, Timothy Forbes-Turner, Martin Nott, Michael Stewart, Philip Carr, Michael Lovell, Felix Au, Julian Shurgold, Michael Brookes, James Mulligan [*prostate operation approaching*].



### **3. Attending**

Canon Philip Gillespie [College Rector], Mgr Roderick Strange [President], Fr Michael McLaughlin [Secretary], Fr Michael Thomas [Vice President], Canon John Weatherill [Treasurer], Mgr Brian Dazeley, Fr Douglas Lamb, Fr Andrew Broster, Canon David Goodwin, Canon Michael Buckley, Fr John White, Canon Christopher Loughran, Fr Christopher Greaney, Fr Thomas Hoole, Fr John Laybourne, Fr Anthony Kelly, Fr John Peyton, Fr Thomas Montgomery.

### **4. Donations:**

Given Anonymously £5250.00

### **5. Remembrances**

Fr Geoffrey Davey [1967 - 971] – 12<sup>th</sup> February 1975;  
Fr Henry Ferro[1971] – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2005;  
Fr Michael Finch [1971] – Deceased 1986;  
Fr David Gould [1971] – Deceased 2015;  
Fr William Hughes [1971] – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018;  
Canon Desmond Millett [1971] – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021;  
Fr Patrick Norton [1971] – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008;  
Fr Bartholomew O'Dea [1971] – 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2002;  
Fr Francis Parkinson [1971] – Southwark – March 1994;  
Fr Christopher Quirke [1971] – Brentwood - 21<sup>st</sup> January 2000;  
Fr Donald Lorensz [1978] – Hamilton, Bermuda – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2016;  
Fr Geoffrey Allan, [2002] – Wollongong - 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021;  
Fr J.H. Sharpe [1900] – Westminster;  
Fr Hamilton McDonald [1901] – Westminster;  
Fr Terence George [1901] – Lancaster;  
Fr M.W. Cave [1903] – Westminster;  
Fr Henry Barton-Brown [1907] Westminster;  
Fr R, Downey [1909] Westminster;  
Fr George Trollope [1910] Nottingham – 21<sup>st</sup> November 1933;  
Fr Patrick O'Hanlon [1942] Nottingham – 12<sup>th</sup> September 1972;  
Fr Damian Devine – Diocese of Santa Rosa;  
Fr Denis Watt – Diocese of Singapore;  
Fr Martin Callaghan [1971] Leeds – 29<sup>th</sup> January 1995;  
Fr Marwyn Welham [1998-2002] Pretoria – 2019;  
Fr Barrie Holmes [1962-66] Leeds – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021;  
Fr Louis Beasley-Suffolk [2000-2004] – 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021;  
Fr Terry Perkins – Plymouth 1964-68 – 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022;  
Fr Michael Gallon – [Professor 1969-74] - Leeds – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022;

Fr David Craig [1974-78] Shrewsbury - 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022;  
Fr John Morrison [1986-90] St Andrews & Edinburgh – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022;  
Fr Robin Sutton [1980-84] Shrewsbury– 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

## 6. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting, published in the Beda Review were proposed by Fr Douglas Lamb and seconded by Fr Michael Thomas, then signed as accepted by Mgr Roderick Strange, President.

## 7. Rector's report

The Rector's report was presented by Canon Philip Gillespie and is covered in this issue of the *Review*. In addition, he offered thanks to the FMDM from the family of the Beda for all their work, prayer and presence in the College over the last 60 years. Words cannot express the thanks that is due to them.

The Beda will celebrate two Golden Jubilees before the break for summer. During the summer, Sr Patricia celebrates 50 years of Religious Profession and Fr Peter celebrates 50 years of Priestly Ordination. The joyful thanksgiving for those milestones was marked with a sadness in the College as Fr Peter finishes as spiritual director at the Beda this summer. Ad multos annos.

The Beda College celebrates 170 years this year since its foundation. Over these 170 years, the Beda has served firstly the dioceses of England and Wales but latterly (that is for the past 100 years!) English speaking counties from around the world. We delight in being such an international Community and we pray that our mission and ministry may continue to flourish in the coming decades – preparing Ordained Ministers who are *ardent yet gentle servants of the Gospel*.

## 8. Treasurer's Report

### The Beda Association

#### Income and Expenditure

1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

INCOME	2021/22	2020/21
AGM Receipts	£960.00	£60.00
Donations Received	£15,900.00	£250.00
Legacies	-	-
Subscriptions		
Life	£200.00	£750.00
Annual	£250.00	£455.00
Bank Interest	£1.26	£2.19
TOTAL INCOME	£17,311.26	£1517.19



EXPENDITURE	2021/22	2020/21
AGM Expenses	£910.00	
Donations Given	£13,300.00	
Bank Charges	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£14,210.00	NIL

#### FUNDS AT BANK

Opening balance	£6,607.20 [01.04.21]	£5,090.01 [01.04.20]
Net Income	£3101.26	£1,517.19
Closing bank balance	£ 9,708.46 [31.03.22]	£ 6,607.20 [31.03.21]

*Rev Canon John Weatherill, Hon. Treasurer*

*12<sup>th</sup> May 2022*

Proposal made by Fr Michael Thomas that a donation of £7,000.00 be given to the College. This was seconded by Fr Douglas Lamb and unanimously approved.

It was also suggested that in the parishes where a Beda priest is resident that an Annual Beda College Appeal through the Beda Association be taken up to support the work of the College. This was left up to the individual priests to decide.

## 9. Secretary's Report

Kevin Kiem sent this article to me over the last few days regarding a Beda priest.

**John Cyril Hawes**, was born in Richmond, Surrey to Edward, a solicitor and Amelia Hawes. He attended school in Brighton and Canterbury. After leaving school he began training as an architect in London in 1893 with Edmiston and Gabriel. He also received formal architectural education at the Architectural Association School as well as the Central School for Arts and Crafts.



In 1897, he began practicing as an architect, designing houses at Bognor. After winning a design competition, he was commissioned to build his first church in Gunnerton in 1899.

After studying at Lincoln Theological College, he was ordained as a Church of England priest in 1903. After stints at Clerkenwell and Caldy Island, he was posted to a mission in the Bahamas. In 1910 he designed St Paul's Church in Clarence Town on Long Island.

In 1911 he left the Bahamas for the United States where he converted to Roman Catholicism. After leading a nomadic existence in Canada and the United States

for several years, including working as a labourer and as a railway teamster he began studying for the priesthood at the Beda College in Rome. He was ordained as a Catholic priest on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 1915, after which he was sent to Geraldton, Western Australia where he worked as a priest, architect and builder. In recognition of his work in Church design and architecture he was named a monsignor by Pope Pius XI.

In May 1939, Hawes sailed from Freemantle, returning to the Bahamas, officially on a pilgrimage. He designed and built Mount Alvernia Hermitage on Como Hill at Cat Island, which became his home. Along with this hermitage, he also designed five churches in the Bahamas as well as a second church at Clarence Town, St Peter's.

He died on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1956 in Miami, Florida aged 79 and at his own request was buried in a cave located beneath the hermitage at Cat Island.

### **The Cause of John Cyril Hawes**

Inquiries are underway to determine whether there is evidence of heroic virtue in the life of Mgr John Cyril Hawes [AKA Fra Jerome] that might give cause to promote him for sainthood. Heroic virtue is understood to mean evidence of a person exhibiting all the virtues higher than the average person. In addition, evidence is requested of any recourse to Mgr Hawes for divine intercession and any received since the time of his death to the present. If you have any information you would like to share, please email Fr Robert Cross at [heritage@diocese-geraldton.org](mailto:heritage@diocese-geraldton.org).

### **Anniversaries this year**

#### **Silver Jubilees [Ordained 1977]**

Fr David Annear, Plymouth	27 <sup>th</sup> June
Fr Leonard Antwi, Zambia	
Fr Bruce Barnes, Portsmouth	21 <sup>st</sup> December
Fr Steven Bejo, OFM Con, Philippines	
Fr John Boyle, Portland	8 <sup>th</sup> March
Fr Andrew Browster, Lancaster	5 <sup>th</sup> July
Fr David Burns, Lancaster	
Fr Paul Chipchase, Nottingham	
Fr Francisco Chissuaca, Lubango, Angola	
Fr Barry Grant, Southwark	13 <sup>th</sup> July
Fr Barry Huggans, Melbourne	23 <sup>rd</sup> August
Fr Trevor Jordan, Plymouth	
Fr Maurus Koikkara, OSB, India	
Fr Emmanuel Mashahu, Burundi	
Fr Kevin McLoughlin, Liverpool	

Fr Ross Patterson, Menevia	
Fr John Robson, Broken Bay, Australia	
Fr Manual Sabino, Lubango, Angola	
Fr Thomas Scannell, Southwark	
Fr Joseph Tan, Brentwood	
Fr James Teeling, Southwark	
Canon John Weatherill, Southwark	13 <sup>th</sup> July
Fr Simon Winn	5 <sup>th</sup> January

**Ruby Jubilee** [Ordained 1982]

Fr Michael Andrysiak, Vancouver	3 <sup>rd</sup> July
Fr Terence Boleski, Vancouver	3 <sup>rd</sup> July
Fr Michael Evans, Cardiff	3 <sup>rd</sup> July
Fr Dermot Fenlon, East Anglia	
Fr Timothy Forbes-Turner, Southwark	26 <sup>th</sup> June
Fr Barry Hughes, Southwark	20 <sup>th</sup> June
Fr Douglas Lamb, Birmingham	18 <sup>th</sup> June
Fr Patrick McHugh, Kilmore	20 <sup>th</sup> June
Fr Bernard Meredith, Rustenburg	10 <sup>th</sup> June
Fr Craig Scott, Vancouver	3 <sup>rd</sup> July
Fr Michael Stewart, Westminster	3 <sup>rd</sup> July
Fr John Walsh, Birmingham	3 <sup>rd</sup> July
Fr John Walsh, Lancaster	19 <sup>th</sup> June
Fr John Whooley, Westminster	5 <sup>th</sup> June
Fr George Woodall, Nottingham	12 <sup>th</sup> June

**Golden Jubilee** [Ordained 1972]

Fr George Barrett, Shrewbury	
Fr Bernard Blundall, OFM Conv	18 <sup>th</sup> March
Fr George Carrick, Plymouth	18 <sup>th</sup> March
Fr Laurence Dominik, Slavonic Rites	
Fr Martin Humphreys, Augustinian	20 <sup>th</sup> December
Fr Douglas Livingstone, Paraclete Fathers	18 <sup>th</sup> March
Fr Eric Nimmo, Southwark	
Fr Desmond O'Regan, Arundel & Brighton	18 <sup>th</sup> March
Fr Elmer Ponton, New Orleans	18 <sup>th</sup> March
Fr Frederick Sheldon, Birmingham	
Fr Peter Wilson, Northampton	

**Diamond Jubilee** [Ordained 1962]

Mgr Brian Dazeley, Nottingham	29 <sup>th</sup> October
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Our congratulations and prayers are sent to all Jubilarians.

Prayer cards and the Necrology Booklet for 2021/22 are available.

Over the last three or four AGMs members were asked to look and reflect on the Constitution and Rules of the Beda Association as they were thought to be dated. At this meeting changes were made to bring them up to the present as follows.

**The Beda Association**  
**[Founded 8<sup>th</sup> July 1918]**  
**CONSTITUTION AND RULES**



**Name**

The Association shall be called **"The Beda Association"**.

**Objects**

1. To enable former students and staff of the College to meet, at least annually, to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass together and to meet socially.
2. The spiritual welfare of the College and its members, by prayer and association.
3. The financial assistance of the Pontificio Collegio Beda.

**Membership**

1. Is open to former staff/students of the Pontificio Collegio Beda and anyone willing to promote the objects of the Association.
2. The acceptance of new members shall be left to the discretion of the Council.

**Annual Subscription**

1. The minimum annual subscription shall be determined by the Council annually, and approved by the Annual General Meeting.
2. Subscriptions shall fall due annually on 25th May.
3. Life Membership will be granted to any person, who subscribes the appropriate fee, laid down by the Council and approved at the Annual General Meeting.

**Funds**

1. The funds of the Association shall be administered by the Council, solely for the good of the Association. Accounts shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Association which shall include all expenses incurred.

**Governance**

1. The Officers shall be:  
The Chairman/President,  
Vice-Chairman/Presider,  
Treasurer and Secretary.

They shall hold office for one year and shall be eligible for re-election at the Annual General Meeting.

2. There shall be a Council of the Association consisting of: The Officers and Representative from each province in England and Wales. These to be elected annually, at the Annual General Meeting.
3. Ex-Chairmen shall be ex-officio Members of the Council for three years after their terms of office.
4. The Council shall meet at the request of the Chairman/President or, at the request of not less than four Members of the Council. Four will form a quorum.
5. The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held for business and social purposes, usually in May, in such a place as the Council shall determine. It shall elect or re-elect the officers of the Association and the Members of the Council and the Treasurer shall present the accounts for adoption.
6. Other business regarding the affairs of the Association may be brought before the Annual General Meeting, provided one month's notice is given, in writing, to the Hon. Secretary.
7. On the day of the Annual General Meeting, Mass for the wellbeing of the College, for deceased former staff/students of the College, and of the Association, shall be concelebrated.

## General

1. The Rector of the Pontificio Collegio Beda shall be requested to arrange the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the College Chapel, each month from November to June, for living and deceased staff/students, and Members of the Association. At the discretion of the Rector this Mass is to be said from July to October. A stipend for these Masses is to be provided by the Association.
2. No rules of the Association shall be altered except at the Annual General Meeting. One month's notice shall have been given to the Hon. Secretary, in writing, and to succeed it must receive a two-thirds majority of the Members present at the Meeting and voting.

**The Subscription for membership is as follows:**

For students at Pontificio Collegio Beda membership is free as an associate member.

For a newly ordained Priest membership is free for the first year.

The fee is: £50.00 for annual membership  
£250.00 for life membership.

Please make cheques payable to the **"Beda Association"**. Payments must be made in **Pounds Sterling**.

*Annual membership is renewed every 25<sup>th</sup> May.*

Request for membership should be made through the Beda Association Secretary.

## 10. Election of Officers.

Both Fr Michael Thomas [Vice-President] and Fr Michael McLaughlin [Secretary] are retiring from their position this year, Fr Thomas after 12 years and Fr McLaughlin after 18 years. Mgr Strange proposed a vote of thanks to both for their work in holding and promoting the work of the Beda Association.

	Nomination	Seconded	Elected
President: <i>Mgr R Strange</i>	Fr T Montgomery	Fr A Broster	✓
Vice-President: <i>Canon M Buckley</i>	Fr A Broster	Mgr B Dazeley	✓
Treasurer: <i>Canon J Weatherill</i>	Fr M. Thomas	Fr M McLaughlin	✓
Secretary: <i>Fr J Peyton</i>	Fr M Thomas	Fr C Greaney	✓

## 11. Venue and approximate date for next year.

Wistaston Hall, Crewe on the 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> May 2023

## 12. Any other business

N/A

## 13. Closing Prayer

We closed by praying the 'Gloria' led by Mgr Roderick Strange.

We celebrated Mass with Canon Philip Gillespie being the main celebrant as we prayed the votive Mass of St Bede remembering those of our Beda Family who have died; those who are ill and in need of our prayers; the membership of the College and all who support the College in any way.

Mass was followed by a reception and a delicious dinner.





# Pontifical Beda College Staff and Students 2021 – 2022



## Formation Staff

- Canon Philip Gillespie (Liverpool) Rector
- Fr John Breen (Hexham and Newcastle) Human Formation and Pastoral Director
- Sr Patricia McDonald SHCJ, Academic Programme Director
- Mgr Peter Verity (Lancaster) Spiritual Director
- Fr John Carlyle (Birmingham) Spiritual Director

## First Year

1. Kwadwo Osei, Louis (OSB)
2. Thornley, Philip (Leeds)

## External Students

- Abasolo, Oliver (SMM)
- McMahon, Philip (OFM)
- Shayo, Cassian (OSB)

## Second Year

1. Boyle, James (Westminster)
2. Chung, David (Port-Louis)
3. Henderson, Paul (Edinburgh)
4. Hiney, Thomas (Portsmouth)
5. Kerr, Anthony (Meath)
6. Marley, Simon (Lancaster)
7. McNally, Brian (Armagh)
8. Salmon, Eamon (Ferns)
9. Shankland, Peter (Edinburgh)

## Third Year

1. Bishop, Andrew (Southwark)
2. Doherty, Shaun (Derry)
3. Fernandes, Jason (Goa and Daman)
4. Henry, Sean (Shrewsbury)
5. McCann, Dominic (Shrewsbury)
6. McMahon, Robert (Down and Connor)
7. Moore, Gerard (Killala)
8. Moores, Paul (Leeds)
9. Orkuma, Maxwell (Gboko)
10. Siwecki, Wladimir (Stockholm)
11. van der Vorst, Patrick (Westminster)

## Fourth Year

1. Bua, Philip (Argyll & the Isles)
2. Green, Douglas (Glasgow)
3. Harwood, Michael (Liverpool)
4. McKendry, Frank (Glasgow)
5. Tan, Ignatius (Melbourne)

**Based in Rome, the Pontifical Beda College was established in 1852 as a seminary for the formation of diocesan priests. The College welcomes English speaking men over 30 and has students from 12 countries. It is under the guidance of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.**

## **The Beda Association's**

### *Prayer for Seminarians*

Jesus, we thank you for the great gift of priesthood in the Church.

We pray for all priests and those in formation for priesthood.

Form their hearts to be more like your own, the Heart of the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.

Draw them to your Heart, bless them with your zeal as they serve you and your people.

Give them great joy as they proclaim the good news of your Resurrection, give them wisdom, hope and trust as they discern your will for them.

With confidence in you we ask this.

Amen

## **The Beda Association's**

### *Daily Vocation Prayer Calendar*

#### **Monday**

Vocations from your own parish

#### **Tuesday**

Vocations ministry in your diocese

#### **Wednesday**

Applicants for seminary and prospective seminarians

#### **Thursday**

Those in seminary at this time

#### **Friday**

The professors teaching in seminary

#### **Saturday**

Those preparing for ordination to the diaconate

#### **Sunday**

Those preparing for ordination to the priesthood

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**[www.bedacollege.org](http://www.bedacollege.org)**