



The Beda Review

2022 - 2023

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A statue of the Madonna and Child at the Church of St Paul the Apostle, Tre Fontane



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Rector's Report 2022-2023

Canon Philip Gillespie

As I write this column (in mid-June) work is carrying on apace to ready the 4th floor of the Seminary for the arrival in September of our brethren from the Scots College. As many of you may know, the Scots who currently have a building out on the Via Cassia, want to sell it and move back into the centre of Rome so that they can be nearer to the Gregorian and Angelicum Universities where the seminarians study. At the present time they do not have a building into which they can move hence our offer that, *pro tem*, they move in to the Beda until they have settled on a new site.



While this will mean two seminaries operating slightly different timetables we are sure it will be a positive experience for both houses and what slight alterations and accommodations we have to make will be outweighed by the joy of sharing our beautiful building with the Scots, students and staff.

Looking back over the past year (September 2022 to September 2023) I think we can be content that the Formation Experience here at the Beda continues to be wholesome and effective. In September of last year, we welcomed 12 new seminarians, and this was a welcome boost to the house – both in terms of numbers and in the varied skills and talents which have been brought to us. On 14th June 2023 we ordained 7 men to the Diaconate and over the summer months, God willing, 8 men will be ordained to the Priesthood. It is always a proud and happy moment when we see those with whom we have journeyed for the 4 years of the Beda Programme take their place in the ranks of diocesan and religious ministry. May they be ardent but gentle servants of the Gospel!

As for the Formation Year 2022-2023, you will get a glimpse in the College Diary of the events, the joys and sorrows, the ups and downs which have gone to make up our months together. The important thing is to be always open to learn something new – about God, about ourselves and indeed about others; that is as true in parish ministry as it is in seminary formation. Indeed the heart of ongoing formation is the desire to keep eyes, ears, and heart open to new experiences and fresh learnings. In order to process these learnings we as diocesan priests need to maintain the practice of spiritual direction and annual periods of recollection/retreats. As the demands of the ministry increase and we are called to take more and more responsibilities at deanery, diocesan and sometimes national levels, there is always the temptation to relegate our own spiritual development and ongoing formation to the level of “Wouldn’t it be nice if....”. That would be a shame.

So, thank you for your continued interest and support for Collegio Beda. Please pray for us as we pray for you. If you are not currently a member of the Beda Association please contact the Secretary, Fr John Peyton, whose details are on p.59 of this Review. Increasingly we are asked to accept in the Beda seminarians from territories whose Bishops would find it overly burdensome to pay the full residential fees. The Association therefore intends to establish a Bursary Fund and more details of this will be available in the coming months.

With thanks to Deacon Thomas Hiney of the Diocese of Portsmouth, Editor and Deacon Paul Henderson of the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh, Assistant Editor and compiler of the Diary.

The Deacons this year took a quote from St Bede as their motto: *Unfurl the sails and let God steer us where he will*. Amen to that!

Good wishes

Fr Philip

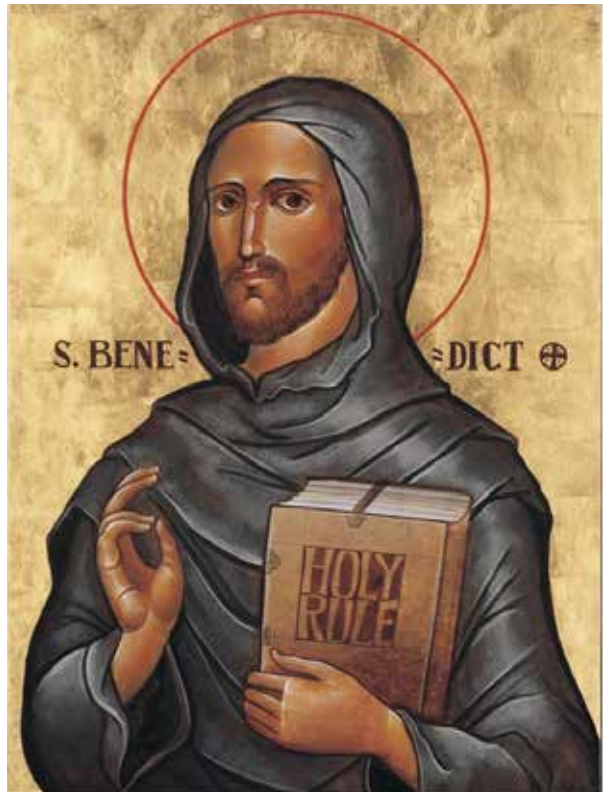


On Asceticism and Grace

Phil Thornley, 2nd Year, Diocese of Leeds

Within Christian history, an element of spirituality which is never far away is asceticism. For anyone looking to take their Christian life seriously it has certain obvious attractions – self-denial has direct connections with things Jesus did. I lived for a few years in a Benedictine community where asceticism was simply part of the ordering of life, not something I had to arrange for myself. Studying the Pentateuch here during the Autumn and reflecting on it during Lent gave me fresh perspective. The acts of God in leading the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt have an allegorical meaning for us: that of God leading one out of the spiritual slavery of sinful ways.

The Rule of Saint Benedict has been a long-standing source of reflection for me. One lead that it gives is that different people have different sorts of enslavement and so the chapter on Lent asks that they 'look carefully at the integrity of their lives, and get rid in this holy season of any negligence and compromise which may have crept in... offered freely to the Lord with the joy of the Holy Spirit'



(RB49:2-6). It urges the dropping of bad habits and instead a wholehearted focus on God through contrition, heartfelt repentance and *Lectio Divina*. There are things that we have become dependent on that we barely realise, they blur our vision and show a kind of hypocrisy in our profession of faith because such habits are displacing our freedom for God and the other.

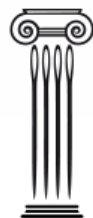
While encouraging the denial of our appetites through giving up something of our food or drink or sleep, the Rule also alerts us to a common danger in any good work, that while trying to do a good thing we become caught up in our own success: vainglory. To nullify this, it tells the monks that they are to get the permission of the superior for whatever measure they are going to take in Lent. My spiritual director, the person who knows my spiritual battles, is most apt to be the one I ask for approval and blessing. One Lent, when I wanted to take on a particularly heroic deprivation, my spiritual director nudged me towards a better challenge: to give and do kind things to a person I was having trouble with.

Benedict urges self-denial and this should allow a person to welcome the grace of God. The danger is a sort of neo-Pelagianism, including an obsessive concern with self-fulfilment and an over-emphasis on what *we* are doing. The central, repeated lesson of the Exodus is that the people of Israel should realise that it is God who is doing everything in their liberation and that their own initiatives are useless, in fact counter-productive, and can separate them from God. I do not free myself, but if I am willing to let go of serving myself and live by the grace of God, with my thoughts less focussed on my own needs, I can be more alert to his gratuity, spotting all that he is always doing for me.



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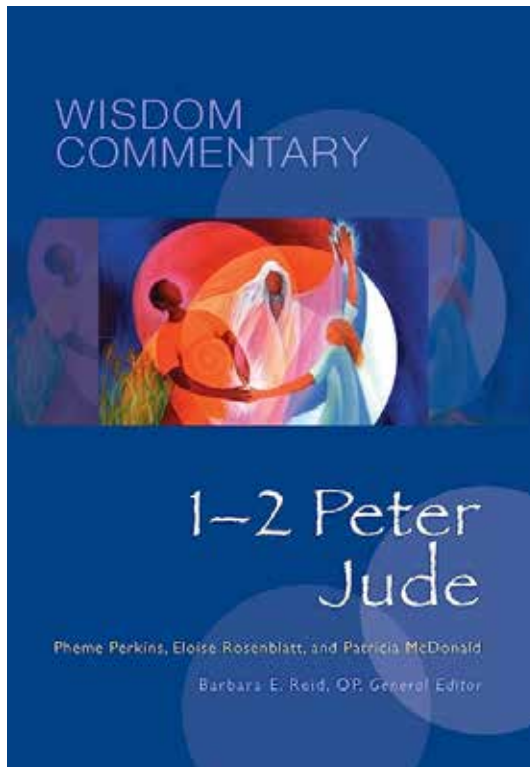


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Award for Sr Patricia

Sr Patricia McDonald SHCJ, Academic Programme Director of the Beda, has won an award for her contribution to a commentary on 1&2 Peter and Jude for the *Wisdom Commentary* series, published by Liturgical Press. At the Catholic Media Awards 2023, held this year in Baltimore, the commentary won second place in the category “Scripture – Academic Studies”. Sr Patricia also contributed to the imprimatur-bearing *Jerome Bible Commentary for the Twenty-First Century* which appeared in 2022, with a commentary on Colossians. *Ad Multos Annos*, Sister!





Remembering Pope Benedict XVI – the apostle of truth!

By Benwen Lopez

Santo Subito! were the chants from some of the crowds gathered for the requiem Mass of Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI in St Peter's Square on a frigid January morning. The mist in the air and the grey clouds in the sky created a perfect ambience for a day when thousands gathered to bid farewell to the grand old shepherd of the Catholic Church, who lived an almost monastic life for close to ten years at Mater Ecclesiae Monastery, after his stunning resignation in 2013.

Although Benedict XVI was elected to the papacy in 2005, his remarkable and path-breaking contributions to the theology of the Church began decades before his papacy. He was known for being articulate in his defence of Catholicism, fought “tooth and nail” against the “dictatorship of relativism,” a term he conceptualised to illustrate how the secularist agenda against religion is growing and shaping into a militant model, a cultural smokescreen for harnessing egos and desires. He truly understood the destructive power possessed by the divisive forces within and outside the Catholic Church and, owing to his commitment to the truth, did not mince his words when dealing with the challenge.

In the context of seminary life, I would like to highlight some key lessons taught by Papa Benedict. In his interviews with Peter Seewald, he revealed how as a seminarian he was conflicted with such questions as to whether celibacy was the right choice for him or how one should deal with postings after ordination. He said, “Yes to the priesthood meant that I had to say Yes to the whole task, even in its simplest forms.” He also cautioned that the study of theology is not to “learn a trade,” but rather to have a deeper understanding of the faith and to discover its majestic splendour and truth in the person of Jesus Christ.

In his 2005 address to seminarians in Cologne, Germany, he said that the heart and goal of formation [in any seminary] is to bring the student to an intimate knowledge



Calls for the early canonisation of Pope Benedict

of the God revealed through Jesus Christ. Therefore, seminarians ought to keep discovering God in the person of Jesus Christ, especially through the Word and Sacraments, and to pursue the path of holiness, which meant seeking to always do the will of God. He also strongly encouraged seminarians to foster growth of human maturity, something that would augment every aspect of seminary life, and eventually grow into mature priestly life: “The seminarian experiences the beauty of [his] call in a moment of grace which could be defined as ‘falling in love’. His soul is filled with amazement, which makes him ask in prayer: ‘Lord, why me?’ But love knows no ‘why’; it is a gift to which one responds with the gift of self.”

Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI encouraged seminarians to treat the years in seminary as a journey of discovering Christ, and it is only when one has that personal experience of Christ that one will gain the insight of understanding the will of God and the purpose of one’s vocation. This experience can only manifest through the movement or power of the Holy Spirit, he said.

During his lifetime, Benedict XVI authored over 60 books, preached thousands of homilies, wrote three encyclicals and four apostolic exhortations. The message therein all boiled down to his last three words, “Lord, I love you,” which summed up his papacy and the contributions he made to the Church and in the lives of countless people. It was also the final commendation of his soul to Jesus Christ – the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Ave Atque Vale, Papa Benedetto!

Benwen Lopez, Diocese of Sindhudurg



Garden News

By Paul Moores

Formerly, the *capanna* (roughly “hut” in English) was a social space for the FMDM sisters, whose ministry in the College sadly drew to a close in 2022 after sixty years of service. A well-positioned outside room, it had in recent years become a tool shed, obscured from view by a hedge and half-forgotten. It was crying out for renovation, as it had clear potential to return to its former use as a refuge for reading and socialising.



The *Capanna* before restoration work by the students



The Capanna after restoration work

Plans were made, funding secured, willing volunteers recruited, and furniture and fittings ordered over the winter. In the New Year, many hours were spent by the student team; sanding, scrubbing, and filling the walls, preparing, and painting the windows and doors, as well as cutting the hedge, felling an overgrown conifer that obscured the windows and (eventually) putting together furniture. Downpours then identified a leaky roof issue, but Larry did a fantastic job in rendering, sealing, and painting the roof, making it watertight once more. In time for the summer, the new furniture and furnishings were then installed, as well as fresh furniture for the gazebo idea. As the photos show, it was a proper and satisfying makeover. A big thanks to all who got involved, not least to our generous benefactors, without whom this project would have been impossible.

Ad multos annos to the Capanna!

Paul Moores, 4th Year, Diocese of Leeds



I am lost, It's over – A powerful homily

His Eminence, Maurice Cardinal Piat, Bishop Emeritus of Port Louis, preached a memorable homily during Mass on Wednesday 30th November 2022 for the Feast of St Andrew, Apostle. We asked for permission to reproduce what he had said in these pages, and he kindly sent the following notes:

1 a. “Come, follow me”

This simple call was the start, for the apostle Andrew and others, of an unexpected and happy journey with Jesus.

This is also what is at the heart of our calling today.

We are not called simply to “join a club”, or to “study doctrine”, or “do a job”, or to “perform duties”, be they pastoral, liturgical or academic.

We are called to “trust a person” – the person of Jesus Christ who takes the initiative to invite us to follow him on his journey; we are called to follow him, to adopt his way of life, to participate in his mission, and to find happiness on the way.

1 b. “Follow me”

According to the Gospel of John, when Andrew first heard John the Baptist pointing at Jesus, saying “This is the lamb of God”, he asked Jesus “Where do you live?” And Jesus said “Come and you will see.”

First, an invitation... “Come”

Then, a promise... “You will see”.

To follow Jesus, to walk behind him, we have to trust him. There is no other way. Trust is the only fuel we need.



2. And how did this “following of Jesus” actually happen for Andrew and the first apostles?

a. There was a first phase of enthusiasm as they witnessed wonderful events.

- Preaching: Jesus did not preach like the Pharisees but as a man who had authority.
- Miracles: Men and women, children, the poor, lepers and crippled were cured.
- Popularity: Jesus had undeniable charisma which attracted crowds.
- Hope: the apostles felt that nothing/nobody could resist Jesus - neither the forces of nature (e.g. the tempest on the lake of Galilee) nor the powerful Roman Administration – and they were filled with hope and looked forward to a bright future.

b. Then there was a second phase of disillusionment.

- Provocation and conspiracy arose from the Pharisees and religious authorities, which did not trigger much reaction from Jesus, who simply stood his ground.
- Some subtle warnings from Herod, which did not bother Jesus either.
- The enthusiasm and welcoming by the crowds faded away.
- Then, and perhaps especially, there was Jesus' own confession that he would be rejected, condemned and crucified, but would rise again on the third day. Andrew and the apostles could not understand what Jesus was saying. They were lost. They had followed him blindly but at this point they were perturbed. They probably held out hope that Jesus would somehow manage to escape his impending doom or, better still, defeat his enemies and emerge victorious.

c. Then comes the third phase - the apostles' collapse.

Right from the moment Jesus is arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, the apostles escape because in their understanding Jesus has lost. It's over. They disappear completely until after the resurrection. They would not even believe what the women who went to the tomb told them they had seen.

d. And then there is a fourth phase where the apostles regain their faith.

Thanks to the reassurance of Jesus after the resurrection, and the silent work of the Holy Spirit, promised as a gift that would come after his Ascension, and thanks also to the Virgin Mary, who encouraged the disciples to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit, there came the huge illumination and infusion of powerful energy onto the disciples at Pentecost. Through this empowerment and enlightenment received from the Holy Spirit, they now become true followers of Jesus and worthy apostles. It is only then that they came to realize that Jesus was not meant to be the powerful political leader they were dreaming about, but someone much greater: a person who had loved them until death and given his life for them. A Saviour who saved them, and the whole of humanity, through his humble acceptance of suffering, out of love for us.

3. Your own journeys in the footsteps of Jesus will follow the same pattern. You should not be surprised that you will also go through a critical phase. And when you think to yourself, "I am lost. It's over" - remember then that Jesus had already warned you. It is precisely then that you should RENEW YOUR TRUST IN HIM. Pray the Holy Spirit to make you remember the promise of Jesus.

Pray the Blessed Virgin, and she will encourage you to stay connected to the Holy Spirit. And you will rise again.

4. And what about becoming “fishers of men”, the mission given to us?

Going fishing with Jesus will also follow a similar pattern.

- a.** We don't decide on our own to just go out fishing and “hope for the best”.

We are *sent* fishing and *we are told when and where* to cast our nets, just as Peter and Andrew were told by Jesus both before and after the Resurrection.

We must see that it was not their skill, but their trust in Jesus that led them to reel in such an abundant haul of fish.

- b.** Today, in our apostolate, and in order to fulfill our mission, we too are called to place all our trust in Jesus and throw out our nets and patiently wait for the fulfillment of the Lord's promise.

St Teresa of Calcutta once said, “God does not require that we be successful, only that we be faithful.”

It will take time in order for us to bear fruit, and we need to be patient.

5. In today's first reading, St Paul tells us:

- a.** If you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, if you keep trusting and believing (even when you go through times of aridity and discouragement) then you will be saved. And it is from the heart that you trust, that you believe in him.
- b.** I wish and pray for all of you to become, more and more, trusting disciples and trusting fellow fishers of men with Jesus.

The readings were Romans 10:9-18, Psalm 18 (19): 2-5 and Matthew 4:19

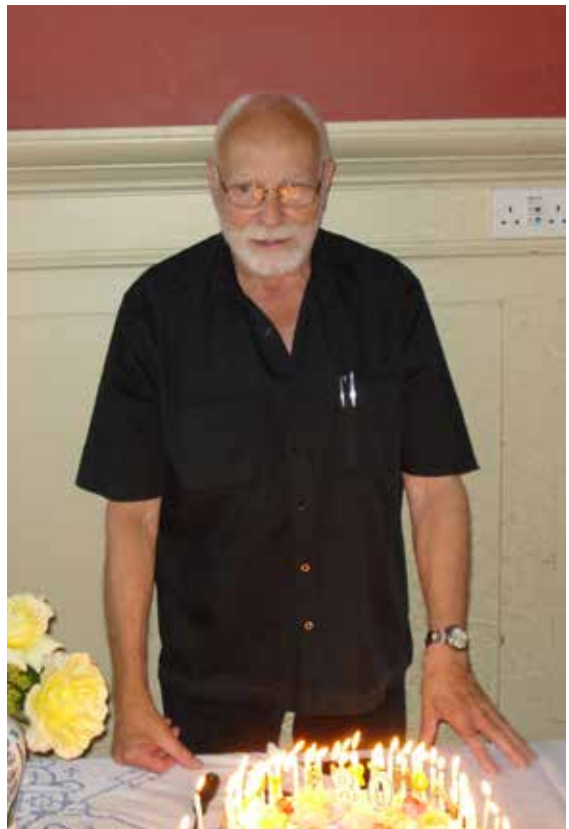


Remembering Fr Adrian Walker

My uncle **Fr Adrian Walker** (6 August 1932 – 24 January 2019) was a terrible driver but a wonderful priest. He never slowed down for roundabouts and had been required to attend several speed-awareness courses. If these are negatives, then he had a whole carpark of positives to his name. He was a much loved and respected priest, a great listener and spell-binding storyteller. He was also one of the first postgraduate students at the then “new” Beda College building where, together with some of Adrian’s closest friends, I was kindly hosted to lunch this year.

The youngest son of a self-taught ophthalmic surgeon who found his Catholic faith in the trenches during WWI, Adrian joined the Royal Navy and served in the North Sea and Mediterranean. On discharge, he received the customary rum send-off. His shipmates then watched with amusement as he accidentally dropped all his kit in the open sea whilst being winched to his return transport. Little did most of them realise that two days later he would start training for the priesthood.

After completing his training at St Edmund’s College, Ware, and now ordained, Adrian was recommended for postgraduate philosophy study in Italy. In Rome, the Beda Collage was his



home with a stint at the University of Bologna in 1960. On returning to the UK, his first appointment was as Assistant Priest in Edmonton (1964-1971). There then followed periods as Chaplain to London University and Assistant Priest in Bayswater. In 1976, Adrian was appointed Parish Priest in Stevenage and then on to Staines.

Adrian's next posting was possibly one of his most challenging but also rewarding: he was to join a parish without a church in Millwall on the Isle of Dogs. This was in a notoriously rough part of East London. In keeping with its reputation, the previous building had been condemned as unsafe. Adrian enjoyed watching it being knocked down and seeing a new church rise in its place. The task of revitalizing the Catholic community among the rapidly changing docklands well suited his energy, drive, and vision. Cardinal Hume helped him start the fundraising and laid the first stone. St Edmund's Church was completed in 2000 with Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor celebrating the first Mass. I still have a treasured fundraising mug depicting how the building was supposed to look. Fr Adrian retired in 2004 but continued to cover as a priest in the Westminster Diocese [Fr Adrian passed away on 24 January 2019 – Ed.].

So, what brought me and some of his friends to have lunch at the Beda in the spring of 2023, four years after his death? On interring Adrian's ashes in his parents' grave, several of us were intrigued by his interesting, sometimes controversial life, and felt compelled to retrace the significant places of his life. This led my partner Christine and I to cycle across London to attend Easter Sunday Mass at the new St Edmund's on the Isle of Dogs. We found a modern church packed with worshippers and stood in unexpected wonder at what we saw. My uncle would have been so pleased. Had he been with us, we would likely have seen his raised, clasped hand gesture which meant joy, welcome and "we are winning".

Next, flights were booked to visit the Beda. We were accompanied by Adrian's long-term friend, Kate, a well-known actress, and her film producer/university lecturer daughter (who has made BBC historical documentaries with Michael Palin). Kate and my uncle met through AA in Staines and continued to support each other until his death. As we walked through the clean and spacious College, visited the modern chapel with its colourful windows and sat in the quiet garden, we got a sense of Adrian's life and what had helped make him such a special person. Another piece of the jigsaw had been put in place.

Thank you, Canon Philip, and your team for making this happen, the warmth of your welcome, our lovely lunch and stimulating conversation, all of which exceeded expectations.

Kate, Eleanor, Christine & Steven



What does it feel like to be ordained?

At the start of the year, 3rd Year student Paul Henderson, Archdiocese of Edinburgh and St Andrews, asked the returning deacons to individually (and anonymously) describe their experience of ordination to the diaconate.

How would you describe your feelings on ordination day on 15th June?

1. I felt tranquil; it felt the right thing to do, what God wanted. I felt that this was not something I was doing for myself, but that it was something for others, to serve others. I also felt a sense of the occasion and I couldn't quite believe it was happening.
2. I felt joyful, peaceful, a sense of calm, strangely not at all nervous. I was so pleased to have family and friends there, to be with fellow students. Bishop Mark Davies was so focused, so sincere during the ordination rite - he felt like a loving presence.
3. During the ceremony I suddenly thought "this is real!" and with that, experienced a profound sense of the grace of ordination. During the Litany of the Saints, I was almost overwhelmed by the gift that was being given to me, at the sheer beauty of this ministry being offered and of a deep connection to the Lord.
4. It was a very special day, as it felt like the accumulation of not just the three years at the Beda, but all the preceding years that had led to this moment. I also felt the presence of my mother, and all the others back home who were praying for me.
5. I was overwhelmed to be honest, by the encouragement and support from everyone in the College, and by Bishop Davies, who was so prayerful. During the Litany of the Saints, I was aware of how close I was to the tomb of St Paul, and I had a sense of being spiritually sustained by the power of his prayer, and all the saints.

6. I think my experience is slightly unusual, as I experienced it as both a hurdle and a doorway. The journey to priesthood for me is like being in love with a woman that I'm desperate to marry. The diaconate ordination was like an engagement to her, yes, but I still have another year before I can marry her and be with my love.
7. Feelings of awe, I felt for the first time in my life that I was where I had to be, where God wanted me to be. A sense of completeness, that my life had led up to this.
8. I had prepared myself for this for four years. It was a powerful experience, although in a subtle way. When we were processing out, at the end of Mass, I experienced great joy in my soul, a deep sense of joy and peace.

Can you describe any spiritual fruits that you have discerned since your ordination?

1. I have a new confidence when I'm preaching or leading a service and I have a sense of being validated and open to grace. Instead of worrying how I will look if I make a mistake, I think "God will give me the grace". I had a sense of joy carrying out my role as a Deacon over the summer when I performed five baptisms. In the end it is about the Lord, not me.
2. I have an awareness of a deeper bond with the Lord; it's taken me to another level of depth in my relationship with him. I experienced it as being distinctly more serious, I'm a witness to Christ. I've experienced great consolation from God following my ordination; as if I've moved towards God, he has opened doors to allow me closer.
3. Since ordination I've felt a sense of deep, deep, deep joy! A holy joy. I love being a deacon. I also have a feeling of peace, a sense of this is what I'm meant to be doing, what God has been calling me to do.
4. I have found it very spiritual to be able now, as an ordained minister, to be of use to God and his people, to be an intermediary for God. I felt this especially over the summer when I was helping out in seven churches. One very special occasion was offering prayers and blessing at a naming ceremony at hospital, when a couple lost their baby. My ordination gave me the blessing of the Church to be of help.
5. I have felt an enormous affirmation in my ministry that has removed any doubts regarding being on the right path. The encouragement from people since I've been ordained has felt like a wave of love! A definite fruit of the spirit is that despite the challenges ahead, I know that everything will be alright. I have a level of confidence now that is not of my own making but is a gift.

6. Very much so, although it's not so much a feeling as an objective reality. I've been accepted as a cleric, and it has made the journey to priesthood very real to me.
7. Closeness to God; it's like being married, like I know the wife is home. Three entities have committed me to God - me to God, God to me, and the Church to me. It is a commitment of love and trust with me, with God, and with the Church.
8. When I was back home as a deacon, I had a sense of tranquility, not to hasten, to rush, and I am more at peace. Yet there are new challenges: the Lord pushes you in a certain direction, to be a witness. I know that the Lord is doing something within me, even when I am tested. The Lord is in control, not me, and I needed to adapt to that. Although it hurts my ego, through the power of the Holy Spirit I am able to glorify his name.

Looking back, what advice would you have given yourself on the day of your arrival at the Beda?

1. Mainly I would tell myself to be less in a hurry and less impatient. When I started it seemed to be taking such a long time, but I've realised this is not about me. The seminary for me has not been about acquiring intellectual knowledge so much as being a blank page and letting God write on me. God needs nothing from me, rather I need to listen to God in scripture, in spiritual direction and in the people of God.
2. I would tell myself that God will give you the strength and grace to manage the ups and downs. The seminary process is meant to be challenging, you learn about yourself. Seminary is not something you should sail through.
3. One thing that struck me at the start of my first year: I overheard two third years talking outside my door, both exclaiming how they couldn't believe they were now in third year. I thought that seemed so far away and yet now in fourth year I can say it's passed so quickly! I would tell myself to just relax more, to live in the day, to enjoy the time here.
4. It is quite something to give up your life that you've spent fifty years building, and to come and stay in a small room at the Beda. Most of my friends are enjoying their retirement and I had just retired from my career when I came here. Although it's been difficult at times, the Beda has been good overall especially for the older men.

5. I would tell myself to try not to worry! It is a radical change in your life, where you leave family, friends, colleagues, work, and your home. I would tell myself to trust in God's providence, to take small steps, to take each day as it comes and not worry about tomorrow. I was like a "cat on a hot tin roof", putting way too much pressure on myself. To summarise, I would tell myself, chill out and take the Beda in your stride.
6. I don't think I would have done anything differently, as I had experience of religious life and seminary before. I didn't expect the academic side to be so serious as it has been though. The use of Microsoft Teams, and the use of computers in general has meant that I've had to assimilate huge amounts of information. This has been challenging, as I've had to improve my computer skills.
7. To be patient, that God does things in his own time, to go with the flow and not to force things. To enjoy the experience. We are in charge of our training. The bishop and the parish who are paying for this training want us to enjoy it, to see joy in us. Seeing the joy in us is what will ultimately bring people to Christ.
8. Be calm, accept things as they are, don't be sad and bring everything to the Lord, bring it to his feet. Sacrifice your expectations and rely totally on him. Relying on his grace in this broken world, to trust in him is the only way. Rely on the grace that the Lord has called you to the priesthood. God's grace will give you inner freedom.



Venice in February



Wistaston Hall is a welcoming holistic spiritual life centre that is an oasis of peace, care and comfort. At Wistaston Hall we welcome all people who are searching. We strive to offer a place where you will find peace, rest, and an opportunity for prayer away from the stresses of daily life. Coming from the Catholic tradition we sponsor a range of events throughout the year.



Individually Guided Retreat - 13th - 22nd June, 23rd - 30th August and 23rd - 30th October 2023

Celtic Spirituality Weekend - 28th - 30th July 2023

Growing in Self Awareness (Myers Briggs Workshop) - 25th - 29th September 2023

Walk a New Path, A Recovery Workshop/Retreat - 29th September - 1st October 2023

Film Weekend - 17th - 19th November 2023

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The Other John Paul

By Sean Henry

“Living the joy of the Gospel, without compromises, loving to the very end” were the words used in St Peter’s Square by Pope Francis at the beatification of “the smiling Pope” John Paul I in September 2022. Little is known of this great pope because of the shortness of his pontificate, but he had embodied throughout much of his ministry the values of the Gospel and the spirit of Vatican II.

Albino Cardinal Luciani was born on 17 October 1912 in a small village in the north of Italy, Canale D’Agordo. His early years brought with them a wealth of social and geographical experiences. His father, a socialist who had abandoned the faith, had worked in Germany and Switzerland, having left Italy to find work. He later returned to work in Venice where, as a widower with two daughters who were both deaf, he met Luciani’s mother. Following their marriage, they returned to Canale D’Agordo, but his father continued to spend large amounts of time in Germany and France. Four children were born to this marriage, the first was Luciani, then a boy who died in infancy and two further sons.

Happily, his father returned to the faith, and in the home catechism was taught and the rosary prayed. As a poor family, who, during the First World War, were sometimes reduced to begging for food, their church became valued not only as a place of prayer and sacrament, but where the poor were made welcome. At a young age, Luciani already felt a calling to the priesthood. When asking his father’s permission, the answer was “yes”, with the desire that Luciani would always be on the side of the “workers” since, as his father told him: “this is the side Christ is on”.

He was ordained priest in 1935, always mindful of the poor, even when working as professor and vice rector of a seminary. There he became known and admired by Angelo Cardinal Roncalli, the Patriarch of Venice who, after his election as Pope John XXIII, appointed Luciani as Bishop of Vittorio Veneto and personally consecrated him at St Peter’s Basilica. In 1959, a short time after Luciani had taken up office as bishop, Pope John XXIII announced the twenty-first Ecumenical Council, Vatican II.



Luciani, “seeing far into the future of the church”, submitted his *vota*, drawing attention to the problems faced by society and the need for Christian optimism, as opposed to pessimism. In opposition to the relativists, and in line with Aquinas, he insisted that reason could arrive at truth, and insisted on the capacity of free will to combat certain psychological obscurities. As bishop, Luciani took part in all four sessions of the Council, supporting the resulting documents with enthusiasm. His push for the Word of God to be placed alongside the sacraments was realised in the document *Dei Verbum*. His experience of poverty was honoured in discussions about the gap between the rich and the poor which were held at the Council. In 1965, on returning to his diocese, Luciani stated that the discussions on religious liberty were “the most tremendous day of the Council”.

Luciani later wrote extensively on issues that arose from misunderstandings of the Council; in particular, he defended the reforms of the liturgy, while condemning abuses of the reform. After the death of Paul VI, the conclave was convened to elect the new Pope. It would be the first conclave since the close of Vatican II, and the first to exclude from voting cardinals who were over the age of eighty, under the rules implemented by Paul VI in 1975. It was also the first to be held in the glare of the media industry’s spotlight. After only four ballots the election was complete. Luciani had been elected and chose the first double-barrelled name in the history of

the papacy, John Paul, in honour of the two pillars of Vatican II, the same who had ordained him bishop, and then appointed him as Patriarch of Venice and Cardinal. John Paul I was now Pope.

On the morning of 29th September 1978, just 33 days after his election, the world was stunned to hear the news of his sudden death. The smiling pope had died of a heart attack. Luciani's vision became his legacy, for a Church on a global mission of zeal for the evangelisation of the whole world, a Church making present the Gospel of Jesus Christ, where the children of God are loved and cherished. During his pontificate, Pope Francis has quoted Luciani many times, especially in his book *The Name of God's Mercy*. Indeed, Francis seems to have considered himself an heir to John Paul I's vision of Vatican II.

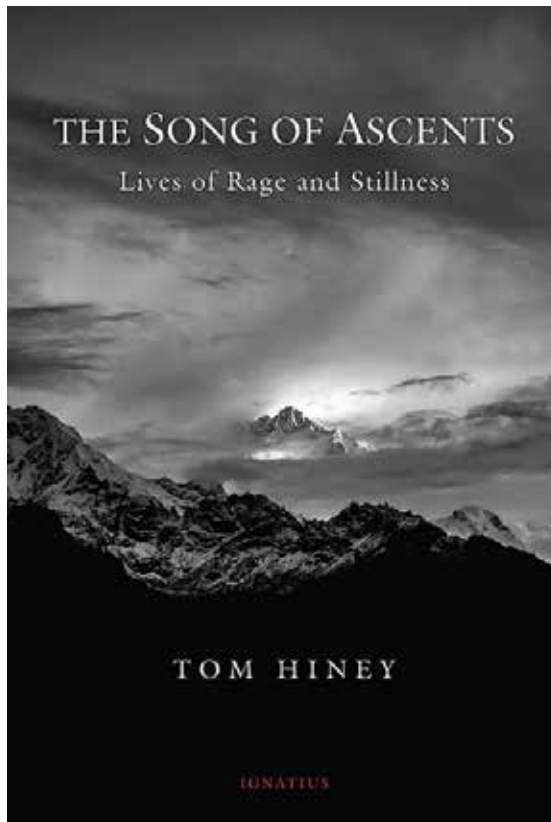
His beatification reminds us that the teachings of Jesus Christ and his Church are eternally true and unchanging, and yet their lived expression, as Vatican II has magnificently shown, develop as the pilgrim Church journeys on its path. Blessed John Paul I – pray for us.

Sean Henry, 4th Year, Diocese of Shrewsbury



A review of *The Song of Ascents*

Third Year student Tom Hiney, Diocese of Portsmouth, who was a biographer in his former life, had a book published by Ignatius Press during the year, a collection of portraits ranging from medieval times to Soviet-era Poland. We asked Dr Ginevra Crosignani, who teaches Church history at the Beda, to review it for us.



I have had the habit, since I was very young, of reading in bed before going to sleep, and usually have more than one book on my nightstand. As soon as I started reading Tom Hiney's *Songs of Ascents*, I realised it's the sort of book one looks forward to picking up at the end of the day and doesn't want to put down.

The title does not obviously indicate what the book is about, except that certain "lives" (of "Rage and Stillness") will be portrayed in it. Indeed, the work itself escapes all kinds of literary categorisation or genres. It is divided into two parts, with each chapter therein telling the stories of extraordinary real characters that are paradigmatic of a spiritual journey most of us can relate to, and which underlie the author's personal story of conversion.

Through each chapter, the reader is transported to different times and places, from Mediaeval England to communist Poland, but the thread is always how God works in human hearts, oftentimes in subtle, almost silent ways, but with a clear understanding that Christ alone is the ultimate consolation. While some of these "lives" are stories of conversion, many times they recount the more subtle and mystical encounter with a lived Christian faith, or its awakening or spiritual growth. Each one of these narrations unearths something deep-seated in every person's spiritual experience, whether it takes place in the 1500s or the 20th century.

The book is divided in two parts, "How It Feels to Believe" and "The Logical Catholic", echoing, I would say, the Augustinian adage for which faith and rational understanding are just two sides of the same coin. The first story describes the daily spiritual struggle of crew members facing death during months of isolation on a whaling vessel amidst Arctic icebergs, where the men's only source of hope is ultimately prayer. The second is a reflection on the missionary activity of the famous explorer Dr David Livingstone, focused on his vocation to crush the extant network of slave trading in Africa, between 1840 and 1873.

Then there is the life of an African prince, Samuel Morris, who, after converting to Christianity, engages in a long quest for gaining perfect knowledge of the Holy Spirit. To get an answer to his question, he is led to visit the United States in the 1890s; here Samuel dies, but not before having performed miracles and changed the lives of every single person he had got to know. Fr Antonio de Monserrate and his companion, Fr Rodolpho Acquaviva, represent an age of martyrdom, the golden age of the Society of Jesus' evangelisation in Asia. These two Jesuit priests will offer their lives, in the late 1500s, in order to carry out their mission at the court of the Moghul Emperor, Akbar the Great. Finally, in the first section, we have a portrait of the lives of the great personages of the Old Testament, pointing to the coming of the Messiah, the Son of God, the fulfilment of the Jewish law, destined from the beginning of times to suffer and die, in order to redeem humanity.

The second part of the book contemplates some very impressive characters, among whom some are retrieved from historical oblivion, while others are saved from a superficial, ideologically biased tradition that wants to present them as hypocrites or grotesque figures. A long, beautiful chapter is dedicated to King Alfred (9th century), the Saxon king who alone has been attributed the epithet “the Great”; the Catholic sovereign who defeated the ferocious, pagan Viking invaders and laid the foundations of Catholic England. While during the Reformation period, and throughout the Victorian age, Alfred was regarded as the ideal Christian monarch, later historiographical tradition greatly debunked his reputation, reduced him from a man of great piety to a man of dominating opportunism. Through this extraordinary character, Hiney deflates the rationalistic trend carried out by some contemporary scholars, who want to deny legitimacy to any historical event which has been traditionally associated with the “intangible”, whether it’s faith or the supernatural.

The chapter entitled “Artwork” brings back to our memory a recent, most significant past but often forgotten, which is that of the fall of Communism in Poland, whose foundations collapsed by the action and personal sacrifice of many great Catholics: Cardinal Wyszyński and Pope St John Paul II, Fr Jerzy Popiełuszko, who was brutally tortured and killed by communist secret police, and Lech Wałęsa, one of the leaders of the workers’ protest movement and later president of Poland; and the composer Henryk Gorecki - all these men stood against evil, in the name of the God Man humiliated on the Cross.

The last story is that of a man known as one of Britain’s great heroes but who has been turned into a sort of caricature by more recent narratives. General Charles Gordon was considered a remarkably courageous soldier even by his enemies, though at times a reckless spirit by the British government, which, at a critical moment told here, abandoned him and the Sudan to their fate. He also had a profound Christian faith, whose founding principles he was constantly dissecting. One of the most fascinating things about Gordon, however, is that his private correspondence unveils his great attraction towards the Catholic faith, especially during the last years of his life.

All these remarkable stories succeed in crushing the modern ideological totem by which humanity will be happy and free once pain and suffering are annihilated. The great lesson taught us by Christian faith is that great Love is inseparable from great Suffering, and only in Christ’s supreme sacrifice can pain and evil be fully reconciled.

The Beda Year

House Photographs



First Year Students

L-R: Anthony Duns, Andrei Ilies, Andrew Vaitiekunas, Rector, Seth Harsh, Br Honorius Niima OSB, Thomas Hampton, Dan Howarth, Stephen Bamber, Stephen Baxter, Christopher Douglas, Matthew Allen, Benwen Lopez



Second Year Students

L-R: Phil Thornley, Rector, Dom Louis Kwadwo Osei OSB



Third Year Students

L-R: Brian McNally, Paul Henderson, James Boyle, Tom Hiney, Eamon Salmon, Simon Marley, Rector, David Chung, Peter Shankland, Antony Kerr



Fourth Year Students

L-R: Gerard Moore, Sean Henry, Robert McMahon, Andrew Bishop, Paul Moores, Sean Doherty, Wladimir Siwecki, Patrick van Der Vorst, Rector



Staff

L-R: Canon Philip Gillespie, Sr Patricia McDonald, Fr John Breen, Fr John Carlisle



New Deacons

L-R: Simon Marley, David Chung, Eamon Salmon, Paul Henderson, Archbishop Cushley, Tom Hiney, Peter Shankland, Brian McNally



Beda College Staff and Students 2022-2023



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Beda Diary 2022-2023

By Paul Henderson

23rd September New Men arrived, strong in number (and including two organists!). The usual week of induction began, introducing them to Rome and College life. See New Men profiles for more details.

28th September At a Mass of Remembrance to mark the death of Elizabeth II at St Paul's Outside the Walls, Arthur Cardinal Roche paid tribute to the Queen, highlighting her deep Christian faith. The Mass was supported by those present at the Beda during the Induction Week.



20th October The anniversary of the opening of the present building. This occasion marked 60 years since the opening of the Beda on its present site and 170 years since the founding of the College in Rome. Present were Cardinals Roche and Harvey, Archbishop Gallagher, and Ambassadors Trott (UK), Porro (Australia), and Collins (Ireland) and other friends of the College.

29th October The Beda fielded a squad for the 2022 Servant of God Fr Ragheed Ganni Memorial 5-a-side football tournament. Good late summer weather and an equally warm if competitive atmosphere at the Irish College meant for a fun morning. Bolstered by some athletic new blood, the Beda team had high hopes of winning a game this year. Maybe next year...



The Beda 5-a-side football team at the 2022 tournament in the Irish College

13th November The College attended a poignant Remembrance Sunday Mass at San Silvestro, led by staff and students of the Venerable English College, with the Scots College also in attendance. Many thanks to the Anglophone parish community who made us feel so welcome, with a reception afterwards, where staff and students from the three Colleges caught up.

21st and 22nd November On the 21st we formally marked the 170th year anniversary of the Beda, founded in 1852 under the initial name *Collegio Ecclesiastico*. It was celebrated on the 22nd, which coincided with the visit of English and Welsh Jubilarian priests, joining us for a sumptuous and extended lunch. Many thanks to all the Jubilarians for sharing their wisdom, humour, and experience with the current body of students.

26-27 November Fr John Carlyle led the house in its Advent Recollection, with a reflection on Mary as the New Eve and Tabernacle of the Lord, Jesus as the New Adam, and the mystery of the Last Days. Many thanks to Fr John.

30th November The College was graced with the presence of His Eminence, Maurice Cardinal Piat of Mauritius on the Feast of St Andrew. David Chung, Diocese of Mauritius, was the MC at the Mass. Many students afterwards asked for a copy of the Cardinal's profound homily, which can be found in this edition.



David Chung at the Mass celebrated by Cardinal Piat on the Feast of St Andrew

4th December The house attended a special Mass at San Saba Basilica as Arthur Cardinal Roche, the new Prefect of the Dicastery for Divine Liturgy, took possession of his titular church. His Eminence's deacon for the occasion was fourth year Beda student, Paul Moores (seated to his right in the photograph). Three Beda students with a medical background were of great help when one of the bishops attending became ill during the liturgy.



Cardinal Arthur Roche takes possession of his titular church, San Saba Basilica.

7th December On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, we had the Admission to Candidacy for nine Third Years, at a Mass presided by Bishop Paul Tighe of the Dicastery for Culture and Education.



Bishop Paul Tighe with the Third Years at the Admission to Candidacy Mass

14th December The House Concert performed by the New Men was hilarious and almost moving - an imaginative and big-hearted Christmas show!



The New Men present their hilarious Christmas show

16th December Many guests joined the College for a beautiful Advent service with readings and hymns from the students in Romanian, Swahili, and Hindi.

17th December – Christmas break began.

5th January 2023 Beda students were among the tens of thousands of mourners to pay respects to Benedict XVI as he lay in state at St Peter's Basilica. Benedict had died on Saturday, 31st December. Then came the Funeral Mass itself, presided over by Pope Francis. It was a poignant occasion, the solemn atmosphere emphasized by the freezing mist that descended on St Peter's Square, at times obscuring the dome of the basilica.



Crowds gather in a misty St Peter's Square for the funeral of Pope Benedict.

21st January To mark Christian Unity Week, the Beda hosted an ecumenical Christian Unity service with representatives from the Methodist, Church of Scotland, and Anglican churches present. Reflecting on his own personal testimony, Fr Martin Browne OSB from the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity gave a powerful homily on the painful divisions between Christians and commented how we must never accept this.

25th January The College was in attendance as Pope Francis led Vespers at St Paul's Outside the Walls on the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul.

13-21st February First and Second Years went to Nemi for a retreat led by Fr Kevin McGinnell, while the Third Years made their Canonical retreat at Bagnoregio with Mgr Patrick Kilgariff. The Fourth Years went on their final Canonical retreat to Rocca di Papa, led by Fr Nicholas King SJ.

22 February (Ash Wednesday) With the North American College (NAC) resuming their Lenten Station Masses again this year, many students began to take advantage of being able to attend this 7 am Masses at some of the most beautiful and historic churches in Rome.

3-5th March Second and Third Years attended a Sexuality Weekend led by Fr Brendan Callaghan SJ. Fr Brendan led talks and workshops using the fruits of psychology to explore supports to maintain a celibate commitment.

15th March The Second Year students were accepted into the ministry of Acolyte, presided by Fr Rector. This moving event was followed by a sumptuous meal with guests.



The new Acolytes with staff members

19-21st March The Beda received its annual visitation by Archbishop Mark O'Toole, Archbishop John Wilson and Bishop John Sherrington from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.



The bishops make their annual visitation to the Beda.

22nd March The Beda supported the NAC Station Mass at St Paul's Outside the Walls, celebrated by Cardinal Harvey, who hosted all attendees to breakfast. He was even seen acting as a waiter going round offering sandwiches to anyone interested!

26th March Seminarians and formation staff from the Venerable English College (VEC) joined us for Mass (where the VEC's Rector, Fr Stephen Wang, preached) followed by our annual Lenten Oasis lunch.



The VEC Rector preaches at the Lenten Oasis Mass

1-2nd April As we approached Holy Week, Fr Paul Finnerty and Fr Edmond Culliman (Rector and Vice-Rector of the Irish College) led us in a penitential service and three recollections. At the latter, Fr Culliman walked us through the readings that would appear in the Holy Week Liturgy, Office and Masses, and reminded us of the great arc (from Ash Wednesday to Pentecost) in which Holy Week lies as the turning point.

5th April Most students this year took part in the annual Seven Churches Walk, as classes ended ahead of the Triduum.

9th April As is traditional, some Beda students joined with the VEC schola and sang at the first Mass of Easter Sunday at St Peter's. Many expressed what a moving experience this was, to be part of a Mass attended by so many, including the Holy Father himself.

6th May Coronation of King Charles III. A live stream of the King's coronation was set up in the garden, and most of us ended up getting hooked and staying to watch this unique and symbolic event. The next afternoon there was a garden party held to celebrate the coronation with many local friends of the College in attendance.

5-7th May The Fourth Years had a weekend away at Nemi which many described as a poignant and positive experience as they reflected on their four years of formation at the Beda.

10th May The First Years were instituted into the Ministry of Lectorate with the Rector presiding.



The new Lectors receive their ministry

25th May St Bede's Day was celebrated with a Mass in the morning and then a buffet in the garden that evening with outside professors and ambassadors to the Holy See present, as well as Cardinal Roche and Archbishop Gallagher.



Guests at the St Bede's Day celebration

7th June Representation from St Mary's Twickenham joined with formation staff and students for a barbeque in the garden to mark the end of the Academic Year.

9th June The Rector's Gita saw staff and students heading off to Mass at Cattedrale di Santa Margherita in Montefiascone, a picturesque town near Viterbo, overlooking Lago Bolsena. A wonderful Mass was followed by an excellent lunch.

11th June Students and staff took part in the spectacular and historic Corpus Christi procession through the streets of Orvieto, after the Mass in the Cathedral presided over by Fortunato Cardinal Frezza. Four students had the honour of helping carry the famous Eucharistic miracle.



The Corpus Christi procession makes its way through the streets of Orvieto.

14th June The Most Reverend Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, presided at the Diaconate Ordination Mass at the Papal Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls, beautifully assisted by the *Schola Cantorum* of St Mary's Catholic Cathedral in Edinburgh. Seven men were ordained to the Diaconate, bringing the 2022-2023 year to its traditional end.

Paul Henderson, 3rd year, Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh



The New Men

Stephen Baxter

I am a seminarian studying for the priesthood for the Diocese of Derry in Ireland. I am from a family of five and the youngest of the children. While I am new to the Beda College, I am currently in my fourth consecutive year of seminary formation. Before coming to Rome, I spent my propaedeutic period in Salamanca. This concluded in June 2020, since the time in Spain was regrettably cut short because of the pandemic, although daily contact of prayer and classes continued online. Following that time in Spain I attended St Patrick's Seminary at Maynooth in Ireland where I completed the required two-year "discipleship" stage of formation and completing a diploma in philosophy at the Pontifical University. Attending the seminary in Ireland afforded many unique opportunities for growth in my vocation, as well as confidence building, through speech, singing, and appreciation of the rich heritage of liturgy, both community prayer and celebration of the Mass, and in both English and Irish.



My working background before these years of seminary formation was in public transport. I worked for nineteen years with the same employer, initially for seven years as a driver then for the remaining twelve years as an inspector. The latter involved more of an administration role, leadership, identifying improvements or opportunities for more efficient working practices and scheduling of buses and drivers. It was a job I thoroughly enjoyed, and I rarely felt that I was "working", despite the early starts and late finishes.

Faith was quite an important element growing up. In primary school I spent a few years as an altar server in my parish where (if I reflect now) I first considered priesthood. A few years later I served as a reader in the same parish, a ministry I continued until I left to go to seminary. In the intervening time I have frequently assisted as a sacristan, particularly during the Christmas and Easter ceremonies. I have always remained close to the church, helped in no small part by family life, work colleagues, the influence

of priests who were teachers in St Columb's College, and the encouragement and prayers of my home parish in Derry. After a period of discernment with the diocese, I was accepted as a student for the diocese in the summer of 2019.

Dan Howarth

Despite feeling an ache towards ministerial life at an early age, I felt called to become a nurse and care for people in a Good Samaritan way. Having graduated as a nurse in 2003, I moved quickly into my specialist field of diabetes. This allowed me to travel extensively – I moved to Auckland, New Zealand to be part of diabetes teams there as well as working for the International Diabetes Federation as a global education coordinator.



I attempted to settle in London, working as the head of clinical care for the national charity – Diabetes UK. During this time, I could not continue to brush off this suspicion that God had a further vocation change for me. I had wonderful support from the priests I met in Southwark but felt that I should return to my home diocese of Liverpool where that support was matched. I was brought up in Warrington and attended the parish of Blessed James Bell.

I had been raised an Anglican but, after a pilgrimage with HCPT to Lourdes when I was 16, felt Our Lady drawing me towards the Catholic faith. I converted at the age of 26 before moving to New Zealand. I am a keen rugby fan and played grassroots rugby and coached up until this year. I also enjoy skiing and travelling. I am very passionate about volunteering, which I do in my spare time, and incorporate this into my holiday time too, particularly in trips to the Holy Land to volunteer in the St John Eye Hospital in East Jerusalem. I feel a particular closeness to St Damien of Molokai, one of the first saints I can remember learning about in school. Fr Damien didn't hesitate to volunteer to minister to the community of lepers deported to Molokai from Hawaii in the mid-1800s. Knowing he would inevitably contract the life ending disease, he happily served his parishioners as one of them. As the patron of outcasts, I look at who may be the outcasts of our society, the lepers of the modern day, and I hope my future ministry can follow Damien's footsteps.

Thomas Hampton

If I'm asked when I started discerning the priesthood, the honest answer is when I was eight. Though I could be considered coming late to seminary, I was told before entering seminary that everything I have done up to now had brought me to this point, and I would like to agree. God prepares us in different ways, and at his timing. I was born in 1980 in the Diocese of Down and Connor in the North of Ireland. My home parish of Saul, Co. Down is where St Patrick landed on his mission to bring Christianity to Ireland, and my neighbouring parish of Downpatrick is where St Patrick is buried. As a child my faith flourished and was nourished by being brought up in the domestic Church, for which I am grateful to my parents. I attended the Catholic schools of St Joseph's Primary School, Ballycruttle, and then De La Salle High School, Downpatrick. I completed my degree in Tourism Management at Edinburgh Napier University in 2003 and, after working in administration, returned to education to complete my teaching qualification (PGCE) at Canterbury Christ Church University in 2008.



Thus started my career teaching Humanities in schools in England and Northern Ireland. Throughout my life, the call to the priesthood came and went with varying waves of intensity but, as the years moved on, the draw towards priesthood became so strong that I needed to do something about it. I reached out to my Diocesan Vocations Director, and so the process of guided discernment began. On the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 2021, I began my propaedeutic year at the Royal and Pontifical English College of St Alban's in Valladolid, Spain. That year in Spain provided me with a great foundation for my continued formation, and the chance to experience the immensity of a Spanish Holy Week and participation in the procession and celebrations of Corpus Christi in the Holy City of Toledo. By the grace of God, and much to my delight, I was informed that my formation was to continue in the Pontifical Bede College, Rome. St Patrick pray for us.

Seth Harsh

I was born in Westmead, a suburb about an hour west of the bustling CBD of Sydney, Australia. I am the eldest of eight children and was blessed to have been raised a Catholic. When I was about ten years old, my family moved even further west to the beautiful Blue Mountains, and after a few years my parents decided to homeschool all eight of us. I rebelled, and instead of engaging with the curriculum put before me, I, through a providential turn of events, picked up the piano. Thus began a passion for music that would influence much of the rest of my life to date.



At 18, I began studying at the Australian International Conservatorium of Music majoring in jazz piano performance. Every day was filled with multiple aspects of music: history to harmony, performance to pedagogy; I was as happy as could be - at least I thought I was. Not long after completing my studies, I was invited to play in a band at a week-long Catholic retreat and I begrudgingly agreed. Over the course of the week, I found myself being drawn into the prayer and inspired by the teaching. Though at the time I considered myself a practicing Catholic, I realised during the retreat that my faith was mostly abstract intellectual assent; there was something missing. Long story short, by the end of the retreat I had experienced the love of God for me in a personal way. My priorities changed, and I was eager to know more.

I enrolled in a theology degree at the Catholic Institute of Sydney, and thus began my journey of faith seeking understanding. This particular institute was attended by seminarians from surrounding dioceses and I got to know many of them quite well. It was during this time that God's call became a little more noticeable. After finishing undergraduate theology, I moved onto some postgraduate studies in theology and teaching, thinking that I would pursue a career as a teacher. God, in his infinite patience, continued to call me through (and despite) my own ideas of what was best for me. Around the age of 33, I entered the seminary for the Parramatta Diocese.

After a year in the seminary, I decided to take a short break. During this time, I moved to the Diocese of Wollongong to work for the bishop there as Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator. What started as a short break became a 7-year adventure that was filled with so much blessing and valuable experience. I witnessed first-hand just how much energy and potential there is in the Church, especially in the area of youth ministry. As hard as it was to tear myself away from the work I had grown to love so much, it was time to go back to seminary - and here I am.

Andrei Ilies

I was born in Buzau, a town in the south-east of Romania, in a family with a strong Roman Catholic tradition, being the second of three children. Together with my family I regularly attended Mass, and this helped me to get to know the life of the local parish as well as to develop beautiful friendships with other children my age. Our parents taught us the importance of personal prayer, as well as family prayer, which we practiced often. At the age of fifteen I was admitted to the minor seminary, a decision that was supported by my parish and family. This time at seminary gave me the opportunity to learn more about the spiritual life and prayer as well as Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, as well as all the subjects taught in other schools.



During this period, I became interested in Ignatian spirituality and got in touch with the Jesuit priests who had resumed their activity in Romania after the fall of the communist regime. At the end of the four years of seminary I was admitted to the Society of Jesus where I had the opportunity to continue my formation for the next five years, the first two years in the novitiate followed by a period of involvement in various Jesuit projects in Romania. The sudden death of my father in 2001 brought important changes in our family. After leaving the Society of Jesus, I started my nursing training and was happy to help my mother settle into her new home in the village where she was born.

This large village community also became my home for the next few years. While working as a nurse at the local hospital I became a member of the Society of St Vincent de Paul and became involved in several projects that the local conference ran in support of people in need. Being interested in doing some work abroad, I was happy when I got a job at Colchester Hospital, UK, in a surgical ward, the same field in which I was working in Romania. At the beginning of 2015 I moved to the UK where the parish of Colchester, became my first parish in the UK. There I had the opportunity to get involved again in the activities of the St Vincent de Paul Society. This work in the parish was complemented by participation in the Diocesan Pilgrimages to Lourdes as a member of the medical team, which brought the opportunity to collaborate with people from other parishes.

My time in Colchester was followed by a job at a private hospital in Chelmsford, for which I moved to Basildon. It was during this time that I began vocational discernment, with the help of my spiritual director and several people from the diocese. I am grateful

that Bishop Alan Williams accepted my application and gave me the opportunity to do my formation here at the Beda College in Rome. I entrust myself to your prayers, to be always seeking and fulfilling God's will.

Stephen Bamber

I am 49 years old, the eldest of seven children, born into Our Lady of Grace, a large suburban parish in north Manchester. I have lived and worked in and around Lancashire in recent years; it is a great privilege to be commencing priestly formation at the Beda for the great and beautiful Diocese of Lancaster. My father was a Catholic primary school headteacher and my mother a music and mathematics teacher. My parents were both devout and faithful Catholics, active in the life of the church locally and within the wider church. They lived the Gospel to the best of their ability and transmitted the heart of their lives in Christ to us - an expression of faith characterised by love, fidelity, and service.



After a typical Catholic education, in my late teens and early twenties I worked in the music industry – playing in popular music bands, touring, and recording. My biggest claim to fame was playing keyboards on the first series of *The Mrs Merton Show*! Most of my working life has been spent in the addiction treatment sector in a variety of roles and contexts – including frontline outreach, management, training, and programme development roles. I have always found this line of work incredibly rewarding, but it is not without its challenges. Addiction is a complex and multifaceted condition that negatively impacts a person's life and the lives of those around them in serious and consequential ways. Nevertheless, accompanying individuals and their families as they navigate difficult journeys of healing and recovery has been an unceasing source of fulfilment and joy in my life.

I have always been inspired by the martyr saints of Lancashire and the significant role they played in keeping the faith alive in England during the Reformation. I'll close this brief introduction citing the Collect for the Feast of the Lancaster Martyrs on August 7th, which I pray for the whole Beda community and especially my fellow First Years: "Almighty Father, may those who died on the hill above Lancaster, grieving for England which they prayed God soon to convert, be our patrons now in heaven, that our lives may witness to the faith they professed." Lancaster Martyrs, pray for us.

Brother Honorius Niima OSB

“O Lord who shall sojourn in thy tent? Who shall dwell on thy holy hill?” Psalm 15. I was born 17 Nov 1993 in Tanzania, in the diocese of Mbulu, and baptized as Leonard Michael Niima. I lived with my parents, helping them at home until 2003 when, at the age of 10, I joined primary school. It was at this time that I began to serve as an altar ministrant, and was around the parish continuously, where I would often hear choirs practicing the responsorial psalms. One day, it was Psalm 15: “O Lord who shall sojourn in thy tent? Who shall dwell on thy holy hill?” This made a call to my heart, and I started thinking of the religious life.



From 2010 to 2013, I was secondary school student, I joined TYCS (Tanzanian Young Catholic Students) and continued to serve as altar ministrant. From 2014 to 2015 I was in high school, where I maintained my TYCS membership. Indeed, fellow TYCS members helped me to grow in Catholic faith in all years of my secondary education. From 2015 to 2018 I attended the University of Dar es salaam, taking a BA in education, specializing in Swahili and Linguistics. Here I also graduated to the TMCS (Tanzanian Movement of Catholic Students) and became involved in the Charismatic Catholic Movement. In 2018, I graduated from university and I went back home to work while waiting to be interviewed by the Ndanda Benedictine Fathers.

From 2019 to 2022 I was in formation house at Ndanda, one year for candidacy and postulancy, and two years as a novice. In my first year of novitiate, I changed my name from my baptismal name Leonard to my religious name Honorius. In July 2022, I professed as a monk with the Ndanda Benedictine Fathers, after which my abbot sent me here, to the Beda College for my formation.

Anthony Duns

I am from the Port Pirie Diocese in South Australia, where I was born and have always lived. I am 47 years old and worked most of my adult life as a specialist diesel mechanic. The last job I had was with an oil industry company that involved a lot of travel, both nationally and internationally. It was during these trips, with long stretches in hotels and rig camps away from home, that I started to think and pray about what the next move in life for me was. About this time, I had a visit from the Diocesan Vocation Director who, after a meal and a bit of a chat, asked me to consider



being a priest. My first reaction was a burst of laughter and I assured him that my time was probably past, and that he could probably find better options than me, but I agreed to put it to prayer.

The next week I found myself back at work, where I had an encounter with a work colleague who was on a faith searching journey. After a week of lengthy discussions and Q&As, it got to a point where I told him that “I can only tell you so much; at some point you must make a decision for yourself if you want to accept Jesus in your life or not.” He went away for the weekend and came back on Monday and said he felt a great calmness over him and confessed that he wanted to become Catholic and told me that I should be a priest! That shocked me as it was only the week after the vocation director had asked me to consider such a path. Over the next five months, I put the whole matter to more serious consideration and prayer and, by the end of the year, had received the spiritual assurance I was looking for. I told the Lord that if this is the path that He was asking me to take, then I would follow.

I signed up to the diocese and, after some preliminary study and a few pandemic delays find myself in Rome at the Beda College. A journey of faith is never easy, but it is the willingness to be open to God’s call (at whatever stage in life), and to respond to that call, that is the key. With plenty of prayer and support from my family, friends, parish, diocese, and - of course - the Blessed Virgin Mary, I may hope to become a priest in a few short years.

Benwen Lopez

When I started to consider offering myself for the Catholic priesthood, I was working as an assistant editor at a business magazine in the glamorous emirate city of Dubai, UAE. It was a well-paid job, and I was also dating a wonderful woman. However, I was not convinced about the vocation of marriage and so sought spiritual direction. After a mutual termination of our relationship and a period of discernment with my spiritual director in Dubai, I arrived at this momentous decision.



With UAE being a middle eastern country, with no seminaries, I was strongly advised to return home to India and seek a diocese to be admitted into. Having the desire to serve in a missionary-natured environment, I communicated my desire to become a priest to Bishop Alwyn Barreto, the prelate of Sindhudurg Diocese, who gladly welcomed me. After a series of meetings, I was accepted into the diocese, and deputed for my formation to the Pontifical Seminary of St Francis Xavier.

After a successful stint, I presumed that I would continue my theology studies in the same seminary; however, the COVID 19 pandemic hit and everything changed. In the summer of 2021, I was deputed for a year-long pastoral placement in a village parish in my diocese; it was quite a change of lifestyle, from recent memories of a glamorous city with an international environment to a humble village in the western region of Maharashtra, India, where electricity could go off at any moment and transportation was scarce.

Midway through my pastoral placement, my bishop summoned me and informed me that I would complete my formation in the eternal city of Rome, and here I am. In India, a typical seminarian is in his mid-20s or early 30s. Therefore, my vocation is considered late, and a lot of people have questioned why it took so long to discern. I tell them that when God went fishing for a priest, it took a while for him to net in a blue whale. At any rate, my vocation to join the priesthood of Jesus Christ was awakened by a conviction experience when I rediscovered the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, an experience which penetrated deep into my soul and lifted me out of a well of despair.

Matthew Allen

I was born in Northamptonshire in 1980 and baptised in our local Anglican church. Except for my paternal grandmother, who was Roman Catholic, my family were members of various local protestant churches. As a child, I was a keen member of the scouting movement and would often attend church services, either with my grandmother or with the local scout troop. From an early age I felt the presence of God in my life. However, worshipping at the local Anglican church, something seemed distinctly *missing*. At around the age of 10, my scout group was invited to participate in an ecumenical exchange, which involved attending a Sunday Mass at the local Roman Catholic church. Although very young, I found this experience deeply moving. Looking back, I can see that the “something missing” was the Real Presence of God at the Eucharist. That moment lingered with me and ignited a hunger to experience it again, and to become a part of that worshipping community.



With the new freedom of being able to walk to and from secondary school, I bumped into the local Catholic priest one day and bravely approached him. Following our chat my quite surprised parents agreed to me taking instruction and being received into the Church in 1992, at the age of twelve. As a keen, teenage convert, I started to serve at Mass, joined the local SVP, and was thrilled to be a part of the parish. To my joy, my parents then also decided to convert. Around that time, I began to wonder whether God might be calling me to a life of service and witness through the priesthood/

religious life. After finishing my A Levels, and not sure what path to take, I started working with my dad in a local shoe factory. I loved this experience, as I had grown up with shoemaking, one of our key local industries.

Despite my new work role, niggling feelings about priesthood had never gone away and, at 22 years old, I joined St Mary's Seminary, Oscott. This was 2003. It was an exciting move, but also daunting, having never been much of an academic myself. Although a great experience, after two years of studies in the seminary I decided to return to my home and job. I threw myself into work and progressed through the industry, ending up as a CEO at 38 years old. Since leaving the seminary, I had become "too busy" to be an active Catholic and had slowly lapsed. In early 2019, my Mum suffered a bad accident and spent many months in and out of hospital, including stays in intensive care. Seeing her suffer was painful, yet I was stunned by her strength. Sadly, despite her determination, she passed away in August 2019. The whole experience put many things in perspective for me, and set me back on the path to offering myself as a priest.

Andrew Vaitiekunas

My parents brought up their children as Roman Catholics, all five of us having been educated at Roman Catholic schools in Australia and receiving the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation. As a youngster I thought that I would enter into the priesthood. I was a member of the Charismatic Movement while a student at St Bernard's Secondary School and while studying at university I taught religious studies at the local Roman Catholic Primary School, St Theresa's. I was a member of the local church choir in Melbourne and on occasion did the readings at Holy Mass.



The Church has always been important in my life, and it is when I retired a couple of years ago from my career as a law lecturer in Melbourne that I was able to consider studying for the priesthood, fulfilling my childhood dream. I spoke to my local Lithuanian parish priest in Melbourne and another priest who I had known years earlier about my vocation to be a priest. They supported me and I was accepted to join the seminary for priests in Lithuania. When I moved from Australia to Lithuania in September 2021, I had to adapt to a new life as a cleric in a seminary, first in Telšiai where I completed the propedeutic year and secondly in Kaunas where I did six weeks of seminarian study before being accepted by and moving to the Pontifical College Beda in Rome in October 2022.

During what was an important time for me in Lithuania, I developed my sense of vocation working with and for organisations providing pastoral care and support. For example, running skill development games for young scouts, coordinating and implementing activities with the leaders of a school for disadvantaged kids and those from dysfunctional families. I also worked with mentally disabled people at a care centre, learning to provide social and psychological assistance to persons in distress or need. I hope that my calling to be a priest will be fulfilled and allow me to help bring people closer to God.

Christopher Douglas

I grew up in a small village in Northern Ireland, where religious identity played a huge part in daily life. It determined the schools you went to, the clubs you joined... even the friends you were likely to make. Yet for all its politicisation, I found religion to be a comforting and genuine part of my childhood. However, I also had questions. How could you ever really know God? Why was there so much suffering in the world? Why did the Church condemn those who were different? My interest in the human condition led me to study biology at university, which I then taught for almost twenty years. I became very comfortable with the de facto rationalism of my peers and in my twenties gradually drifted away from the practice of the faith. However, I often found that the most interesting questions posed by my students were those outside the realm of the natural sciences; questions on ethics, morality and the nature of existence.



In an attempt to find answers, I began reading philosophy and theology, studying Church teaching and eventually found myself returning to Mass. I rediscovered Catholicism in the culture around me, that Fauré's Requiem was a requiem Mass and that Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* was steeped in Catholic theology. I completed an MA in theology, which was one of the richest experiences of my adult life and deepened the intellectual certainty I had that God was real and that he could still be engaged with rationally today. All the while, I became convinced that God's love for all people - regardless of their situation in life - was truly unconditional, without strings or caveats. Over time, an interest in the priesthood which I had experienced in my late teens resurfaced. During the uncertainty of the pandemic, I used the enforced pause in normal life to look hard at who I was and what I wanted, to engage more fully with discernment and ultimately to explore my vocation anew. That exploration has now led me to Rome and the Beda, and given me a chance to see if the movements of the head and heart I have experienced these past years find a home in the priesthood. I look forward to finding out.



Anglican Students

Three Anglican students joined us at the beginning of the year, two from Cranmer Hall in Durham, Daniel Tsoi and James Bartle, and John Wilson, an Anglican ordinand from the Church of England's Diocese of Europe programme, based in Hungary, who joined us for four months, and wrote this account of his impressions.

The 800-mile drive from Budapest to Rome in September 2022 afforded me time to finally consider the ecumenical placement I was heading into. Somehow a frenetic summer of travelling, together with deadlines for two essays in my own Anglican formation pathway, had prevented any real anticipation. To be honest, as I crossed the Julian Alps into Italy, I began to fear I had made a mistake agreeing to it. I had no idea what the seminarians at the Beda would be like and thought I could end up spending the time feeling alien and alone. Not only was I Anglican, after all, but I was also American. Plus, I was married and had four children. Conceivably,



Daniel Tsoi

the only point of commonality might turn out to be the English language (and the Irish contingent would strain even that!) and belief in the Holy Trinity. Furthermore, having already spent significant time away from my family over the summer, including in the UK, and the Holy Land, I thought I had perhaps underestimated the emotional “cost” of the placement.

My rationale for saying Yes had partly come from an experience of living with my in-laws not long after getting married. Moving from Texas to Hungary, we decided to live with Zsófi's parents for a few months while searching for a flat in Budapest. Those few months turned into a year and a half. As an independent-minded American, it was an incredibly challenging period. Nonetheless, I gained so much, no longer just half understanding the ubiquitous Hungarian mother-in-law jokes, and winning a

perspective into Hungarian culture that I never could have internalised otherwise. It reshaped me and gave me another lens through which to understand the world. I can honestly say that I eat differently, dress differently, address conflict differently, and understand friendship differently as a result. Because of those months, Hungarians no longer seem so foreign to me, nor do I seem so foreign to them. My hope was that something similar might happen at the Beda, especially since Hungary, where I am due to serve my Anglican ministry, is a historically Roman Catholic country.

The instinct thankfully proved correct, since living, eating, studying, and praying together provided a unique window into Catholicism. While there are surely differences between the seminaries, I now have a feel for how Catholic priests are formed, as (for four months) I was formed with them. Not in full measure, but certainly in part, especially the rhythms of the Divine Office, the quiet connection with Christ during Adoration, and the strains of the Magnificat that stayed with you while walking down the stairs to the Refectory. I gained a greater appreciation for the sacrifice involved in taking a vow of celibacy – for the way it fundamentally alters the structure of a priest and seminarian’s communal relationships. Whereas I would hold that celibacy should be voluntary as it was in the early centuries (no doubt influenced by the fact that I am married!), I better understand why the Catholic Church is so reluctant to change its position.



James Bartle

Some have asked me what the purpose of ecumenical placements is since conversion in either direction is obviously not the intention. Paradoxically, while I found my distinct identity as an Anglican increased rather than diminished during the placement, I also found my love and respect for the Catholic Church deepened, not to mention feeling a kind of connection to it that is hard to put into words. While increasing mutual understanding is clearly part of the broader ecumenical project, I have come to realize that, fundamentally, it is the relationships that are at the core of that project. Whereas I feared being on the outside and relegated to an outer orbit – something not entirely unfounded, as I remained on my bench each day as others received the Eucharist – at the end of my time in Rome I was struck by how difficult it was to leave. Not only had I grown accustomed to sleeping on the little bed in the room that had become my home, but I had developed genuine friendships that made saying goodbye difficult.

I hope that my presence not only helped us to understand each other's tradition better, but to reflect on our own tradition through the eyes of another. The conversations over espresso in our *salotto* pushed each of us, I think, to articulate the "why" of our respective beliefs, beyond the simple front-line responses we have ready. My time at the Beda was a rich time of learning and I will not forget the image of everyone from the Beda standing at the gate and waving goodbye as I drove off.

Thank you all for this gift.



John Wilson



Ordinations

Priesthood

Patrick van der Vorst	24/06/23	Westminster Cathedral
Wladimir Siwecki	29/06/23	St Anne's Cathedral, Leeds
Paul Moores	01/07/23	St Eric's Cathedral, Stockholm
Shaun Doherty	02/07/23	St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry
Robert McMahon	02/07/23	St Peter's Cathedral, Belfast
Sean Henry	07/07/23	Shrewsbury Cathedral
Gerard Moore,	09/07/23	St Muireach's Cathedral, Ballina
Andrew Bishop	(Delayed for medical reasons)	

Diaconate

Jason Keith Fernandez, 17/02/23, Church of St Thomas the Apostle, Parish of Aldona, Goa.

Ordained together on 14/06/23 at St Paul's Basilica Outside the Walls, Rome:

Brian McNally (Armagh), Paul Henderson (St Andrews and Edinburgh), Tom Hiney (Portsmouth), Eamon Salmon (Ferns), Simon Marley (Lancaster), David Chung (Port Louis, Mauritius), Peter Shankland (St Andrews and Edinburgh)



The Beda Association

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Revd Mgr Roderick Strange

Vice-president

Revd Canon Michael Buckley

Hon. Treasurer

Revd Canon John Weatherill

Hon. Secretary

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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2023



Minutes and Report of the 97th Annual General Meeting of the Beda Association, which was held on Tuesday, 16 May, 2023 at the Oblates Retreat Centre, Wistaston Hall, Crewe

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer, led by Mgr Roderick Strange

2. Apologies

Fr Kevin McLoughlin, Fr Martin Nott, Mgr Peter Verity, Fr Keith Evans, Fr Tom Montgomery, Fr Tim Hutton, Fr Anthony Kelly, Fr David Savoury, Fr Michael McLaughlin (he was due to attend but was called by family friends to deal with an emergency).

2a. Attending

Canon Philip Gillespie, Mgr Roderick Strange, Fr Michael Thomas, Fr John Peyton, Canon John Weatherill, Fr Cavan McElligott, Fr Patrick Harrigan, Fr Bob Devaney, Fr Douglas Lamb, Canon David Goodwin, Canon Michael Buckley, Fr Jim Mulligan, Fr Tom Hoole, Fr John Gray, Mgr Brian Dazeley, Fr Andrew Broster, Fr Christopher Laughran.

3. Donations

A number of donations were made to the Association for the use of the Beda College. Anyone wishing to make a donation to the Association, please send it to the Secretary.

4. Remembrances

Fr Bartholomew O'Dea [1971] – Deceased; 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 Damian Devine – Diocese of Santa Rosa; Fr Denis Watt – Diocese of Singapore; Fr George Trollope [1910] Nottingham – 21st November 1933; Fr Patrick O'Hanlon [1942] Nottingham – 12th September 1972; Fr Geoffrey Davey [1971] – 12th February 1975; Fr Michael Finch [1971] – Deceased 1986; Fr Francis Parkinson [1971] – Southwark – March 1994; Fr Martin Callaghan [1971] Leeds – 29th January 1995; Fr Elmer Ponton [1968-72] New Orleans – 14th February 1995; Fr Christopher Quirke [1971] – Brentwood – 21st January 2000; Fr Henry Ferro [1971] – 21st October 2005; Fr Patrick Norton [1971] – 24th January 2008; Fr David Gould [1971] – Deceased 2015; Fr Donald Lorensz [1978] – Hamilton, Bermuda – 3rd April 2016; Fr

William Hughes [1971] – 18th January 2018; Fr Eric Nimmo [1968-62] Southwark – 20th February 2018; Fr Marwyn Welham [1998-2002] Pretoria – 2019; Fr Geoffrey Allan, [2002] – Wollongong – 24th June 2021; Canon Desmond Millett [1971] Clifton – 19th September 2021; Fr Barrie Holmes [1962-66] Leeds – 19th November 2021; Fr Louis Beasley-Suffolk [2000-2004] Clifton – 17th December 2021; Fr Terry Perkins – Plymouth [1964-68] – 10th January 2022; Fr David Craig – Shrewsbury [1974-78] – 28th February 2022; Fr Michael Gallon – Professor [1969-74] Leeds – 1st March 2022; Fr John Morrison – St Andrews & Edinburgh [1986-90] – 20th April 2022; Fr Robin Sutton – Shrewsbury [1980-84] – 24th April 2022; Fr Louis Rieunier – Plymouth – 17th May 2022; Fr Christopher Lee-Melaka Johor Malaysia – 14th June 2022; Fr Dermot Fenlon, Cong.Orat. – August 2022, Fr Duncan Adamson – Westminster – 16th October 2022; Fr Jeremy Ponsonby Meredith Davies, Westminster – 5th November 2022; Fr John Walsh – Lancaster – October 2022; Fr Kieran Kirby – Plymouth – March 2023; Fr Joseph Branson – Plymouth; Fr Kenneth Hind – Lancaster.

5. Minutes of AGM May 2022

Proposed *Fr Douglas Lamb* Seconded *Fr Michael Thomas*

Signed by President Roderick Strange President's Signature

6. Rector's Report

There are presently 31 resident seminarians at the Beda, plus 2 postgraduate priests, one each from Birmingham and Liverpool archdioceses.

Mgr Peter Verity retired as spiritual director last year. Fr Louis Reunier was due to replace him before his untimely death last year. Fr John Carlyle is presently the only resident spiritual director.

Eight men were ordained to the priesthood from the Beda last summer. There will be 12 leaving this summer, some to spend a year of pastoral theology in their dioceses.

Canon Philip expressed concern over bishops withdrawing seminarians for pastoral work back in their dioceses at the end of their 3rd year at the Beda. Paragraph 24 of the *Ratio* does indicate there should be special arrangements for the priestly formation of mature men. The four year course that the Beda offers should be four continuous years.

There is the possibility of the Beda receiving six new men this autumn.

The Scots college is to move from Via Cassia to central Rome. They have not yet found a new site so are planning to stay temporarily at the Beda. Their community is 11 seminarians and 3 staff members. The staff will take rooms vacated by the FMDM community, the Holy Cross chapel will be for their use and seminarians will occupy the fourth floor.

The coronation of King Charles III was celebrated over that special weekend. Last year's donation from the Beda Association was used to make an external sitting area for the students, which was put to good use on that occasion.

The departure of the FMDM sisters was marked by an overnight *gita* and a thanksgiving Mass at Ladywell, Godalming. The Beda will not lose contact with the sisters.

The *personale* are now employed by an external agency. Whilst some chose to leave, the new arrangement has given stability and flexibility to their employment. Bede's Day is approaching and while there is no formal lunch, there will be an evening reception. It is planned to go to Orvieto for Corpus Christi.

Some building work is needed, e.g. putting photo cells on the College roof to generate our own electricity. Our extra-territorial status caused complications when planning such work. The marble tesserae have started to fall off the walls and need repairs.

Comments There does not seem to be a move to force the Beda to adopt the new priestly formation programme, with newly ordained deacons spending a year back in their dioceses prior to returning to their studies leading to priestly ordination. Some bishops, however, are keen to go with this. The great selling point of the Beda is the life experience of its students.

7. Treasurer's Report

The Beda Association Income and Expenditure 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

INCOME	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
AGM Receipts	£960.00	£60.00
Donations Received	£985.50	£15,900
Legacies		
Subscriptions		
Life		£200
Annual	£90	£250
Bank Interest	£19.02	£1.26
TOTAL INCOME	£2,054.52	£17,311.26

EXPENDITURE	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
AGM Expenses	510	910
Donations Given	7,000	13,300
Bank Charges	£0.00	£0.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£7,510.00	£14,210
Funds at Bank		
Opening Balance	£9,708.46 (01.04.22)	£6,607.20 (01.04.21)
Net Income/expenditure	5,455.48	3,101.26
Closing Bank Balance	£4,252.98 (31.03.22)	£9,708.46 (31.03.22)

Canon John Weatherill, Hon. Treasurer
16th May 2023

There were no life subscriptions this year and only £90 in annual subscriptions. A recruiting drive for new members needs to take place. Fr Michael McLaughlin organised a collection in his parish around Bede's Day which raised £735. The meeting expressed its gratitude to Fr Michael for this very generous initiative.

It was proposed that the Beda Association donate £2,000 to the College.

Proposed *Fr Michael Thomas* Seconded *Fr Tom Hoole*
The proposal was carried unanimously.

Members were encouraged to hold an annual appeal and collection in their respective parishes.

8. Secretary's Report

Fr John Peyton commented that he has still "his L-Plate up" as regards being Honorary Secretary of the Beda Association. He is grateful for the support he is receiving, especially from his predecessor, Fr Michael McLaughlin.

In commenting on the list of remembrances, recorded previously in these minutes, Fr Peyton drew attention to Fr Christopher Lee and Fr Dermot Fenlon. The former was in the year below Fr Peyton at the Beda, and was a



Fr John Peyton, Secretary of the Beda Association

very good friend of his. The latter served at the Birmingham Oratory during the time that Fr Peyton was attending Mass there as a layman. Fr Dermot was his confessor for a time.

It was made known there are Beda cufflinks available from the College at £70 a set.

The list of anniversaries was then read and the meeting sent its congratulations and prayers to all Jubilarians. It was suggested, that where there is a group of Beda Jubilarians from the same diocese, congratulations and best wishes could be sent to the Beda alumni on behalf of the Beda Association via the vicars general of those dioceses.

Silver Jubilees [Ordained 1998]

- Fr Paul Baczynski, Perth Australia
- Fr William Browne
- Fr James Burns
- Fr Neil Byrne, Leeds 18th July
- Fr Leo Cooper, Liverpool
- Fr Stephen Dye, Nottingham
- Fr John Finch
- Fr Andrew Foster, Birmingham
- Fr Paul Fox
- Fr Keith Lambert
- Fr Martin Queenan, Clifton 4th August
- Fr Bill Wilton, Birmingham 6th September

Ruby Jubilee [Ordained 1983]

- Fr Gerry Kelly, Birmingham 24th July

Golden Jubilees [Ordained 1973]

- Fr Michael Boland, Southwark 8th April
- Fr Alvaro Bonilauri, OSB 24th June
- Fr Anthony Cachia, Malta 8th April
- Fr John Chaloner, Salford 7th April
- Fr Francis Connors, Burlington, Vermont 2nd June
- Fr John Feltz, Burlington, Vermont 24th Nov
- Fr Brian Galvin, Brentwood June
- Fr William Green, Salford 7th April

- Fr Richard Lamaro, Townsville, Australia June
- Fr Roy Loperman, Portsmouth 31st March
- Fr Paul Madsen, Copenhagen
- Fr Raphael Marterelli, OSB 24th. June
- Fr Francis Otto, O Carm 7th April
- Fr Colin Wheeler, Nottingham 28th April

Diamond Jubilee [Ordained 1963]

- Fr Richard Garnett, Southwark 30th March
- Fr Hugh McKenna, Plymouth 30th March
- Fr Gerard Neary, Liverpool 30th March
- Fr Bernard Nesden, Northampton 30th March
- Fr Jack Pack, Plymouth 30th March
- Fr Alan Pattinson, Southwark 30th March

Our congratulations and prayers are sent to all Jubilarians of this year.

Vocation Prayer cards are available. The Beda Necrology booklet will be updated and forwarded shortly.

9. Election of Officers

President

Mgr Roderick Strange

Vice President

Canon Michael Buckley

Secretary

Fr John Peyton

Nominated by:

Fr Michael Thomas

Fr Michael Thomas

Canon John Weatherill

Seconded by

Fr Tom Hoole

Mgr Brian Dazeley

Fr Jim Mulligan

Carried

Carried

Carried

Treasurer It was carried by the meeting that Canon John Weatherill should continue as Treasurer.

10. Venue and approximate date for next year

It is planned that the 2024 meeting of the Beda Association take place during w/c 13th May 2024 at the Beda College. Accommodation could be arranged at Palazzola.

It was suggested that the meeting should be available on Zoom, for those unable to physically attend.

11. Closing Prayer

The *Gloria* was prayed at the end of the meeting.

Canon Philip Gillespie was principal celebrant at the votive Mass of St Bede which followed at 4.30pm. We remembered members of our families who have died, those who are ill and in need of our prayers, the membership of the College and those who support the college in any way. Mass was followed by a reception and a delicious dinner.



Attendees at the Beda Association AGM at Wistaston Hall on 16 May 2023

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have a comfortable house with 8 guest rooms
offering accommodation for up to 14 people and
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www.retreathouse.im





Obituaries

Fr Dermot Fenlon died shortly after our last edition had been put to bed, on August 17th, 2022. We have the following summary of his remarkable life, taken from the funeral homily given by Fr D. Vincent Twomey, SVD.

Born in 1941, the son of Dermot and Mary (nee Tutty) Fenlon, his elder brother Frank predeceased him. He grew up in Booterstown, Co. Dublin. After attending Willow Park Primary School and Blackrock College, he tried his vocation, as they used to say, with the Holy Ghost Fathers (the Spiritans) but then left and opted for the study of history at UCD, where he took his BA and then MA, under the direction of Professor Desmond Williams. It was around this time that he published for the first time on 17th-century Irish history in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*.

He then went to Peterhouse, Cambridge, where his supervisor was the preeminent historian of Tudor England Geoffrey (GR) Elton (later Sir Geoffrey Elton). There he worked on Cardinal Reginald Pole (eventually the subject of his book published by Cambridge University Press). In 1969 he became a University assistant lecturer, later University Lecturer in history and a fellow of Gonville and Caius College. There he remained for 10 more years, when he published articles on Thomas More and the French historian Lucien Febvre. He enjoyed a universal reputation in Cambridge, a reputation that is untarnished to this day. A promising academic future beckoned to him, but then he abandoned it to study for the priesthood. What had happened?

Let me recall an anecdote. In 2010, he was invited by his friend, the German author, Dr Jakob Knab, to talk to his students in Kaufbeuren, Bavaria, in the course of which he mentioned the turning point of his life, when he quoted these lines from Francis Thomson's "The Hound of Heaven": I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;/I fled Him, down the arches of the years;/I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways/Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears/I hid from Him, and under running laughter.' Dr Knab wrote: "Fr Dermot told the students how he ran away from God, because he wanted to be free. Only when he gave up and surrendered and when he told God take my life, I'm all yours, he felt true freedom. My students were fascinated, they were grateful for his honest witness."

During his time in Cambridge, he had developed a great interest in Cardinal John Henry Newman, who, after his conversion, became a priest in the order St Philip Neri founded, the Oratorians. This in turn led him to study St Philip Neri the great counter reformation theologian, scholar and poet. Not only did he become a world expert on the life and times of these two saints, but, it would seem, his study of them led him back to God.

In 1978 he entered the Pontifical Beda College in Rome. Ordained in 1982, he served as a priest in the East Anglia diocese. But his love of St Philip Neri and St John Henry Newman led him to enter the Birmingham Oratory in 1991 which had been founded by Newman. There he spent two decades as Newman archivist. But he was first and foremost a priest known for his clear and inspiring homilies and a gentle confessor. Many recall his love of the Blessed Mother and his gentle manner, which caused many local Muslim mothers to seek him out as he walked in the neighbourhood of the Oratory when they wanted prayers for their children. He listened carefully, promising his prayers and giving them one of the Miraculous medals that he always carried in his pocket for their child.

As archivist in the Birmingham Oratory, Fr Fenlon had been involved in preparing Cardinal Newman's cause for beatification. However just as the beatification of Newman was in sight, a crisis arose in the Oratory and he was compelled to leave his beloved Oratory and so, to his great disappointment, was not present in Birmingham, when in 2010 Pope Benedict XVI beatified John Henry Newman.

Thus began what a friend described as his *via crucis*, his way of the cross. To quote from one of his obituaries, Fr Dermot Fenlon, a good priest, would now be offered the opportunity of sanctity. He would be stripped of his home, stability, reputation, books, and research, and even his health. Just as he had walked away from all he had in the world to accept Christ's call to the priesthood, he would now walk away from all he had in the Church to accept Christ's call to take up his cross and follow him. Despite the hardship of adjustment, Fr Fenlon embraced the Cross under the mantle of Mary.

After a short time in Scotland and the USA, he returned to his native Ireland. He found a welcome in his alma mater of Blackrock College, before he went to help in the Dominican Priory in Waterford. He became a guiding light for the fledgling endeavour, Newman College Ireland, teaching eager students first in Rome and for three years in Derry. During all this time, Fr Dermot was in a kind of ecclesiastical limbo until Bishop Philip Egan released him and incardinated him into the Diocese of Portsmouth. And he allowed him to continue his work in Ireland.

For his last three years, Fr Dermot ministered here to the Sisters of the Congregation of the Adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the so-called Cobh Tyburn Convent, and to those that come to this chapel for Eucharistic Adoration and Mass. The nuns assure

me that this was a happy time for him. His gentle, reassuring presence and unobtrusive offers of help and counsel touched the lives of everyone he met: retreatants, the staff employed at the convent and the local residents, particularly any young person who was introduced to him. He manifested a heart as big as the world, taking a keen interest in its affairs and supporting every effort to change it for the better with encouragement and constant prayer. More than one person remarked on how he kept his own learning hidden so that others might not be shy to say what they knew, however little.

He was particularly devoted to the cause of the unborn child. He was also a generous benefactor of the persecuted church through Aid to the Church in Need, which organization supports spiritually and financially persecuted Christians in Syria, Iraq, and parts of Nigeria, among other countries. He could sympathize with those unjustly persecuted, since he too had known injustice and suffered for his defence of the Church's divine moral teaching.

On the evening before he died he made contact with several of his close friends. He also left an email message for the Prioress in which, without in any way predicting his departure, he nevertheless encouraged the efforts of the community to make reparation to the Eucharistic Heart and imparted his blessing to them and their whole Congregation, thanking them humbly for their prayers. He spent his last years, fittingly, here in the Tyburn Convent of Cobh. Tyburn Convent is named after the square in London, where so many of his beloved Tudor martyrs were born into heaven and where St Oliver Plunket was the last to be martyred. This community has a precious relic of St Oliver Plunket, which must have given him great comfort. Fr Dermot went to bed on the eve of the Feast of Our Lady of Knock. In his sleep, he was called to his eternal rest. The removal of his mortal remains took place on the anniversary of Our Lady's appearance at Knock, and he is being buried on the Memorial of Mary, Queen and Mother. He had a deep devotion to Our Lady.

As Jesus said in today's Gospel, "Anyone who loves his life will lose it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life". We pray that Our Lord and Saviour may grant eternal life to Fr Dermot, who to our eyes at least, was a gentle scholar, a noble priest and a humble man of God. May he rest in peace. Amen.

A Requiem Mass for **Fr John Walsh** was held at St John the Evangelist, Poulton, on 12th October 2022. John was born in Listowel, County Kerry, on 28th September 1943 and was the eldest of 13 children. He was educated at Dromerin National Primary School and at St Michael's College initially, and then at Sacred Heart College in Castlebar when the family moved there. John joined the Alexian Brothers Congregation and was made a postulant in 1967, a novice in 1968, and then made temporary profession in 1970. During his years with the Brothers, John worked in the Alexian nursing home before

being transferred to Manchester in 1974 to train as a State Registered Nurse. He then worked at Crumpsall Hospital as a Staff Nurse for a couple of years before training to be a Psychiatric Nurse at Ailsa Hospital in Ayr. Fr John was a seminarian at the Beda College, Rome from 1979 and was ordained to the Priesthood at St Walburge's, Preston, in 1982 by Bishop Pearson.

He held the following appointments:

Assistant Priest

1982-83	Holy Trinity and St George, Kendal
1983-85	Holy Family, Blackpool
1985-87	Choma, Zambia
1987-90	St Gregory, Preston
1990-93	Choma, Zambia

Parish Priest

1995-2003	St Gregory, Preston
2003-07	English Martyrs, Poulton-le-Fylde
2007-09	St Margaret Mary, Carlisle
2009-12	St Patrick & Holy Family, Morecambe
2012-17	St John, Poulton-le-Fylde
2017-21	English Martyrs, Poulton-le-Fylde

In 2021 John retired and was a resident at St Winefride's House where he celebrated the Ruby anniversary of his ordination. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Fr Duncan Michael Adamson died on Sunday 16th October 2022. We have the following from the Vicar General of his diocese of Westminster.

Duncan Adamson was born in Northfield, Birmingham on 9 June 1948, the eldest of three sons. His father's work meant relocation to west London in 1955. At the age of nine Duncan, a regular attender at Mass on weekdays as well as on Sundays, was confirmed, taking the name Aloysius. He was educated at the parish primary school, then at the Salvatorian College, Harrow before going to Shoreditch College in Egham, from 1967 to 1970, to study for a Certificate in Education. He studied the theory and practice of education and trained to teach woodwork, metalwork and technical drawing. He then worked as a teacher at Queensmead School, South Ruislip and then at Bishopshalt School in Hillingdon. He looked after the school's minibus fleet and accompanied students on trips in the summer to locations in the UK and further afield in Europe and North America. As a member of the Most Sacred Heart parish Duncan served as a committed lay parishioner for many years, including as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and as the Master of Ceremonies with a concern for

the worthy celebration of the liturgy and the training of altar servers. He was a good teacher, by example as well as by instruction. He encouraged youngsters who served to share responsibility for the preparation of the church for Mass, for serving at Mass and for clearing up afterwards. His easy way with children and young people was a gift nurtured by his training and career as a teacher.

After fifteen years of work, imparting knowledge and developing the skills of his secondary school students, Duncan returned to student life as a seminarian for the Diocese of Westminster at the Pontifical Beda College, Rome in 1985. There he was a keen student, becoming Dean of Students, and he developed lasting friendships. Fr Duncan was ordained to the priesthood on 24 June 1989 at the age of 41. His was a mature vocation that blessed the Church and the diocese with 33 years of steady and faithful service. His ordination, by Cardinal Basil Hume OSB, Archbishop of Westminster, was in the church of the Most Sacred Heart, Ruislip. His first appointment as an Assistant Priest took him back to west London, to St Raphael's, Yeading where he served from 1989 to 1993. His next appointment was to the parish of St Lawrence, Feltham where he remained for a year when he was appointed Parochial Administrator at Our Lady of Sorrows and St Bridget of Sweden parish, Isleworth where he remained for two years. In 1996 Fr Duncan was appointed Parish Priest of Our Lady of the Rosary, Marylebone. He served as Parish Priest until 2009 when he was appointed to the Most Sacred Heart, Ruislip serving as Parish Priest until his premature retirement, due to ill health, in September 2022. As Parish Priest Fr Duncan also served local parishes and the diocese as Dean and, from September 2019 to May 2021, as an Episcopal Vicar in west London.

Kind, thoughtful, practical and dependable, Fr Duncan was attentive to the needs of his parishioners and to the condition of the church, parish hall and presbytery buildings in his various appointments. His ministry enhanced the lives of his parishioners and his practical skills were used to improve the parish property. If something broken could be fixed, or a fixture made, he would attend to it using his skill and the tools and timber he had collected over the years. His priority was always the church before attending to the presbytery.

For several years as a priest Fr Duncan would take a post-Christmas break on the north Norfolk coast near Walsingham where he would celebrate Mass at the basilica followed by walks and a good evening meal. Regular walking holidays in the UK, especially in the Lake District, were enjoyed by Fr Duncan over the years. His devotion to Our Lady brought him to Lourdes, leading a group from the parish as part of the diocesan pilgrimage every July. He will be fondly remembered for his commitment and reliability, and for his dry and self-deprecating sense of humour. Frequently Fr Duncan would remind others that Jesus has counted every hair on our heads – he would point to his

advancing baldness while saying “not so many to count on my head these days”! West London, and Ruislip in particular, was close to Fr Duncan’s heart. There, in his home parish of the Most Sacred Heart, he celebrated his seventieth birthday and also the Silver and Thirtieth Anniversaries of his ordination. How fitting it is that this church is the venue for his Funeral Mass. When Fr Duncan knew the time had come for him to stand down as Parish Priest he would surely have recalled words of the Nunc Dimittis prayed every night: “...all powerful Master, you give leave to your servant to go in peace...” And now we pray in thanksgiving for Fr Duncan’s life and ministry. May this faithful priest rest in peace and rise in glory.

Fr Jeremy Ponsonby Meredith Davies died on 5th November 2022. He died peacefully in the home provided for him in Fakenham, Norfolk. He was born in London on 25 March 1935 and ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Westminster in Rome on 15 April 1974. He studied for the priesthood at the Beda College. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Perhaps due to his unusual ministry as an exorcist, obituaries of him appeared in *The Telegraph* and *The Guardian*. In the latter, his nephew, the journalist Nick Davies, wrote:

“My uncle, Jeremy Davies, who has died aged 87, was the chief exorcist for the Catholic church in England and Wales. His religious beliefs were utterly alien to me. His views on the role of the devil in daily life were variously horrible (“homosexuality is the work of the devil”) and absurd (yoga just as bad). Because of an ancient breach in our family tree, I never met him until March 2020, just as the pandemic was descending. It was a strange encounter. My first glimpse confirmed my worst fears – this thin, almost skeletal figure, cloaked in black, with only his dog collar blazing white. We shook hands in the church doorway where we had agreed to meet, and he led me to the vestry, where we sat and talked for four hours. The austere figure proved to be unusually gentle in speech and manner. He told stories with a twinkle in his eye. He had humour! And empathy, shaking his head in wonder at the cruelty of his father, whom he loved but who had abandoned the children from his first marriage, including my own father.

Jeremy was born in Wimbledon, south-west London, the son of Idris Davies, a senior officer at RAF Fighter Command during Jeremy’s wartime childhood, and Elizabeth (nee Ponsonby). He went to the King’s School, Canterbury, then studied English at St Edmund Hall, Oxford. He talked to me about the years after he left Oxford in 1957, feeling meaningless, bobbing around in pointless jobs, drifting towards the Catholic church and then studying medicine, and in 1967 going off to work as a doctor in poor communities in Africa. This was a kind man. But still baffling. He had abandoned medicine because “I felt that I was being called by God.” Some of this was purely intellectual: he had read deeply into the history of Christianity and felt impelled to act.

But with a touching honesty he confessed that his final decision to be ordained as a Catholic priest, in 1974, came after he did something he felt was “very wrong” and he wanted to atone. He worked as an assistant priest in London until 1987 when Cardinal Basil Hume appointed him exorcist.

Although for me – the atheist, yoga-loving former *Guardian* reporter – his rituals expelling the devil from buildings or people were entirely bizarre, I began to see glimpses of the world through his eyes, living with the certainty that a malevolent force of almost unlimited power was ruining vulnerable humans. And he – armed only with his crucifix and his god – challenged that force. In its face. Every day. In spite of its terrifying power. He was a very brave man, wasn't he? Most of his work had not involved ritual. Simply he had sat in this same vestry, very much like a psychotherapist, with someone whose life was dangling over disaster, allowing them to speak, giving comfort, offering a spiritual safety net which could break their fall.

An odd encounter, two strangers sharing nothing apart from a broken family root and yet at the end, we shook hands with real affection. I didn't touch another human being for months. An invisible force of horrible power had descended and set about killing millions of people. Jeremy is survived by his sister, Miranda.

The funeral of **Fr Kieran Kirby** took place at the Church of the Sacred Heart in Exeter on Thursday 20th April 2023, a requiem Mass having taken place the day before. He was a priest of the diocese of Plymouth, having studied at the Beda from 1994 to 1998 and was ordained in 2001. He died in a nursing home in Exeter after a long battle against cancer. May he rest in peace and rise in glory. We also learnt latterly of the death of **Mgr Joseph Branson** of Lancaster Diocese, who studied at the Beda in the early 1970s. May they both rest in peace and rise in glory.

Apologies for any notices that have been missed. All obituary details can be sent to Fr John Peyton on fr.john.peyton@rcaob.org.uk.

Fr Peyton confirms that causes for beatification/canonisation of two Beda priests continue to be pursued: Fr Thomas Byles heroically led many passengers to safety on the *Titanic* and chose to stay on board, praying with victims of the tragedy until their death; Monsignor John Hawes did great work in the Diocese of Geraldton, Western Australia before becoming a hermit on the Bahamas. More information about both can be found on the websites of their respective dioceses: Brentwood, England in the case of Fr Byles and Geraldton in the case of Fr Hawes.





Pontifical Beda College

Staff and Students

2022 – 2023

Formation Team

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Canon Philip Gillespie | Rector (Liverpool) |
| • Fr John Breen | Vice-Rector (Hexham and Newcastle) |
| • Sr Patricia McDonald | Academic Programme Director (SHCJ) |
| • Fr John Carlyle | Spiritual Director (Birmingham) |

First Year

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Allen, Matthew | (East Anglia) |
| 2 Bamber, Stephen | (Lancaster) |
| 3 Baxter, Stephen | (Derry) |
| 4 Douglas, Christopher | (Down and Connor) |
| 5 Duns, Anthony | (Port Pirie) |
| 6 Hampton, Thomas | (Down and Connor) |
| 7 Harsh, Seth | (Wollongong) |
| 8 Howarth, Daniel | (Liverpool) |
| 9 Ilies, Andrei | (Brentwood) |
| 10 Lopez, Benwen | (Sindhudurg) |
| 11 Niima, Honorius | (Ndanda-OSB) |
| 12 Vaitiekūnas, Andrew | (Kaunas) |

Second Year

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

External Students

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

On Extended Pastoral Placement

- Fernandes, Jason (Goa and Daman)
- Orkuma, Maxwell (Gboko)

Third 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)

Fourth Year

- 1 Bishop, Andrew (Southwark)
- 2 Doherty, Shaun (Derry)
- 3 Henry, Sean (Shrewsbury)
- 4 McMahon, Robert (Down and Connor)
- 5 Moore, Gerard (Killala)
- 6 Moores, Paul (Leeds)
- 7 Siwecki, Wladimir (Stockholm)
- 8 van der Vorst, Patrick (Westminster)

Residents Studying Out

- Nguyen, Van (Birmingham)
- Unsworth, Andrew (Liverpool)

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