

AVE

The Magazine of The Society of Mary



**The Annunciation by Frederick James Shields
at the Manchester Art Gallery**

£2.00

Annunciationtide, 2022

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From the Superior General

*"A cold coming we had of it,
just the worst time of the year for a journey"*

So begins T S Eliot's poem "The Journey of the Magi". And so thought I as we journeyed to Walsingham Parish Church to keep the Solemnity of the Epiphany on a bright, blisteringly cold North Norfolk 6th January 2022. So thought I as, with still cold-numbered fingers, I placed symbolic Gifts of Gold, Incense and Myrrh at the feet of the Christ Child in the Epiphany House.

Our Procession to that Epiphany House in the Church that morning had journeyed past that very Pillar in the Guilds Chapel where, a century ago in 1922, Father Alfred Hope Patten had set up the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. In doing so he had begun another kind of "journey" for himself and for countless thousands of others who would make the journey to Walsingham as Pilgrims seeking to find more of Christ and so of themselves through the Child on the knee of Our Lady



In view of its title, it is interesting that Eliot does not identify the Magi; nor mention specific gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. He makes no reference to a Star. He focuses rather on the process and means by which the journey of faith is made; no matter who we are, irrespective of the gifts we might bring and whatever sign might lead us forward in faith

This aspect of the poem is reflected in its powerful ending: the interplay of birth and death: Death of the old dispensation or Birth in the New Life to be found through faith in the Christ Child

Eliot wrote "The Journey of the Magi" in 1927, just a few years after Father Patten had restored the Walsingham Shrine and Pilgrimage. A significant time for the Church as the power of the Pilgrimage was known again and also for Eliot himself as he found and committed himself to the worship and life of the Catholic Faith.

The Poem is truly of "Epiphany"; about the revelation and showing forth of Our Lord and of the journey of Faith to Him which all are invited to undertake.

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Our Blessed Lady was called at the Annunciation to undertake a unique journey beginning with the mystery of the Incarnation. A journey that took Her to the Stable of the Nativity, the House of the Epiphany and the Place of the Cross.



The Translation of the Image of Our Lady from the Parish Church to the Shrine, October 15th 1931

A hundred years ago, Father Patten restored the Shrine and re-established the Pilgrimage to the feet of Our Lady of Walsingham. A journey both practical and spiritual through which we may, with Eliot, encounter Our Blessed Lord, the birthplace and the doubt; the prefiguring and fulfilment; time for reflection and renewal in Faith

With my prayers and blessing,

+ 



Alfred Hope Patten

✠ Robert Ladds – *Superior-General*

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A Letter from the Chaplain-General

My dear Friends,

It finally feels as if there is at least a remote possibility that we shall be able to return to living a fairly 'normal' life very soon and that the threat of severe illness is receding. I hope and pray that this is true. But it is also true that we shall carry with us the memory of the past two years - the isolation and loneliness faced by so many, the fear of getting too close to people, the loss of our sacramental life in the Church - for some time to come. As ever, when we are coping with fear and sorrow, when we are uncertain what the future will hold, we are closer than ever to Our Lady. She will show us how to carry our sorrows and to know that God is with us in the midst of it all. Living with fear and uncertainty is something which Our Lady knew only too well: she helps us to turn it into an experience which restores our confidence and strengthens our hope for the future.

Mary stood at the foot of the Cross. She did not swoon or slump or shout, she stood. Certainly she would have cried over the tortured body of her Son, but even then she did not give up her faith in God's providence. And so she was led to perfection through this suffering, to make her capable of her new mission, given to her just before the death of Jesus, of becoming the Mother of all his children, of the Church. She offers that hope to us now as we rebuild our lives, as we rebuild the life of the Church, in all its sacramental reality. We cannot worship God at a distance; we cannot receive the sacraments through a computer screen, but only as part of a worshipping congregation. That is what builds us up and renews his life in us, which feeds us every day with the Body of Christ. So let us turn to our Mother who will give us her unfailing consolation and support and re-establish the life and worship of our churches in all its fullness .

It was a great joy to be able to celebrate the October Devotion at Fr Grant Naylor's beautiful Church in the centre of Sheffield. Our thanks go to him and to all his people for their hard work during the day which made it all possible. We thank Fr Morrison for his homily. The



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Procession through the City centre was a true act of witness on a very busy Saturday afternoon, greeted with smiles and joy wherever we went. And *finally* we were able to hold an AGM that afternoon to fulfil our legal obligations as a Society, after a lapse of more than two years.

With that confidence we look forward to the May Devotion this year. It is on Saturday 14th May, since the National Pilgrimage to Walsingham is at the beginning of the month and the second Bank Holiday is postponed to June for us to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Queen's Accession. Details appear elsewhere in this issue and I hope that we shall be back to the usual routines. There will be a lunch to help us to recover after the Procession to Holy Trinity and the preacher at Vespers will be Fr Peter Anthony, now the Parish Priest of All Saints, Margaret Street. I hope to see YOU there.

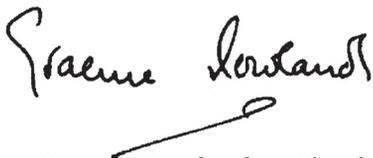
Very many thanks for a number of generous donations in memory of Henry Frier. The money will be used to restore and decorate the Litter for the Processional Image of Our Lady and the work is due to be finished in time for May, so that Bishop Robert can bless it and say a prayer in his memory on the day.

For obvious reasons, the Lourdes Pilgrimage was cancelled yet again this year. We have registered the dates for next year, from 7th to 11th August 2023 and I very much hope this will go ahead, global pandemics and other disasters permitting. There will be the usual support for our youth pilgrims, so that they can take part in it for only £100 each, everything included. I hope we shall have booking forms and firm details by October.

Finally, I hope you will be able to support some of the events organised by the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in this year, which celebrates the Centenary of the restoration of the Shrine and of regular pilgrimages there. The Society of Mary organised one of the first official pilgrimages to the Shrine in the Parish Church and our connection has been strong and fruitful ever since.

I look forward to seeing you later in the year.

With my love and blessing,
Graeme Rowlands



Fr Graeme Rowlands – *Chaplain-General*

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October Devotion 2021

The October Devotion 2021 was hosted by Fr Grant Naylor at St Matthew's Church, Sheffield. The Preacher was Fr Edward Morrison who has kindly allowed his sermon to be shared here for those unable to attend the splendid occasion.

Isaiah 7:10-14

Acts 1:12-14

Luke 1:26-38

I'm sorry to have to remind you all that it is now only 77 days until Christmas. And we may scratch our heads and wonder where the time has gone, but of course Christians should rejoice in the fact that no other birth in the whole of human history is as celebrated across the world. No other commemoration is as widely observed or involves as many people or transcends as many cultures, languages and places as the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. The world pauses and draws breath. Just for a moment the hectic business of the world calms down; families get together, gifts are exchanged, the daily routine of life is interrupted. And this all happens because a child was born around 2,000 years ago in unique circumstances. Something extraordinary happened which was to change the entire universe and leave its mark on history forever.



It is stating the obvious to say that there was no precedent for a baby to be born without a human father, or for its mother to have had no sexual intercourse with a man. C. S. Lewis tells a story about how one day in Oxford, close to Christmas, he had his study window ajar, and he and another sceptical Oxford don could hear a choir outside in the quod below singing carols: "late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb." And the other don smiled and said to Lewis, "Aren't you glad we know better than that?" And Lewis replied in his sardonic way, "And your point is?" And his colleague said, "I mean, aren't you glad we know that virgins don't have babies?" And Lewis paused for a moment and said, "Don't you think they knew that too? Isn't that the point?" Of all the billions of humans born in history, only one was born that way. The Virgin Birth is something unique to Jesus Christ and sets him apart

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from the rest of creation. For some people it's a difficult doctrine to accept – some suggest that the Good News might be easier to accept, or easier to sell to the public, if things like the virgin birth were quietly dropped. It's just a bit far-fetched, the gospel-writers overreaching themselves, getting carried away. Well, as we hear Luke's account of the Angel Gabriel's visit to Mary in our gospel reading today, I think we need to ponder the mystery of the virgin birth all the more and treasure it in our hearts as dearly as Our Lady. I invite you to think about the unique circumstances surrounding Jesus' miraculous birth and ask yourselves two fundamental questions: did it happen? And does it really matter?

Well, first, did it happen? Let me take you back, for a moment, to the beginning of Luke's Gospel, where he states his purpose for writing. He says, "Many people have set out to write accounts about the events that have been fulfilled among us... I also have decided to write a careful account for you...so you can be certain of the truth of everything you were taught."

Luke's purpose is, then, to convey truth. It's important to him that what he writes is unadulterated, carefully researched, employing the testimony of eyewitnesses, corroborating his story with dates and times,



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rulers, and events. His account of the appearance of the Angel Gabriel to Mary is the only account in the four gospels that deals specifically with the annunciation of Jesus' birth through Mary's eyes, and from that, we can be confident that Mary herself would have been an important eyewitness for Luke in his research: how else could we possibly know the sorts of details he gives us? Luke gives us an account of a gospel that is rooted firmly in history: beginning by telling us that these events took place in the reign of Herod, King of Judea, in the sixth month, during the governorship of Quirinius when the emperor had decreed a census must be taken. These are historical events. Luke is true to his word, then, when he says he intends this to be a truthful account, no embellishment, no exaggerations – why? Well, why should there be? Anything that is added to this story takes away from the story. Luke's Gospel is about assuring Christians of the truth of the events of Jesus' life. For Luke to have gone against that stated desire and thrown in a fabricated story, or a rehashed pagan legend, runs totally against the grain of his purpose. And furthermore, it would be unlikely a con-artist would choose a virgin birth as a means of impressing a first century Jewish audience: the idea that God would come to earth at all was hard enough, but that he'd be born to an unmarried woman, with no known father would have been sheer blasphemy. Yet there it is.



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As one theologian put it: “The Virgin Birth is posted on guard at the door of the mystery of the incarnation: and none of us must think of hurrying past it.”

The Virgin Birth stands on the threshold of the New Testament, it is the opening event, the opening shot fired in the battle to save us and win us for God. And it is blatantly supernatural, defying our rationalism, informing us that all that follows in the story belongs to the same order of the miraculous, the wondrous, and the divine, and if we find it offensive or scoff at the reality of it, then there’s no point reading on any further. Yet, sadly it remains a target to this day, attacked both outside and sometimes even within the Church – so yes, it does matter. Why?

Well those who would doubt the virgin birth might prefer Jesus to have been born more like John the Baptist – whose birth Luke tells us of just before Jesus’. His birth was miraculous, for sure, but not virginal. His mother, Elizabeth, was old and barren, but God allowed her and her husband, Zechariah, to conceive and bear a son. God had done the same with Abraham and Sarah in the Old Testament, and other sorts of conception miracles can be found in the Bible. But Jesus’ birth was unique and superior in character.



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The angel tells Mary five things about the Son she's about to conceive. Firstly, his name. He is to be called Jesus, which means 'God saves'. It's the same name, but a different rendition of the name Joshua, who led the Israelites across the River Jordan into the Promised Land. This new Joshua, Jesus, will lead his people through the waters of death and judgement into the promised land of God's kingdom, in which we shall find peace and reconciliation forever. Jesus is our Saviour, and our Deliverer, and that is what his very name speaks of.

Second, he will be great: no other human being has ever, or will ever, be born who is greater than this child. He will be great in his life, great in his death, his resurrection, his ascension, great in his second coming, and great in his judgement. To be ashamed of Jesus, then, would be like a tea light being ashamed of the sun.

Third, his status. He will be the Son of the Most High – that is, the Son of God himself. St Paul called Jesus "the visible image of the invisible God." He is Immanuel, God made flesh, God among us.

Fourth, his lineage. He will sit on David's throne, he is therefore the Messiah, the one promised to Israel long ago to free them from oppression and lead them out of slavery into a new freedom with God. Taking David's throne he will be the good king, the just ruler of this world for whom God's people had been waiting.



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And finally, Gabriel talks about his permanence. His kingdom will never end. He comes to rule, and he lives and reigns today as our king and sure hope until the end of time.

And so, hearing this, Mary asks how? How can this happen – I am a virgin. Virgins don't have babies – you see, even Mary didn't need an Oxford don to tell her that. This Saviour, Son of God, and king, would be born of Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit overshadowing her – and in that the divine sonship of Jesus rests on and depends on the virgin birth. No virgin birth, no Son of God, no divine Saviour, no atoning death, no forgiveness of sins, no faith, no Church, no hope of heaven. Is the virgin birth an optional extra? No, it is a fundamental part of the Christian faith, the bedrock of Jesus' identity, power and authority: Son of Mary, Son of God. Man and divinity brought together to save man from the curse of sin: Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled. That reconciliation takes root first in the love of God and the obedience of Mary in the mystery of the virgin birth, and don't let anyone take that away – because if that goes, our whole notion of God, of Jesus, of Mary, of our faith, falls away.

Mary's response to the angel: "I am the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to your word."

What a model of faith and trust and obedience – one that all of us are called to follow; one that has inspired Christians for 2,000 years and moves us to honour Our Blessed Lady today. Such was her humility, that God raised her to great heights; such was her faith, that she battled through danger, exile, grief and sorrow all the way to the cross, as she stood beneath its shadow when others had fled. Such was the grace God poured into her soul that "All generations will call me blessed." And indeed, we call her blessed today – Mary, the first Christian, the first to accept Jesus Christ into her life and into her body as she bore him in her virgin womb for the salvation of the world.

Amen.



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THE SOCIETY OF MARY

Loving God by loving Our Lady since 1931

May Devotion and AGM

Saturday 14 May 2022

12 noon in S. Silas the Martyr NW5 3QP

Solemn Pontifical Concelebrated Mass

Principal Celebrant:

The Superior General, Bishop Robert Ladds

Chaplains of Mary, Mother of the Church who wish to concelebrate the Mass or to sit in choir at Vespers are asked to contact the Chaplain General by 29th April

**followed by the Procession of Our Lady
through the streets to Holy Trinity**

1.45pm Lunch in Holy Trinity Church Hall

Lunch costs £10 and is payable in cash on the day: no need to book

3.30pm AGM of the Society of Mary in Holy Trinity



**4pm in Holy Trinity,
Hartland Road, NW1 8DE
Solemn Vespers, Sermon
& Pontifical Benediction**

*Preacher: Father Peter Anthony, Parish Priest,
All Saints, Margaret Street, W.1*

*(Underground to Chalk Farm, Overground to Kentish Town West,
Buses 24, 46 and 393 pass the Church)*

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Visiting Mother

by Fr Sam McNally-Cross



In October 2021 as travel restrictions began to ease (at least a little) I made a pilgrimage to Rome. This has been one of my spiritual disciplines for many years, and, after surviving a very nasty bout of COVID in January 2021 which resulted in attendance by paramedics, it was time to go and say my prayers of thanks. I have several usual haunts that I visit as I make my way around the Eternal City but on this occasion there was another place I wanted to go, which had always evaded previous attempts due to time restraints, construction work or the like. This time I was not to be deterred and made my way to the Church of Santissima Trinita dei Monti, at the top of the Spanish Steps.

I arrived in the late afternoon on an unusually warm day for the first of October and after battling my way through the al fresco diners and Instagram posers who litter the street and Spanish Steps themselves I made my way up to the top and came face to face with the church. It was built in 1502 by King Louis XII of France (interestingly the whole site and the surrounding area remain property of the French State) and consecrated by Pope Sixtus V. The church sits next to a monastery of even older origin, having been built in 1494 by Saint Francis of Paola. Unfortunately the identity of the architect has been lost to the annals of time, but it is suggested it may be Giacomo della Porta who was a follower of the great Michelangelo. However, striking as it may be, it was not actually this church I had come to see, but the hidden chapel found within the convent next door.



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The steps up to the convent are steep but the climb is worth it for the incredible view it offers over Rome. Having ascended I found the tiny door, was greeted by the doorman who pointed me in the right direction to the most unusual chapel. In 1828 the convent was entrusted to a new community called The Sisters of the Sacred Heart, a teaching congregation founded by Saint Madeleine Sophie Barrat, and in the mid 19th century a young novice named Pauline Pedreau chose a wall in a corridor and, in honour of Our Lady, painted a mural - *Mater Admirabilis*.



When Pope Pius IX visited the convent he spotted this extraordinary image and quickly granted an authorisation to change the corridor into a chapel and it has been attracting visitors and pilgrims since and the image is reputed to be miraculous. At the age of 15 a young woman Marie Françoise-Thérèse Martin visited this chapel and knelt before the image, praying and asking for the grace of God that she might be permitted to enter the convent. It is safe to say her prayers were heard as this young lady went on to be Saint Thérèse of Lisieux and now, on her feast day, I was knelt in the same hushed chapel with 3 others, quietly saying our prayers.

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There is a beautiful prayer which is associated with the place. May the Mother of God pray for us.

*Mother Most Admirable,
Guardian of our interior life,
we come to ask you to detach us,
to loosen our grasp on visible things
and lead us back to the Invisible which your eyes behold:
The invisible presence
The invisible life
The invisible action
The invisible love
All these realities of faith which are, for us, eternal values.
When we are preoccupied in the activity of the visible,
keep us in the light of the unseen,
and make us strong as though we beheld the invisible.
Give us, we ask, a hunger and thirst for the essential.
Amen.*



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THE SOCIETY OF MARY

Loving God by loving Our Lady since 1931

October Devotion 2022

Saturday 8th October 2022

**Parish of S Peter and S Leonard, Horbury
Northgate, Norbury, Wakefield WF4 6AS**

12 noon Angelus & Solemn Pontifical Concelebrated Mass

Principal Celebrant:

The Superior General, Bishop Robert Ladds

*Chaplains of Mary, Mother of the Church who
wish to concelebrate please notify Fr Paul Cartwright
(fr.paul.cartwright@gmail.com or 07852174303)
by September 24th 2022*

1pm Lunch

*Please notify Fr Christopher Johnson
(fr.christopher.johnson@gmail.com or 01924 576 745)
to assist with numbers for catering.*

2pm Rosary, Homily, Procession and Benediction

Preacher: The Rt Rev'd Glyn Webster



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New Media Team

The Executive Committee and General Council are pleased to announce the formation of a new media team for the Society of Mary. They are Fr Simon Morris, Fr Sam McNally-Cross, Fr Aidan Bartlett and Mr Petter Kringberg. This will ensure that the website, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts are kept updated - offering various prayers, thoughts and devotions on days dedicated to Our Lady.



Fr Simon Morris



Fr Sam McNally-Cross



Fr Aidan Bartlett



Petter Kringberg

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S.O.M. – Merchandise *Order Form*

Please send this form, together with your remittance which should be made payable to **The Society of Mary, to the Sales Officer**, Kathy Redington, The Lilacs, Luxford Lane, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2PJ.

Enquiries should be directed to redingtonkathy@hotmail.com

Quantity	Item	Price (inc P&P)	Total
	Society Medal, Manual & Lapel Badge	£10.00	
	Mary – A focus for Unity for all Christians	£5.00	
Remittance – £			

Name

Address

.....

.....

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E-mail address

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The Society of Mary*(Established 1931)*

The Society of Mary springs from two similar societies founded in 1880 and 1901 respectively, which united in 1931. It has members all over the world and is not confined to Anglicans. Where there are sufficient members in one place or area, they combine to form a Ward, with a priest as Superior and an elected Secretary. They can organise regular services, meetings and many other activities. Five or more members may form a Cell, and organise joint prayer and fellowship.

Isolated members are joined to the Headquarters Ward.

The Society publishes its magazine *AVE* twice each year with details of pilgrimages, retreats, festival services etc. It is free to all members and is the effective link between the various Regions.

The Society is not affiliated to any single Shrine or Marian institution, and is the only organisation endeavouring to promote equally all the different aspects of devotion to Mary.

The Society of Mary

The Society is dedicated to the glory of God and in honour of the Holy Incarnation under the invocation of Our Lady, Help of Christians.

1. Members shall keep a Rule of Life, which will include such special devotions as the Angelus, the Rosary, the Litany and Anthems of Our Lady.
2. They will pray for Departed Members of the Society and offer Mass for them.
3. They will take part in the Mass on the principal Feasts of Our Lady.
4. They will engage in apostolic and pastoral work, according to opportunity, under the guidance of the local Ward Officers and the General Council.

Objects and Membership of the Society

The Society was founded as an Anglican Society with these Objects

1. To love and honour Mary.
2. To spread devotion to her in reparation for past neglect and misunderstanding, and in the cause of Christian Unity.
3. To take Mary as a model in purity, personal relationships and family life.



'The Pietà' by Michelangelo

**The General Council and Executive Committee
pray you have a blessed Lent
and a happy, holy Easter.**