



THE MAGAZINE OF THE
Society of Mary



American Region Edition

Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham

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www.somamerica.org

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 alone.

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 organize regular services, meetings and many other activities. Five or more members may form a Cell, and organize joint prayer and fellowship. Isolated members are joined to the Headquarters Ward.

The Society publishes its magazine "AVE" two times 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 organization endeavoring to promote equally all the different aspects of devotion to Mary.

THE SOCIETY RULE OF LIFE

The Society is dedicated to the glory of God and in honor 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 honor 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.

From the American Region Superior

Dear Members and Friends,

At the time of writing—late August—we are still in the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic. Any meaningful end to the public health crisis remains at least months away. This period has been stressful and difficult. Our prayers go out for those who have died, those who have been afflicted, those who have lost loved ones, and those who have suffered the loss of livelihoods and incomes. I am confident that members of the Society of Mary are doing what we can, according to our means, to bring comfort and assistance to those in need.

In many places, one of the key supports for people of faith has been taken away: namely, the privilege of gathering in church week-by-week for worship, the sacraments, prayer, and fellowship. Some parishes and congregations have undertaken tentative returns to limited “in-person” worship; others continue to provide remote worship via online live-streaming or video-conferencing.

In a theological sense, this pandemic has occasioned what might be called a “time of trial” or a “time of testing.” Let me be clear. I am not suggesting that God somehow sent this pandemic to test us. But I am suggesting that for the Church it has served as one of those events that come upon us unexpectedly and lay bare the quality of our spiritual foundations—as in Our Lord’s parable of two houses, one built on sand and one built on rock. When the rain fell, and the floods came, and the wind blew, the house built on rock stood firm, but the house built on sand fell “*and great was the fall of it*” (Matthew 7:24-27).

The parishes and congregations found best prepared for this pandemic were those that had already been building on solid foundations. In a few cases, this was true simply at a technological level. I know of at least one parish that in the past few years had installed a sophisticated system of wall-mounted cameras for recording and live-streaming liturgies. They had no idea that a pandemic was coming; they were simply responding to the pastoral needs of an ageing and geographically-dispersed congregation whose members could not always be physically present for worship.

At a spiritual level, the most impressive responses to the crisis have similarly come from those parishes and communities that already had a well-thought-out and doctrinally sound theology of worship. For

example, parishioners who had already been taught the doctrine of sacramental “concomitance”—even if not using that particular term—found the transition to Communion in one kind less distressing than those who had not.

Once live-streaming became the only option in many places for continued access to worship in locked-down churches, it is understandable that some dioceses and parishes switched to the celebration of Morning Prayer or Liturgy of the Word as a way of “leveling the spiritual playing field.” If everybody could not be together to receive Holy Communion, then the clergy also would “fast” from the Eucharist for a time in solidarity with their parishioners. That choice was consistent with certain traditions of Anglican understanding and practice.

I am grateful, however, that other parishes of a more Catholic bent decided unhesitatingly to keep offering Mass for the spiritual benefit of physically absent congregations whose members could participate remotely from home, often via hastily-improvised livestreaming technology. The holy sacrifice of the Mass is the most powerful intercession we can offer for the needs of the Church and the world. The venerable Catholic practice of “making a spiritual Communion” when unable to receive sacramentally became an invaluable rock to cling to while we weathered the storm.

I am also grateful that our bishops moved quickly to suppress well-intentioned but theologically confused proposals for “virtual Communion” by “teleconsecration”—about which perhaps the less said, the better. Great is the fall of houses built on sand.

Since this pandemic has occurred during a period “between cures” in my own priestly ministry, apart from my work for the Society of Mary and occasional Sunday supply, I have not been on the front lines of pastoral response to this crisis. So, I want to take this opportunity to record my profound admiration and gratitude for so many colleagues who are exercising their ministries with enormous courage, strength, resourcefulness, and good humor in the face of overwhelming challenges. I stand in awe.

Perhaps counterintuitively, also, I believe that our present trials are strengthening us for the future in ways that we can only dimly perceive at present. Specifically, I want to share three principal hopes for whatever “return to normal” lies ahead in the coming months and years.


First, contrary to those who fear that prolonged absence will irrevocably damage Mass attendance, we may actually be hopeful that one response of the faithful will be a renewed appreciation of the value of

gathering in our houses of worship, along with a greater commitment to regular participation in the liturgy. When something has been taken away from us for a time, we are less apt to take it for granted and more likely instead to recognize it for the incomparable privilege that it is.

Second, many Church members, lay and ordained, have found themselves moved to greater reliance on forms of personal prayer—particularly the Daily Office and Marian devotions such as the Holy Rosary. We may hope that when our churches fully reopen, this deepening of personal spiritual discipline will have strengthened us for our common life and mission.

Third, when we return to liturgical gatherings in our familiar sacred spaces, we may discover that in our absence we have learned something crucial: namely, that even when physically present in church we are still worshipping “at one remove.” Generations of liturgical theologians and mystics—going back to Saint John the Divine on the island of Patmos—have reminded us that the true liturgy, the ultimately real liturgy, is that offered in heaven before the Lamb’s eternal throne. Our temporal gatherings in earthly cathedrals, churches, and chapels represent another form of “remote participation”—a symbolic “livestreaming” in time and space of the endless offering of praise and thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity by Our Lady and all the angels and saints in heaven.

Our eventual return to full participation in the Church’s liturgical and sacramental life will be a joyous homecoming—and may God hasten its day! But we need to remember that, like a flatscreen TV on our living room wall, or a laptop and headphones connected to the internet, in-person earthly worship puts us in contact with a transcendent reality that continues to beckon us in its promise of the ultimate fulfillment of all our deepest desires and longings.

With all blessings in Christ and Our Lady,
 Fr John D. Alexander
 Superior, SOM American Region 

From the American Region Chaplain

Dear Members and Friends,

“The Old Has Passed Away; Behold, the New Has Come”
(I Corinthians 5:17)

The location of the Ark of the Covenant has fascinated religious believers and historians since its disappearance. The most revered object in Judaism famously came to the forefront once again with the 1981 movie, “Raiders of the Lost Ark.” Perhaps the only more sought-after sacred object is the Holy Grail.

Many theories have developed regarding the Ark’s current location. *Tosefta*, a Talmudic work, offers two theories of what may have happened to the Ark. One is that the final King of the first Temple period, King Josiah of Judah, may have hid the Ark along with other sacred relics in order to prevent their falling into the hands of the Babylonian invaders.

Another theory may be found in the Second Book of Maccabees. There the prophet Jeremiah conceals the Ark along with the Altar of Incense on Mount Nebo, claiming that the location will remain a secret, “*until God finally gathers his people together and shows them mercy*” (2 Macc. 2:7).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church claims that the Ark of the Covenant rests under the protection of their priests in the church of Our Lady Mary of Zion in Aksum in northern Ethiopia. Every year at the festival of Timkat (January 19) replicas of the Ark are paraded through city streets throughout the land.

However, perhaps the most commonly held theory is that the Ark of the Covenant, along with the Temple and all its sacred contents, were destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC. It is unlikely that they took the Ark back to Babylon since there it is not included on the detailed list of the items taken.

While it would be exciting if the Ark of the Covenant were to be found, our Catholic faith does not depend upon its current location even if it could be discovered all together. God has given us a New Ark, a better Ark, in which God Incarnate would dwell for nine months! With Mary’s “*Let it be done to me according to your will,*” the Virgin’s womb becomes the Ark of the New Covenant. She contains within her body the personhood of God. Eve’s disobedience in the Garden is now reversed with Mary’s “*Yes.*”

Scripture reminds us that God makes all things new. The baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River transforms a simple Jewish Rite into the Sacrament in which the newly baptized now passes over from death to life. At Passover, God transforms a ritual meal into the Holy Eucharist where bread and wine now become the Transubstantiated Body and Blood of God.

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews writes: *“Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.* (Hebrews 9:3-5)

Three main sacred items were contained in the first Ark: the Tables of the Covenant; the staff of the High Priest Aaron; and the Manna, the bread from heaven. As the first Ark contained the tablets of the Law, the Word of God written on stone, now the Virgin’s womb contains the New Covenant Word or Logos, who *“In the beginning ... was with God, and ... was God.”* (John 1:1). Similarly, as the first Ark encompassed Aaron’s rod representing the high priesthood, so now the Virgin’s womb encases *The High Priest, “who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God ...”* (Hebrews 4:14). And lastly, the manna in the first Ark is now replaced by Christ Himself, the Bread of Life, in the womb of Blessed Mary: *“... the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh”* (John 6:51).

The prophet Jeremiah announces the New Covenant established by the *Logos* born of the Virgin: *“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah ... For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”* (Jeremiah 31: 31,33)

It would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of needle than to find the first Ark of the Covenant. But that is perfectly fine, since we have a better Ark, a new Ark: Mary, the Mother of God, the *Theotokos*, who eternally prays and intercedes on our behalf before her Son who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Fr. Russell A. Griffin

Rector Church of St. Uriel the Archangel

Sea Girt, NJ 

From the Editor

This issue of AVE anticipates the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham (October 15) with three articles: one on the Holy House; another on the ministry of the American priest who helped establish the devotion in this country; and an update on the US Friends of Our Lady of Walsingham. In addition, Fr. Lawrence Crumb provides a meditation tying together Christ’s words to his Mother and St. John from the Cross with Mary’s long predicted role as the New Eve. Venturing into new literary territory, we take great pleasure in printing the first of three installments of a science fiction story by Canon David Bauman, Chaplain of the Guild of the Living Rosary, about a Marian apparition on Mars. Finally, in this time of Covid-19, your Editor has explored the history and art of Venice’s most famous “Plague Church,” built as a votive offering for the city’s deliverance from the Black Death in 1630.

Our Annual Meeting on June 6, 2020 took place by ZOOM video-conference but proved one of our best-attended in many years. Unofficial minutes are published here. And although many Wards and Cells are not meeting presently, we have four encouraging reports. Stay safe and well; and remember that one of the roles of Our Lady has been as a protector from pandemics and a pointer to the promise of eternal life in Her Son.

Phoebe Pettingell 



Mary, The Woman Foretold

A Good Friday Meditation

by Fr. Lawrence N. Crumb

“Woman, behold thy son!” “Behold thy mother.” (John19: 26-27)

In this third word from the cross, as Jesus commends his mother to the care of St. John, the beloved disciple, and the disciple to the affection of his mother, we have what is a very obvious play on words. She has already been beholding the son to whom she gave birth, has been beholding him for many hours – nay, for many years. She who beheld him at close

range during his infancy and childhood had also beheld him during those last years which we call his public ministry. In the story of the first miracle, at the wedding in Cana, we are told that “the mother of Jesus was there.” On another occasion, Jesus is informed that his mother and some kinsmen have just arrived at the door, and he takes advantage of the opportunity to state that all who follow the will of God are equally dear to him. According to tradition, one of the stopping-places along the way of the cross, that sad journey from the judgment-seat to the place of execution, was the point where our Lord encountered his blessed mother. And now, at the hour of death, when strong men have fled, we find the sorrowful mother, a few faithful women, and the youngest of the disciples. She who has made Jesus her chief concern, from the moment of his conception to the hour of his death, now receives the seemingly superfluous command, “Behold thy son!” But in the context of the situation, the words take on an unusual meaning. Just as she is beholding her son for what is apparently the last time, he tells her to divert her gaze to another, to the disciple John, and to behold him for the first time in this new light, regarding him as her son thereafter. In contrast with the nightmare of her own son’s death, she is given a vision of his life being continued through his mystical body, the Church, as represented by the beloved, or ideal, disciple. “Behold thy son!” The play on words is as obvious as it is poignant.

In fact, it is so obvious that it may cause us to overlook another play on words which is even more important. We may notice in passing that here, as on other occasions, Jesus addresses his mother by the word “woman” – a practice which at first strikes us as being rather strange, in comparison with our own usage, but which we soon become used to and take for granted, perhaps writing it off as simply reflecting a difference in custom or language. Now undoubtedly the customs of the time, and the figures of speech in the language which Jesus spoke, will go a long way to explain his use of this word. And yet, in order to grasp its full significance, we must also see it against the background of the Jewish religious heritage. In the Hebrew scriptures, the word “woman” has a very special significance, for it first appears as the proper name of Adam’s partner. Just as his name comes from the Hebrew word meaning “man” (in the generic sense), so Adam is recorded as saying, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman.” For a while then, in the Genesis narrative, she is referred to simply as “the woman,” and when she and her husband receive their punishment for

eating the forbidden fruit, she is mentioned also in the punishment that is given to the serpent for beguiling them. “And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field ... And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Here was God’s promise of hope for the undoing of the power of sin, that from among the woman’s seed, that is, her offspring, her descendants, there would arise one who would overthrow the dominion of evil, treading down Satan under his feet. And so, as Jesus, hanging on the cross, looks down at this other woman, this sinless woman, his pious Jewish mother, he remembers the promise made to the first woman, the promise recorded in the sacred books of the Torah, which every pious Jew knew so well; and it is against this background of God’s promise to her whose only name was Woman, that he cries out, “Woman, behold thy Son!” This is the promised seed that would bruise the serpent’s head, and this is precisely the manner in which he does so, through his atoning death on the cross. And by addressing his mother with the Hebrew word “woman,” so rich in scriptural overtones, he is simply doing with full knowledge of what generations of Christians have done virtually by instinct, in regarding Mary as the Second Eve. This specific name Eve is given to the woman later in the Genesis narrative, and is based on the Hebrew word for life; as we read, “Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.” It is perhaps a subtle hint to his mother, in this hour of his death, that he is not dying at all in any final sense, as he calls her Woman, Eve, the mother of the living, not the dead. If this overtone of meaning seems to depend on straining the scriptures unduly, we have only to remember Jesus’ own words to the Sadducees, who denied that there was any resurrection of the dead: “Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Matthew 22:31-32). And so, whether she realized it or not, he is here telling Mary that she is not the mother of the dying, but of the living. Indeed, like Eve, she is the mother of all living, for just as Eve was to become the mother of all those endowed with a natural human life, even so Mary, by the very process of her son’s death on the cross, was becoming the mother of all who would share in his supernatural life, becoming, through the baptismal sacrament of death and resurrection, partakers of the divine nature, sons of God by adoption, and joint-heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

It is for this reason that Jesus could turn, from these words to his mother, to St. John, the beloved disciple, the representative Christian, and say, “Behold, thy mother!” Following the example of St. John, the Church from earliest times has regarded the mother of Christ with both honor and affection. In later years, devotion to the Blessed Virgin was encouraged in some places to the point where it may have seemed excessive, and out of proportion to its rightful place in the totality of the Christian religion. However, we must remember that in its origins, this encouragement of Marian devotion was both wholesome and necessary, for it was not an emphasis on Mary in and of herself, but as representing the sanctity not only of motherhood but of marriage, the home, and all family relationships. At a time when crusaders and travelling merchants were coming into contact with polygamous Muslim civilization; when troubadours and wandering minstrels made popular the convention of courtly love, with songs in praise of a lady-fair who was not the singer’s wife; when areas of Europe were being Christianized for the first time from a background of the rankest paganism, as represented by the Germanic fertility cults – at such a time, it was only natural that the Church should try to replace sensual songs to “my lady” with devotional hymns to “Our Lady,” the symbol of purity and all virtue. And so today, as we hear this third word from the cross, it is only natural that we should behold, with St. John, that mother who is the prototype of Christian motherhood and inspiration for the Christian home and family, finding in the cross of Christ the meeting-place between word and sacrament – in the case of this third word, the sacrament which makes possible the Christian home and family, the sacrament of holy matrimony. In all of the difficulties which may arise from the married state, Jesus assures us, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” It is in the sacrament of holy matrimony that we receive the grace which is needed to live out a truly Christian marriage, through the son of woman whom we here behold.

This meditation was given in St. John’s Church, Lafayette, Indiana on Good Friday, April 16, 1965. Fr. Lawrence N. Crumb is a priest of the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon. ❖❖❖



Santa Maria della Salute: Our Lady of Health

By Phoebe Pettingell

One of the first sights a visitor to Venice notices is the spectacular dome of Santa Maria della Salute, situated on the Punta del Dogana, a narrow spit of land between the Giudecca and Grand Canals where they empty into the lagoon. In this time of our most recent pandemic, this church has a special relevance: it was built in thanksgiving for Our Lady's mercy in sparing the survivors of a particularly virulent attack of plague on the city in 1630, during which of the 140,000 inhabitants approximately 46,000 died. Begun in 1631, but not completed until 1682, this octagonal building greets boats entering Venice. The dome or "crown," as the



Santa Maria della Salute, Venice

architect called it, is topped by a statue of Mary dressed as an admiral, her hand on a rudder, steering the ship of state. This double dome, a smaller on top of a greater, with two lesser bell towers behind, dominates the skyline and is the focal point of many pictures of this unique landscape. For almost five centuries it has provided a visual promise of hope and encouragement to residents and visitors alike.

Each November 21, on the Feast of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, the authorities of Venice, together with crowds of its citizens, process from the Basilica of St. Mark to Santa Maria della Salute, crossing the canal on floating pontoon bridges set up for the occasion, and enter the church for a festal mass that not only commemorates the feast but also Our Lady's intercession in 1630 for the stricken city. To put this in perspective for us today, approximately thirty-three percent of the population had died, so the toll had been enormous, but those who lived were grateful it had not been worse. Santa Maria was the fifth and last of the city's "plague churches" erected during the 15th and 16th centuries. The earliest ones were dedicated to saints invoked against the Black Death—St. Roch, St. Sebastian, and oddly "St. Job." The fourth was another of Venice's most celebrated places of worship, "Il Redentore," or Church of the Most Holy Redeemer (1592), built by Venice's most celebrated architect, Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), influenced by ancient Greek and Roman styles.

When the authorities of the Venetian Republic decided to add a fifth votive church as a further spiritual fortress guarding the city, they chose the Mother of God as its patroness, and held a competition among architects. They ultimately chose Balsadare Longhena (1598-1682), only twenty-six at the time, for his imaginative conception of shaping the building like a crown. Longhena introduced the baroque style to a place previously constructed first on Byzantine models, then Neo-Classical. To support the enormous weight of his dome, the architect first sank thousands of pilings into the sandy soil. Twelve baroque scrolls at the base of the dome function as buttresses to help support the structure which stands as an amazing feat of engineering. The facade is adorned with statues representing the four Evangelists, the Prophets, Saints George and Theodore (dragon-fighting saints were also invoked against plagues), and Judith with the head of Holofernes—a popular Renaissance symbol of the triumph of Good over its enemies.

Clear windows around the dome allow light to illuminate the main interior, causing the "marble" walls to glow (in reality, brick covered with a paste made of marble dust called *marmorino*, popular at the time). The

interior of the dome itself represents Mary's womb, as the exterior symbolizes her heavenly crown. Eight side chapels make the building star-shaped—the *Stella Maris*. However, none are visible from the central rotunda. Instead, one's view is focused on the high altar. A 12th century Byzantine "Black Madonna"—Our Lady Mediatrix—is enshrined there. In this iconography, her blackness represents other-worldliness. Owing to its location, Venice was a principal trading partner of Byzantium until it fell to the Ottomans in 1453, and the signs of this partnership are scattered throughout the city. Around and over the icon are allegorical statues by the Flemish sculptor, Josse de Corte (1627-1679) representing the church's dedication: "The Queen of Heaven expelling Plague." "Lady Venice" implores the Virgin with her Child to spare her. In answer, Our Lady sends a small, fierce cherub with a weapon to drive away an ancient crone representing the plague. Below, on either side, two patrons of Venice—St. Mark, and St. Lorenzo Justinian, an Augustinian canon who became the first patriarch of the city—gaze up from below at this drama of mercy and salvation.

Venetian churches are celebrated for their opulent paintings, generally by Renaissance masters, and this one is no exception. Many of these continue the plague deliverance theme. The first three chapels



Santa Maria della Salute, Altarpiece with Our Lady Expelling the Plague

on the right side have works by Luca Giordano (1634-1705), depicting the Presentation of Our Lady in the Temple, her Assumption, and her Nativity. The third altar on the left is by Titian (1490-1576), his Pentecost or Descent of the Holy Spirit. The Virgin and the Apostles gaze in amazement as the Dove appears to break through a window above them, sending flames over their heads. Titian also painted Saint Mark enthroned with Saints Cosmo, Damian, Sebastian, and Roch over the altar in the Great Sacristy, commemorating deliverance from an earlier visitation of the Black Death. Cosmo and Damian were physicians before their martyrdom, while Saint Roch's wounded thigh and St. Sebastian's death by arrows evolved into symbols of a disease understood at the time to be caused by "miasmas" or bad air. (Unlike a virus like Covid-19, which can be airborne, Bubonic Plague is mostly carried by parasites like fleas and by touching its skin lesions, though it would be many centuries before this became known.) Titian also provided ceiling paintings on the Great Sacristy of three Old Testament scenes associated with peril: Abraham preparing to sacrifice Isaac; Cain and Abel; and David and Goliath. One really needs a mirror to view these properly, and the church provides them. He also painted circular *tondi* of the (then) eight Doctors of the Church and the Evangelists. Another major art work in the Great Sacristy is The Marriage at Cana by Tintoretto (1518-1594), a major exponent of the Venetian school. The viewer looks down the length of the table toward Jesus, seated at its head, with the Virgin Mary bending over his shoulder pointing out that the wine has run out, and requesting her son to perform his first miracle. Art critics believe that some of the guests are painters of the period, including a self-portrait of Tintoretto himself in an orange robe at the end of the table nearest the spectator.

Santa Maria della Salute merits many pilgrimages to fully appreciate its glories. However, these are not merely great art as in a museum but objects of spiritual contemplation in a church that for centuries has given people hope in times of trouble that might otherwise cause despair. We should be mindful of Our Lady of Health because her mercy is available if we turn to her. She is always steering us toward the truest kind of deliverance: the grace and liberation offered by her Son, our Lord and Savior.

Phoebe Pettingell, Editor of AVE, lives in northern Wisconsin. AVE

The Holy House of Walsingham

Meditation in a Time of Pandemic

by Fr. John D. Alexander

Mention Our Lady of Walsingham, and the image that springs to mind is the Blessed Virgin Mary enthroned as Queen, the Christ Child sitting on her knee, a lily scepter in her right hand. Part of Fr. Alfred Hope Patten's genius was to commission the modern statue to a design based on the medieval priory seal in the British Museum. In 1922, he enshrined the image in Saint Mary's Parish Church in Walsingham, Norfolk, where he was Vicar, and on October 15, 1931 he had it translated in solemn procession to its present location in the newly constructed Anglican Shrine across the road from the ancient Priory grounds.

Devotees of Our Lady of Walsingham do well to remember, however, that the medieval pilgrimage had a dual focus: the Image and the Holy House. This point can easily be overlooked. Other Walsingham shrines around the world feature reproductions of the statue but none, to my knowledge, of the Holy House.



Grotto of the Annunciation, Nazareth



Holy House of Loreto, Sculpted Marble Exterior

The Holy House is absolutely central to the Walsingham devotion. The one medieval source we have describing its origins is the “Pynson Ballad,” published in 1490, which tells of the Blessed Virgin Mary appearing in 1061 to the Lady of the Manor, Richeldis de Faverches, showing her the house in Nazareth where the Annunciation had taken place, and directing her to have a replica built to its exact dimensions. The ballad then recounts the Holy House’s miraculous construction by angels on the spot that Mary had chosen, and the many wondrous healings that had since taken place there.

The image of Our Lady was admittedly also a central focus of the medieval pilgrims’ devotions. Writing of his 1511 pilgrimage to Walsingham in his *Peregrinatio* (1526), the humanist reformer Erasmus describes the original statue as “unremarkable in stature, materials, and workmanship,” sitting at the east end of the Holy House, to the right of the altar, surrounded by candles and *ex voto* offerings. Significantly, however, the Pynson Ballad makes no mention of the statue. The original miracle of Walsingham, according to the founding legend, was clearly the construction of the Holy House itself.

Devotion to the Holy House is historically associated with at least three geographical locations. First is Nazareth in the Holy Land itself. There, in the crypt under the modern Basilica of the Annunciation one



Chapel, Our Lady of the Annunciation, King's Lynn

can view the grotto where the house once stood in which, it is believed, the Angel Gabriel brought the glad tidings that Mary was to bear the Son of God (Luke 1:26-38). By tradition, this house was also the home to which the Holy Family returned after their sojourn in Egypt and where Jesus grew up (Matt. 2:19-23).

The second location is, of course, Walsingham. As noted above, the Pynson Ballad dates the construction of the Holy House, originally a small wooden structure, to 1061. The Augustinian Canons established a priory in 1153 to care for it. In 1226, Henry III was the first of a series of monarchs to make the pilgrimage over the course of three centuries. In the fifteenth century, the large priory church, of which today only an arch remains standing, was constructed.

The third location is Loreto, Italy. According to the local legend, angels miraculously transported the Nazareth Holy House there in 1295 to preserve it from desecration at the hands of the Muslims. Perhaps these



Holy House Exterior, Walsingham Anglican Shrine

angels also foresaw the fate in store for the Walsingham Holy House, burnt to the ground by the agents of King Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell in 1538. Happily, the Holy House of Loreto remains standing to this day, encased in a baroque marble screen and enclosed within a magnificent fifteenth-century basilica.

As Gary Waller relates in *Walsingham and the English Imagination* (2011)—a book with some useful information and interesting arguments despite its non-Christian perspective—the memory of Walsingham never faded completely after the destruction of 1538. Late sixteenth-century ballads alluded to the pilgrimage; one, written by an anonymous Recusant around 1600, bitterly lamented the shrine’s desecration. An eighteenth-century guidebook mentioned that “superstitious country folk” still remembered that the Milky Way had once been called the “Walsingham Way,” guiding medieval pilgrims to their destination. The two holy wells became “wishing wells.” Nineteenth century literary works such as Agnes Strickland’s 1835 novel *The Pilgrims of Walsingham*—not great literature but popular in its day—and Gerard Manley Hopkins’ poem “The Loss of the Eurydice” (1878) raised awareness of the medieval pilgrimage. The publication of Erasmus’ *Peregrinatio* in 1849 and of the Pynson Ballad in 1875 renewed interest in the Holy House. The Roman Catholic Edward



Walsingham Chapel, Buxted, Sussex

Waterton's *History of English Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary* (1879) gave a full 60 pages to Walsingham.

The earliest modern effort at reconstruction took place not in Norfolk but about 160 miles to the south in Buxted, Sussex. There, in 1887, the Anglo-Catholic Fr. Arthur Douglas Wagner built a church dedicated to Saint Mary the Virgin, including a "Walsingham Chapel" constructed to the exact dimensions of the Holy House. It was as a curate at Buxted in 1918 that Fr. Patten first heard of Walsingham, well before he ever imagined that he would be Vicar there.

Meanwhile, in King's Lynn (27 miles west of Walsingham), the Roman Catholic Fr. George Wrigglesworth built the Church of the Annunciation of our Lady in 1897, which included a smaller-scale replica of the Holy House of Loreto. Initial funding for this project came from the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII), who was concerned that Roman Catholic guests at the nearby Sandringham Estate (including foreign heads of state, diplomats, and nobles) should have an appropriate place for worship.

Since the likeness of Our Lady of Walsingham had not yet been rediscovered, Fr. Wrigglesworth had a statue carved in Oberammergau after the pattern of the one in Santa Maria in Cosmedin in Rome, the titular Church of Cardinal Pole, the last Archbishop of Canterbury to be in communion with the Holy See. The statue was installed on August 19, 1897, and a rescript of Pope Leo XIII designated the King's Lynn chapel

the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Walsingham in England.

The parishioners made a pilgrimage the next day by train to the Slipper Chapel at Houghton St. Giles, which had been bought by Charlotte Boyd and restored to use for Catholic worship the same year. The Slipper Chapel had traditionally been the last stop on the road to Walsingham, from which many pilgrims walked the remaining mile barefoot. For the following three decades, however, King's Lynn remained the center of Roman Catholic devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham.

Fr. Patten, a frequent visitor to the European continent, incorporated his first-hand knowledge of Loreto into his designs for the Holy House in the Anglican shrine built in 1931. It was not until 1934—and largely to counter the Anglican Shrine's influence—that the Slipper Chapel was designated the Roman Catholic National Shrine of Our Lady. Happily, in more recent decades the initial bitter rivalry between the two shrines has given way to a more ecumenical spirit of friendship and cooperation.

The foregoing thumbnail history of the Holy House points to the enduring divine and human significance of houses in general. In a time of pandemic and lockdown, we have been told repeatedly that “the Church is the people, not the building.” It is true that a church building without a worshiping congregation can seem little more than an empty shell (although God is always present, most especially where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved). But the converse is also true: a family without a house, apartment, or similar accommodation is “homeless”—a condition of fundamental deprivation that needs to be remedied at the first opportunity. The same goes, *mutatis mutandis*, for parish families and church communities. They need homes, too. (Experiments at “churches without walls” are the exceptions that prove the rule.)

The Holy Family were sojourners in Bethlehem and refugees in Egypt. Our Lord and his disciples knew what it was like to live on the road: “*Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head*” (Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58). But the Holy House of Nazareth reminds us of the blessed time our Lord spent with Mary and Joseph in the domestic years when he “*grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man*” (Luke 2:52).

Virtually everyone I know who has made the pilgrimage reports that returning to the Holy House—or even arriving there for the first time—feels like coming home. But this homecoming focuses our attention in turn on God's presence in all the homes from which we came and to which we shall return. Because at Nazareth “*the Word became flesh and*

dwelt among us” (John 1:14), God continues to dwell with us wherever we go. As T. S. Eliot put it in relation to another pilgrimage destination (Little Gidding) in England:

With the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling
 We shall not cease from exploration
 And the end of all our exploring
 Will be to arrive where we started
 And know the place for the first time.

Fr. John D. Alexander, Superior of the American Region of the Society of Mary, lives in Massachusetts. He has lost count of the number of times he has visited Walsingham. AVE



Walsingham in America

The Rev'd Canon Vivan Albertus Peterson,
 1892-1966

by John W. Conner

A personal disappointment for me in the wake of the coronavirus has been the postponement of the “Descent of the Dove” conference on pneumatology which was to be held at Pusey House, Oxford, this past July. Several students and faculty at Nashotah House were hoping to make the trek and not only take in the city of Dreaming Spires but also, perhaps more importantly for the readership of AVE, make our pilgrimage to Walsingham. Needless to say, the realities of our present moment made this impossible.

This deferred journey allowed me to reflect on my perhaps romantic take on the great shrine and its work. Since I was an undergraduate I have come to see its witness as a sign of hope for those “catholics of Anglican obedience” in the midst of our current ecclesial and broader societal confusion. Familiarizing myself with Fr. Alfred Hope Patten’s efforts to restore the Holy House has proven a source of inspiration. Less well known, however, is the equally inspiring story of the American priest who popularized devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham in the United States.

In the earliest years following the restoration of the Walsingham



*Becket Reliquary
Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham*

shrine in 1921, Fr. Patten relied on the material and spiritual support of those scattered clergy and faithful throughout the Anglican Communion who saw his efforts as a genuine retrieval of Marian piety lost at the Reformation. Michael Yelton, in his biography of Patten, relates how as far back as 1926 shrines to Our Lady of Walsingham were already being erected in both Canada and the Bahamas. In 1930, the first reported American shrine could be found at Grace Church in Sheboygan, WI. The Rev'd A. Parker Curtiss, rector of the parish, even travelled to Norfolk to have the image blessed and a new altar constructed for Grace's own shrine. In 1950, under the impetus of then rector Fr. William Elwell, Grace Church began its now long standing tradition of pilgrimage to the proto-shrine. Though the shrine at Grace Sheboygan was the first in America, however, the connection between the English Shrine and the



American church would be cemented by the efforts of our subject, Rev. Canon Vivan Albertus Peterson.

Born in Illinois in 1892, Peterson was the son of Lorena C. Rousseau and William Albert Peterson, a cattle broker in Chicago. A 1960 article in *The American Church News*, the monthly magazine of the American Church Union, noted appreciatively how Fr. Peterson “grew up in the years of this [20th] century when there were giants in the Episcopal Church. The diocese [sic] of the

Mid-West were governed by bishops of great stature. Bishops Grafton and Weller of Fond du Lac, Nicholson and Webb in Milwaukee, McLaren and Anderson in Chicago, John Hazen White in Northern Indiana.” Father Peterson received a Bachelor of Divinity in 1916 from Nashotah House, which would also eventually award him an honorary Doctorate of Divinity in 1940.

Peterson was ordained deacon in 1915 and then priested in 1916, both by the former Nashotah Professor of Dogmatics and President, Bishop William Walter Webb of Milwaukee. Peterson later cited two Nashotah luminaries, including Webb and the sometime dean of the seminary, Edward Allen Larrabee, as his greatest influences. Following a short curacy at St. Matthew’s in Kenosha and a spell as priest-in-charge at St. Luke’s in Racine (both in the Diocese



Vivan A. Peterson (Center)


of Milwaukee), Fr. Peterson took up in 1919 the post that he would be most noted for: the rectorate of St. James Church in Cleveland, Ohio, where he would stay for the next forty-five years. The list of Peterson's achievements between his arrival at St. James and retirement in 1964 is a foray into the now seemingly forgotten world of catholic Anglicanism in this country. Besides serving on Diocesan Council and varying local committees as well as as a General Convention delegate, Fr. Peterson, at the behest of Bp. Ivins of Milwaukee, was also a member of the editorial board that produced *The American Missal*, was Chaplain General to the Community of the Transfiguration in Glendale, Ohio, and served as the commissary for the early American Benedictines, now at St. Gregory's Abbey in Three Rivers, Michigan. He was also active in the Catholic Congress movement in this country, and its successor the above-mentioned American Church Union (ACU), even serving as Master of Ceremonies at the Solemn High Mass for the Oxford Movement Centennial Congress (1933) in Philadelphia and, for a time, as Field Director for the ACU and chairman of its Cleveland chapter. Further cementing this legacy is the relationship Peterson fostered with the restorer of Walsingham.

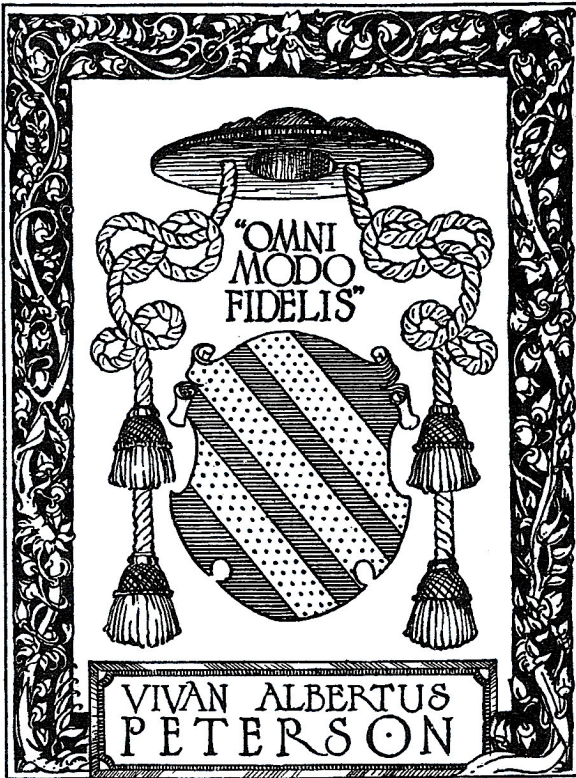
After making his first pilgrimage in 1923, Fr. Peterson began a long-running friendship with Fr. Patten that found the son of the Windy City frequenting the Norfolk shrine and supporting the restorer's various building and beautification schemes. This, most famously, culminated in 1946 when Canon Peterson gifted "the very great gift," Fr. Patten relates, of "...some relics of S. Thomas of Canterbury. These relics consist of bone of the Saint and are indeed one of our greatest treasures; very minute indeed are the three little fragments, but more precious than gold." He goes on to say how he himself "has, virtually all his life, hoped to possess two relics: those of his patrons, S. Hugh of Lincoln and S. Thomas of Canterbury. At last after all these years of waiting S. Thomas's have arrived..." For this kindly and personal gesture, along with his many years of faithful support, Peterson was the first American to be elected an Honorary Guardian of the Shrine. Finally, in June of 1964, Canon Peterson retired from St. James and died in September of 1966 being buried next to his wife Cornelia in the cemetery of the Benedictines at Three Rivers.

The passing of the likes of Canon Peterson drew to a close a chapter in the American Church's history where a seemingly triumphant catholic Anglicanism could find ascendancy and exert considerable influence. As the catholic allegiances characteristic of the inheritors of the Oxford

Movement are increasingly marginalized in the American Church, the task of holding up the memory of the likes of Vivan Albertus Peterson and of his own heroes, Bishop Webb and Fr. Larrabee, would seem all the more imperative. It perhaps behooves us in this moment to look to the continuing legacy and witness of “England’s Nazareth” as well as to do that prayerful work of *anamnesis*, of calling into our present the narrative of God’s action in our history: to cherish these things in our hearts, like Mary the faithful daughter of Zion, and to call on her prayers for the overshadowing Spirit to lead us toward our own promised future.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, Our Lady of Walsingham, pray for us!

John W. Conner is a life member of the Society of Mary and a rising senior at Nashotah House Theological Seminary as well as a postulant for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Pennsylvania (TEC). He can be reached at: jconner@nashotah.edu 



Vivan Albertus Peterson Bookplate

The U.S. Friends of Our Lady of Walsingham

The Story so Far...

By Fr. Jeffrey Queen

If you browse the website of the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham (www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk), you will see the title “The Story so Far...” as an option to explore on the home page. The first full paragraph on that page begins with the familiar line... Richeldis de Faverches was a Saxon noblewoman, married to the Lord of the Manor of Walsingham Parva.

I imagine most of you know Lady Richeldis’s story and her vision of the Blessed Virgin’s request in the year 1061. Our Lady sought shelter, and Richeldis responded.

She began construction. As with most home improvement projects, things didn’t go smoothly at first, and the craftsmen were unable to fulfill their mission. Upon considerable prayer, a vigil watch, and a miraculous intervention, the construction of the first Holy House was completed—and with it the discovery of the Holy Well.

We know what happens next: an image is carved and pilgrims begin making their way to Walsingham to visit Our Lady’s house and find healing at the well. So goes the story, right? Well, not quite.

It seems the image we know as Our Lady of Walsingham comes later. At first, there is a small, one-room dwelling. The vision of it is repeated three times for Richeldis, and with each glimpse into the heavenly realm, Our Lady makes her plea for shelter in the midst of a chaotic world. This place is to be a replica of the house where Our Lady receives the Annunciation from Gabriel and the place will be known from then on as England’s Nazareth.

The image is eventually carved, probably after Richeldis’ son dies. The responsibility for the Holy House and Priory passes to the care of the Augustinian Canons, who provide for pilgrims until the Reformation, when the shrine is destroyed. It will ultimately be restored in part through the loving care of the local Anglican parish priest, Fr. Alfred

Hope Patten, welcoming pilgrims today and inviting all into a deeper relationship with God through Mary and her Son.

I am fascinated and inspired by Our Lady’s request for shelter. That request is as much needed today as it has ever been. And although the Holy House is the first reminder of that vision for us today, it is certainly not the last, for the story of Walsingham does not end in that small village in Norfolk. The story continues through the centuries in the hearts of all pilgrims who search for Our Lady and Her Son and who willingly open their hearts in response to her request.

This call to make room for Mary and Jesus is at the heart of the mission of the newly reconstituted US Friends of Walsingham. In our recent re-organization, we state that our goal is to “promote and educate the US public in regard to work and support of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.”

We hope to again bring Richeldis’s vision to our own land and to encourage a new generation of pilgrims to make room in their hearts and lives for Our Lady and Her Son. This will come about in traditional ways, such as the formation of new cells of the Society of Our Lady of Walsingham in local churches and communities as well as the establishment and promotion of local shrines to Our Lady.

We also hope to promote local events and pilgrimages closer to home—ideally in cooperation with other Marian societies such as the Society of Mary—using as a model the wonderful work done by the people of Grace Episcopal Church in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and their yearly Walsingham Festival each October.

We also hope to be a work of charity and a resource for the fiscal needs of the Shrine in England, through the use of occasional appeals and the encouragement of regular giving by US Friends to the work and mission of the Shrine. Donations to the US Friends of Our Lady of Walsingham, a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation, are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

The College of Guardians, the official caretakers of the Shrine in England, has encouraged and approved the reorganization of the US Friends of Walsingham, and our board of directors is currently made up of clergy and laity from various states. Our most recent and ongoing appeal is to help raise monies for the much-needed repair of the Shrine Bell Tower, which was recently completed but not completely funded, requiring the Shrine to use scarce reserves to finish.

Our board meets yearly in October, during the Walsingham Festival

at Our Lady of Grace in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. However, due to Covid-19 restrictions, the meeting for 2020 as well as the festival will take place virtually.

A member of the US Friends board of directors, Fr. Steven Rice, has created an online platform on Facebook as a hub for the US Friends of Walsingham. For those of you who wish to contact the organization or make a contribution via US post, you can write to... US Friends of Walsingham, PO. BOX 312, Fort Thomas, KY, 41075.

The Vision of Walsingham is still alive in our present day. The need to provide shelter for Our Lady and Her Son Jesus is just as important now as when Gabriel announced the Good News that a virgin would conceive and bear the Son of God. That shelter today consists of both organized shrines and more importantly, the shrine in every heart where the peace of Christ abides and devotion to Our Lady is kept. Will you answer Our Lady's call for shelter? We invite you to support the work and become part of the story so far of Walsingham, and join this modern-day pilgrimage.

Fr. Jeffrey Queen, Rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Fort Thomas, Kentucky, is the President of the Board of Directors of the US Friends of Our Lady of Walsingham. The Society of Mary, American Region has no organizational affiliation with the US Friends of Our Lady of Walsingham. AVE



The Drought in Newton Crater

By Father David M. Baumann

“Blessed is anyone who trusts in the Lord... and is not anxious in the year of drought.” Jeremiah 17:7a, 8b

Part 1 of three parts Setting: Mars, the 22nd Century

Father Gideon Adroa had been sitting at his desk almost without moving for over half an hour. He had been trying to write his sermon for Palm Sunday, but nothing had come to him. His mind kept wandering, affected by the anxiety that drenched the village of Soledad

where he had been pastor for almost two years. He had all the words, he had insights into the Scripture, but now all that felt dry and almost lifeless. He didn't trust himself to be able to speak with much conviction.

His mind wandered. He recalled how his bishop had called him into his office and informed him that he'd been appointed to Soledad, a roughshod settlement in the southern hemisphere of Mars. The entire population was Catholic and faithful, and respected their pastor, so it was a good posting, especially for a 32-year-old man who'd grown up in a tiny but historic Ugandan village whose Christian roots dated back nearly three centuries to the martyrdoms of the late 1880s.

Nothing changed much in Soledad. At least not until now. Now a spirit of fear had taken hold and was growing. For more than three months, a brutal sandstorm had covered most of the southern hemisphere of Mars, disrupting communications even among the larger settlements and completely isolating the small villages. Travel was all but impossible. Such storms were not unknown, for they blew up every few years, and the settlers were familiar with the necessary survival procedures. Stored food supplies were plentiful, and one could close and seal the domes that covered the inhabited areas like blisters for the couple of weeks or two or three months, however long the storms lasted. That was not unusual nor particularly threatening.

Soledad, however, was in critical condition, for in addition to being isolated by the storm, it was also in the forty-second day of an unforeseen and unprecedented drought. Founded in 2119 in the Terra Sirenum area of the southern hemisphere of Mars, sixty years later it was in its third generation of settlers; in all that time, the springwaters had never failed. They flowed clearly and dependably from the lower part of the cracks in a rugged portion of the northern wall of Newton Crater, nearly 200 miles across. Small but abundant and swiftly moving, the river supplied every need the settlers had for water. It supported the prosperous brick-making industry and the farmlands that produced food not only for the villagers but for many of the outlying settlements on the surface. It flowed from the edge of the dome through the village lands to the far side of the dome nearly three miles away; then it surged over the upland area with its massive cratering until it plunged dramatically over the edge of the plateau in one of the largest waterfalls on the fourth planet. It fell into air, its spray fanning out like a horsetail, and then made its way to the low area of Newton Crater where there had been a lake in the distant early years of Mars' active period. Then the waters drained through Ma'adim Vallis, at more than 400 miles

long one of the largest outflow channels on the planet.

But the flow of water had ceased abruptly on the morning before Ash Wednesday. Raymond Tremain, the geological engineer, reasoned that inside the crater wall the rocks had shifted and blocked the underground passage of the river. The wall of Newton Crater nearest to Soledad was heavily marked by dozens of narrow wrinkles that made the terrain look like a prune. Below the wrinkles were short narrow sapping channels that showed where groundwater had cut and shaped the land. The terraformation process that had been started over a century earlier had changed the face of the planet and made it habitable by settlers from Earth. The rapid warming of the atmosphere had melted the water that had been frozen as sheet ice for many millennia. The water was, of course, not only welcome but vital, but at times its effect was also unpredictable. Evidently it had undermined some formation inside the crater wall, and the resulting collapse had suddenly blocked the water needed by the people of Soledad not only for their work but for their survival.

Father Adroa knew the Bible well, and had always scored high marks in the seminary in Kampala. His sermons were usually well received by the people. But he had no experience dealing with the blanket of fear that shrouded the populace. With a feeling of shame, he decided to dig into his archives and preach an old sermon.

On the morning of the Tuesday in Holy Week, most of the two hundred and forty-three villagers assembled in the church of St. Ildephonsus for Mass. Few if any remained at home, for the anxiety over the drought had become intense, and they sought words of encouragement and hope from their pastor. Several dozen came early to pray, and the votive candles burned in greater numbers than had been seen for several years.

The previous day, Father Adroa had taken the day for prayer and thought. Today he felt more confidence about how to address the fears of his people. Considering the crisis that the settlement was going through, he departed from the appointed lessons and preached on Matthew 7:24-27, the account of the wise and foolish builders. "In both cases," he said, "there were storms and winds, but only the foolish who built their house on sand saw their house collapse. The wise who built their house on rock saw their house withstand the assaults that were leveled against it. Let us all be like the wise," he concluded, "and endure this trial. It is a time when our faith, being tested, can become stronger when we see the providence of God, which he will show in his own way and time."

When the Mass was over, a dozen or so people thanked him for his encouragement, but most said little or nothing, and the drawn looks of anxiety remained on their faces. He had to admit to himself that, though he firmly believed the words he had preached, he had no idea how God's providence would work. He looked into the near future and saw nothing he could point to as a sign that God would meet the needs of the villagers.

Soledad's water reserves were kept in towers on the edges of the cultivated fields where the water could be drawn on for the crops without having recourse to the now vanished river. There were a few pools by the riverbed, but they were rapidly emptying as people took their buckets to them. Water was being rationed, and the farmers solemnly informed the people that the towers would be empty in less than ten days.

The following day, Father Adroa once again set aside the appointed lessons and preached on Numbers 20:10-13, the account of Moses' striking the rock with his staff to bring an abundant flow of water to the thirsty people. "Note that Moses struck the rock twice," Father Adroa pointed out with a firm voice. "The first time, so it appears, was not the strike that brought the water. This calls us to deepen our faith and be patient, and await God's timing."

Even Father Adroa felt that this interpretation was a stretch. The anxiety in the village was deepening into desperation. He hoped that the tension would not erupt into arguments between friends or secret and selfish hoarding of what water there was. The people were definitely being put to the test. Outside the dome, the sandstorm whirled and roared with unabated force, making the skies deep brown and fearsome to hear and to see. The vehemence of the winds sounded like a monstrous engine, constantly in motion. The spirit of the village was driven by constant fear, for the sound reminded them of a horrendous predator, relentlessly determined to burst through the shelter of the dome.

The path of the river entered the dome at the edge of the lower parts of the crater and exited on the far side, from which it coursed through the plain toward the great waterfall many miles away. Raymond Tremain called the farmers and brickmakers together.

"You all know that even with careful rationing of the water in the towers," he said, "our reserves are being used up. If we're going to survive, we need to go outside the dome and pump in water from one of the pools." No one spoke; they all knew that there was no other option. "We'll take up the irrigation pipes, plug the holes, and lay a course to the pool we use for swimming. We'll use the reserve pipes first since they

haven't got any holes in them yet. If we have eight or ten workers, we ought to be able to get it done in three days, maybe four."

"What about all the sand in the pools?" someone asked. "The sandstorm isn't showing any signs of calming down yet."

"We'll just have to put a filter where the pipe enters the water, and plant it deep below the surface. And o' course we'll put another filter where the pipe enters the dome. That one'll have to be checked regularly—maybe even hourly—to make sure it doesn't clog up. It's the only choice we've got."

No one had any questions. It was comforting, even if just a little, to have something to do, to have a plan that could buy them some time. And going out into the ferocity of the sandstorm buoyed the men's courage.

On Holy Thursday, a ten-year-old girl named Beatrice and her younger brother Thomas walked to the northernmost edge of the dome where it came down among the tumbled boulders, blind alleys, and tortuous ravines of the crater wall. About a hundred yards away was the place where the dome covered the lower portions of the wall where the river had flowed from the rock, but other than that, there was little there to interest the people of Soledad. The ground was mostly hard rock, unsuitable for farming and far from the quarry used to dig the material for brickmaking. The children had decided to play in the most remote part of the endomed community because they wanted to escape from the mood of anxiety that was consuming their elders.

After exploring the ravines and underhangs of the rock formations, Beatrice suddenly stopped short and stared. She saw a woman standing beneath an outcropping of stone on a ledge that spread out from the cliff and then fell a few feet into a shallow sandy deposit. Beatrice stared for nearly a minute without saying anything, and the woman regarded her with a pleasant and peaceful expression.

"What is it, Beatrice?" asked Thomas. "What are you looking at?"

The girl didn't answer. Finally she asked, "Who are you? How did you get inside the dome?"

"You will be able to answer those questions yourself at a later time, child," said the woman. "I have come to inspire hope in your people and the people to come."

"Hope?" Though she was bewildered by what she heard, a peacefulness settled over Beatrice as if she had stepped into a warm bath. "Our village needs hope. Our water is running out. If we don't get more, we will all die of thirst."

“You will not die,” said the woman. “God will provide what you need.”
 “When will he do that? We need water now.”

“You need something more than water, and that will come first. Then the water will come.”

“What do we need more than water?” asked Beatrice, puzzlement written across her face.

“Who are you talking to, Beatrice?” Her brother pulled on her sleeve, and spoke in a whisper. Somehow he knew that this wasn’t a game.

“The people of Soledad need to trust God,” said the woman. “They need faith more than they need water, and God will teach them about faith before he provides the water. He always knows what you need most.”

“How will he teach them about faith?”

“You will tell the people that they must hold onto their faith, and when they do, it will deepen. And then God will provide the water.”

“How am I supposed to teach the people about faith? I’m only a little girl.”

“Start with your parents, and then tell the priest. Pray to God to guide you and to give you the words to say. The faith of the people will deepen, but it will start with you.”

“But how will I do it? Who are you? Why are you telling me to do this?”

The woman smiled, and it seemed to Beatrice that the sun had warmed her as on the brightest day of summer. “I have already told you, Beatrice. You will answer that question yourself in good time. Come back here tomorrow morning and I will give you a message that will encourage the people of Soledad. Now go tell your parents what you have seen.”

“But, but—” protested Beatrice, but she could no longer see the woman on the ledge. It seemed as if a bright play of sunlight had filled the ledge and caused her eyes to blink repeatedly. And when she could see again, there was no sign of the woman. She turned to Thomas, and her eyes were big and her face was drawn in an expression that her brother had never seen before.

“What happened?” asked Thomas in a whisper. “Who were you talking to? Why do you look so strange?”

“I don’t know, Thomas; I don’t know. But we have to go home; we have to go home right now.”

To be continued...

Father David Baumann—Chaplain of the Guild of the Living Rosary—is author of the ten-volume Starman Saga, a science fiction chronicle set in the middle years of the twenty-second century and undergirded with firm

Christian theology. “The Drought in Newton Crater” is a short story set in the world of the Starmen but is not a central part of that tale. It was first published in 2019 in NovaSF, a periodical dedicated to science fiction stories that include the life of faith. The story is published here with the permission of Wesley Kawato, the publisher of NovaSF. AVE



Minutes of the 59th Annual Meeting of the American Region of the Society of Mary

Saturday, June 6, 2020, at 11 a.m. ET
Held Virtually as a Zoom Conference

The 59th Annual Meeting of the Society of Mary (SoM) was held on June 6, 2020, as a virtual meeting. This was done because of the restrictions on travel and gathering in groups resulting from the Coronavirus Pandemic. As such, the SoM Annual Mass and Luncheon generally held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting did not occur. Therefore, the Annual Meeting took place as a Zoom Conference – with the participants connected to the meeting via video combined with audio or simply by calling in (audio only). A hardcopy letter dated April 27, 2020 was mailed to all members of the American Region notifying them of the meeting’s date, time, and online venue, and inviting them to register with the Secretary to attend the meeting. Those who registered were then sent an email the day before the meeting with the necessary online access link.

There were at least 37 attendees at the meeting, all of whom were members of the SoM:

15 of them were the following Officers and Council Members: The Rev’d Fr. John D. Alexander, Ph.D., Superior; The Rev’d Russell A. Griffin, Chaplain; Dr. David B. J. Chase, Treasurer; Ms. Phoebe Pettingell, Editor of *AVE*; Dr. Paul Cooper, Secretary; The Rev’d J. Connor Haynes; The Rev’d Jonathan J. D. Ostman; Dr. John P. Rosso; The Rev’d Canon Barry E. B. Swain; The Rev’d Warren Tanghe; Mr. Frederick T. McGuire III; Mr. Adam Barner; The Rev’d Jay C. James; The Rev’d Martin Yost; and Mrs. Coral Webb.

The other SoM members who attended were Mrs. Elizabeth Alexander; Mr. Robert E. Armidon; The Rev’d Nicholas Athanaelos; The Rev’d Canon Robert W. Bader; Ms. Linda Chase Brissey; Mr. Daniel P. Devlin; Ms.

Martha C. Eischen; Mr. Joseph M. Feliciani; Col. John Friedlander; Dr. Dario Gherzi; Mr. Christopher Hart; Mr. Dustin E. Henderson; The Rev'd Phil Jacobs; The Rt. Rev'd Chandler Jones; Dr. Bruce Lawrence; Mr. David Lewis; Ms. Betty M. Logan; The Rev'd Michael D. Moyer; The Rev'd Steve Rice; Mr. John Robert; Ms. Jean Savage; and Mr. Samuel W. Sommers.

Regrets were received from Mr. Paul W. McKee; Mr. William Peterson; and Dr. Wallace H. Spaulding, who also conveyed his good wishes to all in attendance.

Opening. At 11:03 a.m. ET, Fr. Superior called the meeting to order. He followed the Agenda which had been sent to all the invitees. Fr. Chaplain then led the opening formula of prayer from the newly revised SoM American Region Manual.

Fr. Superior's Report. Fr. Alexander addressed the meeting as follows:

A New Experience. He thanked the Chaplain and the Secretary for attending to the details of this virtual Annual Meeting. At this time of the pandemic and civil unrest, Our Lady is a source of strength and comfort. She will help us. He invited us to ask him or Fr. Chaplain if anyone needs their prayers.

Online Presence and Email Contact. Over the past year, the SoM has increased its online presence with a Facebook page and has sent out e-newsletters and online issues of AVE, using the email program Constant Contact.

New Manual. A major project during the past six months has been the completion and publication of a revised Manual for the SoM American Region. This Manual is now available for on-demand printing and shipping via Amazon.com for a price of \$5.00.

Conclusion. In summary, it has been an eventful year.

Fr. Chaplain's Report. As Chaplain of the General Ward, Fr. Griffin described the results of emails that have been sent out. Using the Constant Contact program, he said that for the latest email – including AVE – he successfully sent out 409 of these messages. Of this total, 241 were opened; 165 were not; and 3 unsubscribed. He likes the results and continues the quest for obtaining the email addresses of all of our more than 600 members. This would make it possible for him to target the members of a particular Ward or Cell, should that be desired under certain circumstances.

Treasurer's Report. Dr. David Chase, Treasurer, said that the SoM functions financially via a) an Investment Account, which is funded by bequests, and b) the Operating (Checking) Account, which is funded by dues from the members and the sale of medals, etc. For details, he referred the attendees to the latest full financial report, which appeared in the March 2020 issue of AVE. He then made the following observations:

Funding AVE. In 2016, Council decided to invest heavily in AVE. Saying that we all are beneficiaries of this policy, he called attention to the outstanding appearance and content of what we recognize as our national magazine.

Payment of Dues. Most members are mail-in members. Getting out the dues notices depends on when volunteers can do this, which sometimes results in delays. Nevertheless, we are in good shape financially.

Editor of AVE Report. Ms. Phoebe Pettingell, Editor of AVE, reported as follows:

The most recent issue of AVE – the Annunciation 2020 (March 2020) issue – was sent out by mail and is available online at www.somamerica.org, as is also the prior issue – the Our Lady of Sorrows (September 2019).

The next issue of AVE is expected in August or early fall.

Thanks go to Scott Edie for his graphic design work for AVE.

We welcome articles contributed by members, ideally 800 to 1,200 words in length. She also welcomes reports from Wards and Cells on their activities, as well as high-resolution pictures of pilgrimages, etc.

Father Alexander thanked Phoebe for a superb job of compiling and editing.

Secretary's Report. Dr. Paul Cooper, Secretary, reported on the following SoM developments since the last Annual Meeting:

Membership, Wards and Cells. The total number of membership units of the SoM (American Region) now stands at 688; (651 and 661 in 2019 and 2018 respectively.) Spouses included in these units bring the total membership to 713 (676 in 2019 and 688 in 2018). Members of three religious communities, each such community being one membership unit, increase the total membership beyond this number. Having sorted the latest membership list, he reported the number of members by state. He also reported that there are 23 active Wards as well as 2 that are in the process of reactivating; and there are 6 active Cells in the Region. There are 69 inactive Wards and 34 inactive Cells for a total of 103 inactive or a grand total of 132 inactive and active Wards and Cells.

Recently formed Wards and Cells:

Mary, Mother of the Church Ward, Fort Worth, TX

Our Lady of Lourdes Ward, Athens, GA

Our Lady of Emmanuel Cell, Shawnee, OK (had been an inactive Ward)

Wards in the Process of Reactivation:

Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles Ward, Milwaukee WI (being revived)

Our Lady of Victory, Chicago, IL

Guild of the Living Rosary (GLR) Report. Fr. Alexander reported in the absence of Fr. Baumann. He said that some new arrangements will be announced at the next Annual Meeting.

Election of Council Members. Fr. Alexander called for nominations for the Council Class of 2024. Dr. Cooper moved that the Annual Meeting attendees approve the election of the following three persons nominated by the Regional Council at its meeting of March 14, 2020; the nominees include one of the incumbents of the Class of 2020 (indicated below with an asterisk) for the Class of 2024. Ms. Pettingell seconded the motion. Fr. Alexander then asked for a) “No” votes and b) abstentions. There being no response in either of these categories, he declared these three persons unanimously elected:

Mr. Andrew Nardone

Mrs. Elizabeth Baumann

The Rev’d Martin Yost*

Fr. Alexander offered his congratulations to the two new members. He thanked Mrs. Coral Webb and Dr. Wallace H. Spaulding, retiring members of the Class of 2020, for their many years of faithful service on Council. He then appealed for new talent in the coming years, particularly younger folk who have a solid commitment to Catholic Marian theology and useful skills in areas such as editing, online facility, accounting and financial capability, legal expertise, etc. He went on to say that he finds service on Council very rewarding and that we have a good team and work well together.

Other Business. The following responses were made to Fr. Alexander’s call for other business:

Mr. Robert Armidon, of Nashotah House, suggested that membership dues be waived and that free copies of AVE be made available – if financing allows – to seminarians. Fr. Alexander saw this as worth discussing and will follow up with Robert on it.

Fr. Michael Moyer, of Berlin, MD, suggested that, in view of the success of today's meeting format, dispersed members could form a Cell that meets via Zoom, adding that this technology could see more calling in to meetings. Fr. Griffin, in his capacity as Chaplain of the General Ward (whose members are dispersed), commented that he could have a Zoom meeting of this Ward for Marian devotion – including the Rosary – and fellowship, say, two or three times a year.

Mr. Christopher Hart, of St. Mary's, Wayne, PA, suggested that SoM have a presence at the next General Convention – virtually if necessary.

Canon Robert Bader, of Lawrenceville, GA, of the Ward of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour at St. Barnabas', Dunwoody, GA, likes the new Manual.


Mr. Frederick T. McGuire, of Cleveland, OH, unable to unmute himself during this Zoom meeting, called the Secretary immediately after the meeting and congratulated SoM on the new Manual.

2021 SoM Annual Meeting. Fr. Alexander said that next year's Annual Mass and Meeting will take place on Saturday, May 15, 2021, at S. Clement's Church, Philadelphia. He said we can explore with them the use of live streaming, (which they are doing well in the present situation,) as well as physical attendance at that event.

Adjournment. Fr. Alexander prefaced the adjournment by expressing his thanks to all who joined this virtual meeting. He believes that 37 attendees represent the highest number of actual SoM members at any of our recent Annual Meetings.

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Fr. Griffin then led the closing formula; and the meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m. ET.

Respectfully submitted,



Paul Cooper

Secretary, Society of Mary, American Region

July 20, 2020

Note: the foregoing Minutes have not yet been approved by the SoM America Regional Council and are published here for informational purposes only. AVE

News of Ward and Cells

We are always glad for word of the activities of Society of Mary Wards and Cells in the American Region. Since printing the previous issue of AVE, we have received the following three communications.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Ward—Northeastern Illinois

Due to the pandemic the Ward has not met since March 7th. We decided this month not to meet until the beginning of 2021. Since the youngest members are in their late 50s and the rest of us are in our 70s and 80s this was a big reason why we have not met. I will see if the ward would be able to say the rosary via Zoom or some other type of meeting. Our meeting location is still not having group meetings. I think that is still the best for our Ward. Please keep us all in your prayers. Blessings,

Linda Chase Brissey, Secretary

Mary, Help of Christians Ward—Church of the Ascension (Episcopal), Rockville Centre, New York

The Mary, Help of Christians Ward in Rockville Centre, Long Island, is doing well. We had to close the church to public worship this past March, but since July 5 we are open again with 50% capacity at worship. Things are a bit different for the time being, but we have faith that things will return to normal in time. While the church was closed, the Society members were encouraged to continue to pray their Rosary at home and to especially remember all those who have been impacted by Covid 19.

The link here (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxBzI9vVpEg>) is from a video that was created to share with the congregation on Maundy Thursday, which happens to be the anniversary of the creation of our group. Now that the church has been recently wired for livestream broadcasts, we hope to stream our monthly Rosary starting in September.

Ken Mensing, Secretary

Our Lady of Emmanuel—Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Shawnee, Oklahoma

A group of Society members has formed a local cell at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Shawnee, in the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma. The group started three years ago as Marian Anglo-Catholics that

wanted to pray the Rosary together. In 2018, we decided to begin our membership with the Society of Mary, American Region. Previously, our parish held a local Ward; however, it eventually dissolved. We are now reorganizing as a cell with the name Our Lady of Emmanuel. We have kept to the discipline and precepts of the Society by remembering the Marian devotions, feast days, and offering up Holy Eucharist for the repose of past Society members. We even took a pilgrimage this past fall to a shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in northeastern Oklahoma. We are hoping to grow our group with prospective members. Our Rector, Father Tom Dahlman, is providing leadership for our cell. In light of all that is happening in the world today, we pray that you all are safe and well. May Our Lady wrap us under Her Mantle.


Rowdy Washburn, Secretary

Queen of Peace Ward—Saint Martin’s Anglican Church (APA), Ocala, Florida

Our Ward is thriving quite well. We started in 2017 with 11 or 12, and now are at 15. We lost one this year to cancer, but then picked up another interested communicant. This number reflects about 50% of our communicants at St. Martin’s.

On Tuesdays at 10 a.m., we pray the Rosary, using all the mysteries in rotation, including the Luminous Mysteries. And we have since folded the Angelus into our prayer life, to be prayed after the Rosary. Following that, a Deacon’s Mass is said commemorating any Feast Day of the BVM that occurs in the week and, failing that, one of the several saints that may have feast days that week. And we do use blue vestments and Mass set. Our Rosary is prayed from a Rosary Booklet from Old St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Portland Maine.

We are interested in reaching out to other Catholic churches ... We are the only church in our diocese in Ocala and suburbs. We are always on the look-out to expand the Church through the Rosary. Our Vicar Fr. David F. Sokol leads our Ward. He and Mrs. Sokol are also members of the Ward.

Fr. Dcn. Allen A. Ryan, OSBN, Secretary 

FORM OF APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
Send to the AMERICAN REGION MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATOR
Lynne Walker
Society of Mary, P.O. Box 930
Lorton, VA 22079-2930
membershipadministrator@somamerica.org

DECLARATION (which must be made by those desiring to
be admitted to membership of the Society of Mary)

I, _____ (Revd/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)
(block letters – Full name) *(Delete as appropriate)*

Declare that I am a member of the Holy Catholic Church and that I conform to her Discipline and Precepts, and desire to be admitted a MEMBER of the Society of Mary and hereby PROMISE to fulfill the Conditions and Undertake to Promote the Objects and keep the Rules of the Society.

*I enclose herewith my first subscription of \$15 for one year or \$250 for a Life Subscription.
If I want a Society of Mary medal, I have enclosed an additional \$20 for that purpose.*

Signed _____

Mailing Address *(block letters)* _____

E-mail Address _____

RECOMMENDATION by a Priest *(who need not necessarily be a Member)*

From my PERSONAL knowledge of _____
(block letters)

I believe that he/she is suitable to be admitted as a member of the Society of Mary.

Date _____ (Signed) _____

Address _____

Parish/Appointment _____



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Cover illustration:
Our Lady of Walsingham, Anglican Shrine Statue

For information on the Society of Mary
in the Church of England, including
the English edition of AVE, please visit
<http://societyofmary.weebly.com>

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