



THE MAGAZINE OF THE
Society of Mary



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From the Superior

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Dear Members and Friends of the Society of Mary,

Much of what I do as an officer of our Society involves travel and, in a joyful sense, pilgrimage. Over the past decade, our annual Masses and meetings have entailed journeys to host parishes from Boston to Winston-Salem, from the Jersey Shore to Denver.

At our most recent Council meeting, we discussed the idea of conducting all future Annual Meetings by Zoom videoconference. While a few of our members have demonstrated an impressive commitment to traveling the long distances required to attend Annual Meetings, the greatest numbers of attendees have generally come from the host parish and its surrounding area. Holding the Annual Meeting by Zoom will thus foster more consistent participation by a broader distribution of our members across the country.

We do plan, however, to continue holding an Annual Mass at a separate time in a different location each year. This remains a valuable opportunity for pilgrimage to the diverse places where our Wards and Cells carry on their impressive devotion and witness.

At the time of writing, I have just returned from spending the month of October in England. While my wife and I did much traveling and sightseeing, two excursions in particular took on the character of pilgrimages: one to the English Society of Mary's October Devotion in Lancashire, and the other to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk.

The English Society of Mary holds two principal public gatherings each year. The May devotion is always at the Church of St. Silas the Martyr, Kentish Town, in north London. Then, in October, the Society holds a devotion somewhere in the north of England, partly to accommodate members who are unable to travel to London. And this year, the October devotion was held at the Church of Saint George the Martyr in Preston, Lancashire.

The train journey from London to Preston took just over two hours. I found it amusing that last May it took me longer than that to drive from my parish in southern New Jersey to Albany, New York, for our Annual Mass and Meeting at the Cathedral of All Saints—one of the shorter distances that I have had to travel to attend Society of Mary gatherings in the United States.

Although I had never before been to Preston, our arrival at St. George's Church felt like a homecoming. I had not been with the officers of the English Society since a pilgrimage to Lourdes in the summer of 2016. They greeted me warmly, and engaged me in sustained and lively conversation. It made me feel that somewhere along the line I had been



Saint George's, Preston



Mass of the Translation of the Image of Our Lady of Walsingham



*View of the Anglican Shrine from the Priory Grounds,
Walsingham*

promoted from the status of visiting overseas dignitary to that of an old friend. I was intrigued to learn of the English Society's plans to undertake a pilgrimage to Poland in 2024.

It was also an occasion of making new friends, as these gatherings always are. In the pew in front of us was a monk wearing what I recognized as the habit of the Community of the Resurrection. To my astonishment, at the end of Mass he turned around and asked if I were still at Christ Church, Woodbury! He turned out to be Brother Steven, CR, originally from S. Clement's, Philadelphia, but now a member of the Mirfield community for twenty years. Before leaving, I also had a brief but excellent conversation with the Vicar, Fr. David Craven, SSC.

The day's proceedings were more or less what I expected: a sung Mass in the contemporary Roman Rite (as is the custom of English Anglo-Catholics), a hearty and convivial lunch in the parish hall; back into the church for recitation of the Rosary; an excellent sermon by Philip North, Bishop of Blackburn; a festive procession of our Lady through the streets of Preston; and back again into the church for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.



*Fr Graeme Rowlands Superior General of the English SoM
and Fr John Alexander, Superior of the SoM USA*

The October devotion is always timed to fall near the Feast of our Lady of the Rosary on October 7, and this year it fell on the exact date. Sadly, it was also the day of the brutal Hamas attacks in southern Israel. Reports were just beginning to filter through of the violence then taking place, though at that time we were as yet unaware of its enormity.

Since the sixteenth century, the Feast of our Lady of the Rosary has been associated with the 1571 defeat of the Ottoman navy by the combined fleets of the Holy League at the Battle of Lepanto, after Pope Pius V had called on all Europe to pray the Rosary for victory. Perhaps in our own day we can take up praying the Rosary for reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians and a just peace in the Holy Land. Our Lady will surely unite our prayers to hers for the land and peoples dear to her heart.

The following weekend, we rented a car and drove from London to Walsingham, arriving in time for Friday evening Shrine Prayers. My main reason for wanting to go that weekend was the commemoration on Saturday, October 14, of the Translation of the Image of Our Lady of Walsingham from the parish church to the newly built Anglican Shrine in 1931.

The drive to Walsingham, in rural Norfolk, is an arduous business. The last few miles are along one-lane roads lined on both sides with thick hedges. It is impossible for two cars to pass each other without one on them backing up to find a place to pull off the road. Yet this remote village in a remote corner of a remote part of England was thronged with pilgrims from all over the country and beyond.

Making our way Saturday morning to the Anglican Shrine from our lodgings in the village, we encountered literally hundreds of people in the High Street speaking what sounded like a Slavic language—participants, it turned out, in a Polish national pilgrimage to the Roman Catholic Shrine. Meanwhile, the Anglican Shrine Church was filled almost to capacity with a congregation of whom at least two-thirds were Africans, West Indians, and East Asians. This wonderful multi-ethnic offering of worship seemed to me a fulfillment of the concluding line of Robert Lowell’s poem: “and the world shall come to Walsingham.”

Although I have made the pilgrimage to Walsingham more than a dozen times in the past four decades, this year was the first time that the grounds of the medieval priory, destroyed by Henry VIII in 1537, were open to the public. So, ditching our plans to walk the holy mile to the Slipper Chapel, we spent the best part of the afternoon wandering the expansive fields, gardens, and woodlands surrounding the ancient ruins. Well worth the entrance fee, it is a beautiful, quiet, and tranquil

spot—especially on a sunny autumn afternoon—yet not without a touch of melancholy. Later, I recalled lines from the anonymous *Lament for our Lady's Shrine at Walsingham*, written around 1600:

Bitter, bitter O to behold
 The grass to grow
 Where the walls of Walsingham
 So stately did show.

Level, level with the ground
 The towers do lie
 Which, with their golden glittering tops
 Pierced once the sky.

Yet the poet's resigned conclusion, "Walsingham, O farewell!" has not the last word. Today, four centuries later, the Anglican Shrine's Italianate campanile visibly rises beyond the encircling priory walls. After crucifixion, resurrection. After death, new life.

When we departed the priory grounds, it seemed fitting to pay a visit to the parish church of Saint Mary and All Saints, where Fr. Alfred Hope Patten installed the refashioned image of Our Lady of Walsingham in 1922. From here, ninety-two years ago, he had her translated in solemn procession to the new Holy House he had built. In the empty church, warmly illuminated by the late-afternoon sun, I happily recalled the shocked exclamation of Bertram Pollock, Bishop of Norwich, sometime in the twenties: "This is worse than I thought! Much worse than I thought!" We then went outside into the churchyard, located Fr. Patten's grave, and paid our respects to the Founder.

Pilgrimage to destinations near or far, whether literal or figurative, is an integral component of the Christian spiritual life. Christ is both the destination and the way. Our Lady and all the angels and saints accompany us. And I have shared my impressions of these two recent pilgrimages in the hope that readers will likewise be encouraged to continue in the pilgrim's way however our Lord may lead them. **AVE**

With all blessings and prayers,
 Fr. John D. Alexander,
 Superior

THE TRUE CHURCH AND THE TRUE DISCIPLE

*A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral of All Saints
in the City and Diocese of Albany
for the Society of Mary, May 20, 2023
by the Dean, The Very Rev. Fr. Leander S. Harding, Ph.D.*

For my text this morning in addition to the Gospel reading I want to take the iconography of the reredos above the High Altar.

The great East window, above the high altar and the reredos, takes us to the island of Patmos where with the seer, St. John, The Theologian, we are taken up with him, on the Lord's day, in a trance, in which for a time the grim reality of an Imperial Gulag fades from view and he sees the doors of heaven open. The late Lutheran theologian Robert Jenson never tired of pointing out that in the Bible heaven is not far away and that there are doors between heaven and earth and the doors open and there is commerce between heaven and earth and the angels, the messengers who bring good news of earth to heaven and heaven to earth, go back and forth.

Now we are with St. John, and we see into heaven and we see the Lamb upon the throne and the saints in glory and we join their song, Holy, Holy, Holy.

Now the scene is moving. The Lord, the crucified, risen, ascended, coming again Lord, is as He said he would, moving



Cathedral of All Saints, High Altar.

toward us, coming again, as He promised to make all things new, to perfect the work He has begun in us to make us new men and new women, fit for the New Jerusalem which will be the final arrival of the New Heavens and the New Earth and the glory of the Lord will be all in all.

We are with the seer. We see it. We hear it. We smell it. We taste it in the bread and the wine, and in the liturgy, we have as St. Paul, says, an *arabon*, a down payment, a foretaste of the world to come, which is already arriving.

St. John gets free from that prison island and dies an old man, radiant with holiness and love, a recognized saint. Like St. Paul he carries about in his body the death of Christ that the Life of Christ might be known in Him as well. What can the prison keepers do to such a man, to one who has seen such things and who knows such things? It is the keepers who are in prison and the saint who is free. In the midst of the disorder of this world he is sustained and can sustain others by a vision, by an experience, of one coming to finish reordering all things with His love. So as St. Paul says, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. Already in the liturgy we meet Him for the consummation which is already and not yet.

How in the midst of a world which is on the one hand God's good creation and on the other as grim as a Roman penal colony, can we live with the faith, hope, and love of those who have heard the angels sing and have tasted of the bread of heaven and the cup of salvation?

We look at the feet of the coming Lord and we see two figures: Mary and John. Mary has a crown and John has a Lilly, Mary's flower.

I think of these two figures as door keepers, keeping open the doors of heaven so that we might see what John sees and hear the angels singing and take heart. They keep the doors open for us so that we can see what John sees and know what John knows.

His mother and the beloved disciple stayed until the end, until Simeon's prophecy had come true and a sword had pierced her heart as she suffered the torment and rejection of her son.

With His last breath He gives them to each other. "Mother behold your son. Son behold your mother." The scripture tells us that from that day forward the beloved disciple took her to his own house. It can mean something very practical and it can mean that she became of the utmost importance to him.

In the Gospel of John everything has a deeper meaning. Life means more than existence. Bread means more than even the Mana in the wilderness but eternal life. Mary needs a home, and the disciple needs a way to honor his Lord, but we also need to understand the character of

the true church and the life of the true disciple and the figure of Mary and John at the foot of the cross gives us that and gives us the pattern of the relationship between the true disciple and the true church.

Mary is the figure of the true church, that church that is more than what the sociologists call a voluntary association which we can make whatever we want with enough votes and resolutions but the church as our true Mother who gives us life, who brings us forth into the world in a sacrifice of love and obedience, who gives us the pure virgin milk of the holy scripture, who teaches us to sing with her, “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my savior.”

Mary is the one who brings us the real Jesus, the baby of Bethlehem, the boy in the Temple, the suffering servant who speaks to His friend and His mother from the cross.

I was taught to notice that which is being taught by virtue of its absence. When Mary disappears, as she has in too many of our churches and in too much of our theology, both the real humanity and the real divinity of the real Lord disappear and we get some other Jesus, an abstraction instead of the only begotten son of the Father, who takes our humanity from the flesh of the Virgin Mary and by the power of the Holy Spirit tabernacles among us.

Mary as a living presence in the church holds out to us the Christ of the scriptures, the Lord incarnate, Emmanuel, God with us.

The Mary we see here, a door keeper of the House of the Lord, of the Temple not made with hands, now crowned as the Queen of Heaven, is also Our Lady of Sorrows, accepting the prophecy of Simeon, keeping faith with her Son in His passion, a witness to the end. This speaks to me of the passion and suffering of Christ in His body, the church.

We take our place with Mary as she remains a faithful companion to the rejected, reviled, and crucified Christ. There is a mystery here, a connection between the adherence to the cross, the compassionate acceptance of the rejection and violence toward the Lord from the world and even from within the church. This patience in sorrow—this humble faith in the promise of the angel which at the foot of the cross appears completely contradicted. There is a connection between this suffering trust which does not run away—they all ran away except the Mother and the beloved disciple—a connection between this suffering trust and the crown of the Queen of Heaven. We see the heart of Mary encircled with thorns and pierced with the sword of sorrows but we also see her heart encircled with roses as sorrows bloom with holiness and joy.

The cross of Jesus Christ is a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to

Greeks but to us who are being saved, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Mary shows us how to be faithful to the cross of Christ and how the way of trusting sorrow becomes the way of holiness and love and joy. She shows us the way to be crowned with heaven's joy. She shows us how to carry the death of Christ that the life of Christ might be made known in us as well.

When Mary is honored, where her presence is honored and revered—the truth of the church appears, the church as more than a human

association—the church that appears is our Mother that gives us life and feeds us and helps us grow—the church that is humble before God and teaches us to be humble and find our true freedom in obedience—the church that shows us how to surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit making us pregnant with the Word of God and bringing forth new life in our hearts and in those whose hearts we touch.

The church clinging to the cross as the way to the crown of the resurrection—the church longing for the purity and holiness of Mary—when this Marian church thus begins to appear in our hearts and in the life of our congregations and we like John, the beloved disciple



*Cathedral of All Saints, East Window
(Detail).*

obey the Lord and take her to our own house and make her of utmost importance and actually grasp and hold tight to this Lilly—claim this one—Our Lady, the Mother of God, then indeed the doors open and we behold the Lord of heaven and earth come to make us and all things new and we see what John saw and know what John knew and are able to live as John lived with faith, hope, and love—with suffering trust in the promises of God. When the church finds herself, even a little in the mirror of Mary and we find ourselves, even a little in the mirror of St. John clasping the Lilly to his breast, then the doors of heaven open and what we see causes us to sing with Mary, “My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior.” Amen. **AVE**

NOTRE-DAME DE LIESSE (The Black Virgin of Liesse)

By The Rev'd Canon Barry E. B. Swain

Liesse is a very small town in the historic north-west former Province of Picardy. Even today it is a small and very unremarkable place, rather like the area of Norfolk around Walsingham. Since the 12th century, however, it has been the site of the cultus of Notre-Dame de Liesse, colloquially known as The Black Virgin of Liesse as she is (as at Montserrat) one of the “black virgins” common to France, Spain and Italy, whose origins remain unclear.

The basilica was built in the late 13th and early 14th centuries and may well have replaced an even earlier structure as some earlier manuscripts show a quite different building than this. It was said that a knight, Bartolommé de Vir, built it with stones he had “translated” from the building of Laon Cathedral nearby. It is certainly true that the portal and façade were built in the 15th century by Charles of Luxembourg, Bishop of



Basilica of Notre Dame de Liesse

Laon (1473-1519), son of the well-known Comte de Saint-Pol, Constable of France under Louis XI. The actual name of the dedication of the image and shrine is Our Lady of Joy (the same dedication as the principal statue of Our Lady in my church in New York, and at St Mary Magdalen Church in Oxford).

In 1568, disaster struck as the army of the Protestant Prince of Orange looted the village and its church, breaking statues and stealing the bells to melt down, setting fire to the church, and reducing it to fiery ruins. It was nine years before reconstruction could begin in a more peaceful environment.

Not long after the new shrine church was built, “Madame Acarie”, the Mother Foundress of the Discalced Carmelites in France, was brought to Liesse in 1572 by her parents and consecrated to Our Lady there, as was the Abbé Henri Bourdon, a famous French cleric and spiritual writer of the 17th century. It was a favored shrine, as we shall see, of Princess Henriette-Marie (daughter of Henri IV and Marie de Medici), later Queen Henrietta Maria, consort of the Royal Martyr, King Charles I. St Benedict Joseph Labré, who was constantly on pilgrimage somewhere, came here in 1770.

Before the Revolution, the Shrine was quite lively and supported the economy of the whole area (as does the Shrine at Walsingham and of course at Lourdes). There were pilgrims’ hostels and all manner of inns and eateries, as well as the inevitable sale of religious souvenirs of pilgrimage, and ample provision made at the Shrine for Masses, Confessions, and services of popular religion such as the Litany of the Virgin, the Rosary, and Benediction.

Back to the Middle Ages, the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Liesse was a sanctuary of great renown and a pilgrimage destination. To it repaired those with maladies considered incurable, paralytics, those who had survived the plague who came in thanksgiving, those in need of exorcism, prisoners who had been liberated, those who had survived shipwreck and fire. It was especially sought out by couples who had been unable hitherto to conceive a child. From the beginning of the 15th century, it was regarded as one of the patron shrines of the Capetian dynasty, and subsequently taken up by the cadet-branch of the Bourbons.

Royal pilgrims included Charles VI (in 1392), Louis XI (in 1471, 1475 and 1477), Francis I (1527 and 1538), Henri II (1554 and 1558), and Queens Catherine de Medici (1538) and Marie de Medici (1603), and Louis XIII and Anne of Austria together praying for their long-delayed son and heir (Louis XIV was the product of this granted prayer), and Louis XIV himself in 1652, 1678 and 1680.

The shrine was almost completely destroyed and the image itself destroyed during the French Revolution under circumstances that are not completely known to this day. As part of the Concordat made by Napoleon with Pope Pius VII in 1801, the shrine was amongst the religious buildings agreed to be rebuilt by the Empire and work began shortly thereafter. By the time of the Restoration of legitimate monarchy in 1815, following the defeat and final exile of the Corsican ogre, it was opened, completed, during the reign of Louis



Statue of Notre Dame de Liesse

XVIII. It was visited frequently by the Duchesse de Berry, born a princess of the Two-Sicilies, who married the second son of King Charles X, who had been unable to conceive a child, and always came in heavy disguise. When, in May 1821, the Duchess had given birth safely to her son, Henri, at first Duc de Bordeaux but later better known as the Comte de Chambord, the last legitimate line King of France, she came to give thanks but very openly and in great state. The Shrine was undamaged in the revolution of 1830 that deposed her father-in-law, Charles X, and of 1848 which deposed Louis Philippe.

Interestingly, the pre-Revolutionary image of the Black Virgin was spirited away to Quebec at some point, and came to rest in its damaged state at the Church of the Gesù in Montreal by 1877. These circumstances remain completely unknown.

The shrine church was declared a basilica early on (the document itself was lost in the Revolution), and the Blessed Pope Pius IX gave a papal crown to the statue in 1854 in honor of the decree of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception (he did so to many Marian shrines at that same

time). The entire west front was reconstructed in 1920, and interestingly, today, the basilica specially welcomes pilgrimages from those who have converted from Islam.

We now turn our attention to the association with the Stuart dynasty. In January 1643, Queen Henrietta Maria who had fled to her daughter in Holland where she lived, having married the Prince of Orange, was to return to England with resources and soldiers to assist her husband, King Charles I, in his struggle with Parliament. What should have been a short crossing turned into an agonizing nine-day ordeal, and two of the escort ships were sunk in the tempest, and the Queen and her ladies were terrified and desperately ill. All made their last confessions aloud to the Queen's Chaplain as they expected to die, and the fact that they had to shout their sins aloud to be heard over the storm, heard by their companions, was not a deterrence. Henrietta Maria prayed especially to the Black Virgin of Liesse. Eventually, the storm abated, and they were able to limp back to Holland, though with considerable loss of life and property, including jewels which she had hoped to sell to fund her husband's cause. She would later commission the best goldsmith in Paris to produce a sterling silver ship, with all its parts working, as a gift to the shrine in Liesse. It hung in the sanctuary until it was stolen in the French Revolution. Henrietta Maria did not forget the Black Virgin of Liesse either, as she was a frequent pilgrim during her exile in France from 1646 to the Restoration in 1660 when she saw her eldest son restored as King Charles II. She then chose to return to France in 1665 as the damp English climate was exacerbating her extreme arthritis, and died in 1669. She was the maternal grandmother of Louis XV, and therefore an ancestress of much of the Catholic Royalty of the Continent, but also the grandmother of the many illegitimate descendants of her son, Charles II, who married well throughout the British aristocracy, and whose descendants include the present Prince of Wales, through his late mother.

Today the Shrine remains one of the well-known Marian shrines of France though it has, of course, been largely eclipsed by the Shrine at Lourdes, and, to a lesser degree, by the magnificently picturesque shrine at Rocamadour in the Dordogne, also a "black Virgin". As Liesse is not terribly far from Paris, and even closer to Brussels, it should be better known than it is, and pilgrimages are, in fact, on the increase. **AVE**

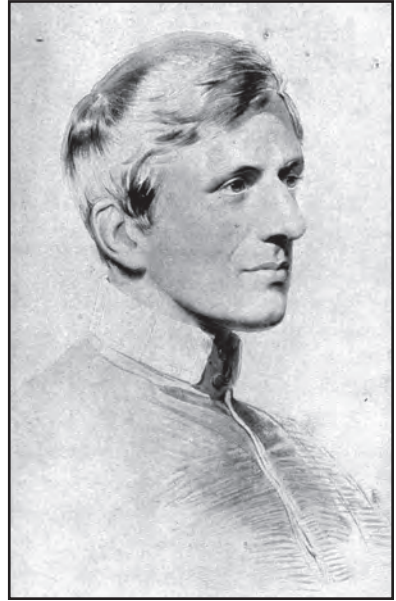
*Father Swain is Rector of the Church of the Resurrection, New York,
Superior-General of The Guild of All Souls,
and a member of the Council of the Society of Mary.*

SAINT JOHN HENRY NEWMAN AND THE NEW EVE

By Phoebe Pettingell

Certain writers manage to make many readers feel as if the author is an old and dear friend. Newman is such a one. At fifteen, I picked up a copy of his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, and felt I had discovered a lifelong companion. Many people react that way since he was one of the nineteenth century's greatest stylists, as well as one of its profound thinkers. His motto, when he was finally raised to the office of cardinal, was *cor ad cor loquitur*—heart speaks to heart. A theologian, philosopher, and historian, as well as a poet, his work continues to have implications in the 21st century both for Roman Catholics and Anglicans.

At the same time he was, and remains, a controversial figure, often misunderstood during his own lifetime and even today. He inspired both devoted friendship and enmity, both personally and in his writings. This is often the fate of subtle and nuanced thinkers who do not easily fit into pigeonholes. Both as an Anglican and after his conversion to Rome, he attracted opposition even among his compatriots, not only for his views, but also the views some ascribed to him. For instance, Charles Kingsley attacked him as a sly Jesuitical thinker, luring unsuspecting innocents into the toils of a grasping, corrupt, and deceitful Church. Cardinal Manning, himself a convert from the Church of England, considered Newman a “half-Catholic,” indulging in literary vanity, surrounding himself with liberal admirers, and surreptitiously advocating Modernism. Meriol Trevor, in her two-volume biography, points out that his opponents often accused him of faults they secretly feared in themselves.



Newman, by George Richmond (1844)

Obviously, volumes could be and have been written about Newman, but here I want to focus on his devotion to the Virgin Mary, which began when he was still an Anglican. Since Henry VIII's break with Rome, and the



*Cardinal Newman,
by John Everett Millais (1881)*

turmoil caused by the religious shifts during the reigns of his three legitimate heirs, English culture became shaped by what historians term a “black legend” about Roman Catholicism. The Pope was the tyrannical leader of a Church that had deformed the message of Christ with power-hungry, bloodthirsty, and unprincipled attacks on True Religion. Newman himself had once described the Church as “polytheistic, degrading and idolatrous.” When, in 1845, he finally converted, he lost close friendships and was portrayed as a corrupter of youth. (Some of his disciples had preceded him.) Some even argued that all along

he had secretly been a Roman agent. Part of Newman’s vocation became helping his nation better understand what Catholicism really entailed. Having himself evolved from Evangelical though Anglo-Catholic to Roman Catholic priest and theologian, he had special insight into what others thought, and was a masterful debater. He also had experience preaching to and pastoring the uneducated, so he learned to communicate on a number of levels. He used the imagery of a family-oriented culture to convey not only his deep devotion to Christ’s mother, but to do so in a manner aimed not only at Roman Catholics, but also at bridge-building with Anglicans.

It was particularly effective in a century that revered mothers’ devotion to their children. As a member of the Oxford movement, Newman had translated Lancelot Andrewes’s private devotions which periodically mention “the holy and immaculate blessed and ever Virgin Mary...whom we commemorate ... with praise and thanksgiving.” Many of the Caroline divines revered Mary, which influenced the compilers of *The Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology*. After his conversion to Rome, and the papal defining of the Immaculate Conception, which was roundly denounced by many Protestants (and a few Catholics), Newman wrote in his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, “indeed, it is a simple fact to say, that Catholics have not come to believe it because it is defined, but that it was defined because they believe it.” And elsewhere he wrote:

It is difficult for me to comprehend a person who *understands* the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and yet objects to it. Does not the objector consider that *Eve* was created *without* original sin? Does he not believe that John the Baptist had the grace of God even before his birth? What do we believe of Mary, but that grace was given to her from the first moment of her existence? We do not say that she did not owe her salvation to the death of her Son. We say that she is the fruit of His Passion.

Thus for Newman, as for the Middle Ages, Mary is “the new Eve,” reversing the sad consequence of the Fall, and birthing the new Adam, whose resurrection overcomes its consequence, Sin and Death.

Similarly, Newman wrote of the Assumption, pointing out that in the Gospel of Saint Matthew, after the Crucifixion, “tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised.” He then adds:

Can we suppose that Abraham, or David, or Isaias, or Ezechias, should have been this favored, and not God’s own Mother? Had she not a claim on the love of her Son to have what the others had? Therefore, we confidently say that Our Lord, having preserved her from sin and the consequences of sin by his passion, lost no time drawing out the full merits of that Passion upon her body as well as her soul.

This use of the scriptural references to Old Testament patriarchs, and the redemption brought about by Christ’s passion, is aimed rhetorically not only at Catholics but also Protestants, another example of Newman’s attempts to cross what seem to be divides in doctrine and theology. Those studying contemporary ecumenical documents will see what a powerful and prophetic effect he has had on the major dialogues between Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

Newman’s love for Mary suffuses his meditations. He rhapsodizes on May—traditionally her month—as one of promise and hope because “she was the sure *promise* of the coming Savior. Since Easter also often falls during May, we can associate it with its joyful Alleluias, not only the return of growing things, and the promise of summer, but also a foretaste of that eternal summer when ultimately we may see God face to face.” Thus, Mary becomes for Newman the Gate of Heaven. **AVE**

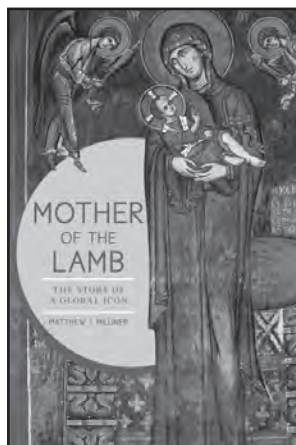
Phoebe Pettingell is Editor of AVE and lives in northern Wisconsin.

BOOK REVIEWS

Matthew J. Milliner. *Mother of the Lamb: The Story of a Global Icon*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2022.

Matthew J. Milliner's new book, *Mother of the Lamb: The Story of a Global Icon* is an elegant and evocative study of what some regard as the most popular icon in the twentieth century, the Virgin (Theotokos) of the Passion in the East, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Mother of Perpetual Succor) in the West. In the popular image, Jesus is in his mother's arms and looks toward the archangel Gabriel on the top right, holding a cross and nails; on the top left the archangel Michael holds a spear, crown of thorns, and wine-soaked sponge. A sandal falls from Jesus' foot as if he just ran to his mother frightened by a vision of the Passion before him. In deep and compassionate sorrow, Mary responds by holding both of Jesus' hands to comfort him, just as she extends her son to us through the mystery of the Incarnation. Widely venerated, the icon expanded beyond its origins in Byzantium to multiple shrines on nearly every continent, and in contexts as varied as India, Poland, the Philippines, and the United States. Our Lady of Perpetual Help is also the busy patron of Almoradi, Spain; Haiti; Salina, Kansas; the Diocese of Middlesbrough in England; and the Diocese of Issele-Uku in Nigeria. She even made an appearance at the 2012 Olympics as a gold-medal winning Ethiopian Orthodox athlete pulled an image of the Virgin of the Passion from her jersey and placed it upon her face: "The moment came more than eight centuries after the icon's first known appearance, and it is likely that the people who saw that image in one moment surpassed the number of people in all of Europe when the image was first painted" (p. 149).

Milliner is a theologically trained art historian from Princeton University. He argues that despite an abundance of studies on the Virgin Mary in the Byzantine tradition, there is a paucity of research related to this unique icon. Milliner traces the origins of the first Virgin of the Passion to 1192 in Cyprus, then a new image of Mary influenced by the political decline of Byzantium and the aftermath of the Third Crusade. From these dynamic origins, veneration of the image moved into Orthodox Christianity, then Roman Catholicism, and from there



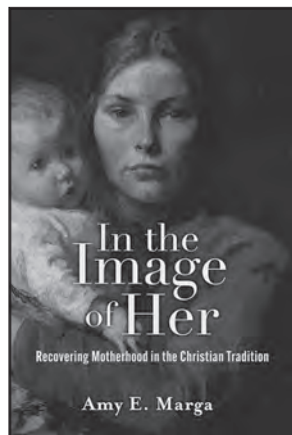
throughout a violent world as a powerful symbol of ecumenism and justice – a “Madonna of the Future.”

Milliner explores four interconnecting themes relating to the image – power, painting, priesthood, and predestination. Locating the origin of the image during imperial defeat, he posits that the image is about much more than power; that the wood and pigment are animate, alive. “The icon’s ability to address pain seems to be its secret, partly explaining why it has proliferated so dramatically across the globe. The image, I learned, was saturated not with tidy answers to studying but with *hesychia*, a silent presence that was answer enough” (p. 4). Milliner argues that the icon’s origin is in the twelfth-century Eucharistic controversies, associating Mary with the priesthood, as the mother of the eucharistic lamb. Here he points to other Byzantine images and texts that refer to Mary’s priesthood. Lastly, he analyzes the symbols of the Passion carried by the archangels and relates them to the “throne” prepared for all humanity from the foundation of the world. “The Prepared Throne conveys that there never was a time-bound moment when God’s plan to rescue humanity was not already being enacted...Mary is not just Mary in this image but Sophia, the church, all humanity at once, and your own self-portrait as well” (p. 92).

This brilliant book is mesmerizing for those who appreciate Marian iconography and the interpretation of religious symbols. Painstakingly researched – over half the book is notes and bibliography – it is also visually interesting and written in an accessible academic style. In addition to Milliner’s impressive technical expertise, it is clear that he has developed a relationship with her (the icon) and he brings that depth to this book. Recommended for all devotees of Marian icons and the Mother of the Lamb today.

Amy E. Marga. *In the Image of Her: Recovering Motherhood in the Christian Tradition*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2022.

An innovative new book that takes a historical approach to the Virgin Mary and locates her within a broader theological tradition is Amy E. Marga’s, *In the Image of Her: Recovering Motherhood in the Christian Tradition*. Here Marga reflects on Mary within a broader theology of motherhood found within centuries of Christian tradition. She argues that Christian theology has focused on two idealized perspectives on motherhood: Eve who birthed



children into sin, and Mary who birthed the Savior of the world. However, what is missing from these two idealized perspectives is a “maternal theology” that expresses the creative agency of motherhood, and the distinctive ecosystems of women’s bodies. Marga expertly negotiates a wide range of theological and liturgical sources to support her arguments; traditional Christian theology, folk practices related to childbirth, prayers and pilgrimages for safe delivery, and ecclesiastical rituals, such as the churching of women. Throughout, she illustrates how Christian mothers within and beyond church institutions creatively adapted their faith traditions in support of their own motherhoods, and for the benefits of their children. Significantly, Marga’s historical reach mines narratives of motherhood from early Christian accounts such as Perpetua and Felicity, through the present era.

Readers of this journal will be particularly interested in two chapters of this book. Chapter three, “The Vulnerable Sinner’s Attachment to Mother Mary,” explores the rise of motherhood within the Christian imagination. In this chapter Marga helpfully traces the development of Christian thought on the Virgin Mary to the Reformation. “As Roman Christianity moved north into modern-day European lands, Mary’s significance morphed from being the ideal virgin to being the protective, loving mother” (p. 67). Not only was Mary the Theotokos, the mother of God, but also mother of the human Jesus. “She became the one person between heaven and earth who could intercede for humanity to her Son, Jesus Christ” (14).

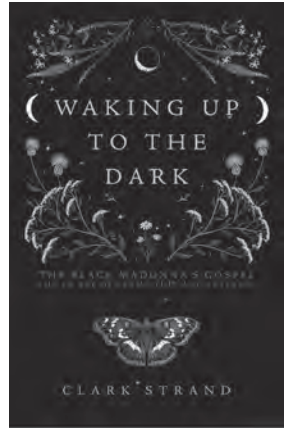
In the following chapter four, “Maternal Piety, Magic, and Sisterhood,” Marga focuses not only on the role of Mary in helping women through the challenges of childbirth and motherhood, but also her mother, Saint Anne, and Saint Margaret. While there were additional saints invoked by women for protection during their childbearing years, these three were especially prominent. “These saints offered comfort, community, and encouragement to mothers. They connected women to the gaze of God’s own being” (p. 107). As the plague cycled through Europe, images of Mary as *mater dolorosa* holding her dead son populated churches as devotions focused on Mary’s sorrow circulated. More recently, images of African American women holding their dead sons in the form of the *pietà* amidst violence against young black men have continued in this tradition.

In addition, this book transcends the Eurocentric bias of literature related to the history of the Virgin Mary and Christian motherhood. Marga writes insightfully on the racial bias in Christian theology that shaped motherhood in the American colonies among settler women and indigenous and enslaved women. Although more research is needed, that

this book takes on the complexities of the differing experiences of white Protestant, indigenous, and enslaved African mothers during North American colonization is an innovative addition.

This is a richly provocative book that examines the history of Christian motherhood and Mary’s role within it from new directions. It is academic in scope and style, but highly readable. I found it exciting as it encourages reflection on Mary, as well as other old friends – Monica, Origen, Dhuoda, Bernard, Hildegard, Julian, Erasmus, Frederick Douglass, and Sojourner Truth – all in the same book!

Clark Strand. *Waking Up To The Dark: The Black Madonna Gospel For An Age of Extinction and Collapse*. Rhineback, NY: Monkfish Books, 2022.



Clark Strand’s *Waking Up To The Dark* is a brief and reflective book that looks beyond the traditional binaries of light/darkness and celebrates the ancient spiritual benefits hidden in the night. Here he signals the importance of the Black Madonna whose guidance and consolation have supported humanity through cataclysmic loss, like the current times. Strand weaves together spirituality, paleobiology, memory, history, science, and what he calls “spiritual archeology” to excavate ancient wisdom and inspiration to renew the world. We have lost touch with the mysteries of the dark, modern life has lost its heart, and we need an apparition of “Our Lady of Climate Change” to face current challenges. “That name is the expression of a desperate plea – and an equally desperate hope” (p. 110).

Strand’s book is a reminder that there are spiritual streams where darkness is not viewed as the opposite of light, or as evil, but as integral to spiritual wholeness, rest, healing, and the creation of new life. Celtic Christianity is one example of a tradition where the darkness is seen as a source of beauty; the vastness of the universe is most visible at night. Jesus was born at night. Conception begins in the darkness of the womb. Entire ecosystems are at home in the darkness beyond humankind.

As a Polish American I was raised with images of the Black Madonna; there are at least five hundred in Europe alone, as well as a

growing number of newer representations starting in the 1960s. Strand believes that we are about to undergo another “Great Narrowing,” or a time when human agency alone will be of limited effectiveness. He does not believe that we can think our way out of the current climate crisis. “Whether the Great Narrowing will lead to a new birth or to a stillbirth remains as yet unknown. It may take centuries to tell if humanity can survive the sixth great extinction in our planet’s history. But Mary is the midwife for that passage. She is the guide to lead us through the dark. Of that much I am sure” (p. 110).

Strand reflected on climate change and the Black Madonna by rising to walk in the darkness. “Jesus was a child of Mary: he woke to pray alone on a mountainside before dawn” (p. 107). Strand filled fifty-nine notebooks and the excerpts from those primary sources fill this book. According to Strand, the Black Madonna reveals her gospel to those she loves. She considers her children to be those “who rise to be with her in the middle of the night” (p. 107).

As someone drawn to the mysteries of the Black Madonna and realistically concerned with climate change, I found the book beautiful and haunting. Strand’s prose is rich with images, and his assessment of climate change sober. It is best to read it meditatively in small sections, before dawn. **AVE**

Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook

Claremont, California

The Rev. Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook, EdD, PhD, is the editor-in-chief of Anglican and Episcopal History



WARD AND CELL REPORTS

New Jersey: Sea Girt—Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Cell (Saint Uriel's Episcopal Church)

On Saturday, October 21, 2023, St. Uriel's cell made a pilgrimage to the National Centre of Padre Pio in Barto, Pennsylvania. We toured the museum filled with cultural and religious relics, beautiful artwork, and reproductions of Padre Pio's life. There was also an area dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima. Padre Pio was devoted to her because she visited him and cured him in 1959. She asked him to say the prayers of the Rosary, which he did every day, all the decades of all the mysteries. A guide in the museum showed us a granite crypt where the blood-stained linens are stored from Padre Pio's Stigmata. He bled a cup of blood each day. We were invited to place our rosaries and crosses on the crypt and pray and they would become a third-class relic. We also viewed one of Padre Pio's gloves that covered the Stigmata on his hands that he received on September 20, 1918. We enjoyed a lunch together. We watched a video of his life and learned about the two miracles he performed. We listened to a presentation in Our Lady of Grace chapel where his actual confessional is kept behind a gate. It was a blessed day of fellowship at a true spiritual sanctuary. – Joann Sargo

New York: Brooklyn—Rosa Mystica Ward (Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, Carroll Street)

Rosa Mystica is a new Ward headquartered at Saint Paul's, Carroll Street, Brooklyn, NY open to all SoM members in the New York City area, regardless of parish affiliation, including Long Island and towns near the city. We have spent the last year preparing for recognition as a Ward and are excited for our upcoming events. In 2022 - 2023 our gatherings included:

- *Attending Chiara Margarita Cozzolani: Vespers for the Blessed Virgin Mary on February 17th, 2022, sung by the Choir of St Luke in the Fields*
- *Attending Mass at Good Shepherd, Kips Bay, hosted by our member Father Stephen Morris on December 10, 2022*
- *Co-sponsoring a Lenten Retreat Day at Saint Paul's Carroll Street on 25th March led by VK McCarty including Sung Mass for the Feast of the Annunciation, celebrated by the Rector, sermon by The Very Rev'd*

Dr Norman Whitmire, and concluding the Retreat with a Rosary led by Father Spencer Cantrell

- *Celebration of the Feast of the Assumption hosted at Saint Mary's, Tuxedo Park*

If you are in the New York City area permanently or are passing through and would like to attend one of our events please be in touch with our Secretary at info@stpaulscarrollst.org. Jonathan Vantassel, Secretary; The Very Rev'd William L. Ogburn, Ward Superior.

New York: Schenectady—Our Lady of the Snows Ward (Saint George's Episcopal Church)

After some years of inactivity, this Ward is reactivating under the leadership of St. George's new Rector, Fr. Thomas Pettigrew, who arrived September 2, and newly elected Ward Secretary Wendy Madelone. The Ward coordinated a luncheon following Mass on October 15 in honor of Our Lady of Walsingham. At Mass for the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, former Rector Marshall Vang, the Ward's founder, celebrated and preached, and the parish hosted a reception following. Parishioners and Ward members were delighted that SoM members from the Cathedral of All Saints in Albany joined them that evening.



Fr Marshal Vang at St George's, Schenectady, on the Feast of the Assumption



THE 62nd ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
AMERICAN REGION OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

Saturday, May 20, 2023

Cathedral of All Saints, Albany, New York

The Annual Mass and Meeting took place in-person on Saturday, May 20, 2023, in Albany, New York. The Annual Mass was celebrated in the Cathedral of All Saints at 62 Swan Street. This was followed by Luncheon and the Annual Meeting hosted by the Cathedral in the neighboring Fort Orange Club at 110 Washington Avenue.

The Annual Mass at 11 a.m. was a Solemn High Votive Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated by the Very Rev'd Fr. Leander S. Harding, Ph.D., Dean of the Cathedral of All Saints, and Archdeacon of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany. About 40 persons were in attendance, and Fr. Harding was also the preacher. The music of the Mass was *Missa Marialis*. Hymns at Mass were *Ye who own the faith of Jesus; Sing of Mary, pure and lowly; Virgin-born, we bow before thee; Hail, Holy Queen, enthroned above*. The Mass concluded with the singing of *Regina Coeli* before the shrine of Our Lady.

Luncheon in the Fort Orange Club followed at 12:45 pm. 28 persons were present, all of whom remained for the Annual Meeting in the same venue.

MINUTES

Call to Order and Opening Prayers

At 1:22 p.m., the Rev'd Dr. John D. Alexander, Superior of the American Region; called the meeting to order. The Rev'd Fr. Russell A. Griffin, Chaplain, led the opening prayers from the *Manual*. Approximately 29 persons attended the meeting, 20 of whom were SoM members. Thus the constitutional requirement for a quorum of ten SoM members in order to conduct business was satisfied.

Officers' Reports

Superior's Report. Fr. Alexander thanked Dean Harding for the welcoming hospitality at this new venue for the Annual Mass and Meeting. He saw this as a moment of opportunity for the SoM, which has had a good year as an ecumenical society that is promoting devotion to Our Lady in the Episcopal Church and beyond.

Chaplain's Report. Fr. Griffin said he has retired from the Church of St. Uriel in Sea Girt and is now saying Mass at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Berlin, NJ, where they recently had a May Procession of Our Lady. So, he sees this new work as a teaching opportunity.

Treasurer's Report. Fr. Martin Yost thanked Assistant Treasurer, Dr. David Chase, for all the help and guidance of the past year, adding that it is a pleasure to serve the SoM as Treasurer. He reported that the operating fund budget is about \$12,000 per year and is funded by membership dues. About \$200,000 from gifts and bequests is invested through the Raymond James brokerage.

Editor of AVE Report. Father Alexander reported for Ms. Phoebe Pettingell, Editor of *AVE*, who lives in northern Wisconsin, which was too far away for her to make the trip and join the meeting. Father noted that Phoebe (a) has made *AVE* more relevant to SoM members in the US, and (b) has completely upgraded *AVE* with a modernized color format – versus the earlier format that seemed to resemble something from the 1890s. He asks that contributors send her material to be published in *AVE*.

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 in the USA now stands at 655. Spouses included in these units bring the total membership to 676. Having sorted the latest membership list, he reported the number of members by state. He also reported that there are 26 active Wards, and there are nine active Cells. There are 68 inactive Wards and 35 inactive Cells for a total of 103 that are inactive – for a grand total of 138 inactive and active Wards and Cells.

Recently Formed Wards/Cells

Rosa Mystica Ward, St. Paul's Carroll St., Brooklyn NY—12 members; has been admitted as a Ward, with Fr. Ogburg as Ward Superior.

Our Lady of the Pillar Ward, Smiths Station, AL—12 members; has been admitted as a Ward, with Fr. Klein as the Ward Superior.

Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Cell at St. Uriel's, Sea Girt, NJ—has formed with 8 members and is now active, with Carolyn Rizzo as organizer.

Mother of God, Joy of All Who Sorrow Cell, Ambridge, PA; at St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church—has formed with 10 members, some from ACNA. Fr. Mackey, Dean of Students at *Trinity School for Ministry* is the leader.

Our Lady, Star of the Sea Cell at St. James On-the-Glebe APA parish, Gloucester, VA—has formed with Fr. Kevin Fife, Vicar and Cell leader.

Wards in the Process of Reactivation:

Our Lady, Queen of Heaven Ward, Church of the Advent, Boston, MA—has progressed toward reactivation; a new Ward Superior is needed.

Our Lady of the Annunciation Ward, All Saints', San Diego, CA – new rector, Fr. Esposito, approved as Ward Superior; Ward is now active.

Our Lady of Ipswich Cell, St. Mary of the Angels, Los Angeles, CA—wants to reactivate.

Please transmit Ward and Cell reports annually to the Council Secretary and to the Editor of *AVE* so that Council has an accurate picture of the state of the Society.

Guild of the Living Rosary (GLR) Report. Fr. Robert Armidon reported for The Rev'd Canon David M. Baumann, Chaplain of the GLR and Mrs. Elizabeth Baumann, Secretary. He said the GLR is incorporated in Illinois and that this Marian organization, which is affiliated with the SoM, has nearly 40 members, each of which says one decade of the Rosary per day. Interested persons are invited to join the GLR.

New Business

Amended Constitution. Fr. Alexander explained that since the Society of Mary in the UK no longer has regions, Council, with the guidance of Fr. Tanghe, has proposed a revised Constitution, removing the term *American Region* from our name, and adopting the name *Society of Mary in the United States of America*. The required notice of the amended Constitution was given in the most recent issue of *AVE*. This revision is consistent with our 1962 incorporation in the State of Delaware as *The Society of Mary*. Dr. Cooper moved that this amended Constitution be adopted by this *Annual Meeting*, and Fr. Griffin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Re-election of Assistant Treasurer. Dr. Cooper moved that Dr. David Chase be re-elected to serve for one more year as Assistant Treasurer. Fr. Yost seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Election of Council Members. Fr. Alexander announced that Council has nominated the incumbents of the outgoing Council Class of 2023 for election as the three members of the Council Class of 2027, namely: Mr. Adam Barner, The Rev. Fr. Jay C. James, and Mr. Paul McKee. Dr. Cooper moved that these nominees be so elected, and Ms. Jean Savage seconded the motion, which then passed unanimously.

2024 Annual Meeting. Fr. Alexander announced this meeting as tentatively taking place on Saturday, May 11, 2024. The venue is to be determined, which he thinks ought to be in the Midwest or on the West Coast so as to give members in those areas the opportunity to attend.

Questions, Discussion, and Other Business

Resolution of Congratulations. Hearing from Fr. Alexander that, as of the May Annual General Meeting of SoM in England, Bishop Robert Ladds has stepped down as Superior General and that Fr. Graeme Rowlands has become the new Superior General, Paul McKee moved that a Resolution of Congratulations for his service be sent to Bishop Ladds, with a pledge of our support to Fr. Rowlands, formerly the Chaplain General. The new Chaplain General is Fr. Simon Morris. The resolution was seconded and passed unanimously.

R.I.P. Dr. Wally Spaulding. Mrs. Elizabeth Alexander asked that Dr. Spaulding be remembered, and Fr. Alexander prayed that he may rest in peace.

Adjournment and Closing Prayers

There being no further business, Fr. Griffin led the singing of the *Regina Coeli* and then led the closing formula of prayer from the *Manual*. Fr. Alexander moved that the meeting adjourn, and Jean Savage seconded the motion, and all approved. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2 p.m. Respectfully submitted,



Paul Cooper, Secretary, Society of Mary in the USA
September 27, 2023

Note: The above minutes are an abridged version of the official minutes approved by SoM Council at its meeting of October 5, 2023. Apart from a table of state-by-state membership statistics, nothing of substance has been omitted.



Concluding Devotions at the Lady Shrine, Cathedral of All Saints, Albany, New York



OFFICERS

Superior

The Rev'd John D. Alexander
superior@somamerica.org

Chaplain

The Rev'd Russell A. Griffin
chaplain@somamerica.org

Secretary

Dr. Paul Cooper
secretary@somamerica.org

Treasurer

The Rev'd Martin Yost
treasurer@somamerica.org

Editor of AVE

Phoebe Pettingell
editorofave@somamerica.org

Cover illustration:
Shrine of Notre Dame de Liesse

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

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