

THE WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



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The Revd Dr Robert Billing – the new Rector of the Shrine

THE WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION

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THE TRUSTEES OF THE WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION

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THE REVD DR ROBERT BILLING

has been appointed the new Rector of the Catholic National Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham. He will serve for a five-year term and will take up his new responsibilities from September 1.

Fr Robert is a priest of the Diocese of Lancaster and served as Bishop’s Secretary to three successive bishops over a period of 13 years. He is currently parish priest of Our Lady of Lourdes, Carnforth, some seven miles north of Lancaster.

As Rector, Fr Robert will oversee the mission of the Catholic National Shrine and will be responsible for the pastoral and spiritual care of pilgrims, the Shrine chaplains and visiting clergy. The Rector also promotes the message and work of the Shrine nationally and internationally.

As Bishop of East Anglia, it was the Rt Rev Peter Collins’ responsibility

to appoint a new Rector for the Marian Shrine: “I am immensely grateful to Bishop Paul Swarbrick of Lancaster for his generosity in releasing Fr Robert for this important role.

“Fr Robert brings with him a wealth of talent and experience that will stimulate our vision of the future. His spiritual, pastoral and administrative abilities will undoubtedly bear abundant fruit within the national and international mission of Walsingham.

“I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Fr James Mary OFM Conv for his contribution over recent months as Acting Rector at the Shrine. As we look forward to welcoming Fr Robert let us be united and committed in praying for him in the weeks ahead. Our Lady of Walsingham pray for us.”

Fr Robert expressed his surprise and joy at his appointment: “My appointment to serve as the new Rector of the Catholic National Shrine and Basilica of Our Lady at Walsingham comes as a big surprise. Of course, it is also a huge joy and honour.

“Only a year ago, I was appointed, after a number of years in diocesan administration, school chaplaincy, and, more recently, engaged in canon law studies, to pastor three small parishes north of Lancaster, each under the patronage of Our Blessed Lady. I had never expected my time in these parishes to be so short, though in this year I have learnt much and received so much encouragement. Now, I take the faithful of these parishes with me in prayer to the heart of Our Lady’s Dowry, to Walsingham.

“As I take up this further service to the Church, this time nationally, I venture, first, as a pilgrim, eager to learn and to serve closely with those who dedicate themselves to make Walsingham ‘England’s Nazareth’ today. I hope to share and confirm that commitment.

The Bishop of Lancaster, the Rt Rev Paul Swarbrick, welcomed the news: “It is an honour for the Diocese of Lancaster for one of our priests to be chosen as Rector for the Catholic National Shrine to Our Blessed Lady at Walsingham. I am delighted that Fr Billing has accepted this appointment. “When I was first asked to release him, I must confess that I said ‘no’ because I believed the need of the Diocese could not spare him. Further reflection followed and I sensed that this request was actually coming from Our Blessed Lady, and I decided that I did not want to get on the

“I have every confidence, given Fr Billing’s considerable talents and experience, that he is a good choice for this significant position in the national church. The work of the Shrine will be safe in his care. Our Lady of Walsingham pray for us.”

Bishop Alan Hopes, Chair of the Walsingham Trust and Bishop Emeritus of East Anglia, said: “I am delighted that Fr Robert has been appointed as the new Rector of the National Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham. With his undoubted spiritual and pastoral gifts, Fr Robert will bring renewal and fresh vision to the mission and work of the Shrine, promoting its message, both nationally and further afield.

“We entrust him to the prayers of Our Lady of Walsingham as he prepares to take up this important task.”

(This announcement was made at noon on 12th July 2003)

FROM PAUL HEWITT – Interim Chief Executive for the Walsingham Trust

My name is Paul Hewitt. I am the interim Chief Executive for the Walsingham Trust. My home Parish is Our Lady of Victories in Kensington in the Diocese of Westminster. I am married to Maria, I have two adult children and I recently became a grandfather for the first time. My



primary vocation is to my marriage and family. My primary service to God is through them. I am now in formation as a permanent deacon for the diocese of Westminster, with one year to complete in my studies at St Mary’s University in Twickenham.

I will be ordained as a permanent deacon in July 2024

Deo Volente. I am currently serving as a lay expert member on the London Diocesan Strategic Safeguarding Board for the Church of England.

I retired recently as the Chief Executive of Harrow Council in West London and I completed over 33 years of continuous service as a senior

leader in Local Government and social care; including undertaking the role of Director of Children's Services and Director for Adult Social Services. I am a qualified, registered social worker, and a qualified executive coach in leadership and management, and run my own coaching company.

As the current chair of the Advisory Board for the Children's Commissioner for England, I have maintained a passionate interest in the welfare and well-being of children and families. I am a Trustee for *Coram*, a National Charity for Children. I am an associate school governor for Our Lady of Victories primary school in Kensington.

I will be working in Walsingham for the next 3-6 months to oversee the transition to the new Rector and to facilitate the recruitment of a permanent Chief Executive. The Bishop and the Board of Trustees for the Walsingham Trust have asked me to provide leadership stability in this time of change, as we reset and refresh the great mission and vision of the National Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham.

I have been profoundly impacted by the peace and beauty of this wonderful place. I am deeply conscious of the many graces that are flowing through the prayers of the local and wider community and the many stakeholders linked to Walsingham.

The Walsingham Association has already been a huge support to me through its presence at the Shrine and in Walsingham. The role played by the Walsingham Association and its unwavering support is key to the ongoing success of Walsingham as a place of pilgrimage, reflection, and retreat. I ask humbly for the prayers of your members to keep me faithful to the task and role for which I am entrusted by God under the gaze of Our Lady.

I look forward to meeting many more of you during my tenure here in Walsingham.

Our Lady of Walsingham pray for us.

Various questions have been asked about the Annual Retreat in October, so here are some notes which I hope will make all clear. If you have any other concerns or questions, please ask. Because of increased costs of accommodation we reduced the duration by a day to make it more affordable. In the past, the AGM followed the Retreat, but the AGM is now attached instead to the Spring Meeting.

Some of you who have booked, or are considering booking, for the Retreat may not know what is involved. Each retreatant will receive a booklet giving times, places and texts – all you have to do is to read the booklet and be in the right places at the right times!

Book now! There are limited places and they are filling fast. See page 40.

It is not a traditional silent retreat; that would negate one of the important aspects – the meeting of fellow Association Members and the renewal of old friendships and the making of new ones. However, we do observe the ‘Great Silence’ from after Night Prayer until after breakfast – that is a discipline which some do not find easy, but please try to do so.

An important part of the retreat is praying the Daily Offices of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Night Prayer together in the Church of the Annunciation. You are strongly urged to make these a part of your retreat, as well as attending the six talks given by our Retreat Conductor. Here is a *provisional* programme. This is planning quite a long time ahead and details may well change. The final programme will be in the booklet you will receive before the Retreat.

Tuesday 17th October

3.45pm	Welcome to the retreat
4.15pm	Evening Prayer
5.00pm	Mass followed by welcome drink and evening meal
7.30pm	Session 1
8.20pm	Night Prayer Great Silence until after breakfast

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Wednesday 18th October

8.00am	Angelus and Morning Prayer followed by breakfast
9.30am	Procession along Pilgrim Way (Transport available)
10.15am	Session 2

12 noon **Angelus** and **Mass** followed by packed lunch
 2.00pm Transport to Anglican Shrine for **Sprinkling and Prayers for Unity**
 4.30pm **Session 3** followed by **Evening Prayer** and **Angelus**
 6.00pm Evening meal
 7.30pm **Sacrament of the Sick** followed by **Night Prayer**
 Great Silence until after breakfast

Thursday 19th October

8.00am **Angelus** and **Morning Prayer** followed by breakfast
 9.30am Procession along Pilgrim Way (Transport available)
 10.15am **Session 4**
 12 noon **Angelus** and **Mass** followed by packed lunch
 2.00pm **Session 5** followed by transport to village
 4.30pm **Session 6** followed by **Evening Prayer** and **Angelus**
 5.45pm Assemble for a drink before evening meal
 8.00pm **Night Prayer** followed by Great Silence

Friday 20th October

8.00am **Angelus** and **Morning Prayer** followed by breakfast
 9.30am **Mass** in the Parish Church of the Annunciation
 End of Retreat

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1948 CROSS CARRYING PILGRIMAGE

From 2nd July until November 2023, there will be an exhibition to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Cross Carrying "**Pilgrimage of Prayer and Penance for Peace**", between 10.00 and 16.00, in the Welcome Centre at the Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady, the Slipper Chapel at Houghton St Giles.

In July 1948, 14 crosses, weighing 90lbs each, were carried from 14 different towns around England and Wales over 14 days, covering on average about 220 miles each. These crosses form the Stations of the Cross in the Slipper Chapel grounds.

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The exhibition will contain details of the pilgrimage together with excerpts from reminiscences of the cross carriers, together with news clippings and photographs from the papers of the time.



On arrival near Walsingham, each group held an all-night vigil with their cross, before leaving at dawn on 16th July, for a Mass at the Slipper Chapel. Later in the morning there was a Pontifical Solemn Mass at which 12,000 were present. This was followed by a barefoot procession from the Slipper Chapel to the Priory Grounds, where Cardinal Griffin was present for Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. In the evening the crosses made one last journey back to the Slipper Chapel Meadow where they were set up to form the Stations of the Cross as we know them today.

WHAT DO WE REALLY KNOW ABOUT OUR LADY?

John Huntriss' book "THE DIARY OF GOD - a guided tour of the Bible, following the route of the weekday Mass readings" is a book you may already use. (If you don't, it is available in the Slipper Chapel shop!) Here is the final part of his writing under this heading.

AT EASTER Scripture records no meeting of the risen Jesus with his mother, but (like the "Pieta" scene) it seems likely enough. She had been present on Good Friday, and Acts 1:14 shows her present among those praying in the Upper Room between the Ascension and Pentecost.

The very flowery Coptic Book of the Resurrection of Christ narrated

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by the apostle Bartholomew (from the middle of the 1st millennium) seems to tell the story, but to muddle Our Lady with St Mary Magdalene. At one point, Mary says, "If indeed I am not permitted to touch thee, at least bless my body in which thou didst deign to dwell".

THE ASSUMPTION There are precedents of a sort in the Old Testament. Genesis 5:24 says “And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.” There are three Jewish apocalyptic books of Enoch, telling not so much of his assumption but of what he saw thereafter. II Kings 2 tells of Elijah taken up into heaven in a whirlwind with a chariot of fire and horses of fire. Then there is Moses. Deuteronomy 34-6 speaks of his death and says that “he buried him” (generally taken to mean that God buried him), but that no one knows the place of his burial. This has given rise to a belief that he was somehow assumed. *There is a Jewish apocryphal book The Assumption of Moses but all we have of it is instructions to Joshua, which may account for the alternative title The Testament of Moses. The end of the book presumably told of the assumption, but it is missing.*

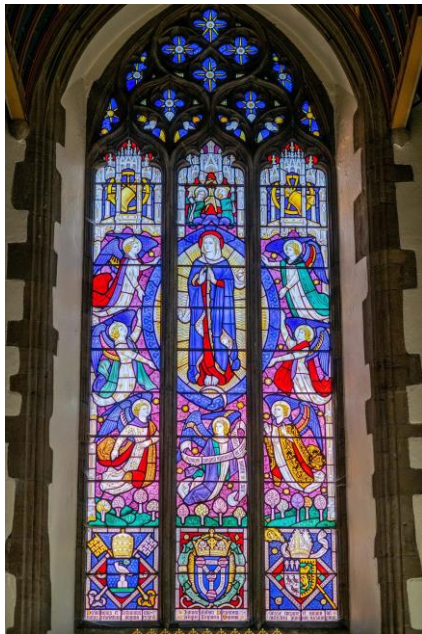
Christian apocryphal writings are rich in accounts of the Assumption of Mary. Here are a few gems.

Most set the story either in Ephesus or in Jerusalem. Usually Mary dies and is buried, and then is assumed from her grave. In one of the Ephesus accounts, the Latin Narrative of Pseudo-Melito, St Paul does put in an appearance.

In a Greek account, all the apostles are miraculously brought to Mary’s death-bed in Bethlehem, together with others like Mark, who is brought from Alexandria. Those who are dead are brought from their graves for the occasion, but warned that this is not the final resurrection. In the Narrative by Joseph of Arimathea all the disciples except Thomas were brought on clouds to Jerusalem and witnessed Jesus, coming with a host of angels to take to heaven the soul of his mother. Satan entered into some of the people of Jerusalem who sought to burn the body and kill the apostles, but they were struck blind and so chaos ensued among them. A Jew by the name of Reuben tried to upset the bier on which the apostles were taking to body for burial: he seized it but his hands became paralysed and he could not let go. He asked the apostles to pray that he be healed and saved and become a Christian, and this duly happened. The apostles laid the body in the tomb to the accompaniment of a light from heaven. They fell to their faces and so did not witness the body taken by angels to heaven. At this point Thomas is brought to the Mount of Olives, and he does see the body going up. He calls out to Mary and she throws down to him the girdle

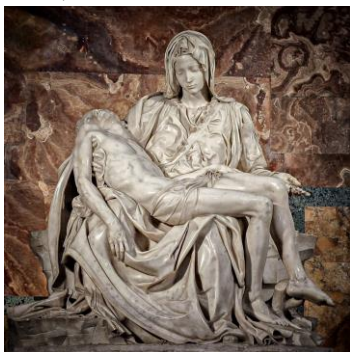
the others had put around her body. He goes to meet the others and Peter reproaches him that he had always been an unbeliever and that was why he had not been allowed to be at the burial. He asks pardon and they pray for him. "Where have you buried her?" he asks. They point to the sepulchre, but Thomas says, "She is not there." Thomas was right. He tells of how he had been whisked away from India in the middle of saying Mass (and he still has his vestments on); and of how he had seen Our Lady and received her girdle, which he shows them.

Compare all this with the plain sobriety of Pope Pius XII in 1950: "We pronounce, declare and define it to be a dogma revealed by God that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary, after completing her course of life upon earth, was assumed body and soul to the glory of heaven." The east window in the Slipper Chapel commemorates this proclamation.



The east window of the Slipper Chapel

AUTHOR'S FINAL NOTE. When we read and meditate on Scripture, we are encouraged to use our imagination to fill out the details of what is described: to picture the setting, or the bystanders. Sometimes it seems we are given only the climax of a conversation, and we may like to try to imagine what could have gone before. All that is good, but sometimes we need to do an audit and remember what is from Scripture and what from our imagination.



This sort of pious imagining lies behind the apocryphal stories of Our Lady, of which we have given you a sample. Some of it may be sober enough (picturing her holding the dead body of her son or

meeting him after his Resurrection), but some is exuberantly over the top, the imagination seriously over-active.

[The Apocryphal New Testament is quite often seen second-hand, compiled and translated nearly a century ago by the same M R James who wrote some of the best ghost stories ever. **Buy it and dip into it if you want, but you'll soon want your feet back on the solid ground of the real, canonical New Testament.** *John Huntriss*]

WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION CLOTHING

A large range of good quality garments, all with the Walsingham Association logo, is available by post at very reasonable prices.

T-SHIRTS £10.50 **POLO SHIRTS £14.50**

BASEBALL CAPS £7.50 **SWEATSHIRTS £18.50**

V-NECK SWEATERS £26.50 **HOODED JACKETS £18.50**

FLEECE JACKETS £27.50

Postage & packing included.

Most items are available in a variety of sizes and colours, and some can be personalised with your name. It's not possible to give all details here, but a detailed and clear order form is available.

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Peter Martin, 1, Lilac Wood, King's Lynn, PE30 3SW.

Telephone 01553 675 784 or 07737 196 440.

E-mail: francisp.martin@btinternet.com

NATIONAL SCHOOLS & OUR NATIONAL SHRINE **Edmund Matyjasek**

In an edition of the Magazine during lockdown, Tim McDonald wrote about the history of Elmham House and also the Pilgrim Bureau, highlighting that both were at one time schools. Elmham House was a fee-paying Grammar School all the way through to 1950. The history of the Pilgrim Bureau, on the other hand, is linked to the whole history of religious education in this country.

The church has of course educated since its very origins. Our Lord is Priest, Prophet and King, and the "Prophet" part includes his teaching of course. Scripture is central to Christianity, and we will all be familiar with the battles fought over the bible being available in the vernacular tongue as well as Latin and Greek – and indeed Hebrew.

One of the – possibly unforeseen but nevertheless devastating – consequences of the closure of monasteries and priories at the time of the English Reformation was that the schools associated with them, or that they served were also closed. This is one of the reasons for the number of long-established schools set up in the years after the 1540s. Indeed, if you look for schools named “King Edward VI” you will find a host throughout the land. The famous school Christ’s Hospital was founded in 1552, Gresham’s at Holt in 1555, Rugby 1567. But much education was either at home, or at locally based “Dame Schools” or charity schools, or by teachers or governesses employed by families. Such was Jane Eyre in the 19th century, the eponymous heroine of Charlotte Bronte’s novel. It was in Victorian times that the first steps were taken to anything approaching a national system for education. It was specifically a venture of the Church as well – in this case, the Church of England, as Catholics did not achieve emancipation until 1829. These were the schools of the “National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church” set up in 1811. It occupied the premises of the Pilgrim Bureau, next door to the grammar school in Elmham House, but with a far larger intake of pupils. The National Scheme ran for some time. It was in 1842 that the owner of the Abbey site, Reverend James Lee Warner, built the National School on the site of what is now Elmham House. The aim of the National Society was to establish a National School in every parish of England and Wales. The schools were usually next to the parish church and named after it but not always.

From 1833 the state began to pay annual grants to the National Society and others involved in education. Ultimately, the founding legislation of modern universal education was the 1870 Education Act that established Board Schools in the late 19th century, many of which still remain to this day in towns; tall, redbrick school buildings, with separate entrances for “Boys” and “Girls”. There were over 12,000 National Schools by the late 19th Century. In the 1944 Education Act these became “voluntary aided schools”, funded by the state but still able to promote the teachings of the Church of England. This is the origin of the widespread and still active “C of E” Primary Schools that became the template then for Catholic Schools, Jewish Schools and others. So, the Pilgrim Bureau has a direct link to the now familiar “faith” schools throughout the land.

Although there is no longer a school at the Shrine, there are a number of schools named after Our Lady of Walsingham in the country, and many more in America. There is now a multi-academy trust in Suffolk & Cambridgeshire, but there is, it appears, only one full secondary school named after Our Lady of Walsingham and that is my school on the Isle of Wight; Priory School of Our Lady of Walsingham.



Now the very curious thing is that the site it is housed in – a very historic site, being the school built by Queen Victoria on the Osborne Estate – was in its origins also in the 1840s and before Prince Albert bought it, a National *Priory School of Our Lady of*

Walsingham School. So, the extent of these National Schools did truly spread nationwide. It seems curious that not more schools are named after our National Shrine. I renamed my school in 2017 (it was founded 1993) from Priory School to Priory School of Our Lady of Walsingham to make its Christian/Catholic identity crystal clear, with episcopal and shrine permission. Mgr John Armitage has visited and kindly said Mass for the school and we ourselves have had a school Mass in Whippingham where we are based, which was the first Mass we believe said in Whippingham since the 1540s. Our Lady of Walsingham is patroness of the school. We have a motto “Built by the Queen of England: dedicated to the Queen of Heaven”. The links with English history and the Shrine were very much appreciated by pupils – one asking, “Do we go back to 1061?”

But the intimate connection between the church and education, and of course with Our Lady as the first teacher of Our Lord, does make the icon of mother and child that is the shrine statue peculiarly appropriate for schools, and, as I hope this short excursus into history has shown, has an intimate connection with the shrine and its current buildings!

RECENTLY DEPARTED MEMBERS

TO ALL MEMBERS: Please tell us if you are aware of the death of a Member. We would rather hear several times than not at all. It would also be good to be able to give a Christian name as well as a surname.

Please remember in your prayers
all these members of the Walsingham Association
who have died.

Mrs Veronica Alexander	Mrs Eileen Keily
Mrs S Bond	Mrs Margaret Long
Mrs Susan Butler	Mr Jacek Rokitnicki
Mrs Jeanette Charalamboos	Mr David Waters
Mr M Good	Mr Francis Widmann
Mr Peter Graham	Ms Drucilla Florence Wright
Mr Geoffrey Hanmer	

*Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord,
and may perpetual light shine upon them.
From the gates of hell deliver their souls, O Lord.
May they rest in peace.*

Dee Wright R.I.P.

Our sister Dee has gone to her reward. Arriving in Sheffield in 2016 from Gloucester, to stay close to her family, she threw herself, in her own indomitable manner, into parish life at St Marie's Cathedral. Dee was unmistakable and highly visible, noted for her check coats and woolly hats, wide brimmed summer hats, or the occasional elegant fascinator, always accompanied by her walking buggy.



Miss Dee Wright

A devout and pious woman, Dee would spend at least an hour after Mass in thanksgiving, vocalising set prayers from the Treasury of St. Anthony. Often attending weekday Mass, she would travel by tram to church and in her later days by taxi, which invariably affected her meagre budget. Dee was essentially a private woman, in spite of her outreach to different charities and parish groups, notably The Walsingham Association and the Ladies Group. She fulfilled her duties with love and resolution and, in doing so, could appear a lone figure.

Dee will be singularly remembered for her love for England's Nazareth. Never missing the Hallam Diocesan Pilgrimage, she additionally travelled there, under her own steam, by train and bus, in spite of advancing age and poor mobility. Along with many Walsingham pilgrims who preceded her, Dee is assured of a special welcome in Heaven.

She was prolific in her work for the Shrine, making Our Lady of Walsingham known and loved, and was an example and inspiration to all who met her, not least the team at the National Shrine. This has been recognised by the Cathedral Parish of St Marie's, Sheffield, which provided tactical support and encouraged her Walsingham activity. She was a witness for the Shrine, selling Association National Draw tickets, on several days of the week, in both good and bad weathers, after Mass. By her valiant efforts, over £400 was raised in 2022. She would probably have made an excellent trustee. Fast forward a year and she again threw herself into the sale of Draw tickets. She purchased a small table and a large framed picture of Our Lady of Walsingham to facilitate this.

Sadly fate intervened and her health rapidly deteriorated. She was first hospitalised in early September, having succumbed to cancer. Mentally alert to the end, Dee occupied some of her time praying the rosary and her favourite litanies and Novena prayers. Visitors to her bedside were regaled with her reminiscences and impressed by her prolific word puzzle and crossword occupation.

The end came on the weekend of the 24th/25th June. Dee, fortified by the last rites of Holy Mother Church on the Saturday, passed away

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peacefully on the Sunday. A light had gone out. The news of her demise was received by parishioners with deep shock and sadness. The promise

made to her to continue the sale of Walsingham Association National Draw tickets will be kept.

Dee will be deeply missed and never more so than on the 2023 Hallam Diocesan Walsingham Pilgrimage on 22nd July.

Requiesce in pace, Dee.

Joseph Durham (Sheffield Walsingham Association, 30/6/23)

THE VIEW FROM THE GARAGE

Richard McNulty, Association Secretary

I think there is one thing to learn quickly when working for the Association here at Our Lady's Shrine: very little stays constant for very long. Sitting comfortably in the material world really isn't what Our Lord and His Blessed Mother expect of us.

At ground-level, and as I write this, my 'view from the garage' will soon be replaced with a 'view from the Welcome Centre' as we prepare to move our office. We will still maintain a presence in the Basilica grounds but I aim to be at my desk Monday, Tuesday and Saturday. Occasionally, I have to be out and about, so if I don't get to the phone – or you need to contact us at any other time – then please do leave a voice message.

Hopefully this doesn't sound at all hackneyed, but what has struck me most as I approach the end of my first full year with the Association has been the ardent devotion of pilgrims visiting Our Lady's Shrine. Whether as part of an extended pilgrimage for a few days, or an individual act of adoration for a few hours, there appears to be a real sense of joy, hope and fulfilment. Further, the experience of speaking to or meeting with Association members from up and down the country has been a real joy. One thing: if you are planning a visit to the Shrine, either individually or as a group, please do feel free to drop me an email or telephone me beforehand. It would be an honour to greet you if possible.

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We are seeing new people joining (and old friends re-joining) the Association. Father Andrew Chamiec, with whom we have been blessed at the Shrine these last few months, has been our ardent advocate. My personal thanks to him for pointing pilgrims to our office! May I also

thank every one of you who has purchased or sold National Draw tickets. This is such a great help to the Shrine as anyone who heard Zyg Rakowicz speak at the AGM will vouchsafe.

There is lots happening of course, and there will be changes. But some things do remain absolutely perpetual don't they? Fundamentally, the presence of God's grace in Walsingham and the effect of that grace on those working and visiting the Queen of Heaven's Shrine. Each day we are blessed with the tangible presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, exposed in the Chapel of Reconciliation and Our Lady gently directing our gaze to her Son.

MEET YOUR TRUSTEES

CHARLES KEILY

I was lapsed from the Catholic Church for a considerable time, I returned to the Catholic Faith fully in 2012. My journey began in 2001 when I had the privilege of taking a UCM group from Sacred Heart and Holy Souls Parish, Acocks Green, Birmingham, to the National Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham. I experienced a personal conversion at the Shrine in Walsingham; I attribute this to Our Lady of Walsingham. I have organised many pilgrimages for various groups to Walsingham, which has become a very special place of Prayer, Devotion to the Mother of Our God for many pilgrims; I have great passion to promote, with all Trustees, the National Shrine of Our Lady, known as 'England's Nazareth', England being the "Dowry of Mary", becoming better known throughout England and internationally. It is a great honour, privilege and a unique opportunity to serve as a Trustee, also serving on the sanctuary at Walsingham.



STEVE MILLS

My Name is Stephen (Steve) Mills and I am sixty years old, married to Alexandra with three grown-up children, William, Edward & Elizabeth. I live in Stourbridge in the West Midlands and regularly attend mass at Our



Lady & All Saints Parish Church, a convert of over twenty years. I have recently retired from my position as Director of IT DPDUK after thirty-one years of service. My time now is being spent helping a variety of charities and apart from being a Trustee of Walsingham, I will be continuing to help those with disabilities into paid employment opportunities, something which I successfully achieved at DPDUK. I found a new passion after IT!

I am grateful for the opportunity of becoming a trustee of The Walsingham Association, where I hope my life skills and the work I do will further increase devotion to Our Lady in the UK. My interests are varied, including Travel, Theatre, Sport, Gardening, and Cooking.

FRANCESCA FLYNN



My family discovered Walsingham and joined Sheffield WA 40 years ago. In 2006, former National Chairman, Dennis Gerrard RIP, suggested I replace my late mother on the Sheffield committee. I became branch secretary and eventually a trustee of TWA. I help with my diocesan pilgrimage. Marian Shrines are vital for fostering devotion to Mary and Christianity generally, as popular culture attacks faith constantly. Walsingham should be better known and visited. I taught French and music in secondary schools, transferring to primary, until retiring from teaching. Then I did reflexology and aromatherapy part time. I keenly support pro-life organisations and those helping the underprivileged and marginalised. I play the organ in two churches, sing, mainly with Sheffield Bach Choir, and am librarian of the local Society of Recorder Players. My interests include music, drama, reading, walking and family, local and Irish history. I am an avid word puzzle and Sudoku addict.

ROBERT TICKLE



I am very pleased to be included as a Walsingham Trustee. My association with Walsingham goes back to my schooldays and I organised the Durham University Pilgrimage when I was a student. At the last school at which I taught before retirement, I used to take a year group to the Shrine every year. I am a convert and a former school chaplain. I live in Bedfordshire. I volunteer for Radio Maria and you may have heard the series of four programmes I made with interviews with pilgrims, clergy and staff. I look forward to my further support of Our Lady's shrine.

MICHAEL CONCANNON



I first came to Walsingham around 30 years ago on a day pilgrimage with Salford Diocese. I was immediately captured by the spirituality of Walsingham, the peace and the benefit of pilgrimage, albeit a day trip. I eventually branched out to weekend retreats, staying at Elmham House and experiencing the hospitality of Walsingham. My wife and I eventually purchased a property in Walsingham ten years ago and, since this time, have witnessed an appetite for the revival of the Shrine of Walsingham by the Bishops of England and Wales. Following the appointment of Mgr John Armitage, the 'Dowry Tour' helped make the message and spirit of Walsingham national. Mgr Moger continued in this vein and we now look forward to the arrival of the new rector. Over the years, I have come to learn more and develop a heart for Walsingham Shrine. I pray for its future success and would like to help in the continuing spread of the message of Walsingham. I am a Trustee for another Roman Catholic charity and hope that I can bring some learned skills and transfer this experience to benefit of The Walsingham Association. I look forward to meeting some of you if you are able to benefit from a Walsingham pilgrimage.

SIMON McCOY



My name is Simon McCoy, I have been a member of the Walsingham Association for over ten years, I have been married for 40 years and have a daughter who is an English Teacher, I regularly attend St Paulinus in Guisborough. I am a National and International Business Development Manager, and have been a Sales & Marketing Director for most of my career, owning my own business and in my spare time I'm a avid collector of Lambrettas, play music and find serenity walking the Yorkshire Moors.

The other Trustee is a familiar face and our Treasurer: **CYRIL WOOD.**

FROM THE BIRMINGHAM WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION

The New Birmingham Walsingham Association Prayer Group was formed on Monday 6th June 2022, the Memorial of Mary Mother of the Church; with the kind support of Walsingham Association Trustee, Francesca Flynn, who attended the launch of this new prayer group. It had three meetings in 2022. Due to an SVP Group being formed around the same time and low turnout, it was considered best to re-launch the Prayer Group in 2023.

The Birmingham Walsingham Association Prayer Group re-launch on Monday 26th June 2023 in the Parish Meeting Room at the Sacred Heart and Holy Souls R C Church, 1151 Warwick Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 6RG, was hosted by the Chaplain of the new group, Canon Jonathan Veasey, Parish Priest. The event went very well, albeit in my absence.

Fr Philip Griffin, Parish Priest at Our Lady and All Saints R C Church in Stourbridge, West Midlands, also the Co-ordinator of the Annual Birmingham Archdiocese Pilgrimage to Walsingham and a member of the Walsingham Association since 2019, kindly attended the re-launch, to talk of his knowledge and experience in visiting the National Shrine and Basilica of Our Lady at Walsingham. He gave some very useful and practical advice on how to move forward in growing this prayer group. Unfortunately I was unable to attend this long planned re-launch of the prayer group, due to an accident early in the afternoon, although I followed the Evening Prayer on live stream. However, the meeting had 12 in attendance with eight Walsingham Association members and four non-members.

At the recent June election, I became a Trustee of the Walsingham Association; I take this opportunity to thank all Walsingham Association members both nationally and locally for their very kind support.

Finally, when visiting Walsingham on Pilgrimage, from 2021, I have also had the great privilege of serving on the Sanctuary of the National Shrine and Basilica of Our Lady. I thank most sincerely the Rector, priests, nuns, MC and sacristans for allowing me this blessed and unique honour, to serve Our Lady of Walsingham, in a very special way.



When England goes back to
Walsingham,
Mary will come back to England
Pope Leo XIII

Our Lady of Walsingham
pray for us.
St Joseph pray for us
St Edward the Confessor
pray for us

Charles P. Keily
Trustee of The Walsingham Association
Acting Chair of the Birmingham Walsingham Association Prayer Group



THE SPRING MEETING'S 'WALSINGHAM EXPERIENCE'

David Chapman

The Spring Meeting and 2023 Annual General Meeting of the Walsingham Association was held in April, from 21st – 23rd. You may wonder why I am telling you this. Basically, because so few of you decided to attend. Yes, I know that AGMs are not the most exciting events, but they have to be held, and this was, after all, the FIRST AGM of the newly formed charity which is The Walsingham Association.

But there's more to the Spring Meeting than the AGM. For a start, it's at Walsingham! A place which holds a very special place in my heart – and I believe it does in the hearts of many of you, so an opportunity to be there has to be a Good Thing. Then there is the meeting of fellow members and exchanging of news and views – and no, I didn't say gossip! There is also the chance to worship and pray together – though it was disappointing that many did not take part in the recitation of Morning, Evening and Night Prayer - the prayer of the Universal Church.

This year, you missed a treat – something for which we have been trying to find a place for some time, namely, Fr Michael Rear's "Walsingham Experience". On Saturday afternoon, Fr Michael, who is probably the greatest living authority on Walsingham, took us on an actual and spiritual journey around some of the Holy Sites. We started at the "Abbey Gateway" in the High Street. Have you ever looked up at it? No, neither had I, but those ancient stones hold several items of interest, including, right at the top, an image which is probably of the Porter, who lived the adjoining house. (I didn't know that either!)

Then to the site of the Holy House – and here we not only heard of its history but also prayed, on that holy spot, a decade of the Rosary. That's what made this historical walk special – we prayed at each site and for me it gave a new emphasis to places I've known for some 50 years and more. From there we walked across the grass in beautiful sunshine to the remains of the Refectory. It is not large, which had not really registered with me before. I think I assumed that a Priory (it was

never actually an Abbey) with such an enormous church would have had many monks, but no, the community was never large – hence a modest refectory. The pulpit remains and we heard part of one of St Augustine’s sermons on Our Lady, which the canons must have heard read during supper.

The ‘Holy Wells’ look rather unappealing and forbidding with their safety gratings and a lot of wire mesh – but they were vital in the life of the Priory as both water supply and places of spiritual cleansing as well. The water flows into a bath into which pilgrims plunged as they do in Lourdes. In the 1930s Catholic and Anglican pilgrims used to drink the water from these holy wells. Again, a new fact was that the little stone archway giving access to the wells was moved there from elsewhere but is actually one of the oldest pieces of building on the site, dating from the 1153 priory.

Sadly, we were unable to access the ‘Martyrs’ Cellar’ in Dowry House. Canon Nicholas Mileham and George Guisborough were held prisoner here for being part of the Walsingham Conspiracy to save the priory. Sadly betrayed, they were tried for treason and were martyred on the field above the village, still known as the Martyrs’ Field.

Finally we made our, by now somewhat weary, way to the 14th century St Mary’s – now the Anglican church – which stands on the site of an earlier Saxon church where Richeldis would have worshipped. It was here that Fr Hope Patten placed a statue of Our Lady of Walsingham in 1922, thereby incurring the wrath of his bishop. Eventually the present Anglican Shrine was built from the 1930s onwards. There is now a Walsingham statue in the same spot in St Mary’s; current bishops do not object! The church was partially destroyed by fire in 1961 but faithfully rebuilt, being now a medieval church with underfloor heating – not common in Norfolk churches. By the grace of God the historic ‘Seven Sacraments’ font was damaged but not destroyed and so remains in use today.

Time was pressing on, but we paused to note the historic Methodist Church just off Friday Market Place. John Wesley preached in Walsingham in 1781 and remarked of the monastic ruins in the village

that “Had there been a grain of virtue or public spirit in Henry the Eighth, these noble buildings need not have run to ruin.” Finally, we climbed the

hill of Station Road to the old railway station – a building which, far from falling into ruin, is now the Holy Orthodox Chapel of St Seraphim of Sarov. Time did not permit a visit to the Anglican Shrine on this occasion – but you cannot take in the whole of Walsingham’s history in an afternoon!

This can be only a brief summary of Fr Rear’s fascinating ‘guided tour’, but it brought to life for those who walked it something of the history and spirituality of Walsingham. Pilgrims coming to Walsingham, when they discuss their programme, may like to request this spiritual tour one afternoon, for there is so much more to the Walsingham Experience beyond the Chapel of Reconciliation and the Slipper Chapel.

A DAY PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM

David Chapman

What may be possible will depend on the distance to be travelled – but even a Day Pilgrimage could be more than just Mass and Adoration in the Chapel of Reconciliation and a quick visit to the Slipper Chapel. These recommendations are based on the experience of a North London parish over many years. It is a suggestion, and will of course be adapted to the needs of each group.

Well before the day of the Pilgrimage: Book the coach – making sure that it has a PA system. Notify the Walsingham Office of your intention to make a day pilgrimage and book anything necessary – see below.

Order Pilgrim Handbooks if required. Either print out hymns and prayers to be used or ensure that a box of hymn books is put ready.

A few days before the Pilgrimage: remind people of the time of departure, any books they need to bring, to have a rosary with them and a packed lunch. (And warm/waterproof clothing and shoes if the weather could be inclement.)

On the coach: Blessing of pilgrims. Prayers for a good pilgrimage and a safe journey. Morning Prayer – print out or bring the books or, if enough people use it, use the form in “Magnificat”. The Rosary. A talk

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from someone about Walsingham, or a film about the pilgrimage if the coach has facilities to show this. The Divine Mercy Chaplet, if this is a

devotion used in the parish or some prayers like the Litany of Our Lady of Walsingham.

On arrival – needs to be by 11am approximately.

Time for the inevitable trips to the loo! And maybe a coffee.

Stations of the Cross – outside if possible. Opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (usually 11.00-11.45)

Mass at noon in the Chapel of Reconciliation.

Lunch Break – ‘bring your own’ or from the Shrine Teashop

(Time during this for an essential visit to pray for your intentions in the Slipper Chapel, and to go to the Shop.)

At about 2.15pm, Procession to the Village via the Pilgrim Way (the old railway line). The coach takes any unable to walk to the village and parks in the coach park. A Processional cross and ‘carrying statue’ of Our Lady of Walsingham are available if you book ahead for them. A portable loudspeaker system for the leader of the Rosary and hymns in procession may be available; ask when booking.

On arrival in the Village: It may be possible to book the Parish Church of the Annunciation in Friday Market Place for a short period of Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Walk to the Anglican Shrine and assemble in the Holy House for prayers for unity and an opportunity to take the Walsingham Holy Water.

Time for a cup of tea – Norton Room or one of the other teashops in the High Street.

Reassemble at the Coach Park for departure.

On the coach home: Evening Prayer plus ‘community hymn singing’ if pilgrims have the energy and inclination!

As the Parish Priest of this parish says: “It’s not a ‘day out’ and it’s not a holiday; it’s a pilgrimage.” Yes, it’s hard work – but immensely rewarding.

Almost always, when the story of the Walsingham shrine is told, it tends to centre on the destruction of the Shrine under Henry VIII and its subsequent revival. That makes sense, of course. But I wonder if we have failed to ponder enough on its actual origins – that day back in 1061 when the Lady Richeldis had her vision, and England's Nazareth came into being.

It's worth thinking about this. In 2061, only some three decades from now, it will be the 1,000th anniversary of the Shrine. Children who are visiting Walsingham this summer of 2023 will be in early middle age by then – and visiting the shrine with youngsters of their own. Well before that date, plans will presumably begin to be laid for a millennial celebration...

1061 was an extraordinary time in England's history. The Saxon era was ending, and in a very short while would come the invasion that changed everything. In 1061, England's king was Edward the Confessor – a pious man we still honour. He and his wife had no children, and there must have been considerable anxiety about his successor. As we know, the choice would finally be Harold, a relative of King Edward's wife. The village of Walsingham belonged to that family – it seems likely that the Lady Richeldis was essentially a member of the Saxon royal family. Richeldis is an unusual name and historians have researched and debated the story and continue to do so.

What is certain is that this was a troubled period. The Holy Land was no longer in the hands of Christians, and the holy places where Christ walked and taught and died and rose again were in territory controlled by Islam. Since the Holy Land had long been understood as part of European Christendom, everything felt insecure. Pilgrims could not visit the land at the very centre of the Faith, the place at the core of everything. War was raging there. And here in England, from where many pilgrims had over the years set off on such pilgrimages, this fear formed the background to domestic uncertainties.

With the Norman invasion of 1066, Harold's death in battle, and the subsequent ravaging of major parts of England in the establishment of

Norman rule, the understanding of Mary as the protector of faith and of certainties, centred on her shrine at Walsingham, England's Nazareth, must have been of much greater significance than we have perhaps fully grasped or realised. Over the next centuries, Normans and Saxons alike would visit and pray, beg for favours, ask for help, confess sins, and give honour to Mary and her Divine Son. These are the centuries that established the shrine with ever-greater significance not only in England but across Europe: Walsingham was loved and visited by thousands and thousands of people, and was the Lourdes or Fatima of its day.

But pondering those very earliest years: the 1060s and the last days of Saxon England, the days of the Crusades, a time of fear and uncertainty, might be valuable to us today. Walsingham's revival in the modern era came as Europe was about to plunge into two world wars...and today we face new worries and uncertainties. The story of the revival of the shrine has always had a sort of prophetic feel about it. As we invoke Mary's intercession at Walsingham, the message is not, and should not be, essentially about a sense of completion: "Hurrah! We've got it all up and running again now. Job done!" It's richer and more complex than that. Here, at England's Nazareth, we are united with a long history of prayer, and we place again at her shrine our worries about the future...and our hopes.

BLISTERS AND BLESSINGS – A PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM!

APRIL 11th TO APRIL 24th 2023

LONDON TO WALSINGHAM CAMINO,

**Reflections by Antonia Moffat, Outreach Co-ordinator for
the Basilica & National Shrine of Our Lady, Walsingham.**

From *Auguries of Innocence* by William Blake:

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour

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Astonishment!

The London to Walsingham Camino is a 180-mile pilgrim route from

London to England's greatest Holy Shrine in Walsingham. I remain in astonishment that I completed the London to Walsingham Camino! I look at the map and marvel! The grace of God was with me, and the prayers and encouragement of countless family, friends and colleagues. As I ponder the grace of Walsingham's new Camino route from London, I get the sense that it is integral in some way to the realisation of the great prophecy of Pope Leo XIII in 1897, when he signed the rescript for the restoration of Our Lady of Walsingham's Shrine - "When England goes back to Walsingham, Our Lady will come back to England."

Intentions!

My main intention for the pilgrimage was for the purification, healing, renewal, and flourishing of the apostolic mission of Our Lady's Shrine in Walsingham, for it is the apostolic mission of Our Lady's Shrine in Walsingham which will bring England back to Christ. Father God, we pray as pilgrims leaving London to walk to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. In doing so we will honour Our Lady of Walsingham and request her motherly presence as we walk, knowing that she will lead us closer to her beloved Son Jesus.

Background to the Camino.

The Camino was full of surprises! The route was fascinating, glorious, challenging, beautiful, and spiritually profound. It was a walk through England's former time of glorious faith - the beautiful ancient Churches, tributes to the ages of faith, prayer, devotion and love of God, alongside the sadness of the devastating destruction of Reformation times which almost liquidated catholic practice and witness. The English Reformation heralded the end of 'Merrie England', a land where all were cared for, through the infrastructure of the monasteries and nunneries. The far greater tragedy was of the desecration and outlawing of God's Holy Church, the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, any devotion and love for the Blessed Mother, the Saints, and prayer of love for the release of the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

Foundational Work upon a Foundational Work!

A foundational work written by Mgr Leonard Whatmore in 1973 - 'Highway to Walsingham', which author Andy Bull commends to us, is

what partly inspired him to create the present day London to Walsingham Camino in a format that would inspire 21st century pilgrims to undertake. Andy found in Mgr Whatmore's book all the research he needed to ensure the London to Walsingham Camino is as close to the route which pilgrims of antiquity took, throughout the Middle Ages, up to 1538, when Our Lady's Shrine in Walsingham was destroyed along with countless other monasteries and shrines. Andy then set his vision to task, and using all the modern technological means, created online up-to-date navigational maps, directions and information, taking into consideration the varied needs of modern day pilgrims - their safety, facilities and interest, historical and spiritual heritage, amidst the glorious English countryside. The route was divided into 13 lengthy sections - London to Waltham Abbey, Waltham Abbey to Ware, Ware to Stanstead Mountfitchet, Stanstead Mountfitchet to Saffron Walden, Saffron Walden to Withersfield, Withersfield to Hawkedon, Hawkedon to Bury St Edmunds - where we had the REST day! Bury St Edmunds to Thetford, Thetford to Brandon, Brandon to Great Cressingham, Great Cressingham to Castle Acre, Castle Acre to Fakenham and finally Fakenham to Walsingham. 180 miles in all! Andy Bull has created a Foundational Work upon a Foundational Work, which I am certain will produce much fruit and vision for generations of future pilgrims.

Camino Preparations!

Preparations for the Camino were in progress for weeks! How to pack a rucksack which weighed less than six kilos with all I would need for two weeks! We were advised to carry no more than 10% of our body weight! How wise that advice was! Preparation included the wearing-in of the walking boots and walking as much as possible. Booking advance accommodation was necessary, as unlike in Santiago de Compostela, England does not have an infrastructure of Camino accommodation and food outlets. I agreed to share with Sarah, a fellow pilgrim in order to halve the costs. Finding accommodation in some of the villages we passed through was difficult, and we had to stay further out. On occasions local people kindly put us up, or provided us with much appreciated sustenance. We pray for the day when an infrastructure of

Camino is made possible in England, for groups of pilgrims both large and small. In advance of the Camino, I planned where I would

attend Sunday Mass, as the route in the main, took us past pre-reformation churches which are no longer catholic.

Buen/Blessed Camino!

The London to Walsingham Camino was physically tough as we undertook the entire Camino in two weeks (April 11th 2023 - April 24th 2023) with one rest day in Bury St Edmunds. Andy Bull led our merrie band of pilgrims as per his London to Walsingham Camino - The Pilgrimage Guide. It was a grace to have the actual author of the route lead us. Three of us completed the entire Camino, with others joining us for several days and others for a week. In the main we had good weather - a mixture of glorious sun, calm dry winds, many April showers, sometimes accompanied by strong winds, powerful rain and sleet. Typical English weather for an English Camino! The daily mileage was between 14 miles and 17 miles - two days were less than this and two were much more! We walked alongside rivers and canals, through and beside fields full of varied crops, lambs, piglets, calves and bullocks, through forest, woodland and dale, quiet blossom-lined lanes, through sleepy villages and, rarely, the shock of a busy road! Glorious bird song was our accompaniment and the chatter of farm animals young and old! England's green and pleasant land was before us, mile after mile, leading us onwards to the holy land of England's Nazareth! Awareness of hundreds of thousands of pilgrims thronging the highways and byways in ancient antiquity spurred me on, as did the words of William Blake - for each Camino step was an encounter with the Living God in the glory of Creation, as I beheld Eternity in each step!

Camino Reality!

I was the least experienced walker among the pilgrims, and usually the youngest! The exhaustion I experienced each afternoon/evening was great! Once I arrived at the accommodation, all I wanted to do was bathe and tend my feet, shower, eat and sleep! The mileage each day was beyond anything I had ever attempted before. I marvelled at how the body regenerates itself following such exhaustion. Most days, I was almost at the limit of my physical endurance! We all carried our own rucksacks and had no opportunity of backup. This meant that you endeavoured to keep up, no matter what! On top of this, I had the

misfortune to have three serious blisters which caused much pain and discomfort throughout the first 90 miles. Thankfully in Bury St Edmunds, on

the rest day, I arranged a podiatry appointment, and James expertly sorted out the blisters and other problems and secured them with thoughtful dressings. I appreciated his thorough examination of my feet and of how I walked. He restructured the inside of my walking boots to ensure no further blisters appeared! This ensured that the final 90 miles were a lot more comfortable than the first 90 miles! They do say that the Camino provides! Well I would say God's great providence provided! It showed me how closely the Lord was walking with me, and how He so wanted me to succeed! I found I prayed well, first thing in the morning, when I would often contemplate and pray the Rosary etc. as I walked. On occasions we would join various congregations for Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer. My spiritual input were the Mass Scriptures of the Day, and readings from the *Imitation of Christ*. At times, we as a pilgrim group, agreed to be silent first thing, to give the first fruits of our day to God. By around 3.30pm each day my whole mind was on putting one foot in front of the other and I was in no way able for formal prayer, or even conversations at times! As you witness here, cumulative tiredness is tough to contend with! In the light of this, to do this Camino with the opportunity for daily Mass and other pilgrim communal prayers and devotions would, as far as I am concerned, need a further week. This would lessen the mileage each day, and provide more time for Mass and prayer. It would however increase the costs and the time needed for the pilgrimage!

Spiritually Enriching!

I found the Camino spiritually enriching - an experience of communing with the Lord. It was an experience of inner peace and of letting go, and of letting God be God with me! It was a liberation to let go of everything in daily life, and to walk hand in hand with the Lord, the Blessed Mother, St Joseph, and the saints. I had a great awareness of the Holy Souls in Purgatory, as we passed by countless thousands of graves and war memorials with the remembrance of the Fallen. I prayed much for them and for all the thousands of intentions entrusted to me before, and during the pilgrimage.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them.

Blessed are you, pilgrim, if you find that the Camino is rich with silence, and the silence is rich with prayers, and the prayers are encounters with the Father who awaits you.

Community!

The Camino was an experience of community with my fellow pilgrims and with those I met along the way. There were countless opportunities to witness to the spiritual power and efficacy of pilgrimage, myriads of opportunities to practice patience, humility and service, and often to be patient with myself and to take care, especially when totally exhausted. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if what concerns you most is not arriving, but arriving with others. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if you discover that a step backwards to help one another is more valuable than one hundred forward without awareness of those at your sides.

Camino End!

We arrived at Our Lady's Shrine in Walsingham on the solemnity of St George, patron and protector of England. So appropriate, spiritually speaking as the key intentions of my Camino (among many) were to pray for our Nation's conversion to Christ. Such a beautiful welcome was had from Sr Jane Louise and the staff at the Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady. "Welcome Home" were the opening words! The bells of the Slipper Chapel chimed in welcome, and we received our long awaited Walsingham Camino Pilgrimage Stamp. Solemn Holy Mass of the Solemnity of St George followed!

*Great St George, our patron, help us,
in the conflict be thou nigh;
help us in that daily battle,
where each one must win or die.*

A welcome lunch was taken in the Slipper Chapel cafe before walking onwards along the Holy Mile to the ancient Priory Grounds, final destination of our momentous Camino. For here lie the ruins of the ancient Priory of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the site of the once Holy House of the Annunciation, which housed the venerated statue of Our Lady of Walsingham.

*Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
The Son whom you merited to bear, alleluia.
Has risen as he said, alleluia.
Pray for us to God, alleluia.*

Then on to the Anglican Shrine for celebratory drinks and supper! Two further pilgrim Camino Stamps for our Camino passports from the Walsingham Estate and the Anglican Shrine.

Camino Beginnings!

Blessed are you, pilgrim, because you have discovered that the true Camino begins at its end! Before arriving at my own home, I called in at my local Parish Church of Our Lady of Sorrows. I was drenched, rucksack and all, as it was pouring with rain! As I entered the Church, the organist was playing, at full volume, Jerusalem! Having just walked the London to Walsingham Camino and having arrived in Walsingham on the Solemnity of St George within two weeks of the Coronation of King Charles III - I thought this was an incredible sign from the Lord and his Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Walsingham, that my pleas and prayers are being heard! For our mission is to build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant Land!

Blake's poem - Jerusalem

*And did those feet in ancient time,
Walk upon England's mountains green;
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On England's pleasant pastures seen?
And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Mills?*

*Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold:
Bring me my Chariot of fire!
I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In England's green and pleasant Land.*

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Author, Andy Bull, recorded a short video of each day's highlights - so that many might experience the joys and realities of each day's Camino

Walk. Perhaps one day you will have the opportunity to undertake this London to Walsingham Camino!

London To Walsingham Camino: The Pilgrimage Guide - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/@LWCandybull/videos>

This is the final video of 13 - detailing the last part of the London to Walsingham Camino - Fakenham to Walsingham and our arrival!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swAVz0vdPhc>

Follow on both YouTube and Facebook LondonToWalsinghamCamino

And buy the bookLondon to Walsingham Camino - The Pilgrimage Guide from the Slipper Chapel Shop - <https://shop.walsingham.org.uk/>

**WALKING TO WALSINGHAM
THE ESSENTIAL USER'S GUIDE FOR PILGRIM GROUPS
BY PETER WALTERS**

Available on www.amazon.co.uk

This unique book gives a comprehensive background to the Guild of Our Lady of Ransom annual Pilgrim Walks to Walsingham, over a period of 50 years from the time of their inception in 1952. The final 'official' Guild walk was in 2001, but thanks to the efforts of some of the walkers it continued until 2018.

Here you will enter into a world of unique Catholic history, of heroic men (supported by heroic women), who year after year made this sacrificial & penitential walking pilgrimage, to pray for the conversion to Christ of the peoples of England, Wales and beyond. They would carry with them thousands of prayer petitions, and have the support in prayer and alms giving of tens of thousands of Catholics around the country. You will also discover in-depth testimonies of the reality of the walk, and of the practical preparations, and on going practical needs of the pilgrim walkers. This is invaluable information!

The alms giving was to support poor parishes in England and Wales. To this day the Guild of Our Lady of Ransom extends these annual grants.

The book gives myriads of vignettes to detail the experiences of the Walsingham walkers down the years. This helps the reader understand the

colossal *'intercessory, penitential and reparational spirituality'* of the pilgrimage, and what it meant to those men undertaking it. It situates the Walsingham Walk as having emanated from a series of "one-off" great Walsingham Walks - the main one being the Great Cross carrying Pilgrimage of Reparation of July 2nd to 16th 1948.

Overview of the history of Walking Pilgrimages to Walsingham

Firstly the 1946 great Cross Carrying Pilgrimage to Vezeley in France, which had a large contingent from England participate. Then followed, in 1947, a small Cross-carrying pilgrimage walk from Bishops' Stortford to Walsingham. This courageously led to the great Cross Carrying Pilgrimage of 1948, when 14 crosses (weighing 95lbs/43kg) were carried from all over England and Wales to Walsingham, in Reparation for the sins/crimes of war, and in intercession for peace. The 14 different pilgrimage walks took place between July 2nd and July 16th, and involved distances of between 198 and 236 miles.

Since 1948, these silent oak crosses, have formed the Stations of the Cross at the Basilica & National Shrine of Our Lady, and are a solemn and permanent memorial of this great penitential pilgrimage. The Guild of Ransom Walks followed on from the great 1948 Cross Carrying Pilgrimage, and began in 1952.

Student Cross, now renamed Pilgrim Cross, took place just before the 1948 pilgrimages, following Easter of 1948. It began when around 30 Catholic students along with three chaplains carried a 100lb/45kg Cross from St, Etheldreda's Church in Ely Place, London to Walsingham. This pilgrimage was walked with the intention of reparation for the sins of students, and in intercession for the needs of students. Pilgrim Cross continues, and pilgrims arrive each year at Walsingham, on Good Friday, from many different parts of England.

The culmination of the Great Cross Carrying Pilgrimage of 1948 to Walsingham

The 1948 Cross pilgrimage was motivated by a plea from Pope Pius XII to all Christians to make acts of penance and reparation, following the tragedy and evils of World War II. The pilgrimage of the Crosses was dedicated to the future peace of the world. The late Bernard Cardinal Griffin who led the final day of the July 16th 1948 pilgrimage of Reparation

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and Consecration to Walsingham, described the pilgrimage as **"The greatest act of penance England has ever seen."** The foot-pilgrims with the Cross in

their midst kept vigil throughout the night of July 15-16 on the hills surrounding Walsingham, and then from the early hours of the morning participated in a series of Masses at the Slipper Chapel Meadow. It concluded with a Solemn High Mass celebrated by Bishop Leo Parker, of the Diocese of Northampton, in whose Diocese Walsingham was situated at the time. This was followed by the silent barefoot procession of the cross-bearers along the Holy Mile, flanked by thousands of day pilgrims, to the ancient Priory Grounds and site of the Holy House. Eye-witnesses gave testimony of the bruised, blistered and bloodied feet of the walkers. People lined the route kneeling, openly weeping in sorrow for their sins, and for the sins of war ...men, women and children alike.

In the ancient Priory Grounds, Bernard Cardinal Griffin celebrated Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament and, solemnly consecrated England and Wales to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on behalf of the entire Hierarchy of England and Wales. Once again this was at the solemn request of Pope Pius XII, requesting that Bishops from around the world to fulfil the urgent requests of Our Lady of Fatima, for the daily Rosary, First Saturdays of Reparation and Acts of Consecration of Nations, for the cause of World Peace and for the salvation of souls.

Post Script

From 1992 to 2013 Antonia Moffat organised Pilgrimages of Reparation and Consecration linking up many Marian Shrines across England, Wales, Scotland, and on occasions Ireland, with the main annual Walsingham Pilgrimage, on or nearest to July 16th each year. They were started in commemoration of the 1948 Pilgrimage Cross Carrying Pilgrimage. Out of these pilgrimages, a Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Reconciliation toured England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland in a mission of Reconciliation through Reparation for 16 years from 1997 to 2013. The Pilgrim Statue was blessed by Pope St. John Paul II in Rome on September 24th 1997. This Pilgrim Statue Tour was a forerunner to the great Dowry Tour of Our Lady of Walsingham which toured England's great Cathedrals from 2018-2020, and culminated in the solemn Rededication of England as the Dowry of Mary by the Hierarchy of England and Wales. Perhaps we need to hear again those solemn words of Bernard Cardinal Griffin, and ponder if this Cross Carrying Pilgrimage, again needs to be re-enacted in some way, which would inspire the generations of today?

If you are reading this Magazine but are **NOT**
a member, **please consider joining.**

The reasons are below and there is a form on the next page so you can
remove the entire page without destroying the Magazine.

THE WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION



Uniting those who love Our Lady of Walsingham
Supporting the National Shrine and Basilica
Promoting pilgrimage to England's National Shrine

OUR MEMBERS...

- spread devotion to Our Lady
- receive regular Magazines
- share in the spirituality
of Walsingham
- join or share in pilgrimages,
retreats and meetings
- are remembered in the daily
Shrine Masses
- support and promote the Shrine
- unite with others in prayer



The Walsingham Association
Pilgrim Bureau, Friday Market Place,
Walsingham, Norfolk NR22 6EG
Telephone: 01328 800 953
enquiries@walsinghamassociation.org.uk
www.walsinghamassociation.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1196936

THE WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION



To join THE WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION...

1. BY BANK TRANSFER: (The preferred and cheapest way.)

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Address and Post Code:		
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Please make the cheque payable to “The Walsingham Association”, put TWA and your name and address on the back and send it with this form to the address overleaf.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Rates for 2023 only;

Individual £16; Non-UK Resident £30;

Family (living at one address) £26

(From 1/1/24 the rates will be Individual £20;

Non-UK £35 and Family £30)

NATIONAL DRAW

The 2022 Draw raised **£13,000** for the Shrine – an excellent result, but double that would be better – and can be achieved **with YOUR help.**

Ask the Walsingham Association Office for tickets. Get permission from your Parish Priest to put them at the back of church, with a note saying that money (£1 each; £5 a book) and stubs can either be sent direct to the address on the tickets or popped into an envelope marked **TWA DRAW** and given to you or your Parish Priest. Nearer the draw date, gather them up and send or bring to Walsingham. Of course, you could actually give out books to people; remember, the tickets have no value until returned, with money – so don't worry about keeping track of them. If you need any advice or help, give Richard, our Secretary, a ring.

33507 THE WALSHINGHAM ASSOCIATION	THE WALSHINGHAM ASSOCIATION Registered Charity Number: 11 90926 Promoted by: D. Chapman, Pilgrim Bureau, Friday Market Place, Walsingham NR22 5EG	33507
Name _____	SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE	
Address _____	1st Prize: 3 Nights full board for 2 ensuite at Elmham House + £100 travel	
_____	2nd Prize: 2 Nights full board for 2 ensuite at Elmham House +£100 travel	
_____	3rd Prize: £100 4th prize £50	
Tel _____	3 further prizes of £25	
<small>Unsold Tickets, Cash, Counterfoils should be returned to promoter by 11/11/23</small>	Draw will take place on 18/11/23	TICKETS £1 EACH
	<small>North Norfolk DC S5L031</small>	<small>QuickPrintUK, Ltd, 23 Prince William Road, Bilton Park, Loughborough, Leics LE11 5SU Tel: 01509 236987 www.quickprintuk.com</small>

This is the last edition of the Magazine which I shall produce. It is with regrets and sadness that I have taken this decision. I wish my successor well as he or she takes on the role of Editor.
David Chapman



THE WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION

Annual Retreat 2023

A reminder that this year's Annual Retreat occurs on
Tuesday 17th to Friday 20th October 2023

We are blessed that this year's Retreat will be led by

Friar Gerard Mary Toman, OFM Conv. *

Author of the highly popular

Walsingham in Lockdown: Reflections **

Theme: Our Jewish Roots

*We recommend booking as soon as possible,
especially if you require particular rooms.*

RETREAT PRICES - three nights, full board

(It may be possible to book additional nights.)

£228.00 for Standard Accommodation, per person

£282.00 for En-suite Accommodation, per person

Residential Booking Details

A non-refundable deposit of £20.00 is required for each booking.

A **booking form** for those who wish to attend and stay at Elmham House may be found in the Lent & Easter Magazine **and** on the Walsingham Association website **or** you may contact the Pilgrim Bureau directly on **01328 820 217 (Option 1)** to make a reservation.

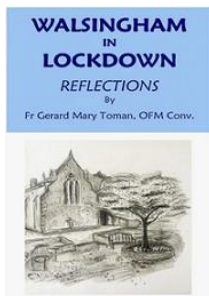
Please make cheques payable to **"The Walsingham Trust"**.

Please book by **Monday 9th October, 2023 at the latest.**

Reservations, The Walsingham Association, Pilgrim Bureau, Friday Market Place, Walsingham, NR22 6EG.

YOU MAY ALSO BOOK AS A NON-RESIDENT

The retreat cost of £20.00 per person, which is in addition to the cost of accommodation, is payable to "The Walsingham Association", and may be paid by cash, cheque or card to our office, on arrival.



Fr Gerard Mary Toman is a Greyfriar - a member of the Order of Friars Minor, Conventual.

After ordination, he was asked by his order to serve at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. Eighteen months after that, the world was gripped by the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Shrine was Locked Down.

** **Reflections** are an account of England's National Shrine of Our Lady during the first 100 days of Lockdown. They are by turns beautiful, moving, funny and theological - but above all, they are an important record of a time unique in more than 900 years of Walsingham History. Published by The Walsingham Association