The Beda Review

60th Anniversary of the present Beda College building
the first in Beda history to be built exclusively for this purpose

2019 - 2020
The Beda Review
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Front cover: “The autumn of 1960 will stand out in Beda history as the starting point of a new era. For the first time the College will have a house designed and built specially for its unique work,” said the Editor of The Beda Review in September of that same year. Its sixtieth anniversary is an occasion to celebrate its service as the home of many generations of men who have been formed for the priesthood and to remember to joyfully keep up that work for future generations.

Back Cover: Angels Unawares, by Timothy Schmaltz, is a life-size sculpture in bronze and clay that depicts a group of migrants and refugees from different backgrounds. The sculptural work interprets the belief that the sacred is to be found in the stranger, in this case, in refugees and migrants. Read more about it in the Rector’s Report.
### Contents

**Rector’s Report**

**Editorial**

**Features**

- A Wildlife Walk through the Beda Grounds – Rev. Michael Smith
- Forgotten by Time – Rev. Matthew Bond
- The “Old” Beda – Brendan Farrow
- One Monastery in Two places – Canon Philip Gillespie
- Building a new Beda – Brother Markus Ohlsson TOR
- Records of the opening of the College Building – Pope John XXIII
- FMDMs at the Beda – Sr Carmel Spratt and Sr Bee Kennedy
- Extracts... From a diary kept by a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood – October 1960 – unknown FMDM sister
- John Henry Newman enrolled among the Saints – Sean Henry
- Changing landscapes, new horizons - the safeguarding journey – Colette Limbrick and Christopher Pearson
- A Reflection on the Stained Glass Windows – Patrick van der Vorst
- The Scenes on the Paschal Candlestick: Some Biblical Reflections – Patricia M. McDonald, SHCJ
## Contents

**The Beda Year**

House photographs 56


The New Men 73

Ordinations 2020 86

**The Beda Association 2020** 88

**Obituary** Fr Peter Gooden – by Fr Michael Buckley 93

**Pontifical Beda College Staff and Students 2019-2020** 95
None of us would have imagined when we gathered in September 2019 just what a topsy-turvy year we would experience! Our intake was 13 new students coming from England, Ireland, Nigeria, India and Sweden and because, in the June, we bade farewell to 11 students the arrival of such an intake meant that almost half the House was new. This meant that the first months were a case of working out afresh what is the “Beda Way”, the House style which over the years has been proven to be effective and fruitful but which is not written in stone and which can quite happily and easily be adapted and altered according to circumstances.

Come Christmas, the period of settlement had happily found its level and, when we reconvened in January 2020, we were soon into the regular celebration of Christian Unity Week with its theme of St Paul’s welcome in Malta, “they showed us unusual kindness” (Acts of the Apostles 28:2).

Hebrews 31:2
Be not forgetful to entertain strangers:
for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.
We interpreted this with the aid of a relatively new bronze statue which had been unveiled in the Vatican, a picture of which is to be found on the back cover of this year’s Review.

It is the work of the Canadian artist Timothy Schmaltz, who has spent 25 years sculpting large-scale works in bronze. These are installed all over the world, including Rome and the Vatican.

*Angels Unawares* is a life-size sculpture in bronze and clay that depicts a group of migrants and refugees from different cultural and racial backgrounds and from diverse periods in history. The figures stand together shoulder to shoulder, huddled in a boat. From within this diverse crowd of people, angel wings emerge from the centre, suggesting the presence of something sacred amongst them. In fact, the sculptural work interprets the belief that the sacred is to be found in the stranger, in this case, in refugees and migrants.

No sooner was the Unity Service finished than we launched into the exam season and then a well-earned break which led some people off to England, some to parts of Italy – and a brave contingent to the sand dunes of Dubai!

Then it struck! On Monday 9 March, Prime Minister Conte announced that Italy would enter into lockdown because of the rapidly spreading and increasingly deadly Sars-Covid 19 Virus. The rest, as they say, is history, and you will be able to read some of it through the words of the Beda Diary contained in this edition. As soon as an Edict from the Council of Ministers was published we gave the students the option, in consultation with their Bishops and Vocations Directors, as to whether they returned to their respective countries or whether they remained here at College. Neither option was without its uncertainties or dangers and at first we may have thought it would be for a couple of weeks only….how wrong we were! Fourteen students chose to return to their homes and Dioceses, which meant that from that point in March through until the end of the College year in June we were a resident Community in Rome of 15 students plus the 5 Formation Staff, the FMDM Sisters having also been recalled to Houses in England and Ireland.

Video conferencing Apps, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Cisco Webex, Skype and indeed the humble telephone soon became part of our regular vocabulary and experience as the profs, both internal and external, strove as best they were able to provide for the continuance of the academic formation, while
tutorials and spiritual direction were continued face to face for those still here and in a mediated manner for those in the diaspora. The experience of a Holy Week and Easter with such reduced numbers was by no means impoverished and during the long weeks of lockdown here in Italy, the garden and the extra space which we enjoy here in Viale di San Paolo came into their own. (I hope you have managed to see the short video on the garden in springtime which is available through the website www.bedacollege.org). We were for such a long time San Beda dentro le Mura – St Bede within the Walls!

For a House which prides itself on the virtue of hospitality to celebrate our Patron without the regular guests from our Sister Colleges, from the Embassies and from the Curia seemed exceedingly odd – but once again, as for Easter so now for the Feast of St Bede, our reduced numbers did not stop us celebrating well and worthily and we were also able to institute, on that day, members of the Second Year to the Ministry of Acolyte.

When it came to the end of year examinations, both we and St Mary’s University, Twickenham, were clear that students should not be academically disadvantaged by the complexities of a situation where most of the teaching and assessment were suddenly online and where those who had returned to their own countries often lacked the usual resources for their studies. Our arrangement with St Mary’s made it possible to relieve some of the extra pressure by reducing the number of (online) oral examinations and we are immensely grateful to St Mary’s for their assistance in this matter. I am pleased to say that no student was unable to progress or graduate because of this alteration to our regular way of doing things! My congratulations to all concerned.

Then there came the question of how we were to end the year. Traditionally we do so with the ordination of Deacons at the Papal Basilica and then a splendid garden buffet – but this all looked increasingly certain to be disrupted if not rendered impossible due to the ongoing crisis. Thankfully the Vicariate of Rome granted us permission to proceed with the celebration of the Diaconate Ordinations (with all due physical distancing, sanitising of hands and wearing of face masks ...) and, on Wednesday 17 June, Cardinal James Harvey, Archpriest of the Basilica of St Paul outside the Walls came across to College and we celebrated the ordination of six Deacons in our Chapel.
Our congratulations to

- Christopher Butler - Diocese of Leeds
- Anthony Grant – Diocese of Brentwood
- Damien Locke – Diocese of Armidale
- Ludvig Ludvigsen – Franciscan Third Order Regular
- Markus Ohlsson - Franciscan Third Order Regular
- Michael Smith – Diocese of East Anglia

who were Ordained Deacon on that day, not forgetting

- Matthew Bond – Diocese of Wrexham
- Alexander Chow – Archdiocese of Melbourne

who, having returned to their Dioceses in March, will receive Ordination before returning to us to begin their 4th Year in October.

Ad Multos Annos also to our Priestly Ordinands this year

- Lodovico Torrisi OSB - 27 June 2020 at Basilica San Paolo, Rome
- Adrian Lowe - 11 July 2020 at Colchester, England
- Norman Allred - 20 September 2020 at Mullingar, Ireland.

At the conclusion of the Diaconate ordination I formally thanked Cardinal Harvey for his disponibilità, his openness and willingness to come across and help us when we found ourselves without an Ordaining Bishop:

Your Eminence, our deepest thanks to you for your generous response to our call for help and enabling us to conclude our year in relative normality by celebrating that for which the College exists – to provide to the Church, Universal and Particular, Ordained Ministers who will be “strong and steadfast in Christ” (Ordination Rite), ardent but gentle servants of the Gospel.

In October of 1960 Pope John XXIII formally opened the College on this site; little did we think as we entered our 60th year that we would be celebrating the conclusion of the year in such a way - a small resident community, yet with the ability to adapt and to concentrate on that which is most fundamental. This has been a hallmark of the Collegio Pio, later known as the Collegio Beda, over the 168 years of our ministry.
So, that was the year that was...!! I very happily pay tribute to all the House - students, resident staff and external professors, who have enabled the Beda to continue both in its physical presence in Rome and also spread around the world.

The decision to remain “open for business” here in Rome was a deliberate choice – but I am acutely aware that we would not have been able to continue as we have without the amazing support and care of the personale of the kitchen (Maria Grazia, Pina, Angelo, Gabriella and Lucia), the household (Larry and Edna, Teresa, Ida, Marily, Melvin and Fabrizio) and our indefatigable office staff, Orietta and Annalisa. To say mille grazie, a thousand thanks, seems weak and insufficient .....but let it cover the thousand ways in which we are indebted to them!

Our intention is to welcome our new students at the end of September and then gather the whole House together in early October... for what I sincerely hope will be a more regular or “new normal” Beda experience in the year 2020-2021!

Speriamo bene .... We hope for the best.

Oremus pro invicem – Let us continue to pray for each other.
This year in review will be a historic one. First of all, the academic year was historically unique, for the College as well as the world at large. As the Rector has already mentioned, we had barely finished the first semester before we found ourselves with the option of going back and finishing the courses for the year from home, or remain at the Beda. During the Roman spring, half the student body remained at the Beda, whose corridors and grounds were much quieter. Not only because fewer voices were heard, but also because the sounds normally coming from outside the walls – traffic noise, loud voices etc. – ceased.

At the same time it seemed to us that wildlife flourished. This prompted one of the students to go on Safari in our garden. Another explorer went searching inside the building and found several interesting books which are now to be seen on the shelves of the library. Despite the fact that we found ourselves in isolation for some three months, we tried to keep things as normal, which is reflected in the Diary. The canonisation of John Henry Newman is one event that deserves an article of its own, which you will find in this edition.

So, in summary, this year was indeed a historic one. But this year’s Beda Review will be historic in another sense. The 60th anniversary of the College building this October has naturally given us good reason to put together a Review that stretches even further back than the autumn of 2019. As I was beginning work on this year’s Beda Review, I found myself browsing through the library to find back issues that documented the move. It was very interesting and rewarding to look back some 65 years and follow what went on during the transition from the Old Beda to the New Beda.
The story is not merely about architecture, but also an account of people who have lived and studied at the Beda – students, as well as the FMDM sisters who have been an uninterrupted presence in the building since its opening – and the work of the saints and of God. It also involves theological reflections on the art that went into the building: the stained glass windows in the chapel as well as the paschal candle stand. All of this, together with some other very good articles, are to be found in the following pages, all put together by a crew of talented writers who contributed to making this Review a historic account of a very special year.
The experience of remaining at the Beda during the Italian lockdown in 2020 made me appreciate more than ever our College grounds. We had much to be thankful for – those living in nearby apartments were confined within much smaller spaces. The quieter environment which resulted from reduced road traffic and closure of neighbouring institutions encouraged encounters with the wildlife in our garden, and I enjoyed observing the various kinds of birds and other animals on our doorstep.

With this in mind I would like to invite you to join me on an imaginary stroll through the Beda grounds. As we go, I will point out a few of the creatures that became more familiar to me during this time.

One species that had already caught my attention during the winter months was the **black redstart**. Elegant, but easily overlooked, this dark grey-brown bird might at first sight be mistaken for a sparrow. In my imagination it hops along the path now in front of me as I walk through the garden passing by the two great **umbrella pines**. The bird’s slender form - reminiscent of a robin - and delicately flickering tail alert me to the fact that this is no sparrow. On approaching too close, I experience a flash of orange as it flies away - did you see it? – the reddish tail which gives this bird half its name! This fellow did indeed fly away – it disappeared before the end of March. The redstart prefers the cooler climes further north in order to breed - we look forward to its reappearance in the autumn.

After paying my respects to the **terrapins** and the **goldfish**, I notice some genuine sparrows, **Italian sparrows** in fact, splashing in the fountain. I’m reminded of the time one flew into chapel just minutes before the start of evening Mass. *The Sparrow herself finds a home...* says the psalmist – fortunately the little bird found its way out eventually.
A wildlife walk through the Beda grounds

I think I will head next for the tennis court, but just before I leave the garden I notice a male blackbird hopping cautiously over the grass - deep in concentration - seeking the next worm. Suddenly there’s the screech of parakeets and three of these green and noisy fruit-eaters ascend rapidly skywards from the orchard.

Once at the tennis court, I take a walk around inside and notice a couple of small finches, known as serins, high up on the top of the perimeter fence. During March and April they were frequently seen there, swivelling from side to side whilst softly twittering their spring song. They also spent time in the orchard and when disturbed displayed a patch of yellow at the base of their tails as they flew away. The males have more yellow on their bodies than the females, but both have the distinctive yellow rump.

One of the pleasures of living in another country can be the experience of different kinds of plants and animals. As I continue my imaginary walk up and around in front of the main College entrance and then down the side of the building parallel with the Viale di San Paolo, I notice the range of
fruit trees – figs, Japanese medlars and the single banana tree towards the end near the kitchen. Suddenly I hear a rapidly repeating, almost mechanical sound. A Sardinian warbler flits from branch to branch voicing its characteristic call as it does so. Before coming to Rome I had never before encountered this Mediterranean bird. With its black “cap”, white “throat”, pale grey back and slightly longer than expected tail it is a delight to observe. If you get close enough you might also spot the red rings around the eyes, set off nicely by the surrounding dark colouration of the head.

I now turn left under the car port and back through into the garden. Two graceful doves, pale brown to cream in colour and more slim and light on the wing than pigeons, alight on the nearest fountain for refreshment. Collared doves, often seen in pairs, are so named because of the distinctive dark mark on the side of their necks. Their gentle call is brought to mind in the divine office where on Tuesdays of week 2 we pray the lines from Isaiah 38:

*Like a swallow or a crane I clamour, I moan like a dove.*

Now as I glance down the garden I can see the full extent of the side of the chapel. A single hooded crow stands silently watching on the roof, while underneath the five pairs of windows designed by Lucia Larreta stand out dark against the surrounding wall. They explore the saving power of Christ and, through the media of coloured glass and light, include depictions of various creatures. The Latin phrase to be seen under the inside of the windows, *Benedicite Omnia Opera Domini Domino*, directs all of God’s creation to praise Him.

With this in mind let us go through into the orchard. As I enter the quadrangle, I catch out of the corner of my eye a scurry of movement and a brief glimpse of a thin tail disappearing behind a stone. The Italian wall lizard can be a treat to observe, but only if you see it before it sees you! Although found in all parts of the grounds, these lizards, with their bright green backs and tails longer than their bodies, are most frequently observed in certain favoured spots. Once you get to know their favourite haunts, approach very slowly on hot sunny days and you’ll get surprisingly close views as these attractively patterned reptiles remain motionless in the sun.
Also worth watching out for is the **Moorish gecko** – a shorter and darker animal with broad head and large eyes – just as quick at disappearing!

The orchard can surprise you. The largest bee I have ever seen in my life appeared from nowhere one day and flew towards me - a huge entirely-black bumble bee with gorgeous blue wings. At the time I was walking along the far wall of the orchard between Our Lady’s statue and the large lime tree, near a pile of chopped wood. The **violet carpenter bee** was perhaps looking for a suitable site for a nest. On another occasion I came across a family of **tree creepers** shuffling their way up the trunks of some of the smaller trees searching for insects in the deeply furrowed bark. **Wagtails** are also seen exploring the orchard from time to time and, less frequently, **long-tailed tits**. These latter appear like small balls of feathers bouncing quickly through the air from tree to tree.

Alerted by the sound of twittering above me, I glance up to see a couple of **swallows** swoop low in their quest for insects. Familiar to everyone, these skilled flyers glide gracefully above the orchard and tennis court, often in the wake of the far more acrobatic and faster **swifts**. **House martins** can also sometimes be seen darting through the air, calling to one another as they do so.

As the light starts to disappear from the sky, the hunt for flying insects continues as a **bat** emerges through the twilight, wheeling frantically above my head. There are more creatures to enjoy here in the environs of the Beda: we have only mentioned a few of them. However, it’s time now to return indoors. We have much to give thanks to Almighty God for – in the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins:

*He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change: Praise him.*
When I entered the Beda College three years ago, my bookbinding skills came in very useful to the College Library as I repaired or rebound the odd book or two. I was also invited to examine the contents of the loft which held numerous, mainly non-significant books. Among them, were found some very old Latin philosophical and theological works dating to the 16th-18th centuries which I have since preserved in the refurbished Library.

It was not until a few months ago, however, that more books of various sizes were stacked in boxes in another part of the loft, dating between the 15th and 19th centuries, printed in Latin, as well as Italian and English. As a result of that discovery, I found at least five books with particular interest, and possibly of some importance which I would like to share with you.

1. A Latin work of St Bede dating from 1521, with the printer’s dedication to St John Fisher who was then chancellor of the University of Cambridge as well as the Bishop of Rochester from 1504.

2. Another Latin work of St Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* but of a very early incunable work which is printed from a wood blocking device dating to 1506. This also has hand-coloured initials which you would still find in later medieval and Renaissance printed works. This particular edition is the second of an earlier edition which was printed in 1475. This book was also given to the Beda College in or around the 1940s by a Welsh Viscount called Evan Morgan, who was a poet as well as a bigwig society figure, and associate friend to both Pope Benedict XV and Pius XI. There is also an inscription by the donor on the front fly page which marks it as a gift to the College students and their theological studies. Again, most likely to be a rare find and a valuable item which has become a part of the patrimony of the College since its foundation 1852 but forgotten with time.

3. An English first edition of the *Rheims New Testament* printed by John Fogny 1582 which is the only printed edition of that year and beyond it. It was also the first Catholic Bible ever printed in English from the Vulgate in response to the Counter-reformation and opposition to the protestant Bible editions under the Elizabethan settlement. It was
translated at the seminary of Douai and published in Rheims, by a group of English exiled Catholics. There is no inscription as to how it came to the Beda, but there are family names in it which indicate it was once in private hands.

4. I also discovered another English work by Thomas Stapleton, who was a 16th century Catholic controversialist and again printed in Douai to an earlier date of 1565. The book is titled *Fortress of the Faith* as a means of preserving the Catholic faith in England from the viewpoint of St Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History*. The book is also dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I, as a reminder of her duty to uphold the Catholic faith in England against the protestant settlement in the early part of her reign. This book is the first edition and most likely to be very rare.

5. Lastly but not least, I came across a Roman Missal that belonged to a former and very significant College Rector, Mgr Charles Duchemin. The missal is inscribed as a gift from the Beda College students in 1953, again another book which has become part of the College patrimony forgotten by time.

Rev. Matthew Bond came across some interesting books in our loft. Here he is with one of his findings.

Between 1852 and 1960 the Collegio Pio, later known as the Beda College was situated at 67 Via di S. Nicolà da Tolentino, near the Piazza Barberini. Towards the tail end of those years, years when then Rector Mgr Charles Duchemin was planning to move the College to new quarters, Brendan Farrow was a student there. He has some fond memories of his stint there, as presented below.

The Pontifical College of St Bede in Rome is probably one of the Eternal City’s least known papal establishments – even among English Catholics. It deserves better.

Founded in 1852 by Pope Pius IX – originally for the training of Church of England and other non-RC clergy who wanted to become Catholic priests, it soon became known simply as “the Beda” and opened its doors to suitable celibate men of English-speaking nations regardless of their previous career profession. Today although less well-known than the uniquely distinguished 16th century Roman seminary called simply “The English College”, or “The Venerabile”, in honour of the 44 students who between 1581 and 1679 were cruelly martyred for their Catholic faith, the Beda too holds its own distinctive place among Rome’s numerous seminaries, with Beda-trained priests now to be found all over the world.

Because of their maturity and pastoral background the usual Catholic six year seminary course of philosophy, Scripture and theology studies was reduced to four years. All other typical seminary routines were maintained – private prayer and meditation in chapel before 7 am Mass, midday visits to the Blessed Sacrament, the rosary recited together before evening Benediction in
the chapel and night prayers in the chapel followed by the *Magnum Silentium* common to all Catholic religious houses. There was a more relaxed feel about the place, helped by a rule permitting students to have wine in their rooms and what in my time in the College was a convention that allowed students to meet socially in their rooms to have a drink and a chat about the day before 7 pm supper. There was of course no shortage of discussion about the Beda courses, issues raised in lectures, individuals’ own work experience, visits to sites of Rome’s own awesome history and places within reach outside the city.

Institutions like colleges and schools are remembered for their achievements but also through the memories of those who were there and created their special spirit. Although not a Beda student myself I lodged – from 1956 to 1960 in what must now be called “the Old Beda”: because in that last year, 1960, the Beda was relocated from its busy, noisy downtown situation just off the Piazza del Tritone to a site (appropriately for a college with worldwide impact) opposite the Basilica of the Apostle of the Gentiles, St Paul’s *fuori le Mura*. In the 1960s I was in Rome working on a theology doctorate thesis (sadly never finished), inscribed at the city’s Jesuit-run Gregorian University and for convenience I lodged at the Beda. Now, at the age of 87 I must be one of the few who knew that “old” Beda. I write therefore from memory of the five-storey building (since become a bank) and its situation, and especially of the men – servants, staff and students – I was privileged to live among during those years.

During my time at the College Mgr Charles Duchemin, the now legendary Rector, was a kindly, gentle man with a genius for unostentatious command. The practice was to report to him if one missed or was late for any of the College routines e.g. the 6.30 am meditation in chapel. In my own (not rare) experience his immediate response was: “You must have needed the sleep”. Conversely it was said that he took very seriously the rule that students allowed out in the evening be back no later than 10 pm or risk being met by him, angry, at the door. Generally though he ran – in the phrase of a student who had been a classmate of the Duke of Edinburgh at Dartmouth RN College – “a tight ship”. Dean of the students in his last year this former “tar” was understandably proud of the fact that the first congratulations he received on his ordination were from Buckingham Palace. He was appointed a parish priest in the Bahamas and when he died was buried there – “A good Hand”, much admired.

Several of the Beda students I knew in those years had served in the forces during WW2. I think of Lucky Louie – a navigator/bomb aimer in the RAF so dubbed when he completed his second course of raids on Germany without
being shot down. Lady Luck deserted him though during the third course and he had to bail out at night on return to England, damaging his back on landing. Much younger was a bright and popular young paratrooper who lost a leg in the battle for Arnhem. He had promised God he would become a priest if he survived the battle ok but crippled, wasn’t sure he had. He came to the Beda and I remember him at Christmas on his crutches doggedly keeping up with us climbing Monte Subasio, Assisi. Another former soldier with us was a retired army Colonel who used to say the two finest institutions in the world were first the Catholic Church and next the British army. A friend of mine thought the colonel really believed the order was the other way round; but the colonel was no stuffed shirt. He had soldiered with Greek partisans in the war and told of hiding booby traps in turds on mountain paths. As Dean in his final year before ordination, checking Christmas decorations in the refectory he noticed two round balloons and one long one had been hung in a ceiling corner. “Has to come down”, he said simply.

Ordinations every year meant the student body of 40 – 50 men welcomed new students every year and while I lodged there these included South Africans (white – one a senior medical doctor), Australians, a Hong Kong Chinese, two Americans (one an unpopular millionaire businessman some inevitably thought only admitted for his money), the English artist Prix de Rome winner (Francis Harpin), several ex-Anglican clergy – one a highly regarded organist (Oxford Mus.Doc, L. Shields), another the author of what was considered an authoritative work on Freemasonry in the Church, all of them more or less orthodox Catholic – though I remember one who did not like the rosary and when told he must have beads for the daily recitation hauled one so long from his pocket that half of it clattered on the surrounding chapel tiles. It caused more amusement than reproach. Other students in my time included a well-known BBC Third Programme announcer (Christopher Pemberton), two former professional footballers and an Irish professional cricketer who’d played for Ireland.

Less conventional than any was the Beda ghost whose existence, like other sceptics I pooh-poohed – till the experience was mine too. The story was that a nun had thrown herself down the five-storey lift shaft and from time to time knocked on student doors. When they opened they found nobody there. I mocked these stories, even those told by older students – till the night in my last old Beda year. I had the only fifth floor student room and was working at my desk when the door only three steps away from where I sat was so heftily kicked it was still shaking from the blows. I jumped up thinking whoever was
there was a fool who must be caught because the only exit from the dead-end corridor was through that door into my room.

In other circumstances this old Beda ghost story would have given the journalist in me the lead into this account; but the truth is better. The mix of nationalities, ages and backgrounds of Beda men all intent upon ordination as priests made the Beda spirit in my years there unique, even among my subsequent experiences as a journalist meeting politicians, clergy and others of very different persuasions.

The way from the street into the then Beda building was up marble (I think) steps past the portiere’s window, and he (an Italian man like all Beda staff at the time) had to get used to not only studenti inglesi of every kind but also to visitors wanting to see relatives like a grandad student there. That was the oldest of these oldies in my time: Rolf Elwes, the widower father and grandfather of well-known British showbiz personalities. A story about this genial gentleman I liked was of the evening recreation time after supper when he approached the Vice-Rector, excused his intervention in the conversation and told the priest that in the city that day he had bumped into “Mmmmm-m-m- -” he couldn’t remember the name but irritated, recalled: “He had a house at ‘M-m-m- -... Stupid of me! Had a house there myself... Anyway, Father, he wished to be remembered to you.” And Rolf was gone. In total contrast a New Zealander I found refreshingly different from some more staid students, had been among other things a top-dressing pilot, dropping fertilizers and insecticides on terraced and generally otherwise inaccessible crops in the south NZ alps – highly dangerous work in the fickle winds because of the many power lines. The life of these well-paid danger-money pilots was said to be two years and after two-and-a-half my friend (Larry/Ilario) decided to take a holiday in Italy – from where his family had emigrated when he was a four-year-old. As well as antipodean English Larry spoke his family’s rural 19th century Italian with unashamed vivacity, sometimes mystifying the 20th century Italian Beda staff, who told me his word for a car for example was to them “a cart”). He was ordained for Auckland Archdiocese and sent to PNG as a flying priest – till the day his ancient mission aircraft fell out of the sky and Larry was killed. A grievous loss to his family and diocese.

For a suburban Londoner like me the mix of good-hearted men of all adult ages and experience from all over the English-speaking world the Beda was a university in the true meaning of the word. I count it a high privilege to have lived among such men and thank the Almighty for placing me in their company in Rome.
Wearmouth–Jarrow was the creation of Northumbrian nobleman Benedict Biscop (c.628–90), who visited Rome and was inspired by the Christian life he saw there.

In 674 he approached King Ecgfrith of Northumbria for land for a monastery. He was first given a large estate to found St Peter’s, Wearmouth, and then in 681 received land at Jarrow to found St Paul’s. The twin monastery probably once owned much of the land between the rivers Tyne and Wear.
Bede entered the monastic community at Monkwearmouth St Peter at the age of 7 and he lived there until, with Coelfrith and some other monks, he was transferred to the newly gifted site in Jarrow where a second monastery church and complex were built under the Patronage of St Paul. It was here, at St Paul Jarrow, that Bede lived out the rest of his life and died on the Feast of the Ascension, Thursday, 26 May 735 and was buried at Jarrow. His remains were transferred to Durham Cathedral at some point in the 11th century (Durham Cathedral was begun in 1093 and the relics of St Cuthbert were transferred to the new shrine in the new Cathedral in 1104).

These newly written icons represent St Peter holding in his hand the monastery church of Monkwearmouth and St Paul holding the monastic church of St Paul at Jarrow.

They encapsulate not only the heritage of Rome, the duorum principum who shed their blood here at Rome but also the monastic life of our Patron Bede: St Peter, Monkwearmouth and St Paul, Jarrow.
“It is not without some sad feeling that we watch this year roll by, the last in the Via San Nicolà da Tolentino. Old students will remember this house, which, in spite of its limitations, gave them friendly hospitality while they were being prepared for the priesthood. But although we should be grateful to it, we cannot live in the past. Our accommodation had become inadequate, and the premises needed much money spending on them; the noise and bustle all around had increased beyond description. The late Holy Father, Pius XII, was quick to understand all this, and gave us the land opposite the Basilica of St Paul’s on which to put the new college which is rapidly nearing completion. It has plenty of air around it and, with its red-tiled roof, already looks handsome, standing against the background of the historic Basilica.

To this new building, designed specially for its purpose, we must now transfer the spirit that has been built up at the old place by so many generations of Beda men. St. Bede will feel at home next to an ancient Benedictine monastery where the Divine Office is solemnly recited each day, and St. Paul, the great convert to Christianity, will watch over those who have received a call as he did.”

The Editor of the March 1960 edition of The Beda Review had great hopes for the future of this new College – as he was writing his editorial the Beda was a lifeless structure (it had not yet received the spirit of life that comes with people making it their home, in this case men and women who want to serve the Lord of life, present among them in the chapel) without windows, supported on all sides by scaffolding – but at the same time a great gratitude for the spirit that had already been built up. This year we celebrate its 60th anniversary, and I can truly say that
I have felt at home there during the three years I have lived here, thanks to the friendly atmosphere that prevails within it. With the Editor quoted above, I also sense the importance it will have for the future as it continues to be the temporal home for men from all over the world who will be prepared for priesthood within its walls.

As we celebrate its anniversary on 20 October, it will be more suitable to remember its earliest time and therefore you will find out more about its conception, formation and birth as you continue reading.

The need for a new Beda had been felt for some forty years before it could actually be realised. The Rector of the time, Mgr Charles Duchemin, writes about it in September 1956:

> When I was sent as Rector of the Beda in 1928, I found I had inherited a house chosen with considerable foresight by my predecessor. It was on high ground and in a central position.... Very soon people were urging me to move the college to more suitable premises, but what could be done? .... We had a building with a cortile in the middle but we owned only three sides of it. The fourth side (from which came many strange noises!) belonged to someone else and was let out in tenements. No purchaser would be interested in buying only three sides of a quadrangle. However in the course of years and through the generosity of many friends who believed in the Beda idea.... the fourth side was bought and paid for.

Everything seemed ready for a move, but then came the war in 1939. The College had to leave Rome for seven years and continued the formation of priests at Liverpool Seminary until 1946, when they could eventually return. Duchemin continues:

> Since then we have gone on re-establishing ourselves. The number of applicants increased until we could take no more.... We divided men’s rooms to make more accommodations until the public rooms like the
chapel, refectory and common room would take no more. Fifty-five was our limit and still is, whereas many more are asking to come and have to be refused.

We thought of several possible buildings, one in particular, the Villa Malta [not far from the Spanish Steps] became vacant and we went over it, secretly pushing a medal of St Joseph between the cracks on the roof…. Soon after we heard that the property had been acquired by the Jesuit Fathers for important literary work. We could not think that St Joseph had failed us, or that he did not know the difference between the Beda and the Society of Jesus!

They looked at other possible buildings and lifted up their prayers to St Pius X asking for his help. Eventually they started thinking about acquiring a site and building a new house. “Finally and as if springing up from the unsuccessful remains of our previous efforts our attention was called to one of the few remaining bits of land in the City belonging to the Vatican.” Pope Pius XII granted them the spot of land, 5,000 square metres, on which the present Beda is located. Now they could start thinking about the type of building they should build and how to finance its construction.

Six months later, the Architect, Dr Renato Costa, was already painstakingly working on the plans. In his own words, he was faced with various problems: “at once interesting yet not easy to solve. One must bear in mind the importance of the building with its religious and historical tradition; especially one must remember the unique situation of the land, so close to St Paul’s, which gives a sacred character to the whole area” (The Beda Review, March 1958). He adopted “a traditional style that had been genuinely modernised.” As for the economic situation, generous souls, among them former students, donated money to “their ecclesiastical alma mater” during the two years it took to construct the building.

Soon the spot of land was ready to be transformed into a construction site. But, there was a small problem which delayed this transformation. “One quite unforeseen obstacle was that a small part of the land was occupied
by a farmer growing cabbages on it. He had rented the land for many years and although he had no legal right to remain, he put up a good case for consideration. We did not want to treat him harshly, nor create bad feeling. Finally he agreed to go peacefully for 425,000 lire (about £250).” (The Beda Review, March 1959) On 1 June 1959, the foundation stone was blessed by the Protector, Cardinal Nicolà Canali. It was placed in the apse of the crypt, which now houses the College class rooms. For 16 months, builders worked at the site, and produced a three-storey L-shaped building, with a chapel. Dr Costa’s plans were constantly being changed, in red pencil, to the point that they ended up looking “as if they had suffered a bad dose of measles” (Vice-Rector Peter Whitty, The Beda Review, September 1960).

The most striking change was that the wing which holds the chapel had moved from the north to the south side. If that had not been done, the wing on the right side of the cover image would have been on the left instead. Another very welcome change, although not an architectural one, was the acquisition of a larger portion of adjacent land, 2,000 square metres, to “guard against new buildings intruding on our privacy as well as to preclude any consequent shutting out of light from the chapel or refectory” (Editorial, The Beda Review, May 1962). The original plans had the wall running close to the lower structure behind the trees as seen on the cover image. As our present Rector, Canon Philip Gillespie pointed out, this was a blessing for us during this year’s lockdown, when we were more or less confined to the College grounds for three months, a time during which “the noise and bustle all around [that] had increased beyond description” also stopped.

Another view of the new structure. The roof terrace has been closed in and is now the Rector’s apartment.
The address of Pope John XXIII was given in Italian and below is the translation as published in L’Osservatore Romano. The Beda Review of March 1961 simply records: “The Holy Father delighted everyone by speaking his farewell words in English.”

Beloved sons, it is with deep satisfaction that we come today to the new home of your Pontifical College of St Bede, whither you have recently moved from your old home in the Via San Nicolà da Tolentino, now no longer adequate for its purpose. How significant this move from the old street in the middle of Rome to the neighbourhood of St Paul’s tomb! Every time you look out at the majestic basilica you will think of the Apostle of the Gentiles, of his consuming vocation, of his desire to live and die only for Christ. “Only by God’s grace I am what I am, and the grace he has shown me has not been without fruit: I have worked harder than all of them, or rather it was not I but the grace of God working in me” (1 Cor 15:10). The proximity of his burial place will inspire you continually to consider, in the light of divine grace, the gift of your vocation and how you must promptly and generously respond to it.

How we ought to thank the Lord for this most tangible sign of His presence in the world – vocation! He calls us; away with lesser aims, with rooted habits, with the dreams of ambition and worldly gain: nothing but for the glory of God, the sanctification of His name, the coming of His kingdom, the fulfilment of His will – the sublime aspirations, in fact, of the Pater Noster. What light, what grandeur, what fascination invests those who are thus called!

The first Mass in the chapel of the new Collegio Beda
This vocation calls for absolute generosity, in the manner of Paul the Apostle who, surprised by God, on the instant left everything to consecrate himself to this mission. It calls for total self-giving, a complete detachment. So that we may run like giants in the chosen way, clothing ourselves with the mind and will of the Eternal Priest. “I live now, not I but Christ lives in me, he who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

You, my dear sons, witness to the fact that the response to the divine call may come at any age. For one, it is a question of a life given to the Lord from childhood, as it was for that great Doctor of the Church, your patron and compatriot, the Venerable Bede. For another it may be the lightening stoke in the full vigour of manhood – the road to Damascus. Before God years do not count, only the intensity of the love with which we answer His call and serve Him.

It is in this light that we must estimate the importance of your College which prepares for the priesthood those who have been called in their mature years. In its unique character this College publicly proclaims the preciousness of vocation, and it is this that gives us pleasure in visiting you today, to encourage you and wish you well.

But another reason weighs particularly in our esteem for your College: it is a living testimony to the prompt and generous response to vocation notable among our sons in England. As our predecessor St Gregory the Great loved England’s sons of old (as your own St Bede so gracefully bears witness), so do we love your country, where the faithful continue to increase. We cherish the memory of our meetings not only with your Bishops, almost all of whom have already come to visit the common Father, but also with many of your illustrious public men and with groups of pilgrims and visitors. All of these encounters have left in our heart blessed memories!

Beloved sons, every race has its wealth of traditions and native virtues, which can and should be elevated and transfigured as the instruments of a fruitful apostolate. The endowments of the English are known to
the whole world; it is for you, singled out from amongst your fellow countrymen by the divine beckoning, to bring to the priesthood those traits of humanity, of chivalry, of solidity which mark your race – which have marked indeed so many fine priests who have gone out from your College already to serve the Church and your countries so well. May service such as theirs bring enlightenment and comfort to all who seek the truth and make your apostolic work irresistibly attractive to the souls of others.

We pray for you, dear sons, that your priestly training may prosper and we are sure that your College, under the protection of St Paul and St Bede, will be a glowing forge, where you will be fashioned for your ministry of tomorrow in a fire of charity and prayer, of recollection and study, of serenity and joy, under the blessing of our Father in Heaven.

And now, beloved sons, a word in English to express to you simply and directly the wish that you may successfully complete the studies you have begun in this city of Rome, luminous centre of Catholicism and achieve a perfect priestly formation, in harmony and union of the gifts of nature and of grace, so that your zeal may contribute to the rejoicing of the universal Church.

We are happy to add to these wishes our particular paternal Apostolic Blessing, which we lovingly impart to our Venerable Brothers and beloved sons here present, to the Rector and staff of the College, to each of you and to your family at home, as a pledge of continued divine assistance and benevolence.
As we celebrate 60 years of the Beda College on Viale di San Paolo, a permanent presence through these years in the College has been the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood, (FMDMs). The sisters came as a response to a request by Mgr Duchemin, Rector, to come and assist with services for the students and staff.

The sisters arrived on 29 September 1960, having travelled by train to Rome. Mgr Whitty, Vice-Rector, was there to meet them and take them to the Holy Child Convent, in Via Boncompagni, as the convent in the Beda was as yet unfinished. This is the Congregation of which Sr Patricia McDonald, our present Professor of Scripture, is a member. (For more details of the sisters’ arrival, see the article “Extracts from a Diary by a FMDM” in this issue.)

From the time of the sisters’ arrival the ministries that were required of them were: administration, infirmary care, finance, teaching and student support, general services of household management, this latter included cooking, laundry and sewing. A book could be filled with the stories and anecdotes that the sisters related of their experiences of early life at the Beda. Sr Maura Bermingham’s story is worth relating about a time during Vatican II when the Beda was abuzz with bishops of all forms and sizes. Heaps of laundry was an issue, especially since there was just one machine in the house. Maura in her enthusiasm dashed to the laundry to put in yet another load of students’ and bishops’ shirts. Unknown to her a pair of ecclesial red socks were mingled with the lot. When she returned to unload the machine, she discovered to her horror that the white shirts had turned red and pink! She spent the rest of the day using bleach in an effort to work a miracle. Pink for the clergy was not yet in fashion in those days!

In the beginning rules for relationships between the sisters and students were very strict, in later years this changed. However from the start the bonds of friendship forged between the sisters and students is legendary. Amazingly many of these sisters, ordained Beda men and former Rectors have encountered each other again in different parts of the globe, in their ministry for the benefit of God’s people.
The FMDM partnership with the Beda has always made it possible for our sisters to study and minister outside the College. This included Sr Assumpta who having obtained her licentiate at the Gregorian University, taught at the College until 2012. A number of sisters were secretaries to Cardinals in different Dicasteries. Sr Patrice O’Brien introduced computers to the Vatican, and often regaled us with stories of resistance and fear of these unknown innovative intruders, with their long tentacles, prepared to entangle the unsuspecting entrant! Sr Janet Fearns’ voice often rang out over the waves from her ministry at Vatican Radio. A number of our sisters did full time study at the Pontifical Institute of Regina Mundi, adjacent to Castle Sant’Angelo, including Sr Carmel Spratt who is presently at the Beda.

We the present sisters at the College, Sr Bee, Sr Carmel and Sr Mary Jean call the Beda home. We love our ministry here and are greatly supported and appreciated by the students, personale and staff. We are appreciative of the many opportunities we have had here in Rome, being included in the outings, festive events and gatherings of religious and students, as they occur in the calendar year.

On this 60th anniversary we feel privileged to be part of an evolving life here at the Beda, where we fully participate in the spiritual and social events of the College. We thank God for the many years of joint ministry where hundreds of priests have been prepared to work in the vineyard of the Lord. We pray that this ministry of preparing “late vocations” for the priesthood which the Beda offers, will continue for many years to come. We extend our gratitude to all Beda Rectors, especially our present Rector, Canon Philip Gillespie, for their unfailing friendship and support to all our sisters through the years.

The FMDM sisters have been a much appreciated and a loving presence since the Beda opened at its current location 60 years ago. Here are the sisters of today’s community: Sr Bee Kennedy, Sr Carmel Spratt and Sr Mary Jean Rogers with the Rector, Canon Philip Gillespie.
In a response to a request made by the Rt Reverend Mgr Duchemin, Rector of the Collegio Pontificio Beda to Very Reverend Mother General, for sisters to come to the new Beda College the following sisters were commanded by Holy Obedience to undertake this work: Reverend Mother Mary Dolores, Sister Mary Josepha, Sister Mary Sacre Coeur and Sister Mary Isidore.

The date of their departure from England depended considerably upon the progress made by the builders of the new College, although it was scheduled to be completed for the return of the students at the beginning of October. Eventually word came from Very Reverend Mgr Whitty, Vice-Rector of the College, saying that the Convent for the sisters would be more or less inhabitable at the end of September. Shortly after this news, a telegram arrived asking the sisters to wait until the floods had subsided because the train services had been interrupted by the damage caused by the floods.

Finally, 28th of September 1960 was selected as the date of departure of the sisters from the Motherhouse, Ladywell Convent, Godalming. Travelling by train, the sisters arrived in Rome on 29th September and were met at the station by Mgr P. Whitty. They were soon speeding towards the Holy Child Convent in via Boncompagni where they were to stay until the Convent was completed. They were anxious to see their new home, so Mgr Whitty took them to the new College. The new buildings stand opposite the Basilica of St Paul, which has a special link with England: “Until the Reformation the Kings of England were honorary members of the Chapter and the Abbot of the Monastery (Benedictine), a Prelate of the Order of the Garter, hence the insignia of the garter incorporated in the arms of the Church” (Oxford Dictionary of the Catholic Church).

As the sisters drove through the gate, it was evident that the College was far from completion; workmen were everywhere, planks, mortar, cement, bricks could be seen, and one could not help wondering how they proposed to be finished in time for the arrival of the students in a few days, and for the opening of the College on 20th October, when the Holy Father Pope John XXIII was expected to grace the occasion with his presence...

...The sisters were struck with the simplicity of the College where over the altar (one large block of white marble) there hangs the life-size bronze figure of the crucifixion by Monteleone ... the ten large windows on the north side in brightly
 coloured glass represent the *Benedicite omnia opera Domini*. On the other side are Stations of the Cross in beaten copper by Mavoaz and on the end wall of the aisle is a figure by Assenza, his interpretation of Our Lady of Walsingham. Underneath the Chapel is the crypt, with its thirteen altars, the acoustics permitting celebration of Holy Mass at all thirteen altars simultaneously.

Eventually, the sisters arrived at the Convent and were overjoyed to find their own little chapel, a community room, seven separate cells with hot and cold water, a bathroom and a shower. The sisters went to work to get the Convent in order as quickly as possible as they were very anxious to be able to take up residence for the feast of our Holy Father St Francis.

October 5th – after an early Mass at St Paul’s, the day was spent in cleaning and preparing, as the students and professors were increasing each day. On the 5th October, the Rector, the Rt Reverend Mgr Charles Duchemin, arrived, accompanied by Mgr Lamb. The first thing he requested was a cup of tea. He had had a bad journey, having lost all his luggage on the way – this was sought for daily but did not turn up until fifteen days later. The tea had hardly been prepared when Cardinal Heard arrived.

Although a few students had been coming in each day, the first large contingent arrived on 7th October. It was also a notable day in as much as the latest model of Singer sewing machine was bought (still in use in February 1998!). As the sacristan had now arrived, the boxes containing the chapel belongings from the old Beda were unpacked and our Chapel was prepared for Holy Mass on the following morning. We were delighted to have the Blessed Sacrament in our midst.

11th October, the feast of Our Lady’s Motherhood, was marked by the Rector offering Holy Mass for the sisters’ intentions, and Mgr Whitty bought a cake and a box of biscuits so that the sisters could celebrate the feast. We also paid a short visit to the sea and, upon our return, received a telegram to say that Sr Mary Louis and Sr M. Annunciation would be arriving later that evening.

On 20th October His Holiness arrived at the College at 4.00 p.m., where he was received by the Rector and Vice-Rector. At the entrance, the following Cardinals paid their respect to the Holy Father: His Eminence Cardinal Pizzardo, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities of Studies, His Eminence Cardinal Canali, Protector of the College, and Cardinal Heard. In the Chapel awaiting HIs Holiness were Archbishop Matthew, Vicar of the Army Chaplains in Gt Britain, Archbishop O’Connor, Rector of the Pontifical North American College, Bishop Beck of Salford, Bishop Cowderoy of Southwark,
Bishop Murphy of Shrewsbury, Bishop Rudderham of Clifton, Bishop Wall of Brentwood, Bishop D’Amato, Abbot of St Paul’s, Bishop Brennan, Deacon of the Holy Roman Rota.

After the singing of *Tu es Petrus* composed for the occasion by Dr Shields, student of the College, the Rector Mgr Duchemin, addressed his homage to His Holiness in English, in which he expressed his lively gratitude to the Supreme Pontiff, how highly honoured the College had been at his friendly visit. He recalled the goodness of the Popes, Pius IX who founded the College, Leo XIII who reopened the College, and Pius XII who made the new construction possible. Mgr Duchemin affirmed that since the end of the war the requests for admissions had increased considerably and on account of this he had been obliged to think of a new residence. The Rector expressed a wish that the spirit and cooperation which had always prevailed in the Old College, despite the limited materials, would continue to reign in the new surroundedings. “Holy Father, we ask your Blessing”, concluded Mgr Duchemin, “on this Pontifical Beda College, on our work in preparing men for the priesthood, called to work in the vineyard of the Lord at the last hour, may they never be lacking in their zeal to spread the Faith, in their devotion to Holy Mother Church, in loyalty to the Vicar of Christ on earth.”

Then the Holy Father gave his Discourse ... His Holiness then imparted the solemn form of Apostolic Blessing. He was then conducted to an adjoining room, where he received the homage of the Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, the Envoy of Great Britain.

There was quite a bit of excitement going on behind the scenes. Mgr Whitty had arranged that when the Holy Father reached the entrance hall, Mother General (Mother Mary Francis) and the sisters would be presented. During the ceremony they had been in the Tribune and naturally decided to leave before the end of the ceremony in order to be in the entrance hall in time. However, their progress was impeded by one of the Vatican officials. He could not prevent us going into our Convent and so down the back stairs to the entrance hall we went as fast as we could. But imagine our dismay to find another official in the front entrance hall, who very rudely pushed Mother General and the sisters (and Mgr Whitty’s mother and sister) into the porter’s lodge, locking the door behind him. It looked as if, instead of being presented to His Holiness, we would only catch a glimpse of him as he passed by our prison! Eventually another official arrived and came the magic word and we were released. When His Holiness arrived he looked more embarrassed than we did; however, we each kissed his ring and received his blessing. We could hear him saying: “Corragio, corragio [sic], sorrelline [sic].” He then blessed us and all those near and dear to us...
John Henry Newman has been part of my life for many years. As a local living close to his home in Birmingham, his name has always been a friendly one. Quickly I realised that I was following in his footsteps, I relocated to Manchester where I was a parishioner of the beautiful Oratory Church and I was a regular visitor to Littlemore. It was with joy, therefore, that October, my first year at the Beda, was the year John Henry Newman was canonised.

Nine years earlier I attended his Beatification at Coften Park in Birmingham. Proudly standing beside my mother Karen and my family, a joyous occasion. Nine years on, I was delighted again, proud to be Catholic and a proud friend of John Henry Newman. The sun was shining; the facade of St Peter’s looked especially dazzling, the people, thousands of them, came from far and wide. There I was again standing next to my mother and family, proud to be with them for this occasion as a seminarian in Rome. My patron was to be canonised as well as four other saintly people. The Holy Father pronounced the words: “We declare and define Blessed John Henry Newman be a saint and we enrol him among the saints, decreeing that he is to be venerated as such by the whole Church”. What a thrill to hear those words.

Newman was now a saint for the Universal Church. His example, teaching and holiness lay before all. “Lead kindly light amidst th’encircling gloom”, he had prayed, “lead Thou me on”! St John Henry Newman makes it clear to us that the Lord does in fact and indeed lead us on to Himself.

The celebrations for the canonisation were colourfully varied, both here in Rome and in many other parts of the world. HRH the Prince of Wales, attending the Mass and at some of the celebrations afterwards paid tribute to the saint in his ability to speak to the hearts of many.
The Beda College proudly celebrated Newman, there were lectures given throughout Rome on the works of Newman. Concerts were celebrated in the Oratory Church and Newman’s Titular Church. Other celebrations of prayer and exhibitions of some of his works were held at the Newman Centre in Rome to which all were welcomed by the “Spiritual Family The Work” and the “Friends of Newman”.

“Heart speaks unto heart”, was this saint’s motto. Love truly does abide into eternity.

**A Daily Prayer**

May He support us all the day long, till the shades lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in His mercy may He give us a safe lodging, and a holy rest and peace at the last.

*St J. H. Newman*
Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament

I place myself in the presence of Him, in whose Incarnate Presence I am before I place myself there. I adore You, O my Saviour, present here as God and as man, in soul and in body, in true flesh and blood. I acknowledge and confess that I kneel before that Sacred Humanity, which was conceived in Mary’s womb, and lay in Mary’s bosom; which grew up to twelve, wrought miracles, and spoke words of wisdom and peace; which in due season hung on the cross, lay in the tomb, rose from the dead, and now reigns in heaven. I praise, and bless, and give myself wholly to Him, who is the true Bread of my soul, and my everlasting joy.

St. J. H. Newman

Praised be Jesus Christ.

St John Henry Newman – pray for us
The topic of safeguarding tends to evoke fear and dread and it is not surprising that when we talk about safeguarding, the first thing that comes to mind is sexual abuse of children. At the moment in England and Wales we are under significant scrutiny in respect of the sexual abuse of children and the actions that the Church in England and Wales has taken in respect of addressing this, both at the level of the individual and in terms of its structure and arrangements. England and Wales are not alone in this and you will no doubt be aware of the scale of the problem internationally - Scotland, Ireland, Argentina, Australia, the US and other countries have been found wanting in their response to the sexual abuse of children within the Church.

We hope that, once you have read this, you will have a fresh outlook on the reality of safeguarding within the Church and a renewed commitment to integrate this conceptually into your day to day ministry. We are going to talk about safeguarding within the Catholic Church in England and Wales, how we got to where we are and then we will talk about the challenges and opportunities when we look at contemporary safeguarding issues. In addressing these areas, we will highlight a golden thread of unity that navigates a diverse and complex landscape.

**Background**

There is a long history of safeguarding within the Church and where better to start considering this today than with St Bede the Venerable. St Bede was a learned scholar and an influential and passionate teacher who shared his knowledge and spirituality with others. He gives a detailed account of St Aidan who strove to preach the message of Christ to all - nobility, the powerful, the weak (slaves and children). He lived a few decades before St Bede. St Aidan came from the community in Iona, founded by St Columba, to
set up a community at Lindisfarne. St Aidan’s message was to protect those most at risk, slaves, children, and bring Christ’s message of hope so that the Church becomes a safe haven – a message still living today in the Church.

St Bede, in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (731 AD) shows the great diversity that could be found in England at the time. Various distinct kingdoms, each with its own traditions and customs. St Bede was keen to show that despite these variations, the Church in England was becoming more united as years went by. He emphasised how the English Church was increasingly following the practices of the rest of the Catholic Church. For example, the Synod of Whitby adopted the system found in Rome for determining when Easter should be celebrated. The Church in every generation is called to balance diversity with unity, which is true now for safeguarding in England and Wales. Those outside the Church are not aware of its rich diversity – it is too often viewed as a homogeneous organisation.

**Diversity and unity**

The Catholic Church is a complex array of structures. In England and Wales it consists of different dioceses, religious orders, congregations and institutes. Each has its own spirituality, its own way of doing things. This diversity should be celebrated. St Bede reminds us there must be unity of practice when it comes to the essentials. No more so true than in safeguarding in the Church. A unified “one Church approach” is necessary to carry out the Church’s mission in England and Wales. The last 20 years have seen the emergence of a unified approach to safeguarding, still a work in progress, striving to become a One Church Approach, but a clear mission of the Church in safeguarding children, young people and people at risk. Recent history has taught us that when these weaker members of the Church are not protected then the good news of Christ is lost within the resulting scandals of sexual abuse and other forms of abuse.

I am going to change direction slightly because up until now, we have assumed that we have a shared understanding of what is meant by safeguarding. Safeguarding is a word that has become common currency and is widely used across statutory, voluntary and independent sectors. Historically, we have talked about child protection.

I want to refer to my doctoral research on the phenomenon of “murder-suicide” which highlighted the need to be aware of the need to safeguard the welfare of people who do not routinely cross our pathways as being...
vulnerable or in need of support. In this research, I found that the need to support and safeguard was not evident because of the position and portrayal of the family. We need to remain alert to what is being experienced by individuals at any time and in any context. The Catholic Church in England and Wales is no stranger to concepts of safeguarding. However, historically and to some degree currently, the predominant focus is on child protection as a response to sexual abuse by clergy. Whilst important, focusing on this alone can distract us from the wider need to safeguard children and adults within the Church.

So, what is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is implicit in gospel values and should be the golden thread running through your ministry. Safeguarding children means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment;
- preventing harm to children’s health or development;
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding adults means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. The aims of adult safeguarding are to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs. Within the Church we consider safeguarding adults more widely – people can be vulnerable at different times and all adults within the Church should be supported to live without being vulnerable to the power and authority of others. So, this changing landscape requires us to recognise the need to safeguard more widely and not just take protective action when something bad has happened. So, how has the Church responded to the need to safeguard? A particular challenge is demonstrated in providing a unified response from the diverse structure and set of arrangements that the Church is.

Diversity

The potential diversity of approach to safeguarding could result in chaos, disparity and an incoherence that does not reflect a unifying response to human need by practicing the underlying gospel values of courage, responsibility, compassion, justice, trust, love and respect for example.
Amidst this diversity, the need for a unifying “one Church” approach was recognised in the publication of The Nolan Report (A Programme for Action, 2001) which sought to protect children from abuse by creating a culture of vigilance within the Catholic Church of England and Wales. By 2007, the Cumberlege Commission Report had moved from the narrow focus on child protection to the wider concept of safeguarding. This was reinforced by the publication of Towards a Culture of Safeguarding which stated: “The Catholic Church in England and Wales is striving towards a culture of safeguarding where all are safe from harm and abuse and where every person is encouraged and enabled to enjoy the fullness of life in Jesus Christ through the prayerful, caring, nurturing, supportive and protective endeavours of the Catholic community, both individually and collectively.” (Towards a Culture of Safeguarding, 2012)

These reports underpin the impetus to strive towards unity with a one Church approach. So, how does this work in practice? Here are some examples of how we demonstrate a unified approach to safeguarding:

- Living and ministering within a culture of safeguarding – that is, having a set of fundamental values, beliefs and attitudes that are at the core of the gospel message, viewing safeguarding as part of authentic ministry;
• Having a one Church approach to safeguarding – clergy and religious (and Catholic organisations where we interact with them) following the same policies and procedures;
• Having comprehensive national safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance – signed up to by bishops, religious leaders and their trustees;
• Demonstrating fairness and transparency in our approach – treating all allegations in the same way in respect of reporting, and balancing the rights of victims for protection and justice, with support of offenders to help them live as good a life as they can.

In addition we must be aware of and respond to issues such as:
• Online abuse which can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phones
• Grooming
• Domestic abuse
• Murder-suicide involving domestic abuse which is not necessarily apparent to others
• Female genital mutilation
• Bullying and cyberbullying
• Child trafficking
• Hazing or initiation ceremonies which include the practice of rituals, challenges, and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group.

There are many additional challenges facing the adult safeguarding agenda at this time. These have not traditionally been seen as central to safeguarding adults work, but are areas where vulnerable people appear to be specifically at risk or specifically targeted:
• modern day slavery – which occurs both across international borders and within borders;
• human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, removal of organs;
• forced marriage;
• honour based violence;
radicalisation - “the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism;”

cyberbullying - the use of the internet, emails, texts, chat-rooms, and so on to repeatedly cause mental anguish to another.

Day to day, families need safeguarding because they are living with poverty, poor housing, unemployment, immigration issues or mental health issues. They may also lack awareness of, or access to, appropriate services which could help them. Some people may need support to understand that they have been abused, to have the confidence and trust to report what has happened and to receive support and protection. We also need to consider the need to safeguard the clergy and religious within the Church who are ageing, perhaps suffering ill-health and in some cases are unsupported.

As challenging as the changing landscape is, by understanding that safeguarding is integral to our Christian values and is a golden thread that runs through all ministry, we can take positive action to protect people rather than simply being reactive when harm has been done. We can achieve this by orientating ministry around some key principles.

Principle 1

Concerns safe people – preventing unsuitable people from taking up certain roles within the Church – clergy, religious and lay are included in this; the importance of applying rigour to selection and ongoing formation cannot be overestimated; ensuring the movement of clergy includes the provision of testimonials of suitability; processes must be in place to allow temporary or permanent removal from ministry where this becomes necessary in order to protect others. Appointments to lay voluntary roles must be robust including formal interviews, taking up of references. Anybody working in the name of the Catholic Church should receive safeguarding training and have the opportunity to consult with others if there are things that concern them.

Principle 2

Concerns safe processes to protect people – these processes include working in accordance with statutory authority processes such as referral to the police and local authority. Robust processes must be in place to identify, assess and to manage risk posed by those who are ordained or have taken vows, to protect people from further harm and to enable the individual to live safely.
Principle 3

Concerns the promotion of safe places – applying safeguards to all places where ministry is exercised and the promotion of wellbeing in everything that we say and do in the name of the Church. This is all about the detail of safe ministry, for example, risk assessments of buildings and events, codes of conduct, ratios for adult:child working, supervision and sleeping arrangements on retreats, visitors to the presbytery, applying boundaries to relationships and not abusing celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation.

New Horizons – just a couple of matters to note

The Catholic Church in England and Wales has publicly given its commitment to safeguarding through signing up to the One Church approach. It is 13 years since the Cumberlege Review reported and the foundations for the current safeguarding structure and arrangements were established. An independent review of structures and arrangements has been commissioned and it is anticipated that it will report next year.

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales are seeking to develop an appropriate general decree (decreta generalia) that would make it possible to secure canonical recognition (recognition, cf. Canon 455 of the Code of Canon Law), so there will be a special territorial law (cf. Canon 13 §1 of the Code of Canon Law) for England and Wales, which would give both juridical authority to the Church’s most important safeguarding rules for children and adults at risk and also secure a right of recourse to the Holy See against a diocese, religious congregation or other juridical person which failed to fulfil the obligations laid down in that law. The effect of this will be to bind the religious orders and dioceses canonically to the One Church approach.

What is needed is continued determination to move from the “We” commitment to “I” action. Agreeing common principles is not enough without personal responsibility for taking action.

We ask that you keep in mind and prayer all victims of abuse and finish with the last words and prayer of St Bede the Venerable – In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit – Amen.
A Reflection on the Stained Glass Chapel Windows

PATRICK VAN DER VORST

Before having a more detailed look at the individual stained glass windows of our Beda Chapel, let’s look at the art of stained glass in general. It is a unique art form, as stained glass windows are never static. Whether they are part of a large cathedral or a more intimate setting as ours, during the course of the day, the windows are animated by changing light. They are impacted by clouds which temporarily cover the sun, illuminating playful patterns across the floor, inviting our own thoughts to wander with them and be seduced by their colourful beauty. Stained glass windows have been essential to the architecture of churches, illuminating the building and the people within, both literally and spiritually.

The material itself, glass, is one of the results of the art of fire. A mixture of sand (silicon oxide), soda (sodium oxide) and lime (calcium oxide) melted at high temperatures produces glass. Glass was used, from ancient Egyptian times, for drinking vessels, ointment jars or windows, but it also allowed scientists to do medical tests observing atomic cells or distant stars. Glass itself puts us in touch with Creation.

In the production of stained glass, the wide array of colours is achieved by adding different minerals to the melting pot, and by allowing variations of time in this process. Some examples of this would be adding cobalt oxide to the glass during the melting process, which would make it blue; or copper-bearing minerals can produce the red tonalities. As glass-making is a difficult and unpredictable process, only few people still master the art nowadays. The whole journey of making a stained glass window, such as our windows at the Beda College, begins with the artist’s sketch and vision, known in medieval times as the *vidimus* (Latin for “we have seen”). The *vidimus* was then drawn to full scale, the actual size of the window. The panes of coloured glass were then cut to shape, placed on the *vidimus* drawing and then soldered together with strips of lead. Lead was and still is the ideal material used to join the pieces of glass. It is malleable and flexible, but yet strong and durable enough to support a great pattern of glass against extremes of weather and temperature.
Looking more closely now at the stained glass windows in our Beda Chapel, the following text from the Book of Daniel is inscribed beneath them: “Benedicite Omnia Opera Domini Domino”. One single word is mounted underneath each of the five sets of double windows. Translated as: “Oh all you works of the Lord, oh bless the Lord”. The words bring the windows together into a single whole artwork. These words were sung by the three young men, who were cast into the fiery furnace by order of the enraged King Nebuchadnezzar, because they refused to worship idols. For them the true orientation of all creation was towards the one true God.

Our stained glass windows are also orientated towards celebrating the Master Creator. As the College building was formally opened on 20 October 1960, it had tapped already into the spirit of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium, promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1963 which states: “Very rightly the fine arts are considered to rank among the noblest activities of man’s genius, and this applies especially to religious art and to its highest achievement, which is sacred art. These arts, by their very nature, are oriented toward the infinite beauty of God... as they are directed the more exclusively to the single aim of turning men’s
minds devoutly toward God” (SC.122). The document goes even further, talking specifically about art in seminaries: “During their philosophical and theological studies, clerics are to be taught about the history and development of sacred art, and about the sound principles governing the production of its works” (SC.129). The stained glass windows are therefore at the very heart not only of the liturgical celebrations in the chapel, but also of seminary life itself.

The windows were conceived knowing that seminarians would be looking at these panels. Each window addresses one aspect of priestly vocation. Fishing nets and boats are featured, referring to Simon and Andrew’s call in Matthew 4. Fire is present illustrating Luke 12: “I have come to bring fire upon the earth and how I wish it were already ablaze”. The plants of the earth, the fish of the waters, the birds of the skies, the sheep in the fields, all are depicted. These are important symbols of priestly ministry: the plants serve as illustrations for teaching spiritual truths; the fish refer to the vocation of the early apostles and helping people to Salvation; birds are more than just bones and feathers, they fly quickly, and with sharp sight they gather in realities from a distance, before coming down again.

The window with the sheep holds no shepherd. They are a picture of vulnerable innocence. But fear not, the shepherd is close by, literally in the next window where we see Christ kneeling in the River Jordan. In a scene evoking His baptism, we see a cobalt blue river combined with the bright yellow rays of the Holy Spirit descending upon Him. His hands are joined
together and his head bowed, praying humbly to His Father. From that day His ministry truly started. This and all other symbols outlined above have a particular resonance for all seminarians present in the chapel.

But probably the main window which speaks the most to me personally, is the window depicting a priest. He is standing on a staircase which connects the earthly brown panels with the celestial blue stained glass window sections. The priest is standing between both, inside a simple architectural church structure. A beam of light from the Holy Spirit has descended upon him. He is wearing red vestments, remembering the blood of the martyrs and of course the Passion of Christ himself. In his hands he holds a double inverted triangular chalice, in golden orange tonalities reminiscent of sunrise, signifying a new dawn is upon all seminarians present. The priest’s head is slightly titled, looking towards three sisters on his right, reminding me of the graceful and joyful presence in the seminary of Srs Carmel, Bee and Mary Jean. On the other side we find religious men in dark clerical grey clothes. The presence of both the sisters and priests is highly appropriate for a house of formation for candidates to the priesthood.

Our stained glass windows were conceived by Lucia Laretta, mother of the architect of the College chapel, Renato Costa (she used her maiden name in her life as an artist). From a purely aesthetic point of view, the first things we note when looking at the windows are the sharply angular lines and simple, basic colours. There is a great simplicity about them, typical for the late 1950s artistic movements throughout the world. Think of artists who were prominent during this period: Mark Rothko, Henry Moore, Serge Poliakoff, Willem de Kooning, etc. all moving towards minimalism and abstract art. Our windows perfectly embody this trend from the figurative to the abstract. Therefore when these windows were unveiled, they would have been quite avant-garde and cutting edge for their time. I do think that when looking at these windows loaded with symbolism apt for their seminary setting, we feel a motherly quality in them. It is said that after Lucia Laretta’s death, her son used to come into the chapel from time to time to admire some of his mother’s finest work.

We are truly blessed to pray in the presence of these stained glass windows while we go through formation. As per the words of Elisabeth Kubler-Ross: “People are like stained glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in their true beauty is revealed only if there is light from within.”
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In upward sequence, the four scenes represent creation, the expulsion from Eden, the crucifixion and the resurrection.

Creation
There are two accounts in Genesis of the creation. In the first, 1:1-2:4, all comes into being by God’s word. So, when it comes to Day 6, God says: “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness...”. In the second account, in 2:5-25, God makes the earth creature (the 'Adam) from “the dust of the ground” (the 'adamah) and brings it to life by breathing into its nostrils the breath of life.

The portrayal on the candlestick is closer to the first account: God is looking down from a cloud and lacks direct contact with the human figure sitting on the ground (although it is, of course, possible that it has just emerged from the ground and God is issuing instructions!). Additional support for Genesis 1 as underlying the author’s inspiration comes from the sheep in the background: in this account of creation, humans are made immediately after the land animals, whereas in Genesis 2 the animals are made as a kind of afterthought when God has realized that it is not good for the man to be alone. So the biblical basis of the image on the candlestick seems to be Gen 1:26-27, although these verses do in fact specify that humankind is made in God’s image and after God’s likeness as “male and female”. I suppose that it’s much easier to draw only one figure, but maybe there was a lost opportunity here?

Expulsion from the Garden
At the next level on the candlestick, humanity is clearly a couple, so it presumes the creation of the woman and the business with the fruit and
The serpent in Genesis 2 and 3. The exact reference of the scene is to Gen 3:23-24. This time, the artist has taken the opposite liberty with the text by drawing both Adam and Eve, even though the Hebrew text here refers only to “the man” as being driven out by God (although clearly both are intended). The eviction is a punishment, involving as it does the requirement to till the ground from which Adam was taken, although God’s immediate concern (v. 22) is in fact merciful: to prevent the pair having access to the tree of life (2:9) and thus being doomed to live for ever in their post-Eden state. This cannot happen: the artist depicts just one angel (Gen 3:24 has “the cherubim”), perhaps armed with a flaming sword, standing outside the gate. There is no way back.

The Crucifixion
As in all four gospels, Jesus is presented as crucified between two others. The accounts of the evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke are reflected in the minimal clothing of Jesus as the artist portrays him here (Mark 15:25-39 and parallels). In John’s account, however, Jesus is not stripped, and so in the Johannine depiction of the scene he typically still wears the purple cloak and the crown, since they are not said to have been removed once they have been put on him (19:2). On the other hand, the scene on the candlestick includes a kneeling figure and two others who are standing near to the cross, which is closer to John’s account, in which the three Marys and the Beloved...
Disciple remain with Jesus to the end (John 19:25-26). By contrast, all three synoptic gospels say that there were women present but standing “afar off”, and Jesus dies alone and abandoned. That is not the case here.

The Resurrection

In this scene, the risen Christ is standing, which is a symbol of resurrection, see, e.g. Rev 5:6; 20:12. Fully robed, he displays in his left hand a banner with a cross on it, the sign of his triumph. He stands within an aureola, a large-scale halo that emits rays of light.

With the resurrection, the movement of the four stages is now complete: from the naked human figure sitting on the ground in the first scene to the Fully Human One in majesty who triumphs over sin and death for the sake of all, the entire process being surmounted by the Paschal candle, the annually renewed symbol of the risen Christ.
Concert Review

FR ADRIAN LOWE


Performers: Igor Levit piano, Markus Hinterhäuser piano, Ning Feng violin, Julia Hagen cello, Klaus Reda percussion, Andreas Boettger percussion, Moritz Wappler percussion, Jeremy Cornes percussion

Although the music listing for this concert may not seem to be the most accessible in the repertoire, it must have been intriguing because the hall was almost sold out, virtually every seat taken by someone who had either experienced the ethereal sound world of the composer Olivier Messiaen and the troubled world of Dimitri Shostakovich, or who were eager to do so by coming to this strange juxtaposition of two very different works. Or are they different? If there is a common theme between the two, perhaps it is the tension between the physical world and a life beyond what we can experience here.

Messiaen wrote *Visions De L’Amen* in 1943 after being released from a prisoner of war camp. There are seven movements, each an Amen of a being expressing gratitude to God. The beings vary from Creation itself, to angels, birdsong, stars and planets, and Jesus in agony. The two pianos are used differently, one expressing the ethereal and mystical – the heavenly realm; whilst the other is more earthly and physically powerful. The two pianists, Igor Levit and Markus Hinterhäuser adopted their respective roles with ease and were happy to engage in the mystical aspects of the work but would also relish the earthy dance sections which are more bucolic and rhythmic in power like in *Amen du Désir* (Amen of desire). The work ends joyously with the *Amen de la Consommation* (Amen of consummation). The performance managed to blend Messiaen’s mysticism and his sensuality in a way that transported the listener to a world which blends together the New Heaven and the New Earth.
By contrast, Shostakovich’s 15th Symphony in its chamber arrangement is an ironic, sardonic work. The stage was now filled with four percussionists, one piano and a violinist and cellist. The percussion play a significant role but never dominated the acoustic. The music is undeniably witty at times, in particular when Shostakovich quotes from Rossini’s *William Tell* Overture, but the symphony is Shostakovich’s last one. It is enigmatic – at times innocent and at others sarcastic. Although it may be difficult to find the true meaning of this work and its sounds and colours are eclectic to say the least, perhaps the final few movements of tinkling, twittering percussion, often likened to a life support system suddenly stopping, give the clue of the elderly composer’s concern with resignation and death.
House Photographs

Beda College Staff and Students remaining in Rome, after the Coronavirus outbreak, 2019-2020
The College Domestic Staff: *Personale* Larry, Lucia, Edna, Theresa, Canon Philip Gillespie, Ida, Maria Grazia, Annalisa, Gabriella, Pina. Absent: Angelo
27th September 2019
The new students arrived at the Beda to begin their induction period. Their arrival was marked this evening with dinner in College.

30th September 2019
Staff and students made an early start for St Peter’s Basilica where Mass was celebrated close to St Peter’s tomb in the Polish Chapel of Our Lady of Czestochowa. A little later, photos were taken on the steps of the Basilica amid the glorious autumn sunshine. After their visit the group enjoyed coffee and cornetti in a local café.

28th September 2019
Mass at the start of the induction period was celebrated in the Chapel of St Benedict in the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls. The occasion also provided an opportunity to look around the Basilica including paying a visit to the tomb of St Paul.

4th October 2019
Today the induction of the new students continued with a visit to the Catacombs of St Callixtus where they also had Mass. The group went on to visit the nearby site of the Ardeatine massacre - the tragic killing of 335 people which took place in 1944.
5th October 2019

Beda staff and students, amidst glorious sunshine, visited Grottaferrata where the Greek Catholic Byzantine-rite Abbey of St Nilus is situated. This fascinating visit was later followed by travelling first to Castel Gandolfo, overlooking Lake Albano, and then on to the town of Nemi above the lake of the same name.

6th October 2019

The College was delighted to receive a visit from an ecumenical group consisting of 44 members of the Archdiocese of Birmingham and the Anglican Diocese of Worcester. Immediately prior to their visit the group had celebrated Vespers at St Paul’s. They joined the Beda community for drinks after which a pizza supper was enjoyed by all at a local restaurant.

9th October 2019

Staff and students from the College attended the Papal audience this morning in front of St Peter’s Basilica. The Beda group was very fortunate to be seated relatively close to the Holy Father, and all were delighted when the College was mentioned by name during the proceedings – truly a very memorable way to mark the end of the induction period for this year’s new students!

11th October 2019

Today the Beda played host to a group of parliamentarians from the UK consisting of 22 MPs. The
group included Sir Edward Leigh MP and was accompanied by the British Ambassador to the Holy See, Sally Axworthy MBE. The particular occasion for their visit to Rome was the canonization of Cardinal Newman. In the afternoon the College began a weekend of recollection led Fr John Carlyle.

**13th October 2019**

Staff and students attended the canonization of John Henry Cardinal Newman during an open air Mass this morning in St Peter’s Square. Cardinal Newman was one of 5 people being canonized. The Gospel of the Mass was sung by two deacons: first in Greek and then in Latin. The “Latin” deacon was a student from the Venerable English College, Rev. Peter Wygnanski from the Diocese of East Anglia.

**19th October 2019**

The Beda Lecture this year, “Changing Landscapes, New Horizons - The Safeguarding Journey”, was given jointly by Dr Colette Limbrick (Director of the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service of England and Wales, CSAS) and Mr Chris Pearson (Chair of the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission, NCSC) thereby representing two Catholic agencies working in this vitally important area.

In his short introduction to the speakers the Rector made reference to the opening of the present College building 59 years ago by Pope John XXIII. On that occasion the Holy Father encouraged the students by wishing for them a union of nature and of grace. Thus it was in the context of this continuing tradition of formation for ministry that the two guest speakers were most warmly welcomed.

After thanking the College for the invitation to speak and outlining their personal backgrounds our speakers stressed that their aim was to provide some light and positivity around what can otherwise be regarded as a dark and foreboding topic. They also stressed the need for a unified approach in safeguarding across the many dioceses in England and Wales and beyond.

The lecture was followed by a very enjoyable *porchetta* buffet in the garden - enjoyed by all.
22nd October 2019
Fr John Carlyle and Fr Patrick Harrigan from the Beda were each awarded first class honour Licentiates in Spirituality from the Pontifical Angelicum University. At today’s graduation ceremony, certificates were presented by the Master General of the Dominican Order.

23rd October 2019
The Beda Community offered prayers today for two former members of staff who died recently: Michael Bowen, Archbishop Emeritus of Southwark who taught theology here from 1963 to 1966; and Brian Noble, Bishop Emeritus of Shrewsbury, who taught Pastoral Studies and Liturgy in the College 1980-87. May they rest in peace.

26th October 2019
The spiritual directors of English speaking Colleges in Rome were welcomed to the Beda today. In addition to their own meeting held in the College, they also met with Beda staff and students over drinks in the garden, followed by lunch.

Our fellow student, Br Ludovico Torrisi OSB was ordained to the diaconate this evening in St Paul’s Basilica, by His Eminence Cardinal James Michael Harvey. Fellow Beda students Adrian Lowe and Norm Allred served as deacons during the celebration.

28th October 2019
It was a pleasure to welcome Tish Nicoll to the College once again. Tish visits several times each year to assist students in their communication of the Word, especially by means of practice sessions in the College chapel. Thanks to the timing of her visit she was also able to join the first year group on their gita to the Rieti valley.
29th October 2019
The College welcomed Fr Alf Hayes, from the Lancaster Diocese, who gave a talk in the common room about his experiences as a military chaplain, particularly during the Falklands war. Fr Hayes, who is now a parish priest in Fleetwood, was visiting Rome to participate in a significant event to be presided over by Pope Francis the following day.

After the invasion of the Falkland Islands by Argentinian forces in 1982 the statue of Our Lady of Luján was brought to the islands from Argentina and placed in St Mary’s Catholic Church in the capital Port Stanley. Following the end of the occupation the statue was taken to England where it was placed in the Catholic Cathedral of St Michael and St George in Aldershot.

Following a recent request from the Argentinian military bishop, Bishop Santiago Olivera, it was agreed to return the statue during an international conference of military bishops in Rome and in exchange a replica presented to the British military bishop, Bishop Paul Mason.

NB: This important event took place during the Papal Audience on Wednesday 30th October during which both statues were blessed by the Holy Father.

31st October 2019
Our first year students enjoyed their gita to Fonte Colombo and Greccio, two Franciscan centres in the Rieti Valley north-east of Rome. The day also included a lovely meal at the Nido del Corvo (Crow’s Nest) Restaurant.

A lovely day for the first year men, with some other students and staff, at Greccio, the place where St Francis arranged a live re-enactment of the birth of Jesus.

9th November 2019
The latest issue (2018-2019) of The Beda Review was formerly launched by the Rector over pre-lunch drinks in the garden. The value of The Beda Review in giving a representation of the College to a wider audience and helping to keep members of the Beda Association fully informed were highlighted by Fr Philip. New students to the College were encouraged to avail of the opportunity to become members of the Beda Association. Finally, the new Editor and Deputy Editor
of the Beda Review were introduced and content was invited for the next issue.

10th November 2019
The annual Remembrance Day Mass took place today at the Church of San Silvestro in Capite. Along with members of the Beda, other participants included: staff and students from the Venerable English College and the Pontifical Scots College, the Rector of the Pontifical Irish College, the Irish Ambassador to the Holy See, Derek Hannon, and the regular worshippers at the 10 am Mass.

This year’s liturgy was organized by the Beda College. Fr John Breen was the main celebrant, and in his homily he invited us to remember all those who died here in Rome and elsewhere in Italy during the Second World War. We were also invited to recognize the many conflicts which have taken place since the end of that war. Fr Rory Hanley, a member of the San Silvestro Pallottine community, made reference to members of his own family who made the ultimate sacrifice in World War II - reminding us all of a loss that touches so many people.

The very warm welcome extended to all by the Pallottine community of San Silvestro continued with generous refreshments after Mass.

17th November 2019
The Vice-Chancellor of St Mary’s University Twickenham, Professor Francis Campbell and Dr Jacob Philips, Director of the Institute of Theology attended today’s Academic Mass. The names of last year’s 4th year students who attained the Diploma in Theology were announced. Congratulations were then conveyed in person by

Very interesting! The new Editor, Brother Markus Ohlsson TOR, and Associate Editor, Rev. Michael Smith, read a fresh copy of last year’s Beda Review with the Rector.

Professor Francis Campbell congratulates Rev. Adrian Lowe at the Academic Mass.
Professor Campbell to Rev. Norman Allred, Rev. Adrian Lowe and Rev. Ludovico Torrisi OSB who each graduated with Bachelor of Theology degrees this summer.

The Mass was followed by lunch in the College dining room with coffee and *digestivi* afterwards in the student common room.

19th November 2019

Around 50 clergy from England and Wales in celebration of their 40th, 50th or 60th anniversaries of ordination joined us for a festive lunch today. Their visit began in the common room during which students and jubilarians enjoyed lively conversation over pre-lunch drinks. As usual coffee and *digestivi* were available following the lovely meal, and some of our guests made a visit to St Paul’s Basilica before returning to their coach. All were presented with a copy of the latest issue of *The Beda Review* before departing.

21st November 2019

The College learnt today of the death of Fr Jim Downey OSA who died recently in hospital. Fr Downey taught scripture for many years here at the Beda. May he rest in peace.

23rd November 2019

Members of the College competed in the annual Ragheed Ganni five-a-side football Tournament. As always

Jubilarians sharing a welcome drink with the Beda staff and students.
the event featured a number of teams from different Colleges in Rome kindly hosted by the Pontifical Irish College. This event coincided with a visit from former Beda student, James Coeur de Lion who was a very welcome addition to the Beda team.

**26th November 2019**

The National Safeguarding Coordinator of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Scotland, Tina Campbell, visited the College today and gave a workshop on safeguarding. A group consisting of both staff and students participated in the session.

**30th November to 1st December 2019**

Our Advent Recollection this year was given by Fr James Walls, Spiritual Director at the Pontifical Scots College here in Rome. Fr Walls led us to reflect upon the virtue of humility – the humility of God in Christ and our living out this humility in our own lives.

**4th December 2019**

Eight of the third year students were admitted into Candidacy for Holy Orders this evening during a special Mass. A number of guests joined in the celebration which concluded with a festive meal in the refectory - *Ad Multos Annos!*

The Beda football team posing in front of the cup they could have won...

The tournament is played each year in memory of Fr Ragheed Ganni (pictured on the table), a priest who was martyred in Iraq in 2007.
11th December 2019
The first year students treated the house to an extravaganza this evening by way of the annual first year Christmas Show. The event included creative use of media, costumes, dance routines and much, much more. The evening’s entertainment featured not one, but several special guest appearances by Beda Professori among others. A great night was had by all helped along by a delicious festive buffet.

18th December 2019
Our personale received a very well-deserved thank you for all their hard work over the last year in looking after us here in the College. Gifts were presented at lunch today to each member of the personale by the Student Dean of Hospitality, Norm Allred - accompanied by hearty rounds of applause.

19th December 2019
The College’s final activity before the Christmas break was the Advent Service which commenced in the common room with hymns, psalms and readings from Evening Prayer. We then processed along to the chapel for a period of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. Finally we moved down to the College refectory to sing an anthem to Our Lady before enjoying a delicious buffet supper.

14th January 2020
The first year students enjoyed their visit to the Scavi underneath St Peter’s Basilica organised by their Church History Professor, Mgr Ciarán O’Carroll, Rector of the Pontifical Irish College.

18th January 2020
The account of St Paul’s arrival in Malta in which the locals showed Paul and his companions “unusual kindness” (Acts 28:2) formed the theme of this year’s Unity Service. Our preacher was Rev. Dr Daniel Pratt Morris-Chapman, Minister of the Methodist Church in Rome.
Daniel spoke very engagingly about his experience of working in Africa prior to coming to Rome. Other participants in the liturgy included members of other Christian communities in Rome plus representatives from the Pontifical Scots and Irish Colleges. The service was followed by a festive meal in the College dining room.

25th January 2020

Papal vespers at St Paul’s presided over by Pope Francis traditionally brings the week of prayer for Christian unity to a close on the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. A number of College staff and students attended this year, along with a range of other Christian representatives. The intercessory prayers during the service were in a variety of languages including English.

27th January 2020

The College presented to the Convent of Mater Dei a copy of their famous icon, Our Lady Queen of Prophets, based on the frescos in the Catacomb of Santa Priscilla. The icon was the work of Beda student, Matthew Bond. The presentation of this icon to the Mater Dei community continues the connections between the Convent and the Catholic Church in England which go back many years.

8th February 2020

End of semester exams brought the first half of the year to a close today. The break until 16th of this month will provide an opportunity for rest and relaxation back home, in Rome or elsewhere.

17th – 22nd/25th February 2020

Staff and students travelled to Nemi, south-east of Rome, to the Centro Ad Gentes retreat and conference centre run by the Society of the Divine Word. First and Second year
students began individually guided retreats and Third and Fourth years had their slightly longer canonical pre-ordination retreats – returning on the 25th of the month. The beautiful and peaceful surroundings provided a welcome space for prayer and reflection with the additional blessing of good weather during our stay.

26th February 2020
The season of Lent began today, Ash Wednesday, with the distribution of ashes during evening Mass.

6 – 8th March 2020
Second and third year students returned to Nemi for a Safeguarding Weekend led by Dr Colette Limbrick, Director of the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service of England and Wales (CSAS). Dr Limbrick had co-delivered the Beda Lecture earlier in the year. All participants greatly appreciated her invaluable input and guidance on this vital topic.

9th March 2020
The lockdown intended to minimise spread of the coronavirus was announced for the whole of Italy today - similar measures having been previously introduced into parts of the north of the country. Over subsequent days all shops were closed with the exception of mainly supermarkets and pharmacies. Self-certification forms will now be required for anyone leaving their house, stating the essential reason for their being outside of their home.

As a consequence of the situation, a number of students chose to leave and return to their home dioceses before travel became too difficult. The FMDM sisters were recalled by their superiors back to Ireland and England.

15th March 2020
Our mid-semester break began with the staff and 15 remaining students confined to the College due to the lockdown. The warm sunshine and quieter surroundings provided a surprisingly calm and relaxing atmosphere during the break.

19th March 2020
A number of staff and students watched the ordination of the new Bishop of Northampton online in the Talbot Room. The new bishop, the former Rector of Oscott College, Fr David Oakley, was ordained in Northampton Cathedral. Due to the current lockdown it was not possible for members of the College staff, who had planned to participate, to attend the ordination.

20th March 2020
Classes resumed today, but with the added novelty of the use of online applications in order to connect outside lecturers with those in the
Beda classrooms and with those back in their home dioceses.

26th March 2020
The College received two visitors from the Vatican who came to advise on safety measures during the current situation. They were pleased with the procedures around social distancing and isolation currently in place here. Some additional suggestions were made to assist us further.

4-5th April 2020
This year’s in-house weekend retreat at the start of Holy Week was led by Fr Peter Verity. The materials provided by Fr Peter for use in prayer and reflection were also made available online to those currently residing in their home dioceses and religious communities.

11th April 2020
Simpler liturgies marked this year’s celebration of the Paschal Triduum which was, nevertheless, very profound and beautiful. We remain in prayerful solidarity with the sufferings of many during this time whilst also sharing in the joy of the risen Lord.

17th April 2020
A group of staff and students concluded their enjoyment of the dramatization of the life of St Teresa of Avila by watching the final episode of the 1983 Spanish TV production on DVD this evening. All found this an enjoyable and informative introduction to the life of this influential Saint and Doctor of the Church.

3rd May 2020
Prayer for vocations was offered today, Good Shepherd Sunday, particularly during the Holy Hour in the College chapel this evening.
Additionally the College community has been mindful in prayer of those within Italy and beyond who are badly affected by the current pandemic.

16th May 2020
Celebrations all round today for Fr John Breen’s 70th birthday and Fr Peter Verity’s 72nd birthday. In addition to a rousing chorus of “Happy Birthday” the personale kindly produced two cakes with appropriate numbers and candles. A lovely addition to the celebration was that Orietta and Annalisa were able to join us for lunch.

17th May 2020
After Mass today we had a combined photo of staff and students in the sunshine in the garden complete with appropriate social distancing.

25th May 2020
Included in today’s celebration for St Bede was the institution of the ministry of Acolyte to four students during our Mass in the College chapel. The evening was rounded off very enjoyably with a splendid al fresco dinner thanks to the skills and dedication of the personale. Our congratulations were offered to Philip Bua, Douglas Green, Frank McKendry and Ignatius Tan. We also remembered their fellow Second year student, Michael Harwood - currently in the UK, who will be instituted as Acolyte in his home diocese. Ad Multos Annos!

29th May 2020
The College arranged for all staff, students and personale to be tested for antibodies against the coronavirus. Blood samples were taken by a nurse today in the Beda clinic. Each person would be notified of their results over the subsequent days.

31st May 2020
During this morning’s Mass for Pentecost, prayers were offered for the whole Beda Community – those here in the College as well as those currently residing in their home dioceses. As usual the sanctuary was decorated beautifully by Edna for today’s celebration.

6th June 2020
This morning a final recording of the Papal Anthem, the Marche Pontificale, was recorded by members of the
Beda College. This piece, along with some selected images, formed our contribution to a virtual tea party in honour of the Queen’s Birthday to be hosted by the British Embassy to the Holy See on 13th June.

16th June 2020

The six candidates for diaconate ordination made their Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity during Evening Prayer in the College chapel.

17th June 2020

Today was a big day for the Beda - six candidates were ordained deacons in the College chapel by Cardinal James Michael Harvey, Archpriest of the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls. Though normally a much larger event held in the Basilica itself, this year’s celebration of diaconate ordination was no less profound and joyful. Among others, great thanks are due to our personale who so beautifully decorated the chapel for this occasion.

Amidst the additional protocols involving the wearing of masks and sanitizing of hands (due to the current pandemic) there was, nevertheless, the powerful richness of the ordination rite itself and the Mass was accompanied by hymns and singing a capella. Sincere and grateful thanks are extended to Cardinal Harvey for his great generosity in ordaining these men to the diaconate.

The liturgy was followed by an outstanding al fresco lunch thanks, once again, to the skill and dedication of our personale. We congratulate the whole Beda Community on the completion of their College year – a year we will never forget – and we especially congratulate our new deacons: Christopher Butler, Damien Locke, Anthony Grant, Brother Ludvig Ludvigsen, Brother Markus Ohlsson and Michael Smith. Ad Multos Annos!

Cardinal James Michael Harvey ordained six new deacons. Here Damien Locke.
The monks of The Abbey of Saint Paul outside the Walls have opened a monastic workshop of sacred vestments and liturgical art, Agorà Atelier San Paolo.

The opening hours are: Monday to Saturday from 9am to 6pm and by appointment.

The entrance is at Via Ostiense 186 (the Monastery entrance) and then via the monastic pharmacy shop.

**How to reach us:**

Metro B - Basilica San Paolo

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Andrew Bishop

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity given me to be here in the first year at the Beda. My route here has been a long and unusual one. As my mother was a lapsed Catholic and my father was strongly Protestant, I was brought up as an Anglican. Although I never lost my Christian faith, I lost my belief in the Church of England as a teenager, and embarked on a quest for the truth. The Catholicism of my maternal grandparents was certainly an influence and, when I went to university I started attending Mass, although I delayed my formal conversion for a few years due to strong opposition from my parents. Even then I had inklings of vocation but, kept putting them off, saying to myself: “Well, if I am not married by the time I am 30.....35......etc., I might give it a go.”

I settled into a career teaching French and Spanish in secondary schools, which lasted 35 years and brought me to South London in the mid-1990s. Even so, I had nagging thoughts of vocation from time to time, and once, when I was around 30, even spoke about them to my parish priest, but just like the Prophet Jonah I fled from the Lord, lacking faith in myself and Him.

I found myself getting married in my mid-thirties, and “That”, I felt “was that for priesthood.” Even so I sometimes wondered about being a married deacon, but I am sure it would have been neither practical nor possible, as the marriage was not a happy one, and we eventually divorced. Fortunately, we had no children, but I did enjoy being a stepfather to my wife’s son by a previous relationship. I hope this experience will make me understanding and compassionate in pastoral ministry.

After the divorce I felt I had messed up entirely, and for a while did not go to Mass. However, God in His mercy never abandons even His prodigal sons, and I started to go to Mass again. After I went to confession, the idea of a priestly vocation returned with a vengeance. “God,” I said, “Father Bishop is a stupid name for a priest, I have done bad things, I am married in the eyes of the Church, and I have my elderly mother to consider, you can’t want this of me.” Whenever I argue with God He inevitably wins, so I
ended up asking for an annulment – this made me learn to be patient, as it took two and a half years. When it came I had no more excuses, and went to talk to the Vocations Director, with the consequence that in 2018 I went to the selection conference at Wonersh seminary, near Guildford, and to my wonderment, was accepted.

They recommended that I spend a year in a parish before seminary, so I spent a wonderful year in Dover, thanks to the fantastic parish priest and parish deacon, and the marvellous people of Dover. By the end of the year I felt I was ready to move on to seminary, and in my first few weeks here I became aware of how much I learned in Dover during that time. It will remain my UK base whilst I study here in Rome.

Sean Doherty

As I write these words, I am sitting at home in Derry, Ireland. I left the Beda family in March 2020 as the Coronavirus was beginning to take hold and I am now living alone in lockdown in Derry, and that seems a little ironic. I spent almost 30 years as a journalist, I presented a 3 hours per day live radio talk show in Ireland, and it was during the last ten years of my work as a broadcast journalist that I began seriously considering a vocation to the priesthood. I had been successful in my career, but I felt
that God was whispering into my ear that the gifts he had given me might be used in another way. I eventually stepped out into the deep, resigned from my job and went to see the Bishop of Derry, Dr Donal McKeown, who was extremely kind and encouraging.

Our Lady has always been a big part of my faith journey, and I believe she has led me to a closer relationship with her Son. Regular visits to Medjugorje have played a valuable role in my vocational journey, and I have built up a wonderful group of supportive friends during my visits. I belong to the Columba Community in Derry/Donegal founded by Fr Neal Carlin, and again the prayerful support of my community is a source of great joy to me.

Before joining the Pontifical Beda College, I spent six months preparing in Salamanca, Spain at The Royal Scots College. This experience gave me an excellent foundation for seminary life in Rome. I loved being with some of Scotland’s finest Catholics, and I will be forever grateful to the Rector, Spiritual Director and all the team and staff as well as the seminarians for their kindness and sincere, prayerful support.

Although I live in Ireland, I was born in England to Irish parents, and I am the youngest along with my twin sister, of 10 children. My family have been very supportive of my decision to discern a vocation to priesthood.

I am very grateful to the Rector Fr Philip and all the Beda family for the generous welcome I received. It is a tremendous privilege to be living and learning at the Beda, an outstanding seminary with some of the most exceptional people I have encountered on my journey.

I look forward to being back with my Beda family soon and would ask whoever is reading this to remember me and all seminarians as we seek to answer the call.

**Jason Fernandes**

Does every little boy play at being a priest? While I don’t know about other boys, this was true of my childhood. I have also had priests as strong role models since childhood, on both sides of my family. My father’s uncle was a Bishop that I was particularly fond of as a boy, and my mother raised me with stories of her paternal uncle who was a Jesuit who worked in the north Indian Jesuit province of Bihar and was martyred there. Over the years I
have seen these and other men and women, both within my extended family and without, as models of service and sanctity that I would like to imitate.

It was to inquire if I was called to be a priest that I worked in Bihar with a Jesuit agency in 2000 soon after graduating from law school. For a variety of reasons, at the end of that year I assumed that I was not called to the priesthood and put this idea away, and proceeded to develop my career, working initially in the development sector and subsequently enjoying a most fulfilling time in the academy.

Over the years, however, I came to realise that while interested in intellectual production, indeed I see this as part of my mission, fulfilling the norms of an academic career is not what I see as most important. Rather, it became increasingly clear, that my mission is to offer intellectual support to communities working towards the realisation of the kingdom of God.

My intellectual journey and political interests have also had some impact on my decision. Passionately concerned about the political unravelling both in Goa and India, I realised some time ago that the answer lay not in tinkering with new political institutions, but in a (re)turning to Christ.

For these various reasons I am delighted that the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman is supporting me in my journey of discernment over the course of the four years that I will spend at the Beda. Do keep me in your prayers.

**Sean Henry**

I was born in 1981 in Wolverhampton to my wonderful parents, Karen and Terry. I have an older sister, Michelle and younger brother and sister, Ronnie and Jade, alongside a wonderful extended family. My most loving family taught me so much that I know, principally how to love, be kind and remain faithful. After school I read theology at the University of Wales, Lampeter, a great experience which helped me to build on the solid grounding of faith that had been passed to me by my family. A sense of calling to the priesthood had been with me from a very young age,
but following University I decided to train as a nurse, in order to gain a career and some experience in life. Following graduation I worked as a Staff Nurse in Accident and Emergency. After a short time I went off to the seminary, a plan that had been in place since I first began my nurse training. Well we all know what the Lord makes of our plans. At seminary I quickly discerned that after my nurse training I should get a little more experience for perhaps a year. I left the seminary and worked again as a nurse in various capacities but always within medicine. The time passed and this lasted 12 years.

My career was both joyful and successful despite its challenges. Eventually it led me into Clinical Management where I worked as Head of Discharge Services, Head of Capacity, Senior Nurse and eventually Associate Head of Nursing for large Acute Trusts. My faith always held a central part in my life, Christ at the very centre, and the calling to priesthood kept me discerning and intrigued. Eventually I made contact with the Bishop of Shrewsbury, a holy and kindly man I had met several times before. He welcomed me into the Diocese to continue this discernment. Following a placement at the Cathedral, working closely with the Bishop and Vocations Director, Fr Edmund Montgomery, I quickly found myself to feel at home.

Here I am today at the Beda, a seminary in Rome where Christ remains the centre. After a short period after arriving at the seminary my Patron Saint John Henry Newman was canonised, a wonderful occasion, attended also by my mother and family. A few months later my mother died after a short but intensive illness. Words cannot express the pain I feel at this separation and loss, I know that for me, as for her, Christ, love, and kindliness must remain the centre of my life, as I discern and continue on this pilgrimage. “Priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus” St Jean Vianney, tells us. It is this love that remains my guiding example.

**Brother Joel Karlsson TOR**

Who am I? Oldest of six sons, two of them being half-brothers of mine. A widower to an amazing woman, Christina Liuzzi Karlsson. A former atheist who has converted to the Catholic Church. A TOR Franciscan friar. And now a seminarian at the Pontifical College of St Bede.

These are just a few things that could describe me. It will never give you the full picture of who I am, nor will a quick glance at me do. I am both shy, and loud. I have strong opinions and am afraid of voicing them at times. I
both aspire to be under authority but am a rebel to the core. I am a walking contradiction, a contradiction that LOVES Jesus!

I grew up in a family of divorce, and lived with my mother Marlene from the age of five. My father was in the picture but I’ve been raised by my mother, and may God bless her! She raised four boys on her own. And I never felt poor, even if we grew up being considered living in poverty by Swedish standards. O, I forgot to mention that I am Swedish.

My upbringing gave me a strong sense of justice, and my mother has given me many other gifts as well. We went to church sporadically, but I was not baptized until I chose it at the age of 22 after I had come to believe in God.

I met Christina while living in Gothenburg and we got married in the USA on the 1 April 2012. After which she moved to Sweden with me. We lived a happy, but hard life with just one low income. And it was during our time together that I came to find the Catholic Church and started doing RCIA. I started RCIA in 2013 and Christina died on 15 August 2014. I was received into the Church in March 2015.

Shortly after being received into the Church, I started my journey towards religious life, and the vocation to priesthood has been there with me from the beginning of my journey towards religious life. It has been put on the back burner when I’ve been focusing on postulancy and novitiate, but
after I professed the evangelical councils to my General Minister I have been given the opportunity to discern the vocation of a religious priest, and since I have two brothers, from my community in Sweden, who are studying here at the Beda it was only natural that I was sent here as well.

That’s a few words on me and how I ended up where I’m at right now. May God bless you and keep you! And please pray for me, I need it! Pax Et Bonum.

**Dominic McCann**

I am 43 years old and currently attending the Beda College as a student for Shrewsbury Diocese. I am originally from Belfast and was born in Andersonstown but moved at a young age to Craigavon, Co. Armagh.

I left school very early with quite a limited education but proceeded with guidance from both of my wonderful parents, Peter and Patricia, to work and train in the construction industry. I chose carpentry and joinery as my main trade. I completed my apprenticeship and have worked within this trade for most of my life. I moved to Stockport in 2011 and started my own company tendering to the local council and different shop fitting and trade refurbishment companies. My own business employed local tradespeople that to this very day continues with this great work.

I remained in the construction industry up to being invited to enter the house of discernment in Shrewsbury Cathedral under the wonderful guidance of Bishop Mark Davies and my fantastic Vocations Director, Fr Edmund Montgomery. I spent a year in Shrewsbury living in community with 5 other brothers who have also now currently moved on to Oscott seminary to continue further formation and training. Within this programme we lived, worked, prayed and studied together as well as serving Holy Mass and participating in the life of the Cathedral parish.
After spending time in this unique place Bishop Mark decided that I make formal application to seminary. I have done so and am now really enjoying the tough but very rewarding time here at the Beda College. I am excited to see what the future holds but remain firmly grounded and maintain an openness to God’s will and the work of the Holy Spirit. I really thank God for the wonderful family that I have been blessed with and for all the people that continue to love, guide and pray for me and my future ahead.

**Robert McMahon**

I was born in Belfast in 1953 the eldest of six children. My mother and father were both from Belfast and they too came from large Catholic working class families. My education started in the local Catholic primary school and it was from this early age I had wanted to study for the priesthood. On finishing my A levels I started my teaching studies in St Joseph’s College of Education, the teaching college of Queen’s University, Belfast.

After my four years at College that included 10 weeks teaching practice each year, I started teaching with the Christian Brothers in one of their schools in a troubled area of West Belfast. I was deeply involved in community work with the Church as well as teaching and that rekindled my desire to join the priesthood. I taught several subjects, one of which was religion and this helped me in my formation. I held several senior posts within the school and headed many departments.

One of my personal interests was sports, so within the parish I helped the Christian Brothers establish a sports club for all age groups and I ran it alongside my teaching for over 30 years.

After 14 years I moved to another Christian Brothers school and continued to do similar work in that school but also continued on with my pastoral work in the first parish.

I retired from teaching after 28 years and went into my own business, but this only lasted for a few years.

Since I left the College I have been very involved with youth and the elderly in my local parishes. My close work and contact with my parish priest and my Vocations Director, and discussions with my Bishop during my attendance at several vocational weekends, have all helped and directed me with my discernment.
I was very pleased when I received word from my Bishop that he was sending me to the Beda College in Rome to continue with my formation. I pray that my example may encourage more retired teachers to answer the call of Christ.

Gerard Moore
I am from Ireland and am 61 years old. I come from a very traditional Catholic family. I have six brothers and three sisters. At the age of 14 I went away to what might be called a juniorate for Christian Brothers where I did my Intermediate Certificate and my Leaving Certificate. After this I went on to spend five years in the Irish Christian Brothers. When I was there I trained to be a primary school teacher. After I left the Christian Brothers I continued teaching and did that for most of my adult life. As a teacher I would have taught children between the ages of 7 and 13. Even as I continued teaching I harboured thoughts of becoming a priest and this thought had been with me since childhood.

About three years ago I lived in Dublin and worked with the homeless in sheltered accommodation. I also spent some time working with the Legion of Mary in Dublin and while I was there the thought of a vocation to the priesthood came back more and more insistently.

I decided to look at this and at least see where it led to. So I left my job in Dublin and returned to my home place in Co. Kerry. While there I decided to take a look at this for several months and eventually with some spiritual direction, I decided to try for a diocese in Ireland.

The whole process had taken about two years. Having spoken to several vocations directors I eventually came into contact with Bishop Fleming of Killala diocese. He and I met and spoke and after more spiritual direction and conversations I was offered a place in the Beda in Rome.

Paul Moores
Thank you for your warm welcome to the College and your continued support during my initial few months. You have certainly enhanced my experience and made the transition easier.

St John Henry Cardinal Newman’s famous adage “to live is to change” resonates, as my life has changed significantly over the last year. And starting at the Beda is a radically different way of life for me. Last Spring,
while on holiday, I stood on Mount Nebo, in Jordan, where Moses spent his last moments. Reputedly he looked out over the valley to Canaan, the promised land, and yearned for God to guide him and his people home. I too, at that moment, looked forward with hope, and a little trepidation to an uncertain future. Having recently met my bishop, Marcus Stock, to discuss my possible return to seminary after a 20-year break.

At 18 I was sent to the Venerable English College by my Bishop, where I spent three years. Although I enjoyed my time there, and particularly community life, it was all a bit much so I returned home in 1999. During the intervening period, I studied theology and architectural history at the Universities of Cambridge and Durham. In terms of work, I had property and hospitality businesses for many years and was employed in variety of roles. A highlight has been my recent experience as a chaplain working for the Abbeyfield Society across England, in ministry to older people.

I look forward to the next stage of my journey and assure you all of my prayers for what lies ahead.

Your brother in Christ,
Paul
Maxwell Orkuma

Following the Covid-19 outbreak, Maxwell Orkuma returned home. Because of difficulties in contacting him we were not able to get an account of his vocation story. The following words are from his letter of application.

After graduation from the College of Education in Katsina-Ala, I worked as a teacher in a private school in Makurdi and attended a vocational retreat in March 2010 at which different Congregations came and spoke of the charisms of their respective communities. I applied to the Presentation Brothers who combined vocation, life in community and the work of education for which my previous courses had prepared me.

Having lived three years of initial formation with the Presentation Brothers, I made first vows and was then posted to Nigeria where I worked in the Diocese of Gboko in Benue State. I did this placement as a classroom assistant at Queen of the Rosary Secondary School, Gboko, a Diocesan owned and run school. It was here that I first met Bishop Avenya, Bishop of Gboko who accepted me as a candidate for the diocese.

Wladimir Siwecki

Despite my Slavic name, I was born and raised in Lutheran Sweden. My parents came from Argentina and were of Polish-Italian descent. I grew up in a rather secular home although the women in the family, especially my two grandmothers had strong faith in Christ, one of them with a strong Catholic faith totally entrusted to Our Lord and Our Lady, and the other one with a bible-centered Pentecostal faith, quite a mix to say the least.
I got an initial call to Christian life as a 20-year-old after my father passed away from cancer. But as the circumstances were, I chose to go my own way. I did military service, studied journalism and history at college.

But I felt something was always missing. So when my mother fell ill with cancer in 2008, I took heart and was baptized. The years that have followed after baptism can only be described as a long adventure with God, for certain a mix between graces and crosses, but what a journey! Interior and exterior one could add.

I realized in 2013 that I had a call for a deeper relationship with God; I began to study theology and philosophy at university. Became confirmed in the Catholic Church in 2016, and moved to a Christian ecumenical retreat centre in spring 2017, where I lived and worked until the summer of 2018, when I applied to the seminary in Uppsala, Sweden.

There I was for one year, and then had the opportunity to continue formation in Rome at the Beda College, for which I am very grateful. Thank you Jesus and Mary!

One of my favourite quotes from St Paul is: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Tim: 4:7) and my great wish is that those words one day will become my own. I give all thanks to God the Father in the Holy Spirit through Christ Jesus for where the journey has brought me so far.

Patrick van der Vorst

I was born in Bruges, Belgium. After being at a Benedictine school and studying law at Louvain University, I moved to London in 1995 where I have been living ever since. I started a career in the art world and worked for an auction house for 15 years. My specialty there was 18th century French furniture. I often marvelled at the beauty of furniture making where so many different artists, guilds and craftsmen at the time had to collaborate to make a stunning piece of furniture: wood carvers, bronze makers, marble cutters, marquetry artisans, etc... all had to team up to create the one piece. A wonderful display of teamwork and talent.

After leaving the auction world, I set up an online art valuation platform which put me in touch with the whole new, fast-paced, rapidly evolving landscape of the internet. A catalyst for connection, and as we have seen
in these past months of the virus taking hold of the world, a wonderful tool as well for us to use as Christians. The history of human communication is like a long journey starting from Ancient Greece and its writings, to the new technologies of the internet. The internet is the latest tool which can contribute greatly to the enlargement and enrichment of our human minds to spread the Word of God. Living 24 years in London, I applied for the Archdiocese of Westminster and now started this new, exciting, joyful chapter of the second half of life at the Beda College. As a friend of mine told me before I departed for Rome last September: “Patrick, you are now moving from believing in art to the art of believing....” Beautiful words I thought.

And here they are all together, with Campbell Lindsay, who studied with us for the first semester.
## Ordinations 2020

### Priesthood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norman Allred</td>
<td>Meath</td>
<td>20 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Lowe</td>
<td>Brentwood</td>
<td>11 July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodovico Torrisi OSB</td>
<td>Benedictine at Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls</td>
<td>27 June</td>
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### Diaconate

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Bond</td>
<td>Wrexham</td>
<td>5 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Butler</td>
<td>Leeds</td>
<td>17 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Chow</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>8 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony Grant</td>
<td>Brentwood</td>
<td>17 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damien Locke</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
<td>17 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludvig Ludvigsen TOR</td>
<td>Third Order Regular of St Francis of Assisi</td>
<td>17 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markus Ohlsson TOR</td>
<td>Third Order Regular of St Francis of Assisi</td>
<td>17 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Smith</td>
<td>East Anglia</td>
<td>17 June</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The newly ordained deacons with Cardinal James Michael Harvey: Br Ludvig Ludvigsen, Michael Smith, Bro Markus Ohlsson, Damien Locke, Christopher Butler, Anthony Grant

Our dear Edna made some beautiful flower arrangements for the Diaconate Ordination. Six sunflowers, one for each ordinand, which in Italian is girasole, meaning (flowers that) turn towards the sun. Here placed under the altar. The arrangement was repeated at the feet of Jesus below the Crucifix.
President
Revd Mgr Roderick Strange

Vice-president
Revd Fr Michael Thomas

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Hon. Treasurer
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Archdiocese of Cardiff
Revd Fr William J. Isaac
St Teilo’s Presbytery
Old Church Road
Cardiff
Glamorgan
CF14 1AD
w.isaac@btconnect.com

Diocese of Clifton
Revd Fr Michael Thomas
Sacred Heart Presbytery
8 Townsend Road
Minehead
TA24 5RG
minehead@cliftondiocese.com

Diocese of East Anglia
To be appointed

Diocese of Hallam
To be appointed
Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle
Revd Mgr Andrew Faley
St Edward’s Presbytery
Coquet Ave
Whitley Bay
Tyne & Wear
NE26 1EE
ajfaley@yahoo.co.uk

Diocese of Lancaster
Revd Fr Andrew Broster
St John the Evangelist Presbytery
The Willows
Ribby Road
Kirkham
Lancs
PR4 2BE
andrewtbroster@gmail.com

Diocese of Leeds
Revd Fr Michael McLaughlin
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Presbytery
Carmel House
7 Wesley Place
Silsden, West Yorkshire
BD20 0PH
michaelmclaughlin5@gmail.com

Archdiocese of Liverpool
Revd Fr Andrew Jolly
9 Mort Street
Wigan
Greater Manchester
WN6 7AU
frandrewjolly@hotmail.com

Diocese of Menevia
Revd Fr Mansel Usher
St Benedict’s Presbytery
Llythrid Avenue
Sketty Road
Swansea
SA2 0JJ
benedictclydach@aol.com

Diocese of Middlesbrough
Revd Canon Gerard Robinson
St Mary’s Cathedral
Dalby Way
Coulby Newham
Middlesbrough
TS8 0TW
gerard.paul@btopenworld.com

Diocese of Northampton
To be appointed

Diocese of Nottingham
Revd Fr John Kyne
St Philip Neri Presbytery
3 Chesterfield Road South
Mansfield
Notts
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frjohnkyne@gmail.com

Diocese of Plymouth
Revd Fr Brian Kenwrick
St Mary’s Presbytery
Killigrew Street
Falmouth
Cornwall
TR11 3PR
brian.kenwrick@prcdtr.org.uk
**Diocese of Portsmouth**  
Revd Fr David Sillince  
St Boniface House  
413 Shirley Road  
Shirley  
Southampton, Hampshire  
SO15 3JD  
davidsillince@yahoo.co.uk

**Diocese of Salford**  
To be appointed

**Diocese of Shrewsbury**  
Revd Fr Robin Sutton  
9 Sherborne Road  
Wallasey, Wirral, Cheshire  
CH44 2EY

Revd. Fr David Craig  
42 Cromwell Court  
Beam Street  
Nantwich  
CW5 5NZ

**Archdiocese of Southwark**  
Revd Fr Stephen Wymer  
St Simon Stock Presbytery  
5 Bleakwood Road  
Walderslade  
Chatham, Kent  
ME5 0NF  
frswymer@hotmail.co.uk

Revd. Fr Philip Seed  
Peveril  
Fordoun Road  
Broadstairs  
Kent  
CT10 2BN  
philipseed@yahoo.co.uk

**Diocese of Wrexham**  
To be appointed

**Archdiocese of Westminster**  
Revd Fr Tom Montgomery  
Holy Family Church  
194 Knightsfield  
Welwyn Garden City  
AL8 7RQ  
tommontgomery@rcdow.org.uk

**Scotland**  
**Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh**  
Revd Fr Jeremy Milne  
St John the Baptist Presbytery  
37 St Ninian’s Road  
Edinburgh  
Lothian  
EH12 8AL  
jeremymmilne@googlemail.com

**Diocese of Argyle & the Isles**  
Revd Canon Roderick Johnston  
The Visitation Presbytery  
Taynuilt  
Argyllshire  
PA35 1JQ  
taynuilt@rcdai.org.uk

**Australia**  
Revd Fr Geoffrey McIlroy  
Parish of Melton  
10 Unitt Street  
Melton 3337  
Victoria  
Australia  
geoffmcilroy@gmail.com
Annual General Meeting 2020

Due to the Coronavirus the AGM due to be held on 6 May 2020 at Wistaston Hall was cancelled. Dependant on the availability of accommodation we hope to hold an AGM later in the year. More information on this as the year continues.

Deaths remembered since the last AGM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Death</th>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th>Years at the Beda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fr Desmond Devine</td>
<td>11th May 1998</td>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
<td>1992-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Patrick Tinney OSA</td>
<td>26th July 2004</td>
<td>Augustinian</td>
<td>1988-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr David Fennelly</td>
<td>23rd December 2013</td>
<td>Tuam</td>
<td>1992-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Stephen McGuinnes</td>
<td>7th May 2018</td>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>1982-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgr Kenneth Hodgson</td>
<td>16th June 2018</td>
<td>Maitland</td>
<td>1958-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Martin Williams</td>
<td>30th June 2018</td>
<td>Hallam</td>
<td>1975-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Brian Reid</td>
<td>15th April 2019</td>
<td>Durban</td>
<td>1992-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Michael Murray</td>
<td>22nd June 2019</td>
<td>Shrewsbury</td>
<td>1979-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Terry Rogers</td>
<td>28th June 2019</td>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>1987-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Burns Huggan</td>
<td>10th September 2019</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>1993-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archbishop Michael Bowen (Lecturer)</td>
<td>17th October 2019</td>
<td>Southwark</td>
<td>1963-66 Lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop Brian Noble (Lecturer)</td>
<td>21st October 2019</td>
<td>Shrewsbury</td>
<td>1980-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Tony Minniter</td>
<td>31st October 2019</td>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>1987-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Peter Stevens</td>
<td>9th November 2019</td>
<td>Westminster</td>
<td>1985-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr William Tolan</td>
<td>13th November 2019</td>
<td>Dunkeld</td>
<td>1982-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr James Downey OSA (Lecturer)</td>
<td>19th November 2019</td>
<td>Augustinian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr John Dewis</td>
<td>16th December 2019</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>1952-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canon Colin Taylor</td>
<td>18th February 2020</td>
<td>Nottingham</td>
<td>1985-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr Peter Gooden</td>
<td>9th May 2020</td>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>1987-91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Office holders

The present officer holders will continue in office until the next AGM. Might I ask two things of the members:

1. Those who are members encourage those newly ordained to consider becoming members of the Association

2. That you might encourage those who have not yet given permission for the Association to keep their contact details to do so. Because of this lack of permission I hold at this present time contact details for 196 members whereas prior to the new Data Protection legislation I held contact details for 372 members.

Please continue to hold the Pontificio Collegio Beda, its students and academic and office staff, the sisters and the personale with the members of the Beda Association in your prayers.

God bless

Fr Michael McLaughlin

Secretary to the Beda Association
Fr Peter Gooden
16 August 1936 – 9 May 2020

Born in 1936, Peter was baptised two weeks later on 30 August at St Luke’s, Irlam O’ Th’ Heights in Salford. His parents had been founding members of the parish and he attended the local school. He also claimed descent from the English martyr who shared his name.

After leaving school, he was apprenticed to the Instrument Department at Metropolitan Vickers, an aircraft division. He worked there for a number of years and was employed later as a lab technician at Manchester University with responsibility for the electron microscopes. At that time, his main hobbies were golf and horse-racing, backing them, rather than riding them. He was also a member of the SVP in the parish and served as President.

In 1970, however, he decided to try his vocation to religious life and joined the Benedictines at Quarr Abbey on the Isle of Wight. He was there for a considerable time, but in the mid-80s decided to leave the monastery and returned to Manchester where in due course he was accepted as a student for Salford Diocese and sent to study at the Beda. He was ordained as a priest on 22 June 1991.

One of his Beda contemporaries was Vincent Royle, a widower, who was a student for the Archdiocese of Birmingham. They became firm friends and, after ordination, they went back to the Beda in February every year for a holiday. After my own ordination I used to go with them. Peter and Vincent looked forward to these visits and to meeting the students, new and old. They always encouraged them and reminisced about their own time in the College. In fact, they looked forward so much to returning that Peter used to email Orietta Mariotti at the Beda in the August before each visit, just to make sure that accommodation was available.

After ordination, he began his ministry as assistant priest at St Anne’s, Crumpsall, and was also appointed chaplain to Booth Hall Children’s Hospital. The following year he moved to St John Bosco, Blackley, where
the parish priest was Fr Mark Davies who is now the Bishop of Shrewsbury, but he remained chaplain to Booth Hall. Then in 1994 he was appointed as chaplain to Hope Hospital which is now Salford Royal, holding that post for five years. In 1999 he was appointed parish priest to St John Fisher, Haughton Green, where he remained until his retirement in 2009. Although very forthright in his approach to life, Peter was also kind and humble in his dealings with people. He was a generous, pastoral priest.

It was typical of him that, after retirement 2009, he went to Boarbank Hall in Grange-over-Sands as chaplain. It was also typical of him that when that same year Sr Catherine Purvis who had been the Rector’s and the College’s secretary and bursar throughout his time at the Beda, died at the FMDM Convent at Godalming, he travelled down and back from Cumbria in the day to attend her requiem. Six years later, in 2015, he returned to Salford once more as priest-in-residence at St Mary’s, Chipping, until, the following year, he settled into one of the new retirement apartments at Cathedral House.

After experiencing severe back pain, he was eventually admitted to Salford Royal in mid-February this year. There he was diagnosed with two damaged vertebrae and underwent spinal surgery to repair them and at the same time was told he had prostate cancer. After three weeks in hospital he moved to Nazareth House in Manchester, but admitted in a letter in April to the former Beda Rector, Roderick Strange, that he was not in good shape. However, he added in a way that was typical of his deep faith, “we are all in the hands of the Lord who knows what is best.” And then he concluded, “I look back fondly on my visits to the College with Vincent and Michael and the welcome we always received, but we must look to the future and trust in the Lord – in the words of our diocesan prayer, ‘Stay with us Lord on our journey’.” He died on 9 May 2020.

Peter was a true friend who always encouraged and supported me in my ministry. He will be sadly missed by many. May he rest in peace,

Fr Michael Buckley
Formation Staff

- Canon Philip Gillespie (Liverpool), Rector
- Fr John Breen (Hexham and Newcastle) Human Formation and Pastoral Director
- Sr Patricia McDonald SHJC, Academic Programme Director
- Mgr Peter Verity (Lancaster), Spiritual Director
- Fr John Carlyle (Birmingham), Spiritual Director

First Year

1. Bishop, Andrew (Southwark)
2. Doherty, Sean (Derry)
3. Fernandes, Jason (Goa and Daman)
4. Henry, Sean (Shrewsbury)
5. Karlsson, Joel (TOR)
6. McCann, Dominic (Shrewsbury)
7. McMahon, Robert (Shrewsbury)
8. Moore, Gerard (Killala)
9. Moores, Paul (Leeds)
10. Orkuma, Maxwell (Gboko, Nigeria)
11. Siwecki, Wladimir (Stockholm)
12. van der Vorst, Patrick (Westminster)
Second Year
1. Bua, Philip (Argyll & the Isles)
2. Green, Douglas (Glasgow)
3. Harwood, Michael (Liverpool)
4. McKendry, Frank (Glasgow)
5. Tan, Ignatius (Melbourne)

Third Year
1. Bond, Matthew (Wrexham)
2. Butler, Christopher (Leeds)
3. Chow, Alex (Melbourne)
4. Conmee, Kevin (Portsmouth)
5. Dunne, Colin (Meath)
6. Grant, Anthony (Brentwood)
7. Locke, Damien (Armidale)
8. Ludvigsen, Ludvig (TOR)
9. Ohlsson, Markus (TOR)
10. Smith, Michael (East Anglia)

Fourth Year
1. Allred, Norman (Meath)
2. Lowe, Adrian (Brentwood)

Third Year External
Torrisi, Lodovico (OSB-San Paolo)
Based in Rome, the Pontifical Beda College was established in 1852 as a seminary for the formation of diocesan priests. The College welcomes English speaking men over 30 and has students from 12 countries. It is under the guidance of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.