

Father Martin Boland



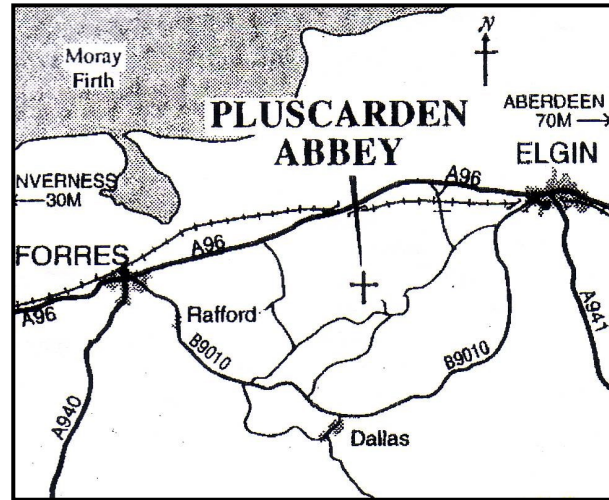
Fr Martin Boland was born in Glasgow in 1966 before moving to London where he enjoyed a Catholic secondary school education at the London Oratory. After school, he studied English and Theology at the University of St Andrews. His first visit to Pluscarden was with Canmore, the Catholic chaplaincy.

Following university, he taught English at the Ilford Ursuline High School for girls before being accepted by Bp Thomas McMahon to train for the Diocese of Brentwood at the Venerable English College, Rome. He studied at the Gregorian University where he gained a licence in dogmatic theology. His final thesis was on the nature of personhood in the work of St Thomas Aquinas.

He was ordained to the priesthood on 14th September 1996, the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, at St Edmund of Canterbury, Loughton. He was an assistant priest in three parishes before being appointed in 2001 as Catholic chaplain to the University of Essex and parish priest of Brightlingsea and Wivenhoe where he spent the next eight years. Following that, he was appointed Dean of Brentwood Cathedral which he has served for the past nine years.

He currently provides modules on ecclesiology and morality for primary and secondary school teachers who are studying for a Certificate in Catholic Religious Studies. He also speaks at Conferences for Head teachers and other groups on a range of theological and Catholic issues. His interests are Catholic theology and matters artistic and cultural.

www.pluscardenabbey.org



Travel

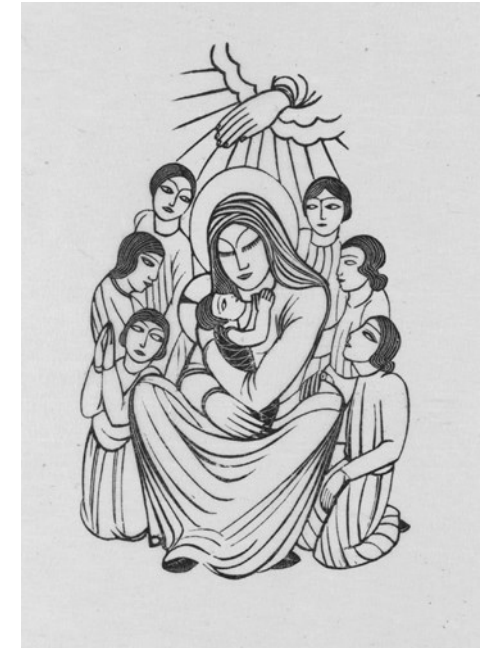
Six miles west of Elgin, Pluscarden Abbey lies forty miles east of Inverness and seventy miles west of Aberdeen. Both cities have airports. There are bus and rail links to Elgin. A taxi to the Abbey is the most reliable way of completing the journey from Elgin.

From the South by road, follow the A9 to Carrbridge, then the B9007 and A940 to Forres. From there take the B9010 through Rafford to the turn-off for Pluscarden Abbey. If you leave the A9 at Aviemore and follow the A95 to Granton-on-Spey, you can take the A939 and then the A940 to Forres, or continue on the A95 and the A941 to Elgin and from there drive to the Abbey.

Alternatively and more scenically, you can follow the A93 until past Crathie then take the Lecht road to Tomintoul and from there the B9008 till it joins the A95. You can then come to the Abbey via Marypark, Knockando and Dallas.

“BEAUTY WILL SAVE THE WORLD”:
A theological and pastoral reflection
on the role of beauty in the life of the Church

FATHER MARTIN BOLAND



THE 2019 PLUSCARDEN PENTECOST LECTURES

A series of four public lectures at
Pluscarden Abbey

Elgin
IV30 8UA

From 11th to 13th June 2019

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“BEAUTY WILL SAVE THE WORLD”:

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In an age and society, where the crude and ugly are often celebrated; where “the brutality of fact” and purely functional predominate, many people now question whether beauty has any relevance or, indeed, exists. Is the idea of beauty a bourgeois construct and a distraction from the work of refashioning society based on the principles of historical materialism and secularism? Have we lost faith in the power of beauty to provide humanity with an ennobling sense of the transcendent? If beauty does exist, is it anything more than an appeal to aesthetic ornamentation?

These lectures will attempt to explore some of these issues and to retrieve beauty from the cult of the ugly. Beauty will be presented as a theological “transcendental”, a necessary *ad vital* way of being drawn into the life of the Blessed Trinity. This *via pulchritudinis*, way of beauty, leads us in a unique fashion to deeper reflection on the Incarnation, the mystery of the revelation of Beauty Itself.

The beauty of the Catholic Church serves to make real the truth of the Incarnation and the mysteries of faith in every age and time through its liturgy, art, doctrine and moral life. These lectures will contend that without beauty, the Church becomes less attractive and the good news of God’s grace is expressed with less clarity and conviction. When the beauty of the Church is celebrated, men and women will develop a deeper appreciation of the transcendence of the Triune God.

All Welcome

There will be no charge for these lectures and all are welcome to attend, either for the whole series or for individual lectures. We can offer hospitality at the Abbey for a limited number of both men and women. Early booking is advised.

There are also many places to stay in the Elgin area: contact the local tourist office: 01343 542666.

The lectures will take place as usual in St Scholastica’s Retreat, the white single storey building a short distance outside the main gate.

Contact: To make further enquires or book accommodation, please write to:

Pentecost Lectures
Pluscarden Abbey

Elgin, IV30 8UA (enclosing a SAE);
or fax 01343 890258

e-mail: guestmaster@pluscardenabbey.org

Programme

Tuesday 11th June at 3.00 pm

The problem of beauty in the contemporary mind

Four responses are considered to Dostoevsky’s claim in *The Idiot* that “Beauty will save the world”. Two responses are secular: one based on Marxist ideas of historical materialism and the second expressed in the concept of the “romantic sublime”. Two responses are theological: one recognises beauty as a transcendental property of being and the second roots Beauty not in the realm of the conceptual but in the person of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word. This overview aims to sketch the complexity of the issues involved and the importance of beauty to faith and reason.

Wednesday 12th June at 10.30 am

Retrieving beauty

Given such conflicting views of beauty, is it possible to claim that beauty is an expression of reality of being? Would it be an exaggeration to recognise beauty as a form of knowledge that draws us into the mysteries of faith? Is it essential that we move, as Saint Pope John Paul II claims, from superficial phenomena to fundamentals, that is, to a serious concern with the metaphysical ground of being and the knowledge of transcendence? If it is, what role does beauty play in that process?

Wednesday 12th June at 3.00 pm

The Incarnation as the revelation of Beauty Itself

The Incarnation is the key to any understanding of beauty, if it is to be considered to be more than a decadent aestheticism. A faith that is founded on the divine Incarnation will find expression in the visible and created realms. An orthodox Christology of the image provides an answer to the challenges of iconoclasm. Within the life of the Church, the vocation of the artist is to find ways to express these Christological mysteries of faith. Art acquires a theological and typological purpose. It exists to give glory to God and to His creation.

Thursday 13th June at 10.30 am

Celebrating beauty in the life of the Church

In the contemporary period, there have been two great defenders of “epiphanies of the beautiful”: Saint Pope John Paul II and Pope emeritus Benedict XVI. They have both argued that when beauty is relegated to the peripheries of our Christian life and worship so the beauty of the Church dims for our contemporaries. Artists are cartographers of beauty who help map for the Church trustworthy paths to contemplation of the Blessed Trinity. From the beautiful arises praise of the source of all beauty.