



The FRIENDS of the
HOLY FATHER

ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 2019

**THE FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the thirty-ninth Annual General Meeting of The Friends of the Holy Father will be held on **Thursday, 13 June 2019 at 6.45pm** in Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, Westminster, London SW1P 1QN.

The Annual General Meeting will be preceded by the 5.30pm Mass in Westminster Cathedral, which will be offered for the intentions of members and also for deceased members. Mass will be celebrated by the Rt. Rev. Thomas McMahon, Bishop Emeritus of Brentwood.

23a Vincent House
Vincent Square
LONDON SW1P 2NB

Mary Maxwell
Hon. Secretary

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 4 June 2018
- 3 To receive the Report of the Council for the year ending 31 December 2018
- 4 To receive and adopt the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2018
- 5 Election of Council:

Chairman	John Dean
Vice Chairmen	David Murphy Dr Michael Straiton
Hon. Secretary	Mary Maxwell
Hon. Treasurer	Fiona Traynor-Bucknall
Ecclesiastical Adviser	Fr Guy Sawyer
Other Council Members retiring by rotation:	John Dean John Scanlan

6 Election of Independent Examiner

To appoint Mr Gerard A Smith FCCA as Independent Examiner for the ensuing year.

TIMETABLE

5.30 pm	Mass in the Cathedral
6.45 pm	Annual General Meeting in Vaughan House
7.30 (approx)	Reception with buffet supper at which members will have the opportunity to meet Bishop McMahon
8.30 pm (approx)	End of Meeting

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

1 Income

Donations

2 Income from & expenditure on charitable activities

Members' subscriptions

Annual General Meeting

Meetings / reception

3 Allocation of governance & support costs

Support

Leaflets & stationery

Postage, website & publicity

Mass offerings

Governance

Annual General Meeting

Council meetings

Independent examiner's fee

Bank charges

Total governance and support costs

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

2018 £	2018 £	2017 £	2017 £
Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure
6,162		6,925	
6,926		8,447	
670		875	
7,596		9,322	
	715		1,331
	415		369
	100		100
	1,230		1,800
	735		610
	30		55
	2,100		2,100
	125		132
	2,990		2,897
	4,220		4,697

There were no charitable grants in 2017, thus no allocation of governance and support costs was made that year.

Grant funded activity	Support & governance	Total 2018	Total 2017
26,000	4,220	30,220	4,697

4 Analysis of charitable grant expenditure

Grant to the Holy Father towards the cost of refurbishing the Basilica of St Domitilla

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Income

Donations

Interest

Charitable activities

Total income

Expenditure

Grants to support Holy Father

Governance & support costs

Other charitable activities

Total expenditure

Net income

Total funds brought forward

Total funds carried forward

2018	2017
6,162	6,925
55	10
7,596	9,322
13,813	16,257
30,220	
4,220	4,697
0	0
30,220	4,697
(16,407)	11,560
78,474	69,914
62,067	78,474

TRUSTEES

Brian Callaghan, FCA

John Scanlan, KCSG, KGCHS

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Chairman John Dean BA, DipLaw, DipLP

Vice Chairmen David Murphy MA and Dr Michael Straiton, KCSG, MB, BS

Hon. Secretary Mary Maxwell, DSG, DC*HS

Hon. Treasurer Fiona Traynor-Bucknall

Ecclesiastical Adviser Fr Guy Sawyer

Registered charity number 280489



PETRVS

The FRIENDS of the

HOLY FATHER

23A Vincent House, Vincent Square, London SW1P 2NB
Website: www.friendsoftheholylfather.org

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE
of the Holy Father Francis on the call to holiness in today's world
19th March 2018

'Rejoice and be glad' (Mt 5:12), Jesus tells those persecuted or humiliated for his sake. The Lord asks everything of us, and in return he offers us true life, the happiness for which we were created. He wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence. The call to holiness is present in various ways from the very first pages of the Bible. We see it expressed in the Lord's words to Abraham: 'Walk before me, and be blameless' (Gen 17:1).

What follows is not meant to be a treatise on holiness, containing definitions and distinctions helpful for understanding this important subject, or a discussion of the various means of sanctification. My modest goal is to re-propose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities. For the Lord has chosen each one of us 'to be holy and blameless before him in love' (Eph 1:4).



THE SAINT AND THE SULTAN OF EGYPT MEET
800th anniversary

Shortly after his election, Pope Francis told Italian pilgrims that he chose St. Francis as his papal name because St. Francis of Assisi was so devoted to the poor, a virtue he wanted to be reminded of throughout his papacy. St. Francis was 'the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation,' the same created world 'with which we don't have such a good relationship.'



Pope Francis visited Abu Dhabi and Morocco early this year; he told Ambassadors to the Holy See early in January:

'These represent two important opportunities to advance inter-religious dialogue and mutual understanding between the followers of both religions [Christianity and Islam] in this year that marks the 800th anniversary of the historic meeting between St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan al-Malik al-Kamil [of Egypt].'

In 1219, in the course of the Fifth Crusade, St. Francis of Assisi went to Egypt with the Crusaders, both to seek peace and to preach the Gospel of Christ to the Muslims. During a short truce that followed, St. Francis with one companion who served as interpreter, walked from the Crusader lines into the Muslim stronghold at Damietta. The two men, in their simple garb, were taken to Sultan al-Malik-al-Kamil. The Sultan was impressed by the simple message Francis offered – he wished to save the souls of the Sultan and his followers with no hint of criticism or conflict. Being a devout Muslim himself, the Sultan was keen to have talks with his new guest; these took

place over the following three weeks. When the Sultan inquired by whom, why and how they had been sent, Francis replied with an intrepid heart that the Most High God had sent him to point out to the Sultan and his people the way of salvation and to announce the Gospel of truth.

Inspired from heaven, Francis continued: 'If you wish to be converted to Christ along with your people, I will most gladly stay with you for love of Him. But if you hesitate, then command that an enormous fire be lit and I will walk into the fire along with your priests so that you will recognize which faith deserves to be held as holier and more certain.' The Sultan replied that he did not dare accept this choice because he feared a revolt among his people. Nevertheless, he offered Francis many gifts, which the man of God spurned as if they were dirt. Seeing that Francis so completely despised worldly possessions, the Sultan was overflowing with admiration and developed an even greater respect for him. After three weeks of dialogue the Sultan had the two friars returned safely to the Crusader camp with an armed escort.

The encounter had a considerable impact on St. Francis' life and practice. He was impressed by the religious practices of the Muslims, the call to prayer, the approach to a transcendent God and the deep respect they had for the sacred book of the Qur'an. He was present at the Salat, the ritual prayer Muslims performed five times a day. The Sultan offered Francis rich gifts, but he did accept one, an ivory horn (below), used by the muezzin to call the faithful to prayer. The rods attached are struck to summon the faithful to listen to a sermon. It is in the Treasury of the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi. On his return, Francis used it to call people for prayer or for preaching. Francis was also given a token of safe passage throughout the Holy Land, which he accepted. His journeys throughout the country laid the foundation for the Franciscans being given the freedom to serve the Holy Places to this day.



THE PRIVILEGE OF THE SICK

Even if the eyes of the disciples had not grown heavy, even if they had the strength to watch and pray, they would not have understood, they would not have entered into that solitude, they would have had no part in the Agony; they would still have been on the other side... but we, the sick, however wretched we are, we, with all our deeds behind us, heavy with the burden of a whole life, it is we who have the privilege of that solitude in the centre of which there lies that prostrate body, face downward on the ground: the Man of Sorrows, the Son of Man, the Son of God.



Journal, 1937,
Francois Mauriac (1885-1970)

PETER'S PENCE AND ITS FOUNDER

Peter's Pence is the annual collection throughout the Catholic Church on the feast-day of Ss Peter and Paul on the 29th June. The money is meant to support the concerns of the Successors of St Peter for the many different needs of the Universal Church, the relief of those most in need, and for dioceses in difficulty. One notable use was that of Pope St John XXIII, who used the Peter's Pence fund to cover the costs of the Second Vatican Council which had been called at short notice.



From about the 5th century, Britain became a cluster of Anglo Saxon kingdoms, each vying for supremacy. By the 8th century Mercia (from the Old English *merce*, 'people of the boundaries') had become the most powerful of these territories.

Neighbouring Mercia was the Kingdom of Wessex, ruled from 688-726 by King Ine. Ine was a keen legislator, noted for his code of law, and a powerful protector and patron of the Church,

having built the church which was to later become Wells Cathedral. In 725 he abdicated and went on pilgrimage to Rome and was baptised there by Pope Gregory II. He took with him a tribute in coins, which he presented to the Pope. This action was soon taken up throughout the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and spread to the rest of Europe. A similar tribute was offered by Offa, King of Mercia in 794, of one silver penny from every household of means in his kingdom (this one inscribed *offa rex mer*), collected on 1st August – the feast of St Peter ad Vincula: or Peter in Chains. Offa is also remembered for building his Dyke to keep out native Britons, an 80 mile huge ditch-and-bank construction from sea to sea: from the Dee estuary in the north to the Severn estuary in the south. He must have had a huge supply of workmen from Mercia and his client kingdoms around to enable this enterprise to be achieved.

Pope Benedict XVI reflected on Catholic giving through this yearly collection in an address in 2006:



'Peter's Pence is the most characteristic expression of the participation of all the faithful in the Bishop of Rome's charitable initiatives in favour of the universal Church. The gesture has not only a practical value, but also a strong symbolic one as a sign of communion with the Pope and attention to the needs of one's brothers; and therefore your service possesses a refined ecclesial character.'

Today Peter's Pence is collected in all diocesan Catholic churches at the annual collection on June 29, the feast of Ss Peter and Paul. This money is used by the Pope himself to support the many different needs of the Universal Church and for the relief of those most in need, such as relief from natural disasters and for dioceses in difficulty.

During building works in Rome in 1929 to create the Vatican Radio Station, a hoard of 517 Anglo-Saxon coins was unearthed dating from the 9th to 10th century. These were considered to be the annual donation of Peter's Pence. They were sent to London to be sold at Glendennings and were purchased by private buyers. The British Museum studied the Collection, made a detailed list of the coins and took plaster copies of them.



THE FIRST PROMOTER OF CHRISTIAN ART

Pope St Gregory the Great



The first securely dated Christian pictures of about AD 230 were found in the ruins of a Greek fort at Dura Europos, on the banks of the Euphrates in Northern Syria. In this fort was a house-church with a fresco of St Peter walking on water (above). During the first three centuries, the practice of Christianity was forbidden in the Roman Empire, but flourished outside it. Christian art-works, such as those in Rome, were confined to secret places in the catacombs where the central figures of the faith were first portrayed by symbols such as the fish, the dove and the lamb. Soon catacomb frescos appeared, impressionistic,

vivid and lively as was suited to an underground movement, such as the healed paralytic carrying his bed on his back, Daniel in the lion's den and the Good Shepherd carrying his sheep.

When Christianity was granted official toleration by the edict of Milan by the Emperor Constantine in 313, persecution ceased and Christianity became established everywhere as the official religion of the Empire.

Fresco at Dura Europos of Peter walking on the water

Priceless works of art survive from that time: such as the mosaics on the floor of the Cathedral of Aquileia built in 319; the head and shoulders of Christ in the floor mosaic at Hinton St Mary in Dorset; the great mosaic of Christ in Majesty in the apse of the basilica of Santa Pudenziana in Rome c.390, and the contemporary Christian wall frescos at Lullingston Villa in Kent. In the sixth century voices were raised complaining that art encouraged idolatry. In 599 Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles, destroyed the pictures in his churches and condemned the worship which they attracted.

A Pope stepped in to save the cause of sacred art for all time:

'We praise you heartily for forbidding men to adore images, but we blame you for breaking them. It is one thing to adore a picture, it is another to learn from a picture, as through a narrative, what ought to be adored. For what the written book conveys to those who read it, that also the painting conveys to the uninstructed folk who contemplate it. Call together the scattered children of your church and prove to them that nothing made by human hands should be adored, for it is written: "you shall worship the Lord your God and him alone shall you serve." Exhort your people earnestly to acquire the ardour of remorse by gazing on these pictured scenes of history, while they bow in adoration of the Holy and Almighty Trinity, and that alone.'

St. Gregory the Great's letter to Serenus

CARDINAL NEWMAN'S CONVERSION

Blessed John Henry Newman (1801-90) was one of the key literary and religious figures of the nineteenth century. He was brought up an Anglican, and ordained into the Church of England in 1824. He became the leading member of the Oxford Movement, whose primary objective was to bring spiritual renewal to the Church of England in the theory of the *Via Media*, by reviving certain Roman Catholic doctrines and rituals that Anglicans had dropped during the struggles of the Protestant Reformation.

The writings of St Augustine of Hippo (354-430), (overleaf) one of the Fathers of the early Church, had a profound effect on Cardinal Newman after he had grappled for years, before his conversion to the Catholic Church in 1845.

St Augustine owed much to his mother Monica, a devout Christian and a saint of the Church. He was born in Tagaste in Numidia and was educated in Carthage, North Africa and then lived in Rome. He was in a restless and unsettled frame of mind, changing from one faith to another. It was in Milan,

where he had been appointed a professor of Rhetoric, that he heard St Ambrose preach.

One night, with his Bible in his hand and in a state of deep depression as to his future, Augustine heard a child cry out '*tolle lege, tolle lege*' – 'take, read.' He opened the Bible and his eyes alighted on 'put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.' Afterwards he became a Christian, was baptised by St Ambrose and then returned to Hippo where he became Bishop and where he spent the rest of his life.

In 1839 Cardinal Wiseman wrote an article in the *Dublin Review* in which the sentence '*Securus judicat orbis terrarum*' appeared, which means 'the verdict of the whole world is conclusive,' that had been said by St Augustine about the Catholic Church and by this he meant that the Church had stood together as one, united for the truth.

A copy of the *Dublin Review* was given to Newman who saw this sentence:

had felt from any words before. To take a familiar instance, they were like the "Turn again Whittington" of the chime; or, to take a more serious one, they were like the "Tolle, lege; tolle, lege," of the child, which converted St Augustine himself. "Securus judicat orbis terrarum!" By those great words of the ancient Father, interpreting and summing up the long and varied course of ecclesiastical history, the theory of the Via Media was absolutely pulverized.'

from the *Apologia pro Vita Sua*

Right: 6th century fresco of Augustine of Hippo in the Lateran Basilica.



SAINT BONIFACE

The greatest Briton?



Historian Christopher Dawson estimates that 'Boniface had a greater influence on the history of Europe than any other Englishman.'

Saint Boniface of Crediton, missionary, bishop, saint and martyr, the patron saint of both Germany and Holland, was born in Crediton, Devon, in 680 into an Anglo-Saxon family and was baptised Winfrith (Old English 'friend of peace').

When he was five, Winfrith listened to some monks who were staying at his father's house who had returned from a mission to the pagans on the continent. He was so impressed by them that he resolved to follow their example. Although his father had

intended him for a secular career, he gave way to his son's entreaties and sent him at the age of seven to a monastery school at Nursling, in Winchester. He eventually became the director of the school where he wrote the first Latin grammar in England, and gave lectures, which were widely copied and circulated.

In 716 the abbot of his monastery died and he was invited to assume his position, but still wishing to evangelise, he proceeded to Rome in 717 where he met Pope Gregory II who gave him the nickname 'Boniface' and ordained him missionary bishop, without a diocese, for Germania, an area then lacking any Church organisation.

He set out to preach in Friesland (now a part of the Netherlands), whence he was soon expelled because of war between its heathen king and Charles Martel of France. Boniface after a brief withdrawal, went into Hesse and Bavaria, having secured the support of Charles Martel, the ruler of Frankia, for his work there.

In Hesse, in the presence of a large crowd of pagans, he cut down a tree of immense age and girth, sacred to the god Thor. It is said that after only a few blows of his axe, the tree tottered and crashed to the ground, breaking into four pieces and revealing itself to be rotting away within (left).

In its place grew a small fir tree. The saint told the pagan worshippers that the tiny fir was the Tree of Life and stood for the eternal life of Christ, and the triangular shape of the fir tree symbolised the Holy Trinity – God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. By the 12th Century, Christmas trees were hung from ceilings as a symbol of Christianity.

It was the beginning of a highly successful missionary effort, and the planting of a vigorous Christian church in Germany. He asked the Christian Saxons of England to support his work among their kinsmen on the continent, and they responded with money, books, supplies, and above all, with a steady supply of monks to assist him in teaching and preaching.

Boniface did not confine his attentions to Germany. He worked to establish cooperation between the Pope and others in Italy on the one hand, and Charles Martel and his successors in France on the other. He persuaded the sons of Charles Martel, Carloman and Pepin, to call synods for the church in their territories. He never forgot his initial failure in Friesland, and in old age resigned his bishopric and returned to work there. Many Friesians had been converted earlier by Wilibrord, another Saxon missionary from England, but had lapsed after his death. Boniface preached among them with considerable success.

The foundations of the new age in Europe were laid by the greatest missionary, St Boniface, 'the Apostle of Germany,' who had a deeper influence on the history of Europe than any Englishman who ever lived.

He visited Rome again in 739 and on his return to Germany he used his authority as papal vicar to reorganise the Bavarian Church and to establish the new dioceses which had so great an importance in German history. For Germany beyond the Rhine was still a land without cities, and the foundation of the new bishoprics meant the creation of new centres of cultural life. It was through St Boniface that Germany first became a living member of European society.

He has had an enormous impact on English and European history far beyond the simple conversion of people to Christianity. In 722 he was consecrated a bishop with the remit to preach to the heathen, east of the Rhine. In 723 he visited the Frankish court and was taken under the protection of the king, Charles Martel ('martel' meaning hammer). Over the next two years Boniface's mission continued in Hesse and Thuringia where he established convents and started to create a disciplined system of churches. This was built on in the years which followed by the organisation of dioceses and provinces,

all under the Pope, in other areas of Germany. His guidance of the early church in Germany through his establishment of structures, which enabled it to co-exist with monarchy, proved to be of great importance. The educational and literary influence from his monasteries and churches in his lifetime and over the next centuries were very significant. He is described as the Apostle of Germany and is greatly revered in the Netherlands.

In 732 Boniface was consecrated archbishop, without a specific archiepiscopal see by Pope Gregory III, who authorised him to organise the hierarchy of the church in Bavaria and created four new sees. Boniface founded the abbey of Fulda and in 745 he was given Mainz as his cathedral, being created Primate of all Germany by Pope Zachary. He set off for further missionary work in Friesland. On June 5, the eve of Pentecost, 754, while preparing a group of Frisians for Confirmation, he was attacked by a group of pagans who killed him. He would not allow his companions to defend him. His body was taken to Fulda, where it still rests.



When Pope Saint John Paul II visited Germany in November 1980, he spent two days in Fulda. He celebrated Mass outside the cathedral, in front of an estimated crowd of 100,000, and hailed the importance of Boniface for German Christianity:

'The holy Boniface, bishop and martyr, signifies the beginning of the gospel and the church in your country.'

Cardinal Ravasi, whom Pope Francis appointed to restore the Basilica of Ss Nereus and Achilleus in the 1st century Catacomb of Domitilla, the oldest of all Christian burial places, sent this letter (overleaf) thanking us for the donation of £26,000 to complete the restoration work:



PONTIFICIA COMMISSIONE
DI ARCHEOLOGIA SACRA

II/2/111

Vatican, 12 October 2018

Pos. N.

(Citare il numero nella risposta)

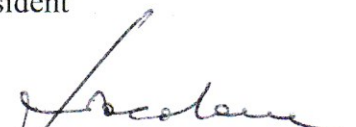
Dear Dr. Straiton,

I have received, through the services of the Apostolic Nunciature in London, your most kind note accompanying a cheque for £26,000 as a generous donation from the *Friends of the Holy Father* destined to supporting the works of reorganization of the Basilica of Sts. Nereus and Achilleus in the Catacombs of Domitilla. This will be used, in particular, for the new lighting system and the recovery of the Damasian inscription, as well as to recall, with a dedicated inscription, the Homily pronounced by St Gregory the Great in the same martyrial Basilica.

May I extend to you my heartfelt thanks for this act of generosity and indeed for your own sensitivity and that of the other *Friends*. I would be delighted to welcome you and the members of the Foundation here in Rome and to arrange for a visit to our catacombs once the works you have sponsored are complete.

As I await the occasion to meet with you, I renew my sentiments of high esteem, and bless you in the Lord.


GIANFRANCO CARD. RAVASI
President


Mons. Pasquale Iacobone
Secretary

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