

The FRIENDS of the HOLY FATHER

NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 2020



New Apostolic Nuncio for Great Britain.



Pope Francis has named **Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti** as Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain, in place of Archbishop Edward Adams, who retired in January 2020.

Claudio Gugerotti was born in Verona, Italy, in 1955 and ordained a priest of the Diocese of Verona in 1982. He studied Eastern Languages and Sacred Liturgy and was a professor of Patristics and Eastern Liturgy at the Institute of Ecumenical Studies in Verona from 1981 to 1985. He served previously as the Pope's representative to Georgia and Armenia, as well as Azerbaijan (2001-2011), and later as Nuncio to Belarus (2011-2015). Abp Gugerotti has been the Apostolic Nuncio to Ukraine since November 2015.

SOME ANNIVERSARIES

1600th - Saint Jerome died September 30th 420.



St. Jerome was buried in Bethlehem but was later translated to the Basilica of St Mary Major in Rome. He was brought up a Christian and received a good education, learning to write a pure and vigorous Latin. In 374 Jerome joined a group of friends and went to live as a hermit in the desert of Calcis. He suffered from ill health and temptations. In order to control his imagination he learned Hebrew and began his life's work as a scholar devoted to the interpretation of the scriptures. In 378 he went to Constantinople to study the scriptures under the great Greek theologian, St Gregory Nazianzen. Four years later he went to Rome and became secretary to Pope Damasus. He translated the Bible from Greek to the Latin Vulgate version, since adopted by the Catholic Church as the official text.

In a legend, St Jerome was reported to be giving a lecture to his students when an injured lion appeared. St Jerome welcomed the lion but his students fled. He examined the lion's injured paw and extracted the thorn he found there. This cured the paw and the lion remained with St Jerome until his death. In a decree in 1298, Pope Boniface VIII proclaimed the Four Doctors of the Western Church as: St Gregory the Great, St Ambrose, St Augustine and St Jerome.

850th - St Thomas Becket was murdered on December 29th 1170

Thomas Becket (1118-70) became one of the most popular saints in Europe following his martyrdom in Canterbury Cathedral. Thomas was the son of a prosperous merchant in London and was educated at the Augustinian priory at Merton, Surrey, then at London and Paris. He had a penchant for magnificent display. When Henry II succeeded to the throne in 1154, Thomas became his best friend and was

appointed as Chancellor. In 1162 Henry determined to control the Church and so secured the election of Becket as Archbishop of Canterbury. Henry ignored Thomas's warning that this would mean the end of their friendship. As Archbishop, Becket resigned the Chancellorship and quarrelled fiercely with the King over the jurisdiction of Church courts. In October 1164 after a stormy meeting with the King at

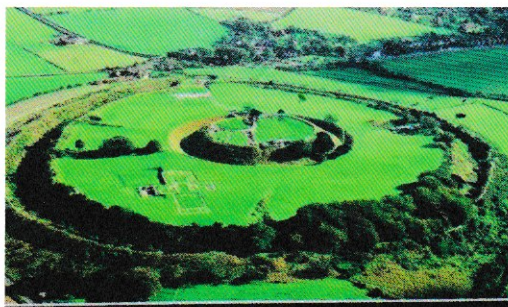


Northampton, Becket fled to France and spent most of the next six years on spiritual retreat, refusing to compromise with Henry. Finally, in July 1170 Becket and the King met in Touraine when Henry made some tactical concessions. On November 30th 1170 Becket returned to England to reassert his authority over the English Bishops. On Christmas Day in Normandy, an exasperated Henry II reprimanded his household for allowing him to be treated in such a way. Four Knights took the hint and returned to England and spilt the brains of Becket on the floor of Canterbury Cathedral.

800th St Francis of Assisi resigned his office of Minister-General at the General Chapter in 1220.

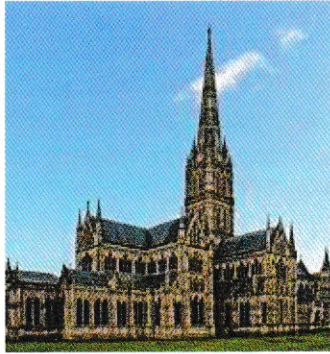
During a journey to the Holy Land where he met the Islamic Sultan and attempted to halt the Crusade, Francis was recalled urgently by news of changes that had taken place in the Order which he had founded. Numbers had become large, foundations had been made outside Italy, there was no proper organisation and only the simplest of rules. Their protector, Cardinal Ugolino, wished the whole Church to benefit from their ideals and example. Francis realised that he was not the administrator or organiser that the Order needed and resigned his post. He was succeeded by Brother Elias of Cortona. To his later years belong some of the most famous incidents in St Francis' life, such as the inauguration of the Christmas Crib at Greccio, the Canticle of the Sun that he wrote after visiting St Clare who was severely ill, and above all the reception of the stigmata on Mount la Laverna in 1224. He died in 1226 and was canonised by his old friend Pope Gregory IX, formerly Cardinal Ugolino.

800th – the building of the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Salisbury begun in 1220 and completed in 1258.



Old Sarum was the site of the earliest settlement of Salisbury, located on a hill about two miles north of modern Salisbury. An Iron-Age hill fort was erected around 400 BC, and was occupied during the Roman period. The Saxons took the hill-fort in the 6th century, when it later became a stronghold against the marauding Vikings. The Normans constructed a motte and bailey castle, a stone curtain wall and a great cathedral. A royal palace was built within the walls by King Henry I. The heyday of the settlement lasted

some 300 years until disputes between the Sheriff of Wiltshire and the Bishop of Old Sarum led to the transfer of the church to the nearby plain. A New Sarum, **Salisbury**, grew up around the construction site for the new Cathedral in the early 13th century. The buildings of Old Sarum were dismantled to be used for stone, and the site became abandoned. Herbert Poore was the last Bishop of Old Sarum. He died in 1217 and was succeeded by his brother **Richard Poore** who succeeded to the See with the help of the Papal Legate, Cardinal Guala Bicchieri.



It was during this time that Richard Poore oversaw and helped plan the construction of the new Salisbury Cathedral as a replacement for the previous one at Old Sarum. Building commenced in 1220. Bishop Richard also laid out the town of Salisbury to allow the workers building the Cathedral to live in less cramped circumstances than in the old garrison town at Old Sarum. The Cathedral, however, was not dedicated until 1258.

150th THE FALL OF ROME

On 20th September 1870 General Raffaele Cadorna, commanding about 60,000 Italian troops, attacked Rome. General Hermann Kanzler commanded the Papal Army and the Swiss Guards who were inside the walls defending the city. At 5:00 a.m. General Cadorna began bombarding the Porta Pia, one of the gates in the walls of the city, with cannon. A breach was made soon after, and the revolutionary forces began pouring in through the gap. Resistance was hopeless, so about noontime, Pope Pius IX gave orders for his army to lay down their arms and the white flag of surrender was hoisted from the top of St. Peter's Basilica. The 1100-year rule of the Papal States had come to an end.



HENRY VIII'S PERSONALITY ALTERED IN 1534

Two bills were enacted into Parliament in 1534 and became law. The first made Henry head of the English Church and the second confirmed his marriage to Anne Boleyn, whose child was to inherit the Crown. Anyone casting slander on this marriage was to be declared guilty of treason. By giving himself new powers and inventing a new "crime" Henry had changed from being a constitutional monarch to a despot.

Henry abolished 110 hospitals which had served the sick poor and suppressed 90 colleges and 2,374 chantries and chapels. In 1545 he forced Parliament to pass an Act by which colleges, hospitals, fraternities and guilds were vested in the Crown, so that these institutions could be abolished.

Records show that in his later years Henry complained of lack of concentration and suffered from anxiety. Evidence of his cruelty abound. The contemporary historian, John Stow, recorded that 72,000 people were executed during his reign. Stephen Perlin, a French physician, who was in England during the reigns of Edward and Mary wrote, "in this country you will not meet with any great nobles whose relatives have not had their heads cut off".

" ALL CHILDREN ONE MOTHER " raised at Thomas More's trial on July 1st 1535.

It was not the Norman Conquest that made England part of continental civilization, as many historians have so often asserted. Thomas More, who knew little or nothing of the details, was right when he argued at his trial that the conversion of England to Christianity had resulted in England taking her place forthwith in a European unity. Monks' Wearmouth, Jarrow and York, became the centres of European civilisation and learning. Britain had been part of the ancient Roman world, and, in spite of a century and a half of Teutonic heathendom, the earlier Christianity of Britain had been passed on to sanctuaries like Glastonbury and Iona. The mission of Augustine meant the return of Britain to Europe.

English Christianity is more venerable than the English State, and is above all a European not an insular thing. The Norman Conquest only emphasised what was already a feature of English Christianity. Two generations after the Norman Conquest, Englishmen, Normans and Flemings combined with the Portuguese to recover Lisbon from the Moslems, and so give Portugal a place in the expansion of Europe. "We are all children of one mother" exclaimed Henry Glanville, who brought his East Anglian contingent to the common cause. Later it is as the children of one mother that Peter Giles, a Fleming, Raphael Hythlodaye, Portuguese, and Thomas More met together in a garden in Antwerp, understanding each other fully, as members of a common civilisation.

Thomas More was giving a true view of English history when he claimed that Englishmen, as Christians, had always been part of one great unity, and that to separate the English Church from the European fellowship and make it subordinate to the English State, as Henry claimed to do, was something new, a departure from a tradition nearly a thousand years old.

From R. W. Chambers- **Thomas More**

Newsletter compiled by Dr Michael Straiton KCSG, Vice-Chairman, Friends of the Holy Father

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