

THE FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the twenty seventh Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Holy Father will be held at **6.45 pm** on **Wednesday 30 May 2007** in Vaughan House 46 Francis Street Westminster London SW1P 1QN. For security reasons tickets will be issued. Please see enclosed note. The Annual General Meeting will be preceded by the Annual Mass at the high altar of Westminster Cathedral, which will be celebrated by Bishop Peter Doyle, Bishop of Northampton

Archdiocese of Westminster

Dr Michael Straiton KCSG MB BS DO

Vaughan House

Hon. Secretary

46 Francis Street

2007

London, SW1P 1QN

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 8 June 2006.
3. To receive the Report of the Council for the year ended 31 December 2006.
4. To receive and adopt the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2006.

5. Election of Council:

Chairman	John Dean
Vice Chairmen	Martin Dean
	David Murphy
	Leo Simmonds
Hon Secretary	Dr Michael Straiton
Hon Treasurer	Gregory Edwards

Other Council Members retiring by rotation:

Mary Maxwell
Rosemary Rendel

6. Election of Independent Examiner

During the year Buzzacott resigned and the Council appointed Mr Gerard A Smith FCCA to fill the vacancy, who being eligible, offers himself for re-election to hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting.

7. Any Other Business.

TIMETABLE

5.30 pm	Mass in the Cathedral.
6.45 pm (approx.)	Annual General Meeting in Archbishop's House.
7.30 pm (approx.)	Reception with buffet at which the Friends have the opportunity of meeting Bishop Doyle, the Council and each other.
8.30 pm (approx)	End of Meeting.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 2006

We were delighted to welcome Archbishop Stefan Wesoly to the 2006 Annual General Meeting after he had celebrated our Mass in Westminster Cathedral for the Holy Father's intentions. Residing in Rome, Archbishop Wesoly was for 37 years the delegate of the Polish episcopate with responsibility for Polish people around the world.

The Polish community in Great Britain was greatly strengthened by the many Polish ex-service personnel who settled here after World War II and, as a result of that country joining the E.U. we have recently been joined by an estimated half a million compatriots from Poland. Of great importance to these immigrants is the maintenance of their national identity, both the language and spiritual needs, for which the Polish Catholic Mission in London takes the greatest care.

Pope Benedict has recently been well received in Poland and when he met the gathering of 600,000 thousand young people he was impressed by their enthusiasm and exhorted them to build their lives on Christ, encouraging them to be



Mgr Ralph Brown (left) and Archbishop Wesoly

steadfast in the Faith. A new initiative is the John Paul II Foundation which has been established in Krakow giving scholarships to poor students from ex-communist states to study there.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 2007 HISTORIC ANNIVERSARIES



Confirmation at Coventry, 30th May 1982

Our A.G.M. this year happily falls on 30th May :25th anniversary of Pope John Paul II's six-day Pastoral Visit to Great Britain from 28th May to 2nd June 1982. The Pope's visit made an indelible impression not only on the vast crowds who attended the Masses and other open-air meetings but on the millions who saw and heard him on television and radio. The historic occasion was co-ordinated by Mgr Ralph Brown whose great organizational skills helped to ensure its resounding success. The Friends were also invited to help in a small way. We were involved in running a star-studded concert at Wembley and the Papal Visit dinner which both raised funds to offset the overall cost of the visit. We even paid the premium for the Holy Father's medical insurance cover whilst he was here ! At the same time we helped to stage the Pope's play *The Jeweller's Shop* in London.

On 30th May 1982 Pope John Paul's day began early in the morning addressing a crowd of 24,000 Poles at Crystal Palace. He then flew to Coventry Airport and celebrated the Mass of Pentecost for a crowd of 350,000 people at which he administered the Sacrament of Confirmation. Then on to Speke Airport in Liverpool in the afternoon and a drive through Toxteth to the Anglican Cathedral to take part in a service, before travelling along Hope Street for Mass in the Cathedral of Christ the King. He was greeted in words and song by young people in the Cathedral Piazza afterwards and joined them in singing "Bind us together, Lord" before retiring for the night at Archbishop's House, Liverpool.

This year is also the 20th anniversary of the Beatification of the Eighty-five Martyrs of England, Wales and Scotland on 23 November 1987. The F.H.F. produced a map that detailed the place of origin of each of the martyrs which was presented to the Holy Father after the beatification ceremony in St. Peter's. We also assisted in the production of the souvenir booklet.

The group of Eighty-five Martyrs is made up of sixty-three priests and twenty two laymen. Of the priests fifty-nine were from the seminaries and four were Franciscans. The nationalities of the martyrs were: eighty English, three Welsh, one

Scot and one Irishman.

Cardinal Hume, who led the pilgrims to Rome for the beatification, said:

“These heroic people laid down their lives for the sake of conscience and religious faith. I am immensely proud that the Roman Catholic Church in this country is heir to a tradition of courage and faith beyond compare”

EASTER BABY AND ENGLISH KING - MARTYR

On 16th April 2007 Pope Benedict XVI celebrated the eightieth anniversary of his birth, and baptism on the same day in the parish Church of the small village of Markt am Inn in Bavaria. That Church is, rather surprisingly, dedicated to St. Oswald, the king-martyr of Northumbria in north-east England, who died in the year 642.

The first church at Markt was founded in 1297 by a local magnate and dedicated to St. Oswald of Northumbria. It is known that relics, including those of St. Oswald, accompanied St. Willibrord when he left England in 690 on his missionary travels to the then pagan Low Countries, and thence on to Germany with St. Boniface.

St Oswald can be remembered as one of England's heroes; his bravery and military skill, his generosity and piety, together with a sacrificial death in battle for country and faith, were combined as Anglo-Saxon hero and Christian saint.

Pope Benedict recalls his birthday in his book *“From my Life”*:

“I was born on Easter Saturday, the 16th April 1927, in Markt am Inn. The fact that the birthday was on the last day of Holy Week and the eve of Easter, that I was baptized immediately on the morning of my birth, with the holy water which had just been blessed at the Easter Vigil, in those days celebrated in the forenoon, was always remarked upon in the family history.

To be the first person baptized with the newly-blessed water was seen as divine providence. The fact that from the very beginning my life was immersed in the Easter mystery always filled me with gratitude, because that had to be a sign that I was blessed.

After calling at Regensburg last September the Holy Father visited his birth-place where the inhabitants turned out in force to greet him. The Church at Markt am Inn has been rebuilt in recent years, but retains its old reredos featuring St. Oswald with carvings depicting his martyrdom at the hands of the pagan king of the middle-English kingdom of Mercia.

SAINT OSWALD AND THE CONVERSION OF NORTHERN ENGLAND

St. Oswald of Northumbria is regarded as the key figure in bringing Christianity to Northern England in the 7th century. Whereas the efforts of others had faltered, King Oswald brought strong political stability and Christianity to Northumbria that was to last.

Following the collapse of the Roman Empire in the 5th century, Britain had been colonised by waves of pagan Anglo-Saxons from across the North Sea and the Christian Britons were forced to the West, to Wales and Cornwall. By the seventh century a myriad of petty tribes had consolidated into a few recognisable kingdoms. The rich ones were on the east coast - East Anglia and Kent - having developed links with the powerful Franks across the Channel. It was through Frankish Gaul that the Christian mission from Rome came to Kent in

597. The poor kingdoms lay in the North, Northumbria being the northernmost, up by Hadrian's Wall beyond which were the Picts, whom Rome had been unable to tame.

The years 627-632 were crucial to the establishment of Christianity in the North.

Northumbria, the land above the river Humber, had been divided into two pagan kingdoms, Bernicia, north of the River Tees, and Deira to the south. King Edwin of Deira aspired to a liaison with the powerful king of Kent and in 627 he asked Ethelbert for the hand of his daughter. Ethelbert consented, on condition that Edwin embraced the faith, and the Princess Ethelberga, accompanied by her chaplain Paulinus, one of St. Augustine of Canterbury's companions, set off for the North. She married Edwin after Paulinus had baptised him, with thousands of his subjects following suit.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER



The shrine of St Oswald and font at Markt am Inn

Edwin laid the foundations of the new church at York where Paulinus was appointed the first Bishop.

The new faith in Northumbria was soon to be tested. Two powerful enemies came against Edwin: Penda, king of the heathen Mercians and the Briton, Cadwallon, king of Gwynedd in North Wales. In late 632 there was a great battle at Heathfield in which Edwin was killed and his warriors scattered. Northumbria was defenceless before her enemies. Queen Ethelberga and her family with Bishop Paulinus fled back to Kent.

Cadwallon was master now. He slew two Northumbrian princes who endeavoured to make themselves kings, and slaughtered the people without mercy. Being a Briton he was a seemingly a Christian, but it made no difference. Many Northumbrians thought that the Christian God had forsaken them, and began once more to worship the old gods.

When it seemed that no Englishman could live in the land, a new leader appeared. Years before a prince named Oswald had been driven from Northumberland by King Edwin. Fleeing north, he came to the small Irish Christian kingdom of Dál Riata in south-west Scotland, centred on the Island of Iona

where St Columba had founded his monastery only a few years before. Oswald was not only heathen, but English too. Nevertheless, the monks of Iona received him kindly. Soon Oswald learned to love the monks, their Gaelic language and the religion they followed. He became a devout Christian.

In 633 Oswald, hearing that Edwin was dead and that his land was being destroyed by Cadwallon, came back to Northumbria. Gathering a small army around him, near the ruins of Hadrian's Wall, on the crest of a hill, he set up his standard, a large wooden cross. He told his men that the Christian God would help them. Cadwallon, over confident, attacked Oswald's little force but the Britons were swept back. Cadwallon, fleeing for his life, was caught and killed as he tried to cross a stream and his men were wiped out. To the victors it seemed a miracle. The cross was left standing, the place was called Heavenfield and over the years wood from the cross was reputed to cure the sick.

Oswald asked his friends in Iona to send someone who could preach the Gospel to the Northumbrians. They sent Colman who, regarding them both uncouth and unteachable, gave up and went home. The next monk Aidan was both patient and kind. Oswald, being fluent in both Irish Gaelic and English, was able to translate Aidan's message to his people. With Oswald as their king and Aidan as their bishop, the Northumbrians became fervent Christians. Soon their faith spread to neighbouring kingdoms and Oswald even stood as godfather to King Cynegils of Wessex. Land was given to support monasteries and many men gave up their possessions to become monks. Women did the same; the most famous of these was Hilda, who ruled over a large monastery and nunnery at Whitby. Oswald completed the first church at York that Edwin had founded, in 635.

Oswald's reign however did not last long. After only a few years he was killed by the pagan king Penda of Mercia on August 5th, 642 at the Battle of *Maserfelth*, now thought to be Old Oswestry, praying with his last breath for the souls of his bodyguard who died with him. The body was mutilated in sacrifice to Woden: the head and limbs were hung on stakes.

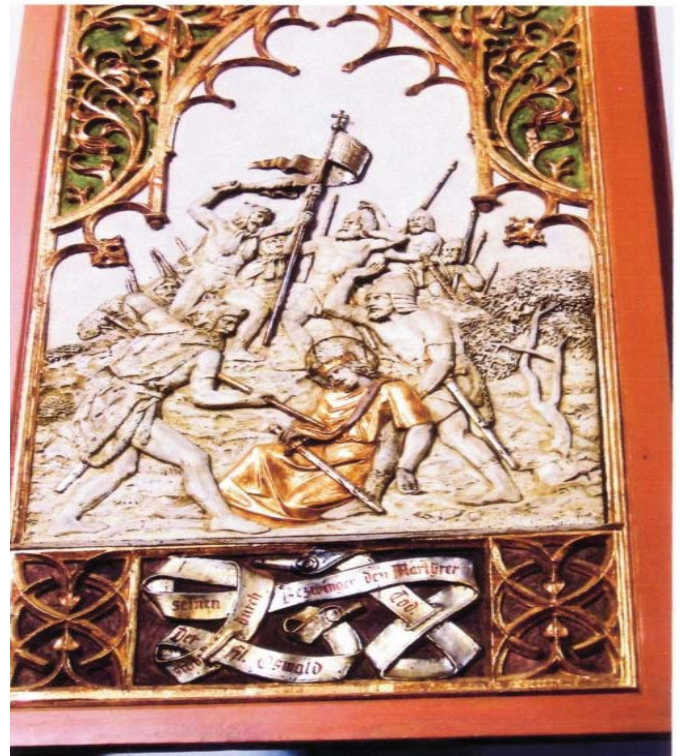
The parts were recovered and venerated in different places with many miracles recorded.

St. Oswald's head, however, was kept by the monks at Lindisfarne, but when they were driven out by Viking invaders they took it with them and finally laid it to rest in a tomb at Durham Cathedral where, together with the body of S. Cuthbert, it lies to

this day.

Seventy churches were dedicated to St. Oswald in England. Other relics went abroad and the cult of St. Oswald extended to Scotland, Ireland, Portugal, Bohemia, Holland, Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

His feast-day is 5th August.



Markt shrine -St. Oswald's death at the hands of Penda

POPE BENEDICT'S NEW BOOK

When Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected Pope Benedict XVI in 2005, he became one of the most accomplished theologians to ascend to the Papacy in several hundred years. Over the previous fifty years of his life he had written scores of theological works.

This new book entitled simply *Jesus of Nazareth* - his first book written as Benedict XVI - is a bold, momentous work in which the Pope seeks to salvage the person of Jesus from recent "popular" depictions and to restore his true identity as discovered in the Gospels. Through his brilliance as a theologian and his personal conviction as a believer, Pope Benedict shares a rich, compelling, flesh-and-blood portrait of Jesus and

invites us to encounter, face to face, the central figure of the Christian Faith.

It is available in English at £14.95 and can be ordered from:

The Catholic Truth Society
40-46 Harleyford Road
London SE11 5AY.
Tel 0207 640 0042

GIFT TO THE HOLY FATHER

The F.H.F. Council has already agreed to assist the newly established Centre for Peace on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem as already reported, a project willed by both Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. We have received ideas from Mother Tekla - mother general of the Bridgetine Sisters who run the Centre - regarding refurbishment of the building. The total cost would be in the region of £130,000; our limited

deposit in the bank allows us to commit to refurbishing the Chapel and conference hall, but we will launch an appeal shortly in the hope of raising the full amount needed.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER

THE SCALE OF VALUES

The Catholic hierarchy recently accused the British Government of abusing parliamentary democracy by forcing through new gay rights laws that compromised religious liberty. This finds an echo from the 1920's Weimar Government's directive to doctors to euthanase new-born 'defectives'. When Hitler developed this policy, Pope Pius XI recognised its disastrous consequence and issued the Encyclical Letter '**Mit Brennender Sorge** (with passionate pleading) on March 14th 1937, "on the Situation of the Church in Germany". Here is an extract:

Whoever transposes Race or People, the State or Constitution, the executive or other fundamental elements of human society (which in the natural order have an essential and honourable place) from the scale of earthly values and makes them the ultimate norm of all things, even of religious values, and deifies them with an idolatrous cult, perverts and falsifies the divinely created and appointed order of things. Such a man is far from true belief in God and from a conception of life in conformity to it.

Direct your attention, Venerable Brethren, to the growing abuse shown in speech and writing of using the thrice holy

name of God as a meaningless label for a more or less arbitrary product of human research or aspiration, and labour among your faithful that such an error may be as vigilantly repelled as it deserves. Our God is the personal, transcendent, omnipotent, infinitely perfect God, one in the Trinity of persons and threefold in the unity of divine essence, Creator of the universe, Lord, King and ultimate end of world history, who does not and cannot suffer any other gods beside Himself.

This God has given His commandments in the manner of a sovereign. They are independent of time, space, country or nation. As God's sun shines on all the human race without distinction, so His law knows no privileges, no exceptions. Rulers and ruled, crowned and uncrowned, great and small, rich and poor, depend equally on His word. An essential consequence of the fullness of His rights as Creator is his claim to absolute obedience from individuals in whatsoever society they be. Such a claim to obedience extends to every sphere of life in which moral questions have to be settled in accordance with divine law, and therefore with the adjustment of mutable human laws to the structure of the immutable laws of God.

THE FRIENDS' PILGRIMAGE TO NORTHUMBRIA - 2007

The next pilgrimage of the Friends to the "Land of the Northern Saints" will take place from 11th September to 18th September 2007. A few places are still available. We will travel by GNER train from London to Newcastle, then on to our hotel in Alnwick, Northumbria. Places to visit will include: Holy Island and Lindisfarne Priory, Bamburgh Castle and Farne Island, Hexham, Monkwearmouth and Jarrow, Alnwick, Durham, Helmsley and Lastingham.

For further information please write to :

Monsignor Ralph Brown, Prot Ap
Flat 3, 8 Morpeth Terrace
London SW1P 1EQ.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER

Archdiocese of Westminster
Vaughan House
46 Francis Street
London SW1P 1QN

Registered charity number 280489

**THE FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2006**

	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	
	2006	2005
		(restated)
	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Incoming resources from generated funds		
Voluntary income	9,500	1,500
Investment income - interest receivable	1,162	1,158
Incoming resources from Charitable activities	11,114	13,187
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	21,776	15,845
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CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Donation to support the Holy Father	42,000	-
Other charitable activities	1,743	3,759
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	43,743	3,759
Governance costs	2,528	3,834
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	46,271	7,593
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NET (OUTGOING) INCOMING RESOURCES	(24,495)	8,252
 BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		
AT 1 JANUARY 2006	57,693	49,441
	<hr/>	<hr/>
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD		
AT 31 DECEMBER 2006	33,198	57,693
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All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial years.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER

**FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2006**

	2006	2005
	£	£
Current Assets		
Debtors	30	1836
Cash at bank	34,578	57,326
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	34,608	59,162
Current Liabilities		
Sundry creditors	(1,410)	(1,469)
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net current assets	33,198	57,693
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Represented by		
Unrestricted funds		
General funds	33,198	57,693
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Full accounts etc. will be available at the Annual General Meeting or on request.

CONSTITUTION

The Friends of the Holy Father is a membership society, governed by its Objects and Rules dated 23 June 1980 and amended on 23 June 2005. It is a charitable organisation registered under the Charities Act 1993 – Registration No. 280489.

PRINCIPAL AIMS

The objects of the Charity are the promotion and advancement of the Roman Catholic religion by supporting the Pope through the dissemination of the teachings of the Church and the establishment and maintenance of a fund, the income and capital of which are to be applied to assist in defraying the expenses of the Pope in furthering his apostolic ministry.

Dr Michael Straiton Hon. Secretary

Archdiocese of Westminster

Vaughan House

46 Francis Street

London, SW1P 1QN

TRUSTEES

Brian Callaghan, FCA

Colin Edwards, KCSG, KC*HS, FCA, CTA

John Scanlan, KCSG, KGCHS

ADDRESS

Archdiocese of Westminster

Vaughan House

46 Francis Street

London, SW1P 1QN

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Chairman	John Dean
Vice Chairmen	Martin Dean, KCHS David Murphy, MA Leo Simmonds, KCSG, KCHS
Hon. Secretary	Dr Michael Straiton, KCSG, MB, BS, DO
Hon. Treasurer	Gregory Edwards, BSc, ACA
Other Council Members	Hazel Allport Mary Edwards, DGCHS Mary Maxwell, DHS Rosemary Rendel, DSG Ann Ross, DHS John Sylvester, KCSG, KHS
Ecclesiastical Adviser	Monsignor Ralph Brown, Prot. Ap., JCD, KCHS