

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the twenty ninth Annual General Meeting of The Friends of the Holy Father will be held at **6:45pm** on **Thursday 14th June 2012** 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 The Most Rev Peter Smith, Archbishop of Southwark.

23A Vincent House
Vincent Square
LONDON, SW1P 2NB

Dr Michael Straiton KCSG MB BS DO
Hon. Secretary

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 16th June 2011.
3. To receive the Report of the Council for the year ended 31 December 2011.
4. To receive and adopt the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2011.
5. Election of Council:

Chairman	John Dean
Vice Chairmen	Martin Dean David Murphy
Hon Secretary	Dr Michael Straiton
Hon Treasurer	Gregory Edwards
Other Council Members retiring by rotation:	Jennifer Edwards Mary Edwards

6. Election of Independent Examiner

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

7. Any Other Business.

TIMETABLE

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

Date: 10 May 2012

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING — 2011

We were delighted to welcome Archbishop Peter Smith, Archbishop of Southwark, to our 2011 Annual General Meeting, after he had celebrated High Mass for the Holy Father's intentions in Westminster Cathedral. He recalled the recent Papal State Visit to the United Kingdom when Pope Benedict preached the Gospel to the whole nation and thousands came to greet him. What he said, especially at Westminster Hall where he addressed 1,800 who had come

to hear him, was moving and in language ordinary folk could understand and his address was followed by tremendous applause. Mgr. Vincent Brady read a message from the Holy Father who greeted Archbishop Smith, thanked the Friends of the Holy Father for their work, appealed to the lay faithful to be examples of faith, vision and wisdom in the public forum, and asked for our continuing prayers.

Battle of the Milvian Bridge, Rome: October 28th 312 — seventeenth centenary

Battle of the Milvian Bridge—Raphael's fresco in the Vatican Palace

The battle in AD 312, at which Constantine the Great was the victor, changed the course of history. Before, Christianity had suffered persecution throughout the Roman Empire but after, Constantine decreed religious toleration that allowed Christians to emerge at last from the catacombs into the light of day.

At the end of the third century the Empire was on the point of collapse. The successful soldier-emperor Diocletian had tried to stabilize Roman society on his own. To solve the serious economic problems he introduced a price-freeze throughout the Empire; it did not work. He imposed the pagan state religion with the demand that everyone made a sacrifice of incense on the pagan altars; this did not work either as the Christians worshipped the one true God and refused to comply and were punished by hideous torture and slaughter. Diocletian's efforts failed, so he devised a cumbersome system of power-sharing by creating the Tetrarchy, a rule of four – two Emperors, himself and an old soldier friend Maximian, with a subordinate Caesar under each, the juniors succeeding the seniors at regular intervals. Both these Emperors soon retired, leaving the succeeding juniors to fight it out among themselves.

One of the contenders for power in the West was Constantius Chlorus who ruled Britain and Gaul. He died in July 306 at the legionary fortress at York with his eldest son Constantine at his side, whereupon the army acclaimed the son Emperor to succeed. Maximian's son, Maxentius, put in a claim and seized Rome as his power-base. Constantine felt his position threatened and in 307 proclaimed himself sole legitimate Emperor in the West and, realizing the danger of his position, went on the offensive.

Constantine left Britain and his first objective was to ward off German attacks on the Rhine frontier. In 310 he advanced into Spain, defeated Maxentius's forces there and gained control of the provinces. His aim now was to secure the key to lasting and stable power, Rome. In the late summer of 312 Constantine marched his army, now an experienced, loyal and confident force, across the Alps. It was not a large force as he had to leave troops to defend the Rhine frontier. Turin was taken after a cavalry battle and without resting he pressed on, taking Milan then Verona where he confronted and defeated his enemy's main force in Northern Italy. He crossed the Appenines and took the road south to Rome. While on the march Constantine called on God in

earnest prayer to help him in his present dangers, whereupon a most marvelous sign appeared to him and his army in the heavens: a Cross with the words *in hoc signo vinces* - "in this sign you shall conquer". At this divine sign he was struck with amazement, as well as all who had also witnessed the miracle.

On October 28th 312 Constantine marched down the via Flaminia to the northern gate of Rome at the Milvian Bridge. Maxentius had built a pontoon bridge across the Tiber and decided to engage in open battle with Constantine outside the city walls. Constantine first sent in the cavalry that

pushed the enemy troops towards the river. After further fighting Maxentius decided to withdraw into the city but there was only one escape route, the Milvian Bridge. Panic ensued in the withdrawal and the temporary bridge collapsed throwing many enemy troops into the Tiber. Maxentius himself drowned in the Tiber and Constantine entered the city to tumultuous acclaim.

In the following year as sole Emperor in the West Constantine met Licinius, the Emperor in the East, at Milan. They both signed a letter, the Edict of Milan that proclaimed religious toleration throughout the Empire

Bertha, Queen of Kent—died AD612—fourteenth centenary

St. Augustine addressing King Ethelbert and Queen Bertha on his arrival in England in AD 597

Ethelbert, King of Kent was at the time *bretwalda* or paramount ruler in England and was the first English king to convert to Christianity. In c. 560 he married Princess Bertha, (539-612), the daughter of Charibert I, the Merovingian King of Paris and his devout queen Ingeberga, which enabled him to build an alliance with the most powerful state in Western Europe. The condition for the marriage was that she would be able continue her Christian observances in England and for that purpose she was accompanied by her chaplain Bishop Luidhard as her confessor, and Ethelbert gave her a disused Christian church in Canterbury that dated from Roman times for them to celebrate Mass. She restored it and dedicated it to St. Martin of Tours: it survives today, the oldest English church still in use.

The influence of Bertha assisted the Roman Mission to Eng-

land sent by Pope Gregory the Great.

St. Augustine and his company of 40 monks sent from Rome by Pope Gregory the Great, arrived in Kent in 597, and their favourable reception, the subsequent baptism of King Ethelbert and his subjects and the rapid success of the mission, owed much to the efforts of Bertha. A letter from Pope Gregory to Queen Bertha survives. He wrote "... for, as through Helena of illustrious memory, the mother of the most pious Emperor Constantine kindled the hearts of the Romans into Christian faith, so your zeal for works in the nation of the Angles, ... are known not only among the Romans who have prayed earnestly for your life ... but have come even to the ears of the most serene prince at Constantinople ...".

Rosemary Rendel DSG

The distinguished historian and founder member of the Council of the Friends of the Holy Father Rosemary Rendel died peacefully at home in Somerset on 12th December 2011 and is deeply mourned by her many friends. She devoted her great accomplishments unstintingly in the service of

many Catholic organizations.

Rosemary was descended from a family of engineers. One great-uncle designed ships for the Italian navy and also the harbour at Genoa where they were docked. Another designed the lifting engines for Tower Bridge in London. Her

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER

father was the distinguished diplomat Sir George Rendel with whom Rosemary travelled widely on his missions to various European capitals and also to Arabia. He was a leading light in the Catholic Union of Great Britain as was his daughter after him.

It was after the idea of founding a new society to help the Pope was raised at a Catholic Union meeting that the Friends of the Holy Father came into being in 1980. Rosemary immediately joined the Council and applied her formidable gifts to promote the new organization. She was an expert in the workings of the Holy See and passed this knowledge to members through the periodic Newsletter. To make the historical importance of the Papacy better known she inspired a series of exhibitions in Westminster Cathedral that offered essential information through text and pictures on display stands, which were widely appreciated. She wrote a history **Peter's Pence**, that was published by the Catholic Truth Society, of the annual worldwide collection for the Pope that was started in England in the 8th century

For many years Rosemary served as the honorary secretary of the Catholic Record Society; she was active in the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary where Christians of many traditions may find a focus of unity and was a member of the Friends of St Thomas More. In May 1985, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Canonization of Saints Thomas More and John Fisher, she organized a pilgrimage to Rome where the party met other devotees of St. Thomas More including the then President of Italy, Francesco Cossiga, who entertained the party at the Presidential Palace.

For the 450th anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Thomas More on the 6th July 1535, Rosemary worked tirelessly and single-handedly to hold the very successful international Congress on the Saint in London, even finding lodgings during the summer vacation at Allen Hall and Imperial College for the many delegates who came from around the world. For her outstanding service to the Church Pope John Paul II

appointed Rosemary a Dame of the Pontifical Order of St. Gregory the Great, one of the first ladies to be so honoured. To quote St Thomas More, in his final letter to his daughter Margaret before his martyrdom in 1535 :

Pray for me, as I for thee, that we meet merrily in heaven.

Cardinal Hume introduced Rosemary to Pope John Paul II in St Peter's after the Beatification of the 85 Martyrs in 1987

Vatican Museums—over 5 million visitors

In 2011 visitors to the Vatican Museums exceeded 5 millions for the first time and they are now among the most prestigious in the world, rated third after the Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum in New York. This rating is based on a mix of factors such as the fame of the collections, the fascinating setting, the prestige of the Apostolic See, the quality of the reception and the professionalism of the services provided.

Such fame comes at a cost. Security has to be tight to protect both the visitors and the exhibits. Every year ten million feet walk across the polychrome flooring and the most famous archaeological mosaics in the world, gradually wearing them out. Wear and tear has to be confronted, with a practically uninterrupted flow of visitors traversing the galleries and exhibition halls, staircases and gardens, bringing refuse, humidity and dust, fading the frescoed walls and decorated plaster reliefs, mosaic and inlaid flooring.

To guarantee top level efficiency in the protection of the patrimony, the latest digital and information technology is used. The reception services - the cafeteria, the snack-bars,

the bookshops selling post-cards and souvenirs – all have to be equipped to offer the best service to such a varied and vast number of people. Two years ago campaigns began for dust removal, revision and maintenance of the routes and other problems that have to be tackled for the future.

Little did Pope Julius II realize in 1503 what he had begun when he brought his marble statue of Apollo from his own palace and placed it in the Belvedere Courtyard. Three years later another remarkable statue was found on Rome's Esquiline Hill of Laocoön - a priest of Apollo and his two sons struggling hopelessly against two monster serpents; Julius could not resist, he bought it for the Vatican. The Pope could also pick artists as easily as statues. After he saw a sculpture by a young Florentine, the Pietà by Michelangelo, it was soon added to the Vatican collection, and he commissioned the painter Raphael Sanzio from Urbino to decorate his Stanze or apartments in the Vatican Palace, launching both artists on their distinguished careers in the service to the papacy.

Beatification of the 85 Martyrs of England, Wales and Scotland—25th anniversary – 27th November

Pope John Paul II beatified the 85 Martyrs in St. Peter's

Pope John Paul II beatified these martyrs in St. Peter's Basilica on **27th November 1987** before a large group led by Cardinal Basil Hume. The Cardinal considered that it had great significance as "in times marked by a seeking of reconciliation and unity, it is tempting to try to dismiss the history of the Reformation as an embarrassing episode in the past which is best forgotten. However, true ecumenism must be rooted in a deep respect and understanding for our various traditions... The martyrs who died during the persecutions in an age of religious conflict should inspire us, in an age of reconciliation to pursue the path to unity with even greater understanding and effectiveness".

"Of the 85 martyrs", the Cardinal continued, "22 were laymen who were executed because they had been caught helping priests. These represent and stand for thousands of oth-

er people who risked their lives in order to help priests ordained in the seminaries abroad. Without such dedicated people, priests would not have been able to live and travel in England at that time. It must also be remembered that the majority of the priests came from families where the generosity and faithfulness of the parents encouraged their sons to offer themselves for the priesthood. The 85 martyrs are indeed close to the hearts of our people. They came from all walks of life, the humblest to the most noble. They all lived and worked in our land, in places where people live and work today. Many families today can include one of more martyr among their ancestors. These martyrs show us that the call to holiness is not something exceptional and out of reach of ordinary people but is found in the circumstances of daily life".

Pilgrimage to Lombardy—4th—10th October 2012

This will take us to Milan the capital of Lombardy and to places nearby including Monza and Pavia. And there are still places available for you to join us. Great historic art treasures will be seen including Leonardo's *Last Supper*. There will be visits to places nearby associated with three of the early Fathers of the Western Church – St. Gregory the Great, St. Ambrose and St. Augustine of Hippo. Milan is one of the greatest fashion capitals of the world and Monza is home to the Italian Formula One Grand Prix.

For further information please write to Mgr. Ralph Brown Prot. Ap., St. Wilfrid's Convent, 29 Tite Street, London SW3 4JX.

Monza—gifts from Pope Gregory the Great

The Iron Crown of Lombardy—gift of Gregory the Great

In the late 6th century Rome had been seriously threatened by the invasion of the pagan Lombard tribes who had poured from the north into the collapsed Western Empire. As no military resistance came from the Emperor in Byzantium, Pope Gregory the Great decided to manage the perilous situation himself. A great diplomat Gregory struck up a friendship with Theodelinda, the Christian wife of the Lombard King Agilulf, who succeeded in converting her husband to Christianity. Gregory wrote to Theodelinda on her decision to educate the Crown Prince Adulovald as a Catholic: "You have given your son the armour of the Catholic faith". In this letter he mentions gifts he is sending to Adulovald including a golden cross to wear around his neck, containing a splinter of the Cross of Christ.

As Theodelinda had asked for some relics of the Roman martyrs for the chapel of her palace at Monza, the old Pope sent her some ampoules filled with the oil of the lamps that burned before the tombs of the martyrs in the Roman basilica.

These still survive at Monza and for the student of the papal archives this last gift is most interesting, as Gregory had attached to each ampoule a strip of papyrus telling where it had come from. These little strips of papyrus were preserved in a wooden box up to 1042. After the destruction of the Lombard palace the box was kept in a marble urn behind the great altar of the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Monza. Lost and rediscovered in 1881, they are now in the Cathedral Treasury in Monza. These miniscule fragments of writing are all that is left of the thousands of words that came from the pens of Pope Gregory and his chancery. The pectoral cross sent for the baptism of the young prince, with its splinter of the True Cross, has also survived in the treasury at Monza; Pope Paul VI asked that it be lent to him to wear on his visit to Jerusalem in 1964. Another of Gregory's gifts is the Iron Crown of Lombardy that is constructed round one of the Holy Nails recovered by St Helen in Jerusalem.

New Members needed

Please download a **Membership Application Form** from our website and recruit a new member to assist our effort in serving the Holy Father in his universal apostolate.

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER

Registered charity number 280489

23A Vincent House, Vincent Square, London, SW1P 2NB

Web site: www.friendsoftheholylfather.com

**THE FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2011**

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	2011	2010
	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Incoming resources from generated funds		
Voluntary income	16,143	1,375
Investment income - interest receivable	22	21
Incoming resources from Charitable activities	10,656	10,737
	26,821	12,133
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	26,821	12,133
 CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Other charitable activities	1,715	1,770
Governance costs	3,922	3,197
	5,637	4,967
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	5,637	4,967
 NET INCOMING RESOURCES	 21,184	 7,166
 BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		
AT 1 JANUARY 2011	47,851	40,685
	69,035	47,851
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	69,035	47,851
AT 31 DECEMBER 2011		

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial years.

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.

23A Vincent House,
Vincent Square
London, SW1P 2NB
10 May 2012

Dr Michael Straiton KCSG MB BS DO
Hon. Secretary

**FRIENDS OF THE HOLY FATHER
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2011**

	2011	2010
	£	£
Current Assets		
Cash at bank	69,863	48,771
Debtors	1,450	1,400
	71,313	50,171
Current Liabilities		
Sundry creditors		
Creditors : Amounts falling due within one year	(2,278)	(2,320)
	69,035	47,851
Net current assets	69,035	47,851
 Represented by		
Unrestricted funds		
General funds	69,035	47,851
	69,035	47,851

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

TRUSTEES

Brian Callaghan, FCA
John Scanlan, KCSG, KGCHS

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Chairman

John Dean BA, DipLaw, DipLP

Vice Chairmen

Martin Dean, KCHS
David Murphy, MA

Hon. Secretary

Dr Michael Straiton, KCSG, MB, BS, DO

Hon. Treasurer

Gregory Edwards, BSc, ACA

Other Council Members

Hazel Allport
Mary Edwards, DCSG DGCHS
Jennifer Edwards, BSc
Maggie Hood
Mary Maxwell, DCHS
Ann Ross, DHS
John Sylvester, KCSG, KCHS

Ecclesiastical Adviser

Monsignor Ralph Brown, Prot. Ap., KCHS, JCD