

Allen Hall Seminary News

ALLEN HALL, 28 BEAUFORT STREET, LONDON SW3 5AA

Easter 2020 Edition

From the Rector

Canon Roger Taylor



Much has happened since the last edition of Seminary News. The establishment of a new Pontifical Institute in this country, in collaboration with St Mary's University, has been an important event not just for us but potentially, as it unfolds, also for the whole country. Our new Vice-rector and Dean of studies, Canon John O'Leary, has written about this elsewhere in this edition; and this gives me the opportunity to welcome him to the team.

We also wish his predecessor here well, Fr Michael O'Boy, having taken up a new post as Parish Priest in St Albans, as well as Canon Stuart Wilson, who left us as Spiritual Director for St James, Spanish Place. We also launched recently a new series of Allen Hall public lectures. The first, to celebrate 450 years since our foundation at Douai, was given by Professor Eamon Duffy, who gave us a fascinating picture of how the Douai-Rheims Bible developed, to be used as a tool of evangelisation by the early English Martyrs, who are so very much a part of our history.



House Photo 2019/2020

From the left, the Rector with some staff and seminarians of Allen Hall

More recently, to coincide with the canonisation of St John Henry Newman, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, explored St John Henry's thinking and how relevant it remains not just to the whole Church, but also to the very fundamental ways in which we think and dialogue as a society. Bishop John Sherrington shares his insight on this talk in this edition, but I can certainly say that it was a case of one extraordinarily penetrating mind and intellect engaged with another. It was exhilarating and we were deeply grateful.

The Allen Hall Lecture

Bishop John Sherrington (Auxiliary Bishop, Westminster Diocese)

Dr Rowan Williams, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge and former Archbishop of Canterbury, delivered the Allen Hall Lecture on 22 November 2019, entitled 'St John Henry Newman and the life of the mind'. Following a welcome from the Rector, Canon Roger Taylor, we received a rich and stimulating lecture. After a session of fascinating questions, it was a pleasure to be able to thank Dr Williams for his lecture. The company then gathered in the refectory for refreshments and conversation.



Canon Roger Taylor, Dr Rowan Williams and Bishop John Sherrington

The Archbishop's scholarship and careful presentation enlightened us about the understanding of St John Henry Newman's life of the mind. He stimulated our imagination and inspired us by the beauty of Newman's language, which opened up avenues that can assist us in developing a rich intellectual life. An intellectual curiosity about the doctrines we have learned can open the mind and help our development. Out of often untidy patterns of growth following different leads and hints, we glimpse the green shoots of development. Newman

warns us about the partiality of different sciences and the need for a wholeness of understanding. There is always the danger of settling upon only one particular way of knowing and understanding the world. Every question has a value and should stimulate further thought. Every science has its particular part to play but we must follow through towards a harmonious synthesis. Depth and better understanding are only developed through the experience of a community of learners and conversation. We were warned about the seduction of the charismatic leader who only presents a partial but compelling understanding of our realities.

Newman shows us the need for an integrative habit of mind: flexible but not chaotic; making connections but not oversimplifying; growing from vivid analogies and following the intellectual appetite and joy of new discoveries. There is always elbow room for humility. Knowledge and propositions that shape us in a wide variety of means must eventually touch the heart. To allow them to find their place in the heart, one must be ready to leave behind partial identities, prejudices, old convictions and grow in new understandings. St Thomas Aquinas, with his understanding of *intellectus*, reveals a mind always open to new understanding and possibilities, not just a narrow way of reason. Education is a matter of enlarging the mind.

We always risk the danger of creating a utilitarian education which stifles and fails to develop deeper intellectual understanding. Training the mind is a little like physical training. It requires discipline, perseverance and precision. Thinking about thinking is important. Thank you to the Rector, staff and seminary for the generous hospitality.

St Mary's University Twickenham and Mater Ecclesiae

Canon John O'Leary (Westminster Diocese)

History was made in September 2019, when six Allen Hall students became the first group to be awarded the Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology by the newly founded pontifical institute, *Mater Ecclesiae* College.



But this was not the only history making event. Another group of ten students became the first to register for the joint STB/BA programme offered by *Mater Ecclesiae* College in partnership with St Mary's University, Twickenham. This is a kind of 'two for the price of one' offer. By following exactly the same programme of studies over the same three year period, the students work towards obtaining both the pontifical and secular degrees. Although the majority of courses will continue to be taught at Allen Hall, about a third will be delivered at the spacious and rather attractive campus at St Mary's. Mention must also be made of four more students from Second Theology: although studying for the STB only, they nevertheless attend some courses at St Mary's as visiting students.

Presently all these students on one day a week, after an early morning Mass and somewhat hurried breakfast, make the roughly hour long journey by bus and train to Strawberry Hill, carrying with them their packed lunches (lectures do not end until 1pm). Despite both Allen Hall's and St Mary's proximity to the Thames, none has yet taken up my suggestion of rowing to lectures. However, one has on occasion cycled. By all accounts, the students enjoy the weekly change of scene, or 'day release' as one joker has described it. They also highly value the intellectual formation given by the excellent

lecturers at St Mary's. The additional library facilities are greatly appreciated as well. The opportunity to meet and mix with lay students, both those attending the same lectures as they are but so too with others studying a wide range of different disciplines, is proving to be a most welcome and formative experience. This bodes very well indeed for the gradual inclusion of all three years of theological study at Allen Hall into the joint STB/BA programme.

For the successful beginning of this enterprise immense gratitude is owed to a large number of people from bodies such as the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Conference of Bishops of England and Wales, the Diocese of Westminster and, of course, St Mary's



University and Allen Hall. Without their hard work and close cooperation this exciting new development would not be possible. I would like to express sincere thanks to my predecessor as Dean of Studies at Allen Hall, Father Michael O'Boy. His tireless efforts and meticulous planning has certainly made it so much easier for me to become a part of this project whilst still in its infancy. We are also very thankful for the generous support the British Province of the Society of Jesus continues to provide for the formation of priests to serve the Church's mission in this country.

Please do pray for this pioneering partnership between Allen Hall, *Mater Ecclesiae* College and St Mary's University. May it continue to flourish so that we will have priests well equipped to proclaim effectively the Gospel within the context of our twenty-first century culture. Thank you.

Canon John is the new Vice-Rector and Dean of Studies at Allen Hall.

New to the House this Year

Canon John O'Leary
(Vice Rector)



In September, 1985, having just finished school, I left my home parish of Ruislip to begin formation for the priesthood at Allen Hall. After two extremely enjoyable years here I moved to the Venerable English College in Rome to complete my formation. I was ordained priest in 1992 and appointed to Brook Green; from there I moved to Tottenham in 1995. My second 'stint' at Allen Hall began in 1999 when I became an external lecturer in philosophy. This was combined with serving as an assistant chaplain at Newman House University Chaplaincy. I continued to lecture whilst Parish Priest of Shepherd's Bush from 2002 to 2005. In 2006, one year into my PhD research at Heythrop, and now resident at Ss. Anselm & Cecilia, Holborn, my lecturing at Allen Hall came to an end.

In 2009 I was appointed Parish Priest of Kingsland, but just sixteen months later became Private Secretary to Archbishop (later Cardinal) Nichols. Following five years in that post, I went to Tollington Park as Parish Priest in 2016. September, 2019 marked my third 'start' at Allen Hall - this time as Dean of Studies and Vice Rector. My main responsibility is overseeing the intellectual formation of the seminarians, helping them, I hope, to integrate studies into their spiritual, pastoral and human formation as they prepare for a fruitful and joy-filled ministry as priests.

Sr Helen Costigane
(Lecturer and Formator)

I was born in Glasgow, though raised in Johnstone, Renfrewshire. After university in Glasgow, and determined never to become a teacher, I decamped to London, where I studied management, worked in marketing, then switched to training as a chartered accountant, so that I could earn big bucks. Clearly, God has a sense of humour as it was during this time that I felt the call to religious life, which I explored. Having passed exams (saying 'never again!') and working for a time, I joined the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. After novitiate, I went to study at Heythrop College and ended up teaching Christian Ethics, while studying for a doctorate in that subject, and also working as Province Accountant. During this time, I fell in love with Canon Law (having once shaken my fist at the newly promulgated Code of Canon Law so proudly displayed in a theological library in 1983) and pursued licentiate and doctoral studies spare-time at KU Leuven, and ended up not just teaching it, but acting as a canonical consultant to dioceses, priests, religious congregations, and lay people. I would never have believed it could be so interesting.

After many years at Heythrop College, I joined St Mary's University, and now teach courses there and at Allen Hall, where I'm also on the Formation Team. Who knew that,



determined never to teach, or to do further study, and having once seen Canon Law as the dark side of the Good News, I would end up where I am today? And it is my particular privilege, not just to teach theology, but to accompany those who are searching for God, and especially those who are seeking to serve Him in the priesthood. How blessed am I!

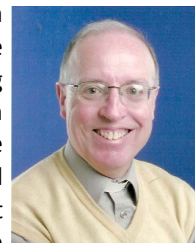
Rev Shaun Morrison
(Ordinariate)



My journey began as I was curious where Gran use to go each Sunday so I asked if I could join her at the local Church of England church. I found it a place of welcome & friendship. I attended Roman Catholic Primary & Secondary schools where I learnt more about the Catholic faith. I started to have thoughts about the Priesthood during my teenage years; it was to be a long journey. In 2008 I began studies for the diaconate. Towards the end of the three year course, Pope Benedict announced the formation of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham. Through guidance from the Holy Spirit I knew this was the path for me. I was received into the Ordinariate in 2011 and attended a selection conference which accepted me for formation to the diaconate in 2012. I was ordained to the Diaconate in July 2015. Thoughts of the Priesthood never went away and in March 2019 I was accepted for formation for the Priesthood by the Ordinariate. I believe my experiences to date have helped foster the vocation for the priesthood. I am also sure that Our Lady of Walsingham has been praying for this for me.

Rev Andrew Neate
(East Anglia Diocese)

I live in Cromer, Norfolk and serve as a Permanent Deacon in the busy seaside parish of Cromer and Sheringham. Leaving my Banking career early, I was able, when ordained in 1996, to offer a full time commitment to the Diaconate Ministry and served for 17 years as a Chaplain at Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge and also in the Mental Health Care Trust in that city. I was married for over 50 years and have recently been widowed. Although beyond retiring age I have discerned a call to the Priesthood and feel fit and able to take on an active role. Bishop Alan has asked me to undertake studies through to May 2020 and I am very please to be studying at Allen Hall. My late wife's family are descended from St Thomas More and it seems fitting that I should be here.



John Casey
(Westminster Diocese)



From an early age I was captivated by the Cross, it generated questions that led me to look more deeply at what my faith was about. I moved to London from Scotland at the age of 23 and lived with the Xaverian Fathers for a short time. Having made some bad personal decisions and being

away from the church for some time the Cross again changed my life. Whilst working as a police officer in London I studied more about my faith at Maryvale in Birmingham. This led me to embrace a more interpersonal relationship with God. Whilst volunteering in my parish in various roles especially assisting with the RCIA for thirteen years, I embraced God's call to be a priest. Through God's grace and the impact and support of too many to mention, my faith experiences throughout a very varied life and career underpinned my application to continue on the path of discernment towards priesthood in the Diocese of Westminster.

Moses Itene
(Brentwood Diocese)



I was born and bred in Nigeria where my vocation journey to the Catholic Priesthood began in St. John of the Cross Spiritual Year Seminary Ekpoma and Ss. Peter and Paul Major Seminary Ibadan, where I obtained Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy in 2007. From 2007 to 2012, I worked as the Executive Assistant to the Executive Secretary of the Government of Bayelsa state of Nigeria Pilgrims' Welfare Board. In the autumn 2012, I arrived in England to study for my Master of Laws degree in International Law in the University of Huddersfield. I continued my doctorate in legal research at the same University and successfully graduated as a Doctor of Philosophy in International Law and Jurisprudence in 2018. Throughout my studies and my professional career, I struggled to ignore my vocation to the priesthood. After fervent prayerful discernment and spiritual direction, I realised that God's vocation for me was not going to leave me. Consequently, I applied to the Diocese of Brentwood and was subsequently sent to Allen Hall to continue my formal training for the Catholic Priesthood.

Allen Gonzalez
(Plymouth Diocese)

As a child growing up in the United States, Denver, Colorado, my mother had always instilled in me the Roman Catholic Faith. I took my faith for granted and lived my adolescence in the world, always seeking to do what I wanted and not answering to anybody. Despite all this, God constantly reminded me of His unconditional love, especially through the Neocatechumenal Way where I heard that someone could love me despite my recklessness and disobedience and understand who I was.



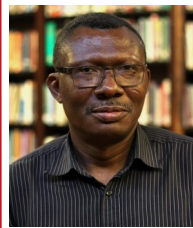
With these words of God's love always in mind, I stood up during a pilgrimage to New Mexico, USA in July 2019, where I was invited to Italy to see what seminary God wanted for me. In the end, God chose London and I will be at Allen Hall discerning the vocation to the priesthood for the diocese of Plymouth. God has been extremely good to me and I pray I might one day to serve His people as a priest.

Martin Krizmanic
(Westminster Diocese)



I was born in Zagreb, Croatia. I grew up in a Catholic family. I'm the first of five children and I'm nineteen years old. My faith was nurtured by my parents and my Neocatechumenal community, a group of people with whom I undergo a journey of Christian formation. In the third year of high school, I was invited by a friend of mine to join a vocational group. Soon after I started attending this group, I received many graces through listening to the Word of God and the guidance of catechists. God acted in my life and I felt a call to priesthood. After a time of discernment, I was invited to a retreat in Italy from where I was sent to London to start formation to the priesthood. At the moment I'm studying philosophy at Allen Hall.

Francis Nanguor
(Spiritian)



I took my first vows to live as a religious in 1996 in Ghana and subsequently took the vows to live perpetually as a religious in 2002. Since then I have lived and worked in various capacities as a religious brother. As discernment is a life long activity, I came to the realisation that I would like to continue my life as a religious in the ministerial priesthood. I did the due diligence concerning permission to enrol in formation process to prepare me in all the human development appropriate for the ministry. In 2019 I got enrolled to start this formation course in Allen Hall.

Gregory Echegwo
(Salesian)

I was born in Nigeria and I joined the Salesians of Don Bosco in 2008. I was sent as a missionary to England in 2013. I love football, basketball, running, dancing, singing, and reading. Having done with my Theological degree at St. Mary's University Twickenham, I am currently enjoying my pastoral theological studies in Allen hall Seminary.



Joseph Tran
(Salesian)

I'm originally from Vietnam, In 2008, I took my fist profession and became a Salesian. in 2011, I fell another calling from God to be a missionary. Then I was sent to the UK province in the same year. In 2017, I finally made the perpetual profession in the Sacred Heart Church, Battersea, London. I am living in Salesian House Battersea, London. Having complete my degree in Theology and Religious Studies in St. Mary's University, Twickenham, London in 2019, I currently study at Allen Hall, pursuing further studies for priesthood.

A lay perspective on the selection of candidates for the priesthood

Dr Veronica Fulton (Governor, Allen Hall)

In the roles which I have at Allen Hall, I have been lucky enough to be able to obtain what I believe is a unique insight, for a layperson, into the priesthood. In my previous capacity as a member of the selection panel for candidates for priestly formation and now as a member of the Board of Governance of Allen Hall, I have been able to see and better understand the complex demands made of the candidates and of their formators.

I was initially asked to be a selector ten years ago. In these past years many candidates have been interviewed. Not all have been successful. The faith journeys on which the candidates have embarked are many and varied. In my naivety, I thought all those considering priesthood would be saintly already! However, it is apparent that a significant number of the candidates have found a calling through being at a very low point in their lives, and it is at this moment that God has spoken to them. Some have been in relationships for a number of years, but they feel that their future lies in developing their relationship with God. It is a great privilege to be able to share with someone their deepest thoughts and desires. In the current climate, we must be sure that candidates have a stable personality and no mental health issues. These requirements and checks must be rigorously enforced, but hopefully do not overshadow the calling which these men are seeking to ensure that they are able to fulfill.

As selectors, we look for men who not only have some idea of priesthood but who are open to be formed into priests. To enable this to be done, they must be willing to look into their hearts and adapt themselves into being a missionary disciple for Christ, and to share this spirit with those whom they may come into contact in a parish or elsewhere. This can be lonely, but I am always struck by the friendships that are struck up between the candidates and which endure long after ordination. The current demands made on priests are seriously onerous, and some of these demands cannot be easily taught. For example, most priests live on their own, so the daily routine of cooking and washing can be a challenge! This is where I have been impressed with how the men can be supportive of each other both in a material sense and in a spiritual sense.



The formation team at Allen Hall has a huge role in preparing the candidates for ordination. There is the academic preparation to enable philosophy, theology, scripture, canon law and liturgy to be taught, but in working towards ordination, the importance of a pastoral heart must be developed. This is no easy task. Essays have to be written and exams passed. However, it is in the relationship of seminarian and formator that each must have complete trust and confidence in the other. In our human frailty this is not an easy relationship, but calls for an openness which is an essential part of the training. In the formation at Allen Hall, the importance of community life as envisaged in the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* must be upheld. So, in the Board of Governance, we discuss everything from the importance of maintaining the fabric of the building to the provision of academic studies and the progress of the seminarian. As governors, we get to meet groups of seminarians who are able to tell us of any difficulties they have been encountering. This helps us to have further insight into life at Allen Hall.

It is a huge privilege for me to be involved in the training of priests for service in the Church. It is important, I believe, that people from different backgrounds are part of the seminary. This helps bring a vibrancy to community life which otherwise could be too stilted, predictable and even inward looking.

Kenya Summer Reflection 2019

Francis Thomas (Westminster Diocese)

Missio (the Pope's official charity for overseas mission), CAFOD (the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) and the Mill Hill Missionaries (founded by Cardinal Herbert Vaughan, former Archbishop of Westminster), provide an opportunity for men training to be priests in England and Wales, to experience the life of the Church in another part of the world.

The aim is to make available to them an experience of missionary work, spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ, in a situation and context that is vastly different from their home. I was incredibly privileged to travel with another seminarian, John (from the Diocese of Southwark), to Nairobi the capital of Kenya, in East Africa for 5 weeks this summer. We stayed in a central parish, St Joseph and Mary, Shauri Moyo, run by the Mill Hill Missionaries with Parish Priest Fr Francis Makuba (from Kenya), Assistant Priest Fr Victor Nayak (from India) and Brother Ignatius (from Uganda on his second pastoral year, in formation to be a Mill Hill Missionary Priest). We arrived to a presbytery and church that were being run on a generator, while problems with the local electricity supply were being resolved. That meant there was no hot water, television or worst of all for us 21st century young men, no internet!

In the following days and weeks we were walked around the surrounding slums (as the locals themselves would call it), where many live in small houses, with tin roofs, cement walls and with no toilets, showers or running water. The latter necessities are provided communally in the central areas of the slum, for a small charge. The narrow, twisting paths between shacks are rocky, bumpy and often have little streams of water, flowing towards the main river running through Nairobi - although this river is now terribly polluted and only serves to wash the waste further downstream.

There is plenty of activity, people selling food (both alive and cooked), transporting goods, hand-making storage boxes, furniture, clothing, cookers, gates and doors. There are children playing, singing and dancing, while avoiding the occasional motorbike hurtling along the narrow street. It is frenetic with noise from people's music, chatter and the shouts of 'Mazounga' (white man), as we were spotted

walking along. Everyone is intrigued and interested as to why we are visiting Shauri Moyo, let alone Kenya, of all places that wealthy Westerners could be. You are encouraged to shake hands with all whom you both encounter and are introduced to, especially the children who think your hair is fake and your white skin is painted on. The experience of such popularity, while only being able to greet people saying: 'Habari?' (How are you?), was painful, but nothing new to those who have lived in a foreign country without knowing the language.



We were welcomed warmly everywhere and into each home, among every individual and family. We were generously given vast amounts of food and drink, which most could ill afford. We came to them as missionaries, not charity workers, or wealthy philanthropists ready to transform each life just by the giving of money. We came to bring the Good News that Jesus, risen from the dead, wishes to be with them, to suffer with them, to assure them of his love, and give them hope for eternal life. However, we received all these assurances from the people who live their faith as the most central part of their lives. Jesus is not a person of history, heard about only on Sunday's, or prayer a chore for the desperate, and Mass an obligation akin to paying your gas bill. For these Christians, Jesus and his Church provide the reasons they get out of bed each day, and to whom they pray in hope for greater faith and trust in the challenges provided by their living conditions. They have the gratitude to give thanks to God for the multitude of daily blessings, from their being alive, to their children, their work, friends, neighbours and all the joys they share.

Francis is currently on his extended pastoral placement in the parish of the Most Sacred Heart, Ruislip.

The End of 'Newmania'?

Fr Michael Halsall (Ordinariate)

At the end of the Thanksgiving Mass for the Canonisation of St John Henry Newman, Cardinal Nichols quipped that, being the last formal liturgy of the weekend's events, "the party is over". There is a real sense in which the party is just beginning, with so much richness to discover in Newman's writings, sermons, prayers, and the example of his life. Bishop Robert Byrne in his homily noted that over 15,000 turned up on the streets of Birmingham to pay homage to him. Generations have spoken of him as a saint ever since. Such crowds do not turn up for dry academics: his pastoral life and ministry matched up to his great spiritual writings. In every respect he 'walked the talk'. Thousands of documents relating to England's 19th-century convert were released ahead of his canonization, highlighting his role as a pastor and evangelist. Fr Ignatius Harrison, provost of the Birmingham Oratory, said Cardinal Newman "wasn't just a lofty philosopher — he was primarily a priest and prophet, who foresaw the difficulties facing Christianity in a secular world ... He was loved in his lifetime not because everyone had read his academic masterpieces, but because of his pastoral kindness to the poor and sick, as these collections graphically illustrate."

A renewed interest in St John Henry's life and work, it is hoped, will reignite and reinvigorate English Christianity. His difficult decision to 'cross the Tiber' was fraught with



rejection from both sides, and small wonder he struggled to make the move in 1845. However, it was truth which compelled him, and that truth sustained him in all his works and pastoral ministry. At a recent ecumenical thanksgiving service, the Archbishop of Canterbury noted that, "St John Henry saw truth and loved it, despite the cracked pots in which it was held. In such an attitude he is saintly, and in following his model we find a love that seals the cracks, that empowers the shepherding, a kindly light that points us to heaven". RH Hutton, the editor of *The Spectator*, wrote in an obituary that Newman's passing was like "a white star, extinguished, of a sign vanished, of an age impoverished, of a grace withdrawn". Now he is proclaimed as being 'among the saints', those graces are now acknowledged and available to us by his intercession. We can move beyond the example of his life, and the fruitfulness of his written words.

The Catholic Church in these islands can look forward to his powerful intercession for the Conversion of England, an increase in vocations, a genuine move towards holiness in living, and the promotion of Life in all its aspects. St John Henry Newman: Pray for us.

Fr Michael is the Vocations Director for the Ordinariate.

Recent Seminary Events

Ordinations to the Diaconate— 16th June 2019

Revs David Knight (Westminster), Adam Dora (Westminster) and Axel Soriano (Westminster)

Priestly Ordinations – Summer 2019

Frs Laurence Bryce (Cardiff), Chinedu Enuh (Vincentian), Julian Davies (Westminster), Ben Woodley (Westminster)

New Students Arrival – 6th September 2019

The college welcomed six new men who began their formation in Allen Hall

Institution of Acolyte – 26th October 2019

Seminarians Anthony Asomugha, John Ashu, Mike Guthrie, James Lewis, Andrew Marlborough, Daniel Daley, Jakub Josko and Marco Salvagini were made Acolytes by Bishop Mark O'Toole.

Allen Hall Lecture — 22nd November 2019

Former Archbishop of the Church of England, Dr Rowan Williams delivered the Allen Hall Lecture attended by the Allen Hall house and invited guests.

Year of the Word Lecture — 5th February 2020

First of three talks on "Finding Christ in the Old Testament" delivered at Allen Hall by Fr John Hemer MHM

Thank you for your support!

The staff and seminarians at Allen Hall are very grateful to you all for your prayers and support. Please continue to pray for us, and that others may respond generously to God's call to serve Him in priesthood or religious life.

Seminary News Editor: *Daniel Daley* (Westminster Diocese)