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AD JESUM PER IMMACULATAM

THE MARIAN FRANCISCANS

THE MARIAN FRANCISCANS IN DUNDEE

by Fr Pio M. Idowu

After about seven years of ministry and pastoral care, on 29th September, Feast of St Michael the Archangel, the friars bid farewell to the parishioners of Gosport to begin a new adventure in Scotland. Up until late August, the friars were in dire need of another accommodation, bigger and more suited to their needs. The presbytery at St Mary's Gosport had become too small. Then, by some miracle of divine providence, the search for a bigger accommodation ended when Bishop Stephen Robson of Dunkeld Diocese invited the friars to occupy the former Diocesan Pastoral Centre located in Dundee. And so, within about a month of accepting Bishop Robson's invitation, the friars left Gosport and moved to Dundee.

The farewell party organised for the friars on 25th September was really very touching as was the great number of people who came to say their goodbyes to the friars. It was well and truly a joyful occasion as many parishioners and friends used the opportunity to manifest to the friars their appreciation for their ministry these past seven years. The parishioners of Gosport will be greatly missed.

As a farewell gift, the Friends of the Marian Franciscans presented the friars with a bouquet of 30 Masses to be celebrated by a Redemptorist monk of Papa Stronsay.



*Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, ca. 1670
By Bartolomé Esteban Murillo*

This is to certify that

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

has been celebrated thirty times consecutively in the style of
Gregorian Masses, from 9 October to 7 November, 2022,
by Fr Peter Mary, F.S.S.R.

for the
Marian Franciscan Friars

at the request of the Friends of the Marian Franciscans.

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Priest Fr. Peter Mary, F.S.S.R. - Date 8 Nov., 2022

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RadioImmaculata

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Mass Times

St. Joseph's, Portsmouth
Sunday: 11am (TLM)
Daily: 7am (TLM)

St. Joseph's, Dundee
Sunday: 9am & 11am (TLM)
Mon-Fri: 7am & 6pm (TLM)
Saturday: 9.30am (TLM)

The friars arrived in Dundee the night of 29th September after a long and almost uneventful journey, except for a little incident, close to Dundee, where one of the cars ran over a deer. The following day work began immediately in transforming the former pastoral centre into a friary. One of the first projects was to set up a temporary chapel where the friars could pray and celebrate Mass. In fact, the first Mass in the friary was celebrated the evening of that same day.



The first Mass in St Mary's Friary, Dundee

The friars quickly settled into their new home and were given a warm welcome by Bishop Stephen Robson and the faithful who belong to the Sacred Heart Latin Mass Community in Dundee. On 4th October, Feast of St Francis of Assisi, Bishop Robson assisted at the Solemn High Mass.

On the 8th November, feast of Blessed John Duns Scotus, the Marian Franciscan Studium was inaugurated with a Solemn High Mass. The bishop couldn't be present at the Mass, but he came the following day to give the inaugural lecture on the life and doctrine of Blessed John Duns Scotus. After the talk, there was tea and coffee and the bishop stayed on for at least two hours, chatting familiarly with the friars and recounting lots of stories.



Bishop Stephen Robson gave a wonderful talk on Bl. John Duns Scotus

UPDATE ON THE MARIAN FRANCISCAN FAMILY

By Neville McNally, a faithful friend of the friars

Authentic Witness

Earlier in the year, when one of the Marian Franciscan priests preached on sexual morality and the infiltration of immorality and gender ideology in Catholic schools, the media ran a hostile campaign against him: 'Priest sparks trans outrage' ran one headline. The Friar Priest was roundly condemned merely for giving moral guidance in accordance with authentic Catholic teaching. Such guidance is generally at odds with today's secular world and moral standards have become so altered that holding firmly to authentic Catholic morality is not even tolerated, very often even within the Church. When the world attacks, it is tempting to flee like lambs from wolves. Defending the truth requires great strength and courage. Anyone defending the moral truth doesn't go unnoticed and an appreciation of the Friar's authentic witness was seen in several supportive letters in the local newspaper. Another testament to authentic witness was displayed on Sunday 25 September at a farewell party organised by parishioners of St Mary's in Gosport to bid farewell to the Franciscan Family of Friars and Sisters, departing for pastures new.



The friars leave St Mary's Gosport

There were moving tributes paid to the Friars and Sisters, who had served the Parish for the past 7 years. Gratitude was expressed for their ministry, joy for their future development but tinged with sadness at their leaving. What was particularly striking was the wide cross-section of people present, representing every class, social group and generation, which made it a truly Catholic gathering. Their presence in numbers spoke to the impact that the Marian Franciscans made on the lives of so many. The people of Gosport will greatly miss the Friars and Sisters and in their tributes that day, these ordinary lay Catholics gave powerful witness to something authentic.

Providence

The Marian Franciscan Friars have the happy fortune of attracting lots of interest from discerning men attracted to the religious life. Space has been a limiting factor on admissions, with insufficient room in the previous Friary at St Mary's in Gosport and at St Joseph's in Portsmouth to accommodate the expanding interest. In addition to needing space for their growing numbers, there is need for a house of study, or studium, where the Friars can study and be formed for the priestly life of a Friar. A studium has its own needs, such as a library, lecture rooms, chapel for prayer, as well as space for living. While finding a building which met all these attributes would be highly unlikely, it does define the type and size of building which could be adapted to the Friars' purpose.

For quite some time, prayer and practical searches for such a suitable property were underway. Friends of the Marian Franciscans helped in the search. Properties were investigated and visited across Hampshire - including Romsey, the New Forest, Winchester, Southampton, Portsmouth and the South Downs. These included convents, a monastery and former schools. The former seminary at Wonersh, near Guildford, was also investigated, but neither it, nor the other places became viable. The pressure to find a solution became more acute when it was announced in the Summer that the Friars' parish ministry at St Mary's Gosport would be transferred to a Diocesan parish priest at end of September. This meant that the Friars (and Franciscan Sisters) had to find a new home - and have vacated - in less than 2 months!

Where there is faith there is hope and just as things might have appeared hopeless, Providence seemed to hear the prayers of the faithful. In late August, the Franciscan Sisters identified a property being sold by the Diocese of Dunkeld in Dundee, Scotland. The property consists of two parts: A convent and chapel, which is suitable for the Sisters, and an adjacent former Diocesan Pastoral Centre, a building which is suitable for the needs of the Friars.



The Friars' new home: St. Mary's Friary, Dundee



Solemn High Mass on the Feast of Blessed John Duns Scotus

Following discussions with the Diocese, the sale of both properties was agreed. The purchase of the Friars' part of the property is being made on behalf of the Friars by the Friends of the Marian Franciscans charity trust.

On the 8th of November, the Friars celebrated the Feast of Blessed John Duns Scotus in a magnificent ceremony following permission from Bishop Stephen Robson to elevate this solemnity to a First Class Feast. On the following day, the Friary was formally dedicated to Blessed John Duns Scotus in the presence, and patronage, of the Bishop, who gave a wonderful talk on the life of the famous Subtle Doctor, who was born not far away in the Scottish Borders.

The purchase of the property will be finalised shortly but to complete all financial post-ownership obligations and undertake the necessary modifications to the building, including the creation of a chapel and a retreat centre for visitors, a fundraising effort will be launched. Further details will be provided in the next Newsletter.

Although we weren't successful in our bid for the former Wonersh seminary, we did manage to obtain about 30 cubic metres of redundant furnishings and equipment (desks, chairs, curtains etc.) from Wonersh which will be used for the new studium in Dundee. The plan is to hire a truck (if we can find a volunteer driver with a truck licence) or 2 Luton vans and to collect the items for onward movement to Dundee on Monday 19 December. There is need for volunteers who can drive and/or help with loading (desks, chairs, carpets, domestic equipment etc.) at Wonersh (near Guildford, Surrey) on Monday 19 December 2022. If you can help, please contact Neville McNally by Email: enemen@hotmail.com.

The Friars (and Sisters) residing in Dundee will, of course, remain incardinated in Portsmouth under Bishop Egan who is the founder of their religious community.

They will continue to be present and minister in the South of England, from their base at St Joseph’s in Portsmouth which, in addition to daily and Sunday Mass, will now also be the venue for First Saturday devotions at the start of every month. Finally, please note in your diary that on Saturday 10th December the Friars will host at St Joseph’s, Portsmouth, an all-day retreat led by Father Serafino. The retreat will be on the theme: “Bringing forth the Nativity of Jesus in your soul through the Immaculate Heart of Mary”. For more details, please contact Rebecca Goodlad by email: rebeccagoodlad@gmail.com.



Bishop Stephen Robson and the Friars

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND US

At the instant when God united the Soul of Mary to her body, He preserved Her from contracting the stain of original sin (which normally defiles every human soul). Additionally She was filled with an immeasurable and singular grace which rendered her the mirror of the sanctity of God Himself, as far as this is possible to a creature.

What God accomplished in Mary Immaculate, in a unique and sublime fullness, must be achieved in the faithful in the measure established by God: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess 4:3). For this to happen, the Christian must model his life on that of Mary, the “Tota Pulchra” (“All Beautiful”). This way is “the swiftest, surest, most beautiful way” to become a saint (St Maximilian Kolbe).

In practice this means:

- 1) to fight every sin in our thoughts, words, and actions, regularly purifying our soul in the sacrament of Confession.
- 2) to clothe oneself, inside and out, with the virtues of the Blessed Virgin, in order to mirror Her sanctity and beauty.

BECOME A FRIEND

If you are not already a Friend, please consider becoming a Friend today! The Friends of the Marian Franciscans is a charity was set up in 2021 to enable the faithful to help the friars in their ministry. That help is in two kinds: spiritually through prayer; and materially through donations, which support the friars’ day-to-day living requirement – food, shelter – and their ministry to a growing number of apostolates, in person and online. You can find more information on the friars and the Friends of The Marian Franciscans, the UK registered charity that we have set up to help them, at themarianfranciscans.org/help-the-friars. If you are interested in joining our network, please complete and tick the GDPR box opposite to indicate you agree to the personal data you provide being held and processed by the friars and Friends of the Marian Franciscans charity for its charitable purposes.

Please return the following form to the email or postal address shown below:

Name:

Address:

Email:

Telephone:

Age (if under 18):



Please return your completed form to either email or postal address below.

Email Address info@friendsofthemarianfranciscans.org

Postal Address: Friends Of The Marian Franciscans,
Walton House,
Tattingstone Close,
Lower Bourne,
Farnham, GU10 3QY.

Do you Agree to your data being held for the purpose of keeping you informed about Friends’ activities through periodic newsletters and direct messages connected to supporting the Friars?:

Yes / No *

* Please delete whichever is not applicable. In the event that you do not want us to store your personal data please let us know and we will remove your personal data from our systems and will not consider you further.