

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Will Headquarters' members please note that all subscriptions should be sent to the Secretary.

VACANCIES ON THE GENERAL COUNCIL
The following members of the General Council are due to retire in 1979:

The Revd P. T. Gray

Mrs M. Holmes

Mr G. Lewis

The Revd R. C. Smith

Mr D. Wilderspin

The office of Secretary falls vacant in 1979, but the present Secretary will be offering himself for re-election.

WHEN WRITING TO THE SECRETARY,

make sure that your envelope is marked "The Society of Mary". This will ensure that it is dealt with promptly. If a reply is required, please enclose a stamp.

MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Members please note that the next meeting will take place on Monday 29th January 1979, at 6.15 pm at Faith House.

ORDINATIONS

Your prayers are requested for three members of the Adelaide Ward (Australian Region), who are to be ordained on Saturday 3rd February 1979, in the Cathedral Church of S. Peter, Adelaide:

Anthony Noble to be ordained to the diaconate.

The Revd David Lunnis and the Revd Bruce Naylor to be raised to the sacred priesthood.

O Mary, Queen of the clergy, pray for us;

Obtain for us many and holy priests.

(Raccolita, No. 558)

S. O. M. MEDALS cost 60p plus postage; this includes the blue ribbon.

MANUALS cost 20p plus postage. These and medal can be obtained from the Secretary. Money with order, please.

I am pleased to announce that Dr Mascall has recommended that the prize should be awarded to Mr Martin Dudley of St. Michael's College, Llandaff. I should like to thank the people who submitted essays, which were all of a very high standard.

WARD CHANGES

ACTION:

new Ward Superior — The Revd M. F. Goddard, Vicar of S. Peter's, Acton Green

KENTON, Middlessex (new Ward)

Ward Superior — The Revd P. Jermyn, Vicar of S. Mary's, Kenton

BATH:

Ward closed.

STAFFORDSHIRE (North):

new Ward Secretary — Mr Paul Nixon, 11 Davenport Avenue, Crewe, Cheshire

WINDSOR

new Ward Superior — The Revd F. T. Bonham, Priest-in-charge of S. Agnes, Spital

COPY FOR CONSIDERATION for the next issue of "Ave" must be received by 1st February at the latest and sent as follows:

To the Chaplain-General — articles and essays.

To the Secretary — Ward reports — items of note, &c.

They reserve the right to amend or delete copy as may be expedient and as space permits. It is regretted that copy cannot be returned.

Our Lady of the Park

A FORGOTTEN CORNISH SHRINE

The place-name of a small copse is the sole surviving remembrance of the only mediaeval Cornish pilgrim shrine of Our Lady. The little copse is called Ladye Park Wood and is situated in the country-side a short distance from the ancient borough town of Liskeard. This small parcel of land was a hallowed place for countless Cornish pilgrims for nearly 300 years. It was the site of the pilgrim shrine of Our Lady of the Park.

The 14th century saw the building of at least forty chapels of Our Lady in Cornwall, but they were generally manorial oratories, licensed by successive Bishops of Exeter for the use of tenants of feudal estates. Our Lady of the Park, however, was different and from the outset was endowed as a shrine for pilgrims in Cornwall. The shrine was built in a corner of the deer park attached to Liskeard castle — hence the name of Our Lady of the Park. There is no record of the actual date of building, but all the fragmentary

evidence seems to indicate that it was built during the second half of the 13th century by the order of Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who had persuaded the princes of the Holy Roman Empire to elect him King of the Romans. He was a colourful character and the son of Henry III. After a period of dabbling with politics in Europe, he returned to Cornwall and was one of the few earls to make permanent residence in the county.

At that time, Cornwall was exceedingly remote from the rest of England. The River Tamar was an effective barrier with Devon and to this day the only land crossing into Cornwall is a road in the extreme north-east of the county. In the 14th century, however, the only bridges across the river were a few crossings at the upper reaches, where the Tamar is narrow and shallow. Within the county, roads were almost non-existent, being confined to tracks and paths across the moors. Moreover, the people did not speak English. They spoke their own Celtic tongue, similar to Welsh and Breton, and even as late as 1549 one of the reasons for the rebellion against the Prayer Book of Edward VI was that the people could not understand English. The only people who travelled to and from Cornwall were the wealthy and important ecclesiastics and government officials. Richard decided, therefore, to set up a shrine of Our Lady as a pilgrim centre for the people of Cornwall, and chose the deer park of his castle at Liskeard as the site for the chapel.

Although there is no record of the actual date of building, it was probably around the year 1250. From the outset it was intended that the pilgrim shrine should be separate from the parochial jurisdiction of Liskeard and it had its own specific endowment of "a garden, an orchard and half an acre of land." It is unfortunate that no accounts of the life of the shrine have been preserved. No Erasmus came down to Cornwall to write an account for posterity. It is possible, however, to get the outlines of its history from the registers of the diocese of Exeter, of which Cornwall was then an archdeaconry. Thus, in the year 1311, the vicar of Liskeard tried to test the independence of the shrine church by claiming a parochial share of the offerings of the Cornish pilgrims. Bishop Stapledon of Exeter gave judgment against the vicar and upheld the independence of the shrine. There were no further attempts by parochial authority to interfere with the life of Our Lady of the Park, and indeed, as late as 1543, the vicar of the parish of Liskeard bequeathed the sum of 12d (equivalent to the wages of the deer park keeper for one week) to the "store of holy Lady Parke". Alas, within

four years of that bequest the shrine was pillaged and despoiled by royal decree.

It would seem that in its early life the shrine enjoyed royal patronage and protection. This was due to the kinship of the founder with the monarchy. Earl Richard granted a charter to the people of Liskeard for an annual fair on the feast of the Assumption and this fair was to last three days — the vigil, the feast day, and the day after. The annual event must have been of particular solemnity, when the pilgrims to Our Lady of the Park joined with the local population in keeping the feast of the Assumption.

From the scant documentary evidence which survives, it appears that the shrine was served by a priest-chaplain and two assistant priests. They had a house separate from the shrine chapel, and must have been native Cornishmen, because they celebrated Holy Mass and the offices in the Latin tongue, but conducted devotions in the local Cornish language. By royal decree, the priest-chaplain was given the status of a royal chaplain and in 1339 the holder of the post was granted a special warrant to travel throughout the realm to collect alms for the shrine. It must be remembered that from the economic standpoint Cornwall had always been a very poor county and the offerings of the local pilgrims were insufficient to maintain the shrine. One wonders where the priest-chaplain went in his travels in England. There are no surviving records. Did he go to Walsingham? It would seem that he was away a very long time and it is fair to assume that he visited the main pilgrim shrines of Our Lady in England. There was, however, a constant struggle to get enough money to maintain the pilgrim shrine in a suitable state to cater for the pilgrims. Throughout the life of the shrine, all the land around the deer park was open moor and the only industry of the locality was the processing of wool, sheared from the moor-land sheep. Thus, in 1441 Bishop Lacy of Exeter granted an indulgence to all who gave alms towards the maintenance of the shrine of Our Lady of the Park.

King Henry VIII in 1533 appointed John Leland to be the Royal Antiquary with a special commission to tour the country so as to chronicle places of interest, ancient documents and antiquities. He came to Cornwall in 1538 and in his report to the king wrote that on his way from Looe to Liskeard, "I passed in a wood by a chapel called Our Lady of the Park where was wont to be great pilgrimage and a place of great oblations." It was a case of future

events casting their shadows before them. Within a few years, royal protection turned into royal despoliation. The shrine was desecrated, the statue of Our Lady was destroyed, the priests were turned out of their home, and the small parcel of land was confiscated. When the commissioners under Edward VI visited the chapel in 1547 only one chalice and a bell weighing half a hundred-weight remained for confiscation. The chapel was allowed to fall into ruins and the stone was eventually used for the building of a house and the former holy well became its domestic supply of water. The land was eventually sold to a local landowner.

And now only the name of the little copse survives as a reminder of the glories of former times. And even that remembrance is tarnished. I asked a local inhabitant how Ladye Park Wood came by its name. The reply was, "Oh, it was once owned by one of the gentry called Lady Park. I don't know who she was."

It may be too much to expect a restoration of this only mediaeval Cornish pilgrim shrine of Our Lady in the foreseeable future. Perhaps, however, one of the local parish churches (and there are several in the Catholic tradition) could restore a modest shrine of Our Ladye of the Park. After all, the restoration of Walsingham began that way.

St. Bernard writes:

"The prophecy of Simeon is realized: a sword of grief pierces the most gentle soul of the glorious Virgin Mary, who, by her unequalled love, becomes the Queen of Martyrs."

The Seven Sorrows show Mary at the foot of the Cross, united with her Son. The Cross is the centre of her life, as it must be the centre of every Christian's life. Calvary is the supreme test of her

14

A History OF THE FEASTS OF OUR LADY

PART FOUR

6. The Seven Sorrows of Our Lady (15 September)

In the 15th century, there appeared in Germany a commemoration of the Compassion of Our Lady, kept on the Friday after Passion Sunday. It was officially instituted by the Synod of Cologne in 1423. The reason behind this feast was, and still is, to reflect on the role of Mary at the foot of the Cross, and to meditate on her sufferings as she watched the agony of her Son.

faith.

"An ineffable union is established between the oblation of the Incarnate Word and that of Mary; the divine blood and the tears of the Mother flow together and are mixed for the redemption of the human race." (Dom Guéranger)

In the 17th century, the Servites celebrated the feast with great solemnity, usually on the third Sunday of September. Pope Pius VII extended its observance to the whole Church, and St. Pius X fixed its date on 15th September, the day after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, thus drawing together two parallel conceptions of Christian piety.

7. The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary (7 October)

On that day was kept originally a feast of Our Lady of Victories. The title was changed to that of Our Lady of the Rosary by St. Pius V, in order to commemorate the naval victory of Lepanto when the forces of Islam that were threatening Europe, were defeated. This important battle, and victory, took place on Sunday 7 October 1571, while the Pope and the people of Rome were reciting the Rosary. The victory was seen as a direct answer to prayer, as won "by the help of the same Mother of God", as the Roman Martyrology puts it.

The feast was at first limited to certain churches, then was extended to the whole Church by Pope Clement XI, in thanks-giving for another triumph of the Christian armies over the Turks, this time in Hungary, in 1716.

The feast of the Rosary provides us with a summary of the liturgical year, as the faithful meditate on the fifteen mysteries. In an admirable triptych, it shows the joyful, sorrowful and glorious events in the lives of Christ and his Mother, as they are recalled in succession throughout the Church's year.

8. The Presentation of Our Lady (21 November)

The festival is based on a legend that, at an early age, Mary was dedicated to the service of God in the Temple of Jerusalem where she grew up and served with other girls under the priests and Levites. The story comes from the apocryphal Proto-evangelium of James, already mentioned under September 8. The date of the feast commemorates the dedication of a church of St. Mary at Jerusalem in 543. From there, it quickly spread to the East, and there is evidence

15

could at least try to adapt it to the Kalendar of the Church. Could not 1st January be more explicitly kept as the feast of Mary, Mother of God; could there not be greater emphasis on 1st May as the day of S. Joseph the Worker; could not Catholic parishes arrange the May devotions to Our Lady on the Spring festival; and could not the August Bank Holiday (now the last Monday in the month) be arranged as an external festival of the Assumption? These are just a few ideas which come to mind after the mundane review of international public holidays. Perhaps others may have some better ideas, but it would be a pity if the whole concept fell by default.

HORACE KEAST

Cornish Pilgrimage Revived

For the first time since the Reformation, an organised pilgrimage was recently made to the site of the ancient Cornish shrine of Our Lady of the Park, near Liskeard. The event, attended by about 50 pilgrims, was planned by the Cornish ward of the Society of Mary and was the direct outcome of an article in the Christmas issue of "AVE" by Horace Keast on the history of the forgotten shrine. The pilgrimage began with the solemn singing of Vespers of Our Lady at the nearby parish church of Menheniot. The officiant was Fr Timothy van Carrapiett, vicar of S. Day, and superior of the Cornish ward of the Society. The service followed the rite of the new order arranged from traditional sources by Fr Milburn, our Chaplain General. The antiphons and canticle were sung by a small choir.

The service was followed by a "faith tea", at which all the pilgrims pooled their refreshments as a sign of the friendship of the occasion. This was followed by an address by Mr Keast on his researches on the history of the shrine in the old records of the diocese of Exeter, of which Cornwall was an archdeaconry during the life-time of the shrine.

The pilgrims then motored five miles to the site of Our Lady of the Park, where a copse has still retained that name throughout the centuries. A procession was formed and a pilgrim hymn was sung. This hymn was composed by Mr Keast in collaboration with a Roman Catholic member of the Fraternity of Our Lady of the Portal, which has been restored as a guild at Truro. The hymn recalls the life of the shrine in olden times and was sung to the tune of

THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF Haddington

"Ye who own the faith of Jesus."

It is hoped that the pilgrimage will become an annual event and that in due course at least some wayside reminder of the old shrine will be erected. In the meantime, Mr Keast would be glad to hear from any correspondents who know of liturgical or Kalendar references to Our Lady of the Wayside. His address is: 63 Treyew Road, Truro, Cornwall TR1 2BY.

The Earl of Lauderdale has had designs made for 15 kneelers, to be worked in gros-point embroidery, symbolic of the 15 mysteries of the Holy Rosary, drawn by Miss Enid Chadwick of Walsingham. If any member of the Society would be willing to work one of these, would he or she write to the Earl at the House of Lords, and he will give them a choice of the designs as soon as they have been finalised by the embroidery experts. It would be splendid if all 15 were the work of our members. I may say, incidentally, that gross-point is very easy to do.

The shrine still has a number of needs, which is natural in the initial stages. These are Altar vessels, cruets, a spare fair linen cloth, a small wrought iron pricklet-stand, and vestments. These latter must be of a style suitable for the ancient building and in keeping with present day liturgical requirements.

Donations will be welcomed, but gifts of actual articles must be referred to the Earl in the first instance. I commend this appeal most heartily to the generosity of all those who love Our Lady and rejoice to see her honour increased and enhanced.

Our Lady of Wedale

The Puritan reformation in Scotland in its rejection of native Catholicism lost much of value; indeed, that loss is still to be seen today in many aspects of contemporary Scottish life, but one aspect in particular which has been lost is that of devotion to Our Lady. It has been said that such devotion has always been the exception to the Scottish or the English temperament, but history does not support this. One has only to look at the preponderance of mediaeval churches dedicated to the Virgin, or at the mediaeval pilgrimage centres of Whitekirk, S. Mary's Haddington or the chapel of Our

Lady of Loreto to realise this. Even the Puritans could not change the land's place names or the name of the garden flowers which were often named after the Mother of Christ, e.g. Marigold means Gold of Mary, Ladyslipper — Our Lady's slipper. In our border area all the Abbays were dedicated to her, as was the 6th century church of S. Mary of Jedworth (Jedburgh) with its Anglican shrine of S. Cuthbert, as well as the parish churches in Selkirk, Hawick, Bedrule, Ladykirk, and Goldstream, while such place names as "Maryfield" or Lady-lands usually indicate land belonging to a chapel or altar dedicated to the Virgin.

In our own parish (which covers all Gala Water) there is, in fact, the site of one of the most ancient Marian shrines — Our Lady of Wedale at Stow. Even today the local Church of Scotland parish is called "S. Mary of Wedale". The site is very ancient, and according to legend King Arthur brought back from the Holy Land fragments of the "true cross which were long preserved with the deepest veneration in the Virgin Mary's Church of Wedale." Arthur brought back with him an image of the Virgin which he deposited at Wedale also. This image, although in a broken and fragmentary condition, was still held in the highest veneration centuries later in A. D. 826 when Nennius wrote his "Historia Britanum". The importance of the "Chapel of Our Lady of Wedale", at one time the principal seat of sanctuary in Scotland and perhaps the oldest, was recognised by King Malcolm IV (1154—1165), who by charter gave the same rights of sanctuary to Tynningham as existed at Wedale.

The chapel itself is sited near Torsance and nearby was "a spring of crystal water called Our Lady's Well. Here tradition saith, the Virgin Mary sometimes alighted to visit the sanctuary at the Stow of Wedale, and a great boulder, long preserved but smashed and dispersed these many years, bare the impress of her foot".

Mention of Stow Chapel is scant in the 13th to 16th centuries but given the constant warfare in the region which destroyed most records this is hardly surprising. Whatever one may feel about the legends they witness to the warm humanity of the early Church's faith.

Devotion to S. Mary the Virgin is not only a constant reminder of the Incarnation of Our Lord but has led directly to the equal status of women in Western Society. Look at Islam to see how women under that religion are still treated! At a time when so many Christian values are under attack should we not now remember the value of devotion to Our Lady, and say, in the words of the old

Scottish prayer:
 "Shield, Oh Shield us, pure Virgin of Nobleness
 Mary beloved! Mother of the White Lamb,
 Our Lady of Wedale Pray for us."

IAN McMILLER
 Sources: "Historia Britanum" Nennius A. D. 826; Monastic Annals of Teviotdale; The Stow of Wedale, Wilson; Footsteps of the Ancient Scottish Church, Barrett; History and Poetry of the Scottish Borders; Brave Borderland, Gould.

OCTOBER DEVOTION

Saturday 6th October 1979

at S. SAVIOUR & S. PETER'S CHURCH
 SOUTH STREET, EASTBOURN
 by kind permission of the Parish Priest, Fr Derek Allen

12 noon SOLEMN CONCELEBRATED MASS & SERMON
 Preacher: The Bishop of Lewes
 alb and white or gold stole), please bring plain
 Picnic lunch (please bring your own) in Church Hall.
 Hot drinks will be available. There are also restaur-
 ants in the vicinity.
 ROSARY SERVICE — Readings, Meditations and Hymns
 followed by BENEDICTION.
 Tea (10p payable at the door).
 (The church is ten minutes' walk from the Railway Station).
 9.55 am train from Victoria

at S. CECILIA'S CHURCH
 PARSON CROSS, SHEFFIELD

12 noon SOLEMN CONCELEBRATED MASS & SERMON
 Preacher: Fr Gordon Reid
 (Priests wishing to concelebrate, please bring plain
 alb and white or gold stole).
 Picnic lunch (please bring your own food), drinks
 will be available.
 ROSARY, SERMON,
 Preacher: Fr Anthony Yates
 PROCESSION OF OUR LADY & BENEDICTION

CATHOLIC SOCIETIES' REQUIEM, Thursday 15 November 1979 at 7 pm at
 S. Alban's, Holborn. Preacher: Fr Peter Geldard, General Secretary of the
 Church Union.

