



Seminary News

From Allen Hall, London SW3 5AA



Greetings from Allen Hall!

I'm Rajiv Michael, a second year philosophy student at Allen Hall and it's my House job this year to look after communications. Traditionally we've produced a glossy in house publication called The Mulberry. It's named after the historic Mulberry tree in our garden, going back to the time of St. Thomas More. This year, we decided to produce a more streamlined version, which you hold in your hands, containing seminary news. The magazine itself will be available in due course at www.allenhall.org.uk. It's the fruit of our Rector's vision and the (hard) work of the seminarians' hands - doing our bit to bring the Church into the digital age.

It's been a busy year, full of changes at the seminary. Our former Rector Mgr. Mark O'Toole was appointed Bishop of Plymouth and we said goodbye to our former Dean of studies, Fr. Stephen Wang, now Senior Chaplain at the University Chaplaincy in Gower Street. Fr. Roger, our Vice-Rector has replaced Fr. Mark as Rector, while Fr. Michael O'Boy formerly parish priest at Euston, and responsible for the diocesan youth provision, has been appointed Vice-Rector and Dean of Studies. While the restoration work on the Seminary Chapel is nearly complete we've been hard at work at our studies, navigating the falling plaster-work in the seminary library.

At Allen Hall we are very conscious that our life here is made possible through the generosity and support of others, not just monetary support (as important as it is) but also through much needed prayer. One of the aims of the Mulberry is to try and lift the veil that can cover seminary life, giving everyone a glimpse of what goes on here and how today's future priests are being formed. With this in mind, this year's Mulberry (shortly available online), will include a focus on the journeys of those just entering and those about to be ordained. We are a diverse group, drawn from across the globe, training for a variety of dioceses, from Westminster, Nottingham, Cardiff and Leeds, through to Johannesburg in South Africa, and Macau in China.

A recent quiz, making its rounds on Facebook, tries to identify which Apostle's psychological profile people most closely match. The creators of the quiz should be commended for their genius (they had managed to profile all the apostles, something no sensible biblical scholar ever attempted!) and while it was mostly way off the mark, it was quite amusing. I got off lightly, being matched with James the Lesser - a quiet and introverted character, with a calming presence on others. My fellow editor Robert James, from Cardiff, appears closer to James the Greater - a thinker of deep thoughts. Some students were likened to Judas, "the rebel", something they found rather disturbing. None of us took it seriously of course, but it was a good reminder of the diversity of our community - not unlike Jesus' original choice of Apostles. He seemed to

have taken particular delight in picking quite an eclectic group of people on which to build his Church. Today he's still doing the same. Yet for all the diversity in culture, as well as the differences of age and temperament, real communion and real joy lies at the heart of all that we are and do. Hopefully The Mulberry will give you a glimpse of the communion and joy which we experience here; the same communion and joy which Pope Francis challenges each of us, whoever we are, and wherever we are, to share with the world at large.

Our New Rector

Fr Roger read law at Oxford and practised for a time at the Bar. He spent most of his working life, however, pursuing his passion for opera, working in the management of some of the UK's national opera and ballet companies. During this time he converted to the faith and entered the Cistercian monastery of Mount St Bernard in Leicestershire. He then applied to the Diocese of Westminster and was in seminary at the Beda College in Rome, studying theology at the Angelicum, where he also did his further studies. His dissertation was on Marian dogma in Catholic-Methodist Dialogue. He served in the parishes of St George's, Sudbury and St Francis de Sales', Tottenham as an assistant priest, and was parish priest of St Monica's, Palmers Green, prior to coming to Allen Hall as Vice-Rector in 2008. He took up his new responsibilities as Rector in December 2013.



Please pray for those being ordained this year

To the diaconate :
Kevin Athaide (Nottingham),
Cyril Chiaha (Westminster),
David Lucuy (Westminster).

To the priesthood:
Derek Hyett (Westminster),
Andy Chamiec (Westminster),
Brian O'Mahony (Westminster),
Cyril Law (Macau)



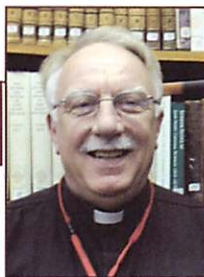
Our New Men



**Laurence Bryce—
Cardiff**

I thought about the priesthood for the first time when I was about 11 or 12, though it was only in my late teens, when I found myself being drawn to my faith

much more that it started taking any concrete shape. During my time at Cardiff University, studying Engineering, I got involved in the Chaplaincy and started seriously discerning my vocation. I was helped through being part of a discernment group and wise advice from some priests. I came to see the priesthood as the life in which I could find most fulfilment and where I could be of most service to others. After considering religious life for a while, I decided for the diocesan priesthood, being attracted to its pastoral nature and realising the great need today for secular priests.



Rev. Kevin Gradwell—Nottingham

I grew up in the Diocese of Salford and am a Lancastrian, a Mancunian, at heart. In 1973 I got married and came to live in the 'Deep South' of England (Cheshire). I have three grown up children and a granddaughter of some five months standing. For most of my working life I was a policeman. After retirement I tried other occupations but without the same enthusiasm. In 2010, I was ordained to the Permanent Diaconate and during the past three years worked happily with the diverse communities of Derbyshire. Following the death of my wife and a discussion with my Bishop, I found myself dispatched to Allen Hall as a transitory Deacon for priestly Formation. Now that I have been rejuvenated, I am to further discern my vocation with forty plus other young men!



Mauro Iannicelli—Westminster

I am Italian, from Rome, forty-three years old and in the first year of formation at Allen Hall. This is my seventh year in London. Before coming to seminary, I worked as a software developer for thirteen years. After a long period of searching for God's will regarding my vocation, I finally felt that it was in the priesthood I would be able to serve people the most, and so love people most. Football-wise, I support Roma - a message for the Italians in the diocese! My big passion is the study of different models of evangelisation and playing praise and worship songs with my guitar. I also love learning languages; at the moment I am learning Spanish.



James Noakes—Nottingham

I was born and raised in Whitwick, a small village in Leicestershire. The village is better known for Mount St. Bernard's Cistercian Abbey. At Leeds Trinity I studied Theology and then spent four years as a Lay Chaplain. In my first year at University my parents decided to start sheep farming. After eight years in Leeds I decided to join my parents in developing a rare breed organic sheep farm. I first started thinking of priesthood when I was asked by my parish priest if I wanted to be a priest, at the age of eight. For the next 25 years, I came up with one excuse after another to run away from God's call. God works in mysterious ways; in my case a Cistercian, a Benedictine, and a Dominican made me realise that I needed to discern my vocation; and here I am.



Chinedu Enuh—Vincents

My vocational journey was not particularly difficult, but it took me around 17 years before I could submit my desire for the priesthood to the Church for discernment. In hindsight, I realise God never abandoned me. The many times He brought me through difficulties, fears and doubts in the past now serve to reassure me of His faithfulness for the present and future, not unlike

the Israelites, whom He had to keep reminding of His Love. As a seminarian studying for the Vincents I see a complete emptying of oneself to the service of the poor as the way to keep alive the reality of my Christian encounter with the risen Lord.

I felt the call to the priesthood during an eight day walking pilgrimage to Czestochowa a year before the World Youth Day in Madrid. At that time, I had other plans for my future, but during that year I prayed in front of the Blessed Sacrament every week, asking God for discernment. After the WYD in Madrid I decided to join the seminary. An important moment in my discernment was not only the meeting with Pope Benedict XVI, but even more his sermon on Christ's question "Who do you say I am?" Searching for this answer, I find myself in the seminary in England, happy to serve where God has called.



Karol Kencel—Redemptio Mater



Back Row

Mauro Iannicelli, Tony Thomas, Rev. Andy Chamiec, Royston Price, Joshua Hilton, Mike Taylor

Top middle

Joseph Okoro, Cyril Chiaha, Rajiv Michael, Laurence Bryce, Karol Kencel

**Bottom middle
Front Row**

Carlos Quito, David Lucuy, Chinedu Udo, Christian de Lisle

The idea of priesthood has been with me from a young age. A particular inspiration came from a priest who helped lead our family through a time of great sorrow. At the end of my time in Sixth Form I decided to apply to the diocese of Leeds; I was accepted and began my seminary formation in Valladolid, Spain. From there I was sent to Oscott College and, after a pastoral year, I found myself being "formed in Chelsea." My brother is in formation for priesthood as well, currently studying in Rome. I'm happy at Allen Hall. There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the house. Long may it continue!



Joshua Hilton—Leeds

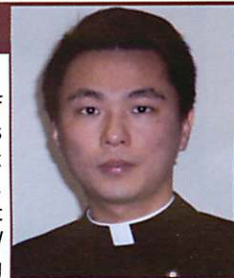
Mark Dunglinson—Westminster

I became a Catholic when I was younger and have had an increasing sense of vocation to the priesthood for a long time. This was consolidated whilst living and working in Brazil for five years, the first time I had lived in a Catholic country. I have worked in the travel industry all my life, and when the last project came to a natural end, I arrived at a 'now or never' moment. I wondered if I had left it too late to apply for seminary. Apparently not! Here I am at Allen Hall embarking on a journey of further discernment. Wherever God chooses to lead me, I thank Him and am grateful for this opportunity.



Rev. Cyril Law—Macau

After finishing the last two years of theological training in Rome, I was ordained a deacon in July 2013 back in my home diocese of Macau, China. I am now a research student at Heythrop, working on an MPhil/PhD thesis in theology, comparing the thoughts of J.H. Newman and Ma Xiangbo, a prominent Chinese Catholic scholar at the beginning of the 20th century.



Mike Taylor—Redemptorists

"I fled Him, down the nights and down the days; I fled Him, down the arches of the years..." appropriately explains my mature vocation. Fear of an early calling (age 11) prompted me to run. After more than twenty-five years in Corporate Finance, and a growing sense of dissatisfaction, the Hound of Heaven finally caught up. The BBC documentary "Catholics" featuring Allen Hall reignited that original calling and began my process of Discernment with the Redemptorists. Two years later, at fifty years of age, where do I find myself? Allen Hall!



Daniel Humphreys—Westminster

I was ordained in the Church of England in 2000, and worked in parishes in Yorkshire and London before being received into the Catholic Church in 2012. It had been a long journey, which had included a considerable amount of contact with Catholicism, through good friends, ecumenical contacts, most particularly when I was one of the Anglican Exchange Students at the Venerable English College back in 1999. My first impressions of Allen Hall are of a place which has a clear identity and sense of purpose, as well as a happy and constructive atmosphere and ethos. The great variety of men here reveals much about the diversity of the Catholic Church here in England and Wales at this time; there are few dull moments.



Jonathan Whitby-Smith, James Noakes, Daniel Palmer, Lawrence Ndlovu, Kevin Gradwell, Marco Salvagnini & Matteo di Giuseppe, Michael Maguire, Samuel Ejeregbe, Jonathan Stogdon, Mark Dunglinson, Kencel & Chinedu Enuh, Robert James, Francesco Verdura, Daniel Humphreys, Rev. Brian O'Mahony & Rev. Cyril Law

Francesco Verdura—Redemptoris Mater

I was born and raised as a Catholic in an Italian parish, St Francesca Cabrini in Bedford. I am one of eight, and my parents were strict when it came to attending mass. I did not however really appreciate the foundations my parents tried to lay down for me to grow in faith during those years. However, as I have grown older I now see what my parents have given me as a grace. It has helped in numerous situations of conflict, as hiding in false securities can only lead to loneliness and doubt. I recently finished my A levels and was planning to study sport science at university. I decided to go to the seminary, however, for a year of discernment to see what God's will is for me. Seminary so far has had its challenges, but is also helping me in countless ways.



I'm the third of nine children, born in a Catholic family and raised in the faith. During my adolescence I entered into a time of crisis. I was unable to understand the meaning of my life and in the process, had a falling out with my family as well. In 2008, I went as part of the World Youth Day pilgrimage to Sydney. During a vocational meeting I felt that God loved me for the person I was, and felt called to the priesthood. Desiring to know the love of God in a deeper way, I began to discern my vocation. Over a period of two years God helped me reconcile with my family and finish my studies, after which I was accepted for the Neocatechumenal Way Seminary in London. It's exciting to be here, open to the will of God.



Marco Salvagnini—Redemptoris Mater

I am a first year student in the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, generally known as the Redemptorists. I was born in Wales, to a practising Anglican family, and was received into the Church after university. I felt drawn to the Religious life, and with the support of my parish priest discerned a calling to the missionary life of the Redemptorists. After postulancy in Liverpool, I moved into our Clapham monastery, and started studying at Allen Hall. I've been very happy working alongside diocesan students, and impressed with how well Allen Hall respects the identity and charism of Religious students.



Royston Price—Redemptorists



Chapel Update

We were very fortunate as a seminary to take over in 1975 a former convent here in the heart of central London and establish Allen Hall – named after Cardinal Allen, our founder in the penal times of the 16th century. It enables us to live within striking distance of the many parishes, hospitals, schools, prisons, etc where our seminarians undertake pastoral work throughout their time here. It is close, too, to the university where they study for their theology degrees.

Built largely in the 19th century, it has its challenges as the fabric gets older, but at its heart it has a striking chapel, erected after the 2nd World War, when the original chapel was destroyed in the bombing of London. I say 'at its heart' for a very good reason, which is that our prayer life is at the absolute centre of what we do here. It is the lifeblood of our community, indeed of any well-lived life, and it underpins the seminarian's discernment of his vocation. After forty years the chapel recently needed some urgent help. Part of the concrete roof was falling down, the heating had all but given up, we found asbestos and, like any parish church, it was in need of cleaning and decorating and a thorough general updating. This we have begun to undertake over the last year, so that it is now safe and warm, and is being brought modestly back to life. There is always more to do in an old building such as this. Our library is now a 'hard hat' area, as the ceiling is falling down and is unsafe; and our classrooms are old portakabins, built thirty years ago with a life expectancy of eight years, and now slowly rotting away.

So we are very grateful that much of this very necessary programme

of work is being funded through the Growing in Faith programme, from the generosity of the people of the Diocese. Thank you for this. Thanks especially to the Augustinian Sisters of Burgess Hill, in particular Sister Clement, for the new pews in the chapel.

We are always struck by the great support we receive in every way. It enables us to look forward confidently to our future here and, I hope, give to the Diocese the priests it needs and prays for in the years to come.

Fr Roger Taylor
Rector

A Prayer

Almighty God, bless those preparing for the priesthood at Allen Hall, and all those involved in the life of the seminary. May they discern your will in their lives; may they grow in faith, hope and love; and may they lead others to know Christ and to grow in holiness.

We pray especially that you will call many people to the priesthood and the consecrated life in our Diocese, and that you will give them the courage they need to answer your call. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

St Thomas More *pray for us.*

Martyrs of Douai *pray for us.*

Summer Accommodation in London



The seminary offers comfortable bed and breakfast accommodation in July and August. Beautiful gardens and chapel. Centrally located and within walking distance from Battersea Park. Rooms from £50 per night.

More details can be found at -

Website : www.allenhall.org.uk

Email : allenhall@rcdow.org.uk

Telephone : 020 7349 5600 (option 0)