

## THE HOMECOMING OF THE DOMINICANS

WHITSUNTIDE, 1929, will always be memorable in the annals of the Dominican Order for the happy events of the re-establishing of a formal Priory and House of Studies, and the consecration and solemn opening of the Priory Church at Blackfriars, Oxford. On Monday, May 20th, the Church, dedicated to the Holy Ghost, was consecrated by his lordship the Bishop of Alexandria, Canada, the Rt. Rev. Felix Couturier, O.P. After the ceremonies of consecration and dedication High Mass was sung by Father Bede Jarrett, O.P., the English Dominican Provincial. On Tuesday, May 22nd, Bishop Couturier sang pontifical High Mass in the presence of His Eminence Cardinal Bourne. His Grace Archbishop Goodier, S.J., preached a sermon, the full text of which, by His Grace's kind leave, we are able to present to our readers in this current issue. His lordship the Bishop of Northampton, Dr. Cary-Elwes; the Abbot of Ampleforth, Dom Edmund Matthews, O.S.B.; the Rt. Rev. Abbot Sir David Hunter-Blair, O.S.B.; the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Barnes; the Father Provincial of the Jesuits; the Father Provincial of the Servites; the Father Provincial of the Salesians; Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C.; Fr. McCann, O.S.B.; Father Vignaux, S.J.; Father Leo O'Hea, S.J.; Father Ronald Knox and many other priests were present.

The Master General of the Dominican Order was represented by Father Louis Nolan, O.P., and the Dominican Provincials of Paris, Belgium and Ireland, and many other friars were among the visitors. The Mayor of Oxford represented the City, and the University was represented by several Catholic Dons.

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Mr. Doran Webb, the architect, was also present. Of his artistic skill the church and building are sufficient testimony.

The new Blackfriars is the third Dominican Priory to be established in Oxford. The first house, founded in 1221, the year of St. Dominic's death, stood on the site now occupied by the Town Hall. Within a very short time the friars were obliged, on account of increasing numbers, to seek a new home, and through the generosity of King Henry III, land was given to them on the south side of Oxford in the parish of St. Ebbe's where Isabel Bolbec de Vere, the widowed Countess of Oxford, built them a Priory. The size of this priory, of which only one small lodge now remains, can be judged from the facts that the 'Mad Parliament' was held there in 1280, and that it was able to house a General Chapter of the Order. This second Priory lasted for a little over three hundred years and was destroyed in the religious upheaval of the sixteenth century; its friars were scattered and its glories extinguished.

'*Omne trinum perfectum,*' says the scholastic tag. This third Priory, appropriately opened in the year which commemorates the first centenary of Catholic Emancipation, has about it all the flavour of romance, all the marvel of a dream come true. That it was built is due to the generosity of a comparatively small group of benefactors and to the faith and vision and courageous zeal of Father Bede Jarrett, the present Dominican Provincial.

The homecoming of the Blackfriars means the revival of the daily public chanting of the Church's official prayer, for so long silenced in Oxford; it means the opening of a house of Catholic theology in an important seat of learning; what it will mean for the future lies hidden in the hands of God and in our hopes and prayers.

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*Text of the Letter from the Cardinal Secretary of State to Father Bede Jarrett, O.P., Provincial of the English Dominicans.*

DAL VATICANO, die 1 Maii, 1929.

Admodum Revdo. Patri BEDAE JARRETT,  
Anglicae Provinciae Ordinis Praedicatorum  
Moderatori,  
OXONIAM.

Admodum Revde. Pater,

Magno sane cum gaudio didicit Augustus Pontifex Dominicanum Oxoniae coenobium eique appositam ecclesiam, quorum quidem aedium auspicalem lapidem octo abhinc annis opportune jecistis, per proxima Pentecostes sollemnia vos esse dedicaturos.

Id vobis gratulatur ex animo Beatissimus Pater, cum probe noscat non posse Dominicanos sodales suam eiusmodi religiosae vitae studiorumque sedem restituere—postquam rerum adiuncta per plusquam tria saecula eos abesse coëgerunt—quin magnopere conferant cum ad Ordinis sui decorem et incrementum promovendum, tum ad catholicam doctrinam propagandam impensiusque fovendam.

De re igitur valde laetabili vobis gratulatur ex animo communis Pater, qui inceptis laboribus vestris bene omnia precatus, id potissimum a Deo vobis exoptat ut veteres Oxoniensis Universitatis laudes, in quibus comparandis inclytus Ordo vester magnopere elaboravit, feliciter renovare atque aemulari possitis. Interea Sanctitas Sua caelestium munerum conciliatricem peculiarisque benevolentiae Suae tibi singulisque Anglicae Provinciae Dominicanis sodalibus Apostolicam Benedictionem peramanter impertit.

***Blackfriars***

Ego vero haec tibi referens, ea qua par est observantia me libenter profiteor.

Tibi

addictissimum

P. CARD. GASPARRI.

*(Translation)*

THE VATICAN,

May 1st, 1929.

To:—

The Very Reverend Father Bede Jarrett,  
Head of the English Province of the Order of  
Preachers,  
Oxford.

Very Reverend Father,

It was with great joy that the Supreme Pontiff learned that the Oxford Dominican Priory and Church, the foundation stone of which you laid eight years ago, would be dedicated at the coming feast of Pentecost.

From his heart the Holy Father congratulates you on this event, for He well knows that the restoring by Dominicans of a seat of studies and a centre of religious life, after three hundred years of enforced absence caused by the turn of events, cannot do otherwise than contribute to the glory and increase of the Order, to the spread and the more zealous love of Catholic teaching.

Our Holy Father rejoices with you from his heart on this most happy event; He prays that every blessing may attend your labours thus begun, and He especially asks God that you may happily win once more in the University of Oxford the renown which your distinguished Order earned by its labours in

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the past. Meanwhile His Holiness, to gain the Divine Help for you and as a token of His special good will towards you, affectionately imparts to you and to all the Dominicans of the English Province His Apostolic Blessing.

Yours devotedly,

P. CARDINAL GASPARRI.