

“O Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother, look down in mercy upon England thy Dowry.”

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Dowry



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***Painting Salvation* or Art For Souls**

Support our Apostolate

Picture: FSSP Summer Camp Saint Peter for boys in the Peak District, August 2025.

*Our priests and seminarians were kept busy this year with... ongoing parish activities including Confirmations and excursions; a discernment weekend for twenty-four young men at Buckden Towers in February; a Marian day of recollection for forty young adults of *Juventutem* in London last May; our two summer camps for seventy-six children in August; the *Juventutem* Summer Weekend gathering over fifty young adults at Ampleforth in July; talks and liturgies at the WeBelieve Festival in Birmingham in July; priestly ordinations in Bavaria in June; assisting Bishop Athanasius Schneider at various pontifical liturgies in June; and pilgrimages, starting with the Chartres Pilgrimage of Pentecost, ending with the LMS Pilgrimage from Ely to Walsingham.*

Please pray for our ten priests in these Isles (including one out of ministry due to sickness, and another slowly recuperating) to be sent reinforcement; for our six seminarians, including Seminarian James admitted for First Tonsure; for now Deacon Conan McGonagle preparing for priestly ordination on 28th May 2026 in America; and for many saintly vocations.

God bless you!

Editorial: The Popes and The Archangel



Dear Friends, since our latest special edition of *Dowry* on cloistered life was released last Spring we have rejoiced with the Church universal on the election of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV on May 8, 2025. The new sovereign pontiff apparently chose the papal name Leo in reference to Pope Leo XIII's social teachings. It was the same predecessor who prescribed that the Leonine Prayers be recited after Low Masses, as is still the case at most traditional holy Masses. Those prayers include the *Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel* composed by Pope Leo XIII himself following an apparition in 1884 in which he was made more aware of the need for the *Prince of the heavenly host's* protection upon the Church.

Previously Pope Francis had consecrated the State of the Vatican to Archangel St Michael, on July 5, 2013, following an initiative from Pope Benedict XVI who attended the ceremony after his resignation. Pope Francis said: "Michael—which means: "Who is like God?"—is the champion of the primacy of God, of his transcendence and power. Michael fights to reestablish divine justice; he defends the People of God from their enemies and above all from the arch-enemy par excellence, the devil. And St Michael triumphs because in him it is God who acts... In consecrating the Vatican City State to St Michael the Archangel, let us ask him to defend us from the Evil One and cast him out."¹

Earlier, Pope Benedict XVI had told some bishops whom he was ordaining on September 29, 2007

that Saint Michael "defends the cause of God's oneness against the presumption of the dragon, the 'ancient serpent', as John calls it. The serpent's continuous effort is to make men believe that God must disappear so that they themselves may become important; that God impedes our freedom and, therefore, that we must rid ourselves of him. However, the dragon does not only accuse God. The Book of Revelation also calls it 'the accuser of our brethren..., who accuses them day and night before our God' (12: 10). Those who cast God aside do not make man great but divest him of his dignity. Man then becomes a failed product of evolution."²

*I invite everyone ...
to recite it
to obtain help
in the battle*

Pope John-Paul II himself had publicly invited all to make use of that prayer: "May prayer strengthen us for that spiritual battle spoken of in the Letter to the Ephesians: 'Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might' (Eph 6:10). It is to this same battle that the Book of Revelation refers, bringing before our eyes the image of St. Michael the Archangel (cf. Rev 12:7). Pope Leo XIII certainly had this scene clearly in mind when, at the end of the last century, he introduced a special prayer to St. Michael throughout the Church: 'St. Michael the Archangel,

defend us in battle against the evils and snares of the evil one; be our refuge...'.³

Although today this prayer is no longer recited at the end of the Eucharistic celebration, I invite everyone not to forget it, but to recite it to obtain help in the battle against the forces of darkness and against the spirit of this world."³

As it happens, May 8, 2025 was also the feast day commemorating the Apparition of Saint Michael the Archangel on Mount Gargano in Italy in the year 492 according to tradition. Let us request the great archangel to protect Pope Leo and guide him as he stands at the helm of the Barque of Peter in our rather tumultuous times. And may the Archangel extend his protection to us in these Isles, securing for our Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter abundant spiritual fruit. □

Malleray

Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP,
*Superior of the FSSP England
Apostolate*

Bedford, August 15, 2025

¹ Cf.

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco_20130705_statua-san-michele.html.

² Cf.

https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20070929_episc-ordinations.html.

³ Regina Caeli allocution on Sunday 24 April 1994, cf.

https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/angelus/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_reg_19940424.html.

Catholic Faith & Fellowship with *Juventutem*

By young adult and free-lance journalist Angeline Tan

I felt the familiar sense of déjà vu upon arriving at Ampleforth Abbey on Friday, July 18, 2025, for the *Juventutem* FSSP Summer Weekend, given that this year marked my third consecutive one attending *Juventutem* Summer Weekends at the Abbey.

Upon disembarking from my friend's car (we had driven a good number of hours from the hustle and bustle of London for this event), the verdant, lush, and tranquil surroundings of the Abbey, along with its dew-soaked grounds, beckoned me over as I joined some fifty other young single Catholics from various corners of the UK for the start of the weekend. There was almost an instant sense of camaraderie as we exchanged introductions and pleasantries. Some faces were refreshingly familiar, while I still had the leeway to exchange first introductions from among the rest of the participants.

Evening approached, and what better

way to start our faith-focused weekend than with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Abbey's crypt? During Mass, Deacon McGonagle, FSSP preached on *Praying and accompanying the sick and dying, after the example of St Camillus de Lellis*. We attuned ourselves interiorly to the True Presence, and received Our Lord Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. The reverent and spiritual tone of the weekend was officially set, in light of the words of the venerable Father Faber, priest of the Brompton Oratory in the 19th century, that the

Mass is the "most beautiful thing this side of Heaven". Indeed, it is the Mass that matters!

Over the course of the next two days, I felt like a kid in a candy store as I, together with the rest of my fellow participants, was treated to the ritual beauty of the Traditional Latin liturgy (1962), heavenly Gregorian chant, and the mere use of Latin

itself in our prayers (e.g. Compline).

Gradually, worldly concerns and distractions took a backseat as interior silence and recollection assumed centre stage. On the Abbey's serene grounds, some of us even managed to find time to recite more than five decades of the Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the latter being a daily staple for Catholics living in a secularized world.

Inspiring talks given on topics ranging from the Traditional Latin Mass to Catholic social doctrine certainly indulged our intellectual appetite for true Christian knowledge. Some speakers were clerics, like Abbot of Ampleforth Dom Robert Igo, OSB who gave an engaging *Presentation of the Rule of Saint Benedict*; Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP who reflected on *Where we hope to be as Catholics in ten years?*, and on *The Traditional Latin Liturgy and evangelisation*; by





Fr. Miklós Homolya, FSSP on *Political power in the light of natural law and original sin*, and on *St Vincent de Paul, a giant of social welfare in the name of Christ* (it being the feast of the famous French priest); by Deacon Conan McGonagle, FSSP on *What's my vocation? How to discern what God wants for me*; and Second Year seminarian Rafal who spoke about his *Life at the FSSP International Seminary in America*.

Lay speakers also intervened, such as Lorcan Price, legal counsel with ADF International, who spoke about *The state of freedom of speech and freedom of religion in the modern west*; Sarah Haire, one of the leaders of *Juventutem* London, who shared

deep views on reclaiming *Catholic femininity*; and William Currie, of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, who presented *Attacks on the beginning and end of life—the Catholic response*.

Discussions touched on the spiritual life, Catholic identity, as well as dealing with contemporary challenges from the perspective of traditional-minded Catholics. Open Q&A sessions permitted participants to clarify doubts and express opinions to the speakers, while benefitting the rest of the audience.

As someone with a largely sanguine disposition, I found mealtimes, those glorious periods peppered with convivial laughter, and wholesome chatter, to be one of the highlights of the *Juventutem* summer weekend. Conversations ranged from topics pertaining to our shared Catholic Faith to what Yorkshire

had to offer in terms of tea.

For the record, the gentle pitter-patter of rain throughout the weekend that left the Abbey grounds glistening in an almost ethereal hue of green (England being England even in the summer months) did not dampen participants' spirits. While outdoor activities like playing frisbee or going on meditative strolls had to be shelved, wet weather plans like a spontaneous visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the main church, indoor card games, or simply a well-deserved siesta during breaks, were the order of the day.

Other times for prayer included a Holy Hour of Eucharistic adoration in the crypt with confessions being heard, and optional Latin Vespers sung by the monks in the abbey church. A pleasant gradation, holy Mass was Low on Friday, Sung on Saturday, and Solemn on Sunday.

Notably, evenings would bring participants together again for the solemn chant of Compline— the day's final prayer. Compline, the communal prayer invoking God's peace as the night unfurled,



characterized by a tapestry of plainchant melodies and ancient psalms in front of the hidden God in the Blessed Sacrament! During such moments, time felt suspended, as if everything beyond the Compline prayers had faded into oblivion.

“Jube Domine benedicere...”

“Te lucis ante terminum

“In manus tuas Domine...”

Finally, the final echoes of the Compline stanzas paved the way for the *Salve Regina* - an ancient and beautiful hymn dedicated to the august Mother of God. For centuries, this Marian chant signified the night's childlike surrender to Mary, Refuge of Sinners and Mother of Mercy. Since time immemorial, hearts burdened by labours and trials have sought - and found- solace under Mary's protective mantle. Our weekend evenings were no exception, for our pleas and voices in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary transformed our chapel into an oasis of Mary's maternal embrace. Regardless of background or status, all participants, cleric or laity, man or woman, can find consolation in the reality that the Blessed Virgin Mary is our spiritual Mother.

On both evenings, social interaction (enhanced by varied liquors) provided all those who wished with ample opportunity to get to know each other better, and to chat about whatever they fancied. Catholic books were also displayed for sale.



Strikingly, the reluctant goodbyes among participants on the final day of the summer weekend were more than compensated for by the spiritual nourishment of the Traditional Latin Mass, solid Catholic doctrine, the joy of new acquaintances forged, and old friendships renewed. Indeed, this weekend was not merely any other event where Catholics gathered to merely “hang out”. Rather, it was a rare and precious opportunity where faith and fellowship truly intertwined.

God willing, may my attendance at next year's summer weekend be a testament to my edifying experience at this year's. □

Juventutem is an international movement for the sanctification of young people (18-35 single Catholics) according to the Roman traditions of the Church. It has currently fourteen groups active in America and the British Isles.

The largest group is in London, UK, where seventy young adults attend one Friday a month (for confessions, traditional sung Mass with homily, social with Q&As).

Visit www.juventutem.org for more information.



Clarion Call for Gregorian Chant

By Christian Jenkins, a professional singer who trained as a chorister at St Georges, Windsor Castle, Tewkesbury Abbey, and later in opera at the Royal Welsh College of Music. Whilst performing in concerts and operas around the country, Christian leads and sings in choirs for Masses such as the monthly Juventutem London one (at St Mary Magdalene's, Wandsworth, Friday 7:00pm) and other occasions, as well as studying different methods and techniques of chant. Find out more on the LMS website and the Gregorian Chant Network lms.org.uk/gregorian-chant.

What is liturgical music? “Nothing so uplifts the spirit, gives it wings, liberates it from earth, releases it from the prison of the body, teaches it to love wisdom... as harmonious music and a divine song composed in rhythm.”

These words from St John Chrysostom in the fourth century still encapsulate how music can elevate us to God.

We know from scripture that the psalms and prayers were chanted in the ancient temple. Our Lord and Our Lady would have heard chanting around them throughout their lives as part of rituals and traditions. Music is not an embellishment or an adornment on the liturgy, but an integral part of divine worship.

Countless Popes and Saints have come out in praise of music as; a form of prayer, evangelisation, and how it can “excite the minds of the faithful to devotion” (St Thomas Aquinas).

What is the current situation? Currently across the Church there is a crisis brewing which will have consequences for the future. Musicians are not being trained. This is not just in the Church, but

across society—music is pushed to the bottom of our thoughts, dragged through the mud with modern ‘fast-food’ music, and any ideas that music is an important part of our social, moral, and emotional development are silenced.

Within Catholic parishes, musicians, who have been a stalwart of their

parishes throughout the years, are ageing and retiring and are finding few who are willing or able to take the reins.

From my experience, music in the Catholic Church is mostly reliant on paid secular singers, paid trained Anglicans, trained Anglican

Right: untrained young adults eagerly sing Gregorian Compline (here at the Juventutem Summer Weekend 2025).

Below: seminarians sing the Gregorian liturgy at the FSSP international seminary in Bavaria (Easter Vigil 2025).





converts, or professional Catholics. The problem is not funding, it is not a problem for a paid choir to come in and sing (as many do). The problem comes when we are not organically raising Catholics to give glory to God through music. We are not exposing younger generations to understand the music as liturgy.

Where are Catholic organists being trained? How many people are volunteering for their local choir? Is there a programme to get children involved and trained in music, especially in Gregorian Chant?

Whilst there are successful choir schools around the country (such as Westminster Cathedral) and pockets of Catholic organ training in schools such as London Oratory School, Cardinal Vaughan schools, as well as New Hall School in Essex, we must question how this training is trickling back into the musical environments of smaller parishes outside of major cities.

This problem is not exclusive to traditional circles—as one priest put it “even the hippies with guitars are

dying out”. The Anglicans are suffering a similar demise in their musical training of children, which is something I personally benefited from and have been able to use at Mass.

What can we do?

If we are truly to raise the next generation of Catholic musicians, we must lead by example. Singing a hymn at the end of Mass gives everyone the opportunity to sing and praise God with their voices. As one of my friends said, “I know I’m tone deaf, but I love singing the *Salve Regina* at the end of Mass”.

We must also increase volunteers participating in the music. Leading a choir is hard work, mostly because of the lack of volunteers that come forward and sing. Even if you aren’t confident, there’s safety in numbers. The more people who volunteer and commit to a choir, the better the music will become, and you will enjoy it!

If you’re near a Catholic school, see if there’s a choir you can help, either by volunteering, or fundraising for

them. Find opportunities for children to sing, in and out of the liturgy.

If you’re a parent, play music around the house. The great composers of Western Civilisation like Mozart, Wagner, and Bach have all been proven to help with cognitive development in children. Even singing hymns in the car will be a great benefit for you, your children, and the music of the Church. You will be leading your children to God through music.

Most importantly, support your current choir and choir leader. Thank them for their work, ask if you can help; either by singing, helping to fundraise books or music (which can be very expensive), and pray for your choir.

If we wish to see the Mass flourish in our day, then we must stand up and act on all things associated with the Mass. Altar serving, singing, fundraising, and praying all need committed volunteers to ensure that the Mass is as beautiful as possible for our Lord, now, and for years to come. □

Cardinal Mercier's Thomistic Psychology

A Belgian priest from the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter with a doctorate from the Angelicum in Rome on the Philosophy of Saint John-Henry Newman, Father Gerald Duroisin, FSSP explains the relevance for today of Cardinal Mercier's work in psychology (cf. The Origins of Contemporary Psychology by Désiré-Joseph Mercier)

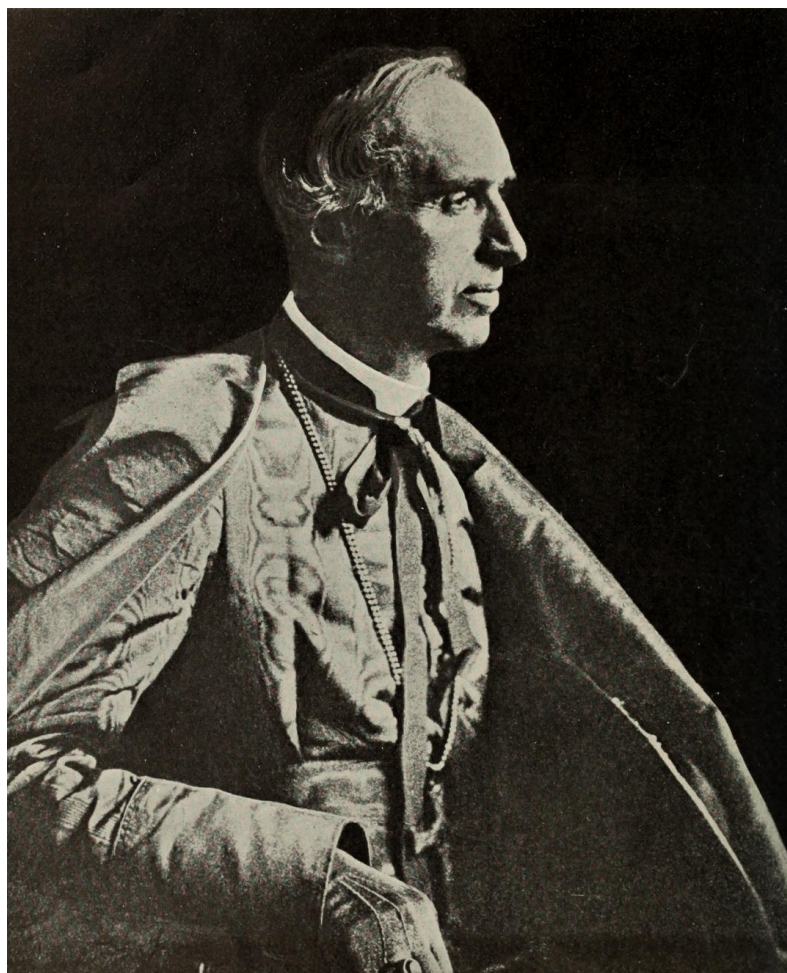
Next year marks the centenary of Cardinal Mercier's death (Brussels, January 23, 1926). He was the Archbishop of Mechelen (Malines) and the Primate of Belgium (1906-26); for England, he is particularly important because of the "Malines Conversations" which gave Anglicans the opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith. The Thomist revival also owes him much. However, one of his main interests are psychological issues.

When speaking of psychology, we should not first think only of depression or pain, and the relief of anxiety. This may belong to psychiatry which recommends the use of drugs or different methods of therapy. Mercier was the contemporary of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) but he had insights which, according to us, are more valuable and more fruitful than those of the founder of the "depth psychology" or other forms of "analytic psychology".

With the advent of the social media era, it seems that we are witnessing a resurgence of the medieval "unique intellect" or of the seventeenth-century rationalism which denies the immortal soul, as the vital principle (the "form") of our body which is now seen as a machine. Mercier has a holistic Aristotelian approach of man as a "rational animal", whose mind knows reality by experimenting objects through the senses. Concepts are not simple productions of the mind, but they express reality: Through the process of abstraction, we have the ideas of "tree", "dog", "man" etc. which enable us to know the nature of this plant, this animal or this being.

If intelligence is merely seen as what performs a given task or transforms reality, in this materialistic or pragmatic system, personality is greatly reduced. For Mercier's realism, on the contrary, the object itself, which is outside of our mind, is more important. If God exists, He is in Himself more significant than man's consciousness (or unconsciousness)!

Whereas modern thought is cut off from reality, the organic approach value emotions, which is simply very human. Once we know there is a Creator and that He is an all-loving Father, we can but love Him with all our heart, and we also love our neighbour as ourselves. Moreover, free will and freedom are evident,



unless we are imprisoned in an artificial intellectual system.

Very much against David Hume (1711-1776), Mercier defends the spiritual nature of our soul. It is not a “bundle of perceptions”. Human knowledge can reach “meta-physical” realities. While many in Mercier’s time think that the object of psychology is what man knows in his consciousness, the famous Belgian Cardinal refuses such a limitation which he asserts goes back to René Descartes. Moreover, if we reduce man’s personality to this “consciousness”, it will mean that a young child is no person, or that we cease to be a person when we sleep!

At the time of Mercier, experimental psychology was a new science, and our author makes a lot of investigations in this field. It should not become a province of mechanics or physiology. While the sense depends on an organ, the intellect does not. The sound scientific basis Mercier gives to psychology is a precious methodological principle for our time, in which the border between what is real and what is virtual is often blurred. Whereas the technique of free association of ideas remains focused and locked in the subject, Mercier’s “natural” psychology, which does not disregard man’s moral dispositions and religious beliefs, opens additional horizons.

According to many psychoanalysts, society’s laws and customs often inhibit man in his personal development. In Mercier’s time, Freud starts to develop a whole series of theories about “defence mechanisms”. However, these seem very superficial when compared with the richness of traditional sapience and happiness resulting from the

possession of Truth. Respect for sacred authority and for parents come from the divine and natural law. A science that tends to substitute a new order of things is doomed to failure. Freud’s focus on the repression of sexuality as an explanation of all conflicts is not realistic and simply overlooks that man has a reason that he must use! Mercier frees us from many pseudoscientific theories and deviations. An example again is hypnosis which, according to Mercier, mainly comes from abnormal suggestibility; consequently, it cannot constitute a panacea to cure psychological disorders.

For man’s achievement of his final goal, Mercier’s realism and his empirical method are a good antidote against the inducement of the spectacular development of artificial “intelligence” or the error of “psychologism” which holds that all the important issues can be solved by the psychological study of mental processes.

Finally, in our present situation, Mercier’s speech during the “Congrès de Malines” on September 25, 1909, i. e., just a few years before World War I, is still an important warning: “The spread of materialist doctrines ruins the temperament of nations and the diminishing of their true religious life makes them powerless to react, which causes the anguish of many honest souls.” However, faced with dechristianization and

revolutionary individualism, which are disintegrating the social body and man himself, the famous Cardinal ends with a note of real and supernatural Hope, that is offered by the universal Church: She has lost in extension, but through her communion and her holiness, she is indisputably gaining in depth and intensity. □

Left:
Cardinal Désiré-Joseph Mercier
(Wikipedia Public Domain
via The World's Work, 1919:
<https://archive.org/stream/worldswork38gard#page/456/mode/2u>).

Below: St Thomas Aquinas
watches over seminarians
in the Examination Hall
at St Mary's College, Oscott,
Birmingham (picture FSSP).



The Privilege of Being a Woman

A talk given as part of a workshop on femininity at the Juventutem Summer Weekend in July 2025 at Ampleforth Abbey, by Sarah Haire, a young adult co-leader of Juventutem London

Heart speaks to heart. My hope today is to reignite or renew in you a deep love and appreciation for the pinnacle of creation: women. What it means to be a woman has been profoundly reshaped, even hijacked, by modern movements. But let's rewind, go right back to the beginning.

In Genesis chapter 1, on the sixth day, God created humanity in His image and likeness, male and female. He created them, and God declared it "very good." Then, in Genesis 2, God revealed that "it was not good that man was alone." So, from the very rib of Adam, God fashioned Eve, the first woman. As St. Augustine beautifully put it, Eve was taken "from Adam's side to be equal to him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him." Man and woman were clearly created to complement each other. Yet, in our society today, these lines have blurred, and the unique essence of womanhood is being eroded.

The Unraveling: Where Did We Go Wrong? Who's to blame for this erosion? I'll go first and point directly to feminism. Over the past fifty years, feminism has fundamentally redefined what it means to be a woman, notably through its emphasis on career, contraception, and abortion. Instead of celebrating what it means to be a woman, feminism has tried to make women like men.

The narrative became that a woman's career is paramount, defining her very identity. The aim was to "smash the glass ceiling," to "beat the men," or, worse yet, to "become like a man," leaning into masculine traits to get ahead. In this pursuit, the very essence of femininity was traded away. Women were told it was "progress" to hand their one-year-old children over to a stranger each morning. The economy didn't help—young families are stretched thin. But this wasn't liberation. It was a quiet erosion of something sacred. As G.K. Chesterton quipped with piercing truth: "Feminism is mixed up with a muddled idea that women are free when they serve their employers but slaves when they help their husbands."

Now, many women are beginning to wake up and realise that fulfilment is not found in fluorescent-lit offices, endless emails, or the stress of competition. It's found in relationships, in love freely given, in the quiet, steady giving of oneself. The lie deepened with the advent of contraception. Promised as freedom, it brought confusion. The pill, in manipulating a woman's natural cycle, muddles not just hormones—but the heart. It imitates pregnancy, tricking the body and subtly distorting attraction. Research reveals a chilling consequence: women on hormonal birth control often choose men based on different subconscious traits—security over

natural chemistry. When they stop the pill, many report a startling shift: the man once attractive becomes unfamiliar. It is a heartbreaking irony—the very tool meant to "empower" women may undermine the foundation of lifelong love. Pope John Paul II said it best: "The truth of Catholic sexual morality is proved in the wounds of those who did not live it." And indeed, the contraceptive mentality, even impacts Catholic circles. It teaches us that fruitfulness is a problem, not a blessing.

But the most tragic consequence of this ideology is found in abortion. In the name of "rights," a mother is pitted against her own child. The womb, designed as the safest sanctuary, has become the most dangerous place on earth. The unborn—each one a miracle, each one known by God—are dismissed as simply a clump of cells. If you add up all the deaths from wars, famines and genocides in human history, the number reaches 1.6 billion. A harrowing fact is that there have been 2.5 billion children killed through abortion since its legalisation worldwide.

Pope Benedict XVI asked with anguish: "How can it be that the most wondrous and sacred human space—the womb—has become a place of unutterable violence?"

(Both pictures by FSSP)



This is the greatest genocide in human history. This is not just a cultural crisis—it is a spiritual battle. And woman is at the very centre of it. After the fall in Eden, God spoke to the serpent: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers.” From the very beginning, there has been a war between Satan and the woman—between the destroyer of

life and she who was created to give it. The evil one hates the womb, because it is the cradle of creation. He hates maternity, because it mirrors God’s own life-giving love. And so, he wages war not only on children—but on womanhood itself.

Carrie Gress calls this movement the “Anti-Mary Spirit”—a counterfeit femininity that mocks everything

Mary represents. Where Mary is full of grace, the anti-Mary is full of pride. Where Mary nurtures life, the anti-Mary promotes its destruction. Where Mary says “Let it be done unto me,” the anti-Mary says, “I will not serve.”

For me personally, I remember at four years old, asked, “What do you want to be when you grow up? For

so long, I believed my identity was rooted in achievement: my grades, my job title, the next goal. Feminism has sadly shaped me, quietly and deeply. Feminism, a fruit of the fall, blurred the lines between men and women, and with it came confusion.

In order to really live our femininity, men need to live their masculinity. I understand the difficulty when terms such as ‘toxic masculinity’ dominate the conversation or a simple gentlemanly action of opening the door for a woman, can be met with discontent. The man’s sacred role is to protect and provide. Blurred lines in gender roles, the breakdown of the family, moral relativism and the sexual revolution, which have all been the result of this final battle in which we face, have ensured that many men are not living their masculinity. In the absence of masculine leadership, women were told to become their own protectors. So we began to: work, provide, defend, decide, and survive—often alone. Some women are hiding savings from their husbands, afraid to trust. First dates end with split bills. The dance of complementarity has collapsed.

In our politically correct, passive world, how many men really stand up for women? The Labour government was unwilling to investigate foreign Muslim rape gangs to avoid offending political sensibilities. In this country alone, there have been over ten million abortions—millions of fathers didn’t stand up for their children. I understand many men tragically didn’t have a say, including a friend of mine, Ben. We see a generation of men afraid to lead, and of women tired of pretending they don’t need them. This is not about blame: feminism has done enough of that. Feminism claimed to liberate us, but

instead it divided us. It taught us to compete with one another instead of calling us back into our complementary roles. We have to encourage each other. Ladies, let him open the door, let him carry the bag, let him pay that bill. We are daughters of the King after all.

[Cheerful laughter in the room.]

Men and women are made for one another—not only in marriage, but in mission. One uplifts what the other cannot fully carry alone.

As Pope St. John Paul II so beautifully wrote: “Woman complements man, just as man complements woman... Womanhood expresses the ‘human’ as much as manhood does, but in a different and complementary way.”

Discussion: Ladies, have you noticed feminism impacting your own life? How do you try to counteract it with your femininity?

Men: How have you noticed this in women? What do you like to see in women?

As St. Paul urges in Romans, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” This timeless wisdom prompts us to ask: How can we truly embody our God-given femininity and dismantle the falsehoods that have shaped us?

For me, a profound journey into Catholic femininity began with the Traditional Latin Mass. The Church’s rich traditions sparked a deep desire to integrate tradition into



every part of my life. So, what does it truly mean to live out my femininity? It’s more than just dresses and veils, though these can certainly be a good starting point. It’s about embracing what St. Pope John Paul II eloquently termed our feminine genius: our unique capacity to bear and nourish life, our innate intuition, and our deep empathy. As Chesterton wisely observed, “A woman uses her intellect to find reasons to support her intuition.”

What exactly is the feminine genius? It’s the unique set of qualities and capabilities women bring to the world, vital for societal flourishing. It’s often understood through four

interconnected aspects: receptivity, maternity, sensitivity, and generosity. Embracing these four components of what it means to be a woman is one way we can pursue our feminine purpose.

At its heart, it's a call to emulate Our Lady, the quintessential model of femininity, the New Eve. Hers was a life of ultimate sacrifice for God, a profound "Fiat Voluntas Tua." Her compassion led her with haste to her barren cousin Elizabeth. Her wisdom at Cana simply directed us: "Do whatever He tells you." And her steadfast love kept her with Our Lord Jesus to the very end. When abandonment was almost universal, Mary—our model, the cause of our joy, the seat of wisdom, the gate of heaven, the Queen of Peace—remained. In her unwavering presence, we discover the authentic blueprint of femininity, standing in powerful opposition to the world's distorted view of womanhood. As Alice von Hildebrand, who courageously identified as "the enemy of feminism" (devoting her life to the restoration of genuine femininity) so insightfully conveyed, Mary illuminates the sheer privilege of being a woman. St. Edith Stein's words resonate deeply here: "The world doesn't need what women have, it needs who women are."

Pope St John Paul II said, "The Church sees in Mary the highest expression of the 'feminine genius' and she finds in her a source of constant inspiration. Mary called herself the 'handmaid of the Lord' (Lk 1:38). Putting herself at God's service, she also put herself at the service of others: a *service of love*. Precisely through this service Mary was able to experience in her life a mysterious, but authentic 'reign'. It is not by chance that she is invoked as 'Queen of heaven and earth'. The

entire community of believers thus invokes her; many nations and peoples call upon her as their 'Queen'. For her, 'to reign' is to serve! Her service is 'to reign'!"

Edith Stein wrote that at the very heart of this genius lies a deep-seated capacity to shelter souls—to provide a haven where individuals can genuinely grow, unfold, and fully actualize who they are meant to be.

The feminine presence—delicate, yet profoundly powerful—can sway hearts. A woman's very vulnerability, rather than a weakness, can become a formidable strength that inspires men to protect and cherish her. The biblical story of Esther vividly illustrates this. After three days of fasting with her people, she approached the king radiating her femininity. Her courage and grace moved him, and he granted her plea to save the Jewish people.

This same strength, enveloped in humility, is evident in St. Catherine of Siena when she convinced the Pope to return to Rome. And in St. Scholastica's final meeting with her brother, St. Benedict. His monastic rule permitted only annual visits. As their time together concluded, she begged him to stay and continue their divine conversation. He refused, bound by his rule. In response, she turned to gentle, tearful, sincere prayer. Instantly, the sky grew dark, and a fierce storm broke, compelling St. Benedict to remain. Her love-filled tears moved heaven itself, forcing even St. Benedict to recognize the divine power operating through her.

Beyond sacrifice, the feminine heart expresses love through tender devotion. Peter sacrificed his fishing career, and Matthew his wealth, but Mary Magdalene demonstrated her

love for Christ in an exquisitely personal and embodied manner. With an alabaster jar of ointment, she stood behind Him, washing His feet with her tears, drying them with her hair, and anointing them with perfume. Hers was an intimate, reverent, and deeply human expression of love.

Ultimately, femininity is a mystery. It's a sacred reality often represented by the veil—a symbol of reverence, beauty, and concealed strength. This may be why St. Paul advocated for women to cover their heads in church: to honour the profound mystery of woman, a being uniquely capable of nurturing life—both physically and spiritually—in the likeness of divine love.

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- A common full citation for this topic is: Russell, T. J., Marzoli, D., Cobey, K. D., & Roberts, S. C. (2014). The association between discontinuing hormonal contraceptives and wives' marital satisfaction depends on husbands' facial attractiveness. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111(49), 17469-17474.
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Painting Salvation or Art For Souls

Introducing a new book of commentaries on a dozen classical paintings, by Fr Armand de Malleray, FSSP

Painting *Salvation* offers twelve Catholic meditations on classical paintings by Michelangelo, Titian, La Tour, Raphael, Caravaggio, Vermeer, Claude, and more. I was privileged to present some of them at the *WeBelieve* Festival at Oscott in July 2025, and I am glad to witness ongoing interest for such sacred depictions. The book draws from the numerous tours I led in the main art galleries in London in past decades. It is meant not for experts but for average Catholics, young people and adults. The book is also based on the *Art for Souls* series of CD-ROMS that I had authored in the 2000s.

The perspective is plainly devotional rather than erudite or historical. Too many Catholics keep away from great paintings because they assume that academic qualifications are required to state what the image expresses or inspires them with. Instead, good Catholic painters illustrate truths which are the shared patrimony of all believers. If you know your catechism, you are qualified enough to describe to your children a Nativity, or to yourself a Crucifixion, or to your friends an Assumption. Spending some time with famous classical paintings is good for us: it nourishes our piety and strengthens our faith.

Let us use the metaphor of painting as sailing. Like sails, paintings consist of canvas stretched across perpendicular frames to reach some destination yet unseen. This book is like a sailing boat, then. Each of the

twelve paintings commented upon could be seen as one of its sails. They display before our minds some limited aspect of God's revelation: his Incarnation, his childhood, the calling of his apostles, his sacrifice, his Resurrection, and the witness of his saints. The commentaries offer a time of contemplation, an aesthetic emotion. They seek to reveal the beating heart of famous images. If any artist is expected to help us decipher the world, even more should the Christian artist describe faithfully the Design revealed to men by God.

A feast for the mind even of the unbeliever, that approach will set in motion these ingenious paintings as powerful systems of signification. These pictures move—like sails catching the wind. Land ahoy, or heaven ahead, rather, if our crossing proves to be a safe and happy one.

So many images are stored in our memory, which we wish were not. Some violent, some impure; some having occurred by accident, some culpably perhaps; some naturally, some as products of technique such as cinema, videos, computer games or advertising. A good way to heal our sight is to furnish our faculties with beautiful images designed as vehicles of truth. Our

memory, our imagination, our emotions subsequently use such images as safe material to cleanse and refine our outlook on the world, on people and, fundamentally, on God and eternity.

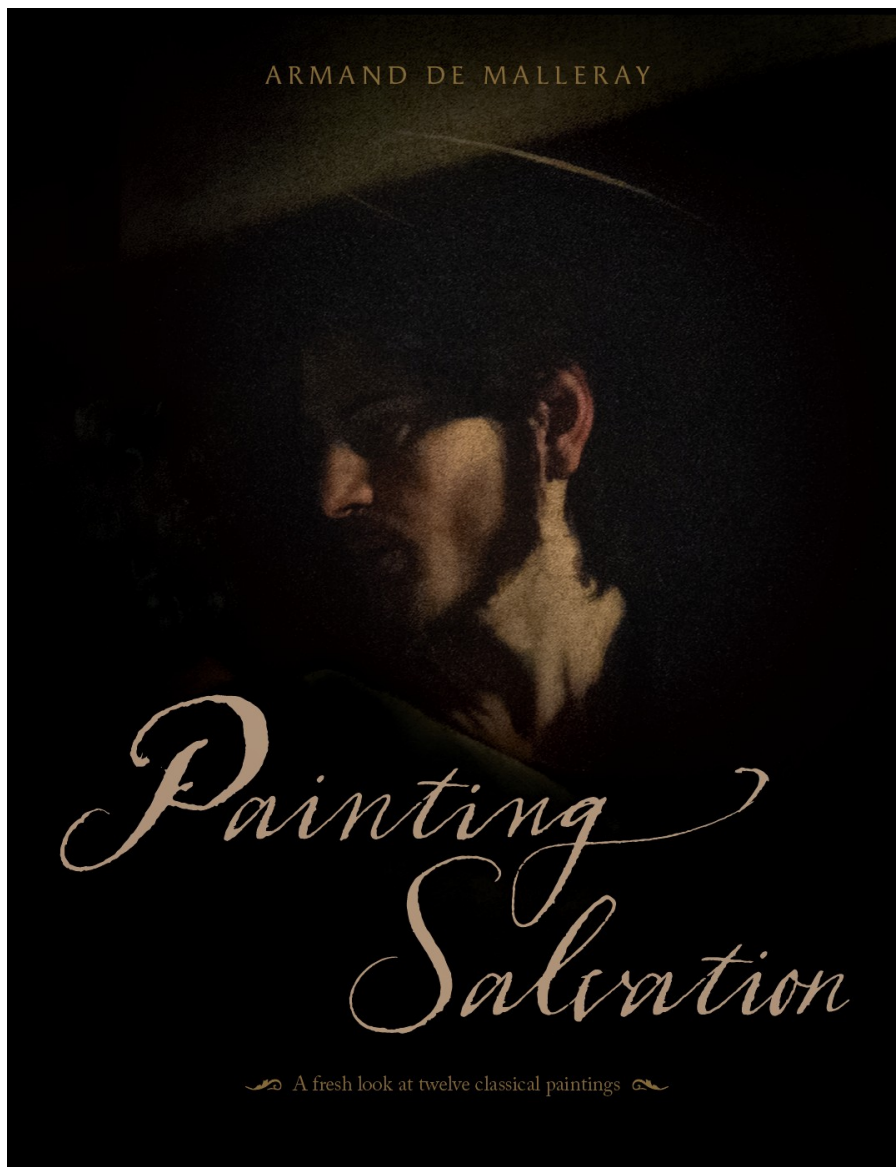
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What readers say about *Painting Salvation*:

A lovely, short book in which a man of words lays before us his spiritual understanding of Cosmos, namely, that beneath the superficial clothing of the physical world lies truth itself. Using twelve paintings as a device to illustrate this, Fr de Malleray encourages the reader to see all things in a more true, more sacramental light. A highly recommended spiritual work.

James Gillick—renowned painter, portraitist of Pope John-Paul II and Margaret Thatcher





Painting Salvation by Armand de Malleray is a masterful exploration of the interplay between faith, art, and salvation history. Through profound and eloquent commentaries on twelve classical paintings, this work unveils the spiritual depth and theological richness of masterpieces we thought we knew. A compelling journey for both art lovers and seekers of the divine, this book reminds us that beauty and truth are eternally intertwined—and made accessible by this erudite author.

Dr. Jan Christoph Bentz, Faculty of Theology and Religion, Oxford University

An enjoyable and intelligent analysis of the pictorial and spiritual "anatomies" of famous paintings we thought we knew. In Painting Salvation, Father de Malleray reveals many of the hidden connections lying beneath the surface of these sacred masterpieces.

James Tyldesley—Artist and University Lecturer in Fine Arts, London UK

As with the great Cathedrals of Christendom and the Music of the Liturgy, the masterpieces of the Christian artists aid the assimilation of the truths of faith and fire the Catholic imagination. Fr de Malleray brings out in this work the importance of such images and demonstrates the fruitfulness of a proper theological engagement with them.

Father Marcus Holden, author of the 2024 film *Christ Contemplated*, on Christian paintings at the London National Gallery; of the *Evangelium* catechesis series; and Episcopal Vicar for Catechesis and Evangelisation in the Archdiocese of Southwark, London, UK (since then, Rector of the Beda College, Rome)

Discover reviews of *Painting Salvation* (Arouca Press) and of other books by Fr de Malleray on the new dedicated website <https://malleray.com/>.

The author has received permission from his Superior General to have this website set up to promote his books, helping spread the Catholic faith through spirituality, theology, fine arts commentaries, and fiction. Any proceeds are spent to prepare, promote, and share past and future books by the author, including complimentary copies to unwaged readers, i.e. seminarians, and gifts to clergy and converts.

May Saint Francis de Sales, celestial patron of Catholic writers, intercede for the good apostolic fruit of this modest tool of evangelisation. The website was officially opened on the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord Jesus, Thursday, 29 May 2025.

□

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Above: On behalf of our Fraternity Deacon Stjepan Androic, FSSP gave a testimony on his vocation to the priesthood at the *WeBelieve Festival* in Birmingham last July, as part of a Vocation Presentation led by Bishop Timothy Menezes. (Photo FSSP)

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