

**Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem
Grand Priory of England & Wales**



Walsingham pilgrimage 2024

From the Bailiff

Dear Friends,

From Thursday 30 May to Sunday 2 June 2024, eighty pilgrims from the Order joined the Grand Prior on his pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. This honoured the tenth anniversary of the international pilgrimage made to Walsingham by the late 49th Grand Master, Don Carlos Gereda y de Borbón.



Following in the footsteps of their pilgrim forebears, folk demonstrated great tenacity and commitment and travelled considerable distances, by a variety of modes of transport, from Sussex, Hampshire, Devon, Somerset, Gloucestershire, London, Kent, Essex, the Marches, the Midlands, Yorkshire, Merseyside, Cumbria, Scotland, South Wales and even Aberystwyth. About two thirds of those present were Walsingham neophytes.

Thursday 30 May

After Vespers and supper on Thursday evening the pilgrim group was welcomed to the Shrine by the Registrar in Residence (acting Administrator), the Reverend Prebendary Graeme Rowlands. The

Bailiff, Dr David Woolf KCLJ, presented an illustrated history of Walsingham based upon his 41 years of pilgrimage there.

Friday 31 May

Each morning of the pilgrimage the St Lazarus chaplains celebrated the Eucharist for the pilgrims in the Shrine Church, and the Chaplain-General Emeritus, Fr Ian Evans ECLJ, celebrated the Grand Prior's Mass in the Slipper Chapel of the Basilica of Our Lady of Walsingham.



On Friday morning the Bailiff led a large group of pilgrims on the Holy Mile from Little Walsingham to the Slipper Chapel at Houghton St Giles, making stations en route at Martyrs' Field (the site of the execution on 30 April 1537 of Sub-Prior Nicholas Mileham and yeoman Thomas Guisborough) and the Orthodox Chapel of St Seraphim, in which is housed and venerated the proto-archetype of the icon of Our Lady of Walsingham. This image was used for the holy card issued to commemorate the Grand Prior's pilgrimage.

The Grand Priory National Executive Council met in the Orangery of the Shrine on Friday afternoon. At the conclusion of business, the Council was joined by the Commandery Commanders, Hospitallers and Chaplains who were on pilgrimage. The Registrar, Martin van Kan CLJ, gave a presentation on his recent analysis of the Grand Priory membership statistics. This is an ongoing project that will be shared at the next Commanders' Zoom meeting.

The Bailiff thanked those Commanders, Hospitallers and Chaplains present for enthusiastically embracing amongst their Commanderies the twin pillar approach to the life of the Grand Priory, namely the spiritual life and the hospitaller work. There was no better way to celebrate that approach than by a Grand Priory pilgrimage to Walsingham. The recent success of the Grand Prior's World Leprosy Day 2024 appeal clearly illustrated what could be achieved by this method.



Late on Friday afternoon the pilgrims travelled to the ancient parish church of Houghton St Giles for the Investiture Vigil. Houghton St Giles was the medieval lepers' 'slipper chapel'. The lepers were isolated from the other pilgrims who made their devotions before entry to Walsingham at the Slipper Chapel (now located at the Basilica) on the opposite bank of the River Stiffkey running through Houghton Dale.

Fr Ian Evans, assisted by Fr Robin Nash, presided at the Vigil service. Bishop Lindsay Urwin ECLJ delivered a most thought-provoking homily during which he encouraged the pilgrims to place themselves in the position of the medieval ostracised leper pilgrims who came to Walsingham seeking healing.

Two candidates for promotion to equestrian rank, Fr John Wall SChLJ and Rhys Jenkins KLJ, took their Vigil vows. The service concluded with the Bailiff delivering the Vigil charge to the candidates, assisted by David Knox KLJ, Marshal of the Grand Priory.

On returning to Walsingham the pilgrims gathered at the site of the ancient leprosarium. Bishop Lindsay offered prayers for the repose the souls of those lepers who had resided in the hostel and were buried in nearby unmarked graves. The Bailiff laid a commemorative wreath of laurel leaves, red carnations and rosemary (the herb of remembrance) on behalf of the Grand Priory.

Later in the evening the pilgrims gathered in the Shrine Church for the office of Compline from the St Lazarus Prayer Book. The Chaplain-General, Canon Brendan Clover SChLJ, officiated assisted by Fr John Eldridge. The day's devotions concluded with the pilgrims facing the Holy House to sing the *Salve Regina*.



Saturday 1 June

The Grand Priory's national investiture service was presided over by the Chaplain-General in the Shrine Church on the afternoon of Saturday 1 June 2024. The investing officer was the Grand Prior, Lord Lothian, assisted by the Bailiff. The preacher was the Lord Abbot of Farnborough, Dom Cuthbert Brogan OSB. The rousing singing from the congregation was ably led by John Bullock KLJ on the Shrine organ. It was a great joy to welcome Lady Olga Hay to the investiture. Her late father, the Earl of Lauderdale, was appointed a Guardian of the Holy House by Fr Hope Patten. The Administrator invited Lady Olga to sit in her late father's stall (St Hilary) during the investiture. Dom Cuthbert concluded the investiture service by imparting the pontifical blessing.



Pre-prandial drinks in the orangery were followed by the investiture banquet in the Shrine refectory. In his speech the Bailiff thanked all those who had assisted him behind the scenes with the planning and organisation of the pilgrimage - in particular, Gareth Vaughan GCLJ, the Chaplain-General and the corps of chaplains, Barry Downs KLJ, and the admin team at the Shrine led by the Administrator's PA Venetia Davies. He also thanked the members of the Grand Priory for their tremendous support for the recent surgical eye camp led by the Grand Priory Hospitaller, Mr Daniel Morris CLJ, and the phenomenal response in raising £25,000 for the Grand Prior's World Leprosy Day appeal 2024. It was noted that the twin pillar approach to running the Grand Priory, namely the interior or spiritual life and the hospitaller work, had truly come under Our Lady's patronage during the pilgrimage weekend at England's Nazareth.

In his reply to the Bailiff's toast to the Grand Prior and the Grand Priory, Lord Lothian noted that the Walsingham pilgrimage had demonstrated the truly ecumenical nature of our Order with members present representing the Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox, Baptist and Methodist denominations. That such a diverse group could all come together under the banner of St Lazarus was a wonderful example of the ecumenism of our Order. Like Bishop Lindsay in his Vigil homily the day before, the Grand Prior drew inspiration from the journeys of faith made by our forebears in the Order and those who were then isolated because they suffered from leprosy. The fact that leprosy still exists should be an incentive to us to help work to towards the eradication of that horrid disease. The Grand Prior concluded by highlighting the core values of the Order as being:

1. To exemplify in our lives the Christian and ecumenical ethos of our Order;
2. To make the hospitaller goals of the Order our primary focus;
3. To concentrate our charitable work on the treatment of leprosy.

It is hoped that the time spent on pilgrimage in Walsingham will enable the members of the Grand Priory to apply these primary aims to their work for the Order.

The investiture banquet concluded with the Bishop of East Anglia, the Rt Rev'd Peter Collins, giving a rousing speech in which he thanked the Order for its ecumenical witness in these troubling times and highlighted the wide variety of hospitaller and charitable work undertaken by the Grand Priory.

To mark the end of the investiture weekend, the pilgrims took part in a torchlight procession of the image of Our Lady of Walsingham around the Shrine grounds – a wonderful climax and a powerful witness for the pilgrims. May the intercessions of Our Lady of Walsingham support the endeavours of the Grand Priory of England and Wales.

Dr David A. Woolf KCLJ

Bailiff



A gallery of photographs of the pilgrimage weekend can be found at

[Order of St Lazarus Grand Priory of England & Wales Walsingham Pilgrimage & Investiture 30th May - 2nd June 2024](#)