

Pope John Paul II has proclaimed that the year 2000 AD is to be celebrated as a Year of Jubilee.

With attention focused on the new millennium, an opportunity presents itself to look back on the past thousand years and to celebrate what has been achieved during that time by the Catholic people of Wales and Herefordshire. Pre-Reformation glories; the sufferings of penal times; the recusants; our Martyrs; the effects of Irish immigration, the growth of Catholic Education and the re-emergence of the Church, and its ultimate acceptance, as an important part of the national life of Wales and Herefordshire are just some of the topics worthy of celebration.

These short booklets have been and are being produced by individuals, parishes, historical study groups and schools in the Archdiocese as part of our contribution to the world-wide celebration of two thousand years of Christianity. I commend them to you and congratulate all who have taken part in this imaginative "Millennium" project.

**+John Aloysius Ward**

Archbishop of Cardiff.



## ARCHDIOCESE OF CARDIFF

### CATHOLICS IN WALES AND HEREFORDSHIRE IN THE SECOND MILLENNIUM

Short Studies of Notable People, Places and Events 1000-2000 AD.

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# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF BISHOP THOMAS JOSEPH BROWN 1798 - 1880

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Herefordshire



Wales



No. 1

## Millennium Prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ,  
Lord of time and eternity  
prepare our minds to celebrate with faith  
the Jubilee of the year 2000.  
Fill our hearts with joy and wonder  
as we recall that precious moment  
when you were conceived  
in the womb of the Virgin Mary,  
that moment when you became our brother.

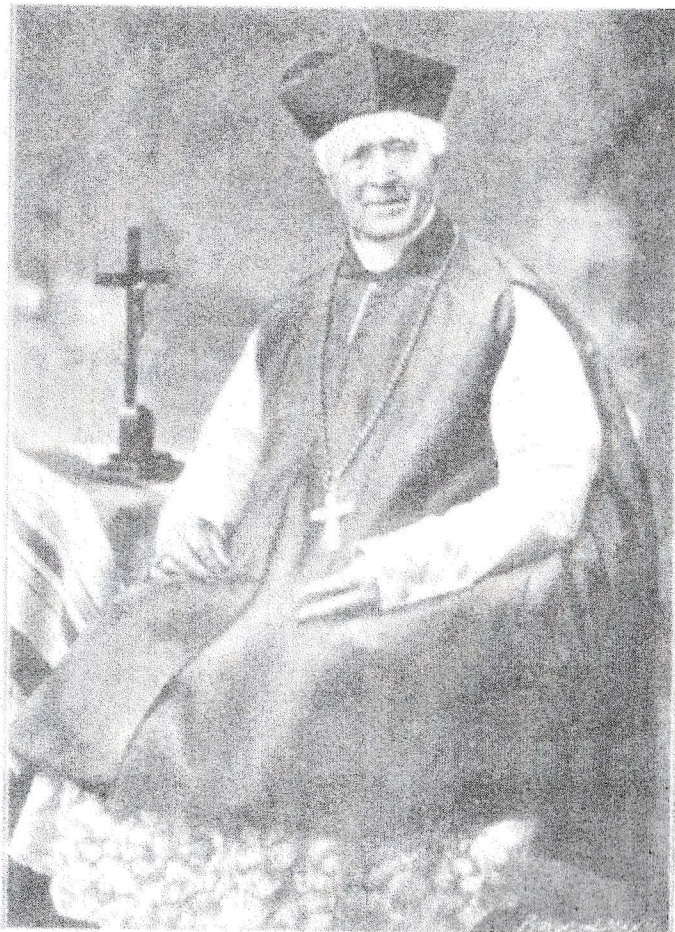
*Praise and glory to you, O Christ  
today and forever.*

Lord Jesus bring us with you and your mother  
on your journey to Bethlehem.  
the place where you were born.  
May we travel with you,  
firm in the faith,  
loyal to the truth,  
obedient to the will of the Father,  
along the one true path that leads to life.

*Praise and glory to you, O Christ  
today and forever.*

Jesus, at your birth the angels sang:  
Glory to God in the highest  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Two thousand years later  
we need to hear that song again.  
We need to pray for peace  
in our hearts,  
in our families,  
in our country,  
in our sad and wonderful world..

**THE**  
**LIFE AND TIMES**  
**OF**  
**BISHOP THOMAS JOSEPH BROWN**  
**DD O.S.B.**  
**1798 - 1880**



**BISHOP THOMAS JOSEPH BROWN**  
**D.D., O.S.B.**  
**VICAR APOSTOLIC OF THE WELSH DISTRICT 1840**  
**BISHOP OF NEWPORT AND MENEVIA 1850 – 1880**

## **BISHOP THOMAS JOSEPH BROWN**

### **D.D. O.S.B.**

It was Charles Dickens who opened his novel about the French Revolution - "*A Tale of Two Cities*" with the words, "*It was the best of times; it was the worst of times*". This could perhaps be said of the plight of Catholic Church in the 1790s. The persecution it had suffered in Britain and Ireland was easing off (apart from sporadic and local outbreaks of anti-Catholicism). The excesses of the French Revolution and its treatment of priests and religious - associating them with the "aristos"; calling for them to be sent to the guillotine and confiscating their goods and property was met with condemnation and offers of aid and shelter in "Protestant" Britain. It is estimated that at one stage there were more than five thousand priests who took refuge across the English Channel. At their head there were some nineteen French bishops.

More significant than this was the return to England of the exiled religious houses, schools and colleges which had functioned in mainland Europe since the Reformation and the subsequent penal laws. These had turned Britain into a missionary area to be served from abroad by priests who were educated overseas and often returned to minister in secret and suffer public martyrdom for the Faith they professed.

The Catholic Relief Act of 1791 meant that Catholic chapels became legal on registration. Mass could be celebrated by all priests who had taken an agreed form of oath, but the celebration of Mass was forbidden in any building possessing a bell or steeple! It was, however, permitted in a private house if not more than five outsiders were present. The habits of religious orders might not be worn in the streets. Leading Catholic recusant families, were associated with the building of one of the first such Catholic chapels in **Monmouth**, which opened in 1793. Welcome though this step was to the Catholics of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, full emancipation was still some way away.

The reaction to the Relief Act of 1791 was very different from that of the earlier 1778 Act which gave rise to the Gordon

Riots. Bishop Walmesley was Vicar Apostolic of the Western District (with responsibility for the whole of Wales!). He lived in Bath. In 1780 his home and a newly built, almost completed, chapel were burned down by rioters and he narrowly escaped with his life. Bath, under the care of the Benedictines, was a centre of Catholicism and is an important factor in our story.

England, at war now with a France where Napoleon was becoming increasingly powerful, faced an uprising in Ireland where an attempt was to be made to land French troops to assist the rebellion of the "United Irishmen" - a society seeking to establish an independent Irish Republic. The society, penetrated by government informers, was easily suppressed before the planned invasion could take place. This led to an Act of Union in a very short time

On May 2nd of 1798, in Bath, was born Thomas Brown. (He would have been registered in the first Census of 1801). His birth was to be followed by those of a group of men who were to have a profound effect on the history of the Catholic Church during the nineteenth century - Cardinal Newman 1801; Cardinal Wiseman 1802; Archbishop Ullathorne 1806; Cardinal Manning 1808 - all achieved leadership roles and distinction within the Church while still comparatively young.

At that time, Bath which had been the central meeting point for the higher social classes who came, in season to take the waters and to exchange local and national gossip, was now being replaced by Brighton as the social centre of the kingdom. The bewigged citizens, to be seen in their sedan chairs and "Bath" chairs were now mainly retired folk seeking a quiet life and the restorative qualities of the "waters".

The son of a good Catholic family from Bath, Thomas Brown, of necessity, started his schooling in a Protestant school because there was no other. News of Nelson's success and death at the Battle of Trafalgar would have reached Bath when Brown was a seven year - old schoolboy. Fr. Ainsworth, the Benedictine priest in charge of the Bath Mission looked after the religious education of

the boy and encouraged him to read many religious books - which he did avidly.

Often the centre of argument over his firm Catholicity, Thomas always gave a good account of himself and proudly said in later years that nobody had beaten him in the many religious arguments that took place in these early years. This small "Protestant" school was eventually to provide no fewer than three well-known priests for the missions in England and Wales.

His talents and brilliance as a scholar were, even at this young age, soon recognised and through the influence of Fr. Ainsworth he was sent to the Benedictines for his later schooling when he was about nine years of age. This took place at Acton Burnell in Shropshire. The Benedictines had maintained houses on the Continent during the penal times but the coming of the French Revolution had forced them to leave Douai. In an increasing climate of tolerance in England, the community of St Gregory took refuge at Acton Burnell, a mansion owned by a former Benedictine pupil, Sir Edward Smythe, who generously set aside part of the mansion and the park to enable them to open a school for boys. (*In 1785 the Prince of Wales, later George IV had married Mrs. Fitzherbert, a young Catholic widow of good family - by birth she was a Smythe of Acton Burnell*).

Feeling drawn to the ecclesiastical state Thomas Brown petitioned to be admitted to the Benedictine Order and was clothed in 1813 - when he was fifteen years old. There had been two communities in residence at Acton Burnell - St. Laurence's which settled at Ampleforth in Yorkshire in 1802 and St. Gregory's in which Thomas Brown had become a postulant moved in 1814 to Downside a small property near Bath which had just been purchased by the Community. It is recorded that on their way to Downside by stagecoach (Shropshire to Bath was a two day journey at least in those days) the Gregorians including Brother Joseph Brown slept at the Star Inn in Worcester and caused great astonishment by standing round the table at supper and intoning the long monastic grace. (*The monastic habit was not allowed to be worn in public until some thirty five years later. and the ordinary*

*monk might have been mistaken for a well-to-do gentleman farmer - dressed in shoes with buckles, long stockings, knee breeches, double breasted coats, neck cloths and erect collars).*

They reached Downside only to find that their furniture and equipment, which had been despatched by canal barge, had not arrived. They were told to study in spite of the fact they had neither books nor tables to sit at! This same year, 1814, he was professed as a monk.

For the next twenty six years until 1840 he was a member of the Downside community as a student, master and professor. Among his colleagues were a future Archbishop, two bishops and two abbots but Brown was the most outstanding scholar, having a retentive and unfailing memory. He taught classics and literature and was acknowledged as a brilliant teacher. In April 1823, he was ordained priest and was appointed professor of Theology a subject in which he excelled as scholar and teacher. One of his students had the name of Ullathorne - later Bishop of Birmingham. As well as his teaching, Fr. Brown held many monastic offices at Downside - including Infirmarian - a post at which, for once, he was not a spectacular success!

Only three years after ordination he attended the General Chapter of the Benedictine Order. In 1829 he was sent to Rome to conduct a case before the Roman Curia in which he had to oppose the wish of Bishop Baines of the Western District (himself a Benedictine) to secure Downside as his seminary. To have lost, could have meant the end not only of Downside but of the English Benedictine Congregation.

Succeed he did - but only after overcoming an initial prejudice against himself and his case. A deep study of Canon Law and learning the "Roman Way" by one or two bitter experiences led to his eventual success and popularity in Rome. His energy and appetite for work - a disturbing enigma to the Roman mind - brought the "English Monk" to the attention of Cardinal Cappellari who, after their initial relationship was strained and unpleasant, became a close and warm friend in later years.

It was during his stay in Rome that a memorable story is told of him that is something of a legend. He was lodged in the monastery of San Gregorio and his genial nature soon attracted many friends in the Community there. After a while the cordiality of his brethren seemed to cool alarmingly and they even shunned him. Having borne it for a time, he could no longer tolerate this seeming animosity and went to see the Prior, asking for an explanation. The Prior had some difficulty explaining that at times unearthly noises and blows which had shaken adjoining rooms had been heard coming from his cell and the community had interpreted this as Dr. Brown, having great combats with the devil! Only then did the reason for his "boycott" become clear to him. (*Although he would not have used that term which was coined in Ireland later in the century*).

It had been bitterly cold and his cell, lacking the comfort of an English fire, he felt the need to do some exercise to warm himself and keep the blood circulating. He had obtained a length of rope and taught himself to skip! While the monks thought he was whipping himself or fighting with the devil, he was, in fact, becoming very proficient in the art of skipping! He asked the Prior to come to his room where he demonstrated his skill. The Prior, astonished and delighted at the performance insisted that he repeat it for the community at their next recreation. The monks were entranced and talked so much about it that it came to the attention of the Cardinal Protector of the Order of St. Benedict who insisted on his next visit that the "*monacho inglese*" should give a further demonstration in his presence. Cardinal Cappellari was later elected Pope and took the name - "Gregory XVI".

Dom Joseph returned to a Britain which was now enjoying a much more tolerant climate for his co-religionists because of Catholic Emancipation which was achieved in that year (1829) after a long struggle. Catholics were now allowed to vote, sit in Parliament and occupy nearly all the offices of and state. Religious celebrations were forbidden outside churches and private houses. There were still restrictions on the use by Catholic Bishops on adopting the names of existing Anglican Dioceses restrictions were also placed on the freedom of religious orders. These sections

remained, in effect a dead letter and were largely ignored as time went by.

Much of the success achieved by Catholics, at this time, was due to the genius and the campaign of Daniel O'Connell - "The Liberator" who took advantage of the Irish situation following the Act of Union to get himself elected a Member of Parliament for Clare and to pressurise George IV and the Duke of Wellington into acceding to the Catholic Relief Act.

After resuming his duties at Downside and doing a great deal of writing and defending the Faith in public controversies with Protestant fundamentalists, he had the distinction of being awarded one of three "doctor's caps" by the Chapter of the English Order of St. Benedict. The peak of his success within, and devotion to, the Benedictine Order, was reached when the learned Dr. Thomas Joseph Brown was elected Prior of Downside in 1834. He was to stay just six years in that office!

From 1688 until 1840, there were just four area bishops - known as Vicars Apostolic. They had to cover vast areas at a time when travel and communication were so difficult that journeys were calculated in days rather than hours and newspapers were carried by stagecoaches to the major towns and by carriers to the smaller towns and surrounding villages.

Until 1840, the whole of Wales was contained in the Western district. There were, within Wales, at the beginning of the 18th century, just seven Catholic missions - Holywell in North Wales and the others - confined to Monmouthshire and Breconshire - were at Abergavenny, Perthir, Monmouth, Brecon, Usk and Llanarth. In addition there were domestic chapels at Talacre in North Wales and at Courtfield - the Vaughan home - in Herefordshire. Other Catholics had to rely on itinerant priests. A Jesuit from Bristol visited Cardiff and South Wales as far as Haverfordwest four times a year ministering to the congregations which were growing rapidly, mainly as a result of Irish immigrants seeking work in the ports and the valleys of South Wales.

In 1840 Rome agreed to a re-arrangement of the districts, increasing their number to eight. Wales and Herefordshire was to be a separate district with its own Vicar Apostolic. Pope Gregory XVI named his friend from earlier days Dr. Brown - "The Skipping Monk" - to be the first bishop of this vast and neglected area. He received the news with great grief, knowing that it would mean a radical change to his monastic way of life and his devotion to intellectual pursuits. There was talk of a petition from St. Gregory's (the Downside community) asking for another to be named. This was not proceeded with and his consecration by Bishop Griffiths, of the London area took place in the Benedictine Church in Bath on 28th October 1840. Bishop (later Cardinal) Nicholas Wiseman preached at the ceremony. Thus began a ministry which was to last for forty years.

The task before him was daunting and called for the commitment of a true apostle. His first pastoral letter contained a graphic account of the desperate situation of the area under his charge.

*"To dispense the sacraments, the doctrines of truth and the consolations of the Catholic Ministry to many thousands of poor Irish labourers, who are congregated in the mining localities we have sixteen missions only. Moreover in some of the most important of these, either there is no place whatsoever that can be set aside for the celebration of our Holy Mysteries, or the Adorable Sacrifice is offered in a chamber, so mean, so unprovided with altar furniture, that nothing, except urgent necessity, can justify its being used for so holy a purpose, in which too the congregation and even the priest, are not secure from the inclemency of the weather. Since our very recent arrival here, the result of our inquiries into the state of the missions in this county alone (Monmouth) is most appalling.*

*At Abersychan and Pontypool is a united congregation of 800 Catholics, having for their place of public worship a room in a public-house, used on the week days by the customers and very kindly lent by the landlord on Sundays for the celebration of Mass.*

*At Merthyr Tydfil there are at least 800 Catholics, for whose religious accommodation no better can yet be provided than*

*an ill-floored loft over a slaughterhouse. At Rhymney and Tredegar are numerous congregations without any chapel or resident priest.*

*At Cardiff, on the borders of the county, the number of Catholics is not less than 1,200, having no more suitable temple than a small room, the window of which is taken out to accommodate the large congregation, who crowd, as many as can find a place, into a confined shed . . .*

*We have hardly a school in any of our missions wherein the faith and morals of multitudes of poor Catholic children who abound there may be formed and preserved. We have no means at our disposal. We have no seminary. We are almost without resources for the education of the clergy. We ourselves, are entirely dependant on the liberality and charity of those who assist us."*

A few further statistics illustrate the dire poverty and needs of his diocese in those early days. He had in all nineteen chapels - eleven of these were in Hereford/Monmouth (then considered part of England) with only eight to be found in the twelve counties of Wales. He had only nineteen priests to serve this vast area. To supply chapels and schools, to meet heavy debts, he had at his disposal only a fund producing just £24 a year. The collection of the first year of his office amounted to £300, and this with two foundations at the English College, Lisbon, was all that he had to apply to the education of future priests. For his own personal maintenance, he was entirely dependent on alms.

A less courageous and determined man would have given up the struggle but year upon year he fought to improve the situation. Churches and schools were built. Horrendous debts were faced and somehow overcome. The famine years in Ireland brought greater distress as immigrants poured into South Wales. Bishop Hedley, his successor said of Bishop Brown in these times,

*"He had not been long Bishop when the wave of Irish Immigration, which really made this diocese what it is, set in. Along the coast of Wales, from the mouth of the Usk to Milford Haven, the victims of famine began to arrive in hundreds and thousands. They drifted to the centres of industry, to Swansea, to*

*Cardiff, to Newport, to Merthyr, to Tredegar and leaving, alas, hundreds of their number dead upon the road. They formed by degrees the beginnings of an immense Catholic flock. Then priests had to be got for them, and chapels built and schools and priests' dwellings provided."*

There are many stories of heroic endurance of hardships by priests and people alike in these early days. The saintly Mr. Carroll (secular priests were not generally addressed as "Father" until later in the nineteenth century) lived in a rented cottage where he stored and sold potatoes, meal and fish to raise money for the poor. In 1847 he caught the "Irish Fever" having been seen a few days before its onset, trudging over a bleak mountain road in blinding rain - wearing a tattered coat and broken boots - bringing the Sacraments to a dying person! Just two days before he died, he collapsed while saying Mass and still insisted on remaining on a mattress in his humble day room to be available to his flock.

The priest in Cardiff was threatened with eviction because he could not pay his rent. The Bishop found him ill and in a state of destitution- the whole of his collection for the previous Sunday was just two shillings and sixpence! He was on the point of selling the pig he was fattening. Bishop Brown gave him a sovereign and told the Catholic paper of his plight. The response saved the priest and his bacon!

In 1850, with the restoration of the Hierarchy, the Welsh District was divided and the six northern counties became part of the Shrewsbury Diocese while the rest became the Diocese of Newport and Menevia with Bishop Brown as the first Bishop. A unique consequence of his appointment was that he was allowed to name St. Michael's Priory at Cleohanger, Herefordshire as his pro-Cathedral and to draw his Chapter Canons from that Benedictine Community which was to become Belmont Abbey. This practice was not uncommon in pre-Reformation England but is the only instance of its being permitted since then.

Year on year the Church spread and strengthened under his leadership. A study of the Catholic Directories reveals an incredible growth of Missions (parishes), churches and schools. When he took

on the Welsh Vicariate there were in all Wales and Herefordshire sixteen chapels and a dozen priests. When he died, in South Wales alone there were over forty churches and as many priests.

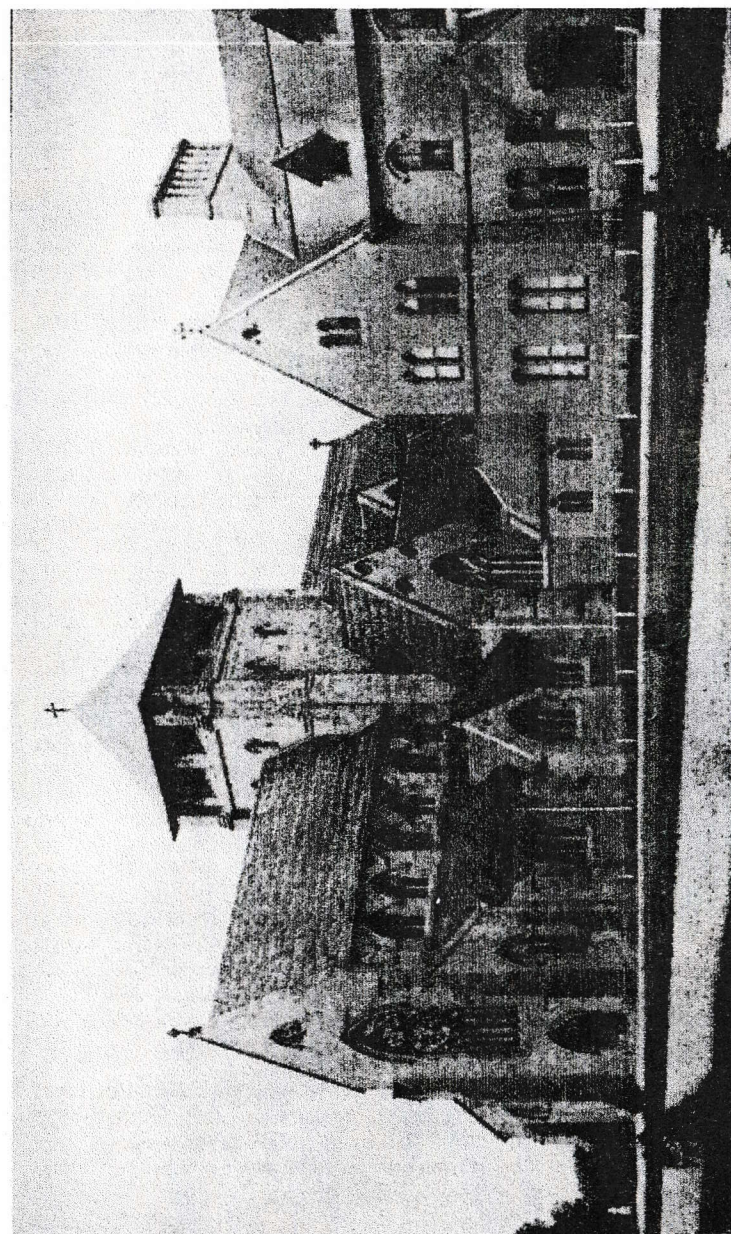
Bishop Brown saw the development of the Catholic Church in South Wales through a period of immense social, agricultural, industrial and technological change. He witnessed many events that we read of in our history books. He is deserving of a scholarly biography. He and the vast majority of his people endured heartbreaking injustice, poverty and discrimination but faced these iniquities with courage and determination. A great intellectual, friend of Cardinal Newman, twice reckoned to have been considered for transfer to the Westminster Diocese, Thomas Joseph Brown became a beggar for Christ's sake and for the sake of his people in Wales.

Worn-out by his labours and heavy responsibilities, Bishop Brown died in 1880 at the age of 82.

"The Tablet" of Saturday 17th April 1880 reported his death in these terms. *"For many years Bishop Brown's health has been ailing and since 1873 his labours have been shared by his auxiliary, Rt. Rev. Bishop Hedley O.S.B. The late winter severely taxed the enfeebled health of the Bishop, and at last, after some weeks of sickness, and after devoutly receiving the last rites of the Church, he expired on Monday 12th April."*

A subsequent edition reported that his funeral took place on Friday 16th April at St. Michael's Priory, Belmont – his pro-Cathedral. Present were six Bishops and numerous clergy. Bishop Hedley preached the panegyric as Bishop Brown lay in state, with his face uncovered until the end of the service. The coffin was borne to the grave on the shoulders of six members of his Benedictine community, the closing service being performed during a driving storm of rain.

His body was placed in a new brick grave close to the east window of the Cathedral. Later it was moved inside the church beneath a magnificent carved stone memorial, which can be seen today by visitors to what is now Belmont Abbey.



**St. Michael's Priory, Cleochanger, Hereford (now Belmont Abbey)  
The pro-Cathedral of the Diocese of Newport & Menevia**





The attached appendices - interesting in themselves - serve to illustrate the great strides that were made by the Catholic Church in Wales and Herefordshire under the care and guidance of this great Bishop.

To place Bishop Brown in the context of the history of his times, we list below some of the outstanding events that occurred in his lifetime.

- 1792 *French Revolutionary War between Britain and France.*
- 1798 *Irish Rebellion crushed.*
- 1799 *Napoleon comes to power in France.*
- 1800 *Act of Union with Ireland passed, to become effective the following year.*
- 1801 *The first census of Great Britain.*
- 1802 *Treaty of Amiens ends the French Revolutionary War.*
- 1803 *Napoleonic War begins. Rising in Ireland crushed.*
- 1805 *Nelson wins the Battle of Trafalgar but dies of wounds.*
- 1806 *Pitt the Younger dies. Trevethick's small industrial railway completed.*
- 1808 *Wellington's Peninsular War begins.*
- 1810 *King George III becomes insane. Prince of Wales becomes Regent the following year.*
- 1812 *Napoleon marches on Moscow. Anglo-American War begins.*
- 1814 *Napoleon defeated and exiled to Elba. Anglo-American war ends.*
- 1815 *Napoleon defeated and exiled to St. Helena.*
- 1820 *Reign of George IV begins.*
- 1824 *Stockton and Darlington Railway completed - the first passenger trains operate. Menai Bridge opened.*
- 1829 *Catholic Emancipation is carried. Successful trials for Stephenson's "Rocket"*
- 1830 *George IV dies succeeded by William IV.*
- 1831 *Serious cholera epidemic breaks out.*
- 1833 *The Oxford Movement is launched.*
- 1834 *Tolpuddle Martyrs transported.*
- 1837 *Reign of Queen Victoria begins.*
- 1839 *Chartist riots in Newport.*
- 1840 *Marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Penny Post introduced.*
- 1844 *First telegraph line in England is laid.*
- 1845 *The Irish famine starts.*
- 1846 *Corn laws repealed.*
- 1848 *Revolutions occur in France, Germany Italy and Austria.*
- 1851 *Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace held in London.*
- 1853 *Outbreak of Crimean War- Florence Nightingale at Scutari.*
- 1856 *End of the Crimean War.*
- 1860 *Abraham Lincoln becomes U.S. President.*
- 1861 *Death of Prince Albert. American Civil War breaks out.*
- 1865 *Slavery abolished in U.S.A. Abraham Lincoln assassinated.*
- 1868 *Transportation of criminals ended.*
- 1869 *Imprisonment for debt is abolished. Anglican Church in Ireland disestablished*
- 1870 *Franco- Prussian War begins. Death of Charles Dickens.*
- 1871 *Bank holidays introduced. Stanley meets Livingstone.*
- 1874 *Disraeli becomes Prime Minister.*
- 1875 *Suez Canal purchased.*
- 1876 *Victoria becomes Empress of India.*
- 1878 *Swan invents electric light bulb.*
- 1880 *Gladstone Prime Minister. Boycotting starts in Ireland. Bishop Brown dies.*

## Appendix 1

1842

### EXTRACT FROM THE CATHOLIC DIRECTORY AND ANNUAL REGISTER

Rt. Rev. T. J. Brown, OSB (Vicar Apostolic)  
Chepstow, Monmouthshire.

#### DISTRICT OF WALES

(North and South Wales, Monmouthshire and Herefordshire)

#### HEREFORDSHIRE

- Hereford. St. Francis Xavier's. Rev. Wm. Waterworth.  
On Sundays & Holydays. Mass at 10.30am & Vespers  
6.30pm.
- Ross-on-Wye. Rev. John Lewis Reeve. An attempt is being made to  
form a Mission in the beautiful town of Ross, where  
has long lain the germ of a Catholic Congregation.  
Subscriptions in aid thereof are earnestly solicited  
from the charitable and will be gratefully received by  
the Right Rev. Vicar Apostolic and the incumbent,  
Wye Villa, Ross, in which a private domestic Chapel  
Mass on Sundays and Holydays at 11.
- Weobley. Rev. M. Sinnott.

#### MONMOUTHSHIRE

- Abergavenny. Rev. James Milward. Prayers on Sundays & Holydays at 10.
- Chepstow. Rev. Wm. Woollet. Mass on Sundays and Holydays at  
10.30. afternoon prayers at 3. On weekdays Mass at  
8.am. in the Bishop's Oratory.
- Courtfield nr. Ross Rev. John Joseph Reeve.
- Llanarth. Rev. Samuel Fisher.
- Monmouth. Rev. T. Burgess.
- Newport. Revv. Edward Metcalfe and John Davison.  
On Sundays & Holydays Mass at 8 and 10. Afternoon  
prayers at 3. Weekdays Mass 8. The noble church at  
Newport was opened in Nov. 1840.
- Pontypool & Abersychan.  
Rev. Thomas Cody. An attempt has been made to establish  
a mission at Pontypool in favour of about 700 poor Irish  
employed in the iron and coal works in that neighbourhood.  
For this purpose, the Rev. T. Cody has been stationed at  
Newport in the house of the Rev. Ed. Metcalfe, and attends  
the Catholics of Pontypool and the neighbourhood on  
Sundays, travelling on foot a distance of 13 miles and  
upwards weekly and saying Mass at a public house in  
Abersychan. It is proposed to erect a shell of a Chapel as

soon as means can be obtained.

Usk.

Very Rev. Dr. Rooker. Mass on Sundays and Holydays 11  
afternoon prayers 3. Weekday Mass 9.

#### SOUTH WALES.

Brecon.

Rev. L. Havard.

Cardiff.

Rev. P. Millea. There is at Cardiff a congregation of almost  
exclusively poor Irish, fluctuating from 1,000 & upwards who  
have only lately had the advantage of a resident Priest and are  
still without any better chapel than the ground floor of a  
cottage, connected with an open shed. A suitable Church,  
however, is now commenced through the charity of the late  
benevolent Mrs. Eyre of Bath and Thomas Eyre Esq., but  
further assistance will be essential for its completion.  
Contributions to be sent to Rt. Rev. T.J. Brown, Chepstow.

Merthyr Tydfil

Rev. M. Carroll: The very zealous and talented pastor of  
Merthyr Tydfil has under his care about 700 poor Irish who  
are employed in the iron and coal works at Merthyr Tydfil  
and other places scattered at a distance of 7 or 8 miles around.  
He has no chapel but says two Masses every Sunday; one in  
Merthyr Tydfil in a loft over a slaughter house and the other at  
a six miles distance (which he travels on foot) in a wash house.  
He has a school of about 50 poor children of both sexes in a  
one horse stable, about 8 feet wide and 16 feet long. His own  
dwelling is a workman's cottage without a single article of  
decent furniture and often, it is feared, without sufficient food.  
The smallest contribution etc. would  
be gratefully received.

Glam.

Swansea.

Rev. Charles Kavanagh. The Chapel is in a ruinous condition,  
much too small and its term of lease is almost expired. Much  
contributions are earnestly solicited for the poor Irish engaged  
in the iron and copper works in Swansea and for the more  
respectable Catholics who would frequent this beautiful  
watering-place, had it a decent place for Catholic worship.

#### NORTH WALES.

Holywell.

St. Winefrides. Rev. Francis Pythgoe.

Talacre Flints.

Rev. Joseph Dwyer.

Wrexham Denb.

Rev. T. Tobin. Chapel with debt of £300.

#### ECCLESIASTICAL STATISTICS OF THE DISTRICT OF WALES.

Missionary Priests	20
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## Appendix 2

1880

### EXTRACTS FROM THE CATHOLIC DIRECTORY AND ANNUAL REGISTER

(The Year of Bishop Brown's Death)

### DIOCESE OF NEWPORT AND MENEVIA

Monmouthshire, Herefordshire and South Wales: namely Brecknockshire, Cardiganshire, Glamorganshire, Pembrokeshire and Radnorshire  
PATRON OF THE DIOCESE.

Our Blessed Lady, conceived without sin, Dec. 8

Right Rev. THOMAS JOSEPH BROWN, O.S.B. Bishop of NEWPORT AND MENEVIA; born at Bath, May 2, 1798; cons Oct. 28, 1840 Bishop of *Apollonia* and Vicar Apostolic of the Welsh District; transl. to Newport and Menevia, Sept. 29, 1850; named Assistant at the Pontifical Throne, Nov. 29, 1854.  
Residence: Bullingham, Hereford.

#### BISHOP AUXILIARY.

Right Rev. JOHN CUTHBERT HEDLEY, O.S.B. Bishop of Caesaropolis; born 1837; cons. by the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Sept 29, 1873.

Residence: St. Francis Xavier's, Hereford.

*Registrar for deceased Clergy:* Rev. Thomas Abbot, Monmouth  
*Inspector of Religious Instruction:* V.Rev. Canon Wilson OSB, St David's, Swansea

CATHEDRAL CHAPTER, erected Sept 3, 1860.

*Cathedral Prior.*

Very Rev. Paul Wilfrid Raynal

*Canons.*

Resident: Very Rev. William Romuald Woods (*Canon Theologian*); Very Rev. Henry Basil Hurworth; Very Rev. Peter Austin O'Neill; Very Rev. Francis Cuthbert Doyle; Very Rev. Archembald Francis Fleming. - *Non-resident:* Very Rev. Alfred Paulinus Wilson (*Canon Penitentiary*); Very Rev. John Wulstan Richards; Very Rev Robert Isadore Green; Very Rev. Charles Vincent Dolman

The Chapter is composed of a Cathedral Prior, with five resident Canons and four non-resident: all Benedictines.

*Rural Deaneries.*

*St. David:* Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. Vacant.

*St. Illtyd:* Brecknockshire and Glamorganshire. *Dean:* Rev. W. Williams

*St. Dubritius:* Monmouthshire. *Dean:* Rev. Thomas Abbot

*St. Thomas of Hereford:* Herefordshire. *Dean:* Rev. Peter Lewis

## MONMOUTHSHIRE

ABERGAVENNY. *St. Michael.* Rev. Robert Ephrem Guy, OSB. Sun, M. 9, 10.30; devs, inst, B 6. Hds,

M 10; B.6.45 Wkds, M. 8.30sum. 9.wint. Th. B. 6.45

*The Sisterhood of St. Ethelreda, attached to this mission, teach the night school and Sunday school and visit the poor.*

ABERSYCHAN. *St. Francis of Assisi.* (1863). Served from Pontypool. Sun. M. 9, 11; R.C.B. 4.30. Hds, M 9. Wkds, M 8.

ABERTILLERY. *St. Mary* (1877) served from Brynmawr.

BLAENAVON. *The Sacred Heart and St. Felix.* (1868) School Chapel served from Pontypool. Sun, M.11; C 3.

BRYNMAWR. *St. Mary.* (1863) Rev. P. J. Cardinael. Sun., M. 11; R,B 6.30.Hds. M. 9; R,B 7.30

CAERLEON. Served from Newport ev 4th Sunday. M.10.30. C ev Sun, 6.

CHEPSTOW. *St. Mary.* Rev. John B. Quaid. Sun. M. 10.30. evng serv. 6. Hds. M 9: wkds 8.

COEDANGRED, Skenfrith, near Monmouth. *The Immaculate Conception* (1847)

Rev. F. Marianus O.S.F.C. Sun, M 11; Hds 10; aftn serv. with B, 3 Wkds, M 8 sum. 8.30 wint.

CWMBRAN. *Our Lady of the Angels.* (1867) School Chapel, served from Pontypool. Sun, M 11; evng serv, C, B 6.

DAN-Y-GRAIG, Grosmont. *The Immaculate Conception.* (1869). Served from Pontypool. Sun, M 11; evng serv, C, B 6.

EBBW VALE *All Saints,* School Chapel (1865). Rev. E. O'Dwyer. Sun M 9, 11; evng serv 6.30. Hds, M 10; B 7.30. Wkds, M 8.30 sum, 9 wint. Cf, Sat 7 to 10pm. Cfr: H Fam

LLANARTH, Raglan. Rev. Edmund Delarue. Sun M 10.30; Hds 9, wkds 8.30. V,B.Sun, Hds 5.30

MONMOUTH. *St. Mary* (About 1795). Rev. Thomas Abbot (m.R.) Sun, M 10.30 V.B 8. Wkds, M8.30 sum, 9 wint. Visits BS, R and nt prs, 8 ev evening, with B Th. Lent Sta Fri at 7.30pm.

-1 NEWPORT. *St. Mary* (1840) Fathers of Charity: Revv. Dominic Cavalli, Michael Bailey, Alfred Bowen. Sun, M8, 9.30, 11; C 2.30; V, inst, B 6.30.Hds, M 5, 7, 10; evng serv 7.30. Wkds, M 7, 8. Wed, Fri, evng serv 7.30

-2 St. Michael', High-street, Pillgwenlly (1872) Sun, M 9; C 2.30.Hds. M 8.30.

PENLLWYN. Served from Pontypool. Sun, M 8, B 11.

PONTYPOOL. *St. Alban's Monastery* (1844; July 23 1846.) Franciscan Capuchin Fathers; Revv. FF. Joachim (*Superior*) David (*Vicar*), James, Benedict, Augustine. Sun, M 9, HM 11; V,C,B 6.30. Hds M 7.30, 9; B 7.30. Cf in English, Italian, French and Dutch. 3rd Order of St. Francis. Cord of St. Francis.

RISCA, Newport. *St. Anthony of Padua and St. Clare*. (1868) served from Pontypool.

RHYMNEY. *St. John*, (Aug 1 1861.) Rev. Leonard Joseph Davies, OSB. Sun, M 9, 11; V,B 6. Hds, M 9; R B 7. Wkds, M 8. Mon, Wed, Ros 7 p.m..Cf mng, and evng at 6, exc Sun and Tu.

TREDEGAR. *The Immaculate Conception* (1860; re-opened 1865) Rev. William Williams. Sun, M 9, 11; V,B 6.30. Hds M 9.30; wkds 8.30.

USK. *St. Francis Xavier*. (1847) Rev. Thomas Croft. Sun, M 11; V,B 6 Wkds, M 8.

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## HEREFORDSHIRE

HEREFORD. *St. Francis Xavier*. (1837 -39). Right Rev. BISHOP HEDLEY, O.S.B. Very Rev. Charles Vincent Canon Dolman O.S.B. Sun M 8, 11; Hds 9; devs B. 6.30.

BARTESTREE Convent. Rev. Peter Lewis. Sun, Hds, M 9; B.3.30.

BROXWOOD, Pembridge. *St. John of the Cross*. Rev. A. Van den Heuvel (*Can Regular of the Holy Cross*). Sun, M 10; aftn serv 3.

CLEHONGER, Hereford. ~~Pro-Cathedral of St. Michael~~. (1855; Nov.21.1859). Very Revv. Paul Wilfrid Raynal (*Cathedral Prior*) Wm Romuald Canon Woods (*Sub-Prior*), Henry Basil Canon Hurworth, Peter Augustine Canon O'Neill, Francis Cuthbert Canon Doyle, Archembald Francis Canon Fleming. O.S.B. Sun, M 10; V 3.30. Hds, M 9.45; V 3.30. COURTFIELD, Ross. Rev. Michael Ryan. Sun, M 10.30; C inst 3; B 4. Hds, M 9; wkds 8.30. Sat, B 6p.m.

KINGTON. served from Leominster.

LEOMINSTER. Rev James Berry, (19 Broad Street) Sun, M10; evng serv 6.

ROSS. *The Most Blessed Sacrament*. Rev. P. Fotheringham, B.D. Sun H.C. 8.30, M 10.30; C inst 2.30; serv, lect, B 3. Hds, M 8. Wkds. M 8.

ROTHERWAS, Hereford. *St. Mary*. Rev. W.E. Drifffield. Sun, M,B 10.30.

WEOBLEY. *St. Thomas of Hereford*. (1834) Rev. Charles Kerin. Sun, M 10.30; Hds 10. Aftn serv 3.

## SOUTH WALES

### BRECKNOCKSHIRE

BRECON. *St. Michael* (Aug. 6.1851.) Rev. John Dawson. Sun. M 10.30 wint, 11 sum. V, winter 3, sum 6.

### CARDIGANSHIRE

ABERYSTWYTH. *Our Lady of the Angels and St. Winefride*, Queens Road. (1874-5), Rev. W. E. Williams. Sun. H C 8.30; M 10; prs. inst. B. 6 Hds, M 10; R. disc, B 8. Wkds, M 8 sum. 8.30. wint. Th R, inst, B 8.

### CARMARTHENSHIRE

CARMARTHEN. *St. Mary*. (1851,1852) Rev. Thomas Carolan. Sun, M 11; prs. disc 6; Hds, M 10; wkds 8.

LLANELLY. *St. Mary*. Rev. Thomas Contrin. Sun, M 11; V. inst 6.

### GLAMORGANSHIRE.

ABERAVON. Rev. W.J.McClement. Sun. M 11; devs, s. B. 6.30. Wkds, M 8.30; Ros. Sta, altern Fri, 7.30.p.m.

ABERDARE. Rev. Armand Hamelin. Sun, M 11; C inst 2; V, lect, B 6. Hds, M 10 B.inst 7.30.

BRIDGEND. *St. Mary* (1856) Very Rev. Robert Isadore Canon Green OSB. Sun, M 9, 11; C inst 4; V, B 6.30. Hds. M 9. Wkds M 8 sum, 8.30 wint. Th, devs, B 7.30.

CARDIFF - 1. *St. Peter* (1861). Fathers of Charity: Revv. Richard Richardson, John Bailey, George Cormack, George Harrison. Rev. Daniel Hallahan. Sun, M 8.30, 10, HM 11; V,B 6.30. Hds, M 8, 10, evng serv 7.30. Wkds, M 7.30 8 Wed, Fri 7.30 p.m. R and B.

-2 *St. David* (1841-42) Fathers of Charity. Revv. Stephen Bruno, Edmund Butcher, Joseph Butcher. Sun, M 7, 8.30, 9.45, HM 11; V.B. 6.30. Hds, M 5, 7.30, 9, 10; evng serv 7.30. Wkds, M 7, 7.30. Devs, Tu, Th, Fri, 7.30p.m.; B, Th 7.30.

-3 *St. Mary*, Canton. School Chapel. Rev Abbe Bardet (*retired*) Sun, M 7.30, 11; C 3; V,B 6.30. Wkds, M 7, 7.30. B, Fri 7.

-4 *St. Patrick*, Grange Town. Served from St. Peter's Sun, M 9.30.

-5 *St. Joseph*, Penarth. Rev. Henry Clark, Inst C.. Sun, HC 9, M 11.30; R, inst, B 4.30. Hds, M 9; wkds, 7.30.

CARDIFF -6. *St. Paul*, Newtown. Served from *St. David's*. Sun, M 8.30, 10 evng serv 7.30; Devs, Wed, Fri, evng 7.30.

-7. CARDIFF CASTLE. Served from Penarth.

-8 LAMBETHERY. Station served from Penarth. 1st Sunday of each quarter, M 11.

*Public Institutions attended: Gaol, Infirmary, Workhouse, Industrial Ship,*

*Ely Union School. Ten Poor-schools, Middle school, under Sisters of Providence. Upper school for young ladies, Heathfield House, Roath.*

-9 Convent of the *Good Shepherd*. Rev. F.C. Gallini

DOWLAIS. *St. Illtutus* (1844-46), Rev. James Edmund Tunney OSB; Rev. Thomas Matthews. Sun, M 7.30, 9, 10, 11; C, B 3; V, B 6.30. Hds, M 7.30, 9; evng serv 7.30. Wkds, M 7.30. Th, R, B 7.30. Lent and Adv, 7.30; Tu, R, B; Fri. Sta.

MAESTEG. *Our Lady and St. Patrick*. Rev. P. J. Capron. Sun, M 9, 11; evng serv 6.30. Hds, M 9; evng serv 7.30. Wkds, M 8.30. Fri, Sta, B 7.30. Society for the Crusade for the Suppression of Intemperance.

MERTHYR TYDFIL. *St. Mary*, Rev. John Bernard Sanders DD, OSB; Rev. Richard Butler. Sun, M 9, 11; V, s, B 6; Hds, M 7.30, 9; wkds, 7.30. Fri, devs 7.30 p.m.. At Troedyrhiew, Sun, M 9.

MOUNTAIN ASH. Served from Aberdare. M, inst 9.30, ev Sunday.

NEATH. Served from Aberavon. Sun, M, inst 9.30.

SWANSEA - 1. *St. David*, *St. David's-place*. (1847.) Very Rev. Alfred Paulinus Canon Wilson, OSB; Rev. Bernard Wade, OSB; Rev. James O'Reilly. Sun, M 9, HM 11; serv for ch, B 3; V (1st Sun of m Cp). B 6.30. Hds, M 8.30, HM and disc 10; Cp, disc, B 7.30. Wkds, M 8, 8.30. Evng serv, Wed, Fri, 7.30. Fri Lent and Adv, Sta 7.30.

-2. *St. Joseph*, Greenhill. Very Rev. John Wulstan Canon Richards, Rev. Henry Julian O'Hare OSB. Sun, M 8.30, 11; Cp, C, B 3. Hds, M 8, 10; R. disc, B 7.30. Wkds, M 8, Th, evng serv 7.30. Lent and Adv, Sta 7.30.

*General Infirmary, Fever Hosp., Gaol, Un. Wkh, - Four Poor-schools.*

*Girls and Infants taught by the Ursulines. Upper school for young ladies under Ursulines.*

TREFOREST. *St. Dubritius*. (1857) Rev. James Moore.  
St. Michael's Home, Industrial School for girls.

## PEMBROKESHIRE

HAVERFORDWEST. *St. David and St. Patrick* (April 24, 1872.) Rev. John Cullen. Sun, M. 11; C 3; R, s, B 6. Hds, M 9. Wkds, M 8, wint 9.

PEMBROKE DOCK. (1846, 1847.) Rev. Oliver Murphy. Sun, M 9.30, 11; evng serv 6. Hds, M 9; wkds, 8 sum, 8.30 wint.

TENBY. Occasionally served from Pembroke Dock.

## RADNORSHIRE

No Mission.

## COMMUNITIES, &c.

### MEN

BENEDICTINES: Cathedral Priory, St. Michael's, Clehonger, Hereford

CAPUCHIN: Pontypool.

FATHERS OF CHARITY: Newport, Cardiff St. David's and St. Peter's

### WOMEN

GOOD SHEPHERD:

Cardiff.

OUR LADY OF CHARITY AND REFUGE:

Bartestree, Hereford

SERVANTS OF THE SACRED HEART:

Llanarth.

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL:

Bullingham, Hereford

SISTERS OF NAZARETH:

Cardiff.

SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE:

Cardiff.

SISTERS OF ST. ETHELDREDA:

Abergavenny.

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH:

Newport.

URSULINES:

Swansea.

## *Ecclesiastical Statistics of the Diocese*

	Secular	28	
PRIESTS	Regular on Mission	27	62
	In Monastery of St. Michael's OSB	6	
	Retired.	1	
	Public Churches, Chapels and Stations		58
	Registered for Marriages.		29

This is the first booklet in a series to be published by the Archive/History Group of the Archdiocese. It consists of a number of interested volunteers prepared to devote their expertise and time to researching, writing, compiling, printing and publishing articles on the Catholic history of Wales in the second Millennium. We also aim to produce a newsletter periodically under the title "The Old Faith". If you are interested in joining us or receiving the newsletter please contact:-

**The Secretary, Archive History Group,  
Pastoral Resource Centre, 910 Newport Road,  
Rumney, Cardiff CF3 8LL  
Tel: 029 2036 0044  
E.mail: [darch@mccmail.com](mailto:darch@mccmail.com)**

Material for this booklet has been taken from various sources in particular "The Downside Review" of 1880 and "St. Peter's Magazines" published in Cardiff in the 1920's by Rev. J. C. Cronin I.C.

No.2 in the series will be "A Short History of St. David's Cathedral, Cardiff" – a fascinating study of the history of the "Mother Church" of Cardiff – the first to be built there after the Reformation.

The Millennium Prayer and logo is published on card by St. Paul's Multimedia and is available from the CTS Bookshop, Cardiff

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*Praise and glory to you, O Christ  
today and forever.*

With the shepherds from Bethlehem  
and the wise men from the east,  
we kneel before your manger, Lord Jesus.  
We commit ourselves once again  
to the great missionary work of bringing you  
to those who have never heard your name.  
And we reach out the hand of friendship  
to those who are worshipping you in different  
churches and searching for Christian unity.

*Praise and glory to you, O Christ  
today and forever.*

Lord, your mother Mary kept all these things  
and treasured them in her heart.  
Open our hearts to the richness of  
our faith.  
Open our minds to its meaning.  
We adore you and bless you as our Lord  
and Saviour,  
Son of God and son of woman,  
the way, the truth and the life,  
the one mediator between us and God.

*Praise and glory to you, O Christ  
today and forever.*

