



CATHOLIC NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY THE BASILICA OF OUR LADY, WALSINGHAM

Walsingham - "England's Nazareth"

PRESS RELEASE FROM THE BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

9th April 2018 The Solemnity of The Annunciation



OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM TO VISIT ALL ENGLISH CATHEDRALS IN PREPARATION FOR THE REDEDICATION OF ENGLAND AS THE DOWRY OF MARY IN 2020

The Guild of Our Lady of Ransom in partnership with the National Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham announces a two year 'Dowry Tour', which will see the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham leaving her hallowed seat in the Slipper Chapel visiting the Cathedrals of England.

This tour is part of the spiritual preparation for England's re-dedication as the Dowry of Mary around the Solemnity of the Annunciation in 2020. Both the Tour and the rededication have the support of the Bishops. This is a call to a spiritual renewal to support the New Evangelisation in our Country.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols says *"This is a moment of great promise for the Church in this country and for our mission"*

The Joys of Mary

The Annunciation of the Lord, which is at the heart of Our Lady's message at Walsingham, celebrates the angel Gabriel's appearance to the Virgin Mary, announcing that she had been chosen to be the Mother of Our Lord. Her response *"Be it done unto me according to thy word"* invites us to participate in her first joy, *"that the Word became flesh and lived among us"*

It is the joy of the Annunciation that sets the tone for this pilgrimage, as we are invited to rediscover what the ancient title of England as 'Dos Mariae', *Mary's Dowry* means for us today and for future generations to come. Devotion to the Joys of Mary was strong in medieval England and is expressed in the Christmas song the Joys of Mary.



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Meaning of Dowry

The word "dowry" (from the Latin *dos*, meaning "donation") is sometimes understood as the donation accompanying a bride. In medieval English law, however, the meaning is reversed—a husband would set aside a portion of his estate designated for the maintenance of his wife, should she become a widow. The historical understanding of England as "Mary's Dowry" is understood in this sense—that, England has been "set apart" for Mary.

The title is believed to originate in the time of St Edward the Confessor (1042 - 1066) in whose reign the Holy House was built, though its precise origin is unknown. It had become widespread by the middle of the fourteenth century, and around the year 1350, a mendicant preacher stated in a sermon that "it is commonly said that the land of England is the Virgin's dowry", reflecting the origin of the title, in the deep devotion of the English people to the Mother of God that existed in medieval England.

In 1381, King Richard II (1377 - 1399) "set aside" England to Our Lady as her Dowry, for her care and protection in the Chapel of Our Lady of Pew in Westminster Abbey.

In 1399 Archbishop Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury wrote.

"The contemplation of the great mystery of the Incarnation has drawn all Christian nations to venerate her from whom came the first beginnings of our redemption. But we English, being the servants of her special inheritance and her own dowry, as we are commonly called, ought to surpass others in the fervour of our praises and devotions."

In 1893 Pope Leo XIII write

"the 'wonderful filial love which burnt within the hearts of your forefathers towards the get Mother of God... to whose service they consecrated themselves with such abundant proofs of devotion, that the Kingdom itself acquired the singular title of Mary's Dowry.'" He also recalled the special devotion paid to St Peter as the principal patron of the country. He desired that this devotion to these "two patrons of the faith" and 'guardians of all virtue' be revived and a new consecration made by a solemn rite. He foresaw it bringing great benefit on the people at that time which marked a new beginning for the Catholic Faith in England.!"

The gift to be given in 2020, will reflect that same love of the Mother of God that inspired the original gift, but the gift given today will not be the country of England, but the gift of the personal faith of the people of England and those who have made their home here.

The people who seek again, in our time, the prayers and protection of the Mother of God for our country to assist the Church in the new evangelisation which calls for a new ardour in our faith.



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New Spiritual Exercise – The Angelus Promise

The prayer of the Angelus is set around the events of the Annunciation, the **Angelus Promise** has been created to help us prepare spiritually for the Rededication of our country, as Mary's Dowry.

The Angelus Promise comprises of four parts:

1. Preparation: Prayer, Truth & Service
2. A Pilgrim's Walk: Penance
3. Making the Promise: Commitment
4. Living in the Present Moment: Fidelity

First date

The first visit will be to Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral between 21st and the 23rd June 2018

Under the guardianship and protection of St Joseph, Father of the New Evangelisation, the 'Dowry Tour' will support ongoing spiritual formation through the promotion of a nationwide Novena of prayer for England in preparation for the rededication.

Let us remember the famous Prophecy of Pope Leo 13th when he signed the rescript for the Restoration of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in 1897: *"When England goes back to Walsingham, Our Lady will come back to England"*

Full tour schedule to date can be found on

www.dowrytour.org.uk



Notes to editors

Key Anniversary: 70 years ago. In 1948 Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, dedicated Great Britain to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

What is the new evangelisation?

The key texts in which reference to New Evangelisation appears are:

1990 John Paul II's missionary encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio*

1997 The Vatican Congregation for the Clergy's, General Directory for Catechesis

2001 John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*

The promise – commitment

Prayerfully make your angelus promise in private.

R: The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary V: And she conceived by the Holy Spirit

As God once chose Mary to become the Mother of His Son through the message of an angel, so He chooses me this day, and invites me through the ministry of the Church or the example of another, to seek and do His Will at this moment in my life. Hail Mary full of grace.....

R: Behold the handmaid of the Lord V: Be it done unto me according to thy Word

Mary's response to her invitation, "let it be done to me according to your Word," opened her heart to God's grace and all things became possible. Let my YES today take away fear, as I embrace God's Will, and like Mary "ponder these things in my heart." Hail Mary full of grace.....

R: And the Word became flesh (bow or genuflect) V: And dwelt amongst us

At a moment in history, Mary's faithfilled YES conceived Him, first in her heart, which then led to the birth of our Saviour. Through accepting Him in my heart, enable me to recognise my role in bringing Christ to my sisters and brothers today. Hail Mary full of grace.....

R: Pray for us O most holy Mother of God V: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

Let us pray: O Holy Mother of God, pray for us, and assist us as we dedicate ourselves this day. Your yes at the Annunciation brought our Saviour Jesus into the world, and you invite us to contemplate the great mystery of the Incarnation, sharing your joy in announcing that "the Word was made flesh and lived among us." May our yes, this day, open our hearts to serve our



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sisters and brothers in this your Dowry, that they too may share our joy in the Good News that God walks among us. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Full details of The Angelus Promise can be found in the NEW Pilgrim Handbook: The Walsingham Way 2018