

GK's MEEKLY

FROM THE CATHOLIC

G.K. CHESTERTON SOCIETY

JULY 30 - - 2022

VOL. I.

No. 1

SIXPENCE

THE MEEKNESS OF A CONVERT

A Catholic is a person who has plucked up the courage to face the incredible and inconceivable idea that something else may be wiser than he is.

– G.K. Chesterton, 'In Defense of Sanity'

Born on 29th May 1874 on Campden Hill, Kensington, GK Chesterton was baptised in the Anglican Church of St George. He went on to become a renowned journalist and author of more than 100 books. Some of his major works are 'Orthodoxy' and 'The Everlasting Man' as well as biographies of St Francis of Assisi and St Thomas Aquinas. He is perhaps best remembered today for his crime fiction stories about Fr Brown.

Chesterton's new Bishop writes...



David
By the Grace of God and favour of the Apostolic See
Bishop of Northampton

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings to you as you gather together as pilgrims to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the Conversion of G K Chesterton.

My apologies that it is not possible to be with you at this time. This message of encouragement and support is offered with gratitude for your faithfulness to the memory of one who made his home in our Diocese.

Professor Jack Scarisbrick wrote my school textbook on reformation history. Some years later, he was a parishioner and a great support to me. At this time, in 1986, he wrote these words of Chesterton in a letter to the *Chesterton Review*,

'we all know that he was an enormously good man as well as an enormous one. My point is that he was more than that. There was a special integrity and blamelessness about him, a special devotion to the good and to justice... above all, there was that breathtaking, intuitive (almost angelic) possession of the Truth and awareness of the supernatural which only a truly holy person can enjoy. This was the gift of heroic intelligence and understanding - and of heroic prophecy. He was a giant spiritually as well as physically.'

The sanctity of Chesterton is a matter for the Holy See to decide. In the meantime, we may seek to bear witness to our Catholic faith in these difficult times, by reflecting upon the wit and passion of this illustrious convert, as he sought to bear witness to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

+ David

Rt Revd Dr David J Oakley

Cardinal Pacelli, the (then) Vatican Secretary of state and the future Pope Pius the XII, sent a telegram on behalf of Pope Pius the XI, to the Archbishop of Westminster on the occasion of Chesterton's death, which described Chesterton as a gifted Defender of the Catholic Faith. But while his defence of the Faith was bold, Chesterton was always personally meek and very humble. When asked for a copy of one of his books, he asked the astonished recipient why they would want a copy! He debated many of the famous men of his day, but however wrong men like Shaw and Wells may have been, he never fell out with them (cont. over)



(cont) but could debate them and yet remain good friends with them.

Saturday 30th July 2022 is the 100th Anniversary of the Conversion of GK Chesterton.

The location of his reception into the Catholic Church was "the Railway Hotel in Beaconsfield, the dance-room of which had been converted into a makeshift chapel in the absence of any Catholic church in the town. In truth it was little more than a shed with a corrugated-iron roof and wooden walls, fitted with chapel fixtures by Sir Philip Rose and made available by the hotel's Irish landlady, Mrs Borlase. However, if Father Rice had failed to persuade Chesterton to be received in more luxurious surroundings (Douai Abbey School where Father was headmaster), he was compensated amply when Gilbert requested that he be present with Father O'Connor at his reception on Sunday, 30th July. The two Priests breakfasted together at the inn at which Father O'Connor was staying before walking together to Top Meadow [GKC's house]. According to Father Rice, they found Gilbert in an armchair reading the catechism, 'pulling faces and making noises as he used to do when reading'. Greeting his two friends, he got up and stuffed the catechism in his pocket. At lunch he drank water and poured wine for everyone else, and at about three o'clock they set out for the church. While Gilbert was making his Confession to Father O'Connor, Frances [GK's Wife], who was weeping continually, was comforted by Father Rice."

From *Wisdom and Innocence, A Life of GK Chesterton* by Joseph Pearce.

Please cut out, keep and say the prayer below

God Our Father, Thou didst fill the life of Thy servant Gilbert Keith Chesterton with a sense of wonder and joy, and gave him a faith which was the foundation of his ceaseless work, a charity towards all men, particularly his opponents, and a hope which sprang from his lifelong gratitude for the gift of human life. May his innocence and his laughter, his constancy in fighting for the Christian faith in a world losing belief, his lifelong devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and his love for all men, especially for the poor, bring cheerfulness to those in despair, conviction and warmth to lukewarm believers and the knowledge of God to those without faith. We beg Thee to grant the favours we ask through his intercession, the end of abortion in this Country [and especially for.....] so that his holiness may be recognized by all and the Church may proclaim him Blessed. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Catholicgkchestertonsociety.co.uk

The Convert

By GK Chesterton

Written on 30th July 1922

After one moment when I bowed my head
And the whole world turned over and came upright,
And I came out where the old road shone white.
I walked the ways and heard what all men said,
Forests of tongues, like autumn leaves unshed,
Being not unlovable but strange and light;
Old riddles and new creeds, not in despite
But softly, as men smile about the dead

The sages have a hundred maps to give
That trace their crawling cosmos like a tree,
They rattle reason out through many a sieve
That stores the sand and lets the gold go free:
And all these things are less than dust to me
Because my name is Lazarus and I live.

Never Miss an Issue of GK's Meekly!

Send us your email address today and never miss a single issue; CatholicGKCSociety@yahoo.co.uk
This first issue has been published on the day of the 12th Annual GK Chesterton Pilgrimage. The second issue will include a report of the Pilgrimage.

Supporting Pregnant Mothers

Sponsorship over the years, of some of those walking on the Pilgrimage has raised over £20,000 for the Pro-Life work of The Good Counsel Network. You can donate to them here,

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/gkcwalk22

GK Chesterton Prayer in Other Languages

Find the GK Chesterton Prayer in over twenty languages on our website.

Read GK Chesterton

See our website for some links and ideas of what to read and how to find Chesterton writing for free (He wrote a lot more than Father Brown!)

Watch GK Chesterton Online or on TV

Watch GK Chesterton, The Apostle of Common Sense, at www.ewtn.co.uk or on Sky 586, at 2.30pm Monday, 7am Wednesdays or 3.30am on Saturdays.

Famous Authors on GKC

"If after all my Atheology turns out wrong and your Theology right I feel I shall always be able to pass into Heaven (if I want to) as a friend of G.K.C.'s. Bless you" H. G. Wells, letter, December 1933.
Terry Pratchett writes that Chesterton "in small doses taken regularly is good for the soul".