

**Oblates of St Gregory the Great and St Frances of Rome**  
**Retreat Day with St Gregory's Society - Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024**



*The Emmaus Story by  
Daniel Bonnell*

It was a joy to be back home!  
We gathered with Gregorians, old boys of the School and their wives and friends of Downside for a post Easter retreat. The day began with Mass in the Abbey Church: the temperature had not improved but

the Mass lifted our spirits. Fr Michael Patey (School Chaplain) was the principal celebrant with Fr James and Fr Leo concelebrating. We were blessed with the presence of two Polish Scholars who accompanied us with singing the chants, and trumpet accompaniment to the organ.

Fr Michael reminded us that although this was not the traditional Easter Triduum retreat, we were still in the Easter season, a time of great joy. He preached eloquently, comparing the instructions to the early Christian Community to the recent school inspection. The inspectors were looking for performance indicators and outcomes. Paul and Barnabas were appealing for discipleship and evangelisation.

After Mass we gathered for coffee in the Weld Café: a very convivial atmosphere with renewed acquaintances and friendships. Fr Leo spoke to us about our baptismal vocation, reminding us of the liturgical importance and significance of the Triduum, particularly the Easter Vigil.

We were given a delicious lunch, and this was followed by a choice of a tour of the Abbey Church led by Patrick Magee, or a tour of the Abbey Gardens by Fr Leo.

The afternoon continued with *Lectio Divina* led by Fr Leo based on the Emmaus story in Luke's gospel that is traditionally read at the Easter evening Mass. We were also given a picture by Daniel Bonnell of the Emmaus story and were asked to reflect on a number of questions:

Which words of Jesus struck us most?

What was Jesus saying to each one of us?

What did we see and understand from the picture?

We then proceeded to the Abbey Church for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, with Benediction and the opportunity for confession.

The day finished with tea and scones and reluctant farewells.

*Tina Quinn*  
*Oblate of St Gregory the Great*  
*& St Frances of Rome*