

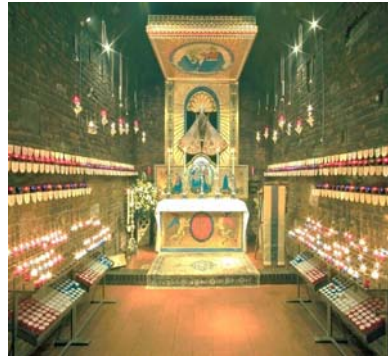
Rosary Prayer Group: Holy Pilgrimage to the Anglican Shrine at Walsingham, “England's Nazareth”

All Saints' parishoners James Peck and Elizabeth O'Brien made pilgrimage this Eastertide to the holy shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk, England. We came representing the All Saints' Rosary Prayer Group along with pilgrims from Saint Paul's – K Street, an Episcopal church in Washington D.C.. On the way we spent 3 days sightseeing in Cambridge with evensong devotions in the great college chapels of the University. Other stops included Bury St. Edmund's, Ely Cathedral, and Little Gidding, a country chapel that gave T.S. Eliot inspiration in his poem *the Four Quartets*. A tour of Salisbury Cathedral, evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, eucharist at the sister parish of St. Paul's – Knightsbridge, and time around London completed the journey.



The story of Walsingham inspires hope for the future and trust that in God's time all manner of things will be well. The legend is that in 1061 the Virgin Mary appeared to the Saxon noblewoman Richeldis

de Faverches and brought her to the house in Nazareth where the angelic annunciation of the incarnation was received. Mary asked Richeldis to build a replica of the house in Walsingham with the words “all who seek me there shall find succor.”



The holy house in England quickly grew in fame and remained one of the principle destinations for Christian pilgrims until the reformation, when by order of the Henry the VIII all monastic houses were abolished and pilgrim shrines destroyed. Walsingham shared in this fate and for over 300 years remained a derelict ruin. Interest in pilgrimages returned to England with the rise of the Oxford movement, which stated that Anglicanism, along with Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, were three branches of the One Catholic Church. By the 1930's Walsingham had been restored as a pilgrim shrine. Today, over 300,000 pilgrim visitors each year are beckoned to Walsingham to offer prayers and devotions.

Our first order of business upon arrival was to meet in the holy house for prayer and thanksgiving. Each day began with a Eucharistic celebration

before breakfast and ended with shrine prayers centered on the rosary. Other pilgrim services included evening prayer, private confessions, the Stations of the Cross, a procession of Our Lady of Walsingham, sprinkling with holy water and laying on of hands, and a procession of the consecrated Host with Benediction, a service in which the faithful adore Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament. The shrine is available for devotions day and night with many individual chapels dedicated to the mysteries of the rosary.

A replica of the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham now sits in the Lady Chapel, and is used each Sunday morning at 9:15 when the Rosary is said. Making pilgrimage to a holy place brings alive the reality that we are part of a much larger organism, the body of Christ. There's something special about a place where the faithful have gathered for centuries to honor Mary, the ideal for Christian discipleship and symbol of the Church. Walsingham provides such a space not only for worship and devotion, but also for refreshment, healing, and for making new friends. Truly it can be said of Our Lady of Walsingham, “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.”



*Photos by Graham Howard,
Walsingham*

*For more information about the
Anglican shrine of Our Lady of
Walsingham, visit:
www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk*