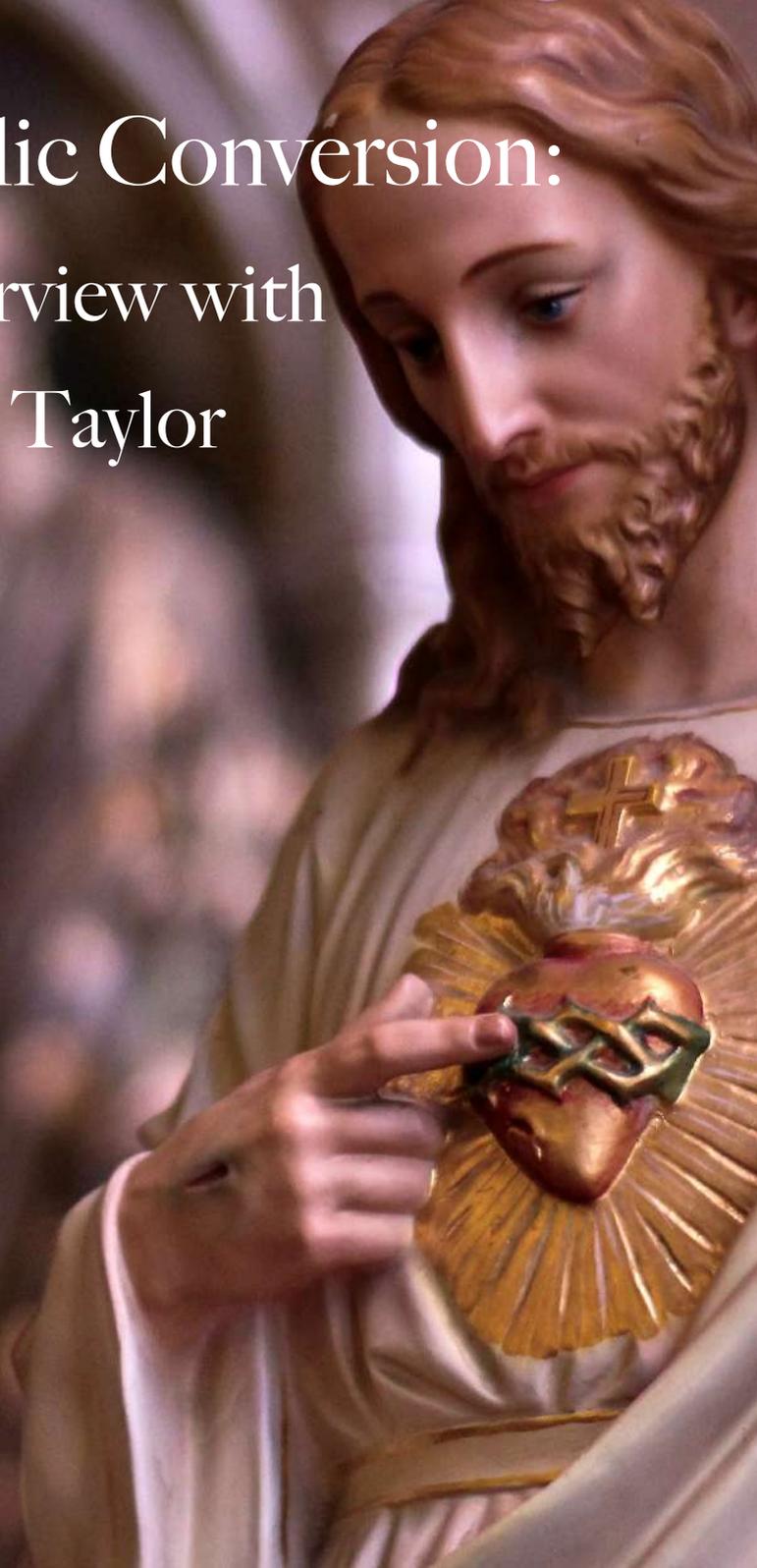


Catholic Conversion:
An Interview with
Derrick Taylor



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Introduction

I have studied religion, philosophy and belief seriously since the age of fifteen but since founding my own movement, Astronism, I have realised what it means to face ridicule for simply how you see the world. Although my Astronist beliefs now greatly divaricate from my grandparents' Traditionalist Catholic beliefs, no doubt my Astronist affiliation possesses origins in how my grandparents immersed me into the Catholic religion from a very young age.

I always knew my grandfather was religious, but I did not realise the degree to which he had undergone religious and mystical experience. However, when I first read his 1995 interview with the Sceptre Bulletin — four years before my own birth — I realised just how much my grandfather had a gift for spiritual perception and divine connection. When I read the Sceptre Interview, as I call it, it ploughed me over in a way that it only could for me because I am the grandson of the subject.

Although my grandfather had died nearly ten years earlier, when I was reading his interview, I felt closer and more connected to him than ever before. The interview thrust upon me a mixture of emotions; joy because of the fact that I had managed to retrieve a direct resource to my grandfather's life and beliefs yet also sadness to know that I will never be able to speak to him about his Catholicity and the interior locutions he experienced. Beyond this, I have so many more questions that I can only make speculations as to his answers. I felt a similar way when I first read my grandmother Irene Mary Taylor's October letter after its rediscovery in June 2020.

Whatever the case, I understand now that certainly it is my duty to the legacy of my grandfather to ensure that the world know of his beliefs, to systematise his Catholic figureship and beatific image, and to make certain that my grandfather's life

and legacy are not forgotten. In retrieving the Sceptre Interview, I have realised more than ever before that my grandparents were extraordinary in their Catholicity which has translated to my belief that in their life stories, there exists a significant opportunity to make of them two English Catholic figures from Lancashire and, perhaps one day, two new blessed and later, saints.

In this book *Catholic Conversion*, I perform an exegesis on this interview of my grandfather and explicate the events in his life that he describes to the best of my knowledge and understanding of them. I also establish the foundations for Derrick Taylor's beatific image — the set of attributes and concepts that form his Catholic figureship — which has in turn translated to manifold contributions to the theological system Irenianism named after his wife (my grandmother), of which his contributions constitute a major branch. This *Catholic Conversion* and the preceding work *Irene Mary's October Letter* (published 23rd December 2021) form the necessary precursory works to *The Beatification Story* (to be published in Spring 2022) which will take all the ideas and contributions from both of these figures to form a full beatific image for my paternal grandparents.

The Sceptre Interview is full of powerful words and emotive stories of the life of an ordinary man in ways yet oxymoronically, extraordinary in others. A man who was more down-to-earth and Lancashire-born and bred than any other yet whose profound faith resulted in his experience of a series of locutions during his life which helped him overcome the many trials he faced in all his eighty-one years on this Earth.

“I went to see Fr McNally, who always saw me, supernaturally.”

– Derrick Taylor, Sceptre Interview (1995)

Sceptre Bulletin Interview with exegesis

“Journeys in Faith”

This subtitle captures the underlying purpose of my grandfather’s interview; to explore the trials and tribulations of Derrick Taylor from his childhood to his later adulthood to reflect on how his Catholicism has allowed him to forge through his hardships to become not only a better person, but a better Catholic because of those tribulations and sufferances prescribed for him by God.

Indeed, yes, this points to the belief that the trials and tribulations that each of us face are certainly put there by God to bring about the holiest of lives in all of us. This aspect of the actions of God is sometimes interpreted as cruelty but neither my grandfather, my grandmother Irene Mary, nor Mother Angelica herself saw it this way. They saw the tribulations of life as opportunities to suffer as Christ suffered, to purify and to make new one’s life in the Image that God has laid down for us so that we may ascend to take our place with God in the blissful heavenly realm.

The interview invites us into the life of Derrick Taylor by giving us a short insight into how his Traditionalist Catholicism not only changed and shaped his life from a young age but influenced his entire spiritual outlook. In my efforts to promote my grandfather’s Cause for Beatification, I want this interview — which I often call the Sceptre Interview — to show the world the life of Derrick Taylor through his own words which will serve to illuminate his overall beatificity. I, myself, am

following my grandfather's life just as the world is too. Come along with me on this journey of mine as I reflect and attempt to perform an exegesis on my grandfather Derrick's words about the course of his earthly life.

“Light a Candle for Me”

Now we come to the main title of the interview. It is referencing one of my grandfather's answers later in the interview about the fact that he, when he was just a child, asked his friend's mother to light a candle for him in front of a picture of the Sacred Heart, a request she fulfilled. I will write more about this event that I call the Kindlement later when we come to that part but I think that the candle that was lit for my grandfather represented to him his impending conversion to Catholicism and the hope that one day his instinct to become a Catholic would materialise.

In a broader sense, lighting a votive candle is representative of many things, namely hope and God's shining light protecting the people for whom the candle is lit. I think that the moment my grandfather asked his friend's mother to light that candle for him when he was seven years old on 1st July 1938, that represented the start of his Catholic journey, the beginning of his pious life, a life that although ended in 2011 with his physical death, continues on through his Beatification Cause now in full effect.

This aspect of the interview demonstrates my grandfather's belief in the power of simply lighting a candle in the name of someone, especially to invoke the protective love of God onto that person. From that

moment on after that candle was lit, God's loving care and protection cloaked my grandfather and guided him towards his marriage to my grandmother Irene Mary, his fatherhood of twelve souls and his experience of locutions and devoutness thereafter. I suspect this candle represented so much for my grandfather, hence why he not only included it in the interview but decided to focus on it for the interview's title.

“[Our thanks go to J.S. a Sceptre Bulletin subscriber, who carried out the following interview, and to Derek Taylor, who agreed to tell the story of his conversion in the interview, on 22.2.95.]”

The lady who interviewed my grandfather was called Judith Sheen (or Shean). I had numerous interactions with Judith during my childhood due to her friendship with my grandmother Irene Mary whom likely gravitated toward's Judith's Traditionalist approach to Catholicism. I specifically remember visiting a convent in Manchester (I think it was the Good Shepherd Sisters although I could be mistaken) with my grandmother and my cousin Thomas in around 2007 and Judith welcomed us there. Judith also attended both my grandmother and grandfather's funerals.

It is a shame that my grandfather's name was misspelt by the publisher. The correct spelling is Derrick.

The Sceptre Interview was carried out on 22nd February 1995 in either the living room or piano room but more likely the living room of 222 Longmeanygate, the residence that my grandfather built in the 1960s for his family and that I, as his grandson, visited very often

throughout my childhood of the 2000s and where many of my first interactions with my grandparents' Traditionalist Catholicism took place.

Indeed, I think my grandmother Irene Mary would have been present during the interview and likely was instrumental in arranging for it to take place. I think my grandmother's organisation of this interview was part of her broader campaign to establish her, her husband, their family and their home at 222 as a refuge for Traditionalist Catholics. Although I know that only a fraction of my grandmother's plans played out, I do know that she had the ambition to turn her home into a Traditionalist Catholic school and to build a church on their land dedicated to the Tridentine Mass which I believe the shrine that was depicted in *The Lost Shrine of Irene Mary* (2021) was an initial attempt of. Indeed, my initiation of the two Causes of Recognition for my grandparents are a continuation of this campaign of Traditionalist Catholicism that my grandmother had begun but never seemed to have the ability to see through completely, perhaps in part due to a lack of funds.

Although the interview was likely arranged by my grandmother, I do think my grandfather's acceptance to participate was his way of telling his Catholic story and explaining his relationship to the Faith in a way that was surely cathartic for him. This was my grandfather's main attempt to get the message out that he and my grandmother always intended which was to follow the Catholic religion as it had been intended to be followed by their forefathers. Of course, my grandparents likely did not realise that almost thirty years after this

interview was conducted, that their grandson would be performing his own analysis of the words for the purpose of their Causes for Recognition with intention to present them both for beatification.

Shortly before I continue with the exegesis, this reminds me of one point to clear up. My grandparents did not know of my plans to have them recognised in the Church as they had both already died by the time I had even fathomed the concept in 2020 for my grandmother and in 2021 for my grandfather. However, I know they know now of my intentions to present them for beatification due to my ability to speak with them in my prayers, their intercessions are no doubt guiding me now, healing my wounds, pushing me forward, navigating me through my hardships, and illuminating my mind to the truths of the world. They are here and they are able to intercede.

Of course the role of their Beatification Cause is to show the Church their Catholicity which indeed is why the writing and promotion of both their joint story and their individual stories is incredibly important for if my grandparents remain little known then so too will their intercessions. All in all, I know that my striving for their beatification in the Church they loved so dearly and had dedicated their lives to in many respects is not necessarily what they would have desired or dreamed, but it is necessary if the message that they so fervently, evidently believed in throughout their lives separately and together as a married couple, is to be propagated now that they have both long passed from this life.

“JS: When did you first think of coming into the Catholic Faith?”

Judith commences the interview by asking about my grandfather’s first interactions with Catholicism during his childhood in the 1930s. This first question serves to reaffirm the overall purpose of the interview to explicate the Catholic journey of my grandfather and how the Catholic religion shaped his whole life from childhood to his corporeal passing. Indeed, Judith intends to pinpoint with this question the inception of my grandfather’s Catholicism which is indeed crucial to the trajectory of his faith thereafter, a trajectory that was launched by the event of the Kindlement.

“When I was only seven years old I knew that there were some things about the Faith which I instinctively “knew”.”

My grandfather answers Judith’s question in a curious way initially. He answers to say that there were things about Christianity that he instinctively “knew”. I’m not sure I will ever completely understand what he meant by this but that is exactly why, as part of my exegesis, I want to attempt to theorise some of the possibilities. I think what my grandfather “knew” as an innocent child of seven was threefold:

1. The warmth of the Sacred Heart.
2. The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.
3. The truth of the message of Christ.

I think the Sacred Heart devotion resonated with my grandfather because it represented, directly, the loving warmth of Jesus Christ, the universality of his salvation

as my grandfather believed, and the protective care of the Church as the protector of this divine message in the material world. In these three categories of “instinctive knowledge” my grandfather had that his Catholicity was instinctual as two of these are not Protestant doctrines that my grandfather would have been brought up to believe as an Anglican.

I think by age seven my grandfather instinctively “knew” that Catholicism was his truth and that it was part of his destiny to convert to it in the aftermath of the event known as the Kindlement which had occurred on 1st July 1938, the feast day of the Sacred Heart, when my grandfather was still just seven years old. I think he had an instinctual draw to the Catholic faith that began at age seven and stayed with him and came into fruition when he converted to marry my grandmother from 1950 onwards. I think there was an innate quality about him that allowed him to know and then see the truth of Catholicism. This did not mean that he didn’t have questions, worries and even suspicions of the Catholic faith — that he and his experience of handling these is something he openly discusses later on during the interview. It is in this that we point towards the internal, spiritual struggle that Derrick Taylor felt from age seven onwards between his instinctive feelings for Catholicism and his upbringing as a Protestant.

However, I don’t believe my grandfather was alone in experiencing this phenomenon. Many throughout the history of Catholicism have described a deep yearning to convert, one expressively personal and instinctive. I see my grandfather as one of these special individuals

whose desire to convert to what he saw as truth despite perhaps the social and familial disruptions it may cause and despite the ridicule he may face. My grandfather, as like any other convert, should be admired for their stalwartness at least if nothing else but indeed there is so much more that my grandfather is worthy of being admired for.

What is also interesting to note is that from the scientific understanding of the development of the child's brain, age seven is when the frontal and temporal lobes grow at a faster rate than any other time in one's life. I don't think it was a coincidence that my grandfather's mind began to change during this time. His great mind was developing and he was beginning to come to his own conclusions about the world around him, including about the metaphysical realm that he says he instinctively knew of. I find it interesting that from such a young age he was drawn to Catholicism, especially the Sacred Heart, just as the lives of many other saints and blessed have been described throughout Christian history. I call this quality and phenomenon "instinctivism" which has become one of the core conceptual contributions of my grandfather to the theological system Irenianism named after my grandmother and of which my grandfather's beatificity constitutes a major branch.

"For example, I was a Protestant and sang in the choir — something which I loved."

My grandfather here contrasts his instinctive draw to Catholicism with the Protestantism that he was baptised and brought up into as a child and young man. I like

that he adds the detail that he sang in the choir — “something that [he] loved” and I didn’t think he would have. This simply shows how one’s own perspective of their grandparents can really contrast with how they were in their youth. I appreciate the Sceptre Interview for this personal attribution if nothing else.

My grandfather grew up a Protestant and lived in the Protestant religion for the first twenty or so years of his life. He grew up in a culture when Catholics were ridiculed and conversion to Catholicism was not only a taboo for family members but for wider society. In those days, it seems as though what you were when you were born is what you must be for life then on but my grandfather resisted, as many others did, and forged his own path, becoming and coming closer to what he saw as right for him. My grandfather was indeed active in his Church of England parish despite his reservations about the Protestant religion. No doubt he tried to make Protestantism work for him but as I have explained, Derrick Taylor was an instinctivist as many other saints were before him. He felt an instinctual attraction to Catholicism from as early as one could feel such a desire and this desire was not meek and mild, it was innate, solemn and full of vigour and this instinct bounded following his conversion to heights that he likely never foresaw to the point where he experienced direct communication with God the Father.

“And I was really fascinated by the Creed, especially the words: Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church.”

Perhaps secondary to my grandfather’s devotion to the Sacred Heart was his devotion to and resonance with

the Four Marks of the Church as “One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.” This resonance of his is expected to be reflected in the upcoming official art pieces featuring him. Indeed, this particular devotion of Derrick Taylor will be an important hallmark, both theoretically and allegorically, to his overall beatific image and Catholic figureship.

“JS: That was nearly 60 years ago. Things must have been different then, generally in society and particularly in life in Bamber Bridge?”

It’s interesting that Judith makes reference to Bamber Bridge when I always associated my grandfather Derrick with Coppull and Chorley, the towns where he was born and raised. I think perhaps Judith mentioned Bamber Bridge here in reference to my grandmother Irene’s connections to Bamber Bridge and the fact that my grandparents were married there at St Mary’s Church in 1954 and where my grandfather’s conversion to Catholicism took place from 1950.

“You can say that again! As lads we used to call Catholic boys awful names.”

Derrick Taylor here, in his response, reconfirms the Protestant culture in relation to their ridicule for Catholics even through to the 1930s, 40s and 50s. Indeed, England as a whole has changed significantly since these times but we should transport ourselves in our minds and imaginations back to how my grandfather would likely have felt having to pretend to be adhered to Protestantism all the while having growing feelings of Catholicity. I presume one of the

most popular of these “awful names” was papist but I can’t think of others used and frankly, I prefer not to find out.

The main point to reiterate here is that although my grandfather was outwardly Protestant, he was — in his own words, not mine — very much inwardly Catholic. This does make me wonder how many other Protestants experienced this internal tug of war during these times and those earlier. I suspect my grandfather would have later regretted his participation in ridiculing those who belonged to the religion to which he would come to dedicate the majority of his life — here, the irony must not have escaped him.

“However, I did have a friend who must have been a Catholic — there was a picture of the Sacred Heart in his house — it was in the corner of the room, I remember.”

Here, as Derrick Taylor continues his response, his particular devotion for the Sacred Heart is first revealed. My grandfather’s devotion to the Sacred Heart has since become a significant part of his beatific image, an image that became manifest through David Young’s illustration *The Locutions of Derrick Taylor* (2022) that featured a representation of the Sacred Heart at St Wilfrid’s Church, Preston. The first of the interior locutions that my grandfather experienced during his life — which will be explored in much greater depth later in this exegesis — came about through my grandfather’s devotion to the Sacred Heart and its subsequent intercession.

I think that my grandfather's particular devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was based on the fact that this most famous and distinct of Catholic devotions featured Jesus Christ himself. Although I am sure my grandfather loved and devoted himself to the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God, Saint Mary was far more of a particular devotion of my grandmother. Instead, I think my grandfather's devotion to the Sacred Heart had to do with his gender. Here was a mortal man — Derrick Taylor — asking for the intercession of the one and only divine man — Jesus Christ. The worries of men and the worries of women have always been a contradistinction. Jesus was likely the only man that my grandfather could speak with, ask for help from, and seek out refuge in that wouldn't judge, ridicule or expose. In contrast to my grandmother whose devotion to Our Lady certainly consisted of feminine worries and communications, my grandfather's devotion to the Sacred Heart was filled with masculine worries and styles of communication. A mortal man to divine man conversation is what my grandfather's particular devotion to the Sacred Heart clearly developed as and manifested into.

“That was the first time I saw a votive lamp — there was always one burning near that representation of the Sacred Heart.”

The imagery that my grandfather's words reflect here in my mind is powerful — a Protestant child beholding the mysteries of the devotions of the Catholic faith. Derrick Taylor's devotions to the Sacred Heart are indeed a powerful Catholic image, one that will likely play an important part in the representation of his beatificity forevermore.

“JS: What effect did that first holy picture have on you, do you think?”

Judith’s question is posed in order to probe deeper, to understand how and why this image of the Sacred Heart has stayed with Derrick Taylor from all those years ago.

“Strangely, although I was very, very young, it filled me with an uncanny peace of mind. I loved going to that house.”

Derrick Taylor acknowledges his own youth at the time of viewing the Sacred Heart representation for the first time. I think my grandfather referred to his youth to emphasise perhaps his naivety at the time and again the fact of his instinctive draw to the Catholic faith despite that he likely did not even understand the many layers of allegory and the in-depth theology associated with and underlying the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

I found my grandfather’s phrase “uncanny peace of mind” to describe his mental state during his visitation of this Catholic home and his witnessing of the Sacred Heart representation. I think in this moment he felt the mystery of the Catholic faith deep within as he describes it through his use of the word “uncanny.” Additionally, I interpret my grandfather’s sense of “peace of mind” as him having found himself even though at the time at the age of seven he mustn’t have truly understood fully it yet. I think he had found his true religious affiliation but that it would take some fifteen years longer for him to see through this instinct

and to gather the confidence to tell the world who he was by marrying his fiancée, a Catholic.

I think my grandfather loved going to that Catholic house because it brought him closer than he ever had been before to who he instinctively knew he was. He knew he was Catholic but had perhaps never been close to a Catholic before that time and so saw in them and their household full of Catholic devotions reflecting back at him his own spiritual feelings. As he alluded to, my grandfather felt comfortable there, like he belonged, like he was one of them, a Catholic indeed.

Indeed, this moment in my grandfather's life was certainly the beginning of his particular devotion to the Sacred Heart which opened the door and opened his eyes to Catholicism for the first time, a door that he would eventually walk through when he was baptised in 1952 and even more so when he married my grandmother in 1954 and then later still when he underwent his confirmation into the fifth in 1956.

“Somehow, you know, I always had it at the back of my mind to become a Catholic — I continually experienced a sense of restlessness inside.”

I suspect the “sense of restlessness” that my grandfather endured during his teenage and young adult years before converting to Catholicism and marrying my grandmother stemmed from anxiety at the time that he perhaps would not get the chance to convert or marry someone who would allow for him to belong to the religion he so chose. I also consider that this restlessness emerged from his decreased interactions

with the Catholic community at this time. Perhaps he had lost touch with the Catholic friend he once had and perhaps he felt a little lost or detached from his true faith during these young and formative years. From his words about his past, my grandfather is certainly displaying characteristics that every person would if they belonged to a religion that they did not truly believe in or feel an instinctual affinity for.

I think the fact that my grandfather did manage to endure this spiritual restlessness and was able to identify this aspect of his younger self years later is a testament to his Catholic character. He knew within him that he was a Catholic despite the world around him telling him otherwise. No wonder he felt a continual sense of anxiety over his belief identity and outward religious affiliation at the time.

This aspect of my grandfather's young life contributes to his overall beatificity, namely the spiritual struggle he endured. This is not to say that his struggle was unique, worse or otherwise different from others, in fact it was probably fairly ordinary. However, when this struggle is taken in combination with all the other aspects of Derrick Taylor's life that we know and admire, we realise there exists a person here whose Catholicism was not only fervently important to him, but that he made subtle contributions to the theology of during his ordinary life of being a collier, a husband, a father, and a grandfather. I continue to be intrigued by the paradox that my grandparents were simultaneously ordinary yet so devout, in many ways eccentric and very much lay theologians and catechists that they have this resulting quality of extraordinariness, a quality of them both that

keeps penetrating my thoughts, mixed with memories of them, all in contradistinction to how the world or England specifically has become — an increasingly non-religious land.

“I did in fact ask that friend’s mother to light a candle before that picture of the Sacred Heart for me, and she did.”

This of course is the moment that I referred to earlier, when my grandfather asked his then-friend’s mother to light a candle for him, thus giving inspiration to the title of the interview. In my grandfather’s beatification story, I see this event — what I officially call the Kindlement — the moment of the ignition of Derrick Taylor’s Catholicism on Friday 1st July 1938 on the feast day of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This was not only a definitive event in the life of my grandfather but also indeed constitutes a definitive attribute of his beatific image. Furthermore, the sincerity of this kind of spiritual request from a seven year old child is also quite striking and demonstrates a special quality of depth of Derrick Taylor as a young boy, distinct from so many others.

Another important term of Derrick Taylor’s beatific vision/image comes in the form of his role as a votarist — when used in the context of Irenianism, refers to a devotee of the Sacred Heart. Votarism is indeed also a broader concept that involves any kind of particular devotion and one’s contribution of theological concepts as a result of their devotion.

“JS: In spite of that, it was some time, wasn’t it, before you did get nearer to becoming a Catholic?”

Here, it is clear that Judith is pushing the interview along, away from the first portion around when Derrick Taylor is seven years old in 1938 to when he was around seventeen/eighteen in 1948/49 when he first met my grandmother Irene Mary. This is when my grandfather came into contact with Catholicism once again, but this time, of course, his instinct to become Catholic would fully materialise; his destiny to become Catholic would be fulfilled in his meeting of my grandmother, a conversion that would take my grandfather's spiritual life and divine experiences to such new and wondrous heights.

“It was a long time. I used to go to the Leyland Motors Sports and Social Club and it was there that I met Irene, my future wife.”

Indeed, just as the moment that any person meets their future spouse is monumental on reflection, this moment when my grandparents met for the first time was indeed very special. It is wonderful to ponder on the life that was ahead of them both, one of laughter and joy, family and love, but also, and necessarily so, in order to become holiest of persons one can become, many trials and tribulations, death and poverty, and incredible sufferancy overall.

“She told me from the start that she was a Catholic (in those days it was usual for the non-Catholic party to be converted before marrying a Catholic).”

My grandfather yet again comes back in contact with the Catholic faith. Not this time through just a friend, but through a young lady who would become his wife,

my grandmother. The formalities of the culture of those days likely caused some anxiety at the beginning, particularly as the divide between Protestants and Catholics was still palpable it seems during those times. My grandfather clearly knew from the outset that marrying Irene Mary would constitute a significant break from all he knew and all he was raised to be. He must have known that marrying my grandmother would change not only his personal life forever but his religious life too.

“I told [her] that I realised this because I had seen a picture of what I later learned was a picture of St Therese the Little Flower, in their entrance hall at home.”

Derrick Taylor now begins to come into contact with other Catholic figures that he might not have come across before. The Little Flower, for example, remains a distinctly Catholic figure in Christianity, someone that Protestants may only know very little about or pay much attention to.

This was the beginning once again of my grandfather’s exposure to the Catholic way of life in the form of Catholic practices and devotions. Indeed, my grandfather was immersed into this branch of Christianity that was otherwise clouded in mystery for him as an Anglican for the entirety of his childhood and youth.

Indeed, also, this was my grandfather coming closer than he ever had before to a religion that he, from the age of seven as he says, he felt instinctively drawn to. He must have felt a sense of immense joy and relief

somewhat to know that the candle that his Catholic friend's mother had lit those fifteen or so years earlier had finally shone the light to lead him home, to the place he always knew he beloved in the Church he adored with his beloved wife Irene Mary.

“JS: What about the reactions of your family — because they were not particularly happy about Catholicism, were they?”

Judith's next question strikes at the heart of my grandfather's likely worries at the time; the backlash that he would receive from his family and wider society for firstly marrying a Catholic girl and secondly becoming a devout Catholic himself. Again, this speaks to the relatability of my grandfather's beatificity, that just as many other converts have experienced anxiety over their family's reactions of their decision to convert so too did Derrick Taylor experience this same anxiety. This makes my grandfather a Catholic figure who others can relate to; his story resonates because of its ordinariness yet his approach to life and especially his piety remain extraordinary, again this to and fro between ordinariness and extraordinariness emerges as a recurring oxymoronic theme not only in my grandfather's story but also in my grandmother's life.

“Well, that's right, and first of all I told my father that I wanted to be converted.”

Now my grandfather begins with the story of how he approached his father with the news of both his intentions to marry Irene Mary and his impending Catholic Conversion.

Derrick Taylor's father was named Frederick Taylor¹. He was a builders labourer who lived in Coppull but was born in the nearby town of Chorley. Derrick's father was an Anglican.

"His wise reaction was to ask me if I was only wanting that in order to "get the girl" (Irene)."

This is an interesting exchange between my grandfather and his father, particularly because of its reality. You can imagine the wise words of a father to his son about a prospective bride. It seems Frederick Taylor doubted his son Derrick's genuine desire to convert to Catholicism which perhaps reveals to us the state of the times and attitudes towards Catholicism back then. That a father would presume that the only reason his son would want to convert to the Catholic religion was to marry the girl he admires.

I'm sure there have been many cases of this occurring, but my grandfather Derrick was different. He had possessed an instinct to become Catholic long before meeting my grandmother, an aspect of himself that he clearly had never told his father. No, indeed, my grandfather would have converted to Catholicism either way I believe but meeting my grandmother was the solidification of his entry into the Latin Church; it was jumpstarted and hastened his conversion to the Catholic faith, a conversion that I believe would have taken place even if he hadn't married a Catholic woman.

¹ more information about my great-grandfather Frederick Taylor can be access at the following link: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/234825930/frederick-taylor>.

““Because,” he said, “if you convert and later on fall away, you will only hurt her and me.””

I think with this response, Frederick Taylor was intending to gain some kind of clarification and confirmation from his son about his intentions with my grandmother and the whole conversion process. I understand this concern and I trust my grandfather did too. I think it was important for his father to reconfirm with Derrick that the conversion to Catholicism was a solemn process, one not to be taken at whim or just for the sake of marriage. I know my grandfather wouldn't have come to the decision to convert based on a whim and we know this now from the backstory retold by him but for anyone to convert to a new religion or even a new denomination within the same religion, this is not a decision to be taken lightly.

“JS: What happened next?”

Judith, the interviewer as she is, asks the question to lead the my grandfather on so the story of his conversion continues.

“Irene took me to a good and holy Benedictine priest at St Mary's, Brownedge, Bamber Bridge. Fr McNally was his name.”

My grandmother Irene Mary introduces her fiancé to Father McNally² to begin the process of Derrick's

² details of Father McNally, Derrick Taylor's favourite priest, can be found at: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/189951729/patrick-gabriel-mcnally>.

conversion to Catholicism, an event that is now known as the Catholicisation. Clearly, it was Father McNally's welcoming character that settled my grandfather into the Catholic faith and led Father McNally to become my grandfather's favourite priest both before and following Father McNally's corporeal passing.

From what my grandfather says, especially later on in this interview, Father McNally had an incredibly significant impact on him and in fact became my grandfather's spiritual confidant for the rest of his life, even supernaturally, long after Father McNally had died as my grandfather describes later on. From what my other grandparents, William and Hilda Warbrick, have told me Father McNally was a well-liked priest at St Mary's Church from 1950 to 1964 who was instrumental to the development of the Brownedge parish and the attached Catholic schools.

“JS: I believe your first meeting was full of apprehension for you.”

With her interjection, Judith highlights the anxiety and nervousness that my grandfather felt during this initial meeting with the priest, particularly over the formalities. This altogether highlights the fact how foreign Catholicism really was to my grandfather at the time as he clearly had very little awareness or perhaps a warped understanding of the Catholic religion, including those that led it and those that belonged to it.

“You can just imagine — we had been brought up with such weird ideas of Catholics and what they did that I was terrified.”

My grandfather now confirms this warped perception of Catholics and Catholicism from the overarching Protestant culture of England. My grandfather clearly demonstrated that “new convert anxiety” that most people would feel when converting to a religion that they had been fed so many distorted and pre-conceived notions about. Nevertheless, he continues his conversion process, taking it one step at a time, all the while immersing himself into the fullness of the Catholic faith, its charms and mysteries, and its myriad aspects, many of which sharply contrast from that of Protestant denominations.

“The only picture I had in my mind was one of priests I had seen walking around reading the Breviary.”

Again, my grandfather makes reference to the misperceptions he had been told about Catholics and how Catholic priests act. These misperceptions may seem irrational to people who are already Catholics themselves but putting oneself in the shoes of a Protestant, all one can use in terms of reason is what they know of the world from what they have seen and heard and if all that they have seen and heard is negative and misconstrued then it isn't irrational that they would result in coming to false conclusions about the group in question. Despite all this, my grandfather, with my grandmother by his side, continued to walk ahead, not turning back or letting the fear of the unknown overtake him.

“As we got to the door, I asked Irene if I was supposed to kneel down when he opened the door, or something.”

Clearly my grandfather had a misconception of what a Catholic priest would expect of him which reflects the state of affairs of the time I think. It shows that most of the division caused by religion in those days was caused by a lack of interfaith dialogue and communication overall that in turn lead to rumour, gossip and misperceptions running wild about groups not your own. This speculation and hearsay clearly had real world effects when it came to who someone was allowed to converse with, let alone marry. I think religious affiliation can be used to sow seeds of division when there is a lack of consistent communication between the different religious groups. My grandfather’s misperceptions of Catholics and Catholicism were clearly brought about by this kind of lack of interfaith communication, something that he was made subject to even as an innocent child. However, this process of dispelling those misperceptions of the Catholic religion is clearly a necessary precursor to his journey in faith as before one can join and immerse themselves into a faith, they must first establish a clear and honest grounding of what that religion entails by clearing out those metaphorical cobwebs of misperceptions.

“She could have laughed at me but, very patiently, she explained that we were just going in for a chat about things and to take it like any other visit to the family.”

I think the role of my grandmother here was really important. I said previously that I thought my grandfather would have gone the whole way with his Catholic Conversion even if he hadn't have had my grandmother there beside him but no doubt her role was absolutely crucial in bringing about his conversion at still such a young and tender age. I think it was my grandmother's ability to calm my grandfather's nerves and guide him that allowed for him to complete his conversion so swiftly. They simply were made for each other in this respect and I think anyone who is going through a crisis of conversion needs someone they can trust beside them to help them through this likely traumatic experience of leaving behind one identity — the identity they were brought up with and were told to associate with and believe in — for a new identity — one they have always been told was strange and not to be associated with or believed in.

“JS: And was Fr McNally such an ogre after all?”

Judith plays into the misconceptions that my grandfather had of Catholics and the Catholic priest particularly for this question, in doing so revealing the illogicality of those misperceptions.

“Naturally enough, far from it! He was a man with a huge heart and large frame to go with it.”

Indeed, my grandfather responded in the sense that Father McNally was simply a human being whose beliefs may have differed from my grandfather's original religion of Anglicanism but whose humanity shone through immediately and allowed my

grandfather to comfortably begin to accept and eventually immerse himself into the Catholic faith and its many particularities.

“He asked me why I was afraid and I told him that I thought he would make me kneel down there and then and tell him all my sins.”

Once again the misperceptions that my grandfather had been fed about Catholicism are demonstrated here regarding his fears about having to do perform certain rituals or formalities to be accepted as a Catholic.

“He introduced me to the beloved “penny” catechism and for three and a half years I received instruction from that wonderful priest who has since gone to receive his eternal reward.”

Here we find the origins of Derrick Taylor’s love for the penny catechism and his first reference to the concept of “eternal reward” which has indeed since come to stand as one of his many theological contributions.

My grandmother first took my grandfather to visit Father McNally on 3rd September 1950 when my grandfather had just turned 20 years old (Father McNally had returned to serve at Browndedge St Mary’s six months before in March 1950 following his service as Parish Priest at Knaresborough) and then the “three and a half years” referenced in my grandfather’s response takes us to March 1954 which is when my grandparents married.

Father Patrick McNally died in 1976 around the time of Derrick and Irene Mary Taylor's discontent with the aftereffects of Vatican II began to reach their climax especially with the troubles in the Catholic Church in England with Archbishop Lefebvre's establishment of the Society of Saint Pius X as my grandmother references in her *Deo Gratias Note*.

"JS: And finally you were received into the Church?"

Judith leads the conversation to the completion of my grandfather's process of conversion with this question. I also like the terminology of being "received into the Church". I think for many of his childhood and young adult years my grandfather was searching for his spiritual home which is why he felt the sense of restlessness and fear he says he did during those times. With being received into the Church that he says he instinctively "knew" and had been drawn to since age seven as a result of the occurrence of the Kindlement when he was age seven on 1st July 1938, my grandfather was in a sense coming home, coming to the Church with which he identified and coming to a place whereby his outward religious affiliation matched his inward spiritual outlook and religious feelings.

"Yes."

I am sure my grandfather felt a sense of relief at this moment. That spiritual restlessness that he had felt since seven years old about having been raised Protestant when he instinctively knew he was a Catholic must have lifted when he finally entered into the Catholic religion some sixteen years later. Indeed, the

completion of his conversion would chart the course for the rest of his life and the trajectory of his spiritual outlook too.

“JS: Were your family and relatives present?”

I’m glad Judith asked this question because I think it makes reference once again to the hostile culture that persisted during these times towards those who identify themselves as Catholic.

“No. After my reception I told my father, and one of those amazing things happened!”

I think it is a shame that my grandfather’s parents did not attend his baptism simply because it was a Catholic ceremony. This highlights once again how the Protestant-Catholic divide was very much still a real social issue in 1952.

“He said, “Now I will tell you a secret. My brother also is a Catholic and he and his wife have a son whom they baptised a Catholic, and this son, your cousin, is a Catholic priest. And this was only one story, which has a follow-up which I will tell you about later on.”

Perhaps the news that his cousin was not only Catholic but a Catholic priest at that would have given my grandfather peace of mind knowing that he was not the only person in his family to be a member of the Catholic Church.

“Our Lord tried me sorely on occasions, though, I can tell you!”

Derrick Taylor begins to reference here the numerous tribulations that he was faced with during his life which he saw as sufferances that were to be endured for his own betterment, namely for the purification of his soul ready for union with God after death.

“For instance, just before Irene and I were to be married, our two sets of parents agreed that they should meet over a dinner, which they did.”

My grandfather then begins the story of the Birkacre car accident, one of the significant tribulations of Derrick Taylor’s life, which occurred on 17th January 1954.

“Everyone was apparently very happy with the intended match and the evening was a joyous occasion.”

They had been at the Working Men’s Club in Higher Walton, the village where Irene Mary had grown up and lived with her mother and father Edith and Richard Hardacre. The two couples had met to discuss the details of the impending marriage between their children which was set to place March of that year. The couples had left the Club at around 10pm in order to take the Taylors back home to Coppull.

“When it came to be time for going home, Irene’s father offered my parents a lift home, which they accepted. A slight misjudgement, and my father was killed on the way home in the car driven by my fiancée’s father.”

Richard Hardacre was driving the car and had *not* been drinking. Just before the present junction of New Road and Birkacre Road, Richard saw the lights of two vehicles approaching. One appeared to be overtaking the other. He moved nearer to his own side and braked slightly, however, the car began to skid with the back towards the centre of the road. The car overturned into a 10-foot ditch on Birkacre Road, Coppull at around 10:30pm due to ice on the road. Ellen Taylor later recalled that her husband Frederick had shouted “look after yourself, Nellie” just before the impact.

The two women who were sitting in the back of the car managed to get out after the car had stopped, they climbed up to the road junction and stopped a motor cyclist who went for help, meanwhile Frederick sustained fatal head injuries and died from a haemorrhage. The full newspaper article was titled “ROAD TRAGEDY ON NIGHT OF MARRIAGE PLANNING” and was published the following day on 18th January 1954.

“You can imagine the shock and tragedy that could have ruined our relationship!”

Certainly this event of the death of his father would not have only reshaped Derrick Taylor’s familial life but his married life also because it was his fiancée’s father who was driving the car when the accident happened although it was certainly not Richard Hardacre’s fault that the accident did occur.

The fact that my grandfather was able to persevere through this time speaks not only to the quality of his character and his dedication to my grandmother, but also his belief that God has all things planned and the sufferances we are forced to endure are for the good of our soul even if it doesn't seem that way at the time. I think this first major tragedy in my grandfather's life must have been his realisation and experience of the concept of moral sufferance in a way that was very real and personal to him.

“After some little time of happy marriage, Irene presented me with the first of our twelve children — a wonderful boy, who only managed to survive some hours and who then went to Heaven, an innocent, baptised child of God.”

My grandfather then continues onto the second major tribulation in his life. The first was indeed the tragic, accidental death of his father and the second was the tragic, premature death of his first-born son named Derrick Stephen Taylor, born 27th December 1954 and after living for just thirty minutes passed away.

It is interesting that my grandfather describes his son as “baptised”. As my grandmother must have been predisposed as she had just given birth, I suspect either my grandfather or another family member (perhaps my great-grandmother Edith) baptised the child in the kitchen sink, a ritual which my own maternal grandmother, Hilda Warbrick, performed on me when she feared my mother wasn't going to baptise me as Catholic. Although most baptisms are performed officially by priests, anybody can baptise a child in the Catholic tradition as long as immersion, affusion or

aspersion is performed in the name of the Trinity. I hadn't realised that prior to this that my grandfather's first-born son had had the chance to be baptised before his death so this must have given my grandparents some peace of mind knowing that he would go straight to heaven as my grandfather describes as an "innocent, baptised child of God."

Again, this was the second of the two major tribulations to happen to my grandfather in the year 1954 and this was likely just as — if not even more — tragic and affective on my grandfather's mental health and faith as the loss of his faith almost a year earlier in the January of 1954.

"This was a real disaster to me and so of course I went to see Fr McNally, who always saw me, supernaturally, through my personal and family, material and spiritual crises."

Following these two tribulations, particularly the latter, my grandfather was clearly bound to be heavily effected, the entire course of his whole conversion to Catholicism.

Here we have Derrick Taylor who converted to Catholicism because he had instinctively believed that this was his spiritual home where God intended for him to be. For over three years he dedicated himself to Catholic instruction, underwent his baptism at age twenty-two and then was prepared to marry in the Catholic tradition only for his father to die two months before the wedding and for his first child to die in the same year after just thirty minutes of life. I'm sure that my grandfather must had his doubts during this time

about whether converting to Catholicism had really been what God wanted if these two major tragedies had happened concurrent to and following his conversion.

Of course, my grandfather returned to his confidant Father McNally once again for the guidance he sought after such tragedy in his life. Indeed, what I found most fascinating about my grandfather's words here is his subtle reference to the intercessory powers of Father McNally; that even after his corporeal death, my grandfather was still able to continue having this priest as his confidant. The distance that death brings did not effect them in this way for it seems my grandfather was in direct communication with this priest long after his death in 1976.

Finally, for this part, I like my grandfather's use of the phrase "who always saw me, supernaturally." This particularly struck me due to the subtlety used for something quite extraordinary — to be in communication with someone who has passed on from this material world. I also like the idea that Father McNally, even in death, continued to guide my grandfather's spirituality. I'm sure that with my grandfather's prayers especially, Father McNally had quickly reached heavenly bliss and for all the good works he had participated in for the Browndge parish during the course of his own earthly life.

"He helped me once again to see God's loving hand in everything."

My grandfather was clearly in great distress following the death of his first-born son — as is understandable

— and I think his faith in God must have been shaken too — as is also understandable. I think it is likely that my grandfather had lost his way for some time in his Catholic faith after these tragedies which is why he needed to speak with Father McNally and he told him “once again” to seek the protective care of God in the sufferances thrust upon us. Indeed, this relates back to the previous concept of moral sufferance and the idea that even in the worst case scenario — which losing your own child absolutely classifies as — a Catholic must still trust in God that no matter what happens, this has been intended by God — not because God is evil or because God hates you as some cynics may suggest — but because these occurrences in life are events that should necessarily happen to create that holiest image of us. Mother Angelica speaks about this concept of moral sufferance (although Mother did not use that phrase herself) in 2001 long after my grandfather’s own tribulations (Link: <https://youtu.be/jd4U4eteQq0>). I remember that my grandmother Irene Mary used to watch Mother Angelica during my childhood at 222 Longmeanygate and I suspect she watched this particular episode from 9th January 2001, likely with some resonation to the tribulations of her own life.

By this, we come to one of the other key concepts identified in my grandfather’s contribution to Irenianism which is based on his use of the phrase “loving hand” of God. I can tell that my grandfather yearned to see God’s providence in the events that happened during that year of his life.

Not only did my grandfather have to face the death of his father Frederick, not only did he have to overcome the death of his son Derrick Stephen, but he still had a wife he was responsible for, the young girl he married that too had just given birth to a child that she lost. He had to stay strong for her as I understand my grandmother was distraught after this experience. I believe she was never the same again after this death of her first-born son had taken place according to the words of her mother Edith whose words were relayed to me through my aunt Thérèse (the second-born child of my grandparents) many years after their utterance. And this, my grandfather did. He did stay strong and he did press on with his life and he did take these tribulations as moral sufferances to be “offered up” as Mother Angelica once described.

““You told me that your dearest wish would be to have a son a priest, and now you have one!””

The piety of my grandfather is once again demonstrated in Father McNally’s revelation that my grandfather had once told him that his “dearest wish would be to have a son a priest.” Indeed, with this response, Father McNally was attempting to comfort my grandfather and it likely did the job, assuring my grandfather that his son was now under the protective care of God in heaven. I believe that when my grandfather died, God reunited him with his sons Derrick Stephen and the other son he lost some years later in around 1962 named Francis.

“JS: You have always had a great deal of devotion to the Sacred Heart, haven’t you?”

Now having understood and grasped the context of the two major tribulations of my grandfather's life (among many others which proceeded these two), Judith wishes to move the conversation along to explore the role of Catholic devotion in helping my grandfather to persevere as he did.

“The Sacred Heart has worked miracles in my life and the life of my family, so of course I have devotion to Our Lord under that description.”

This is one of the responses from the interview that resonated with me the most for it perfectly captures, in my grandfather's own words, the sincerity and depth of his adoration for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Perhaps the most striking thing for audiences to read is my grandfather's claim that the “Sacred Heart has worked miracles in [his] life.”

I believe what my grandfather is referring to here is a multitude of instances in which he prayed to the Sacred Heart, an act which we know he performed regularly, one of which produced interior locutions. I think he prayed to the Sacred Heart over the death of his father; I think he prayed to the Sacred Heart for guidance after the death of his son Stephen and the miscarriage of his second son Francis; I know he prayed to the Sacred Heart during the turmoils he felt during the aftermath of Vatican II; and I know he prayed to the Sacred Heart in his later years for I remember him doing so.

Derrick Taylor did not only resort to his confidant Father McNally in times of crisis, but he also found

refuge in the warmth of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is where he would retreat in times of worry, pain and distress, when the world became too much, too noisy, too overwhelming as it does feel for all of us from time to time. In this, we see the very humanity of Derrick Taylor formed by his fragility, his need for comfort, his need for guidance, and his need for shelter in the House of God when events overcame his ability to see through their purpose in his life.

It is for this reason that the post-corporeal imagery of Derrick Taylor has come to include and be intertwined with his devotion for the Sacred Heart because as my grandfather himself states, the Sacred Heart was a miracle worker in the times of trial, tribulation and misfortune he was predetermined to have to endure by the Almighty One. My grandfather was completely dedicated to his devotion to the Sacred Heart as has been established and the Sacred Heart performed the intercessions that my grandfather so fervently needed in these times in order to allow him to persevere on. This important relationship between my grandfather and the Sacred Heart devotion constitutes a central role in the iconography associated with Derrick Taylor.

“You know, when the changes came about in the Liturgy and some people went further than they should have, in disobedience to the Pope, I found it very difficult to maintain my patience and serenity.”

Derrick Taylor accuses modernists in the Church of taking the changes of Vatican II too far, that their interpretations of the Second Vatican Council distorted its true purpose and meaning to the degree to which my

grandfather could see their distortions were damaging and even beginning to the Church he loved with his heart. My grandfather's concern for the Church at this time, just as my grandmother's, was absolutely fervent, a worry that completely shook the core of both of their faith.

Despite his and my grandmother's opposition to the fundamentals of Vatican II, my grandfather still reaffirms their joint obedience to the Pope. Although my grandparents were certainly stalwart in their Traditionalism, they never once defied or denied the authority of the Pope as some Traditionalists did at the time of Vatican II and have done so since.

My grandfather felt so deeply about the changes to the Liturgy and how some had taken the modernisation too far that this affected his "patience and serenity" as he describes. The fact that my grandfather felt this misinterpretation of Vatican II so solemnly to the point that his patience and serenity were being compromised shows his absolute love and loyalty to the Church he converted to all those years before. We should not mistake my grandfather's feelings for arrogance. I don't think my grandfather thought what he saw as right for the Universal Church should be universally applied, but that he was simply just following the faith taught to him, a faith that was not being reflected in parts of the new liturgy as he saw it. My grandfather was keeping true to his character by standing by the form of the faith that had been instructed to him, nothing more and nothing less. I think grandfather saw these misapplications of the new liturgy as an injustice, not only to the Church itself and Catholics around the

world, but as an injustice against God and that is why this time of change in the liturgy caused such turmoil for him and my grandmother who believed the same.

“Indeed, for some time I believed the Church was being destroyed and she no longer appeared like the Church I loved with all my heart and soul.”

Derrick Taylor details his fear of a plot to destroy the Church from the inside. He describes that the Church was beginning to become distorted from the Church he was baptised into, the Church he was received into at the age of twenty-two.

“I was sort of blind for some years.”

Here my grandfather makes an inference to his spiritual blindness for the years following the Second Vatican Council and particularly during the 1970s when the aftermath of the Council and its various interpretations had pervaded the Universal Church and had reached the North of England. I think this was the time in my grandfather’s when he felt furthest from the Church that had received in his youth yet his belief in the Pope and his belief in Jesus Christ never faltered. I think this is why my grandfather sought refuge in the Sacred Heart devotion.

I see that ecclesiastical politics of the time had almost faded, jaded and destabilised the relationship that my grandfather had with the Church, namely his ecclesiophilia was somewhat damaged during this time which is reflected in the fact that my grandfather describes being spiritually blind. This blindness that my

grandfather is talking about is the culmination of my grandfather's feelings of disorientation with his faith, his distrust of the decisions of Vatican II, his perplexity with the new direction of the Church, and his anguish over the injustices as he saw them that were ravaging the liturgy that he had converted to and had been baptised for.

Perhaps this affected my grandfather in a way differently from that of my grandmother who had never known anything but the Catholic liturgy. What I mean by this is that because my grandfather was raised an Anglican and so lived as an Anglican for the first two decades of his life, perhaps he saw the changes of Vatican II and the modernisations to the Latin liturgy that came with it as the Catholic Church becoming more Protestant-like in its liturgy because he was familiar with the Protestant liturgy and its stylistic, linguistic and thematic differences from the Catholic liturgy. I think, simply, my grandfather and my grandmother too both loved in absolute terms and without any kind of regression or detraction the Latin liturgy. The Latin liturgy, the Tridentine Mass, had so many distinguishing characteristics that its watering-down and in many ways for English Catholics, its perceived Anglicisation under the Vatican II reforms were significant worries to those who identified themselves as Latin Catholics. I can see here how my grandfather may have had particular concerns about these changes particularly due to his Protestant background.

“One day, I had occasion to go to St Wilfred’s Church in Preston, because one of our children was in a procession in honour of Our Lady.”

Now my grandfather continues with the story of his journey through the Catholic faith, having addressed his life’s major tribulations and having described his concerns over changes in the Church at the time. These responses have been building up to a culmination in which my grandfather divulges about a very personal aspect of his faith; his experience of interior locutions. Notice here that the interviewer, Judith, remains silent to allow my grandfather to speak freely and naturally of his own accord about how these concerns he felt climaxed one day while he was in devotion and supplicational prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in St Wilfrid’s Church in the centre of the city of Preston, a church I still frequent now for the very fact that in that church I feel closer to my grandfather and my grandmother than anywhere else.

“There is a large statue there of the Sacred Heart, and I found myself in front of it asking God yet again what on earth was happening in the Church and what I could do about it.”

Derrick Taylor indeed draws closer to the Sacred Heart devotion to ask this solemn question of God. There is no other devotion that would be better suited to answering my grandfather’s prayers than the Sacred Heart for he held, we know, particular resonance with it as I have already discussed.

Use of the phrase “yet again” suggests my grandfather has brought about this kind of request before now, that he had experienced similar feelings of distress and discomfort with the Church before, wondering in which direction it was headed and whether this was right and true to Christ. It seems my grandfather had experienced a series of these kinds of existential crises regarding his faith in the Church.

I believe that my grandfather is referring to the turmoil for Traditionalists brought about by Vatican II and its various interpretations with affect on the liturgy when he speaks about what is “happening in the Church.” He seems, in his words despite them being recollective, to still remain fervently concerned about the future of the Church into which he was received all those years earlier. I must admit that I do not fully understand the degree to which the Church supported Traditionalists during this time, but it does seem as though my grandmother and many other Traditionalists, some of them priests themselves, felt in a sense left behind when the changes came in. I want to know if the Church supported its Traditionalist adherents in ways that it should have done to understand why the changes were made and how they can continue to participate in the Latin Mass despite the changes. It just makes me wonder whether the Church really did do enough to reassure these kinds of parishioners like my grandfather that the decisions made in Vatican II were the right ones for the Church.

My grandfather, in his recollective words, seems quite distraught about the affairs of the Church at this time to the point at which he wanted to know what he could do

about it himself personally. I think that this request to know what to do highlights the sincerity and devoutness of my grandfather. Despite having ten children, a wife and a house to look after — despite having all these distractions and more that come with family life — my grandfather still made the time to make a fervent request of God to offer his time and efforts. He felt so passionately a concern for the Church and the message of Christ that he willed himself to speak directly to God to ask what he could do to help despite having so many responsibilities already. My grandfather's devotion to the Church here cannot be understated.

I think we should also take a moment to appreciate the fact that my grandfather wanted to know from God himself what he could do to help the Church. He, my grandfather, not a member of the clergy, not educated in theology, and not even having been to Rome in his whole life, wanted to help the Catholic Church. I'm not listing these aspects of my grandfather to undermine him, indeed I'm listing them in order to show the contrast, despite all of these responsibilities he had already, he still felt that not only could he help but that he had a duty to help the Church. I think my grandfather's ecclesiophilia stretched as far as that he would have done anything God had asked of him despite all of the familial responsibilities he already had undertaken in his life.

“To this day I believe I had a “locution” from Our Lord in response to my really fervent and sincere request to know what to do.”

Indeed, in the previous couple of sentences, you will have felt a build up to the climax that is my grandfather's experience of an interior locution when he was 41 years old. Interior locutions are the definitive religious experience of Derrick Taylor, an experience which has since come to inspire his beatific image and overall Catholic figureship, as recently distinguished from his wife and my grandmother Irene Mary Taylor. Previously, I had not regarded my grandfather as having a separate distinct Catholic figureship from my grandmother and so had not launched his separate Cause for Recognition but having now understood the depth to which he immersed himself into Catholicism and that he had received this series of locutions, it is clear that my grandfather was just as devout and gifted as a lay mystic as my grandmother.

I pinpoint these particular interior locutions of Derrick Taylor in St Wilfrid's Church, Preston as having occurred in 1971. Indeed, this moment, the one in the church, is the basis of the inspiration for the illustration *The Locutions of Derrick Taylor* by David Young published alongside this work in 2022.

These locutions that I speak of were indeed profound. Many mystics, priests and laypersons have spoken of seeing Marian apparitions, having had messages from saints, having experienced Christophanies, but in his locutions, my grandfather speaks directly to God the Father. My grandfather, at this time, was a father to ten surviving children so it makes sense that the Father of All, God the Father, would speak to Derrick Taylor in answer to his fervent request for help, in answer to his

prayer of supplication. In this request, I see three distinct forms of help:

- Help to see again the true of Christ's message following Derrick Taylor's spiritual blindness.
- Help to know what Derrick Taylor can do to fix the problems he saw and foresaw in the Church.
- Help to know how to act, who to trust and what to believe in times that clearly were very unsettling for Derrick Taylor and his wife Irene Mary.

My grandfather's request was therefore multilayered, a request for help to cure his spiritual dejection, a request for help to understand what he could do to help the Church, and finally, a more general request to know what to do in his life and who to believe in times when my grandfather likely felt unsure of who to listen to.

We know that the interior locutions that Derrick Taylor experienced in St Wilfrid's Church all those years ago certainly gave him a new, uplifting outlook on the Church and what he was to do in his Catholic life. Although these locutions were not the only ones experienced by my grandfather, they remain the most well known.

"I felt suddenly the worry lifted and Our Lord telling me: "Keep up with your Mass. Everything is all right.""

What the Lord is saying her to my grandfather is that continuing to practice and believe in the Mass is the primary responsibility that my grandfather has in his

life dedicated to the Church. I knew that for all those years my grandparents dedicated themselves to the Latin Mass, their efforts would be rewarded by ascendance to the “eternal happiness” as my grandmother once described in her own writings; indeed, this is the bliss of heaven that Irene Mary was referring to.

God the Father says to Derrick Taylor to focus on “your Mass.” I find this choice of words interesting, particularly “your” meaning that although the Mass for others has changed, “your” Mass will remain as it has been or as you believe it. Is this not an implicit way of saying continue with the Latin Mass, the form of Mass that had been my grandfather’s since he was received into the Church twenty years prior to his experience of these locutions?

The reassurance that God the Father gave to Derrick Taylor is embodied through the words “everything will be alright”. I take this to mean that my grandfather should not worry about the Vatican II reforms, should not worry about the turmoils in the Church as they were occurring then, and should not, above all, lose faith in the providence of God and the message of his son Jesus Christ.

Derrick Taylor followed the words of God exactly as they were spoken to him and I and all who knew him can attest to this. He continued with the Latin Mass, “your Mass” as God the Father had told, he did no longer fret over the fate of the Church because the Church was in God’s good, protective hands and he did not again lose the trust in God that had been instilled

within him all those years ago when that candle was lit for him in his friend's altar to the Sacred Heart in 1938. Following his experience of locution, my grandfather, an ordinary man in many ways yet an extraordinary man in others, really did listen to what God was saying.

I think we all, through our lives, receive signs from God, messages, guidances, but the difference is that most of us don't really listen to what God is saying to us. We either misinterpret or choose to misinterpret his words or we don't listen to his words at all, we ignore him and avert the Church for most of our lives. However, my grandfather was different. He listened, really listened to what God had to say to him which ties back to and only serves to reinforce the fact that his request of God for help through the intercession of the Sacred Heart of his Son Jesus was pure and sincere. God knew this and God knew that my grandfather was as devout to him as any priest would be let alone a father of ten children. But in this, again, I think God would see the devoutness of my grandfather that he was entrusted with the caremanship of ten souls and his dedication to this responsibility throughout his life in caring for the safe passage of those souls during life.

In essence, God saw the sincerity of my grandfather's request and so answered him promptly and without ambiguity. Derrick Taylor was to continue with "his Mass", the Latin Mass, and was to continue raising his family and caring for his wife Irene Mary the Catholic way in spite of oppositions and disapprovals from the outside world. This is what he did and never faltered in these obligations he had to both his family and to God.

Indeed, my grandfather felt his worries lifted after this profound experience. I would too if God the Father had spoken to me directly on issues concerning his Church. At least in this regard, my grandfather could rest his heart, mind and soul on matters of the Church. I think it is for this reason that he was not, in his later years as I remember him, as concerned or disappointed or dissatisfied with the Church as my grandmother was. I noticed then and continue to remember to this day that my grandfather, although still holding to his Latin Mass and still concerned with Church affairs, did not exhibit the same degree of concern and dejection that my grandmother did. This is likely due to the fact of my grandfather's proclivity for experiencing such locutions. I think that if my grandmother had also experienced similar kinds of directly divine assurances that "everything is all right" then she herself would likely not have experienced that same degree of dejectedness that she did express during her latter years, particularly following the Second Vatican Council. However, I do believe that my grandmother's experience of transverberation in 1996 not long before I was born certainly spurred her on during her latter years in terms of both her intensive devotion, dedication and piety. I always did notice, however, that she never seemed quite as settled or content as my grandfather in their latter years when I was growing up at 222 and I think the fact that my grandfather had experienced his interior locutions points to the reason why — because he had been given all of the reassurances from God that he needed all those years ago.

Finally, what I find interesting to consider is what God the Father, Christ or Our Lady said to my grandfather in

other interior locutions he experienced during his life. I hope that somehow these messages will come to light in the future, but for now, we are left to ruminate on these words that have, gratefully, been left for us in this most fascinating of interviews about such an ordinary yet oxymoronically, extraordinary Catholic who just so happens to be my grandfather.

“And so I returned once again to normal practice and praying for those misguided people who try to alter the doctrines and moral teaching of the Church to fit in with their own frustrations.”

My grandfather continued his Latin Mass and his devotion to the Sacred Heart and his devotion to the Four Marks of the Church and caring for his family just as God had instructed. Interesting here is my grandfather’s use of the phrase “normal practice” in order to distinguish his Latin Mass from the changes in the modern English Mass and other changes to the liturgy that he saw as going beyond what the Pope had decreed as part of the Second Vatican Council reforms. Indeed also praying for the souls misguided whose attempts to alter doctrine would remain a crucial part of my grandfather’s dedications in prayer.

What my grandfather refers to by fitting “in with their own frustrations” is a person’s lack of understanding of moral sufferance as Mother Angelica described. That such individuals attempt to change Church doctrine to suit their own sufferances in order so that they needn’t endure them.

“As always, I sought out Fr McNally and asked him why he had taught me all this “rubbish” about having to go to Confession and the rest!”

It seems my grandfather had another lapse in his faith once again in the later 1970s, this time following the controversy surrounding Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre’s discontentment with the Church’s application of Vatican II reforms which eventually lead to excommunication. Again, I think my grandfather and perhaps also my grandmother struggled with this concept of trust in God for several instances in their life as many do, as even the greatest of saints did during their own lifetimes.

This interior locution, led by God the Father once more but formed by the intercession by Father McNally, must have taken place after 1976 when Father McNally died for indeed this was a supernatural conversation, one not had been two mortals but between a man corporeal and a priest incorporeal. This occurred on 15th December 1978 and took place at St Mary’s Church in Bamber Bridge, the church where Father McNally served for some time and where he and Derrick Taylor first met.

“He told me not to look to the right or to the left but to carry on living my faith as always, and always to be faithful to what the Pope is saying, which will never, in matters of faith and morals, be anything other than what I had learned in the beloved catechism.”

I think there are five core messages that can be drawn out from Father McNally’s locutions to my grandfather

inside St Mary's Church, Browndge Lane in Bamber Bridge in 1978. The first is the principle that one should not look at what anyone else is doing; that one should not concern themselves with the actions and thoughts of others as such a preoccupation causes one to focus on people rather than God. Keeping one's attention on God rather than the affairs of others will do you all the good. I think is the underlying message of Father McNally words to my grandfather here as relayed to him supernaturally post-corporeally.

The second of the core messages of Father McNally is that Derrick Taylor should carry on living his faith as always as if the events in the world had not occurred as the practice of his faith should continue no matter the circumstances. Continuation of practice and ritual is an essential element of the Catholic religion so it is not surprising that this is one of Father McNally's core messages to my grandfather. In continuing one's practice of the Faith, one remains in communion with God and on the path to salvation. Continuing practice is therefore the mainstay of Catholic spiritual activity; that, essentially, if a Catholic is experiencing spiritual despondency, they are best to continue their practice to deepen once again or otherwise reinvigorate their faith to work through their spiritual tribulations.

The third of the core messages dispensed by Father McNally to my grandfather after the priest's death is that my grandfather should always remain faithful to the Pope. What makes a Catholic distinct from a Protestant is of course their alliance with the Pope.

Assurance is given by Father McNally that the Pope “will never, in matters of faith and morals” contradict the catechism. This kind of promise from Father McNally no doubt provided my grandfather with the confidence in the Pope’s leadership that many Catholics will need reassurance of from time to time not because they are bad Catholics but simply because they are human. This type of reassurance is particularly important for Catholics experiencing any kind of spiritual tribulation.

The fifth and final core message delivered by Father McNally to my grandfather through his experience of interior locution is that his adherence to the words of the catechism are paramount in conjunction with loyalty to the Pope. The catechism remained always the central source of my grandfather’s adherence to Catholic doctrine as is the same for all other Catholics but in times of spiritual tribulation, indeed one’s belief in and understanding of the catechism may subside which requires some kind of external reassurance.

In these five messages delivered by Father McNally, five core components of Catholicism are once more reiterated:

1. Focus on God, not other people.
2. Continuation of practicing the Catholic faith.
3. Loyalty to the Pope above all.
4. The Pope will never contradict Catholic doctrine.

5. Centrality of the catechism.

Indeed, these five core messages delivered by Father McNally are reflective of the Catholic consciousness, the series of mental and metaphysical experiences, thoughts and considerations that Catholic might have regarding their faith not only in the Pope and in the Bible but in also in the message of Jesus Christ himself. Father McNally's messages strike at the heart of what makes a Catholic a Catholic and the attributes of persistence, hope, fidelity, conviction, and integrity. The group of interior locutions experienced by my grandfather by way of Father McNally will be called the McNally locutions which took place at St Mary's Church in Bamber Bridge as distinguished from the earlier Sacred Heart locutions. These five core messages outlined here and produced through the McNally locutions will be called the Five Intimations.

“JS: You have often met opposition even publicly for having such a large and united family.”

Judith makes reference to Derrick Taylor's reception of public and personal opposition to his and his wife Irene's Catholicity. My grandfather lived as a Traditionalist in a changing, modernising, transforming world. Judith implies that Derrick had received opposition to the way he chose to raise his family, particularly because he chose to raise his children in the Catholic faith.

“Those things have never bothered me.”

My grandfather reiterates his adherence to his beliefs and his raising of his family the way he saw fit under the judgement of God. My grandfather did not do as the world directed, only as God directed. My grandfather did not believe what he was told by the world. My grandfather and my grandmother too both believed in spite of the world's disapproval of them. They practiced *their* Mass and followed *their* religion as they had been taught it.

My grandfather's defiance against a ridiculing modern world is not only emblematic of his beatific image, but also that of his wife Irene Mary's beatific image. Both of my grandparents demonstrated their absolute adherence to the tradition of the Catholic faith. This kind of stalwartness is not unique indeed, but it is nonetheless impressive, especially so in an increasingly secular, increasingly non-religious world. This quality of them, and all their other attributes combined, are impressive to the degree that I see clearly the importance of campaigning in the name of my grandparents receiving recognition from their Church under the beatific images that I have begun to lay out through *Irene Mary's October Letter* and through this work, the *Catholic Conversion* and will solidify once more through my writing of *The Beatification Story*.

"It is a privilege to be asked by Our Lord to take care of eleven souls and own and Irene's, and I cannot relinquish that responsibility for fear of looking stupid in public."

Here, Derrick Taylor makes reference to what I have called merimnism or merimnity or merimnesis — that is, the practice and obligation of stewarding and acting

in guardianship for souls — formed from the Greek word *merimnó* meaning to “take care of.”

“I shall be called to account by Our Lord for these souls.”

Derrick Taylor directly refers to his belief that he is responsible for the souls of his children and his wife when his judgement comes. Derrick Taylor indeed firmly held to the concept of the caremanship of souls, the idea that a Catholic is responsible to God for the souls of their spouse and offspring. Derrick Taylor took seriously his caremanship and continued with it despite ridicule from others, despite major tragedies in his personal life and also despite spiritual tribulations and doubts in faith.

It is this doctrine of caremanship to which my grandfather adhered himself to that shaped the personal and spiritual aspects of his life. It is my grandfather’s caremanship of his family member’s souls that he saw as his greatest, most solemn duty to God. Derrick Taylor did what the caremanship of his family’s souls demanded of him even if the world disagreed with what he believed or how he approached his Catholic faith.

“There is one famous story when I was hauled up before the local magistrates hereabouts because I had gone to the local school to take away my children from the sex education classes.”

The fact that anyone who had anything to do with the case is now deceased confirms to me that this took place in around the early 1970s (so over twenty years

prior to the Sceptre Interview) which is when biology textbooks began to teach a more comprehensive version of human anatomy and the human reproductive system³. My grandfather's hearing took place on 17th April 1973 at Preston Magistrates' Court in Preston and is now referred to as the Peroration of Derrick Taylor, or simply the Peroration, especially when understood as one of the key religious events of his life.

“Sex education is for the home, and this is where it should be taught.”

This belief about sex education that Derrick Taylor adhered to is an important Catholic doctrine. My grandfather held steadfast to the view that central to raising one's children Catholically is to teach them about sex and sexuality in a way that is consistent with Church principles and values, aspects of education which my grandfather clearly believed were not the place of the school to oversee.

Some Catholic principles that can be derived from the words and actions of Derrick Taylor on the topic of sex education mixed in with contemporary needs in education include:

- Remain consistent with the Church's teachings on human wholeness while acknowledging the context of contemporary issues and complexities.

³ <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/body-mind/health/health-studies/brief-history-sex-education>.

- Involve parents as they are primary educators of their child.
- Establish a positive view of human sexuality and dignity of the human person.
- Equip young Catholics with the ability to make sensible judgments about the right thing to do.
- Explore and promote virtues which are essential to maintaining respect and dignity for oneself and one's partner.
- Be delivered in an age appropriate way which reflects the development of the child.
- Be part of the cross-curricular work in both primary and secondary schools.
- Be sensitive to the needs of the individual pupil and recognise the mix of pupils with different sexual orientations, genders and family backgrounds in each class.
- Be taken seriously by governors and teachers as an integrated part of the broad and balanced curriculum that Catholic schools offer.
- Allow for parents to make decisions on opting their children out of programmes which they feel uncomfortable with as shunning the role and opinions of parents is not consistent with Church teaching.

- Provide parents with the tools to help guide the development of their child’s understanding of sex, especially if parents elect to teach their children privately.
- Be delivered by competent professionals who understand and comply with the Church doctrine.

“I received a severe reprimand from the Bench on that occasion.”

Despite a fervent and impassioned defence, Derrick Taylor was given a severe reprimand for his actions in taking his children out of school. However, a reprimand is much different from a fine or conviction. Indeed, the bench expressed disapproval of my grandfather’s actions but did not declare them criminal.

The hearing that Derrick Taylor participated in and defended his faith during is so called the Peroration because it was such an earnest display of my grandfather’s dedication to his Catholic beliefs and identity. It was quite moving for those in attendance and was certainly a further testament to Derrick Taylor’s determination to defend the Church in any capacity should he be required to do so even if this meant attending a hearing to orate such a defence.

“However, that was not before I explained to the judges on the bench my feelings about my own responsibilities to my wife and to my children, above all before God.”

Derrick Taylor, with equal doses of passion and solemnity, explains why his Catholic religion did not

correspond with the newly introduced policies of sex education being taught in high schools at the time. Derrick Taylor was indeed opposed to all sex education but particularly advocated only for his own children to be removed from such classes based on his religious convictions.

Although I do not know the exact words of my grandfather in the hearing, some important key points of defence that he is inferring to include:

- The caremanship of his family's souls in accordance with divine law.
- The responsibility to uphold his Catholic faith for his wife, his children and "above all" God.
- The duty to protect his children from what he sees as misguided or otherwise evil activity.

"The next day, the then Mayor of the town, who had sat on the Bench that time, passed me in his mayoral car in the street. Suddenly I was called over by his driver who said that the Mayor would like me to drive some way with him."

I am not exactly sure who my grandfather is referring to when he speaks about the mayor of the town. If he is referring to the mayor of Preston at the time, this would have been Joseph Dewhurst (incumbent 1972-1973). Other mayors in office around this time were Thomas Dewhurst (incumbent 1971-1972).

If my reckoning with the timings is inaccurate, the mayor of the time might have been Joseph Pownall

(incumbent 1982-1983) who is a Catholic and parishioner of St Augustine's Church in Preston which would make more sense that he would hold such views similar to that of my grandfather. However, my grandfather in his words does not say that the mayor agreed with what he had said in court, just that he had been "very impressed" by how he had defended his actions which lends less credibility to the fact that it could have been Joseph Pownall. For a similar reason as Pownall, Joseph Holden was a Catholic who held the position of mayor of Preston from 1966 to 1967 although this doesn't quite fit into my timeline of when the trial occurred.

It is altogether possible that the mayor my grandfather is referring was not the mayor of Preston. Although there might have been a mayor of South Ribble at the time (if the hearing took place from 1974 onwards), it is unclear who the incumbent of the office was and it is also unclear as to whether they would have held the role of sitting on the bench during such hearings.

All in all, I hope that as more information is retrieved about my grandfather, we will learn more about this hearing, what he specifically said that had impressed the mayor so much, the nature of the defence he took regarding the accusations set against him, and who in fact was the mayoral figure who had been present during the hearing.

"I climbed into the car and he did in fact tell me that he had been very impressed by what I had said to the judges. I can tell you all this because anyone had anything to do with this story is dead now."

The idea that the mayor was impressed by my grandfather's words means that what he said must have been powerful and significant in terms of how he responded to the accusations levied against him.

It is ironic that one of the members of the jury did in fact admire my grandfather's defence. Indeed, I think an important distinction to make is that the mayor did not say he agreed with my grandfather but that he was impressed. This gives the impression that the mayor did nonetheless understand the position of Derrick Taylor in his Catholic religious views of sex education being taught in schools rather than by parents in the home.

“JS: What was the ending of the cousin-priest story?”

Judith returns to the story that Derrick Taylor made reference to earlier in the interview, particularly as a means of tying up the entire interview, providing for a more lighthearted conclusion to a largely solemn conversation.

“Oh, yes! Not long ago I went to visit a lady called Mrs S. in Penwortham and there was a priest there. As we talked, it emerged that his name is Taylor and that he has been investigating the many Taylors on his family tree as he had lost touch with the family. I always wanted a priest in the family! We'll see!”

This story is ironic because I currently reside in the town Penwortham outside the city of Preston. I think my grandfather's desire to have a priest in his family

once again demonstrates, albeit in a lesser way, his dedication to the Catholic faith and his own personal Catholic identity.

Finally, I want to make an introduction to Derrick Taylor's Three Duties established in association with his wife Irene Mary's Three Honours which were ecclesiophilia, traditionalism and simplicity. Derrick Taylor's Three Duties present the obligations that Catholics have for the privileges and honours of being Catholic which are identified in Irene Mary's Three Honours. In this, we see how these two categories and the concepts within them act together in tandem, how they complement each other to form a framework for Catholic living which indeed establishes the foundations of Irenianism through the development of Living Catholicism, or Animatic Catholicism, as was introduced in my exegesis of my grandmother's October letter.

The Three Duties of Derrick Taylor include:

- Akolouthism (his following of his instinct to become a Catholic).
- Conservice (his safeguarding of the Church).
- Merimnism (his taking care of other's souls).

When I first read the Sceptre Interview in October 2021, I realised that there were so many layers to my grandfather's words which is why I saw the necessity to perform an exegesis on the interview to reveal as best I

could these many dimensions of my grandfather's beliefs, words and events during his incredible life.

My grandfather's legacy is captured forever in this Sceptre Interview and I hope that I have done his beliefs and approach to Catholicism justice through my exegesis of the interview. The primary takeaways from my exegesis include:

- Derrick Taylor felt the instinct to become a Catholic from the age of seven due to the Kindlement in July 1938.
- Derrick Taylor asking for a candle to be lit for him was a metaphor for his journey to Catholicism.
- Derrick Taylor experienced a sense of restlessness while still a Protestant because he knew the Catholic Church was his true spiritual home.
- Derrick Taylor experienced a series of interior locutions throughout his life, particularly during his 40s (most well known of which are the Sacred Heart locutions and the McNally locutions).
- Derrick Taylor followed his locutions from God the Father exactly as they were spoken to him until the day he died.
- Derrick Taylor, despite facing ridicule and even a court hearing, held steadfast to his Catholic faith.

- Derrick Taylor regarded himself as responsible for the condition of his wife's soul and the souls of his twelve children.
- Derrick Taylor practiced moral sufferance in which tribulations are seen as opportunities to achieve greater degrees of holiness.
- Derrick Taylor had particular devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus which performed miracles and intercessions on his behalf and the Four Marks of the Church.

I think it is also important to conduct this same kind of overview for my grandmother's legacy at this point in time so that audiences can compare their two stories and the core elements of their beatific images and overall Catholic figureship.

- Irene Mary built a Mary garden and Marian shrine to materialise her devotion to Our Lady.
- Irene Mary was a contemplative person who spent hours at a time in prayer and devotion, especial was her dedication to performing the Rosary.
- Irene Mary had particular devotions to Dominic Savio, Josemaría Escrivá, Mother Angelica of the Annunciation and Thérèse of Lisieux as a means of emulation.
- Irene Mary held steadfast to the Tridentine Mass even after the reforms of Vatican II.

- Irene Mary believed the Church's abandonment of the Tridentine Mass would see its downfall (a belief called meiotism).
- Irene Mary believed that her offspring belonged to God first and her and her husband only secondarily and temporarily.
- Irene Mary incorporated Traditionalist Catholicism into her daily life and her domestic, family life to form a life of personal holiness.
- Irene Mary expressed a sense of habitual disappointment and dissatisfaction with the state of the world which she wanted to shield her loved ones from by their insulation.

Overall, by observing both of these overviews and by reading the words of my grandparents themselves, one can surely realise why I have established separate causes for their recognition in the Church and why I feel so fervent about their potential as Catholic figures that can inspire generations of Catholics to come.

Sceptre Interview without exegesis

“Journeys in Faith”

“Light a Candle for Me”

“[Our thanks go to J.S. a Sceptre Bulletin subscriber, who carried out the following interview, and to Derek Taylor, who agreed to tell the story of his conversion in the interview, on 22.2.95.]”

“JS: When did you first think of coming into the Catholic Faith?”

“When I was only seven years old I knew that there were some things about the Faith which I instinctively “knew”.”

“For example, I was a Protestant and sang in the choir — something which I loved.”

“And I was really fascinated by the Creed, especially the words: Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church.”

“JS: That was nearly 60 years ago. Things must have been different then, generally in society and particularly in life in Bamber Bridge?”

“You can say that again! As lads we used to call Catholic boys awful names.”

“However, I did have a friend who must have been a Catholic — there was a picture of the Sacred Heart in his house — it was in the corner of the room, I remember.”

“That was the first time I saw a votive lamp — there was always one burning near that representation of the Sacred Heart.”

“JS: What effect did that first holy picture have on you, do you think?”

“Strangely, although I was very, very young, it filled me with an uncanny peace of mind. I loved going to that house.”

“Somehow, you know, I always had it at the back of my mind to become a Catholic — I continually experienced a sense of restlessness inside.”

“I did in fact ask that friend’s mother to light a candle before that picture of the Sacred Heart for me, and she did.”

“JS: In spite of that, it was some time, wasn’t it, before you did get nearer to becoming a Catholic?”

“It was a long time. I used to go to the Leyland Motors Sports and Social Club and it was there that I met Irene, my future wife.”

“She told me from the start that she was a Catholic (in those days it was usual for the non-Catholic party to be converted before marrying a Catholic).”

“I told [her] that I realised this because I had seen a picture of what I later learned was a picture of St Therese the Little Flower, in their entrance hall at home.”

“JS: What about the reactions of your family — because they were not particularly happy about Catholicism, were they?”

“Well, that’s right, and first of all I told my father that I wanted to be converted.”

“His wise reaction was to ask me if I was only wanting that in order to “get the girl” (Irene).”

““Because,” he said, “if you convert and later on fall away, you will only hurt her and me.””

“JS: What happened next?”

“Irene took me to a good and holy Benedictine priest at St Mary’s, Brownedge, Bamber Bridge. Fr McNally was his name.”

“JS: I believe your first meeting was full of apprehension for you.”

“You can just imagine — we had been brought up with such weird ideas of Catholics and what they did that I was terrified.”

“The only picture I had in my mind was one of priests I had seen walking around reading the Breviary.”

“As we got to the door, I asked Irene if I was supposed to kneel down when he opened the door, or something.”

“She could have laughed at me but, very patiently, she explained that we were just going in for a chat about things and to take it like any other visit to the family.”

“JS: And was Fr McNally such an ogre after all?”

“Naturally enough, far from it! He was a man with a huge heart and large frame to go with it.”

“He asked me why I was afraid and I told him that I thought he would make me kneel down there and then and tell him all my sins.”

“He introduced me to the beloved “penny” catechism and for three and a half years I received instruction from that wonderful priest who has since gone to receive his eternal reward.”

“JS: And finally you were received into the Church?”

“Yes.”

“JS: Were your family and relatives present?”

“No. After my reception I told my father, and one of those amazing things happened!”

“He said, “Now I will tell you a secret. My brother also is a Catholic and he and his wife have a son whom they baptised a Catholic, and this son, your cousin, is a Catholic priest. And this was only one story, which has a follow-up which I will tell you about later on.”

“Our Lord tried me sorely on occasions, though, I can tell you!”

“For instance, just before Irene and I were to be married, our two sets of parents agreed that they should meet over a dinner, which they did.”

“Everyone was apparently very happy with the intended match and the evening was a joyous occasion.”

“When it came to be time for going home, Irene’s father offered my parents a lift home, which they accepted.”

“A slight misjudgement, and my father was killed on the way home in the car driven by my fiancée’s father.”

“You can imagine the shock and tragedy that could have ruined our relationship!”

“After some little time of happy marriage, Irene presented me with the first of our twelve children — a wonderful boy, who only managed to survive some hours and who then went to Heaven, an innocent, baptised child of God.”

“This was a real disaster to me and so of course I went to see Fr McNally, who always saw me, supernaturally, through my personal and family, material and spiritual crises.”

“He helped me once again to see God’s loving hand in everything.”

““You told me that your dearest wish would be to have son a priest, and now you have one!””

“JS: You have always had a great deal of devotion to the Sacred Heart, haven’t you?”

“The Sacred Heart has worked miracles in my life and the life of my family, so of course I have devotion to Our Lord under that description.”

“You know, when the changes came about in the Liturgy and some people went further than they should have, in disobedience to the Pope, I found it very difficult to maintain my patience and serenity.”

“Indeed, for some time I believed the Church was being destroyed and she no longer appeared like the Church I loved with all my heart and soul.”

“I was sort of blind for some years.”

“One day, I had occasion to go to St Wilfred’s Church in Preston, because one of our children was in a procession in honour of Our Lady.”

“There is a large statue there of the Sacred Heart, and I found myself in front of it asking God yet again what on earth was happening in the Church and what I could do about it.”

“To this day I believe I had a “locution” from Our Lord in response to my really fervent and sincere request to know what to do.”

“I felt suddenly the worry lifted and Our Lord telling me: “Keep up with your Mass. Everything is all right.””

“And so I returned once again to normal practice and praying for those misguided people who try to alter the doctrines and moral teaching of the Church to fit in with their own frustrations.”

“As always, I sought out Fr McNally and asked him why he had taught me all this “rubbish” about having to go to Confession and the rest!”

“He told me not to look to the right or to the left but to carry on living my faith as always, and always to be faithful to what the Pope is saying, which will never, in matters of faith and morals, be anything other than what I had learned in the beloved catechism.”

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“JS: What was the ending of the cousin-priest story?”

“Oh, yes! Not long ago I went to visit a lady called Mrs S. in Penwortham and there was a priest there. As we talked, it

emerged that his name is Taylor and that he has been investigating the many Taylors on his family tree as he had lost touch with the family. I always wanted a priest in the family! We'll see!"

Derrick Taylor in Irenianism

In my choice of naming the theological system Irenianism, one might understandably mistake that only my grandmother has made contributions to the system but this is not the case. The beatific image and Catholic identity of my grandmother Irene Mary Taylor constitutes one of two major branches of the theological system Irenianism while the other major branch is comprised on the contributions made by and in the name of my grandfather Derrick Taylor.

Indeed, the primary contributions of my grandfather are his beatific image and Catholic figureship themselves but conceptually, Derrick Taylor's contributions variously include divine responsibility, eternal reward, instinctivism, locutionism, loving hand of God, moral sufferance, restless Catholicity, votaries, Tridentinism (also contributed by Irene Mary), akolouthism, conservice, and merimnism.

However, it is Derrick Taylor's role as a locutionist — a person who experiences interior locutions — that constitutes his primary function in Irenianism. My grandfather was indeed a seer, a person who could connect to God in ways the majority of others cannot. It seems clear that my grandfather could quieten his mind so well and focus his devotions to the Sacred Heart that he was able to experience not one nor two but a series of individual instances of interior locution during his life.

The knowledge produced from these locutions has of course constituted the basis for my grandfather's contributions to Irenian theology. Derrick Taylor's contributions with the publication of this work, the *Catholic Conversion*, have now been established and will be further systematised hereafter in *The Beatification Story* and beyond in the name of promoting Irenianism, the Catholic theological system based on the life, works and legacies of both Irene Mary Taylor and Derrick Taylor in which the crucial role of the latter is made clear.

Glossary

222 Longmeanygate: a large residence in Midge Hall near Leyland built and owned by Derrick Taylor in the 1960s and his wife Irene Mary Taylor. It is where Cometan grew up in part and where much of the iconography involving Derrick Taylor and Irene Mary Taylor is based. The house was built following Derrick Taylor's purchase of the nearby Bannister Farm including its land and a cottage in the early 1960s and it served as the home of the Taylor family for over fifty years until it was sold in 2019 to new owners.

Akolouthism: one of Derrick Taylor's Three Duties of a Catholic, to follow one's instinct to undergo conversion to Catholicism; from the Greek word akolouthiste meaning "to follow".

Akolouthist: a person who follows their instinct to convert to Catholicism especially an instinct felt from childhood, such as Derrick Taylor.

Bannister Farm: the farmhouse in Midge Hall near Leyland that Derrick and Irene Mary Taylor bought prior to Derrick's construction of 222 Longmeanygate in the early 1960s.

Careman: (or **carewoman**) a person who believes they will be judged by God for the condition of the souls of their spouse and offspring, a core belief held by Derrick Taylor.

Caremanship: responsibility for the condition of the souls of one's spouse and offspring.

Conservice: safeguarding the Church and preserving its traditions, regarded as one of the Three Duties of a Catholic identified by Derrick Taylor.

Coppull: the birthplace of Derrick Taylor, a village in Lancashire in North West England known for its collieries Ellerbeck and Chisnall Hall.

Derrick Taylor (1930–2011): Traditionalist Catholic figure from Lancashire, England, known for his interior locutions, childhood instinct for Catholicism and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, all of which produced a series of theological concepts that have in turn contributed a major branch of the theological system Irenianism.

Ellen Taylor (née **Stringfellow**; 1905–1966): English spinner and the mother of Derrick Taylor.

Frederick Taylor (1905–1954): English builder's labourer and the father of Derrick Taylor; died in a car accident on Birkacre Brow in Coppull.

Irene Mary & The Cosmical Cometan: (or **Catholic & Cosmic**) an illustration created by British artist David Young in 2020 featuring Irene Mary Taylor beside her grandson as the first of official representation of Irene Mary as a Catholic figure.

Irene Mary Taylor (née **Hardacre**; 1932–2015): (often **Irene Mary**) Traditionalist Catholic figure from Lancashire, England whose lifelong devotion to her faith inspired the basis for her Cause for Beatification and the theological system Irenianism named in her honour. She is known to have experienced a type of religious ecstasy known as a transverberation (the divine

piercing of one's heart) and was especially dedicated to living a life of personal holiness by incorporate Catholic doctrine into one's domestic life.

Irenianism: the Catholic theological system based on Traditionalist theology and Tridentinian practice whose two major branches centre around the separate contributions of Irene Mary Taylor and her husband Derrick Taylor.

McNally locutions: the interior locutions experienced by Derrick Taylor based on his supernatural communications with his then-deceased confidant priest Father McNally initiated by God the Father which occurred inside St Mary's Church, Bamber Bridge on 15th December 1978.

Merimnesis: (or **merimnity**) stewardship of other's souls, especially when regarded as an obligation of a Catholic; from the Greek word merimnó meaning to "take care of."

Merimnism: one of the Three Duties of a Catholic, to steward the souls of one's spouse and children.

Millstone Platt: a row of houses (now demolished) on Chapel Lane in Coppull where Derrick Taylor was born (at number 64 specifically) on 12th August 1930.

Sacred Heart locutions: the interior locutions experienced by Derrick Taylor in which he heard the voice of God the Father and produced guidelines for him regarding his approach to Catholicism following the reforms of Vatican II. The locutions were produced by Derrick Taylor's fervent supplication to God and by the intercession of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. These locutions occurred in St Wilfrid's Church in Preston on 31st May 1971.

Sceptre Interview: the interview of Derrick Taylor with the Sceptre Bulletin conducted on 22nd February 1995.

The Locutions of Derrick Taylor: an illustration created by British artist David Young in 2022 depicting Derrick Taylor while experiencing interior locution inside St Wilfrid's Church in Preston on 31st May 1971.

The Lost Shrine of Irene Mary: an illustration created by British artist David Young in 2021 based in the grounds of 222 Longmeanygate featuring Irene Mary Taylor in devotion at the Marian shrine she built and Cometan appearing to greet her.

Votarism: Catholic devotion to the point at which a religious experience (such as locution or ecstasy) or a myriad of theological concepts are produced.

Votarist: a Catholic devotee, especially one who experiences interior locutions, religious ecstasy or some other supernatural or mystical phenomena. For Derrick Taylor, his role as a votarist emerged as a result of his devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Cause resources

Official website of Irene Mary and Derrick Taylor and their Causes for Beatification: <https://www.irenemary.com>

Official page of Irene Mary & The Cosmical Cometan: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/david-young/irene-mary-the-cosmical-cometan-2020>

Official page of The Lost Shrine of Irene Mary: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/david-young/the-lost-shrine-of-irene-mary-2021>

Google Knowledge Panel of Irene Mary Taylor: <https://g.co/kgs/3tzksp>

Google Knowledge Panel of Derrick Taylor: <https://g.co/kgs/EzREjT>

Google Knowledge Panel of the October Letter: <https://g.co/kgs/oXGtFQ>

Google Knowledge Panel of the Beatification Story: <https://g.co/kgs/udRP8r>

Gallery: Derrick Taylor's life told through images



Derrick Taylor (left) with his father Frederick and his mother Ellen "Nellie" alongside his little brother James "Jimmy" (middle) and his older sister Alma (right). Taken in circa 1935.



Derrick Taylor in Conscription Uniform (circa 1948).



Derrick Taylor outside his house Peacehaven in the village of Coppull in 1955.



Derrick Taylor on holiday at Butlins in Blackpool in summer 1953.



The back garden of Peace Haven in the village of Coppull (circa 1955).



Derrick Taylor (right) at Leyland Motors Sports and Social Club (circa 1953).



Derrick Taylor with some of his children at Bannister Farm, Midge Hall (circa Summer 1963).



Derrick Taylor with his fiancée Irene Mary on holiday at Butlins in Blackpool (circa 1953).

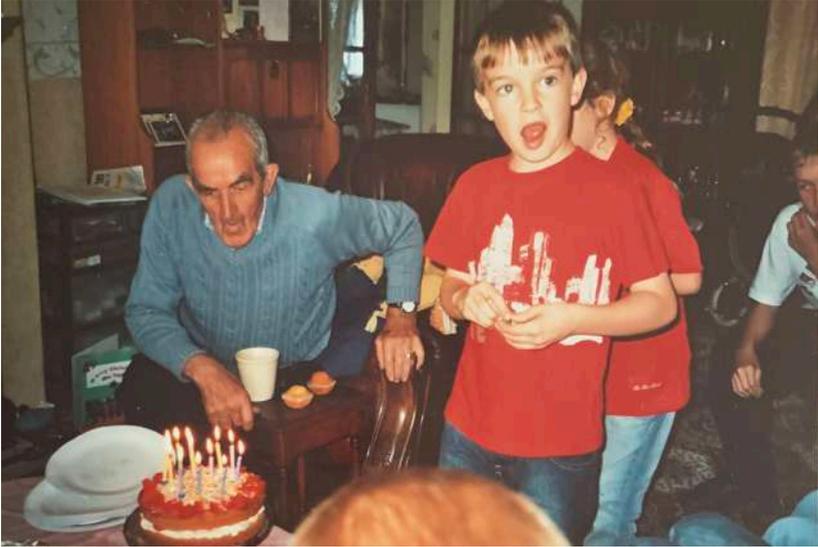
Derrick Taylor in the greenhouse at Peace Haven, Coppull (circa 1955).



The ongoing construction of 222 Longmeanygate featuring Derrick Taylor and two of his daughters (taken in circa 1966).



Derrick with his wife Irene Mary, children and family friends for a family portrait (taken on 27th March 1973, the 19th wedding anniversary of Derrick and Irene Mary; possibly taken at 222 Longmeanygate).



Derrick Taylor's 77th birthday taken on 12th August 2007.

The Locutions of Derrick Taylor



Published: 23rd March 2022

The Astronist Institution publishes *The Locutions of Derrick Taylor*, the first official depiction of the grandfather of Cometan in aid of his Cause for Recognition in the Catholic Church with intentions to beatify. This astounding piece was illustrated by Mr David Young, an English artist who has now drawn several memorable commissions both of Cometan and of his grandmother Irene Mary Taylor.

This latest of Young's illustrations takes us to the narthex of St Wilfrid's Church in the city of Preston on the 31st May 1971. Derrick Taylor, then aged 40, steps into the church while his daughters prepare for and participate in a procession for Our Lady on the feast day of the Visitation. Derrick Taylor heads towards the famous depiction of the Sacred Heart of Jesus placed adjacent to the church's entrance. At that time, Derrick Taylor was experiencing an intensive spiritual crisis of faith and sought refuge in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Catholic devotion that had been the initiator of Derrick's instinct to convert to Catholicism from age seven.

This moment of Derrick Taylor kneeling before the Sacred Heart in the narthex of St Wilfrid's Church embodied the culmination of years-long discontent, confusion and anguish over the reforms introduced by the Second Vatican Council. These reforms, no longer simply statements in a document or mere words in a speech, had, by this time, been implemented throughout the Church and had made their way to Lancashire, a bastion of the Catholic faith following the Protestant Reformation. Derrick Taylor always remained loyal to the Pope but felt a great degree of spiritual concern and worry over the direction the Church would head, especially with the

implementation of Vatican II reforms being taken further than what the Pope had decreed.

One should understand that Derrick Taylor had only been confirmed into the Catholic faith for six years before the Second Vatican Council commenced. No doubt he wondered what he had converted to in learning that the distinct forms of Traditionalist Mass comprised of myriad rituals and Latin liturgy were to be done away with just a decade or so following his conversion. In his Sceptre Bulletin interview from 1995, Derrick Taylor explains the spiritual blindness he endured for years and the feeling that the Church he loved, and had so solemnly converted to, was being destroyed from within. When Derrick Taylor stepped into St Wilfrid's Church that special day, he went in with the hope of finding guidance or some semblance of peace of mind that the Church was safe and that the direction it was being navigated was true to the message of Christ and the Church and Mass the Lord had first instituted.

This day was indeed the beginning of a new era for Derrick Taylor's Catholicity; it was from this day forward that he had managed to engage to a new and remarkable height with God. Indeed, God the Father answered Derrick's desperate supplications through the intercession of the Sacred Heart and spoke directly to him, asserting that he should not worry and that he should continue with his Mass. This was the overall message of God that was spoken to Derrick Taylor on this day in May 1971 and it was these instructions from his Lord that Derrick Taylor exactly followed for the remainder of his earthly life through his stalwart attendance of the Latin Mass, his continued adherence to Catholic doctrines and his continued love and devotion expressed for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is Derrick Taylor's experience of interior locution in 1971 and his subsequent experience of the same supernatural phenomenon

in 1978 (these called the McNally locutions) that have formed part of the basis for his grandson Cometan's endeavour to have him recognised in the Church as an English Catholic figure who was Lancashire born and bred.

The mystical occurrence of interior locution is captured in this illustration through the use of colour, the halo showing God's presence imbuing Derrick and the imagery of sound waves entering his ears. The awe and wonder experienced by Derrick Taylor during the locution is captured through his facial expression yet the anguish he felt prior over his spiritual crisis is captured in the tears rolling down his cheek. The various details included from the devotional card to the flowers to the candles are all featured with the intent of helping form the distinct beatific image of Derrick Taylor. Further detail is provided by the ornate nave of St Wilfrid's Church featured in the background. The nave creates a truly mystical atmosphere for this illustration depicting the Sacred Heart locutions, one of the pivotal religious events in the life of Derrick Taylor.

Irene Mary & The Cosmical Cometan





Published: 21st November 2020

The Astronist Institution is pleased to publish for the first time the exquisite piece titled *Irene Mary & The Cosmical Cometan* commissioned in August 2020 by the Astronist Institution and completed in November 2020 by British artist David Young.

Commissioned to coincide the initial launch of the [Cause for Beatification of Irene Mary Taylor](#), the grandmother of [Cometan](#), the piece represents a beautiful physical coming together by the holding of hands of an old religion (Catholicism) with a new religion (Astronism). The old is encapsulated by the figure of Irene Mary as the grandmother, the guide, and the teacher while the new is encapsulated by Cometan as the grandson, the listener, and the follower. It is remarkable how David Young has managed to capture a personal relationship between a grandmother and her grandson whilst simultaneously capturing a universal message of the coming together of two faiths.

Irene Mary is depicted with the Catholic halo denoting her post-corporeal state following her departure of this life. Her carrying of the crucifix and her wearing of the mantilla encapsulate her exemplary status for all Catholics and will serve her path to beatification well. Cometan is depicted gesturing the unique tridian with his fingers along with his own cosmical halo as is customary in the Astronist religion. The deep purple background, the use of rich colours for the clothing and the depictions of stars as the setting for this Cosmic Catholicity certainly complete this piece and give it an unrivalled distinctiveness.

The Lost Shrine of Irene Mary



Published: 7th December 2021

The Astronist Institution is pleased to publish this, the second official depiction of Irene Mary Taylor in effort of her Cause for Beatification. The depiction was masterfully created by Institutional illustrator David Young from October to December 2021 and marks the seventh commission for Mr Young from the Institution so far. It reflects a real event that occurred which Cometan recollected from his time spent with his grandmother during his childhood.

This intriguing illustration is set during the Summer of 2007 in the grounds of Irene Mary and Derrick Taylor's home at 222 Longmeanygate in Leyland, Lancashire, a unique house which Derrick built himself during the early 1960s. You can see the house in the distant background. In the foreground of the illustration, one sees depicted an enclosed garden of overhanging trees, flowers, a cobbled pathway and trellises.

Indeed, your eye immediately turns to the two figures in the scene, the first is the devout old lady kneeling in what appears to be a small red shed filled with Catholic religious devotional cards, statues and ornaments. The lady's prayers on this hot summer afternoon are interrupted by a young boy who, after running from the field behind, appears at the shed door. This boy is a nine-year old Cometan, the grandson of Irene Mary. In the not too distant background, you can also see a shrine to the Virgin Mary that Irene Mary and her grandchildren built during the mid-2000s to show their devotion to the Mother of God. The shrine is now described "lost" since the death of Irene Mary in 2015 and the subsequent dilapidation of her home 222 and its grounds which were sold to new owners in 2020.

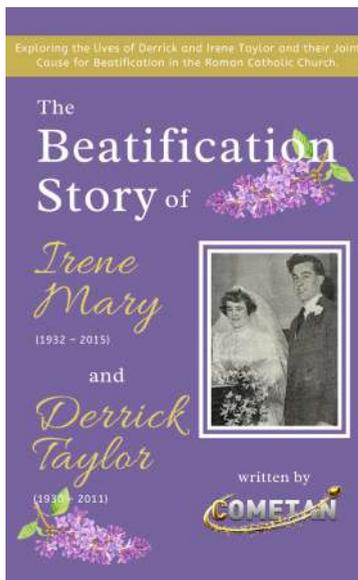
This illustration represents once again the bond shared

between Cometan and his grandmother and provides audiences with an insight into one of Cometan's most prominent memories of his time spent at 222 Longmeanygate. The illustration also contributes to the image of Irene Mary for the efforts of her Cause for Beatification as an ordinary grandmother with an extraordinary dedication to her Traditionalist Catholicism. Although bright and summery, this scene depicted holds within it a sense of mystery and intrigue.

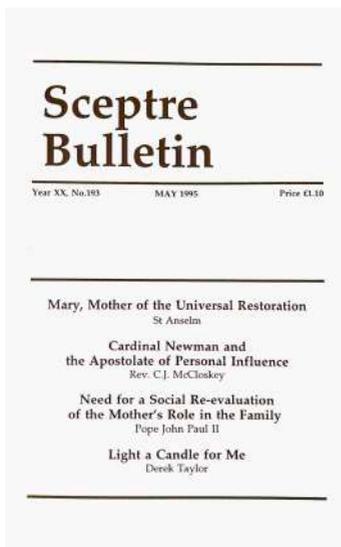
Other works about Irene Mary and Derrick Taylor



– Released on 23rd Dec 2021 –



– Set for Release in 2022 –



Light a Candle for Me

– Published in 1995 –