

- 1 Lourdes in France is well-known as a place for pilgrimage. For nearly 500 years, England had its own shrine - Walsingham - a village in Norfolk. There, in the year 1061, a Lady Richeldis had a vision. Our Lady told her to build a church which would include a room resembling Mary's house in Nazareth.
- 2 Eventually a large church and a priory (a monastery) were built which helped to house some of the many pilgrims. Thousands of people each year walked or rode on pilgrimage to Walsingham, which became known as "England's Nazareth". Almost every king and queen for 300 years made at least one pilgrimage to the Shrine at Walsingham, including King Henry VIII (*the eighth*) who walked the last mile barefoot.
- 3 In 1534, the monastery and church and pilgrim centre at Walsingham were closed and sold off by King Henry VIII as part of what is called the "Dissolution of the Monasteries". The king gained a lot of money from the sale of all the monasteries.
- 4 In the 1920s - nearly 400 years after the Shrine's destruction - people started to visit Walsingham again to pray there. Since then, new churches have been built, and the ruins of the monastery church are visited. On their pilgrimage, many people find peace and inner healing and encouragement in difficult times.
- 5 The original statue of Our Lady of Walsingham had been taken to London and burnt on Henry VIII's orders. 450 years later, a copy of that statue was on display in Wembley Stadium, at the occasion of a Mass celebrated there by Pope John Paul II in 1982.
- 6 Today is the feastday of Our Lady of Walsingham.

7 *Let us pray:*

Mary, teach us

how to say "Yes" to the Lord every moment of our lives.

Mary, teach us

how to say "Thank you" to the Lord every moment of our lives.



 *The prayer is one that is used in the "Fiat Rosary".*

 *At the "Dissolution of the Monasteries", the fine buildings were pillaged for their stone, which was then often used to build large houses for the new owners who were sometimes merchants who formed a new 'middle class'.*

 *A courtier reported that, nearing death, King Henry VIII (possibly regretting some of his actions) was heard to say: "Our Lady of Walsingham, pray for me."*

 *In the British Museum is an ancient wax Seal of Walsingham. It was only by looking at the image of the statue depicted on that seal, that contemporary statues of Our Lady of Walsingham have been produced.*

 *The present-day Anglican Shrine is built opposite the ruins of the priory church (now in private hands). The Roman Catholic Shrine is built around the "Slipper Chapel" - the last of a series of "station churches" which pilgrims of old would visit on their way to Walsingham. On leaving the Slipper Chapel, many pilgrims would walk the last mile barefoot, as did Henry VIII himself. There is now also an Orthodox Shrine in the village.*

 *See also 20 May and 15 August.*

 *Poem: T.S.Eliot - Little Gidding*

 Hail Mary (*Carey Landry*); Holy Virgin, by God's decree; Mary, most holy; Oh Mary, when our God chose you; The angel Gabriel; Where are you bound?

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:

www.prayingeachday.org