

## Winds of change

AS OONA STANNARD leaves the helm of the Catholic Education Service (CES), thoughts are turning to who might succeed her.

The Church, like all institutions these days, has to budget its work according to scarcer resources, so some are saying that a priest may be appointed to the post. This would make a significant saving, as a cleric would not be paid a salary – according to the latest accounts, Ms Stannard was paid between £70,000 and £80,000.

If a priest is being sought, a strong contender would be Fr Tim Gardner, who is adviser for religious education at the CES. Not only has Fr Tim experience in education, he is also a Dominican: the same religious order as Bishop Malcolm McMahon, who is chairman of the CES.

The deputy director, Greg Pope, is also in the running; he is a former Labour MP who has good links with Whitehall.

Along with new leadership, other changes are said to be afoot in the CES. The body is a separate charity from the Catholic Trust for England and Wales – the administrative and legal arm of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales – and it is understood that the CES will be brought more closely under the bishops' conference's oversight. While the CES operates out of the same office as the bishops' headquarters in Eccleston Square, central London, it has valued its independence. Following this principle, for a time Eccleston Square staff members were unable to call the CES on the internal phone system and had to use an outside line. (See *News from Britain and Ireland*, page 39.)

## Temping cleric

WHILE BOSSES at *The Guardian* and *The Observer* newspapers have just completed their latest round of voluntary redundancies aimed at cutting back on their 630 journalists, they have managed to find room for one out-of-work clergyman.

The Revd Giles Fraser, who resigned as canon chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral after controversially welcoming the Occupy protesters, started at the newspaper on Monday. He was on the front page of *The Guardian* after his resignation and has contributed to the paper's comment pages in the past.

"I'll be helping on the leader desk and the comment desk for a few months," he told us. "I'm still a priest but while I haven't anything better, it's a good job to do. I'll be writing about anything and everything, though I'm trying not to do too much religion."

He is not the first vicar to have worked on Fleet Street. The Revd George Pitcher became *The Daily Telegraph's* religion editor, having been an award-winning business journalist with *The Observer* before his ordination.



Fraser, who says ultimately he would like to return to full-time ministry in an inner-city London parish, decided that his work dress code would not include a clerical collar. "This is a secular job," he says.

## Swelling the ranks

WHEN THREE Church of England nuns at the Priory of Our Lady at Walsingham decided to join the newly created Catholic ordinariate that bears the same Marian dedication, there were fears for the future of the Anglican community as the nuns leaving were its youngest members.

But now three more women are considering joining the Priory, prompting Mother Mary Teresa to tell us: "It's almost as if God is stepping in and filling up the ranks."

One woman has moved in, another is due to come by Easter and a third by autumn. All are British, two are 48 and one is just 28. They will potentially swell the numbers of professed nuns from five to eight.

"These are the first enquiries we've had for six years," Mother Mary Teresa said. Despite the good news, the ageing community will have to take a long, hard look at their future in three years' time; their continuing depends on whether the three novices end up taking their vows or not.

## Busman's holiday

HE HAS no diplomatic training, and what can be described as a no-nonsense approach. But this has not stopped Mgr Peter Smith, chancellor of the Archdiocese of Glasgow, from being appointed attaché to the Vatican's United Nations mission.

His departure from Glasgow on 1 March will leave what one senior colleague described as a "very big hole" and the at least temporary loss of a "very Glaswegian style of pastoral care". Mgr Smith, an avowed fan of New York City, sees more continuity than break in his new position, telling us: "Let's get

this into perspective. I won't be addressing the General Assembly. My skills are essentially administrative, and the job I'll be doing for the nuncio is essentially the job I've been doing here for 25 years and for two archbishops."

Mgr Smith has had to deal with potentially explosive situations in his St Mary's Calton parish where an Orange Walk used to process directly past the church during Mass. Delicate negotiation defused that situation. However, he stressed that conflict resolution is only a small component of the UN's work.

"It's completely misleading to focus exclusively on conflict. I'd say that 90 to 95 per cent of the UN's work is in a field that is absolutely parallel to that of church teaching, on matters like human rights and dignity, housing, freedom, personal responsibility. That's where the work is," said Mgr Smith.

He will be replaced as chancellor, archdiocesan master of ceremonies and parish priest at St Mary's Calton by Fr Tom White (Thomas P. White), the current vice chancellor and, in the eyes of colleagues, cast in very much the same proactive mould. "He'll come off the bench and make an impact," said one.

## Parallel lives

THE BIRMINGHAM Oratory has said farewell to Fr Gregory Winterton, an influential figure in the cause of Blessed John Henry Newman, who died last week at the age of 89, the same age as the late cardinal.

In the early 1970s, after Pope Paul VI had expressed an interest in beatifying Newman, Fr Gregory founded the Friends of Cardinal Newman in order to deepen popular knowledge and interest in him. Fr Gregory regularly gave guided tours of the Oratory to guests, including Pope Benedict XVI during his visit in 2010.

At the community's house, he would explain that Newman thought well-ventilated rooms were healthy and therefore liked high ceilings; he also made sure that Newman's desk was exactly as it had been left.

In many ways, the Oratorian's life mirrored that of Newman's. Like the cardinal, Fr Gregory was received into the Catholic Church having resigned as a Church of England clergyman, and he even physically resembled Newman in old age. He was also a zealous pastor and devoted teacher.

His Requiem Mass took place on Tuesday at the Birmingham Oratory and was celebrated by Fr Paul Chavasse. He was buried at the community's graveyard, Rednal, close to Newman's burial place; as the coffin was lowered, the earlier rain stopped and the sun broke through the clouds.