

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

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Francis opens the doors to his 'secret' archive

TO ENTER THE Vatican's Archivio Segreto you pass through the Porta Sant'Anna, the gate by which cars enter the Vatican, talk your way past Swiss Guards, through the Cortile del Belvedere, then take a right. The secret archive overlooks the courtyard, the Cortile della Biblioteca, next to the Sistine Chapel. It's stuffed with gems such as the papal bull that excommunicated Martin Luther, the transcripts of Galileo's trial and the handwritten pleas for help that Mary Queen of Scots sent to Pope Sixtus V before her execution.

You imagine it's cold and draughty, and so dimly lit that the grey-haired researchers have to peer at its treasures through a magnifying glass. "No!" the distinguished historian and former librarian at Heythrop College, Michael Walsh, assured us, rolling his eyes. "It's a state-of-the-art modern archive. Properly lit, climate-controlled and quite high-tech; lots of smart young scholars and professional staff." Not that researchers wander around. They consult indexes and wait for papers to be brought to their desks, hoping they are the right ones.



On Monday, Pope Francis officially changed its name to the "Vatican Apostolic Archive" to remove "negative" connotations of being described as "secret", though a more authentic rendering of "Archivio Segreto" would be a private, or closed library, rather than a locked drawer where we keep louche items we would prefer our mother not to find.

Francis noted that the archive has long been open to scholars and that he himself has decreed that the potentially controversial archives of Pope Pius XII would be available to researchers in March next year. "I asked

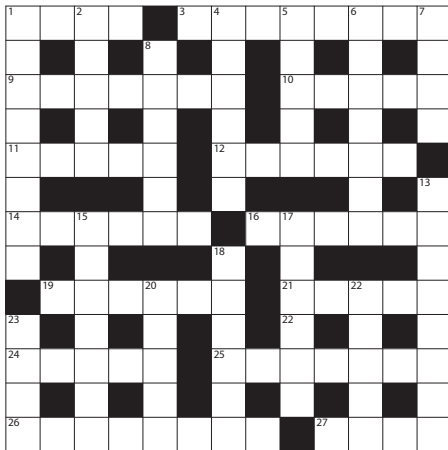
about the Pius XII papers when I was in the archives a few years back," Walsh told us, "and an archivist pointed to boxes on shelves. 'There they are, awaiting the papal nod,' he said." The Pope has now nodded.

THE TRAPPIST monks in Belgium are known worldwide for their breweries, while the order's Belgian nuns labour away with less recognition making soap and cosmetics. A convent not far from the famous Westmalle monastery has now found a way to tap into the order's better-known market. The sisters in Brecht have begun adding Westmalle Dubbel beer to their hair products to make "a soft and beneficial shampoo for every hair type, with a modest sweet scent".

Their ads claim the beer, which makes up 10 per cent of the new shampoo, contains vitamins, minerals and trace elements that beautify skin and hair and protect against ageing and bacteria. "We've added a bit of perfume to avoid the impression that you're washing your hair with pure beer, which not everybody might like," as Sr Katharina, the abbess at the Abbey of Our Lady of Nazareth, acknowledges. Early trials have been encouraging. "We've tried it ourselves for several weeks and many of us don't want to use anything else," she said.

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 681 | Axe



Across

- 1 Area of battle during the Crusades? (4)
- 3 Gemstone's cut by a mate of Ananias (8)
- 9 Prayer that's seen as something divine by American
- 10 They were scattered around Jesus, giving to charity following a quiet start (5)
- 11 Korah's boy gets to like teacher (5)
- 12 Few protect a line dancer in the N.I. (6)
- 14 Site in Turkey where Noah went to dry out? (6)
- 16 Rita's place is initially called after some church in Ancona (6)
- 19 Fury over Georgia's first step to independence, he predicted ... (6)
- 21 ... a hard thing to get voice heard promoting prophet (5)

- 24 Clerical cloth, one rodents get to (5)
- 25 Haggard woman's entanglement with a sun goddess in Canaan (7)
- 26 British dynasty first meet kabbala extremists to get head start for the Jewish holiday (8)
- 27 Get some stranger appointed to find lost Egyptian bishopric (4)

Down

- 1 Semite seen in an area running around this morning (8)
- 2 Hindu tunes from one dressed in shabby clothes (5)
- 4 So matching elements make up an Umbrian town (6)
- 5 Pontifical, like a bull! (5)

- 6 Criticise individuals, about a hundred, being Muslim (7)
- 7 Blunder losing front of the church bit (4)
- 8 Girly part of the Mass? (6)
- 13 Canaanite wife of Judah Ahab shut out (8)
- 15 Schism over a Scotsman's two accounts (7)
- 17 "Getting a medal" story is taken up by Dan's leader (6)
- 18 Gomorrah's king's a terribly brash individual to take on board (6)
- 20 Text of the N.I. maybe intellectual-type Rabbi accepted (5)
- 22 Titus' help for Church here's substantial, no hoax (5)
- 23 German Protestant composer means little in Wales (4)

Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 2 November, The Tablet, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY. Email: thetablet@thetablet.co.uk, with Crossword in the subject field. Please include your full name, telephone number and email address, and a mailing address. Three books – on Saints, Monasticism and Philosophy of Religion – from the OUP's Very Short Introduction series will go to the sender of the first correct entry drawn at random on Friday 15 November. The answers to this week's puzzles and the crossword winner's name will appear in the 23 November issue.

SUDOKU | Beginner

7				4			
	1					2	
4		3	1	7			
5	8	1				6	
1						7	
2				5	4	9	
		7	9	6		1	
8						3	
		8				4	

Each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9.

1	7	9	4	5	2	3	6	8
4	2	3	7	8	6	9	5	1
5	6	8	1	3	9	2	4	7
3	8	2	5	6	1	4	7	9
6	4	5	8	9	7	1	2	3
7	9	1	3	2	4	5	8	6
8	1	4	2	7	3	6	9	5
9	3	7	6	4	5	8	1	2
2	5	6	9	1	8	7	3	4

Solution to the 12 October crossword No. 678

Across: 5 Samaritan; 8 Iona; 9 Aramaean; 10 Zionism; 11 Sheba; 13 Wicca; 15 Sainily; 18 Lawrence; 19 Ahab; 20 Sebastian.
Down: 1 Canaan; 2 Lamaism; 3 Micah; 4 Hamath; 6 Dominican; 7 Sanballat; 12 Talents; 14 Carmel; 16 Naaman; 17 Annas.
Winner: Antony Sisley, Beckenham, south-east London.

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