



CORNELIA AND ROME

BEFORE WE BEGIN...

- PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT
- It is over 170 years since Cornelia first came to Rome
- The Rome Cornelia visited was very different from the one that you are going to get to know whilst you are here
- But you will be able to see and visit many places Cornelia knew and which she would still recognise

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

- Learn a little bit about what Rome was like in the nineteenth century when Cornelia came
- Look at the four visits Cornelia made to Rome in 1836-37, 1843-46, 1854, 1869
- Find out what was happening in Cornelia's life during each visit

ROME IN THE 19TH CENTURY

- It was a very small city with walls round it
- You could walk right across it in two hours
- Most houses were down by the river Tiber on the opposite bank from the Vatican
- Inside the walls, as well as houses, there were vineyards and gardens, and many ruins from ancient Rome

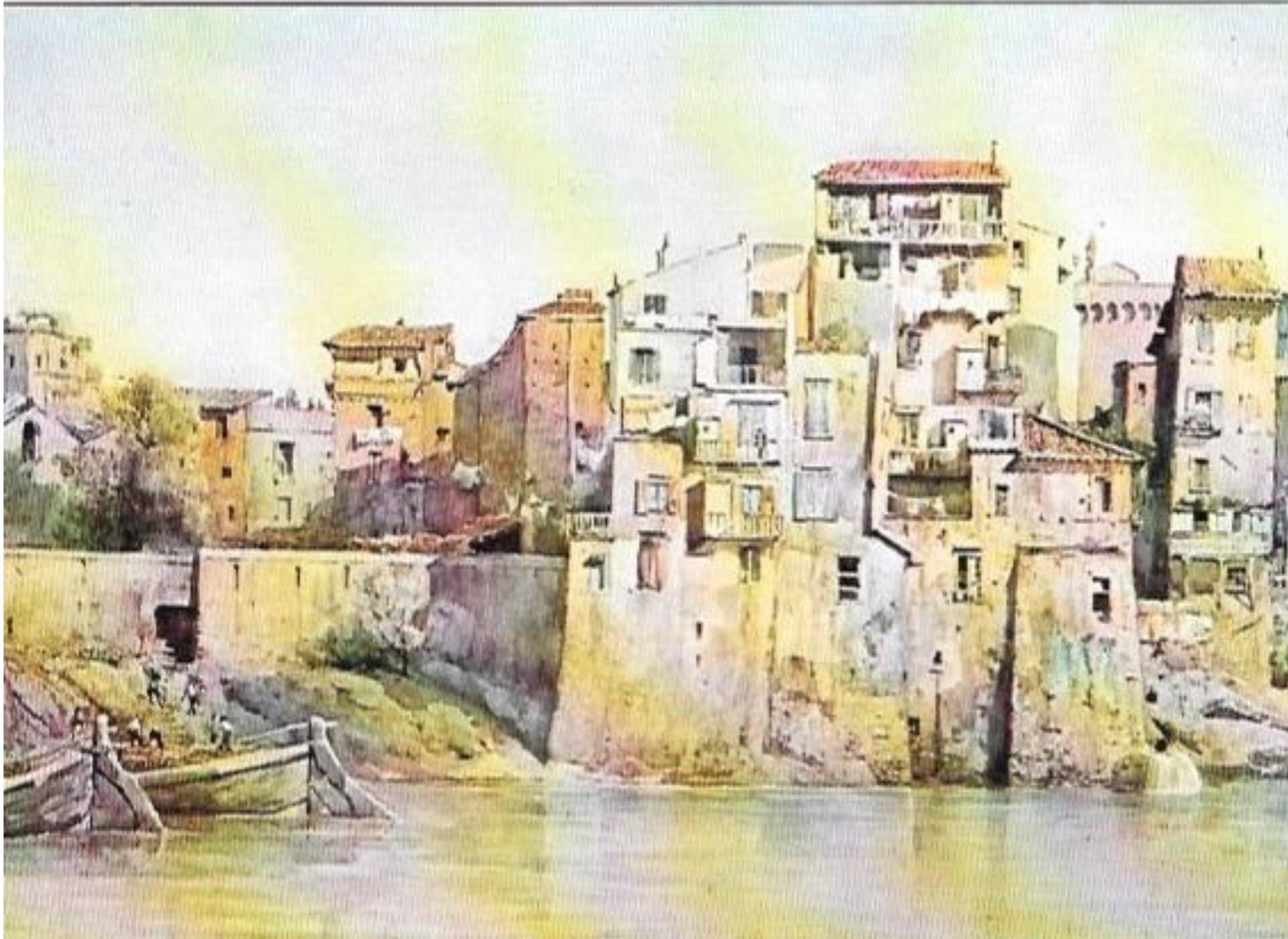
ROME IN THE 19TH CENTURY

- Some inhabitants (including some clergy) were very rich indeed, but the majority of people were very, very poor
- The streets were narrow and cobbled and had no lighting, making them extremely dangerous once it went dark
- The river Tiber often flooded the houses on its banks
- Cholera epidemics were frequent

ROME IN THE 19TH CENTURY

- You can see how overcrowded the city was when Cornelia knew it
- There were magnificent palaces and church buildings but most people lived in wretchedly poor conditions
- Injustice, violence and crime were part of everyday life





ROME IN THE 19TH CENTURY

- The river Tiber flowed right up against the houses
- It overflowed its banks frequently
- And the houses of the poorest inhabitants were flooded with river water



ROME IN THE 19TH CENTURY

- The Jews had to live in a Ghetto
- They endured extreme poverty, disease and overcrowding

ROME IN THE 19TH CENTURY

- The pictures may make it look charming, but it was a dreadful place to live if you were poor
- Some of the wealthier inhabitants (like Gwendaline Talbot Borghese, who Cornelia knew) tried to attend to the desperate needs of the poorest and most destitute citizens

THE CHURCH IN 19TH CENTURY ROME

- Rome was very small and the pope (the ruler of the city) was often seen in the streets, walking, or riding in a glass coach
- There were churches in every street and piazza (as there still are) but in the 19th century they were all in use
- Religious processions were commonplace

THE POPE IN 19TH CENTURY ROME

- The Pope was a political leader as well as head of the Church: he ruled the Papal States (lands in central Italy), of which Rome was the capital
- The Papal States were reputed to be the worst governed country in Europe
- The Pope stopped being a political leader only when the Papal States became part of a united Italy

POPES IN CORNELIA'S TIME

- 1831-1846 Pope Gregory XVI
- 1846-1878 Pius IX (Pio Nono)
- Politically, neither of them was sympathetic to democracy or to sacrificing their temporal power to a united Italy
- For the Church, they wanted to retain all authority in Rome, believing that centralisation rather than collegiality would strengthen and unify the Church

Pope Gregory XVI

Pope Pius IX

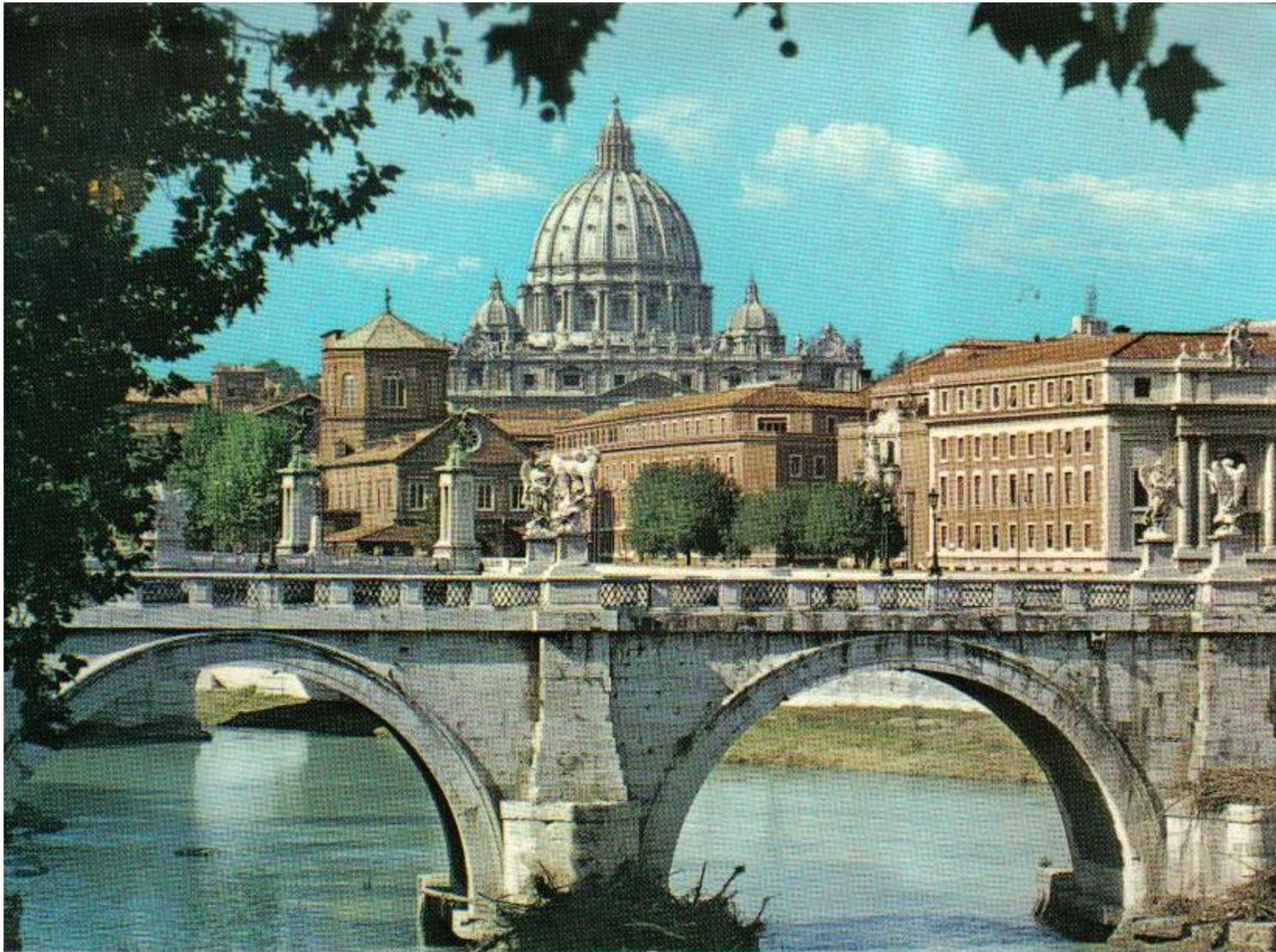
- Gregory XVI died in 1846 just as Cornelia was founding the Society
- Pius IX died in 1878, just a year before Cornelia herself





CHURCHES CORNELIA VISITED

which you may have a chance to visit too



THE VATICAN

- If she were here today, Cornelia would recognise this modern view of the Vatican from across the Tiber which you will still be able to see too



THE VATICAN: IN FRONT OF ST PETER'S

- This photo reminds us that in Cornelia's day people in Rome either walked or travelled in horse drawn carriages: there were no cars or buses



THE VATICAN: IN FRONT OF ST PETER'S

- In the 19th century, like today, huge crowds gathered in front of St Peter's waiting for the pope to appear on the balcony
- But in Cornelia's day, wealthy people waiting sat comfortably in their own carriages.



THE VATICAN LIBRARY: SALON SISTO

- In Cornelia's time the pope did not receive women in his own apartments
- Cornelia's audiences with the Pope would have taken place in the Vatican Library, possibly in this room, the Salon Sisto



TRINITÀ DEI MONTI

- If you visit only one Cornelian site in Rome, it should be this one
- Cornelia lived here at the Sacred Heart convent at the top of the Spanish Steps for two years
- It was here that her work of founding the Society began



MATER ADMIRABILIS

- This image of Our Lady can still be seen at the Trinità dei Monti
- It was painted by a Sacred Heart postulant, Pauline Perdreau
- Cornelia was a quasi-postulant at the same time as Pauline and must have discussed the painting with her



ST JOHN LATERAN

- This is the Cathedral of Rome, first established during the 4th century, and the most important of the major Roman basilicas
- In 1836 Cornelia was invited to see one of the processions of the pope and the cardinals that regularly took place here



SANT' ANDREA DELLA VALE

- Cornelia absorbed theology and spirituality of the Incarnation from the Epiphany sermons of Gioacchino Ventura, a Theatine father at this church
- She kept a copy of his sermons all her life



SAN CARLO AL CORSO

- In 1837 Cornelia attended a week of liturgical celebrations of the Epiphany, including sermons by Joacchino Ventura, which were hugely popular and were based at this church on the Corso



THE VENERABLE ENGLISH COLLEGE

- 1828-1840 Rev Nicholas Wiseman was Rector of the English College
- He came to know Cornelia in Rome in the 1830s
- Later, as a bishop in England, he supported Cornelia's work of founding the Society, though eventually he made life difficult for her
- Cornelia certainly visited the English College when she was in Rome in 1869



SANTA CROCE IN GERUSALEMME

- 15 Jan 1844 Cornelia visited this church (which contains what are said to be the relics of Christ's passion) with La Baronne d'Hoogverst, a married woman, who later founded the congregation of Marie Reparatrice



STA MARIA MAGGIORE

- Another of the major Roman basilicas
- Here, in the chapel of the Nativity, are relics said to be of the crib of Jesus
- Cornelia often came here to venerate the relics, and brought four year old Merty with her

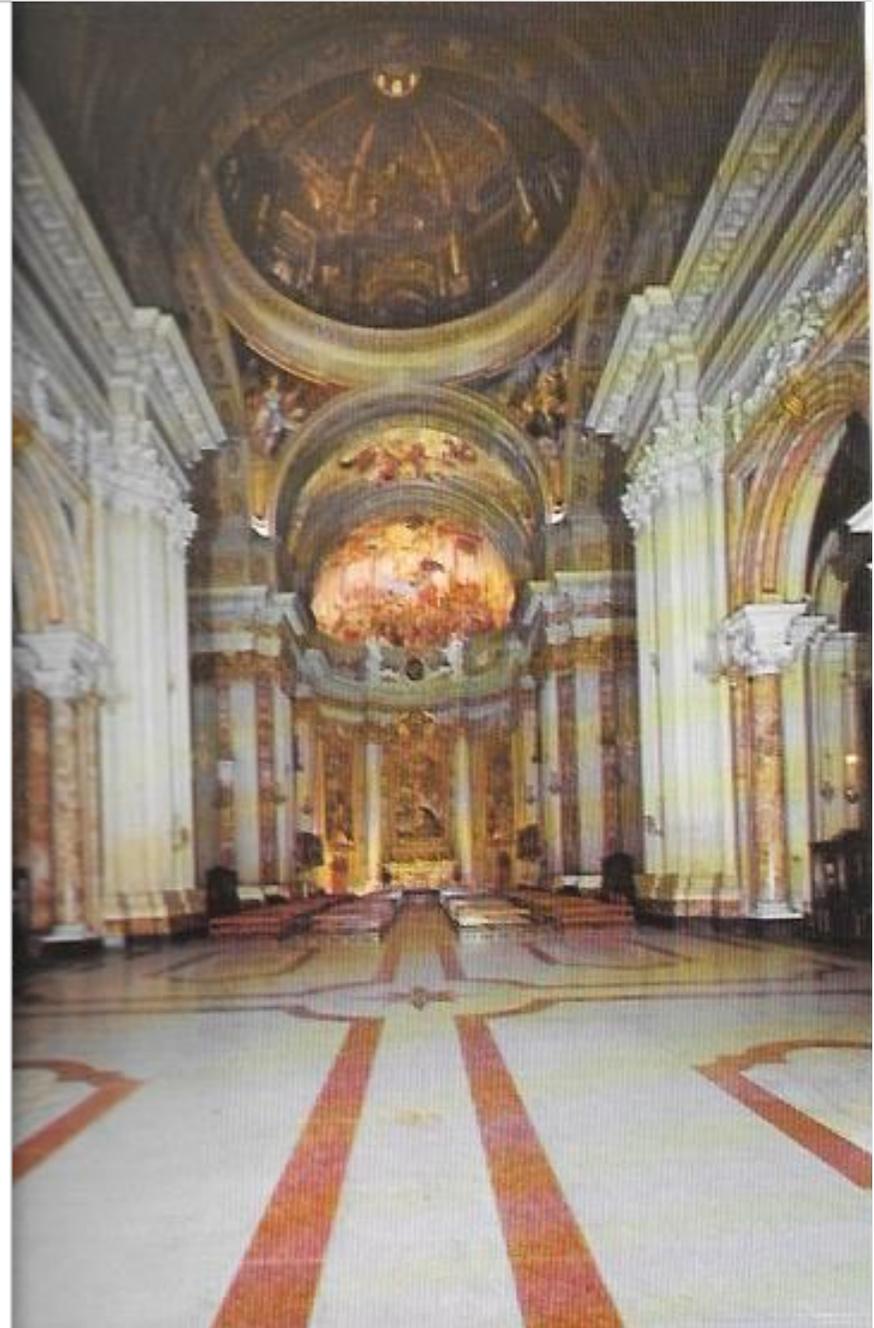


THE GESÙ

- This is the major Jesuit church in Rome
- When Cornelia visited, it looked just as it does today
- The charism and spirituality of our Society are influenced by the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius
- Cornelia had a great personal devotion to St Ignatius

CHURCH OF SAN IGNACIO

- The tomb of St Aloysius Gonzaga is in this church
- Cornelia visited it often whilst she was in Rome in the 1830s
- She had placed Merty under St Aloysius' protection
- And she prayed often for Merty in this church





CHURCH OF ARACOELI

- Cornelia loved this great Franciscan church
- When later she set up cribs in Holy Child houses it was the crib here that she was remembering
- Anselmo Knapen OSF, consultor, lived here when Cornelia was finalising the rule and she came here often to work with him



CORNELIA'S FIRST VISIT TO ROME

FIRST VISIT:

FEBRUARY 1836-APRIL 1837

- The Connellys stayed at first at the Hotel Spillman on the Via della Croce
- Pierce, Cornelia, Merty, Adeline and a nurse or servant
- They had three bedrooms, a dining room, sitting room, anteroom and all their meals
- Cost \$70 per month plus 20 cents a day to hire a piano



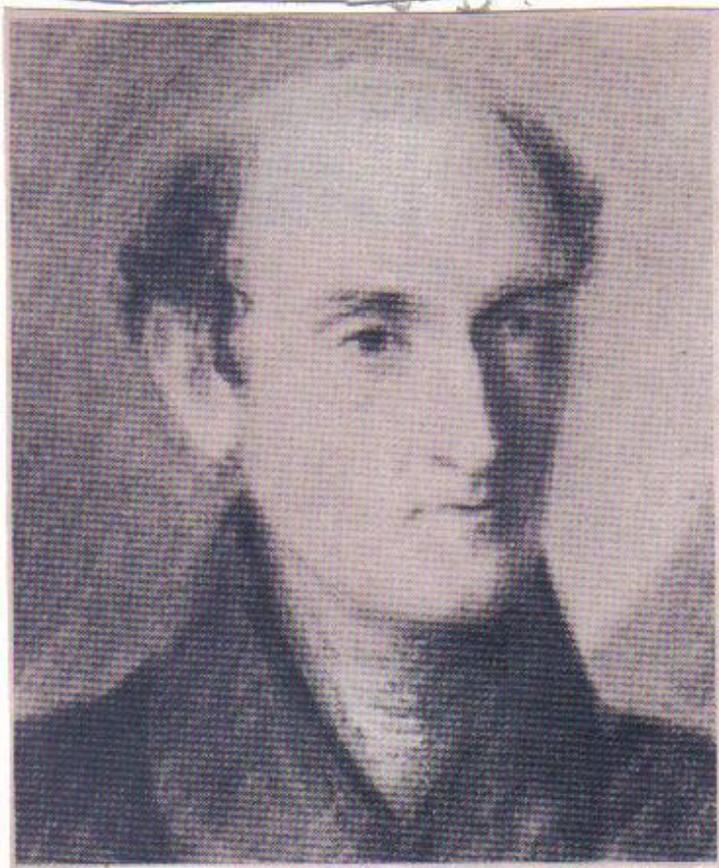
VIA DELLA CROCE

- The Hotel Spillman where Pierce and Cornelia stayed no longer exists
- But it was on this street near the Spanish Steps, in the heart of Rome



WHAT CORNELIA LOOKED LIKE IN 1836

- These two drawings were made by a member of the Colonna family
- I think Cornelia may be dressed for a papal audience and perhaps the drawings were made to commemorate such an occasion



WHAT PIERCE LOOKED LIKE IN 1836

- This seems to be the companion piece to the drawings of Cornelia
- Pierce looks older than she does
- But in 1836 they were both young and enjoying life
- Pierce was 32
- Cornelia was 27

WHOM DID THEY MEET?

- Pierce had a letter of introduction to Cardinal Fransoni, who was in charge of mission lands which included the USA
- Gradually they met other important priests and Vatican officials
- They became friends with Catholic English aristocrats who lived in Rome, notably the Earl of Shrewsbury and his family

WHAT DID THEY DO?

- They enjoyed the sights of Rome, especially the churches
- They took a great interest in the Church, prayed and had spiritual direction and met and listened to many clergy
- They both took art lessons
- They both took Italian lessons
- Cornelia took French lessons (Pierce already spoke French)
- Cornelia also took music and voice lessons

THE IMPACT OF ROME ON CORNELIA

- Soon after they arrived, Cornelia wrote back to the States,
- ‘At every step you see the most precious works of art. The beautiful obelisks, columns, statues and fountains in every piazza, the magnificent churches and palaces, shops, streets...’

PIERCE, CORNELIA AND THE CHURCH

- 27 March 1836 (Palm Sunday) Pierce was received into the church by Cardinal Odescalchi (Cornelia was already a Catholic)
- 31 March 1836 (Maundy Thursday) Pierce and Cornelia were confirmed by Cardinal Weld (an English cardinal who had been married himself)

PIERCE, CORNELIA AND THE CHURCH

- At his first meetings with Cardinal Odescalchi, Pierce also asked about the possibility of being ordained a Catholic priest
- Both Bishop Rosati in the USA and Cardinal Odescalchi advised him to remain a layman

WHAT HAPPENED THEN?

- May 1836
- PIERCE travelled to England with Lord Shrewsbury, staying for several months and meeting many leading Catholic laymen
- CORNELIA went with the children to stay at the Palazzo Simonetti on the Corso, the home of Lord Shrewsbury



PALAZZO SIMONETTI

- Here Cornelia reflected on and prayed about the future, and especially about Pierce's continuing sense of God's call to priesthood
- As a mother her focus was on the children who were ill with whooping cough



John Talbot, 16th Earl of Shrewsbury

- Lord Shrewsbury and his family became close Roman friends of both Cornelia and Pierce
- Later Cornelia counted on their support even more in all the difficulties surrounding the founding of the Society in England



Gwendaline Talbot Borghese

- Gwendaline was the Earl of Shrewsbury's daughter who had married the Prince Borghese when she was very young
- She had small children like Cornelia
- She must have met Cornelia often when Cornelia was at the Palazzo Simonetti
- Gwendaline died at the age of 21

1837 LEAVING ROME

- April 25 Pierce, Cornelia and the children were received in private audience by Pope Gregory XVI
- April 29 The Connellys left Rome
- They travelled across the Alps by coach, though Cornelia was heavily pregnant
- June 22 John Henry was born in Vienna

1837 LEAVING EUROPE

- A week before John Henry was born they received news of a financial crisis in the USA and realised they must return home as quickly as they could
- Even so, it took them five months
- They travelled via Paris
- November 7 They finally sailed from Le Havre for New Orleans: not the best time of year for a journey which took two months



CORNELIA'S
SECOND VISIT TO
ROME

1843-1846: CORNELIA IN ROME

- Life was very different for Cornelia and Pierce now: they had a serious purpose very different from the lighthearted happiness of their first visit
- Pierce was about to study for the priesthood in the Catholic church
- To make this possible Cornelia had to take a solemn vow of chastity



VIA DI RIPETTA

- 1843-4 For four months the Connelys stayed in this street near the river and close to the Palazzo Borghese
- Only Frank was with his parents: Mercer was at school in England and Adeline a boarder at the Trinità

1844: THE EARLY MONTHS

- Epiphany, Carnivale, Lent: Cornelia and Pierce joined in the Church and social events
- MARCH:
- Cornelia made a retreat for laywomen at the Trinità
- Pierce asked the pope for a deed of separation so that they could both become religious – with the Jesuits and the Sacred Heart

APRIL 1844

- 1 April The deed of perpetual separation was signed by Pierce and Cornelia at their lodgings on the Via di Ripetta
- 9 April Cornelia entered the Society of the Sacred Heart at the Trinità as a quasi-postulant
- 10 April Pierce began to train for the priesthood
- It all happened much more quickly than Cornelia and Pierce had anticipated

CORNELIA AT THE TRINITÀ

- Cornelia struggled at the Trinità, not feeling called to be a Sacred Heart sister
- This portrait was painted there, perhaps by Pauline Perdreau, Cornelia's fellow postulant
- It was painted for her children but they never received it



JUNE and JULY 1845

- Cornelia offered to return to family life; Pierce refused
- 18 June Cornelia made a solemn vow of chastity
- 22 June Pierce was ordained deacon in the chapel at the Trinità
- 6 July Pierce was ordained priest
- 9 July Pierce offered his first Mass, at the Trinità. Adeline made her first Communion and Cornelia sang in the choir

1846

- Cornelia was still at the Trinità
- With help from her director, John Grassi SJ and from Pierce, she was drawing up outline constitutions for a congregation of her own
- 18 April Cornelia left Rome with Adeline and Frank to begin a new life and a new congregation in England



CORNELIA'S THIRD
AND FOURTH VISITS
TO ROME

1854: FIRST VISIT TO ROME AS FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

- January-April 1854 Eight years after the founding of the Society; Cornelia was 45
- Pierce's case against her for the restitution of conjugal rights had been widely publicised in England.
- As a result Cardinal Wiseman and Bishop Grant wanted her out of England (permanently, if possible)



CORNELIA ABOUT THIS TIME

- This is probably the earliest photograph (rather than drawing or painting) of Cornelia
- It shows her for the first time in the habit she had designed for the Society
- It was taken at St Leonards, England

1854: FIRST VISIT TO ROME AS FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

- This time Cornelia and the two SHCJ with her stayed in the piazza outside the Gesù, on the corner near Ignatius' rooms
- Cornelia hoped the Rule would be approved by Rome
- But Pierce had presented a rule earlier and the Roman authorities, confused, refused to approve what Cornelia had written

1854: FIRST VISIT TO ROME AS FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

- So what did Cornelia do during these four months?
- She met with people who she hoped would help or support her: Pio Nono, Cardinal Fransoni, Fr Peter Jan Becck who was the general of the Jesuits
- She went house hunting because she would have liked to have a Holy Child community in Rome
- She took painting lessons. She intended to paint a triptych and began with a huge painting of St Ignatius

1869: SECOND VISIT TO ROME AS FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

- May-July 1869 Cornelia was 60
- She had come to Rome hoping for final approval of the Rule
- She was not expecting any difficulties
- BUT she ended up, as she said, 'doing and *undoing*'
- Fr Anselmo Knapen OSF, the consultor up at the Aracoeli, insisted on changes to Cornelia's text, changes that would cause great unhappiness
- He insisted she add a chapter on enclosure, separate lay sisters from choir sisters, re-work the authority of the superior general



1869: SECOND VISIT TO ROME AS FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

- This is a photograph of Cornelia taken in the 1860s
- She looks tired and worn out
- She was coping with many unresolved problems and anxieties
- The continuing existence of the Society was by no means certain



1869: SECOND VISIT TO ROME AS FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

- On this visit Cornelia and her two SHCJ companions stayed in Via Nicola di Tolentino, which runs into this piazza, the Piazza Barberini
- In spite of the heat and the hard work, the difficulties and disappointments, they managed to take pleasure in the beauties of Rome

1869: SECOND VISIT TO ROME AS FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

- What did Cornelia and her companions do when they weren't up at the Aracoeli working with Fr Anselmo Knapen?
- They had an audience with Pio Nono which Cornelia said she 'would remember for ever'
- Cornelia says they visited 'The magnificent monuments of the Roman faith... splendid churches with precious relics and crypts and paintings... We are seeing again everything that is to be seen, though the crypts are rather cold for those inclined to stiff knees and rheumatism'



1869: SECOND VISIT TO ROME AS FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

- Cornelia wrote home, 'Yesterday we had a delicious drive out on the via Appia... overlooking the ancient aqueduct to the mountains with Frascati and Albano in view... Then on turning round to come back we had the very beauty of paradise in the setting sun behind Rome...'

ENJOY YOUR TIME IN ROME!

- Cornelia wrote, 'What a blessed spot is Rome!'
- May you come to love and enjoy it as much as she did