

RE Prefects have a Theology Taster Day at the Faculty of Divinity, Cambridge University

On the 28th of September we travelled by minibus to Cambridge University's Faculty of Divinity and soon we were looking around their library. We found some old, rare books about theology and religions. Some smelt really nice! After that, the whole group went down to one of the lecture halls. The seats were in a semi-circle that faced a big projector screen. The seats all faced a spot where the lecturer would stand and teach. We had a lecture about Thomas Aquinas and his views on faith and reason. He lived over 800 years ago. He wanted to join the Dominicans, but it was seen as an extreme thing to do, like joining the circus. His family didn't want him to go, so his two brothers kidnapped him and locked him up in his house for two years! Then his Mum saw he wasn't going to change his mind, so she let him go. He then carried on in his life and became a preacher in Paris where he spent his life trying to answer the basic question "What is God?" - he wrote 50 volumes in over ten million words on this topic.

After the talk, we split up into seminar groups led by a postgraduate Theology student and discussed the issues raised in the lecture. I learnt that science and religion cannot contradict, but I still question that when looking at certain things. After that, we went back into the lecture hall, and had a mini Hebrew lesson and learnt the Hebrew alphabet. I learnt how to write my name in Hebrew. Then we had a delicious lunch at St. Catharine's College and a tour, including their chapel, library, and bar!

At end of the day, we had a look at a medieval manuscript. We got to touch it, and pass it around. They told us that they had found out that there was writing that had faded out on the pages, so they put ultraviolet light on it and saw that a mother had written the names of her babies that had been born. It is the only illuminated manuscript in the world which has a list of births written inside.

I really enjoyed my time at the Faculty of Divinity and I got a great taste of what it would be like to be a student studying Theology.

By Beatrice Duffett