



All Saints Parish Paper

MARGARET STREET, LONDON W.1

OCTOBER 2005

£1.00

VICAR'S LETTER

Our summer holiday was spent in the depths of France, in the small hamlet near Poitiers which we go to most years to see one of Theresa's sisters. We had a week with family and then a week on our own.

It was a chance to relax, read, sleep and enjoy the food and wine of the country. The weather was so hot that anything more than a little light tourism — a few of the Romanesque churches which abound in the area, one abbey ruined and another one still going strong — was out of the question.

I grew up in a small village, so tend not to have romantic fantasies about the bliss of rural life, but I was reminded of things that we miss in London: the night sky, moon and stars. We never see them because of the 'light pollution' caused by the street lighting we rely on for our safety. To stand in a garden and be able to see an inky black sky dusted with stars and only the occasional artificial light from an aircraft was worth every penny of the train fare. As was being able to sit in the garden during the day noticing the rhythms of nature. It dawned on me after a while that the humans were the only creatures in that garden with the leisure simply to "stand and stare". The red squirrel searching for nuts for its winter

store, the half-wild cat from the nearby barn with kittens to feed, relentlessly patrolling her hunting ground in search of mice and young rabbits, the pair of wood pigeons building a new nest, the swallows and house martins performing aerobatics above us to build up their strength on insects for the long flight to Africa, the bats which took over at dusk doing the same before their winter hibernation; bees and butterflies harvesting nectar, and other less welcome insects recognising pale urban skin as a good source of nourishment. All these had work to do.

We went to church in the nearby village. It is a light and airy Romanesque church of the 12th century with whitewashed interior. Unlike some French churches it is obviously loved and kept clean and tidy. High in an archway in the chancel there is a small statue of St James. This area straddles the pilgrimage route south from Paris to Santiago de Compostella in Spain and many local churches have the apostle's image with pilgrim's staff and cockle shell.

As in most parts of rural France and England, the parish priest has to cover a number of places and the service schedule is rather complicated. Marcelle, the old lady next door who still cycles to Mass,

keeps us informed of where and when to go. We forget sometimes in central London how spoiled we are. The Cure suffers from severe asthma and on the first Sunday was so short of breath that instead of the sermon we had five minutes' silent reflection on the Gospel. The passage for that Sunday was Jesus saying to Peter, "Get behind me Satan". So he was spared having to preach on Jesus reprimanding the first pope for a glaring example of fallibility! The next Sunday he was in better voice. Congregational singing is a relatively new thing in French parish churches, so even our musical French was welcome reinforcement. Poitiers itself has two famous saints; St Hilary the 3rd century bishop whose work on the Trinity I had to study as a divinity student, and St Radegund, a 6th century princess-turned-abbess. France is in many ways a deeply secularised country and yet worshipping in churches where people have prayed for well over a thousand years and visiting a flourishing monastery re-established in the 20th century after the government had done its best to suppress the monastic life, communicates a sense of the perseverance of faith and stirs hope when yet another survey has predicted the demise of Christianity in our own land.

Our last week was spent without radio, television, newspapers, internet or telephone calls. This meant that the imagination could roam not only in the local countryside but in places opened by books. So novelists took my mind's holiday to the Spain of the Civil War and today. Theo Richmond took me into a world now vanished; to Konin, the shtetl which had been the home of his Jewish family in pre-war Poland. Amos Oz in his

"Tale of Light and Darkness" into the life of a family from that same world making a new life in Jerusalem. Charles Peguy's great poem "The Portal of the Mystery of Hope", helped me explore the spirit of Christian France which I was sensing in churches and monasteries.

But all this isolation had a drawback too. We knew of Hurricane Katrina and had prayed at church for its victims but had no idea of the scale of the devastation it had left in its wake. We discovered that only when able to buy a newspaper at the railway station on our journey home. The images of a city laid waste and its poor and sick and elderly abandoned are still being absorbed.

And so we came home to our own city. Our garden now is the courtyard. The rhythms those of that 24 hour city that does not sleep; that defies the cycles of nature. The pace of life is determined not by the slowly turning year but the frenetic pace of the next deadline or marketing campaign. The background noise is not birdsong and crickets but alarms and helicopters. No sooner had we returned than the first mince pies were on sale in Sainsburys.

But there are places in this city which respond to a different rhythm. It is not so much that of rural life as that of another city, the heavenly one. William Blake's Jerusalem — for long the anthem of the WI — has become the hymn of sporting England and is being sung today to celebrate the triumph of the England cricket team. I heard an eminent evangelical clergyman and hymnwriter protesting that "Jerusalem" is not a hymn

and ought not to be sung in church. I am sure that technically, he is probably correct. But somehow he seemed to have missed the spirit of the thing, the Spirit in Blake's poem. It has long been an inspiration to those who have wanted to make of this land a better place. Yes, I know the story associated with Glastonbury of the Holy Family coming to England is just a legend. But surely we believe that Christ is present here and now, not just in the green and pleasant but in the dark satanic mills of our cities, among the wretched and abandoned. Some of them are not very far from us.

And if we do believe that, then a church like ours stands as a sign of another city, the new and heavenly Jerusalem into which the kingdoms of this world will bring their treasures. Our task is not just to point to that other city but to transform this one into its likeness.

Part of our calling here at All Saints is to provide a space where people can draw breath, enter a God-filled silence. Instead of the language of mammon, here people can encounter the music and poetry of heaven. I am sure that everyone associated with All Saints recognises that this is a vital part of the Church's mission in central London. It is central to our response as a parish to the London Challenge issued by the Bishop.

We have inherited a place which speaks of God. Our responsibility is to care for it. As many of you will know we have been working over the last decade on its restoration. We have just received an estimate of the cost of the work which remains to be done in the church itself.

Our intention has been to have this completed in time for the 150th anniversary of the consecration in 2009.

The cost is somewhere between £2 and £2.5 million. This is a daunting sum, and rather more than I was expecting. I am not an expert on stained glass and so was unprepared for how much the repair of our windows is going to cost. The PCC has had a first look at the figures and is determined that we must go ahead with this work. This will require a serious commitment by all of us, by our many friends near and far, both in terms of our personal giving and also in the business of raising funds from trusts and grant-giving bodies. We make a start on this task at the beginning of this month with our Dedication Festival and we must pray that God will grant us grace to bring it to completion.

Yours in Christ,

Alan Moses

PARISH NOTES

Farewells

Fr Allen Shin and Clara

Sunday September 11 was Fr Allen Shin's last Sunday with us as our honorary assistant priest. The chaplain's accommodation at Keble College is now ready and he and Clara will be moving to their new home. A presentation was made after High Mass at which Fr Allen was celebrant and preacher. The Vicar paid tribute to the generous contribution Fr Shin has made over the past three years through his preaching which is both learned and

witty (he has a fine line in pulpit jokes), through his wonderful singing of the liturgy, through the work he and Clara have done in bringing the younger members of the congregation together for social events. Many of us have enjoyed their hospitality. We are glad that they are not going too far away. We will be able to visit them, and we hope that they will visit us sometimes. Fr Alan “the Elder” as Fr Allen “the Younger” likes to call him has already been booked to preach in Keble College on Remembrance Sunday.

As Fr Allen is moving from one Butterfield building to another, he should feel quite at home and he need only look at polychrome bricks and tiles to be reminded of us. The presentation included a cheque as a token of our appreciation and a handsome copy of the Church of England’s new Office Book, so that he will have a memento of us when he says his daily prayers.

Fr Shin’s sermon is published in this issue.

Joseph Fort

Sunday August 28th was Joseph’s last as our organ scholar. It has been a delight having Joe with us and he has made an enormous contribution to our music and worship. We wish him every blessing as he takes up an organ scholarship at Selwyn College, Cambridge.

Our new organ scholar, Simon Jacobs, has already joined us and we welcome him.

Walsingham Cell

September 8th, the feast of the Birthday of Mary, was the first birthday of the Cell.

This was marked by Mass with hymns at 6.30 p.m. at which over 50 people were present. The Vicar celebrated and preached and Fr Aquilina admitted four new members to the Cell. We also heard about Richard Hislop’s intrepid group of cyclists who are to do a sponsored cycle ride to Walsingham over the spring bank holiday next year to raise money for the Shrine’s development appeal.

On Thursday December 8th, the Feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our speaker will be Canon Nicholas Sagovsky of Westminster Abbey. Canon Sagovsky is a member of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission and will speak on its recent document entitled “Mary, Grace and Hope in Christ”.

Prebendary John Gaskell

The Archbishop of Canterbury has announced the award of the Cross of St Augustine to Fr Gaskell. The award, which is in the gift of the Archbishop, marks conspicuous service to the Church and the wider community. He will receive the award at a ceremony in the Chapel at Lambeth Palace on Wednesday October 19th.

The press release from Lambeth Palace explains that:

“The Cross of St Augustine was founded by Archbishop Michael Ramsey. It takes the form of a circular medallion bearing a replica of the 8th Century Cross of Canterbury; on the reverse is an engraving of the chair of St Augustine of Canterbury. The ribbon is of “Canterbury Blue” and it is worn

around the neck by clergy and on the left breast by lay people.

“The Cross has historically been awarded to clergy and lay people of foreign churches who have contributed conspicuously to advancing friendly relations with the churches of the Anglican Communion. More recently it has been given for outstanding service within the Church of England whether centrally or in the diocese, or the Anglican Communion as a whole, and also to those who have contributed to advancing relations between the various Christian communions and churches.”

We extend our warmest congratulations to Fr John on this award which marks a distinguished ministry as priest, preacher and spiritual director and particularly his work as chairman of Affirming Catholicism.

Musical Notes

It is expected that the choir’s latest recording will be available in time for the Festival. The recording is of music particularly associated with All Saints including the Rachmaninov settings of Mass and the Evensong Canticles and the Vale Requiem. Some of this music will also be sung during the Festival.

Norman Caplin’s Missa Omnium Sanctorum will be sung again, this time with the newly-completed Credo.

Pitkin Guide

Stocks of the Pitkin Guide produced in Fr Hutt’s time have now been exhausted. We have taken the opportunity to produce an interim reprint with some new photographs of areas of the church which have already been restored and some updating of the text. These should be available shortly. A further and more radical revision will of course be necessary when the restoration work is completed.

Frère Roger Schütz

The ecumenical monastic community founded at Taizé in Burgundy by Brother Roger, a Swiss Reformed Pastor during the Second World War, has become a centre of inspiration and pilgrimage for many Christians. It was a great shock then to hear that he had been stabbed to death during Evening Prayer in the Community Church.

Patrick and Margaret Spencer, long-standing members of All Saints, have a house not far from Taizé and have known the community for many years. They have written the following article.

TAIZÉ, AND FRÈRE ROGER

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est

Anyone reading this is likely to have experienced the shock wave that followed the news of the violent killing of Roger Schulz, Prior of the Community of Taizé amidst the 2,000-strong congregation at

evening prayer in the Church of Reconciliation on August 16th. The full horror of the event struck us when we realized that those sitting nearest to him might have been young children. Later, at a memorial service in St Mary’s, Somers Town, thoughtfully prepared to capture the

atmosphere of a Taizé gathering, we joined others whose lives had been touched by their visits to the Community. We were only a tiny few compared with the thousands of pilgrims who go every week to this village in South Burgundy, but we recalled and gave thanks for the life of the Protestant Swiss pastor who brought about the most successful ecumenical achievement in Europe.

Our family links with Taizé are the result of a series of happy accidents. Introductions to people and events there are nearly always explanations by word of mouth. The first visit was in 1970, twenty years after Roger Schutz and six other young men had come to the village to work and pray together. Their avowed intent was to reconcile the people in that area who, during and after the conflicts of two world wars, had been bitter enemies. It was a long, slow business changing minds and hearts, but hospitality, shared work and evident commitment to a particularly non-violent way of life brought others to help. We had arrived in Burgundy not long after the upheavals in Paris and elsewhere had made monastic life seem attractive to a significant number of students. Their contemporaries from Eastern Europe, encouraged by the moderate tone of the Second Vatican Council, added to the numbers. What these young people seemed to have in common was the search for a way to escape from the more entrenched religious practices of their elders, and a desire to change things, as the 'modern monks' had done. Frère Roger told us later that they were looking for 'something beyond themselves'.

What we found, on a hillside not far from Cluny, was a fairly large, modern concrete

church surrounded by people carrying boards that had 'Silence' boldly written on them in English, German, French and Polish. The main Sunday service was the Eucharist at ten o'clock. We sat on the floor, joined in the chants and took part in what our friends called 'the silence cure' (*la cure de silence*), which involved about a thousand people, completely still for at least ten minutes. We heard the birds outside. After the reading of the Gospel, the significant sentences were translated into other European languages for the benefit of groups of visitors known to be present. There was no sermon and no collection. A particular silence surrounded a single utterance in the distinctive voice we came to know well. As we left we were given a printed version of Roger's prayer as a prompt for further meditation, while he stayed in the church to talk with those who wanted to consult him. We then found we had arrived just as a number of devotees from 42 countries with Taizé connections were planning a Council of Youth. The concern was to see how the experience of life at Taizé could become a reality in life elsewhere. It finally came together in 1974; about 100,000 people took part to empower a huge communal effort of work and prayer. Although the reports of events tend to foreground the numbers of those involved, Roger has always emphasized the strength of the few gathered together with a common purpose.

Over time we have come to know more about this extraordinary place: its people, how it supports itself as a community and defines itself within the wider bounds of Christianity. Everyone is made welcome. Discussions and Bible study have remained at the heart of weekday group interactions.

The brothers live by their work and the expertise they share with others. It took us longer to grasp the extent of the outreach to parts of the world where social injustice, persecution, neglect of the poor, lack of water and medicine, were rampant. These were foremost in Roger's programme, summed up thus: 'We have been born into a world which, for most people, is not a place to live in'. When he was asked why he and some of the brothers had shared the living quarters of the poorest people in Hong Kong, he replied; 'To make the most trying conditions that people have to undergo part of our own lives'. *Sharing* is a continuous theme in Roger's writings, in tune with the *sitting-next-to* implications of *reconciliation*.

There were also visits of mission to cities. All the great churches of London were thronged at New Year in 1987. We'll never forget the beauty of St Paul's without its chairs, and then crammed with young visitors who shared singing and silence. The most memorable service of all is the great Eucharist of Easter, after which a novice dedicates himself to the Community and becomes a brother. As Prior, Roger then leads him slowly round the church to be greeted by his family, the brothers, and then by the rest of the huge congregation.

We were in Taizé in June. The continuity of the greeting is now familiar, but we know that a place of pilgrimage constantly changes to suit the needs of the pilgrims. The printing press, the pottery and the art studio are still fully active and adapted to changing tastes. Electronic communications deal with things here as elsewhere. In church, the number of older brothers who once knelt on stools and now sit on chairs

has grown. What has not changed is the stability of common purposes. The enthusiastic young continue to come from near and far. As ever, reconciliation is the dynamic of the here and now. We sang, concentrating on the meaning, words and music both new and old.

Yet, we had to admit that, as we saw him walk slowly up the long, slightly sloping nave of the church, his hand on the shoulder of one of his brothers, Fr Roger had become a frail old man. As he took his place at the rear of the Community enclave, he pulled his fine white shawl over his shoulders. His eyes were still bright. The special prayer was very short. We let ourselves wonder what would happen after he died. We didn't know then that he had already chosen his successor, Fr Alois, some time ago. As we came out into the beauty of the Burgundy countryside, we saw how greatly the work of the Community has grown and flourished, despite a host of difficulties, since that day in August, 1940, when Roger Louis Schütz bought an abandoned house in that almost deserted village overrun by refugees fleeing from the Gestapo.

In the here and now of the beginning of a new phase of life and work in Taizé, we offer two of Fr Roger's sayings, with our prayers.

'As time goes by, I realize more and more that I am called to say how capable the young are of re-inventing the world'.

'The struggle for a better world cannot be sustained without communion with God'.

P. & M.S.

DIARY DATES

Friday 30 September

7.00 p.m. to Midnight

Vigil of Prayer for the Renewal and Restoration of All Saints,
in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

Please sign the list at the back of church.

Sunday 2 October — Dedication Festival, Friends' Day and Launch of the All Saints Restoration Appeal

11.00 a.m. High Mass

Celebrant and Preacher: The Rt Revd Richard Chartres,
Bishop of London

Music: Mariazellermesse — *Haydn*

I was glad — *Parry*

(The Lord Mayor of Westminster, Cllr Tim Joiner, will be in attendance.)

6.00 p.m. Solemn Evensong, Te Deum and Solemn Benediction

Preacher: The

Music includes: Service in G, O pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and
Collegium Regale Te Deum — *Howells*

Thursday 6 October

7.05 p.m. Holy Hour led by The Vicar.

Friday 7 October — The Cell of Our Lady of Walsingham and All Saints

Our Lady of the Rosary — *members pray the Rosary during the day
ending with Low Mass, Rosary and Benediction at 6.30 p.m.*

Tuesday 25 October — The School of Worship Programme for 2005 - 06 begins

7.00 p.m. in the Parish Room: *The Anglican Missals*

(The 6.30 p.m. Mass will be celebrated according to the English Missal.)

Fr Nicholas Davis, Parish Priest of Holy Trinity,

Tarleton, Diocese of Blackburn.

All Saints Festival 2005: 31 October - 6 November

(Please see separate notice.)

ALL SAINTS FESTIVAL 2005

PRINCIPAL CELEBRATIONS

MONDAY 31 OCTOBER

EVE OF ALL SAINTS

**6.30 p.m. Litany of the Saints, Solemn Evensong
and Solemn Benediction**

Preacher: Fr Peter Jackson, Vicar, Christ Church, Southgate

Music includes: Wood in E flat No 1

The souls of the righteous — *Harry Bramma*

TUESDAY 1 NOVEMBER

ALL SAINTS DAY

6.30 p.m. High Mass

Preacher: The Rt Revd Timothy Stevens, Bishop of Leicester

Music: Missa Omnium Sanctorum — *Norman Caplin*

(with premiere of the new Credo)

Alleluia — *Randall Thompson*

WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER

ALL SOULS DAY

6.30 p.m. High Mass of Requiem

Preacher: Fr Alan Gyle, Vicar, St Paul's, Knightsbridge

Music: Requiem — *Walter Vale*

Bring us, O Lord God — *Harris*

SUNDAY 6 NOVEMBER

FESTIVAL SUNDAY

11.00 a.m. Procession and High Mass

Preacher: The Ven Stephen Conway, Archdeacon of Durham

Music: Mass in E minor — *Bruckner*

Faire is the heaven — *Harris*

6.00 p.m. Solemn Evensong, Te Deum and Solemn Benediction

Preacher: Canon Ronald Coppin

Music includes: Dyson in D

O quam gloriosum — *Victoria*

All Saints, Margaret Street

Friday September 30th



**VIGIL OF PRAYER FOR
THE RENEWAL AND
RESTORATION OF
ALL SAINTS
IN FRONT OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT**

7.00 p.m. to Midnight

Please sign the list at the back of church

THE SERMON BY FR PETER GROVES, PRIEST-IN-CHARGE OF ST MARY MAGDALENE, OXFORD, AT HIGH MASS ON THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BVM, 15 AUGUST 2005

My parish, like yours, is in the centre of a city. It has few residents. Most of those who do live in it, reside within an Oxford college, and hence have a chaplain to fulfil the rôle of parish priest. One consequence of this situation is the lack of occasional offices, in particular funerals. As a curate I suppose I conducted a funeral every other week or so, but now three or four a year is about it. Recently, and especially since the explosion of publicity concerning grief and funerals that accompanied the death of Princess Diana, clergy have increasingly found themselves expected to deliver a eulogy, rather than to preach a homily, at funeral services. To talk about death and the continuity of Christian life is considered by some to be too awkward. Platitudes about someone we probably didn't know roll all too easily off the tongue. The word resurrection might well be far from anyone's mind.

A sermon for the Assumption is, in a sense, a funeral sermon, or perhaps a memorial address, for the Blessed Virgin, someone whom the Church holds as dear as anyone after its Lord and God. Mother of God, we call her, but also Mother of the Church, Mother of us all. If ever we had good words to say about anyone, if ever a fulsome eulogy could be forthcoming, here is an example. However, a eulogy and a sermon are not the same thing. A eulogy is not preached, and is more than likely about the past. Celebrating the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is precisely not about looking back, but about

looking forward, about hoping and rejoicing that God's gift of life is not simply biological. As with any Christian teaching about Mary, our concern is not with what she has done, but with what God has done, and hence what God will do.

Something else uncomfortable about the hoo-ha with Princess Diana was the oxygen given by the media to the trite spiritualism that seems so commonplace. If ever you wanted evidence that our society cannot truly be secularized because it was never truly Christianized, start a discussion about life after death. The idea that Diana was somewhere up in the sky, immaterial and yet present, her name spelt out by the stars, as Elton John put it, reflects the very common notion that human beings are fundamentally something ethereal, beings trapped in their bodies who only escape at the point of death. I have only slipped away into the next room, say the well-meaning but vapid words of Henry Scott Holland. Death is nothing at all: in which case I want to ask why it should be the cause of grieving. Death is very much something, something real and something disconcerting, and for this reason above all Christians must be unafraid to speak of resurrection.

Early in Christian history, the rhetoric of Gnosticism, which taught that creation was a cruel imprisonment which saw virtuous souls confined within weak material bodies and needing to transcend them, was ever more strongly opposed by emphasizing the

physical reality of Jesus Christ. Truly a person, truly God. Truly a person meant something physical, something material, something made of stuff which could be touched, could decay and could be subjected to violence. You and I are physical creatures. What we are is, at least in part, defined by what we call our bodies, and it is no part of Christian teaching about the soul to think that my soul is truly me and hence my ultimate self has nothing to do with my body. My soul is the word I use to describe what makes me me, a nameable identifiable person rather than simply a collection of cells which renews itself every number of years.

It follows that if I am to enjoy any life after the moment which the world calls my death — and remember that my death is not really an event, it is simply the termination of a whole series of biological events which we call earthly life — if I am to live beyond my present existence, then it must be truly I that lives, not some lesser form of myself. Jesus himself, his whole person, was raised by God from the dead to new life, and that is what you and I hope to share, that is, we may say, the fate of the Church, and Mary — through whom God worked to bring Christ to the world — is the Church personified.

In northern Italy, above the high altar in the magnificent church of the Frari hangs Titian's Assumption, a work as vivid as any in Venice. The huge, bold colours come together in the Virgin's attire as she is swept heavenward, beyond the reach of the apostles below her. Right at the top a bearded God the Father waits with open arms. This most glorious of depictions could easily fool us, but it really needn't. The clue is in the picture of God himself. None of us

thinks that God the Father can be literally represented: the Hebrew obsession with avoiding idolatry and graven images was the concern to worship the one true God — any pictorial God is clearly not he who made the heavens and the earth. Just as Titian has represented God the Father as a person, so the familiar sight of Mary being drawn upward whilst very much alive, as if she's been somehow taken by surprise, is something we should not dwell on literally. Christian orthodoxy, East and West, has never taught that Mary didn't die. The doctrine of the Assumption teaches that she was resurrected at the point of her death, that her new life began immediately in our earthly time scale, that she — the type of the Church — was assured a place in her Son's presence without fear of the day of judgement. It is for this reason that the Orthodox talk of the Dormition of Our Lady, her going to sleep. But the insistence that her death was real can be found in theologians as Roman as St Thomas Aquinas.

Resurrection is a hard notion, not one we are meant to understand. Statements about the resurrection are, quite literally, extraordinary, for resurrection doctrine is not centred on the familiar territory of worldly experience, but belongs within the eschatological realm, as part of Christian talk about the sovereignty of God over time as well as space, about the fulfillment of God's promises in God's good time. It is a statement of Christian hope, not the blind arrogance or the nervous optimism of the world, but the patient expectation of faith rooted in prayer and in the Resurrection of Christ himself. One only needs to read Paul's first letter to the Corinthians to be reminded that embarrassment about the Resurrection is nothing new. But God

created you and me to live in his presence, transformed, warts and all. I have no idea what sort of body is a spiritual body, just as I have no idea where, or rather what, heaven might be. But these things would scarcely count as beyond this life if I were able to understand them. The Church of England has done well to make this Feast its principal

celebration of the Virgin Mary. We can do well to remind ourselves that in celebrating her, we celebrate the saving acts of God, the God who promises the new life of the Resurrection to each one of us. We do not commemorate her death, we celebrate her life, and we do so in the joyful hope that it is a life we will one day share.

**THE SERMON BY FR ALLEN SHIN ON
HIS FAREWELL SUNDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2005**

911	New York City
1007	Invasion of Afghanistan
1012	Bali
1128	Kenya
320	Invasion of Iraq
1120	Istanbul
311	Madrid
529	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
801	Bangladesh
903	Beslan
1229	Riyadh
707	London

Against the backdrop of the current situation, Jesus' teaching in today's Gospel comes as the most difficult moral maxim of all — Forgive. Forgive not seven times, but seventy times seven. Try telling this to those who have lost their loved ones in one of these bombings. I couldn't pretend to have such a moral superiority. Forget seventy times seven or even seven times. We have to find a way to forgive even just once. We are caught in a moral dilemma. But, as Christians we cannot ignore it nor can we escape from it.

This is a list just short enough we can bear and handle. Last year alone, supposedly, there were 651 terrorist attacks around the world. The list expands exponentially if we include all incidents of terrorism and counter-terrorism in Israel and Palestine and in Iraq. How much longer must we endure this cycle of senseless violence? Till we fill every day of the calendar with memories of senseless violence and innocent victims? A virus of religious fundamentalism in the Islamic society has spread world-wide and is now called a political movement. Do they not know that violence and terrorism get nowhere in achieving genuine and lasting peace? But, then, peace is not the aim of a cycle of unending hatred and violence, but revenge is.

The great Russian novelist, Tolstoy, also struggled with this dilemma. In his last great novel, *Resurrection*, he treats the injustice and cruelty of the Russian justice system as the fundamental problem of what was wrong with the Russian society in his day. The unreasonable sentences handed down to those criminals from the low class and poor background, while the wealthy criminals got away with murder literally, and the violent cruelty with which the prison guards were allowed to treat the prisoners — all contributed to the increasingly decaying and violent society. And the conclusion of this novel comes as a surprise to the main character as well to the readers.

I would like to read you a few short excerpts from the conclusion of the novel.

Nekhlyudov opened the copy of the New Testament the Englishman had given him as a souvenir. "They say one can find an answer to everything here," he said to himself and opening it at random he began reading Matthew, chapter 18...

"And can that be the whole answer?" Nekhlyudov suddenly exclaimed aloud. And the inner voice of his whole being said, "Yes, that is all".

And it happened to Nekhlyudov as it often happens to people living a spiritual life. The thought that at first had appeared so strange, so paradoxical, laughable even, ever more frequently finding confirmation in life, suddenly he realized quite clearly that the only sure means of salvation from the terrible wrongs which mankind endures is for every man to acknowledge himself a sinner before God and therefore unfit either to punish or reform others. It now became clear to him that all the dreadful evil of which he had been a witness in gaols and halting-places, and the calm self-assurance of those who committed it, resulted from the attempt by men to perform the impossible: being evil themselves they presumed to correct evil. Vicious men undertook to reform other vicious men and thought they could do it by mechanical means. But the only thing that came of it all was that needy and covetous men, having made a profession of so-called punishment and correction, themselves became utterly corrupt, and continually corrupted their victims. Now he knew the cause of all the horrors he had seen, and what ought to be done to put an end to them.

The answer he had been unable to find was the same that Christ gave to Peter: to forgive everyone always, forgive an endless number of times, because there was no man living who was guiltless and therefore able to punish or reform.

"But surely it cannot be so simple?" Nekhlyudov said to himself, and yet he saw beyond any doubt that, strange as it had seemed to him at first, used as he was to the opposite, it was certainly not only a theoretical but also the most practical solution of the problem.

Now Nekhlyudov understood that society and order generally speaking existed, not thanks to those legalized criminals who judge and punish other men, but because in spite of their depraving influence people still pity and love one another.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these other things shall be added unto you." But we seek "all these other things" and obviously fail to attain them.

This is the last great wisdom one of the greatest novelists of the modern times has left us. It is challenging and difficult to accept. It seems impossible and even laughably naïve. Yet, Tolstoy echoes the very Gospel message Jesus tells Peter in today's Gospel reading.

The Greek word for "forgive" literally means "let go". Letting go of the crime and the criminal so that the criminal may repent and live a new life. Some modern scholars have wrongly applied the modern psychology of letting go of one's baggage to recast this Greek concept of forgiveness. But forgiveness is not about self-

improvement. Nor did the Greeks mean something like a Buddhist ascetical discipline of letting oneself go.

In the Old Testament the Hebrew word for forgiveness is richer in meaning and concept. When it is used of God's forgiving of human sins, it means "to bear" or "to carry". That is to say, that in forgiving us our sins God bears or carries the burden of our sins. This is an apt metaphor for Jesus' carrying of the Cross, the symbol of human cruelty, which in the Crucifixion is transformed into the symbol of God's grace. Sometimes it can also mean "to cleanse" or "to wipe off," meaning that God cleanses or wipes off the ugly marks of sin. God's forgiveness of our sin purifies our whole being. Sometimes it can even mean "to cover," as God covers over our embarrassment and humiliation of sin with his compassion and mercy. Yet another meaning is "to atone," because atonement is the foundation of forgiveness.

Jesus in his earthly ministry constantly forgives, for which he gets into trouble with the Pharisees. The classic Jewish understanding is that true forgiveness can only come from God. So, when Jesus says "Your sins are forgiven," this, on the one hand, reveals Jesus as the Son of God who has the authority to forgive. But on the other hand, Jesus in his incarnational earthly ministry also shows the possibility of human capacity to forgive one another and do so endlessly. It is the only way indeed we can achieve a human society of true freedom and genuine peace.

In forgiving us our sins God has not simply *let go* of our sins. Through Christ's crucifixion, death and resurrection, God has

purified and transformed us from our sinfulness into a new state of being. There is an intimate relationship between forgiveness and new life both individually and collectively.

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," Jesus has taught us to pray. God's forgiving of our sins is inextricably linked with our capacity to forgive each other. To obtain God's forgiveness we need to forgive those who have wronged us, and at the same time ask forgiveness from those whom we have wronged. In refusing to forgive or to ask for it, our soul remains rigid. If we continue to hold on to the memory of a wrong done to us or a wrong we have done to another, it gets lodged in the depth of our soul as an impurity. It festers within and its decay pervades through our whole being till we have life no more.

It still feels impossible, however, to forgive the terrorists who continue the bombings killing innocent lives. What does it mean to forgive Osama bin Laden and his terrorist bandits when they are not even asking for forgiveness? Do we even need to forgive? What are we to forgive in such extreme acts of violence? Any chance of their being forgiven, it seems, can only come from God. Yet, we are called to forgive and learn to forgive we must, lest we, too, are turned into vengeful monsters as they.

But, forgiveness is not an exercise in self-improvement. At the heart of forgiveness is conversion, purification, atonement, and, yes, resurrection. The process of forgiveness is an arduous journey of the soul, a labour of love in prayer and faith in God. I feel angry toward the terrorists, but

I also feel sad for them, their souls trapped and tormented in hell of hatred and anger. But there is a chasm in my soul between my feeling sad for their souls and my ability to forgive them. Only an intentional journey of prayer, prayer for the victims as well as the perpetrators, can bridge that chasm in the soul. Such a prayer, though, seems almost impossible for the moment. But, begin to pray, we must. Pray for *all* that God may forgive us *all*.

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES

MUSIC AND READINGS

● SUNDAY 2 OCTOBER DEDICATION SUNDAY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 205

Introit: Terribilis est

Mass: Mariazellermesse — Haydn

Lessons: 1 Kings 8: 22 - 30

Psalm 122

Hebrews 12: 18 - 24

Hymn: 362 (T 185; v 3 Descant
— Caplin)

Gospel: Matthew 21: 12 - 16

Preacher: The Rt Revd Richard Chartres,
Bishop of London

Creed: Credo III

Anthem: I was glad — Parry

Hymns: 206, 211 (T 456), 426

Voluntary: Improvisation on 'Urbs Beata'
— Paul Brough

SOLEMN EVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 132

Lessons: Jeremiah 7: 1 - 11
1 Corinthians 3: 9 - 17

Office Hymn: 204

Canticles: Service in G — Howells

Anthem: O pray for the peace of
Jerusalem — Howells

Preacher: The Rt Revd Graeme Knowles,
Bishop of Sodor and Man

Hymn: 484 (T 167)

SOLEMN BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Elgar (No. 1)

Te Deum: Collegium Regale
— Howells

Tantum Ergo: Bruckner

Voluntary: Master Tallis' Testament
— Howells

● SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER TRINITY 20

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 401

Introit: Omnia quae fecisti

Mass: Missa 'Simile est regnum
caelorum' — Victoria

Lessons: Isaiah 25: 1 - 9

Psalm 23

Philippians 4: 1 - 9

Hymn: 443

Gospel: Matthew 22: 1 - 14

Preacher: Fr Ivan Aquilina

Anthem: Christi, adoramus te
— Monteverdi

Hymns: My God, and is thy table
spread, 282, 286

Voluntary: Fantasia à 5 — Bach

SOLEMNEVENSONG at 6.00p.m.

Psalm: 139: 1 - 18

Lessons: Proverbs 3: 1 - 18
1 John 3: 1 - 15

Office Hymn: 150 (R)

Canticles: Service in F minor — Gray

Anthem: Abendlied — Rheinberger

Preacher: The Vicar

Hymn: 483 (T 77)

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Paul Brough

Hymn: 389

Tantum Ergo: Paul Brough

Voluntary: Voluntary in C — Stanley

● SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER TRINITY 21

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 333 (v 5 Descant
— Caplin)

Introit: In voluntate

Mass: Spaurmesse — Mozart

Lessons: Isaiah 45: 1 - 7

Psalm 96

1 Thessalonians 1

Hymn: 388 (i)

Gospel: Matthew 22: 15 - 22

Preacher: The Vicar

Creed: Credo II

Anthem: Haec dies — Palestrina

Hymns: 377, 493, 466

Voluntary: Fantasia and Fugue in C minor
— Bach

SOLEMNEVENSONG at 6.00p.m.

Psalms: 142, 143: 1 - 11

Lessons: Proverbs 4: 1 - 18
1 John 3: 16 - 4: 6

Office Hymn: 150 (S)

Canticles: Service in E — Murrill

Anthem: O Lorde, the maker of al thing
— Joubert

Preacher: Fr Ivan Aquilina

Hymn: 355

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Martin Bruce

Hymn: 414

Tantum Ergo: Martin Bruce

Voluntary: Imrovisation on 'Tantum
ergo' — Paul Brough

● SUNDAY 23 OCTOBER THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 485

Introit: Si iniquitates

Mass: Collegium Regales
— Howells

Lessons: Leviticus 19: 1 - 2, 15 - 18

Psalm 1

1 Thessalonians 2: 1 - 8

Hymn: 467

Gospel: Matthew 22: 34 - end

Preacher: Fr Ivan Aquilina

Creed: Credo III

Anthem: O thou the sweetest source of
gladness — Wood

Hymns: 420, 431, 372

Voluntary: Theme and Variations
— Andriessen

SOLEMNEVENSONG at 6.00p.m.

Psalm: 119: 89 - 104

Lessons: Ecclesiastes 11, 12
2 Timothy 2: 1 - 7

Office Hymn: 150 (R)

Canticles: The First Service — Morley
Anthem: Adoramus te, Christe
— Lassus
Preacher: The Vicar
Hymn: 396

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Byrd
Hymn: 270
Tantum Ergo: Byrd (No 1)
Voluntary: Elévation (Messe pour les
Couvents) — Couperin

• SUNDAY 30 OCTOBER THE FOURTH SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 410
Introit: Dicit Dominus
Mass: Missa 'O quam gloriosum'
— Victoria
Lessons: Micah 3: 5 - end
Psalm 43
1 Thessalonians 2: 9 - 13
Hymn: 481 (T 462)
Gospel: Matthew 24: 1 - 14
Preacher: Prebendary John Gaskell
Anthem: Ave verum corpus — Lassus
Hymns: 390 (v5 Descant — Caplin),
408 (i), 476
Voluntary: Chaconne in E minor
— Buxtehude

SOLEMNEVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

Psalms: 111, 117
Lessons: Daniel 7: 1 - 18
Luke 6: 17 - 31

Office Hymn: 150 (S)
Canticles: Service in E minor
— Daniel Purcell
Anthem: How amiable are thy
dwellings — Weelkes
Preacher: Fr Ivan Aquilina
Hymn: 433 (v 6 Descant — Gray)

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Bach
Hymn: 384 (v4 Descant
— Caplin)
Tantum Ergo: Bach
Voluntary: Liebster Jesu — Bach

MONDAY 31 OCTOBER THE EVE OF ALL SAINTS

SOLEMNEVENSONG at 6.30 p.m.

Litany in Procession:
Litany of the Saints
Psalms: 1, 5
Lessons: Ecclesiasticus 44: 1 - 15
Revelation 19: 6 - 10
Office Hymn: 196
Canticles: Service in E flat (No 1)
— Wood
Anthem: The Souls of the righteous
— Harry Bramma
Preacher: Fr Peter Jackson, Vicar,
Christ Church, Southgate
Hymn: 231

SOLEMN BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Hutchings
Hymn: 227 (T 184)
Tantum Ergo: Hutchings
Voluntary: Litanies — Alain

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The Friends support the work of this centre of Christian witness and worship, teaching and spiritual counsel, through their prayers, their financial help and their concern.

Please write for further information to The Friends' Secretary at the address below.

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Sundays Low Mass at 6.30 p.m. (Sat), 8.00 a.m.

and 5.15 p.m. Morning Prayer 10.20 a.m.

HIGH MASS and SERMON at 11.00 a.m.

SOLEMN EVENSONG, SERMON and
BENEDICTION at 6.00 p.m.

Monday to Friday Morning Prayer at 7.30 a.m.

Low Mass at 8.00 a.m., 1.10 p.m. & 6.30 p.m.

Confessions from 12.30 - 1.00 p.m. & 5.30 p.m.

Evening Prayer at 6.00 p.m.

Saturday Morning Prayer at 7.30 a.m.

Low Mass at 8.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.*

(* First Mass of Sunday)

Confessions 5.30 p.m., Evening Prayer 6.00 p.m.

Confessions are also heard by appointment

020 7636 1788

Instruction in the catholic faith as taught by the Church of England can be obtained on application to any of the priests, who will also give help in preparing for the sacraments.

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CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR OCTOBER 2005

1	<i>St Remigius; Anthony Ashley Cooper</i>	Diocese in Europe
2	✕ DEDICATION FESTIVAL (and Friends' Day)	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
3	r Requiem (6.30 p.m.)	The departed
4	St Francis of Assisi	Franciscans
5		The homeless
6	William Tyndale	Translators of the Scriptures
7		Those in need
8		Musicians
9	✕ THE 20th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
10	St Paulinus	Province of York
11	<i>St Ethelburga</i>	Religious
12	St Wilfrid of Ripon	Friends of All Saints
13	St Edward the Confessor	Westminster Abbey
14		Those in need
15	St Teresa of Avila	Spiritual Directors
16	✕ THE 21st SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
17	St Ignatius of Antioch	Christian commitment
18	ST LUKE THE EVANGELIST	St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy
19	Henry Martyn	USPG
20	v for Unity	Christian Unity
21		Those in need
22	v of Our Lady	Walsingham
23	✕ THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
24		The unemployed
25	<i>Ss Crispin and Crispinian</i>	The School of Worship
26	St Alfred the Great	Church Schools
27		Unity
28	Ss SIMON AND JUDE, APOSTLES	Those in need
29	James Hannington	St Cyprian's Theological College
30	✕ THE 4th SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
31	EVE OF ALL SAINTS	The Festival

Please note:

All Friday Masses are 'for those in need' — intercessions from the board inside Church are used on these days.

v — a Votive Mass

r — a Requiem Mass (6.30 p.m. only this month)



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