



All Saints Parish Paper

MARGARET STREET, LONDON W.1

OCTOBER 2008

£1.00

VICAR'S LETTER

The origins of the feast of the Holy Cross which we have just been celebrating are something of a historical curiosity. When the Emperor Constantine ordered the erection of a complex of buildings in Jerusalem “on a scale of imperial magnificence” to set forth as “an object of attraction and veneration to all, the blessed place of our Saviour’s resurrection”, he entrusted the supervision of his work to his mother the Empress Helena.

The hill of Calvary had been covered with rubble after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. While this was being excavated, wood was found which was thought to be the true cross. The shrine which St Helena built included two principal buildings: one a large basilica for the Liturgy of the Word; the other, a circular church, known as “The Resurrection”, with its altar over the site of the holy sepulchre, which was used for the Liturgy of the Sacrament and the singing of the Daily Office. Toward one side of the courtyard, through which the faithful had to pass on their way from Word to Sacrament, the exposed top of Calvary’s hill was visible. There, the veneration of the cross took place on Good Friday.

The dedication of these buildings took place on September 14th, the seventh month of the Roman calendar, in 335; echoing the consecration of Solomon’s Temple in the

seventh month of the Jewish calendar.

As we do most years, we spent our summer holiday in a small hamlet near Poitiers. That city was an important centre of early Christianity in France. St Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, was one of the great theologians of the early western Church. St Martin of Tours, that soldier-turned monk and missionary bishop, was a monk at Liguge which is a few miles outside the city and where there is still a Benedictine monastery. Less well-known outside the area is St Radegunde. She was a princess of the Merovingian royal house in the 6th century. She retired to a convent at Poitiers, becoming its abbess. Her royal connections led to the Emperor in Constantinople sending her a relic of the true cross. She commissioned the Bishop of Poitiers and court poet Venantius Fortunatus to compose hymns for the solemn procession to welcome this relic. They have come down to us as two of the treasures of the western liturgy of Holy Week. One is *Vexilla Regis* — “*The Royal Banners*”, the office hymn for Passiontide which we sang at Evensong on Holy Cross Day; the other is *Pange Lingua* — “*Sing my tongue the glorious battle*” which is sung during the Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday; with its haunting refrain:

**“Faithful cross! above all other,
One and only noble tree!”**

**None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be;
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron!
Sweetest weight is hung on thee.”**

So, however sceptical we might be of the authenticity of St Helena’s discovery, something of enduring worth came out of that relic sent to St Radegund’s monastery all those centuries ago.

Here at All Saints, while the magnificence of our building may not be on “an imperial scale”, it is, as one correspondent says in this issue, *“one of the supreme buildings of the nineteenth century”*.

We are soon going to find ourselves surrounded, if not by rubble, then certainly by scaffolding, when the first phase of our internal restoration programme begins in the New Year. In the meantime, a great deal of work needs to be undertaken on the accommodation in No 8 Margaret Street which has not had much attention since its transformation into flats on the closure of the choir school in 1968. These need to be up-graded to meet current legislation and this is not going to be cheap. This work will commence in October and the plan is for it to be finished by Christmas. That will allow us to use the Parish Room as our weekday chapel, as we did some years ago during the restoration of the organ. This will allow the maximum amount of uninterrupted working time on the church and this means that the programme can be completed in the shortest possible time. We will still be using the church on Sundays, although surrounded by scaffolding. Part of my holiday reading this year was Philip Ball’s “Universe of Stone”, a fascinating account of the building of that triumph of Gothic architecture, Chartres Cathedral. It’s clear that worship in the midst of a building site is nothing new.

All this might sound rather wearing, not least for those of us who live here, but our experience the last time was that not only did we manage to maintain our daily round of worship, but that much good came from it. We appreciated both the intimacy of worship in the Parish Room and our return to the church. While we may not discover any relics during the process, I am sure that we will know the presence of God, because we will have Christ’s presence in Word and Sacrament and Congregation in the midst of it all. While the work of restoring the church building is proceeding, the work of building the church as people of God must continue.

A century ago, Fr Mackay recorded that no sooner had he mentioned the need for a Lady Altar, than someone had offered to pay for it. He was also hoping for someone to pay for a new organ too! He invited friends of All Saints from all over the country to come up for the eight days of the Festival; meaning, we must suppose, those of independent means who did not have to work for a living. The majority of the people of All Saints these days are of more modest means.

That does not mean that people have not been generous. We have raised considerable sums to fund the re-roofing of the church, the rebuilding of the organ, the replacement of the chairs, and now for the restoration of the interior, over the last dozen or so years. Much of this has come from the congregation. At the same time, we have increased the level of giving to the general funds of the congregation, so that the parish has been able to carry out these works while increasing its commitment of funding to the diocese and the wider Church. We begin this month, on our Dedication Festival, with the renewal of our financial commitment to

All Saints. The finances of All Saints have been on a healthier footing in recent years than at any time in its history. We call this “A Sacrament of Seriousness” because we believe that our sacramental religion, our Eucharistic worship, needs to be expressed in our consecration of the gifts we enjoy from God to his service in the worship and mission of the Church.

Yours in Christ,

Alan Moses

PARISH NOTES

Congratulations

To **Clive** and **Joy Wright** on their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

To **Gillian Dare**, who as well as being awarded the Cross of St Augustine by the Archbishop of Canterbury was also awarded the OBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List.

Farewells

On Sunday September 7th we bade farewell to **Andrew Arthur** who has been our Assistant Director of Music for 8 years. He goes to be Director of Music at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. After the organ recital which Andy played after Mass, the Vicar paid tribute to all that Andy had done for the parish. He said that the division of labour in our music department meant that Andy’s rôle had primarily been behind the scenes in the organ chamber, emerging only occasionally to conduct, as he had done at Mass that morning for the Bach offertory anthem.

Andy’s most memorable contribution was probably his 9 hour performance of the collected organ works of Buxtehude. The work that went in to this was

emblematic of Andy’s professionalism. If the preparation and preaching of sermons is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration, the same is true of musicianship. Those who are around All Saints during the week, know the thoroughness of Andy’s practice and preparation for the music which all of us enjoy on Sundays. Fr Alan recalled the story he had told after the Buxtehude marathon, of Bach walking hundreds of miles from Leipzig to Lubeck just to hear Buxtehude play. Andy’s feet must have travelled many hundreds of miles across the pedals of our organ.

The Vicar was joined by Paul Brough in paying tribute to Andy as a colleague and in congratulating him on being elected to a fellowship at Trinity Hall, a tribute to his musical scholarship, and on his engagement to Charlotte.

Gifts and mementos of All Saints were presented on behalf of congregation and choir.

In reply Andy spoke of what being part of All Saints and its choir had meant to him over these years and how inspiring it had been to be able to make music in a context where the whole act of worship and everything connected with it was taken seriously.

Fr Neil Bunker

As many of you know, Fr Neil Bunker has been experiencing a period of ill health for a number of months now. We have missed having him around. After consultation with his doctors, he has decided that the wisest course is for him to find somewhere to minister which is nearer to his home and thus avoid the strain of travel. We are grateful beyond measure to Fr Neil for his unstinting help, especially during the months of the Vicar’s illness last year.

His careful celebration of the liturgy and powerful preaching, his welcoming smile and sympathetic ear have been much appreciated. We wish him both a full restoration to health and every blessing for the next stage of his ministry.

Fr Neil writes:

It has been a great pleasure and privilege to serve within All Saints as one of the honorary assistant priests during the past two and a half years. I have now decided to move on to the next stage of my vocational journey and look forward to serving in another parish closer to my home. Thank you for all your prayers, kindness and support.

And Welcomes

To the two new members of the music staff who have joined us:

Henry Parkes who is our new Associate Director of Music.

And

Anthony Fort who is our new Organ Scholar.

An Itinerant Preacher

Fr Alan seems to be trying to get two years' liturgy into one this year. In June he celebrated Corpus Christi here and again in New York. To this he has now added a double celebration of the Assumption; first here on the Friday night and then on Sunday morning at **Old St Paul's** in Edinburgh, returning to his old pulpit at the invitation of Canon Ian Paton, the Rector. After a couple of days seeing old friends and familiar places, he and Theresa returned to London to board the Eurostar for two weeks of sunshine in the depths of rural France. On the morning of their return home, the heavens opened. As they were

preparing to head north, the swallows were lining up on the telephone wires to begin their rather more arduous journey to winter in Africa. After the splendours of worship here and in Edinburgh, they had two weeks of simple French country religion with unaccompanied singing. One of our fellow-worshippers was an elderly gentleman who proudly told us that he had been awarded the OBE for his services with the Royal Air Force in North Africa during the Second World War.

All Saints, Clifton, in Bristol, is a church with long connections with All Saints, Margaret Street. One of the more recent ones was in the person of Lovinia Miller who worshipped in both churches. A contingent of her Bristol friends came up to London for her funeral Mass here, and Fr Richard Hoyal, the Parish Priest of All Saints, Clifton, conducted the interment of her ashes recently.

Fr Alan was honoured to be invited to be one of the preachers at their festival to mark the 140th anniversary of the consecration of the church. The Victorian church, built after the parish was established, was the work of the architect George Edmund Street who lived in Cavendish Square and was a churchwarden at All Saints, Margaret Street. The church was destroyed by incendiary bombs in 1940. The present church was built in the 1960s. Some of Street's work survived the disaster; including the altar plate he designed and a statue of the Virgin and the Child Jesus crowned as King of Saints, which he presented as a thank-offering for the completion of his work.

Fr Alan preached at Mass on Holy Cross Day at the conclusion of the festival. As usual on these occasions he met many people who had happy memories of worshipping at

All Saints. One of the festival events was a concert called “Sanctuary” at which one of the singers was Kate Ashby from our own choir. When Fr Alan had taken his seat at the front of the nave after the procession at the beginning of Mass, he found sitting behind him the familiar figure of Elizabeth Coles who had come in from Portishead to lend moral support.

Victorian Society London Summer School, 2008

Charles Brownell, Professor of Art History at Virginia Commonwealth University writes:

On behalf of the participants in the Victorian Society London of 2008, I am writing to thank you for the opportunity to study the incomparable interior of All Saints at our own pace on July 14th. What William Butterfield achieved in your church unfolds itself to one's comprehension only by degrees — I have been visiting All Saints off and on for exactly forty years — and our time in Margaret Street last month was precious. We are grateful to have had this chance, and we wish you all the best in the endeavour to restore one of the supreme buildings of the nineteenth century.

The Visitors Book

If we should ever question the wisdom of keeping the church open daily, then the entries in our Visitors Book should quickly persuade us of the importance of this ministry.

“I can't come to London without coming here. I remember the wonderful services, choir and quality of prayer.”

“As wonderful as ever — thank you. So nice to be able to light a candle and pray here.”

“A beautiful, much loved church.”

“Very Powerful.”

“Solace for the Soul.”

“I have just discovered this gem after many years working nearby.”

“I found out All Saints church by accident, walking down the street... I stopped by and discovered how beautiful the church is... honestly... ‘this is the gate of heaven’ for everyday life. Thanks!”

“I am an atheist but I love visiting churches. This is the most beautiful and serene church I have ever been in. Thank you!”

“It's amazing to find such a peaceful sanctuary in the heart of the West End! Much needed!”

A SOUND INVESTMENT

Dr Harry Bramma writes:

It is eleven years since All Saints started the Organ Scholarship scheme. The driving force behind this was the Vicar — not me! He felt, rightly, that a church with such a fine musical tradition should be playing its part in educating the church musicians of the future.

The departure of our last organ scholar, **James Grainger**, to the post of Sub-Organist at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, had reminded me how very successful the scheme has been. We have attracted gifted young musicians, all of whom have gone to further their education elsewhere, and who are now beginning to fill important positions in churches and cathedrals.

The congregation will, I'm sure, be interested to read of the subsequent success

of the young organists who contributed so much to the life of All Saints.

Our first organ scholar, **Mark Laffin**, went on to the Organ Scholarship at Keble College, Oxford. He is now Dr Giles Fraser's Organist at St Mary's, Putney, and Director of Music at a large comprehensive school in Fulham.

Justin Luke, who followed him, was here for three years whilst studying at the Royal College of Music. Now he is the Sub-Organist of the Queen's Chapel of the Savoy and Director of Music at St Thomas's Preparatory School in Battersea.

David Pipe, after a year with us, became Organ Scholar of Downing College, Cambridge. He is about to take up the appointment as Assistant Director of Music at York Minster.

David Humphreys left us for the Organ Scholarship of Jesus College, Cambridge and is now the Assistant Organist of St Edmundsbury Cathedral.

Unusually, **Peter Dutton** came to us from Trinity College, Oxford, where he was Organ Scholar. He is now Director of Music at St Peter's, Bexhill on Sea.

Joe Fort has recently taken a first in Part Two of the Music Tripos at Cambridge, where he was Organ Scholar of Emmanuel College.

His successor, **Simon Jacobs**, is currently Organ Scholar of Clare College, Cambridge.

Our new Organ Scholar, the ninth, is **Anthony Fort**. He has been Organ Scholar of St Martin's, Dorking, for the past year, and is going on to Girton College, Cambridge, next year.

MASS SETTINGS FOR THE ALL SAINTS FESTIVAL 2008

The setting of the Ordinary on All Saints' Day this year will be the *Missa "Che fa hoggi il mio sole"* by Gregorio Allegri. This composer is of course most famous for his '*Miserere*'. The Mass, however, is lively and attractive, and I hope all will enjoy it. On Festival Sunday it is the turn of a 'pot-boiler', and so Schubert's *Mass in G* will be sung. On All Souls' Day we return to the *Requiem* of Maurice Duruflé, reprised to satisfy popular demand.

It is perhaps worth noting that this year's Festival is the second shortest it can be, with all of the musical liturgies taking place on consecutive days. Next year will be the shortest possible: Sunday November 1st 2009 will be All Saints' Day and Festival Sunday all in one go.

OCTOBER HOLY HOUR

Wednesday October 1st

Holy Hour this month will be in preparation for our Feast of Dedication.

We will be praying especially for our life and mission in this place and for our Stewardship Renewal Programme.

Please come and join us.

ALL SAINTS, MARGARET STREET
www.allsaintsmargaretstreet.org.uk

ALL SAINTS FESTIVAL 2008

PRINCIPAL CELEBRATIONS

FRIDAY 31 OCTOBER — EVE OF ALL SAINTS

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

Preacher: The Revd Michael Bowie, Rector of Berkhamstead

Music includes: Collegium Magdalenæ — *Leighton*

SATURDAY 1 NOVEMBER — ALL SAINTS DAY

11.00 a.m. High Mass

Preacher: The Rt Revd John Flack,
Honorary Assistant Bishop of Peterborough

Music includes: Missa “Che fa hoggi il mio sole” — *Allegri*

SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER — FESTIVAL SUNDAY

11.00 a.m. Procession and High Mass

Preacher: The Most Revd Dr Valentino Mokiwa,
Archbishop of Tanzania

Music includes: Mass in G — *Schubert*

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

Preacher: The Revd Simon Butler, Team Rector of Sanderstead

MONDAY 3 NOVEMBER – ALL SOULS DAY (transferred)

6.30 p.m. High Mass of Requiem

Preacher: The Rt Revd Michael Marshall,
Honorary Assistant Bishop in London

Music includes: Requiem — *Durufle*

FESTIVAL APPEAL

The Parochial Church Council resolved that the Festival Appeal be divided this year between our Mission projects (Church Army Hostel in Marylebone for women, West London Day Centre, and Fr Fermer’s work in Brazil, a USPG project) and the All Saints Restoration Appeal. *Please give generously.*

DIARY DATES

Wednesday 1 October

7.05 p.m. **Holy Hour** Led by the vicar

Sunday 5 October — DEDICATION FESTIVAL (and Friends' Day)

11.00 a.m. **Procession and High Mass**

Preacher: The Vicar

6.00 p.m. **Solemn Evensong and Solemn Benediction**

Preacher: Fr Bill Wilson, Vicar, St James', Sussex Gardens

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

6.30 p.m. Low Mass with Hymns

7.00 p.m. The Rosary will be said for approximately 30 minutes, to be followed by light refreshments.

Tuesday 14 October — *School of Worship 2008 / 9*

Our plan this year is to focus on what used to be called "The Occasional Offices": Ministry to the Sick and Dying, Marriage, Funerals, but the School will begin with a session on Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament: ***Blessed, praised and hallowed*** at 7.00 p.m. It will conclude with a simple office of Benediction.

Thursday 16 October

Fr Gerald invites you to join him to see *The Brothers Size?* at the Young Vic. Please sign the list at the back of the church and buy a ticket on-line (www.youngvic.org) or by 'phone (020 7922 2922). Seats are unreserved. On the night we'll meet at the Young Vic at 7.15 p.m. and go in together. Then we'll have a drink in a pub afterwards to discuss the play.

Tuesday 21 - Friday 24 October

The John Lewis (Sabeema) Arts and Crafts Club Autumn Exhibition will be shown here, 12.00 - 6.00 p.m. in the Parish Room. *Do come and visit.*

Friday 31 October

The **Card Aid** Charity Christmas cards shop opens here again, for the third year, until just before Christmas. Normal hours will be 11.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m. Monday to Saturday. *Card Aid have also produced our new Christmas card — The Holy Family — the Crib at All Saints Church. Sold in packs of 10 @ £5 per pack, they are available from our Sunday Shop, the Parish Office and in church at selected times. Sold in Aid of All Saints Church.*

Friday 31 October - Monday 3 November — ALL SAINTS FESTIVAL 2008

EDWARDTIDE PILGRIMAGE

Saturday October 18th, 2008

The Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey invite us to join this pilgrimage.

Includes:

- 9.00 a.m. Morning Prayer with Hymns
- 9.30 a.m. Abbey open for visits to the Shrine which can be pre-booked for groups.
- 11.00 a.m. A Lecture on the life of Edward the Confessor by Canon Nicholas Sagovsky.
- 12.00 noon Festival Eucharist at the High Altar with congregational Mass setting.
Celebrant: The Dean
Preacher: Fr Philip North, Priest Administrator of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.
- 1.15 p.m. Lunch break/Visits to the Shrine
- 3.00 p.m. Festal Evensong with the Abbey Choir

Throughout the day visitors will be free to look around the Abbey, Cloisters and Gardens.

Artefacts from the library will be on display and there will be activities for children.

The Coffee Club will be open for hot and cold drinks and light refreshments.

If you would like to take part, please sign the list in church.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOURS

A series of informal visits to central London churches.

An opportunity to find out about their past, present and future ministries.

A chance to meet fellow Christians in your area.

Organised by the Westminster Council of Churches.

Monday October 20th at 7.00 p.m. St Paul's, Knightsbridge.

CELL OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

The Cell's annual programme commences in the autumn and the first event on our list was a meeting at St Mary's Church, Willesden, on Saturday September 6th, to celebrate the nativity of Our Lady. Eighteen of us ventured out on pilgrimage to this quite delightful church, including Fr Gerald Beauchamp, who celebrated Mass for us. The vicar, Fr David Clues, gave generously of himself and his time, not only through his exceptionally kind and thoughtful hospitality, but also by undertaking to play

the organ for our hymns and to ring the rather complicated bells for the Angelus. He later gave us a very stimulating talk on the history of the church up to the present day and joined us to chat over our packed lunches to which he added coffee and tea.

For centuries Willesden has been a place of pilgrimage, although it has never quite been established how this came about. There is a legend that Our Lady appeared in the churchyard in the mid 13th century

and, later, one Dr Crewkerne is reported to have had a vision of the Holy Trinity in Archbishop Cranmer's time when he also encountered Our Lady, who requested that she be honoured at Ipswich and Willseden. There may have been an original wooden church on the site, but St Mary's church was founded in 938 during the reign of King Achelstan who had given the land on which it was subsequently built to St Paul's cathedral. It was erected near the spot where the King had encountered two monks at prayer, which in those days was in the middle of a forest. The word 'Willesden' derives from the word 'wellesden' meaning a spring or well at the foot of a hill. There is well water which runs under the church and today access is provided in the chancel where it continues to be used by pilgrims for health and healing purposes. The shrine was especially popular in mediæval times in the days of the Black Death when people arrived in their throngs to receive well-water cures (there is even evidence of a nearby pit believed to be for those who didn't quite make it). The church is well-known for its image of the Black Madonna and Child (thought to have been turned that colour by the many candles lit by pilgrims). The image was publicly burnt in Chelsea in the Reformation, whereas a second statue, purportedly of Our Lady of Ipswich, was somehow sold by bribery and taken to Italy. By decree of Henry VIII an annual fine was imposed on the 'idolatrour' church of St Mary's which was required to be paid by the incumbent until finally rescinded in 1902, at which time a new statue of the Madonna and Child was placed in the chancel. In 1972, on the feast of Corpus Christi, the then Bishop of London, Dr Graham Leonard, who had a great affection for this church, presented it with a new statue of the Black Virgin of Willesden.

Today St Mary's continues to be a place of prayer and pilgrimage and the church doors are kept constantly open. There is something very special about this place of sanctuary — the church is old and very small, although considerably up-dated over time. Those of us who entered it could sense that herein lies a place of prayer, one was also met by a lingering aroma of incense. It is easily accessible, being a short walk from Neasden underground. Pilgrims are specifically encouraged and some of us intend to return; others may like to make a first visit. There is a warmth about this church and much to see and take in as well. It was a wonderful and privileged experience being there.

Four of us ventured on to Our Lady of Willesden — the Roman Catholic Shrine about 20 minutes' walk away. The weather was not in the least encouraging, but the distance covered was less than that between the Walsingham Anglican Shrine and the Slipper Chapel, which reminded us that the inclement elements between the two were once considered part of the pilgrimage challenge! It was in 1885 that the Roman Catholic Mass was once again celebrated in Willesden and seven years later a new statue (created out of wood from an oak tree situated in the grounds of St Mary's) was blessed by Cardinal Vaughan. Following upon the request in the Pope's Encyclical Letter of 1954 that Our Lady should be honoured by the establishment of a Shrine in every diocese, the existing Willesden one was created in order to become the centre of Westminster's celebrations for that Marian Year. Many thousands have visited this shrine which was refurbished in 1995 in time for the Jubilee Year, when pilgrims not only came to pay homage to Our Lady but also to obtain indulgences.

Juliet Windham

THE SERMON PREACHED BY THE VICAR ON THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

“When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law.”
Galatians 4: 4

I want to speak not just of one Lady but of three. The first was called Margaret. A few years ago, she came to live across the street with the All Saints Sisters. She was an elderly, unmarried woman of the type you often find associated with religious communities; dedicated and intelligent. A quiet, gentle manner concealed a steely will. She had spent much of her life working in forms of social care. She was still working in her 80s, retirement not being a concept she had any time for. Her background was staunchly evangelical: All Souls, Langham Place, rather than All Saints, Margaret Street, but we were now her parish church and she worshipped with us. Every now and then, she would come across to the Vicarage for a chat and I would make sure I had my theological wits about me.

On one occasion, she told me she had been thinking about Mary — someone who in the evangelical world has usually been airbrushed out of the family photograph. She had noticed how Mary figured in both the iconography of this building, in its worship and in people’s prayers. Being the kind of thoughtful and prayerful person she was, she did not simply reject this out of hand as so much popish nonsense; she read her Bible and she examined her own reactions and thoughts. **“She pondered these things in her heart”**, as Mary had done.

As sometimes happens when people engage in that prayerful listening which the Archbishop has been trying to persuade his fellow-bishops, and the rest of us, to espouse,

she came to see something new. That was what she had come to speak to me about.

She had been thinking about Mary in the light of her relationship with her own mother. If her own mother had made her so much the person she was; not just by carrying her in the womb and giving her birth, but in years of loving care and nurture and education; then surely this must be so of Jesus and his mother. Who taught Jesus the Law of love of God and neighbour, by word and example, but Mary and Joseph.

One of the tendencies in Christian heresy has always been to so emphasise the divinity of Christ that his humanity, his being **“born of a woman, born under the law”** almost disappears. This heresy is called “Docetism” from the Greek word *dokein*: “to seem”. Jesus only **seems** to be human. The flesh is simply a disguise. It’s as if Jesus is like Clark Kent. All he has to do is pop into a telephone box and out pops superman.

Orthodox Christianity has always held out against this docetism, although some of the self-proclaimed “orthodox” around at the moment are hardly free from it. Biblical studies in recent years have given us a new awareness of the real humanity of Jesus Christ. Rather than being an abstract individual with an artificial, make-believe human nature, he is a real, genuine, limited human being with his own experience. Despite his many gifts he needed to grow in self-awareness, discerning his vocation through his own life experiences. His ministry and death were not pre-programmed but the result of decisions freely if not always easily made: think of the temptation in the wilderness, the agony in the Garden, the cry of dereliction on the

cross; all embarrassing to Docetism. His life was not play-acting.

Mariology, the way we think about Mary, is based on **Christology**, the way we think about Christ. If Christology has a tendency towards unreality, there is a similar trajectory in Mariology and devotion: an increasing tendency to divorce Mary from her context, resulting in ever more rarified reflections on her privileges, powers and glories. An objective piety, firmly grounded in scripture, seeing Mary as of the Church rather than above it, is replaced by a much more subjective one increasingly detached from the Mary of scripture. Mary came to be seen as a mediator between us and her Son — the Just Judge — to obtain his mercy; in the way that children might get their mother to intercede with an angry father in a patriarchal society. Many of the attributes and functions of the Holy Spirit in Scripture are effectively transferred to the Virgin Mary. These glorifying and maximalising tendencies, credit Mary with such supernatural gifts that they effectively remove her from the human condition. They produce a spirituality distant from both her reality and ours. Many of us quite like such a spirituality because, as T.S. Eliot says in “Murder in the Cathedral”, humankind cannot bear too much reality. Religion can be used as a hiding place from it. To counter this, we need to give full weight to Mary’s genuine engagement in human life. If the presence of God in nature and grace works in the case of Jesus, the word made flesh, then how much more so in the case of Mary who is completely human.

The belief that Mary was conceived without original sin, has often been taken to mean that she lived a life like that of Adam and Eve in paradise before the fall. She had special privileges that enabled her

to negotiate the troubles of life effortlessly, in a world whose historical struggle was not her own. Exempt from human passions, preserved from temptations, especially those of a sexual nature, immune from wrestling with issues, spared ambiguity when it came to decisions, always in full possession of her wits, clearly knowing God’s plan for herself and her son and more than willing to carry it out, she moved through life with unearthly ease. The one allowable exception is the sorrow she feels at the cross, but even here it is said, she willingly sacrificed her son for the redemption of the world. This kind of thing effectively dehumanises Mary. She was perfect. Cocooned in a bubble of privileges, her humanity is a bleached-out thing.

But being conceived without original sin does not mean being conceived in a vacuum. The opposite of sin is **grace**. We have inherited a tendency to think of grace as a substance doled out in limited amounts by God; something rather like those products advertised on TV which kill all known germs or remove the most stubborn of stains; essentially negative and preservative rather than creative and transformative. But grace is really the active presence of God. As the great Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner, now rather out of favour with the Vatican thought police, says, “**The Giver himself is the gift**”. Mary was enveloped from the beginning in the love of God.

Rahner points out that whatever we say of Mary, whatever she has from God, ultimately reveals something of God’s way with all human beings. Her own situation as first of the redeemed in Christ anticipates the gift of grace offered to all humankind in the incarnation. God takes the initiative to surround all human beings with redemptive love and unrepentant fidelity.

Rather than something ethereal, grace can be tasted through created things and events. Rather than diminish or subvert the wholeness of human nature, grace enhances and fulfills it through the union with the living God of all creation, including the human heart. Rather than detaching our interest from the world on the assumption that God has no interest in earthly matters, and is really rather disgusted by them, grace turns us toward the world as the place of God's presence.

This gives importance to all things human: joys and sufferings, the body and sexuality, relationships of intimacy and community, creativity and intellectual effort, building a just and beneficial society, struggle against oppressive forces and action for peace, justice and the integrity of creation; the kind of things Mary sings about in the Magnificat.

Grace humanises rather than dehumanizes. Mary's relationship with the Spirit creates her as a free, fully human being. She has to accomplish her life in the midst of the struggles of history, not angelically outside them.

The grace of God plunges into the heart of the world. Hence Mary's life was a real human journey. She searched, she felt anxious, she did not understand everything, had to find her way from stage to stage on life's journey. Life did not treat her gently. She lived through the common human lot: tears and tedium, distress and bitterness, agony and death, joy and light, courage and greatness. These of Lisieux, a saint whose saccharine coating is mercifully being stripped away to reveal the tough-minded young woman she was, pointed to this truth when she pondered why she loved Mary. It was not because the Mother of God received exceptional privileges that would remove her from the ordinary condition, "**ravishings,**

miracles, ecstasies" and the like, but because she lived and suffered simply, like us, in the dark night of faith.

The American writer Patricia Noone's humorous comment is apt: Mary did not have the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception framed and hanging on the kitchen wall, assuring her that she was sinless and free from error.

I began with one woman who thought about the Mary she encountered here in this church. Let me end with another woman who spends a lot of time, perhaps more than anyone else, praying before the statue of our Lady in All Saints, Margaret Street. She is not someone associated with fervent Marian piety. But she is a mother who bears the suffering of her own son with long term illness. Like Margaret her heart is open to all sorts and conditions of people. She sits there day by day, one mother talking to another; two sisters talking about their children.

I have spoken of God's gracing of Mary for her rôle in our salvation and how that calling was lived out in a real human life, so that we might see it as emblematic of something which is true in a way of all us called to make Christ present in the world. What of the mystery we celebrate today, in her Assumption? Neither is this something which divorces her from the human reality of life and death. It is the application to Mary, as it will be to us, of the power of the resurrection not to negate human life as of no significance if not downright evil, but as something transformed and glorified by the love of God. We rejoice that Mary is with her Son in heaven. We pray that in God's good time we will be too.

In the meantime, we share her Magnificat to sing of his love.

SERMON PREACHED BY FR GERALD BEAUCHAMP AT HIGH MASS ON HOLY CROSS DAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH

*Readings: Numbers 21: 4 - 9;
Philippians 2: 6 - 11; John 3: 13 - 17*

I was sitting in church alone recently when a tourist walked in. You could see ‘wow!’ written all over their face as they began to take in the building. Nothing quite prepares you for the first time that you walk into this church. As you cross the courtyard you’re in no doubt that it’s likely to be impressive but the interior still takes you aback.

So the person walked around looking at the decoration. The iconography of this church is fairly accessible. Even if you don’t know much about symbolism you know that the figures are either from the Old Testament or are Christian saints.

Some of the images tell a story – Christmas, the Crucifixion, and the Ascension. But when this tourist got to the west end I could see that they were puzzled. Finally, having looked at the panel at the back of the church for some time they said ‘*What is that about?*’ They were asking about the image of the cross encircled by a serpent surrounded by people being bitten by snakes.

William Butterfield, the architect of this church, like many of his generation who wanted to strengthen the catholic tradition of the Church in Victorian times thought that one of the ways to do it was to create buildings and decorative schemes that told stories and told them in all their complexity. Christ can only be fully understood in the context of his Jewish tradition. The Old Testament is the quarry from which the New Testament was hewn.

This was a noble aim but not an easy one

to realise. It’s difficult enough to turn quarry stone into a finished item like a statue or a building. It’s even more difficult to translate visually the experience and ideas from one culture to another. Things get lost in translation. They also get misunderstood. A classic example of this is portraying Moses as having horns.

When St Jerome drew together a Latin translation of the Bible at the end of 4C he translated the Hebrew word *karan* in a passage about Moses in the Book of Exodus (34: 29 - 35) as ‘horns’. But ‘horns’ is not the only translation. *Karan* can also mean ‘light’ (‘radiated light’) which in the context is much more likely. So Butterfield portrays Moses as radiating light in a way that looks a bit like he’s got horns.

Where the relationship between the panel and the text gets even more interesting is around what exactly is attacking the people. Our translation this morning talks about ‘fiery serpents’. Other translations read ‘poisonous snakes’. The text is a bit ambiguous as to whether these creatures are celestial or terrestrial. The Hebrew word is *serapim*, a word that’s found its way into English. It’s often coupled with ‘cherubim’: cherubim and seraphim.

So we see in the panel that as well as the snakes that are already twined around the people’s arms there are red winged creatures descending from heaven. The antidote to what has afflicted the Israelites is more of the same. God commands Moses to erect a bronze serpent. When bitten, people are to look on it and they will live.

For St John, the imagery of punishment

and redemption evident in this story is used to deepen our understanding of Christ and his cross. 'And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.' We look and we live.

Now you don't have to be a Freudian analyst to see that here we are on some fairly delicate ground. In the ancient world there was a tension: snakes and serpents were both worshiped and feared. They could be symbols of creation and destruction, of fecundity and chaos.

Sex bridges the two and as sexual beings we all oscillate between life and death. Sex keeps committed relationships alive and brings children into the world. But unbridled lust can lead us into all sorts of hazards and the arrival of Aids in our culture has brought into sharp focus the connection between *eros* and *thanatos*, love and death.

D.H. Lawrence explored all this fearlessly. In his poem *Snake*, Lawrence muses on the complex emotions that overwhelm us in our encounters with snakes (and sex). There is awe and there is dread. In his poem Lawrence tells of going to a watering hole only to find a snake there already. If 'he were a man' he would kill it. But something holds him back. Finally, as the snake having drunk his fill is already slithering away he throws 'a clumsy log' at it but then he experiences both loss and shame. The poem ends:

And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the
underworld,
Now due to be crowned again.

And so, I missed my chance with one of
the lords

Of life.

And I have something to expiate:

A pettiness.

It's strange that once Moses had made the bronze serpent and the crisis was past, nothing is heard of it again until hundreds of years later. It obviously ended up in the temple in Jerusalem because under King Hezekiah who undertook a root and branch reform of the temple worship in the late 8BCE the bronze serpent was destroyed (2 Kings 18: 4). Hezekiah thought that people were worshipping it and so he had it smashed.

Hezekiah may have been the first Protestant but what he was breaking was not simply an idol but a whole way of seeing creation. No longer was there a balance between the forces of creation and destruction, of waxing and waning, of wonder and woe. From now on the snake was only to be feared and so obliterated.

It would be too much to claim that the destruction of one idol would warp the understanding of everyone who has been influenced by Judaism and Christianity but it does point to a trend that has sometimes seen the body and especially sex as somehow in opposition to God. Some Christians have beaten themselves up (literally sometimes) and used the cross in a perverse way. Christ, however, came to save the world not condemn it.

I wonder if St Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, would have left the cross where she found it had she known to what misuse so great a symbol would be put in succeeding centuries. We celebrate Holy

Cross Day today because it was on this day, 14 September in 335CE that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was dedicated in Jerusalem.

It was built on the site where the cross had been found and it was to be the church in which this great relic was to be housed. Over the succeeding centuries the cross became a prize for various armies conquering Jerusalem until it fragmented into reliquaries across Europe and the New World.

The Western tradition took a particularly dark turn around the time of the final disappearance of the cross. If you look at images of the crucifixion up to around 1100/1200CE the figure of Christ is usually fairly upright. He is often fully clothed, sometimes wearing Eucharistic vestments. This is the Christus Victor, the Christ who is glorified on the cross. But with the arrival of the Gothic style the body sags. The naked, crucified Jesus takes centre stage. Triumph demurs to terror.

One of the important things about this building is the way in which it seeks to reconcile things that are often seen to be in opposition. At the east end of the church the great Doctors of the Church from East and West look out at each other across the chancel. Although definitely gothic in style the interior retains a joyful optimism. Not for Butterfield the bleeding crucifixes, wailing Madonnas and ghastly martyrdoms that we see elsewhere. In portraying the cross and serpent as sharing redemptive intimacy he may have been ahead of his time and it certainly has something to say to the Church today.

D.H. Lawrence was right to regret his ‘pettiness’ at throwing a log at the vanishing snake and there is something very petty

about much of the current debate on sexuality within the Church. Heat seems to have replaced light on the issue. So this image in this church on this Holy Cross Day speaks to our time: its’ cool faithfulness to the text and what is behind the text can point us to a place where cross and snake are united and find a common home in our lives. Christians at home with sex: that’s what I’d call a real ‘wow!’

100 YEARS AGO

NOTES FROM THE VICAR

In the August Parish Paper I described my vision of a side altar for All Saints. Such an altar has been offered at once by a worshipper who desires to remain anonymous. I am very thankful, because I am sure a side altar will prove the greatest blessing to us. Of course, we cannot have our altar until “the lover of sacred music” has helped us to deal with the organ.

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

● SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER DEDICATION FESTIVAL AND FRIENDS’ DAY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Processional Hymns: 205, 210

Introit: Terribilis est

Mass: Missa Brevis in D — Mozart

Lessons: 1 Kings 8: 22 - 30

Psalm 122

Hebrews 12: 18 - 24

Hymn: 477 (T 408 (i))

Gospel: Matthew 21: 12 - 16
Preacher: The Vicar
Creed: Credo II
Anthem: I was glad — Parry
Hymns: 206, 483 (T 77), 362 (T 185;
v 3 Descant — Caplin)
Voluntary: Dedication March
— Lloyd Webber

SOLEMN EVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 132
Lessons: Jeremiah 7: 1 - 11
Corinthians 3: 9 - 17
Office Hymn: 204
Canticles: Gloucester Service — Howells
Anthem: Locus iste — Bruckner
Preacher: Fr Bill Wilson, Vicar
St James', Sussex Gardens
Hymn: 484 (T 167)

SOLEMN BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Schumann
Te Deum: Solemn Tone
Tantum Ergo: Bruckner
Voluntary: Cantabile — Franck

● SUNDAY 12 OCTOBER TRINITY 21

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 401
Introit: In voluntate tua
Mass: Mass in B flat — Rachmaninov
Lessons: Isaiah 25: 1 - 9
Psalm 23
Philippians 4: 1 - 9
Hymn: 443
Gospel: Matthew 22: 1 - 14
Preacher: The Vicar
Anthem: Ave Maria — Rachmaninov

Hymns: 227 (T 184), 282,
478 (v 4 Descant — Birch)
Voluntary: Prelude and Fugue in C minor
— Vaughan Williams

SOLEMN EVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 139: 1 - 18
Lessons: Proverbs 3: 1 - 18
1 John 3: 1 - 15
Office Hymn: 150 (R)
Canticles: Service in B flat
— Rachmaninov
Anthem: Hymn to the Cherubim
— Rachmaninov

Preacher: The Vicar
Hymn: 137

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Rachmaninov
Hymn: 389
Tantum Ergo: Rachmaninov
Voluntary: Study in A flat — Schumann

● SUNDAY 19 OCTOBER TRINITY 22

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 333 (v 5 Descant
— Caplin)
Introit: Si iniquitates
Mass: Missa Omnium Sanctorum
— Norman Caplin
Lessons: Isaiah 45: 1 - 7
Psalm 96
1 Thessalonians 1: 1 - 10
Hymn: 360
Gospel: Matthew 22: 15 - 22
Preacher: Fr Gerald Beauchamp
Anthem: Ave maris stella — Grieg
Hymns: 233 (T 244), 377, 345
Voluntary: Prelude and Fugue in G
BWV 541 — Bach

SOLEMN EVENSONG

at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 142; 143: 1 - 11

Lessons: Proverbs 4: 1 - 18

1 John 3: 16 - 4: 6

Office Hymn: 150 (S)

Canticles: Service in B minor — Blair

Anthem: Like as the hart — Howells

Preacher: The Vicar

Hymn: 355

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Harry Bramma (No 2)

Hymn: 414

Tantum Ergo: Harry Bramma (No 2)

Voluntary: Psalm Prelude Set 1, No 2
— Howells

● SUNDAY 26 OCTOBER LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 55

Introit: Dicit Dominus

Mass: Missa 'O quam gloriosum'
— Victoria

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

Psalm 1

1 Thessalonians 2: 1 - 8

Hymn: 467

Gospel: Matthew 22: 34 - end

Preacher: Fr Gerald Beauchamp

Creed: Credo II

Anthem: Ave verum corpus — Lassus

Hymns: 357, 431, 420

Voluntary: Fantasia in C — Byrd

SOLEMN EVENSONG

at 6.00 p.m.

Psalms: 119: 89 - 104

Lessons: Ecclesiastes 11, 12

2 Timothy 2: 1 - 7

Office Hymn: 150 (R)

Canticles: The First Service — Morley

Anthem: O how amiable are thy
dwellings — Weelkes

Preacher: The Vicar

Hymn: 435

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Fischer

Hymn: 370

Tantum Ergo: Palestrina

Voluntary: Trio Sonata No 2 (second
movement) — Bach

FRIDAY 31 OCTOBER THE EVE OF ALL SAINTS

SOLEMN EVENSONG

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: Collegium Magdalenæ
— Leighton

Anthem: Give us the wings of faith
— Bullock

Preacher: The Revd Dr Michael Bowie,
Rector of Berkhamsted

Hymn: 432

SOLEMN BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Hutchings

Hymn: 225 (i)

Tantum Ergo: Hutchings

Voluntary: Improvisation on
'Gaudeamus' — Paul Brough

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STEWARDSHIP AT ALL SAINTS

All matters relating to Stewardship should be addressed to the Stewardship Administrator, Mr Dennis Davis, c/o All Saints Vicarage, 7, Margaret Street, London W1W 8JG

FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS

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.

PARISH ORGANISATIONS

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All Saints Foundation

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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. and 6.30 p.m.

Confessions from 12.30 - 1.00 p.m. and 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.

PARISH OFFICIALS

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Mr Norman Caplin 020 8989 3295

Electoral Roll Officer:

Miss Catherine Burling c/o 020 7636 1788

CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR OCTOBER 2008

1	<i>Remigius, Bishop of Rheims; Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftsbury</i>	Social Reform
2	v for Unity	Christian Unity
3		Those in need
4	St Francis of Assisi	Franciscans
5	✕ DEDICATION FESTIVAL (& Friends' Day)	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
6	William Tyndale	Translators of the Scriptures
7		Cell of Our Lady of Walsingham and All Saints
8		Friends of All Saints
9	<i>St Denys and his Companions; Robert Grosseteste</i>	Unity
10	St Paulinus, Bishop of York, Missionary	Those in need
11	<i>Ethelburga, Abbess of Barking; James the Deacon, Companion of Paulinus</i>	Religious
12	✕ THE 21st SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
13	St Edward the Confessor	Westminster Abbey
14	r Requiem (6.30 p.m.)	The departed
15	St Teresa of Avila	Spiritual Directors
16	<i>Nicholas Ridley; Hugh Latimer</i>	Unity
17	St Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch	Those in need
18	ST LUKE THE EVANGELIST	St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy
19	✕ THE 22nd SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
20		West London Day Centre
21		Church Schools
22	v for Peace	Peace of the World
23		Unity
24		Those in need
25	<i>Crispin and Crispinian</i>	Society of All Saints Sisters of the Poor
26	✕ THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
27		The unemployed
28	ST SIMON AND ST JUDE, APOSTLES	USPG
29	James Hannington, Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa	Theological Colleges
30		Unity
31	Martin Luther, Reformer	Those in need

Please note:

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

r — Requiem — the monthly Requiem, 6.30 p.m. this month.

v — a Votive Mass.

