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VICAR'S LETTER

This year, I am not reading a "Lent Book". This is not due to laziness. I have such a large pile of books looking at me reproachfully, waiting their turn to be read, that I decided not to add another to it. We also have two Lent study groups, one reading "The Joy of the Gospel" by Pope Francis, the other the poetry of George Herbert, so I am not starved of food for mind and soul while trying to reduce that for the body during the Lenten fast

This decision meant that I had not read the introduction to this year's Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book, by Dr Graham Tomlin, the Dean of St Mellitus' College. Stephen Bayley, writing in the Evening Standard's glossy magazine which comes out with the Friday issue, had. I discovered from the Internet, that Mr Bayley is a culture and fashion critic, and was once described as "the second most intelligent man in the country". Who was the most, I wonder?

Theology and Church don't feature very often in the pages of London's free evening paper. The Friday magazine is usually devoted to celebrities and what they were wearing at last week's parties: information forgotten as quickly as the magazine is discarded by tube commuters weary at the end of the week. On this occasion, however, Mr Bayley managed to combine fashion

and theology; spiced with a dash of sex, to defend the appropriation of the cross by the rag trade.

The Archbishop had commented, as others have before him, that to transform an instrument of torture and execution into a fashion item is to rob it of its real meaning.

Bayley is clearly not happy with the Archbishop who 'for all the world... looks like the demoralised CEO of a failing FTSE100 company that has lost control of its markets. The share price is on the slide. Brand values are being diluted by pirates, but the lacklustre management does not have a fix '

The Church's congregations are "sparse and foetid". Well, I have seen some sparse congregations in my time and our churches can get a bit smelly at times. That's usually because we let homeless people take shelter in them. We have incense to deal with that problem. (A standing incense burner which I picked up in a church supplier's sale a couple of years ago has proved a very useful bargain on a number of occasions of late.)

And then there's the clergy. 'Every day I walk past Church House in Westminster and... I see lanyard-wearing, conferencegoing clergy with their cheap shoes, bad haircuts and sad faces all talking in desultory mode to each other. Dear me, they do not look on the verge of salvation. Me, I'd be quite happy to find a vicar who dressed like Tom Ford (a pioneer of fashion's secular cross).'

I wonder how I'm supposed to afford a Tom Ford suit on my stipend. As I have said before in these columns, clerical dress is about dressing down not dressing up. As a former dean of Southwark used to say, the clergy should wear black 'because the care of souls is a serious business'. That's no excuse for scruffiness, although St Francis of Assisi and a host of other ascetic saints who did not consider cleanliness was next to godliness, might disagree with me on that point.

As I know from experience, meetings in Church House don't often bring a smile to the face. I must try to look cheerful when I'm going there: even in the face of adversity. It might brighten up Mr Bayley's day if he is walking past at the same time. The fashion business, which we see a lot of round here, may be more relentlessly upbeat — but I wonder if it is really any happier.

He does have a point when he suggests that much of the contemporary Church has little or no appreciation of the symbolic and the visual; indeed seems to deliberately reject it. This is something I, and others wiser than me, have been arguing for years. I may not wear a designer label suit, but we do have beautiful vestments and a church which looks like a house of prayer rather than a cinema or a shopping mall. Jewelled crosses have a longer history in the Church than the more grimly realistic ones we are used to in western Christianity. They represent the triumph of Christ on the cross.

'People want things to believe in,' says Bayley, 'and if the Church cannot supply them, fashion will.' He sees the cross as a 'powerful badge of fresh rebellion'. I couldn't agree more, but on the catwalks of Milan or Paris, the designer shops of Bond Street, or in the pages of Vogue? If only it were, in an industry which seeks to persuade us that we can find fulfilment by spending money we don't have on clothes we don't need; many of them not even beautiful. This is the industry which has given us heroin chic, size zero models, the sexualisation of primary school age girls, and the abuse and exploitation of workers, many of them children, in third world sweat shops. If Mr Bayley is so keen on rebellion, as something more than 'an instinct for irreverence among smart folk," perhaps he might lead a revolt against these things. That would be to live ex memoria *passionis* — to stand with the Christ who was stripped of his garments and suffered on the cross for us all, and to allow our lives to be fashioned by him, so that we too stand with all the suffering.

One thing I have been reading is Paula Byrne's **'The Real Jane Austen: A Life in Small Things,'** a book I would recommend. Among the **'small things'** are two small topaz crosses bought by their naval officer brother Charles for Jane and her sister Cassandra with his prize money. Byrne says that, 'Topaz was all the rage, but the fact that Charles chose crosses rather than lockets is significant, alluding as it does to his sisters' deep Christian faith as well as marking their delight in fashion'.

The gift made such an impression on Jane that it inspired a passage in Mansfield

Park, her most moral and religious novel. Fanny Price receives a similar cross from her sailor brother. She is the character whose virtue stands in contrast to the irreverent smart folk, those who deride the Church and its clergy. One of them is glad that a house is far from the church. Another approves of the closure of a family chapel, in which daily prayers had once framed the life of the household: 'every generation has its improvements'. If such improvements are the kind of thing which fashion gives us to believe, then we would do well to stick with Miss Austen's 'deep Christian faith'. If we do that, we might learn to share her delight in beautiful things, without making an idol of them.

Yours in Christ,

Alan Moses

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHURCH SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS 5th Sunday of Lent (6 April) until Palm Sunday (13 April)

The Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster have launched a joint initiative this Lent to encourage people to pray for the work churches do to support people in need in their parishes and beyond.

Archbishop Justin and Cardinal Nichols will give thanks to God daily for this essential act of service, and pray for his blessing on the work of the churches.

They will also visit church projects to learn from participants and to see how communities are being transformed. Their hope is that by joining together in prayer and encouraging others to join them they will foster the work of the Church in strengthening community and helping those in need across the country.

Get Involved — If you would like to join them by committing to prayer, you will find daily resources from April 6 - 13 on both: www.archbishopofcanterbury.org and the Catholic Church in England and Wales website.

Here at All Saints, we will be sharing in this at Morning and Evening Prayer and at the daily Masses.

DIOCESE OF LONDON: PRAY FOR SEVEN

The Rt Revd Jonathan Baker, Bishop of Fulham, writes:

Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

[1 Thessalonians 5: 17 - 8 RSV]

Capital Vision 2020 promises that 'We will be more creative in reaching new places with the Good News in the power of the Spirit'. The final commitment we make in seeking to achieve this objective concerns prayer. Perhaps it should be the first. Each of us is invited to pray for at least seven people, that we may share with them the story of our faith.

As Lent begins, a season set apart for deeper prayer, for the refreshment of our souls, it is right that the Capital Vision Pray for Seven initiative should move to the foreground. Prayer is the work of the whole People of God; it is not for specialists alone. Many, not least the elderly and housebound, who might struggle to discern their particular calling within the life of the Church, can be at the forefront of this ministry of prayer. Most parishes and Christian communities will have networks which lend themselves readily to fostering intentional prayer: youth clubs and Sunday Schools, altar servers, study and house groups, breakfast clubs and so on. The list will be as long and varied as the opportunities for prayer which arise, according to individual circumstances, in the life of every Christian.

Will you join me in starting to pray for seven people?

Some of those for whom you feel called to pray, you will want to keep privately within your heart, at least for the time being. Others are those whom you may wish, courteously and sensitively, to tell that you are praying for them. In due course, we hope to be able to offer opportunities across the Diocese to enable you to invite those for whom you have been praying to attend special events and services. But, in the meantime, two different resources have been developed within the Diocese which are now available to help us all pray for seven people.

First, from April 2014 the Diocese of London is sponsoring an app, available for Android and Apple iOS called PrayerMate. This app was originally developed by Andy Geers, a member of Euston Church in the Diocese of London. He wanted to help people to be more faithful in prayer for the people and causes we care about. Andy has further developed the app to help us in our priority of praying for seven people. Additional features enable you to pray through the **Diocesan Cycle of Prayer**, add other prayers which you regularly use and people or organisations for whom you wish to pray. The app, currently sponsored by London City Mission, is available as a **free download**.

Secondly, and for those who prefer printed resources, the Mothers' Union has come up with the idea of a pray for seven bookmark which has space to record the names of those for whom you are praying. We've had these printed and they are now available to order free from **capitalvision2020@london.anglican. org** — there are plenty available so please order as many as you would like.

Finally, following on from the positive responses to the Week of Prayer which was held in the run-up to the launch of Capital Vision 2020 in June 2013, we are planning another such week of 24/7 prayer from 9 to 15 June this year. This will be run in conjunction with 24/7 prayer, St Paul's Cathedral and Holy Trinity, Brompton. As last year, all will be invited to book slots of one hour (the booking can be made online) to pray in one of the chapels in the Cathedral with guided praver during daytime hours, or in local parishes and places during the evening, night and early morning. For those praying locally, resources with ideas for your time of prayer will be made available. Booking will open after Easter; do think about which slot you, a group you are involved in, or your parish would like to sign up for.

I hope you will all take very seriously this call to pray for seven. You might find this prayer helpful in bringing before the Lord all those for whom you feel called to pray:

O God, who in the work of creation commanded the light to shine out of darkness; we pray that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ may shine into the hearts of all your people, and so reveal to them the knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

HOLY WEEK AT ALL SAINTS

In the Eastern Churches, Holy Week is called Great Week. It is certainly a great week at All Saints, the most profound and moving of the year.

The Holy Week services which are now part of Common Worship have their origins in the worship of the Church in Jerusalem where local Christians and pilgrims to the holy city could join in the celebrations of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus.

At the Reformation, much of this was lost as Cranmer pared the liturgies of the week down to focus on the word. While the Roman Catholic Church kept them, the services were usually celebrated early in the morning. Change began under Pope Pius XII who instituted a reform of the liturgies to restore their original pattern. This was brought to its final form in the liturgical forms initiated by the Second Vatican Council.

These changes had an effect on the way Holy Week was celebrated in Anglican churches too and the rites in Common Worship are effectively an Anglicanised version. **Palm Sunday** — Holy Week begins with the Commemoration of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem, in the **Liturgy of Palms and Procession**. We begin with the reading of the Palm Gospel and the blessing of palms in Market Place and then process to church bearing palms and singing the traditional hymns.

After the procession, the most striking feature of the Mass is the singing of the Passion by three cantors, with the choir taking the part of the crowd. In some churches, where the Passion is read rather than sung, these parts are taken by the congregation. The passion is taken from each of the synoptic Gospels over the three-year cycle of the lectionary. This year, we hear St Matthew. At the death of Jesus, all kneel in silence.

Our practice in recent years has been to have a sequence of readings and music for Passiontide in the evening on the Fifth Sunday of Lent. Because that is when Fr Bowie is being licensed, we are transferring this service to Palm Sunday this year. It will include Tallis's setting of the Lamentations.

The first three days of Holy Week have no special liturgical acts. The Gospels at Mass have incidents from the week. The Lamentations of Jeremiah are read at the daily office. They feature too in the service of **Tenebrae**, sung on Wednesday evening. Tenebrae is something of a liturgical relic. It is in fact the old offices of Mattins and Lauds for Maundy Thursday. There were similar services for Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Before evening Masses were allowed, these were 'anticipated', that is sung on the eve, to provide a dramatic evening act of worship. The name Tenebrae — 'shadows' — comes from the ceremony of gradually extinguishing candles and lights as the service progresses until the service ends in darkness and with the crash of an earthquake. It is a beautiful and reflective service in which the Lamentations for Jeremiah are sung to a haunting chant. A second set of readings has extracts from St Paul's strictures on the Corinthians for their divisive behaviour at the Eucharist.

Maundy Thursday has two major services.

The first, the Chrism Mass, is in the Cathedral. At this the clergy renew their ordination vows and the sacramental oils are blessed by the bishop (hence the name 'Chrism' from that used at Confirmation and Ordination).

The second is the Mass of the Lord's Supper which takes place in the evening. It is the only eucharist celebrated in the parish that day. The day gets its English name 'Maundy' from the Mandatum Novum - the new commandment — which Jesus gives to his disciples in the Upper Room in St John's Gospel, after he had washed their feet. After the Gospel (John 13: 1 -17, 31b - 35) has been read and the sermon preached, the principal celebrant of the Mass takes off his chasuble and girds a towel around his waist, as Jesus did, and washed the feet of twelve people from the congregation. Some will recall that Pope Francis caused a stir last year when he did not wash the feet of twelve who were all men and all priests, but went to a vouth detention centre where he washed the feet of twelve of the inmates, including women and Muslims

The ceremony of the Royal Maundy which the Queen carries out each year is a sanitised version of this rite. Sovereigns used to wash the feet of their subjects.

The Mass also commemorates the institution of the Eucharist with a reading from Exodus 12 about the Passover, and 1 Corinthians about the Eucharist.

At this Mass, enough bread and wine is consecrated for Communion on Good Friday, when the Eucharist is not celebrated. After Communion, this is taken in procession to the Altar of Repose, which has been prepared with flowers (to represent the Garden of Gethsemane) and candles. The altar party and choir then scatter in disarray (like the disciples in the Garden).

The High Altar is then stripped of its cloths and ornaments and the sanctuary left bare. While this happens Psalm 22 is read.

When this is complete, the Gospel of the Watch is read to begin the Vigil which we keep throughout the night. "Could you not watch with me one hour?"

Good Friday — We combine two traditions in a long service which lasts from 12 noon until 3pm.

One is the **Three Hours' Devotion**. This is a series of sermons on the Passion (often they were on the Seven Words from the Cross). The addresses are punctuated by hymns, prayers and silence. To the surprise of many Anglicans, among whom this service caught on in a big way, its origins are with the Jesuits in Peru. It was devised as an act of reparation after an earthquake devastated Lima in the 18th century. So what looks like a very protestant service is in fact a very catholic one. An example of traditions meeting.

We now have an hour with three sermons. This is followed by the **Liturgy** of the Passion. This austere rite, with no organ music, begins with the ministers prostrating themselves before the altar in silence, before the celebrant rises for the Collect of the Day. The Liturgy of the Word follows with at its heart the singing of the Passion according to St John. For John, the cross is the place of Christ's triumph, and so we call this day 'Good'.

After the sermon and silent reflection, we move to the Proclamation of the Cross. A cross is carried through the church. At each of three stations, the procession halts and the deacon proclaims, 'Behold the wood of the cross, whereon was hung the world's salvation'. We respond. 'O Come let us adore,' and genuflect. The ministers and people then come to venerate the cross. During this a series of anthems is sung. This includes 'The Reproaches' and 'Crux Fidelis'. After the Veneration. the Crucifix is placed on the high altar. After a very Catholic selection of anthems, we sing the Non-Conformist Isaac Watts' great hymn, 'When I survey the wondrous cross', written for Holy Communion.

Then there are the **Solemn Prayers**, a series of biddings, silences, and collects, encompassing the world for which Christ died.

The final part of the service is Holy Communion. The reserved sacrament is brought from the Altar of Repose. A simple white cloth is spread on the altar. After the Lord's Prayer and Invitation, ministers and people receive the Sacrament. During this hymns are sung, which often include the Stabat Mater — 'At the cross her station keeping'. After silent reflection, the choir sings Lotti's Crucifixus - one of a number of heart-stoppingly beautiful moments in Holy Week. The liturgy concludes with a closing prayer. Just as on Maundy Thursday, there is no blessing or dismissal. This is because these two liturgies are seen as part of a whole which concludes with the Easter Vigil. All these were originally combined in one very long overnight celebration, before being done on separate days.

On the evening of Good Friday, we have the Passiontide devotion of the **Way of the Cross** after Evening Prayer.

Holy Saturday or Easter Eve has no celebration of the Eucharist: only the offices of Morning and Evening Prayer and a Liturgy of the Word. The latter ends with the account of the burial of Christ. The clergy and servers celebrate this together at noon, after they have rehearsed the complicated Mass of the Easter Vigil. Others are welcome to join us.

The Great Vigil of Easter begins after dark. It can be celebrated any time between sundown and sunrise. Here it is at 9pm, in order to allow those who rely on public transport to get home afterwards. It has four parts.

The Service of Light begins in the courtyard with the kindling of the New Fire and the blessing and lighting of the Easter Candle. This is first marked with symbols of Christ — the cross, the Alpha and Omega, the numerals of the year, the

five wounds; as the symbol of the risen Christ. Then it is lit from the New Fire. The deacon, carrying it, leads the procession of the congregation into church. He halts three times, raises the candle high and sings, 'The Light of Christ'.The congregation respond, 'Thanks be to God' and genuflect. The light from the candle is spread through the church as the congregation's candles are lit. The paschal candle is then placed in its stand by the pulpit and the deacon sings the Paschal Proclamation: the Exsultet.

The Vigil is a series of key readings from the Old Testament telling of God's saving love. Each is followed by silent reflection, a psalm or canticle, and a collect. After the proclamation of the resurrection, the Gloria is intoned, the organ plays joyfully for the first time since it fell silent on Maundy Thursday. The Church bells are rung and the ministers and people ring hand bells. The altar candles are lit and Passion-tide veils removed. After the epistle, the Easter Alleluia is sung and then the Easter Gospel proclaimed. Then there is either a sermon or the Easter Sermon attributed to St John Chrysostom is read.

The Liturgy of Initiation takes place at the font. In its fullest form, as at the cathedral, it includes Baptism and Confirmation. If these are not, the font is still blessed and we renew our baptismal vows: a public declaration of our union with Christ in his death and resurrection. The congregation is sprinkled with water from the font.

The Eucharist — The Easter liturgy culminates with the celebration of the Eucharist in which we are sacramentally reunited with the risen Lord.

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

LICENSING OF FR MICHAEL BOWIE

Fr Michael has now moved into No 6 Margaret Street and has been busy unpacking. He has already become a familiar face at weekday services.

He will be licensed as assistant priest at Evensong and Benediction on Sunday April 6 (the 5th Sunday of Lent) by the Archdeacon of Charing Cross, the Revd Dr William Jacob, who will also preach at the service.

As well as welcoming Fr Michael to the parish, we will also welcome a contingent of supporters from his old parish of Berkhamstead and other friends.

Sister Margaret ASSP

The Vicar travelled to All Saints Convent in Oxford on 17 March for the funeral of Sr Margaret of the All Saints Sisters of the Poor.

Margaret had been an All Saints Sister for over 65 years. One of the places she worked during those years was here in Margaret Street. So we give thanks for her part of our history.

Her funeral Mass was celebrated by Fr John Cullen, a former assistant priest

and Director of the Institute of Christian Studies here, who had known her since his postgraduate days in Oxford. Sr Margaret was for many years the sacristan at the convent in Oxford. She was renowned for her high standards and had left instructions that Fr Cullen should celebrate because she knew he would do it properly!

ANGLICAN CATHOLIC FUTURE PILGRIMAGE TO CANTERBURY — Saturday 17 May

The day begins at 11am with a talk on pilgrimage by the Dean of Canterbury, the Very Revd Robert Willis. There will then be a Mass in the cathedral undercroft at which the preacher will be the abbot of Mucknell Abbey, Brother Stuart Burns.

The day will include a spiritual pilgrimage around the cathedral and will conclude with Choral Evensong and a visit to the Shrine of St Thomas.

If you would like to take part please register on the Anglican Catholic Future website or let the Parish Office know.

WHAT'S AN AREA DEAN FOR?

The duties of Area Deans don't impinge on the lives of most parishioners very often, if ever. But one of them is to assist parishes in the deanery during vacancies. At the moment in our deanery, St Paul's, Rossmore Road, is vacant, so Fr Alan is spending some of his time supporting the churchwardens, PCC and the team of clergy and lay workers there. Fr Neil Bunker has also been giving valuable assistance in their work with people who are mentally unwell.

Fr Alan has also been involved in the process of selecting a new parish priest. An appointment has been made but the new priest will not be here until the summer, so his supportive rôle will continue for some time yet.

GOING TO ROME...

The Vicar is not changing his ecclesiastical allegiance, but he will be spending some days in Rome at the beginning of May. While he hopes to see some of the sights while he is there, he has three preaching engagements. One is a return visit to All Saints, the Anglican Church in Rome. The second is at an ecumenical service in the Caravita, an English-speaking church run by American Jesuits. The final one is at the nearby Anglican Centre in Rome where he will be staying. He flies home after attending the Wednesday morning papal audience.

...AND THEN TO NEW YORK, also in May, for Fr Allen Shin's consecration as bishop. The service will take place in the Cathedral of St John the Divine. A small contingent from All Saints will be present and Fr Alan has been asked to be one of those who present Fr Shin for his episcopal ordination. He will also preach at the Church of St Mary the Virgin during his stay.

ALL SAINTS, MARGARET STREET, W1 www.allsaintsmargaretstreet.org.uk

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER 2014 Preacher: Bishop John Flack

All services sung by the Choir of All Saints

PALM SUNDAY, 13 APRIL

10.45am Liturgy of Palms in Market Place, Procession to Church and HIGH MASS

6pm Passiontide Music, Readings and BENEDICTION

MONDAY — WEDNESDAY in Holy Week, 14, 15, 16 APRIL 6.30pm Low Mass with Homily

WEDNESDAY, 16 APRIL

7.30pm TENEBRAE for Maundy Thursday

MAUNDY THURSDAY, 17 APRIL

6.30pm Concelebrated HIGH MASS of the Lord's Supper

GOOD FRIDAY, 18 APRIL

12 noon The Preaching of the Passion

- 1 3pm The Solemn Liturgy and Veneration of the Cross
- 6.30pm Stations of the Cross

HOLY SATURDAY, 19 APRIL

12 noonLiturgy of the Day9pmHIGH MASS of the Easter Vigil

EASTER DAY, SUNDAY 20 APRIL

- 11amProcession, Blessing of the Easter Garden
and HIGH MASS
Preacher: The Vicar, Prebendary Alan Moses
- 6pm Festal Evensong, Te Deum and Benediction Preacher: Fr Michael Bowie, Assistant Priest

POETRY TEA — Sunday 6 April, 3pm at Pamela's

All welcome. The subject will be "My Favourite Poems or Prose". Bring pieces you have *written* — why not take this opportunity to showcase your best work — or best-loved pieces you have *read*.

To accept or to find out Pamela's address please ring Sandra on 020 7637 8456 and leave a message with your name and telephone number.

Cost £6 in aid of the All Saints Restoration Fund.

SERMON PREACHED BY THE VICAR ON ASH WEDNESDAY, 2014

"Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness: according to the abundance of your compassion blot out my offences."

Psalm 51 is the most striking of those psalms which the Church traditionally calls **Penitential**: ones which are prominent in the Liturgy of Lent.

In the Bible it has a rather racy title or introduction which does not appear in liturgical psalters:

"A Psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba."

Nathan came to convict David of sin because of that adultery, the pregnancy which ensued, the king's botched coverup, and then his arrangement of Uriah's murder. It's the kind of story which would make the front pages of the tabloid newspapers.

The association of this psalm with that scandal may well be a later addition but it signals to those who read or sing it that it is about sin and forgiveness. And so the Church sings it on Ash Wednesday. In fact, the psalm is more about God's character than our sinfulness. The psalmist is able to make his prayer for forgiveness because of what he knows of the mercy and goodness of God.

He then goes on to petition God, as we do in the Collect for Ash Wednesday, not just for forgiveness but for re-creation: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

He trusts in the compassionate nature and intention of God so firmly that he is even able to anticipate that transformed existence. **"Then shall I teach your ways** to the wicked and sinners shall return to you."

"Deliver me from my guilt, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness."

In the story of David and Bathsheba, the decisive thing is not David's sinfulness but God's grace. That sin did have grave consequences; the first child born to Bathsheba dies (and David's family nearly falls apart).

Yet, David's sin is forgiven. He is allowed to live and remain king.

Just as God's grace is the most outstanding feature of the story, so too Psalm 51 begins with focus on God. Before the words of confession which dominate the opening verses, the psalmist appeals to God's character. He uses three words that communicate God's grace:

- ♦ "mercy"
- ♦ "steadfast love"
- ♦ "compassion"

All three also appear in the story of Israel's worship of the Golden Calf in Exodus, so Psalm 51 can be read against that background too. It applies to communal, corporate sin, as well as to that of individuals. Both stories are about the forgiveness of grievous sin. God's character is what keeps relationship intact. Both David and Israel are justified, made right with God, by God's grace. So it is with the psalmist who admits that God is **"proved right"** in God's judgement, and later affirms that his **"tongue will sing of your righteousness"**. He has been or will be set right by God's grace.

After appealing to God's character, the psalmist then turns to his own sinfulness. Israel's vocabulary of sin pervades these first few verses. The basic word for sin is filled out by:

- The personal "guilt" of the sinner
- Transgressions" which suggest wilful rebellion
- "Evil" the injurious effects of sinful behaviour.

The emphatic "Against you, you

only, have I sinned" sounds odd to us. Is it suggesting that our sins have no consequences for others: all those Bathshebas and Uriahs and the children? What the psalmist is really saying is, not that our sinful behaviour has no destructive consequence for others, but that sin has its origin in our failure to honour God.

"I have been wicked even from my birth, a sinner when my mother conceived me."

This verse has been used to speak of the unpopular doctrine of original sin. It does not mean that sin is transmitted biologically or that sexuality is by definition sinful: although Christians have sometimes suggested both. What it does convey is the inevitability of human fallibility. In each human life, in our human situation, sin is pervasive. We are born into it, and we cannot escape it. While sin is a matter of individual decision, it has a corporate dimension that affects us, despite our best intentions and decisions. We ignore that truth at our peril.

But the link with the story of David and Bathsheba reminds us that the reality of God's steadfast love is more fundamental than the reality of human sinfulness.

"Behold, you desire truth deep within me and shall make me understand wisdom in the depths of my heart."

The wisdom that the psalmist prays for is an openness to and a dependence on God. While sin is inevitable and pervasive in the human situation, it is not the last word.

His faith in God's transforming power is clear in language used in the Old Testament

only of God's activity: in creation and new creation: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." To be forgiven is not just a wiping clean of the slate, a get out of jail free card. It means to be restored to conditions that make new life and growth possible.

Then because of that new life, his thoughts turn to others. Having been made new, he promises to share this experience with others. **"I shall teach your ways to the wicked, and sinners shall return to you."** The chief among sinners will be the teacher of sinners. The reconciled will bear the message of reconciliation.

But an inward transformation is not all or enough. The clean heart and new spirit will be accompanied by the outward and audible proclamation. God's new thing must be proclaimed and praised: "Open my lips. O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise." And so we do every day at Morning and Evening Prayer. And on Sundays in Lent, we will rise from our knees after confessing our sins, to sing: "O Lord, open thou our lips. And our mouth shall show forth thy praise." And in this Mass, we will offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Psalm 50, had identified the proper sacrifice as "thanksgiving" — humble gratitude accompanied by faithful words and deeds.

And this is exactly what the forgiven, transformed psalmist offers to God. What God desires is a **"broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart"**. God desires the humble and contrite who are willing to offer their whole selves. If pride is the fundamental sin that leads to idolatry, then the transformed psalmist now shows a humility that leads to praise. The psalmist's offering to God is the whole self. He has much to proclaim, but it is not about the self but God. His witness is pointed in the same direction as his opening appeal: to the character of God.

The final verses, which may be a later addition, give the intensely personal testimony a corporate dimension. They remind us that sin is never simply a matter of individual decision; it is also a matter of corporate, institutionalised evil. The justification of the individual sinner does not rule out the need for participation in the worship of the community. It enables proper participation. **"Right sacrifices"** will be offered by those who have first offered their whole selves to God. By the mercies of God, even the traditional rituals, the same old order of worship, will be transformed.

This psalm, this day, this season, this liturgy, call our attention to a perennial feature of the human situation: sin.

Israel's story is a long list of mistakes. So too the behaviour of the disciples in the Gospels, the life of the early Church revealed in the letters of Paul, the life of Paul himself, whose words in the epistle echo the psalm, the history of the Church throughout the centuries, its life now, our own lives, if we are honest enough to admit it. Psalm 51 is not just about David or Israel or some anonymous ancient psalmist; it is about us. It is about how we are as individuals, families, churches.

That is the bad news. But the good news in Psalm 51 is even more prominent. It is not just about human nature, but about God's nature. The good news is that God is willing to forgive sinners and, better yet, is able to re-create people. He is "of sin the double cure", forgiving what is past and transforming the future.

Psalm 51 invites us to "**be reconciled to God**". As Paul knew, reconciliation happens as a result of God's willingness to forgive. The result is a new creation, and the reconciled are entrusted with the message of reconciliation.

Pope Francis has said: "For if we have received the love which restores meaning to our lives, how can we fail to share that love with others?".

100 YEARS AGO

The Vicar wrote:

Almost, I suppose, since the beginning of All Saints and the Community, the Angelus has been rung in this parish from the Chapel of the Home. The Chapel of the Home is closed at present and on the Feast of the Annunciation the Angelus was rung from the Church and will now always be rung. The Angelus is rung before the first Mass at ten minutes to seven, at noon and directly after the last Amen of the daily Evensong. On Sundays and Feasts the Angelus will be rung at the end of High Mass. The priests and choristers pause to say it before leaving the choir. On Sunday evening it will be rung just before the doors are opened at 6 o'clock

The Vicar writes: The Angelus still rings out from All Saints each day. During

Lent a group of us have been studying the poems of George Herbert. In his biography of Herbert, Isaak Walton speaks of parishioners at Bemerton pausing from their work when "Mr Herbert's saint's bell rang to prayers". I'm not sure how many people look up from their computer screens when our bells call to prayer, but we did have an email some time ago asking what the different bells meant. So someone was listening.

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

• SUNDAY 6 APRIL FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

HIGH MASS AT 11am (Passiontide begins)

400 (T A&MR 401)
Judica me
Mass for five voices — Byrd
130
Ezekiel 37: 1 - 14
Romans 8: 6 - 11
254 (T 458)
John 11: 1 - 45
The Vicar
Prebendary Alan Moses
Byrd
Versa est in luctum — Lobo
84, 85, And can it be

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION with Licensing of Fr Michael Bowie as Assistant Priest at 6pm

Psalm:	30
Lessons:	Lamentations 3: 19 - 33
	Matthew 20:17 - end
Office Hymn.	· 79
Canticles:	Collegium Regale
	— Howells
Anthem:	Timor et tremor — Poulenc
Preacher:	The Venerable
	William Jacob
Hymn:	83
O Salutaris:	238
Hymn:	82
Tantum ergo.	383
Voluntary:	Jésus accepte la souffrance
	— Messiaen

• SUNDAY 13 APRIL PALM SUNDAY

Liturgy of Palms in Market Place, Procession to Church and HIGH MASS at 10.45am

Liturgy of Palms: Hosanna Filio David! — Vale

Palm Gospel: Matthew 21: 1 – 11 Blessing of Palms: Pueri Hebræorum

— Palestrina Processional Hymns: 509, Lift high the

	01055, 511
Introit:	Domine, ne longe
Setting:	Mass in B flat
	— Rachmaninov
Psalm:	31: 9 - 16
Lessons:	Isaiah 50: 4 - 9a
	Philippians 2: 5 - 11
Hymn:	94

Gospel:	The Passion according
	to St Matthew
Preacher:	Bishop John Flack
Anthem:	O Saviour of the world
	— Ouseley
Hymns:	87 (T 486), 88, 86

A SEQUENCE OF PASSIONTIDE MUSIC AND READINGS followed by BENEDICTION at 6pm with the Choir of All Saints

Music:	Lamentations I and II
	— Tallis

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: 251 Hymn: 89 (i) Tantum ergo: 195

WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

TENEBRAE for MAUNDY THURSDAY at 7.30pm

A service of Psalms and Scripture readings with music by Viadana, Victoria, Anerio and Lassus.

THURSDAY 17 APRIL MAUNDY THURSDAY

HIGH MASS of the LORD'S SUPPER AT 6.30pm

Introit:	Nos autem
Setting:	Missa Brevis — Walton
Psalm:	116
Lessons:	Exodus 12: 1 - 4, 11 - 14
	1 Corinthians 11: 23 - 26

Hymn:269 (I)Gospel:John 13: 1 - 17, 31b - 35Preacher:Bishop John FlackAntiphons at the washing of feet:A new commandment;After the Lord had risenfrom supper — plainsong;Ubi caritas — DurufléUbi caritas — DurufléAnthem:O sacrum convivium— Tallis

Hymns: 302, 304 *Post Communion Motet:*

Ave verum corpus — Byrd At the procession: 268 (R) Stripping of the Sanctuary: Psalm 22 Gospel of the Watch: Mark 14: 26 - end

FRIDAY 18 APRIL GOOD FRIDAY

SOLEMN LITURGY OF THE PASSION & VENERATION OF THE CROSS 1pm - 3pm

Psalm: 22:1-11 Lessons: Isaiah 52: 13 - 53: end Hebrews 10: 16 - 25 Hymn: 92 Gospel: The Passion according to St John **Bishop John Flack** Preacher: At the Veneration: The Reproaches — Palestrina; 95 Liturgy of the Sacrament: 79 (Choir) Hymns: 97.98

Motet: Crucifixus — Lotti

SATURDAY 19 MARCH HOLY SATURDAY EASTER EVE

HIGH MASS OF THE EASTER VIGIL AT 9pm

Setting: Missa Brevis — Jonathan Dove The Liturgy of the Word: Genesis 1: 1 - 2: 4a; Psalm 136 Genesis 22: 1 - 18; Psalm 16 Exodus 14: 10 - 31, 15: 20 - 21; Canticles of Moses: Isaiah 55: 1 - 11; Canticle Isaiah 12: 2 - 6; Ezekiel 36: 24 - 28; Psalm 41: 1 - 7 The Easter Alleluyas Hvmn: 119 Gospel: Matthew 28: 1 - 10 Preacher: **Bishop John Flack** At the Procession to the Font: Litany of Thanksgiving for the Resurrection (arr. Kitchen)

Offertory Hymn: 296 (i), 116 (T Arnold)Hymns:102, 317, 124Voluntary:Toccata, Op 5 — Duruflé

• SUNDAY 20 APRIL EASTER DAY

PROCESSION, BLESSING OF THE EASTER GARDEN and HIGH MASS at 11am

Procession and Blessing of the Easter Garden: Hail! Festal Day!; 119

Introit:	Resurrexi
Setting:	Krönungsmesse — Mozart
Psalm:	118
Lessons:	Acts 10: 34 - 43
	Colossians 3: 1 - 4

Hymn:	110 (v 3 Descant	Psalm:	16
	— Benson)	Lessons:	Acts 2: 14a, 22 - 32
Gospel:	John 20: 1 - 18		1 Peter 1: 3 - 9
Preacher:	The Vicar,	Hymn:	125 omit *
	Prebendary Alan Moses	Gospel:	John 20: 19 - end
Anthem:	Easter — Vaughan Williams	Preacher:	The Vicar,
Hymns:	111, 123, 120		Prebendary Alan Moses
Voluntary:	Final (Symphonie Romane)	At the Proce	ession to the Font:
	— Widor		Litany of Thanksgiving for
			the Resurrection

Anthem:

FESTAL EVENSONG, TE DEUM & BENEDICTION at 6pm

Psalm:	105
Lessons:	Song of Solomon 3: 2 - 5;
	8:6-7
	Revelation 1: 12 - 18
Office Hymn:	101 (omit *)
Canticles:	The Chichester Service
	— Walton
Anthem:	Dum transisset Sabbatum
	— Taverner
Preacher:	Fr Michael Bowie
Hymn:	117
O Salutaris:	French chant
Te Deum:	Stanford in B flat
Tantum ergo:	Henschel
Voluntary:	Toccata in F, BWV 540
	— Bach

• SUNDAY 27 APRIL SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

HIGH MASS and HOLY BAPTISM at 11am

Hymn: 106 (T 219; v 4 Descant

- Caplin)

Introit:	Quasimodo
Setting:	Missa 'Che fa' oggi il
	mio sole' — Allegri

Hymns: 121, 389, 173 (T 265) Voluntary: Triumphal March — Lemmens CHORAL EVENSONG &

Haec dies - Byrd

(arr. Kitchen)

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 6pm

30		
Daniel 6: 6 - 23		
Mark 15: 46 - 16: 8		
· 101 (omit *)		
Service in E — Murrill		
Alleluya, I heard a voice		
— Weelkes		
Fr Michael Bowie		
351		
Elgar (No 3)		
118		
Tantum ergo: de Séverac		
Christ lag in Todesbanden,		
BWV 625 — Bach		

ALL SAINTS FOUNDATION

The Foundation's Purpose is to assist the parish in the maintenance and restoration of our Grade 1 listed building. The trustees are able to expend both capital and income to this end.

The Administrator of the Foundation is **Damon Brash**. He can be contacted through the Parish Office if you would like more information about making a donation or a bequest.

The Foundation's Charity Number is: 273390.

CHOIR AND MUSIC TRUST

The Trust's purpose is to support the music of All Saints. It makes grants to the PCC to assist with the costs of the choir. At the moment, these meet just over half of the music budget each year.

The Trust's capital cannot be spent, only the income.

The Administrator of the Trust is **Geoffrey Woodcock**. He can be contacted through the Parish Office if you would like further information about how to make a donation or bequest.

The Choir and Music Trust's Charity Number is: 802994.

FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS

The Friends of All Saints is a fellowship of people who have some connection with All Saints: former or occasional worshippers. It enables them to support our work through prayer and giving. The Friends are prayed for on a rota each day at Morning Prayer, and on the second Wednesday of the month the Friends' Candle burns in church and they are prayed for at Mass.

Our Friends' Secretary Juliet Windham has recently retired, with our gratitude for all she has done. Until a successor is confirmed, please contact the Parish Office in relation to Friends' matters.

MISSION PROJECTS

We support:

The work of **US** (formerly USPG) with the Church in Zimbabwe among people affected by HIV-AIDS;

The Church Army hostels and programmes for homeless women in Marylebone;

The West London Day Centre for the homeless.

Janet Drake chairs our Mission Committee. She can be contacted through the Parish Office.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

As well as the monthly **Parish Paper**, you can keep in touch with life at All Saints through:

The All Saints Website

www.allsaintsmargaretstreet.org.uk

The Parish Email

This gives weekly news of events, people to pray for, and a short letter from the Vicar. You can subscribe through the All Saints website, or by contacting the Parish Administrator, Email: astsmgtst@aol.com

The Weekly Notices included in the Sunday service booklet, which worshippers are encouraged to take away with them.

Vicar:

Prebendary Alan Moses 020 7636 1788 Mobile: 07973 878040 Email: alanmoses111@gmail.com.

Assistant Priest:

The Revd Dr Michael Bowie 020 3632 4309 Email: mnrbowie@hotmail.com.

Honorary Assistant Priests:

The Revd Gerald Beauchamp 020 7258 0724 The Revd Julian Browning 020 7286 6034 The Revd Neil Bunker

Mental Health Liaison Chaplain for Westminster.

Parish Administrator: Mrs Dee Prior 020 7636 1788 Email: astsmgtst@aol.com

Parish Officials

Churchwardens:

Chui chivai achisi			
Mr John Forde	020 7592 9855		
Mr Chris Self	020 8858 6370		
PCC Secretary:			
Dr Dilys Thomas	020 7794 3626		
Hon Treasurer:			
Mr Patrick Hartley	020 7607 0060		
Director of Music:			
Mr Tim Byram-Wigfield			
C/	o 020 7636 1788		
Associate Director of Music:			
Mr Charles Andrews	01580 240575		
Electoral Roll Officer:			
Miss Catherine Burlin	g		

c/o 020 7636 1788

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Service Times

Sundays:

Low Mass at 6.30pm (Sat) 8am and 5.15pm Morning Prayer 10.20am HIGH MASS and SERMON at 11am CHORAL EVENSONG, SERMON and BENEDICTION at 6pm.

Monday to Friday:

Morning Prayer at 7.30am Low Mass at 8am, 1.10pm and 6.30pm Confessions 12.30 - 1pm and 5.30pm Evening Prayer at 6pm

Saturdays:

Morning Prayer at 7.30am Low Mass at 8am and 6.30pm* (* First Mass of Sunday) Confessions 5.30pm. Evening Prayer 6pm.

CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR APRIL 2014

1	Frederick Denison Maurice, priest 1872	King's College, London
2	-	Local businesses
3		Unity
4		Those in need
5		Fr Michael Bowie
6	¥ 5th SUNDAY OF LENT	
	Passiontide begins	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
7		Voluntary agencies
8		Students
9	Dietrich Bonhoeffer, pastor and martyr, 1945	
		Friends of All Saints
10	William Law, priest, spiritual writer, 1761	Unity
11	George Selwyn, bishop, 1878	Those in need
12		Preparation for Holy Week
13	₩ PALM SUNDAY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
14	Monday in Holy Week	Holy Week worship
15	Tuesday in Holy Week	Pilgrims to the Holy Land
16	Wednesday in Holy Week	The Peace of Jerusalem
17	MAUNDY THURSDAY	
18	GOOD FRIDAY	
19	EASTER EVE	
20	₩ EASTER DAY	Thanksgiving for the Resurrection
21	Monday in Easter Week	Thanksgiving for the Resurrection
22	Tuesday in Easter Week	Thanksgiving for the Resurrection
23	Wednesday in Easter Week	Thanksgiving for the Resurrection
24	Thursday in Easter Week	Thanksgiving for the Resurrection
25	Friday in Easter Week	Thanksgiving for the Resurrection
26	Saturday in Easter Week	Thanksgiving for the Resurrection
27	★ 2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
28	George, martyr, patron of England, 304	The Church and People of England
29	Mark the Evangelist	Biblical Scholars
30	Pandita Mary Ramabai, translator, 1922	Christians in India



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