



All Saints Parish Paper

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VICAR'S LETTER

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

These words in St John's Gospel are addressed to the apostle Philip by some Greek pilgrims in Jerusalem for the Passover festival. The great evangelical preacher Charles Simeon took them as the motto for his ministry. He had them inscribed on the pulpit lectern in his church in Cambridge to remind him of his task.

We are not told anything more about these foreign visitors and they disappear as quickly as they have come. They serve to introduce Jesus saying that his “hour,” the decisive time of his passion and glorification, the hour when he will be lifted up to draw all people to himself, has now come.

Visitors to a city church like ours frequently arrive with no introduction and often we will not see them again. Some will come to a service because they are visiting London on business or holiday, from other parts of the country or the world, and know that we have services every weekday as well as on Sundays. Some will be newcomers to London, for work or study. Others pop in on their way to or from work or in their lunch break to say a prayer, light a candle, spend a few minutes in quiet reflection. For some, a striking building catches their attention; they pause to look and perhaps to enter.

Some, as we know, come for shelter from the rigours of life on the streets or a brief respite from the clamour of the city.

Perhaps they will be familiar with our tradition and will fit in easily. For others it will be new and strange and they may need some tactful help. They may be from another Christian tradition, another religion, or from none.

They may speak to one of the clergy or our church watch team or a member of the congregation. They may leave a message in the Visitors' Book or a prayer request on the notice board. Some will pass through leaving no apparent trace; “known only to God”. It is a feature of our ministry here that many of those we have contact with come and go unknown to many of the Sunday congregation. We may never discover the effects of our ministry, or only years later. Our ministry in the confessional, and often outside it, is necessarily confidential and not something we can broadcast; although we should make every effort to make its availability known.

The request of those Jerusalem pilgrims can serve equally well to remind all of us in the Church, and in this church in particular, of our calling: to bring people to Jesus. People come to churches for all sorts of reasons; sometimes not even consciously

thought out. They may be quite nervous and uncertain. Our approach to visitors has to be a sensitive one, but not so low key as to be invisible. The Greek pilgrims seem to have spoken to Philip because he had a Greek name and came from an ethnically mixed area. He was able to be a point of contact. Visitors need to sense, I think, that the people they encounter in church are not so far removed from themselves as to be unapproachable; that they speak “fluent human,” rather than some arcane religious dialect no more intelligible to them than the Klingon of Star Trek. They may have a question you can’t answer, a request which you can’t meet, but you can introduce them to someone who might be able to: the clergy for example.

The clergy of the parish have a deliberate policy of standing at church door or gate to speak to people as they leave — especially to those who are not regular members of the congregation — but we cannot talk to everyone at once. On Sunday mornings especially, we rely on members of the congregation to look out for visitors and newcomers, especially those who might be looking a bit lost and shy. People who have known All Saints for many years tell me that we are a lot better at this than we used to be. Many members of the congregation at a recent funeral told me how impressed they had been by the hospitality All Saints provided for visitors.

However, it is not something we can be complacent about. It’s quite easy to slip into the habit of talking only to our friends over coffee. It takes quite a bit of nerve to break into huddles like that, and not everyone has it. You may well believe that other people are better at this kind of thing than you are, but if you are the only person who has

noticed someone, then for them you might be the Philip, who will introduce them to the Andrew, who will bring them to Jesus.

At the beginning of this month, during Holy Week and at Easter, we will ourselves be pilgrims in Jerusalem for the Lord’s Passover. We will be here in the streets on Palm Sunday, at Bethany, in the Upper Room, in the Garden of Gethsemane, the high priest’s courtyard and the governor’s tribunal, on the way of the cross and at Calvary, at the tomb with Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and again on Easter morning with Mary Magdalene and the women, with Peter and the Beloved Disciple, on the road to Emmaus and in the Upper Room, and all because **“we wish to see Jesus”**. This is our opportunity to walk with him, to spend time in his company, to listen to his words and reflect on what they mean for us, to know him risen and present in the breaking of the bread.

Charles Simeon dated his conversion to having to prepare for the compulsory Communion at his Cambridge college. John Wesley had described the Sacrament as a ‘converting ordinance’. This is no longer a view widely espoused among evangelicals but it ought to be among us. If people come looking to see Jesus, it will help if those of us here already look as if we might have seen him. During Holy Week, as we celebrate God’s love for us revealed on the cross, we might pray for a deeper conversion in our own lives and the grace to risk sharing the knowledge of the transforming love of Jesus with others.

With best wishes for Holy Week and Easter.

Yours in Christ,

Alan Moses

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is also known as 'Good Shepherd Sunday' because the Gospel at Mass is chosen from chapter 10 of St John's Gospel in which Jesus speaks of himself as the Good Shepherd. This Sunday has become a day on which the Church prays for vocations to the pastoral ministry.

All Saints has long been a parish which has encouraged vocations to the priesthood. One of the ways it does this at the moment is through the work of Frances O'Neil as an Examining Chaplain — one of a team of experienced people, lay and clerical, who assist Directors of Ordinands in the discernment of vocations. Frances writes about her work:

The Work of Examining Chaplains in Selection for the Ministry

All Saints has a long tradition of nurturing and sponsoring vocations to the ordained ministry. Encouragement and support for prospective ordinands is an important part of our parish's mission, both within our own congregation and in the wider Church. We need to be aware of the possibility of vocation for those we encounter within the Church and to be ready to support if appropriate.

Those who believe they may have a calling to the ministry will first approach the parish priest where they worship, who will consider referring them to the Diocesan Director of Ordinands for the next step in the process of selection. They will be asked to submit information about their personal faith history and reasons for believing that they have a vocation. They will then attend three short meetings each with a member of the Examining Chaplains' team whose job it is to help the

candidate to discover whether he or she has a real and sustainable vocation to the ordained ministry.

The team of Examining Chaplains includes both lay and ordained people with various professional and parochial backgrounds who will explore different aspects of the candidate's potential for service in the ministry. They will use the Church of England Criteria for Selection which cover nine crucial aspects of discernment of vocation and the ability to fulfil it. Summarised they are:

- A conviction of being called, evident to both the candidate and others;
- Knowledge and understanding of the structure and practice of the Church of England and its ministry, particularly in the candidate's own tradition;
- Commitment to personal spiritual discipline and practice;
- A robust, flexible and open-minded personality which is characterised by integrity of life;
- A capacity to build and develop healthy personal and pastoral relationships;
- A capacity and willingness for collaboration and leadership;
- Knowledge, understanding and personal commitment to the faith of Christ;
- A commitment to mission and evangelism;
- The intellectual ability to undertake study and fulfil the theological demands of ministry.

It is, of course, essential that the candidate should communicate a sense of his or her personal faith, spirituality and

passion for Christian witness, but this must be underpinned by evidence of practical knowledge and skills or, in the case of those who are younger and less experienced, the ability to benefit from further education and training. Although any Examining Chaplain may seek to explore any of the Criteria for Selection with the candidate, usually, they will choose to focus on one or two aspects: often an area which is of interest or concern arising from the candidate's personal statement or one which is related to their own professional interest or experience. An Examining Chaplain meets people from every tradition in the Church of England and members of the team must seek to discern the strengths which could be of service to the Church: not to recruit ministers in their own tradition. These meetings are only the first stage in what will become an increasingly rigorous selection process for candidates who are recommended to go forward. The Directors of Ordinands may, in the light of the Examining Chaplains' reports and their own meetings, suggest a candidate should explore another avenue of vocation such as the Religious Life or one of the lay ministries. It is a process which is designed to ensure that the Church's ministry is continuing and effective, providing leadership and inspiration for the people of God.

Frances O'Neil

RESTORATION PROGRAMME

Rather like Christians living in expectation of the coming of Our Lord, here at All Saints we are in an in-between stage as we await the arrival of the pendant light fittings which will complete the magnificent 'electroliers' (to give them their Victorian

name). Until these arrive and have been fitted, the final adjustments to the whole scheme cannot be carried out. The delay is frustrating, both for the contractors and for us, but we must possess our souls in patience. In the meantime, we have enough of the first fruits of the scheme to give us more than a glimpse of the glory that is to be revealed on the last day.

Meantime too, the contractors have not been idle. Much has been going on "below decks" to complete the re-wiring of our whole electrical installation. This will mean the building will be much safer. In the church itself, two systems are being installed which will also make it safer. One is a fire detection system and the other is a closed circuit television system. The latter can be monitored from the parish office. Its purpose is to improve the security of the building and those who use it. It had proved its worth within days of going into operation when Fr Michael was working in the office one Saturday afternoon and spotted someone who was clearly not deep in prayer before the statue of Our Lady but intent on stealing from the money box. He was sent packing.

A team of surveyors and photographers from English Heritage spent several days in church, taking measurements and photographs for the Survey of London project which is being masterminded by our good friend Professor Andrew Saint. We look forward to seeing the results which will add further to our knowledge and photographic record of the building.

This will also be enhanced by the researches of Professor Andrew Walkden of the University of Aberdeen. He and his wife came to All Saints on 17 February to investigate Butterfield's use of different

kinds of marble here. Professor Walkden kindly gave us a guided talk on what their discoveries have been so far and went home with lots of photographs to continue their researches. Again, we look forward to learning more.

In the meantime, too, fund-raising has continued and parishioners and friends have continued to be generous in their support.

The sum raised has now reached **£392,000**. This has reduced our reliance on loans to **£15,000** (from an original **£35,000**). There is still some way to go.

While we have benefited in the last few months from penny and bar bottle collections; the proceeds of Poetry Teas; received generous donations from America and most recently Mumbles and a collection at Robert Streit's funeral this month, perhaps the most unusual piece of fund-raising has been Fr John Rick's sale of clothing and other items which resulted from his Lenten clear-out of possessions. Held in the parish room on two Sundays, this raised **£600** and the remaining clothing was donated to the local Salvation Army shop. Our thanks to Fr Rick and those who assisted him in setting up, selling and clearing his temporary Heavenly Hoarder's Shop.

While there is still work to be done in church, we can now have the building open again, and we have welcomed an increasing number of groups coming to see the church in recent weeks — including architectural, design and history students from the UK and Europe, Church of England flower-arrangers, the University of the Third Age from Sevenoaks and a

book club from West London. Some let us know they are coming. Others simply turn up unannounced. Individuals also appear and it is good that they are no longer disappointed on finding the church closed. All Saints' primary purpose is of course not just an interesting historic building but a house of prayer and a place of worship. That is the principal reason we have been spending so much effort and money on its restoration, so it is good to see people able to come in and pray whenever they feel the need.

It is good to read the appreciative comments left in our Visitors Book. Recent ones include:

A visitor from Germany who wrote: *A wonderful church and I am so glad that I found my way here. I like what I saw and felt.*

A Northern Irish Presbyterian who wrote: *God bless all who enter within.*

A visitor from Surrey: *Absolutely stunning renovation and beautiful service. Keep up the good work.*

And one from Liverpool: *Thank you for keeping this beautiful church open and accessible.*

Visitors from Falkirk: *An amazing place. Delighted to have found this spiritual place.*

And from nearer at hand, a Londoner: *An amazing sight — thank you for keeping it open. We've waited a long time to see the interior. We were not disappointed.*

And a reminder that we do not just welcome tourists but those in need: *Thank you for all your patience, acceptance, kindness and care.*

One visitor did complain about the noisy radiator. These are now very old and have reached the stage when moving parts can no longer be tightened up to stop them rattling. We are trying to keep them turned off as much as possible. Our plan is to replace them with something quieter over the summer period.

PEOPLE

Bishop Allen Shin — We are looking forward to welcoming Bishop Allen, and Clara, back to All Saints for their first visit since his consecration as Bishop Suffragan in the Diocese of New York. He will preach at High Mass on Sunday 26 April, which appropriately is Good Shepherd Sunday. That evening, he will preach at Keble College where he was chaplain; so a feast of Butterfield for him.

Another American Bishop: **Fr Peter Eaton** is a former server at All Saints who has spent most of his ministry in the United States, latterly as Dean of St John's Cathedral in Denver, where he graciously welcomed Fr Alan and Theresa some years ago. He has been elected Bishop of South West Florida and will be consecrated on Saturday 9 May in the cathedral in Miami. We will be remembering him in our prayers.

Three Persons in One Archdeacon and One Archdeacon in Three Persons — This might be an apt way of describing the arrangements in the Archdeaconry of Charing Cross (the City of Westminster) in the period until a new archdeacon has been appointed. The three Area Deans, including the Vicar, are sharing the duties, with particular responsibility for their own deaneries. Fortunately, our deanery is fully

staffed at the moment. Among Fr Alan's first archidiaconal duties was that happy one of licensing **Fr Andrew Walker** as Director of the Healing and Counselling Centre at St Marylebone Church at a Mass on Wednesday 18 March. Fr Andrew is returning to the deanery in which he served his title, at St John's Wood Church.

The Bishop of London has also asked Fr Alan, in his capacity as Chair of the House of Clergy in the diocese to be on the advisory group for the appointment of new bishops for the Edmonton and Kensington episcopal areas.

New Organ Scholar — We are delighted to announce the appointment of **Laurence Long** as the Dr John Birch Organ Scholar, from September 2015. Laurence is a Foundation Scholar at the Royal College of Music, where he studies the organ with David Graham. Laurence was earlier a chorister at Rochester Cathedral, and won the Medway Young Performer of the Year prize for his performances on the piano. He succeeds Nicholas Mannoukas, who has held the scholarship for the last two years.

POETRY TEA AT PAMELA'S

— Sunday 1 March

Mary Rowe writes:

Once again I walked up the little street to our poetry rendezvous. Behind the high wall on one side trains were clanking and there was the hearty chant of football fans. I reached Pamela's house with its cheerful flowers on the windowsill, and was drawn in to the familiar, comfortable atmosphere. Plates of tempting sandwiches and Welsh cakes for St David's Day drew our eyes, but first we had the pleasant business of the afternoon to deal with.

The theme chosen was Love, and there were plenty of approaches available. John Betjeman provided a light-hearted story in *The Subaltern's Love Song* read by Stephen Green. *Walking Away* by Cecil Day Lewis, read by Edna Dickinson, sensitively described a father's emotion as his son began to grow up and away from him. Andrew Marvell from the 17th century was chosen by Gillian Dove (*To his Coy Mistress*) and Charles Thomson (*The Fair Singer* and *Young Love*). His poetry, scholarly and passionate, called one to re-read it later. The natural world looms large in love. Shelley, in *Love's Philosophy*, read by Ian Wilson, brings in fountains, river, wind, flowers and sunlight in his efforts to gain a kiss. In *Love in the Valley* by George Meredith, chosen by Mary Rowe, the loved woman is compared to a squirrel and a swallow, and the trees are flushing and flashing and streaming. We had Elvis Presley's *Love me tender* and *You don't have to say you love me* from Ronald Porter. For a change prose was used in the satirical, humorous account of Mr Collins' proposal to Elizabeth Bennett, from *Pride and Prejudice*, read by Sandra Wheen.

Some people would say that these approaches circle round the real heart of love, the yearning for the divine. Richard Lovelace's words in *To Althea from prison*, read by Gillian Dove, asserting that love is free in spite of iron bars, could be used by a mystic as well as by Althea's lover. Michel Quoist's *Lord, why did you tell me to love?* from Dudley Green and George Matheson's *O Love that wilt not let me go* from Stephen Green brought in questioning and confidence. St Paul's resounding words on love, or charity, read by Daphne Watts, compassed the height and depth of love.

This is only a selection of the thoughtfully chosen poems which were read. As usual, we enjoyed an excellent tea prepared by Pamela and Sandra, and appreciated Pamela's hospitality.

Afterwards I walked along the quiet streets, dark except for the occasional lights and glinting puddles. Behind me was the intangible world of love, romantic, light-hearted, enduring, intellectual, anguished, funny and divine, which was even more real than the solid world of these sober streets.

REVISION OF THE ALL SAINTS' ELECTORAL ROLL

The Electoral Roll has to be revised before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) on 19 April 2015. Inclusion on the Roll is the qualification to attend, participate and vote at the Meeting, or to be nominated for office. The Roll will be closed for revision between Tuesday 24 March and Friday 3 April. No further entries may be made to the Roll between 23 March and the close of the APCM. ***Would members of the Roll please check their entries on the copy of the Roll available in the Parish Office?*** Alterations should be notified to me, c/o the Parish Office. Anyone else who wishes to be included on the Roll, and who fulfils the qualifications, is welcome to apply. Completed forms should be returned via the Parish Office.

***Catherine T Burling,
Electoral Roll Officer***

ALL SAINTS, MARGARET STREET, W1

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER 2015

Preacher: Vicar, Prebendary Alan Moses

PALM SUNDAY, 29 MARCH

- 10.45am Liturgy of Palms in Market Place, W1
Procession to Church & HIGH MASS
6pm Choral Evensong & Benediction

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY

- 6.30pm Low Mass with Homily

WEDNESDAY, 1 APRIL

- 7.30pm TENEBRAE for Maundy Thursday

MAUNDY THURSDAY, 2 APRIL

- 6.30pm HIGH MASS of the Lord's Supper

GOOD FRIDAY, 3 APRIL

- 12 noon The Preaching of the Passion
1 – 3pm The Solemn Liturgy of the Passion
& Veneration of the Cross
6.30pm Stations of the Cross

HOLY SATURDAY, 4 APRIL

- 12 noon Liturgy of the Day
9pm HIGH MASS of the Easter Vigil

EASTER DAY, SUNDAY 5 APRIL

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

HPH 2015: Thinking for Today's World

Why does inequality continue and seems to be increasing and what can Christians do about it?

70 years ago the government agreed that citizens should be provided with adequate income, health care, education, housing, and employment. In return for a weekly national insurance contribution, benefits would be paid to people who were sick, unemployed, retired, or widowed. Many argue that the austerity measures of the last years are undermining these principles.

This year's HPH Lectures explore these issues.

Tuesday 14 April

The Church, Usury and Redemption

Ann Pettifor, Director of Policy Research in Macroeconomics

Ched Myers has argued: "The Hebrew Bible's vision of Sabbath economics contends that a theology of abundant grace and a communal ethic of redistribution is the only way out of our slavery to the debt system, with its theology of meritocracy and private ethic of wealth concentration. The question today is this: Has the Church mis-remembered the Bible's understanding of redemption not just as a spiritual matter, but as an economic issue? Does the Church — do we act — on this understanding? And do we honour the Hebrew Bible's vision of "the only way out of our slavery to the debt system?" Or are we, as a Church, captive to the creditor-driven orthodoxies of modern capitalism?"

Tuesday 12 May

Faith and Poverty in Diverse Britain

Bishop Michael Ipgrave of Woolwich

Tuesday 9 June

Homelessness and the 3 Faces of Poverty

Jon Kuhr, Executive Director of Social Work at West London Mission

*All lectures will be held at **Hinde Street Methodist Church, London W1***

*Starting at **7.30pm***

Admission is free and all are welcome!

SERMON PREACHED BY THE VICAR AT EVENSONG AND BENEDICTION — LENT 1

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” Acts 2: 42

Just before Christmas, Pope Francis ruffled some very grand ecclesiastical plumage when, in the traditional address to senior members of the Curia, the largely

clerical bureaucracy which runs the Vatican, he called them to a critical process of self-examination. To help them along, he spelt out some of the failings which beset an organization which is a combination of imperial court and civil service: careerism, gossip and the like.

It has been pointed out that such an examination of conscience is pretty much what one could expect from someone who is not only your boss, but a chief pastor formed in the Jesuit tradition. The daily *examen* is an integral part of the spirituality of St Ignatius Loyola. It asks how we have used our time, gifts and opportunities, how we have fulfilled our duties or failed to, how what we have done has served the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Self-examination should not be confined to ecclesiastical bureaucrats or members of religious orders. It is required at all levels of church life — both communal and personal. The confession and absolution with which Cranmer prefaces the offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, used tonight, help us call to mind those things **“we have left undone... which we ought to have done,”** as well **“those things we ought not to have done”**.

This is not to make us feel bad but to make us better: **“That we may, hereafter live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of God’s holy name.”** An intention which a pope, who is a member of a religious order whose motto is *Ad Maiorem De Gloriam*, would recognize as the heart of the matter.

One of the origins of Lent lies in the period of preparation for catechumens, candidates for baptism at Easter. Now, in the liturgy of Easter Vigil, whether there are candidates for baptism or not, we will all renew the vows of our baptism.

So at Evensong during this Lent, we are engaging in catechizing: rehearsing some of the questions we will be asked at Easter. Our sermons will be based on the questions in what is called the **Commission** at the end

of the Common Worship service of baptism. These spell out the basics of what it means to be a Christian: **“Those who are baptized are called to worship and serve God”**. We are going to preach on those questions in order to focus our self-examination.

The first of them is based on that text from the Acts of the Apostles which I read out at the beginning: **“Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, the breaking of the bread and the prayers?”** It is Luke’s description of the communal life of the earliest Christians in Jerusalem; those who were baptized as a result of Peter’s preaching at Pentecost.

Some argue that this is an idealized, rose-tinted, picture of the early Church. This may be true, certainly the Church in Jerusalem was not without its problems — as Luke himself tells us. The cynical might say that he presents us with an impossible ideal. The implication being that we should not even try to emulate it.

But is it not better that we have an ideal which challenges us rather than a lowest common denominator which leaves us undisturbed in our mediocrity? In his column in the Guardian yesterday, Canon Giles Fraser recalled a fellow columnist saying to him that it was better to be a hypocrite than to be a cynic. Hypocrites at least have ideals even if they fail to live up to them. Cynics do not have even that. Without an ideal of the Church and Kingdom, we sink into easy-going but very dull conformity.

To fail, to fall short, in our following of Christ, does not mean that following Christ is wrong, and that we were equally wrong in trying to do so. Our intention is right, even if we fail in the execution of our good resolutions.

So, on the basis that it is better to have ideals and fail, than to have none and not even try, let's look more closely at the elements in Luke's pen portrait of the early Church.

They were devoted to:

1 The Apostles' Teaching: That teaching would come to form what we know as the New Testament but at that stage must have been primarily oral. Its core would be their witness to Jesus Christ, birth, ministry, passion and his resurrection which was what got it all started.

Doctrine, another word for teaching, is unfashionable these days. Many parts of the Church seem to have largely abandoned it in favour of experience: feeling excited about the Spirit or nice and warm about Jesus. But doctrine is important because we are surrounded by all sorts of mind-forming forces, which shape and influence us; whether we like it or not, whether we recognize it or not. They co-opt us to a culture which persuades us that all our needs can be satisfied by buying its products. It provides us not just with these products, but with experiences meant to satisfy us.

If we do not learn the basic Christian truths that we are created by God, not by ourselves, or by some random natural process; that we are created for a purpose which is to love God and our neighbour, and that this God, revealed in Jesus Christ, is one who is both loving and lovable, then we find ourselves with little reason to be religious other than force of habit, or as a mechanism for coping with the stresses of the world.

Being faithful to the apostles' teaching asks of us a willingness to go on learning — that is to go on being disciples. That learning is in part an intellectual exercise

— we have to study scripture, read books, listen to sermons, attend study groups and the like, if we are to grow in Christian understanding. But this teaching is more than a head thing. It changes our lives as we put into action what we have learned. The practice of Christianity will in turn make us ask deeper questions about what we have learned. We are to **“continue in the apostles' teaching”**. Your clergy have a duty to go on teaching you in that tradition and we all have a responsibility to go on learning. It's hard work for us, and for you. In the short term we might well prefer to have our ears tickled with a few amusing anecdotes topped off with a bit of general moralizing — but in the long term that soon fails to either challenge or satisfy.

2 Fellowship

A word which can also be translated “communion”. We are not individuals interested in a religion who have joined a society of the like-minded. God has chosen us, we have not chosen him: **“You did not choose me, I chose you.”** We pray, **“Our Father,”** not **“my Father”**. This goes clean contrary to the way our age, obsessed with consumer choice, thinks.

We are members of the Body of Christ, a body in which all are mutually dependent. We are members of a household built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head cornerstone. Even though that body is divided, its unity fractured by disputes old and new. It was so even in the time of the New Testament — there was no golden age to which we can return. But maintaining and building the unity of this fellowship was and is a significant responsibility for members of the Christian community. For those of us in episcopal traditions, that is focused by our being in communion with our bishops,

the successors of the apostles, our being in communion with them. That is why we pray for our Bishop at Mass each day. It is not just that he has a difficult job to do.

We must do all that we can to be **“in love and charity with our neighbours”** as we approach the Holy Eucharist and as we live out our life in the Church. St Paul has some scathing things to say to Christians in Corinth whose bad behaviour, greed and selfishness, contempt of those poorer or less important than themselves, those less “spiritual” perhaps, results in them not being able to discern the body of Christ and eating condemnation on themselves (*1 Corinthians 11: 29*).

In the Gospel at Mass today, Mark tells us that when Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness, the angels ministered to him. Being faithful to the apostles’ fellowship involves ministering to our brothers and sisters; bearing one another’s burdens.

3 The Breaking of the Bread

Luke’s and the early Church term for what we call the Mass, the Eucharist, the Holy Communion. Christian communion is expressed and effected by our table fellowship. We are the companions of Jesus and one another — we eat with him and he eats with us.

Our tradition places the highest importance on the centrality of the Eucharist. It is not merely a sad memory of someone long dead, but the active presence of one risen and still with us — one who makes himself known in the breaking of the bread; one who feeds us with himself the living bread.

We see it as not only expressing a communion already established but as working the transforming act which builds

communion or re-establishes it when it has been fractured or impaired. The Church makes the Eucharist and the Eucharist makes the Church. That is why we must hunger and thirst for the Eucharist; why we should be eager to take part in it as often and as deeply as we can.

4 The Prayers

The prayers, first of all of the Church — it’s daily common prayer, whether we are physically present at them or whether we join in them by saying the divine office at home.

The Letter to the Hebrews reproaches those who **“neglecting to meet together, as some do:”** (Hebrews 10: 25). This is not just because of the bad effect our failure to be there has on us but also because we not only miss the opportunity to encourage others in their faith but might actually discourage them.

Statistics suggest that patterns of church attendance are changing. People attend less frequently: once or twice a month instead of every Sunday: once on a Sunday instead of twice; not during the week at all. In many parishes, even urban ones here in London, where we do not have the problems of rural multi-benefice parishes with a handful of priests covering numerous places over sometimes long distances, daily worship, the Offices and Mass, once seen as vital in parishes of catholic tradition, has almost disappeared. I realise that I am preaching to the converted here, because you are here for Evensong and it is not my intention to beat you up.

There is, however, more than one spiritual danger in the neglect of worship. It is the focus of our life: it is where we encounter the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, where we break bread together. Neglect of **“the**

prayers” makes Christians seem much less prayerful than members of other faiths — especially our Muslim neighbours who pray five times a day.

So our prayer in common, our devotion to the prayers, is an important act of witness to others. Think of the person who wanders in during a weekday service, and finds not an empty building but a group of people praying the Eucharist or the Office: a living microcosm of the Church.

There is too, a danger for those who worship here only at large choral services. They risk succumbing to the experience culture which affects other traditions rather more obviously. The experience of High

Mass or Choral Evensong is not necessarily more holy, just because it is aesthetically more refined than the Christian Folk Rock music you will encounter at Hillsong along the road in the Dominion Theatre.

Rather than congratulating ourselves on our heritage of faith, our concern should be to allow it to shape and strengthen our Christian lives more fully than before. We need to steep ourselves in the elements of the prayers which have sustained and motivated generations of Christians in witness and service: the psalms and scripture, hymns and prayers.

We do these things because that is what Christians are called to do.

SERMON PREACHED BY FR MICHAEL BOWIE AT EVENSONG & BENEDICTION LENT 2

‘Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?’

That question from the baptismal ‘Commission’, our Lenten topic this evening, sounds a bit ‘mom and apple pie’: it is difficult to admit being *against* resisting evil. But it is a question worth asking and answering for each of us, because perseverance in resisting evil is not so much a quest, in the grand Wagnerian style, as a hard slog: its more in Alan Bennett’s ‘cream cracker under the settee’ territory. That’s what repenting and returning to the Lord is about.

There’s a good reason for this: evil is banal, not romantic, despite people thinking that the devil has all the best tunes. That thinking misses the real music of creation and the deep harmony of love. So it is a very good question for Lent,

which is so much more about countering the banality of evil with small steps forward in goodness than it is about grand resolves: resolves which often we often fail to keep and which can be a subtle source of temptation in themselves. If we over-reach ourselves in our aspirations to be good, the failure, being inbuilt and inevitable, can sap our resolution and leave ‘our last state worse than our first’ (Matthew 12: 45).

So the most important part of the question is the bit about falling into sin, and repenting and returning to the Lord. But this begs a prior question, ‘what is sin?’. There are some comfortingly easy answers, in manuals that purport to help would-be penitents, but the collapse in the use of the confessional, especially among Roman Catholics (for whom it remains, technically compulsory), bears witness to a radical doubt even among devout Christians about sin and reconciliation. As

Fr Gaskell once remarked to me, people no longer feel, or even think, themselves to be unreconciled. And if they do, they work it out in therapy, not the confessional.

This is an area where traditional Christian obsessions about sex have often got in the way of grace. I have rarely heard a confession that isn't at least partly, if not wholly, about sex. Yet Jesus hardly talks about it, and you will struggle to construct a coherent Christian sexual ethic from the Bible, despite what both protestants and Catholics have said for centuries. That is because the Bible wasn't written with this subject in view. When it does get sex in its sights, especially in the Old Testament, the context is usually faithfulness versus unfaithfulness; very often as a metaphor for the people's relationship with God. So far, so helpful — faithfulness, rather than sex, is the proper context of what it means to be good, godly, holy.

I remember when preparing my first confession trying to get some help from the assistant priest (I find myself thinking about the assistant priests I've known rather too much these days). He said I should think about how I had fallen short of my own personal Christ. I didn't understand what he meant, so I prepared a list from the options provided in the *Centenary Prayerbook*, which must have been tedious, if familiar, to the Rector. I think I now understand a little better what he was getting at, but the terminology didn't help me. I wanted to know what I'd got wrong (sin), whereas he wanted me to look at a relationship and see how it could be right, and then to improve on my efforts so far.

It may be that the conscientious rebranding of confession as 'reconciliation', while theologically coherent, has muddied things

a bit. It is absolutely right that we should think about this sacrament in terms of our relationship with God and one another, hence 'reconciliation', indeed 'truth and reconciliation', is the aim. But talk of being 'reconciled' blurs very easily into modern ideas of the integrated personality; also into less sophisticated models of 'self-help' at the Norman Vincent Peale end of things. And the trouble with both of those is that the therapeutic model underlying them is essentially about the well-defended *self* as an end. The healthy psyche is conceived of as essentially secure and self-preserving, rather than focused beyond itself, the outward focus which is crucial to a Christian understanding of our proper relationships, with God and our neighbour.

So sin is not about what damages the psyche *per se*. It is about what damages us as *children of God*, conceiving that as a dynamic relationship rather than a fixed state. It is about what damages both God, and the soul, the *essential* self, embodied (and we are not to forget the embodied bit). With this in mind I find 'confession' and 'absolution', or 'forgiveness of sin' a more effective terminology to communicate what Christ in the Gospel, and therefore the Church, wants us to enact and receive.

But again, the issue is how do we identify sin? I have mentioned slightly disparagingly the sin-lists in the old Catholic manuals: they are often not the most useful implements for self-examination, any more than the sin-lists to which Paul defaults in his letters. So what else are we to use?

The key here, I think, is very similar to the key to reading scripture: look for the grand trajectory of grace rather than the minutiae of law, as both Our Lord and St Paul recommend. That's how we can

leaven the human flaws of scripture with the Gospel, and that's how we can leaven our lives with truth and love. It's about establishing a Gospel principle for reading and understanding the world, and acting within it.

Starting from the premise of the Gospel as grace and invitation, we could see sin as whatever opposes those things: that which undermines 'grace and invitation'. For it is very often about imbalances of power, or even coercion, behaviours and attitudes which serve acknowledged or unacknowledged grandiose ideas about one's self. It will often be about the imposition of my unreflective self on another, solely to my advantage and to defend what I can get, without regard for the other's needs or sensibilities. And of course you can expand that 'other' to include the Church, society as a whole or even creation.

One last thing. The Jews mostly saw sin as something *done*, rather than something thought or intended. That helps me. Our Lord, in equating hatred with murder and requiring us to examine our darker desires, did not intend to make us neurotically over-scrupulous. He wanted us to avoid the sin of considering ourselves better than other people merely because we *hadn't* acted on our bad impulse.

But the avoidance of sin, the resisting of evil, is often precisely the restraint of impulses for reasons of love, as shown by God in Christ. We might do well to recover that Jewish understanding, because it fits much better with the second aspiration of our question: 'whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord'. That requires action, or restraint, as well as a change of heart.

Repentance has to be *possible* and *achievable*, or we're stuck in that repeating pattern of unhelpfully grand resolutions followed by persistent and demoralising failure. Forgiveness rather than guilt is the goal of the Gospel!

100 YEARS AGO

The Vicar wrote:

And now I want to draw everybody's attention to the announcement about St George's Day. On feasts of obligation like the Epiphany and the Ascension, All Saints is packed to the doors. Is it too much to hope that it will be packed to the doors on St George's Day this year? There will be a Solemn High Mass, Procession and Sermon at 11am. An orchestra will accompany the Mass. The preacher will be the Revd C.E. Osborne, Rector of Wallsend. For the magnificent music Mr Vale has chosen, I refer our readers to the music list (*The Mass setting was Dvorak in D and the Offertory Anthem a setting of Psalm 150 by César Franck*). I hope a good many young people and children will come to this Mass, and that many who come will wear the roses of England. Earlier in the day there will have been a ceremony of local interest. Our Scouts, the IX Marylebone (the Duke of Newcastle's Own) will hear Mass at 8 and afterwards bring the colours, which have recently been presented to them, to be blessed at the high altar.

That Marylebone could support at least eleven scout troops in those days says something about the nature of the area in those days. There were also a good many more churches.

On Monday, March 22nd, the Lord Bishop instituted the Revd S Kirshbaum

Knight to the Vicarage of St Andrew's, Wells Street. Mr Webb, Mr Houldsworth and Mr Cumberledge were all kind friends and neighbours to All Saint, and we offer their successor a warm welcome to our neighbourhood. During the time I was at Pusey House I preached a good deal at St Andrew's, and anyone who has ever ministered there retains grateful memories of its singularly kind and gracious hospitality. We wish St Andrew's every blessing in the coming years.

In fact, St Andrew's was not to have that many years left in Wells Street. In the 1930's the parish was closed and All Saints took over its district, which is why our parish now extends as far East as Berners Street!

St Andrew's lives on because the building was dismantled and rebuilt in Kingsbury in north London, where it continues to this day.

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

TENEBRAE for MAUNDY THURSDAY
7.30pm A service of Psalms and Scripture readings with music by Viadana, Victoria, Anerio and Lasso

THURSDAY 2 APRIL MAUNDY THURSDAY

HIGH MASS of the LORD'S SUPPER with footwashing at 6.30pm

Introit: Nos autem
Setting: Kyrie & Gloria:
 Communion Service in E minor — Lloyd Webber;
 Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei: Missa de Angelis 116
Psalm: 116
Lessons: Exodus 12: 1 - 4, 11 - 14
 1 Corinthians 11: 23 - 26
Hymn: 304
Gospel: John 13: 1 - 17, 31b - 35
Preacher: The Vicar,
 Prebendary Alan Moses
Antiphons at the washing of feet:
 Mandatum novum;
 Postquam surrexit — plainsong;
 Ubi caritas — Duruffé
Motet: O sacrum convivium — Morales
Hymns: 284, 302
Post Communion Motet:
 Ave verum corpus — Byrd
At the procession to the Altar of Repose:
 268 (R)
At the Stripping of the Sanctuary: Psalm 22
Gospel of the Watch: Mark 14: 26 - end

FRIDAY 3 APRIL GOOD FRIDAY

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

Psalm: 22: 1 - 11
Lessons: Isaiah 52: 13 - 53: end
 Hebrews 10: 16 - 25

Hymn: 94
Gospel: The Passion
 according to St John
Preacher: The Vicar,
 Prebendary Alan Moses
At the Veneration:
 The Reproaches
 — Palestrina; 95
Liturgy of the Sacrament: 79 (Choir)
Hymns: 83, 97
Motet: Crucifixus — Lotti

SATURDAY 4 APRIL
HOLY SATURDAY
— EASTER EVE

HIGH MASS OF THE EASTER
VIGIL at 9pm

Setting: Missa Brevis — Kodály
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;
 Canticle of Moses;
 Isaiah 55: 1 - 11;
 Canticle Isaiah 12: 2 - 6;
 Ezekiel 36: 24 - 28;
 Psalm 42: 1 - 7

The Easter Alleluys
Hymn: 119
Gospel: Mark 16: 1 - 8
Preacher: The Vicar,
 Prebendary Alan Moses
At the Procession to the Font:
 Litany of Thanksgiving for
 the Resurrection (arr Kitchen)
Offertory Hymn: 116
Hymns: 519 (Choir), 102, 124
Voluntary: Toccata, Op 5 — Duruflé

● **SUNDAY 5 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
 1 Corinthians 15: 1 - 11
Hymn: 110 (v 3 Descant — Benson)
Gospel: John 20: 1 - 18
Preacher: Fr Michael Bowie
At the Procession to the Font: Litany of
 Thanksgiving for the
 Resurrection (arr Kitchen)
Motet: Ecce vicit Leo — Philips
Hymns: 111, 123, 120
Voluntary: Finale (Vivace) from
 Symphonie VI in G minor,
 Op 42 — Widor

FESTAL EVENSONG, TE DEUM
& BENEDICTION at 6pm

Psalm: 105
Lessons: Ezekiel 37: 1 - 14
 Luke 24: 13 - 35
Office Hymn: 101 (omit *)
Canticles: Magnificat: Service in E
 — Murrill;
 Nunc dimittis: Tone V
Anthem: Dum transisset Sabbatum
 — Taverner
Preacher: The Vicar,
 Prebendary Alan Moses
Hymn: 400 (T A&MR 401)
O Salutaris: French chant
Te Deum: Service in G — Sumsion

Tantum ergo: Henschel
Voluntary: Christ ist erstanden,
BWV 627 — Bach

● SUNDAY 12 APRIL SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 125
Introit: Quasi modo
Setting: Communion Service in E
— Darke

Psalm: 133
Lessons: Acts 24: 32 - 35
1 John 1: 1 - 2: 2

Hymn: 100 (omit *) (T 60 (ii))
Gospel: John 20: 19 - end
Creed: Credo III

Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Motet: Alleluia! I heard a voice
— Weelkes

Hymns: 113, 115, 173 (T 265)
Voluntary: Toccata — Jongen

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 600pm

Psalm: 143
Lessons: Isaiah 26: 1 - 9, 19
Luke 24: 1 - 12
Office Hymn: 101 (omit *)
Canticles: Service in D — Wood
Anthem: Haec dies — Byrd
Preacher: Fr Julian Browning

Hymn: 112
O Salutaris: Elgar (No 1)
Hymn: 108
Tantum ergo: de Séverac
Voluntary: Sicilienne, Op 5 — Duruflé

● SUNDAY 19 APRIL THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 103 (v 4 Descant — Caplin)
Introit: Misericordia
Setting: Missa Papæ Marcelli
— Palestrina

Psalm: 4
Lessons: Acts 3: 12 - 19
1 John 3: 1 - 7

Hymn: 254 (T 458)
Gospel: Luke 24: 36b - 48
Preacher: Fr Michael Bowie
Creed: (Palestrina)
Motet: My beloved spake
— Hadley

Hymns: 279 (T 182), 358 (ii), 104
Voluntary: Prelude and Fugue in F
minor, BWV 534 — Bach

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 6pm

Psalm: 142
Lessons: Deuteronomy 7: 7 - 13
Revelation 2: 1 - 11
Office Hymn: 101 (omit *)
Canticles: Service in C — Stanford
Anthem: Ye choirs of new Jerusalem
— Stanford

Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Hymn: 117
O Salutaris: Schumann
Hymn: 483
Tantum ergo: Bruckner
Voluntary: Revery, Op 66 No 2
— Parker

● SUNDAY 26 APRIL
FOURTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 106
Introit: Jubilate Deo
Setting: Missa Brevis in D — Mozart
Psalm: 23
Lessons: Acts 4: 5 - 12
 1 John 3: 16 - end
Hymn: 107
Gospel: John 10: 11 - 18
Preacher: The Right Reverend
 Allen Shin,
 Bishop Suffragan, New York
Creed: Credo IV (Choir)
Motet: Benedictus (The Short
 Service) — Gibbons
Hymns: 282, 463 (ii), 436
 (v 4 Descant — Blake)
Voluntary: Tanz-Toccata — Heiller

**CHORAL EVENSONG &
 BENEDICTION at 6pm**

Psalm: 81
Lessons: Exodus 16: 4 - 15
 Revelation 2: 12 - 17
Office Hymn: 101 (omit *)
Canticles: Service in F — Ireland
Anthem: Most glorious Lord of Lyfe
 — Lloyd Webber
Preacher: Father Michael Bowie
Hymn: 351
O Salutaris: Bach (No 1)
Hymn: 118
Tantum ergo: Bach (No 1)
Voluntary: Christ lag in Todesbanden,
 BWV 625 — Bach

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CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR APRIL 2015

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| 1 | Wednesday in Holy Week | |
| 2 | MAUNDY THURSDAY | |
| 3 | GOOD FRIDAY | |
| 4 | Easter Eve | |
| 5 | ✠ EASTER DAY | Our Parish and People |
| 6 | Monday in Easter Week | Thanksgiving for the Resurrection |
| 7 | Tuesday in Easter Week | Thanksgiving for the Resurrection |
| 8 | Wednesday in Easter Week | Thanksgiving for the Resurrection |
| 9 | Thursday in Easter Week | Thanksgiving for the Resurrection |
| 10 | Friday in Easter Week | Thanksgiving for the Resurrection |
| 11 | Saturday in Easter Week | Thanksgiving for the Resurrection |
| 12 | ✠ 2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER | Our Parish and People |
| 13 | | SPCK |
| 14 | | Diocese of Masasi |
| 15 | | The General Election |
| 16 | <i>Isabella Gilmore, deaconess, 1923</i> | Religious Communities |
| 17 | | Those in need |
| 18 | | Former Choristers |
| 19 | ✠ 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER | Our Parish and People |
| 20 | | Persecuted Christians |
| 21 | Anselm, abbot, archbishop, teacher of the | faith, 1109 |
| 22 | | The Archbishop of Canterbury |
| 23 | George, martyr, patron of England, c 304 | Deanery of St Marylebone |
| 24 | <i>Mellitus, bishop of London, 624, Seven Martyrs of the Melanesian Brotherhood</i> | The Church and people of England |
| 25 | Mark the Evangelist | Those in need |
| 26 | ✠ 4th SUNDAY OF EASTER | Biblical Scholars |
| 27 | <i>Christina Rossetti, poet, 1841</i> | Vocations Sunday |
| 28 | <i>Peter Chanel, missionary, martyr 1841</i> | Poets |
| 29 | Catherine of Siena, teacher of the faith, 1380 | Mission agencies |
| 30 | <i>Pandita Mary Ramabai, translator, 1922</i> | Spiritual writers |
| | | Unity |

