

All Saints Parish Paper

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MARCH 2015

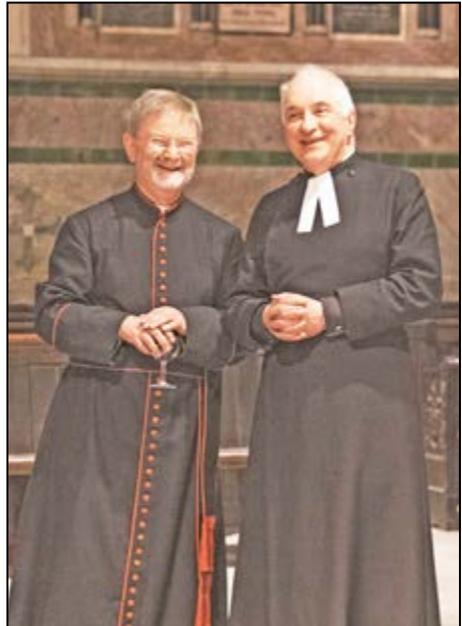
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VICAR'S LETTER

At the beginning of the year, prompted by the need to remedy the excesses of Christmas over-indulgence, we had "Dry January" a month of abstinence from alcohol to give abused livers a break. This month, a cancer charity is promoting a fund-raising exercise called "Chocolate-Free March". Last year's weight loss plan, the Five and Two Diet, has survived to help people try to slim another year.

These secular abstinence programmes have a familiar ring to those steeped in the Christian tradition. Many of us have been giving up chocolate and alcohol and other things during Lent for years. The Five and Two Diet sounds remarkably like the Christian tradition of fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays. We should not complain if the secular world borrows from spiritual wisdom. It might even provide a point of contact with many who might have little experience of anything else to do with the Church's life.

This interest in disciplines which have their roots in religious traditions should also prompt us to take this aspect of our heritage rather more seriously than we may have done in the past. There was a time when we were urged to "take up" rather than "give up" things for Lent. This was probably a healthy corrective to what could become a sour legalism, but pendulums can swing



The Vicar and the Archdeacon at St James, Sussex Gardens, 17 February 2015.

Photo: Andrew Prior

too far. I still remember a Lenten sermon preached here years ago by Fr Kevin Scully. He contrasted the half-hearted nature of much Christian Lenten discipline with the observance of the Ramadan fast by the Muslim families in his Bethnal Green parish.

At the beginning of Lent the Church calls us to the disciplines of fasting, prayer, study, almsgiving and good works. Ash

Wednesday and Good Friday are fast days and weekdays in Lent (except the feasts of the Annunciation and St Joseph) are days of abstinence. Sundays are not because they are feasts of the Resurrection — even in Lent.

Fasting and abstinence are related but not the same. Abstinence means giving up particular forms of food or drink, meat or alcohol, for example. In former times fish was usually eaten in place of meat. For many this would have meant salt fish. Nowadays, when fresh fish is widely available there seems little hardship or virtue in giving up meat only to eat grilled sea bass instead; even if it has been sustainably sourced.

Abstinence provides an opportunity to examine what we eat and drink. “We are”, as they say, “what we eat”. It is not that food and drink are bad in themselves; although some of the products of the food industry certainly are. Malnutrition for many in our world means not having enough to eat. For others it means eating and drinking either too much or the wrong things. Abstinence teaches us discrimination and moderation.

Fasting, in the strictest sense, is to give up food altogether. Some people do this for a period in solidarity with the world’s poor and hungry; those who do not know where the next meal is coming from and who often go to bed with empty stomachs. This kind of fasting is something which should only be done for a limited time and under spiritual and medical guidance.

In normal circumstances, the Church understands fasting to mean a considerable reduction in the amount of food we eat. Something many of us would benefit from. The short and long-term effects of over-indulgence in food and drink are enough to make us aware of the need for moderation.

Fasting and abstinence make us more conscious of what we consume. They remind us of our dependence on God and others for our daily bread. They bring to mind those who go hungry. The Church links them with almsgiving. The money we save by giving up things during Lent is not to be used to improve our bank balance — although reformed habits can have that effect — but to be given to those in need. The contents of our Lent boxes are a sacrament of our disciplines.

Many of us grew up with the discipline of fasting before receiving Communion — not too taxing if you went to the early Mass. The Roman Catholic Church, which tends to be more prescriptive about these matters than the Church of England, has reduced the eucharistic fast to one hour. I can remember a Roman Catholic relative checking her watch on a Sunday morning to see if it was not too late to have her breakfast. If you worship at High Mass in All Saints, we are at least an hour into the service before we get to communion.

All this may sound legalistic, and it can be so, but again it comes from a deep spiritual wisdom. Anyone who tries praying after a full meal will soon discover that it is very difficult to still mind and body and concentrate on prayer while the digestive processes are hard at work.

All these practices are means of grace rather than legal rules. They are to help us grow in the Christian life rather than amass spiritual points. They are to encourage a joyful rather than a doleful spirit. Feast and fast belong together.

Our Lord enjoyed a party, and whatever some puritan Christians may say, he was not a total abstainer. I am grateful to Fr Nicholas Wheeler, from our diocese who works in

the City of God in Rio de Janeiro, who in reporting his parish's celebration of Carnival quoted Archbishop Helder Camara's words on the subject:

"It's one of the few joys that remain for my people. I don't know what worries God more: the excesses of carnival or the pharisaism and lack of charity on the part of those who think themselves better or holier for not taking part."

Austin Farrer advised his hearers in a Lenten sermon, in the spirit of the Gospel for Ash Wednesday, that when they were guests at someone else's table they should eat what was put in front of them, rather than parading their piety by telling everyone that they could not eat what their hosts had prepared because they had given it up for Lent.

Dom Helder also famously remarked on how strange it was that the rich and powerful who applauded him for feeding the poor would call him a communist if he asked why they were poor.

That something is a means of grace suggests that we should use our wits and imagination in discerning what is right for us. There are other things which affect our ability to grow in the spiritual life. Serious self-examination might be revealing about how much time and energy we waste, how much we allow the constant distractions which surround us from media and advertising to undermine our discipleship. How much time do we spend watching television? How can I say that I don't have time to pray or go to church during the week if I find time to watch my favourite soap opera or chat show or crime series? What kind of thing do I watch?

Researchers tell us of the negative effects on our ability to concentrate or sleep, of

spending too much time on social media: constantly checking Email, Facebook, Twitter and others of which I have not even heard. Do we need to make a serious effort to abstain from some of this? We can use some of that time to build or mend non-virtual relationships; ones with family, friends, neighbours, colleagues.

In this season we are to examine ourselves, interrogate our consciences in the light of the Gospel. This is not to make us feel bad about ourselves, but to free us from the captivity of habits which enslave us. It is so that we can repent, that is "turn around," turn our lives around.

The NHS is instructing our GPs to advise us that we need to take 30 minutes of brisk exercise five times a week. This will help keep us healthy in the face of an epidemic of lifestyle-related diseases. That's certainly something I need to pay attention to now that winter is almost past.

If I may borrow from St Ignatius Loyola, Lent is about spiritual exercise. It involves making more time for being with Jesus in his prayer, fasting and temptation. It means making time for study and for good works. So it is a season for both giving up and taking up.

Yours in Christ,

Alan Moses

THE RESTORATION PROGRAMME

On 1st February, the Eve of Candlemas, the new lighting system was dedicated. This turned out to be rather in anticipation of its completion. The system awaits the arrival of bulbs and glasses for the hanging pendants on the chandeliers (more correctly, "electroliers") in the nave and the lights to be fitted on the choir screens.

When they have arrived and been fitted, the engineers will be able to proceed with the final adjustments of lighting and controls. The new control system will have a number of settings for different services and light conditions. There was enough of the new system working for us to be able to see something of the final result.

It was a great pleasure to welcome so many of those who have been working on the scheme, together with members of their families, and those who have given to support it. A very convivial party was held in the nave after the service. Photographs of the event were taken by Andrew Prior and are available on the All Saints website. The Vicar's sermon at the service can be found in this issue.

In the meantime, work continues on the re-wiring, installation of CCTV and the Fire Detection system and donations for the work also continue to come in. The CCTV will be monitored from the parish office and this will provide a greater degree of security for those using the church during the week and our volunteer Church Watchers. After expending so much time, effort and money on restoration, it would be a pity if the church burned down for want of a fire detection system.

It is wonderful to have the church open again. Already it feels as if things are beginning to return to normal, with people coming in to pray, to look, or sometimes just to sleep. Groups are already making bookings and arriving once more to see the church.

Professor Gordon Walkden, who teaches geology at the University of Aberdeen, accompanied by his wife Mary, spent a day with us on Shrove Tuesday, examining and photographing the various types of marble

and stone used by William Butterfield in the church. Professor Walkden hopes to be able to identify the different types, a good many of which seem to be from Derbyshire. He kindly gave an informal talk to a group of 15 attendees (including representatives from the Survey of London, English Heritage and the Victorian Society) on what had been discovered on this visit. We look forward to hearing more.

CHRISTIANS IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

A resolution proposed by our own Cedric Stephens and supported by our PCC was passed unanimously by the Deanery Synod.

“This Deanery Synod requests that London Diocesan Synod draw attention to the plight of our Christian brothers and sisters in Iraq and Syria and consider ways in which the Diocese might show solidarity with and practical support for them, both in their homelands and here.”

Here at All Saints, the Vicar took the opportunity of a visit by Bishop Geoffrey Rowell, who had recently visited Iraqi Christian communities on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to ask him to preach about this important topic. The original purpose of his visit was to hear the choir sing a setting of a eucharistic hymn he had written. We are grateful that he was willing at short notice to take on a more active rôle. His sermon appears in this issue.

MUSICAL NOTES

Congratulations on the arrival of another choir baby to **James Sherwood** and **Lucy** on the birth of **Albert Joseph**.

At Evensong on the Sunday before Lent we welcomed **Jennifer Snapes** back to her

place in the choir after her maternity leave.

Congratulations to **Paul Brough**, our former Director of Music, who has been appointed Director of Music at St Mary's, Bourne Street, after the tragically early death of **David Trendell**. He will be working for a while at least with **Fr Neil Bunker** who is looking after St Mary's during the vacancy there.

Small Choirs Festival

Fr Michael Bowie writes:

On Saturday 14 February I went to Bloomsbury Baptist Church to lead the concluding act of worship and preach at the Small Choirs Festival, at the invitation of the organiser, Philip Norman, whom many of us know as Lily Caplin's son-in-law (and who was one of the founders of the Festival several years ago). This is an extremely valuable piece of work, encouraging churches from a variety of denominations in a living tradition of authentic church music. At All Saints we are privileged to worship with the help of professional singers every Sunday, but all of us understand the vital importance of the work of musicians, both professional and amateur, in resourcing liturgical worship in thousands of churches in England and beyond. All opportunities for singers and organists to meet, get to know one another and make music together, are extremely valuable. The website and festival provide an accessible forum for doing this at little cost and with the advantage of a critical mass of singers which few of those present will ever see in their local churches.

I found it an impressive and enjoyable occasion. There were over 60 singers present and they rehearsed several good new pieces which were then performed at

the concluding act of worship in a manner which would have enhanced the liturgy of any church. At least as importantly everyone was obviously having a good time, as well as being devoted to the music of the church. We believe that the liturgy, and especially the Mass, 'makes' the Church, so everything we do must be the best we can offer. This festival helps more people to offer their best and it was a privilege to be invited to it. I am pleased to say that we shall host the 2016 festival here at All Saints.

Small Choirs, in this sense, are defined simply as choirs which have few or no men. You can find out more on the website — www.small-choirs.org.uk. Its main function is to make music for such choirs easily and cheaply available (both in printed form and also with audio downloads). The secondary function is to promote the festival. Philip Norman's email address is also on the website if you are interested in finding out more or offering support. And please add this endeavour to your prayers.

FRIENDS OF MASASI DIOCESE IN TANZANIA

The new Bishop of Masasi, James Almasi, and his wife Veronica will be visiting the UK for the first time in April this year. They will be in All Saints Parish Room on Tuesday 14 April to meet people and provide an update on Masasi Diocese.

Do come and meet them informally between 11am and 4pm. Lunchtime Mass at 1.10pm is followed by lunch and an illustrated talk. For catering purposes, please let Jean Castledine know if you plan to attend — Telephone: 020 8858 3508.

RIP

The funeral of **Frank Whitehill** was held at All Saints on Thursday 19 February. Frank came to worship at All Saints after the death of his wife. He had sung in the choir of Southwark Cathedral when Dr Harry Brama was the director of music there. For the past ten years or so, Frank has lived in a nursing home in Oxfordshire. He was a member of the Friends of All Saints.

Robert Streit has been a familiar face at All Saints, especially in more recent years. He died in St Mary's Hospital after a short illness on Sunday 8 February. He had received the last rites from Fr Alan the previous evening. His funeral will be held at All Saints on Thursday 5 March at 2.15pm. We extend our sympathy to his partner **Jack de Gruiter**, a long-standing member of All Saints.

FAREWELL TO ARCHDEACON BILL JACOB

Our Archdeacon, the Revd Dr William Jacob, retired at the end of February. He should have gone at the end of December, but the Bishop asked him to remain in office for an extra couple of months. The Area Deans organised a Farewell Eucharist at St James's, Paddington, on Shrove Tuesday at which Bishop Richard presided and preached.

The Lay Chair of the St Marylebone Deanery Synod, Penny Greenwood-Penny paid tribute on behalf of the laity.

Fr Alan, as the longest-serving Area

Dean in the archdeaconry, spoke on behalf of the clergy:

I want to refer to the Bishop's sermon — not this evening's but the one he preached when he commissioned Dr Jacob at Holy Trinity, Prince Consort Road, 18 years ago. He recalled how he was asked at his selection conference to choose his favourite cleric in literature. He chose one from Trollope — Anthony not Joanna — from Barchester. It was not the saintly Mr Harding, or the devout scholar Mr Arrabin, poor Mr Quiverful with his huge family, or Bishop Proudie, but the splendidly grand and ambitious Archdeacon Grantly. This does not seem to have gone down well with the selectors: not the kind of potential cleric being sought in those days.

It is difficult to image two archdeacons less alike in personality than Dr Jacob and Dr Grantly. Bill is reserved and undemonstrative — not something you could say about his Barchester equivalent. But apart from their office, they have in common a deep love for the Church of England. They both have a healthy suspicion of novelty and the quick-fix panacea. While Dr Jacob has been very supportive of new initiatives, he is convinced that the enduring heart of the Church's life and work is still in its parishes.

Bill came to us after a long spell as principal of a theological college — not a usual route to the archidiaconate. In those days the clergy wondered what someone with little parochial experience would be like. How he would get on with us and we with him?

Archdeacons can be seen as simply middle management figures — regional

managers keeping the local branches up to scratch. In the past they have been painted in much darker tones: bishop's spies — ecclesiastical secret policemen. Mediæval theologians doubted that they could get into heaven.

Well management has inevitably been part of Bill's task, and we are grateful for many occasions when he has helped and guided us through the maze of rules and regulations which govern the parishes we are responsible for.

But he has been much more than an administrator or ecclesiastical bureaucrat. He has been a pastor and a friend. One of the key factors, I think, has been that he has shared with us in the realities, good and not so good, of ministry in this complex and challenging City of Westminster. His knowledge of it has not just been that of someone who sits in an office and reads emails from "Yours disgusted.Com". At St Giles-in-the-Fields he has known first hand what we all experience. We have found that he has been there for us when we needed him.

As the Bishop has said, he has taken on the burden of safeguarding. Any priest who has had any acquaintance with this knows that this is work which exacts its toll. It probably needs someone with Bill's reserves of calm patience and perseverance to do it well.

Many of you know that Bill is no mean scholar, a church historian of some note. Amidst the endless cycle of meetings which is the lot of the modern archdeacon, he has been working on a book on the Church in Victorian London with its response to the challenges of a rapidly changing and

expanding city. We hope that retirement will allow him to complete it for our edification and encouragement.

There was a rumour that Bill was the model for a more modern fictional archdeacon: in the television series "Rev." I know this to be quite untrue because that authoritarian figure patrols his archdeaconry in a black cab. Bill always travels by public transport or on foot — which may be why he almost always arrives at meetings at the last minute or beyond.

There is one cleric from Barchester Towers I have not mentioned: Mr Slope. That ambitious schemer had to leave Barchester when his plans came to naught. But all was not lost. Trollope tells us that he became the Minister of a proprietary chapel in St Marylebone and married a rich widow.

Bill, some of us must have tried your patience from time to time, but I hope we have not driven you to apoplexy as Mr Slope did Dr Grantly. If we have, we ask your forgiveness.

We thank you for all you have done for us and been to us.

We wish you a long, and happy, and active and fruitful retirement.

Unlike those mediæval theologians we believe that the "grace of salvation" we sang of in the final hymn extends even to archdeacons. So, as you go off to your retirement south of the river, pray for us as we will for you, that we may merrily meet in heaven.

Our own Andrew Prior was the official photographer for the occasion, and one of his pictures appears in this issue (page 1). Others will be on the diocesan website.

St Cyprian's Clarence Gate

Francis Holland School —
Charity Choral Concert
in aid of St Cyprian's Church

Monday 30 March 2015, 6.30pm

Music by Handel, Haydn, Parry & Rutter,
including Handel's Zadok the Priest

Tickets £10/Under 18s Free

For tickets please contact Mrs Gurini
(sue.gurini@fhs-nw1.org.uk)

Feast of Title

The Annunciation Marble Arch

Wednesday 25 March, 7pm

High Mass & Procession

Preacher: Fr Paul Thomas,
Vicar of St James', Sussex Gardens

***Drinks reception after Mass.
All welcome.***

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

SERMON PREACHED BY THE VICAR ON THE EVE OF CANDLEMAS, 1 February, 2015, Evensong & Benediction with Dedication of the New Church Lighting Scheme

“The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts.”

A famous church is being restored. The grime of the ages is being cleaned from its walls and now there are colours — reds and greens and golds — there is even some black but it's paint not soot.

A visiting American architect who is not expecting this is appalled. **“It's**

scandalous”, “a desecration... like adding arms to the Venus de Milo,” he thunders.

Now — before our architect Colin Kerr blows a fuse — I'd better explain that the American visitor is not in an apoplectic rage about the restoration of All Saints, Margaret Street — but about that of Chartres, the iconic mediæval Gothic cathedral.

That American architect is not alone in thinking that mediæval or Victorian churches should be dark and gloomy, not bright and cheerful. But this was not the intention of the original Gothic builders who saw light as reflecting the being and glory of God. And when we had cleaned the interior of this church, removing generations of grime laid down by Victorian gas lighting — the cutting edge lighting technology of its time but one producing appalling amounts of filth, as well as the contributions of London smog and the smoke of candles and incense, and it was clearly not William Butterfield's either. He intended this to be a place vibrant with colour and light, not one sunk in sepulchral melancholy. In both churches, floating jewels of light now dance on cleaned stonework as sunlight plays through stained glass. But you have to come here on a bright sunlit morning to see them.

When we set about restoring this building, we decided to leave replacing a ghastly and inadequate lighting scheme until we had seen what the restored interior looked like, so that something sympathetic could be designed. The intention was to provide a variety of lighting options which would complement and enhance a building used not just on bright sunlit days but early in the morning and on dark winter evenings; both for grand services like this one and for quiet ones and times of private prayer.

As I said before the service, we still have some work to do, but this evening, the Eve of Candlemas, the feast of Presentation of Christ in the Temple, when he is recognised by the old priest Simeon as the “light of the nations,” seemed an

appropriate occasion to dedicate a new lighting system. So tonight we bless not candles as the church's custom has been on this feast, but these new lights. (Holy water and electricity don't go well together, so we'll confine ourselves to prayer.)

And as we bless, we give thanks to God for all that has made this work and what proceeded it possible:

- The skill and dedication of those who have designed and carried out the work — and it is good that some of them are with us this evening;
- The generosity of those who have given, and indeed are still giving, of their substance to fund it — and again a good many of them are here this evening and others are with us in the Spirit.

On a number of occasions over recent months, people have said to me, nothing much seems to be going on. We have had a long spell with temporary lighting. The services of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany are full of passages about light and darkness:

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.”

“The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.”

“Arise, shine, for your light has come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.”

“And God said, ‘Let there be light’, and there was light.”

Well there were times when it seemed that we were not getting much light for our

money up here: just a temporary string of light bulbs on the scaffolding. But below decks, in the engine room so to speak, a great deal was being done. We could not just tack a new lighting scheme on to antiquated and dangerous wiring, so everything had to be replaced. Otherwise all our efforts might go up in smoke one day. Almost the last things to be installed were fittings and lights themselves. In the language of the Catechism, they are the “outward and visible sign” of a work hidden but real.

And what is true of a lighting scheme is true also of the life of this church. We are not just conserving a piece of architecture, however interesting and significant. This is a working church not a tourist attraction.

Each morning, when electricians or lighting engineers, scaffolders or conservators have arrived, they have found us at our work; for our day begins when many of those who work around us are on their way to work. The foundation of all our work is prayer. Its guiding principle is the Gospel. Its energy source is the Holy Spirit. Its wiring is the life of word and sacrament. We are to be a community of people who seek to live our common life in the light of Christ the light of the world, on the pattern of Jesus Christ and the self-giving love which is the very being of God.

From the beginning of this restoration programme, we have said that we are not doing this just for ourselves but for all those people who live and work around us, or who look to this place for spiritual strength, and for those who come after us. We did not build this church, we inherited it from our forebears. It has been given to us in trust. Our responsibility is to hand it on to future generations. We are here not to

keep that light to ourselves, safely sheltered behind closed doors, hidden under a bushel basket, but set it on a lampstand where others can see it. So like the heavenly city in the book of Revelation, its doors must stand open to the world.

This church is set here in this earthly city to represent that heavenly city, the New Jerusalem; to give people a vision of that city and the hope for the world which it embodies.

On Friday afternoon, while we were checking and adjusting some of the light settings, two young women, one of them wearing a hijab, slipped into church. I went over to speak to them. They were from the language school across the street. They asked what was happening, so I explained what we were doing and a little about the church and what goes on here. It was the young Muslim woman who said how good it is that there is a building here where people can come to be quiet and pray and to be reminded of the meaning and purpose of life.

Over the years to come there will be many who will ask what this building means and what we are doing here. Our task will be to know that for ourselves and to be able to explain it and share it with them.

“The latter splendour of this house will be greater than the former.” Those words from Haggai about the restored temple in Jerusalem which I borrowed as the motto of our restoration programme, will come true not just because we have cleaned the interior and installed new lighting, but because it and those who serve and worship here shine with the light of Jesus Christ.

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 10 March

Rethinking Disability

Roy McCloughly, National Disability Advisor to the Church of England

Despite changes in legislation and increased awareness of human rights, disabled people frequently find themselves isolated and marginalised.

Why is this?

Tuesday 14 April

The Church, Usury and Redemption

Tuesday 12 May

Faith and Poverty in Diverse Britain

Tuesday 9 June

Homelessness and the 3 Faces of Poverty

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

*Starting at **7.30pm***

Admission is free and all are welcome!

'HE PITCHED HIS TENT AMONG US'

SERMON PREACHED BY BISHOP GEOFFREY ROWELL, HIGH MASS, SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT, 2015

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us... and we beheld his glory.”

(John 1: 14)

Here is the heart of our Christian faith. Here is the reality of the God whom we worship and adore. Here is the God who, as the Lady

Julian of Norwich powerfully says, ‘comes down to the lowest part of our need’. The Mighty Lord, the Creator of the vastness of the universe, does not stand aside from it, but becomes *flesh*, the very stuff of our bodyliness, and *dwells* among us. Yet St

John's Greek for 'dwelling among us' is not the word, as in the Fourth Gospel it so often is, in speaking of this identification, for making his home amongst us; it is a word *eskeenos* related to *skeenos* which means a tent or a tabernacle. 'He pitched his tent among us', with all the echoes of the tent of meeting, the tabernacle in the wilderness, where God was with his people in their wanderings and journeyings through the harshness of the desert, and which was the tent where his presence was known and his glory revealed.

At the beginning of December I went, on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury, for a few days to the north of Iraq, to Kurdistan, first to Erbil, the Kurdish capital, and then a three-hour journey to Dohuk. I went to see and know at first-hand the situation of the many thousands displaced by the forces of the Islamic State, which in August last year over-ran Mosul, Iraq's second city, and then swept across the Nineveh plain, with its many Christian villages. In one camp, in the grounds of Mar Elias Church, they were putting up their Christmas crib. It was in a tent, a tent like those which had been the shelter for families who had had to flee from their homes, their culture, their churches. As they put up the tent, and placed the nativity figures in it, of Mary, Joseph and the Christ Child, with the shepherds and the angels, it was indeed a reminder of the reality of the Incarnation: God chose to come down into our midst — *he pitched his tent among us*.

The advance of ISIS forces, with their distorted fanatical interpretation of Islam, and appalling associated brutality, echoes the invasion of the Mongols centuries earlier, which likewise had devastating consequences for the Christian population of what is now Iraq. Christians and Christianity in the Middle East are under

threat as never before. They find themselves ground so often between upper and nether millstones — between the conflict between Sunni and Shia, or between Israel and Palestine.

I first went to Syria as an undergraduate many years ago. In Aleppo, now sadly a bombed and ravaged place, there were thriving Christian communities. I remember being entertained by the Syrian Catholic Archbishop who was about to go to the Second Vatican Council, and talked about his hopes, whilst serving myself and the fellow theological student with whom I was travelling excellent ice-cream. Yet the next day there was a *coup d'etat*, two days confined to our hotel, and then a bus journey to Damascus with eleven checks by irregulars with machine guns before we arrived. The Ba'ath regime of the Assads, with an avowedly secular ideology, strangely gave a greater freedom to the Christian communities. Being part of the visits by Archbishops George Carey and Rowan Williams, I remember meetings with both Hafez Assad and his son Bashar — on both occasions as we talked about the Middle East we agreed that if religion was part of the problem of the Middle East it was also part of the solution. Later still, leading a pilgrimage to Syria when it was still possible, we were warmly welcomed by Archbishop Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim in Aleppo — I helped him distribute school prizes — a gentle and courageous pastor, who was kidnapped with a fellow-bishop over a year ago and nothing has been heard of him since.

This year is the centenary of the Armenian genocide of 1915. The vast numbers who died (Syrian Christians as well as Armenian) will be canonised as martyrs in April of this year, with commemorative events in

July and September. In Deir-ez-Zor on the Euphrates there is — or rather was — a shrine to the Armenian martyrs, with their remains preserved in glass niches in the narthex. This has been razed to the ground by the ISIS forces — as have ancient churches and shrines in Mosul and elsewhere in a deliberate attempt to eliminate the memory of Christian communities, just as in Eastern Turkey you have to search hard to find ruins of Armenian and Georgian churches, and only recently has the great monastery of Sumela — in ruins since the expulsion of the Greeks in the 1920s — high up in the Pontic Alps, featured on tourist itineraries.

The exodus of Christians from the Middle East — including the Holy Land — is understandable but deeply troubling and concerning. It is some years since Archbishop George Carey warned that all that would be left for pilgrims to the Holy Land would be the equivalent of a Disney theme park. Of course the West needs to offer asylum in the direst of straits, but the message from my visit to Kurdistan was quite clear: we want to return to our homes, with internationally guaranteed protection. Living in portakabins and tents, with children with little prospect of serious education, is only sustainable as a temporary solution, marvellous as is so much of the work that I saw.

In Egypt, the country with the largest Christian community, the Copts are relieved that the Morsi Muslim Brotherhood government is gone, and they seek ways to flourish. There are often good relations with the great Muslim centre of the Azhar, as there were also in Syria, where on Archbishop Rowan's visit the Christian community entertained the leaders of the Muslim community to the *iftar* meal which broke the Ramadan fast on one day, and

the Grand Mufti and the Muslim leaders reciprocated on the next. The monastic revival in Egypt continues powerfully. I spent two months in the monastery of St Macarius in 1979, and was welcomed back as a great friend in October last year, following the ecumenical meeting in Cairo where Anglicans and Oriental Orthodox Christians signed an historic agreement on the nature of Christ. We have a long history of ecumenical relations which should not be forgotten. If you want to read one particular account of Tractarian clergy and the Sisters of Bethany living in south-east Turkey and western Iran, J.F. Coakley's *The Church of England and the Church of the East* gives a detailed and vivid picture. Our historic ecumenical links are particularly important at this time of crisis in the Middle East, and when Western governments too easily take refuge in the view that religion is a private matter. (And note how much reporting there was about Yazidis — and rightly — and how little in comparison about Christians, at the time when both were victims of ISIS violence.)

Let us never forget that our Christian faith is in its roots an Eastern religion. We have been shaped by our Jewish heritage, but also by the Hellenism of the Eastern Mediterranean, and by the continuing Semitic traditions of the Syriac churches, and the monastic tradition which sprang from both Egypt and Syria. Anthony of Egypt, the first monk, has a powerful saying: 'Your life and your death are with your neighbour.' From the same monastic tradition comes the reminder of Evagrius — 'the one who prays is a theologian, and a theologian is one who prays'. The deep and fundamental link between prayer and theology, which was at the heart of the Oxford Movement goes back to the same concern in the deserts of Egypt and Syria.

This week Archbishop Warda from Erbil will address the General Synod and meet with parliamentarians — a visit to remind us of the urgent needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ, which call us to a courageous compassion, of showing that they are not forgotten, of ministering to their urgent needs, and of pressing government for the policies and action which can bring relief. Isaac of Nineveh, one of the great saints of Iraq, wrote of the merciful heart of true compassion embracing the whole of creation.

What is a merciful heart? It is the heart burning for the sake of all creation, for men, for birds, for animals, for demons, and for every created thing; and by the recollection of them the eyes of a merciful man pour forth abundant tears. By the strong and vehement mercy which grips his heart and by his great compassion, his heart is humbled, and he cannot bear to see any injury or slight sorrow in creation.

The same burning compassion leads to continual prayer ‘even for irrational beasts, for the enemies of the truth, and for those who harm him, that they may be protected and receive mercy’.

The overflowing of compassion in this merciful heart of all-embracing love, is rooted in the heart of God himself, who in that love chose to pitch his tent amongst us, entering into our human condition and knowing it from the inside to the point of death. In that self-giving love we behold his glory, and, as St John goes on to say, *of his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace*. It is out of that fullness that we are called to be disciples of Christ, and to live out that love in prayer and care and concern for our fellow Christians in need, in the Middle East and throughout the world.

100 YEARS AGO

The Vicar wrote:

“We have had the pleasure of welcoming back three sons of All Saints who have been wounded in or invalided from the firing line. Mr Gordon Hayward still carries his shrapnel, but it is hoped that with some months rest it will make itself at home and be forgotten. Mr J.F. Ladell, my second Senior Chorister, was wounded as he stood in the ranks of the London Scottish preparing for the famous charge. Mr Ladell had a series of remarkable escapes, time after time his uniform had been pierced and the men around him killed. His wound was cured at Rouen and he returned to the front where he got severe frost-bite from which he still suffers, this is hardly to be wondered at as he would fall asleep with his feet buried in mud and find in the morning that they had been frozen in hard! Mr Hugh Shephard is also suffering from frost-bite. He is the first of our soldiers to reappear in the sanctuary after enduring some of the hardships of this campaign. We receive cheery letters from Mr Harold Williamson, who is now in the firing line. His first turn in the fire trench he thought rather dull “except that I got my coat torn by a piece of shrapnel”. Four of the five big boys of the choir when I first came are in the army. Two others have tried to join but have been told by the authorities that they must wait till they are a bit older.”

He also recorded a courageous death nearer home, of George Stephens, one of the boys cared for in the All Saints’ Boys’ Home.

“George Stephens was prepared for Confirmation in the December of 1913. At that time he was very ill, and we scarcely thought he could get into church, but he

begged that he might go, so he was carried in and placed in a chair just outside the chancel steps. He insisted that he could walk up with the other candidates and knelt in front of the Bishop. He was too ill to go to church for the First Communion, but it was brought to him, and this continued to be done until the following Easter when he seemed much better and went to church, and this he kept up until a short time before he died... On Festivals he would go in for the 11 o'clock Mass, and always seemed to love doing so, although he was too feeble to kneel much, sometimes only doing so at the elevation.

“We tried sending him to Margate for open-air treatment, which seemed to do him some good, but the war brought this to an end, as the home was closed to be used for troops, and he came on to us at Herne Bay, where we were spending the school summer holidays. We shall all look back on those days with pleasure; he was so happy at being with us, and he seemed so bright, we thought the disease must have been arrested and he would live to grow up... The end came very gradually; each day he seemed able to do less, and just before Christmas he took to his bed. He received Extreme Unction on Christmas Eve, and had his last Communion carried from the church after Midnight Mass. He lived exactly a month after that; but there was constant sickness and he was unable to receive Communion again. He was a very quietly devotional boy, and only those who knew him well understood what depth there was in the child. His affection for Fr Shedden was always very great and deep. He used, especially those last four weeks, to watch for his coming in at night to say his prayers and give him his blessing, and nothing ever quieted and gave him rest in the same way.

“On Sunday 24th January he changed very suddenly and said: “Send for Father Shedden; I want him”. We had to wait for the High Mass to be over, and directly the Angelus finished, he said: “Send now”. He rallied that afternoon, and we thought he might last some days; but the great change came that night. He was clearly conscious almost it to the last and really went to sleep like a tired child. All through his illness there was perfect patience. He must have suffered much, as his tuberculous condition caused bad abscesses but he never complained, only sometimes saying he felt tired. We laid his body in Brookwood Cemetery, in the St Alban’s ground... Fr Shedden sang the Mass, assisted by Fr Hodgson, who, a year ago, had carried George into church for his Confirmation.”

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

● SUNDAY 1 MARCH SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

HIGH MASS at 11am

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| <i>Hymn:</i> | 507 |
| <i>Introit:</i> | Reminiscere |
| <i>Setting:</i> | Missa ‘Sæculorum Amen’
— Guerrero |
| <i>Psalm:</i> | 22: 23 - end |
| <i>Lessons:</i> | Genesis 17: 1 - 7; 15 - 16
Romans 4: 13 - end |
| <i>Hymn:</i> | 64 |
| <i>Gospel:</i> | Mark 8: 31 - end |
| <i>Preacher:</i> | The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses |

Creed: Guerrero
Anthem: A Litany
(Drop, drop, slow tears)
— Timothy Byram-Wigfield
Hymns: 72, 302, 148
(omit v 2, 3 and 4)

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 6.00pm

Psalm: 135
Lessons: Genesis 12: 1 - 9
Hebrews 11: 1 - 3, 8 - 16
Office Hymn: 60
Canticles: The Short Service
— Weelkes
Anthem: Ach, arme Welt — Brahms
Preacher: Fr Michael Bowie
Hymn: 73 (i)
O Salutaris: 94
Hymn: 70 (i)
Tantum ergo: 295

● SUNDAY 8 MARCH THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

HIGH MASS at 11am

Entrance Hymn: 507
Introit: Oculi mei
Setting: Missa 'Simile est regnum
cælorum' — Victoria
Psalm: 19
Lessons: Exodus 20: 1 - 17
I Corinthians 1: 18 - 25
Hymn: 379
Gospel: John 2: 13 - 22
Preacher: Fr Julian Browning
Creed: Credo II
Anthem: O Lord, in thy wrath rebuke
me not — Gibbons
Hymns: 87 (T 486), 464, 76

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 6.00pm

Psalms: 11, 12
Lessons: Exodus 5: 1 - 6: 1
Philippians 3: 4b - 14
Office Hymn: 60
Canticles: The Short Service
— Ayleward
Anthem: Versa est in luctum — Lobo
Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Hymn: 392
O Salutaris: 493
Hymn: 294
Tantum ergo: 470

● SUNDAY 15 MARCH FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (Mothering Sunday)

HIGH MASS at 11am

Entrance Hymn: 507
Introit: Lætare
Setting: Mass in G — Schubert
Psalm: 107
Lessons: Numbers 21: 4 - 9
Ephesians 2: 1 - 10
Hymn: 439 (T 346)
Gospel: John 3: 14 - 21
Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Creed: Schubert
Anthem: Ave Virgo sanctissima
— Guerrero
Hymns: 276 (ii), 384 (v 4 Descant
— Caplin), 413
Voluntary: Prelude and Fugue in
D minor, BWV 539 — Bach

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 6pm

Psalms: 13, 14

Lessons: Exodus 6: 2 - 13
 Romans 5: 1 - 11
Office Hymn: 60
Canticles: Service in A flat
 — Harwood
Anthem: Ave Maria — Mendelssohn
Preacher: Fr Michael Bowie
Hymn: 368
O Salutaris: Caplin (No 1)
Hymn: 225 (i)
Tantum ergo: Caplin (No 1)
Voluntary: Voluntary in A minor
 — Stanley

● **SUNDAY 22 MARCH**
FIFTH SUNDAY
OF LENT
(Passiontide begins)

HIGH MASS at 11am

Entrance Hymn: 507
Introit: Judica me
Setting: Mass for five voices
 — Byrd
Psalm: 51: 1 - 13
Lessons: Jeremiah 31: 31 - 34
 Hebrews 5: 5 - 10
Hymn: 84
Gospel: John 12: 20 - 33
Preacher: Fr Michael Bowie
Creed: Merbecke
Anthem: Remember not, Lord, our
 offences — Purcell
Hymns: 67, 91, 420

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

● **SUNDAY 29 MARCH**
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: Mark 11: 1 - 11
Blessing of Palms: Pueri Hebræorum
 — Palestrina
Processional Hymns: 509, 511, 641
 (Lift high the Cross)
Introit: Domine, ne longe
Setting: Mass in B flat
 — Rachmaninov
Psalm: 31: 9 - 16
Lessons: Isaiah 50: 4 - 9a
 Philippians 2: 5 - 11
Hymn: 332
Gospel: The Passion according
 to St Mark
Preacher: The Vicar,
 Prebendary Alan Moses
Anthem: O Saviour of the world
 — Goss
Hymns: 83, 86, 88

**CHORAL EVENSONG &
 BENEDICTION at 6pm**

Psalm: 69: 1 - 20
Lessons: Isaiah 5: 1 - 7
 Mark 12: 1 - 12
Office Hymn: 79
Canticles: Service in B flat
 — Rachmaninov
Anthem: O Saviour of the world
 — Ouseley
Preacher: Fr Julian Browning
Hymn: 90
O Salutaris: Rachmaninov
Hymn: 89 (i)
Tantum ergo: Rachmaninov

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.

Please contact **Dee Prior** in 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 and 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 Weekly Parish E-mail

This gives weekly news of events, people to pray for, and a short letter from the Vicar or Assistant Priest. You can subscribe through the All Saints website — see News and Events/Weekly Newsletter for directions about signing up.

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 — can be contacted via the Parish Office.

Parish Administrator:

Mrs Dee Prior

020 7636 1788

Email: astsmgtst@aol.com

Parish Officials

Churchwardens:

Mr John Forde 020 7592 9855

Mr Chris Self 020 7723 2938

PCC Secretary:

Jaron Lewis

asms.pccsecretary@outlook.com.

Phone messages to the Parish Office

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 Burling

c/o 020 7636 1788

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

(Except bank holidays — 1.10pm Mass only)

Saturdays:

Morning Prayer at 7.30am

Low Mass at 8am and 6.30pm*

(* First Mass of Sunday)

Confessions 5.30pm.

Evening Prayer 6pm.

On major weekday feasts, High Mass is sung at 6.30pm

CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR MARCH 2015

1	✠ 2nd SUNDAY OF LENT	Our Parish and People
2	Chad, bishop & missionary, 672	Mission in England
3		Lent Appeal
4		Local workers
5		Unity
6		Those in need
7	Perpetua, Felicity & companions, martyrs, 203	Persecuted Christians
8	✠ 3rd SUNDAY OF LENT	Our Parish and People
9		University of Westminster
10		The homeless
11		Friends of All Saints
12		Unity
13		Those in need
14		Parish Retreat
15	✠ 4th SUNDAY OF LENT (Mothering Sunday)	Our Parish and People
16		London Diocesan Board of Schools
17	Patrick, bp, missionary, patron of Ireland, 460	Ireland
18	<i>Cyril, bishop & teacher of the faith, 386</i>	St Marylebone Healing and Counselling Centre
19	JOSEPH OF NAZARETH	Fathers
20	Cuthbert, bishop, missionary, 687	Those in need
21	Thomas Cranmer, archbishop, Reformation martyr, 1556	Renewal of worship
22	✠ 5th SUNDAY OF LENT (<i>Passiontide begins</i>)	Our Parish and People
23		All Saints Choir and Music Trust and Foundation
24	<i>Oscar Romero, archbishop, martyr, 1980</i>	Justice and Peace
25	THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD TO THE BVM	The Annunciation, Marble Arch
26	<i>Harriet Monsell, founder of Community of St John the Baptist</i>	Religious Communities
27		Those in need
28		Preparation for Holy Week
29	✠ PALM SUNDAY	Our Parish and People
30	Monday in Holy Week	Devotion to Our Lord
31	Tuesday in Holy Week	Inquirers



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