

All Saints Parish Paper

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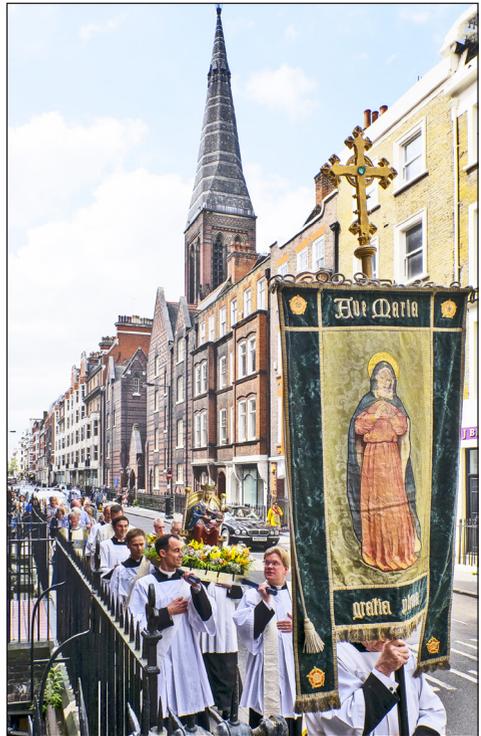
VICAR'S LETTER

In many parishes, the summer holiday period is a quiet time with most people away on holiday. All Saints does not have the same kind of dip in attendance and we maintain our regular round of worship. There is a blessed fallow period when church meetings stop and this allows some time for reflection. This summer seems to have been quite hectic in one way or another, but I have been giving some thought to the issues of Church growth and Church decline which are much talked about these days.

A recent issue of *The Church Times* had a spread of articles on the subject. The question was approached from different angles: Church decline is a complex issue and there is not likely to be a one-size-fits-all solution to the problem. Churches are affected by the same social trends which mean less people are willing to be involved in political and communal activities. A world of electronic communication can mean people are less able or willing to engage in face-to-face communication. Perhaps this goes some way to explaining why loneliness is one of our major problems.

Alongside more substantial articles, a number of people were asked to give tips for Church Growth. The Bishop of Willesden's list began with: **“Serve decent coffee: no more grotty instant in ancient teapots”**.

Well, we can say that we dealt with that



The Assumption procession from All Saints passing along Margaret Street

(Photo: Andrew Prior)

a long time ago! It's difficult to gather statistics, rather than just anecdotal evidence, on how many people came and stayed because of the improvement in the coffee. However, one parish priest who came to see me recently did say how impressed he had been by the catering and social life at All Saints. So those involved in this can take a bow; even if they did not know it, they are

promoters of Church growth!

“Get a properly trained welcome team — not a bunch of depressed-looking people who stand at the back poring over the hymn books.” As I live “over the shop” I don’t often come to church on a Sunday through the main door, although I often get to see the people on duty there. They don’t seem to fit Bishop Pete’s description but they might not be as effusive as in some places. In a church which keeps silence before services, we would not want them to be. Our building is quite intimate and noise carries. I was reminded of the importance of this recently when providing cover at another parish recently and hearing from the sacristy the level of chatter produced by a not very large congregation. But, first impressions are important and the ministry of those whom newcomers first encounter is vital.

Fr Dan Tyndall, the Vicar of St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol says: **“I’m often warned off being too friendly, and told that people want to be anonymous when they come to church. At least when you’ve overstepped the mark and trespassed into ‘personal space’ it is blindingly obvious. We know how many we have offended by being over-enthusiastic. We have no idea how many we offend by being over-cautious.”**

The Bishop of Willesden suggests having a **“back-door policy: keep a track on who’s new, visit them early, invite them to a welcome lunch. And if they don’t stick around, go back to them, and find out why they stopped coming.”**

In a city centre parish with many visitors and worshippers coming from all over the place, this is more easily said than done. That does not mean that we should not try

harder to keep in touch with people and try to find out why some people do not stay. We should not assume that it’s their fault if they don’t like the way things are at All Saints! The clergy work hard at the church gate on Sundays and at the door on weekdays, to speak to people, especially newcomers. Fr Neil Bunker told me the other day that he still remembers coming to a weekday Mass almost twenty years ago and being asked who he was and what he did — he was not in clerical dress and as some of you know his hairstyle is rather unconventional for a priest.

“Provide a menu of service options (it’s not new: it always used to be the 8 o’clock for the individualists, 10.30 for the families, and 6.30 Evensong for the depressives!). Consumerism means that we have to give people a plethora of choices, including café church, ambient worship, traditional.”

Like me, you may be wondering what “ambient worship” is. It is, I discovered, a trend in the world of charismatic-evangelical worship songs of having a gentle undercurrent of music which ushers people into the presence of God. I think I might prefer it to the heavily-amplified electronic music often found in such churches. This seems designed to deafen hearers and to make it impossible for them to sing together. We have our equivalent of ambient music in silence and the gentle playing of the organ before service. All Saints is certainly a building with “ambience” and one which Butterfield intended to give people a sense of the presence of God. We do provide a lot of services, so that those who cannot make the 11am Sunday ‘holy hour’ can still get to church. Perhaps our range of options is not as wide as it might be. However, I am not so keen to capitulate to consumer culture.

Being a Christian makes demands on us in the whole of life, so we should not pretend to people that they do not need to spend serious amounts of time in worship and prayer.

“Get outside your building. Mission is now centrifugal not centripetal. The old ‘come to church and discover the mystery’ stuff has less traction when people won’t darken your door. Do festivals, Mass in the park, acts of kindness in the community. Be known.” We don’t have a park, but we are trying to get out more. The day after I am writing this, we will be processing on Oxford Street amid the Saturday shoppers for the Feast of the Assumption. This and our Palm Sunday and Corpus Christi processions are occasional. We need to find other ways of engaging with the huge numbers of people who work or shop in our area. Posters at the gate do seem to draw more people in, but many still say, “I’ve worked around here for so many years and never knew this place was here”. Someone who works in Margaret Street stopped to ask me why we rang the bells so often each day. After I had explained, he then asked if we minded so many people eating their lunch in our courtyard. This rather took me by surprise but I suppose the question we should ask is how those who have got as far as the courtyard might be encouraged, and for some it does require courage, to make the next step through the church door.

“Have a decent website, properly maintained. Most people now search online for a church to attend.” We do and it seems to attract a good deal of attention. How much of this translates into new members of the congregation rather than being an aid to occasional worshippers who are visiting London is difficult to assess. We are trying to use the website and “social media,” as well as more old-fashioned means like this

Parish Paper, to communicate what we are about. This is new and challenging territory for many of us.

“Carpet your church if you can. And get decent chairs. Nobody goes to rough old pubs any more, and they don’t want to sit in a draughty building on wooden pews with moth-eaten cushions and kneelers embroidered at the time of the Battle of Waterloo. Unless, of course, you are mediæval and historic. In which case, play it up!” Well, we are Victorian Gothic Revival and we do play it up. Years ago, we replaced rickety and uncomfortable chairs and our kneelers aren’t embroidered. The church is warmer than it used to be: hard to believe, I know but true! When I first came to All Saints, for several months each year, the clergy would sit huddled in their cloaks for the morning meditation and office. I haven’t had to wear my cloak in church for years. There is still work to do: the PCC is looking at how we can improve the heating system. The main doors need attention and we hope this will reduce the draughts a bit. We have to live with the fact that Butterfield worked with limited space and there is no porch to act as a buffer between the cold outside and the warmth inside. The more people come to church, the more often the door gets opened and the more heat disappears. The convector heaters at the back of church need replacing: they have reached an age at which they no longer operate quietly. We are hoping to get this done before the coming winter. We have no intention of carpeting the church. It would destroy the acoustic — something Bishop Pete should know as a former archdeacon! Carpet also gets scruffy very quickly.

“Get rid of the dynasty of people who have run the church for the last 40 years. Persuade them to stand down. Honour their contribution. They stop

being part of the solution and become part of the problem when they block everything.” Such is the turnover of people in central London that we have relatively few people who have been here for forty years. However, in a church with a large turnover of people and many people who lead very busy lives, we need to be on the lookout for ways in which we can involve newer people so that the same people aren’t relied on for everything for too long. Are we so pessimistic about the power of the Holy Spirit, that we assume that anyone over a certain age cannot be converted to a sense of mission?

“Plant vigorously. Don’t be afraid to try stuff and fail. Plant on estates, in schools, in pubs and cafés. Partner with other churches who can help you with this.” In a tiny parish like ours, some of this does not apply. We don’t have estates or schools. We do have pubs and a new café seems to open every week. We have partnered with other churches — the Annunciation and St Cyprian’s — and this has borne fruit. There is a place, I think, for some kind of forum in which churches of our tradition can explore ways in which we might be more adventurous: trying stuff even if it might fail. One idea I have been mulling over with colleagues is late night church to match the late night shopping and eating which are now a feature of our area. This was not the case twenty years ago. That might be an opportunity for a different group of people to get involved. That we don’t know if it will work is not a reason for not trying something.

“Pray, Pray, Pray, Pray. And pray. Nothing will work unless it’s rooted in God and the life of the Spirit.” We do pray a lot at All Saints. There is a lot of liturgical prayer. It is good, too, to see more

people praying in church these days — and not just those who pop in to light a candle — although many do that in an unself-conscious way. Many of those who do are not members of the congregation but people who work in the area. We pray each morning for our three parishes, street by street. Do we need to pray in a more focused way for the mission of All Saints, how we might share the good news of Jesus Christ with those around us?

Yours in Christ,
Alan Moses

TWENTY YEARS IN MARGARET STREET

July twenty years ago saw the arrival of the Moses family at the Vicarage and the beginning of Fr Alan’s ministry at All Saints. To mark this occasion, there was wine in the courtyard after High Mass and one of Frances O’Neil’s custom-made cards as a memento of the occasion. Fr Julian’s sermon appears in this issue (*see page 6*). Fr Michael had already made kind comments in the Parish Email letter and Chris Self proposed a toast in thanksgiving. The Vicar spoke briefly about the twenty years and some of the people involved who were no longer with us before rain stopped play.

A NEW BISHOP

The Revd Dr Johan Dalman, who preached here some years ago, while he was an ecumenist at the headquarters of the Church of Sweden, has been appointed Bishop of Strängnäs (which has a large mediæval cathedral some 75 miles to the west of Stockholm). He will be consecrated in Uppsala Cathedral on 6th September when Colin Menzies from All Saints, an old friend, will be in the congregation.

In response to a congratulatory email from the Vicar, he wrote:

Dear Alan

Thanks for your encouraging and supportive words, and for your prayers — means a lot. How grateful I am for the times I've had the opportunity to worship in All Saints, Margaret Street, — a spiritual boost topped off with a sturdy G&T in the basement or a lovely meal in your vicarage! — Go there and be inspired, I tell my colleagues — a Gospel happily received in the traditionally catholic diocese of Strängnäs!

Yours truly Johan

PREACHING AWAY

Prebendaries of St Paul's take turns preaching at the cathedral on major saint's days. Fr Alan preached on the feast of St James the Apostle (25 July). The congregation was large and varied; made of people from all over the world. There were some familiar faces, including a former curate of All Saints, Archdeacon David Painter who was in London and decided to go to Mass at St Paul's, not knowing that the Vicar was preaching.

A breakdown in summer cover arrangements led to a more last minute trip to celebrate and preach at St Barnabas, Pimlico. The Sung Mass in this lovely church, which with All Saints was one of the early centres of the 19th century Catholic Revival in the Church of England, is at 9.30am, so thanks to the Victoria Line, Fr Alan was able to get back just in time for High Mass at All Saints, after apologizing to the St Barnabas folk for not being able to stay around to be sociable after Mass.

While on holiday in the United States, he will be preaching at St Mark's, Philadelphia and St Thomas's, New York.

COMMUNITY OF ST MARY — CHAMA CHA MARIAMU MTAKATIFU

David Craig writes:

It was in May 1908 that Bishop Frank Weston of Zanzibar asked the Community of the Holy Name in Malvern if they would train novices for a new community which he wished to found for work with the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA). The first Sisters of the Community of the Sacred Passion were professed in Zanzibar in 1911 for work among girls and women. They were to exert enormous influence on the development of education and spirituality until their final departure in 1991. One of their most significant achievements was firstly to encourage vocations from the local church (as early as 1929 the first aspirant Ester Mkwiza was clothed as a postulant) and then, as the number of aspirants increased, to oversee the establishment of an independent African order of nuns — Chama cha Mariamu Mtakatifu (CMM) Community of St Mary of Nazareth and Calvary. This was founded in 1946 to provide an increasingly varied ministry. It was originally based in the diocese of Masasi at Newala but quickly expanded until today the Community has some dozen houses with over a hundred nuns working mostly in impoverished areas.

In addition to commitment to primary education, they provide courses in personal development classes for girls and women, health and midwifery services and have been at the forefront of the church's programme to combat HIV and AIDs.

While the recent discovery of oil and gas in southern Tanzania has brought unanticipated wealth to the area, the majority

of Tanzanians exist by subsistence farming and most of the novices come from farming families and have only the basic primary education. The Community spends much time and money extending their education, enabling the sisters better to serve the CMM's aim to develop women and girls. While grants, traditionally from USPG, have provided educational scholarships for sisters to gain higher qualifications in education, medicine and development, the order — like the majority of Tanzania — earns its income from farming and the sisters combine their life of prayer with hard manual work. It would be hard to overestimate the contribution CMM has made to the increasingly vigorous life of the church in Tanzania, responding to new challenges and, at a time when so many religious orders are in decline, maintaining a vigorous novitiate. Post independence in

the 1960s, the Anglican Church in Africa underwent huge changes, responding to the challenges of Africanisation; negotiating the handover of mission educational and medical institutions to government departments, an indigenous order of sisters were to play a significant rôle in this transition.

Over the past weeks, we have been remembering Sister Martha in our intercessions. She is one of the senior nuns of the Tanzanian order — she was a consultant to USPG's tercentenary initiative Venture Fourth and acted as one of the chaplaincy team at the 2008 Lambeth Conference.

For further information The History of the Universities Mission to Central African vols II and III, (G. Blood) The Call of the Cloister, (Peter Anson) [www.African Sisters of St Mary \(CMM\)](http://www.AfricanSistersofStMary(CMM)).

SERMON PREACHED BY FATHER JULIAN BROWNING, TRINITY 8 (FATHER ALAN'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY AT ALL SAINTS)

Jesus took the loaves and when he had given thanks he distributed them to those who were seated. John 6: 11.

God lives in our souls. Christianity is an intimate business. We know that intimacy for real in Holy Communion. God comes to feed us, and that is what saves us. Doctrines and rituals don't save us. God saves us. It is a blasphemy to see the Eucharist as a membership sign, separating who's worthy to receive and those who don't make the grade. God is food for everyone. All we need is hunger, the hunger for a solution to the problems of human existence, and a willingness to surrender to the One who is that solution. St Augustine wrote: Christ is the bread awaiting hunger. Food makes us what we are. We don't just receive holy bread; we become it, God's incarnate body

in every human body, bread that is broken and shared. We are hungry to be filled, not only with bread, but with Jesus's presence. That's the miracle of the Eucharist.

And that's the miracle of the loaves and fishes, the feeding of the five thousand. For St John this miracle takes place just before Passover. It is a Passover meal. It is a Last Supper. Jesus takes the bread and gives thanks; he says a standard grace.

So what is the miracle, what unnerves the crowd? The miracle is Jesus Himself. Here is a man who knows that nothing is impossible with God. Now we might believe that, on and off. But it's a different matter to take the first step and risk your life to bring this Kingdom of God, the way God does things, before people's eyes. That's

what Jesus did. Jesus took the first step and let God do the rest.

Being a parish priest is never a soft option. Being Vicar of All Saints, Margaret Street, must be among the more challenging posts in the Church of England. And to serve as that for twenty years, as Father Alan has done, would be impossible in prospect, and is unbelievable in retrospect. Let's look at two different crowd scenes, two Galilee hillsides here. There is the external view, the building, the restoration of this place, a massive responsibility shared with the church wardens and the church council. But there is also the internal landscape, the responsibility for souls, the feeding of the multitudes, and that has its own challenge for any parish priest. (I'm setting to one side of course all the pastoral and administrative emergencies of daily ministry which arise.) The challenge is that you don't see the result of your labours. It's not a factory or office where you see a product. You must know from your own attempts at spiritual renewal that planning doesn't help much. Renewal, revival, closeness to God, cannot be managed into existence. God's grace works according to His plan, not ours. So with the Church. It can't be managed into success. All we can do is what Jesus did on that hillside; take the loaves and bless them; take the first step and let God do the rest.

Now to do that every day for twenty years is impossible without support, and we must remember with gratitude that Teresa and the family have also lived and worked here for twenty years. The job is also impossible without a clear view of Jesus in that crowd beside the Sea of Galilee, and what he was doing. Jesus's task was Communion. Human beings can share in God's generosity; communion awakens in each of us a divine energy, love without limit. It is not the job

of a vicar to keep everybody happy. Just as well, I hear you say, with people as contrary as other churches might say we are. But it is necessary to keep everyone together, because there's no Communion on our own. The priestly task is communion, in every possible sense. And that is what Alan has given us, day in, day out, for twenty years.

Now in this church, because of the frequency of Mass, because of the business of our services, the intimacy of that moment of communion can be lost. Communion should never be rushed, never. It is the moment when God says to you, it is all right, it will be all right. I shall feed you, and I shall feed you with my whole life, which I have given up for you. You were right to follow Me to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, tired and hungry as you are.

Communion outside in the open air is somehow different from communion in a church. The last time I was privileged to distribute communion outside was among the crowds at Walsingham on the National Pilgrimage this year. Thousands of people: there were a number of communion stations around the Abbey grounds. People came and went. The choir sang something. The birds sang along too. The army cadets dawdled. People sat on the grass. In silence we gathered up the pieces that remained, that nothing might be lost. There was no rush. Nobody wanted to be somewhere else. Where God is, life begins. *"When we meet the living God in Christ... we know what life is"* [Benedict XVI]. What the world sees as unusual is for Christians business as usual. And that is what you, Alan, have given us over twenty years, business as usual, our place by the Sea of Galilee where God is to be found.

At the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the miracle of the loaves and fishes, the crowd

knew that in the presence of Jesus they had all they needed. They sat down, they were fed. It's the same for us. When you come up for Communion, remember the comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly turn to him: Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. And give thanks for this Church and for all who work and worship here.

THE ASSUMPTION

After a week which had seen some spectacular downpours, Saturday 15 August dawned as promised by the weather forecasters we had been following anxiously, dry, sunny and fresh.

It was the perfect weather to be outdoors. This was just as well as we were having our first outdoor procession for the feast of the Assumption.

Congregations at Saturday High Masses can be a bit unpredictable. Many who come to evening Masses during the working week are on their way home. On a Saturday, most people have to come into town. However, in spite of it being at the height of the holiday season, there was a good congregation which included two ladies from the Lebanon. I assured them that we pray for Christians in the Middle East daily at All Saints. There was someone from Leicester who had told me he was coming when I spoke to him when preaching at the cathedral on St James's Day. After the service, I met a lady from Gloucester who had been shopping on Oxford Street and when she saw the procession passing she decided to join in. The person who had travelled the greatest distance, although not just to be at this service, was Paul Hunter, home for a short visit from Japan. He and Vince will be returning to London later this year.

Canon Dr Simon Jones of Merton College, Oxford, refreshed by a recent sabbatical, preached an excellent sermon which will be remembered for "Our Lady of the Scrapheap". (*This sermon will be published in the October Parish Paper.*) Fr Simon did not spend the whole of his sabbatical preparing the sermon. He is a member of the Church of England's liturgical commission and was working on a practical guide to the Initiation Rites: Baptism and Confirmation.

The Church of the Annunciation's statue of Our Lady of Walsingham had been "translated" to All Saints in Fr Michael's car the day before and rested on trestles by the Lady Altar, decorated with flowers by Jean Castledine. Cedric Stephens had organized stewards to guide us safely through the traffic. The tricky business of getting the congregation out into the street quickly has now been perfected. A group of stalwarts had been recruited to assist with carrying Our Lady during the procession. They were reinforced by some young clergy from other parishes who had joined us for the day. The brass band and drum have made a great contribution to our singing. Members of the congregation handed out leaflets explaining who we were and what we were doing. We were photographed by more people than I could count, including groups of young Muslims whom I greeted with "Salaam aleikums" between singing "Ave Marias". Andrew Prior was busy taking photographs for us and some had been posted on social media by the end of the afternoon. I know that others are planning to send theirs to us.

Even in a church as practiced at these things as All Saints, services like this do not just happen: a huge amount of work beforehand, not least in the parish office, goes into making them a success.

While the congregation went home with a

spring in their step, choir, servers and clergy were not finished work. They were back on duty for the wedding Mass of Benedict Jacke and Rolari Segun.

So a day with two High Masses came to a happy end. I thought Fr Bowie was the “last man standing” as he was on duty for the normal Saturday evening round, but that honour went in the end to Mhairi Ellis who was leaving after setting up music for the next day as I came back from searching the church for a wallet lost by a wedding guest. There was no sign of the wallet, but I did find the chancel keys which had also gone missing.

AM

MHAIRI’S FAREWELL

Congregational singing at High Mass on Sunday 16 August was vigorous, even by the standards of All Saints. This was because a good number of former choristers were with us for Mhairi Ellis’s last Sunday in the Choir.

At the end of Mass, Fr Alan took as his text some words from a hymn: “Thirty years among us dwelling”. Mhairi, who knows her hymnbook from cover to cover, would recognize them as coming from the Passion-tide hymn *Pange lingua — Sing my tongue*, sung during the procession to the altar of repose on Maundy Thursday.

After thirty and more years of singing in the Choir, five directors of music and three Vicars, Mhairi is going on, not to suffering and death, but to a well-earned “sabbath rest,” and the opportunity to do other things.

The final hymn at Mass was “Sing praise to God who reigns above”. An optional verse was especially appropriate for the occasion: “Then all my gladsome way along

I sing aloud thy praises,
That men may hear the grateful song
My voice unwearied raises:
Be joyful in the Lord, my heart!
Both soul and body bear your part!”

Fr Alan spoke of Mhairi’s long years of devoted service in the Choir. This included not just singing but far more. As choir librarian, she has played a vital rôle in ensuring that the music to be sung was there when it was needed. As ‘choir fixer,’ she has often been the one who has organized ‘deps’ when needed to cover gaps in the Choir ranks. She served too for some years as the parish secretary and later on the PCC.

It had been a great delight to all her friends when, after she met Michael Adam on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, romance blossomed and they married. We hope that, freed from her duties at All Saints, she will be able to spend some more time with her husband.

As well as the bouquet which has become our customary gift to our “departing divas,” Fr Alan presented two other gifts. For one who has spent all those years doing what is known in the trade as “Sunday Opera,” there were theatre tokens, so that she and Michael can enjoy being in the audience. The second was a new honour, invented for the occasion: Life Membership of the All Saints Club and a certificate to prove it.

The Vicar then announced that there would be a dispensation from Paul’s strictures in the epistle about not being given to too much wine as Mhairi and Michael had kindly provided it for the occasion.

After a celebratory lunch at a local restaurant, the Choir returned to be reinforced by an even larger gathering of choristers of former years who had assembled for Evensong. Two of the

directors of music Mhairi has served with: Dr Harry Brama and Paul Brough were also in the congregation. Extra chairs had to be set out in the chancel to provide places for the choral reinforcements. After a rendition of Parry's setting of Milton's *Blest Pair of Sirens* worthy of a large choral society, Fr Alan explained to those who had turned up expecting a quiet summer Sunday Evensong, why this was not the case and invited the congregation to remain seated after the voluntary while a group photograph was taken. Then there would be refreshments and speeches. The "team photo" was taken with commendably brisk efficiency by Andrew Prior. When all were equipped with a glass of something to gladden the heart and refresh the voice, the Vicar called the congregation to order for the speeches.

The first was by our Director Music, Tim Byram-Wigfield, who spoke of Mhairi's enormous contribution to the life and work of the Choir, including helping him with the minutiae of anglo-catholic worship. He presented gifts on behalf of the Choir: a rosewood music stand — in symbol only as it will arrive at her home soon — a framed photograph by Andrew Prior of the chancel of All Saints and, reflecting Mhairi's librarianship and love of the musical history of All Saints, a copy of Richard Redhead's setting of the Prayer Book Psalter to Gregorian Chants as used at the Margaret Chapel and All Saints when he was organist here. A final gift will also materialize in the future: Martin Bruce, one of our former choristers, whose setting of *Ave verum* was sung at High Mass, and who was in the congregation, has been commissioned to write an anthem in Mhairi's honour. It will have a part for her, so she will have to come back and sing it!

Then it was Mhairi's turn — the text of her speech follows this article.

Speeches over, Fr Alan proposed a toast to "Mhairi" and then the party continued happily long into the evening, with tasty Kurdish canapés (*supplied by Della Murad at dellalondon1@gmail.com*) helping to blot the effects of the wine.

Mhairi writes:

I don't know how to thank all my colleagues and friends in the Choir, clergy and congregation of All Saints for all the kindnesses and warm wishes with which they and other friends from all round the world have surrounded me as I prepared to sing for the last time as a regular member of the Choir. And then what a cornucopia of splendid gifts — I was so touched by the thought and wit which had gone in to their selection and presentation. I can't wait to see and hear what Martin Bruce will write in response to his commission, and to have the chance perhaps to come back and sing it with the Choir.

The speech I gave after Evensong was only the second formal speech I had made in my life. Although I was determined that I would try my best to get across all the things which had been percolating in my head for some time, I was rather nervous, missed some bits out as I became worried about the length of it — and I understand some of it couldn't be heard very well at the back, so I'm pleased to have been asked to reproduce it here for you...

Fr Michael said in advance of the Vicar's recent celebration of his two decades of ministry here that Australians and Northerners have in common a dislike of any sort of fuss. Well, Scots don't much care for fuss either, and those who know me well

will know that I would much have preferred to slip away quietly after Evensong on some wet Sunday — but it quickly became apparent that this wasn't going to be allowed, so I'm afraid I seem to have gone rather to the other extreme!

I'm honoured to have been allowed to choose music for three weeks (one for each decade), and along with favourites from the mainstream repertoire have chosen to highlight the music of All Saints composers, following on from Fr Alan's choices for his anniversary celebration. This place seems to have inspired many of its musicians to compose for the building and for the Choir, and I hope you've enjoyed listening to their work, and that the work of our 'home' composers will stay firmly in the repertoire. Thanks to the Choir and organ department for indulging my choices and being prepared to put in extra work on some unfamiliar repertoire, and thanks to Tim for playing my all-time favourite piece of organ music, *Master Tallis's Testament* by Howells this morning, and suggesting that cheeky little number by Derek Bourgeois to send us all out with a smile tonight.

Fr Alan very kindly allowed me to name a favourite hymn — you may be surprised to know that it wasn't the one with the tune 'Michael' which we sang this evening! In fact it was *Sing praise to God who reigns above* with which we ended Mass, with Michael Fleming's wonderful tune '*Palace Green*' enhanced by the descant which Norman Caplin wrote for our wedding in 2008. [The Vicar has mentioned above the verse which has always particularly moved me, and which was the reason I particularly wanted to sing it on my last day.]

I was also allowed to select the readers for Mass this morning, and was invited to have a hand in the choice of flowers (what

a delightful coincidence that my favourite colour blue was on display for Our Lady, for whom as many of you know I have a particular fondness). I was even asked if I wanted to choose servers, but I stopped short of that — it would have been impossible to single any of them out as they're all lovely friends, although I did beg for a thurifer who would be merciful after his power so the Choir wouldn't be smoked out, and of course I insisted that the indefatigable Cedric should be in charge.

Service and loyalty may be old-fashioned concepts, but they are concepts still well to the fore in this place in all the hard work which goes on both before and behind the scenes in every department. I have been delighted to give over three decades of service and loyalty to this church — service which I trust has been mostly cheerful, although I do apologise to anyone who has been on the receiving end of the very occasional tantrum, and more frequent pedantry — all I have ever wanted is for things to be correct and to proceed in a seemly fashion!

As Fr Alan mentioned this morning, it's been my privilege to serve three Vicars (and through two interregna) and five Directors of Music, three of whom are here tonight, to work with some distinguished assistant organists, and with all the organ scholars who have gone on from here to great things.

It's wonderful that so many singers and friends have been able to come to today's services — as I've chosen to leave in August many people of course are away on leave, but have sent good wishes from various parts of the world. But wasn't that an amazing 'wall of sound' at Evensong? Many thanks to all the former choristers and friends who joined the Choir tonight — it's probably just

as well that the rest are on holiday or you would have been totally deafened!

Other people can't be here because they're in a better place. Of all the friends I've encountered here who have gone to glory over the years I would bring to mind two who are frequently in my thoughts — Nick Luff, our former assistant organist, who sadly died last year (and I hope the many fine organists here will not object if I describe Nick as the most sensitive accompanist I have ever worked with), and dear Norman Caplin, who with Lily and their family became my surrogate family when I was so far away from my own.

While tidying up in the Choir Room recently I came across a Parish Paper from 1999 in which the Vicar extolled 'the level of commitment, not only to music but to the church, which our choir members demonstrate', and this is still the case. When I was checking back through the list of singers who have been regular Choir members here during my time, in order to let them know I was finally leaving (and on my own two feet, rather than in a box, as some of them were expecting), I was amazed how short that list was — a reminder that singers stay in this Choir on average much longer than in most other professional London choirs. I am delighted to be able to hand over the Head Chorister's Cup to my esteemed colleague Ian Lyon, whose length of service is not far behind mine at a quarter of a century. The past couple of months have seen the break-up of our little corner of Cantoris with the departure of two sopranos who gave 12 and 15 years of service respectively — it's been a particular joy for me to sing behind, under and around the wonderful and versatile Amy and Louisa. Thanks to them and to all my other colleagues too many to name individually.

When I joined the Choir I was a post-graduate student new to London, and its youngest member. The fees were £6 per service, and there was a rehearsal on a Friday evening for which we were given £2 (which was of course immediately spent in the pub). None of the choristers, as far as I remember, made their living entirely from music, although the then Director of Music was extremely proud of the fact that all four of his sopranos (including me — does anyone here remember when I was a soprano?) had degrees in music. Now, as I leave, the fees are rather higher, Friday rehearsals are long gone, and currently a majority of the Choir make their livings from music: they sing in all the well-known professional chamber choirs and opera choruses, play in West End musical theatre, or have international solo careers. But they keep coming back loyally to sing here — often driving through the night after a concert to be here on a Sunday morning.

In addition to singing in the Choir, extra tasks in the way of musical administration seem to have come in my direction over the years. Tasks like looking after our ever-expanding music library, fixing singers, pointing psalms, translating texts and so on have multiplied to take up a good deal of time, and I'm glad to know that this administrative support to the Director of Music has now been recognised as a real job, for which the chorister who takes over from me is going to be paid.

I have given service on the PCC, the Events Committee, behind the Bar and in the Parish Office, and assisted in the restoration fund-raising efforts by bringing in various outside groups to perform concerts, and of course taking part in those four amazing Choir cabarets (it's not every choir that

can say that its repertoire stretches from Hildegard of Bingen to Take That!).

Shortly after I arrived, All Saints church celebrated its 125th anniversary. If you'd suggested then that I would still be here for its 150th I would have laughed in your face — but not only have I hung around long enough to witness that anniversary, but also seen the transformation from dingy smoke-darkened decoration to re-pristinated (to use Bishop Richard's expression) glory over the past few years, all supervised by the Vicar and masterminded to the finest detail by John Forde. (I can't mention Mr Forde without repeating his joke that I have been here so long that a Faculty would be required to have me removed, as with any other fixtures and fittings!) The very last items in the restoration scheme, the choir lights, have arrived this week but not yet been installed — so I had more than one reason for not being able to see the music in my final services today. Now we can see that restored colour and glorious light, this is once again a place where architecture, decoration, music, preaching and liturgy all combine into a perfect harmony and surely a foretaste of the next world.

Many of you have wondered what I am going to do next?

Well, I'm not going to stop singing. I do want a vocal rest, but after that it looks as if I may be having my London church career upside down — most singers test out various churches before settling on one to get involved with, but I was scooped straight up here as soon as I arrived in town, so didn't get the chance to 'dep around' first. I've been flattered by several churches saying they'll offer me work now they know I'm free, but I don't want to be a stranger

here — I hope I'll be allowed to come back and deputise here sometimes too. I also seem to have developed a parallel career as a singing nun: if you really do miss the sight of me you may be able to catch a glimpse when the next series of 'Call the Midwife' comes to your TVs at Christmas, and if you miss the sound of me there's still time to catch it in the national tour of *The Sound of Music*...

I am also looking forward to having the freedom to have the odd weekend away, and particularly to spending more time with my lovely and long-suffering husband. Tim mentioned in a recent Parish Paper the amount of time Michael spends sitting quietly in the Choir Room waiting for me to finish clearing away the day's music; I thank him for his patience, love and support, and I thank *you* all for making him so welcome in your midst. As well as giving helpful legal advice as a Trustee of the Foundation and the Choir and Music Trust, he's been making himself useful lately as a superb salesman of Choir CDs, and I hope that others will be able to carry on that task and send more examples of our music winging their way round the world.

That's quite enough about me. I wouldn't have stayed here so long if it hadn't been for all of *you* — my All Saints family. Among the wonderful friends I've encountered here are people who have given me several kinds of employment, who have solved legal and medical problems, the woman who made my wedding dress, the man who makes my jewellery, those who have been friends in various sorts of need, and those from whom I have learned many new things. Thank you All Saints — you've been fabulous!

100 YEARS AGO

It is said that the first casualty of war is truth. Fr Mackay addressed questions raised by the legend of the "Angels of Mons" who had supposedly intervened to support outnumbered British troops in the early days of the First World War. This legend began with a short story by Arthur Machen, a writer of gothic horror stories. It spoke of ghostly bowmen from Agincourt being summoned to the aid of the British. Although a work of fiction, this was widely believed to be a factual account. No amount of denials on Machen's part seem to have had any effect on the elaboration and spread of the tale. The ghostly bowmen became warrior angels. The story was reproduced in parish magazines and cited in sermons as a sign of divine support for the allied cause at a time when the atrocities committed by the German army in Belgium were becoming known.

Fr Mackay who wrote:

'I have been greatly interested in following the fortunes in the story of "The Angels at Mons". In the form in which we have got it — the tale told by "Miss M, the daughter of the well-known Canon M," — it is evidently a concoction. There is a journalistic turn about the phrase, "the well-known Canon M" which is quite fatal to the simplicity of the story. How tired I got of Miss M in May! Her tale reached me by post after post, and my scepticism grew apace. But I do not think the story is altogether based on Mr Machen's invention. Real spiritual experience has crystallized into these forms. In times of great stress and agony perceptions on the presence of the unseen awake in men, perceptions which they cannot analyze and which they clothe in conventional symbolic

shapes. I do not think a legion of angels was sent from heaven to help our men in the great retreat; but I do think that in the horror and agony of that time men became conscious, they did not know how, of another plane of existence and of its agencies, and that their impression, communicated from mind to mind, and then from mouth to mouth, have taken this commonplace and inadequate form.

'I am surprised that no first-hand evidence of these impressions has been forthcoming. Hardly any year of my life passes without good first-hand evidence of such experiences reaching me, evidence I am able to examine and cross-examine. The fact is that the majority have grown abnormally insensitive to impressions which ought to be received more generally, and which were received more generally when mankind was on a higher spiritual level than it is today. Mr Andrew Lang investigated multitudes of such tales, and I asked him once what conclusion he had arrived at. "There are people who see spooks," he said; "I won't say more than that, but that is certain, there are people who see spooks, and it is a very uncomfortable gift."

'Not always uncomfortable. The fact is that there seems to be goodness, frivolity and evil in the unseen world as there is goodness, frivolity and evil here. To attempt to get in touch with the unseen by means unhallowed by the Church is to commit mortal sin and to incur the greatest of all possible danger. But the experience St Paul describes in the twelfth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians was not an uncomfortable one. It can be matched again and again in the lives of saints, and I know several people who think themselves to be far from saints to whom a door has been opened and a vision vouchsafed.'

**LIVING WITH DEMENTIA:
AN EVENING ON DEMENTIA AND FAITH**

Tuesday 15 September, 7 - 9pm

at St Martin's Hall, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square

This is the second of a series on dementia: to explore the lived experience of dementia; to discover how the church can support those with dementia and their carers; to consider how dementia affects our understanding of what it means to be human.

With refreshments and opportunities for sharing and questions.

Chaired by Fr Neil Bunker, Mental Health Liaison Priest for Westminster, with Dr Sam Wells, Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Canon David Warbrick and Clive Wright (a member of All Saints, Margaret Street), and those working in the field.

Suggested donation £5 — All welcome.

*For more information contact: The Revd Katherine Hedderly
katherine.hedderly@smitf.org — 020 7766 1102*

**Sunday 13 September
at 7.15pm**

**Four-manual Harrison & Harrison
(1910)**

**Organ Recital
(following Benediction)**

**CHARLES ANDREWS,
Associate Director of Music,
All Saints**

**Programme includes pieces by Bach,
Pachelbel, Byrd, Lloyd Webber and
Rheinberger.**

***Retiring collection to support the
Choir and Music at All Saints
(suggested donation £4)***

**There will be one further organ
recital at All Saints in 2015:**

**22 November:
Timothy Byram-Wigfield,
Director of Music**

*Please find more organ recitals at
www.organrecitals.com.*

**SUNDAYS AND
SOLEMNITIES
MUSIC AND READINGS**

**● SUNDAY 6 SEPTEMBER
FOURTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER TRINITY**

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 415 (ii)
Introit: *Protector noster*
Setting: Cantus Missæ — Rheinberger

Psalm: 146
Readings: Isaiah 35: 4 - 7a
James 2: 1 - 10, 14 - 17

Hymn: 466
Gospel: Mark 7: 24 - end
Preacher: Father Julian Browning
Creed: (Rheinberger)
Anthem: Ave verum corpus — Elgar

Hymns: 323 (T 313), 283, 436
(v 4 Descant — Blake)
Voluntary: Aufschwung, Op 174,
No 3 — Rheinberger

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 6pm

Psalm: 119: 41 - 56
Lessons: Exodus 14: 5 - end
Matthew 6: 1 - 18
Office Hymn: 150 (R)
Canticles: Service in G — Howells
Anthem: Salve Regina — Howells
Preacher: Father Michael Bowie
Hymn: 468
O Salutaris: Fischer
Hymn: 442 (T 406)
Tantum ergo: Palestrina
Voluntary: Andantino (Suite No 1,
Op 51) — Vierne

SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

CHORAL EVENSONG at 3.30pm

Psalms: 24 and 25
Lessons: 1 Kings 8: 1 - 30
Acts 15: 36 - 16: 5
Office Hymn: 152
Canticles: Brewer in D
Anthem: Blessing, glory, wisdom and
thanks — Brewer
Hymn: 251
O Salutaris: Harry Bramma (No 2)
Hymn: 295
Tantum ergo: Harry Bramma (No 2)
Voluntary: Marche Heroïque — Brewer

● SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 439 (T 257)
Introit: *Inclina, Domine*
Setting: Missa 'Cruz fidelis'
— Vivanco
Psalm: 116: 1 - 8
Readings: Isaiah 50: 4 - 9a
James 3: 1 - 12
Hymn: 370 (T 456)
Gospel: Mark 8: 27 - end
Preacher: Father Michael Bowie
Creed: Credo IV
Anthem: Set me as a seal upon thy
heart — Walton
Hymns: 376, 290, 172 (T 443)
Voluntary: Sonata No 3 (1st movement)
— Mendelssohn

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION First Evensong of Holy Cross Day at 6pm

Psalm: 66
Lessons: Isaiah 52: 13 - end of 53
Ephesians 2: 11 - end
Office Hymn: 79
Canticles: Service in G — Sumsion
Anthem: O crux splendidior
— Philips
Preacher: Father Julian Browning
Hymn: Lift high the Cross
(NEH 641; omit *)
O Salutaris: Bortniansky, arr Caplin
Hymn: 95
Tantum ergo: Harwood, arr Caplin
Voluntary: Rhapsody No 1
in D flat major — Howells

● **SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER**
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER TRINITY

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 427
Introit: *Miserere mihi*
Setting: Missa Papæ Marcelli
— Palestrina
Psalm: 54
Readings: Wisdom of Solomon
1: 16 - 2: 1, 12 - 22
James 3: 13 - 4: 3, 7 - 8a
Hymn: 15
Gospel: Mark 9: 30 - 37
Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Creed: (Palestrina)
Anthem: *Sicut cervus* — Palestrina
Hymns: 273 (T 302), 464, 94
Voluntary: *Allegro maestoso*
(Symphonie No 3, Op 28)
— Vierne

**CHORAL EVENSONG &
BENEDICTION at 6pm**

Psalm: 34
Lessons: Isaiah 33: 13 - 17
Matthew 6: 19 - end
Office Hymn: 214
Canticles: *Service in F minor* — Gray
Anthem: *Os justi* — Bruckner
Preacher: Father Michael Bowie
Hymn: 189
O Salutaris: Timothy Byram-Wigfield
Hymn: 315
Tantum ergo: Timothy Byram-Wigfield
Voluntary: *Elegy* — Ireland,
arr Rowley

● **SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER**
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER TRINITY

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 433 (v 6 Descant—Caplin)
Introit: *Justus es, Domine*
Setting: Missa ‘*Simile est regnum*
cælorum’ — Lobo
Psalm: 19: 7 - end
Readings: Numbers 11: 4 - 6, 10 - 16
James 5: 13 - end
Hymn: 398 (T 395)
Gospel: Mark 9: 38 - end
Preacher: Father Julian Browning
Creed: Credo III
Anthem: *O sacrum convivium*
— Gabrieli
Hymns: 287, 306, 357
Voluntary: *Prelude and Fugue in C,*
BWV 545 — Bach

**CHORAL EVENSONG &
BENEDICTION at 6pm**

Psalms: 120, 121
Lessons: Exodus 24
Matthew 19: 1 - 8
Office Hymn: 150 (S)
Canticles: *Service in E flat (No 2)*
— Wood
Anthem: *O Lord, the maker of all*
thing — William Mundy
Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Hymn: 324
O Salutaris: Bach (No 1)
Hymn: 487 (T 447)
Tantum ergo: Bach (No 2)
Voluntary: *Salix* — Whitlock

**Information correct at the time of going
to press.**

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@gmail.com.

Honorary Assistant Priests:

The Revd Gerald Beauchamp

020 7258 0724

The Revd Julian Browning

020 7286 6034

Parish Administrator:

Dee Prior

020 7636 1788

Email: astsmgtst@aol.com

Parish Officials

Churchwardens:

John Forde 020 7592 9855

Chris Self 020 7723 2938

PCC Secretary:

John McWhinney

asms.pccsecretary@outlook.com.

Phone messages to the Parish Office

Hon Treasurer:

Patrick Hartley 020 7607 0060

Director of Music:

Timothy Byram-Wigfield

c/o 020 7636 1788

Associate Director of Music:

Charles Andrews 01580 240575

Electoral Roll Officer:

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 — 12 noon Mass only)

Saturdays:

Morning Prayer at 7.30am

Low Mass at **12 noon** 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 SEPTEMBER 2015

1	<i>Giles, hermit, 710</i>	Sant Egidio Community
2	<i>Martyrs of Papua New Guinea, 1901, 1942</i>	Papua New Guinea Church Partnership
3	Gregory the Great, bishop, teacher of the faith, 604	Unity
4	<i>Birinius, bishop, 650</i>	Those in need
5		The Children's Society
6	✠ TRINITY 14	Our parish and people
7		Refugees
8	The Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Thanksgiving for Our Lady
9	<i>Charles Fuge Lowder, priest, 1880</i>	Friends of All Saints
10		Unity
11		Those in need
12		Local government
13	✠ TRINITY 15	Our parish and people
14	Holy Cross Day	Thanksgiving for the Cross
15	Cyprian, bishop, martyr, 258	St Cyprian's, Clarence Gate
16	Ninian, bishop, 432	The Church in Scotland
17	Hildegard, abbess, visionary, 1179	Unity
18		Those in need
19	<i>Theodore, archbishop, 690</i>	The Archbishop of Canterbury
20	✠ TRINITY 16	Our parish and people
21	Matthew, apostle and evangelist	The spread of the Gospel
22		Schools
23	Ember Day	Vocations
24		Unity
25	Lancelot Andrewes, bishop, spiritual writer, 1626, Ember Day	Those in need
26	Ember Day (<i>Wilson Carlisle, founder of the Church Army</i>)	The Church Army
27	✠ TRINITY 17	Our parish and people
28		Local workers
29	Michael and All Angels	Thanksgiving for God's messengers
30	Jerome, translator, teacher of the faith, 420	Biblical scholars

