

Oremus

Westminster Cathedral Magazine



The Magi lead us to the worship of Christ, the Word made flesh, who has come among us.



WESTMINSTER
CATHEDRAL

Living as Signs of Hope

Fionn Shiner and Paulo Aido

Two Franciscan friars, the only remaining clergy in Idlib, Syria, have revealed details of their lives ministering in one of the last bastions of jihadist rule in the country, including the daily threat of being killed, tortured or attacked. Fr Firas Lutfi, Custodian of the Province of Saint Paul for the Franciscans of Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, said the friars were staying to help Christians suffering extreme persecution.

He notes that: 'Their suffering started a decade ago. When the war in Syria started raging in different areas of the country, militant groups took control of that region and proclaimed it an Islamic state. They confiscated the properties of the Christians, enforced the Islamic Shari'a law on all the non-Muslims,

took away their rights to move freely in their own villages and forced the women to wear the veil. They destroyed and prevented any apparent Christian symbols, like the crosses above the churches and the graveyards'. Fr Hanna Jallouf, 67, and Fr Luai Bsharat, 40, are serving 300 Christian families in the villages of Knayeh and Yacoubieh in Idlib province, which is close to Turkey's border with western Syria. The region is still controlled by international jihadist groups, including an offshoot of Daesh (ISIS).

Father Lutfi reports: 'Those extremists have often persecuted, attacked, beaten, tortured and even murdered some of our brothers and sisters, most notably among them Fr Francois Murad who was beheaded in 2013, and recently a lady teacher

who was raped and violently killed in Yacoubieh. The Christians in these regions face absolute persecution, fear, violence, danger, death, terrorism and the necessity of hiding their faith and opinions. The presence of the Franciscans, therefore is to be a sign of hope in the midst of the darkness and hopelessness. Despite the daily difficulties and the unbearable miseries, Fr Luai and Fr Hanna have stayed there because they believe in serving and trying to protect the remaining Christians, and they believe that this region should not be forsaken. Both the friars and the Christian families believe that their presence in the area is of paramount importance, contributing to strengthening the Church so that she can continue living through her people during these atrocities'.



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The cover shows the Adoration of the Magi from the 'Life of Christ' Barberini Tapestries, woven in Rome 1644-1656. It is on display at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon - Eugene, Oregon, USA and on loan from the Episcopal Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York City.

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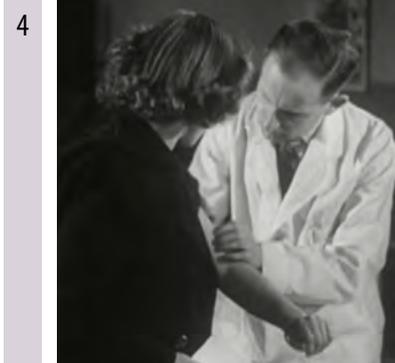
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If you would like to support us by joining the Companions, please write to *Oremus*, Cathedral Clergy House, 42 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QW or email oremuscomps@rcdow.org.uk with your contact details, including postcode. Members are asked to give a minimum of £100 annually. Please mention how you would like your name to appear in our membership list and if you are eligible to Gift Aid your donation. Postal subscriptions to *Oremus* may be purchased through the Cathedral Gift Shop's website or by using the coupon printed in the magazine.

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The Bishops Write on Covid-19

Bishop Richard Moth

Chair, Department of Social Justice, on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

The development of a vaccine against Covid-19 presents an important breakthrough in protecting others as well as oneself from the virus; a virus which has not only caused a global pandemic and led to a huge loss of life but has also placed a great burden on healthcare workers and systems. Each of us has a duty to protect others from infection with its danger of serious illness, and for some, death. A vaccine is the most effective way to achieve this unless one decides to self-isolate.

At present, debate concerns the use of the vaccines developed by Pfizer & BioNTech, Moderna, and Astra Zeneca. Some have questioned the use of the Astra Zeneca vaccine, since it has been developed from cell-lines originating from the cells of an aborted foetus in 1983. The Congregation for the

Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Academy of Life have expressed the view that one may in good conscience and for a grave reason receive a vaccine sourced in this way, provided that there is a sufficient moral distance between the present administration of the vaccine and the original wrongful action. In the Covid-19 pandemic, we judge that this grave reason exists and that one does not sin by receiving the vaccine. Both the Pfizer & BioNTech and Moderna vaccines have a different source, since they are mRNA-based vaccines. On 2 December 2020, the Pfizer & BioNTech vaccine was approved for use in the UK.

Each Catholic must educate his or her conscience on this matter and decide what to do, also bearing in mind that a vaccine must be safe,



A smallpox vaccination scene from the 1951 film Surprise Attack

effective, and universally available, especially to the poor of the world. Catholics may in good conscience receive any of these vaccines for the good of others and themselves. In good conscience, one may refuse a particular vaccine, but one continues to have a duty to protect others from infection.

It's time to follow our star!



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Many of us have experienced looking at a night-time, star-studded sky. We love stars, because stars have always called us to greatness. They stir up within us a sense of mystery. Poets have written about them, singers sing about them, artists and children love to paint them. From a very young age we are told to *'follow our star'*. Following our stars sometimes leads us to challenging

places. A star can guide us to deeper insight. With that new insight responsibilities can come. It is not always easy to follow our star. Some, however, take the challenge.

St John Paul II, after Ali Agca made an attempt on his life, saw a star that said: *'forgive'*. This star led him to meet his would-be assassin in prison. The light of the star enabled him to discover within his own heart a capacity for mercy he did not know he possessed, Divine Mercy. This Mercy belonged to the Creator of the stars, but it was the saint's to use and he used it well. He used it magnificently.

St Mother Teresa was a woman who could not stop following her star that said: *'serve the poor'*. This star that twinkled in her native Albania led her to embrace the poor of Calcutta, and many other places around the world. After her death, the Sisters and Brothers of Charity continue her compassionate ministry all over the world. Her star shines on, losing none of its brightness.

There was a man of God from El Salvador, St Oscar Romero. His star said: *'speak out'* against injustice and violence being perpetrated against the poor people of his country. This led to his martyrdom but his star shines on brilliantly though all those who continue to work for justice and peace.

What kind of star are you and I following? Have we been seduced by the false, empty stars of celebrity? Following these 'stars' will never bring us to God or give us life. Our Star was born in a stable and died on a cross, but only this Star can offer us hope, tenderness, mercy and compassion, justice, peace, love and eternal life. I hope that during this Christmas the Star that is Jesus will enlighten each one of us. May Jesus pierce our darkness and help us to see the things we really need to see, the things that God has in store for us. May we, like John Paul, Teresa and Oscar follow this Star by serving others and journeying towards eternal life.

With every blessing

Fr Sławomir Witoń

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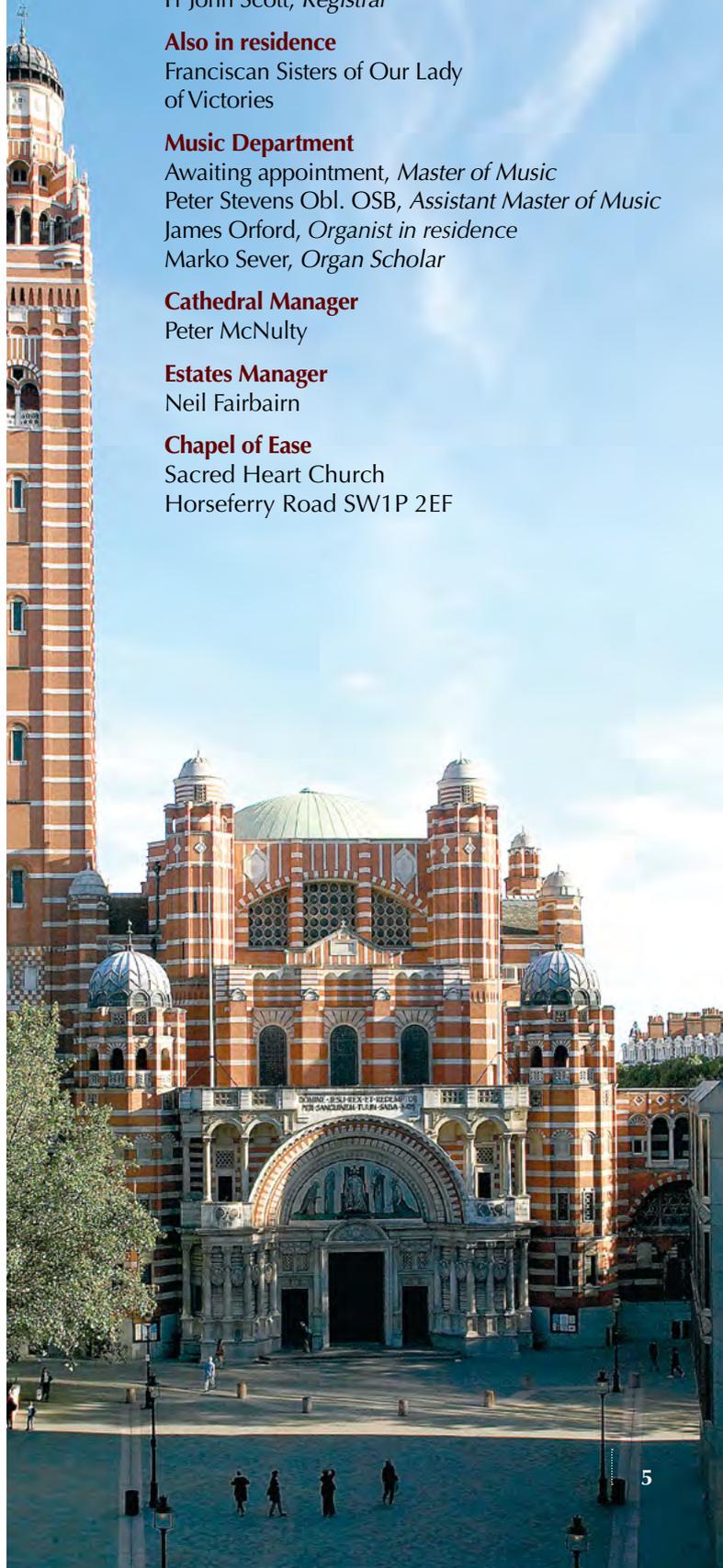
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An Apostleship of Presence

Philip J Smyth

Presence in the desert

Now ordained to the priesthood, Charles' focus was on Algeria, where he hoped to live a life of poverty, contemplation, adoration (especially before the Blessed Sacrament) and hospitality 'to every passer-by, good or bad, friend or enemy, Moslem or Christian. He called his fraternity a *Khaoua*, an Arabic word which means a centre of Muslim religious fraternity, where brethren meet to pray, to receive pilgrims and to welcome travellers and the poor. He settled at Beni-Abbes on the Algerian/Moroccan border, and later wrote to Marie de Bondy: 'I want to accustom all the inhabitants, Christians, Muslims, Jews and non-believers, to look on me as their brother, the universal brother. Already they are calling the house 'the Fraternity' (*Khaoua*) – about which I am delighted'. And in the same month he told the bishop that the people of Beni-Abbes were soon accepting him as: 'a brother here – not only the poor, though, everyone'.

This was the insight that Charles was to live out at Beni-Abbes, and later at Tamanrasset. He was the only priest for 250 miles, slept on the ground, and lived on bread and boiled barley, figs and dates, spending most of his time in prayer. With financial support from his family and with help from the locals and the French soldiers in the vicinity, he built himself a chapel and a small, five-roomed building. Visitors flocked to see him, and he soon became widely revered by the Muslims. In 1905 he moved to Tamanrasset in the Sahara, where in December 1916 he was murdered by Senussi terrorists who had invaded the region. He was 58 years old.

The martyrdom of Blessed Charles of Jesus was witnessed by Paul Embarek (a former slave whom Charles had ransomed), who was tied up by the marauders nearby. He later buried

Charles' still-bound body. Paul hastened to inform the French commandant of what had happened and when the tragic news reached the *Moussa* (the local ruler and a great friend of the saint), the latter was beside himself with sorrow and grief. On 26 December he wrote to Charles' sister, Marie de Blic: 'Praise to the One God! To her Ladyship our friend Marie, the sister of Charles, our *Marabout*, whom traitors and thieves ... have assassinated. As soon as I heard of the death of our friend, your brother Charles, my eyes closed; all is dark to me. Charles the *Marabout* has not died only for you, but for us all. May God have mercy on him, and may we meet him in Paradise'.

Legacy

What had he achieved? During 15 years in Algeria he never made a single Muslim convert, and he never attracted any companions to share his way of life. His violent and brutal death seems so meaningless. He was not a martyr in the classical sense of that word, but the victim of the random and mindless anarchy that was endemic in the region at that time. So why is he still remembered? His influence is, in fact, remarkable. Less than 20 years after his death, the cause for his canonisation was introduced (Charles was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI on 13 November 2005), and a congregation of brothers, and some years later, one of sisters, sprang up in France based on the principles of his life and witness: prayer, adoration, poverty, hospitality and solidarity with the very poorest – an Apostleship of Presence. His influence has also been very great among the diocesan priesthood, both through the meetings of the Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests, and in the lives and prophetic witness of many priests like Michael Hollings and John Dalrymple, to name but two.



The Tamanrasset desert scene

However, it could be argued that Blessed Charles of Jesus had merely followed a strong Catholic tradition, at least as old as St Francis, of prayer, adoration, poverty and the imitation of Christ in living alongside the poor – something that Pope Francis has placed at the heart of the contemporary Church, and indeed could be said to live out himself. And this, of course, is all true. But Charles' sense of respect for Islam, his willingness to learn from 'pagans', the openness with which he welcomed them as brothers and sisters – this is surely radically new and prophetic. He spoke to Muslims of God and of the Commandments. He sought out and became a close friend of the *Moussa*, Ruler of the Hoggar at Tamanrasset, even becoming his spiritual advisor. He learned their native language so that he could speak to them in their own tongue, with their own words. He was alone and unarmed among a fierce, tribal people, prone to violence; he was friendly, open, enjoying their jokes, laughing with them. As he wrote to Marie de Bondy, he wanted to think as a Tuareg. He devoted much of his last years, in fact, to compiling a Tuareg/French dictionary and to translating the Gospels into their language.

The great missionary activity of the Church in the 19th and 20th centuries was driven by a concerted response to the material needs of the non-Christian world, as well as by a desire to preach the Gospel and make converts to the Faith. Blessed Charles' example of humble, patient presence incarnating Christ once more among a largely ignorant and indifferent world, will be, perhaps, one of the greatest challenges facing the followers of Christ in the centuries to come, as well as the realisation of the growing presence of Islam near and far.

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On Slavery and Statues

Dr Stuart Blackie KCHS



The felled statue of Christopher Columbus outside the Minnesota State Capitol, in St Paul, Minnesota

Slavery has a long history. It has been practised widely throughout the world. In the ancient world, slavery was simply a fact of life and there was no concept of human rights or of sanctity of life. Anyone could be enslaved at any time. Many were born into it but you could be considered as booty by an incoming victorious army and enslaved. Or, if your family was destitute, you or your children could be sold into slavery. Enslavement meant that you became the private property of the owners. Everyone who was anyone had slaves. It is self-evident, from personal experience as well as throughout most of human history, that the strong dominate the weak.

I suspect that in ancient Greece and Rome every farmer probably had a few slaves, male or female, to help with work in the fields and at home. The wealthy bought many slaves to serve their business interests and were in the market to bid for highly skilled artisans, be they builders, stonemasons, silversmiths or just administrators, land workers or miners as required. Intellectual slaves could be bought to educate your children. In Roman times, slaves who served their masters well and were freed did not hesitate to buy slaves themselves. Few people then thought twice about it. To us, however, all this is now self-evidently abhorrent.

However, in the prevailing culture of the time, Christianity achieved the well-nigh impossible. Christian understanding and doctrine elevated the individual soul, rendering all equal before God. The slave and his master, the commoner and nobleman alike are each precious in the eyes of God. Christianity insisted that, in the presence of the Almighty, even the king was only one among many. Indeed, because he had power to change things, he may have even greater need to call upon his mercy. This was partly accomplished through the Christian insistence that salvation was a gift from God earned by the sacrifice on Calvary. This doctrine prevented kings, aristocrats and the wealthy from lording it morally over the rest.

Christianity also made the surprising and explicit claim that even the lowliest person had genuine rights and championed the even more incomprehensible idea that the act of human ownership degraded the slave-owner more than the slave. The concept that each and every soul is valuable established itself against impossible odds as the fundamental presupposition of Western law and society. Even in retrospect, it is amazing that, under the Christian revelation, ownership and absolute domination of another person came to be

viewed as wrong. We fail to understand how difficult such an idea is to grasp. Christ came to redeem sinners. Christian society objected to infanticide, to prostitution and to the principle that might means right. It demanded that even society's enemies be regarded as human. Finally, it separated church from state so that the all-too-human emperors could no longer claim the veneration due to gods. At the time, this was asking the impossible, but, nevertheless, it happened.

As the Christian revolution progressed, however, the seemingly impossible problems it had solved disappeared from view, and, as always happens, even the fact that such problems had ever existed also disappeared from view. It was only then that other problems surfaced in the general consciousness. As an example, in some countries, beyond the reach of electricity, the poor are more concerned with having to cope with cooking over wood fires and dealing with darkness as it falls than with the possibility of future climate change. Around the turn of the 20th century, the increasing quantities of horse droppings fouling city streets was causing concern. Development of the internal combustion engine solved that problem. The fact that cars pollute only became a First World problem of sufficient magnitude to attract public attention when the stimulus for its development had also been forgotten in the mists of time.

Slavery, however, has not disappeared and is still with us today. The immediate utility and profitability of slavery is obvious. A notable example is the luring of people from poorer countries to the Middle East or to the West and

confiscating their passports on arrival till they have repaid the 'debt' incurred. Perhaps it also surfaces when we buy cheap clothing or visit a car wash. The sugar in our tea may have come from a plantation which, at one time, used slaves. The ancients are long gone and merely destroying their statues serves no purpose. But their language and literature, providing the evidence for their actions, thoughts and beliefs – the source of their wide-ranging influence – were preserved and are increasingly studied.

Professor Abulafia, Emeritus Professor of Mediterranean History at the University of Cambridge, maintains that the ancient Greeks commemorated disgraced athletes, people accused of cheating at the Olympic Games, by setting up statues, not of the offending athletes but of Zeus, at the entrance to the stadium. They carried the name of the athlete and details of the offence. The bases can still be seen. They were a warning to other athletes and shamed the city from which the disgraced athletes came. It was a way of maintaining standards.

Do we want a repeat of the iconoclasm of the eighth and ninth centuries? Or a repeat of the cultural vandalism of the Reformation when beautiful and priceless manuscripts, stained glass, statues and whole monasteries were destroyed, leaving us now with ruins? Jordan Peterson is of the opinion that people assume pseudo-moralistic stances on large scale social issues so that they can look good to their neighbours. Virtue signalling on social media is easy. Embodying virtue is so much more difficult.

A Seminarian Comes to Meet Us



© Tony Webster

Domagoj Matoković was born on 3 January 1996 in Zagreb, Croatia, as the third of twelve children in a Catholic family. His parents raised him in the faith, taught him to pray and took him to Mass from a very early age. His faith and vocation are strongly linked with the Neocatechumenal Way, a charism which arose in the Church at the time of the Second Vatican Council and has borne many fruits since.

He completed both his primary and secondary education in Zagreb. There was a period of a few months in 2014, when he was 18 years old, which he regards as a particularly important time of his life. He says: 'This was a period in which God acted in my life with particular strength. Up until then, I lived a sort of a "double life". I was one person at school with my friends, and a very different person at home or in the Church. The truth is, both these "lives" were fake, as I felt I could not be my natural self because of fear of rejection of both my parents and my schoolmates. But that period was a special one with my Neocatechumenal community, as it became clear to me that God loves me as I am and does not need me to change. I was deeply struck by this fact, which subsequently pushed me to offer myself to God in whatever way he may want – even priesthood.

It has not always been easy, but I have been happy through all this time and I have seen that God has accompanied me'.

Encouraged by the catechists of his Neocatechumenal community, he decided to offer himself to be sent to a seminary anywhere in the world. This turned out to be London, and so he has been preparing for priesthood at the *Redemptoris Mater* House of Formation here in the diocese of Westminster. Apart from studying philosophy and theology, and fulfilling some pastoral tasks he has been given in the diocese over these years, he also spent two years (2016-2018) as a time of missionary formation with a team of catechists in Australia and Oceania.

Domagoj has been asked to come and experience Cathedral life and to assist as necessary on Sunday mornings.

The Vaughans of Courtfield – An Appreciation

Archbishop George Stack and Fr Peter Wilson

The recent sudden death of Patrick Vaughan gives an opportunity to reflect on the significance of the Vaughan family for the life and history of the Catholic Church in England and Wales - and beyond. Perhaps the name best known to us today is that of Cardinal Herbert Vaughan (1822-1903), Patrick's great-uncle. The crowning achievement of Herbert must surely be the building of Westminster Cathedral. The first great ceremony in that iconic place of worship was the funeral of its founder in 1903.

He was also responsible for the establishment of other great institutions, including St Joseph's Missionary Society, Mill Hill, which has been responsible for creating an indigenous clergy in many parts of Africa. The Catholic Truth Society, which continues to play such a significant part in the Catholic life of our country, was formed at the instigation of Cardinal Vaughan. At the age of 36, and as a priest of the diocese of Westminster, he purchased *The Tablet* for £900 in the summer of 1868. He wanted to ensure that the voice of Catholic Journalism was heard and read.

Cardinal Vaughan came from an august family whose members had remained steadfast in their Catholic Faith despite many years of persecution and hardship. Sometimes their loyalty to the Faith led to some reckless endeavours! The brother of his maternal grandmother was Cardinal Thomas Weld (1773-1837), the first Englishman to be a Cardinal since the Reformation. A convert and a widower, and a father with his children in tow, he was affectionately described as 'The Cardinal of the Seven Sacraments'. Through all of those tumultuous times, the Vaughan family managed to retain their family home, Courtfield, in Monmouthshire. The name 'Courtfield' was in deference to the fact that King Henry V (of Agincourt fame) had been raised there as a boy.



With so many vocations in the family, it is hardly surprising that the Vaughan name came to be attached to a prayer book

Herbert's father, Lt Col John Francis Vaughan, was a devout man. After a time studying in France, he returned to Courtfield. Given the strong Catholic commitment of the Vaughans, it is surprising that he very soon chose to marry a non-Catholic from the neighbouring area. Her name was Eliza Rolls, and her family were described as 'earnest Evangelicals'. Her nephew was Charles Rolls, who co-founded the famous Rolls Royce car manufacturers and also has the distinction of having been the first Briton to be killed in an aeroplane crash.

Much to the delight of her new husband, Eliza became a Catholic soon after their marriage. Her conversion was not just to membership of the Church, but engendered in her a deep attachment to the spiritual life in the Catholic tradition. At Courtfield she began the habit of a daily Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament in the house's little chapel. Between 5pm and 6pm

she would be before the Lord, and would take her children with her. She delighted in reading the lives of the saints, and teaching her family how to follow in the paths of these great heroes of the Faith.

One of her favourites was St Bernard of Clairvaux. Bernard's father, Tescelin, was a knight and hoped that his sons would follow him into military service. Meanwhile their mother, Aleth, 'sought to inspire them with a deep love of God and with sentiments of mutual esteem and charity'. Aleth offered all her children to God, at the moment of their birth, with the prayer that he would call them to serve as priests or religious; and they all did, each of them fulfilling her hopes. Tescelin, following the death of Aleth, followed his sons into the monastery at Clairvaux. Aleth's prayer was answered even more profoundly, because not only is Bernard a saint, but all his brothers as well as his sister have been beatified, as has Aleth herself, now known as Blessed Aleth of Montbard.

So inspired was Eliza Vaughan by this tale, that she soon decided that she would follow Aleth's example and consecrate her children to God, with the prayer that he would choose them to serve him as priests or nuns. God answered her prayer mightily, and almost completely. The Vaughans had 14 children, one of whom died shortly after his birth. Of her remaining eight sons all but two became priests, and of her five daughters, all but one became a nun.

Her eldest, Herbert, is of course our celebrated Cardinal Vaughan.

Her second son, Roger Bede, became the superior of Belmont Abbey and then Archbishop of Sydney. He was also instrumental in many Catholic projects in his diocese, including a leading part in the building of St Mary's Cathedral, the magnificent mother church of Sydney Archdiocese, where he is buried.

Kenelm joined the Cistercians, but had to leave due to ill health. He was, however, ordained to the priesthood and bought from the Earl of Cadogan a property in Beaufort Street for the society he had founded, the Brotherhood of Expiation. It is now Allen Hall, the Westminster diocesan seminary. Kenelm travelled extensively in South America to raise funds for the building of the Blessed Sacrament ('Spanish') Chapel in Westminster Cathedral.

Joseph became a Benedictine monk and founded the Abbey at Fort Augustus in Scotland – sadly no longer a monastery.

Bernard became a Jesuit and a legendary preacher. It was said that he had preached to all the crowned heads of Europe! However, most of his time was spent with the poor in the

East End of London, where his memory is still held in high regard.

Eliza died giving birth to John. He became a Canon of Westminster and a Domestic Prelate to Pope Leo XIII, before becoming the Auxiliary Bishop of Salford (where Herbert had been the bishop before his translation to Westminster).

Of the daughters, Gwladys entered the Visitation Order, Helen joined the Sisters of Mercy, Clare became a Poor Clare, while Mary was the Prioress of an Augustinian convent. Margaret, the youngest, wanted to be a nun too, but her ill health prevented it. She lived at Courtfield, consecrated to God, and lived her final years in a convent.

Two sons, Francis and Reginald, did not offer for the priesthood, but married and had distinguished careers, giving devoted lay service to the Church. Francis was appointed as Chamberlain to successive popes. From their children came further priests and nuns: Reginald's son Herbert, the Cardinal's nephew, played a leading role in the life of the Catholic Missionary Society. Francis had three sons, two of whom became priests, including Francis John (1877-1935), who became the Bishop of Menevia.

Courtfield was sold by the Vaughan family to the Mill Hill Missionaries in 1950. Given the remarkable story of vocations from the Vaughan family, the Archbishop of Cardiff in 1955 dedicated the Chapel as a Shrine of 'Our Lady of Vocations', a dedication renewed by Archbishop Ward in the Jubilee Year 2000. In the crypt, among other family members, John Francis Vaughan and Eliza are buried. Their prayers surely join those of Our Lady of Vocations in praying for new vocations in the Church.



This historic image shows the River Wye flowing past the edge of the Courtfield estate. In the distance is the tower of St Margaret's church, Welsh Bicknor. When this church was made redundant by the Church of England's diocese of Hereford, the late Patrick Vaughan obtained it and undertook a long and painstaking restoration to bring the building back into condition. His funeral was held there and it is the place of his burial.

© US Library of Congress

Given the changed membership of the St Joseph's Mill Hill Society with native clergy now serving the Church in their former mission territories, the Mill Hill Fathers decided to withdraw from their great college at Mill Hill. Part of that withdrawal included the exhumation of the body of their founder, who had been buried there. I [Archbishop George] was privileged to be present on that occasion and, even more of a privilege, to re-inter the Cardinal's remains at Westminster Cathedral in the presence of some of his descendants. By the same token, in 2009 the Mill Hill Fathers also decided to leave Courtfield, which had been a House of Formation for so many of their priests and brothers. By good fortune, the great-grandson of John and Elizabeth Vaughan, Patrick, was able to purchase the estate from them. The ancient home is once more back in the bosom of the family and now being lovingly cared for by the next generation.

Can You Really Put a Price on This?



Church leaders have called for urgent government support to protect churches after a new report highlighted the UK's increasing reliance on mainly volunteer-led services including food banks, mental health counselling and youth groups based in churches, chapels and meeting houses. The House of Good report from the National Churches Trust, the UK's leading church buildings support charity, has branded the nation's church buildings a 'National Help Service' after finding they provided £12.4 billion worth of essential social and economic support to local communities during the 12 months up until May 2020.

The report found that church buildings are a ready-made network of responsive hubs providing increasing levels of care and wellbeing to local communities throughout the UK. The majority of churches found a way to provide community support during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the report warns that many of their buildings are under threat, especially in towns and cities where they deliver the most value, as support for essential maintenance and repair from government and other funding bodies dries up.

Chief Executive of the Trust, Claire Walker, said: 'With the pandemic, church buildings were placed in the same category as gyms and cinemas and forced to lock down. But for the most vulnerable in our society, the support church buildings offer is not a recreational choice – it's an essential

need – and lockdown served to highlight the increasing reliance of people on this support. These buildings have become essential, but this is a Help Service that we risk losing and may never be able to replace if these buildings do not get the financial support they need. Each year, we receive thousands of requests for help from churches desperately in need of repairing the roof, or installing kitchen facilities and toilets, but we are only able to fund a quarter of these. For this reason, we are urgently calling on local and national government and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to recognise the continuing need for their support'.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Joint Presidents of the Trust argue that: 'During lockdown, churches around the country continued to use their buildings for the benefit of society as people suffered the fallout of the pandemic. The value that church buildings provide in offering a space where all are welcomed and loved might be priceless, but looking after them has a very large cost. This report makes the argument for why it is appropriate for church-based community services to be funded by national government'.

Will Watt, Director of State of Life, social impact and value specialists, which carried out the study, describes the work: 'Evidencing the full social value of the church building and its congregation and volunteers was a pioneering and rewarding challenge. The findings reveal that churches are without doubt "key places" in our community. Churches

provide a ready-made and extremely cost-effective source of help, support and care. This care radiates out from the buildings into our communities'.

The detailed economic study measured the extent of the social and economic value which the UK's 40,300 church buildings provide to the nation and local communities. It examined church buildings open to the public and being used for Christian worship. This includes churches, chapels, meeting houses and church halls but excludes cathedrals.

In the UK, the total social value of church buildings calculated so far is at least £12.4 billion: roughly equal to the total NHS spending in England on mental health in 2018. Cost benefit analysis shows that for every £1 invested in church buildings there is a Social Return on Investment (SROI) of £3.74 using the most conservative methods, with some wellbeing valuation methods estimating the SROI to be up to £18.10.

The *House of Good* study follows a methodology consistent with HM Treasury's Green Book, the Government's source of guidance on how to assess a policy's economic and social value. The evaluation is divided into two key sections on market and non-market value.

Market value:

- **£1.4 billion:** the direct economic value created by the running, staffing and hiring out of church buildings.
- **£200 million:** the replacement cost of social and community services, like food banks, youth groups, mental health services.
- **£850 million:** the replacement cost of volunteers' time.

Non market value:

- **£165 million:** the wellbeing value to volunteers.
- **£8.3 billion:** the wellbeing value to the hundreds of thousands of people who benefit from social and community services provided in, or with the help of, churches.
- **£1.4 billion:** the wellbeing value of attending church services.

The *House of Good* report is here – www.houseofgood.nationalchurchestrust.org/

Becket and a Book

Maurice Billingsley

The Book in the Cathedral by Christopher De Hamel; Penguin UK, 2020; ISBN 10: 0241469589 / ISBN 13: 9780241469583

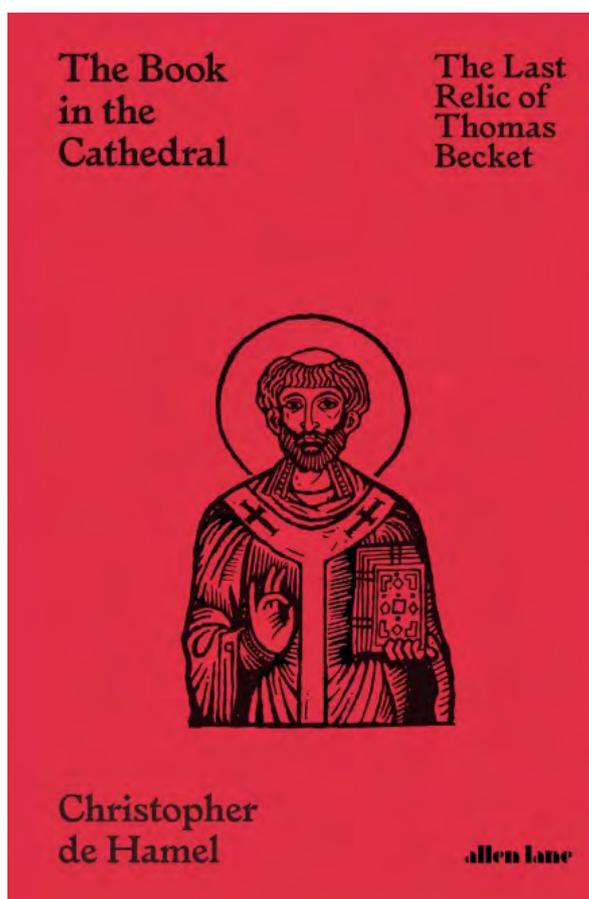
Those who have read Christopher de Hamel's *Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts* will attest that he is a delightful and informative guide to mediaeval thought and culture. This little book was produced for the now postponed 850th anniversary celebrations of the Martyrdom of St Thomas Becket, who was born in 1120, murdered in 1170, and his remains translated into a new shrine in 1220. It is not a potboiler, however, but a work of scholarly detection and a good read. It would be a perfect stocking-filler for anyone with more than a passing interest in Becket, Canterbury or medieval art.

De Hamel loves manuscripts and tracking and tracing those who produced and owned them, with all their personal foibles, not to mention the scholars who study and care for them today. He brings a storyteller's art to an historical detective mystery, which includes two sainted martyrs and other archbishops of Canterbury, artists and scholars in Anglo-Saxon England and mediæval France – the Æ symbol is one of the clues – but I'll spare the spoilers, except to pose the question, why is Thomas shown so often with book in hand, when he was not a writer like Dunstan or Anselm?

Not all will be revealed, for Becket remains an enigma; was he a holy man, was he a scholar? Much of what remains of his library is in Cambridge, including manuscripts that de Hamel cared for. Of one he says: 'I suspect that I handled it more often than Becket did. I used to show it to classes of students sometimes, and remarkably often one would furtively reach out a finger to touch the edge of a page, evidence that a sense of momentary encounter with Thomas Becket still carries a secret thrill' (p17). Yet for the medieval monks, books were books, whosoever had owned them; they were not so personal as a lock of hair or a scrap of clothing. My own 'reach out a finger' moment came on a Cathedral Open Evening at Canterbury. Two ladies had a dish filled with sweepings of iron from the floor of a Saxon smithy in the precincts, from the time of St Dunstan, metal worker and one of the greatest of our Archbishops. Could it be metal he had worked? But that's another tale.

This little book should be bought in a touchable form, not as an e-book. It is well presented and cloth-bound in martyr's red, another witness to the fascination of history and eminently readable.

Christopher de Hamel is an Academic Librarian and Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.



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With a Father's Heart (Part 1)

Pope Francis

The Holy Father has written an Apostolic Letter on St Joseph, to mark the 150th Anniversary of his being declared a Patron of the Universal Church. The year from 8 December 2020 to the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception next year, 8 December 2021, is to be a Year of St Joseph. The Letter is of some length and will be continued in the next two editions of Oremus to give us food for thought in the Year.

With a Father's Heart: that is how Joseph loved Jesus, whom all four Gospels refer to as 'the son of Joseph'. Matthew and Luke, the two Evangelists who speak most of Joseph, tell us very little, yet enough for us to appreciate what sort of father he was, and the mission entrusted to him by God's providence.

We know that Joseph was a lowly carpenter (cf. *Mt* 13:55), betrothed to Mary (cf. *Mt* 1:18; *Lk* 1:27). He was a 'just man' (*Mt* 1:19), ever ready to carry out God's will as revealed to him in the Law (cf. *Lk* 2:22.27.39) and through four dreams (cf. *Mt* 1:20; 2:13.19.22). After a long and tiring journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, he beheld the birth of the Messiah in a stable, since 'there was no place for them' elsewhere (cf. *Lk* 2:7). He witnessed the adoration of the shepherds (cf. *Lk* 2:8-20) and the Magi (cf. *Mt* 2:1-12), who represented respectively the people of Israel and the pagan peoples. Joseph had the courage to become the legal father of Jesus, to whom he gave the name revealed by the angel: 'You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins' (*Mt* 1:21). As we know, for ancient peoples, to give a name to a person or to a thing, as Adam did in the account in the Book of Genesis (cf. 2:19-20), was to establish a relationship.

In the Temple, 40 days after Jesus' birth, Joseph and Mary offered their child to the Lord and listened with



The Holy Family in the Church of San Salvatore, Venice by Lattanzio Querena

amazement to Simeon's prophecy concerning Jesus and his Mother (cf. *Lk* 2:22-35). To protect Jesus from Herod, Joseph dwelt as a foreigner in Egypt (cf. *Mt* 2:13-18). After returning to his own country, he led a hidden life in the tiny and obscure village of Nazareth in Galilee, far from Bethlehem, his ancestral town, and from Jerusalem and the Temple. Of Nazareth it was said, 'No prophet is to rise' (cf. *Jn* 7:52) and indeed, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' (cf. *Jn* 1:46). When, during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Joseph and Mary lost track of the 12-year-old Jesus, they anxiously sought him out

and they found him in the Temple, in discussion with the doctors of the Law (cf. *Lk* 2:41-50).

After Mary, the Mother of God, no saint is mentioned more frequently in the papal magisterium than Joseph, her spouse. My Predecessors reflected on the message contained in the limited information handed down by the Gospels in order to appreciate more fully his central role in the history of salvation. Blessed Pius IX declared him 'Patron of the Catholic Church', Venerable Pius XII proposed him as 'Patron of Workers' and St John Paul II as 'Guardian of the Redeemer'. St Joseph is universally invoked as the 'patron of a happy death'.

Now, 150 years after his proclamation as *Patron of the Catholic Church* by Blessed Pius IX (8 December 1870), I would like to share some personal reflections on this extraordinary figure, so close to our own human experience. For, as Jesus says, 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks' (*Mt* 12:34). My desire to do so increased during these months of pandemic, when we experienced, amid the crisis, how 'our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines, or on the latest television show, yet in these very days are surely shaping the decisive events of our history. Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning

personnel, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests, men and women religious, and so very many others. They understood that no one is saved alone... How many people daily exercise patience and offer hope, taking care to spread not panic, but shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday ways, how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, looking ahead and encouraging the practice of prayer. How many are praying, making sacrifices and interceding for the good of all'. Each of us can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. St Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. A word of recognition and of gratitude is due to them all.

1. A beloved father

The greatness of St Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way, he placed himself, in the words of St John Chrysostom 'at the service of the entire plan of salvation'. St Paul VI pointed out that Joseph concretely expressed his fatherhood 'by making his life a sacrificial service to the mystery of the incarnation and its redemptive purpose. He employed his legal authority over the Holy Family to devote himself completely to them in his life and work. He turned his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman oblation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home'.

Thanks to his role in salvation history, St Joseph has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people. This is shown by the countless churches dedicated to him worldwide, the numerous religious Institutes, Confraternities and ecclesial groups inspired by his spirituality and bearing his name, and

the many traditional expressions of piety in his honour. Innumerable holy men and women were passionately devoted to him. Among them was Teresa of Avila, who chose him as her advocate and intercessor, had frequent recourse to him and received whatever graces she asked of him. Encouraged by her own experience, Teresa persuaded others to cultivate devotion to Joseph. Every prayer book contains prayers to St Joseph. Special prayers are offered to him each Wednesday and especially during the month of March, which is traditionally dedicated to him. Popular trust in him is seen in the expression 'Go to Joseph', which evokes the famine in Egypt, when the Egyptians begged Pharaoh for bread. He in turn replied: 'Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do' (*Gen 41:55*). Pharaoh was referring to Joseph the son of Jacob, who was sold into slavery because of the jealousy of his brothers (cf. *Gen 37:11-28*) and who – according to the biblical account – subsequently became viceroy of Egypt (cf. *Gen 41:41-44*). As a descendant of David (cf. *Mt 1:16-20*), from whose stock Jesus was to spring according to the promise made to David by the prophet Nathan (cf. *2 Sam 7*), and as the spouse of Mary of Nazareth, St Joseph stands at the crossroads between the Old and New Testaments.

2. A tender and loving father

Joseph saw Jesus grow daily 'in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favour' (*Lk 2:52*). As the Lord had done with Israel, so Joseph did with Jesus: 'he taught him to walk, taking him by the hand; he was for him like a father who raises an infant to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him' (cf. *Hos 11:3-4*). In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God: 'As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him' (*Ps 103:13*). In the synagogue, during the praying of the Psalms, Joseph would surely have heard again and again that the God of Israel is a God of tender love, who is good to all, whose 'compassion is over all that he has made' (*Ps 145:9*).

The history of salvation is worked out 'in hope against hope' (*Rom 4:18*), through our weaknesses. All too often, we think that God works only through our better parts, yet most of his plans are realized in and despite our frailty. Thus St Paul could say: 'To keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness"' (*2 Cor 12:7-9*). Since this is part of the entire economy of salvation, we must learn to look upon our weaknesses with tender mercy.

The Evil One makes us see and condemn our frailty, whereas the Spirit brings it to light with tender love. Tenderness is the best way to touch the frailty within us. Pointing fingers and judging others are frequently signs of an inability to accept our own weaknesses, our own frailty. Only tender love will save us from the snares of the accuser (cf. *Rev 12:10*). That is why it is so important to encounter God's mercy, especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where we experience his truth and tenderness. Paradoxically, the Evil One can also speak the truth to us, yet he does so only to condemn us. We know that God's truth does not condemn, but instead welcomes, embraces, sustains and forgives us. That truth always presents itself to us like the merciful father in Jesus' parable (cf. *Lk 15:11-32*). It comes out to meet us, restores our dignity, sets us back on our feet and rejoices for us, since, as the father says: 'This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found' (v. 24).

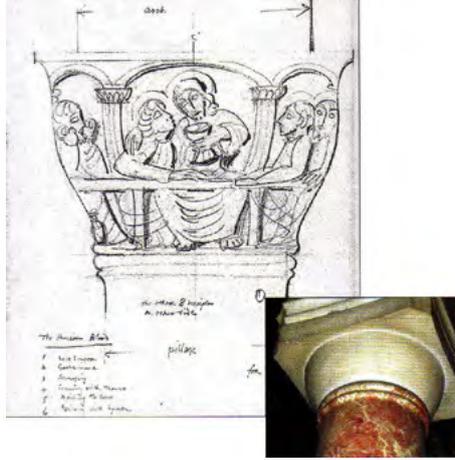
Even through Joseph's fears, God's will, his history and his plan were at work. Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.

Eric Gill – The Final Years

Patrick Rogers

Besides his work on mosaics, Eric Gill was involved in several other Cathedral projects in the years leading up to his death in 1940, though not all were completed. The first was for a tombstone, appropriately enough since Gill had started his career as a carver of tombstones.

In 1917 Count Alexander Benckendorff, Tzar Nicholas II's last Ambassador to Britain, had died of influenza and his daughter, the Hon Mrs Ridley, had arranged for him to be buried in St Peter's crypt in the Cathedral, as he had requested. But his tomb was unmarked. In March 1938 Mrs Ridley set out to rectify this and the Cathedral Art Committee recommended Gill to carve the inscription. The memorial, of dark green Cumberland slate, was completed by him at a cost of



The design for a sanctuary column capital, with the uncarved capital

some £70 and placed on the tomb in early 1939. It bears the coat of arms of Count Benckendorff and the inscription, in Russian and Latin: Count Alexander Philip Constantin Ludwig Benckendorff, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

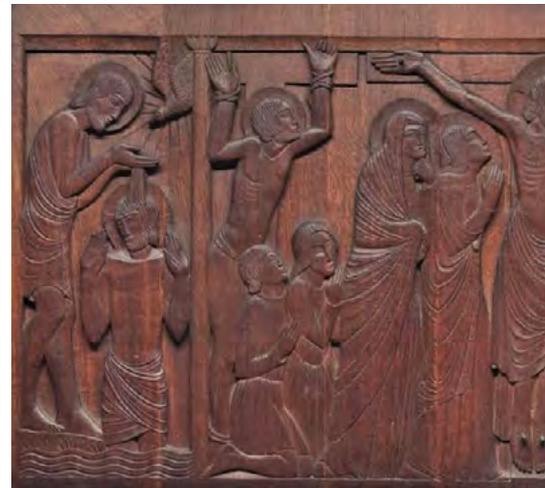
for Russia to the Court of St James's. August 1 1849 – January 11 1917. Requiescat in Pace.

The next work which the committee believed Gill should undertake was in the Cathedral sanctuary. Either side of this are three columns in coloured marble, but their capitals of white carrara marble are as yet uncarved, unlike those elsewhere in the Cathedral. In May 1939 the Art Committee recommended that Gill should carve them and, for good measure, design and carve a Paschal candlestick as well. Cardinal Hinsley turned down the candlestick (thus saving an estimated £200), but agreed to the capitals. Gill's designs, dated January 1940 and only recently rediscovered, show the Last Supper, Garden of Gethsemane, Scourging at the Pillar, Crowning with Thorns, Nailing to the Cross and Piercing with the Spear. Sadly the War and Gill's worsening health in 1940 prevented them being executed.

The last project which Eric Gill undertook for the Cathedral was an altarpiece for the Chapel of St George and the English Martyrs. In October 1939 he produced his initial design for a carved panel of Hopton Wood limestone with Christ crucified in

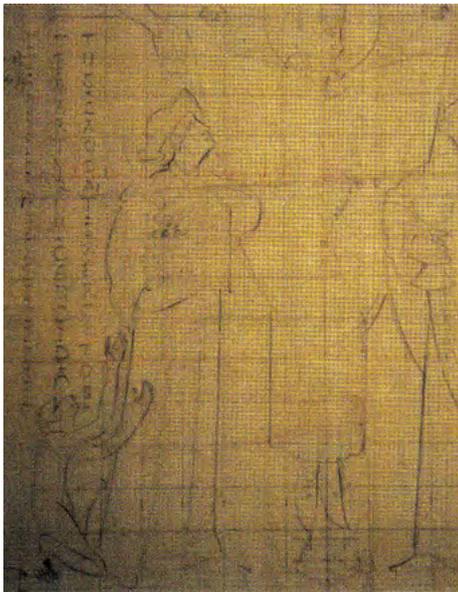


The sanctuary arch at St Peter's. In Gill's design for the Cathedral, a chalice would have been at the centre of the arch, at St Peter's, appropriately, it is the Apostle's keys that are depicted.



Eric Gill's War Memorial altarpiece for Rossall School, depicting the Baptist baptising Jesus and being himself beheaded.

© St Peter's church, Carlisle-on-Sea



The July 1939 design for the altarpiece in St George's Chapel

the centre and St Thomas More and St John Fisher (martyrs canonised in 1935) on either side. This was accepted at an estimated cost of £500. Initially he proposed that additional martyrs should be represented behind the two main figures but by July 1939, when he finalised the design, he had abandoned this idea in favour of a monkey kneeling beside More in the lower left corner, illustrating both the saint's humanity and the lowliness of mankind. There seems to be no doubt that both Cardinal Hinsley and the Art Committee approved the design which Hinsley was reported in May 1939 'to have liked very much indeed' and which was described by Gill in detail in the Cathedral Chronicle of July 1940.



Note the flanking images, left and right, of John... in prison

Gill worked on the altarpiece until his death in November and the final touches were added by his assistant Laurie Cribb. Because of the War it was not installed in the Cathedral until January 1947 when Cardinal Griffin, who had succeeded Hinsley in 1943, was given a private viewing. On observing the monkey he peremptorily ordered it removed. Neither Laurie Cribb, nor Eric Gill's widow and executor, nor the Cathedral Architect in charge, nor the donors of the altarpiece (on which £100 remained to be paid) were consulted and the action was widely condemned as vandalism. The reason given for it, expressed in a letter from the Prefect of the Sacristy to the Catholic Herald in March, was that the monkey would have been only a distraction and was 'not in accordance with the traditions of the Church'.

It is a pity that Eric Gill's final work in the Cathedral was vandalised in this way. Before this happened, in 1942, his widow had arranged for a small Hopton Wood stone tablet to be placed beneath the Fourteenth Station of the Cross. It reads 'E.G. LAPIDARIUS 1882 – 1940 R.I.P. (Lapidarius being the Latin for Stoneworker).



Eric Gill's small and inconspicuous memorial tablet at the Fourteenth Station

Addendum

Fr John Scott

In his article on Eric Gill's involvement with the Cathedral published in the November Oremus, Patrick wrote about the proposal for the sanctuary arch which the artist put forward:

'The arch would show the Palm Sunday procession with Jesus seated on an ass on the left, an angel bearing a chalice in the centre and Jesus carrying the cross on the right. Gill explained that the scenes should be inconspicuous line drawings on a gold background – more like an inscription or arabesque than a painted picture, and should represent the two great humiliation scenes before the Crucifixion – itself represented by the great crucifix already hanging before the sanctuary in front of the proposed chalice. For: "these things are the essence of Christian teaching: He humbled himself. He rode an ass. He carried his own cross. He shed his own blood. It is a great big Church, in the midst of a great big Babylon. But it is not as a victor and as a swaggering Lord that he should appear". But this was too radical for the Committee and Cardinal. In March 1939 Gill's thought-provoking design for the sanctuary arch was turned down – a decision greeted with relief by Gill himself'.

That, however, is not to say that Gill judged that his idea was fundamentally flawed, for he had already brought it successfully to completion in another church, St Peter's in Gorleston-on-Sea, Norfolk. That church, the only one designed by Gill and completed in four months during 1938, offered a very different interior to that of the Cathedral, the walls being whitewashed and the windows being of plain glass. Here we can see at least something of what Gill intended. In St Peter's, as at the Cathedral, a great crucifix hangs in front of the arch.

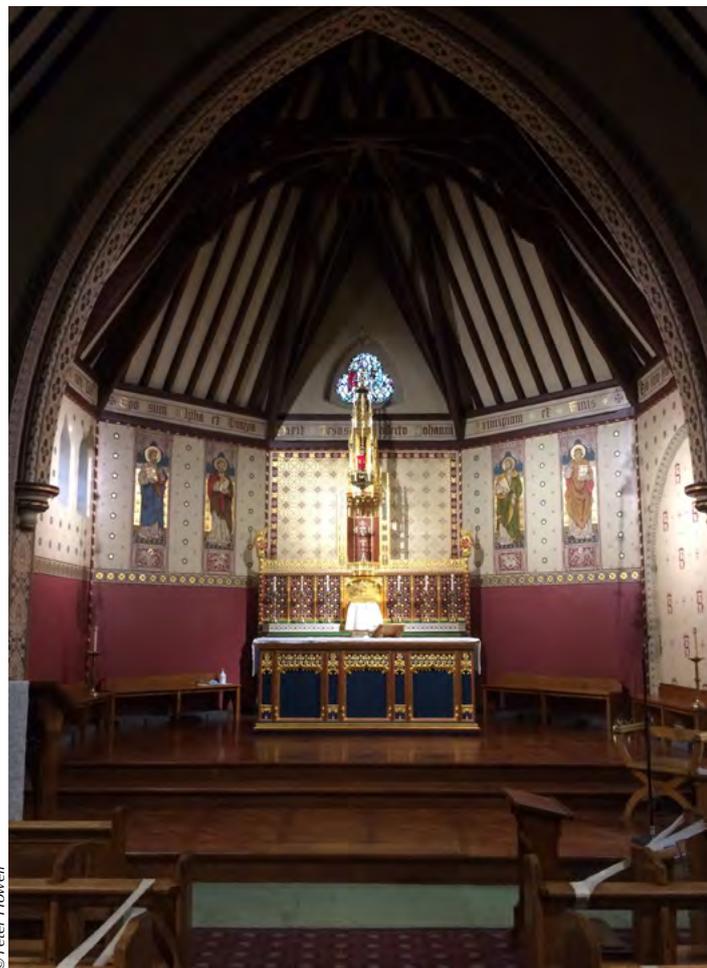
The November piece also included reference to Gill carving in wood. Coincidentally, as this piece was being written, news was received that a War Memorial altarpiece, carved by Gill for Rossall School, is being put up for sale, and so the opportunity is taken here to show another example of his representation of the crucifixion.

Mr Bentley Back in Brentford

Peter Howell

In 1976 I was helping to set up an exhibition of the work of J F Bentley at Westminster Cathedral. I went out to St John's, Beaumont with a friend to collect some objects which the school was lending. On the way back I stopped at St John's, Brentford, a church which I had never visited, though its spirelet rising up beside the Westway flyover was a familiar sight. The church itself is a brick building of some charm, built in 1866 to the design of the obscure J T Jackman, but I wanted to see the fittings by Bentley, who had worked there in 1879, and most importantly the high altar. Attached to his wooden screen at the west end was the poster for the exhibition, which had been circulated to all the churches of the diocese. The sanctuary, however, was bare. We learned that the altar had just been removed, and the remains were in a heap outside the church waiting for a skip.

Apparently the parish had thought that the church was by Bentley, but not the altar. It was only too common for priests and people to be ignorant about the architecture



The altar and sanctuary restored



The church, looking east, as it was

and furnishings of their churches. I made efforts – with little success – to remedy this when I was a member of the Art and Architecture Department of the National Liturgy Commission. The Taking Stock website, now almost complete, means that such ignorance is no longer to be expected.

I asked the parish priest if I could have the remains of the altar, and he agreed. The two gilded angels had been taken by a parishioner, who generously let me have them. They were presumably carved by James Erskine Knox, who executed most of Bentley's woodwork. I also wanted to discover what the altar had looked like, and the parishioner offered to show me his daughter's wedding film, on which it appeared. However, more conveniently another parishioner gave me a postcard. I had to decide what to do with the bits. I tried to repair the finely carved woodwork as best I could, in the manner of a jigsaw puzzle, but a good deal was missing. The largest parts – the frontal and the reredos, which had been cut in half – went in my bathroom. One of the uprights spent many years in the Victorian Society's office, causing some interest, but eventually I brought that back to my flat.

A few years ago I heard that efforts were being made to restore the late 19th century appearance of the interior, with Anthony Delarue as architect. There had been figures of the Evangelists painted on canvas and attached to the sanctuary walls. These were recreated by the late Kevin Howell (of Howell and Bellion), who based his design on the figures in the stained glass window of St Andrew's, Boreham, Essex, by N H J Westlake. He often worked with Bentley, so this was very appropriate. I indicated that I was more than willing for the remains of the altar to go back,

and they have now been reconstructed and redecorated in the original colours, with the appropriate gilding. The altar is set forward from the reredos. The crucifix and the pelican on top of the tabernacle (a device used by Bentley also at Holy Rood, Watford, and Corpus Christi, Brixton) have been repaired, and the sanctuary lamp has been rehung.

Bentley's screen at the west end survives and has been recoloured and gilded. So also do the stained glass window of the Communion of Our Lady, designed by him and made by Westlake, and the triptych frame for the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour survive, though the framed picture of the Sacred Heart has disappeared as have the big six candlesticks. In her biography of her father (1919), Winefride de l'Hôpital writes that the priest had received several offers for them. In the 1980s I was told that a drawing by Bentley had turned up at the church, but by the time I tried to see it it was lost again. It was only very recently that I discovered that my grandparents were married at St John's, which made me even more pleased to have helped in this restoration.

Great credit is due to the Parish Priest, Fr Gerard Quinn, to the architect, Anthony Delarue, and to Stephen Bellion and the team of Matthew Bateman (carver and cabinetmaker), Ricky Green (decorator and gilder), Ann Reed (decorator), Jonathan Beales (joiner), and Matthew Galpin (metalwork repairer).



The altarpiece, with tabernacle and east wall

Two Views of the Crib

We have been used to the crib being set up in front of the altar in St Joseph's Chapel – an appropriate enough location, to be sure, but one restricted in space and accessible with difficulty for those who are less mobile. So now the crib is taking centre stage just beyond the internal west doors, where it can be more easily approached and, not least, where it is highly visible to passers by and the curious, and may well, we hope draw them in. But look carefully at the first image; not only is a person praying at the crib, but beyond it can be seen that the Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the high altar for weekday afternoon Adoration.

Spiritual writers speak of three comings of Christ, one at the end of time in glory, which we have yet to know, one in Jesus's earthly life and one in our own day when he is known in the life of his Church and particularly in the Blessed Sacrament of his Body and Blood. At this season the crib and the altar combine to recall for us these two comings which feed our longing for his final coming in glory.



The view from the piazza



The performer's view from the balcony of the Grand Organ

Scotland's Brutalist Seminary

SCMO

The Archdiocese of Glasgow recently concluded the transfer of ownership of the former St Peter's Seminary and its surrounding estate at Cardross to new owners. A new charity, the Kilmahew Education Trust, will be the new legal owners of the site. They aim to develop it as an asset for the local community while respecting the unique archaeological status of the iconic St Peter's building. No payment was made as the Archdiocese bequeathed the estate and buildings free of charge to the Trust.

Announcing the transfer of ownership, Archbishop Philip Tartaglia, the Archbishop of Glasgow, said: 'This is a good day for the Archdiocese, for the local area, and, I hope, for the wider Scottish community. Times were very different when St Peter's Seminary was opened in the late 1960s to wide architectural acclaim. Changing requirements in priestly education, a drop in the number of seminarians and difficulties in maintaining the fabric of the building mean that the seminary had a relatively short lifespan. For four decades the Archdiocese has sought a new owner for the site, and finally a solution has been found. I wish the new owners every success as they develop the site and move forward to a new chapter in the history of the seminary and its estate'.

Stuart Cotton of the new charitable trust was equally enthusiastic at the news. He commented: 'The Trust is delighted to take up the many challenges that exist on the Kilmahew Estate and is grateful to the Archdiocese of Glasgow for its outstanding support over the last year in facilitating the transfer of ownership and for trusting us with the honour of becoming the next custodians of this outstanding and unique heritage asset. There is no doubting the beauty of the Kilmahew landscape nor the atmospheric presence that surrounds the seminary complex of St Peter's. We simply need to develop a viable vision, with education at its core, and execute the plans that develop from that to the best of our abilities. In the build up to the acquisition, our Education Trust has been busy putting together an internationally-renowned team to assist us.



The Brutalist terraces of rooms at the former Seminary

We are currently fine-tuning our plans to enhance Kilmahew and these will be made public in due course. It goes without saying that the Kilmahew Estate and St Peter's Seminary are of significant historical importance to the Scottish public and we are acutely aware of just how many diverse groups are stakeholders, including the local Cardross community, Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Government. The next few months will see us developing relationships with these and other stakeholders and presenting our vision for Kilmahew alongside our expert team. We believe our vision will provide Kilmahew with a very exciting and vibrant future whilst also respecting its outstanding heritage. We look forward to sharing our initial masterplan in due course and welcoming the public to share our experiences along the way'.

The acquisition of Kilmahew marks the end of a 10-year search by the Trustees to identify a suitable site in the UK from which to base their educational programmes, which will be aimed at young children and their families. With backgrounds in education consultancy and complex business turnarounds, the Trustees are uniquely placed to deliver a new chapter in the history of Kilmahew and the St Peter's Seminary complex.

The seminary building itself was designed by the firm of Gillespie, Kidd & Coia, and has been described by one international architecture conservation organisation as a 'building of world significance'. Brutalist in style and owing a huge debt to Le Corbusier, the former seminary is widely considered to be one of the most important examples of modernist architecture in Scotland. It was completed in 1966 just as the number of candidates entering seminary began to decline. The building never reached its full capacity of around 100 students. In February 1980 it closed and for some years acted as a drug rehabilitation unit.



The former Seminary Chapel of St Peter

Learning New Ways of being Friends

Christina White

The Friends said goodbye to 2020 with a very successful online Big Give campaign that has raised over £52,000 for the Cathedral. The money has already been allocated to improving the livestream and communications in the Cathedral generally, and here's hoping it won't be long before the picture quality for Masses is dramatically enhanced and even more people can be reached around the world.

It was very moving to read the notes and messages of support from donors across the UK – that is the big advantage of an online campaign – we reached far and wide with our appeal message. We forget, now that the Cathedral is open again, that there are still many, many people who are shielding and not daring to venture out until there has been widespread application of the vaccination programme. The Cathedral livestream has been a lifeline.

2020 was the strangest and saddest of years. There were some highlights. We embraced technology and my sincere thanks to Peter Stevens, whose pre-Christmas Advent concert of organ music on 4 December brought the spirit of Christmas into people's homes. It was a privilege to see him playing up close. Organists really are a dexterous bunch. Peter also entered into the spirit of a Friends' event and joined in with an online drinks party – gin and Dubonnet in hand. We are hoping to have an online Lenten concert of music, so please keep an eye on the February Oremus, on the website and the Cathedral Newsletter where updates will be posted.

The year saw the loss of too many close Friends – amongst many, Canon Christopher's death in June, and then we heard the sad news of Theresa Giwa's death in December. She was such a

supporter of the Cathedral and such a powerhouse of faith and kindness. It is telling that the team in reception in Clergy House miss her so much. Pre-Covid, Theresa was a regular visitor who always had time for people; that is a lesson to be learned. My condolences to her family and to everyone who knew her in the Cathedral. We have lost two great pillars of the community.



The Roman God Janus looks both forward and backward, as in this fresco of the Aula Gotica in Ss. Quattro Coronati, Rome

© Foto Maurizio Fabre

Events-wise, we have taken the view that we must maintain an online presence until such time as we are surer of the pandemic situation. I have moved Joanna's talk on 9 February online. There will be a programme of online events in the Spring Newsletter which will be posted to Friends next month. If you are not familiar with Zoom – do please give it a go. Once in, it's easy and it's a simple way to keep our community going. A Zoom tutorial has been posted on the Friends' Facebook Page to make the going online easier.

I was looking for Cathedral pictures this week and came across an image online of Thirleby Road and Westminster Cathedral from 1921, a century ago. It is a bird's eye view, looking down on the great domes. The Cathedral then really was a hidden gem; hidden from Victoria Street. The piazza opened up the Cathedral to London and at Christmas our new Administrator opened up the Cathedral to the world again – placing the crib at the main entrance so that it has been visible even from the retail

depths of Cardinal Place. I wonder how many more people have set foot inside the Cathedral for the first time, drawn by that miraculous image of the crib and the stable. It was a brilliant message of hope and a token of faith at the end of an unforgettable year.

A final reminder that payment for all new subscriptions, for events and donations may be made via our Virgin Money Giving Account: <https://tinyurl.com/FRIENDS-VMG>. We are accepting cheques, but please, if booking for an event, send well in advance. We are still collecting for the Canon Christopher Memorial Appeal which has raised over £12,000. Please be generous.

I wish you a very Happy New Year. Let's pray for a better year ahead.

Forthcoming Events

Tuesday 5 January 2021: The online Epiphany Eve Friends' Cathedral Quiz with Fr Andrew Gallagher as quizmaster. 7pm. Tickets £10

Thursday 21 January: Dr Rory O'Donnell: Online Zoom talk – From Whitehall Palace to Wigan Pier, Catholic churches 1685 – 1829. 7pm. Tickets £5

Tuesday 9 February: Joanna Bogle, The Marian Shrines of England. Online Zoom talk. 7pm. Tickets £5 (please note this event has now moved online)

All payments should be made via our Virgin Money Giving site. Please note that payments for events are not eligible for Gift Aid - <https://tinyurl.com/FRIENDS-VMG>.

Contact us

- Write to: Friends' Office, 42 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QW
 - Call: 020 7798 9059
 - Email: friends@westminstercathedral.org.uk
- Registered Charity number 272899

St Wulstan (1008 – 1095, feast day 19 January) was born in Worcestershire and, after studies at the monasteries in Evesham and Peterborough, was ordained in 1038. He became a Benedictine monk at Worcester Cathedral Priory and then Bishop in 1062. He is the first English bishop known to have made systematic visitations of his diocese, anxious that country people should have the chance of going to Mass. An outstanding success of his episcopate was the abolition of the trade in slaves from Bristol to Viking Ireland. He also survived the Norman Conquest to become a trusted adviser of William the Conqueror. Canonised in 1203, he is the patron saint of vegetarians.

St Wulstan's crypt in Worcester Cathedral



© Mattana

The Month of January

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention

Evangelisation – Human Fraternity

May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

Friday 1 January 2021

No Friday abstinence

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

(Bank Holiday: Masses at 10.30am and 12.30pm;

5.30pm Mass (live streamed only)

Saturday 2 January

Ps Week 1

Ss Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors



St Basil the Great on the doors of the People's Salvation Cathedral

The Cathedral opens at 7.30am, and closes after the last Mass of each day.

Service times, Monday to Saturday:

8am Mass, 10.30am Mass (Latin, Monday to Saturday, streamed on Saturday), 12.30pm Mass, 5.30pm Mass (streamed, Cantor or Choir), Confessions: 12-12.30pm, 5-5.30pm

There is Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 2-5pm Monday to Friday

Service times on Sundays:

Saturday 5.30pm Vigil Mass (Organ, streamed), 8am Mass, 10.30am Sung Mass (Choir, streamed), 12.30pm Mass (Organ), 3pm Solemn Vespers & Benediction (Choir, streamed), 4pm Mass, 6pm Mass (Organ, streamed), Confessions: 12-12.30pm, 5.30-6pm

Tuesday 5 January

Christmas feria

Choral Services resume

5.30pm Vigil Mass of the Epiphany – Chapter Mass, the Provost, Canon Brockie

Wednesday 6 January

Suspended Holy Day of Obligation

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

5.30pm Sung Mass (Men's voices)
Victoria – Missa O magnum mysterium
Handl – Omnes de Saba
Organ: Litaize – Epiphanie

Thursday 7 January

Christmas feria

(St Raymond of Penyafort, Priest)



The tomb of the Dominican friar, St Raymond, is in Barcelona Cathedral

Friday 8 January

Christmas feria

Friday abstinence

Saturday 9 January

Christmas feria

Sunday 10 January

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

10.30am Sung Mass (Full Choir)
Mozart – Missa brevis in B flat (K.275)
Handel – And the glory of the Lord
Organ: Cochereau – Toccata 'Marche des Rois'
3pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction
Bevan – Magnificat octavi toni
Marenzio – Tribus miraculis
Organ: Reger – Fugue – Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern

Monday 11 January

Ps Week 1

Feria – Weekday Lectionary readings of Year 1 begin

Tuesday 12 January

Feria

(St Aelred of Rievaulx)

Wednesday 13 January

Feria

(St Hilary, Bishop & Doctor)



St Hilary of Poitiers, celebrated in a 17th century print

Thursday 14 January

Feria

Friday 15 January

Feria

Friday abstinence

Saturday 16 January

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

Sunday 3 January

Ps Week 2

2nd SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

10.30am Sung Mass

3pm Solemn Vespers (English) and Benediction

Monday 4 January

Christmas feria

Sunday 17 January *Ps Week 2***2nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME****10.30am** Sung Mass (Full Choir)*Palestrina* – Missa brevis*Palestrina* – Iubilante Deo universa terraOrgan: *Leighton* – Gloria (Missa de Gloria)**3pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction (Full Choir)*Lassus* – Magnificat octavi toni*Lassus* – Omnes de SabaOrgan: *Durufle* – Fugue sur le Carillon de Soissons**Monday 18 January**

Feria

The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place until Monday 25 January

Tuesday 19 January

Feria

(St Wulstan, Bishop)

Wednesday 20 January

Feria

(St Fabian, Pope & Martyr, St Sebastian, Martyr)

Thursday 21 January

St Agnes, Virgin & Martyr

5.30pm The Passage 40th Anniversary Mass – Cardinal Nichols**Friday 22 January**

Feria

(St Vincent, Deacon & Martyr)

*St Vincent, seen in tiles in Lisbon***Saturday 23 January**

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

Sunday 24 January *Ps Week 3***3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (OF THE WORD OF GOD)**

Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of Cardinal Nichols (1992)

10.30am Sung Mass (Full Choir)*Mozart* – Missa brevis in F (K.192)*Palestrina* – O admirabile commerciumOrgan: *Dupré* – Final (Sept Pièces)**3pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction*Palestrina* – Magnificat primi toni*Haydn* – Insanæ et vanæ curæOrgan: *Stanford* – Larghetto (Benedictus)

– Sonata No 3 'Britannica' Op. 152

Monday 25 January

THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL THE APOSTLE

Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity ends

Tuesday 26 January

Ss Timothy and Titus, Bishops

Wednesday 27 January

Feria

(St Angela Merici, Virgin)

Thursday 28 January

St Thomas Aquinas, Priest & Doctor

*The Triumph of St Thomas Aquinas, the saint seen between Plato and Aristotle***Friday 29 January** *Friday abstinence*

Feria

Saturday 30 January

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

10.30am Mass for Consecrated Life – Cardinal Nichols**Sunday 31 January** *Ps Week 4***4th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME****10.30am** Sung Mass (Full Choir)*Palestrina* – Missa Æterna Christi munera*Poulenc* – Videntes stellamOrgan: *Eben* – Moto ostinato (Musica Dominicalis)**3pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction*Lassus* – Magnificat primi toni*Tallis* – Videte miraculumOrgan: *Cox* – Creation Dance

Key to the Diary: Saints' days and holy days written in **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS** denote Sundays and Solemnities, CAPITAL LETTERS denote Feasts, and those not in capitals denote Memorials, whether optional or otherwise. Memorials in brackets are not celebrated liturgically.

What Happens and When

The Opening Hours of the Cathedral, the closures for cleaning and the times of public liturgy are published here in *Oremus*, on the Cathedral website and via Social Media. Please be assured that all booked Mass intentions continue to be fulfilled by the Chaplains.

Throughout the Year

At the time of going to press it remains unclear when and where it will be possible for the various groups attached to the Cathedral to meet. As soon as information becomes known, it will be published in the weekly Newsletter and on the News pages of the Cathedral website. Thank you for your patience.

After the War

Steve Burrows

As I went along the the hallway of the small council flat I glanced into the kitchen. A priest with thick white hair was sitting at the kitchen table in his black suit and clerical collar. I proceeded on to the room at the end of the corridor where the elderly patient was in bed. She was a large woman. I had to change her leg ulcer dressings. I don't recall how the conversation started, but she began to tell me how it was at home in Austria soon after the war.

She met a British service man. He liked her. She said this was a big thing for girls. He was leaving soon for the UK. He promised to write and send tickets for her to visit him in London. He wanted to show her the parks. He said London had beautiful parks. About two months later an envelope arrived. She showed it to her aunt who said open it. It held a letter and tickets to Victoria Station, England. As she told me this her fingers moved in the air, outlining the permits' shapes and sizes, as real to her mind now as to her eyes then. But at the time she couldn't believe what they were.

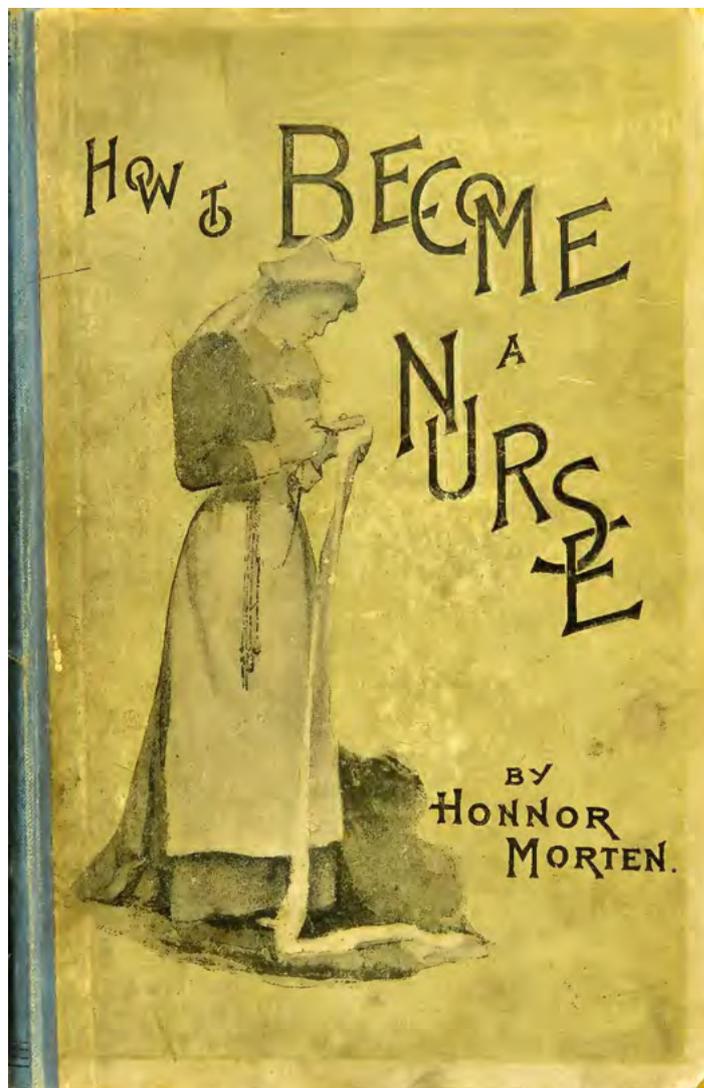
Anyway, for a little while she didn't do anything. Then she went to the Station Master at the railway station. He said, yes they are tickets to London, but better hurry up, they expire in three days. So.

She had four brothers; and there were two girls, her and her sister. 'If I had asked them no chance! Now, my mother, I went to her, she said, "What's the matter?"' I said: 'You know I have been getting in your way here. I am going away'. She said: 'I know, to the furniture shop'. So I said: 'Yes' (the lady explained there had been plans for her to move to a nearby town to work in a store).

But the next day she packed her bag and caught the train, changing at Leipzig, and other stations. She had two shillings. She had to answer the question at borders 'Have you any silver or gold?' She replied: 'No, I have two shillings', They gave her a visa for three months. In a jewellery shop near the station in London she sold a bracelet for five pounds.

At this moment the priest tapped at the door and came in. He stood quite tall in the small room which was mostly filled with the double bed. He had a good face. It had humour and clarity in it, and traces of youth, even into his early old age. I guess the story hung in the air. I was at the same time paused in my wound cleaning and bandaging. So, seeing we were engaged in talk of some kind, he said a word or two quietly in an Irish brogue, then went out again.

My patient went on with her account. She said she travelled to the address on the letter because there was no one to meet her at Victoria. When she got there they weren't expecting her. 'He said I was late. He had two weeks leave and it was almost over. That night I slept with the women,



Nursing and unwrapping bandages have both moved on since this textbook was written

three of us in a bed'. I asked if she married him. She did. 'But how can you love someone?' she continued. 'I don't think you can. Just like that. Ok, if you both try towards building something together, if both of you are willing, but otherwise, no, I don't think so.' She added, with some depth of finality born of experience: 'I wouldn't do it again, no'. Her husband died some years ago. Her son lived in the flat with her.

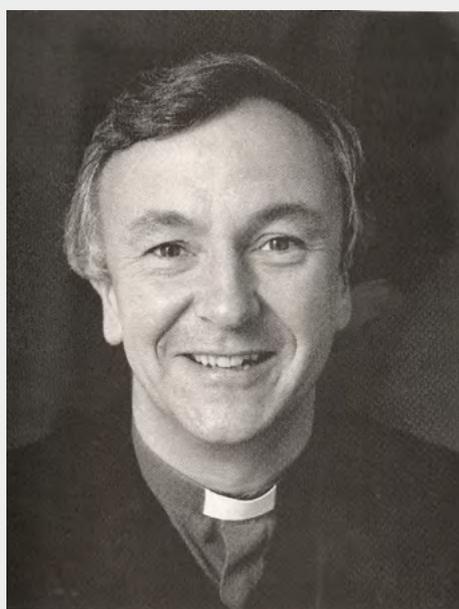
As I made my way back along the corridor to leave I glanced in at the kitchen doorway. The priest was again sitting at the table mildly waiting. The lady was old and in poor health with her heart. I later heard the ambulance was called for her. I don't know how she got on. This was a while ago. But I think she wanted to tell her story.

CATHEDRAL HISTORY – A PICTORIAL RECORD

The Episcopal Ordination of Mgr Vincent Nichols as Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster –
Friday 24 January 1992

Paul Tobin

The appointment of Bishop John Crowley as Bishop of Middlesbrough left a vacancy for an auxiliary bishop in the North London Area of the diocese, and this was filled by the appointment of the then General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales (CBCEW), Mgr Vincent Nichols.



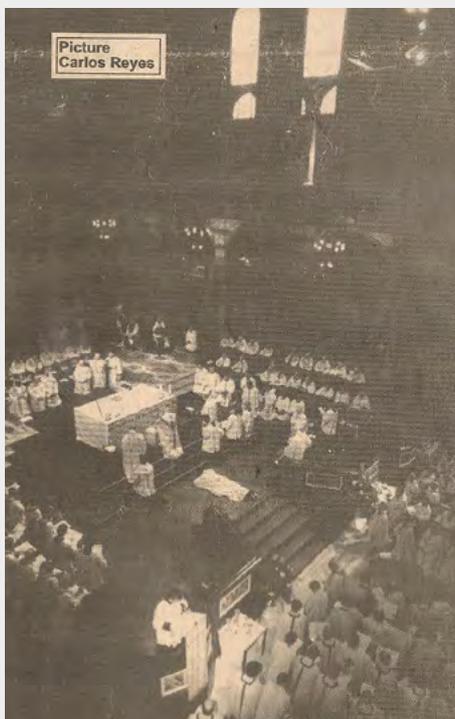
The Bishop-elect, pictured in the Order of Service

The Principal Consecrator at the ceremony, held on the Feast of St Francis de Sales, was the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Basil Hume, with Archbishop Derek Worlock of Liverpool (1920-1995) and Bishop Alan Clark of East Anglia (1919-2002) as Co-consecrators.

An article in the Westminster Record, entitled 'Acclaim for new Bishop', describes how: 'The slight figure of Vincent Nichols, attended by two robust elderly fellow priests, moved slowly in the long procession through the Cathedral'. For the record these priests were Mgr Canon Adrian Arrowsmith, a well-known and much-loved priest of the Westminster Diocese and Mgr Leo Alston, who had been Rector of the Venerable English College, Rome when the future Cardinal

was a student for the priesthood. In the Sanctuary among those present were the Apostolic Pro Nuncio, Archbishop Luigi Barbarito and several Anglican Bishops, including Bishop David Sheppard of Liverpool, the home town of the Bishop-elect. 'A full Cathedral witnessed the ceremony, including members of the Bishop's own family, one of whom had flown in from Australia for the occasion.'

In his homily during Mass, the Cardinal spoke at length of the great figures of the English Church, of John Southworth, himself a Lancastrian, and the great Bishop Richard Challoner, who worked with apostolic zeal in Westminster. Mention was made of St Charles Borromeo and of the Catechism of the Council of Trent. He spoke, too, of St John Fisher and referred to the Bishop-elect's studies of the great man.



The Litany of the Saints is sung

In image 2, the Bishop-elect is seen prostrate during the Litany of The Saints, with Cardinal kneeling in front of him, facing the altar with Archbishop Worlock

to his left and Bishop Clark to his right. After the investiture with ring, mitre and pastoral staff, 'Vincent Nichols was now a Bishop in the full sense'. This completed, he was then seated and exchanged the kiss of peace from his now brother bishops. At the end of Mass the new Bishop addressed the people (image 3); his message was one of thanks to all, particularly his family. He asked for prayers that he would live up to the calling of a Bishop.



Bishop Nichols addresses the congregation

Bishop Nichols was to remain as an Auxiliary until the death of Cardinal Hume in June 1999, when he became Diocesan Administrator during the interregnum until Bishop Cormac Murphy-O'Connor of Arundel and Brighton was appointed 10th Archbishop of Westminster in February 2000. At the same time Bishop Nichols was translated to Birmingham as Archbishop until April 2009, when he succeeded Cardinal Murphy O'Connor as Archbishop of Westminster. Finally, in February 2014, he was created Cardinal by Pope Francis.

On reaching his 75th birthday last November he submitted his resignation to the Holy Father, who has asked him to continue in post for the foreseeable future. This makes Cardinal Vincent the third successive Archbishop who has continued in post after the official retirement age.

Putting our Money where our Faith is

Dr Justin Thacker

Earlier this year, Pope Francis said this: 'Structures of sin today include repeated tax cuts for the richest people, often justified in the name of investment and development, and tax havens for private and corporate profits, plus the possibility of corruption by some of the largest companies in the world'. I suspect he did this because he had been paying attention to where Jesus had put his emphasis in the gospels. It is often said that Jesus talked more about money than any other subject. Whether or not that's true depends on precisely how you count it, but it's certainly the case that he did talk about money a lot. Forty per cent of the parables are about money or possessions, one in every ten verses in the gospels are on this topic and Jesus spoke about money approximately four times as often as he spoke about prayer.

It makes sense to look to that body of teaching as we think about the Covid-19 crisis we face. Whilst obviously a health crisis, it is also a deeply economic one which is having profound financial consequences for many. Many are losing their jobs or seeing their income diminish, worried not just about their health but also about their financial security. This is especially true for those who are poorer. The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities and highlighted new ones, with analysis by the IMF suggesting the economic consequences will be much deeper and last much longer for those who are poorest. The same economic shock is not experienced by everyone.

In light of all this, what does our Christian faith say to us about the use of money and the wider economy? To explore these issues, the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility is running a series of online events to explore the ways in which our faith, finance and the wider economy



It is our Christian duty to make representations about how our taxes are spent

interact. Called 'Restoring Hope', we want to offer a vision of hope that can help us in these difficult times. We start with a figure of £40 billion available in our churches each year and how it could make a real difference. £40 billion? Well, the average UK church has at least 40 adults; the average UK income is approximately £25k. There are 40,000 churches in the UK. If you multiply all that together you get £40 billion. Our vision is one in which we take seriously the idea that all of our money is God's money, and that we have a moral responsibility to use all of it wisely. It is for that reason that we talk about the £40 billion restoration fund.

With regard to the 30% or so that is taken in taxes, we can use our voices to campaign for more effective use of that money; with regard to the 70% that is left, we can think more carefully about how we spend it – which includes what shops we buy in, which bank we use, where our savings

are invested etc. We don't have the 100% to spend at will, but we do have some influence over all of it, and that influence should be guided by our Christian ethics. One strand of our work is about encouraging Christians and churches to take a pledge. That pledge is not about giving away a tenth of our income to charity; it is about using 100% of our money with a Christian mindset. It is about asking questions of who we bank with, where our pensions are located, on which products do we spend our money, who provides our energy, our car, our clothes etc. It's also about campaigning for tax justice - which is another strand of our work via Church Action for Tax Justice – to ensure that the tax policies we implement are those that have poverty, inequality and environmental sustainability at their heart.

A recent international report argued that we need an economic system that focuses less on growth and more on equality and the climate. One of the reasons they gave is that humans are not inherently selfish, focused only on maximising their own income, but rather that we are social beings for whom the well-being of others, community and social cohesion matter. In reading this, it struck me that the authors of the report were, perhaps belatedly, coming round to an insight that theologians identified in the pages of scripture, indeed in the very nature of the God, a few thousand years ago. As people created in the image of God, we are in essence persons-in-community, not individualised self-centered beings. It is this kind of application of Christian thinking to our money and contemporary economics that we will be discussing at our events.

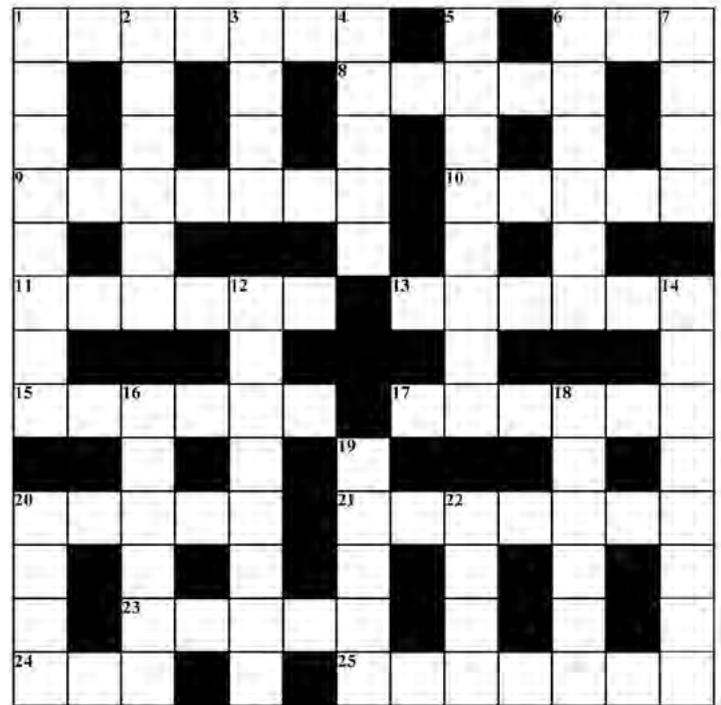
Dr Justin Thacker is Director of Church Action for Tax Justice, a programme of the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR).

A Tale, Founded On A Fact, Which Happened In January, 1779

William Cowper (1731-1800)

Where Humber pours his rich commercial stream,
There dwelt a wretch, who breathed but to blaspheme.
In subterraneous caves his life he led,
Black as the mine, in which he wrought for bread.
When on a day, emerging from the deep,
A Sabbath-day, (such Sabbaths thousands keep!)
The wages of his weekly toil he bore
To buy a cock – whose blood might win him more;
As if the noblest of the feathered kind
Were but for battle and for death designed;
As if the consecrated hours were meant
For sport, to minds on cruelty intent.
It changed, (such chances Providence obey,)
He met a fellow-labourer on the way,
Whose heart the same desires had once inflamed,
But now the savage temper was reclaimed.
Persuasion on his lips had taken place;
For all plead well who plead the cause of grace.
His iron-heart with Scripture he assailed,
Woody him to hear a sermon, and prevailed.
His faithful bow the mighty preacher drew,
Swift as the lightning-glimpse the arrow flew.
He wept; he trembled; cast his eyes around,
To find a worse than he; but none he found.
He felt his sins, and wondered he should feel.
Grace made the wound, and grace alone could heal.
Now farewell oaths, and blasphemies, and lies!
He quits the sinner's for the martyr's prize.
That holy day was washed with many a tear,
Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear.
The next his swarthy brethren of the mine
Learned by his altered speech, the change divine,
Laughed when they should have wept, and swore the day
Was nigh when he would swear as fast as they.
'No,' said the penitent: 'such words shall share
This breath no more; devoted now to prayer.
Oh! if thou seest, (thine eye the future sees,)
That I shall yet again blaspheme, like these,
Now strike me to the ground, on which I kneel,
Ere yet this heart relapses into steel;
Now take me to that heaven I once defied,
Thy presence, thy embrace!' – He spoke, and died!

To submit a poem whether by yourself or another for consideration, please contact the Editor – details on page 3.



Alan Frost November 2020 – No. 84

Clues Across

- 1 'Remember that thou keep holy the ----- day' Ten Commandments (7)
- 6 Follower with device for the heat? (3)
- 8 '----- of sanctity', pleasant aroma that may be discerned from a dying Saint (5)
- 9 Daily Cathedral service (Office) in which the Choir sings (7)
- 10 Provision at Lourdes for pilgrims to be immersed in the Shrine waters (5)
- 11 See 19 Down
- 13 See 24 Across
- 15 Hagia -----, the cathedral of Constantinople (6)
- 17 Book of the Old Testament (6)
- 20 Nature of the original terrain (Bulging Fen) where the Cathedral stands (5)
- 21 Early opera by Gluck, based on play by Euripides (7)
- 23 Poet of the famous 'Inferno', describing his journey through Hell (5)
- 24 & 13 Across: Professional musicians who sing in the Cathedral's choir (3,6)
- 25 Headwear signifying cardinals (3,4)

Clues Down

- 1 *Per Sanguinem Tuum* -----, part of text above Cathedral entrance (5,3)
- 2 Members of a choir (6)
- 3 Semi-circular end of a church housing the altar (4)
- 4 '----- with his own petard', poetic justice (literally blown up by his own bomb) (5)
- 5 Within the sound of these a true Cockney is born, it is said (3,5)
- 6 Brother or monk (6)
- 7 They will "have it" if a motion is defeated in the Palace of Westminster (4)
- 12 Revelation of the Twelfth Day of Christmas (8)
- 14 Old instruments associated with the Devil? (8)
- 16 Spoof or light imitation of a writer's style or work (6)
- 18 O Salutaris -----, Benediction hymn [St. Thomas Aquinas] (6)
- 19 & 11 Across: The prayer Our Lord taught the Apostles (5,6)
- 20 '----- Hill Fathers' (now Missionaries), founded by the future Cardinal Vaughan (4)
- 22 Early Bishop and Saint, dedicatee of Birmingham Cathedral (4)

ANSWERS

Across: 1 Sabbath 6 Fan 8 Odour 9 Vespers 10 Baths 11 Noster
13 Clerks 15 Sophia 17 Esther 20 Marsh 21 Alceste 23 Dante 24 Lay
25 Red Hats Down: 1 Salva Nos 2 Basses 3 Aps 4 Host 5 Bow
6 Bells 7 Fratres 8 Noes 12 Epiphany 14 Serpents 16 Farody 18 Hostia
19 Pater 20 Mill 22 Chad

A Government Grant to boost Communications

Linda McHugh

In terms of bad news, 2020 has arguably been the worst year that many of us can remember. So we were very encouraged to hear that Westminster Cathedral was one of 445 organisations to be awarded a grant from the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage (CRFH). This fund, along with the Heritage Stimulus Fund, is provided by the Government and administered at arm's length by Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. We are in good company, as other recipients of grants include Blackpool's Winter Gardens and the International Bomber Command Centre in Lincolnshire as well as many museums, theatres, music venues and other places deemed to be a source of pride for communities across the country.

As everyone is only too well aware, the Cathedral's financial position, which was far from strong anyway, has been devastated by Covid-19. Income from collections and donations is less than half of what it was, and our commercial activities have effectively ceased. The purpose of this particular fund is not to replace that lost revenue directly, nor can it be used for capital projects such as building repairs and maintenance. It is intended to enable the recipient organisation to undertake projects which will help secure its future by replacing, over time, the visitors and the income lost as a result of Covid-19 closures and restrictions.

Much of the money that we have been awarded will be used for the

Communications Project, the subject of previous articles in *Oremus*. Among other things, this means that our new website can incorporate a lot of functionality, e.g. downloadable tours and on-line concerts, that we might otherwise be unable to afford. The grant also means that other funding - notably the proceeds of the Friends' successful Christmas Big Give campaign - can be used for projects, such as the live stream, not covered by the CRFH grant. On the live stream, there will be facilities for those with impaired hearing, notably sub-titles and signed Masses and, for those who are blind or struggle to read text, the key sections of the website and all of the tours will have an audio commentary.

As part of the project we will also be looking at programmes for schools, and visits to the Cathedral, complete with a 3D tour downloadable to a smart phone, will be part of these educational programmes to be designed in conjunction with the Diocesan Education team. The programmes will incorporate learning sessions in the Cathedral Hall and regular users of the Hall will be delighted to know that, under the auspices of this element of the project, we will be upgrading its sound system.

All the innovations and improvements that we are planning are part of what we are calling the Renewal Strategy. When Covid-19 is no longer dominating our lives and restricting both the numbers permitted at Mass and our freedom to mix as

much as we would wish with fellow members of the Cathedral family, it will be the time both to give thanks to God and to renew our commitment to the Cathedral. It will also be the time for the Cathedral to renew its links to all parishioners and regular supporters. There will be further news in due course about various activities that will form part of Renewal.

Under the terms of the grant, the CRFH project and the 32 sub-projects identified as comprising it will need to be completed by 31 March 2021, which is a very tall order indeed, but all of us involved are very excited by the concept and what it can mean for the future of the Cathedral. We express our appreciation of the contribution of Alison Smith of the Diocesan Fundraising team, who wrote the application that resulted in the award, and, of course, we are very grateful to the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage for giving us the money that will help us to realise our plans and aspirations.



In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*

Let there be Light

Together with the rest of the country, the Cathedral has carried on without ceasing in any way during the recent electric power failures. Some ingenuity was required – the height of our success probably being Solemn Second Vespers of the Immaculate Conception in the midst of a power cut. Candelabra provided light for the Chaplains in Choir in the Lady Chapel, an emergency circuit gave one light for the boys of the Choir School and the acolytes really came into their own in providing the sole light source for the Celebrant. The whole ceremony was carried through with tremendous aplomb and the Lady Chapel glowed with the warm light of the candles reflected in the gold mosaic of the ceiling. Full marks to the Master of Ceremonies who conducted things so well that it looked as though we had intended it that way.

Battle was joined as news spread that the Cathedral was a good source for obtaining candles. In desperation we had to remove the candles from the side Chapels – for the first time in history, the candles were more the goal of the dishonest than the candlesticks. As we go to press, there is hope that the electric power will rapidly return to normal and we can relax from guarding the great paschal candle from any really adventurous spirit! One Chaplain was sorely affronted in Victoria Street on being offered one of the Cathedral votive candles for only a penny!

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Baptism in the Cathedral

A note on the back page of the *News Sheet* draws attention to a change in the arrangements for baptism. The news will take time to spread that there is a radically new approach to this sacrament. It will no longer be possible to plan the christening party and then fix the date of the baptism. The new rite of baptism asks questions of the parents that some will not be able to answer in all honesty. They are asked to express their own faith, and to promise to assume responsibility for the faith of their child. It will save unnecessary distress if people come to know as soon as possible that this is so. The priest will try to help parents realise what it is they are undertaking. He will not refuse to baptise, but will make it clear that the choice and the responsibility are theirs. This attitude has been gaining ground in recent years, but now, with the issues so plainly stated in the rite, priests are likely to favour a baptism only if there is reason to hope that the child's faith will take root and grow. This depends, under God, almost entirely on the parents. If they show little regard for their faith the child's chances are minimal.

from the January 1971 Westminster Cathedral News Sheet

Varia

We are informed by Sir Robert Blair, the Education Officer of the London County Council, that there is a need for more workers for the School Care Committees in order that the expansion of social and educational activities contemplated by the new Education Act may be properly carried out.

Each school in London has a Care Committee, and the function of this Committee is to advise the Council on all matters affecting the well-being and comfort of the child.

The main duties of the School Care Committees are to select necessitous children for free meals, to report upon children in need of medical treatment and neglected children, and to watch over the child's employment when he leaves school. In carrying out these duties the Committees work in close co-operation with the headmasters and head-mistresses and with the District Organiser. During the war many Care Committees were depleted in numbers, since their members helped in other national services. It is hoped, however, that the Committees will soon be brought up to full strength again by the enrolment of voluntary workers who have sympathy and understanding in such matters.

Any of our readers who would care to offer their services for such an important branch of child welfare are invited to write to the Education Officer, London County Council, Education Offices, Victoria Embankment, W.C.2

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The Reason Why – Godparents at baptism

The Church will not tolerate the modern practice, which is nowadays becoming very common, of calling attention to the social importance of some particular baby by invoking the patronage of a multitude of godmothers and godfathers.

It may be done with a view to the child's financial interests in years to come or to conciliate a number of relatives, but the fact remains that in the law of the Church there may be at the very most one godmother and one godfather .. Then, obviously, the person who undertakes to safeguard the future religious life of the child must be someone who believes in the Catholic religion .. The presence of a non-Catholic may be welcomed as a witness, or a well-wisher, or as anything you please except sponsor.

from the January 1921 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle

Care for the Teenage Years

Clare Bergin

The Christian Institute has welcomed a High Court ruling on the use of puberty-blocking hormones on children under 16 by the Tavistock Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS). The court ruled that children under 16, who are considering gender reassignment, are unlikely to be able to give informed consent to medical treatment involving drugs that delay puberty. The ruling said that because of the experimental nature of the drugs, clinics should seek court authorisation before starting such treatment, even in cases of teens aged 16 or over.

The case was brought by two claimants against an NHS trust that runs the UK's main gender identity development service for children. One of the claimants, Keira Bell, who was prescribed hormone blockers when she was 16, argued that the clinic should have challenged her more over her decision to transition to a male. When she was 16, after three one hour appointments, she was prescribed puberty-blockers. At the age of 20 she had a double mastectomy. She told the court that she thought the treatment would make her happy. She said: 'It

was heartbreaking to realise that I'd gone down the wrong path'. Keira has now begun de-transitioning treatment.

In her ruling, Dame Victoria Sharp, sitting with Lord Justice Lewis and Mrs Justice Lieven said: 'It is highly unlikely that a child aged 13 or under would be competent to give consent to the administration of puberty blockers .. It is doubtful that a child aged 14 or 15 could understand and weigh the long-term risks and consequences of the administration of puberty blockers. In respect of young persons aged 16 and over, the legal position is that there is a presumption that they have the ability to consent to medical treatment'. They said that given the long term consequences of the treatments, which were described as 'innovative and experimental', court consent should be sought prior to clinical treatment.

Simon Calvert, Deputy Director for Public Affairs at the Institute, observed that: 'Keira Bell has secured a win for common sense. People have become increasingly uneasy at the

way normal medical considerations have been elbowed out by identity politics and the demands of activists. This concern is particularly acute when it comes to children. Ten years ago, the GIDS – the only such clinic for children in England – received 77 referrals. Last year there were over 2,700 – three quarters of them girls. It's way past time that we paused to ask ourselves what is going on.

Many experts are concerned this rapid rise in cases is being driven by social influences, particularly online. Teenagers experiencing common adolescent struggles are being encouraged to think of themselves as trans, as if it is the solution to all their problems. Cruelly, it is often presented to them as the only alternative to suicide. The reality behind the rhetoric is that, for children experiencing confusion about sex and gender, at least three quarters of them will find that the confusion resolves itself naturally around the age of puberty. But, of course, puberty is the very process being blocked by the drugs given to kids at the GIDS clinic. TheŠra's victory means these experiments on kids must stop'.

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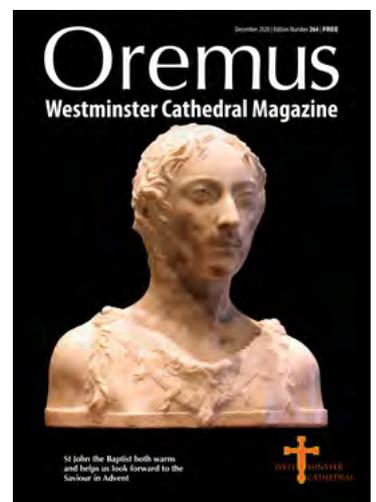
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Images of Christmas in our School

Claudio and Monika, Year 6

Usually the school goes to Westminster Cathedral all dressed up and looking amazing, to act and sing in a Nativity play. But this year, we had to change our plans because of the danger of Covid-19. Jesus' birth is too important for us not to celebrate – even the pandemic can't stop our excitement and preparations for Jesus to come into our lives so we had to make a plan. Every class is in its own bubble and can't mix, so individually they prepared a part of the Nativity following a script written as a rhyming couplet poem. Every year group sang and acted a little part of the special story.



The classroom is prepared for Christmas.

us the joys of Christmas and helps us prepare in our hearts to be ready for Jesus.'

Year 5: 'In our part of the School Nativity, Mary and Joseph acted really well and celebrated when they heard that they would have the baby Jesus.' 'Our corner makes our class feel like a family all waiting together for Jesus and it gives me a feeling of peace and holiness.'

Year 4: 'Being a donkey was a good part to play, because it helps me remember how hard the journey was for Mary. When our class were filmed it made me nervous but I had to do my best and play my part for the school. Our prayer corner makes me so joyful that Jesus was born.'

Year 3 told us about their part in the Nativity play that was filmed this year because parents can't watch it live. 'Even though I didn't feel confident singing in our class' carol, I still did my best and enjoyed being part of it – I did the actions to Sparkle and Shine and hope this cheers up everyone up who watches the film.'

Claudio and I went to visit Year 2, who were very enthusiastic in their description:

'Our class sang a carol about angels. We felt excited but the most scary thing was if we would forget the words. Our prayer corner makes us remember Jesus and makes me feel peaceful.'

Year One had all dressed up as kings in the play and still seemed excited. A group of children told us: 'We feel so happy because our prayer corner reminds us about Jesus' birth, but it also makes us peaceful when we look at the crib.'

The Reception class told us that they feel excited too for baby Jesus and they have been learning about the Christmas story in class. In the nursery, children were very keen to talk to us. Even the very youngest children in our school seemed to understand its real message of Christmas. We finished our interviews by visiting the school chapel, where we thought about people who have lost their jobs or who are on the streets at this time. We mustn't forget that this year is so hard and sad for many people but Jesus brings us hope.

Our classroom prayer corners were made to reflect the true message of Advent and Christmas and we went around interviewing some of the children about their thoughts and feelings as this Advent time.

Year 6: 'All the decorations make me relieved that we can still celebrate Christmas even in the pandemic. When I gaze at our prayer corner it really shows



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Renovating crumbling classrooms



Toroma Primary School for Boys is one of the first schools established by the Mill Hill Missionaries in Soroti Diocese, Uganda. The school is an important part of the missionaries' legacy and the parish priest Fr. Deogratius Oryangatum has asked for help to continue their work. The school has

a long history of helping local children overcome social challenges - illiteracy, high school dropout rates, domestic violence and poverty – which they face constantly. But Toroma Primary School was built in 1932 and the classrooms are in a terrible state – in fact, they're falling down. The roof is rusty and leaking, the walls are cracking and water seeps through, making the classrooms damp and unhealthy for pupils and teachers alike. There is a very real danger the classrooms will collapse; this has already happened several times in different parts of the country, leading to injury and even death.



Fr Deogratius has asked SPICMA for help to renovate the two classroom block to make this school safe for teachers and pupils. Please can you help?

Please send your donation and return this form to: SPICMA, P.O. Box 299, Cirencester GL7 9FP

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