

December 2021 | Edition Number 275 | FREE

# Oremus

## Westminster Cathedral Magazine



**St John the Baptist points to the Saviour in the Advent season and calls us to prepare his way**



# New Pit Latrine for Bunduki Primary School, Tanzania



Current state of Bunduki Primary School's Latrine

Bunduki Primary School is like many others in Morogoro Diocese, Tanzania. The parents of its 320 students are subsistence farmers and can't afford to fund the construction of a new pit latrine, following the collapse of the school's existing latrine two years ago. These sorts of projects - small, simple and usually overlooked by larger charities - can be extremely beneficial to those whose lives they affect.

Can you please help us fund a new latrine for them? It will improve the school's hygiene, comfort and attendance for many years to come.

*Thank you!*



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# Oremus

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*Oremus*, the magazine of Westminster Cathedral, reflects the life of the Cathedral and the lives of those who make it a place of faith in central London. If you think that you would like to contribute an article or an item of news, please contact the Editor.

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Statue of St John the Baptist outside Kazan Cathedral in St Petersburg, Russia

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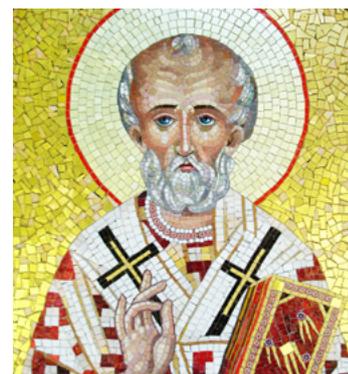
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# Egypt's Copts in Low-Level Trouble

Christian Solidarity Worldwide

The headmaster and several other teachers at a school in Ezbat Beshri, Samalout, Minya governorate in Egypt, ordered Coptic Christian students to remove any pendants or bracelets bearing a cross recently. CSW sources report that some Christians students at Al-Thawra school were beaten by teachers and Muslim students after the order was given. In one incident, a female teacher beat a Christian student and encouraged other students to beat him, snatch his pendant and destroy the cross. Nader Shokry, a journalist covering sectarian incidents, reported: **There is an investigation and the directorate of education is following up the incident. Things have changed from the past, sectarian incidents still occur but there is a quick response now and things are dealt with more quickly'.**



CSW's Mervyn Thomas comments: 'We welcome the quick response of the Egyptian authorities on this occasion and we call upon them to hold those responsible for this appalling behaviour accountable. We are particularly concerned by the fact that this conduct was encouraged and joined in by teachers, and call for appropriate measures to be taken against them. Whilst we commend the efforts of the

Egyptian government in recent years to improve the situation of Christians, and the personal commitment of President Sisi to reform religious education and combat extremism and hate speech, we continue to call upon the Egyptian authorities to extend these reforms to include unrecognised religious groups'.

It is a common tradition for Coptic Christians to wear the symbol of the cross or tattoo it on their wrists. The typical form of the cross is made up of two bold lines of equal length that intersect at the middle at right angles. Each line terminates in three points, representing the Holy Trinity, while altogether the cross has 12 points, symbolizing the Apostles, whose mission was to spread the Gospel message throughout the world. This Egyptian form is also widely used in the Ethiopian and Eritrean churches.

## Join the Companions



... and help us to keep publishing Oremus free of charge

Although we earn income from the advertising which we carry, *Oremus* relies on donations from readers to cover its production costs.

The Companions of *Oremus* was established to recognise those who give generously to support us. Open exclusively to individuals, Companions' names are published in the magazine each month (see page 7). All members are invited to one or more social events during the year and Mass is offered for their intentions from time to time.

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](mailto: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 by completing and sending to the office the coupon printed in the magazine. As the Cathedral Gift Shop is closed, its website has to be suspended and subscriptions cannot presently be entered by that means.

*Thank you for your support.*

# Fr John writes



*Dear Parishioners, Friends and Readers of Oremus*

**This edition roams around the world, following Catholic life and themes wherever they can be found. From Syria the puppet Little Amal came to the Cathedral; the Chaplains' initial incredulity at the prospect was brought to admiration by the Precentor's skill**

**in creating a suitable liturgical format and by the many who came to greet Amal. Looking across the Atlantic we are reminded of a Cathedral connection with Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, herself the object of what we now call a terrorist attack a hundred years ago. Going deeper into South America, Bishop Mark Jabalé OSB, who has previously written in *Oremus* of his experiences building a monastery in Peru, now introduces us to a pilgrimage to Ayabaca, undertaken much in the spirit and discomfort of medieval European pilgrimages. Moving to North America, I am grateful to the magazine *Local Culture* for permission to reprint material relating to the visions of society expounded in the last century by both Hilaire Belloc and G K Chesterton. Although some of their thought can sound quaint, other aspects chime in closely with current concerns both about the nature and status of the family and also about the intimate relationship which we should have with the land on which we are privileged to live.**

Readers will see from the Friends' page that Christina White is, after 14 years' service as Director of the Friends, leaving the Cathedral for new work with the University in Oxford.

On behalf of all those who have enjoyed the wide range of events which she has so effectively and imaginatively succeeded in conjuring up, *Oremus* wishes to offer a tribute in print for all her hard work. Her journalistic skill has meant that deadlines have always been met, whilst her shepherding of Friends and their friends – not always amongst the most mobile – on outings means that not one has been lost. And if events build up the wider Cathedral community, then we must not forget that their aim is also to provide the resources to maintain and enhance the Cathedral and its worshipping life; for what has been achieved in that way, we owe Christina our thanks. In particular the maintenance of her Facebook page and provision of online events through lockdown helped greatly in the Cathedral's work of keeping in contact with parishioners, whilst in recent months she has kindly been loaned part-time to the Cathedral to work on the new website, which you will shortly be able to access and enjoy. Christina, your friends here wish you every blessing as you leave.

With my best wishes

*Fr John Scott*

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# A Beatification in Sight

Vatican News



Pope Paul VI visits Venice with Albino Luciani as Patriarch there

**Pope Francis has authorized the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to promulgate the decree on a miraculous healing attributed to the intercession of Pope John Paul I. Having received in audience Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, Prefect of the Congregation, the Holy Father authorised his dicastery to promulgate the decree recognising a miracle attributed to the intercession of Albino Luciani, otherwise known to us as Pope John Paul I. The Congregation's website says it is about the healing of an 11-year-old girl who was diagnosed as terminally ill, with 'severe acute inflammatory encephalopathy, a malignant refractory epileptic illness and septic shock'. Her situation was very serious, characterised by numerous daily seizures and a septic state of bronchopneumonia. After the parish priest who served at the local hospital where the child was being treated, asked people to pray for Pope John Paul I to intercede for the child, she made a complete recovery.**

Born on 17 October 1912 in Forno di Canale (today Canale d'Agordo), in the north Italian province of Belluno, and dying on 28 September 1978 in the Vatican, Albino Luciani was Pope for only 34 days, one of the shortest pontificates in history. He was the son of a bricklayer who had worked for a long time as an emigrant in Switzerland.

In a letter written to his son, granting him permission to enter the seminary, his father wrote: 'I hope that when you become a priest, you will be on the side of the poor, because Christ was on their side' – words that Luciani would put into practice all his life. He was ordained priest in 1935 and in 1958, immediately after the election of John XXIII, who as the Patriarch of Venice knew him, was appointed bishop of Vittorio Veneto. Luciani took part in the entire Second Vatican Council and applied its directives with enthusiasm.

A pastor close to his people, he spent a lot of time in the confessional. During the years when the lawfulness of the contraceptive pill was being discussed, he listened to many young families and repeatedly expressed himself in favour of an opening of the Church on its use. In 1968, when Pope St Paul VI released his encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, declaring the use of the contraceptive pill morally illicit, the Bishop of Vittorio Veneto promoted the document, adhering to the Pontiff's magisterium. Pope Paul, who appreciated him, appointed him the Patriarch of Venice in 1969 and later made him a cardinal in March 1973.

Luciani, who chose the word *humilitas* (humility) for his episcopal coat of arms, was a pastor who lived soberly, firm in what was essential in the faith, open from the social point of view, close to the poor and to the workers. He was rigid when it came to the unscrupulous use of money to the detriment of the people, as was demonstrated by his firmness on the occasion of an economic scandal in Vittorio Veneto involving one of his priests. In his magisterium, he particularly insisted on the theme of mercy. As Patriarch of Venice, he suffered a lot because of the protests that marked the years following Vatican II. At Christmas 1976, when the factories of the industrial centre of Marghera were occupied, he issued words which are still very relevant today: 'Showing off luxury, wasting money, refusing to invest it, stashing it away abroad, does not only constitute insensitivity and egoism: it can become provocation and weigh on our heads with what Pope Paul VI calls "the wrath of the poor with unpredictable consequences".'

After the death of Pope Paul, on 26 August 1978 he was elected in a conclave that lasted one day. The double name he assumed on his election was in itself a programme. By combining John and Paul, he not only offered a tribute to the Popes who wanted him as bishop and cardinal, but also marked a path of continuity in the application of the Council, barring the way both to nostalgic retreats into the past and uncontrolled leaps forward.

A great communicator, he wrote an acclaimed book entitled *Illustrissimi*, which contains letters he wrote to the great personalities of the past with judgments on the present. For him, catechesis was of particular importance and the need for those who transmit the contents of the faith to be understood by all. His Wednesday General Audiences were catechetical meetings. He spoke without a written text, quoted poems from memory, invited a boy and an altar server to approach him and talked to them. In an impromptu speech, he recalled having suffered hunger as a child and repeated his predecessor's courageous words about the 'people of hunger' who challenge the 'people of opulence'. He went out only once from the Vatican, in the sultry weeks of late summer 1978, to take possession of the Cathedral of St John Lateran as Bishop of Rome. There, he received the homage of the Roman Mayor, Giulio Carlo Argan, a Communist, to whom the new Pope quoted the Catechism of St Pius X, recalling that among 'the sins that cry out for vengeance in the sight of God' are 'oppressing the poor' and 'defrauding workers of their just wages'.

Pope John Paul I died suddenly on the night of 28 September 1978. He was found lifeless by the nun who brought coffee to his room every morning. In just a few weeks of his pontificate, he had entered the hearts of millions of people for his simplicity, humility, his words in defence of the least and his evangelical smile. Several theories of alleged conspiracies on his sudden and unexpected death were built that served to sell books and produce films. A documented study of the death, which definitively closes the case, was signed by the Vice-Postulator of the beatification process, Stefania Falasca (*Cronaca di una morte*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana). The reputation of his holiness of life spread very quickly. Many people have prayed and are praying to him. Many simple people and even the bishops of Brazil corporately have asked for the opening of his cause, a long procedure that has now reached a conclusion in the beatification.



© Luciano Corda

Albino Luciani as Pope John Paul I

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and of our anonymous Companions

*If you would like to become a Companion of Oremus, see page 4*

# Light Lines: An Exhibition

Royal Academy

**The Royal Academy of Arts is presenting *Light Lines: The Architectural Photographs of Hélène Binet*, an intimate unveiling of architecture through the lens of this renowned Swiss-French photographer. Over the past 30 years, she has travelled the world to photograph works by architects including Le Corbusier, Zaha Hadid RA, Nicholas Hawksmoor, Daniel Libeskind, Jørn Utzon and Peter Zumthor Hon. RA. The exhibition spans Binet's career, showcasing around 90 images of more than 20 projects by 12 architects.**

She approaches both self-initiated projects and commissions with a spirit of enquiry, seeking to understand the underlying conditions of the site and the intention of the architect. Often her photographs focus on a fragment of a building and do not aim to portray the whole story. Seeking simplicity from complexity, she primarily makes black-and-white images that deal with light, space and form. She works only with film and has handprinted many of the works within the exhibition in her London darkroom, restricting the scale of the work to give it intimacy. Observing the essential elements of architecture, such as floor, ceiling and wall, Binet transports viewers to imaginary landscapes beyond the frame of the photograph.

The exhibition is organised in themes that are echoed throughout her career, exploring connections between ideas, places and landscape. It begins with one of her most iconic images, a large square format print of Zaha Hadid's Vitra Fire Station, completed in 1993 and photographed soon after. Other works will include shadows and spaces at Le Corbusier's La Tourette monastery in France and the Jantar Mantar Observatory in Jaipur, India, where she uses light and shadow to orient herself in both a practical and spiritual sense. The following section will return to Binet's longstanding professional relationship with Hadid. Black and white images of her best-known works



© Royal Academy

*Shuttered concrete and nature beyond*

will include the MAXXI Museum of Art in Rome, the Glasgow

Riverside Museum of Transport and the Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art in Cincinnati. These are hung alongside photographs of works by less well-known architects, who similarly deal with the rawness and power of unadorned materials, such as the sculptural form of a shuttered concrete bridge by Sergio Musmeci in Potenza, Italy, that links visually to construction images of Hadid's monumental Phaeno Science Centre in Germany.

The final section will show powerful and simple images of Binet's observations of the essential elements of architecture: walls that catch shadows and act as a foil for nature, and ground planes that show the use of architecture across time. Here, Binet's images of the Thermal Baths at Vals by the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor will be hung alongside landscaping and pathways at the Acropolis designed by Dimitris Pikionis in the 1950s. The majority of the buildings represented in this exhibition date from the 20th and 21st centuries, but there will be three projects from earlier periods: 18th century churches in London by Nicholas Hawksmoor, the 18th century Jantar Mantar Observatory in Jaipur, India, and the Lingering Garden of Suzhou, China, parts of which date to the 16th century. These

historic sites underlie the universal quality of her work and her interest in the essential elements of architecture. Binet said: 'I hope that visitors will come out of the exhibition feeling closer to the architects' art of making, and might also see the spaces that belong to their own life and experience in a new way. Working on this show has been like meeting old relatives and friends, and realising how relevant they are to me still, and to the ideas that I continue to develop in my work.'

Hélène Binet (b.1959) is a London-based internationally acclaimed photographer, originally from Switzerland. After completing her studies she worked as a photographer at the *Grand Théâtre de Genève*, where she photographed various theatrical performances for two years. She then turned her attention to architectural photography with great success, receiving praise for the ways in which 'she exposes architecture's achievements, strength, pathos and fragility'.

Over a period of more than 25 years she has captured both contemporary and historical architecture, and is a fervent advocate of analogue photography, working exclusively with film and a firm believer that 'the soul of photography is its relationship with the instant'. She is fondly considered 'the architect's photographer', a title informally bestowed upon her for the way in which her work is enlivened with the experience of a building and the intent of the architect, through her handling of light, shadow and texture.

*Exhibition open until 23 January 2022, 10am – 6pm Tuesday – Sunday (last admission 5.30pm)*

*Admission from £15; concessions available; under 16s go free (T&Cs apply); Friends of the RA go free. All visitors must have a pre-booked timed ticket to enter the building. Tickets can be booked in advance online ([royalacademy.org.uk](http://royalacademy.org.uk)) or by phone (020 7300 8090).*

# A Jubilee Year for the Virgin of Guadalupe

Archdiocese of Mexico City

Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes, Archbishop of Mexico, blessed and opened the Holy Door of the Basilica of Guadalupe on Sunday 14 November, marking the 100th anniversary of the bomb attack on the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, which took place on 14 November, 1921, in which miraculously, the cloak of San Juan Diego was undamaged. With the opening of the Holy Door, an extraordinary Jubilee Year has begun, during which the faithful will be able to obtain a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions established by the Apostolic Penitentiary. The Year will end on 20 November 2022, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

The attack took place on the morning of 14 November 1921, when a man placed a bomb hidden in a

bunch of flowers in front of the sacred image. In the explosion, the altar and the marble sculptures that flanked it were scarred; a heavy bronze crucifix was bent; the foundations of the old Cathedral were also damaged. But the glass covering the image of the Virgin was not even scratched. This bomb attack caused great shock among the Mexicans, because in addition to being a serious sacrilegious act, it also threatened the identity of the Mexicans, since the Virgin of Guadalupe was the banner with which the 'Father of the Fatherland', Fr Miguel Hidalgo, had rallied people in their struggle for independence from Spain 100 years earlier. Five years later, Mexico was plunged into the War of the Cristeros (1926 - 1929), a peasant rebellion against the anticlericalism of the Mexican government.



*Our Lady of Guadalupe has a certain importance for us here at the Cathedral, as a large copy of her image (seen here) hangs in the Outer Sacristy, watching over the preparations for Mass and each procession in and out of the Cathedral.*



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# A Vision for the Future

Allan C Carlson



Hilaire Belloc in a cartoon by Low

**The origins of Distributism lie in *Rerum Novarum*, the papal encyclical on capital and labour promulgated by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. There is confusion, though, over its animating worldview. A common misunderstanding is that the encyclical represents a form of Catholic socialism, absent inevitable class conflict, with a focus in both analysis and prescription on the new industrial order. Certainly some of the document's more vivid language speaks of workers left 'isolated and defenceless' before exploitative factory owners and ruthless competition; and it hints at possible responses, such as the payment of family wages and the activism of Christian labour associations. The real spirit of the document, however, is agrarian.**

This begins in its anthropology. Early on, Leo explained that it is reason that distinguishes humans from the animals and 'renders a human being human'. This endowment also allows humans alone 'to possess things' for more than temporary or momentary use. Indeed, the 'laws of nature' testify to the importance of stable, private ownership

and the division of property among men as 'pre-eminently in conformity with human nature'. The Pope emphasized how this fundamental right to property held a special bond to the land. As he explained: 'The earth, even though apportioned among private owners, ceases not thereby to minister to the needs of all'. Indeed, there is no one 'who does not sustain life from what the land produces'. Leo expanded on this to affirm the agrarian theory of value: 'all human subsistence is derived either from labour on one's own land, or from some toil, some calling, which is paid for either in the produce of the land itself, or in that which is exchanged for what the land brings forth'. These products of the land, and not the detritus of financial speculations, represent real wealth.

This embrace of agriculture as the foundation of the true human economy also explains Leo's insistence that land should belong to those who work it physically. As he argued, when persons turn the activity of their minds and the strength of their bodies 'toward procuring the fruits of nature,' when they impress their personalities on the land and these products, they establish moral claims: 'and it cannot but be just that they should possess 'that portion' as their very own 'and have a right to hold it without any one being justified in violating that right'. Given the nature of land-ownership patterns in Europe and the Americas at the time, where the great majority of farmworkers were still quasi-serfs or tenants, *Rerum Novarum* stood as a clarion call for peaceful agrarian revolution through land redistribution.

Leo also grounded the ownership of land and other forms of productive property (read 'natural resources' such as woodlands or ponds) in a man's capacity as 'head of a family,' for it was the 'most sacred law of nature that a father should provide food and all other necessities for those whom he has begotten'. This principle most certainly extended to industrial workers as well.

Accordingly, the great injustices of the industrial order could be resolved only by transforming all workers and their families into landowners. The law, Leo insisted, 'should favour ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many as possible of the people to become owners'. Only when factory workers could anticipate gaining such 'a share in the land' might the dangerous 'gulf between vast wealth and sheer poverty . . . be bridged over'. Despite later claims to the contrary, bonds, stock certificates, and other forms of paper wealth could provide no acceptable substitute. All Distributist theory and action rests ultimately on programmes of land-to-the people.

In Great Britain such ideas stoked the imaginations of two Christian writers, Hilaire Belloc and Gilbert Keith Chesterton. To this day a fair number of Chestertonians have argued that Distributism was initially and primarily Belloc's project, which he gulled his friend into adopting to the great detriment of the latter's literary, poetic, and apologetic work. While it is true that Belloc approached Distributism in a more systematic way (to which I shall return), it is also a fact that Chesterton had been wrestling with the implications of *Rerum Novarum* for at least as long as his older friend, and would produce the first book-length treatment of the subject: *What's Wrong with the World*, published in 1910.

Echoing Leo's attention to the family, Chesterton rested his defence of widespread property ownership on 'the principle of domesticity: the ideal house, the happy family, the holy family of history'. While the 'progressive intelligentsia' of his day denounced the chains of family life and shrieked 'to be let out of the decent home,' members of the working class yearned to enter in; and so they should, for this was the only way to build lives and a society in which humans might flourish. Appealing to the 'free

family,' Chesterton held that the home 'is the one anarchist institution,' 'older than law' and pre-existing the state. Standing as chambers of liberty, family homes should not be attached to each other nor be part of high-rise structures. Rather, they should stand on their own parcel of land, with a garden and space for simple animal care, because 'the idea of earthly contact and foundation,' 'of separation and independence,' is paramount. Every 'normal man' desires a 'visible kingdom, a fire at which he can cook what food he likes, a door he can open to what friends he chooses'. Indeed, such productive homesteads are the vital cells of a sustainable democratic order.

Two years later, Belloc's *The Servile State* appeared. He argued that slavery, banished by the Christian civilization of high medieval Europe from the 11th through to the 13th centuries, had returned. Under industrial conditions, once again 'an unfree majority of non-owners' worked for the gain of a small number of owners. The property-less were trapped in the 'servile state'.

How had this happened? Belloc said that in Great Britain the political effects of the Protestant Reformation were to blame. Prior to the mid-16th century, an English yeomanry actually existed: family-scale farmers with ownership or effective control of their land. However, King Henry VIII's seizure of monastic lands in the 1530s and 1540s and their distribution to loyal followers tipped the scales toward the consolidation of property by a new oligarchy. Using legal devices such as enclosures and 'statutes of fraud,' this group destroyed yeoman families over the next several centuries. By 1700 the British Isles were already places where only plutocrats or proletarians might be found.

When new inventions came along, the same rural oligarchy gained control of industry as well. A development that might have 'blest and enriched mankind' reinforced instead the stark division between owners and the propertyless. By his time, Belloc calculated that 19 of every 20 Britons were without land or capital, while a full third stood as indigent poor. Political democracy, the expansion of the franchise, had so far done nothing

to break this oligarchic control. He acknowledged that modern governments were using devices such as workmen's compensation and unemployment insurance to give some security to workers. In his view, however, this simply represented a new way to confirm their permanent servile status.

What was the alternative? For Belloc it was the recreation of a 'property state,' where ownership of a home, land, and other productive resources would once again be the normal expectation and status of families. In a parallel set of essays for the *Oxford and Cambridge Review*, published the same year, Belloc laid out concrete reforms that could restore property to families. Broadly stated, his reforms called on the government to act 'continually as the protector and nourisher of the small man' through progressive taxes on large corporate entities and direct and indirect subsidies to new and small enterprises, including credit unions under local, democratic control. Property taxes should fall heavily on the agricultural land of absentee owners; family-scale farmers, or peasants, as Belloc quaintly preferred, should pay no tax at all. Modern versions of artisan guilds should be re-chartered by local authorities, with controls over training, quality, and scale of production. Chain stores and department stores such as Harrod's should face special tax levies, small independent shops none at all. Belloc also favoured support of the *suburbs*, rightly understood. There was,

he said, 'a universal tendency making for private ownership of houses and small [gardening] plots just outside' the cities; it was here that 'a revolution upon a great scale could be effected' if the resources of the community could be protected and brought into play.

Chesterton, too, chimed in with specific ideas on how to make the 'property state' a reality. They bear both his optimism and his humour. Large retailers, he said, must face popular boycotts, which should be as easy as targeting 'shops selling instruments of torture or poisons for private use in the home'. Chesterton demanded an end to urban renewal projects that destroyed the informal fences, chicken coops, dovecots, and small gardens of urban dwellers in order to move these dwellers into modern apartments. Instead, 'we should seize on these [recalcitrant] slumdweller as if they were infant prodigies' bearing within them the seed of a 'spontaneous revival' of country ways. And he praised the Model T Ford as a populist, decentralizing alternative to the monopolistic railways. Indeed, 'the free and solitary traveller is returning before our very eyes'. The motorist recovered 'the freedom of the King's highway in the manner of Merry England'.

(to be continued)

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*G K Chesterton at work*

# The Abortion Act – An Act of Witness

Bishop John Sherrington



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**Today (27 October 2021) is the 54th anniversary of the passing of the Abortion Act in 1967. We grieve for the death of so many children, unborn lives, by legal abortion, almost 10 million since that date. We remember those women who carry the pain and burden of their decisions. As the numbers continue to rise each year, the conversion of hearts and minds towards the unborn child is ever more urgent.**

This week as we approach the COP26 meeting, focus has turned to the care of God's gift of creation and good stewardship of the earth. Many hours will be spent pondering emissions and policies. Behind this debate, Pope Francis reminds us in his encyclical *Laudato Si'* that everything is 'interconnected' and connected to every other part of creation. As we listen to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, we also listen to the cry of the unborn child in the womb, a voice that cannot be heard, but part of the interconnectedness of all reality. The Pope writes: 'Since everything is interrelated, concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion. How can we genuinely teach the importance of concern for other vulnerable beings, however troublesome or inconvenient they may be, if we fail to protect a human embryo, even when its presence is uncomfortable and creates difficulties?' 'If personal and social sensitivity towards the acceptance of the new life is lost, then other forms of acceptance that are valuable for society also wither away'. [*Laudato Si'* 120, *Caritas in Veritate* 51].

This understanding invites our reflection on the set of relationships between persons and with the whole of creation. It includes our relationships between women and men, with the unborn child, and the elderly. It includes the gift of sexual dignity, marriage, family, the world of work and all social and economic relationships. Rights are not just about our freedoms but respect the nature of

who we are as persons. From this flow our duties towards the vulnerable and those who cannot defend themselves. The profound loss of understanding of the gift of unborn life and its connectedness to all of reality, is at the heart of many of our social challenges. Yet it is not totally lost, since for this reason women agonise about abortion, but often many cannot see alternatives. Facing moral anguish and desperation, a choice is made which often leads to painful scars and deep grief which needs healing, as evidenced by the wonderful work of Rachel's Vineyard.

We have not only to face the terrible reality of almost 10 million legal abortions in this country. but also address the conditions which lead to abortion. The interconnectedness of all reality makes us reflect on violence which destroys human relationships, especially sexual and domestic violence. The abduction and murder of Sarah Everard has shocked the country. This interconnectedness also makes us reflect on poverty and housing. There is a task of education to build mutual and loving respectful relationships. A study of the many factors which lead to abortion is needed to begin to address the reasons for this number.

There are glimmers of hope. Polls show that 60% of the general population and 70% of women believe that the current 24-week gestational limit for abortion should be reduced. There is increasing concern about the law permitting abortion of children with disability up to birth, highlighted recently in the courageous case taken by Heidi Crowter. Her cry sought legal recognition for the unborn with disability: 'The judges might not think [the law] discriminates against me, the government might not think it discriminates against me, but I am telling you I feel discriminated against.' She lost her case, but not her innate dignity as a human being created by God from conception. She seeks appeal to the Court of Appeal. The argument must continue.

Part of our contemporary task in educating and motivating others to love life is to open them up to the wonder of the mystery of life, not only in imagination but also in practice. We can witness to this truth and educate by example when we show acts of kindness in caring for those women who are pregnant in difficult circumstances and seek to support them in caring for their child. We can witness to forgiveness and God's mercy when the Church offers the gift of mercy to those women who have chosen abortion.

Today's Act of Witness resonates with the Pope's hope that: 'amid the present crisis [of the pandemic] all will be led to a greater appreciation of the moral imperative to build a "culture of life" marked by ever greater concern for nurturing, protecting and promoting the integral welfare of all God's children, beginning with the most vulnerable' (Pope Francis, *Message for the Day for Life*, 2020).

# A Saint for Christmas

Dr Michael Straiton KCSG

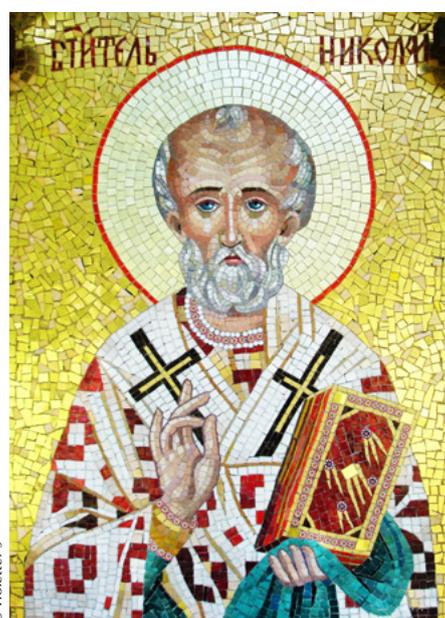
**I have often wondered why there are as many as 437 medieval churches in England dedicated to St Nicholas the Wonderworker (270 – 343 AD), one of the most popular saints for church dedications, with thousands more around the world and 50 in Rome! In addition, ‘Nicholas’ was one of the most common names for boys before the Reformation, as evidenced by baptismal records of the time.**

St Nicholas (the name is Greek meaning ‘victory of the people’) was born in Patara, which is now in Turkey. Brought up as a Christian, he became the Bishop of Myra, originally an ancient Greek city in Lycia, and now a small Turkish town named

Demre. In the first three centuries of our modern era Christians were periodically persecuted because they refused to worship the Roman Emperor as a god; to do so would have been idolatry and a denial of faith in the One God. Nicholas was imprisoned under the rule of the Emperor Diocletian but

after Constantine the Great was proclaimed Emperor at York in AD 313, Christianity gradually became a tolerated and then the official religion of the Empire, meaning that Christian prisoners, including Nicholas, were released. Subsequently he attended the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, when Constantine called bishops from around the then known world to codify the Christian faith and agree a formal summary of Christian belief in what became known as the Nicene Creed.

St Nicholas has the longest history as a patron of children as well as being the patron saint of many countries, notably Greece and Russia. One of the most popular stories tells of his compassion for three poor young women. Their father had lost his fortune and with it all hope of providing dowries for his three daughters. To save them from poverty and the threat of having to support themselves as prostitutes, Nicholas threw three bags of gold coins through an open window of the family's house, so that each daughter would have enough to make a good marriage.



St Nicholas, Wonderworker

In the 11th century, the Seljuk Turks began encroaching on the territory of the Byzantine Empire and by 1084, Myra, the site of the saint's tomb, was in Muslim hands. Although the Turks had not defiled the shrine, many Christians in the West thought that his relics needed rescuing. In 1087 sailors from Bari, in southern Italy, seized them and today the relics of St Nicholas lie in the crypt of the grand Romanesque basilica that the people of Bari built for the saint; pilgrims of all Christian denominations continue to visit the shrine. Recently Pope Francis arranged for a portion of the relics at Bari to be lent to Russia. A rib bone was extracted from the rock-bound tomb using key-hole surgery technique. It was then set in a casket and sent to Moscow in 2017, where it was venerated by thousands.

Countless children have been named after Nicholas, such as Nick in English, Nicol in Scots, Nicola and Colin in French, Cola in Italian, Klaus in German, Nikolaj and Kolinka in Russian and many others. As his day is shortly before Christmas, he was made the purveyor of the gifts of the season, and the Dutch element in New England introduced Santa Klaus to many a young American, so that at Christmas he eventually achieved fame all around the world.



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# A Different Kind of Pilgrimage

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*Lush greenery covers this mountainous area of Peru*

Bishop Mark Jabalé OSB

**Peru is a land full of surprises. It seems to combine the totally predictable with the unexpected. My discovery of the pilgrimage to Ayabaca is an example of the latter. We, in the First World, are used to calling a journey to Lourdes or the Holy Land either by plane or coach and train a pilgrimage. But there still exists in the world the good old-fashioned type of pilgrimage that our forefathers might have made in Chaucer's time. Ayabaca is one of the pilgrimage centres of Peru and each year thousands of pilgrims undertake the journey there on foot. In October 1985 a friend came to visit me from England in Tambogrande, and he and I decided to take the journey to Ayabaca; the easy way, by car.**

Ayabaca is a small town up in the mountains very near the border with Ecuador. It used to be the centre of Inca activity in that area, and there are still a great many trips one can make to some of these ruins. They will take you deep into the jungle; and the road is infested with robbers who will ambush you and relieve you of all you possess. It was probably rather for reasons of cowardice than for the expressed one of not having the time that we confined our journey to Ayabaca itself and to a car; such a trip into the interior would have had to be undertaken on the back of a donkey, with a guide. We were, in any case, due to go and see the immense riches of Cusco and Machu Picchu shortly afterwards, so we did not feel too deprived at missing a few badly exhibited ruins.

Ayabaca is the home of the *Señor Cautivo* (the Captive Lord), a most beautiful statue carved out of local wood, and the centre for pilgrimage for pretty well the whole of the northern region of Peru. The legend attached to the statue is that in 1751 the parish priest of Ayabaca, García Guerrero,

decided that the people of the town should have a carved wooden statue of their 'Holy Patron'. In order to carry out this project, he formed a committee of members of the parish. They decided to entrust the project to artists from Ecuador, who had the reputation of being the best sculptors of religious statues in that region. For that purpose, a delegation was sent to nearby Ecuador; but on the way there they met 'some men dressed in white', who told them that they were sculptors. These men said that they would accept to undertake the commission on three conditions:

- That no one should see them at work;
- That their meals should be passed through a window once in the morning every day; and
- That the price for the work would be agreed upon when the task was completed.

These conditions were adhered to and for some days the food was passed through the window. But soon the Ayabacans began to be overcome by curiosity; so they approached the house and started shouting, calling the sculptors. Receiving no answer, they shouted again and again, with the same negative result. So, finally, they entered the house, and the first thing they saw was that the food which had been passed through the window was still there, totally untouched. The house was completely empty, except for the main room, where there was the most beautiful statue of a Nazarene Christ, hands crossed in front and tied together. They called it the *Señor Cautivo*, and took the statue back to their village. Thus was born the legend that the statue was the work of angels; and slowly Ayabaca became a centre of pilgrimage for the whole of the

Northern Region, kept as a Solemnity on 13 October. First of all people came to see the statue, then they came for the miracles worked by the *Señor Cautivo*. The little village of Ayabaca then took on a very great importance, and became a small town. Much more recently, in answer to a request by Daniel Turley Murphy, Bishop of Chulucanas (the diocese for Ayabaca), Pope St John Paul II, who had visited Peru and Ecuador in 1984, elevated the Parish of Ayabaca to the rank of a Sanctuary. My friend and I went there shortly after that date, on 15 October.

The most common reason Peruvians go on the pilgrimage is because they have made a promise so to do; and a promise to the *Señor Cautivo*, unlike most other Peruvian promises, is a promise kept. I met a young man of 19 who, during the disastrous rains of 1983, almost lost his child through dehydration. Doctors could do nothing for the baby. So, he made a promise to the *Señor Cautivo* that if his son got better, he would make that pilgrimage to Ayabaca for four years in succession. The boy recovered; and he was on his second pilgrimage that year. Others do it to recover from a personal illness, to mend a feud in the family, to atone for past sins, or simply out of personal devotion. A woman whose health was rather poor decided to go on the pilgrimage and she was talking to me about it. I told her that with the state of her health she really ought to think again about going on that pilgrimage; her answer was 'Yes, of course Father, you're quite right. Because of my health I must go on the pilgrimage'. Devotion to the *Señor Cautivo* is not yet very widespread in the south of Peru, but it is spreading. Pilgrimages normally begin from one of the big centres in the North, round our area. Sechura, Paita or Talara, three ports along the Pacific

coast, will see their pilgrims leave first, because they have furthest to walk; and, please note, strictly walking, no other transport for any part of the pilgrimage. Ninety kilometres along, and a good day's journey later, pilgrims will start from Piura and Sullana. Again a further day's journey through the hot desert the road leads to Tambogrande, where we had our parish. This part of the journey is on an asphalt road, but the going is hard because there aren't many places you can shelter from the sun, which at this season is beginning to get quite hot. Also, there aren't many places where you can pick up water and walking in the sun is thirsty work. But at least the road is flat and the steep climbing will not come till later on. Tambogrande (grande = big or great, tambo = resting place) is the last staging post on the way to Ecuador, and most pilgrims will spend the night there.

And so you will see them, from the first week in October, walking along the main road – singly, in pairs or in groups; packs on backs, with enough food to last them the journey, although it will always be possible to buy food along the way. Most of them have a blanket wrapped around their midriffs; the only thing they will use to wrap themselves in at night to sleep on the floor. And, of course, a purple sash with a gaudy image of the *Señor Cautivo*, slung over the shoulder, their identification as pilgrims; this will earn them the respect and sympathy of all on the way, because the pilgrimage is a tough one and those who take part in it deserve admiration. The night before they set off, most pilgrims will have been to confession and to Mass. Confession is a rare occurrence in a Peruvian's life, but before the Ayabaca Pilgrimage, it is traditionally a time for shriving. Most towns will lay on a special Mass for pilgrims, their families and friends, to set them on their way. By this time, those pilgrims who set out a week before, because they were carrying a cross, will be well on along the road. Yes, some do carry a cross; and when I say a cross, I mean a real one; and when I saw these in Ayabaca Church I could hardly believe anyone could have carried them all that way. This is done as a special penance because a very special favour was granted. Some pilgrims find a way to cheat, because they fit small metal wheel at the foot of the cross, to help it roll along the road.

And so, from Tambogrande to Las Lomas, the last bit of asphalted road which took us in the car a short half hour, the start proper of the pilgrimage climb; the 150 kilometres which will wind its slow four or five day journey to Ayabaca. Along the road the scenery will undergo some startling changes; but at this stage, from Tambogrande to Las Lomas, the last little town before the wilderness, and for 16 kilometres more you might well think yourself in the southern part of France between Avignon and Aix-en-Provence on a hot summer's day; lush greens and colours, interspersed with browned and parched patches where the water has not reached. This is the Valley of San Lorenzo, an extremely efficiently irrigated area which proves that if the Peruvians got moving on irrigating the desert, the whole of that part could become a Garden of Eden.

(to be continued)

*Bishop Mark, Emeritus of Menevia, lives in retirement at Belmont Abbey, the Benedictine House of which he is a professed member.*



© Guillermo Gonzalo Sánchez Achutegui

*The statue, dressed*

# The Baldacchino Unveiled

Patrick Rogers



*This drawing of the unveiling of the baldacchino hangs in Clergy House*

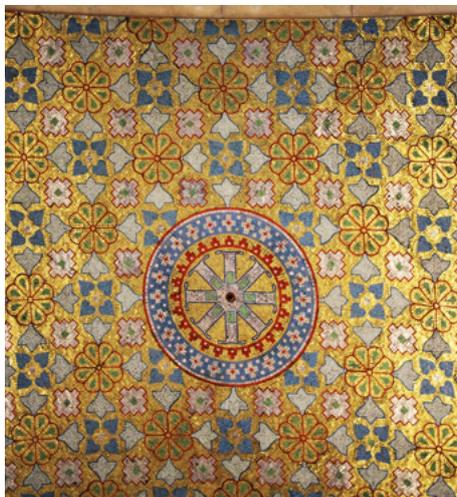
**On Christmas Eve 1906 the Baldacchino, the great marble canopy over the high altar in the Cathedral, was publicly revealed for the first time. It had been planned for 10 years and argued over for the last five. But neither the Architect who designed it nor the Cardinal who authorised it ever saw it. Nor would they have been very happy if they had.**

When, in July 1894, J F Bentley was commissioned by Cardinal Vaughan to be the architect of Westminster Cathedral he resolved to study Romanesque and Byzantine churches before starting work on the Cathedral plans. Leaving London in November, his first destination was Milan where he was struck by the appearance of the church of Sant Ambrogio, particularly its very early baldacchino supported by four ancient purple porphyry columns. Returning from his travels in March 1895, he immediately set to work on designing the new Cathedral. By May two ground plans had been produced – the first showing a square baldacchino in the apse (where the choir now sings) and the second showing it in its present position in the sanctuary. But it was Bentley's third and final plan, produced and approved by the Cardinal later that year, that was of most interest,

for it showed the baldacchino as it is today, supported by a semi-circle of four columns on each side.

By 1901 construction of the Cathedral had reached the point at which the decoration of the sanctuary could start. Bentley was determined that the high altar and baldacchino 'should be the crown of his work, the ark within the Holy of Holies', as his daughter and biographer put it. He was bitterly disappointed when his design for an elaborate altar was rejected by Cardinal Vaughan in favour of a 12-ton block of unadorned Cornish granite. But he was determined not to give way on the baldacchino. As he wrote in November 1901: 'At present I see no other way of doing the baldacchino than what I have shown, but I shall be glad of any suggestions. I know I spent a great deal of thought upon it, and I think it is the best thing about the Cathedral.' Bentley was determined to have eight columns of yellow Verona marble 15 feet high, and was ultimately triumphant over those who argued for the more usual four columns, which would, of course, have been cheaper.

On his choice of yellow Verona, however, Bentley was opposed by the Cardinal. While in Rome after



*Looking upwards from the mensa of the high altar*

his appointment as Archbishop of Westminster in 1892, Vaughan had been to the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls and was much taken by the translucency and colour of the onyx columns there. But some of these columns consist of three sections and Vaughan was determined on monoliths for the Cathedral at Westminster for 'all the columns are monoliths and the baldacchino ought to be reared on nothing inferior'. This was despite the view of the marble merchants of London, Belgium and Paris that onyx could not be obtained in lengths of more than five to five and a half feet, whereas columns 15 feet long were needed for the baldacchino. As luck would have it, Vaughan had a friend in Marseille, Marius Cantini, who had supplied the marbles for the new Byzantine Cathedral there and owned onyx quarries in Algeria. Although it would require many months, Cantini believed he could supply onyx columns of that length.

The winter of 1901-02 passed without success, but in May Cardinal Vaughan was able to write to Lady Herbert of Lea that, for the first time, and to the surprise of the marble merchants, eight onyx columns 15 feet long had been obtained. The following month this was announced in the Westminster Cathedral Record. Bentley never saw the columns, for he had died on 2 March 1902. After his death, his assistant for almost 25 years, John Marshall, took over. But against Bentley's express wish that the baldacchino should be produced by an English firm under the constant supervision of the Cathedral architect, Cardinal Vaughan asked Marius Cantini to submit an estimate for the whole baldacchino. This was to be made in Marseille and delivered ready for assembly, as also occurred with the font, archbishop's throne and pulpit – all made in Rome to the dismay of Bentley. But when the eight onyx columns were



*Fourteen feet of solid strength*

unpacked in the Cathedral three were found to be broken and a fourth badly cracked. So the idea of prefabrication in Marseille was abandoned.

What then happened is unclear. Bentley had produced a number of drawings of the baldacchino prior to his death in 1902. In a very early one (B-22) in pencil he had drawn a decorative finial for its top. Initially this consisted of a pineapple mounted on a globe, then on the same sheet it becomes a cross above a globe and in subsequent

coloured working drawings (B-24, 26, 34) just a gilt bronze cross 18 inches high. Two drawings of the baldacchino (B-23, 31) refer to a contract with the marble merchants Farmer & Brindley of 5 March 1903. In B-24, 27 and 33 the overall height, width and span above the altar have all been reduced by three feet and the columns are 14 feet high rather than Bentley's 15; B-24 is also annotated 'old onyx reduced in length.' So Bentley's dimensions were reduced, perhaps to try to save the onyx columns by making them shorter or simply to

save on cost. Marshall was completely faithful to Bentley, but Vaughan was much more interested in economy. Authority to alter Bentley's plans could only have come from him. This is supported by a letter in *The Tablet* of 19 September 1903 (after Vaughan's death on 19 June) protesting against the 'clipping and paring of a great artist's careful and thoughtful work' – the baldacchino.

It was not until after Archbishop Bourne had taken over at the end of 1903 that things moved on. A new contract was placed with Farmer & Brindley, eight columns of the yellow Verona on which Bentley had set his heart, arrived in July 1905 and, after 17 months' work, the scaled-down baldacchino was unveiled on Christmas Eve 1906. So Vaughan never got to use his onyx columns. They lay in St Joseph's Chapel for many years before being sold. In 1914 one was installed either side of Our Lady's Altar in Birmingham Oratory where they are listed, rather ironically, as Siberian onyx. The fate of the others is unknown. Bentley did finally get his yellow Verona columns, albeit posthumously, but they are 14 feet long rather than the 15 he had planned. And neither on the drawings of the scaled-down baldacchino sent to Farmer & Brindley in 1904-05, nor on the structure revealed in December 1906, was there any sign of the little bronze cross. Like Cardinal Vaughan before him, Bourne had strong views on the Cathedral decoration. As far as the cross is concerned, it rather looks as if he did not like it.



*The baldacchino in Sant' Ambrogio, Milan – an inspiration to J F Bentley*



© Mazur/CBCEW.org.uk

*Making a new friend*

## Little Amal visits the Cathedral

Little Amal is the giant puppet at the heart of *The Walk*, travelling 8,000km in support of refugees. During 2021, the 3.5 metre-tall living artwork of a young Syrian refugee child has walked across Turkey, Greece, Italy, France, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium and the UK to focus attention on the urgent needs of young refugees.



*The Cathedral was crowded with young and old – and their phones for pictures*



© Mazur/CBCEW.org.uk

*A new use for the pulpit; the Cardinal greets Amal*

The story began in Good Chance Theatre's play, *The Jungle*. Amal appeared as a character who represented the hundreds of unaccompanied minors in the Calais migrant camp who were separated from their families. The play contributed to a global conversation about refugees and shared humanity, and Amal was brought to life as a giant puppet made by War Horse creators Handspring Puppet Company. Her journey from Gaziantep near the Turkey-Syria border to Manchester in the UK, has shone a light on the stories of the millions of young refugees who are displaced – and the many who are forced to risk arduous journeys for the chance of a better life.

## An Eminent Guest

November being the month of many Requiem Masses, the diocesan clergy have their own occasion of praying for the souls of their brethren at the Annual Deceased Clergy Mass. This year the Mass coincided with the presence in London of His Eminence George Cardinal Pell, sometime Archbishop of Sydney, Australia, who shared in the celebration of Mass and the subsequent socialising in Cathedral Hall. Here he is seen, with Bishop Michael Campell OSA, Emeritus of Lancaster, on his right and on his left (not visible) the Cathedral's own resident Antipodean, Fr Brian O'Mahony.



## A Trio becomes a Quartet



In recent times we have been used to having three Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Victories living with us in the Clergy House Convent on the top floor, and many will know their faces from having seen them at Mass in the Cathedral. However, the Sisters do have their own chapel and there has been a tradition of Mass being celebrated for them there once each week. Generally it has been the Administrator who undertook this responsibility, but this is now being shared among the Chaplains, so that we may all have the experience of being with the Sisters in their own home at much closer quarters than is possible in the Cathedral, where distances are inevitably much greater. Pictured here before Mass are (left to right) Sr Angelina, Sr Celeste, Sr Jesuina and Sr Fatima, who, we are delighted to report, has come to join the Sisters here in Westminster. We wish her happiness in her new home.

## A Photographer Caught



The Catholic Police Guild had its Annual Requiem in the Cathedral, with Bishop Alan Williams sm of Brentwood presiding and the customary presentation of police headgear to represent deceased officers was made at the beginning of Mass. Dame Cressida Dick, Metropolitan Police Commissioner was present, having been met and welcomed by Cardinal Vincent. It just happened that both the Editor of *Oremus*, who would describe himself as a person with a camera, was present at the same time as Marcin Mazur, who works for the Bishops' Conference and is properly described as a photographer. *Oremus* is often indebted to Marcin for images, but on this occasion the temptation to picture him taking pictures proved irresistible. We apologise to him (seen standing in front of the throne) for cutting half his head off.

# In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*

## Snowball Prayers

There are such things as exaggerated and mistaken devotions, and there are people so weak-minded and over-credulous as to be led astray by the first presumptuous apostle of his (or her) own private formula of prayers who seeks to propagate it. By post one gets the following: "THE PRAYER. Lord God, bless, we pray Thee, the whole human race, and lead us to dwell with Thee in Thy dwelling place." If, as one presumes, dwelling place here means on earth the true Church and Heaven in the world to come, the prayer is a good one, and, by those to whom the wording appeals, may be repeated with advantage. But why not keep it to oneself, or, at most, with fitting diffidence, show it to one's intimate friends? Why add: "This prayer has been sent out to the whole earth. Tradition says that those who send it further will be delivered from calamity. Copy it and send it to nine different persons within nine days. The ninth you will experience a great joy"?

"Sent out to the whole earth" – this is simply not true. "Tradition says," etc. – tradition says nothing of the kind. "Nine persons within nine days" – here we have downright superstition. Wouldn't it be better to send it to three hundred and sixty five persons within a year? "On the ninth day you will experience a great joy." What right has an uninspired person to pose as a prophet? And where is the Ecclesiastical permission, the Bishop's permission, without which devotions cannot lawfully be spread about?

A correspondent wrote, on receiving the "Prayer" and misleading screed affixed: "I have had so much unhappiness in my life that I can't risk any more, and so have sent it on to nine people within the nine days. I could not return the thing as I should have liked to do, as I don't even know the handwriting. There may be other people as feeble-minded and as superstitious as I am."

We recommend our readers to put objectionable leaflets of the sort into the fire, which is their proper place. If you want to experience great joy on the ninth or any other day, do daily some good work, hear Mass, say the Rosary, visit the Blessed Sacrament and propagate these solid practices of piety not only among nine people for nine days, but among as many people as you can, and, as far as may be, every day of your life.

*from the December 1921 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle*

## Medal Winners

Bishop Guazzelli has presented three laymen with the *Bene Merenti* Medal and Scroll:

Mr Joseph Pettazzoni – our beloved 'Joseph', who, for over 30 years, has been a Cathedral Sacristan. He is known literally to millions all over the world. His permanent niche is at the back of the Cathedral, never failing to greet both the arrival and departure of visitor and parishioner alike with a sincere and heartfelt wish. His personal smile to each and every person has warmed the hearts of countless numbers – and who knows how much that smiling greeting has played in introducing strangers to their first contact with the love of Christ in His Church? Born in Bologna on St Joseph's Day, 19 March 1892, Joseph was at one time chief 'cellist in the Moscow Symphony Orchestra. Coming to the Cathedral in 1939, he has given daily unstinted service for 32 years. The only days he has had away in the whole of that time are two short periods through sickness! Otherwise he has been at his post 365 days a year and it is impossible adequately to express our gratitude in material terms.

Mr John Farey – 'Jack' to all lovers of the Cathedral. Born in Clapham on 28 March 1903, he has operated the lift in the Cathedral Tower for 41 years – coming to the Cathedral on 24 September 1930. At a conservative estimate, in that time Jack has travelled 650,000 times up and down the tower – approximately 35,000 miles or 1½ times round the circumference of the world – in the lift!

Mr Giovanni Ruscetta – The most eloquent tribute to Mr Ruscetta lies in the very fact that, after 30 years' voluntary devoted service to the Cathedral, he remains comparatively unknown. He presents living testimony to the call of Christ so to labour for the Kingdom of God that the Father alone knows the fullness of it. Born in Rarto, near Milan, on 29 July 1884, he offered his services to the Cathedral during the blitz on London in 1940. Since then he has daily worked quietly in most of his free time in assisting the sacristans to prepare for evening Masses and Services on weekdays, and has worked unsparingly in the background on Sundays and major feasts.

To these three loyal Cathedral servants we offer our deepest gratitude and our most sincere congratulations on their so well-deserved awards.

*from the December 1971 Westminster Cathedral Journal*

# Fare Ye Well



Christina White

**A blank sheet of paper, a blank screen, a word count. It is a strange feeling to be writing my last *Oremus* contribution (well, last at least for the Friends' Page). The year 2021 closes with art talks planned and our annual Big Give fundraiser. December is usually a flurry of activity for the Friends but this year, as last, there will be no Christmas Fair – no tinsel-laden exhaustion – and the days will count down with a greater sense of solemnity, and of time passing.**

December is a time to look back and I reflect on so many years at the Cathedral and some brilliant moments that will stay in my memory forever: Mass in Peterborough Cathedral in memory of Katherine of Aragon; sitting at St John Henry Newman's desk, or imagining the hedgerows of great recusant houses, of Oxburgh Hall, of Mapledurham, of Coughton Court, bestrewn with white cotton sheets – a signal of safety or of warning. There were dinners and parties, talks and concerts, and so many cream teas.

I remember Stephen Hough playing the piano before a vast canvas by the artist Peter Doig. I had cleared up in the library where pre-concert drinks were served, and I sat in the well by the sanctuary to hear him play. I remember the rose petals that we scattered as the relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux left the Cathedral and the beautiful, poignant motet written by Martin Baker to mark the Friends' 40th Anniversary.

There were mad moments. Being thrust out into a thunderstorm armed with metal-tipped golf umbrellas at an unnamed Northamptonshire country house because the alarms had gone off; trying to source baskets of snowdrops for a dinner at The Travellers' Club (Leona,

I will always be grateful) and the time The Vintners removed the sparklers from 120 party bags. One year before the Christmas Fair, I gave all the poinsettias to Sr Angelina to look after because I thought she was good with plants ... and who could forget the boxes and boxes of sweet-scented shower gel that burst open on arrival and left Clergy House Reception smelling like a boudoir, much to the confusion of visiting clergy and, indeed, the consternation of Canon Christopher Tuckwell.

Throughout, there were trustees who made their own individual contribution to the Friends and the volunteers – too numerous to mention – who filed and packaged, cleared tables, washed glasses, made me tea. I am grateful to all and everyone who helped, and especially to Patrick who would always say: 'Offer it up.'

What stands out most in 14 years, are the thank you's; the handwritten cards that expressed a kindness, an appreciation. That, more than the fundraising achievements, the perceived glamour of a black-tie event, are what will stay with me. I am glad that I gave someone a day to remember. My term of office ends appropriately with a musical event. We held an online organ concert last year and it spoke of hope for the future and reached out, as all the online events did, to the countryside and countries beyond. I hope that this will continue. I wish you fair blessings for a Happy and Holy Christmas. And I look forward, as the Cathedral will look forward, to the blank, white sheet of a New Year. I leave you with Jackie Kay's *Promise*. Fare ye well.

Remember the time of year when the future appears like a blank sheet of paper a clean calendar, a new chance. On thick white snow

you vow fresh footprints then watch them go with the wind's hearty gust. So, fill your glass. Here's tae us. Promises made to be broken, made to last.

## Forthcoming Events

**30 November** - BIG GIVE Christmas Challenge in aid of the Westminster Cathedral Hall Community Project. This year we are raising further funds to refurbish the Hall kitchen. The appeal ends on 6 December.

Please note that the VMG account has now closed and payment for all events should be via cheque payable to The Friends of Westminster Cathedral pending alternative online payment.

**1 December:** Online art talk with Paul Pickering: French artists in Rome in the Grand Siècle (17th Century) 7pm. Tickets £5

**10 December:** Advent Organ Music. A special online recital with Peter Stevens, Assistant Master of Music, who will also join us online after the concert for chat and drinks. Tickets £10

**16 February:** Live from Queen's College, Oxford: Dr Conor O'Brien on St Patrick and the Early Saints of Ireland. This is the second in our series of online talks based on the Chapels of Westminster Cathedral 7pm. Tickets £5

## Contact us

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

## CATHEDRAL HISTORY – A PICTORIAL RECORD

### Mgr Canon Martin Howlett Celebrates his Golden Jubilee of Priesthood

Paul Tobin

On Monday 21 December 1936 the longest-ever serving Cathedral Administrator to date (1906-1946), Mgr Martin Howlett, celebrated High Mass in the presence of Archbishop Arthur Hinsley (Archbishop of Westminster 1935-1943) and members of the Metropolitan Chapter to mark the 50th anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood on the Feast of St Thomas the Apostle in 1886 (St Thomas' feast was moved from December in the reform of the Calendar after the 2nd Vatican Council).

As a Protonotary Apostolic, he was to be entitled to pontificate at High Mass, wearing a white mitre (Mitra Simplex) and seated not on the faldstool as would a bishop be, but on the sedilia as shown in the picture. The right of a Protonotary Apostolic to pontificate was limited to just three times a year. There is some doubt as to which piece of furniture formed the sedilia (the seat for the Sacred Ministers) but one candidate is the bench now situated outside the sacristy.



After 1968, the most junior rank of Monsignor, the Privy Chamberlain, was retitled Papal Chamberlain. In the back row on the far right of the picture can be seen a Privy Chamberlain wearing the purple mantellone, a full length purple garment worn directly over the cassock. The only other Cathedral Administrator to have been given the title of Protonotary Apostolic was Mgr

Canon Francis Bartlett, whom some readers may remember from his time in that post from 1966-1977.

Behind the archways of the Lady Chapel can be seen the wooden floor, which was not decorated with marble until the mid-1950s.

Photograph: *Westminster Cathedral Chronicle* January 1937

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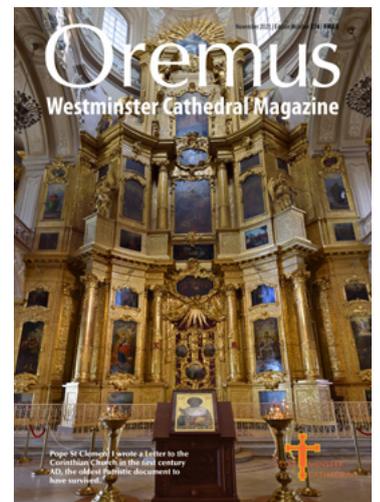
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We would like to thank our readers for their continued support and all those who send donations. Increased postal costs for overseas mean that annual subscription rates are UK £25; Europe £55; Rest of the world £70.

Send to: *Oremus*, 42 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QW United Kingdom



# SVP and Westminster Cathedral: A Special Relationship

Jahnel Marseglia, Year 6



**At St Vincent de Paul School, we are very fortunate to be the parish school of Westminster Cathedral. There are a number of special events that happen throughout the year because of our partnership. In the season of Advent, the School performs our Nativity Play in the Cathedral [see 14 December in the Diary pages – Ed.]. Nursery Class dress as stars, Reception as shepherds and sheep, Year 1 as Wise Men and Year 2 as Angels. Key Stage 2 perform as Chamber Choir and School Choir and some children are chosen as narrators.**

We often see Fr Vincent in the Cathedral celebrating Mass, when we have Holy Days of Obligation and when Year 3 children receive their First Holy Communion (we walk the short distance from our school, which is only just next door!). This term in Religious Education in Year 6, one of our topics is 'Vocations and Commitment'. As School Chaplain, Fr Vincent Mbu'i visits the school every week. For this topic, he came to our class and spoke to us about his training and vocation to the priesthood. It was extremely interesting and we learnt so much.

First of all he spoke to us about his calling from God to become a priest and what had inspired him. We learned that some young seminarians from a seminary near the village where he lived fascinated him. He thought that the men seemed very blessed and he wanted to feel the same sort of contentment. He even pretended to be a priest when he was younger!

During his 11 years of training he studied Theology – The science of God (we learnt that 'theos' means God and 'logos' means science of), Philosophy, Psychology, Anthropology and Sociology – we were impressed by these extensive studies and knowledge of Fr Vincent. His school was called a seminary, and in his time there he was taught about six important aspects of his role as a priest: academic, emotional, spiritual, social, communication and morality.

He also told us about how, during a priest's ordination, the Ordinand (the name used when a priest is about to be ordained) must take three vows:

- Obedience – Promising to following the will of God,
- Chastity – Promising not to get married, and always to be faithful to God the Father,
- Poverty – Promising to live a simple life and sharing everything with others, and knowing that you can depend on God for all that you need.

Priests receive a small stipend (an amount of money) each month, and cannot receive any gifts that cannot be shared equally. All of them have to spend some time in silence to connect with God. This time is called a 'retreat'. During their long period of quiet, they spend time praying to God and reflecting. Fr Vincent talked to us about having to be able to control his emotions in different situations, and how he has to be able to be contemplatively listening all the time (which means listening with the third ear and being able to decipher all the emotions that his parishioners may be experiencing).

In his time with us, he taught us so much about vocations and was able to answer so many questions. We asked him challenging questions that enabled us to have a better understanding of what it means to answer God's call and this also helps us to deepen our understanding of what it means to be a Catholic. I look forward to seeing Fr Vincent on his next visit and I have many more questions to ask.

St John Damascene (mid 7th-mid 8th centuries AD) has his feast on 4 December and is often referred to as the last of the Eastern Fathers of the Church. Ending his life as a monk and as such a poet of note, he had enjoyed a remarkable career as a trusted Administrator working for the Muslim Sultan. He is famous for his defence of the veneration of images in Christian devotion at the time of the Iconoclastic Controversy which rocked the Christian East. An unlikely legend has the Christian Emperor Leo the Isaurian plotting John's downfall by having treacherous letters forged in the saint's hand, which led the Sultan to order John's hand cut off. However, the saint prayed in front of an image of the Virgin (shown here), who healed and restored it – which perhaps underlines the importance of images and icons for our prayer.



© Wellcome Images

## The Month of December

### The Holy Father's Prayer Intention

**Evangelisation:** Catechists – Let us pray for the Catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God; may they be its witnesses with courage, creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### Wednesday 1 December *Ps Week 1*

Advent feria

**11am, 2pm** Catholic Children's Society  
Carol Services

### Thursday 2 December

Advent feria

### Friday 3 December *Friday abstinence*

St Francis Xavier, Priest

\* Migrants' Day



St Francis baptising

### Saturday 4 December

St John Damascene, Priest & Doctor

**4pm** Monthly Mass, 1962 Missal  
(Blessed Sacrament Chapel)

### The Cathedral is open from 7.30am and closes in time for 7pm.

**Monday to Friday:** Morning Prayer 7.35am, Mass 8am, Mass (Latin, unless there is a Funeral) 10.30am, Mass 12.30pm \*, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 1.15-4.30pm, Sung Vespers 5pm (Latin, Choir, except Tuesday, English, Cantor), Solemn Mass 5.30pm (Choir, Tuesday Boys' voices, Wednesday Men's voices).

**Saturday:** Morning Prayer 7.35am, Mass 8am, Mass 10.30am (Latin, sung), Mass 12.30pm \*, Sung Vespers 5.30pm (English, Cantor), Sung Mass 6pm

**Sunday:** Mass 8am, Sung Morning Prayer 9.30am, Sung Mass 10am, Solemn Mass 12noon (Choir) \*, Solemn Vespers and Benediction 4pm \*, Sung Mass 5.30pm, Mass 7pm

\* Live streamed via the Cathedral website

Additional hours of Confessions before Christmas will be advertised in the Cathedral and on the website.

### Sunday 5 December *Ps Week 2*

#### 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**12pm** Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

*Rubbra* – Missa in honorem Sancti Dominici

*Palestrina* – Deus tu conversus

Organ: *Escaich* – Evocation II

**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction

*Incertus* – Magnificat quinti toni

*Gibbons* – This is the record of John

Organ: *Demessieux* – Rorate cæli

### Monday 6 December

Advent feria

(St Nicholas, Bishop)

**2pm** Woldingham School Carol Service

### Tuesday 7 December

St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor

**5.30pm** Vigil Mass of the Immaculate

Conception of Our Lady

(Cathedral Chapter Mass)

**7pm** HCPT Carol Service

### Wednesday 8 December

#### THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, Patron of the Diocese

**5.30pm** Sung Mass (Full Choir)

*Palestrina* – Missa brevis

*Victoria* – Ave Maria

Organ: *Tournemire* – Postlude (L'Orgue mystique II)

### Thursday 9 December

Advent feria

(St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin)

**7.30pm** London Fire Brigade Carol Service



St Juan Diego in the *Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Zapopan*

### Friday 10 December *Friday abstinence*

Blessed Virgin Mary of Loreto

### Saturday 11 December

Advent feria

(St Damasus I, Pope)

### Sunday 12 December *Ps Week 3*

#### 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Gaudete Sunday)

**12pm** Sung Mass (Full Choir)

*Mozart* – Spatzenmesse (K.220)

*Sweelinck* – Gaude et lætare

Organ: *J S Bach* – Prelude & Fugue in

A major (BWV 536)

**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction

*Bevan* – Magnificat quarti toni

*Byrd* – Vigilate

Organ: *J S Bach* – Nun komm der

Heiden Heiland (BWV 661)

**Monday 13 December**

St Lucy, Virgin &amp; Martyr

**Tuesday 14 December**St John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor  
**2pm** SVP Catholic Primary School  
Carol Service**Wednesday 15 December**Advent feria  
**7.30pm** Christmas Celebration I**Thursday 16 December**Advent feria  
7.30pm Christmas Celebration II**Friday 17 December** *Friday abstinence*Advent feria  
**2pm** Westminster Cathedral Choir  
School Carol Service**Saturday 18 December**

Advent feria

**Sunday 19 December** *Ps Week 4***4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT****12pm** Solemn Mass (Full Choir)  
*Palestrina* – Missa brevis  
*Bruckner* – Ave Maria  
Organ: *Alain* – Litanies  
**4pm** Parish Carol Service  
Organ: *J S Bach* – In dulci jubilo (BWV 729)**Monday 20 December**

Advent feria

**Tuesday 21 December**Advent feria  
(St Peter Canisius, Priest & Doctor)**Wednesday 22 December**

Advent feria

**Thursday 23 December**Advent feria  
(St John of Kanty, Priest)St John of Kanty in the Collegium Maius  
w Krakowie

Please check Christmas service times in  
the Newsletter and on the website in  
case of changes having to be made

**Friday 24 December** (Christmas Eve)*Friday abstinence*Advent feria  
**8, 10.30am, 12.30pm** Mass  
*Abstinence ends***4pm** Pontifical Solemn First Vespers of  
Christmas (Cardinal Nichols)  
*Buxtehude* – Magnificat in D  
*Poulenc* – O magnum mysterium  
Organ: *Messiaen* – Dieu parmi nous  
(La Nativité du Seigneur)**6pm** Vigil Mass of Christmas with  
Blessing of Crib**7.30pm** Cathedral closes; reopens  
at **10pm****11.15pm** Vigil and Solemn Pontifical  
Mass During the Night (Cardinal  
Nichols)*Haydn* – Missa Sancti Nicolai*Byrd* – Lætentur cæliOrgan: *Widor* - Final (Symphonie VI)**Saturday 25 December****THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD****8am** Mass  
of the Dawn**10am** Sung Mass of the Day**12pm** Solemn Pontifical Mass of the  
Day (Cardinal Nichols)*Victoria* – Missa O magnum

mysterium

*Sweelinck* – Hodie Christus natus estOrgan: *Mulet* – Carillon-Sortie**3pm** Solemn Pontifical Second  
Vespers and Benediction (Cardinal  
Nichols)*Palestrina* – Magnificat primi toni*Pérotin* – Viderunt omnesOrgan: *Balbastre* – Quand Jésus  
naquit à Noël**3.45pm** The Cathedral closes.**Sunday 26 December****THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY  
AND JOSEPH***Usual Sunday Mass times***12pm** Solemn Mass**4pm** Solemn English Vespers and  
Benediction

On Monday and following days:

**9.30am-6pm** Cathedral open**10.30am, 12.30pm, 5.30pm** Mass**11.30-12.30pm** Confessions**Monday 27 December**

St JOHN, Apostle &amp; Evangelist

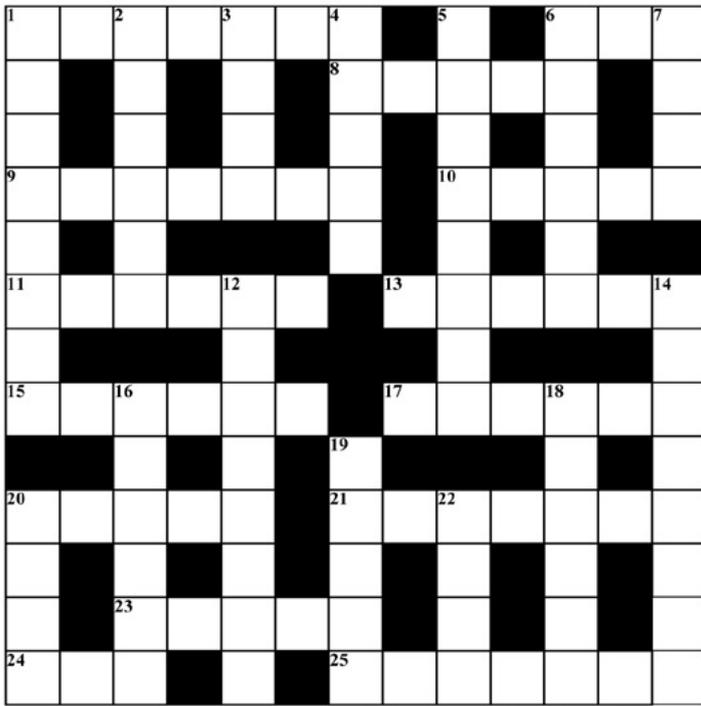
**Tuesday 28 December**

THE HOLY INNOCENTS, Martyrs

**Wednesday 29 December**ST THOMAS BECKET, Bishop & Martyr,  
Patron of the Parish Clergy**Thursday 30 December**6th DAY IN THE OCTAVE OF  
CHRISTMAS**Friday 31 December** *No Friday abstinence*7th DAY IN THE OCTAVE  
OF CHRISTMAS

**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****Catholic Grandparents' Association**Hinsley Room,  
Second Sundays 12-3.30pm**Charismatic Prayer Group**Cathedral Hall,  
Fridays 6.30-9pm**Divine Mercy Prayer Group**St Patrick's Chapel,  
Sundays 1.30-2.30pm**Filipino Club**Hinsley Room,  
First Sundays 1-5pm**Lectio Divina**Hinsley Room,  
Monday 7-8pm**Legion of Mary**Hinsley Room,  
Monday 1.30-3.30pm**Nigerian Catholic Association**Hinsley Room,  
Fourth Sundays – 1.30-3pm**RCIA group**Hinsley Room,  
Wednesday 7-8.30pm**Rosary Group**Lady Chapel,  
Saturday 10-10.25am**Walsingham Prayer Group**St George's Chapel,  
First Tuesdays 2.30-4pm**Yoruba Association**Hinsley Room,  
Third Saturdays 1.30-3pm



Alan Frost December 2021 – No. 94

**Clues Across**

- 1 Angel who ‘from Heaven came’ in the carol (7)
- 6 Vessel for cooking or flowers (3)
- 8 Description of a perfect situation (5)
- 9 ‘The Black -----’ of Rocamadour, much visited by pilgrims (7)
- 10 St Bernard of -----, 12th century monk and theologian, wrote ‘Daily, Daily, Sing to Mary’ hymn (5)
- 11 Snack food with wine at the **15 Across** ? (6)
- 13 Day the maids were ‘a-milking’ in the carol (6)
- 15 Informal get-together (6)
- 17 Short phrase, meaning for the time being (3,3)
- 20 Italian composer of a famous Sanctus from his ‘Requiem’ (5)
- 21 Italian Renaissance painter, with own room of works in the National Gallery (7)
- 23 Floor covering in the birthplace of Jesus (5)
- 24 See **7 Down**
- 25 Term from the Middle Ages for a monastery or convent (7)

**Clues Down**

- 1 Novelty ideas and stunts to attract people’s attention (8)
- 2 ‘On Westminster -----’, Wordsworth’s famous poem of December 1802 (6)
- 3 Duke of Waterloo buried in St Paul’s Cathedral (4)
- 4 Pastel colour, and flower gathered in WW2 song (5)
- 5 One of the Three Kings in the carol (8)
- 6 Agricultural implement, literal in Genesis, symbolic in Luke Chapter 9 (6)
- 7 & **24 Across**: Boy who melts Scrooge’s heart (4,3)
- 12 European whose Christmas greeting is ‘Feliz Navidad’ (8)
- 14 Contrary virtue to the deadly sin of pride (8)
- 16 Holy oil used in anointing (6)
- 18 State of altered consciousness, possibly linked to ecstasy (6)
- 19 Placed upon the monarch’s head during Westminster Coronation (5)
- 20 Dress to offer Holy Mass (4)
- 22 William -----, Quaker giving name to N.E. State of the USA (4)

**ANSWERS**

**Across:** 1 Gabriel 6 Pot 8 Ideal 9 Madonna 10 Cluny 11 Cheese 13 Eighth 15 Social 17 Pro Tem 20 Verdi 21 Raphael 23 Straw 24 Tim 25 Nunnery **Down:** 1 Gimmicks 2 Bridge 3 Iron 4 Lilac 5 Melchior 6 Plough 7 Tiny 12 Spaniard 14 Humility 16 Christ 18 Trance 19 Crown 20 Vest 22 Penn

# What the Bird Said Early in the Year

C S Lewis

I heard in Addison’s Walk a bird sing clear:  
 This year the summer will come true. This year. This year.  
 Winds will not strip the blossom from the apple trees  
 This year, nor want of rain destroy the peas.  
 This year time’s nature will no more defeat you,  
 Nor all the promised moments in their passing cheat you.  
 This time they will not lead you round and back  
 To Autumn, one year older, by the well-worn track.  
 This year, this year, as all these flowers foretell,  
 We shall escape the circle and undo the spell.  
 Often deceived, yet open once again your heart,  
 Quick, quick, quick, quick! – the gates are drawn apart.

# Advent Calendar

Rowan Williams

He will come like last leaf’s fall.  
 One night when the November wind  
 has flayed the trees to the bone, and earth  
 wakes choking on the mould,  
 the soft shroud’s folding.

He will come like frost.  
 One morning when the shrinking earth  
 opens on mist, to find itself  
 arrested in the net  
 of alien, sword-set beauty.

He will come like dark.  
 One evening when the bursting red  
 December sun draws up the sheet  
 and penny-masks its eye to yield  
 the star-snowed fields of sky.

He will come, will come,  
 will come like crying in the night,  
 like blood, like breaking,  
 as the earth writhes to toss him free.  
 He will come like child.

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

# Thoughts as the Year of St Joseph Ends

John O'Neill

**St Clement prayed: 'O God, make us children of quietness and heirs of peace'. It is thought-provoking, since at times moments of quiet can overtake us unexpectedly. There is an African saying that it takes a whole village to raise a child. A few years ago I was struck by how one very young child can commandeer the attention of everyone within range. We respond irresistibly.**

I was on a long haul flight and at first I was feeling like a grumpy old man. When you are on a plane at night, how come everyone else seems able to sleep but not you? Having exhausted all entertainment options, I was hoping that this was not going to be some long dark night of the soul. My mind drifted back to innocent days on rainy schoolroom afternoons in England memorising Shakespeare – *sleep knitting up the ravell'd sleeve of care, sleep is sore labor's bath, balm of hurt minds*. That's what I need but I'm wedged in economy wearing my complimentary travel slippers with a scathing inner voice saying: 'So these little slippers are going to stop you having a deep vein thrombosis high above the South China Sea?' Yes, the prospect was bleak and gloomy.

That was when the spotted fluffy cat sailed out of the darkness. A few rows ahead I realised it was feeding time for a disgruntled infant. When you're not sure if it's breakfast or dinner, when all around you are simply shapes huddled under blankets, what do you do? You wail. If you have teeth, you gnash them. Mum and Dad respond in a very satisfactory way. Helpful ladies come running. Strangers bring back your fluffy cat. The flightdeck is temporarily the world in microcosm, and we are all drawn to the infant in distress. Our whole attention is powerfully engaged by a baby. Perhaps we each feel some deep stirring within, elusively beyond conscious memory.

Even as adults we are never very far from the same fundamental helplessness. We may busy ourselves staking out territory in various ways, but at times, as on a journey, we simply have to wait passively. As we wait, our so-urgent priorities gradually diminish. On a plane we regress to some stateless timeless vulnerability. In this shadowy childlike world, nothing is more important than making sure baby's feeding bottle is exactly right, the blanket arranged just so, fluffy cat close at hand for comfort. In a few hours more, of course, at the airport, identity kicks back in and the rush is on again. For now the nightlights are a benign votive glow and we travel hopefully, held secure.

As the plane engine lulls our thoughts, we reflect. Children are not self-conscious. They are robustly curious about life and don't hold on to regrets. St Thérèse of Lisieux advises us not to be discouraged if we fail because: 'children fall often, but are too small to hurt themselves'. Thérèse didn't set herself unreachable goals but rather observed wryly: 'I will have the right of doing stupid things up until my death, if I am humble and I remain little. Look at little children: they never stop breaking things, tearing things, falling down, and they do this even while loving their parents very, very much.' When we become as little children we lose our self-deceptions. However, there is another process whereby childlike simplicity irresistibly attracts those around us. As the Year of Saint Joseph concludes, we may think the counterpoint of a father-figure is the one who is child-like.



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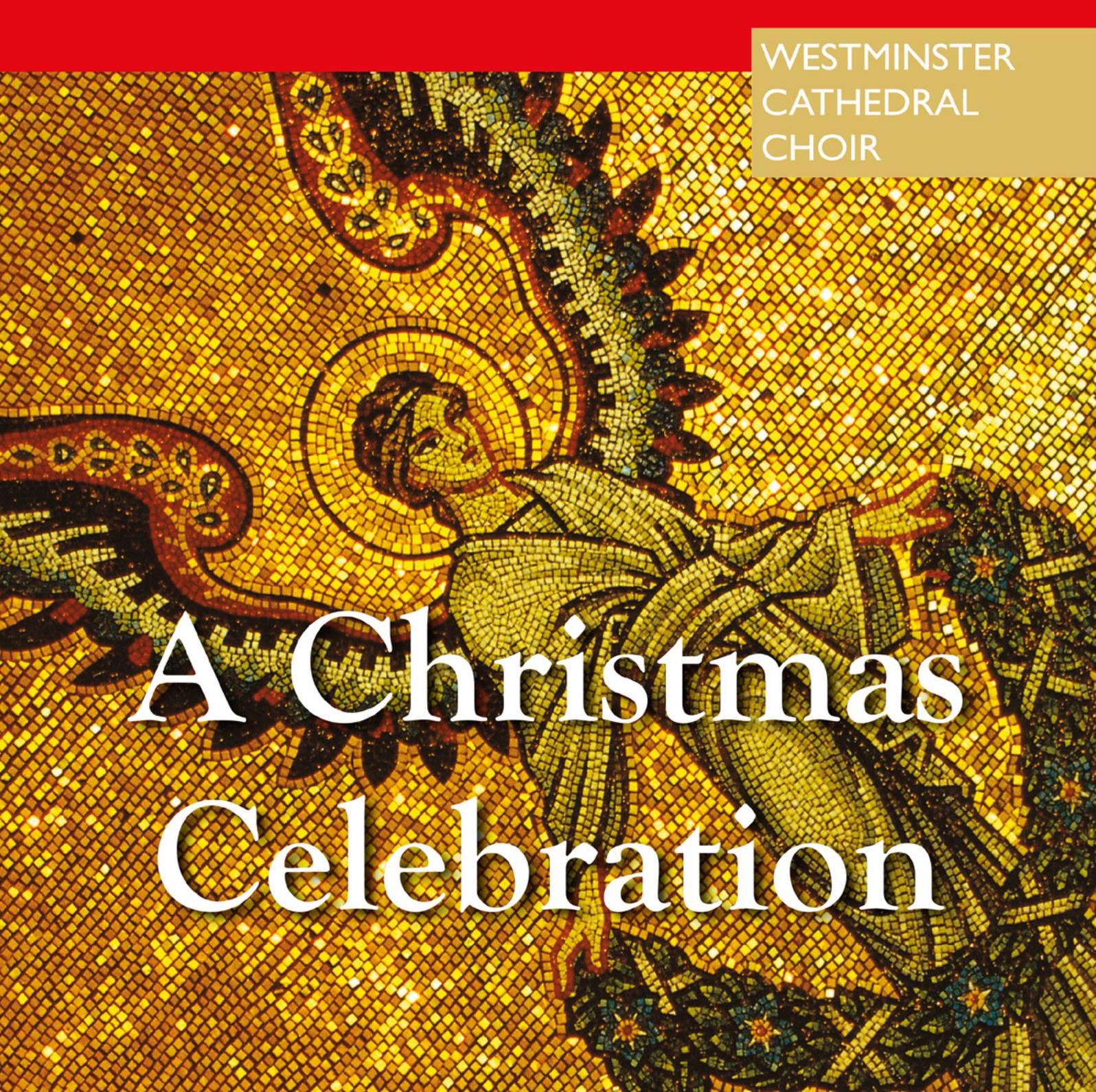
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WESTMINSTER  
CATHEDRAL  
CHOIR

# A Christmas Celebration

Westminster Cathedral Choir *and* Orchestra  
*directed by* Simon Johnson

Wednesday 15 *and* Thursday 16 December 2021  
7:30pm

Tickets available from Ticketmaster [www.ticketmaster.co.uk](http://www.ticketmaster.co.uk)

This is a fundraising event in aid of Westminster Cathedral