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Administrator and Chairman of the Friends





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# Dear Friends of Westminster Cathedral

I AM SURE that we will never forget the experience of the last twelve months - when the advent of COVID-19 changed everything! Who could have ever imagined what living through a pandemic would be like? Having to adjust every aspect of our lives and to take on board a new way of being, new way of living, new ways of relating to each other; embracing nothing but new vocabulary in our daily lives: lockdown, furlough, social distancing, Zoom ... to name only a few. Attending Mass on television screens, computers and phones – who would have ever thought this would become the reality of daily life? A very challenging time for us individually and as the Cathedral community.



As the Cathedral Family, we had been deeply affected not only by the pandemic but also by the sudden death of our much-loved Administrator Canon Christopher Tuckwell, and subsequently by another two unexpected partings into eternity of two of his predecessors: Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue and Monsignor Mark Langham. Many wonderful tributes have been paid to these great men. They are very much missed and we thank God for their ministry. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Change is coming - a change for a better future! We are slowly, but surely, transitioning into the 'new normal'. We need to give thanks to God for the incredible work of scientists and medical personnel who have enabled vaccines to be produced so quickly, and for all the NHS staff and volunteers who have given their time and skills to create such a speedy service so that we can begin to look forward with hope. This is indeed something we should thank God for; as it is through the gifts he has given to each of these people, that the vaccination programme has come to be. The Bishops have encouraged all of us, when we are eligible, to be vaccinated for the common good.

Personally, I would like to thank you all for your warm welcome and support which you have given to me ever since my return to the Cathedral in late October. I am very grateful to Cardinal Vincent for giving me the opportunity to be with you again. Please pray for me; so that I can be the priest that God wants me to be for you and with you and build on the beautiful legacy of Canon Christopher.

As we stand at the threshold of Easter we look to the future with hope in the risen Christ. We are certain that He who conquered even death itself will destroy every darkness in our hearts and lives caused by the Pandemic with the brilliance of His loving light. May this hope help us to look forward to being reunited again with our family and loved ones, and as the Cathedral Family and the Friends.

Thank you for the ongoing support you give to the Cathedral especially during these unprecedented times. God bless you all! Christ is Risen, Alleluia.

Fr Slawomir Witor Administrator of Westminster Cathedral and Chairman of the Friends

Fr Slawomir Witor Administrator of Westminster Cathedral and Chairman of the Friends; Andrew Sanders, Vice-Chairman; Andrew Hollingsworth, Treasurer; Linda McHugh, Chair of the Friends' Anniversary Appeal. Assisted by Zoe Goodway, Patrick Gormley, Geraldine Kay, Elizabeth Gibson and Simon Johnson. The Friends' Council is aided by Barry Lock, Chairman of the Mosaics Appeal Group, and Christina White, Director

The Friends of Westminster Cathedral

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# Homily

## Mgr Mark Langham Requiem Mass

### Westminster Cathedral 18 February 2021

John 21:15-19

BACK IN September, only six or so months ago, Mark preached on this very same encounter between Jesus and Peter. A moving and personal homily delivered to an empty church in Cambridge, live streamed, but painfully alone, isolated and shielding on the day of his thirtieth anniversary of ordination. And addressing God, he said, *but Lord how can I feed your sheep, like this?* Adding with his characteristic colour: *I can't even feed the pigeons on Guildhall Street.*

A day or so before he died, we spoke on the phone and I left him a message by email, and I gave him another line from John, chapter 7, 'from his heart shall flow streams of living water'; and he wrote back, *Thank you so much for this. Amid a blizzard of emotions, moods, regrets, rages and hopes, and hopes, it brings some calm.*

I found in those last weeks and since Mark died, that rather like a novel, or painting or a poem, it's now that it's over; that I've been given something of the true picture, given the real and hidden gifts of his life. As if God has stood back from his artwork now finished, to admire its beauty in its completeness.

Visitors to Mark will remember he kept a rather large and unmissable ceramic skull, a *memento mori*, on his desk at all times, not because of some morbid taste, or any contempt for life – quite the opposite, he rejoiced in life; but in order to give life weight and significance.

'To those who are not Christian, the cross can appear inhuman, or false as an attempt to answer the problem of suffering. But fulfilment of life from Jesus Christ doesn't lie in living-for-me, but in dying-for-them: a real conversion of heart in the way we love. Christ's death in the gospel is not presented as a fact, a grisly destiny he just has to endure, but rather as an act: the defining event of a life. It is a death brought to life by love' [R Williams, whom Mark respected deeply and welcomed in Rome]; in this gospel of John – 'this he said to show by what death he was to glorify God.'

When I saw Mark's face deeply scarred by his suffering, so much so he warned me in advance, I also saw someone who knew, somehow, God had given him a chance to co-write this last chapter; to choose this gospel, after the pattern of Our Lord. Mark, you fed the Lord's sheep in the gift of yourself. You fed us. You fed me. Your 'greatness lay in the costliness of your love,' in the dignity and perseverance of 'your faith and your hope, that marked you out from the merely powerful or successful in life.' [after Eamon Duffy, close friend and support of Mark, who nursed him in his sickness.]

Thirty years ago, at Mark's ordination, Basil Hume, again, preached on this same passage from the Gospel. And focusing on Jesus' question 'Do you love me?', he said to Mark, 'A priest must know how to love'. Words, by his own admission, continued to teach Mark up until the very last day of his life.

For in spite of the extraordinary warmth of his hospitality we all knew, his convivial nature, love of fun and his ready wit, he was a deeply private man, reserved, who knew at one level how to give, but in his hiddenness, found it hard to receive, and the vulnerability and acceptance that went with that. Years ago he said his strength and energy came not from being with people, but in solitude. Very few knew of his long battle with leukemia. I remember maybe twelve years ago, driving him to a hospital outside Rome for tests and early treatment, with only an inkling of where this was really going.

It was only in these last weeks he started to open up more about his needs: to be able to die in the diocese he loved and missed; to be somewhere catholic for his last days at St John & St Elizabeth Hospital; to have a rhythm – a beginning and end to the day and to prayer (I encouraged him to live stream our monastic night prayer); to be with people, and most especially with family, with whom there was at least a chance of human contact. On 7 December on my feast day he had written: *this morning we were woken early by nurses in full PPE, who told us that one of those on our ward has tested positive for Coronavirus. ... so, isolation for all of us, multiple testing, and God knows what next. I just wonder how much more the Lord wants to throw at me. I have to confess that I reached for my rarely-used rosary and gave heaven a blast.* I sent him an e-mbrace.

You see, typically for Mark, shielding had presented him initially with a sort of opportunity – he wrote in October: *piano, learning German, painting a portrait of Arnold (now sitting to my left), and am doing some talks and conferences, so I am not completely at sea.* But his deterioration was swift. *My sadness was that I did not get a chance to say farewell to Cambridge – but it all happened rather quickly,* he wrote, and before long he was saying: *Eamon Duffy has taken me in for the last eight weeks, and has shown a care and support that I could never imagine. At every stage, I am looked after, Sr Clement has been wonderful as ever, and they are going to great lengths to try to get me to eat.*

These times were a crash-course in love-to-the-end, for a priest who had let love be his slow and patient teacher. Mark was a tremendous student of humanity in all its rich variety, convinced as he was, that when God made man, he saw that it was good. Mark rejoiced in this creative, beautiful, life-giving mercy in God. 'There was in Mark a profound tenderness towards human weakness.' [Sr Ann Swailes OP, fellow chaplain and friend at Fisher House, Cambridge]. Someone who could love someone more, with and because of their imperfections. Making him a sensitive, conciliatory priest, whose instinct was to reach out to those in difficulty or marginalised. Mark taught me that lesson well. In a word, he taught me mercy, to love like God, whose Son is both perfect icon of God and of the human person. So when he preaches, when he eats with sinners, when he is moved, when he reaches out to touch and heal, when he sets free, when he kneels to serve, when he weeps, when he laughs, when he walks, talks, challenges, loves, forgives, suffers, dies. He reveals to us who God is. He is also the perfect icon of the human

person. He shows us who we really are, how to be human according to the blueprint of our creator. In whom we discover how beautiful humanity is when lived fully.

Beauty was in many ways the key to Mark's life, in the sense that this rather introverted character was turned inside out, unlocked, would be brought to life by the light and shade of created beauty. He would say when looking at a beautiful sunset in oranges and blues and pinks, he'd say *God can paint in colours not allowed together in art. You wouldn't trust a man-made painting like that.* Things for all to see, perhaps more exciting for Mark all the things invisible, or only visible to God. The things that reveal themselves over time and fade away. The fine detail of this Cathedral, a building he said *whose wonder and serenity makes you want to say your prayers*, soaring details only visible ordinarily to the London pigeons; or the transient beauty in nature – he loved gardening and the seasons; the stories that lie behind cities and their history he would bring out on his fabulous tours of Rome (he used to book restaurant tables under the name Marc Antony), stories that otherwise would remain unknown, forgotten. Or even the night prayers of monks *attended*, as he once put it, *only by the angels and the saints.* Beauty was a sign to Mark that humanity in all its weakness is indestructible in Christ. Much light and shadow, disfigured maybe, but then all the more loved and saved. Mark used to say one of the great privileges working here was leading the stations of the cross, *and offering up a prayer for the soul of the brilliant, tortured, and controversial artist.* 'Even when they explore the darkest depths of the soul or the most unsettling aspects of evil, artists give voice in a way to the universal desire for redemption.' For Mark, cherished words of John Paul II.

Mark could be a rather fastidious and particular man at times: I used to enjoy putting books back on the shelves in the wrong order to wind him up; or move a shepherd out of place in his intricately constructed crib scene; leave chairs and cutlery at odd angles. Beauty in art and in nature, bit by bit, taught this reserved Mark to let go and accept the full range of human experience and a language with which to express a deep yearning in his heart for God, that unifies and redeems, that ultimately gave him strength to see him through his illness. It was the yearning that lies at the heart of the catholic culture he loved, he could offer genuinely as his own, in that exchange of gifts so important in his work in ecumenism. I'm sure it's why he was so highly regarded for his work towards unity. About the holy land he wrote: *Into such a place was our Saviour born, and it is perhaps no accident that the geographic heart of our faith lies amid such political uncertainty, human frailty and scandalous division. This was the humanity that Christ redeemed.* It thrilled Mark to go shopping in the Vatican supermarket at the foot of St Peter's, jostling for the most basic of commodities in the shadow of a building stretching up to heaven.

Mark thought of himself as an achiever: during his months of illness at the end of his time here at the cathedral, he was mournful and produced a rather airless self-portrait with accompanying inscription: *tanta peracta necnon plura vix incepta* – 'many things undertaken and yet so many things scarcely begun.' He felt very much the same way in these last months. But I know he saw that, although God had indeed blessed him with many talents, God would be recognized in him in a heart broken open, a heart that could only say, in the words of his favourite line of the psalms: 'behind and before you besiege me', as were read earlier [psalm 139 (138)].

## Mark Langham RIP

Mark was very conscious of history and its legacy: he kept a diary; he painted; he littered his rooms with medals and busts of the great and not-so-good-but-very-interesting. He treasured and told wonderful tales of being part of the story of each place he went whether Bayswater Parish, here at the Cathedral, Rome, Cambridge, the Cardinal Vaughan as a school boy, and Whitton as a child. He said the act of offering Mass in St Mark's in Venice was to *become part of the story of St Mark's*, and proudly he kept a flag emblazoned with the Venetian Lion of St Mark, holding a book of the gospels on which it stands written: *Pax tibi Marce, evangelista meus* - 'Peace to you Mark, my evangelist.'

But after news of the seriousness of his illness spread, he received a great number of messages in his last weeks – messages of gratitude and affection reminding Mark-the-priest that the greatest masterpiece of his life must be other people, the lives he'd touched; in so many places and times, so many nationalities, the pinnacle of high society to the least noticed in our midst. I shared with Mark, these words I've always admired in Pope Benedict XVI: 'I know of no more convincing proof for the faith than precisely the pure and unalloyed humanity that the faith allowed to mature ... in so many ... I have had the privilege to encounter.'

There remained in Mark to the end an element of that younger, more guarded version of himself – he chose that rather static picture of himself for the booklet today – but only because he didn't allow himself to see the man of far greater stature he had become. The best pictures reflect a gentleness and a paternity that really came into its own in Cambridge. Paternity which is not about Mark's gifts, but about the gift of himself, rooted in a coming home to himself. Mark's great personal need in sickness taught him and those closest to him that, in letting go his unfinished projects and frustrations, and finding a



gratitude to God, would allow him to give himself away. In that, he was a priest of the gospel to the end. [This was a beautiful conversation just before he died, in which he really valued the way people were helping him prepare himself for death.]

'Do you love me?', asks Jesus of his priest, *Mark*. *You know I love you* he replies, all the devices and defences of his heart laid bare.

The longing for God that beauty could express and the healing, unifying power it could wield, he intuited lay at the heart of what he called *that most precious of Catholic beliefs*, purgatory, which he described as a sort of *night before Christmas* in its purifying yearning for God, *helped by the prayers of the living*, that we do today.

I don't have the chance now to ask Mark if he knew these lines of CS Lewis, but I'd be amazed if he didn't:

'It was when I was happiest that I longed most ... The sweetest thing in all my life has been the longing ... to find the place where all the beauty came from.'

Peace to you Mark, my evangelist. Peace to you Mark.

AMBROSE HENLEY OSB  
Ampleforth Abbey



THERE'S AN Irish anti-war song about a man who leaves his sweetheart and child in the 1800s to fight in the Ceylon wars and returns so disfigured that his beloved barely recognises him. The refrain is: 'Johnny, I hardly knew ye.' It was in my head the morning after Mgr. Mark's funeral which, in common with many of you, I watched online.

It was, I acknowledge, an odd connection to make. Fr Mark (he insisted we dropped the Monsignor): so urbane, so English, so elegant (there was always the swish of the soutane about him). The lyrics of the song - in times past, belted out in a smoke-filled Irish pub - speak of someone who is physically unrecognisable. The refrain, without the Guinness and the cigarettes and the banter, also speaks of regret. I hardly knew ye. Truly, I needed more time to know you.

Pope Paul VI said of priests, that they cannot be of service to men if they remain strangers to the life and conditions of men. I had the privilege of working with Fr Mark when I first came to the Cathedral. It was for a little over a year; he went to Rome and thence to Cambridge. In the brief time I knew him, he was never a stranger. He gave of himself utterly in empathy, kindness and understanding; a priest who worked tirelessly for the harvest, who took such joy from life and from his priesthood. He remembered the little things: birthdays, anniversaries. He said, 'thank you'. His kindnesses were moments of grace.

He was the first person whom I contacted for a contribution to Canon Christopher's Memorial Booklet and his reflection was perfect. He had an artist's eye, an unerring ability to alight on a feature, a quirk, that explained the whole. He said the booklet made him cry:



## Mark Langham RIP

'I received today the Friends' tribute to Canon Christopher. I was unable to read it without needing to dry my eyes. Thank you for this beautiful and fitting tribute, which I shall treasure.' He signed off: 'Warm wishes.'

I worked with a volunteer who knew Fr Mark as a child; her eldest daughter and Mark were of similar age, and the families grew up together in Whitton. Blustery English beach holidays; sunburned in blurry photographs. Children of the 60s. Catholicism at the very core of life. She was always so proud of Fr Mark and the priest he had become.

A friend recalls how he helped her and her husband through the trauma of losing a baby, delivering a homily to 'the two of us, lonely in that empty chapel' that was worthy of a packed Cathedral or State funeral. Cor ad Cor loquitur: heart speaks unto heart. On 18 February, she stood in the piazza to watch his coffin leave the Cathedral, a final act of thanksgiving and a mark of lasting respect. She messaged me: 'He is gone now. A lonely sight.'

Fr Mark WAS fastidious – we were constantly reminded to put up notices with the requisite 'four' drawing pins. But he was also grounded, a man - as

EM Forster would have it - of the stars and trees, sunrise and the wind. He liked nothing more than to potter in a garden, greeting the morning. I remember once being at a meeting and his fingernails were stained with compost; he had been out early, potting up trays of petunias and wallflowers. I last saw Fr Mark in October 2020 when with pride he showed me the garden terrace that he had created at Fisher House (Audrey, his beloved basset hound, was a constant at his heels). He told me that he had decided to plant perennials, not annuals. I like to think that there was comfort in knowing that the earth he had tilled would reveal bounty in the Spring.

I am reminded of Seamus Heaney who, when asked if there was anything in his canon that might stand as an epitaph, recalled a line from Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus, telling the story of the old king who dies and vanishes into the earth: 'Wherever that man went, he went gratefully.' It stands for Fr Mark too: a lovely man, a good and holy priest, and a star for heaven and earth. He shone so very brightly, and we are grateful. May he rest in peace.

CW





BISHOP PATRICK O'DONOGHUE, who died on 24 January, was a first cousin of my late father Feargus O'Tuama. My father and mother became Life Members of the Friends when he was Administrator at the Cathedral

Padraig, as he was always known in the family, was born in Mourne Abbey in County Cork in Ireland on 4 May 1934. His parents were Dan and Sheila O'Donoghue who were farmers. Padraig, who was one of five children, grew up on the family farm. Padraig was particularly proud of his nephews and nieces and he spoke to me about them often.

Padraig was baptised in St Michael's Church in Mourne Abbey. After leaving school he worked for some time in the Irish Post Office in County Donegal and told me once that he played hurling for Donegal! He studied for the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Westminster and was ordained as a priest by Bishop Casey, then an Auxiliary Bishop in Westminster, in St Michael's in Mourne Abbey in 1967. A neighbour of his family told me that pupils in the parish had a day off school to mark this auspicious occasion!

In the 1970s Padraig was the Director of Studies at Allen Hall Seminary and he was the Sub-Administrator at the Cathedral from 1978 to 1985, having been appointed by Cardinal Hume, with whom he developed a close friendship. When I

came to live in London in the late 1980s Padraig was back at Allen Hall, this time as Rector. I occasionally went to the Saturday evening Vigil Mass there and had dinner with him and the seminarians afterwards. He was appointed Administrator of the Cathedral in 1990, which is when my own great love of the Cathedral began.

Padraig was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster in May 1993 and his consecration took place at the Cathedral on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul on 29 May, the principal celebrant being Cardinal Hume. All Padraig's family were there and it was a truly joyous occasion. He was appointed Bishop of Lancaster in June 2001 and his installation took place on 4 July, which was an extraordinarily hot day and one could feel sympathy for the Lord Lieutenant and the Sheriff and other dignitaries in their very heavy clothing!

Padraig had a great love of the Cathedral. My late husband Michael and I were at a lunchtime Mass one day in spring 2004 and as we were leaving we saw Padraig standing at the back. He told us that he was in London to appear before a House of Commons Committee investigating the cockle pickers tragedy in Morecambe Bay, which is in the Diocese of Lancaster, and that while in London he had to drop into the Cathedral.

I watched Padraig's funeral Mass, which was live-streamed from St Michael's Church in Mourne Abbey, where he had been ordained and had received other sacraments. There were moving tributes to him from some of his nephews and nieces, of whom he was so fond. Looking from my window at the Campanile of the Cathedral, I thought that it was fitting that I was watching his funeral Mass in the shadow of the Cathedral that he loved so much.

CLIONA HOWELL



so that walking into the Cathedral felt like going home each Sunday morning.

The other thing was that he never ever failed to join the parishioners at coffee in the Cathedral Hall each Sunday after that Mass and thus he knew many of us very well indeed.

He was a good preacher and we missed him when he was no longer our own pastor at Westminster Cathedral having been consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese by Cardinal Basil Hume on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, in June 1993. Though he was still in the diocese, seldom did I see him in the Cathedral again and learned in 2001, that he had been appointed Bishop of Lancaster.

May his soul, and that of our dear Mgr. Mark Langham rest in the Peace of Our Lord.

LOUISE TAYLOR

WHAT A SAD time for all who are associated with Westminster Cathedral as we hear of the deaths of two former Administrators and our parish priests: firstly, Mgr. Mark Langham and now Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue, Bishop Emeritus of Lancaster Diocese.

I knew both fathers but perhaps Bishop O'Donoghue will be less well known to some parishioners as he ceased to be Administrator here some 28 years ago. He was Administrator of the Cathedral from the mid 1980s to 1993. We called him "Pod". He was a very caring pastor and a holy priest. In fact, he was unique as he is the only priest I have known at the Cathedral who would come down the aisle to welcome many of the parishioners each Sunday before the 10.30 am. Mass. He would have his hand extended and a broad smile on his face before he even got to you





# Society of St Augustine of Canterbury

THE CATHEDRAL complex, consisting of Vaughan House, Clergy House, Archbishop's House and the Cathedral itself is one of the most dazzling of central London's architectural gems. The Friends of Westminster Cathedral know this better than anyone else. But did you know that there is Catholic charity which has devoted itself to another part of the complex?

Nearly a hundred years ago, the Society of St Augustine of Canterbury was formed by a group of lay Catholics to support the Archbishop of Westminster in his mission of promoting and advancing the Roman Catholic religion in England and Wales. The Society's principal, practical objective has been to help the Archbishop by contributing financially towards the funds needed for the conservation, maintenance and improvement of Archbishop's House.

Archbishop's House, like the other parts of the complex, was designed in the 1890s by John Francis Bentley who is considered to be the most influential nineteenth century Roman Catholic architect in Britain after A W N Pugin. It was built between 1902 and 1903 in the distinctive orangey red brick that is a key characteristic of buildings in the surrounding streets. The "new" Archbishop's House in Ambrosden Avenue replaced the former home of the Archbishops in Carlisle Place. To many, the masterpiece of the House is The Throne Room. An interesting history of the Society has been written by our former Chairman, John Barrie, and a copy is sent to all new members.

The House serves as both the official and private residence of the Archbishop

and his personal staff. It undoubtedly plays a significant role in the life of the Church and therefore its upkeep is an important contribution to the overall wellbeing of the Roman Catholic Church throughout England and Wales. The building, which is Grade II listed, provides the Archbishop and the wider Catholic Church in England and Wales with a suitable venue for national and international meetings, to receive His Holiness on Papal Visits and to host receptions for Catholic organisations.

The Society through its membership and sound investment policy has been able to assist the Archdiocese of Westminster by taking on the responsibility for a substantial part of the annual maintenance costs for this cherished building. Each year, the Society is able to make a significant donation which is presented at a private reception given by the Archbishop in the Throne Room. Members of the Society may bring a guest to these special events when there is the opportunity to meet the Archbishop and listen to a talk given by him.

Many Friends of Westminster Cathedral are members of the Society and enjoy the lectures given by guest speakers, receptions and summer visits to places of 'Catholic interest'. Each membership is hugely appreciated by our Beneficiary.

Next year, the Society will celebrate its Centenary and a special programme is being devised. I feel certain that any Friend of Westminster Cathedral would enjoy membership of the Society of St Augustine of Canterbury.

RICHARD COLLYER-HAMLIN is a member of the Friends Development Committee.



ARCHBISHOP'S  
HOUSE

ARCHBISHOP'S  
HOUSE

# Embracing Zoom

OUR AUTUMN events were all held on Zoom, the exceptions being Joanna Bogle's walking tour which focused on Haverstock Hill/ London's Marian Shrines, and Paul Pickering's walking tour of historic Whitehall. Within days of the newsletter being posted, the regulations changed and the Rule of Six, came into play which meant that I had to give up my place on both tours and the numbers were limited. I am assured that everyone who attended enjoyed them, and I thank Joanna and Paul for their continued support of the Friends with interesting events.

Professor Martin Dubois of Durham launched our autumn season with an erudite talk on the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins. He had, he assured me, recently attended a training session on Zoom which helped to calm nerves (especially mine). I recommend his book: Gerard Manley Hopkins and The Poetry of Religious Experience. He quotes Hopkins answering the charge that he had given up an illustrious artistic career: 'You wouldn't give only the dull ones to Almighty God.'

Fr Daniel once more stepped 'unto the breach' and was our quizmaster for the October quiz. We eased the pain by ensuring that fish and chips were delivered to Clergy House and my thanks go to Patrick Gormley for becoming the Cathedral's very own Eats-Delivery man. We ran two Facebook quizzes in the summer, and this was our first foray into the Zoom format. Barbara Smith again set a taxing and entertaining set of questions.

Later that month we welcomed back Fr Nicholas Schofield, the Westminster Diocesan Archivist, who spoke on the Papal

Zouaves: a dedicated army of men from all over Europe who came to the defence of the Papal States in the 19th century.

It was interesting to hear how the Italian Question was embraced in England. Garibaldi became something of a folk hero – hence the popularity of the Garibaldi 'squashed fly' biscuit – much of the fervour swept up by those who were delighting in the perceived decline in power and influence of the Catholic Church. Amongst the ranks of the Zouaves was a young engineer who would later help to procure marble for Westminster Cathedral.

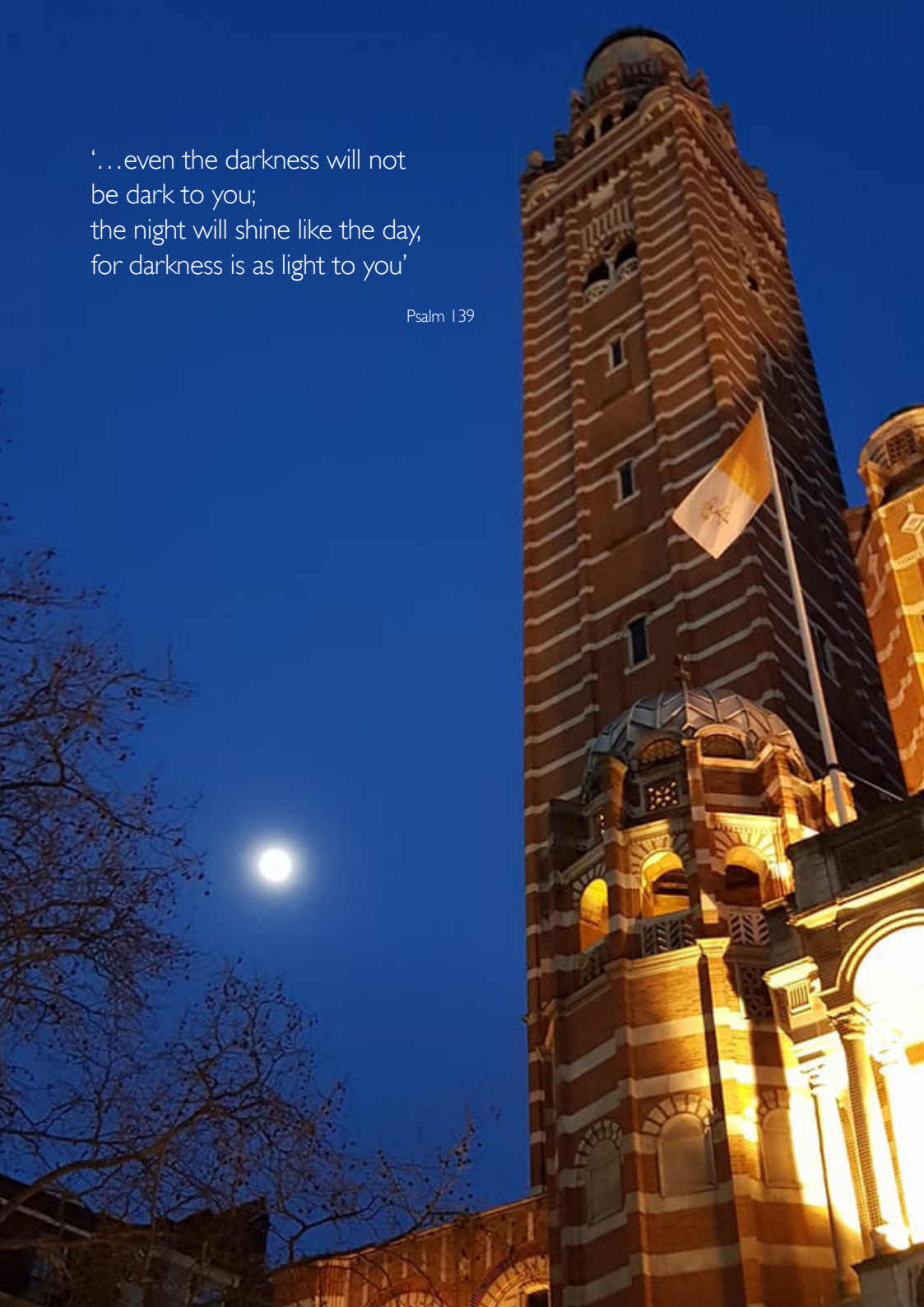
Professor Caroline Barron joined our Zoom community with a brilliant talk on St Thomas Becket and specifically the saint's links with London. On her recommendation I purchased two maps from the London Topographical Society showing Tudor London and Medieval London. I recommend both. It is moving to see the number of chapels and religious houses which dominated pre-Reformation and it was sad to hear her recount how Henry VIII comprehensively sought to erase the saint from London.

Dr John Harvey showed himself to be a natural communicator with his talk on Peter Paul Rubens. It was Dr Harvey's first venture into Zoom, and he gave an accomplished lecture that left us all wanting to visit the National Gallery (then, and now again closed) to see Rubens' great Peace and War painting. I recommend his book *Pax*, a fictional account of the life of the great painter. I was asked in the week what I miss most during lockdown and museums and galleries are near the top of the list.



'...even the darkness will not  
be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you'

Psalms 139





In November, all hail to our Head Sacristan Richard Hawker and Prof. Andrew Sanders, vice-chairman of the Friends, who presented a tour of the Cathedral sacristy treasures. It was our first foray into video, and I thank Aaron Britton who did the filming and Simeon Elderfield of Archbishop's House who made the introductions. Our video skills need work but hopefully this will improve with practice. Aaron did a good job in difficult circumstances. There was a problem with sound and that will be improved with the use of lapel microphones – we forgot that 'in person' doesn't always translate easily into film. It was extraordinary to see the treasures. Friends who came on the Ingatestone trip with Dr Rory O'Donnell and Fr John Scott in 2019 may recall that the Henry VIII chalice was taken with us on the day for the celebration of Mass.

Peter Howell's book on John Francis Bentley, Cathedral Architect, was published this year and he generously gave the Friends a free talk in the run up to Christmas. I hope many of you purchased the book as a gift for friends or self. Peter's knowledge of Bentley is unsurpassed. We will revisit this when public events can again be held safely.

Paul Pickering gave two online talks for the Friends. A talk on Rubens and the creation of some of his greatest works for Philip IV of Spain, and a Christmas-themed talk looking at representations of the nativity through the ages. Paul chose some wonderful examples which encouraged the appreciative audience to think again about how the birth of Our Lord is depicted.

Peter Stevens, Assistant Master of Music, rounded off the year's events with a concert of organ music for Advent and Christmas which included the Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Praeludium in D major BuxWV 139, JS Bach's In dulcio júbilo BWV 729 and Theodore Dubois's Marche des Rois Mages. Peter, gin and dubonnet in hand, joined the post-concert discussions on Zoom. At the end of such a difficult year the concert was a nice precursor to Christmas and also gave us a brilliant opportunity to see the Grand Organ – heard but not usually seen.

Usually at Christmas we are incredibly busy with the Christmas Fair. With all events cancelled, our focus was on the online Big Give Appeal which raised £53,352 for Cathedral Communications. My thanks to everyone who contributed and who also shared details of the appeal with friends and colleagues. We exceeded our target by £8000.

Our autumn/winter events season continued into 2021 as lockdown regrettably also continued. Dr Rory O'Donnell gave a brilliant talk on Catholic churches in England from 1685-1829. It was a reminder of the determination of the faithful to keep the flame of faith alive. I hope that when life resumes, we may visit some of the chapels in person; I hope Dr O'Donnell will accompany us.

Joanna Bogle rounded off the season with a talk on the Marian shrines of

England. I was left pondering how much we have lost, and grateful that the Cathedral 'restored' Our Lady of Westminster in the 1950s. The statue of Our Lady is a much-loved focus in the Cathedral and there are always flowers at the foot of the shrine.



## Forthcoming Events

OUR EVENTS for the summer are staying online. The uncertainty of the last 12 months has made it impossible to plan for any in-person talks or tours. Comprehensive vaccine protection should be in place by the end of the summer so let's hope we shall meet again in the autumn.

Alison Weir was scheduled to give a talk in the Hall on 3 March and this has been moved to an online Zoom event on the 10th March. Her subject is Queen Katheryn Howard – the fifth of Henry VIII's wives who lost her head, and without doubt her heart. I will be interested to know if the tragic queen's last words were indeed for her true love Thomas Culpeper. Alison is a formidable researcher and historian; we can expect new insights into the short life of the 'Tainted Queen'.

Dr Rory O'Donnell gave a brilliant talk for the Friends in January looking at Catholic churches from 1685 to 1829. He returns on 15 March with a Century of Emancipation – looking at Catholic cathedrals in the period 1829 to 1929. Rory will be posing the question: what was it that a Cathedral builder wanted in the first 100 years of Catholic Emancipation? It is an intriguing thought as the Cathedrals built during this period are all different. He will focus the talk on five in particular: Birmingham, Belmont, Norwich, Westminster and Liverpool, and on five prominent architects: AW Pugin, EW Pugin, GG Scott Jr, JF Bentley and Lutyens. Rory is a published expert on the 19th Century Catholic Revival and for many years was an Inspector at English Heritage and is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He has already expressed an interest in accompanying us on future Cathedral visits.

Peter Stevens, Assistant Master of Music, will present another online concert of organ music for the Friends, on Friday 26 March. The focus is music for Lent and Holy Week and the programme will include works by Bach and Franck: JS Bach (1685-1750) *Aus tiefer Not* BWV 686; César Franck (1822-1890) Choral no. 2 in B minor; JS Bach *O Mensch bewein* BWV 622; and JS Bach *Passacaglia* BWV 582. Peter's Advent recital put people in the mood for Christmas and this will be a poignant and beautiful selection of works in preparation for Holy Week.

Paul Pickering returns in Holy Week with an art talk on the depiction of the Cross – from the Catacombs to the Renaissance. I came across an article recently which suggested that, for the early Christians, the cross was a symbol of death and torture and the fish was the preferred motif, ichthus (fish) representing the first initials of Jesus Christ. Over time it became the emblem of salvation, at the heart of Christian iconography. I am looking forward to Paul's observations on how we have come to view the cross.



The Dig is prime viewing on Netflix at the moment and I recommend it for the beauty of the photography and the fine individual performances from Ralph Fiennes and Carey Mulligan. It is a compelling drama about the famous excavation at Sutton Hoo, and the

discovery of the Anglo-Saxon burial ship and its extraordinary treasure which included Christian artefacts. Archaeologist Martin Carver will be speaking to the Friends on 14 April to talk about the finds and the insight they offer into pagan/Christian England at a time of real cultural and religious crossover. Martin worked extensively on the Sutton Hoo site, so his observations are very much from personal experience. When museums return to life, we may organise another trip to the British Museum to view the Sutton Hoo treasure.

Barbara Smith is currently working on another online Friends quiz for us which will be live on the 20 April. Fr Andrew Gallagher has gamely offered to be quiz master for the evening. I appreciate that everyone misses the camaraderie of the fish and chip suppers, but these will return in good time.

On to May and Professor Sarah Foot – Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford University and a Canon of Christ Church Cathedral – will be giving a talk on the missionary saints of the early English Church. This is the first in a series of talks based on the chapels of the Cathedral, so we start with the Chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine. I heard Prof. Foot on the radio in discussion with Melvyn Bragg and she is a very interesting speaker.

When Joanna Bogle gave a talk for the Friends earlier this year, she mentioned Felicity Surridge who had created a Mary Garden. I am pleased to say that Felicity will be giving a talk for the Friends on 12 May talking about the tradition of Mary Gardens in honour of Our Lady and how to plant your own. The talk will include illustrations from her book 'A Garden for Our Lady' published by Gracewing. Felicity and her husband Malcolm are parishioners

of St Joseph's Catholic Church, New Malden where they designed and planted the church Mary Garden. Malcolm is a professional artist and illustrator who also enjoys restoring statues for churches and cathedrals.

When Dr Caroline Barron gave her talk to the Friends last year on St Thomas Becket she touched on the history of monasteries in London, and I am pleased to welcome Dr Nick Holder to the Friends in June with his talk on the Friaries of Medieval London.

Dr Holder is an honorary research fellow at the University of Exeter and was an archaeologist at the Museum of London, working on a number of important research projects including the excavation of England's largest medieval cemetery at Spitalfields. I hope that many of these talks will be a useful precursor to the eventual tours and visits which we can plan for the future.

Fr Ambrose Henley OSB of Ampleforth Abbey will give a talk to the Friends in September. The theme is: Who do you say I am? Praying with scripture. Fr Ambrose's homily at Fr Mark's funeral in February was inspirational. I am so pleased he has agreed to do this for us.

Over the last season we managed to include some extra events - talks on Zoom and a post-Christmas quiz were slotted in - in addition to the advertised schedule. Please keep track of the Friends Facebook and Instagram pages where we are able to advertise late changes. There are also regular announcements in the weekly Cathedral newsletter and in Oremus, the monthly Cathedral magazine.

I look forward to welcoming the regulars back online and hope many more of you will join the online community.

CW

## Mosaic News by Barry DS Lock



I FEAR THAT with the continuing lockdown and its restrictions, there is little to report on the St Patrick's Chapel Mosaics Project. I understand that the design is still the subject of discussions between the Cathedral's Art and Architecture Committee and the Historic Churches Committee. However, the Seed Corn Fund continues to grow, albeit without any help from the collection box which used to be alongside the Chapel. This has been removed as result of the changes in the Cathedral to comply with Covid-19 requirements.

In the meantime, we must reflect upon the mosaic decoration added to the Cathedral in recent years by the Friends of the Cathedral or by private individual members of the Friends and other admirers of the Cathedral: The Vaughan Chantry, St Joseph's Chapel, St George and the English Martyrs Chapel, the panels of St Alban, St David, St Ambrose and St Laurence, St Francis and St Anthony. So, let us continue the good work – please send donations for the St Patrick's Chapel Mosaics Fund to the Friends Office in Clergy House. Cheques should be made payable to The Friends of Westminster Cathedral but please write St Patrick on the reverse of the cheque. The Friends can also take an online payment via the Friends Virgin Money Giving page or bank transfer. Please contact the office for further details. I wish you finally, a Happy St Patrick's Day for the 17 March. Keep well.

### Help Us to Help the Cathedral

Covid-19 has meant many changes for the Friends and we are grateful that we have been able to keep going through online events and the Facebook page which now numbers 1000 followers. Thank you!

All our members receive a newsletter twice a year through the post, but the cost of this keeps rising. If you would like to receive the newsletter online only, to help us save on postage and printing, please email: [christinawhite@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:christinawhite@rcdow.org.uk) and we can put this in place for the autumn mailing.

Our new database is up and running and we can see that many of you are still paying the very old membership rate of £25, or even less. We cannot update a Standing Order; please do this for us. With the next mailing we will need to focus on sending the newsletter only to those who pay the proper subscription. If you do not wish to pay the little extra, you will still be registered as a Friend but as a donor only - be assured that we are very grateful for any and all contributions. Letters will be going out in the next few weeks advising you of your subscription rate and whether it needs to be increased.

Thank you for your support of the Friends and Cathedral through such a difficult year:

THE FRIENDS COUNCIL  
March 2021





# Endpoint

I ARRIVED ten minutes early for Mass on Ash Wednesday to find nearly all the nave seats in the Cathedral taken. Social distancing, like water, carves out spaces, aided and abetted by an impressive team of stewards directing latecomers to side chapels and efficiently controlling the general ebb and flow. The Cathedral was packed in Covid terms – and it was heartening to see so many people – but it is still, strangely, empty.

Marcin Mazur, the official diocesan photographer, commented on that emptiness when he sent through the link to his beautiful pictures of Fr Mark Langham's funeral some of which we have printed in this newsletter: Fr Mark gave him his first professional job as a photographer, and then captured the moment in the Cathedral blog: Solomon, I have surpassed thee. You can find it still. Marcin, in tribute, wanted to return the favour: 'He took the first picture of me by the altar,' he said. 'So, I had to take his last picture, by the same altar.'

I am very grateful to Fr Hugh, our Cathedral Chaplain, who told Fr Mark in his final days how much he meant to the Friends.

On our behalf, he conveyed our love and assured him of our prayers. Fr Hugh told me that Fr Mark had nodded in acknowledgment.

In less than a year, the Westminster community has lost three former administrators; priests who brought their own character, talents and vision to the Cathedral, who through their efforts became part of the history of this great church. I am thankful that the Cathedral livestream enabled us to watch the funeral Masses of Canon Christopher and Mgr Mark (remember the Friends' fundraising will help the livestream to improve). I know many of you also watched Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue's funeral from Mallow, Co. Cork on YouTube. How fondly 'POD' is remembered!

Fr Slawomir Witon, of course, represents both a new chapter and a welcome line of continuity and friendship with his predecessors. It was a real tonic to welcome him back to the Cathedral and I think he has been touched by the support he has received. Your continued Friendship to the Cathedral means a great deal.

In these uncertain times, we continue to arrange events online and discussions continue on how best to commemorate Canon Christopher, and indeed Fr Mark and Bishop Patrick. May these good and faithful priests rest in peace. Please remember too, the many members of the Friends who have died during these Covid days. The restrictions on funerals impose a further burden on their families and we hold them in our prayers.

May good times return. We are in need of normality.

CW



Wednesday 10 March: Alison Weir on Katheryn Howard – the Tainted Queen. Zoom talk online at 7pm. £5 payable via VMG link (please note change of date from 3 March)

Monday 15 March: Dr Rory O'Donnell: 'A century of Emancipation: Catholic Cathedrals 1829-1929'. Online talk on Zoom 7pm £5 payable via VMG link

Friday 26 March: Organ Music for Lent with Asst. Master of Music Peter Stevens. Online concert at 7pm and post-concert Zoom discussion. £10 payable via VMG link.

Monday 29 March: The Cross in Art, from the Catacombs to the Renaissance, with Paul Pickering. Online talk on Zoom 7pm £5 payable via VMG link

Easter Sunday 4 April 2021: The Friends run an online Zoom coffee morning after the 10.30am Mass every Sunday. Please join in the discussion!

Meeting ID: 893 8290 2036 Passcode: 085090



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Wednesday 14 April: Archaeologist Martin Carver on the Anglo-Saxon treasures of Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, and the insight they offer into pagan/Christian England. Online talk on Zoom 7pm £5 payable via VMG link

Tuesday 20 April: The post-Easter Quiz via Zoom with Fr Andrew Gallagher in the chair as quizmaster. 7pm £10 payable via VMG link.

Wednesday 5 May: Professor Sarah Foot. Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Oxford and a Canon of Christ Church Cathedral. Online talk on Zoom: The Chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine: Saints of the Mission to the English. 7pm £5 payable via VMG link



# - September 2021



Wednesday 12 May: A Garden for Our Lady. Felicity Sturridge on the history of the Mary Garden and how to create your own. The talk will include illustrations from her book: 'A Garden for Our Lady – Reviving the Ancient Tradition of Mary Gardens.' 7pm £5 payable via VMG link

Tuesday 8 June: The Friaries of Medieval London. Talk by Dr Nick Holder of Exeter University. 7pm £5 payable via VMG link

Friday 25 June: A Year's Minde Mass in memory of Canon Christopher Tuckwell RIP. 5.30pm Westminster Cathedral. We hope to have a social event after the Mass but this will be subject to prevailing Covid restrictions. To help us plan, please indicate whether you intend to attend and we can keep you updated. There will be notices on the Cathedral website and in the weekly newsletter.

Friday 24 September: 'Who Do You Say I Am?' Praying with Scripture with Fr Ambrose Henley OSB. Online talk on Zoom 7pm £5 payable via VMG link

## How To Book

For all our online events please pay as follows:

- 1) Pay via our Virgin Money Giving site at least one day before the event.
- 2) Pay via our Virgin Money Giving site closer than one day before the event but forward your email receipt to [christinawhite@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:christinawhite@rcdow.org.uk) as proof of payment.
- 3) Send a cheque to the office at least one week before the event.
- 4) Email the office on [friends@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:friends@rcdow.org.uk) with a contact number and we can call you back to arrange card payment.

Payment for an event will admit one person. Please be generous if more than one person is attending with you.

You must have access to a computer/tablet/smart phone and an email address. This is because we will email you the Zoom link so that you may access the event online (on receipt of payment).

If you have any queries at all about the booking process please contact the office. Payment for an event will admit one person/ one household. Please be generous if more than one person will be attending with you.

We are sorry but you will not be able to access the online events without internet access and an email address.

# Support Westminster Cathedral



## Join The Friends Today

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Please return this form to: Friends' Office, Clergy House, 42 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QW  
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☐ UK Membership £30 ☐ Europe Membership £40 ☐ Rest of World £50

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