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# Oremus

## Westminster Cathedral Magazine



The celebration of St George, England's Patron Saint, is put back three days this year to allow for the Octave celebration of Christ's Resurrection.

  
WESTMINSTER  
CATHEDRAL

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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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This statue of the Martyr St George is on the frontage of the Palacio de la Generalitat, Barcelona in Spain's Province of Catalonia.

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# From the Administrator



**Throughout the Season of Easter, the Word of God and the liturgy of the Church help us to celebrate the themes of passing from darkness to light, from blindness**

**to sight and from death to life. As I write this message the whole world is under the dark cloud of the war in Eastern Europe. Our hearts bleed every day when we hear about the suffering of the people of Ukraine. So much pain! Millions of displaced people, traumatised children, cold, lack of water and food, death and destruction!**

The response of Pope Francis and the Church at this challenging time gives us courage. The day after Putin launched the invasion, the Holy Father made a personal visit to the Russian Embassy to the Holy See and pleaded for peace. He declared Ash Wednesday a 'day of prayer and fasting for the people of Ukraine', and he spoke on the phone with President Volodymyr Zelensky, who came away saying that 'the people of Ukraine feel the spiritual support of His Holiness'. The Holy Father also dispatched two Cardinals to Ukraine to affirm his closeness with the two million refugees fleeing that country, and with Ukrainians generally. He said that the Vatican is: 'ready to do everything, to put itself at the service of peace', adding that 'rivers of blood and tears are flowing in Ukraine', and that war sows only 'death, destruction, and misery'.

As we approach Easter, we remember that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead and that He has made Himself present in the heart of our world to help us to overcome all barriers, banish hate, violence and prejudice, and He draws us closer to those around us. May the gift of Christ's resurrection, the gift of new life and His victory over death, renew our hope. May the voices of a world and the cries for peace, transformation and renewal, be heard, and may the Easter celebrations open our hearts to the hope, wonder and transformation that Jesus wants to bring into our wounded world.

May the Risen Christ help each of us to bring the power of His Resurrection into the world. Where there is violence, let us sow peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love. Where there is sadness, let us sow joy.

Fr Sławomir Witoń

## The Request of Fatima Heeded

Vatican News

**Pope Francis has consecrated Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, Friday 25 March, during the Celebration of Penance that he presided over in St Peter's Basilica. Director of the Holy See Press Office, Matteo Bruni, added: 'The same act, on the same day, has been performed in Fatima by Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the Papal Almoner, who was sent there by the Holy Father'.**

In the apparition of 13 July 1917 in Fatima, Our Lady had asked for the consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart, stating that if this request were not granted, Russia would spread 'its errors throughout the world, promoting wars and persecution of the Church.' She added: 'The good will be martyred; the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be destroyed'.

After the Fatima apparitions, there were various acts of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Pope Pius XII, on 31 October 1942,



*The immaculate Heart of Mary in St Peter's Church, Vienna*

and on 7 July 1952 he consecrated the peoples of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the Apostolic Letter *Sacro vergente anno*: 'Just as a few years ago we consecrated the whole world to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mother of God, so now, in a most special way, we consecrate all the peoples of Russia to the same Immaculate Heart'.

On 21 November 1964, Pope St Paul VI renewed the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart in the presence of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council. Pope St John Paul II composed a prayer for what he called an 'Act of Entrustment' to be celebrated in the Basilica of St Mary Major on 7 June 1981, the Solemnity of Pentecost.

In June 2000, the Holy See revealed the third part of the secret of Fatima. At the time, the then-Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, pointed out that Sr Lucia, in a letter of 1989, had personally confirmed that this solemn and universal act of consecration corresponded to what Our Lady wanted: 'Yes, it was done,' wrote the visionary, 'just as Our Lady had asked, on 25 March 1984'.

# Fr John writes



*Dear Parishioners, Friends and Readers of Oremus*

**The images of war in Central Europe have their influence on this edition of *Oremus*. Whether some form of truce and peace will have been established by the time that you read this remains unknown, so you will find on the back cover a letter from our Catholic Bishops in Europe, urging the support of the**

**Russian Orthodox Church, that our faith may be a powerful force for peace. That, of course, involves small gestures as well as international diplomacy, so I have included news from Stella Maris about how Ukrainian and Russian seafarers are being assisted in their isolation and concern for their families. As soldiers and civilians die in the conflict, so John Woodhouse writes about his experience of being prepared, with both family and friends, both to talk openly about death and to prepare for it.**

As half of the month is still in the Lenten season, we have an account of how the children of St Vincent de Paul School enter into its disciplines, and Fr Tim Finigan offers a piece describing the understanding of fasting of Bishop Challoner, whose mortal remains are in the Chapel of St Augustine and St Gregory as a reminder of the hidden years of the Church in this land. In the last two editions, Tobias Runeson has written about some of the foundations of our Christian belief, and when he sent in a reflection on St Paul's assertion of the truth of the Resurrection, it seemed an appropriate conclusion to the previous two pieces.

It is very noticeable at the beginning and end of the Solemn Mass in Lent that instead of being played in and out of church by our musicians, the sanctuary party enters and leaves in solemn silence – at least insofar as the squeaking of shoes does not break it. This year, however, Lent has not meant down time for the Grand Organ, but the opportunity for some much-needed care, which our Assistant Master of Music, who spends much of his time with that 'venerable old lady', describes for us.

I have looked to the East for a couple of contrasting stories: a priest serving in China writes about biodiversity, inspired by the traditions of Chinese art, whilst up on Piccadilly the Royal Academy is opening an exhibition of sometimes playful 19th century Japanese art, created at a time when that country was beginning to open up to the West; I think it will be well worth a visit.

Leaving the best news for last, the long-awaited new Cathedral website is now live. Please do visit and interact with it, and watch for further developments as we bring them online.

*Fr John Scott*

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# Lifting the Lid

John Woodhouse

**I recently took part in *Lifting the Lid*, a 3-day online Festival about death and dying. This came out of my regular attendance at Death Café (<https://deathcafe.com/>), which is ably run by Victoria Keen. It is good that people can be enabled to talk freely and confidentially about their experiences which sadly are sometimes distressing, for all too often funerals can be impersonal.**

Everybody's grief is individual and there is no 'catch-all' phrase which fits all circumstances. Too often we say the wrong thing because we do not know what to say. If you do not know what to say, simply say it: 'I don't know what to say'. In the end your presence is what matters. Those who are bereaved so often just want someone to sit and listen to them. Of course, some want to be alone but bereavement can be a very lonely time. A simple text just asking if there is anything you can do can be better than a phone call, as long as you make it clear there is no need to respond. And try to do this later on as well. It is very sad that people who have lost children are often avoided. Make sure that you name the person who has died.

The interfaith aspect of the event was fascinating and we found much common ground. My humanist friend agreed with me that statements like: 'I have lived, I have died, it does not matter' can be very distressing. Of course it matters to me that somebody died; why else would I wish to show my respects? The Christians and the Imam present all spoke about the importance of living well so that one may die well, knowing you have done your best. This is very much a Benedictine idea. When asked what Ampleforth school taught the boys, Cardinal Hume replied: 'We teach them how to die'! In fact the weekend underlined that it was as much about living as dying!

It is so important to talk about death and to inform your family and friends of your wishes. I recall a much-loved friend whose son refused to hold a funeral, which caused much distress. If possible, write your obituary and make sure that everyone who needs to know of its location is aware. Make a list of people who should be informed of your death. Write a will and keep it up to date, properly signed and witnessed. Be honest with children. I was fortunate to grow up in a family where my father played the organ for funerals, meaning that death was discussed, and my mother did a good job preparing me for the inevitable day. None of us knew that they would die within a week of each other.



*The Death and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the pilgrimage church of Kefermarkt, Upper Austria, by the anonymous Master of the Kefermarkt Altarpiece, around 1497*

In an online Grief Awareness Week event organised by the Good Grief Trust (<https://www.thegoodgrieftrust.org/ngaw/>), Dr Kathryn Mannix and Greg Wise spoke about really listening to the person who is dying, the family and the bereaved. Greg commented that not many men tend to get involved. Just be yourself and don't try to be somebody else. The most important thing is to turn up and be prepared to sit quietly, which takes courage. 'Tenderness is not a weak thing', said Kathryn, 'it is the strongest thing you can show. Always be kind'. She has written two excellent books *With the end in mind* and *Listen*, whilst Greg has written *Not that kind of love: the heart-breaking story of love and loss*, all of which I recommend. Our whole society would benefit from taking on board their message. Spiritual directors, too, can learn so much about real listening, especially the difficult issue of imparting bad news on the telephone.

The time I spent in the hospice with my 90 year-old music teacher and friend John East was a revelation. John was very much a traditional Catholic, and I expected

to have to say prayers even in Latin, yet none of it was necessary. All I had to do was sit there and be there. I had taken in a radio so John could listen to Radio 3. When he woke up, I spoke about the passage in Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* when Gerontius sings: 'I went to sleep'. John nodded and said 'Yes'. Having arranged a rota of friends to be with him, the last thing he said to me was 'Thank you'. On the Saturday I was in Liverpool for the Catenian conference and went to the convent to see 90 year-old Sr Mary Pia. To my delight, she was an old friend of John's, so we chatted about him and said some prayers; and that was the time that John died. Newman has the idea that the echoes of the *Subvenite* said by the friends around Gerontius' bed are heard in heaven. The funeral at St Etheldreda's, Ely Place was a Latin requiem with plainchant, for which I collected reminiscences and produced a service booklet and a Facebook page – memorialisation is important. One thing worth noting is that the library did not want John's valuable collection of books and music scores! Why not give away stuff well before the time?

A couple of practical points. It is a good idea to get quotes from different undertakers and to ask at the funeral that everybody sprinkles the coffin with holy water at the final farewell. Crematoria may not be keen on this, but it is part of Catholic ritual, similar to throwing earth or flowers into the grave and it gives everybody something actually to do. Traditions and rituals are important. I will never forget the Afro-Caribbean funeral of a library caretaker, with an open coffin and tremendous singing as the coffin was lowered into the grave, demonstrating real sorrow but also real joy.

We can also share our faith in the resurrection. In the *Benedictus*, the gospel canticle used at Morning Prayer each day, we find the verses: 'In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace' (Luke 1: 78–79). It is worth taking time to find similar Biblical passages, especially in the psalms, which help to sustain and nourish our hope at last to reach heaven and to be with the Lord.

#### *Books mentioned:*

Kathryn Mannix *With the End in Mind: How to live and die well*, Collins pbk £9.05 Kindle £6.49

Kathryn Mannix *Listen: how to find the words for tender conversations. A powerful new book about life, death, relationships, mental health and how to talk about what matters*, Collins pbk £8.19 Kindle £9.99

Clare and Greg Wise *Not that kind of love: the heart-breaking story of love and loss*, Quercus pbk £6.99 Kindle £4.99

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*If you would like to become a Companion of Oremus, see page 2*

# The Troubles of the Eritrean Church

Christian Solidarity Worldwide

*Several years ago, the late Canon Christopher led a pilgrimage to Ethiopia, opening the eyes of pilgrims to expressions of Christian faith and traditions very different to those we experience here as Catholics in Western Europe. However, this story indicates that interference by governments can be experienced by Christians anywhere.*

**The legitimate patriarch of the Eritrean Tehwado Orthodox Church, Abune Antonios, has died, after 15 years under house arrest. The 94-year-old patriarch is reported to have died in the early days of February. His body was taken to the Abune Andreas monastery, to which he belonged, where he was buried. Local sources report that a large crowd gathered at his burial site, many of whom had travelled long distances on foot.**

Patriarch Antonios was removed from office for resisting the Eritrean government's repeated interference in church affairs. Most notably, he had refused to expel 3,000 members of the Orthodox renewal movement, Medhane Alem, protested against the detention in November 2004 of three priests from the renewal movement, and objected to the imposition of Yoftahe Demitros, a pro-government lay person, as its general secretary. In August 2005, the Patriarch Antonios was removed from administrative control, confined to ceremonial duties, and eventually deposed in January 2006 following secret meetings of the Holy Synod that were convened in contravention of the church's Canons. He remained under *de facto* arrest until the early hours of 7 May 2007, when his personal pontifical insignia and clothing were seized, and he was officially placed under house arrest in an undisclosed location in the Eritrean capital, Asmara. Months later, he was illegally replaced by Bishop Dioscoros, who was approved of by the Eritrean government, but remained unrecognised by the Orthodox papacy in Egypt until his death in 2015.

The nonagenarian patriarch was not seen in public again until a tightly-managed appearance at St Mary's

Orthodox Cathedral in Asmara in July 2017. He later disappeared from public view again, after insisting on the public revocation of the accusations levelled against him as an assurance of genuine reconciliation. His conditions of house arrest, which had been somewhat eased, again became more stringent. Since then, the patriarch was only seen in smuggled videos in which he continued to criticise the conditions and grounds of his detention. In July 2019, and in seeming retaliation to one of these videos, five pro-government bishops signed a statement accusing Abune Antonios of having committed heresy, stripping him of all official authority and effectively excommunicating him. Once again, he responded defiantly, saying of his detractors: 'The Eritrean Synod are the accusers and adjudicators, without listening to my side. They broke the law of the Eritrean Orthodox Church'.

Patriarch Antonios' removal and mistreatment opened a deep schism in the denomination that is likely to be exacerbated by his death in custody. Many Orthodox adherents and clergy continued to support him, both in Eritrea and in the diaspora. In June 2019 five priests from the Debre-Bizen Monastery in the Northern Red Sea Region were arrested, reportedly for supporting him and protesting government interference in church affairs. On 13 May 2021 the Eritrean government confirmed a second uncanonical replacement, announcing that Abune Qerlos had been elected the fifth patriarch and would be consecrated on 13 June. However, the Abune Andreas monastery was among many Orthodox adherents who refused to accept him.

CSW's President Mervyn Thomas commented: 'Abune Antonios was a deeply principled man who prioritised his calling over the politicisation of the Church by a regime deemed to have committed crimes against humanity since 1991. Despite 16 years of unremitting pressure, mistreatment, and defamation, the Patriarch never compromised, even when it could have led to his reinstatement. He chose instead to protect the integrity and doctrine of the Church with which he had been entrusted, at the cost of freedom and comfort in his twilight years. We urge the international community to honour Antonios' courageous stand for freedom of religion by galvanising efforts to secure the release of the three Orthodox priests for whom he advocated, as well as that of thousands of others detained arbitrarily in Eritrea on account of conscience or belief. We also urge the Egyptian Orthodox authorities, to whom the late patriarch appealed his case, to ensure a succession that is in line with Church tradition. Recognising the current incumbent would be tantamount to legitimising the unjust and illegal removal, imprisonment and mistreatment of a hero of the faith'.

The three Orthodox priests who were arrested on 19 November 2004 and are reportedly held in Wengel Mermera prison in Asmara are Dr Futsum Gebrenegus, at the time Eritrea's only psychiatrist, Dr Tekleab Menghisteab, a highly respected physician and Rev Gebremedhin Gebregiorgis, an expert theologian. All were involved in the renewal movement within the Orthodox Church and were based at the Medhane Alem Church.

# Broadcasting from the Rosary Shrine

Helena Judd

**Radio Maria England has announced plans to build a new studio at the Rosary Shrine and Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary and St Dominic, Haverstock Hill. The 24-hour station is part of a worldwide network of more than 80 radio stations on all continents, offering a voice of hope and encouragement, responding to Jesus' invitation: 'Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature' (Mk 16,15).**

In a statement it says: 'We try to embrace all the charisms that the Holy Spirit is bestowing upon the local and universal Church in our time. Interaction is essential to us and we invite our listeners to share their concerns and joys. Creating a family spirit, also by involving volunteers and listeners, Radio Maria accompanies every person who hungers for God on their journey of faith.'

Fr Lawrence Lew OP, Prior and Parish Priest, said: 'We believe that this partnership between Radio Maria and the Rosary Shrine will be a wonderful way to advance the hopes of the men and women who built St Dominic's. The Rosary Shrine church exists for the preaching of the Holy Rosary, which is a special gift of Our Lady for proclaiming the Gospel of Christ and God's saving love for all peoples. As the Order of Preachers, we are delighted to support and work alongside Radio Maria in our common mission of preaching the faith for the salvation of souls, bringing the light of reason and faith to bear upon the lives of our contemporaries. I have no doubt that our parishioners and pilgrims and the local community at the Rosary Shrine will be enthusiastic about this work of evangelisation, and I know that

the people of London and the wider UK will also benefit greatly from Radio Maria's programmes and activities here'.

The programming of Radio Maria is based on three pillars: prayer, catechesis and human formation, broadcasting daily Mass and spiritual content, as well as social programmes and worldwide news. Currently, collaborations with the Dominicans in Cambridge have included morning prayers, daily Mass and religious teaching programmes including topics on the Divine Office, saints and sacred scripture. With this new studio at the Rosary Shrine, Radio Maria is looking forward to developing collaborations which also furthers the mission of the Rosary Shrine.

*The full schedule and more detailed programme information can be found at <https://RadioMariaEngland.uk>.*

## The Henrician Chalice

Richard Hawker

**One of the objects in the Cathedral's collection that excites most interest is the Henrician chalice. Its hallmarks date it to the year 1529, just on the cusp of the English Reformation. This makes it one of the last Catholic chalices to be made in Catholic England. It stands just shy of seven inches tall, is silver gilt, and made in England. It is not our grandest chalice by any means, but it is one of our most significant.**

We do not know who the silversmith was, but two other pieces of his work survive at opposite ends of the country. Judging by that and the quality of this piece, he was clearly of some note and ability. The chalice is finely engraved with a crucifix, and with abbreviated forms of two prayers from the Sarum Missal in use at that time. It was given by one Baron Antonio French, and his sisters. Further back than that we have not yet been able to trace.

In 1529 St Thomas More was made Lord Chancellor, in succession to Cardinal Wolsey, and was warning the House of Lords as to the dangers of a royal divorce, which was in fact to happen that year. In due course, deprived of his position, he went to the Tower of London where he joined St John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and both were executed there for their steadfastness in faith. This is a chalice, therefore, strongly linked to the blood of our martyrs.

It sees use a few times a year: often it is the chalice presented to candidates at priestly ordinations, being also used on Maundy Thursday, and for other significant occasions. It is shown here in the hands of the Cardinal, on the occasion of his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood in 2019. Its history does not begin and end with 1529, however. Fast forward to 1982,



© Marcin Mazur

and the first visit of a reigning pope to these shores: on 28 May, St John Paul II celebrates Mass in Westminster Cathedral, and he uses this chalice.

Its use on Maundy Thursday is significant. Before the Holy Week reforms of the 1950s, this chalice was carried in procession to the Altar of Repose, containing the Host which was to be used in the mysterious rites of Good Friday. Our 1920s silver 'Urn', used at the Altar of Repose, was designed to house this remarkable little chalice.

*Also, a personal note: Thank you to all who have contributed to the fundraising efforts for the restoration of the Metropolitan Cross. At the time of writing we are very nearly at our total.*

# The Unhappy Woman and the Child

Steve Burrows

**The tram is a newish and welcome asset to the area, but already graffiti defaces one of the signs. Why do youngsters do this? Youthful wildness? They don't know any better? Maybe a root of such vandalism lies in scenes similar to the one I witnessed this morning on my way to work in a suburb of Manchester.**

I was seated on the left of a fairly empty carriage when a woman got on with a pushchair and sat across the aisle from me. A little boy, about three years of age, was sitting in the chair, and the chair hood was up. A blank wall of metal and darkened glass, the front wall of the compartment, was facing him. The child started swinging both legs together, rocking the pushchair. The woman swore at him, telling him to stop it. It wasn't a joking sort of swearing. The swear word used was quite strong. It was jarring to hear. After a few moments he, wanting to look out of the window I suppose, pushed the hood back. She instantly pushed it up again, hard, and again swore at him, telling him to stop it. I glanced across. She was looking at her phone. I looked away, but soon heard the click and hiss of a small can being opened, maybe an energy drink, or maybe one of those pre-mixed drinks such as rum and coke. I looked across again. She took a drink.

I was watching the local scenery pass by when I heard her say: 'I don't want it. You eat it'. She said this not softly, nor coaxingly, but bluntly, dismissively. I didn't look across, but in my mind's eye I saw the child proffer, and then take back, some small food item. Then I heard the sound of her hawking some heavy phlegm from her nasal passages, and swallowing. She repeated this. She addressed no ordinary conversation towards the boy, who couldn't see her from where he was. He had nothing to look at. His wrap dropped off his knees on to the floor. She reached round the chair and picked it up, saying warningly: 'That's

the last time I do that'. I could see his unhappy pale face as he turned my way. He didn't say one word during all this time, only made some sounds. A little more time passed. He swung his legs again. She raised her voice as she swore at him, telling him to stop it. He stopped it. I looked across at her. The phone had been put away. Now she had an open packet of tobacco in her lap and was carefully rolling a cigarette.

My stop was coming up. As I rose I heard her say, *sotto voce*: 'I'm going to go mad in a minute'. That was what happened, without exaggeration, as accurately as I can recall it.

Why didn't I say something? Well, in retrospect, maybe I should have. But a single man doesn't usually take notice of women with their children, let alone intervene there. When the woman had first sworn I had felt annoyance, and had wished such behaviour wouldn't happen. I didn't want my journey disturbed. But then the mother's behaviour just kept happening, and it was all of a piece. She was consistently awful to the child. The famous saying has it that it only takes for good people to do nothing, for evil to triumph. I could have said prayers at

the time. I'm sorry to say I didn't think of that. But I do remember thinking I should do something, otherwise the whole thing would subsequently be forgotten, leaving nothing behind but a disagreeable feeling that we are all going to the dogs. It took a little effort to get out a notebook and a pen and begin to write, but that is what I did.

However, what's the point of writing up someone else's misery and bad behaviour? Well, not to point a finger at the mother. I didn't want to do that. I omitted identifying details, so she needn't fear exposure. Rather, it was to witness to behaviour that is happening now, in October 2021, in a northern city. I don't see why Manchester would be much worse than other parts of England, so this must be happening elsewhere in our society. This account tries to make something visible. You have to admit a problem before you can solve it. One glimmer of light might be the woman's quiet comment about going mad, because she would have been aware of me when she said it. I was just passing her, going towards the door. So perhaps, as I was leaving, she was admitting to another person that there was a problem? What would help her, and her child, and society?



A Metrolink tram in Manchester's Corporation Street

© Marc A Gibbs

# A Reflection on I Corinthians 15

Tobias Runeson

**The Christian faith makes very little sense without heaven and eternity. So many of the claims of Christianity can only be reconciled in the light of what is to come. That is why the resurrection of Jesus is the single most pivotal event of the Christian faith and thus of all humanity.**

Many of the objections against the Christian faith hinge on the idea that human life is limited to our years here on earth and that hope of a life to come is no more than an attempt to relate to our inevitable mortality. With such a worldview, Christian claims do indeed become troublesome, evil becomes more problematic and the self-sacrificial life of the Christian will seem to be less purposeful.

However, if Jesus did indeed rise from the dead as a first fruit for all mankind, then a different light shines on us. If God will bring all evil to an end and every injustice to judgment, then the idea of a good God despite all present evil is suddenly an easier concept to accept. And if it is true that every hardship and selfless act of charity in this life will receive its throughout eternity, then the self-sacrificial way of the Christian will indeed seem a reasonable choice.

This is why St Paul, in his fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians, sternly establishes the claim that Christ indeed is risen, proclaiming that the resurrection is not purely symbolical, but is rooted in an actual event. If not, he says, then our faith is futile and we are of all people most to be pitied. However, Christ did rise from the dead. The impression is often given that the detail of the resurrection and of Jesus' life is unsubstantiated. Yet Paul begins by naming a long list of people who actually had met Jesus after he had risen; this is significant as he writes within as few as 20 years of the event. Many of the people he names may still be alive at the time of writing and recipients of the letter could investigate this for themselves.

The apostle then draws out the implications: not only can our sins be forgiven, but we too can rise to eternal life. 'As in Adam all die, so in Christ will all be made alive.' For those of us who live our lives with faith in the Lord, we can look forward to the glory that he has made available for us. As we prepare to celebrate Holy Week and the resurrection we are encouraged by St Paul to fix our eyes on the risen Lord and to align our lives with the life of heaven, our hearts filled with the hope found in our Saviour.

## A Southern Italian Stew

Ismaele Conte



**St Francis of Paola (feast day 2 April) was a mendicant Friar who was born and spent most of his life in southern Italy. Soon after he joined a Franciscan order at the age of 13, and after having visited Assisi as a pilgrim, he was granted permission to go to live in prayer and solitude. Some local people, attracted by the kind of life he led, joined him, laying the foundation for the order which would then become the Hermits of St Francis of Assisi.**

There are many extraordinary things that he performed in his life, which led kings and emperors to ask for his counsel on several occasions. What would Francis have to say to us if we could be in his presence? The day before he died, he called his brethren to his death bed, and exhorted them to be charitable to one another and to live like Christ. This was his dying wish, which can help us as we continue our Lenten journey towards Easter and our earthly journey towards Heaven, perfecting and

nourishing our faith. We can ask St Francis to help us in this task, which will bring our ultimate reward.

The saint is said to have had a great love for animals, and is perhaps the first vegan saint. A typical Sicilian recipe is *Caponata*, which no doubt he would have eaten:

- 100ml olive oil (to fry the vegetables) and 50ml red wine vinegar
- 3 large aubergines, cut into 2cm cubes and stir fried until just cooked
- 2 long shallots and 4 large plum tomatoes, chopped and stir fried until just cooked
- 2 tsp capers, soaked if salted
- 50g raisins
- 4 celery sticks, sliced
- handful toasted pine nuts and basil leaves

Put all the cooked vegetables back in a saucepan, add the capers, raisins, celery and vinegar, season well and cover with a lid. Cook over a low heat for 40 mins, until all the vegetables are soft. Stir gently so it doesn't break up too much; the stew should smell sweet and sour. Serve with bread, bless the Lord and enjoy!

# Kyōsai: The Israel Goldman Collection

Royal Academy

**Kawanabe Kyōsai (1831–1889) was the most exciting and popular Japanese painter of the late 19th century. A child prodigy and draughtsman of the highest ability, his art is humorous, provocative, energetic, and outrageous. The exhibition will focus largely on the art of *sekiga*, spontaneous paintings, produced at calligraphy and painting parties (*shogakai*) which were often fuelled by prodigious amounts of saké. Overlooked for decades, many of these works reveal a comical twist which plays on conventions or reflects the artist's take on society.**

Alongside these spontaneous works, highly detailed studio paintings will reveal the wide subject range Kyōsai



*Death and laughter have a close existence here*

referenced as well as his revolutionary style which challenged the rigid artistic conventions of the day. The historical context of his work will be explored, revealing the great political, social, and cultural changes taking place across Japan which he captured in his art. The exhibition will include around 80 works, many of which have never been exhibited or published, and these will all be drawn from the unparalleled collection of Israel Goldman. This will be the first monographic exhibition of Kyōsai's work in the UK since 1993.

He was initially a pupil of the ukiyo-e artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1798-1861) before receiving academic

training at the celebrated Kano school. He had a keenhesitate to incorporate new elements into his traditional studies. More recently he has been an important source for modern manga, tattoo artists and contemporary painters. As one of the most famous artists of his day, written records regarding Kyōsai are also abundant. There are contemporary accounts of his interactions with the first generation of Western artists, writers and diplomats to visit Japan after the country opened its ports to the West in 1854. They include the British architect, Josiah Conder, and the founder of the Musée Guimet, French industrialist Émile Guimet. Kyōsai also published a self-illustrated, semi-autobiography, *Kyōsai gadan*, in 1887.



*Animals, with or without humans, feature strongly*

The exhibition will explore three themes. The first section, *From Tradition to Innovation*, will highlight Kyōsai's representative works which demonstrate the variety of genres and styles in which he painted. These works, which include finely finished examples in full colour, reveal his firm foundation as a trained academic painter and provide a distinct contrast to the spontaneous paintings. Thanks to his extensive mastery of the traditional practices, these works are painted with considerable freedom and invention. A highlight here will be one of the most important works in the exhibition, a unique pair of 3-metre folding screens, *Night Procession of one hundred Demons*, 1871 – 1889.

The second section *Laughing at Modernity* will introduce Kyōsai within the historical setting of mid to late 19th century Japan. Prints and paintings depict the introduction of Western culture to Japan, encounters with Europeans and Americans, domestic political events and civil wars. In these pieces, contemporary topics are treated with humour, with human figures or 'humanised' animals often created in order to overcome strict political censorship. The final section, *The Artist meets his Public*, will focus on spontaneous paintings and collaborative works. Collaboration often occurred at gatherings and it was a vital part of art making in 19th century Japan. Some of the spontaneously painted compositions are 'drunken paintings', which reveal the essence of Kyōsai's virtuosity as a painter with their wilder and freer brush strokes. He also painted comical *shunga* (sexually explicit images), often impromptu in front of an audience. Additional, related works will be exhibited in the genre of 'paintings within paintings,' one of his recurring themes.

*Exhibition runs until Sunday 19 June 2022, 10am – 6pm Tuesday to Sunday. Admission from £15; concessions available; Friends of the RA go free. Advance booking is essential for everyone, including Friends of the RA; tickets can be booked online (royalacademy.org.uk) or by phone (020 7300 8090).*

# Hidden Casualties of War

Stella Maris

**Stella Maris chaplains have been speaking about the dilemmas and worries of both Ukrainian and Russian seafarers as the war in Ukraine deepens. Wojciech Holub, regional port chaplain in Tilbury and London Gateway, said several Ukrainian seafarers he has met are incredibly anxious about not being able to return back home or see their families.**

‘One Ukrainian ship master I spoke to at Tilbury port told me that his contract had ended, and a replacement captain had already joined the ship. However, he has had to remain on board because of the difficulties getting flights home,’ said Wojciech. ‘Another young seafarer was on a vessel heading for drydock in Gdansk, Poland. He comes from Crimea and has Russian and Ukrainian nationality. He said he hoped to find safe accommodation in Gdansk as he feels he has no chance of getting home. His sister and other relatives have escaped to Turkey. Another from Kyiv spoke of his grief and told me he was thinking of his home and family, and cannot wait to get home.’

It is not just the Ukrainian seafarers who are worried about getting home, but also those from Russia and the surrounding countries such as Georgia and Armenia. Both Ukrainian and Russian seafarers are shocked and horrified by what they are seeing and hearing about the war. On board vessels of mixed Russian and Ukrainian crew, they are united and have no animosity towards each other, Wojciech said.

This sentiment is echoed by Deacon John Fogarty, regional chaplain for Kent and the Medway ports, who spoke to the Russian captain of a vessel with 13 Russian crew members. ‘The captain, whose mother was half Ukrainian, was almost apologetic, as were the crew members, simply for being Russian. It struck me that there may be many more seafarers feeling the very same. Russian seafarers are really struggling at this time as well as their brothers and sisters in the Ukraine.’

Deacon Doug Duncan, Northeast Scotland regional port chaplain met three Ukrainian seafarers who had finished their contracts in the oil and gas sector. Their employer was looking at placing them on another vessel, the men told Doug. ‘Three of them have decided to go home, while the three who are staying know that if they return home, they probably would not be able come back to the UK to work. They have advised their families to flee while they would carry on working and supporting their families in some way.’

Martin Foley, Stella Maris’ chief executive officer said: ‘Our chaplains in the UK and around the world will redouble their efforts to support all seafarers affected by this war. It is desperately unfortunate that Ukrainian,

Russian, and other seafarers are getting caught up in it. We are urging all governments to ensure the safety of all seafarers, their entitlement to adequate shore leave and their access to our welfare services’.



Julian Wong, East Anglia regional Port Chaplain, provides a Ukrainian seafarer with a free SIM card in Felixstowe Port



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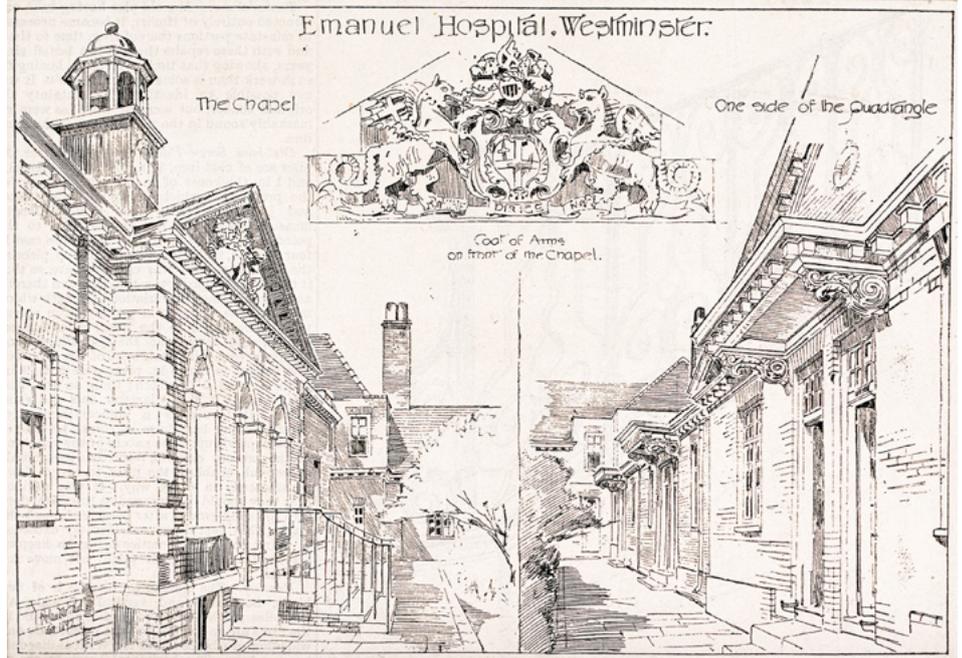



# A Walk Through Tothill Fields

Patrick Rogers

On a warm evening in summer, when the commuters have left London for the suburbs, it is pleasant to stroll through the back streets of Westminster looking for signs of what was here before. Starting from the main entrance to the Cathedral, you are in what was for many centuries called Tothill Fields, and before that was an unhealthy, water-logged area known as Bulinga Fen. In the more recent past, until the early 1970s in fact, just an extension of the street called Ashley Place separated the Cathedral from a six-storey block of offices and shops. This is why the west front of the Cathedral nearest you is stepped back as it rises – to allow sunlight to reach the tall buildings then standing in front of the Cathedral which, incidentally, concealed it from Victoria Street. It was only in 1969 that Westminster City Council decided to demolish these and open up the space called the Piazza in front of the Cathedral, the work being completed in 1976.

Moving back in time a hundred years, instead of a cathedral you would have been standing in front of a prison. Westminster (Middlesex) House of Correction (commonly called Tothill Fields Prison) was built on enlightened, Benthamite, lines from 1826 to 1834 on an eight-acre site between Francis Street, Morpeth Terrace and Victoria Street. It housed 600 women sentenced to less than five years, and 300 boys aged between five and 17 (plus a few who lied about their age to escape an adult prison), mostly sentenced to a month or two for pickpocketing and petty theft on the streets of London. Half of them were recommitments, one 14-year-old being in for the seventeenth time. The prison, though strict, was not harsh and some homeless boys were suspected of committing crimes just in order to be clothed and fed there during the cold winter months. But it was considerably more expensive to run than similar institutions and was closed in 1883 and demolished in 1884-5.



*The Emanuel Hospital, Tothill Fields*

Turning right down Ambrosden Avenue with Ashley Gardens on the left, you can see why the Cathedral looks as it does. When the prison site was put up for sale, Cardinal Manning, second Archbishop of Westminster, bought the entire eight acres through a Catholic holding company. Four acres were reserved for his cathedral and the remainder sold. The Ashley Gardens flats were built from 1890-93 and those on Morpeth Terrace and Carlisle Place in 1885-98. For external decoration a combination of red brick and grey stonework was chosen, so when the Cathedral was built, from 1895-1903, a similar decorative scheme was adopted. Morpeth Terrace and Carlisle Place, incidentally, were named after Viscount Morpeth, Earl of Carlisle and Minister of Trees and Forests, who cleared much of the slums between here and Westminster Abbey in the 19th century.

At the end of Ambrosden Avenue stands Francis Street, named after Francis Wilcox's cottages which stood here before the area was developed. Across the road stands the pub, built in 1848 as 'The Windsor Castle' probably to cater for the warders and other staff

of the prison. It was renamed as 'The Cardinal' in 1963 and the sign outside then showed Cardinal Wolsey on one side and a cardinal bird on the other. But about five years later the bird was replaced by a portrait of Cardinal Manning – ironically since he was strictly teetotal. Later refurbishment, of course, has restored the original name.

We are now close to the main entrance of the prison, consisting of massive granite blocks, iron gate and portcullis, while inside hung rows of cutlasses designed, of course, to impress and deter. Continuing to the right along Francis Street past first Clergy House and then Vaughan House, we reach the luxury mansion flats of Morpeth Terrace and Carlisle Place (the best examples in London). At the junction with the latter stands old Archbishop's House, occupied by Cardinal Manning from 1873 until his death in 1892, and then by his successor until 1901 when the present Archbishop's House on Ambrosden Avenue was finished. Manning's house (with a blue plaque on the side recording its history) was originally a club for the Guards who lived in an accommodation block on

Francis Street opposite. To the left of this is an unusual building with a statue of St Francis at the corner. This was the Guards' orphanage and was modelled on Brunelleschi's Foundling Hospital in Florence.

Cardinal Manning, then Archdeacon of Chichester, finally decided to leave the Church of England in 1851 while attending a service in the Charlotte Street Chapel at 12 Palace Street (built in 1766, it became a cinema in 1924, the Westminster Theatre in 1931 and burned down in 2002). On the opposite side, at 43 Palace Street, was the Church of St Peter and St Edward (built in 1856-58), a Chapel of Ease to the Cathedral and a military chapel for the London District, especially for Catholic soldiers stationed at Wellington Barracks near Buckingham Palace. It was closed in 1975 and converted into offices.

In 1867 Cardinal Manning was planning a Roman Catholic cathedral on the other side of Victoria Street. He first wanted the site on Carlisle Place – to the left of the street (1867), then to the right, then occupying both sides and the street itself (1868) and finally on the old prison site (1884). Walking up Carlisle Place, on the left we pass St Vincent's Centre with its statue of St Vincent de Paul over the main entrance and The Passage Day Centre for the homeless in the basement. Built in 1862-3 as an orphanage, it subsequently also became a school, hostel, soup kitchen, hospital during the First World War and public feeding station during the Second. Its name



*Westminster Abbey, seen across the Fields*  
by John Varley of Hackney

comes from King's Scholars' Passage which runs behind, given because monks nearby were experts on the Book of the Kings in the Old Testament.

Turning right into Ashley Place, we are now beside what was St Andrew's Anglican Church to our right. Built in the Gothic style in 1851-2 to hold 1,200, it received a direct hit from a bomb in 1940 and was demolished in 1952. Past the Cathedral again and down Howick Place, then across Francis Street and we are standing beside the Army and Navy Stores (now House of Fraser) where another prison, Tothill Fields Bridewell, stood. Built in 1618 and closing in 1836 after the new prison opened, above its entrance (now part of the New Sessions House on Broad Sanctuary opposite Westminster Abbey) was carved: 'Here are several sorts of Work for the Poor of this Parish of St Margaret, Westminster. As also for the County according to Law and for such as will Beg and Live Idle in this City and Liberty of Westminster. Anno 1655'. So it was for indolent paupers,

vagrants and beggars. It appears in a picture of 1796 with only the iron spikes on the walls and awnings showing its true purpose. A couple are clearly visiting. And the inmates? Of course they are begging.

Across Artillery Row ahead stood the Artillery Ground for practice with longbows, crossbows, pistols and muskets (not cannon despite the carving on the grey building) from Tudor until Victorian times. This is also the area of almshouses for the industrious poor, and Charity Schools for orphans or children whose parents were unable to look after them. Looking left across Victoria Street, you can just see Bluecoat School, founded in 1688 and now owned by the National Trust. Down the street to your right stood Greencoat Hospital School, founded by Charles I in 1633 and now replaced by a pub named after it. Opposite and to the right is Greycoat School, founded by local tradesmen in 1698. There was also Emanuel (Browncoat) School on Buckingham Gate, Palmer's (Blackcoat) Butler's and Emery Hill's, now commemorated in Palmer Street and Butler Place just across Victoria Street, and Emery Hill School off Rochester Row. These schools were set up to teach children Christian values, patriotism and diligence, for later employment as watermen, tailors, seamstresses, domestic servants etc., arranged by the school.

So what happened to the Westminster Charity Schools and to the almshouses customarily built by the same benefactor beside them? In 1873-4 the dayboys were transferred to Emanuel School on Buckingham Gate. In 1883 Emanuel moved to new premises on Wandsworth Common, where it stands today. Similarly in 1874 the girls were transferred to Greycoat School which is now a large and successful comprehensive. The almshouses were also amalgamated in 1880-82 and you can find three of them nearby on the right of Rochester Row. United Westminster Almshouses there consists of Palmer's on the left, Butler's in the centre and Emery Hill's on the right, also commemorated in the name of the adjacent street, which will lead you back towards the Cathedral.



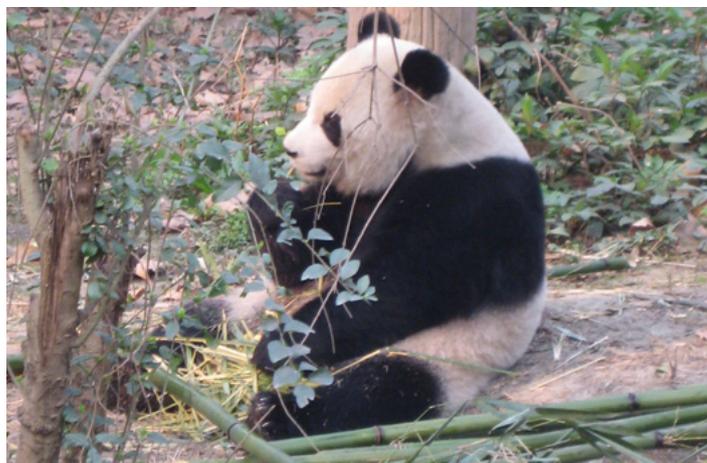
*Mothers exercising with their children at Tothill Fields Prison*

# Caring for the World

Fr Dan Troy

**Traditional Chinese paintings that show the natural world depend on just two colours to convey their meaning. Black ink on white paper is the only approach available to the artist. Another feature of these paintings is that a huge part of the natural world can be represented on paper that hangs from near the ceiling to a point close to the ground. Closer examination of scenes that show sweeping clouds, towering mountains, churning waterfalls and an expanse of trees will reveal small features that actually represent people, who might otherwise be easily missed in the huge paintings. The contrast in scale between the people and the natural world represents a clear understanding by the artists of the need for humans to be humble within the natural world.**

The rapid economic development of China over the past 30 years seems to be moving its people along a path that is quite different to what is represented by its deeply traditional painting. Most people in China realise that economic development has taken a toll on the natural world. Public notices promote the need for a low carbon lifestyle, but these efforts to influence thinking are completely outnumbered by the stylish advertising that promotes new cars as part of a desired lifestyle.



© Tomasz Dunn

*It is not just about pandas*

The twice rescheduled United Nations-sponsored Convention on Biodiversity (Conference of Parties - COP - 15) is expected to take place in Kunming from 25 April to 8 May. The capital city of Yunnan province is located at almost 2,000 metres above sea level and is popularly known as Spring City due to its moderate temperatures all year round. The mountainous province is also where many of the country's ethnic minorities are living.

China's vast landmass means that it has a huge variety of climates and ecosystems. Whether it is the tropical island province of Hainan, the fertile plains of the Yangtze basin, the western deserts or the bitterly cold northeast in winter, the full spectrum is represented here. Natural history books

and television programmes show that Chinese people have a keen interest in the land and life systems that surround them. Like many other countries where good intentions are often expressed, the challenge in China seems to be trying to find a way of life that provides for the people in a balanced way without damaging the natural world. With an economy that is continuing to expand, it is difficult to see how the balance will be found.

The Convention on Biodiversity provides China with an opportunity to facilitate a step forward for the entire world in this crucial area of the life of our planet. Scientists agree that today's extinction rate is hundreds, or even thousands, of times higher than the natural baseline rate. A tragic leaking of the life of our planet is taking place, each species dropping over the cliff of extinction, never to be seen again by any future generation. Huge efforts have been made in China to conserve the panda for future generations. A great symbol of China, it shows how one species can capture the public imagination. What we fail to keep in mind is that all species, irrespective of size, hold just as much mystery and uniqueness as the panda.

On a more positive note, opportunities do exist for Church personnel in China to take part in educational activities related to ecological concern. During the past five years over 100 sisters, some priests and lay people, as well as some people with no connection with the Church, have taken part in ecological workshops with visiting Irish geologist and botanist John Feehan. The week-long workshops have provided the opportunity for participants to learn about the timescale and vastness of the universe, the diversity of the ecosystems on planet Earth, and the depths of beauty that are held in flowers and insect life as revealed when using hand lenses and microscopes. Faithful to the direction offered by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, the question posed by John during these workshops has consistently been: 'What does this tell us about God?' Participants have already begun to share their insights by facilitating similar workshops and further workshops have been requested, part of a post-Covid experience that is hoped for by many people.

While there is a growing awareness of ecological issues within the Church in China and in wider society, it still feels that the genuine efforts being made by people are similar in scale to the people represented in traditional Chinese paintings, small in comparison to what surrounds them, but nonetheless a meaningful part of what is happening. Perhaps the upcoming Convention on Biodiversity in Kunming will see the emergence of an energy of Olympic proportions for people in all nations to contribute prophetically to a preservation of all forms of life on our fragile planet.

*Fr Dan Troy is a member of the Missionary Society of St Columban. He lives in China.*

# Caring for an Old Lady

Peter Stevens

**As regular members of the Cathedral's congregation will know, the Grand Organ is, at the time of writing, undergoing three weeks of important restoration work. Built by Henry Willis III between 1922 and 1932, the Grand Organ is acknowledged as one of the world's great instruments, capable of an immense dynamic range of exceptional quality, and speaking with great power and focus from the west gallery of the nave. The Grand is extraordinarily resilient; despite being played almost every day of the year, only one major rebuild of the organ has taken place in the century since it was installed.**

In 1983-4, the renowned organ builders Harrison and Harrison restored, cleaned and rebuilt both the Grand and Apse Organs, and have looked after both instruments ever since. Now, almost forty years on, their skilled craftsmen are undertaking crucial work to keep the organ playable; whilst far from being a complete rebuild, this work should help to stave off a major rebuild for several more years to come. Of the 4000 pipes in the organ, some of the largest have started to lean over under their own weight. Consider the shape of an organ pipe; its weight is supported at the narrowest point, near the base of the pipe. Over many years some pipes begin to bend out of shape, and this can even stop them from speaking entirely; one of the largest 32' reed pipes has been silent since last year. Harrisons have selected 40 of the worst-affected pipes from across the organ, and have set up a workshop in the gallery, reshaping the pipes and soldering them back together. Further issues with the largest pipes only became apparent when they were lifted out of the organ, and so extra work has been needed to repair them.

In addition to the pipework, several other issues have been causing problems over the last few years, and even in the last few weeks; until the organ builders arrived, one particularly noisy stop was being held in with masking tape, as it kept coming out of its own volition when least expected! In the 1980s rebuild, great care was taken to maintain the pneumatic touch at the console that is such a distinctive part of the experience of playing the Grand Organ. Lead tubing behind the banks of stop knobs – known as 'jamb's' on either side of the console – is being restored to make the stop action more reliable, and prevent faults from occurring. Furthermore, the motors of the drawstop action are being releathered to stop wind from leaking.

The Grand Organ is truly unique, admired internationally, and has drawn many of the world's finest players to give recitals over the last hundred years. We are very grateful to Harrisons for their craftsmanship and expertise, and for the great care they take of the Cathedral's organs throughout the year; these instruments are a crucial part of the Cathedral's heritage and identity, contributing to the daily liturgies as well as to the musical life of the capital. We can look forward to hearing the Grand Organ again for the great liturgies of Holy Week and Easter.



*Some pipes are shorter and thinner, whilst others are bulky with big mouths and like to rumble*



*All these pipes balance on a very narrow point and are shaped for maximum support; notice the solder repair on them all*



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## Prayer for Peace (1)

When the news broke that the Russian Army, instead of being massed on the borders of Ukraine, had actually begun an invasion of that country, the decision was swiftly taken, first to institute the corporate recitation of the Memorare for peace at the end of each Cathedral Mass, but also more immediately to keep a Holy Hour. Obviously not everyone at the 5.30pm Solemn Mass could stay for the hour, but it is good that a fair number offered their time. Any war or conflict leaves behind a legacy of evil deeds and bitterness that will demand much prayer before reconciliation and true peace can prevail.

## Prayer for Peace (2)

On the Sunday following the beginning of the Russian invasion, Cardinal Vincent offered the 10am Mass with intention for Peace. The image is a screen shot from the livestream of that Mass and shows the Administrator, who was concelebrating, being censured at the Offertory. Sometimes the brightness of the morning light illuminates the smoke of the incense as it rises. As the incense grains are placed on the charcoals which are not themselves intensely hot, the smoke tends to rise quite slowly and then hangs in the air somewhat like a cloud, as pictured here.



# High and Low, Young and Old



© Marcin Mazur



© Marcin Mazur

The Church has its official Holy Days of Obligation for attending Mass – Sundays and a small number of major feasts during the year, such as the Ascension of Our Lord, Ss Peter and Paul and the Assumption of Our Lady – but the Faithful seem to have decided that there are two other days on which they must be present, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The Ash Wednesday attendance at Mass was virtually at pre-pandemic levels and most encouraging. The Cardinal celebrated the evening's Solemn Mass and is seen here being ashed himself by Fr Alexander, his Private Secretary. However, there is no requirement for reaching the age of reason before being ashed, and so the editor of *Oremus* was also captured ashing a very young member of the congregation.

## A Lenten Ordination

Almost as a foretaste for the summer ordinations of deacons and priests, Fr Jonathan Goodall was ordained to the priesthood in the Cathedral on the Saturday of the First Week of Lent. Formerly a bishop in the Church of England, he will now be serving as a Westminster Diocesan Priest. The image shows him in the Sacristy with Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski, Eparch of the Holy Family of London, who concelebrated the Ordination Mass. The Eparchy serves Ukrainian and Belarusian Catholics and also Slovakian Greek Catholics, and the Ordination offered a happy opportunity to display both the universal nature of the Church and our support for the people of Ukraine.



# What does Fasting Mean for Us?

Fr Timothy Finigan

**In the 1775 edition of his *Garden of the Soul*, Bishop Challoner reminded Catholics that they should fast and abstain on all days of Lent, as well as the Ember Days and the Vigils of major feasts. Fasting, he said, meant: ‘we are to eat but one meal in the day’. Between then and 1996, the law of the Church was gradually and successively mitigated. The 1872 revision of the *Garden of the Soul* does not require fasting on the Sundays of Lent, and abstinence is only required on Fridays. By this time, two collations or light snacks are allowed in addition to the main meal.**

The 1909 edition of the Catholic Encyclopaedia gives considerable space to the various reasons which excuse from fasting. Along with sickness and hard manual labour, the author mentions headaches, loss of sleep, or difficult mental work such as that undertaken by ‘bookkeepers, stenographers, telegraph operators, legal advisers’ and others. Not surprisingly, in the conclusion of the article, it is observed: ‘No student of ecclesiastical discipline can fail to perceive that the obligation of fasting is rarely observed in its integrity nowadays. Conscious of the conditions of our age, the Church is ever shaping the requirements of this obligation to meet the best interests of her children’.

Fifty-seven years later, the document *Paenitemini* changed the law to its present form, which only obliges us to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Certainly, the requirements have been ‘shaped’, but whether the Church has met the ‘best interests of her children’ is open to dispute. Since the Old and New Testament scriptures, the writings of the Fathers, and the tradition of the Church all seem to require us to fast as part of the spiritual life, it is worth asking whether this is achieved in any credible way by what essentially amounts to not eating between meals on two days of the year.



*Bishop Challoner is buried in the Cathedral's Chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine. As he died 70 years before the Restoration of the Hierarchy in this country, he is termed a ‘Vicar Apostolic’.*

It is embarrassing when many ordinary people in our midst faithfully keep a month-long fast during which no food is taken between sunrise and sunset.

In response to the absence of any law on fasting which would constitute a hardship, and hence a real penance, Lent has become a matter choosing a Lenten penance for ourselves, of ‘giving something up’. I did come across advice in one or two schools that even giving something up was not a good idea, but that the children should do something extra instead. When I advised that this would directly contradict any sermon that I gave to the children about Lenten penance, the idea was fortunately not pressed.

Many Catholics are still unsure about the value of corporal penance, and particularly of fasting. In the kind of inconsistency that we increasingly face in society, fasting is deemed a good thing if the purpose is to lose weight, look more attractive, or chase faddishly after an illusory miracle of instant healthiness, but fasting is seen as a dark and superstitious practice if it is a spiritual exercise to atone for our sins and plead for the mercy of God. Many of our contemporaries would be horrified to hear Challoner’s explanation that fasting appeases the wrath of God which is provoked by our sins, and that by condemning and punishing ourselves, we admit our guilt and work with the justice of God. Lenten penance is first and primarily concerned with sorrow and reparation for our sins, and secondly with overcoming our

disordered desires and temptations so that the flesh is made to submit to the spirit. Since food is so basic a necessity of life, fasting is ideally suited to the season of penance in which we seek to draw away from the death of sin and cleave to life in Christ.

The more the Church’s discipline on fasting has been relaxed, the greater has been the volume of casuistical discussions aimed at diluting even further the rules that remain. Rather than obsess about what exactly the Church requires of us as a minimum, we would do better simply to follow the teaching of the gospel and our Catholic tradition, by depriving ourselves of some food, especially meat, that we would otherwise eat and enjoy, and force ourselves to experience some hunger as a result. For the Christian, Wednesdays and Saturdays are traditionally days of fasting, in addition to Fridays. We could certainly abstain from meat on those days of Lent, and most of us could fast rather more than we do in preparation for Easter, especially if that means simply having one meal in the day.

Bishop Challoner is refreshingly free of psychobabble when he offers homely, and genuinely pastoral advice on the regulations of his time: ‘If you find some difficulty in the observance of them, offer it up to God for your sins’.

*This piece first appeared in Mass of Ages, the magazine of the Latin Mass Society and thanks are offered to Fr Finigan and the Society for permission to reproduce it.*

# In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*

## Varia

When the election of Pope Pius XI was announced and the facts of his life became known, Englishmen generally were rather surprised to hear that he had visited England. Very few of his 259 predecessors have done so! With the exception of Pope Leo XIII (said to have visited for a few weeks more than 30 years previous to his election in 1878), one has to go back several centuries to find another Pope who could claim personal acquaintance with our country. The present Pope has been to England more than once. He has visited Oxford and other cities, and has studied manuscripts at the British Museum. He can read English with ease, but it can hardly be said that he speaks it with any fluency.

As it became known that the Pope stayed at St Ermin's Hotel (near the Caxton Hall) on his last visit to London in 1914 – he actually occupied room no. 555 – it was presumed that he would have chosen Westminster Cathedral as the nearest church at which to say his Mass, and that therefore a record ought to be found in the book kept in the Sacristy, in which clerical visitors who celebrate Mass are required to sign their names before doing so. The signature of His Holiness has been found therein, the entry being dated 9 June 1914, and signed in Latin: Sac(erdos) Achilles Ratti, giving Milan as his diocese. Remark the signature and date. In the year 1914 he signs himself: Achille Ratti, Priest. In 1922 he can sign himself, Sovereign Pontiff! This makes a striking little record of his rapid rise to the Throne of Peter.

.....

So many are the ways and haunts of evildoers that it is not to be wondered at that persons of dishonest intent should find their way to the Cathedral, knowing it to be open all day from 6.30am to 9.30pm and to be frequented by people at all hours, especially at the various daily services. It has, however, been noticed rather ruefully by the unfortunate victims that Confessional time on Saturdays must have been especially marked down by such nefarious visitors as a fruitful one. Difficulty is felt by the authorities how best effectively to warn people not to leave their personal articles (umbrellas, handbags, etc.) unattended while in the Confessional. The following suggested lines have not so far been approved of:

You who come your souls to thrive  
Should simple be, but worldly wise.  
To this church come folk who steal,  
Therefore heed this brief appeal:  
Please take care of your possessions  
Whilst making your confessions.

*from the April 1922 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle*

## The Hidden Treasure

In 1947 an Arab boy was throwing stones into some thick bushes and heard muffled sounds of breaking pottery. Hidden from sight was a narrow cave. Inside, tall jars stood against the walls, all sound save one. They contained rolls of frayed, dry skins – the now famous Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), the ancient manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible and other devotional literature. A search for other caves eventually brought to light 10 scrolls and fragments of 600 books. They were about 2,000 years old and the consequences of the discovery were far-reaching.

The original Hebrew Bible scrolls were written in a kind of 'short-hand' – not even the name of God was fully spelled out – and the texts were open to spiritual interpretation. The teachers of Israel trained the hearers of God's word to listen in their hearts to the echo of its spirit, and to recapture the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who knew the Unseen Lord. Such training made the people see clearly the gap between the ideal and the real, and led to discontent. The only way to prevent unrest was to circulate a Bible in which everything had only one officially accepted meaning. The Masoretes produced an improved script, but with every word precisely determined by the Commentaries of the accredited lawyers and teachers.

## The Grace of the Septuagint

The early Christians did not really need the Hebrew Bible. They took for their guide the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek version of the Old Testament used by the dispersed Israelites, to which the Gospels constantly refer and whose language they use. The LXX conveys in plain language the mystical sense of the Patriarchal Faith which Jesus came to share with all men. His name as 'Christ', and his person as 'The Lord', appear consistently in the LXX. The Christian Church held to the Greek LXX as the Bible of the Apostles until St Jerome, much influenced by the Hebrew text proper, swayed the balance in favour of the Masoretic text – with St Augustine opposing him. Most translations of the Old Testament into European languages were made from the Masoretic text, with only occasional side-glances at the LXX. That accounts for the difficulties of the average layman in understanding the Old Testament which never openly reminds him of Christ. Now the Dead Sea Scrolls have much more in common with the LXX than with any harsh, Masoretic texts we know. Thus they vindicate the wisdom of the early Church.

*from the March / April 1972 Westminster Cathedral Journal*

# The Loss of the Papal States

Dr Michael Straiton KCSC

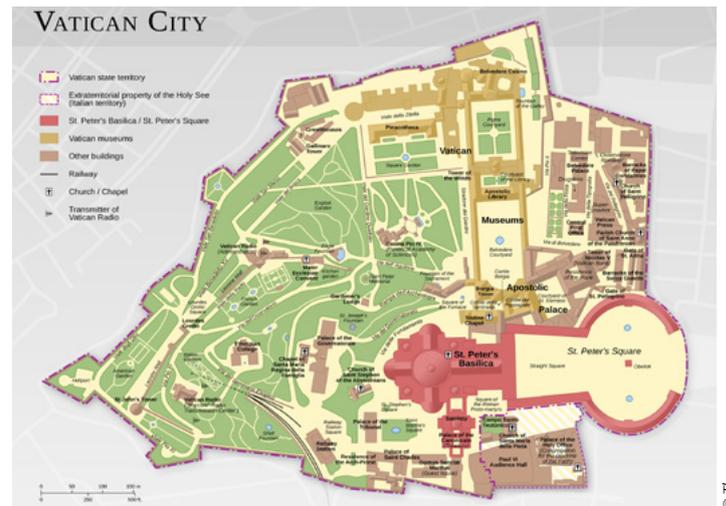
*At this time when national boundaries are so contested, Dr Straiton considers how the Papacy's lands shrank to Vatican City alone.*

**On 20 September 1870 General Raffaele Cadorna, commanding about 60,000 Italian troops, attacked Rome. General Hermann Kanzler commanded the Papal Army and Swiss Guards that were inside the walls defending the city. At 5am General Cadorna began bombarding the *Porta Pia*, one of the gates in the walls of the city, with canon. A breach was made soon after, and the revolutionary forces began pouring in through the gap. Resistance was hopeless, so about noontime, Pope Pius IX gave orders for his army to lay down their arms; the white flag of surrender was hoisted from the top of St Peter's Basilica. The 1,100-year rule of the Papal States had come to an end.**

The bishops of Rome first acquired lands around the city in the 4th century; these lands were known as the Patrimony of St Peter. Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) is credited with consolidating the papal holdings into a unified territory. The official beginning of the Papal States came in the 8th century. Thanks to the Eastern empire's increased taxation and inability to protect Italy, and, more especially, the emperor's views on iconoclasm, Pope Gregory II broke with the empire, and his successor, Pope Gregory III, upheld the opposition to the iconoclasts. Then, when the Lombards had seized Ravenna and were on the verge of conquering Rome, Pope Stephen II turned to the King of the Franks, Pippin the Short. Pippin promised to restore the captured lands to the pope and went on to defeat the Lombard leader, Aistulf, compelling him to return the lands which the Lombards had captured to the papacy.

Ignoring all Byzantine claims to the territory, Pippin's promise in 756 by a process known as the 'Donation of Pippin' provided the legal foundation for the Papal States. Donations by Charlemagne, his son and his grandson confirmed the original foundation and added to the territory. Over the next few centuries, throughout the volatile political situation in Europe, the popes managed to maintain control over the Papal States. When the Carolingian Empire broke up in the 9th century, the papacy fell under the control of the Roman nobility. This was a dark time for the Catholic Church, but the Papal States remained strong because preserving them was a priority for the secular leaders of Rome.

In the 12th century, commune governments began to rise in Italy; although the popes did not oppose them in principle, those that were established in papal territory proved problematic, and strife even led to revolts in the 1150s. Yet the Republic of St Peter continued to expand; for



Vatican City – The Papal State as it now is

example, Pope Innocent III capitalized on conflict within the Holy Roman Empire to press his claims. The 14th century then brought serious challenges. During the Avignon Papacy, papal claims to Italian territory were weakened by the fact that the popes no longer actually lived in Italy. Things grew even worse during the Great Schism when rival popes tried to run things from both Avignon and Rome. Ultimately, the schism was ended, and the popes concentrated on rebuilding their dominance over the Papal States.

In the 15th century, they saw considerable success, once again due to the focus on temporal over spiritual power displayed by such popes as Sixtus IV. In the early 16th century, the Papal States saw their greatest extent and prestige, thanks to the warrior-pope Julius II. But it was not long after the death of Julius that the Reformation signalled the beginning of the end of the Papal States. The very fact that the spiritual head of the Church should have so much temporal power was one of the many aspects of the Catholic Church that reformers objected to. As secular powers grew stronger they were able to chip away at papal territory. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars also did damage to the Republic of St Peter.

Eventually, during the course of the re-unification of Italy, Rome and the Papal States were annexed to the new Kingdom in 1870. With this dramatic loss, Pius IX was in temporal limbo. He retired from his Quirinal Palace in Rome and took up residence in the Vatican. Now he was effectively 'the Prisoner in the Vatican' and he and his successors remained so for the next 59 years.

# CATHEDRAL HISTORY – A PICTORIAL RECORD

## Palm Sunday 1952

Paul Tobin

**It was part of the Cathedral Customary for the Cardinal Archbishop to bless the Palms on Palm Sunday and take part in the procession, but not to celebrate the High Mass that followed. Instead, the Cardinal presided at the throne wearing cope and mitre and attended by two Assistant Deacons and an Assistant Priest. This limited form of presiding included blessing the Deacon before the Gospel reading ( being Palm Sunday this would have been the three Cathedral Chaplains who sang the Passion according to St Mathew) and giving the final blessing.**

For much of the previous year, Cardinal Bernard Griffin (Archbishop of Westminster 1944-56) was recovering from a serious heart attack, and it was obviously deemed necessary to reduce his attendance in the Cathedral for the Holy Week ceremonies. So in looking at the Holy Week programme for that year, it can be seen that in addition to missing Palm Sunday, he was also absent for the Mass on Maundy Thursday morning that included the Blessing of the Holy Oils. However, he was able to perform the short (and separate) ceremony of the *Mandatum* (Washing of the Feet) in the afternoon.

On Good Friday he was able to preside both at the Mass of the Presanctified in the morning that was

celebrated by his Senior Auxiliary, Archbishop Edward Myers, and at Tenebrae (Matins & Lauds) of Holy Saturday that was celebrated in the evening.

Holy Saturday morning saw the Cardinal preside at the First Mass and Vespers of Easter that began approximately two and a half hours after the start of the Easter Vigil at 9am, but he did not attend Matins & Lauds at 5.30pm. Easter Sunday was the one day he did celebrate Pontifical High Mass, preceded by Pontifical Terce starting at 10am as well as preaching at the Evening Service of Compline, Sermon & Benediction at 7pm.

Bishop George Craven, Vicar General, as Celebrant is seen about to enter the Cathedral with Fr (later Mgr Canon) Francis Bartlett as Deacon wearing one of the folded chasubles that were worn by the Deacon and Subdeacon during Advent and Lent in place of the Dalmatic and Tunicle respectively. In the background, wearing a biretta is Fr Anthony Cooke, whose voice can be heard intoning the *Gloria* on the original recording of Benjamin Britten's *Missa Brevis* in D in 1959.

Source: *Westminster Cathedral Chronicle*, May 1952

Image credit: KEYSTONE



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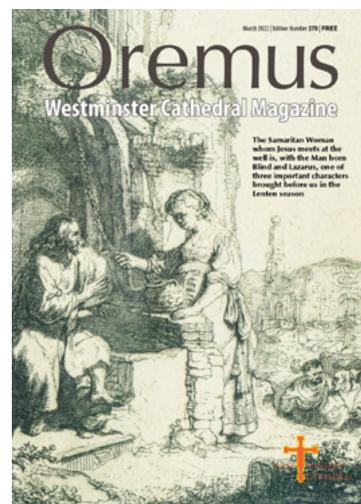
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**Tales of the English Martyrs**

A false report of St John Fisher's execution having been fixed for a certain day, the cook brought him no dinner, and on the bishop asking the reason, the cook replied that he thought the bishop would be already dead. 'Well,' said the bishop merrily to him, 'for all that report thou seest me yet alive, and therefore whatsoever news thou shalt hear of me hereafter, let me no more lack my dinner; and if thou see me dead when thou comest, then eat it thyself. But I promise thee, if I be alive, I mind, by God's grace, to eat never a bit the less.'

*Bust of St John Fisher by Pietro Torrigiano*



© Metropolitan Museum of Art

## The Month of April

### The Holy Father's Prayer Intention

#### For Health Care Workers

We pray for health care workers who serve the sick and the elderly, especially in the poorest countries; may they be adequately supported by governments and local communities.

### 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, Confessions 11.30-12.30pm, Mass 12.30pm \*, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 1.15-4.30pm, Confessions 4.30-5.30pm, 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, Choir), Confessions 11.30-12.30pm, Mass 12.30pm \*, Confessions 5-6pm, Sung Vespers 5.30pm (English, Cantor), Sung Mass 6pm

**Sunday:** Mass 8am, Sung Morning Prayer 9.30am, Sung Mass 10am, Confessions 10-12.30pm; Solemn Mass 12noon (Choir) \*, Solemn Vespers and Benediction 4pm, Confessions 5-6.45pm, Sung Mass 5.30pm, Mass 7pm

\* Live streamed via the Cathedral website

#### Friday 1 April

*Friday Abstinence*

Lent feria

*Ps Week 4*

**6.15pm** Stations of the Cross

#### Saturday 2 April

Lent feria

(St Francis of Paola, Hermit)

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

#### Sunday 3 April

*Ps Week 1*

### 5th SUNDAY OF LENT

**12 noon** Solemn Mass (Men's voices)

*Palestrina* – Missa Eripe me

*Tallis* – Suscipe quæso Domine

*Tallis* – Si enim iniquitates

**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction

*Viadana* – Magnificat primi toni

*Byrd* – Aspice Domine

**4.30pm** Deaf Service Mass in Cathedral Hall

#### Monday 4 April

Lent feria

(St Isidore, Bishop & Doctor)

#### Tuesday 5 April

Lent feria

(St Vincent Ferrer, Priest)

**5.30pm** Chapter Mass

#### Wednesday 6 April

Lent feria

#### Thursday 7 April

Lent feria

(St John Baptist de la Salle, Priest)

#### Friday 8 April

*Friday Abstinence*

Lent feria

#### Saturday 9 April

Lent feria

#### Sunday 10 April

*Ps Week 2*

### PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

**11.30am** Procession and Solemn

Pontifical Mass (Full Choir)

*Malcolm* – Ingrediente Domino

*Anerio* – Christus factus est

*Victoria* – Passion according to St Luke

*Byrd* – Mass for four voices

*Byrd* – Ne irascaris

*Byrd* – Civitas sancti tui

**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction

*Lassus* – Magnificat octavi toni

*Lassus* – Improperium expectavit

#### Monday 11 April

MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

#### Tuesday 12 April

TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

**12 noon** Solemn Pontifical Mass of

Chrism (Full Choir)

*Mozart* – Missa brevis in F major (K.192)

*Croce* – In spiritu humilitatis

*Mawby* – Ave verum corpus

Organ: *J S Bach* – Prelude in E flat

major (BWV 552)

#### Wednesday 13 April

WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

#### Thursday 14 April

### MAUNDY THURSDAY

**6pm** Solemn Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper (Full Choir)

*Vaughan Williams* – Mass in G minor

*Durufflé* – Ubi caritas et amor

*Byrd* – Ave verum corpus

#### Friday 15 April

*Fast and Abstinence*

### GOOD FRIDAY

**10am** Office of Readings (Full Choir)

*Victoria* – Tenebræ Responsories

*Anerio* – Christus factus est

**3pm** Celebration of the Passion of the Lord (Full Choir)

*Bruckner* – Christus factus est

*Byrd* – Passion according to John

*Victoria* – Improperia

*King John IV of Portugal* – Crux fidelis

*Lotti* – Crucifixus

*Casals* – O vos omnes

**6.30pm** Stations of the Cross

#### Saturday 16 April

*Fast as desired*

### HOLY SATURDAY

**10am** Office of Readings (Full Choir)

*Victoria* – Tenebræ Responsories

*Anerio* – Christus factus est

**8.30pm** The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night (Full Choir)

*Lassus* – Iubilate Deo omnis terra

*Reid* – Exodus canticle

*Palestrina* – Sicut cervus

*Vierne* – Messe solennelle in C sharp minor

*Bassano* – Dic nobis Maria

*Taverner* – Dum transisset Sabbatum

Organ: *Widor* – Final (Symphonie VI)

**Sunday 17 April***Ps Week 1***EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION****12 noon** Solemn Pontifical Mass (Full Choir)*Mozart* – Krönungsmesse (K.317)*Martin* – Hæc dies*arr. Baker* – O filii et filiaeOrgan: *Dupré* – Prelude and Fugue in B major**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction (Men's voices)*Palestrina* – Magnificat primi toni*Lassus* – Congratulamini mihiOrgan: *Vierne* – Final (Symphonie I)

Monday to Friday timetable:

The Cathedral opens at 9am and closes at 6pm;

Mass: 10.30am, 12.30 and 5.30pm;

Confessions: 11.30am – 12.30pm.

**Monday 18 April****MONDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER****Tuesday 19 April****TUESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER****Wednesday 20 April****WEDNESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER****Thursday 21 April****THURSDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER****Friday 22 April***No Friday Abstinence***FRIDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER****Saturday 23 April****SATURDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER****6pm** Vigil Mass with Adult Confirmations**Sunday 24 April***Ps Week 2***2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER (or of DIVINE MERCY)****12 noon** Solemn Mass (Cantor)**4pm** Solemn Vespers (English) and Benediction*St Mark looks out watchfully over Venice***Monday 25 April**

St MARK, Evangelist

**5.30pm** Vigil Mass of St George**Tuesday 26 April****ST GEORGE, Martyr, Patron of England****Wednesday 27 April**

Easter feria

**7.30pm** Grand Organ Festival Recital – Tom Bell*Olivier Messiaen* – Le Livre du

Saint Sacrement, to mark the 30th

Anniversary of the death of the Composer

**Thursday 28 April**

Easter feria

(St Peter Chanel, Priest &amp; Martyr; St

Louis M Grignion de Montfort, Priest)

*Choral services resume***Friday 29 April***Friday Abstinence*

St CATHERINE OF SIENA, Virgin &amp;

Doctor, Patron of Europe

**Saturday 30 April**

Easter feria

(St Pius V, Pope)

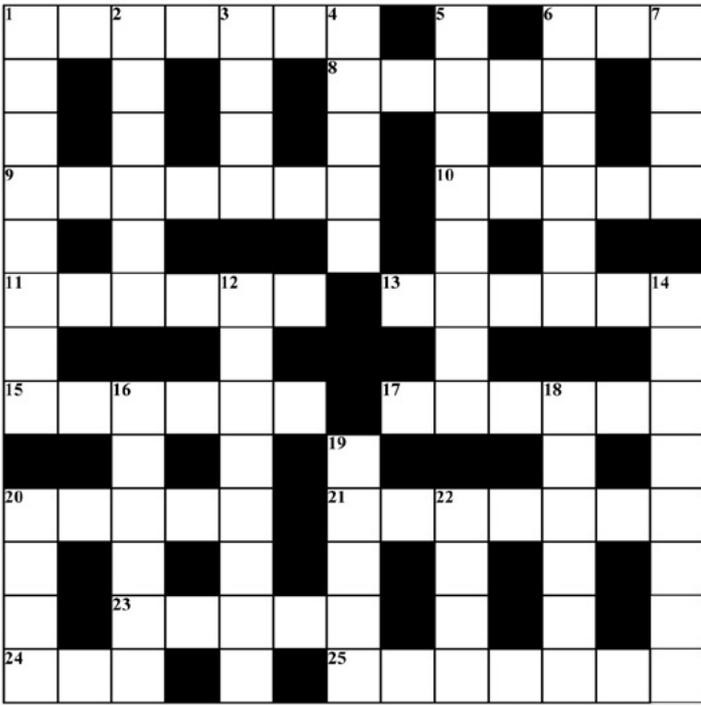
**9.30am – 4.30pm** A Day with Mary

**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**Guild of the Blessed Sacrament**Blessed Sacrament Chapel,  
Mondays 6.15pm**Guild of St Anthony Lady Chapel,**

Tuesdays 6.15pm

**Lectio Divina**Hinsley Room,  
Monday 7-8pm**Legion of Mary**Hinsley Room,  
Monday 1.30-3.30pm**Nigerian Catholic Association**Hinsley Room,  
Fourth Sundays – 1.30-2.30pm**Oblates of Westminster Cathedral**Hinsley Room, Fourth Sundays  
2.30-4pm**RCIA group**Vaughan House,  
Tuesday 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 Sundays 1.30-3pm



Alan Frost April 2022 – No. 98

**Clues Across**

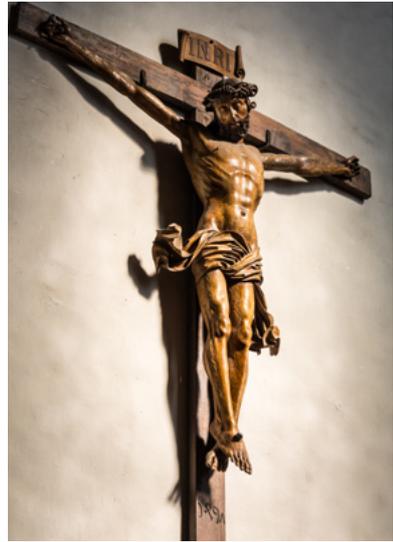
- 1 The father of the apostles James and John (7)
- 6 & 24: Famous bell in Westminster (3,3)
- 8 Animal used for wool, meat and pack-carrying (5)
- 9 Column in Trafalgar Square (7)
- 10 St ----(-) Marie de Montfort, Feast Day 28 April (5)
- 11 Medieval monk producing illustrated manuscripts (6)
- 13 Book of the OT by prophet who led Israelites into the Promised Land (6)
- 15 Seed scatterers, one subject of a famous parable from Jesus's teachings (6)
- 17 Hilaire -----, leading Catholic writer and poet, friend of G K Chesterton (6)
- 20 Prefix meaning 'many' (5)
- 21 Isle where Benedictine Quarr Abbey (originally Cistercian) is located (2,5)
- 23 Chicago airport named after decorated Catholic war hero (5)
- 24 See 6 Across
- 25 Hector -----, composed *Symphonie Fantastique* and *L'enfance du Christ* (7)

**Clues Down**

- 1 Jewish political zealots (8)
- 2 Hat traditionally associated with the City of London (6)
- 3 Rail on wall for hanging pictures (4)
- 4 'Für -----', very popular piano piece by Beethoven (5)
- 5 In mythology, a Muse of poetry (8)
- 6 Book of the OT following Lamentations (6)
- 7 NHS Hospital in Central London linked to King's College (4)
- 12 Fortified gateway, giving its name to City arts and concert centre (8)
- 14 Island and former federal prison off San Francisco coast (8)
- 16 English composer of 'Crown Imperial Suite' and 'Belshazzar's Feast' (6)
- 18 Gyorgy -----, composer left Hungary in 1956 to develop his avant-garde music (6)
- 19 Mount where Moses received the Ten Commandments (5)
- 20 Son of Lot, from whom a tribe descended (4)
- 22 River flowing around Durham Cathedral (4)

**ANSWERS**

Across: 1 Zebedee 6 Big 8 Lama 9 Nelson's 10 Louis 11 Scribe 13 Joshua 15 Sowers 17 Bellloc 20 Milt 21 Of Wight 23 O'Hare 24 Ben 25 Bertoz Down: 1 Zionists 2 Bowler 3 Dado 4 Elise 5 Calliope 6 Baruch 7 Guy's 12 Barbican 14 Alcatraz 16 Walton 18 Ligeti 19 Horeb 20 Moab 22 Wear



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Crucifix in the pilgrimage church, Kefermarkt, Upper Austria, circa 1497

**Crucifix**

Gus Thomas

It is a subdued depiction – no bright  
Trickles of blood, or contortion of limbs.  
Suspended from a roof-beam, Christ looks down  
In sombre reverie. The cross, itself,  
Tapering to a point below the feet,  
Resembles nothing so much as a nail:  
Christ, mercilessly nailed, become a nail,  
Patiently awaiting the hammer-blow,  
To pierce our intransigent hearts with love.

.....

**Bridie Macmahon**

Our God within the raging storm  
addresses Job in awesome might;  
the fullness of His love concealed  
until we see our Saviour's light.

Our God hung high upon the Cross  
addresses us in mortal pain;  
and with His broken body says:  
my love for you will never wane.

And so God's son, in human form,  
confounds the devil's bitter lie;  
Christ's raw lament no final word,  
but prelude to God's great reply:

You need not fear, my children blest –  
forego your grief, your woe, your strife;  
my love is yours, and from the Cross  
I give you my eternal life.

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

# Lent in our School Life

Aiden Reyes-Abella (Year 6)



**Lent has always been a very important time for me at St Vincent de Paul School. I use this period for reflection, my personal growth, self-sacrifice and as a new beginning. Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent which lasts for 40 days and 40 nights. It represents the time Jesus Christ spent in the desert alone, praying and fasting while also being tempted by the devil.**

It is a tradition to celebrate the first day of Lent by attending Mass at Westminster Cathedral and having ashes placed on our forehead by the priest. The ashes (which are made from last year's palm leaves) symbolise the dust that God made us from. The Cathedral is beautifully decorated in purple drapes which are the colour of Lent; it represents royalty and mourning. The colour purple is used in churches and the homes of Christians to remember the pain and sacrifice of Jesus's death and his resurrection. As we enter Holy Week at St Vincent de Paul, we think and talk about how Jesus sacrificed his life for us on the cross.

As part of our Lenten preparations, it is a tradition to gather together each day for collective worship. This happens as a whole school and in classes.

When we pray together as a class, we (the children) lead the worship and reflection. Our reflections are based on the Gospel readings from the previous Sunday. So far, we have thought about how we should always place our trust in God. At the time of writing this, our prayers are based on the Transfiguration and we have been encouraged to experience and respond to God's presence by reflectively looking at representations of Christ.

As a school community we use Lent as a period to strengthen our own self-discipline by fasting, which means giving up certain favourite foods or habits. We call this our 'Lenten Promise' and reminds us of the sacrifices Jesus made as his love for us. We also use this time during Lent to give to those less fortunate than us, by donating food

to charities as well as raising money using CCS (Catholic Children's Society) donation boxes.

The last week of Lent is called Holy Week which begins on Palm Sunday, the day when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem. The people of Jerusalem welcomed him by waving palm leaves in the air and laying them across the ground. In preparation for Easter this year, Year 5 and Year 6 will be performing our Passion Play. This is a very special performance about Jesus' final day on earth and his joyous resurrection which I am extremely proud to be a part of this year. We are always very fortunate to be performing the Passion Play on Westminster Cathedral's main sanctuary, and we invite all our school community and families to this special occasion.



*This reliquary bust of St Vincent de Paul in the Basilica of St Sernin, Toulouse depicts the saint with a heart on fire with charity, underlining the school motto – Love One Another as I Have Loved You*

The President of the European Union Bishops, Cardinal Hollerich, sent this letter to His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, on Tuesday, 8 March 2022, asking him to issue an urgent appeal to Russian authorities to immediately stop hostilities against the Ukrainian people:

Your Holiness,

It is with deep sorrow in my heart that I am addressing you today as President of the Commission of the Catholic Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) and as a brother faithful in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Broken-hearted, we listen to the voices of our brothers and sisters who are suffering from the foolishness of war in Ukraine, whose horrific consequences are in front of our eyes. Thousands – soldiers and civilians alike – have already lost their lives and more than a million people have been displaced or fled their homeland, most of them vulnerable women and children. As violent attacks are hitting Ukraine and its people every day with greater force, the need for humanitarian assistance is growing dramatically by the hour, while diplomatic efforts have remained fruitless so far. Moreover, as words and actions keep escalating, the possibility of a wider European or even global conflict with catastrophic consequences cannot be excluded.

In these darks moments for humanity, accompanied by intense feelings of hopelessness and fear, many look to you, Your Holiness, as someone who could bring a sign of hope for a peaceful solution to this conflict. In 2016, you jointly deplored with His Holiness Pope Francis 'the hostility in Ukraine that has already caused many victims, inflicted innumerable wounds on peaceful inhabitants and thrown society into a deep economic and humanitarian crisis', urging for action aimed at constructing peace and social solidarity .

Please do not let those powerful words go in vain. Sharing Pope Francis' feelings of anguish and concern repeatedly expressed over the 'rivers of blood and tears flowing in Ukraine', I dare to implore your Holiness in the spirit of fraternity: please, address an urgent appeal to Russian authorities to immediately stop the hostilities against the Ukrainian people and to show goodwill for seeking a diplomatic solution to the conflict, based on dialogue, common sense and respect for international law, while allowing safe humanitarian corridors and unrestricted access to humanitarian assistance.

As Your Holiness stressed during your recent meeting with the Apostolic Nuncio to the Russian Federation, 'the Church can be a peacemaking force'. In this time of Lent, let Mary, mother of health and hope, pray for us! As Christians, proclaiming the same Gospel and praying to the same God, who is the God of peace and not of war, pray and do our utmost to help end this senseless war so that reconciliation and peace may dwell again on the European continent.

May our blessing be with you,

Respectfully yours in Our Lord Jesus Christ,

+ Jean-Claude Cardinal Hollerich SJ  
Archbishop of Luxembourg, President of COMECE



Cardinal Hollerich, Archbishop of Luxembourg

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