

Oremus

Westminster Cathedral Magazine



All our joys do flow from Mary,
all then join her praise to sing.



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T 020 7798 9055
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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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Tony Banks – Distribution
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Design and Art Direction
Julian Game

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This image of Our Lady with the Child Jesus and St Philip Neri is in Rome on the corner of the via dei Farnesi and the via di Monserrato, the street on which the Venerable English College is located.

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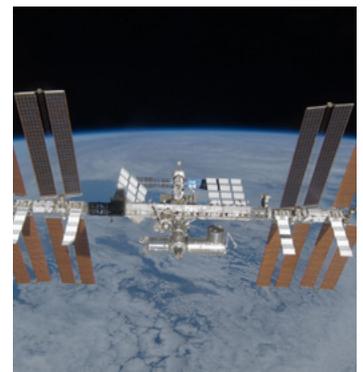
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Accepting the Challenge



The Cathedral is delighted to announce that Suzi Pendlebury has been appointed as Cathedral Architect, succeeding Michael Drury after his 25

years in the role. She is a highly experienced conservation architect with the firm Caroe Architecture, having worked on a number of high profile repair projects, including the major re-roofing of the dome at Ickworth House which is in the care of the National Trust. She is also Architect to the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich and has been overseeing grant-aided repairs at a number of Catholic churches in the diocese of East Anglia, notably the fine Victorian church of St Mary, Great Yarmouth.

Suzi grew up in Kent, initially captivated by Augustus Pugin's church of St Augustine in Ramsgate, and went on to study not only further buildings by him but also those of the great ecclesiastical architects of the 19th and early 20th centuries, alongside the main architectural curriculum. She has worked across a range of sectors in sensitive environments and, following an award-winning refurbishment of the 1927 housing for working women in Hampstead Garden suburb, moved to work with Purcell Miller Tritton. There she focussed on works of conservation, repair and sensitive adaption including projects for English Heritage, the Royal Parks and the Palace of Westminster. In 2012, she joined Oliver Caroe, working as his deputy at St Paul's Cathedral and assisting with other buildings in the firm's portfolio, such as Ripon Cathedral and York Minster, along with her own appointment for George Gilbert Scott Jnr's Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich.

She says: 'I am delighted to be appointed to the role of Westminster Cathedral Architect. Through all my work I enjoy conserving, repairing and keeping our built heritage thriving through careful interventions. Working not only with churches and cathedrals but with other buildings of high significance, I have built a broad understanding of the ever-changing challenges and opportunities that face these places, as they continue to serve us as our needs and expectations evolve through time. The work of the St Anne's Gate Practice hitherto has brought the Cathedral to a turning point where it is now possible to fully develop and realise a plan for the future, serving as the Mother Church for our faith in England and Wales. It is a great honour to be able to serve Fr Witoń and the team caring for the Cathedral and its complex of ancillary buildings, conserving their past and ensuring their future'.

The End of a Tenure

Neil Fairbairn

Our long-serving Cathedral Architect Michael Drury has retired from the post of Cathedral Architect after 25 years of service begun in 1997. He came to us following similar appointments at Salisbury and Portsmouth (C of E) Cathedrals. This was the high point of a career with an increasing focus on the conservation and enhancement of historic places of worship, building on his interest in Arts and Crafts Architecture.

From the outset there were major challenges, including how to create equal and dignified access from the piazza into the Cathedral and the provision of facilities for visitors. A comprehensive list of projects for the care and repair of the fabric would be too long to present here, but some major points are the cleaning and re-presentation of the Boris Anrep mosaics in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, the renewal of the copper roof coverings over the northern chapels and the design of the memorial to the late Cardinal Basil Hume. More recent

times have seen the completion of the stonework and the decorative scheme for the Chapel of St George and the relighting of four of the chapels.

He also oversaw two very distinct additions to the Cathedral's appearance, the access ramps and steps from the piazza and that essential visitor asset, the toilet block on the South side. The access ramps, in the view of several commentators, were an addition that 'looked as if the Cathedral had always had them', possibly the best compliment a conservation architect could ever be given. Following alarming discoveries during the quinquennial survey, a major fundraising campaign took place in 2008 and the project to stabilise the concrete vaults, including the installation of safety netting, throughout the heights of the nave was successfully undertaken. For a while, the Cathedral was also a cathedral to scaffolding on a magnificent scale.

The Cathedral has to respond to funding opportunities as and when they arise. Sometimes this can be at very short notice. Michael was able to help the Cathedral secure funding from the Albert Gubay Foundation, both rounds of the World War One Cathedrals Repairs Grant Scheme and the more recent Heritage Restart schemes launched at extremely short notice by the government. As a result, a start has been made on dealing with many of the larger problems facing the Cathedral.

Personally, as Estates Manager, I have greatly appreciated Michael's help in steering some complicated projects through all of the relevant approvals processes. His clear and systematic analysis of the issues has, on many occasions, helped us find the best way forward, minimising the impact on the Cathedral's life and at the same time keeping it in good repair.

Fr John writes



Dear Parishioners, Friends and Readers of Oremus

The front cover of this edition rightfully features Our Lady, but with a slight twist, as she is pictured in the company of St Philip Neri, the 'Apostle of Rome'. As the calendar changes from year to year, so some saints lose their days to Sundays or major feasts, and this year it is St Philip's turn. Perhaps our near

neighbours in the Brompton Road will find a way to ensure that he still receives due honour!

Two pieces seek to reflect our Christian insistence on the importance of each and every human life; I have included a catechism by the Holy Father on the ways in which the elderly can be open to and guides for the younger generation, whilst the good news that Parliament has, for the 12th time in recent years, again rejected 'assisted suicide' has to be tempered by a realisation that those who seek to change the law show few signs of giving up – so we must ourselves fight on.

Two and a half years ago I published an extract from a travel diary of Victorian members of my own family who visited Egypt in the early 1860s. Some of you were kind enough to say that you would be interested to read more, but then Covid-19 came and I had not got round to do anything about this, until an email arrived from Washington USA. In the world of interconnectedness, a reference to the extract in *Oremus* had appeared on an information sheet listing known European travellers in Egypt in those years and my correspondent was anxious to know if there was more material. Well, there is, so you can be transported back to the world of Victorian exploration and its particular perspectives as reported back home in letters to family in Leeds.

With Easter falling as it did, I have been able to include several images from the Holy Week liturgies. The Chaplains were gratified by the support of the faithful as Holy Week progressed, culminating in full houses at all the Easter Day Masses. We were greatly assisted by the priests who volunteered to come and assist with Confessions, and numbers suggested that many people who could not come to Reconciliation during the time of the pandemic have been able to return. A very particular angle on Holy Week is offered in the Palm Sunday homily of Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh, which I reproduce. It is the day on which 'The Disappeared' of the troubled years in Northern Ireland are commemorated and appeal made for information leading to discovery of their bodies. Here is a real reminder of the continuing cost of reconciliation so that peace may finally be established and communities healed.

Fr John Scott

Westminster Cathedral

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The Madonna and Child, and Raphael

Lucien de Guise

For Raphael, May was by no means the only month dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Few artists of any era have been as committed to the Madonna as this sometimes overlooked member of the Renaissance triumvirate of Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raffaello Sanzio. The National Gallery is making up for that neglect with the most comprehensive exhibition for decades, simply titled 'Raphael'. Going back a bit further, 1848 to be precise, Raphael's star shone too dazzlingly for the Pre-Raphaelites. After seeing the attention given by the Royal Academy, they adopted his name as the antithesis of their creative vision.



An early work in the Tondo form

Enough time has now elapsed for us to see what might be called the real Raphael. Joining his paintings on permanent display at the National Gallery are seldom-seen works from other collections. The display is stunning enough for visitors and reviewers to lavish praise as did the Victorian cognoscenti

at the Royal Academy. What nobody can fail to observe is the multitude of Madonnas. Some might think at once of the singer whose ageless face still attracts attention on social media. The last thought for many will be the Virgin Mary. Over the past century the Holy Mother has been as overlooked as Raphael, apart from the occasional work of art that is noted for its blasphemy.

Raphael was able to absorb from the best of his elders as well as being an artist ahead of his time. Death stalked his life, although this is not detected in his work. He lived, in fact, only 37 years and was an orphan with a strong attachment to the concept of the ideal mother. Having two parents die by the time he was 11 made him more than usually susceptible to the gentle, maternal Madonnas that are on view in such abundance at this exhibition. They are not around every corner, though. The curators have gathered them all in one space. Other religious imagery does not receive the same treatment. There are images of saints and many of Christ, but not enough to warrant their own capacious room.

Those who know the National Gallery well will be aware that one of the most visited paintings is a Crucifixion painting by Raphael, the first thing that you see on entering the recently opened exhibition. This is an image that

always impresses, especially with two of the most elegant angels of the Renaissance at Christ's side. It is, however, an early work and hardly representative of his enormous output. You will not see others like it in the show, or anywhere else.

This exhibition is also eager to show Raphael the polymath. As with many men of the Renaissance, his interests did indeed range widely. Architecture and archaeology fascinated him. I saw no mention of fossils, though, which absorbed Leonardo da Vinci, nor babies in the womb or Vitruvian experiments. Raphael's true love seems to have been the Madonna and Child.



The Madonna of the Pinks

Although there were many women in the life of this unmarried man, the one who meant the most to him was another man's mother. Raphael's favourite living woman is depicted in the exhibition, barely clothed, and she looks nothing like the Virgin Mary; his mistress Margherita Luti is the only contemporary female on show. In one dedicated room there are no less than

ten paintings of the Madonna. Our image of Mary, mother of Jesus, may largely be shaped by this artist. Raphael's depictions were once called syrupy and some might now call them saccharine. Certainly they embody a form of moral perfection that is seldom encountered.

Each of his Virgins is different and yet each one suggests a similar otherworldly kindness and compassion that was probably a more popular look then than now. She keeps different company in the various paintings and is never seen alone. In some she is part of the Holy Family, with her elderly husband Joseph enraptured by her. Other figures were brought into the picture when they happened to be John the Baptist or namesake saints of those who commissioned the painting. Occasionally it is just Our Lady with Our Lord at a very young age.

There is unfortunately no indication of how these paintings looked in their original settings, unlike the extraordinary exhibition at the National Gallery in 2019



A later Tondo, fully exploiting the form

that featured just one painting – Leonardo's slightly sinister *Virgin of the Rocks*. Although Raphael's works were never intended to be seen together in one room, now that they have been rounded up it is a revelation to see the various manifestations side by side. Every one of them exudes goodness.

It appears that Raphael himself was a good man. Perhaps too interested in the ladies, but otherwise called 'saintly' by those who knew him well. He was kind to other artists, as is clear from a drawing that he sent to Domenico Alfani to help with the composition of an altarpiece featuring the Holy Family with a pomegranate. Vasari, who did not always have kind words about artists, was sufficiently affected by Raphael's death to write about men with such gifts and excellence of character as being, 'if it be not a sin to say it, mortal gods'.

The saintliness does not always come through in the other sections of the exhibition. Raphael was a fine portraitist with a room full of paintings to prove it. These include the banker Bindo Altoviti. Some might assume that this angelically pretty young man is a rather vain self-portrait, as he dominates the exhibition's poster and publicity material. The real Raphael is represented elsewhere – a more questioning, uncertain type of person.

People fascinated Raphael and he tried hard to please them. Faith was perhaps his greatest inspiration. In addition to the famous Crucifixion altarpiece there are paintings, drawings, tapestries and even two bronzes of Christian significance. Popes were an important part of his life, which did not prevent him from showing his patron Julius II as reassuringly old and vulnerable against the bright green and red of his backdrop. These works were all part of the Papal commissions that he undertook. His Madonnas, on the other hand, were mostly undertaken during the time before he set up his workshop in Rome. There is an innocence about them that is sometimes mocked, but shines through more celestially on the dark, chapel-like walls of the National Gallery than in a pack of greeting cards.

There have never been so many Raphael Madonnas on view in one place. As some of them are not allowed to be photographed, it means that the public cannot take a panoramic view of the display. At least we can look at them without a mobile phone in hand and absorb their serenity. This would have caused much envy for a troubled artist whose religious faith wavered throughout his life. Salvador Dali also had a mother who died when he was comparatively young. He never questioned Raphael's supremacy as an artist; these images might have been what brought him back to the Church, at least some of the time.

'Raphael' is at the National Gallery until 31 July.

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A Catechesis on Old Age

Pope Francis

This was delivered in the Paul VI Audience Hall on Wednesday 30 March.

In our path of catecheses on the theme of old age, today we will look at the tender picture painted by the evangelist St Luke, who depicts two elderly figures, Simeon and Anna. Their reason for living, before taking leave of this world, is to await God's visit. They were waiting for God, that is, Jesus, to visit them. Simeon knows, by a premonition of the Holy Spirit, that he will not die before seeing the Messiah. Anna attends the temple every day, devoting herself to his service. Both of them recognize the presence of the Lord in the child Jesus, who fills their long wait with consolation and reassures them as they bid farewell to life. This is a scene of encounter with Jesus, and of farewell.

What can we learn from these two elderly figures filled with spiritual vitality? First, we learn that the fidelity of waiting sharpens the senses. Besides, as we know, the Holy Spirit does precisely this: enlightens the senses. In the ancient hymn, *Veni Creator Spiritus*, with which we continue to this day to invoke the Holy Spirit, we say: 'Accende lumen sensibus'; 'Guide our minds with your blest light, enlighten our senses'. The Spirit is capable of doing this: of sharpening the senses of the soul, despite the limits and the wounds of the senses of the body. Old age weakens, in one way or another, the sensibility of the body; one is going blind, another one deaf. However, an old age spent in awaiting God's visit will not miss his passage; on the contrary, it will be even more ready to grasp it, will have greater sensitivity to welcome the Lord when he passes. Remember that it is typical of the Christian to be attentive to the visits of the Lord, because the Lord



Simeon and Anna in the Temple by Rembrandt in the Hamburger Kunsthalle

passes in our life, with inspirations, with invitations to better ourselves. And St Augustine used to say: 'I fear that Jesus will pass me by unnoticed'. It is the Holy Spirit who prepares the senses to understand when the Lord is visiting us, just as he did with Simeon and Anna.

Today we need this more than ever: we need an old age gifted with lively spiritual senses capable of recognizing the signs of God, or rather, the Sign of God, who is Jesus. A sign that challenges us, always: Jesus challenges us because he is 'a sign that is spoken against' (Lk 2: 34)

– but which fills us with joy. Because crisis does not necessarily bring sadness, no: being in crisis in service to the Lord very often gives you peace and joy. The anaesthesia of the spiritual senses – and this is bad – the anaesthesia of the spiritual senses, in the excitement and stultification of those of the body, is a widespread syndrome in a society that cultivates the illusion of eternal youth, and its most dangerous feature lies in the fact that it is mostly unaware. We do not realize we are anaesthetized. And this happens. It happens. It has always happened and it happens in our times. Numbed senses, without understanding what is happening: when they are numb, the inner senses, the senses of the Spirit that enable us to understand the presence of God or the presence of evil, cannot distinguish between them.

When you lose the sense of touch or of taste, you realize immediately. However, you can ignore that of the soul, that sensitivity of the soul, for a long time, living without realizing that you have lost the sensitivity of the soul. It is not simply a matter of thinking of God or religion. The insensitivity of the spiritual senses relates to compassion and pity, shame and remorse, fidelity and devotion, tenderness and honour, responsibility for oneself and for others. It is curious: insensitivity stops you understanding compassion, it stops you understanding pity, it stops you feeling shame or having remorse for having done something bad ... It is like that. The numbed spiritual senses confuse you and you no longer feel those things, spiritually. And old age becomes, so to speak, the first casualty, the first victim of this loss of sensibility. In a society that exercises sensibility primarily for enjoyment, there cannot but be a lack of attention to the frail, and the competition of the winners prevails. And this is how sensitivity is lost. Certainly, the rhetoric of inclusion is the ritual formula of every politically correct discourse. But it still does not bring about a real correction of the practices of normal co-existence: a culture of social tenderness struggles

to grow. The spirit of human fraternity – which I felt it was necessary to relaunch forcefully – is like a discarded garment, to be admired, but ... in a museum. One loses human sensibility, these movements of the Spirit that make us human. It is true, in real life we can observe, with moving gratitude, many young people capable of honouring this fraternity to its fullest. But herein, exactly, lies the problem: there is a gap, a shameful gap, between the testimony of this lifeblood of social tenderness and the conformism that compels youth to present itself in an entirely different way. What can we do to bridge this gap?

From the story of Simeon and Anna, but also from other biblical accounts of the Spirit-sensitive elderly, comes a hidden indication that deserves to be brought to the forefront. In what, in real terms, does the revelation that kindles the sensitivity of Simeon and Anna consist? It consists in recognizing in a child, whom they did not beget and whom they see for the first time, the sure sign of God's visitation. They accept not to be protagonists, but only witnesses. And when one accepts not being a protagonist, but gets involved as a witness, it is good: that man or that woman is maturing well. But those who always want to be protagonist and nothing else, never mature on that journey towards the fullness of old age. God's visitation is not embodied in their lives, it does not bring them on to the scene as saviours: God does not take flesh in their generation, but in the generation to come. They lose their spirit, they lose the desire to live with maturity, and as one usually says, they live in a superficial way. It is the great generation of the superficial, who do not allow themselves to feel things with the sensibility of the Spirit. But why do they not let themselves? Partly out of laziness, and partly because they are already unable: they have lost it. It is bad when a civilization loses the sensibility of the Spirit. On the contrary, it is wonderful when we find elderly people like Simeon and Anna who conserve

this sensibility of the Spirit, and who are capable of understanding the different situations, just as these two understood the situation in front of them, which was the manifestation of the Messiah. There is no resentment and no recrimination for this, when they are in this state of stillness, of being still. Instead, great emotion and great comfort when the spiritual senses are still lively. The emotion and comfort of being able to see and announce that the history of their generation is not lost or wasted, thanks to an event that is incarnate and manifested in the generation that follows. And this is what elderly people feel when the grandchildren come to speak with them: they feel revived. 'Ah, my life is still here'. It is so important to go to see the elderly; it is so important to listen to them. It is so important to speak with them, because there is this exchange of civilization, this exchange of maturity between the young and the elderly. And in this way, our civilization advances in a mature way.

Only spiritual old age can give this witness, humble and dazzling, making it authoritative and exemplary for all. Old age that has cultivated the sensitivity of the soul extinguishes all envy between generations, all resentment, all recrimination for an advent of God in the generation to come, which arrives together with the departure of one's own. And this is what happens to an elderly person who is open to a young person who is open: he or she bids farewell to life while, so to speak, 'handing over' life to the new generation. And this is the farewell of Simeon and Anna: 'Let your servant depart in peace'. The spiritual sensitivity of old age is capable of breaking down competition and conflict between generations in a credible and definitive way. This is certainly impossible for men, but possible for God. And nowadays we are in great need of this, of the sensibility of the spirit, the maturity of the spirit; we need wise, elders, mature in spirit, who give hope for life.

Assisted Suicide, Yet Again

The House of Lords voted in mid-March to reject Lord Forsyth's proposals for a Bill to legalise assisted suicide by 179 votes to 145 votes in a landmark vote. It marks no less than the twelfth time that proposals for assisted suicide related laws have failed to be passed by UK Parliamentarians. Those failures were in the House of Commons (1997, 2015) House of Lords (Lord Joffe's three attempts between 2003-2006, 2009, 2014, 2016 and 2020) in Scotland (2010 and 2015) and today's vote.

In response to the vote, Parliamentarians and rights groups have united to issue concurrent statements welcoming the move and calling for supporters of assisted suicide to end attempts to consume great quantities of Parliamentary time after the House of Lords has spoken so clearly on this issue. Bishop John Sherrington, Lead Bishop for Life Issues, has commented: 'I am pleased that the Lords rejected Lord Forsyth's amendment to the Health and Care Bill, which would have brought in assisted suicide "by the back door". If passed, not only would there have had major constitutional implications over who brings forward government legislation, but would also have seen

a Health and Care Bill facilitating and hastening death by means of assisted suicide. I reiterate the Church's support for the provision of high-quality palliative care for all and welcome Baroness Finlay's amendment to this Bill, supported by the Government, regarding this.'

Baroness Campbell of Surbiton from Not Dead Yet argued: 'We need a thoughtful, detailed, evidence-based debate about any changes to the law on assisted suicide, which includes the concerns of disabled people who want support to live, not support to die'. Meanwhile Danny Kruger MP said: 'The House of Lords has now unequivocally rejected the latest attempt to shoehorn radical assisted suicide laws on to the statute book. Given that supporters of assisted suicide have said that the House of Lords is more supportive than the Commons, this is ample evidence that assisted suicide enjoys neither momentum or support. Countless hours have been spent debating these proposals and given the pressures on Parliamentary time, this result ought to be an indicator that future time should not be given over to this issue again'.

A number of commentators have observed that a change in legislation would place invisible pressure on sick and vulnerable people to consider this 'option', while any safeguards or restrictions would inevitably be widened or removed over time. Terminally ill and disabled people require protection rather than feeling like a burden. In America's state of Oregon, which uses the same drugs to kill the terminally ill as are used on death row, a majority of those ending their lives cite that feeling and fear as the reason, while academic studies have found that far from cutting suicides in the general population, legalising what is euphemistically called 'assisted dying' may lead to an increase.

Parliament needs, therefore, to turn its attention to the real issues facing the country of ensuring that everybody can access the very best medical care, regardless of whether they are disabled or terminally ill and how to fund this. The Government's longstanding position that any change to the law on assisted suicide is a decision for Parliament must be honoured, and this amendment, in forcing the Government to give implicit endorsement to a policy that it does not support, had to be rejected.

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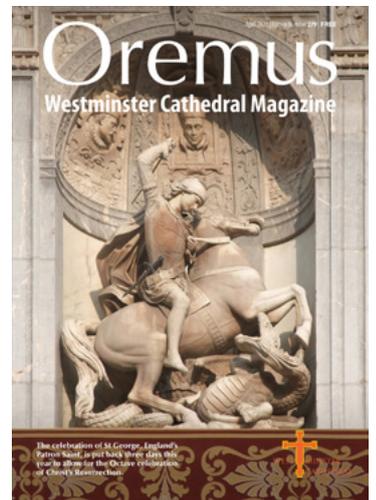
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The Urn of the Maundy Thursday Watch

Richard Hawker, Head Sacristan

The Cathedral's 'Urn', in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept at the altar of repose for adoration between the Mass of the Lord's Supper and midnight on Maundy Thursday, properly has no veil, which would usually indicate the Eucharistic presence. Nor is there a cross on that altar, although it is decorated in white, rather than the purple of Passiontide.

Urns come in many shapes and sizes; ours is in two pieces: the base and columns, and the urn itself. Unusually for our silver, it is of silver plate, rather than sterling silver (there is no hallmark); possibly due to it being used once a year, and also because silver plate tends to have a brighter shine. It is reasonable to suppose that the designer was John



Marshall, Bentley's assistant and successor as Cathedral Architect. The silversmiths were most likely Blunt & Wray, who did much work

in the Cathedral, including the Metropolitan Processional Cross, and also the candlesticks and crucifix of the high altar.

The urn was designed for the Chapel of Ss Gregory and Augustine, the original altar of repose; presumably to allow for quiet prayer, whilst the Office, including *Tenebrae*, continued to be sung on the main sanctuary, as well as the washing of feet, the *Mandatum*, then a separate function. The various motifs on the urn give us the usual 'house' style: tapering columns, with detailed capitals, as well as details on the corners of the urn, and two stylised ferns, perhaps alluding to the altar of repose as a garden, which is as it should be.

Access to the Sacraments

The Catholic Union



New guidance for police officers, which recognises the importance of allowing victims of crime to have access to priests and family members, has been welcomed, with the College of Policing recognising the importance of priests being able to administer the Last Rites to people at crime scenes in cases of serious injury or death. The changes to the guidance are the result of a joint group set up by Cardinal Nichols and the Metropolitan Police following the tragic death of Sir David Amess last year, when Sir David's priest was denied access to the crime scene by police officers.

While the decision to allow third party access to a scene 'remains an operational decision', the new guidance recognises that the Last Rites and other religious needs are 'extremely important', both for the victim and their family. Following Sir David's death, the Catholic Union worked with a cross-party group of peers to raise concerns in Parliament that he had been denied the Last Rites on the day he died, joining Baroness Stowell of Beeston and Baroness Masham of Ilton in a meeting with the Home Office Minister, Baroness Williams, at the end of last year to discuss the matter. Welcome as the new guidance is, it has also been necessary to highlight that priests were continuing to face problems administering the sacraments to people

in hospitals and care homes, with a change of culture across public services needed to address this.

Nigel Parker, Director of the Union, comments: 'This is really encouraging news. For the first time, we have official guidance from the police that recognises the importance of priests and the sacrament of the Last Rites. We are extremely grateful to everyone involved in the working group for producing such a clear and sensible set of guidance notes. Thank you to Mike Kane MP, whose extremely moving speech after the death of Sir David highlighted the importance of the Last Rites to Catholics. Thanks also to many other parliamentarians, including Baroness Stowell and Baroness Masham, who did so much to raise this matter in Parliament. We were all deeply shocked by this murder. He was a friend to the Catholic Union and a supporter of many of our campaigns. This new guidance should prevent people at crime scenes being denied access to the Last Rites in future. However, there is still work to do to make sure people working in public services have a better understanding of the importance of faith to those who believe. We will continue to campaign for the culture change we need to bring that about.'

Humility

Dr Stuart Blackie KCHS

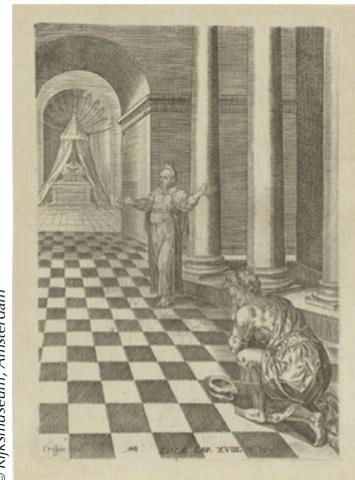
It is hard to be humble. It is not that we do not have more than enough deficiencies to merit humility. To misquote a Churchillian saying, we have a lot to be humble about. Rather, it is because there is a defence mechanism within each of us that normally does not let us go to that place of humility. If we try to be self-effacing and humble, invariably we take pride in that, and then feel smug about it. Humility should not be confused with lowliness, which involves rejecting one's own true worth. Nor should humility be equated with humiliation. Humility is elusive. Even trying to define it risks the possibility of assuming a lofty moral position. It is derived from the Latin *humus* (ground). To be humble is to be grounded, but this does not do justice to the complexity and value of this virtue. Indeed, humility is not a virtue that we can claim for ourselves: to do so would suggest pride or arrogance, the opposite of humility.

Humility requires us to value our own self-worth appropriately, while accepting our fallibility and frailty. Humility teaches us to use the talents we have been given to best advantage, but to be content with what we are. The core of humility is the understanding that no matter the greatness of a personal accomplishment, no-one is fundamentally more special than anyone else and therefore not entitled to special treatment in everyday life. It promotes solidarity and teamworking by reminding us that we all share the same flawed human nature which, only by working together, we can ameliorate. It allows us to focus less on ourselves, to behave more generously and to become unconcerned with impressing other people.

We all perceive the world from our own point of view, often prioritising our own needs and desires. Contemporary Western culture celebrates individuality, celebrity, success and competition. In this context, humility appears counter-cultural, impractical and renders one open to exploitation. However, humility is valued in many religions. Some argue that humility is the fundamental ethical virtue upon which the other virtues rest. In contrast to this, C S Lewis claimed that pride, the antithesis of humility, is the utmost evil. By its very nature, pride is essentially competitive. Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next person – being richer, cleverer or better-looking. The pleasure is that of being above the rest and being able to exercise power. And power is what pride really enjoys. There is nothing makes a man feel so superior to others than being able to move them around like toy soldiers. A proud person is always looking down on things and other people. And, of course, if you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above

you. Pride always means enmity, and not only enmity between man and man, but enmity to God. In God, you come up against what is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. Lewis goes on to claim that pride leads to every other vice; it is the complete anti-God state of mind. It was through pride that Lucifer became satanic. According to St Louis Montfort, Satan fears the Blessed Virgin Mary not only more than the angels and other saints but, in a sense, even more than God himself. Satan, being proud, suffers infinitely more from being thwarted and crushed by a little and humble handmaid of God. Her humility hurts him more than the divine power which he knows is far superior to his own.

We are familiar with the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. I have little doubt that the overwhelming majority of us, on hearing the story say: 'Thank God I am not like that Pharisee!' But, in doing so, we are in fact imitating him, burnishing our credentials and polishing our own sense of virtue. 'I thank you God, that I am not as self-centred, corrupt and hypocritical as so many other people are'. It demonstrates that pride is forever sneaking around our defences and keeping genuine humility at bay. There is no mention by the Publican of repentance. However, maybe that is something for another day. The Publican, by at least acknowledging his sin, opens the door ajar allowing God at least the potential to enter. This he can work with and can bring about circumstances which may lead to changes and improvement in the future.



© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

The Pharisee and the Publican
by Abraham de Bruyn

Humility may also be aroused when in awe of one's surroundings. Awe can significantly change our mood and behaviour. It seems to shrink our sense of self and tends to make us feel more connected to a greater whole: society, Earth, even the Universe. Awe is an emotion that combines amazement with an edge of fear, in which what we confront is so huge that it dwarfs us. 'Beautiful, so beautiful', exclaimed the Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, a few minutes after he was blasted into orbit in April 1961 to become the first human being in



© NASA

The International Space Station, a good place for getting perspective about ourselves

space. He was talking not about the stars, but about our own planet. He later signed a message to the rest of us: 'People of the world, let us safeguard and enhance this beauty – not destroy it!' This was at the height of the Cold War. In 1971, Apollo astronaut James Irwin looked up from the surface of the moon to describe the Earth as 'that beautiful, warm living object looking so fragile, so delicate...' On one occasion, when a NASA astronaut climbed out of the International Space Station to float free in the vacuum of space, holding onto the spaceship with one hand, all thoughts of his mission temporally left



© rocketjohn

Julian of Norwich – a statue at Norwich's C of E Cathedral

him. Instead, he was 'attacked by raw beauty'. To his right was the universe, stretching on for ever and brimming with stars. On his left, the whole world – an exploding kaleidoscope of colour. He found it stupefying.

To other astronauts, the view brought home the triviality of political conflicts and national boundaries. Of the latter, only those between India and Pakistan and between North and South Korea are visible from space – and even then, only at night. Awe forces us to give in to mystery and to acknowledge how much there is beyond us that we do not understand. And to scientists, there is nothing bigger than the cosmos. However, as revealed to Julian of Norwich, even that pales into insignificance. 'And in this He showed me a little thing, the quantity of a hazel nut ... I looked upon it and thought, "What may this be?" And it was answered generally thus, "It is all that is made"'. It is astounding that, in God's presence, the whole of the cosmos, with all its immensity, grandeur, beauty and complexity, can be reduced to a mere trifle! It brings to mind the Ash Wednesday injunction: 'Remember that you are dust ...' And that God's Son cared enough and deigned to come down from there to pay a debt he did not owe because we owed a debt we could not pay.

That is the ultimate demonstration of practical humility!



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New Light on the Russian in the Crypt

Patrick Rogers



A 'SPY' cartoon of Count Benckendorff on his arrival in London in 1903.

Westminster Cathedral is not renowned for its tombs. There are only eleven, one of which (Cardinal Vaughan's) was, until recently, not a tomb at all but a monument with a sculpted effigy of the man. The founder of Westminster Cathedral wished to be buried in another of his great foundations, the Missionary College at Mill Hill, and his body was only transferred to the Cathedral in 2003. Eight other Cardinal Archbishops of Westminster and the great Bishop Challoner, who led the Catholic Church in England for a large part of the eighteenth century, are also interred in the Cathedral. The eleventh sepulchre is that of a layman who held no position whatsoever in the Diocese of Westminster. And thereby hangs a tale...

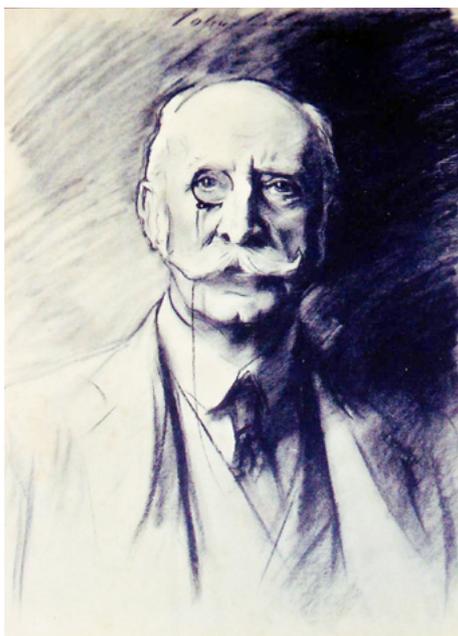
Count Alexander Benckendorff was born in 1849 in Berlin, his father being the Tsar's roving ambassador for Europe, and he did not go to Russia until he was 18, two years before joining the Diplomatic Service. As a result of this, his Russian was always rather poor and his dispatches were written in French. Before becoming a diplomat he was educated in France and Germany, then represented his country in Rome, Vienna and in Copenhagen. Finally, from 1903 until his death, he was Russian Ambassador to England. Regarded in Russia as a liberal and in England as an anglophile, in 1911 his only daughter, Natalie, married the second son of Viscount Ridley, The Hon Jasper Ridley. Count Benckendorff was instrumental in arranging the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 which, together with France, resulted in the Triple Entente. He encouraged the teaching of Russian at British universities and was Honorary President of the newly formed Russo-British Chamber of Commerce. Unusually for a Russian, he was also a Roman Catholic.



The Hon Mrs Jasper Ridley, Count Benckendorff's only daughter, as a child.

With 1914 came the Great War. Russia, allied with Britain and France, suffered a series of crushing defeats. By early 1917 war-weariness, antagonism towards the Tsar's family (the Tsarina in particular) and the allure of revolutionary socialism had brought Russia close to collapse. By March, Tsar Nicholas II had offered to abdicate, intending to spend the rest of the war abroad and then to settle quietly in the Crimea, where he would devote his life to the education of Aleksei, his haemophiliac son. Instead he was placed under house arrest and in July 1918, on the orders of the Bolshevik Urals Soviet, he and his family were shot.

Meanwhile a severe influenza epidemic was sweeping across Europe. Count Benckendorff, the Tsar's ambassador to the Court of St James's, was one of the first to be struck down. On 8 January 1917 he took to his bed. Three days later the condition had congested his lungs and he died, in a month when the disease caused more than 300 deaths in London alone. Before his death he told his daughter, by now the Hon Mrs Jasper Ridley, of his earnest wish to be buried in Westminster Cathedral where he had worshipped regularly. This wish she conveyed not only to the Cathedral but also to the British Government. The only people buried in the Cathedral at the time were the first two Archbishops of Westminster, Cardinals Wiseman and Manning. After the completion of the Cathedral in 1903, their remains had been transferred to the crypt in 1907 from an initial place of rest in Kensal Green Cemetery. Cardinal Bourne, the Fourth Archbishop of Westminster, had left for Rome in December 1916 and did not return until April 1917.



Count Benckendorff drawn by John Singer Sargent in 1911.

Communications between London and Rome had to pass through several war-torn countries. Letters could take a week to arrive and telegrams two days. Meanwhile in Russia the Imperial Family was in turmoil, and communications subject to strike action. With these difficulties, together with the fact that the Count had died at 10pm on a Thursday, *The Times* reported on Monday 15 January that 'up to a late hour no reply has been received from Cardinal Bourne in Rome to the request that the body might be interred in the Cathedral'.

On Saturday 13 January 1917, a private memorial service was held for members of the Count's family and staff at the Russian Embassy. On Sunday the body was brought to the Cathedral to lie overnight before the high altar under the Russian flag, prior to a Solemn Requiem Mass the following day. Count Benckendorff's Requiem Mass must have been one of the most unusual in the Cathedral. On a cold, gloomy winter's day, a Guard of Honour of Grenadiers, together with the band of the Irish Guards, was drawn up outside. Within the Cathedral the coffin lay before the sanctuary steps covered with a black pall and white cloth embroidered with the Imperial arms of Russia. On a cushion at the foot lay Count

Benckendorff's medals and other decorations. On each side of the coffin stood three tall candles. A few paces from each, a British soldier leaned on his reversed rifle while an officer stood at the foot of the coffin.

Despite the problems of arranging the Requiem Mass at short notice during a weekend in wartime, members of both the British and Russian Royal Families attended or were represented. King George V was represented by the Duke of Connaught, Queen Alexandra by Earl Howe, the Tsar by his brother, the Grand Duke Michael. The Grand Duchess George of Russia was present and the Prince of Wales and five royal princesses sent representatives. Mrs Lloyd George (wife of the Prime Minister) was there and Cabinet members included Mr and Mrs Asquith, Mr Balfour, Mr Austen Chamberlain, Lord Robert Cecil, Lord Curzon, Lord Derby and Lord Milner.

A week later, on Monday 22 January 1917, Count Alexander Benckendorff's wish was granted. 'By special request of the Government and permission of His Eminence Cardinal Bourne' (to quote the *Westminster Cathedral Chronicle*), he was buried in St Peter's Crypt of the Cathedral where he had been a constant worshipper during the last 14 years of his life. At this simple service his wife, Countess Sophie, too distressed to attend earlier ceremonies, was the chief mourner, together with

his only daughter who had played such a key role in bringing the Count to his last resting place. It was the Count's daughter who also commissioned Eric Gill (then working on the Cathedral Stations of the Cross) to produce the memorial slab which lies above the ambassador's tomb. Made of dark green Cumberland slate, it was finally installed early in 1939. In Russian and Latin, the inscription reads: 'Count Alexander Philip Constantine Ludovic Benckendorff, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for Russia to the Court of St James's. August 1 1849 – Jan 11 1917. Requiescat In Pace'.

Cardinal Bourne must have been under considerable government pressure to agree to the interment in Westminster Cathedral. Russia was a military ally and its seemingly imminent collapse would release many German divisions to fight Britain and France on the Western Front, for America did not enter the war against Germany until April 1917. It was a time to show solidarity with Russia, not for a snub, real or imagined. The Count's daughter knew what she was doing when she publicly declared her father's wish to the British Government. Soviet Russia has passed into history, as did the Russia of the Tsars, and an era of religious and political freedom has dawned in Central Europe. In 1991 the first post-Soviet Russian Ambassador since Count Benckendorff was appointed to the Court of St James's.



Count Benckendorff's tomb in the Cathedral Crypt, inscribed by Eric Gill in both Cyrillic and Latin.

From Alexandria to Cairo

Fr John Scott

In the November 2019 edition of *Oremus I* published extracts from the travel letters of my great-great-great uncle Eli Plummer, describing a journey along the Nile in 1862-3. Out of the blue an email arrived recently from a gentleman in Washington asking about the letters. He writes: 'I belong to ASTENE, The Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East. We meet every two years in a university town in the UK.' Encouraged by his interest, here are some more extracts. Eli was married to Louisa and had a young son at home in Leeds, John was 19 and 'rather delicate', but certainly seems to have enjoyed the trip. Mr Brocklebank was a clergyman friend of the family.

I had intended to tell you to write to us to the Post Office, Alexandria. We called there today but did not find any letters. I should like very much to hear some news of Louisa and my little boy and also of you all. We are intending to proceed by train at 9 a.m. on Thursday morning to Cairo, all being well, and then I suppose after making some necessary arrangements, we shall get on to the Nile. I should like you to write to us and address us to the Post Office, Cairo. We shall look out for some copious news, but I am afraid we shall not be able to get any news of you until our return from the Nile trip which we expect will occupy about 2 months. You will be able to write us two or three letters in the meantime.

Now that Mr Brocklebank has got on to land again he begins to feel more like himself and I doubt not will soon recover his usual tone. Myself and John, I am thankful to say, continue in good health. You would feel a marvellous change in the weather if you could be transported from England to Alexandria to spend a day or two with us. I know not what the Egyptian summer may be, but the winter is certainly quite warm enough for our English constitutions.

It is a pretty sight to see the palm trees here with large clusters of dates upon them. We had a few dates to dinner this evening and they have a much superior flavour to those we get in England. John has got settled in bed surrounded on all sides by a mosquito curtain. I am about to do the same.

So with love to you and George, Henry etc., from John and myself.

I am, Dear Father and Mother,

Your affectionate son,

Eli.

.....

Cairo

We must now wend our way to the Railway Station and take our place for Cairo. How strange it seems that we should be taking a ride by rail through the very land of Gochen, so famous in Old Bible Story! The comic rhyme of one who indulged in the ludicrous fancy of travelling by steam through Egypt and Palestine:- 'Stop her, now then for Jeppa', 'Ease her, anyone for Gizeh?', has come to be literally true, for there is a Gizeh station on the railway from Cairo into Upper Egypt. The distance between the two cities is 162 miles and is accomplished in 6 hours with tolerable punctuality now, but at that period of our visit, the Pasha was in the habit of using the line whenever it took his fancy to drive an engine and so interfering with the regular traffic. He was cured of this whim by a slight reminder of his own danger. One day he felt sleepy, and stopped the traffic for his nap. It was shortly afterwards run into by another train and His Highness suddenly awoke convinced of the propriety of sleeping elsewhere.

The railway passes through rich but featureless country, stopping at Kafe Zayzt for refreshments if the tough and coarse descriptions of food which were displayed, may be

so called. We made our dinner of plain boiled rice, a slice of bread and an orange for which 5/- was charged. Everything at this place was charged in English shillings, and assuredly, if anything can decide in the mind of the Arab the question of English as against French preponderance in Egypt, it is that our sovereign counts 25 francs to 20 of the corresponding French pieces. Prices are nominally the same, but the Englishman appears willing to pay the extra 25% without a murmur, and this, for an Arab, is an irresistible argument.

Mark Twain tells a good story in reference to this Railway – as to how the fuel used for the locomotives was composed of mummies 3,000 years old, purchased by the ton or graveyard for that purpose, and that sometimes one heard the profane Engineer call out pettishly 'Confound these plebians, they don't burn worth a cent. Pass out a King'. The traveller's most eager anticipation on the journey from Alexandria to Cairo is to catch a glimpse of the pyramids which are visible from the carriage window at 20 miles distance from the latter city. How familiar and yet how strange they appeared, hovering afar in dusky grandeur upon the edge of the Yellow Lybian Desert, overlooking the green valley of the Nile as if destined to reign eternally, the mysterious genius of Egypt, Ancient and Modern. Like the first far-off glimpse of the Hymalyas, it is a sensation there is no describing or forgetting.

And soon after, ages apart, as it were, from these memorials of the Ancient Egyptian Kings, the fantastic Minarets of Cairo built by the Arab Conquerors of this fallen empire, peep forth from a luxuriant mass of palm groves and gardens, answering in every respect to our conceptions of a perfect Oriental City. The Railway Station presented a scene of the same wild confusion as at Alexandria, but *experimenta docet*,

and we were now armed with the invincible 'Kowbash', an instrument of torture made from the hide of the hippopotamus, with which we soon cleared a space in the yelling crowd.

Here then we are, in the 'Great Al Cairo' as Millon calls it, the city of Saladin and of the Arabian Nights, creations which once so fanciful and visionary, seem to kindle into life and reality as we gaze upon every object that surrounds us. The apartment we sit in is decorated with mysterious arabesques, lattices instead of glass windows, ample luxurious divans heaped with cushions replace our stiff chairs and sofas; instead of the roll of coaches and the sound of bells, we hear but the solemn and mournful invocation to prayer from the balcony of some minaret, or the wild shrill guttural cries of the Arabian women accompanying a marriage or a funeral. Every sight and every sound reminds us that we are in the midst of a different race and different manners – associated with our earliest and most romantic impressions.

The style of the houses, like that of our own old cities in the Middle Ages, consist of successive storeys of latticed windows, overlying one another to the topmost storey, till in the gloomy Jewish quarter, they meet and interclasp. These lattices are so constructed as to admit a free view of the passengers, while those within are concealed from the most prying scrutiny. The best general view of the city is obtained in the Citadel. The whole of Cairo is taken in at a glance; to the eastward in a secluded valley, the long range of the tombs of the Memlock Sultans stretches into the distant desert towards Suez.

On the South, extends the dense verdure of the Delta, a dark green streak which comes up abruptly to the edge of the desert sands. Here stood Heliopolis, the most learned city of Egypt, and there yet stands the Obelisk upon which Abraham and Joseph may have looked. To the Westward, the chief glories of the scene expands, the long range of pyramids like distant blue hills dominating the Nile Valley, from the nearer ones of Gizeh to those

of Sakharra and Bashoor pointing backward through a long and dim vista of unknown Monarchs, towards the unknown origin of civilisation. Nearer to the city on the banks of the river, peep up the minarets of Fostat or Old Cairo, marking the advent of another race. The luxuriant island of Rhoda is half made out and nearer at hand, these portions of the city which were successfully added by the later Arabian dynasties. It is a landscape not only indescribably beautiful to the eye, especially when the sun is sinking behind the pyramids, flinging long rays of ruby lustre aslant the Nile valley, but its soil is the strand of ages, upon which successive rains from Sesestries to Saladina have left the monumental traces of their passages.

Dec. 1st. 1862

.....

Dear Father and Mother,

We are now domiciled in Cairo which is said to be 'The most Oriental City of the East'. Mr Brocklebank says that it is nothing more than a heap of muck, and he cannot understand why they call it Grand Cairo. To a stranger, however, it is full of interest and the centre of many attractions. We have ridden away on the donkeys and have seen one or two places of note since we came, but a goodly proportion of our time has been occupied with making arrangements for going up the Nile. These are now happily completed, and we start in the afternoon of tomorrow, Tuesday, all being well. As far as we can judge, we shall, D.V., be back again in Cairo in about two months from this time, and on our return we propose going into Palestine.

I am thankful to say that we are well and that our journey this far has been very satisfactory. We have beautiful weather; good living; comfortable accommodation; and agreeable company. John seems very well satisfied with this gentlemanly life – indeed I may say so do we all. The only drawback with me is the separation from Louisa and from you all for so long a time. I think we shall all derive benefit from the journey.

I may as well tell you how we got from Alexandria to Cairo:- There is a railway runs between the two places which it appears was made by one of the Stephensons. We took our tickets and started off from Alexandria at 9 o'clock on Thursday morning and went jogging on not over quickly until a little after 4 p.m. For this journey, we paid 4/2d third class which we considered a very cheap rate. The country through which we travelled was upon the whole exceedingly flat and uninteresting. We found some interest, however, in observing the people whom we passed on the way – their dress, customs, and habitations presented many striking peculiarities.

On our arrival in Cairo, we sought out the hotel in which we now are. Yesterday (Sunday) we attended the Afternoon Service (4 o'clock) in the English Church. The whole congregation did not, I think, number 20. We had, however, a very good, plain, evangelical sermon from the Text 'Be not deceived'. This was the first religious service we had had since leaving England. I have been much struck since coming into Egypt to see what an influence the French people have obtained in it. Both in Alexandria and Cairo we are surrounded with French customs and modes of life – England and Englishmen appear to be in a very subordinate position.

With love to you, George, Henry etc from John and myself, and kind regards from Mr. B.

I remain, Dear Father and Mother,

Your affectionate son,

Eli Plummer



The railway station in Alexandria. The book which contains the letters has a number of contemporary photographs.

On the Via Dolorosa

More predictably, during SVP School's Passion Play in the Cathedral, the Archbishop's throne took the place of Pontius Pilate's seat of judgment, while on the sanctuary floor the School's Roman soldiers kept the Women of Jerusalem at bay as Jesus made his way to Calvary through the Stations of the Cross.





The Entry into Jerusalem

The Master of Ceremonies' Instructions for Holy Week liturgies include a reminder that, for anything that requires outdoor movement, the MC and Precentor should meet at a certain time to consider the weather. This year there has been no need for these meetings and the weather, if not always the helicopters overhead monitoring Extinction Rebellion protests again and the accompanying wailing police car sirens, has kindly co-operated, as seen in this entry into the Cathedral.



Behold the Wood of the Cross!

It fell to Fr Vincent to reveal the Cross for Veneration on Good Friday, seen here at the third station on the balustrade steps. It is always moving when the whole body of clergy and laity kneels together in veneration the three times. Perfect Cathedral timing ensured that the general veneration after the Passion liturgy was completed just in time for the evening Stations of the Cross.

Our Friends in Chelsea

Some may be surprised to know that there have been Catholic Chelsea Pensioners for centuries at the Royal Hospital. A priest exiled at the French Revolution came and ministered to them and founded the mission that is now Chelsea I parish in Cadogan Street, just off Sloane Square. This year we have been able to welcome the representative group of Pensioners back, as they kindly offered their feet for the Mandatum ceremony at the Mass of the Last Supper and then joined us for a buffet supper in Clergy House, according to custom.



In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*

Reflections during a Power Cut

The Power of Darkness

When a man knows he is to be cut off from all modern means of heating and illumination, foolishly not having kept a lamp well trimmed, on a cold, moonless night, that certainly concentrates his mind wonderfully. This concentration, brought to bear without distraction upon the disembodied voices of radio, provides a fascinating new exercise in really listening to the actual spoken words.

Patronising the Masses

On each such occasion my fascination reached its height with a programme laughingly (in the circumstances) called 'Current Affairs.' Some amusing speculation can warm the chilled bones. How do the various speakers, who always seem to be queueing up in eagerness to reach the nearest microphone, imagine their invisible audience? Their first assumption must be that the listeners have minds as blank as the powerless TV screen in the corner. We are thought to be hungry for information, thirsty for at least two contradictory statements. We seem to be regarded as sub-normal troglodytes who must be made to understand that we are: eager/lazy; patriotic/disloyal; willing/obstinate; intelligent/stupid; or any permutation of two from three. Not, of course, that the discourse is meant to imply commitment – 'I really do think' seems often only to mean, 'This is the only way I can disagree with the previous speaker'.

The Lingering Cliché

The choicest moments come when musing on the tired phrases repeated on all sides to the point of exhaustion. Lengthy exposure to these ethereal voices in total darkness produces some perhaps unforeseen results. If politics was once definable as 'the art of the possible', it now seems to assume the character of the artifice of the implausible. But it is the repetitious, disconnected cliché, lingering on long after its delivery into the black void that opens up new and unexpected avenues. One or two specimens will suffice.

'The Silent Majority'

It is in the name of this strange entity that many speakers proclaim their right to pronounce. This curious being, if such there be, conjures up for me the concept of some enormous, undulating, amorphous mass. It is, by definition, mute; by divination, greater than any articulate body. What puzzles me is how its spokesmen are so certain of its opinions when any normal communication with it is obviously so difficult. Perhaps, too, this majority likes being silent. If so, it seems hardly likely to think well of someone airing its unspoken thoughts to the world. And if it is a

majority as compared with a minority, it must be equal to that minority in those respects in which the comparison is made. The only known respect is silence. If reason is to be maintained, a vociferous minority can only be compared to a vociferous majority. By what rational process, therefore, can the opinions of a totally silent mass, major or minor, be known? The spokesmen do not convince me that the Divine Economy of Miracles has been suspended on their behalf.

'The Suffering Poor'

This is by far the most nauseating. Nauseating because of its utter humbug. Long after the speaker has ceased this lingers on producing psychosomatic reactions of literally sickening intensity. Every time an immovable Administration, of whatever complexion, meets an irresistible force, from whatever quarter, this emotive hypocrisy is solemnly dished out. In 'normal' times it is precisely the sick, the aged, the homeless, who are the most easily neglected and the most conveniently forgotten. To use their very real suffering to bolster an insufficient case is to risk the rebound most to be feared – the alienation of those who really care.

from the May 1972 Westminster Cathedral Journal

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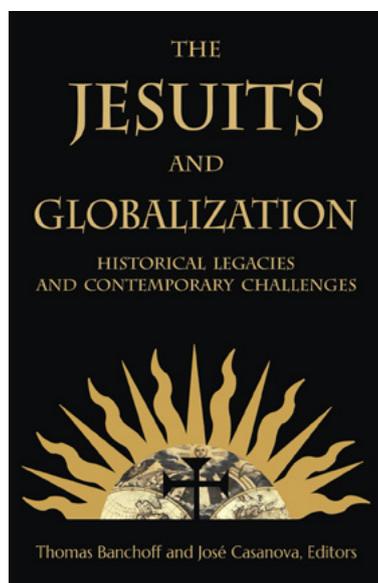
Varia

When the Cardinal Archbishop sings Mass, His Eminence now makes ceremonial entry, if weather conditions permit, by the main doors of the Cathedral, going by car from Archbishop's House. When duly notified of this, the 'Cardinal's Own' Westminster troop of Boy Scouts form an efficient and effective guard of honour, lining the way from the road into the porch of the Cathedral. It was not decided till the last moment that this would be the mode of entry on Easter Sunday, so that it had been impossible to give the Scouts the necessary warning, and, therefore, they were not on duty. This was noticed by a member of the new company of Girl Guides of the Cathedral (Peter Street) Schools, recently formed under the auspices of the Catholic Women's League, as a chance not to be missed! As by magic, the whole newly-formed company, in their new parade uniforms, literally took the position by storm and lined the approach to the Cardinal's car in time for his exit from the Cathedral. As His Eminence emerged in his flaming scarlet cloak, an order was rapped out in a (male) voice of sharp military command (afterwards attributed to Sergeant Crooke, always on his mettle with raw recruits). The electric response and precision of this new company was an agreeable surprise – and a lesson perhaps even for Boy Scouts.

from the May 1922 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle

An Influential Society

James Campbell SJ



The Jesuits and Globalization. Historical Legacies and Contemporary Challenges; ed. Thomas Banchoff and Jose Casanova; Georgetown University Press; 312pp, hbk;

ISBN: 9781626162877 (1626162875)

Since its foundation in the 16th century, the Society of Jesus has embarked on a mission of global significance in a pioneering and influential way. Its 'way of proceeding' encompassed flexibility to times, places and circumstances, to the extent of appreciating the more positive aspects of the cultures Jesuits encountered and using them to impart the Gospel in a way which could be understood by the people.

In this erudite collection, the authors claim that the Jesuits more than anyone contributed to global connectivity and became cultural and political players across the world. However, this influence was not without its costs inasmuch as the Society was eventually expelled from every Catholic kingdom and formally suppressed by the Pope in 1773. Once re-established in 1814, the Jesuit influence by way of missions and educational enterprises

reaffirmed their global missionary interests. This was especially true in the United States, but also worldwide, in a network of colleges, schools and corporal works of mercy. Allied to these missions was a strong line defending the Papacy, as well as opposing emerging secular and liberal thought in Europe and Latin America; but this led to more expulsions. These days the Jesuit commitment to missions with a global reach is articulated in the promotion of justice and the service of faith as a universal common good. The current Holy Father seeks new ways of evangelisation involving the poor and marginalised, education, missions and fraternal links.

In a series of scholarly pieces mostly by Jesuits, the editors have compiled a wide range of most interesting essays on various Jesuit themes. The book is in two parts: historical perspective and contemporary challenges. The first part considers Jesuits in East Asia, their influence on Modernity, relations with Muslims, Anti-Jesuitism, education and globalisation. Part II on Contemporary Challenges looks at the Second Vatican Council and the Jesuits, social justice in Latin America, refugees, higher education and ends with globalization through a Jesuit prism. The themes of refugees, mission and education feature largely in these essays and provide a most useful history of the development of these and related fields.

Part of the appeal of this collection is the link forged and argued for between the foundations of the Society of Jesus and its early missionary enterprises with their international outlook and reach which was present from its inception, and the emergence of 'globalization' as a phenomenon which has gained traction in recent years. This has positioned the Jesuits first of all as progenitors in a global perspective in

a central and powerful way when they began their missions, and laterally as becoming somewhat peripheral and offering accompaniment to the poor. This latter has had an effect on many Jesuit institutions, which now contain mandates in their constitutions and policies which require attention to the poor as part of, say, university education in that country.

The inter-connectedness of the world and the Jesuit concern with souls (that is, the whole person) have their roots, as one essayist argues, in an appeal to universal human reason coming from Catholic medieval scholasticism and Renaissance humanism rather than from theological arguments. Jesuits met other cultures which they regarded as heretical, but they soon learned to adapt and draw out the elements which could tie in with Catholicism. Nowadays, this seems to be no longer as important, given the rise of religious freedom as an individual right and so conversion to the faith seems not to have the imperative it once had. Also, the emergence of new technologies and perpetual news cycles has connected the globe in ways that were only dreamed of before, mostly in science fiction.

The editors seek to glean lessons from all this to include the Jesuit contribution to globalization and the globalization's debt to the members of the Society. The availability of Jesuits for mission all over the world and the open, contingent and historical processes now unfolding, gives Jesuits an ability for adaptation to times, places and circumstances which the Society has always had as a foundational characteristic.

The writers conclude, therefore, that although the Society no longer has the institutional influence it once had, at least in some countries, its venerable way of proceeding ensures that it will influence the lives of many peoples in pursuit of its now re-articulated mission.

A Truly Roman Recipe

Ismaele Conte



St Philip Neri (feast day 26 May), is famous for his missionary work of evangelization in Rome, as he was able to recognize that, rich or poor, we are all children of God. When in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, he would often be asked to go and attend to the needs of the poor, to which he would answer: 'We must leave Christ to go and see Christ'.

At a time in which we are called, together with the Universal Church, to celebrate and rejoice in the Resurrection of Christ, let us look at the legacy Philip would want us to embrace; not by chance is he described as the 'happy saint', as his life motto seems to have been 'A joyful heart is more easily made perfect than a downcast one'.

In Eastertide we are often reminded that Christ destroyed death to give us new life: our fears, anxieties, and everything that weighs us down, especially sin, has been conquered by Christ, who died for us out of love. Let us then make ours the words of Philip, living joyfully knowing that Christ loves us and that we are his children.

A truly Roman recipe, is '*Spaghetti alla Carbonara*', which never fails to put a smile on the face of those with whom you share it. This recipe will yield two servings.

100grams Pancetta, cubed
50grams Pecorino cheese, grated
175 grams spaghetti
The yolks of 2 large pasteurised eggs,
Salt and pepper to taste

- Put a saucepan of water on to boil
- Cook the spaghetti as per the packet instructions, until *al dente*
- In the meantime, fry the pancetta in a frying pan with a little olive oil, keeping the heat on low.
- When the pasta is ready, lift it from the saucepan and drop it in the frying pan together with the pancetta. Don't worry if some water drops in the pan as well, and stir, without breaking the pasta, for about two minutes.
- Turn the heat off, and pour in the frying pan the pecorino cheese and the egg yolks, stirring until perfectly amalgamated (about 2 minutes). The eggs should not be completely cooked, but quite creamy.
- Bless the Lord and enjoy!

The Power of Porridge

Mary's Meals

Mary's Meals has announced that it is now feeding 2,279,941 children every school day, with funds raised in 2021 helping to expand its work in countries including Haiti, Madagascar and Yemen. The charity serves nutritious school meals in 20 of the world's poorest countries, many of which are impacted by conflict and natural disasters. The promise of a nutritious meal attracts hungry children into the classroom where, instead of working or looking for food, they can gain an education and hope for the future.

Despite this good news, this looks to be a difficult year ahead - with conflict affecting countries where Mary's Meals works, such as Ethiopia and South Sudan, and the cost-of-living crisis hitting families in the UK and overseas. Food prices are also rising, making it more expensive to feed hungry children. Since the start of 2022, Mary's Meals has helped children affected by cyclones in Malawi and Madagascar,

as well as children fleeing war in Ethiopia. The charity has also started serving school meals in Yemen, a country enduring one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world.

Daniel Adams, the executive director, comments: 'It is easy to feel hopeless when faced with so much suffering. But every single thing that people do for our mission makes an enormous difference to the children who eat Mary's Meals - and these little acts of love are needed now more than ever before. Despite the uncertainty ahead, we remain determined to keep our promise to the children that we are reaching today, putting our hope in the continued generosity and kindness of all those who believe, like we do, in the importance of attracting children to school through the promise of a daily meal'.

A current example of the work is in Tigray, a semi-arid region in Ethiopia, where brutal fighting has taken place



Volunteers in Zambia prepare school porridge

over the past 18 months, leaving millions of internally displaced people (IDP) in desperate need of food aid. Since conflict began there, Mary's Meals has been able to provide 30,000 people with vital food aid and hygiene kits. The charity has set up classrooms in IDP centres and is delivering trauma counselling for children.

It costs just £15.90 to feed a child with Mary's Meals for a full school year.

For more information on the work of Mary's Meals, see: www.marysmeals.org.uk

Mary's Month

Naomi Burton

Now that the sun is shining again, and at night the sky can be seen in the moonshine Knowing that May is Mary's month is easy. But what of the days of heavy skies, of biting North East wind and rain lashing the halyards - Have you ever seen a brand new flag not only torn into ribbons but literally braided by the wind - Is Mary, then, part of this elemental fury? Perhaps, yes, in the sense that we know she is there, always the place of calm, right in the centre of the storminess of life. We know she is waiting, ready to comfort, to lead us on to her Son when hearts are heavy, when sorrow confuses us. We even know she understands how hard it is to say 'Hail, Holy Queen' when you are soaked to the skin and tired and cross. How easy on a day when the air is clear and bright, when the grass is green and those laggard daffodils decide at last to show their true colour! Indeed in our hearts we know that never was it known that anyone was turned away unaided by this Springtime girl. And how much more does that total love and forgivingness flow from the Father, Son, and Spirit to all who seek.

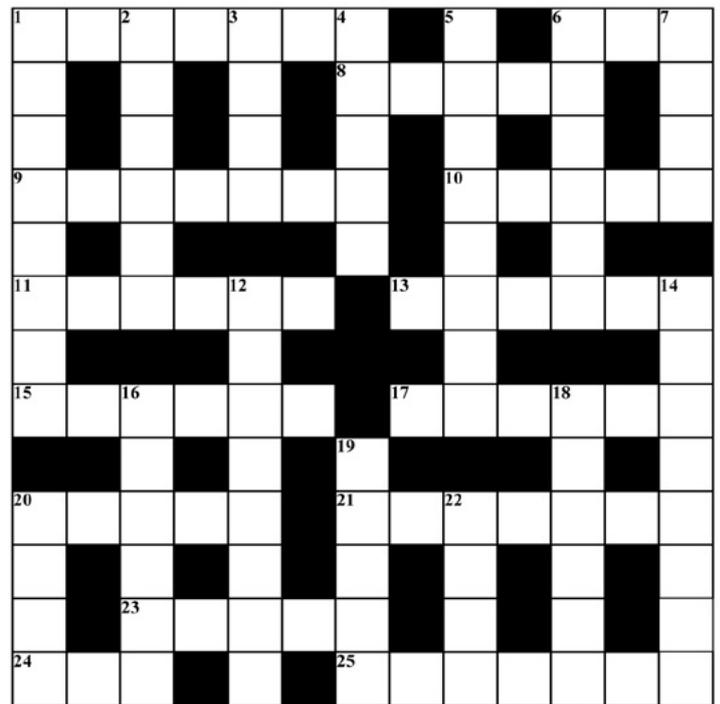
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Our Lady of the Flowers

Anonymous

It's Maying tide all over the earth,
 And Maying is thine, Mary, thy very own,
 Thine is the rose and the phlox, the tulip and pansy,
 Thine is the iris that blooms near dark ponds,
 Thine is the cornflower in fields of wheat,
 Thine the morning glory that decks the hedges,
 Thine the violet that scents the woods,
 Thine the anemone under the bushes,
 Thine the honeysuckle courted by bees,
 Thine the daisies, thy earth-grown stars,
 Thine the campanula, blue like thy mantle,
 Thine the shy nenuphar on silent lakes,
 Thine the forget-me-nots in cloistered gardens,
 Thine the edelweiss on Alpine crags,
 Thine the sunflowers of bright Andalusia,
 Thine the chrysanthemum on Nippon's shore,
 Thine the lotus on the banks of the Ganges;
 Narcissus whispers thy sacred name,
 Carnations recall thy Son's deep love.

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



Alan Frost May 2022 – No. 99

Clues Across

- 1 Boanerges or 'Sons of -----', reference to the Apostles James and John (7)
- 6 See 8 Across
- 8 & 6 Across: 'Queen -- --- ---', title from 'O Mary We Crown Thee' hymn (2,3,3)
- 9 Title of ruler in ancient Egypt as in time of Moses (7)
- 10 & 20 Down: The National Flag (5,4)
- 11 Form a connection with (6)
- 13 Westminster or Stonyhurst, for example (6)
- 15 Fruit cake associated with Lent and Easter (6)
- 17 Togetherness (6)
- 20 Father of King David (5)
- 21 London Park designed by Nash, et al (7)
- 23 William of ----, Middle Ages friar and theologian famous for his philosophical 'Razor' (5)
- 24 Famous Gardens in South West London (3)
- 25 Pre-War UK Prime Minister (7)

Clues Down

- 1 Catholic Knights in the Crusades (8)
- 2 Symbol of two dots above a letter for pronunciation as in Zoë (6)
- 3 & 4: Bd. Alan ---, great Dominican reviver of the Rosary in the 15th c. (2,2,3)
- 4 See 3 Down ----
- 5 Civilisation of ancient Italy, later becoming part of the Roman Empire (8)
- 6 Country associated with Our Lady of Guadalupe (6)
- 7 Story of wool? (4)
- 12 Quality of showing mercy, associated with any one of 14 Popes? (8)
- 14 Sir Edwin -----, creator of the lions at the base of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square (8)
- 16 European capital associated with Orthodox church (6)
- 18 Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui -----, the Glory Be (6)
- 19 Little bit of comfort (5)
- 20 See 10 Across
- 22 Eric ----, famous craftsman, notably of the Cathedral's Stations of the Cross (4)

ANSWERS

Across: 1 Thunder 6 May 8 Of The 9 Pharaoh 10 Union 11 Attach 13 School 15 Simnel 17 Unison 20 Jesse 21 Regents 23 Occam 24 Kew 25 Balfour Down: 1 Templars 2 Umhau 3 De La Roche 5 Etruscan 6 Mexico 7 Yarn 12 Clemency 14 Landseer 16 Moscow 18 Sancto 19 Crumb 20 Jack 22 Gill

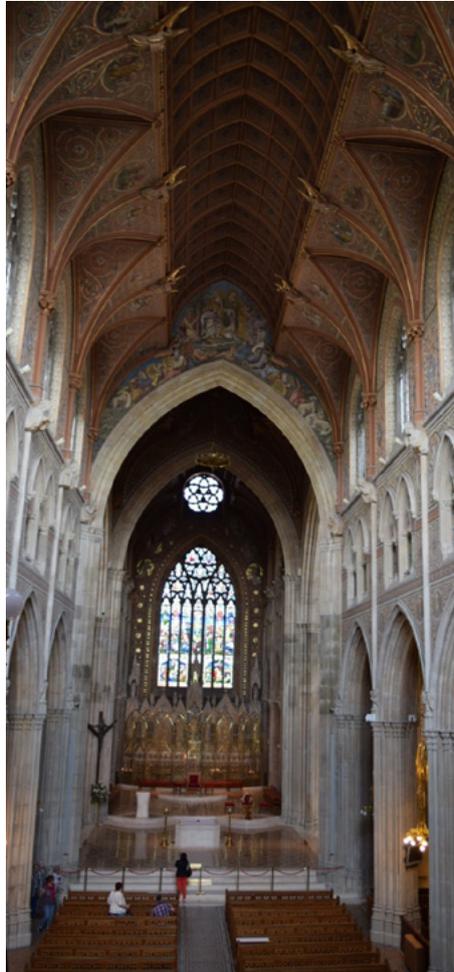
Can 'The Disappeared' be Found?

Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh

A striking feature of all the Gospel accounts is the way in which Jesus is shown as unjustly condemned: a sham trial, the 'back and forth' between Pilate, Herod, the Chief Priest and the baying mob; the verdict already determined, the sentence decided; accusations lined up, false witnesses coached; and, all the time, Jesus chooses to say little or nothing – fully aware that His fate has already been sealed. It is a scene which is sadly rerun even today. This annual Mass for the 'disappeared' reminds us of the lifelong pain and impact of unfair trials, secret condemnation, summary executions and concealed truth. So far there have been 19 known cases of individuals abducted, murdered and secretly buried during the Troubles, but in likelihood there are others. Their families have faced not only the trauma of sudden loss but also the added agony of not knowing where their loved ones are buried and why, and how they were taken.

Thankfully, through the work of the Independent Commission and many others, the bodies of 14 of those who had been 'disappeared' have been recovered. I welcome the Commission members who are with us today, or joining us online. The shocking scenes from Ukraine in recent days of defenceless people being murdered with their hands tied behind their backs, their bodies left unidentified in mass graves, bring home to us how cruel our world can be when conflict, murder, revenge and terror corrupt the soul and forget love.

But this quiet annual gathering here at St Patrick's Cathedral in Armagh, has also brought out so much empathy and solidarity – families and friends who never previously knew each other, from different cultures, backgrounds and sometimes from opposite sides of our so-called 'divide', all united



© National Churches Trust

St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh

by compassion and by the shared experience of loss, unanswered questions and unresolved pain. And that solidarity has been such that hope has not been allowed to die – unjust trial and evil are not permitted to have the last word.

My dear families of the Disappeared, you know the awful strain of searching again and again for the place your loved ones were abandoned. You know how important it is for anyone who has even the slightest information about what happened to your loved ones, way back then, to come forward and share those missing details of what they knew, or what they did. So today, on your behalf, I appeal

again to the conscience of anyone who can help with the cases of Lisa Dorrian, Joe Lynskey, Seamus Maguire, Columba McVeigh and Robert Nairac to bring forward even the slightest clues, so that the agonising wait of you, their families and support persons, can be shortened, and those who remain hidden can at last have a Christian burial. Paddy, I thank you for being here today and for the first time to bring forward a candle of hope in memory of your brother, Seamus Maguire, whose name has recently been added to the list of the 'Disappeared'. We know that are other families of course, whose loved ones were never included in the list of the Disappeared, and who remain anguished and tormented by uncertainty about what happened.

The legacy of suffering and unresolved grief associated with our troubled past remains unfinished business, and a stumbling block to lasting peace here. There is still so much to be done to uncover the truth so that the full stories of what happened during the Troubles can be told; that the dead can rest peacefully in their graves; that the bereaved and injured can find justice and healing; that those who did wrong can make atonement, and, that a just and lasting foundation can be put in place for honest and shared future for us all on this island. Reading today St Luke's story of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am struck by the example of forgiveness and mercy shown by our Saviour, who even in the midst of His blinding pain and torturous death could pray: 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do'. May His example of mercy inspire all of us, here and across the world, never to allow the evil of unjust trial and summary execution to have the last word.

CATHEDRAL HISTORY – A PICTORIAL RECORD

The Pastoral Visit of Pope St John Paul II

Paul Tobin



The first-ever visit of a reigning pope to these shores almost did not take place, owing to the conflict in the Falkland Islands. It was essential for the Pope not to be seen to be taking sides and much diplomatic negotiation took place behind the scenes, which culminated in the papal visit to the UK taking place as well as a subsequent pastoral visit to Argentina in June.

Unlike the visit of Pope Benedict XVI in 2010, which was a state visit with the costs being borne by the Government, this event being of a pastoral nature meant that the costs, around £7million, were borne by the Catholic Church. The theme of this six-day visit was the Seven Sacraments, with the first Papal Mass, which included the rite of Baptism, being celebrated here at Westminster Cathedral.

Pope John Paul II arrived early on the morning of Friday 28 May 1982 at Gatwick Airport and was greeted on his arrival by the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Bruno Heim, and the Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, Cormac Murphy-O'Connor (destined to become Archbishop of Westminster 18 years later) along with the Duke of Norfolk,

representing Her Majesty the Queen. Image 1 shows Pope John Paul, accompanied by Archbishop Heim (left) and Bishop Murphy-O'Connor (right) with the Duke of Norfolk at the foot of the steps and Cardinal Hume to his right.

Having travelled by special train to Victoria station, the Pope was driven the short distance to the Cathedral by a Popemobile, with the route being lined by cheering crowds. On arrival at the Cathedral, he was greeted by the assembled bishops of England and Wales, along with the Metropolitan Chapter and the College of Chaplains. He then proceeded to the Baptistry, where he vested for Mass.

This was the first major event to take place with the new forward-facing altar, which was to be in use for the next 27 years until it was decided to return to the High Altar. By the time of the visit of Pope Benedict, the space at the rear of the altar had been widened by the repositioning of the gradine, on which the crucifix and six candlesticks stand, so that the celebrant could genuflect with a

greater degree of comfort than was previously possible. A scale replica of the Metropolitan throne was specially carved and placed in front of the High Altar for the Papal Mass, which the Holy Father concelebrated with members of the English and Welsh hierarchy. Seen either side of the Pope are Cardinals Basil Hume and Gordon Gray, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh. In Image 2, wearing a Dalmatic is Fr (now Canon) Pat Browne, who proclaimed the Gospel.

After the Mass the Pope went to the loggia above the West Doors to greet the large crowd that had gathered in the Piazza, where the Mass had been broadcast on loudspeakers. Those waiting to get a glimpse of the Holy Father included many people from the offices nearby during their lunch break. Following this he lunched in Archbishop's House, before going to Buckingham Palace where he met the Queen.

Images:

1. *Illustrated London News*, June 1982
2. *Express Newspapers*



Tales of the English Martyrs

Bl Thomas Pickering was a Benedictine Lay Brother apprehended in 1679 during the Titus Oates Plot and accused of being paid to murder the King. Taxed with being a priest, he replied, with a smile: 'No, I am only a lay brother'. About to be hung, he was called upon to confess his fault, at which, pulling up his cap and showing his innocent, smiling face, he said: 'Is this the face of a dying criminal?' So he went to God, the most harmless of men, the most unlikely, and the most unfit for an attempt to murder. He suffered at Tyburn on 9 May.

The Martyrs' Altar at Tyburn Convent



© John D Smith, Cwmbran

The Month of May

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention

For faith-filled young people:

We pray for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary's life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage and the dedication to service that faith generates.

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

Sunday 1 May

Ps Week 3

3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER

12pm Solemn Mass (Men's voices)

Lassus – Missa Congratulamini mihi

Byrd – Christ rising again

Byrd – Christ is risen again

Organ: *Tournemire* – Choral-

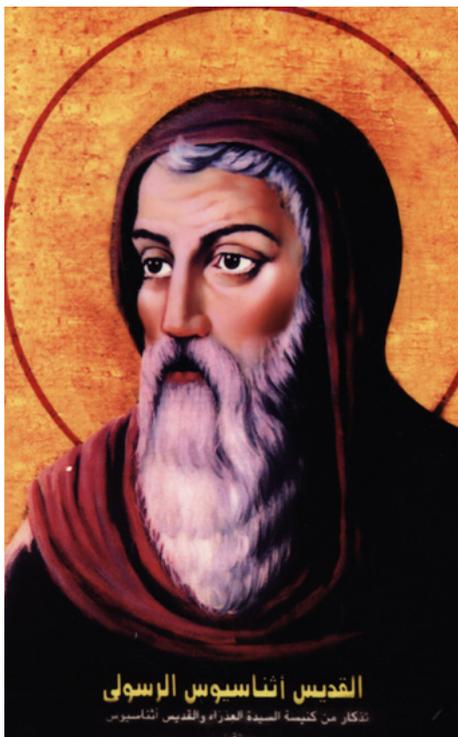
Improvisation sur le 'Victimæ Paschali'

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction
de Monte – Magnificat octavi toni

Byrd – Hæc dies

Organ: *Widor* – Moderato

(Symphonie romane)



St Athanasius

Monday 2 May (Bank Holiday)

St Athanasius, Bishop & Doctor

11am Migrants' Mass

Tuesday 3 May

Ss PHILIP and JAMES, Apostles

5.30pm Chapter Mass

Wednesday 4 May

THE ENGLISH MARTYRS

Thursday 5 May

Easter feria

Friday 6 May

Friday abstinence

Easter feria

Saturday 7 May

Easter feria

2.30pm Parish First Holy Communion Mass

4pm Latin Mass Society monthly Low Mass

(1962 Missal, Blessed Sacrament Chapel)

Sunday 8 May

Ps Week 4

4th SUNDAY OF EASTER

* World Day of Prayer for Vocations

12pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Bingham – Mass for Westminster

Cathedral

Bingham – Et aperti sunt oculi

Byrd – Ave verum corpus

Organ: *Widor* – Final (Symphonie romane)

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction

Bevan – Magnificat quarti toni

Victoria – Regina cæli a 5

Organ: *Messiaen* – Joie et clarté des

corps glorieux

Monday 9 May

Easter feria

Tuesday 10 May

Easter feria

(St John of Avila, Priest & Doctor)

2.30pm Requiem Mass for Baroness
Shirley Williams (Cardinal Nichols)

Wednesday 11 May

Easter feria

Thursday 12 May

Easter feria

(Ss Nereus and Achilleus, Martyrs;

St Pancras, Martyr)

Friday 13 May

Friday abstinence

Our Lady of Fatima

Saturday 14 May

ST MATTHIAS, Apostle

3pm Matrimony Mass (Cardinal Nichols)

Sunday 15 May

Ps Week 1

5th SUNDAY OF EASTER

12pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Victoria – Missa Ascendens Christus

Guerrero – Hoc est præceptum meum

Guerrero – Vos amici mea estis

Organ: *Langlais* – Incantation pour un

jour saint

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction

Lassus – Magnificat septimi toni

Guerrero – Surge propera

Organ: *J.S. Bach arr. Dupré* – Sinfonia

to Cantata 29

Monday 16 May

Easter feria

Tuesday 17 May

Easter Feria

* Day of Prayer for the Victims and Survivors of Sexual Abuse

Wednesday 18 May

Easter feria

(St John I, Pope & Martyr)

Thursday 19 May

Easter feria

Friday 20 May*Friday abstinence*

Easter Feria

(St Bernadine of Siena)

Saturday 21 May

Easter Feria

(St Christopher Magallanes and Companions, Martyrs)

Anniversary of the Installation of Cardinal Vincent Nichols

11th Archbishop of Westminster (2009)

2.30pm Deanery Youth Confirmation Mass (Bishop Sherrington)**6pm** Mass for New Catholics (Cardinal Nichols)**Sunday 22 May***Ps Week 2***6th SUNDAY OF EASTER****12pm** Solemn Mass (Full Choir)*Lassus* – Missa Bell' Amfitrit' altera*Taverner* – Dum transisset SabbatumOrgan: *Franck* – Choral No 1 in E major**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction*Bevan* – Magnificat septimi toni*Monteverdi* – Beatus virOrgan: *Langlais* – Mors et Resurrectio

(Trois Paraphrases Grégoriennes)

Monday 23 May

Easter feria

Tuesday 24 May

Easter feria

Wednesday 25 May

St Bede the Venerable, Priest & Doctor

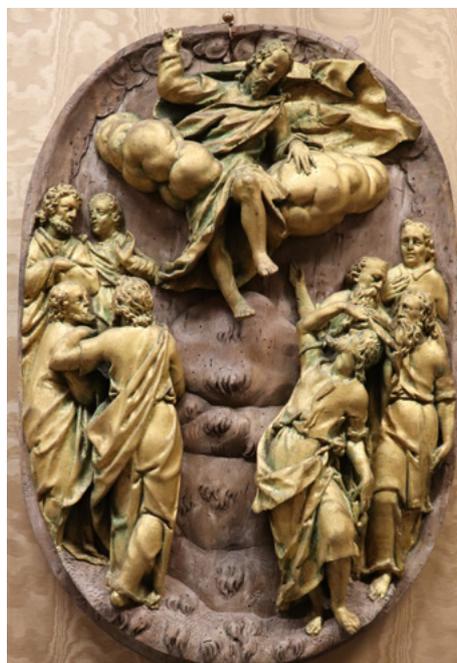
5.30pm Vigil Mass of the Ascension

(fulfils the Obligation)

Thursday 26 May**THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**

(Solemnity)

Masses at the usual times

5pm Solemn Second Vespers**5.30pm** Solemn Mass (Full Choir)*Victoria* – Missa Ascendens Christus*Victoria* – Ascendens Christus in altum*Victoria* – Ascendit DeusOrgan: *Messiaen* – Transports de joie (L'Ascension)*The Ascension of Our Lord (Soth Germany, 1700)***Friday 27 May***Friday abstinence*

ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY,

Bishop

Saturday 28 May

Easter feria

Sunday 29 May**7th SUNDAY OF EASTER**

* World Communications Day

12pm Solemn Mass (Men's Voices)*Palestrina* – Missa Veni creator Spiritus*Palestrina* – Viri GalilæiOrgan: *De Grigny* – Veni Creator**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction*Guerrero* – Magnificat octavi toni*Palestrina* – Ascendit DeusOrgan: *Messiaen* – Majesté du Christ

(L'Ascension)

Monday 30 May

Easter feria

Tuesday 31 May**THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED**

VIRGIN 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' AssociationHinsley 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

Interfaith Group Hinsley Room

Third Wednesdays 2-3.30pm

Lectio DivinaHinsley 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

The Meaning of the Bread of Life

Elizabeth Fothergill, Year 6



In our Religious Education lessons, we have been exploring the topic of Jesus as the Bread of Life. We were asked to write an article about this significant phrase, 'I am the Bread of Life'. We hear this phrase so often but do we really understand its true meaning?

The Bread of Life is our spiritual nourishment, and as

Jesus is the Bread of Life, Jesus is our nourishment. But when I say nourishment, I don't mean food. I mean nourishment of our Faith, which means helping our Faith to grow and flourish and understand that God and Jesus will always forgive our sins, even when we don't realise our actions were wrong and don't repent. Jesus also nourishes us by showing us that there is always support and comfort for us in him, God and Mary our Mother.

But what does Jesus mean when he says: 'I am the Bread of Life'? He means that we are not satisfied spiritually unless we know Jesus; we are not satisfied spiritually unless we have Jesus in our lives; we cannot survive without Jesus. We can receive the Bread of Life at Mass when we receive Jesus' Body, and at Confession when we are reconciled and profess our Faith in God. When we receive the Bread of Life through Communion, we are cleansed of our sins because Jesus is giving us his body, and as Jesus' body is unblemished and free of sin, we too become pure.

When Jesus gave the disciples his Body at the Last Supper, he was giving us the promise of a free life without sin; a life where we are reunited with him and Our Father; a life when we ascend to Heaven. In the New Testament, Jesus taught his disciples to pray: 'Give us this day our daily bread' (Matthew 6:11). We can trust God to take care of our everyday needs. Jesus said: 'If God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you' (Matthew 6:30). That is why God sent the Bread of Life to his people; to show them that he will always put them first, even over his own Son, in their moments of need.

So when *you* are in a time of need, and feel like no-one is there for you, not even God, just remember the sacrifice he made in your brothers' and sisters' moment of need.

Oremus

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Oremus, Westminster Cathedral, Clergy House, 42 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QW



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