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Oremus

Westminster Cathedral Magazine



At the beginning of September we celebrate the visit to the Cathedral of the relics of St Bernadette



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The cover image is a picture of Bernadette Soubirous taken in 1863 by Billard-Perrin. Rather than choosing an image of an elaborate reliquary for the cover, it seems better to remind ourselves of the choice of this poor and uneducated girl to whom the Mother of God appeared at Lourdes.

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The Work of the Cathedral

Canon Shaun Lennard, Provost of the Metropolitan Chapter

The feast of the Dedication of the Cathedral will be celebrated in every church in the diocese on 1 July. It is an important feast for the local church. The Cathedral symbolises the unity of the local church – the diocese. It is particularly appropriate that not only the Chapter and the Chaplains of this great Cathedral gather for Mass on the vigil of this feast, but also that we should be joined by the Heads of Catholic schools in our diocese. Our schools are an important part of our diocesan family. As the late Cardinal Basil Hume once said, no Catholic school can operate in isolation from the local Catholic community.

The annual observance of the dedication of any church celebrates the mystery of the living church, that is the people of God on pilgrimage to the new Jerusalem. And what a people. In a sermon for the dedication of a cathedral, St Augustine told the people: 'This is the house of our prayers, we ourselves are the house of God' (Sermon 336). I started my ministry as a priest twenty-eight ago as a Chaplain of this Cathedral. I came as we were preparing to celebrate the Centenary of the laying of the Foundation Stone. The Centenary Appeal and celebrations gave a marvellous snapshot of the richness of the Cathedral, which is reflected in the wider diocese, especially in its living stones. Alongside its architecture, music and liturgy, helping thousands of people to raise their hearts and minds to God, one finds outreach to the poor, the homeless, those who are lost and distressed as well as a welcoming place just to be, free of charge.

One of my first responsibilities was to be Registrar and I had to send registers over 100 years old to the diocesan archive. We had the registers of the Jesuit church of St Mary in Horseferry Road, the original mission church of this area. Looking through the registers there were baptisms recorded that had taken place in Tothill Fields Prison, which had stood on this site before the Cathedral. This, to me, underlines the inclusivity of this church and its people.

In this evening's gospel reading we find the collaborating tax collector Zacchaeus whose life is in a mess. He is rich, but finds himself hated and mistrusted by his own people and despised and used by the occupying Romans. Zacchaeus feels that in Jesus Christ there might be some way out of his dilemma, so he hides in a broad-leafed tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus and maybe to hear a few words. In Zacchaeus I see the thousands of people who come to this place with many needs or just by accident (and by this place I include the door to Clergy House in Francis Street, The Passage and the Cardinal Hume Centre.) In my first year here, we had



The Cathedral builders in St Joseph's Chapel

© Lawrence Lew OP

twenty-three people in the RCIA group. All had been drawn by this building's accessibility, availability and, in some cases, anonymity. Their stories were fascinating. To return to the Gospel, Jesus notices Zacchaeus, he calls him by name and he goes to his home. This dynamic must always be present in our church, especially in this place. Being accessible to all is half the battle. But then we must notice those who come, find ways to approach them and offer to journey with them. This is not just the task of clergy, but also of those who welcome visitors.

Zacchaeus is transformed by this encounter and he continues his journey on the right road with Jesus. Every day people come to this place for the availability and anonymity of the sacrament of Penance, Confession or Reconciliation. They go out transformed by the love and mercy of God to make a difference in people's lives. And that brings me to the first reading this evening - Ezekiel's powerful vision of streams of living water flowing from the Temple: 'I saw streams of living water flowing from the Temple, bringing life to all, wherever it flowed'. This place is the setting for this dynamic of gathering, being welcomed, being transformed by an encounter with Jesus Christ and then flowing out into the world, taking the transforming love and mercy of God to all whom we meet.

So this evening we give thanks for those who built this magnificent Cathedral, for the one hundred and nineteen years of ministry and for today's living stones who minister and worship here, that we may continue to avail ourselves of God's mercy and, transformed by that love and mercy, flow out and make a difference in our world.

Fr John writes



As *Oremus* resumes after its summer break, it might seem as if some, if not all hell has been let loose on us of late. The media have revelled in predicting ever higher temperatures combined with, eventually, ever deeper flash floods. Nor can we turn on the fans, since we face destitution by energy bills if we do so. At least, if we have a job, we can go on strike, perhaps?

In face of this we turn to our spiritual resources and especially in this month to the Visit of the Relics of St Bernadette. Fr Andrew Gallagher has written a piece to remind us of our great need of healing in connection with the Visit and I thank him for that. Although the first weekend of September will be a packed and exhausting one for the Cathedral, let us remember that the Relics continue their journey around this island until All Saints' Day, so that Catholics can be renewed in faith and hope for God's kingdom to come and his will be done among us.

The summer has also seen priest visitors new and old come and go. Among them, Fr Chris Clohessy offers us a further exposition of a lesser-known Old Testament text, whilst Fr Guillaume Michel has a particular connection with the Cathedral through our major relic of St Edmund of Abingdon, whose body reposes in Pontigny, where he has kindly invited us to visit. Meanwhile there are no changes among the College of Chaplains, although we have said farewell to Marko Sever after his two years as Organ Scholar. You will see that he has left us an audible reminder of his time here with his new CD recorded on the Grand Organ.

A couple of pages remind us of the background work that goes on to keep the Cathedral fit for purpose. At least by the end of the month, the Cathedral Clock will be back from its overhaul, so that the clergy can ensure that their homilies do not overrun. In the sacristy two new sets of vestments have been presented, a welcome relief as the green sets are inevitably the most worn.

However, *Oremus* does not hide its head in the sand when confronted by our contemporary dilemmas. You will see that there is an introduction to the ecumenical 'Season of Creation' which lasts through until St Francis' feast on 4 October, with prayers and Papal teaching which John Woodhouse collated for me. There is also a page of Challenges to help us in a self-examination of how to lead our daily lives as responsibly and harmoniously as we can.

Fr John Scott

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On Holiday in Harlesden

Caritas Westminster

On 1 August, Bishop John Sherrington visited the Syria Summer Camp, an educational, fun and therapeutic event for children from refugee backgrounds hosted by Newman Catholic College and supported by Caritas Westminster. Now in its sixth year, it was initiated in 2016 by Amanda Wooster as a summer activity for refugees who came from places such as Syria and Afghanistan.

Bishop John shares his experience of the visit:

I was warmly welcomed by Inayat and Anisa. Inayat, a young man and student at Newman Catholic College, whose name means 'bounty, kindness, favour', enthusiastically introduced me to other groups of young people at the Syrian Summer Camp. Anisa, an older woman, known as Auntie, whose name means 'pleasant companion' was a quiet and comforting presence with us throughout the day. Sr Silvana from Caritas Westminster, a passionate and dedicated promoter of the summer camp, had organised the visit and accompanied us. We first met the young lionesses, younger children, being coached by a QPR woman trainer. Many had watched the Women's Euro football final on Sunday evening and wanted to follow in the women's footsteps. They were enthusiastic about football, if a little shy in our presence. The next group were waiting patiently to travel by train to London Zoo. The boys were keen to see the lions, which were their favourite animal, but were worried that the lions might be asleep and hidden in their lair.

Inayat introduced us to a group of boys who were discussing the meaning of culture. With origins in Iran, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and other countries, they talked about whether they had grown up in a city or a rural area, the meaning of flags, sport and the culture they had left behind. They said that London was a safe place for them and that was more important than many other things. Learning English to communicate was at the heart of this activity. Football crossed all boundaries. Sr Silvana spoke about women footballers being paid less than men and asked whether this was right? Most accepted the difference!

A further group of teenage boys and girls were exploring the meaning of their names. Each told me their meaning which was beautiful and very moving. I learnt that Fatima, daughter of the Prophet, was translated as 'flower'. They were painting a symbol of their names to express the meaning. Many included light and sun, though some were much darker. I was asked about the meaning of the white collar in my shirt. I explained that it is a sign of being a bishop or

priest. 'What does a ring mean?' I asked. They spoke of marriage and love. I said a bishop's ring is a sign of the love of Christ and his Church. Sr Silvana explained the meaning of her ring of consecration as a woman Religious. We then discussed some common elements of Christianity and Islam, pilgrimage, prayer times, almsgiving and charity, but did not get into detail about our views of the person of Jesus Christ. We also learnt that Ramadan is a much harder fast than Lent!

The final visit was to group of very young children exploring sound and movement with a patient teacher. They created a dance with rhythm and movement which they all thoroughly enjoyed although it was hard to work together. Fun was had by all. Hospitality is central to Arabic culture and so we enjoyed the blessings of lunch together. Inayat presented me with his Afghani wristband and spoke of his hopes for A-Levels and the future. Anisa remained the motherly presence throughout the day.

Driving home from Harlesden made me think about the journeys they had made to be in a safe place in London. The helicopters whirring above Wembley on the day of the Women's Euro final had clearly created anxiety for some of the young people and no doubt brought back terrible memories. Behind each face, a story and a family which is unknown to most of us. Yet each face revealed joy and friendship and appreciation of the work of the volunteers to help them over this period of the summer school. Thank you to Newman Catholic College, Caritas, and all the volunteers trying to help these children and young people to find a safe home and some blessings.



Bishop John with the children. Image credit: CBCEW

Follow the Money

Vatican News

A new unified policy for financial investments of the Holy See and the Vatican City State is being launched this month. The new guidelines remove the autonomy of Roman Curia departments to invest their own money, placing all investments under the control of a special committee that will ensure all Church money follows strict protocols in line with Catholic teaching. The policy prohibits the Holy See from investing in weapons or the defence industry; pornography and prostitution; gambling; pro-abortion health centres and companies that work with embryonic stem cells or manufacture contraceptive products.

The Investment Policy aims to ensure that investments are aimed at contributing to a more just and sustainable world; protecting the real value of the Holy See's net worth, generating a sufficient return to contribute sustainably to the financing of its activities; and are aligned with the teachings of the Catholic Church, with specific exclusions of financial investments that contradict its fundamental principles, such as the sanctity of life or the dignity of the human being or the common good. In this sense, it is important that they be aimed at financial activities of a productive nature, excluding those of a speculative nature, and above all that they be guided by the principle that the decision to invest in one place rather than another, in one productive sector rather than another, is always a moral and cultural choice.

The Policy has been approved *ad experimentum* for five years and enters into force immediately, with a moratorium period to adapt to the proposed criteria. Curial institutions will have to entrust their financial investments to APSA, transferring their liquidity to be invested – or their securities deposited with foreign banks or with the IOR itself – to the APSA account set up at the IOR for this purpose. The APSA, as the institution that administers the patrimony of the Holy See, will set up a single fund for the Holy See into which investments in the various financial instruments will flow, and will have an account for each institution, processing the reporting and paying the returns. The new Investment Committee, established by *Praedicate Evangelium*, will carry out – through APSA – the appropriate consultations aimed at implementing the investment strategy, and will evaluate the suitability of the choices, with particular attention to the compliance of the investments made to the principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church, as well as the parameters of return and risk in accordance with the Investment Policy.

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Imperial Cultural Exchange

Lucien de Guise

There have been sport and music aplenty to mark Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee, but the arts have been less conspicuous. Saving the day is a spectacular exhibition that is being held, appropriately, at Buckingham Palace – or to be absolutely accurate the Queen's Gallery next door. Running until early 2023, the theme is Japanese art, always welcome yet an unexpected choice for this year.

The title of the exhibition, *Japan: Courts and Culture*, explains the relevance of the show. The British royal family has been collecting Japanese works of art for a long time. There has also been an occasional kinship between these two island nations, although their shared history has not always been happy. As few of those who fought in the Second World War are still living, attention can revert to the more productive partnership of the First World War when Japan was an ally of the United Kingdom in the war against Germany.

Among the joys of this exhibition are the memorabilia of those pre-WWII times. There are photographs of the young Crown Prince Hirohito playing golf with his British counterpart, the Prince of Wales before he became Edward VIII. These personal interactions not only give this show its purpose and energy; they also illustrate the benefits of having a monarchy. Everything in the Royal Collection has been methodically stored over generations and there are plenty of people archiving everything in sight. Presidents don't always seem to work the same way. We can see what was on the menu for these leaders of empires when they banqueted together. We can also learn about the music that was brought out to entertain them. It is possible that the Japanese Crown Prince was fed up with hearing *Madame Butterfly* by then, but he no doubt put on a good show of enjoying it being interpreted by a British military brass band.

Then there are the gifts exchanged between the two nations. How unexpected to see the same three feathers used by Prince Charles, the current Prince of Wales, appearing on a Japanese lacquer box for storing letters given to the previous holder of this title in 1922. The story, however, goes back much further than the Roaring Twenties. Even after Japan had closed its borders to foreign visitors in 1603, this distant empire remained a major trading power. Taking advantage of the chaos that beset China as it descended into civil war during the 17th century, Japanese ceramicists and other artisans were busy filling the trade gap, although these substitutes were not always understood to be from Japan when they reached their final destinations.



A screen painting given by the Shogun of Japan to Queen Victoria in 1860

Adoring collectors in Western Europe and the Ottoman Empire often mistook them for the Chinese originals, which makes for some misleading inventories.

As so few enthusiasts of the time could tell the nations of East Asia apart anyway, it is often up to modern authorities to decide what is from where. It does not always matter, as so many of these export wares were produced for a foreign clientele and were not much appreciated in their homelands. Some are of a religious significance that was misunderstood in the Western world. One example that remains enigmatic is the vessel known universally by its Malay name, *kendi*. Extremely popular in the past among the Muslims of Southeast Asia for hygienic drinking, they are labelled as being used for washing hands. This might also have been true in some locations as hygiene has always been integral to Islamic worship. More acceptable for domestic consumption in Japan was Buddhist imagery, which is everywhere at this exhibition, often taking the form of the ambiguous *Guanyin*, 'goddess of mercy'.

Visitors looking for evidence of Christian devotion will find slimmer pickings. There are none of the stunning 'hidden Christian' items that were very much a part of two hundred and fifty years of persecution. The British royal family would probably not have welcomed any such items into the collection, since these works were mostly inspired by the Jesuits in Japan. One object



A colourful kendi drinking vessel from the late 17th century

only to turn against them later. Rather than having any religious significance, the quiver is just one of many examples of martial art on display.

Other items are so filled with whimsical charm – such as an incense burner in the shape of an ox – that they would surely have been admired anywhere they ended up. Craftsmanship has always been a serious business in East Asia, but not without occasional humour. The material collected by the British royal family has often taken the form of official gifts, which makes these items a bit less wry on the whole. The first



Not as Christian as it looks, this lacquer arrow quiver has a clan crest that bears a coincidental resemblance to a cross

The British and the Japanese shared a keen interest in arms and armour, although most of the Royal Collection is more pacific. Colour was what Europe craved, provided by the extravagant ceramics of East Asia. Equally popular was the subtly opulent palette of lacquer wares. Gold on black was such a favourite in Western Europe that generations of French and English

on display does give the impression of being from this sought-after genre; an archer's quiver with a gold cross highlighted on a red lacquer background. This is the heraldic emblem of one of Japan's lordly families, but unfortunately had been first used long before Christianity arrived. The Shimazu clan had once welcomed Catholic priests to their Satsuma stronghold,

only to turn against them later. Rather than having any religious significance, the quiver is just one of many examples of martial art on display. Other items are so filled with whimsical charm – such as an incense burner in the shape of an ox – that they would surely have been admired anywhere they ended up. Craftsmanship has always been a serious business in East Asia, but not without occasional humour. The material collected by the British royal family has often taken the form of official gifts, which makes these items a bit less wry on the whole. The first recorded gift was in 1613. This complete set of armour would have been a very meaningful gesture of goodwill from the Japanese *Shogun* to King James I of England. Later, such armour was used by artists to represent the oppression of Catholics in the British Isles as the authorities in Japan began to persecute missionaries from Spain and Portugal along with a large number of converts among their own people.

craftsmen were set to copying its discreet opulence. The finest lacquer objects were so highly valued in Japan that export licences were required and seldom granted. Although there are some wonderful examples of lacquer chests in the Royal Collection, the supreme example that exists outside Japan is actually in the Victoria and Albert Museum, opened of course in 1857 by Queen Elizabeth's great-great-grandmother.

The keenest Western hoarder of Japanese lacquer was the chief minister to Louis XIII of France. Although Cardinal Mazarin was perhaps the richest man in Europe, collecting restricted exports was as much about connections as money. The Cardinal's lacquer chest in the V&A was the largest item of Japanese master craftsmen's labour to slip through the *shogun's* net. Centuries later, after appreciation of this art had been tarnished by tawdry European copies, the Mazarin chest was labelled as being Chinese and used as a television stand before ending up in South Kensington. Despite one or two omissions, the Royal Collection has ended up with a glorious diversity of Japan's greatest aesthetic triumphs. From the huge screens that provided privacy and colour in drab and draughty samurai castles, to the tiniest netsuke toggles, the full spectrum of Japanese art is on display. Among the less obvious elements, presumably because they were low-budget disposable merchandise, are the *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints that fascinated the likes of Van Gogh and Monet.



Lacquer wares were a favourite of the flamboyant George IV. This cabinet was made in Japan circa 1640-90

Japan: Courts and Culture is an assemblage with a regal flavour. As with the concept of monarchy itself, this exhibition takes the long view – and there is no country with a longer dynastic history than Japan.

Images © L de Guise, courtesy of the Royal Collection

St Bernadette – Why Now?

Fr Andrew Gallagher

The relics of St Bernadette will be visiting England, Wales and Scotland in September and October 2022, starting with their visit to Westminster Cathedral Saturday 3 – Monday 5 September. But after 154 years of pilgrims visiting Lourdes, why has the decision now been made for the relics of St Bernadette to visit us?

The shrine of Lourdes is well known as a place of healing. Even during the time of the apparitions of Our Lady to Bernadette, physical miracles began to be associated with the spring that had been uncovered, and soon after miracles began to be seen, linked to the Eucharistic processions that took place there. Lourdes is also a place of spiritual healing in answer to the call of Mary that we should go to that place for 'penance, penance, penance'. So many who have visited Lourdes out of curiosity have discovered faith whilst on pilgrimage there. And anyone who has visited Lourdes as a pilgrim will also recognise that it is a place where we receive healing in so many other ways – for many it is a place where we rediscover God's love, through being cared for or caring for others, and witnessing the weakest always being put at the centre of everything that happens there.

Following the last few difficult years journeying through the Covid pandemic, and as we continue that journey through suffering its economic and other social consequences, we are all in a time of needing healing. The authorities in Lourdes have recognised that for many who would traditionally travel to Lourdes, due to their increased frailty and the inability to afford to travel, this is not possible at this time. And so, the visit of the relics of St Bernadette around the world is an opportunity for Lourdes to come to us. This visit, in the person of St Bernadette, is particularly appropriate for us in these times, as she was herself someone who was in need of healing.

Much of her youth was spent separated from her family. As a young girl, after her mother had an accident and was unable to feed her, she was sent away from her family for some time to the village of Bartres, and later she returned there to look after sheep in the fields overlooking Lourdes. Her father also spent some time in prison, accused of stealing flour from the mill in which he worked. Bernadette grew up living in poverty. Lourdes was not a wealthy area, and for some time her family were so poor, that they lived in one room in an abandoned prison, struggling to find food each day. On the day that Bernadette first saw Mary at the grotto of Massabielle, she was collecting wood to keep her family warm through the winter months from the side of the river.



The Reliquary of St Bernadette in the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Lourdes

© José Luiz Bernardes Ribeiro / CC BY-SA 3.0

She risked ridicule for her faith. When she first returned home, and spoke of seeing a lady in white, she was told off by her family and told not to tell anyone her lies. When she later spoke to the local priest, he also refused to believe her. And later when she joined the religious life, even some of her fellow sisters were cruel to her out of jealousy. But despite the humiliation she must have felt, Bernadette stayed faithful to what she had seen, and continued to try and reveal the message she had been given to those around her.

She also suffered ill-health throughout her life. From a young age, she had asthma and she was often sick, which left her well behind her peers in her studies. When she was seeking to join a religious order, the superiors were warned that she would become a 'pillar of the infirmary', and this was proved true as, throughout her time in the convent, she suffered from tuberculosis, right until her death at the age of 35. Bernadette knew what it meant to suffer, and spent many hours in her sick bed, separated from her family and dedicating her time to prayer.

In a time when we need healing from all that has afflicted us over the last few years, there can be no better role model of faithfulness and trust than St Bernadette. We pray that the visit of her relics to our country and this Cathedral may be a source of renewal for our faith and a reminder to us of God's love for all those who suffer and are weak in our world, and his constant desire for all of us to find healing through him and in him.

Fr Andrew, formerly Precentor of the Cathedral, is also Assistant Director of the Westminster Lourdes Pilgrimage.

Why are Relics important to Catholics?

How have the Relics of St Bernadette been treated since her death?

At Nevers, Bernadette was diagnosed with tuberculosis of the bone in her right knee and was unable to take part in convent life. She died in the Convent Infirmary at the age of 35 on 16 April 1879 while praying the rosary. The nuns of Saint-Gildard, with the support of the bishop, sought permission to bury the body in St Joseph's Chapel within the convent grounds. On 30 April, the local Prefect approved the choice and on 30 May, Bernadette's coffin was transferred to St Joseph's crypt, where a simple ceremony was held.

On 22 September 1909, two doctors and a sister of the community exhumed the body. They claimed that the crucifix and rosary she carried had been oxidized but her body remained incorrupt, this being cited as one of the miracles supporting her canonization. They washed and redressed Bernadette's body then buried it in a new double casket. The Church exhumed her body again on 3 April 1919, and the examining doctor said: 'The body is practically mummified, covered with patches of mildew and quite a notable layer of what appear to be calcium salts ... The skin has disappeared in some places, but it is still present on most parts of the body'. In 1925, Bernadette's body was exhumed yet again. Relics were sent to Rome and an imprint of her face was moulded, to create a wax mask to be placed on the body. There were also imprints of her hands, to be used for the presentation of her body, which was placed in a gold and crystal reliquary in the Chapel of St Bernadette at the convent in Nevers.

In 1928, Dr Comte published a report on this, where he wrote: 'I wished to open the left side of the thorax to take the ribs as relics and then remove the heart. However, the Mother Superior desired the Saint's heart to be kept together with the whole body, so I contented myself with removing the two right ribs which were more accessible. What struck me was the state of perfect preservation of the skeleton, the fibrous tissues of the muscles (still supple and firm), of the ligaments, and of the skin, and above all the totally unexpected state of the liver after forty-six years. I expected this organ, soft and inclined to crumble, to have decomposed rapidly or hardened to a chalky consistency. Yet, when it was cut it was soft and almost normal in consistency. I pointed this out to those present, remarking that this did not seem to be a natural phenomenon'.

Why are relics important to Catholics?

The veneration of relics is found in many religions and is rooted in the natural human instinct to treat anything connected with those we love, who have died, with care

and reverence. From earliest times the bodies of martyrs were held in special veneration. The relics of St Polycarp, for example, were described as being 'more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold.' In Rome, prayer services were held in the catacombs, and from the fourth century, the Eucharist was celebrated over the tombs of the martyrs. St Augustine of Hippo explains this by highlighting that the bodies of saints and martyrs had enabled them to live as organs of the Holy Spirit. There are two principal reasons for venerating relics: first, God shows his approval of relics by granting healing, and other graces; and secondly, relics help us to feel close to a holy person, making the communion of saints more real and fostering in us a desire for holiness.

Explaining the importance of relics, Pope Benedict XVI said:

'By inviting us to venerate the mortal remains of the martyrs and saints, the Church does not forget that, in the end, these are indeed just human bones, but they are bones that belonged to individuals touched by the transcendent power of God. The relics of the saints are traces of that invisible but real presence which sheds light upon the shadows of the world and reveals the Kingdom of Heaven in our midst.'

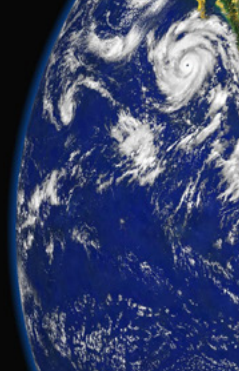
The Teaching of the Church:

The Second Vatican Council recalls that 'the Saints have been traditionally honoured in the Church, and their authentic relics and images held in veneration'. The term 'relics of the Saints' principally signifies the bodies – or notable parts of the bodies – of the Saints who, as distinguished members of Christ's mystical Body and as Temples of the Holy Spirit (cf. I Cor 3: 16, 6: 19; II Cor 6:16) in virtue of their heroic sanctity, now dwell in heaven, but who once lived on earth. Objects which belonged to the Saints, such as personal objects, clothes and manuscripts are also considered relics, as are objects which have touched their bodies or tombs such as oil, cloths and images.

Many popular usages have been associated with this eminently liturgical cultic expression. The faithful deeply revere the relics of the Saints ... The various forms of popular veneration of the relics of the Saints, such as kissing, decorations with lights and flowers, bearing them in processions, in no way exclude the possibility of taking the relics of the Saints to the sick and dying, to comfort them or use the intercession of the Saint to ask for healing. Such should be conducted with great dignity and be motivated by faith.

Paragraphs 236 and 237 of the Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy (2001)

Considering Earthly Matters



The 'Season of Creation' is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment together. During the Season, we are asked to join our Christian sisters and brothers ecumenically in prayer and action for our common home. Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I proclaimed 1 September as a day of prayer for creation for the Orthodox churches in 1989. In fact, the Orthodox church year starts on that day with a commemoration of how God created the world. The World Council of Churches was instrumental in making the special time a season, extending the celebration from 1 September until 4 October.

Following the leadership of the then Ecumenical Patriarch and of the World Council of Churches, Christians worldwide have embraced the season as part of their annual calendar. Pope Francis made the Catholic Church's welcoming of the season official in 2015. In recent years, statements from religious leaders around the world have also encouraged the faithful to take time to care for creation during this time. The season starts on 1 September, the Day of Prayer for Creation, and ends on 4 October, the feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations. Throughout the month-long celebration, the world's Christians are invited to come together to care for our common home.

A Prayer for the Earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature

as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

A Christian prayer in union with creation

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.
Praise be to you!
Son of God, Jesus,
through you all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,
you became part of this earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.
Today you are alive in every creature
in your risen glory.
Praise be to you!
Holy Spirit, by your light
you guide this world towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts
and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you!
Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.
God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,



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help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.

From the teaching of the Popes

If [the vision of creation] is lost, we end up either considering nature an untouchable taboo or ... abusing it. Neither attitude is consonant with the Christian vision of nature as the fruit of God's creation. — Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), §48

Human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself. — Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (2015), §66

The biblical texts ... tell us to 'till and keep' the garden of the world (cf. *Gen 2:15*). 'Tilling' refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while 'keeping' means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature. — Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (2015), §67

Nature is at our disposal not as 'a heap of scattered refuse' but as a gift of the Creator who has given it an inbuilt order, enabling [us] to draw from it the principles needed in order 'to till it and keep it' (*Gen 2:15*).

... The natural environment ... is a wondrous work of the Creator containing a 'grammar' which sets forth ends and criteria for its wise use, not its reckless exploitation. — Pope Benedict, *Caritas in Veritate* (2008), §48

The law ... should favour ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many as possible ... to become owners. ... If working people can be encouraged to look forward to obtaining a share in the land, the consequence will be that the gulf between vast wealth and sheer poverty will be bridged over Men always work harder and more readily when they work on that which belongs to them; nay, they learn to love the very soil that yields in response to the labour of their hands ... — Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum* (1891), §§46-47

There has been too much experimentation with mass production, with the exploitation, to the point of exhaustion, of every resource of the soil and subsoil. - Pope Pius XII, *Address for the Catholic International Congress* (1950)

The Grand Organ's French Connections



The Grand Organ of the Cathedral is considered to be one of the finest in the world. Precisely 100 years ago in 1922, Marcel Dupré inaugurated the instrument, and two years later gave the world première of his Symphonie-Passion here.

Accompanying the Symphonie-Passion on this CD are a selection of similarly themed masterpieces from prominent 20th century Parisian organists. Duruflé's *Prélude et Fugue sur le nom d'Alain*, full of imaginative textures and subtle harmonic colours, explores a gentler side of the organ's capabilities before roaring to a thrilling climax. Vierne's demonic Toccata comes into its own here - a savage explosion of energy, supported by the immensity of the pedal division. Three contrasting works by Tournemire showcase the unique style of rhapsodic liturgical improvisation which have enjoyed a revival in recent years.

This CD is available for purchase at the Cathedral Gift Shop, and online through www.markosever.com/shop



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Faces From the Past – Gertrude Martin

Patrick Rogers



Gertrude Martin

Much has been written about the great personalities in the history of Westminster Cathedral – Cardinals Wiseman, Manning and Vaughan and the architect John Francis Bentley. But many others, most of them virtually unknown, have also played a significant role. One of these is the mosaicist Gertrude Martin whose work in the Lady Chapel and elsewhere is among the most popular in the Cathedral.

Gertrude was born in 1881-82 near Croydon of Irish descent, one of ten children, five of whom were girls who remained unmarried. By the turn of the century not only Gertrude but also her sisters Dora and Margaret, all of whom lived at 24 St James Crescent in Brixton, had become interested in making a living from mosaic work. This was a period when mosaics were much in vogue, influenced by prestige projects such as Clayton & Bell's decoration of both the Albert Memorial and the Albert Chapel for Queen Victoria, and Sir William Richmond's mosaics

in St Paul's Cathedral. Mosaics were by now also being commissioned for churches, theatres, restaurants and private homes.

A leading figure in the world of mosaics was George Bridge, who operated out of premises at 7 Mitcham Park in Surrey. Bridge was a great exponent of the direct method in which the mosaic tesserae are inserted individually into the water-based cement or oil-based mastic, as opposed to the indirect or reverse method in which they are prepared in bulk and fixed upside down to brown paper or canvas in the studio, a method preferred by firms such as Clayton & Bell. Unusually, Bridge also preferred to employ women, for the direct method requires the mosaicists, working in situ, to select tesserae of exactly the same colour as shown on the coloured cartoon they are matching. In Bridge's words: 'No boy could vie with a girl in matching colour'.

Thus it was that by 1902 Gertrude, and very probably her two sisters as well, were among 26 young ladies working for Bridge in Westminster Cathedral on mosaics designed by the artist William Christian Symons. The first work was in the Chapel of the Holy Souls. Here Bridge initially experimented with the indirect method in the studio, but it was not a success and by June 1902 Gertrude was one of the girls on the scaffolding 'pricking in' the designs in the mastic before inserting the tesserae, 'chattering away like birds' though screened from public gaze. The Holy Souls mosaics, portraying the soul's progression from death through purgatory to paradise, were finished in November 1903.

Meanwhile, across the nave in the Chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine, more of Bridge's

young assistants, one of whom (Ethel Linfield) was only 17, were installing mosaics designed by the firm Clayton & Bell. These were prepared on brown paper using the indirect, or 'modern Italian' method, almost certainly by the Venice and Murano Glass company which Clayton & Bell habitually used. In her obituary it was reported that Gertrude was also employed in this chapel. This work, although begun in December 1902, was not completed until May 1904, so it seems very likely that she also worked here. There was then a pause in the Cathedral mosaic work, while, resisting the efforts of Symons and Bridge to obtain more commissions, the newly-appointed Archbishop Bourne considered his plans for the future.

We next find Gertrude, still working for Bridge, in the Italian-style parish church of St Mary and St Nicholas in Wilton, near Salisbury. During 1908-09 she



'The Scaffold A-Building'. Self-portrait of Gertrude Martin at work in the Lady Chapel of Westminster Cathedral, 1913.



Mosaic of Blessed Joan of Arc. The north transept of Westminster Cathedral. Executed by Gertrude Martin and George Bridge.

worked first on the upper, then on the lower, mosaic frieze of angels, designed by Sir Charles Nicholson for the semi-circular apse, before returning to Westminster where more of Symons' designs had been commissioned. The first of these was the panel of Joan of Arc in the north transept, completed in December 1910, followed by the portrayal in the inner crypt of St Edmund bidding farewell to London (March 1911) and then the Sacred Heart Chapel mosaics from March 1911 until February 1912. Gertrude must have been involved with the first of these, for she drew Symons' design for Joan of Arc (very accurately) from memory in January 1911, although the mosaics panel is ascribed to Bridge.

The previous September this panel had been criticised by the Cathedral architects for not following Symons' cartoons, while the mosaic in the Sacred Heart Chapel had to be replaced by James Powell & Sons in 1916. By this time George Bridge had moved down to Brighton and Gertrude, to whom clearly no blame was attached, had obtained her first commission as a

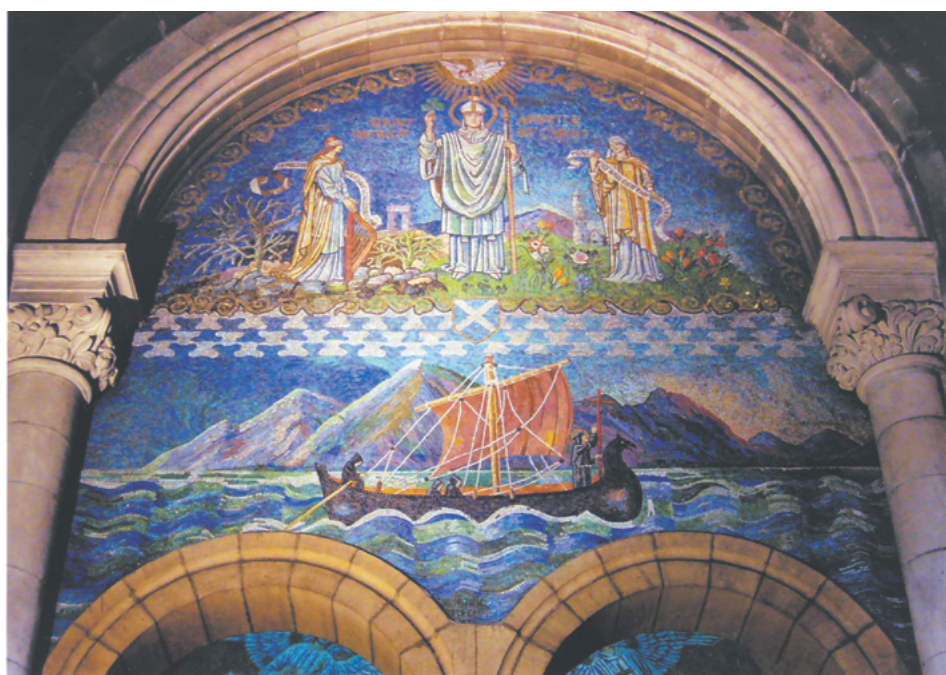
master mosaicist. There followed her best work in the Cathedral – the lovely blue altarpiece and four niche mosaics of Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Isaiah in the Lady Chapel in 1912-13, all designed by Robert Anning Bell, a leading member of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Then she was down to Wilton again for a series of saints below the lower frieze of angels, followed by a mosaic of Christ the King in the main semi-dome there in 1920. Then back to the Cathedral in 1921 to decorate the balconied recesses on either side of the apse for Robert Anning Bell.

Both Anning Bell and Charles Nicholson continued to commission her, the former for panels portraying St Andrew of Scotland and St Patrick of Ireland in the Central Lobby of the House of Lords (unveiled in 1923-24) and St Stephen and King Edward III in St Stephen's Hall (unveiled in 1926) for which, at the instigation of Mrs Winston Churchill, she was granted a small pension from the Royal Charities. In 1927 she was asked by Nicholson to decorate the dome, Baptistry, Chapel of the Holy Spirit and inner tympanum of Belfast Cathedral, work in which she was assisted by her sister, Margaret, and which was completed in 1934. Gertrude's last commission was to



The Annunciation. St Mary's Church, Uttoxeter. Designed and executed by Gertrude Martin, 1914.

decorate the Lady Chapel of Wilton Church using tesserae from pre-war stocks held at Westminster Cathedral and obtained with the help of her sister, Dora. While working on this in 1947 she broke her thigh, and spent a considerable time in hospital before completing the project in 1948-49. Three years later, in February 1952 at the age of 70, she died peacefully in her sleep at her home in Brixton.



Entrance to the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.

A Conflagration Avoided and the Temples of Thebes

Fr John Scott

The Plummer family in Leeds are invited to imagine the wonders of Ancient Thebes as my great-great-great uncles continue up the Nile.

Siout, 250 miles from Cairo, is the next large town arrived at. It is beautifully situated in a rich and fertile plain on the site of the ancient Mycopolis, the city of wolves. In this neighbourhood, vast numbers of wolf mummies are found. Eighty-eight miles from Siout we leave our boat at Girgeh and ride out about 12 miles to the ruins of Abydos, situated at the foot of the Libyan Hills. This is the first ruin of a great temple the traveller meets with in going up from Cairo, and the impression it made upon us is not easy to describe. Although this temple will not bear comparison with what we afterwards saw at Thebes, it is, nevertheless, a grand introduction to the wonders of this ancient land. These ruins have supplied the British Museum with the famous tablet or list of names of Egyptian Kings from a period of 2082 years before Christ.

On the evening of this day, we had a narrow escape from what might have proved a serious accident. One of our friends had been reading in the saloon until a late hour and upon retiring, candle in hand, had set fire to a heavy curtain which divided the saloon from the sleeping apartments. Our shouts soon brought Dragoman, Captain and sailors down upon us and the flames were extinguished when within a short distance of the case containing our stores of powder and cartridges. The Dragoman tried to console us by saying that fires of this kind were not uncommon and related how a boat had been burned to the water's edge at Siout, the occupants escaping by the windows. Two days after this, we reached Bendera, a temple similar to that of Abydos but of vaster proportions.



Interior of the temple of Abydos

As we approached Thebes, full of glowing anticipation which, in travel as with everything else, carries with it half the charm of existence, our progress by no means kept pace with our impatience, the breezes became light and languid, and sometimes dying away, left us becalmed under the burning noontide heat. Even the stimulus of a promised lamb upon the evening of our arrival could hardly induce the poor fasting sailors (it was Ramadan, or the Mohammedan month of fasting) to resume the toilsome process of tracking. As we thus slowly advanced, about 2 o'clock of the afternoon of December 20th, the immense plain of Thebes began to open and we were able to catch glimpses of its distant ruins. It was wholly unlike what we anticipated. The expanse is so vast, miles intervening between the different groups of ruins, that a sense of void and emptiness was substituted for that lively and powerful effect we had expected, would be produced by that first *coup d'oeuil* of the ruined city.

There were indeed Karnak and Luxor on the Eastern side, the Memnonium Medeinut Habon on the Western, with the heavy, awful Colim, lonely landmarks in the midst of the plain, but the effects of these objects was lost by distance. The only grand feature was the lofty barren mountains of yellow sandstones overhanging the Western quarter of the city with the dark orifices of its countless tombs and which seemed to reverberate the ardent rays of the sun. Our arrival at Luxor was announced by the discharge of all our guns, which were answered by the Artillery of the Consulate, and we hastened on shore to make the necessary preparations for the 10 days we proposed devoting to the ruins.

It is as well to remind you that it will only be possible to give a general impression of the city of Thebes and a few views of the most remarkable monuments, in fact rather to excite rather than satisfy an interest in the subject. To describe the buildings in detail would be an endless task, and this applies especially to the Tombs, which contain miles of surface covered with sculptures and paintings, illustrating the religion, manners and customs of Ancient Egypt. The sketch plan of the ruins will serve to explain the relative position of the buildings as seen in the views which follow. You will see that the Memnonium, the Colossi and Medinet Mabon are on the West and Karnak and Luxor on the East side of the Nile. We shall first visit the Memnonium, then proceed past the great statue of Medinet Abou and afterwards visit Luxor and Karnak on the other side of the Nile. These four points

may be taken as indicating roughly the extent of Ancient Thebes. The situation was admirably adapted to favour the development of a great city. Alone of the Egyptian cities was Thebes beautiful by nature as by art.



Avenue of Sphinxes

For the first time, the monotony of the mountain ranges, the Lybian and Arabian, assumes a new and varied character. They each withdraw from the view to encircle a wide green plain. Within the circle of these two ranges, the plain stretches on either side of the river to an unusual extent, and on either side of the river spread the city of Thebes, the populous NO of the prophet Nahuna, with the Nile for its mighty thoroughfare. Assuming that the plan of the ruins of this great city (which in the time of its splendour was thirty miles in circuit) is fixed in your mind, I must now request you to form some idea of the general plan of an Egyptian Temple. As we approach it, we have before us a vast isolated gateway, called a Pylon, passing through which we find ourselves in an Avenue or Bromos of Sphinxes, at the end of which are two obelisks, standing on either side of the pro-pylon, or gateway proper. Entering by this gate, we find ourselves in a vast hall at the end of which are two statues of Kings, one on either side of another door. Again we enter by this door to find ourselves in another inner hall, beyond which is yet another hall usually called the Hall of Columns and beyond that is the Adyhum or place where the oracles were given, with perhaps a side Adyla. No one will expect to find one entire Temple in any of the views they will see. In one we shall see a gateway, in another a part of the Hall of Columns and in a third some other portion. Indeed, it is only by a careful study of many details that the plan can be made out.

Before proceeding on our explorations, we secured the services of a very intelligent and venerable man named Achmed, who knew very little English but contrived to use that small quantity judiciously and make himself clearly understood. He knew all the Gods perfectly well and the subjects of the Sculptures, but his natural quickness and limited language gave much abruptness to his mode of bringing them to notice and 'Sa! Osires! – 'Sa! Battle! are specimens of his style. We had much difficulty in keeping our gravity so as not to offend the good old man when he pointed to the offerings made to the Gods and exclaimed 'Sa! Lunch!'

Let us imagine ourselves standing in front of the Memnonium of which the portion shown here is the 'E' portico. By the side of the Oriende pillars you see the fragments of a colossal statue, which when entire, weighed nearly 900 tons. How the single block of Syenite Granite out of which it was formed could have been transported from the quarries is a great puzzle to modern engineers. I can give no better idea of the size than by stating that the shoulders twenty-two feet across, a toe is 3 feet long and the foot 5 feet across. This statue represents Rameses the 2nd, by whom the Memnonium was built.

This wonderful Temple-Palace where the King resided with his Gods, covered on every part with exquisite sculpture, was about six hundred feet long by two hundred feet broad, with upwards of one hundred and sixty columns each thirty feet high. A wall enclosed it and an avenue of two hundred sphinxes led in a N.W. direction to a Temple or Fortress sheltered among the Lybian Hills.

Leaving the Memnonium, we have before us the ruins of Medinet Abou, between which and the river stand the two Colossi, austere and solemn in the midst of the lone expanse. Their lineaments are half effaced and their gigantic limbs fractured and blackened. A peculiar, almost poetical interest hovers about the one to the North, invested by ancient tradition with the name of

Vocal Memnon; which, when the sun rose above the Arabian Mountains and touched its lips with light, was supposed to utter responsive sounds. Inscriptions expressive of the admiration or spleen of travellers are nowhere more numerous than on this statue. Great numbers of Greeks and Romans visited it in the reign of Hadrian and the Antonines and never failed to repair thither at sunrise.

These statues were not, as would be the first impression of the ordinary visitor, isolated monuments of Theban magnificence but stood in advance of an extensive temple at Kom el Hattan in the rear and to the S. of them. With this they were connected by a long Droma or Avenue which, with other statues of similar proportions to the pair



Statue of Rameses, Luxor

before us, are supposed to have extended across the Western portion of the City and to have communicated with Luxor by a ferry across the Nile and thus to have been a main thoroughfare of Thebes. What a vision of past magnificence, of warlike or religious pageants passing to and fro, does this bring before us! We now proceed to the ruins of Medinet-Abou, of which the view before us represents the N.W. corner of a pyramidal tower adjoining the temple. It is remarkable as being almost the only instance yet discovered of an ancient dwelling. The rooms are small but richly decorated. We see the King, surrounded by the Ladies of his Harem, who fan him, present him with flowers and pay him court. In one place he is seen playing a game of chess and draughts, of which the chequered board, sculptured on the walls more than 3000 years ago are like those now in use.



White Swans and Grey Swans

In older days, during the winter months, the Canons of the Cathedral Chapter wore cappas of white fur, whilst those of the Chaplains were of grey fur – hence white swans and grey swans. The furs have now been retired and the same cappas – scarlet for the Canons and grey for the Chaplains – are worn year round on the appropriate occasions. The Chaplains were pleased to have been invited by the Provost to join such of the Canons as could be present for First Vespers of the Dedication of the Cathedral and the image records the happy event, as does the Provost’s homily for the Mass (see page 4).

The Leavers of 2022 (I)

One summer Cathedral ritual is the July Sunday when the oldest choristers leave the Choir School and the younger ones start their summer break. The boys get the choice of the music and offer us their party pieces, and the leavers are solemnly given their copies of the *Graduale Romanum*, which contains the backbone of the repertoire they have sung while at the Cathedral. Obviously the pandemic has created particular and disruptive experience for the boys, but their bounceback during the year has been impressive and we are sorry to bid farewell to Sebastian and Ethan, seen here with the Administrator and Master of Music after the last Sunday Full Choir Vespers.



The Leavers of 2022 (2)



After a couple of years of being in a marquee, the Graduation Ceremonies for St Mary’s University, Twickenham returned to the Cathedral over two July days. Observation from the top desk of a bus suggested that both Methodist Central Hall and the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre were also doing a brisk trade in graduates. Observe in the image, among those seated centrally on the sanctuary, Canon Peter Newby fulfilling his role as University Chaplain.



Celebrating a Jubilee

Oremus congratulations go to Fr Ljubomir Simunovic, the Franciscan Friar who provides the Chaplaincy to Croatians who live in London. He recently kept his 25th Anniversary of Ordination with Sunday Mass as usual in Sacred Heart Church on Horseferry Road, followed by a well-supported Croatian community reception in Cathedral Hall. Among those present was His Excellency the Croatian Ambassador (seen here), who is himself a friend to the Chaplaincy. Cathedral Chaplains have known and appreciated Fr Ljubomir for a number of years now and many Saturday penitents have cause to be grateful for his faithful assistance in hearing confessions. As he continues his ministry in London, we wish him many more years.



Singers in holiday mode

The internal courtyard comes into its own in the summer months as a venue, sometimes for Archbishop's House staff eating their lunch and sometimes, as here, for Lay Clerks and Organists to mark the end of the musical year. The *Oremus* camera just happened to be going down the Long Corridor and captured this moment of good cheer.

100 not out

More *Oremus* congratulations go to Mary Barsh, who has celebrated her 100th birthday in considerable style, including a party at the Theatre Royal. Mary's positive approach to life in general and her faithfulness to being at Mass are an encouragement to us all and we join in asking God's blessing for her as she sets out on her second century.



An *Oremus* mingling

Oremus has had a bad conscience about not having had a supporters' Social Event for the last years, albeit due to events being beyond our control through the pandemic. However, Companions, contributors and advertisers were finally able to meet for a party in July, to enjoy being together and consume an excellent array of canapes. Pimms and white wine, meanwhile, helped to mitigate the heat of the day.



The Wisdom of Baruch

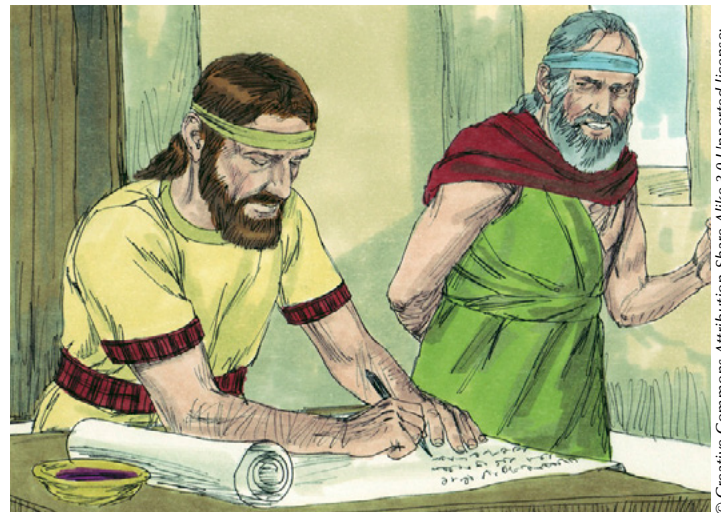
Fr Chris Clohessy

Hidden in the Old Testament between all those towering figures like Hosea and Isaiah, Elijah and Micah, stands a hardly known prophet called Baruch. He was the well-educated, quite highly placed deputy of Jeremiah. He had a prominent position, and even delivered bits of Jeremiah's message when the latter was indisposed. All Baruch really had to do was to take dictation, writing down the things that Jeremiah was hearing from God. What Jeremiah didn't know was that his secretary was moonlighting – when he wasn't writing down what God was saying to Jeremiah, he was hearing things from God, too. Other prophets may have thundered judgment, or challenged people from unpopular stances, or tried to breathe new life into the weary, but Baruch is the prophet of the second chance, of the fresh start and the new beginning.

*Put off, O Jerusalem, writes Baruch, the garment of mourning and affliction, and put on the wholesomeness of the glory that comes from God for ever. Cast around you a double garment of the righteousness which comes from God, and set a diadem on your head of the glory of the Everlasting. Actually, the book we have in our bibles is First Baruch, because there are four books attributed to him. Really, it's just a folder with two bits of paper stuck in it, and sometimes, though not always, a third bit of paper called the Letter of Jeremiah. Baruch is writing about the Exile; all the citizens of Jerusalem have been carried off into exile by an invading army into what is today Iraq. It is a disaster for the city and the people, but Baruch doesn't say: *This terrible thing should never have happened! Instead, he tells them: Clearly it was always going to happen because people have sinned and disobeyed the Law of God. The exile is a just punishment for turning away from Him.**

Baruch begins with a prayer that admits that the people have sinned and are in need of forgiveness. Then he writes a poem all about how important it is to live our lives with wisdom. Speaking from an empty Jerusalem to the people in Exile, Baruch shouts across to them: *Why are you there, in that enemy country, growing older and older in foreign territory? If you hadn't given up wisdom, if you had walked in the way of God, you'd be living in peace right now! But I have news for you. God is giving you a fresh beginning! Repent of your sins, and stop doing them. Take off the clothing of sadness, and put on the garments given by God. Change your way of living. And God will level a road through whatever desert you are facing, so you can return safely, surrounded by the light of his glory, his integrity, his mercy.*

Baruch understands that repentance without a change of lifestyle isn't repentance – it's just regret. But he also understands what happens when we don't live



Baruch writes at Jeremiah's dictation (Jeremiah 36: 4-6)

wisely, and invites us to ask: Where does wisdom fit into my personal hierarchy of virtues? Real wisdom, insists Baruch, is not information or cleverness but is found in the word of God. The scriptures tell us that wisdom, the sort that enfolds itself into our lives and translates our days into something meaningful, begins in us when we start to live reverently before God. Our hearts grow wise when we begin to number our days correctly, learning to make each day count by remembering that there is a final destination to this journey we are on. That destination is the door of the Father's house and eventually we will be standing in front of it. When people realize this, their hearts grow wise, because they start to live each day to the full, with courage and energy, making this limited life joy-filled and productive.

Each of us needs to find wisdom to live by. Not information; we live under an avalanche of information, none of which seems to shape our lives into something better. There is a huge difference between information and wisdom. The best-informed person is not always the wisest. There are some very intelligent people in the world who do some very unwise things. No, it is wisdom that makes something of our lives. Get wisdom, the bible says. Let it be a sister to you. In the Old Testament, Wisdom is portrayed as a woman crying out to the people to make wise choices. She does not promise that wisdom is going to make life perfect, but paving the road with wise choices help to make it much smoother when hard times come. Wisdom is the thing that sets a guard over our mouths, keeps watch at the door of our lips, filtering our words. Wisdom is the thing that scrutinizes our choices, to tell us which one is prudent. Whatever is at the centre of our life will be the source of our security, our guidance and our power. God thinks it should be wisdom.

The Birth of Mary

Rainer Maria Rilke

O what must it have cost the angels
 not suddenly to burst into song, as one bursts into tears,
 since indeed they knew: on this night the mother is being
 born to the boy, the One, who shall soon appear.
 Soaring they held themselves silent and showed the direction
 where, alone, Joachim's farm lay;
 ah, they felt in themselves and in space the pure precipitation,
 but none might go down to him.
 For the two were already quite beside themselves with ado.
 A neighbor-woman came and played wise and did not know how,
 and the old man, carefully, went and withheld the mooing
 Of a dark cow. For so it had never yet been.

translated from the German by M D Herter Norton

Our Lady of Walsingham

(cf: Richard II, Act II, Scene 1)

Benjamin Takavarasha

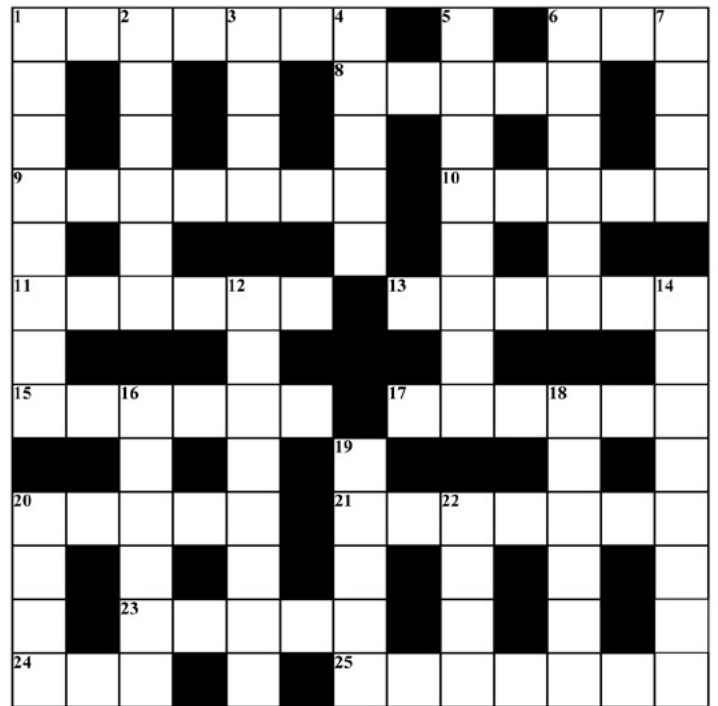
Hear the nation's supplication for transcendent glory:
 But no, not back to the sceptre of imperial prowess
 Nor the Bard's vision of a precious stone in a silver sea
 But her to Her, back to the rites as England's dowry.



© Thorvaldsson

Our Lady of Walsingham in the Slipper Chapel at the Basilica

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



Alan Frost September 2022 – No. 102

Clues Across

- 1 Monastic Order whose heritage in England includes Castle Acre Priory in Norfolk (7)
- 6 Holm ---, type of tree in which Our Lady appeared to the Fatima children (3)
- 8 Court station and Exhibition Centre 2.3 miles from the Cathedral (5)
- 9 Italian city of early Christian iconography from the Byzantine era (7)
- 10 Major cathedral in Italy such as in Florence or Milan (5)
- 11 Former Archbishop of Canterbury, succeeded by George Carey (6)
- 13 William -----, English composer of 'Belshazzar's Feast' and a Coronation march (6)
- 15 The stretch of water crossed to reach Quarr Abbey (IoW) (6)
- 17 Fruits proclaimed by the Bells of St Clement's in the London rhyme (6)
- 20 Underground section of the Cathedral largely dedicated to St Peter (5)
- 21 Nature of limb for the reach of the Law (4,3)
- 23 Saint of Cordoba, 9th c. nun and abbess (5)
- 24 Double helix carrying a person's genetic information (1.1.1.)
- 25 Vigorous or jocular movement in a symphony (7)

Clues Down

- 1 Famous cathedral in France, end of 3-day annual pilgrimage from Notre Dame (8)
- 2 Not fair, not flat! (6)
- 3 Religious image, particularly in Orthodox Church (4)
- 4 Tree of Lebanon referred to in Ezekiel Chapter 31 (5)
- 5 Person who has achieved a university degree (8)
- 6 Seminary in the Midlands (6)
- 7 It's equal to about 2.2 pounds (4)
- 12 & 16 Down: Saint, founder of the Society of Jesus (8,6)
- 14 End of the Pater Noster ('Deliver.....us from evil') (3,1,4)
- 16 See 12 Down
- 18 One who is adept at public speaking (6)
- 19 Also known as, alternatively (5)
- 20 Early English Saint to whom Birmingham Cathedral is dedicated (4)
- 22 John ----, designer of the Marble Arch standing by the site of the Tyburn Tree (4)

ANSWERS

Across: 1 Cluniac 6 Oak 8 Earl's 9 Ravenna 10 Duomo 11 Runcie 13 Walton 15 Solent 17 Lemons 20 Cryp 21 Long Arm 23 Laura 24 DNA 25 Scherzo Down: 1 Chartres 2 Uneven 3 Icon 4 Cedar 5 Graduate 6 Oseott 7 Kilo 12 Ignatius 14 Nos A Malo 16 Loyola 18 Orator 19 Alias 20 Chad 22 Nash

In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*

Jesus Christ, Superstar

London now has two musicals based on the life of Christ. *Godspell* was favourably reviewed in these pages by Noel Barber SJ last February. *Jesus Christ Superstar* is a quite different theatrical experience with a different horizon and aim. To begin with, it is bigger and wilder in every way. Anyone who cannot stomach *Godspell* had better avoid *Jesus Christ Superstar* altogether.

What is wrong with this production is that it is faithful neither to the Gospel nor to the potentials of the work itself. It opts for a fascinating display of theatrical gimmickry that is ultimately self-defeating. No doubt it will be an enormous success, but at the expense of a contradiction between content and performance. The content of the libretto and the music is honest doom. The performance slides too often into entertainment for its own sake. And the final symbol of this decadence is the addition of a mediocre song, a duet for Peter and Mary Magdalen after Peter's denial, 'Could we start again, please'. The programme advertises this as a 'new hit record'; one suspects that the blatantly commercial motive behind its introduction underlies many of the faults of the whole production.

This is not to say that the spectacle is not well done. The stage is brilliantly used; the understage lighting is most effective; the orchestra is excellent. Nor am I complaining about such a fine piece of showmanship as Herod's dance (complete with harem on a water bed), nor about such scriptural inaccuracies as the piercing of Christ's side before he speaks his final words. My disappointment stems from the drift towards mindless gaudiness, the merely spectacular. The results is pleasant anaesthesia of suffering, a glossing over of human mystery to say nothing of the divine.

from the September 1972 Westminster Cathedral Journal

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The Nuns of America

The typical valiant woman is, in America, the Catholic nun. No one better than she combines that spirit of enterprise peculiar to the American people with the spirit of prayerfulness pertaining to the cloister. Her example refutes the notion that spirituality must be sacrificed if one would keep pace with the world of progress.

Ultra-modern, one may say, is the teaching religious in the United States. Not only is she well up in the latest developments of science and familiar with intellectual achievement, but she keeps abreast of the social and

political activities of the men and women around her. She remains withal first and foremost the handmaid of the Church, using the greater freedom and dispensation from traditional custom (accorded in the United States even to ancient congregations) for the purpose of bringing the world into harmony with the highest ideals of Catholic life.

The American nun has this great advantage over her European sister in religion, that she is unfettered by the ingrained prejudices and conventions of layfolk when seeking to adjust externals to the urgent needs of the day. Europe is sometimes slow to see and understand, and there is a danger of giving scandal to the unthinking by innovations which, considered drastic at first, will be looked upon as indispensable improvements a few years hence.

Convent schools and educational institutions in the United States are comparatively young, and this is a great asset for the Superiors when drawing up the rules and regulations for their alumnae. The latter are given greater liberty and at the same time far more responsibilities than convent girls on this side of the water. Undoubtedly, Catholic Women's Colleges and Universities, successful and ubiquitous throughout the land, owe their popularity to a wide curriculum and up-to-date methods. However views may differ as to whether or not Catholics should attend non-Catholic universities, it is agreed that the ideal is the Catholic University offering its students the best of everything and daily demonstrating that the true Faith has nothing to fear from scientific progress or historical research. Unfortunately, there are few centres of learning even in Catholic countries in Europe which may be called Catholic, and there certainly is no Catholic university for women through the length and breadth of the Old Continent. All the more credit, then, to the nuns of America who have created and established in the New World what our ancient nunneries, seats of culture and knowledge, would certainly have developed here had the tragedy of the Reformation been spared to Europe.

A charming instance of the mutuality between American nuns and their pupils remains in the memory of the writer who witnessed the performance of their civic duties by members of a community in Ohio. Motor-cars driven by the girls conveyed the nuns to and from the polling booth until each had registered her vote.

from the September 1922 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle

Six Weeks for Reflection

Mervyn Hogg

All of us in this busy world need to put aside time to think about ourselves and how we participate, contribute, and share our lives with others. This short programme of bible readings, thoughts, and activities, which you can start anywhere and return to as the Spirit moves you, offers a path to renew your journey in faith. How about tackling one section each week at the beginning of this Autumn term?

Week 1: You

Reading: Psalm 90

Thoughts: Despite all the things that you worry about, feel threatened by or the actions you regret, recognize that God loves you and if you embrace this love, he will help you to realize his plans for you. This psalm speaks of the need to trust God's great love and to seek renewal through him. Look at the times when you have struggled to see God in your life. What helps to draw you closer to God's presence?

Activity: Body, Spirit, and Mind. Draw a circle and divide it into these segments. What are you doing to nurture yourself in each of these areas? What could you focus on more and better to realise God's love for you?

Week 2: Time

Reading: Ecclesiastes 3. 1-8

Thoughts: What does this passage say and mean to you? What does it say about time and how do you use it? Why are we given time and what is it for?

Activity: In terms of how you used your time over the last month what was good, bad, and indifferent? Make a start in building a plan to use your time better. What do you want to keep or stop doing? What new thing might you want time available to tackle?

Week 3: Talent

Reading: Matthew 25. 14-30

Thoughts: This parable commends investment in our gifts and skills. How have you nurtured and developed your own talents and skills? Looking at other people in your life, ask yourself where have you seen their talent nurtured, brought to fruition, and used? How has that happened?

Activity: Meet and talk with another person about the talents and skill that you each have. How are you each using them, and could you develop and use them more? Are there talents that you have stopped doing that you could rediscover? Are there people around you who could do with your encouragement?

Week 4: Money

Reading: Matthew 6. 19-24

Thoughts: There is a danger with this passage of ignoring it or interpreting it too rigorously and despairing. Pause and take time to think about your true commitment to God. What could be better in your own Church community? What could you do better yourself, in how you use your money?

Activities: Often we can serve both God and society but sometimes there is a conflict, and we face difficult choices. Looking back over your life where have you faced up to and made difficult choices? What can you learn about what helps you choose well?

Week 5: People

Reading: John 11. 1-7; 17, 32-34

Thoughts: Jesus raises his friend Lazarus from the dead. We cannot bring people and friends back from the dead, yet we can and should pay attention to them whilst they are with us. Who are the people and friends that we rely on and who rely on us? What can we do to bring fullness of life to others

Activity: Which of your relationships needs work and could do with a boost? What are you going to do to make it happen and when?

Week 6: The Earth

Reading: Daniel 3:52-90 (The Canticle Benedicite)

Thoughts: The Benedicite reminds us that the whole of God's creation should praise him, yet it is being damaged by our human exploitation. What does the creation now say to God? How are we expressing our thanks for being redeemed by Christ as 'a new creation'?

Activity: What are you already doing to help the planet in its praise of God? How will you honour God's creation as a gift for future generations? What changes will you make to improve your impact on the Earth's finite resources starting now? What should our Church community be doing to help God's creation continue to grow and flourish?

Coda

I hope you have enjoyed these readings and that the activities have led to some good ideas. We are blessed with a beautiful Cathedral that is open each day. Do take the opportunity to come in quietly and talk with God in prayer both for yourself and to accompany others on their journey in God's great love.

Tales of the English Martyrs

The Maxims of Bl Adrian Fortescue (c. 1476 – 9 July 1539), Dominican Tertiary and Martyr

Use much silence, but when thou needs must speak. Delight not in familiarity of persons unknown to thee. Be solitary as much as is convenient with thine estate. Banish from thee all judging and detraction, and especially from thy tongue. Pray often. Also enforce thee to set thy house at quietness. Resort to God every hour. Advance not thy words or deeds by any pride. Be not too much familiar, but show a serious and prudent countenance with gentleness. Show before all people a good example of virtues.



The Month of September

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention For the abolition of the death penalty

We pray that the death penalty, which attacks the dignity of the human person, may be legally abolished in every country.

Thursday 1 September *Ps Week 2*

Feria

* World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

* Anniversary of the death of Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor, 10th Archbishop of Westminster

Choral services resume

Friday 2 September *Friday abstinence*

Feria

Saturday 3 September

ST GREGORY THE GREAT, Pope & Doctor

Visit to the Cathedral of the Relics of St Bernadette for veneration (see back cover of this edition for the timetable)

Sunday 4 September *Ps Week 3*

23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Veneration of the Relics continues

12pm Solemn Mass (Men's voices)

Lassus – Missa In te Domine speravi

Palestrina – Oravi ad Dominum Deum meum

Organ: Bruhns – Præludium in G major

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction (Men's voices)

de Monte – Magnificat septimi toni

Howells – Salve Regina

Organ: Buxtehude – Passacaglia in D minor (BuxWV 161)

Monday 5 September

Veneration of the Relics ends

Feria

Tuesday 6 September

Feria

5.30pm Chapter Mass

Wednesday 7 September

Feria

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

For an interim period the 10am Sung Mass will be livestreamed on Sundays rather than the 12noon Solemn Mass. It is hoped to revert to livestreaming the 12noon Mass later in the year.

Thursday 8 September

THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



Giotto's Birth of the Virgin in the Scrovegni Chapel

Friday 9 September *Friday abstinence*

Feria

(St Peter Claver, Priest)

8am – 5.30pm NHS Blood Transfusion Service in Cathedral Hall

Saturday 10 September

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

6pm Victoria Choir sings at Mass

Sunday 11 September

Ps Week 4

24th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

* Education Sunday

12pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Byrd – Mass for five voices

Palestrina – Sicut cervus

Byrd – Ave verum corpus

Organ: J S Bach – Prelude and Fugue in E major (BWV 566)

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction (Full Choir)

Lassus – Magnificat sexti toni

Howells – Salve Regina

Organ: Widor – Intermezzo

(Symphonie VI)

Monday 12 September

Feria

(The Most Holy Name of Mary)

Tuesday 13 September

St John Chrysostom, Bishop & Doctor

Wednesday 14 September

THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Veneration of the Relics of the True Cross after all public Masses

2pm Mass for St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School, Slough

Thursday 15 September

Our Lady of Sorrows

Friday 16 September *Friday abstinence*

Ss Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian,

Bishop, Martyrs

Saturday 17 September

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

(St Robert Bellarmine, Bishop & Doctor; St Hildegard of Bingen, Virgin & Doctor)

6pm Visiting Choir



This Miniature from the Rupertsberg Codex of Liber Scivias shows Hildegard receiving divine inspiration in the presence of her scribe

Sunday 18 September Ps Week 1
25th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

* *Evangelii Gaudium* Day

Annual Mass Count – 1

12pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Mozart – Spatzenmesse (K.220)

Palestrina – Si ambulavero in medio

Williams – Ave verum corpus

reimagined

Organ: Reger – Introduction and

Passacaglia in D minor (BWV 544)

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction

(Full Choir)

Bevan – Magnificat quarti toni

Holst – Nunc dimittis

Organ: Ireland – Elegiac Romance

Monday 19 September

Feria

(St Januarius, Bishop & Martyr)

Tuesday 20 September

St Andrew Kim Tae-gon, Paul Chong

Ha-sang and Companions, Martyrs

Wednesday 21 September

ST MATTHEW, Apostle & Evangelist

Thursday 22 September

Feria

Friday 23 September Friday abstinence

St Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest

2.15pm Cardinal Vaughan Memorial
School Foundation Day Mass

Saturday 24 September

Our Lady of Walsingham

9.30am – 4.30pm Divine Mercy Day of
Prayer

Sunday 25 September

Ps Week 2

26th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

* The Harvest

Annual Mass Count – 2

12pm Solemn Mass (Cantor)

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction
(Cantor)

5.30pm International Mass

Monday 26 September

Feria

(Ss Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs)

Tuesday 27 September

St Vincent de Paul, Priest

2pm Mass for St Vincent de Paul

Catholic Primary School

Wednesday 28 September

Feria

(St Wenceslaus, Martyr; St Lawrence

Ruiz & Companions, Martyrs)

7.30pm Grand Organ Festival Recital

– John Scott Whiteley (Organist

Emeritus, York Minster)

Thursday 29 September

Ss MICHAEL, GABRIEL and RAPHAEL,

Archangels

2pm Loreto College Centenary Mass

Friday 30 September Friday abstinence

St Jerome, Priest & Doctor

8am – 5.30pm NHS Blood Transfusion

Service in Cathedral Hall



St Jerome, meditating, by Jacques
Blanchard

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

What Happens and When

Catholic Grandparents' Association

Hinsley Room,
Second Sundays 12-3.30pm

Charismatic Prayer Group

Cathedral Hall,
Fridays 6.30-9pm

Divine Mercy Prayer Group

St Patrick's Chapel,
Sundays 1.30-2.30pm

Filipino Club

Hinsley Room,
First Sundays 1-5pm

Guild of the Blessed Sacrament

Blessed Sacrament Chapel,
Mondays 6.15pm

Guild of St Anthony Lady Chapel,

Tuesdays 6.15pm

Interfaith Group Hinsley Room

Third Wednesdays 2-3.30pm

Lectio Divina

Hinsley Room,
Monday 7-8pm

Legion of Mary

Hinsley Room,
Monday 1.30-3.30pm

Nigerian Catholic Association

Hinsley Room,
Fourth Sundays – 1.30-2.30pm

Oblates of Westminster Cathedral

Hinsley Room, Fourth Sundays
2.30-4pm

Padre Pio Prayer Group

Sacred Heart Church
First Thursdays 1.30-3.30pm

RCIA group

Vaughan House,
Tuesday 7-8.30pm

Rosary Group

Lady Chapel,
Saturday 10-10.25am

Walsingham Prayer Group

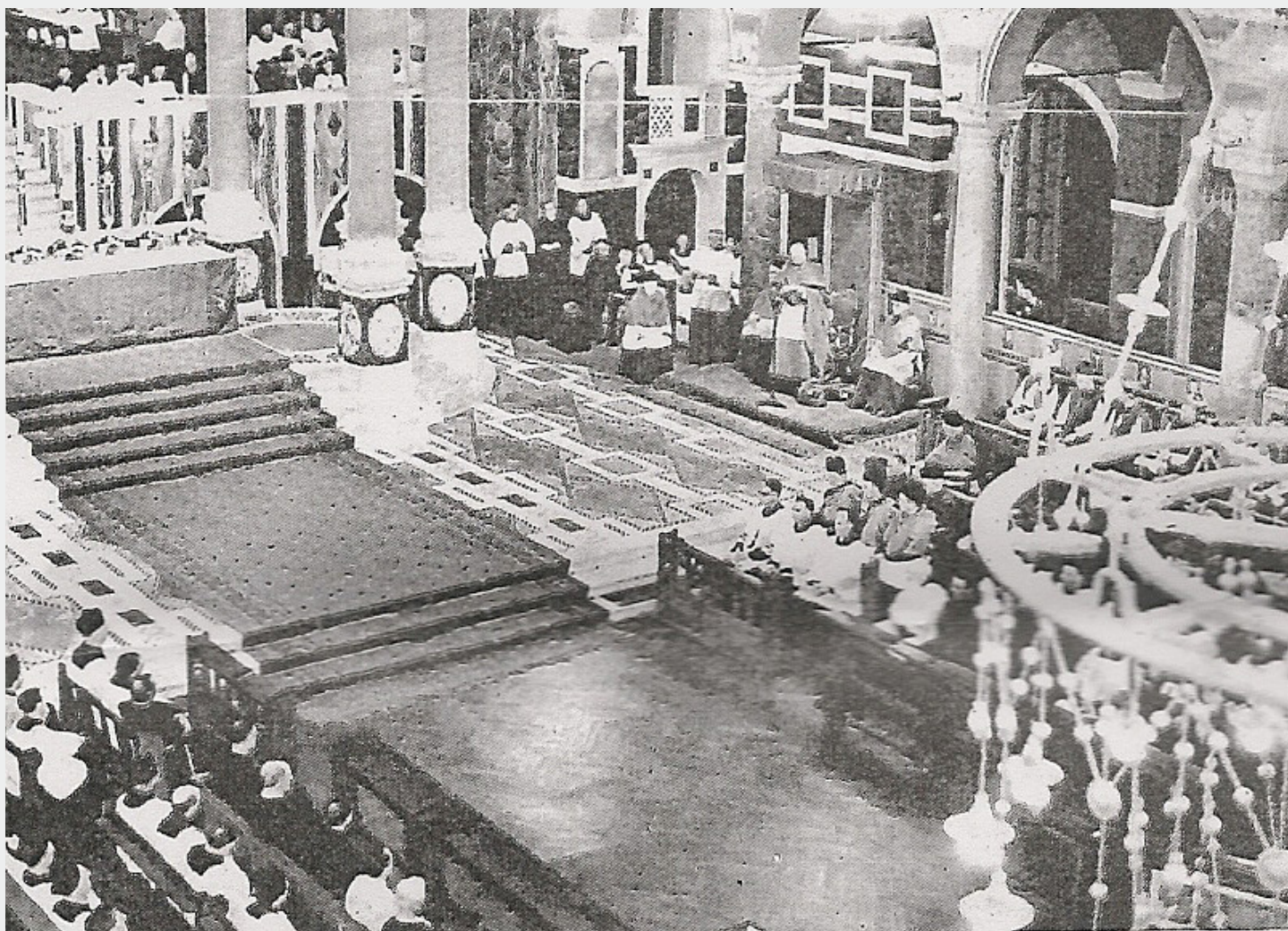
St George's Chapel,
First Tuesdays 2.30-4pm

Yoruba Association

Hinsley Room,
Third Sundays 1.30-3pm

CATHEDRAL HISTORY – A PICTORIAL RECORD

The Solemn Reception of the Apostolic Delegate, 21 September 1954



Paul Tobin

Diplomatic relations between the UK Government and the Holy See were first set up in 1938 with the first Apostolic Delegate appointed by Rome, an Englishman, Archbishop William Godfrey, who had no diplomatic experience unlike all his successors. He was to remain in post until 1954 when he was appointed Archbishop of Liverpool until his translation to Westminster, some two years later. Archbishop Godfrey's successor was Archbishop Gerald Patrick O'Hara, an American who was also Bishop of Savanna-Atlanta. He was to be Apostolic Delegate until his death at the age of 68 in July 1963, shortly after having returned from attending the Coronation of Pope St Paul VI.

The Solemn Reception of Archbishop O'Hara and subsequent Pontifical High Mass celebrated by him was one of the last major functions masterminded by the long-serving Cathedral Master of Ceremonies, Mgr Joseph Collings. The instructions for the ceremonial were as detailed as they are for current events in the Cathedral. Both the Cardinal and Apostolic Delegate were received solemnly and separately at the West Door. Cardinal Bernard Griffin (Archbishop of Westminster 1944-56) walked from Archbishop's House via Ambrosden Avenue, followed by the Archbishops and Bishops (in seniority of appointment) with 'Their Lordships' Chaplains' at the back. On arrival at the West Door, the Cardinal

gave up his hat, cloak and mozzetta and received the *cappa magna*. He was offered the *aspergillum* (holy water sprinkler) by the Provost of the Metropolitan Chapter (Archbishop Edward Myers 1875-1956), took Holy Water in the usual way, offered the *aspergillum* to the Provost to touch and returned it to him.

As the Cardinal's procession moved up the nave, the Provost held up the *aspergillum* and offered it to each of the Bishops as they passed either side of him. This completed, he resumed his mitre and awaited the arrival of the Apostolic Delegate by car. Meanwhile, the Cardinal had processed directly to the throne to await the arrival of the Apostolic Delegate.

Like the Cardinal, he donned the *cappa magna* on arrival at the West Door and his initial reception involved his kneeling on a cushion to kiss a crucifix, offered by the Provost, receiving Holy Water and sprinkling those close by, including the Metropolitan Chapter and Cathedral Chaplains. The Apostolic Delegate put incense into the thurible and was incensed by the Provost before the procession moved off to the Sanctuary. At the foot of the steps leading to the Choir, the Train Bearer draped the train over the Delegate's left arm as the Cardinal, a Prince of the Church, took precedence. Hence, the use of the *tronetto* (lesser throne), complete with backdrop and canopy, opposite the throne itself.

Being seated at his *tronetto*, the Delegate's Chaplain, (Mgr David Cashman, later Bishop of Arundel & Brighton 1965 -71) took the Bull of Appointment in its case to His Grace

who directed him to present it to the Cardinal; he passed it to his own Chaplain, Mgr Derek Worlock and ordered it be read. This was done (in Latin only) from the entrance to the Choir. The Cardinal gave an address of welcome to which the Delegate replied from his *tronetto*, as seen in the picture, then crossed the Sanctuary to be greeted by the Cardinal at the foot of the steps of the throne.

The Rite of Reception over, the Delegate went to the Lady Chapel to be vested in red for Mass of the Feast of St Matthew. The Instructions for the celebration of Mass decreed that the Cardinal would be conceding the blessings, other than the final Blessing of the Mass. These blessings included those of incense and the Deacon proclaiming the Gospel. At the conclusion of Mass, the Delegate returned to his *tronetto* to impart the Papal Blessing. The publication of

the plenary Indulgence was given in both Latin and English with everyone standing, other than the Cardinal and Apostolic Delegate who were seated. The Delegate's procession moved off first by the short route via the balustrade, to be followed by the departure of the Cardinal and Hierarchy with the Metropolitan Chapter, the Cathedral Chaplains and finally, the Bishop's Chaplains via the Pulpit Crossing. The Delegate went to the Oratory in Clergy House (now the Administrator's office) to unvest.

It was a rarity for such a ceremony involving a Pontifical High Mass to be held in the evening at 6pm, as the daily Capitular High Mass with full choir had already taken place that morning at 10.30am and, for the record, there were no fewer than nine Masters of Ceremonies to ensure that this rare and complicated event ran smoothly.

Image: *The Sphere*, 2 October 1954

A New School Year

Nathaniel Scott Cree, Headteacher of SVP School

The start of the new school year in September brings with it the familiar feelings of anticipation and excitement for the year ahead, together with some feelings of nervousness, particularly for those joining our school community for the first time.

The difference this year is that we are embarking on a new beginning for Catholic education in this part of Westminster, as St Vincent de Paul School is merging with our close neighbour Westminster Cathedral School, which has served Pimlico parish. This means that we will have lots of new children and families joining us, and staff members too. It is well documented that schools, and smaller ones particularly, are becoming increasingly vulnerable through financial pressures. Falling school rolls reflect significant changes to the demographics of inner London and are the result of multiple factors such as Brexit, Covid-19 and a decreasing birth rate.

History shows that this is not the first time either school has gone through a significant change. St Vincent de Paul School went through an amalgamation in the early 1970s, just prior to moving from Carlisle Place to its present location beside the Cathedral, while Westminster Cathedral School began life close to Westminster Abbey, before arriving at its Pimlico location in 1963.

Change is neither always popular nor straightforward. Emotions and feelings can run high as we come to terms with what is happening and struggle to accept it. We

can, however, take comfort in knowing that change is all around us and is constant, though often out of our direct control. The words of the serenity prayer provide us with essential spiritual guidance and reinforce the need for us to surrender and accept the changes that we face: 'God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can change and the wisdom to know the difference'.

St Paul, too, writing to the Philippians, urges an avoidance of feelings of anxiety around change: 'Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 4:6-7).

And so in September our school community embarks on a new chapter in its history. One where families, school and parishes work together to build towards a brighter future and a stronger, more sustainable school, so that Catholic education may continue to thrive in this unique and important part of London, and more importantly, so that the children who enter the school gate may receive the highest quality Catholic education. To achieve this successfully, we must be ever mindful that God remains with us now and always.

St Vincent de Paul, pray for us.

Things Old – and New

Richard Hawker, Head Sacristan

Thanks to a kind and generous gift, we have two new sets of vestments, for use on Sundays in Ordinary Time. This is an excellent step forward in renewing our ‘day to day’ vestments, many of which are well over sixty years old.

The vestments are in the strictly Roman shape: Cardinal Vaughan laid down that this was to be the standard vestment shape. He specified that the Cathedral should follow as closely as possible the ‘Customs of the Roman Basilicas’, a liturgical tradition stretching back to shortly after Constantine’s legalisation of Christianity within the Roman Empire. For a fledgling Cathedral such as ours this was an excellent way of demonstrating our visible union with the Eternal City. It also gave us a ready-made tradition on which to model ourselves, rather than trying to feel our own way. Ironically, it has meant that many practices of the Roman Basilicas are maintained here, but have been lost there, such as the daily public celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, the section at the beginning of the book that guides us in how we should celebrate Mass, tells us that: ‘...The beauty and nobility of each vestment [should] not be sought in an abundance of overlaid ornamentation, but rather in the material used and in the design’ (para. 344); it speaks also of ‘Noble simplicity’. Our new vestments employ an exceptional, English woven, silk and gold thread fabric, in a pattern which has been used for church vestments for well over a century, with origins going back to the 15th century. But there is nothing more to these vestments than good quality fabrics and braid, made in a shape well known to us, by someone who is well skilled in her craft. They are simultaneously noble and simple. The fabric has not been chosen at random either; we have a High Mass set, dating from the 1950s in this fabric, where the chasuble has sadly been worn almost to death, but the rest of the set remains pristine, so they represent a continuity with our own history.

The story of this textile is, to my mind at least, very interesting. It is called ‘St Hubert’, and the design dates back to the 1430s. It is to be found in a painting called *The Exhumation of St Hubert* by Rogier van der Weyden, which hangs in the National Gallery. This is one of two surviving panels of a life of St Hubert from the Cathedral of St Michael and St Gudula in Brussels. As you can see, the incorrupt body of St Hubert is being exhumed, to the wonder of the witnesses. One such witness, in the foreground, on the right-hand side, is wearing a fur lined coat, in what we now know as ‘St Hubert’.



The Exhumation of St Hubert by Rogier Van Der Weyden. The bystander on the extreme right wears a fur-trimmed coat in a red and gold version of ‘St Hubert’ fabric

How did it come about that a pattern in a painting became a textile? It is thanks to an architect called Sir Ninian Comper. He was an Anglican, but undertook a number of Catholic works, most notably the Lady Chapel, and certain other parts, of Downside Abbey. In the 1890s he was commissioned by a firm of weavers, specialising in ecclesiastical and academic fabrics, to design a number of textile patterns for them. His inspiration for these designs were to be found in the National Gallery, particularly among Renaissance painters such as Van der Weyden and Crivelli.

In doing this, he was following a proud tradition of Gothic Revival architects ‘borrowing’ patterns from Renaissance and older artworks, and making them into textiles. Were they ever textiles in the first place, or simply painted designs from the artist’s imagination? We will likely never know, and many pages have been produced speculating on this very subject; but this does not concern us. What matters is that Comper did create ‘St Hubert’, and we now have two new sets of vestments in the fabric, for which we are very grateful.



The vestment's inner front lining records the donor's name above the maker's label

A special word of thanks should be made to our donor, without whom these sets would be possible. Their contribution was in thanksgiving to God for 25 years of employment with their current firm, and their name, intention and the year of donation have been embroidered inside the chasuble, so that it is the last thing the priest sees before putting the vestment on. We are, however, still in need of new sets of green and white vestments, ideally three sets of each. If you were interested in giving a set (or paying for part of a set), please do get in touch at headsacristan@rcdow.org.uk.

As I remarked at the beginning of this article, our current vestments are between sixty and eighty years old. With careful use our new sets could well still be in use in eighty years' time, too: a fine legacy to leave the Cathedral!

As an additional note, I would like to thank the readers of *Oremus*, and the Cathedral Chapter for their generosity in responding to our appeal for funds for restoring the Metropolitan Cross and Candlesticks: they are now back with us and in use whenever the Cardinal celebrates the liturgy. Thank you once again!



The Editor is wearing the vestment, with Gomersinda Bondoc, the donor, fourth from left, family and friends

That Would be a Horological Matter

Fr John Scott

For some weeks the Cathedral clock, which hangs under the gallery of the Grand Organ, has been stationary at 10.55am, reminding the celebrant of the 10.30am Mass that he should nearly have finished. This is partly on account of the clock not having been wound (it has no automatic mechanism), but principally because its timekeeping has become rather erratic.

Inspection by the Cumbria Clock Company has revealed that, as for most 98 year-olds, a little extra attention is needed to restore perfect health. They report that: 'The clock has a single dial with glass cover and the case is dated 1924 on the back below the access doors. The movement is a double fusee hand-wound striking movement, working on a little bell on top of the case (this has been disconnected previously, and is not used at

present). The movement is made by "Dent" and numbered 81264. It uses a platform escapement for timekeeping, so it has no pendulum. The movement is of exceptional quality, from a very reputable maker, Dent being responsible for making "the great clock" or Big Ben as it is better known, as well as the clock of St Pancras Station. The clock is in good condition, but there are a few issues with it which require a full strip, clean and repair. It has not been cleaned and oiled for many years and there is contamination of the oil in the pivots, which if cleaned, will stop excess wear occurring.'

Image 1 shows the clock face, movement, hands and winding key and image 2 shows the clockmaker on the hoist, going up to ring the long-disused clock bell for us to hear.



Women Prisoners and their Children

Laura Beesley

A pilot scheme being run by Pact (the Prison Advice and Care Trust) to provide more support to mothers in prison is already yielding significant benefits, according to an interim evaluation report published recently by the University of Cardiff.

The pilot, called 'Together a Chance' has placed social workers in two women's prisons - HMPs Send and Eastwood Park - whose role is to improve outcomes for mothers in custody and their children. The scheme aims at empowering women to maintain links and engage with their children, whilst ensuring that child welfare remains paramount. Unlike local authority social workers, Pact social workers are specialist prison-based staff, and their work begins with the women as their primary caseload. However, their work complements that of their local authority counterparts in safeguarding the best interests of the child, while also providing vital support for mothers, many of whom have been victims of violence and domestic abuse.



Prisoner Engagement

© Pact

The findings, which were unveiled at an event in the House of Lords, include:

- The role of the Pact social workers is invaluable to both mothers and community practitioners.
- Pact social workers are demonstrating that they can hold a 'child-focused-plus' approach, working for the benefit of the child and the mother. They have become part of, and in some cases brought together, the team around the child.
- The range and extent of the social workers' work is impressive, and the role is becoming embedded within the two pilot prisons.

This scheme is beginning to demonstrate that mothers can, with the right support, continue to play a role in their children's lives and be involved in decisions relating to their welfare, where it is in the best interests of the children. This builds on a recommendation made by Lord Farmer in his 2019 report that every women's prison should have an on-site social worker as part of a multi-disciplinary team. Maintaining family contact is a key factor in reducing reoffending - prisoners who receive visits from a family member are thirty-nine per cent less likely to reoffend.



Holloway Women's Prison in North London – hardly Home, Sweet Home

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St Vincent de Paul, our School Patron

Lucas, Year 6



I am very proud to have been asked to write about St Vincent de Paul, even more so now as I am fast approaching my last few days at SVP School. I believe he is a saint whose message we should all carry in our hearts and thoughts so that we can replicate his teachings in our daily actions.

St Vincent was born in a small town in Southern France called Pouy, on 24th April 1581, and died on 27th September 1660, aged 79. Pouy was later renamed St Vincent de Paul in his honour. His feast day is the 27th of September, a day when we remember his generosity and compassion for others. Even though he was ordained as a priest at the age of 19, for the first twenty or more years of his life Vincent spent his time searching for fame and fortune, something many of us can get caught up in, believing that materialistic things will bring us

happiness and love. However, in 1605 the direction of his life changed. Vincent was returning from a trip, when he was captured and taken to North Africa by pirates, sold as a slave and remained captured for two years. Throughout this time, he would pray to God, asking that if he were to be freed he would dedicate the rest of his life to help the poor. Having spent his previous years trying to surround himself with wealth, it was during his time spent as a slave that he was surrounded by poverty and saw how hard it was for people to survive in these conditions.

From this harsh experience St Vincent encouraged people to have compassion for one another, to help bring God's justice and love to people who were unable to live a full human life. This is a belief we are taught from our very

first day at school. Our school motto is: 'Love one another as I have loved you.' Throughout my time at primary school we have always been encouraged and shown the importance of looking after people within our community and throughout the world. St Vincent went on to found an order of priests called the Vincentians, who pledged to devote their lives to helping the poor. He then went on to form the Sisters of Charity, and hospitals and orphanages were opened up to help those in need. Today people know of the St Vincent de Paul Society, which was created by Blessed Frederic Ozaman 150 years later, who was devoted to the life and work of the saint.

As my time at St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School comes to a close I would like to thank all of my teachers for helping me be more like St Vincent and I will try and carry it on during the rest of my life and I hope that if we all looked to be more compassionate, caring and respectful with one another the world would be a happier place.



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THE RELICS OF SAINT BERNADETTE

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL, 3-5 SEPTEMBER 2022

(Part of the first tour of the relics of St Bernadette to England, Scotland and Wales.)

VENERATION OF THE RELICS

Saturday 3 September 1pm - Monday 5 September 6am (No booking needed. Please join the queue on the Piazza for entry via the West Doors.)

SATURDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER

11am Solemn Mass of Welcome* - with enshrining of the relics (H.E. Cardinal Vincent Nichols)

2.30pm – Service of Anointing of the Sick* (Bishop John Sherrington) Admission by ticket only. Tickets available from your Parish Priest.

6pm – Vigil Mass of Sunday* (Bishop Nicholas Hudson)

10pm – Night Prayer of the Church (Compline)* followed by an all-night Vigil.

SUNDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER

6am, 8am – Mass*

9.30am – Sung Mass* (Bishop Paul McAleenan)

12noon – Solemn Sung Mass* (Bishop Nicholas Hudson, sung by the Choir of Westminster Cathedral)

3pm – Rosary*

4pm – Solemn Vespers with Benediction* (The Choir of Westminster Cathedral)

5.30pm – Sung Mass* (Bishop John Sherrington)

7pm – Mass*

9pm – Rosary*

10pm – Night Prayer of the Church (Compline)* followed by an all-night Vigil.

MONDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER

6am – Mass*

8am – Mass of Farewell* (H.E. Cardinal Vincent Nichols)

(*) Entry for Masses and Liturgies will be via the side door of the Cathedral on Ambrosden Avenue. When full capacity is reached there will be no further entry.



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