

# Oremus

## Westminster Cathedral Magazine



In the darkness of winter, the feast of Santa Lucia shines out brightly as a forerunner of hope for the spring

*Santa Lucia*

WESTMINSTER  
CATHEDRAL



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The tomb of Santa Lucia is located in Venice's church of San Geremia. This year, the traditional Scandinavian Sankta Lucia service returns to the Cathedral at 7pm on Friday 9 December.

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# A Christmas Message From The Administrator



**‘Hark! the herald angels sing, glory to the new-born King; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.’ When we hear this beautiful carol by Charles Wesley, we know that Christmas is in the air! I am sure that by the time you read this edition of *Oremus* you must have heard or sung it more than once this year.**

The words of this carol were inspired by the account of the Nativity found in the Gospel of St Luke, especially the verse: ‘Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth!’ (Lk 2:14), which expresses the joy of a multitude of angels praising God at the astonishing news of the birth of Jesus, God’s Son, the Word made Flesh.

As we make our Advent journey, we remember that Christmas brings us the message of Peace. It is a message we desperately need to hear now more than ever, especially as we think of the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Ukraine. The war in that land has upset and unsettled so many, and filled our hearts with worry, fear and anxiety. Peace on earth is definitely something we need to pray, hope and long for this Advent and

Christmas. The coming of Emmanuel reminds us that God is with us, and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus teaches us that God’s love is stronger than anything this world can throw at us. God’s love casts out fear and fills our hearts with peace that only he can bring.

Ever since the doors of our Cathedral were opened to the faithful 119 years ago, it has been a place and a sanctuary of God’s peace. So many come here when things are not going well in their lives or in the world. We come here to pray, to reflect, go to Confession or attend Mass; ... we come here to find peace. Jesus tells us that no one can add an hour to their life by being anxious. My prayer for us – and for everyone this Christmas – is that we shall know the Peace of God of which the angels sang, and that we shall be enfolded by it and given strength to spread peace and goodwill to others.

May God bestow upon you, the readers of our Cathedral magazine, every blessing this Christmas and in the year to come.

Fr Sławomir Witon

## The Manning Chalice and Ciborium

Richard Hawker, Head Sacristan

**Two objects from the sacristy take us back to the heady days of Cardinal Manning and the First Vatican Council. His Eminence seems not to have hurried back to his diocese, fresh from the triumph of Papal Infallibility at Rome, having worked so hard to establish the definition and proclamation of the dogma. Rather, he did a bit of shopping: he bought in Rome three copes, red, white and purple, all bearing his coat of arms. But he also purchased this very fine chalice and ciborium in about 1870. They obviously predate the Cathedral by some decades, so would most likely have had their first use at Our Lady of Victories in Kensington, which became the pro-cathedral in 1869.**

French silver is not quite so regulated as English work; there is not the same strictness over hallmarks, denoting origin and craftsman. It is possible that these are the work of the prolific ecclesiastical silversmith Louis Guillaud of Lyon; they are

certainly consistent with his style. Both are highly decorated with several different forms of ornamentation, including enamelling, engraving, granulating (very tight silver bead work), and are also set with garnets. The colours are very vibrant, particularly the use of turquoise, contrasting with two shades of blue.

The base of the chalice, apart from the usual cross, shows images from nature, including ‘Pliny’s Doves’ and a fish in a chalice. The chalice cup is set into the enamel, and is silver gilt. The base of its setting is pierced, allowing the gilding to shine through. In my opinion, however, the real triumph of this pair is the ciborium. The bowl and lid are almost spherical, and mirror each other beautifully. The settings for the garnets are better quality, and the enamels are beautiful depictions of various saints, together with row after row of silver beading, the whole surmounted by a blue cross sprouting from acanthus leaves.



Because of their various shades of blue, they are an obvious choice for feasts of Our Lady, and will be used on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. On the underside of each there is an inscription commemorating their purchase:

*To the Glory of God, and as a souvenir of the Sacred Vatican Council. Henry Edward, second archbishop of Westminster presented this Chalice of the New Covenant/ Vessel of the Incarnate Word to be preserved in the church of Westminster Cathedral, on the feast of St Thomas of Canterbury, patron of the secular clergy in England. 1871*



# Fr John writes



*Oremus* looks both forward and outward in this edition. Outward, because we cannot but be aware of the reappearance of tents outside the main doors of the Cathedral each evening, as various homeless stake their claims to what little shelter may be found there. I include a report and an appeal from *The Passage*, which deals directly and daily with a good number of Westminster's homeless

and needy. Whilst many face grave hardship as the cost of basic survival has increased, some of us on rather secure incomes have not been spending through the pandemic years and can perhaps push ourselves further in charitable concern.

You will see that another good news story has emerged about a Catholic cathedral; Brentwood's Cathedral of St Mary and St Helen has received a well-deserved listing at Grade 2, so we offer *Oremus* congratulations, remembering that Brentwood diocese is a war-time child of Westminster that came to birth in 1917.

Looking forward, please do read the description of the Cathedral Lighting Project, now underway. The Friends are committed to supporting this and it will produce long-need improvements in two ways. First, there will be a coherent system designed to enhance the appearance both of the building and of the liturgy, so that celebrants on the sanctuary and at the altar do not find themselves in the shadows and secondly, organists and others who need to use the galleries will not find themselves at permanent risk of tripping over odd spotlights and associated trailing cables.

A number of people have told me that they have enjoyed reading about the travels of my Victorian relatives in Egypt. This month I reveal that not everything has been quite as it seemed. Happily, there is a bit more to come, including a visit to Sinai and to St Catherine's monastery and I admit to having enjoyed being in their company again myself – perhaps a post-retirement bucket list trip?

This December edition has to cover both Advent and the sort of Christmas-like activities of the month, but as far as art goes, we go well into January with a look at how artists have confidently depicted the *Magi*. Balthasar, not least, has taken a very distinct identity to himself and the whole account of the Epiphany lends itself to richness; no wonder that the Missal calls for 'an increased display of lights' on the feast.

If you are short of Christmas present ideas, then Adrian Waddingham's book on the Englishman Pope Adrian IV, for which he gives us a taster article this month, may be your simple answer, available in bookshops and online.

With all best wishes for the Advent season.

*Fr John Scott*

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# Timeless Qualities of Classicism Recognised

Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales



*The cathedral's classical façade*

**The Cathedral Church of St Mary and St Helen, known as Brentwood Cathedral, has been listed at Grade II by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on the advice of Historic England. The Cathedral consists of a surviving section of a Gothic church, built between 1860-61, to the designs of Gilbert R Blount (1819-76) and a dominant classical addition, built 1989-1991, to the designs of Quinlan Terry.**

The first Catholic church on the site opened on 20 October 1837 but was soon outgrown by an expanding congregation. In 1861, a second church, dedicated to St Helen, was built, to the designs of Gilbert R Blount, a well-established Catholic architect. The old church remained in use as a school, parish hall and Cathedral Hall. It was listed at Grade II in 1999. In 1917, the church was made the cathedral of the newly-created diocese of Brentwood and was refurbished to reflect its new status. In 1974, a new addition, built to the designs of John Newton, of Burles and Newton, enabled the church to seat 1,000 people.

In the late 1980s, a major anonymous donation allowed for the possibility of rebuilding the cathedral. Bishop Thomas McMahon, Sixth Bishop of Brentwood, commissioned designs from the architect Quinlan Terry, who prepared plans for the replacement of the 1974 addition, working on the same footprint, but this time to a classical design. The Bishop requested a plan with a central altar to allow for maximum congregational participation. Terry's classical designs took inspiration from the early Italian Renaissance fused with the English Baroque of Sir Christopher Wren.

The architect's involvement extended to every detail of the new cathedral as well as to improvements. He designed new gate piers and railings; updated and partially remodelled the original church (the Cathedral Hall); remodelled the cathedral offices with a neo-Georgian entrance bay; and converted and extended

the old convent chapel for the choir school, the last of these works being completed in 2001. Recurring throughout the design of the internal fittings is the number eight, which signifies the seven days of material creation and the 'eighth day' of the new creation, the order of grace created through the death and resurrection of Christ. As with the external elevations, Terry designed every detail of the cathedral's interior, even down to the boards for hymn numbers, the central heating grilles and fire exit signs. The main space of the church resembles an Italian Renaissance court, framed by an arcade of five bays on the longer north and south sides and three bays on the east and west sides. The rebuilt cathedral was opened on 31 May 1991.

Bishop McMahon, now Bishop Emeritus, said: 'My decision to choose a Classical design for Brentwood, one of the first cathedrals to be built after the Second Vatican Council, was influenced by a number of reasons. There was a long tradition of church architecture across Europe in this style. I was much



*The Blessed Sacrament Chapel, in the 19th century portion of the cathedral*



The main body of the building

influenced by Cardinal Vaughan's decision to build Westminster Cathedral in a different style from Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral so that each would be judged on its own merits. I was a great admirer of the Wren churches in the City of London and how each was adapted for the site and space available. In the same way I felt such a style could be adapted for the renewed liturgy of Vatican II and offer a noble simplicity. From my time as an assistant priest in Colchester, I became very familiar with the work of Raymond Erith and Quinlan Terry, whose practice was close by. By 1985 he was already considered by many as the leading architect of classical architecture both in this country and beyond. I feel our extremely good working relationship has been reflected in the actual building and Quinlan has been enormously successful in achieving our vision for the cathedral.

Fr Martin Boland, Dean of the Cathedral and Parish Priest, added: 'We are delighted that Brentwood Cathedral has received a Grade II listing and that Quinlan Terry's unique vision has been recognised. His design combines both tradition and modernity in a striking fashion. The listing also recognises the Catholic community's role in the history of Essex and the Cathedral's place as a sanctuary of hope and prayer for so many people'. The Architect comments further: 'When we consider the history of my design, which was refused planning permission and only obtained approval following an appeal nearly 40 years ago, we begin to realise that the attitude towards serious classical architecture has now changed considerably. To me there is no doubt that the credit for this independence of mind and the courage to disagree with powerful prevailing attitudes goes not only to a number of individuals, but particularly to the architects and advisors working at English Heritage and now at Historic England. The result is already beginning to be seen in that many more architects are now working in the Classical Tradition.'

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# The Magi – A Gift for Painters

Lucien de Guise

*We Three Kings of Orient are, / Bearing gifts we traverse afar...  
Westward leading, still proceeding, / Guide us to thy perfect Light.*

There is a strong sense of geographical certainty to this Christmas carol, which is not really matched by biblical sources. As with so much about the Christmas story, the Three Wise Men have been put under the microscope in recent years. There was outrage when former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams seemed to be dismissive of these participants and other cherished traditions, yet artists over the centuries have been far more convinced. The Epiphany gave them an opportunity to contrast the dereliction of Our Lord's birthplace with his esteemed visitors and their sumptuous offerings. The shepherds brought with them plenty of goodwill, but fewer visually tantalising gifts.

The aspect of the Wise Men/Kings/Magi that has most intrigued art historians in recent times is their racial diversity. To be more precise, it is Balthasar who has stolen the show. Three years ago the Getty Center in Los Angeles had an exhibition dedicated to him: *Balthazar: A Black African King in Medieval and Renaissance Art*. Two years ago it was London's turn, with *Sensing the Unseen* at the National Gallery. The focus was on a painting by Jan Gossaert, accompanied by the words of Theresa Lola, a writer of British-Nigerian origins.

This early 16th-century Netherlandish artist's Balthasar is unquestionably of African descent, among the earlier depictions of what later became a staple subject. The other two Magi are standard-looking folk of the Low Countries at the time. Our knowledge of Balthasar is more complete than the others because of St Bede the Venerable, who wrote much more than the first history of England. Whilst the biblical description (St Matthew 2) is extremely vague, the 8th-century Northumbrian monk singled out Balthasar as 'a dark, fully bearded king'. Later historians took this up with a general consensus. Africa became Balthasar's homeland, or occasionally Macedonia, and when he was not shown in Renaissance art



The Adoration of the Magi by Jan Gossaert, painted circa 1510-15, the subject of an exhibition curtailed by Covid-19

as a man of sub-Saharan appearance, he is often accompanied by a servant who is. Little was said about Melchior and Caspar except their ages and, of course, their gifts. There were numerous medieval and later theories on the origins of these two. Melchior was thought to be the eldest and a king of Persia. Caspar was possibly from southern India or the peninsula that is now Malaysia. None of this compelled artists to create a rainbow of colourful kings. These dignitaries often wear turbans which, despite being associated with the Islamic world, were also a status symbol in Europe. The Virgin Mary is often seen wearing one and nobody was suggesting more distant origins for her than the Holy Land.

The term 'magus' was understood to be Persian, which it still is in a roundabout way. With a meaning close to a wise man or astrologer, star-gazing was a royal pursuit in much of West Asia. It is understandable that they could be astronomers, rulers and learned at the same time. Within some parts of modern Iran there is a strong awareness that these individuals were native sons who headed west. While most Iranians are oblivious to having the first gentile converts to Christianity among their

forebears, the town of Saveh maintains a memory of those early travellers. The Three Wise Men are buried there, at least according to Marco Polo. Rarely considered the most reliable of historians, he stated with certainty about Saveh being the city 'from which the three Magi set out when they came to worship Jesus Christ. Here, too, they lie buried in three sepulchres of great size and beauty. One was named Balthasar, the second Gaspar, and the third Melchior'.



An Adoration attributed to Lucas Cranach the Elder, early 16th century

Just as in Polo's day, this extraordinary detail excites little interest among the locals. Much further west, in the German city of Cologne, the cathedral has attracted hordes of pilgrims since it acquired some kingly relics in the 12th century. Failing to promote this attraction in Persia meant that Cologne acquired a near monopoly. The Saveh locals were mainly Zoroastrians with a large influx of Muslims. Their lack of concern for this site of importance might be a result of the very different Islamic interpretation of the Nativity. Mary, Mother of Jesus is a very sacred person in the Qur'an, but her childbearing experience





The Adoration of the Kings by Bartholomaeus Springer, circa 1595



Giovanni Baronzio, Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi, circa 1326. At this time the distinction between the Magi was based on age

could not be more different. There are no choirs of angels, shepherds or sheep, and definitely no wandering kings. When the time for giving birth to her immaculately conceived son approached, Mary retreated into the desert. Being an unmarried mother brought as much disgrace in pre-Islamic Arabia as it does now. The Qur'an records her despair: 'Ah, would that I had died before this, and had been forgotten and out of sight!'

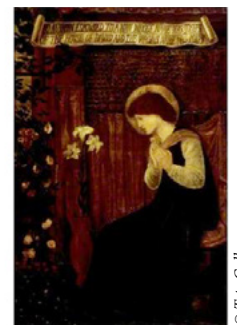
Back in Europe, the complete message about the origins of the Magi never really reached the artists. It took them long enough to pay attention to St Bede on the subject of Balthasar. It was nearly a millennium later, with the Renaissance in full swing, that the kings ceased to look so homogenous. From the late 15th century onwards, Balthasar began to stand out – or appear to merge into the background on many wood panels that have not been freshened up by picture restorers. It is conspicuous that the

regions of Europe that had the most contact with African populations were the most enthusiastic portrayals of a wider, more diverse world. The trade in slaves, gold and ivory brought greater awareness. Florence was one of the cities least committed to the cause of multiculturalism. The most popular theory about Botticelli's whitewashing of the Magi in his 1475 work is that the Medici wanted their own portraits to be given a

place of honour. This would seem more convincing if I had not recently seen an exhibition at the V&A in which a portrait of Alessandro, Duke of Tuscany, is shown as he was rumoured to be the son of a top Medici father and a freed African mother.

Other artists revelled in the chance to break the monotony of subjects distinguishable only by their age and social rank. Here was something from a world away from the dreariness of a northern winter. The seaports of Western Europe were a good place to encounter mariners and others from Africa. Antwerp was the original home of Gossaert and was visited by Dürer, who included a black Balthasar in his *Adoration of the Magi* (1504) as well as a portrait of an African servant he met there. No doubt all the artists of Europe would have enjoyed including persons of distinction from India, China or the newly revealed lands of the Americas. There was no such opportunity. Instead they include, perhaps unknowingly, ceramics and other exotica from East Asia and the Middle East.

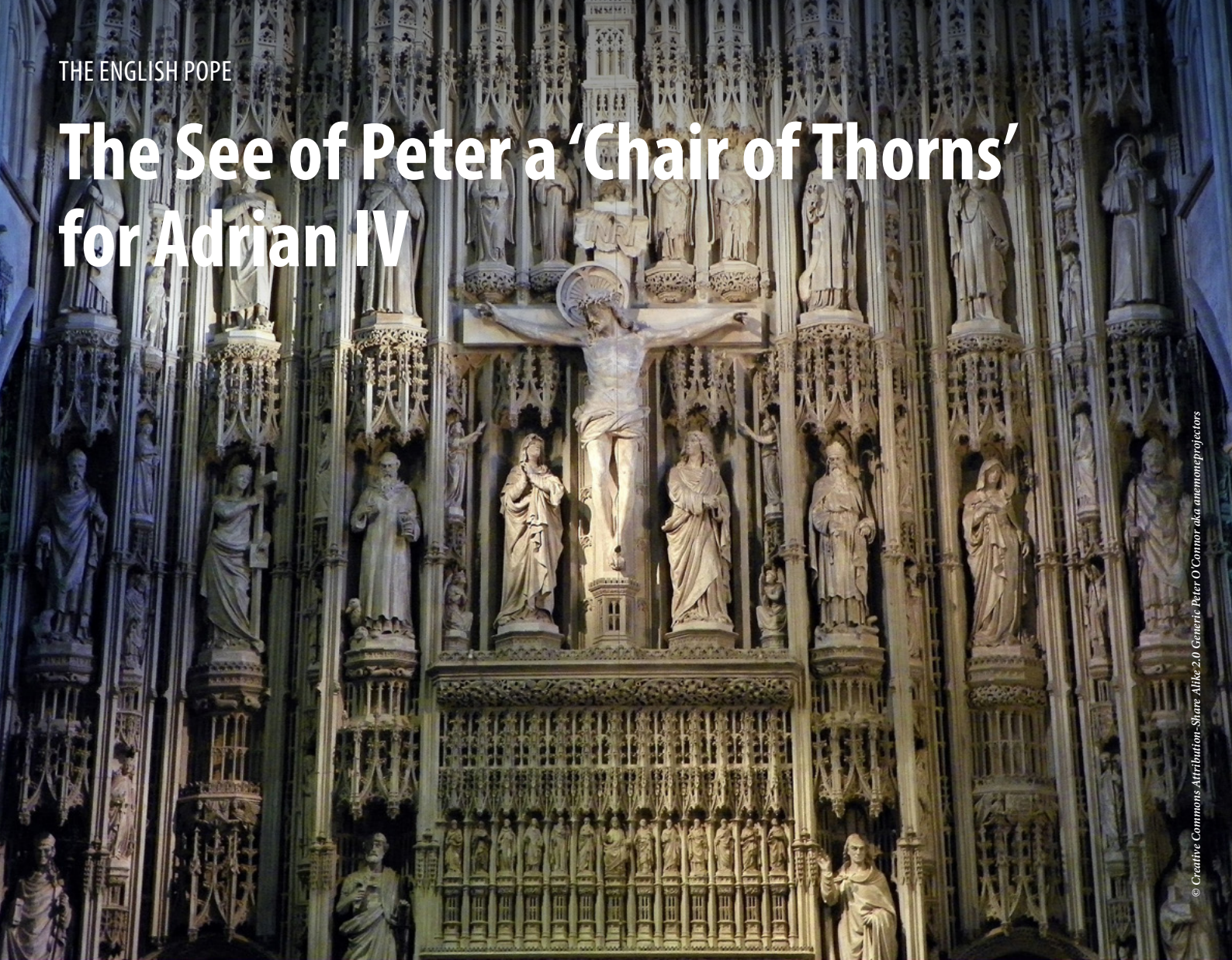
For all its evils, the trade network in the Atlantic introduced Europe to people from far horizons. Africans came to visit, and not always as slaves. The possible inspiration for Shakespeare's *Othello* was a Moroccan ambassador who visited Queen Elizabeth I. At the latest Metropolitan Art Museum exhibition in New York, *The Tudors*, it is stated that he was the first African ever to be painted in England (circa 1600). This is quite possible, as English artists were not prolific painters of the Epiphany. Despite this paucity, there are still many other versions to look at in London. There is also a pleasingly modern spirit of ecumenism about the Three Kings. They are venerated by the Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran and Eastern Orthodox churches; and where would those countless school Nativity plays be without the festive cheer of gold (Melchior), frankincense (Caspar) and myrrh (Balthasar)?



By the 19th century, the diversity had sometimes disappeared, as in this version of a triptych by Edward Burne-Jones. Another version features an African Balthasar



# The See of Peter a 'Chair of Thorns' for Adrian IV



The Waddington screen in St Albans Abbey

Adrian Waddingham

**In 2012 the London Borough of Merton presented a plaque to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to mark her Diamond Jubilee. The Borough believed that Thomas Becket and Nicholas Breakspeare were both schooled at Merton Priory, an Augustinian House founded at nearby Morden in 1114. Only the foundations of the Chapter House remain today. I had always been aware of my namesake Breakspeare, who was elected Pope Adrian IV in 1154, but I had no idea that the two giants of the twelfth century Church were schoolmates.**

On checking I discovered that there is no evidence to support Merton's claim. However, I was struck by how

much information there is about Becket yet how little there was about England's only pope. Becket defended his Church against a king in England, and Breakspeare did exactly the same but on a much larger stage, challenging emperors and kings throughout Europe. No full biography of Breakspeare had been published for 100 years. As long ago as 1766 Edward Gibbon commented in his *Decline and Fall* on the lack of information about Breakspeare: 'The English reader may consult *Biographia Britannica* for Adrian IV, but our own writers have added nothing to the fame or merits of their countryman'. It seemed to me that little had changed since then. I had stumbled upon a retirement project – to re-establish Breakspeare in the pantheon of British notables.

Why has he been so neglected? That he was out of sight in Europe did not help, and his story could not compete with the sainted Becket's dramatic murder in Canterbury. British historians focused on events directly involving Britain, especially its military heroes abroad. Breakspeare's papacy is a military story yet somehow his struggle against Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa has got overlooked. Breakspeare reigned for just less than 5 years whereas his nemesis, Barbarossa, dominated Europe for 35 years. German historians captured the script and were able to belittle Breakspeare. The papal schism on Breakspeare's death did not help the English pope's reputation, and some blame Breakspeare for initiating the



difficult relationship between England and Ireland. Pope Adrian is accused by some in Ireland for permitting Henry II's invasion of that country, even though that only happened some 12 years after the pope's death and, what is more, Henry never claimed papal approval. Whatever the reason, Pope Adrian's story was side-lined along with the Roman Catholic Church.

I had worried that perhaps Breakspear had been overlooked because there was scant information about him. However, the monastic chroniclers of the age tell us quite a bit about Breakspear, especially Matthew Paris and William of Newburgh, and this was embellished by several Victorian hagiographers. There was enough material out there - it just needed bringing together. I had worked as a consulting actuary for 45 years and to help me in the switch from numbers to letters I signed up for a one-year history course at Birkbeck and, once completed, applied for a reader's pass at the British Library, hoovering up as much as I could about twelfth century Europe. Discovering the delights of the Library was a joy in itself: copious reading rooms, invariably full, and a first-rate service delivering chosen books overnight from storage in Yorkshire. Writers are so lucky to have such an institution there for us.

There proved to be much more to Breakspear's story than I had anticipated, making it all the more puzzling as to why he had been ignored. My first surprise was to learn of his inauspicious background, being the impoverished son of a minor cleric at St Albans Abbey, perhaps illegitimate. Breakspear sought to join his father in the abbey but was refused admission so with enormous self-confidence the still-teenage lad sought his education in mainland Europe. The willingness then of people to embark on long, hazardous journeys, usually on foot, was my next surprise. Pilgrims thought nothing then of setting off for distant shrines at home and throughout Europe. Even far-away Jerusalem was not beyond limits. There was effective freedom of movement long before the European Union thought it had invented it.

Breakspear's long walk took him first to Paris, although we do not know how long he stayed there or where he studied.

He then moved south to Arles in what is now French Provence, another noted centre of learning. Eventually, around 1130, he succeeded in his ambition to become a cleric at the Augustinian Abbey of St Ruf just outside Avignon. He would spend more of his adult life in Avignon than anywhere else. There he made rapid progress, becoming abbot in about 1144 when he would have been about 30 years old. However trouble soon followed when his brother monks decided that they did not care for the Englishman's too-strict approach to monastic discipline and appealed to Pope Eugenius to remove him. Eventually the pope agreed but, having been impressed by the charismatic young English abbot, took him into his own service.



*Cameo of Pope Adrian in the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris*

Breakspear had come to papal attention fortuitously and he soon impressed all he met. In 1148 the pope sent his new protégé to the Spanish theatre of the Second Crusade, the only successful part of that particular fiasco. Breakspear stepped up to the mark and a year later Pope Eugenius rewarded him with appointment as the second-ever English cardinal. Hardly with time to fit into his new role as a Prince of the Church, in 1152 Eugenius appointed him further as Papal Legate to Scandinavia, where he was given the specific brief of granting the Norwegian Church its own archbishopric and consequent independence from the German see of

Hamburg-Bremen. His two-year visit to the far north of Europe not only reformed Church practice, but helped give the unsettled Norwegian kingdom wider identity within Europe and a new sense of Norwegian statehood.

Breakspear's mentor, Eugenius, had died during this time of absence and his successor Pope Anastasius died only a month after Breakspear's return to Rome. So successful had his Scandinavian mission been, that in December 1154 Breakspear was unanimously elected pope, taking the name of Adrian IV.

The throne of Peter was to prove a 'chair of thorns' for the new English pope and he spent the brief five years of his reign facing armed challenges from rebel Republicans in Rome itself, and from the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and King William of Sicily challenging the papal states, one from the north and one from the south.

Adrian died of quinsy on 1 September 1159 after 4 years and 10 months of battling. During the struggles Adrian had turned the Church away from its traditional champion, the Holy Roman Emperor, looking instead to King William for support. This was the switch led to the papal schism on his death. The majority of cardinals supported Adrian and they elected his right-hand man, Cardinal Roland, as Pope Alexander III, but a small number of German-favouring cardinals elected an antipope, Victor IV. The schism was to last a full 18 years before Frederick Barbarossa finally conceded, recognising Alexander as the sole pope. The papacy's alliance with Sicily endured for 40 years.

Since England has provided the Church with but one pope, it remains a mystery that there are no monuments or plaques for Breakspear to be found in London. Adrian himself remained loyal to the monastery at St Albans, granting it valuable privileges and the abbey remains proud of its son. The stone screen behind the altar, built by William Wallingford in 1484 and restored in Victorian times, shows Pope Adrian second from the right in the top row. A stone tablet in the floor in front of the altar marks the interred remains of his father, Richard Breakspear.

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# One Bill Away from Homelessness

The Passage

**The Passage takes its values and ethos from the teachings and example of St Vincent De Paul, and was founded by Cardinal Basil Hume and the Daughters of Charity over 40 years ago. At present we support people who are street homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in Westminster – where street count rates are often at the highest in the whole of the UK.**

The current cost-of-living crisis is making it harder for people to manage their household costs, and for some they may find themselves just one bill away from losing their home. We have already seen a 19% rise in people coming to our door for help \*. That's far too many people losing the battle to keep a roof over their heads. We have also seen a change in the age of those accessing our services. Previously the most common age demographic of those coming to us for support was between 40 to 60 years old; we're now seeing more people aged between 30 and 45 years old, which is quite a significant shift.

We are doing all that we can to prevent people from spending even one night on the streets, and for those that do, to help them move into stable accommodation as quickly as possible. Our *No Night Out* prevention scheme provides emergency accommodation for those at risk of spending their first night on the streets, whilst we work with them to find a more sustainable solution. This scheme was launched as a result of what we learnt during the pandemic and our involvement in the Everyone In initiative, which supported those sleeping rough into temporary hotel accommodation.

*No Night Out* not only enables us to protect people's safety and wellbeing, but also provides us with an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of their situation and what led them there. The issues behind a person becoming homeless are complicated and unique to every individual, so this understanding is crucial – it enables us to provide a holistic service that meets everyone's specific support needs.

The cost-of-living rise is extremely concerning, and we expect the number of people coming to us for help to continue rising throughout Christmas and into the New Year. The pressure is rising for many, but for some more than others. If you can, please support The Passage this winter. Whatever you can give, it will make a big difference to those who are most vulnerable in our community. *You can find out more about our work here [www.passage.org.uk/our-services](http://www.passage.org.uk/our-services), and to make a donation, please visit [www.passage.org.uk/donate](http://www.passage.org.uk/donate)*

\* Number of new clients in September 2022 versus September 2021

## Urgent Call for Volunteers

Our volunteers play a vital role and all of them, no matter how much time they can offer, are doing something wonderful - supporting London's most vulnerable people. However, as demand for our services continues to rise, we are in search of 100 new volunteers to support our vital work. A number of new volunteer opportunities have just become available, including School Speaker Volunteer and Health Engagement Volunteer. We are also desperately in need of support in our Resource Centre Kitchen, for our morning shifts.

If you would like to give your time to support those most affected by the cost-of-living crisis, please go to [www.passage.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.passage.org.uk/volunteering) or contact [volunteering@passage.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@passage.org.uk)

## The Gift That Keeps Giving



'A Taste of Home' is the perfect Christmas gift for any food fanatics!

Featuring 40 first course, 40 main course, and 40 dessert recipes from over 100 well-known names including Gino D'Acampo, Nigella Lawson, Sir Paul McCartney, Stephen Fry, Yotam Ottolenghi, and many more; it's sure to get tastebuds tingling.

Plus, all profits from this book go back to The Passage, supporting our vital work.

**Go to [www.passage.org.uk/tasteofhome](http://www.passage.org.uk/tasteofhome)**



# Sheltering by Timothy Schmalz

Vincentian Family

On 9 November, before his Wednesday General Audience catechesis, Pope Francis blessed a new sculpture in St Peter's Square that highlights the plight of the homeless. *Sheltering* is a life-size bronze sculpture showing the figure of a homeless person being covered by a blanket pulled over them by a dove in flight. This image was unveiled days before the 6th World Day of the Poor on Sunday 13 November.

The sculpture is the work of Canadian artist Timothy Schmalz, who already has an established track record in religious statues around the world. His work *Angels Unawares*, about migrants and refugees, was installed in St Peter's Square in 2019, when it was also blessed by the Holy Father.

*Sheltering* was conceived to shine a spotlight on global homelessness and encourage practical solutions in keeping with the mission of the 13 Houses Campaign, an initiative of the global Vincentian Family. The Family is a movement of different religious congregations, lay associations and charities inspired by the life and work of St Vincent de Paul, who 'called together as many as he could, rich and poor, humble and powerful, used every means to inspire them with a sense of the poor – the privileged image of Christ – and urged them to help the poor directly and indirectly' (Introduction to the CM Constitutions).

The Family has formed the FamVin Homeless Alliance (FHA), with the aim of ending homelessness and changing the lives of the 1.2 billion people around the world living without a place to call home. Mark McGreevy leads FHA, which, through the 13 Houses Campaign, seeks to house 10,000 people worldwide by the end of 2023 in more than 160 countries where the Vincentian Family already works. He comments: 'This statue makes a crucial statement about homelessness: it compels us to be aware of the homeless people around us. Before we can solve homelessness, we have to understand it. We need to stop and hear homeless people's stories and involve them in the solutions which deliver long-term change. This is just the first step in an ambitious plan to change the lives of many of those currently homeless.'

Schmalz's sculpture has been unveiled for the first time in an important week for global homelessness, reflecting Pope Francis' unwavering commitment to the issue: 'If we want life to overcome death, and dignity to be rescued from injustice, the way is yours: It is to follow the poverty of Jesus Christ, sharing life out of love, breaking the bread of one's existence with one's brothers and sisters, beginning with the least, those who lack what is necessary, so that equality may be created, the poor may be freed from misery and the rich from vanity, both of which are ways without hope.'

Closer to home, Timothy Schmalz's sculpture Homeless Jesus may be found in the Jesuit Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street in Mayfair.



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# Gaetano Meo, Mosaicist

Patrick Rogers



Meo depicted as Bacchus by Simeon Solomon



He also modelled for Burne-Jones

**Gaetano Meo was born in Naples in 1849 and would probably have encountered English artists who were frequent visitors there. By 1864, now aged 15, he had resolved to walk to England and there make his fortune. Arriving in 1865 he was found busking with his harp on the streets of London by the Pre-Raphaelite artist, Simeon Solomon, who used him as a model and introduced him to his artist friends including Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Henry Holiday. The latter in particular took a liking to the youth and played a lasting part in his career.**

By the early 1870s Meo was not only an artist's model but had been taught to paint. However, he was advised by his English friends that he would do better to concentrate on the developing business of stained glass and mosaics. So, presumably sponsored by one or more of these friends, he returned to Italy to study the Byzantine mosaics of Sicily, Ravenna, Rome and Venice. In the mid-1870s he had become established in England, working both as a model and as an artist's assistant, having married Agnes Morton from Belfast with whom he had five children between 1870 and 1881, these being named Rocco, Margaret, Thomas, Umberto and Edna. By 1870 the family had moved from Fulham to Hampstead and Meo had become Henry

Holiday's pupil and assistant in the art of stained glass-making, to meet the growing demand created by the fashion for building neo-Gothic churches. Holiday threw a party when Meo became a naturalised British citizen in 1886. Sir William Richmond and Holiday were his sponsors, and a song composed by Holiday and parodying 'He is an Englishman' from Gilbert and Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore* was sung in Gaetano's honour.

One verse ran:

'He must drop his accente  
And his dolce far niente  
And per bacco if he can.  
Then renouncing foreign lingo  
He must learn to say "By Jingo"  
Like a true born Englishman'

Meo's friendship with Sir William Richmond and his knowledge of mosaics proved providential, for in 1891 Richmond was asked to prepare a plan for the mosaic decoration of first the apse and then the choir of St Paul's Cathedral in London. His designs were accepted and he was given a three-year contract for the work. So, like Meo before him, Richmond went off to Italy and Sicily to study the mosaics there. He returned, convinced that the Byzantine style should be adopted using irregularly sized mosaic

tesserae and inserting them directly into the cement while leaving wide joints. James Powell & Sons of Whitefriars were to provide the tesserae, the cement and 19 British craftsmen, who would be directed by Richmond and his friend and assistant Gaetano.

The mosaics in St Paul's Cathedral established not only Richmond's reputation but also that of Meo. By 1900 he and his team of mosaicists (now down to five Englishmen and one Venetian) were working on long-term contract for Sir Ernest Debenham, decorating his department stores. This led in turn to a commission in 1912 to design mosaics and supervise their installation in the great domed hall of Debenham's new house at 8 Addison Road, Holland Park, creating an interior rather like a Byzantine church. Rather than saints, however, the walls, spandrels and dome itself were decorated with blue, green and gold mosaics portraying mythological scenes, stylised plants, animals, the signs of the zodiac and portraits of the Debenhams and their eight children. While the work was underway, Meo gave each of the children a little bag of coloured tesserae and encouraged them to make pictures with them.

By 1913 the work was finished and Meo's reputation was further enhanced. As a result he was commissioned in



that year both to install the mosaics in St Andrew's Chapel, the decoration of which the Fourth Marquess of Bute was funding at Westminster Cathedral, and also to refurbish Clayton Parish Church, Bradford. The Cathedral work was directed by the Marquess's architect, Robert Weir Schultz, and was again carried out in the Byzantine style, all the work in the chapel being given to members of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Using Schultz's rough designs translated into mosaic cartoons by George Jack, Meo and his team (two of whom had been with him since the work in St Paul's) set to work, with Meo commuting from his home at 39 Downshire Hill, a stone's throw from Hampstead Heath.

As at Debenham's house, the mosaic tesserae are said to have been supplied by Salviati of Venice. However it is clear from the Glass Order Book records of James Powell & Sons that in 1914-15 this firm supplied Meo at his Hampstead home with cakes of gold, red, blue and black mosaic material valued at some £17 and intended for the Cathedral, suggesting that both firms may have been used. By mid-1914 the mosaic work was proceeding rapidly, with the Marquess taking a keen interest and making occasional visits. As usual the tesserae were fixed directly into the cement which was of the same composition as that used by both Richmond and Meo in St Paul's Cathedral and for the restoration of the Baptistry mosaics in Florence.



Mosaic of Ruth gleaning corn in Clayton Parish Church



Part of Sir William Richmond's mosaics in St Paul's Cathedral

The mosaics illustrate the story of St Andrew, with a portrait of the saint accompanied by trees, flowers, animals and birds, and of the cities associated with him. Above the altar appears the Greek cross of his martyrdom with the dove of the Holy Spirit and his prayer in Latin and in English. Opposite is St Andrew himself with an olive and a locust tree, rosebushes and deer. On the wall facing the entrance are mosaics of Bethsaida (his birthplace), Constantinople (where he was Bishop) and Patras (the place of his martyrdom). Opposite, above the entrance, are St Andrews in Scotland (of which he is the patron saint), Milan, and Amalfi which received his relics after the Fourth Crusaders sacked Constantinople and stole his body in 1204. On the ceiling of the chapel is a glittering, fan-like pattern of fish scales of 'Golden clouds screening Paradise from earthly view' while in the

soffits of the arches are 33 birds, including a green woodpecker and a jay.

The Chapel was opened in December 1915, although work continued the following year when a small mosaic bird (apparently a plover) was removed from the bottom left corner of the west wall mosaic and a rabbit from the bottom right, presumably to avoid distraction from the main composition. Although there was some criticism of the 'coldness' of the marbles there was nothing but praise for Meo. By this time he was refurbishing, designing and producing mosaics for Clayton Parish Church, work which occupied him until 1918. In 1921, having by now resettled both his father and brother in England and having amply fulfilled his boyhood ambition of making his fortune in this country, he died at the age of 72.



The vault of golden clouds over Constantinople in St Andrew's Chapel



# A Masterpiece of Renaissance Religious Art

Simon Johnson, Peter Stevens & William Waine

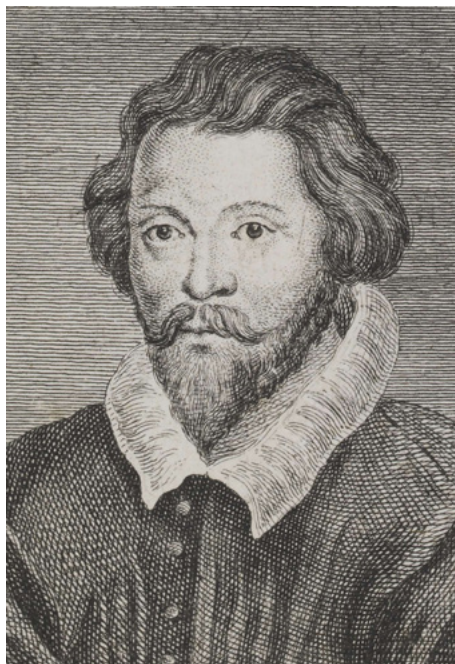
*To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the death of William Byrd, Westminster Cathedral Choir will perform all 109 pieces of his Gradualia – settings of music for Mass – during choral services at the Cathedral, starting on Sunday 18 December.*

**‘During these days it was just as if we were celebrating an uninterrupted Octave of some great feast. Mr Byrd, the very famous English musician and organist, was among the company’ (a Jesuit missionary describes visiting a country house in Berkshire in 1586).**

The body of St John Southworth, martyred in 1654, in the Chapel of St George and the English Martyrs transports us back 400 years to dark days of persecution in England, and we are reminded of those who bore witness to the Faith, and paid the ultimate price. Out of this context comes the music of William Byrd (c.1540 - 4th July 1623). He is considered among the finest composers of the Renaissance, having written some 470 works for all of the contemporary genres, and he exerted a profound influence across the musical landscape of Europe.

Byrd learned his trade under Thomas Tallis, almost certainly a singer at the Chapel Royal during the reign of Queen Mary, whose taste for sumptuous Latin church music inspired the finest composers of the day. It was the perfect artistic melting pot into which the young composer was able to pour his own creative spirit and learn from the greatest masters. From 1563 Byrd was Organist and Master of the Choristers at Lincoln Cathedral. Puritan tendencies there may have been the cause of difficulties – Byrd played elaborately – and so the offer to take up a prestigious position as Gentleman of the Chapel Royal saw his return to London in 1572.

His entire life was affected by political and religious upheavals. *Lex orandi, lex credendi* – how people worship determines what they believe – was a commonplace concept in the 16th century, and he had to reconcile navigating turbulent times with his own beliefs. He probably began life as a Protestant, but from the 1570s onward became increasingly pre-occupied



*Mr Byrd, English composer*

with Catholicism. Pope St Pius V's bull, *Regnans in Excelsis* of 1570, made Queen Elizabeth an outlaw in the eyes of the Catholic Church but, despite this, Byrd seems to have had a cordial relationship with her that undoubtedly protected him in later life. He and Tallis obtained a printing licence from the Queen that resulted in three collections of Latin motets or *Cantiones Sacrae*, some of which seem obliquely to reference a bitterness about the plight of the English Catholic community (several of these works are also presented within this cycle). Despite ongoing suspicion by the authorities, Byrd seems to have emerged relatively unscathed from his association with individuals in both the Throckmorton and Gunpowder plots.

Perhaps tired of compromise, in 1593 he moved with his family to the small village of Standon Massey in Essex, and spent the remaining 30 years of his life there, devoting himself more and more to music for the Roman liturgy. This is music first heard in secret, in clandestine Masses

held in people's cellars and back rooms, attended by brave Catholics, sure in their faith in spite of the threat of discovery. Cardinal Vincent comments: 'Despite the private nature of these first performances, Byrd makes no compromises in the depth and intimacy of his music. It is full of life and emotion and communicates the vitality of a living faith, standing strong against the difficulties of the time. Every note, every phrase, is a prayer. Our prayer today stands in continuity with his.'

This year, the Cathedral Choir will bring this music out into the open. The choir sings Mass on every day during term-time, performing polyphonic settings of the Mass Ordinary alongside the prescribed plainchant Mass Propers in the *Graduale Romanum*. Byrd's settings of the texts of the Propers (Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, Offertory, Communion), and others within the collection, sit happily within the liturgy of the Cathedral and provide the core of our celebration of English Catholic music's favourite son in this anniversary year. The entirety of the *Gradualia* will be performed in its seasonal and liturgical context, alongside other landmark works from Byrd's oeuvre. The celebration begins on Sunday 18th December 2022 and runs until Monday 25th December 2023. When considered as a whole, the *Gradualia* undoubtedly represents a monolithic masterpiece of Renaissance religious art. Yet it is at the miniature level that the composer's desire 'to adorn divine things with the highest art' is to be truly appreciated. Byrd invites us to develop a greater understanding of the intimacies of our own faith. The Church has been given a great gift through the genius and unshakeable faith of William Byrd. To him, we English Catholics owe a deep debt of gratitude.

Further details, including a full programme, can be found at: <https://westminstercathedral.org.uk/music/byrd400/>



# Programme opens for Sixth Form Students for 2023

Stefan Kaminski, Director, Christian Heritage Centre

**With the successful completion of the first year of The Christian Heritage Centre's unique programme, a second round of applications is now being opened to sixth form students across the UK. The programme was launched in 2021 with the specific goal of offering a holistic formation to students who are committed to their Christian faith and to a public-facing service or career. The certificates that were presented to the first cohort in Westminster Hall last April represented the culmination of an intense and varied input over some 12 days of residential courses. Delivered in three modules of several days each, the programme provides students with the tools – intellectual, spiritual and practical – to help shape a Christian society. It was the lack of any such specific preparation for public life that led Lord Alton to include this programme as one of the objectives of The Christian Heritage Centre charity, of which he was the founding Chairman.**

The three units, which are held at the charity's Theodore House in Stonyhurst, Lancashire, and at Westminster Diocese's youth retreat centre in Pinner, provide the foundations to make judgements that genuinely serve the common good and individual human flourishing, and are given shape by a strong framework of prayer and liturgy. By accompanying the students into a deeper engagement with the Mass, teaching them to pray with the Scriptures and to meditate before the Eucharistic Lord, the first objective is to place Christ as the centre and foundation of both their personal lives and their understanding of human reality more generally. The value of this emphasis was vindicated by one of last year's students who commented that the programme 'made me realise that my professional and spiritual lives are synonymous and not separate'. Lord Alton gave witness to the importance of our relationship with Christ in his keynote speech to last year's cohort, in which he also put before them some

of the key issues faced by Catholics and Christians in the political sphere of the UK today.

The programme also provides an invaluable opportunity for students to meet like-minded peers, and to experience an intense, community-focussed enterprise. The team-building activities that are built into the course challenge them to co-operate and communicate effectively. More conventional problem-based bridge-building activities and escape room challenges sit alongside slightly more unusual tasks, such as making an aesthetically-pleasing fruit salad whilst tied together at the hands in a circle! In the lecture room, the weightier concepts of human dignity, human rights, natural and civil law, and conscience are addressed in the first module. The objective for the students is not only to gain a theologically-enlightened and rational ground for these concepts, but to apply them consistently and logically to case studies. The broadening of the students' perspectives was summarised by Klaudiusz Ozog, from St Thomas More Catholic School, Purley, who said: 'I was guided into a depth of theology and philosophy which I, as a scientist, never knew I would enter'. Indeed, the discussions become so involved that at one point the professional photographer was seen to put down his camera and sit down to listen.

The second module turns to the human ecology that underpins all broader societal and environmental questions. The nature and dignity of human life are examined through medical, biological, ethical and theological lenses, to provide a clear moral framework for responding to issues that touch on human life itself. The principles of Catholic Social Teaching help to elaborate the broader societal framework for the flourishing of the human person, and a particular application is made of these to both the question of responsibility for creation



and a just, fiscal policy. Students also benefit from coaching in public speaking, seminars on statesmanship and the political virtues, workshops in virtuous leadership and public policy making.

The first cohort's feedback only served to convince the staff of the programme's value, with students noting the 'golden opportunity' represented by the 'absolutely brilliant course', which 'forms you into a Christian professional and explains everything so well'. In recruiting a second cohort, the charity is committed to accepting students on personal merit and commitment: something which is closely assessed on the basis of their written submissions, and the supporting references and recommendations from schools, academic tutors and priests. The charity has secured sponsorships from organisations and individuals to subsidise costs, which come to £1,500 per student. Some students may be able to cover all or some part of this cost, yet external funding is necessary to make this programme available to students regardless of financial means. With two weeks of full-time, high-quality tuition, activities, board and lodging, the cost represents enormous value for money. We will, therefore, not only be very grateful for any further support towards meeting the costs but particularly for prayers offered for the course's success. For more information, visit [www.christianheritagecentre.com/clf](http://www.christianheritagecentre.com/clf) or contact [clf@christianheritagecentre.com](mailto:clf@christianheritagecentre.com)



# An Appreciation of Volunteers

This year the celebration of the Solemnity of All Saints was chosen, appropriately enough, for the parish party to which Cathedral volunteers are invited as a thank you for their varied contributions, seen and unseen, to the life and ministry of the Cathedral. The images give some idea of the crowd present.

*First, the whole group*



*Some Filipino stalwarts*



*The refreshments were taken seriously*



*And what is Kevin Greenan saying, apparently confidentially?*



*The camera catches Val Hamblen and Louise Sage looking poised, whilst behind them Anne Bond looks slightly shocked. What can Fr Hugh have said to her?*



*Both smart casual and smart were the dress code for the evening*



*If in doubt, bring a Religious*



*An opportunity to meet other parishioners; the Administrator urged everyone to talk to one other person who they did not know*



*At the end of the evening, we thank the volunteers who cleared up and looked after the black bags!*



November as the Month of the Dead brings its cycle of commemorations, one of which is for the Deceased Clergy of the diocese, whose names are recorded in a 'Book of Life'. A good number of diocesan clergy attended and diocesan seminarians from Allen Hall were on duty in the serving team. Bishop Nicholas performed the Solemn Commemoration, sprinkling and censuring the Book. May the souls of our departed priests rest in peace.



© Martin Mazur



In this last month we have sadly said farewell to Agnes Dabrowska, the Cathedral's Finance Manager. We are all aware of the Cathedral's difficult financial position, but Agnes' analytical approach to the accounts has enabled us to run a much tighter and properly budgeted ship and we owe her a great debt of thanks for her years of work. She is seen here with her colleague Toby Mak, who happily continues in the Finance office.



© Zoe Goodway

From a slow beginning, Tea and Coffee in Cathedral Hall after the 10am Sunday Mass has built up and became crowded on Remembrance Sunday when the King's Horse Artillery and assorted other slightly less brightly dressed military personnel joined us for refreshment.

A constant theme in the newspapers is discussion of what the police should be doing. Patrolling the streets? Apprehending burglars? Stopping cycling on pavements? Disrupting drug dealing? Preventing protesters from blocking the M25? The list could go on, but a little-known constabulary activity is its singing. At the annual Catholic Police Requiem Guild celebrated by Bishop Alan Williams SM of Brentwood, the Force provided the choir and a fine performance to support the liturgy.



© Diocese of Westminster



# Trouble in Leeds and the AWOL Clergyman

Fr John Scott

My great-great-great uncles have finished their journey on the Nile. Hitherto all seems to have gone fairly smoothly, but the letters now reveal that all has not been quite as it seemed. We see that Eli, for an undisclosed reason, finds it necessary to return home early to the family in Leeds. The narrative had suggested that the brothers Eli and John were accompanied by Mr Brocklebank, 'a clergyman friend of the family sent along to keep an eye on John' writes my great-aunt Helen, but it now turns out that he has left the brothers with 'a Roman Catholic yet a most respectable loveable young man' and gone off to do his own 'exploring and investigating Scripture associations and illustrations in Upper Egypt', staying at 'the very best hotel in Egypt'.

Letter 9

Cairo

January 17th 1863

My dear Mr P.

Thank goodness we are all in perfect health, well and happy, but I am exceedingly sorry Mr Eli is called home before the completion of his anticipated tour.

I did not go with my young friends up the Nile for the following reasons:-

- (1) We found the passage for the three would be £160, and that would not leave us sufficient to go to Mount Sinai and the Holy Land.
- (2) I could occupy my own time much more to my own interest and satisfaction by exploring and investigating Scripture associations and illustrations in Upper Egypt, apart from the Nile.

Nevertheless, I should certainly have gone with them, but while we were talking over the matter, a young man from Belgium about their own age, and though a Roman Catholic yet a most respectable loveable young man, came into the room and said he had engaged a boat to go up the Nile, and he had that morning been praying to God for a companion as he had to go alone. I said: 'How many will the boat accommodate?' 'Three', - and 'how much will it cost three each?' 'Thirty or thirty five pounds.' I looked upon it as being quite an opening of Providence and immediately said: 'Go and I will remain.' If the boat would have taken four, I

should certainly have gone with them, but my not going, under the circumstances, saved my friends £18 each and quite as comfortable. And moreover, there being such a remarkable Providence in the whole affair I had no doubt of their safety.

During their absence I went first to Suez by rail, nothing but burning, sandy desert all the way for 90 miles. There I remained for a week at one of the best, nay the very best hotel in Egypt, during which time I one day engaged a dragoman and a donkey, and crossing the Red Sea in a boat, rode 8 miles further up the desert to Moses' wells. From there I walked a mile and a half up to the sea side, and have not the least doubt but that was the place where the Israelites crossed in their wilderness journey to Canaan; perhaps I stood on the very spot where Miriam with her timbrel and where Moses stood to offer praises to their Almighty Deliverer. I also visited the pyramids, Joseph's granaries, the Pasha's Palace and gardens, also the tombs of the Sultan, the Mameluke, the Caliph and Pasha Kings, likewise the Petrified Forest, etc, etc, etc.

I have enjoyed myself very much, and when my friends came from the Nile, I had engaged a dragoman to take us to the Holy Mount for £20 each, but alas, when they came back and read the home news, Mr Eli said 'I must go back.' I was exceedingly sorry. However, the young man, their Nile companion, said he should be glad to fill up the vacancy and go with us to Sinai. The camels will start next Monday and we on Friday by rail to Suez, from which place it will take us 7 days to reach Sinai, 3 in the convent there and 7 back. After our return, we shall then proceed to Syria. And now, my dear friend, I hope your mind will be quite at rest respecting John. I shall not leave him for an hour, except it be during time of sleep. Indeed, I shall regard his safety and welfare just as much as my own. I trust we are led by an Unerring Hand and shielded by an Almighty Arm. If so, then:

'Not a single shaft can hit  
Till the God of Love sees fit'

With kind remembrance in a foreign land to Mrs Plummer and the younger ones, Believe me, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

Mr. Brocklebank

Excuse great haste, blotches and blunders, etc. J.B.



Letter 10

Alexandria  
January 19th 1863

Dear John,

My journey from Cairo ended a few minutes after 11 o'clock. I found the carriage very comfortable, and I must say for night travelling very much preferable to the 3rd class. As the Bus and Attendant connected with the Hotel D'Europe first presented themselves to my notice, I decided to take up my quarters there. As far as I can judge, however, the Hotel Abbatt is to be preferred.

I made it first my business to see the English Consul and have secured a new passport for you. You can get it by applying to the English Consul at Cairo. It will be necessary to sign your name in the presence of the Consul. I have paid 5/- for it. After completing that business, I went to the Office of the Messageries, Imperial, and secured a passage to Marseilles for 262 francs, and now I am free for an hour or two to look over Alexandria. It is necessary for me to be on board the steamer at 2 o'clock – one hour before the advertised time of starting. I hope your prospective tour will be even more interesting than that which is past, and that it may be of lasting benefit to you all.

With love to yourself and kind regards to Mr. Brocklebank and Mr. Verhaeghi.

I remain, dear John,

Your affectionate brother,

Eli Plummer.

*The Friends*  
OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

# Our New Project and the Big Give

Joe Allen and Andrew Hollingsworth



**It has now been two months since Joe joined the Friends as Co-ordinator, and he has remarked what a varied and exciting time it has been. The Friends have held an AGM and elected a new Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, and Council Members. We have had interactive events on Justice and Peace; welcomed long-standing friend and author Alison Weir to speak; and held an enjoyable and competitive Quiz and Fish & Chip evening – twice!**

Alongside events and 'present' activity, there has also been much planning in the Friends' Office for a new edition of the Newsletter, and a full and varied schedule of events for 2023. Do keep an eye out in *Oremus* and on the Cathedral website for more information. Of course, the best way to keep in contact is to join the Friends ... membership leaflets are available at the back of the Cathedral or via the website. As a charity there is much to be proud of – and all the time there is fresh evidence of the fundraising that we seek to support. One of our recent projects, in memory of the late Canon Christopher Tuckwell, has recently come to fruition with the installation of a mosaic panel of St Augustine of Hippo by John Maddison, to be installed by this Christmas.

But as one project finishes, another one is in the works – and we need your help for the Cathedral Lighting Project. The article on page 27 lays out the situation: the Sanctuary flood lighting and additional lighting systems need complete replacement. The Cathedral is used by a congregation of 3,000 for its Sunday and daily worship, is visited by tens of thousands of different visitors each year, hosts concerts and carol services for the wider community and online services for the housebound. All of this depends on good lighting.

The Friends are supporting the Lighting Project and have committed to raising funds for the renovation of the Sanctuary lighting, which, alongside the Blessed Sacrament and Lady Chapels and nave, is the principal part of the overall project. But we need your help, and there is a unique opportunity to do this through The Big Give where donations made online after 12:00noon, Tuesday 29 November to 12:00noon, Tuesday 6 December 2022 are matched by generous matched funders. A donation of £100 would contribute £200 or £225 for taxpayers agreeing to gift aid their donation. Please use this link to give online: <https://tinyurl.com/FriendsBG22>.

For more information on this project, or for more general enquiries, please feel free to contact the Co-ordinator of The Friends, Joe Allen, at [josephdavidallen@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:josephdavidallen@rcdow.org.uk) or via Clergy House.

Gifts and Souvenirs reflecting the  
Cathedral's Art and Architecture

**WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL  
GIFT SHOP**

Devotional and Seasonal Items

Opening Times - See website for details  
[www.westminstercathedral.org.uk](http://www.westminstercathedral.org.uk)

All the profits derived from GIFT SHOP sales are used for the maintenance  
and mission of the Cathedral



# CATHEDRAL HISTORY – A PICTORIAL RECORD

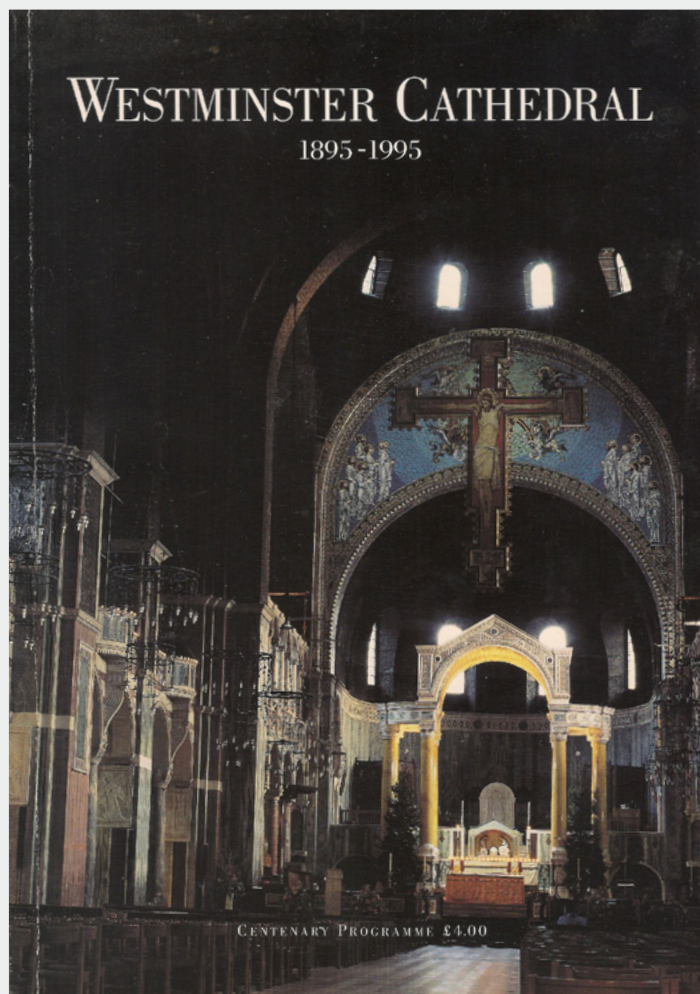
## Christmas 1994

Paul Tobin

During the period of 26 years from 1982, the forward facing altar was used for all Masses, apart from the twice yearly Solemn High Masses organised by The Latin Mass Society. In addition the High Altar was also used on Good Friday afternoon for Holy Communion when the Cross, which had been venerated beforehand, was placed there so as to be clearly visible as the focus for prayer and devotion until after the Office of Readings (*Tenebrae*) on Holy Saturday morning. To facilitate this veneration, the portable Altar was removed after the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday evening and replaced in position later on Holy Saturday whilst the Sanctuary was being suitably decorated for Easter.

With the High Altar not in use, it was decided to place the Cathedral Crib there, thus giving it pride of place over the Christmas season, instead of it being in St Paul's Chapel, its traditional location for which it had been designed. The presence of the four reliquaries on the altar, albeit covered, would indicate that this picture was taken on the afternoon of either Christmas Day or the Epiphany.

Image: Westminster Cathedral 1895-1995 Centenary Programme Cover, Kevin Day



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

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*Oremus* 12.22





# Advent Antiphons

Sister M Charlita I.H.M.

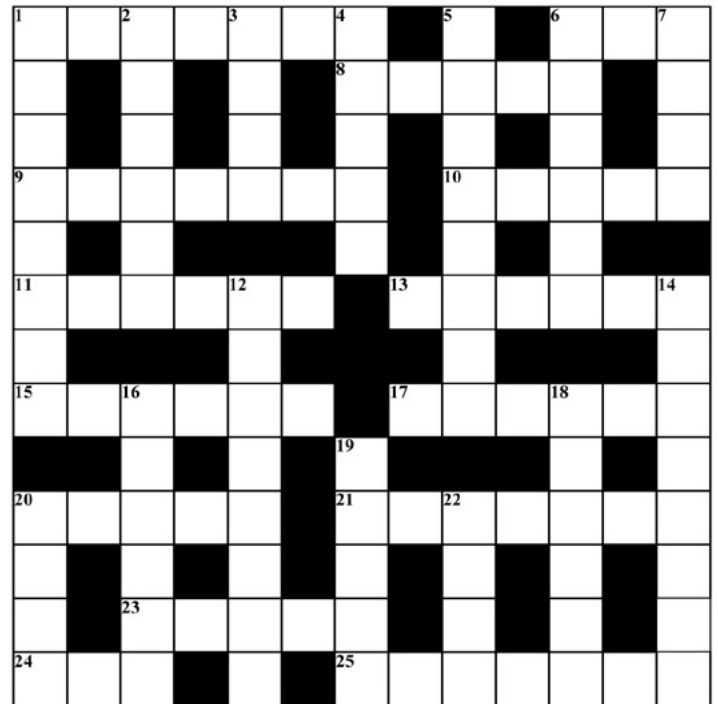
From Mary's sweet silence  
 Come, Word mutely spoken!  
 Pledge of our real life,  
 Come, Bread yet unbroken!  
 Seed of the Golden Wheat,  
 In us be sown.  
 Fullness of true Light,  
 Through us be known.  
 Secret held tenderly,  
 Guarded with Love,  
 Cradled in purity,  
 Child of the Dove,  
 Come!

# Advent Summons

Mary Francis, P.C.C.

Come forth from the holy place,  
 Sweet Child,  
 Come from the quiet dark  
 Where virginal heartbeats  
 Tick your moments.  
 Come away from the red music  
 Of Mary's veins.  
 Come out from the Tower of David  
 Sweet Child,  
 From the House of Gold.  
 Leave your lily-cloister,  
 Leave your holy mansion,  
 Quit your covenant ark.  
 O Child, be born!  
 Be born, sweet Child,  
 In our unholy hearts.  
 Come to our trembling,  
 Helpless Child.  
 Come to our littleness,  
 Little Child,  
 Be born unto us  
 Who have kept the faltering vigil.  
 Be given, be born,  
 Be ours again.  
 Came forth from your holy haven,  
 Come away from your perfect shrine,  
 Come to our wind-racked souls  
 From the flawless tent,  
 Sweet Child.  
 Be born, little Child,  
 In our unholy hearts.

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



Alan Frost December 2022 – No. 105

### Clues Across

- 1 The Angel that came from heaven in the Advent carol (7)
- 6 Show respect to the sound of Cockney bells? (3)
- 8 State in the north of the USA (5)
- 9 Hector -----, composer of Christmas work L'Enfance du Christ (8)
- 10 Irish county where the Battle of the Boyne was fought (5)
- 11 Additional things, like some runs at Lord's! (6)
- 13 Until recent times in Lourdes grotto a single symbol (once many) of miraculous cures (6)
- 15 Relation who has taken the veil? (6)
- 17 London district and palace where Henry VIII lived (6)
- 20 One of the Minor Prophets of the OT (5)
- 21 William -----, London-born satirical painter of, e.g., The Rake's Progress (7)
- 23 Dame ----- Terry, famous Shakespearean actress (d.1928), mostly in London theatres (5)
- 24 Small container, for carrying the consecrated Host (3)
- 25 Day for being shriven approaching Lent (7)

### Clues Down

- 1 Anonymous organisation helping those with the odds against them (8)
- 2 Capital city in the Middle East (6)
- 3 Letters portrayed on a crucifix above Our Lord's head (1.1.1.1.)
- 4 'Abbé Franz ----- (in minor orders), brilliant pianist and composer (5)
- 5 Favourite residence of the late Queen Elizabeth (8)
- 6 See 14 Down
- 7 Native British type of elm tree (4)
- 12 End of prayer can do being open to suggestion (8)
- 14 & 6 Down: Legendary Hollywood film star, born on Christmas Day 1899 (8,6)
- 16 County in the title of the carol On Christmas night all Christians sing (6)
- 18 King, prior to the Norman invasion (6)
- 19 Choir work that can be Gregorian or polyphonic (5)
- 20 Instrument associated with King David, as well as with Wales and Ireland (4)
- 22 Lych ----, wooden shelter at church path entrance, oldest known is in South London (4)

### ANSWERS

Across: 1 Gabriel 6 Bow 8 Idaho 9 Berthoz 10 Meath 11 Extras 13 Crutch  
 15 Sister 17 Ethham 20 Hosea 21 Hogarth 23 Ellen 24 Fyx 25 Tuesday  
 Down: 1 Gamblers 2 Betrut 3 I N R I 4 Liszt 5 Balmoral 6 Bogart 7 Wyck  
 12 Amenable 14 Humphrey 16 Sussex 18 Harold 19 Chant 20 Harp 22 Gate



## Tales of the English Martyrs

St Edmund Campion on the way to his martyrdom.

After kneeling in prayer, Campion was strapped on the hurdle, Sherwin and Briant being together bound on a second hurdle. The martyrs were dragged at the horses' tails through the gutter and filth, followed by an insulting crowd of ministers and rabble. Still some Catholics were consoled by a word from him, and one gentleman, like Veronica on another Via Dolorosa, most courteously wiped his face all spattered with mire and filth. Passing under the arch of Newgate, whereon still stood an image of Our Lady, Campion raised himself and saluted the Queen of Heaven, whom he hoped so soon to see.

St Edmund Campion SJ



© British Library

## The Month of December

### The Holy Father's Prayer Intention

#### For voluntary not-for-profit organisations:

We pray that volunteers and not-for-profit organisations committed to human development may find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international co-operation. experience family affection.

### Thursday 1 December

Ps Week 1

Advent feria

7.30pm Mary Ward Loreto UK Carol Service (Bishop McAleenan)

### Friday 2 December

Friday abstinence

Advent feria

### Saturday 3 December

St Francis Xavier, Priest

\* Migrants' Day

4pm Monthly LMS Mass (Blessed Sacrament Chapel)

6pm Victoria Choir sings at Mass;

Marriage Preparation Course Couples attend



St Francis Xavier baptising

### 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 (Choir), Confessions 5-6.45pm, Sung Mass 5.30pm, Mass 7pm.

\* Live streamed via the Cathedral website

From Sunday 4 December, the Sunday 12noon Solemn Mass with the Cathedral Choir will again be livestreamed rather than the 10am Sung Mass.

### Sunday 4 December

Ps Week 2

#### 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

12pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Berkeley – Missa brevis

Byrd – Vigilante

Organ: Bruhns – Præludium in E minor

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction

Bevan – Magnificat quinti toni

J.S. Bach – Wachet auf, ruft uns die stimme (BWV 140)

Organ: J S Bach – Nun komm der Heiden Heiland (BWV 661)

4.30pm Mass for the Deaf Community (Cathedral Hall)

### Monday 5 December

Advent feria

### Tuesday 6 December

Advent feria

(St Nicholas, Bishop)

2pm SVP Christmas Celebration

5.30pm Cathedral Chapter Mass

### Wednesday 7 December

St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor

5.30pm Vigil Mass of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady

### Thursday 8 December

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

2pm Seniors' Party (Cathedral Hall)

5pm Solemn Second Vespers

5.30pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Victoria – Missa Ave maris stella

Parsons – Ave Maria

### Friday 9 December

Friday abstinence

Advent feria

(St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin)

5.30pm Said Mass (Cathedral Hall)

7pm Sankta Lucia Service

### Saturday 10 December

Blessed Virgin Mary of Loreto



The Transportation of the Holy House from Nazareth

### Sunday 11 December

Ps Week 3

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

12pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

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

Sweelinck – Gaude et lætare

Organ: Mendelssohn arr. Best – Overture to 'St Paul'

© National Gallery of Art



**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction  
*Palestrina* – Magnificat quarti toni  
*Sweelinck* – Gaude et laetare  
 Organ: *J S Bach* – Prelude and Fugue in A major (BWV 536)

### Monday 12 December

Our Lady of Guadalupe  
**2pm** Woldingham School Carol Service

### Tuesday 13 December

St Lucy, Virgin & Martyr

### Wednesday 14 December

St John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor

### Thursday 15 December

Advent feria  
**5.30pm** Diocesan Staff attend Mass

### Friday 16 December

*Friday abstinence*

Advent feria  
**2pm** Westminster Cathedral Choir School  
 Carol Service

### Saturday 17 December

Advent feria

### Sunday 18 December

*Ps Week 4*

#### 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**12pm** Solemn Mass – Start of Byrd 400th  
 Celebration (Full Choir)  
*Byrd* – Mass for five voices  
*Byrd* – Ave Maria  
 Organ: *Escaich* – Evocation II  
**4pm** Parish Carol Service  
 Organ: *J S Bach* – In dulci jubilo (BWV 729)

### Monday 19 December

Advent feria

### Tuesday 20 December

Advent feria  
 am Services in the Crypt; pm Services in  
 Cathedral Hall  
**7.30pm** Christmas Celebration I

### Wednesday 21 December

Advent feria  
 (St Peter Canisius, Priest & Doctor)  
 am Services in the Crypt; pm Services in  
 Cathedral Hall  
**7.30pm** Christmas Celebration II

### Thursday 22 December

Advent feria

### Friday 23 December

*Friday abstinence*

Advent feria  
 (St John of Kanty, Priest)

### Saturday 24 December (Christmas Eve)

Advent feria  
**10.30am, 12.30pm** Mass  
**3pm** Organ Recital  
**4pm** Pontifical Solemn First Vespers of  
 Christmas (Cardinal Nichols)  
*Buxtehude* – Magnificat in D  
*Victoria* – O magnum mysterium  
 Organ: *Messiaen* – Dieu parmi nous  
 (La Nativité du Seigneur)  
**6pm** Vigil Mass of Christmas  
**7.30pm** Cathedral closes; reopens at 10pm  
**11.15pm** Vigil and Solemn Pontifical Mass  
 During the Night (Cardinal Nichols)

*Haydn* – Missa Sancti Nicolai  
*Whitacre* – Lux aurumque  
 Organ: *J S Bach arr. Dupré* – Sinfonia to Cantata 29

### Sunday 25 December

#### THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

**8am** Mass of the Dawn  
**10am** Sung Mass of the Day  
**12pm** Solemn Pontifical Mass of the Day  
 (Cardinal Nichols)  
*Victoria* – Missa O magnum mysterium  
*Poulenc* – Hodie Christus natus est  
*Poulenc* – O magnum mysterium  
 Organ: *Widor* – Toccata (Symphonie V)  
**3.30pm** Solemn Second Vespers and  
 Benediction and Benediction  
*Palestrina* – Magnificat primi toni  
*Byrd* – O magnum mysterium  
 Organ: *Mulet* – Carillon-Sortie  
**5.30pm** Mass

On Monday and following days:  
**9.30am-6pm** Cathedral open  
**10.30am, 12.30pm, 5.30pm** Mass  
**11.30-12.30pm** Confessions

### Monday 26 December

St STEPHEN, The First Martyr



*St Stephen from the Demidoff Altarpiece*

### Tuesday 27 December

St JOHN, Apostle & Evangelist

### Wednesday 28 December

THE HOLY INNOCENTS, Martyrs

### Thursday 29 December

ST THOMAS BECKET, Bishop & Martyr,  
 Patron of the Parish Clergy

### Friday 30 December

*No Friday abstinence*

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY  
 AND JOSEPH

### Saturday 31 December

7th DAY IN THE OCTAVE  
 OF CHRISTMAS  
**5pm** Confessions  
**5.30pm** Sung Vespers (English)  
**5-6pm** Confessions  
**6pm** Sung Vigil Mass of the Solemnity of  
 Mary, the Holy Mother of God

**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



# In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*

In the Steps of Abbé Langreny

Until Westminster Cathedral was built at the beginning of the present century, there stood in Horseferry Road a tiny Catholic Church, St Mary's, which was described by an enthusiastic writer in *The Lamp* of 1896 as 'one of the most flourishing in the metropolis'. At that time it was staffed by Jesuit Fathers. It was closed in 1903 and all that remains of it is the outline of its foundations in the garden behind a house called after it by the Sisters of Charity in Medway Street.

Before it was pulled down there was to be seen, on one of the walls of St Mary's, a simple memorial tablet which read:

To the Memory of Charles Adrien Langreny of Vauville  
in Normandy

Who died, September 5th 1819, aged 54 years.

In the process of tracing the footsteps of the Abbé Langreny through the old books and registers which seldom see the light of day, an admirable story of devotion to the poor emerged. He was one of the many émigrés priests who found refuge in England from the French Revolution. Most returned home when the storm had blown over, having meanwhile started many missions in which their name is honoured to this day: St Mary's, Chelsea; St Mary's, Holly Place, Hampstead; and the only recently demolished St Aloysius', Somers Town, close to Euston Station, were all founded by émigrés. They even had a miniature basilica, built in a mews off George Street, Portman Square, for safety's sake, which survived until almost yesterday. The whole story deserves to be written up in detail.

Meanwhile, what of the Abbé who worked among the slums of Westminster? It seems that he had been the Vicaire at Cleauville, in the diocese of Rouen, when the Revolution broke out. His name only appears very occasionally in the English records because he did not have a regular chapel until towards the end of his dedicated life. We first hear of him in 1792 when he was living in York Street – once the name of what we know as Petty France. He occupied one room and said his Mass in another. Later records trace him to Great Smith Street, then to Dartmouth Street and to Tothill Street. What Catholics were there gave him their support, but they were poor people by all accounts; yet they built schools as early as 1814, when they were opened by Bishop Poynter. Having laboured under difficult circumstances for years, it is good

to think of the old Abbé as having seen some reward for his labours; 2,000 poor labouring people who regularly attended St Mary's mourned him.

from the December 1972 *Westminster Cathedral Journal*

.....

Cardinal Archbishop's Advent Letter

A year ago we had the grateful and pleasing duty of thanking you for the increase of generosity shown in the collection of 1920. This year we are unable to repeat the same expression of special thanks, for owing, doubtless, in great part to the financial stress which affects all our people, the high level of that year has not been maintained. Thus, whereas in 1920 the Church collection amounted to £679, and the offerings from the Convents to £170, last year the collections yielded only £509, while the Convents contributed £148. Donations and subscriptions in 1920 came to £289; in 1921 the whole amount from this source was £237. While making every allowance for the difficulties of the moment, we earnestly beg you not to lose sight of the paramount importance of making sustained effort in order to make adequate provision for those of our aspirants to the Priesthood, the cost of whose training and education rests to a large extent with the Diocese.

In our letter for Trinity Sunday we spoke of the difficulty that at present confronts us, because, owing to the interruption of the studies of many of the seminarists during the war, there will be few ready for ordination before 1924. Indeed, were it not for the strenuous and continuous efforts of the year previous to that period, the situation would be of much greater gravity. We were, however, able to ordain in 1917 and 1918 no less than 29 Priests, and in consequence to set free others for service with the army, nearly all of whom have returned to ordinary work in the Diocese. In this way many places have been filled which otherwise might have remained long vacant. In the years 1919 and 1920, nine Priests were ordained, in 1921 only two, and this year there will not be a single ordination for the service of the Diocese. At the same time, in spite of loss from death, illness or departure elsewhere, there are now 17 more Priests in active work in the Diocese than there were in 1918. This short statement will show you that every effort is being made to ensure to our Diocese a body of Clergy adequately prepared and fitted for their sacred mission.

from the December 1922 *Westminster Cathedral Chronicle*



# New Lighting for the Cathedral

**The Cathedral's lighting was designed by John Marshall, Bentley's assistant and successor as Cathedral architect. Drawing heavily on Byzantine influences, the lighting opens up the vast spaces of the Cathedral for both liturgy and worship, and the many visitors who come daily. However, much of the current lighting is now out of date and in urgent need of upgrading and sympathetic restoration.**

The key area of concern is the Sanctuary. Dating from the early 1980s, its lighting is now at risk of failing. Changing technology and pressure to improve energy consumption have meant it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain, as parts and lamps stop being made or become more costly. The major lighting for this area is provided from an arrangement known as the rig lights, located either side of the Sanctuary and which can be raised and lowered with hand-cranked winches (see image). These lights were set up to suit the forward altar, in the middle of the lower part of the sanctuary between the Canons' stalls. When the liturgy made a permanent return to the high altar for the Papal Mass in 2010, the adjustment available on the rigs was insufficient to light the altar. To overcome this, a number of stand lights were positioned on the gallery. Lighting levels beneath the Baldacchino are hard to achieve from such a distance without casting shadows from its marble columns, so we continue to use infill lights from various places which clutter the gallery without really solving the problem.



*Left: Existing lighting rigs on the back of the chancel arch Right: Loose lighting stands on the transept gallery bridges*

Bruce Kirk of Light Perceptions was approached to help find a solution. His design features an arrangement mounted on permanently fixed, wired poles dedicated just to the lighting, fixed at a maximum height of 2.5 metres above the gallery. They would provide the best lighting for the High Altar, the ambos, the Cathedra, the pulpit and Rood cross, and enable the appreciation

of their architectural setting in all natural lighting conditions, ranging from bright afternoon sunlight to a dark winter evening. Centralised switching will be from one position in the Lady Chapel.

This proposal was approved by the Historic Churches Committee (H.C.C.). They also observed the concentration of lights on stands and temporary beams ('Event Lighting') along the gallery, beyond the sanctuary. It is all old theatre-style like the rig lights and presents similar issues of health, safety, expense and clutter. At the H.C.C.'s request, the project has been expanded to include the whole nave, as additional light is needed in almost all of this area for one event or another.

The lighting of the Blessed Sacrament (BSC) and Lady Chapels (BVM) are also in need of work. Both retain their original lighting schemes based on chandeliers and wall pendant fittings, supplemented by various additions. The BSC has a fibre optic system that is noisy and as a result hardly operates at all due to overheating as well as a dimming system which has long since failed. In the BVM the lighting is in need of updating due to its age and high energy use.

The way that Westminster Cathedral is presented today differs significantly from the original perceptions of its architect, J F Bentley, in the early 20th century. Had an architect of his abilities had access to today's technology, he would have taken advantage of it. Consequently, today's replacement of the sanctuary lighting should make no attempt to replicate older perceptions, but should ensure that lighting enhances the architecture without drawing undue attention to the means by which this is achieved. Most importantly, the Cathedral was designed to provide a magnificent setting for the liturgy, and the lighting of the Sanctuary, and the key liturgical focal points associated with it, should serve this end.

This is a substantial undertaking for the Cathedral, but one which will stand us in good stead for the future, while the benefits will be quickly felt. Not only will the project reduce carbon emissions and running costs, it will also enhance the prayerful atmosphere of the Cathedral and its many beautiful architectural features.

The fundraising for this project is being approached in phases. The Friends of the Cathedral have undertaken to raise the funds for the sanctuary, and will launch their BigGive appeal in the coming weeks. Please see page 21 or contact Joe Allen at the Friends ([josephdavidallen@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:josephdavidallen@rcdow.org.uk)) for more information. For information about funding for the other aspects of the lighting project, please contact Marie-Louise Van Spyk, the Cathedral's fundraising manager ([mlvanspyk@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:mlvanspyk@rcdow.org.uk), Mob: 07596 855 460)



# Why Christmas is important to Christians and to our School

Millie Gorke Bond



As the year is coming to an end an important event for many is fast approaching, which is known throughout the world as Christmas, a special holy day of Jesus. People of different faiths celebrate Christmas in a variety of ways. For many, Christmas is a time to come together with friends and family and a time for reflection. At St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School, it is an important and special time of year for us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

There are several ways we mark this special time; it begins on 1 December when we come together to light the first of the four Advent candles. We prepare our Nativity Performance which we present in Westminster Cathedral, with our families, friends and the public watching and celebrating with us. We thank God in our prayers and we begin to reflect on the birth of Jesus and to thank him for the many things he has done to help us try and bring peace to our world. We hold a Christmas fair, when we can all work together to celebrate and raise money to show our love and support for each other in the name of Jesus Christ. We do all of this because we believe that Jesus, the long-awaited saviour, plays a big part in our life.

For Christians throughout the world it is a time for celebration and for us all to take notice of the lessons we can learn from the

birth of Jesus and a time for us all to be thankful. The Bible tells us that: 'When they saw the star they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him' (Matt 2:10). The scripture shows us the happiness and joy felt by the Magi when Jesus was born, because they knew that he was God's gift to us.

Over the last couple of years there have been lots of events which have affected everyone throughout the world, now more than ever we need to remember the true meaning of Christmas, it is not about the presents under the tree or who has the most decorations around their house. When Advent begins we should remember that this is a time for prayer, penance, sacrifice and hope. During this time, we pray for those people who cannot be with their loved ones at Christmas. It is important that we keep these people in our thoughts, so that they will not be forgotten. This year we will all be thinking specially of those affected by war and those who are struggling with the increased cost of living. This way we support one another and show our thanks for the birth of Jesus, and we try to keep the important lessons we have been shown by him close to our hearts.



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