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Oremus

Westminster Cathedral Magazine

Great St George, our Patron, help us, in the conflict be thou nigh;
help us in that daily battle, where each one must win or die.



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Oremus, the magazine of Westminster Cathedral, reflects the life of the Cathedral and the lives of those who make it a place of faith in central London. If you think that you would like to contribute an article or an item of news, please contact the Editor.

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The cover image of St George is an engraving from the series 'The Apostles' by the Master of 1466. It is now held in the Collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



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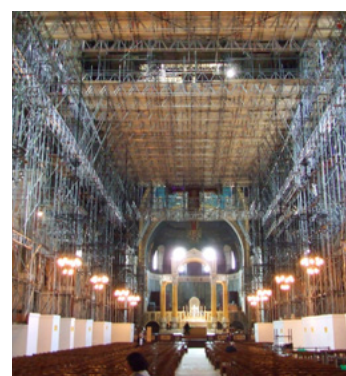
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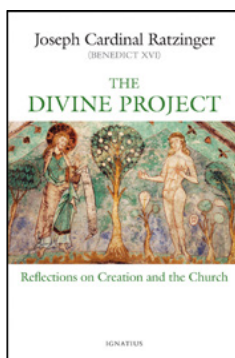
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Out of the Archive – The Divine Project

Ignatius Press

Audio cassette tapes containing lectures by then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger that he gave in 1985 at an abbey in Austria are being published for the first time in English by Ignatius Press as a new book, *The Divine Project: Reflections on Creation and the Church*.

The tapes were lost for almost 30 years, mislaid in the abbey. On these tapes we can hear the voice of the Cardinal who was to become Pope Benedict XVI. He walks his listeners, with small, careful but thoughtful steps, through the thick terrain of the theology of the Creation story. After many decades, these lectures have been dusted off, transcribed and published for readers across the globe for the first time in English in the new book.



At heart it is a study of God the Creator and of man as this Creator's masterpiece. Professor Matthew Levering writes: 'Ratzinger guides us through the most difficult domains of modern theology and modern life: how to read the Bible; the Reason of God and the reasonableness of the cosmos; the meaning of original sin; technology, ecology, and creatureliness; the Cross and the Eucharist; and Vatican II,

pluralism, the Magisterium, and the nature of the Church' Fr Joseph Fessio, founder and editor of Ignatius Press, studied theology under Joseph Ratzinger, whom he first met in 1972.

'These lectures are "vintage Ratzinger" - a theological treasure,' said Tracey Rowland, St John Paul II Chair of Theology, University of Notre Dame (Australia). 'Any Catholic could follow them without a formal training in theology. A copy would make a great present for friends, godchildren, students, priests, seminarians and anyone else trying to make sense of the Church and the world'.

For more information see: <https://ignatius.com/the-divine-project-dvpp/>

Churches and Religious Sites Lost in Ukraine

World Council of Churches

At least 494 religious buildings in Ukraine have been destroyed, damaged, or looted as a result of the Russian invasion - and seizure of religious buildings for use as Russian military bases increases the scale of destruction of religious sites, reports the Institute for Religious Freedom, a non-governmental human rights organisation founded in 2001 in Kyiv, presenting data on the impact of the war on Ukrainian religious communities during a recent Summit Conference on Religious Freedom.

Most churches, mosques, and synagogues were destroyed in the occupied Donetsk (at least 120) and Luhansk (more than 70) regions. The scale of destruction is also high in the Kyiv region (70), where desperate battles were fought in defence of the capital, and in both the Kherson and Kharkiv regions, with more than 50 destroyed religious buildings in each. Even if the most affected regions are in the east of the country, damaged religious sites are spread across all of Ukraine, from Kherson in the south to Chernihiv in the north. Russian air strikes on civilian targets,

including drone attacks, have affected almost all regions and continue.

The Institute also documented many cases of seizure of religious buildings for use as military bases or to conceal the firing positions of troops. This tactic of the Russian military provokes an increase in the scale of destruction of religious sites. Targeted attacks on religious figures and believers by the military and intelligence services, primarily in the occupied territories of Ukraine, are also documented. Believers and clergy often became targets for Russian occupation authorities, because of the Ukrainian language, belonging to a different denomination, or for any other manifestation of independent Ukrainian identity.

According to the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience, at least 307 religious sites in Ukraine were ruined during the 11 months of Russia's attacks, including churches, mosques, synagogues, educational, and administrative buildings of Ukraine's religious communities. The majority of the religious sites damaged during the invasion



l-r: Cathedral of Archangel Michael, Mariupol; Church of Ascension of the Lord, Bobryk village, Kyiv; St George's Church, Zavorychy village, Boryspil Diocese, Kyiv. Photo: (SSUEAFC)

are Christian (297), five of them are Muslim, and five Jewish. Thirty of the sites affected belong to various Protestant communities, 21 to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, five to the Roman Catholic Church, four to the Greek Catholic Church, and 95 to the Jehovah's Witnesses. Forty-eight percent of all Christian religious sites that were fully or partially ruined during Russian attacks (142) belong to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which declared its independence from the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church after its council meeting on 27 May 2022.

Link to the report: <https://irf.in.ua/p/105>

Fr John writes



Dear Readers of *Oremus*

This April edition is published as we prepare to enter Holy Week. Whether, then, you read it before or after Easter, please be sure of the prayers and best wishes of the Administrator and College of Chaplains at this most joyful time of the Church's year. We can arrive at Palm Sunday questioning ourselves as to how our Lenten discipline and devotion

have worked out, but Holy Week reminds us that the work of redemption depends not on our own efforts, but on what the Lord has already done. A spiritual writer noted that Christ rose from the dead early in the morning on the first day of the week before anyone had done any work or earned any merit!

I write this as news is received of the death of Baroness Masham, a formidable member of the House of Lords for over half a century, who spent much of her career campaigning for disability rights. As well as her death being a great loss to the Catholic voice in the Palace of Westminster, her tenacity in upholding the dignity and value of each person, regardless of disability or handicap, was significant in resistance against the repeated Parliamentary attempts to legislate for Assisted Suicide. Her witness chimes in with a piece in this edition of *Oremus* on Charles Dickens. In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge has some advice for the poor, whom he sees as an unnecessary burden on society: 'If they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.' Our Christian faith never permits us to undervalue any life, yet Scrooge's attitude, whilst directed at the Mid-Victorian poor, is not that far from some views which can be found in our present society. Are we so much more compassionate than our forefathers?

We still have some more to come from my great-great-uncle's travels in the Middle East, but meanwhile there has come to light an account of the life of a Cathedral Chorister from 1916 - 1922. Suffice it to say that much has changed – no longer does the Master of Music send boys round to Victoria Station to buy his cigarettes – but I hope to serialise it in the future, as the account gives us insights into educational practices and expectations, as well as eccentricities musical and clerical.

I regret to say that, due to increased postal rates, I have had to put a small increase on the cost of postal subscriptions to *Oremus* with effect from this edition, although the magazine itself remains free. I am very aware of the loyalty and generosity of subscribers, Companions and general readers who donate when they pick up copies. It would be wrong for the magazine to become a profit-making venture, but costs are covered and some small support is given to the Cathedral. Thank you all for your help.

Christ is risen; he is risen indeed.

Fr John Scott

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Pennants and Crosses

Lucien de Guise

There are two religious festivals this month which used to be of almost universal significance in England. Easter has remained pre-eminent for Christians, while St George's Day can sometimes seem more like a fiesta for football enthusiasts. This year they both fall on a Sunday, a fortnight apart. At first sight, that might seem to be all they have in common with each other. There is, however, an additional point of convergence in the visual arts.



Fra Angelico's Christ in Heaven (1423) with a prominent flag of St George

Among the great challenges for painters and sculptors is to depict Christ's Resurrection. The subject needs to look like the physical embodiment of a person who has not been seen for 2,000 years. For many artists the answer has been to use plenty of radiant gold and a flag. Banners had more spiritual significance in the past than nowadays. In the reign of Edward VI, items forbidden by decree included Lenten veils, Rood cloths and Saints' pennants, with an exception for banners of St George, perhaps through royal predilection for a symbol associated with the Order of the Garter since 1348. The same tolerance was not extended to St George's feast, banned in 1552 as one of England's most important and often unruliest holy days of obligation.

It is no coincidence that a conspicuous feature of Resurrection images happens to look like the English flag. For centuries, the approved way to show Christ rising from the tomb entailed his having a resplendent banner in his hand. This usually took the form of a fluttering red cross on a white background. In many cases artists have shown a processional cross on a long staff, instead of the more vibrant cross of St George.

The banner held by the risen Christ does not have much to do with England, one of several countries to have the saint as their patron. It is not entirely clear why the flag is associated with him. Just like the dragon, added to the original hagiography for dramatic effect, the red-on-white cross crept up on audiences. It is likely a relic of the Crusades, a time when the choice of uniform was easily conflated with veneration of

the warrior St George. Artists seem to have pushed it forward as a symbol of Christ's Resurrection. In painted form, the colour scheme stands out magnificently.



The Risen Christ in the Holy Souls Chapel

which the Cathedral has many examples, was about victory for the Emperor Constantine. Having been seen in the sky (or a dream) before a crucial battle, it was soon transferred to the shields of his warriors, just as Crusaders put a red cross on their white shields.

Sure enough, in the Holy Souls Chapel the Risen Lord holds a red and gold cross, rather than a fluttering pennant. The cross sits above a shaft so long it is not immediately apparent where it ends. Roman origins are confirmed by the presence of a victory wreath placed near the top.

Continuing the theme is the mosaic altarpiece, with the enthroned Christ's feet firmly planted on a red and white platform; his halo is embellished with a red cross. This is a common feature, emphasising the special holiness of the Saviour. The creator of the mosaic was William Symons, painter of the more sinuous Great Rood that dominates the nave, who captured the Byzantine spirit of the Cathedral without the medieval trappings that tend to come with the cross of St George. Symons' depiction of the Resurrection is almost invisible in the surrounding blaze of silvery mosaic.

The risen Christ standing, or sometimes hovering, above his tomb is not the only way to represent the Resurrection. Within Orthodox tradition, the subject is avoided entirely. The 'Harrowing of Hell' is the preferred expression, showing Our Lord sorting out the damned souls before returning on the third day. For artists of the Italian Renaissance a more appealing visualisation was the *Noli Me Tangere*, less a brusque 'Do not touch me' and more of a 'Do not cling to me'. The scope for artists to depict this fleeting encounter has proved enormous. Once again the Cathedral's Byzantine spirit is not much inclined in this direction. The most famous version, by Titian, can be seen at the National Gallery. Mary Magdalene was the first



The Cross of St George is just visible on his shield and banner

person to see the Risen Lord, although until quite recent times it was her questionable association with sin for which she was mostly remembered. For artists, it was a question of showing her surprise and perhaps disappointment. Reunited with the one she had such faith in, he is about to depart again; an episode captured in different ways, a reminder of physical loss and spiritual gain.

Although the Cathedral has Mary Magdalene (by herself) in mosaic form, St George has a more imposing presence and his own chapel, shared with the English Martyrs. His flag is displayed discreetly, not

featuring on the altarpiece. Yet the distinctive colour combination is everywhere. Most obvious are the wall mosaics above the chapel's windows and the shields next to the altar emblazoned with a red cross. Those looking for an actual flag will need to examine the statue of St George on the north wall of the chapel, a warrior portrayed with raw intensity. Philip Lindsey Clark, the sculptor, was sought after for war memorials. Unlike Eric Gill, who didn't see active service during the First World War, Lindsey Clark won the DSO. It must also be said that at a time when accommodating ethnic diversity was a low priority, he created a compelling image of a Roman soldier born in modern-day Turkey. Whatever George may have looked like, his memory is still revered by different faiths in the Middle East. Palestinian Muslims have a special affection for a martyr who died for his monotheistic beliefs in the face of Roman paganism.

Lindsey Clark's monochromatic low-relief sculpture does more to emphasise St George's martial qualities than to bring out the colours of the flag he carries. There are traces of red pigment in the banner and the shield by his side. More ingeniously, the sculptor seems to have used the heraldic Petra Sancta system of incised lines to confirm that this is truly a red (gules) cross. Among the long lists of war dead commemorated in this chapel, I found five Georges. It seems a surprisingly small number.

As a symbol of the Resurrection, the cross of St George is not the most obvious choice. Within the Cathedral there is an even

less well-known alternative. The peacock is more visually striking, but less appreciated as a symbol of rebirth and there are different theories on how the bird acquired this status. However, it unquestionably makes for a stunning piece of mosaic work on the way into the quiet heart of the Cathedral, the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament.



The Chi-Ro, an early symbol of triumph and Resurrection

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Encountering Charles Dickens

Genevieve Muinzer

Walking into the Charles Dickens Museum on Doughty Street, where Dickens lived with his wife, Catherine, and his family, you feel you are immediately walking into a world that has been home to your favourite literary characters and recollections. The rooms are atmospheric and evocative, full of Dickens' memorabilia and precious possessions.

A brilliant writer who created some of the most iconic characters in the English language, Dickens campaigned for the poor and demanded social change. Having been a faithful friend, loving husband and devoted father for most of his life, his complex character led him to a spectacular mid-life crisis. However, history and psychology have offered some insight into this personality change, and it is impossible to think of another British writer who has highlighted the plight of the poor and disenfranchised more than him, or whose works resulted in such significant social improvements and public awareness, not just in Britain but all over the world.

As the actor and writer Simon Callow has observed: 'The reason I love him so deeply is that having experienced the lower depths, he never ceased, until the day he died, to commit himself, both in his work and in his life, trying to right the wrongs inflicted by society'. And the British public loved him for it then and have done so ever since. But his campaigning zeal was not confined to Britain. He travelled extensively, doing readings of his most famous works and supporting international charities, which saw him tour widely through the USA, Canada, Switzerland, Italy and France.

Lucinda Hawksley is a Patron of the Museum and is Dickens's great-great-great granddaughter. She has written extensively about her relative, saying: 'I feel bizarrely close to Charles and Catherine. I would have liked the young Charles, who was a lovely husband and father. Unusually for the time, he didn't believe in physical punishment for his children and although strict, allowed them to reason with their parents. When he was older, mental health meant that he became much more difficult to identify with, when he had crises and was at times self-loathing. Interestingly, he became a friend of the poet Longfellow and became a Unitarian because he felt they did so much to help the poor'.

Born in 1812, Dickens' early life was a momentous and often tragic one that impacted heavily on his subsequent writings and adult life. When his father was put in Debtors' Prison, his son was made to leave school at the age of 12 and went to work in a blacking factory, a job which he hated to the depths of his soul and left him with a lifelong hatred of the degraded position into which the poor found themselves forced by society and the government.

Later, as a journalist and writer, he became an indefatigable campaigner against poverty, especially that of children, and this became one of the main themes of his writings. He was the first



Bust of Charles Dickens in the Fall River Public Library, Massachusetts. Presented to the Public Library by Samuel Watson, 1899

British author to highlight the heart-rending plight of the young and the poor in such novels as *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield* and *Hard Times*. His campaigning projects with Angela Burdett-Coutts, 'the richest heiress of her time in Britain', were tireless. She was deeply moved by his depiction of poverty in *Oliver Twist* and *The Pickwick Papers* and, following a conversation with Dickens – a customer of Coutts bank – she pledged to apply her great fortune to the plight of the impoverished. They worked closely together and their charitable projects and

Kenneth C Zinkel, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0

appeals to the government resulted in the setting up of bathing facilities for children who lived on the street, and schools for boys and girls in slum areas. Dickens fought effectively for the establishment of the Ragged School system for homeless children, realising that education was their main way out of destitution. He campaigned for the eradication of the slums that had terrified him as a child as he walked to his job in the dark. These lawless and frightening quarters that featured so prominently in many of his works horrified the public when they discovered that the descriptions were no flights of imagination, but real fetid ghettos of destitution and danger throughout a growing number of British cities.

Dr Cindy Sughrue, the Museum's Director remarks: 'His campaigning journalism and novels certainly led the groundswell of public opinion that fought against the impact of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. There had been a feeling in society at that time that if you were poor, it was because you hadn't worked hard enough and were a shirker.' He hit a raw nerve in a society which was dealing with war, the expansion of the Empire, the Industrial Revolution and the influx of people from the countryside into the new cities, trying to make a living. Like a thunderbolt he opened their eyes, searing their consciences.

The iconic character in his 1843 novella *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge, had voiced a harsh opinion of the poor, exhorting them to die – a view that was held by many people at the time: "If they would rather die," said Scrooge, "they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population." However, the transformative power of the Ghosts of Christmas had galvanised Scrooge's conscience and, in a single night, had redeemed the friendless miser. Likewise, Dickens' story realeased a wave of compassion throughout British society, especially among the middle classes. Within six days, the 6,000 copies of *A Christmas Carol* had sold out and charitable giving from ordinary British households rose substantially. This was followed by a powerful response from other readers throughout the world who had also been moved to their souls by the book.

Dr Sughrue continues: 'People forget that Dickens was known just as much as an activist as a novelist. He was a campaigning journalist who spoke out for those who had no voice. His novels were vehicles for his social and political views. He once wrote a short, punchy article lobbying for support for a hospital for sick children which galvanised a large group of donors and established a fund-raising board.' His masterful handling resulted in the founding of the Great Ormond Street Hospital for children, so often associated with J M Barrie. When asked to stand for Parliament he declined, feeling that he could be a more effective lobbyist as a writer who humanised social crises. His novels were first serialised in magazines, which meant that the poor could afford them, when a novel was

beyond their reach. The public all over the world clamoured for the next edition and readers were captivated by the stories, even waiting at the docks for the next instalment to arrive. Dickens founded his own magazine, *Household Words*, and published many women writers including Elizabeth Gaskell, paying them well and giving them a chance in an otherwise very male profession.

It is therefore ironic that, despite his relentless social campaigning, Dickens' private life disintegrated in the late 1850s, when he fell out spectacularly with friends like Thackeray, allies like Angela Burdett-Coutts and his publisher. Worst still was the way he treated his wife Catherine; in a ruthless gesture he separated from her in 1858. Legally children were the man's property, and he maintained full custody of all but the eldest, Charley, who was of age and went to live with his mother. He prevented the children from seeing Catherine, although they managed to sneak out behind his back to do so. Secretly, the 45-year-old Dickens had fallen in love with the 18-year-old actress Ellen Ternan, and he jettisoned a significant part of his private life to conduct a secret relationship with her until his death at the age of 58.

Simon Callow believes that the author was bipolar, but Lucinda Hawksley maintains that he had suffered from mental illness from his early childhood, and that it all came to a climax amidst family crises, deaths, extreme over-work and the tumult of fame: 'He'd had terrible periods of depression from his childhood in the blacking factory and bleak times of writer's block. He engaged in extensive reading tours that shattered him and yet he continued his exhaustive campaigns. To complicate it all he fell passionately in love: in middle age he had a complete breakdown.' Dr Sughrue adds: 'Dickens was a deeply complex man, who suffered not only from depression but also from obsessive compulsive behaviour and anxiety'. It was a perfect storm. Catherine, his loyal wife, wrote to him after the famous Staplehurst train crash in 1865 in which he was involved, and he wrote back warmly in a gesture of rapprochement.

When Dickens died in 1870 at the age of 58, he was buried in Westminster Abbey and readers all over the world were devastated at their loss. But his characters have lived on vividly, now in many media, and his novels have never been out of print. The Charles Dickens Museum keeps his legacy alive through permanent displays, special exhibitions and events in Doughty Street where you can still feel the spirit of Victorian Britain burning brightly.

The Charles Dickens Museum, 48-49 Doughty Street WC1N 2LX

Dickens and Travel: The Start of Modern Travel Writing by Lucinda Hawksley, Pen & Sword History 2022

'Dangerous Devotion' – the Secret Life of a

Robert Weaver

Sitting within the Archives at Dulwich College, some five miles south of the Cathedral, lies a seemingly innocuous little volume of prayers which can comfortably be held within the palm of one hand; let us play detective, for with a little examination it can yield insights into a world very different from and as equally challenging as our own 21st century, yet with a common shared humanity which can unite us with its original makers and owners across half a millennium.

What does it look like? For a start it is very different from modern books in appearance, being only 4 by 3 inches in size and handwritten by a medieval scribe based in Flanders (modern Belgium) in gothic script about 1460 (already a time of challenge with the revolution of printing from moveable type in 1455) on 172 sheets, called folios, of vellum calfskin (each hide furnishing some nine double sheets for folding into quires to be stitched together on a spine); vellum is durable and tough as a surface and it is salutary that this little volume is a survivor across the centuries and will probably outlast us, as it has all the turmoil, religious and political of the last five centuries.



The Calendar of Feasts; on the third line up from the bottom, the name of St Thomas is undamaged

Opening it up we meet a calendar of saints in Latin, and for December the first indication that this was a potentially dangerous volume to own in the 16th century, for the word *pape* for pope has been erased, although the entry for the 29th for St Thomas of Canterbury, equally suspect to reformers, has oddly survived intact. Next we encounter a series of memorials of ten saints, each accompanied by an initial within which is a small miniature (so called from the red dye *minium* used to outline the underdrawing) of the saint and an

identifying symbol – e.g., Barbara with her tower, Margaret with a rather tame dragon, Christopher carrying Christ, and significantly for us, St Thomas of Canterbury being murdered by four knights in medieval armour (nothing anachronistic about that to the 15th century mind). Here the plot thickens, for the saint's name is lined out and below the image his set text reading *Gaude lux londiniarum* (Rejoice, Light of Londoners) is also crossed, but very lightly so – why? The family or individual owning this book were obeying the ordinance of King Henry VIII in November 1538 that no mention should be made of Thomas as saint in religious books, the most common of which were books like this one, called Hours (enabling lay people to follow the eight monastic services each day Prime to Compline). Henry resented in his reforms that here was a cleric who had stood against another King, Henry II and, through martyrdom, won. The lightness of the erasure indicates that the owners were sympathetic catholics, but obeying the letter of the law to escape punishment. The book thus must have been in England by this time, having been produced across the Channel in a place like Bruges or Ghent, major centres for export.

Liturgically it follows Sarum use, i.e., that for Salisbury Cathedral, which covered books for the south of the country; here we have indications of links with the Continent and a vibrant export trade. Its production would have involved not just a scribe but up to perhaps twenty different processes, from preparing the surface vellum, mixing the vegetable dyes, laying the gold leaf which sparkles around haloes and in the delicate filigree naturalistic borders surrounding significant text, with painting the miniatures being assigned to the most skilled craftsmen and women. Most are anonymous, but our artist has been termed 'the Master of the Beady Eyes' (you can see why if you glance closely) and also painted a similar Book of Hours now at Clare College, Cambridge.

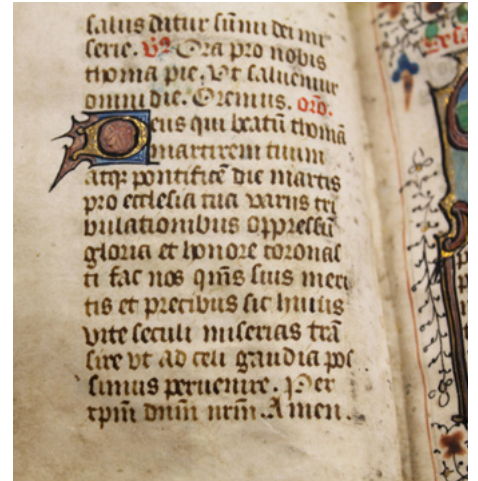


The first of four pages for St Thomas' feast, with a picture of the Martyrdom and light scoring of the text

Recusant Survivor?



Pages two and three of St Thomas' text, with more light scoring



Page four of St Thomas' office; the owner has lost interest in deleting the saint's name

Some 11 full page miniatures survive, eight of the Passion of Christ which appear rather worn; but look closer and that wear is probably not simply rubbing but caressing, perhaps kissing in devotion and is a direct link for us to the opportunities for religious fervour for the layperson right through the centuries. It was valued then for its art, as it is now, and might have been the only book in its owner's middle class home, possibly valued at the cost of reroofing the house, eyewatering today in Dulwich Village.

How did the book get to Dulwich College, a 17th century Protestant foundation by Edward Alleyn, Master of the Bears for King James I and actor manager colleague of Shakespeare? Probably our little prayer book was treasured long after the Reformation as a curious survival of a former age and for the appeal of its decoration and link with a lost past, through the vicissitudes of penal times under Edward VI, Marian revival and Elizabethan Via Media into uneasy Recusancy. Perhaps it was acquired from the centre of the English book trade based in London, from a Paternoster Row bookseller in and around St Paul's Cathedral, and presented as a curio by a 17th century well-wisher or one of the four teaching Fellows of the College for safe keeping, to languish unread in

their Fellows' Library for the next two centuries. It was certainly there by 1729 for it is mentioned in the catalogue of that date as 'manual precum perg.ms' i.e., a manuscript manual of prayers on parchment. When the College relocated down the road in the 1850s refoundation, the Book of Hours accompanied the other four medieval manuscripts (including one from Durham Cathedral cloisters, suitably though ineffectively cursed against theft) to be eventually housed within the College Archives.

The College Book of Hours constituted for its owners a passport to Heaven and remains to this day a potent reminder not only of past devotion but a reminder of past times of turmoil and the enduring power of prayer over the centuries.

Robert Weaver taught Religion and Philosophy at Dulwich College before becoming Keeper of the Fellows' Library there. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

The Library welcomes visitors by appointment on Fridays in termtime; please contact weaverr@dulwich.org.uk



A much-venerated Crucifixion scene, surrounded by delicate border decoration

Bach's St John Passion launches The Cathedral Choral Foundation

Marie-Louise Van Spyk

On Thursday 16 March the Cathedral Choir performed J S Bach's *St John Passion* to a full Cathedral, joined by acclaimed soloists Roderick Williams, singing the part of Christ, and James Gilchrist, singing the part of the Evangelist. The other soloists were members of the Choir, including several talented young choristers who delighted the audience. Sitting in a darkened Cathedral, under the great Rood, it felt like the perfect setting for this great work of sacred music. The soloists sang with real feeling and were immersed in the piece. It was hard not to feel deeply moved as the narrative of the Passion unfolded, punctuated by the piercing arias of the chorus and carried along by a wonderful baroque orchestra, directed by the Master of Music, Simon Johnson.



The Choir in Concert Performance

Speaking to a gathering of Cathedral supporters before the concert, Simon explained how important that evening's performance was to the Choir, and how this marked a critical point in its more than century-old history: 'The Choir has come on a wonderful journey over the past 18 months. Tonight's event marks another milestone, and one where we would like you to join us on that journey. We are living in a time of rapid change, accelerated by the COVID pandemic. Here at Westminster Cathedral, we were already asking ourselves the big questions about our Choir before the pandemic struck ... Central among these is, "Why do we have Westminster Cathedral Choir?" closely followed by "Why do we choose to spend money on it?" and "What value does it bring to our offering of worship?" The Cardinal has answered these questions in our Charter for Sacred Music, but they also bring me to Johann Sebastian Bach. He lived his faith through music, but, more than that, he would often sign his scores with the letters "S.D.G.", or "*Soli Deo Gloria*", "To the glory of God alone". In these three Latin words, Bach provides the answer to Westminster Cathedral Choir's existential question. We exist to glorify God, and we choose to do that to the highest standards. I hope that you will feel able to support us in this vital work.'

Simon was referring to an initiative launched at the Passion concert: The Westminster Cathedral Choral Foundation, which is being established to cover the running costs of the Choir, which currently require funding from the Cathedral of over £500,000 a year. This sum covers the salaries of the eight adult professional singers, the Lay Clerks, who are the backbone of the Choir and sing on six days every week at the Cathedral, and also of the Master of Music, Assistant Master of Music, the Organ Scholar and the Music Administrator, who make up the core team charged with delivering our rich schedule of sung liturgies. Happily, the costs of the choristers are covered by the Cathedral Choir School. The aim is to build up capital in The Choral Foundation that can be invested to offset these running costs into the future and give Simon the resources he needs to develop the reach of the Choir through concerts, tours and recordings.

The Passion concert was a reminder of how fortunate we are in our Choir. Every day, visitors from all walks of life and regular worshippers can enjoy world-class sacred music that draws them closer to God. Indeed, Cardinal Vaughan founded the Choir before the Cathedral was even opened in 1903, as he saw it needed to be central to worship at the Cathedral and for Catholicism in this country. One hundred years later, Cardinal Basil Hume raised funds for the Choir as part of the Cathedral's Centenary Appeal. However, due to rising costs, these funds have now been spent, and so it is now our turn to make sure that the choral treasure we have received is here for future generations.

To do this, you are warmly invited to consider becoming a Patron of The Choral Foundation by giving an amount of your choosing each month, or by pledging to leave a gift in your will. Patrons receive a tiered offering of special benefits, including



The daily singing of the Solemn Mass is at the heart of the Choir's work

Victoria Children's Choir is recruiting!

The Victoria Children's Choir is quickly establishing itself as a leading liturgical children's choir in London, singing Mass once a month at Westminster Cathedral, alongside preparing for other concerts and services. We are currently looking for children in school years 2 - 6 to come and join us!

The choir is an excellent opportunity to improve musicianship, singing ability, communication, teamwork and confidence, whilst engaging in Catholic liturgy and music inside Westminster Cathedral. The children learn a selection of music in English and Latin, and we improve their skills through games, songs, and feed music theory into our rehearsals. The services we sing are accompanied by the Organ Scholar and are well-attended by members of the congregation. The children need no previous singing experience and there are no auditions to join the choir – simply enthusiasm and a love of music! We welcome children from all local schools to join us for our weekly rehearsals on Tuesdays from 4pm-5:15pm in Victoria, alongside Saturday evening Mass at the Cathedral once a month.

Find out more about the choir, visit our website <https://www.victoriachildrenchoir.com> or please email the conductor, Olivia Shotton, on westminstervictoriachoir@gmail.com if you have any questions.



© Simon Marmion, National Gallery, London

A Choir of Angels of 1459

discounted tickets for concerts, invitations to private events and receptions where you can meet like-minded people, and exclusive updates. This is a chance to join in supporting the Choir for this new chapter of its history. To find out more, please look out for the new Choral Foundation brochure available at the back of the Cathedral, and get in touch with Marie-Louise Van Spyk, the Cathedral's Fundraising Manager (tel: 07596 855640, email: cathedralgiving@rcdow.org.uk).



The two evenings of the Christmas Celebration are a much-loved and popular feature of Cathedral musical life



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When the Challenge is to Save the Building,

Neil Fairbairn, Estates Manager

This article appeared in the Oremus of October 2008 and may remind many of a period of time when the whole interior of the Cathedral became not only a noisy building site, but a sort of art installation of scaffolding, a new cladding of all the marble and brickwork.

The Cathedral is undergoing major construction work. Two highly visible projects are taking place; the repair works to the domes and the Access for All on the front steps. However, other work is in hand to renew the Cathedral electrical infrastructure, the Tower lift and to replace the sound system.

Why repair the domes?

J F Bentley, the architect, intended to produce a simple building, relatively fast to construct and cheap. Hence brick was the major construction material, greatly simplifying and reducing building time. Where concrete was used, in the roof and floors, it was unreinforced. The building took seven years to complete as a largely undecorated shell. The architect selected materials with great care but the deficient quality control, especially of some of the bricks which were under-fired, led later to particular problems when bad weather conditions affected the surfaces at the top of the campanile.

Bentley was also keen to avoid embedded metal work; none of the concrete contains any steel or iron reinforcement. On balance this is probably doing the building a favour, as the domes were disturbed by the bombings close to the Cathedral during World War II, letting in a lot of rain water. The deterioration of any metal work that would have occurred then would probably have created a serious problem much earlier in the building's history. The considerable shaking the building received from these near-misses can be judged from the fact that the concrete used for the domes is deliberately varied in thickness, thinning towards the crown, but each dome is still estimated to weigh approximately 700 tons.



How it all began.

Water penetration gave the Cathedral white streaks and patches, visible on the brickwork and concrete at the upper levels. That damage was repaired externally using asphalt with a copper cover to the domes which stopped the problem. The building historically suffered movement from relatively early in its life. There are a number of cracks visible in the lower vaults and some of the walls. These cracks have been the subject of studies over the years. They are stable and routine monitoring was discontinued following the architects' report of 1988.

The domes and vaults, at around 33.5 metres (110 feet) from the nave floor, had proved impossible to examine in detail. Binocular surveys revealed pattern cracking in the concrete but the architects could only speculate on the risk of falling debris. Recently, self-propelled access machines with sufficient versatility became small enough to get through the main doors and the first close up survey for at least 50 years took place in early 2007.

This revealed that preventative action was needed now to deal not just with the concrete of the vaults but also the brick vaults, which in places have lost some of their mortar and show cracking between courses of brickwork. Some work to re-fix the galvanised mesh placed inside three of the domes was also necessary. It is believed this mesh was installed as part of the post-war repairs to guard against flakes of concrete falling to the nave. For reasons that are now unknown, there is no mesh at all in the dome nearest the sanctuary. The squinch abutments (triangular transition pieces between the circular dome and square plan of the supporting arches) are only protected by a mesh in the dome above the Sanctuary, all of the others are unprotected, again for unknown reasons.

Following the 2007 survey, one area of brick vaulting gave such cause for concern that an immediate repair was carried out from an access machine. This repair revealed the difficulty of successfully completing repair work by this method. The main problem was the size of the working platform. Two men were required but there was very little room for manoeuvre once the platform was at the work face. The inherent flexibility of

We Have to Accept It

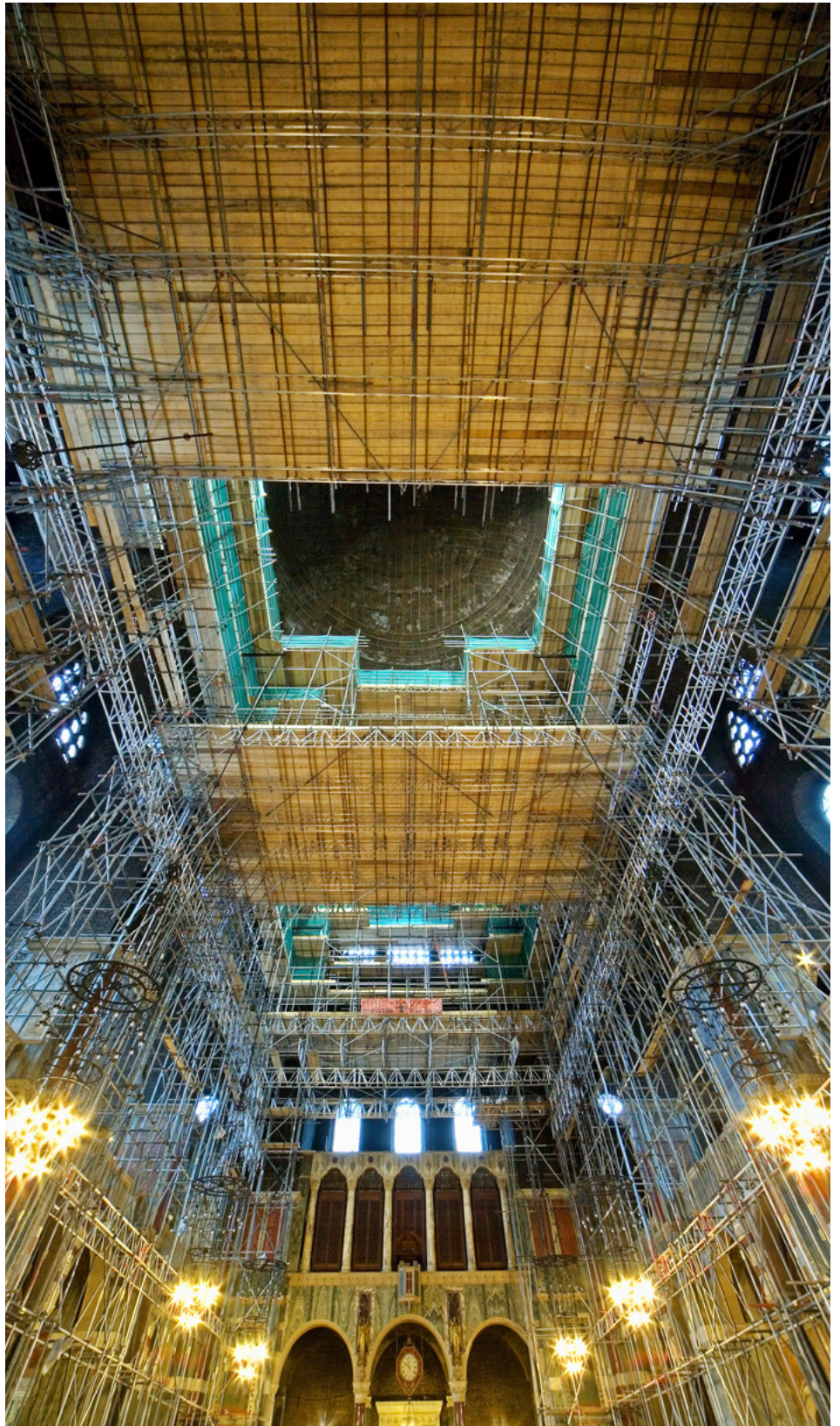
the supporting arm also made drilling difficult. The repair itself involved the use of a fast-setting polyester resin bonding to stabilise the brickwork. The area was then re-pointed and stainless steel pins grouted into diamond drilled holes to further hold the section of masonry in place.

The major part of the cost of repairing the domes is in getting access to them. The scaffolding phased in three stages, starting by the sanctuary and working back to the West doors, is a complex project in its own right. Restricted access is a serious problem, raising major Health and Safety concerns. In order to avoid disturbing worshippers and visitors, scaffolding has been constructed at night. So far the Cathedral's normal daily cycle of Masses has been largely uninterrupted, with the exception of the 10.30am Mass which has had to relocate to the Crypt.

Dust control is anticipated to be a serious problem as the work gets closer to the Grand Organ, situated above the narthex. Additional protective measures will be implemented here.

The first dome has now been fully surveyed and the formal report is awaited. It is clear that the concrete to the lower section of the domes is definitely as bad as was anticipated and that some of its sections are threatening to fall. In the upper level of the domes the concrete is in better condition and more stable. So far the cracking between brick courses has not been identified in the main brick arches crossing the Nave, but it has been discovered in ten locations in the arches, running along the line of the gallery on either side. This is slightly beyond the working platform of the scaffolding which will need adapting to allow repair work.

There have been some delays in the works; these have mostly been stoppages for various liturgical reasons. The Cathedral Chaplains have done what they can to mitigate this. But the work is going on in a fully open public building with a life of its own. There has to be 'give and take' but it is far from easy.



From Sinai to Jerusalem, via Jaffa

Fr John Scott

Great-great-great Uncle John is not impressed by the library or life of the monks of Sinai and there are hints of trouble back home in Leeds. The travelling companion and clergyman Mr Brocklebank has to smooth over some miscommunication, too.

Behind the altar screen are preserved the relics of St Catherine, which consist of a skull and a hand set in gold and ornamented with jewels, they are locked up and cannot be seen. Just below these was a chest lately received as a present from the Emperor of Russia. It is intended to hold the relics. It is made of silver plates finely worked, and has a splendid portrait of St Catherine on the lid set in jewels. In a small room behind was another chest, gold-plated, which had been received from Catherine the 2nd of Russia. It is very easy to see the policy of Russia in making these valuable presents.

There is a small chapel behind the church, supposed to be erected over the very spot where the 'Burning Bush' stood. The place is now covered with silver and lamps are continually kept burning before it. Before entering we had to take off our shoes as the place is considered, as in the days of Moses, to be holy ground. We were also shown the well at which Moses watered his father Jethro's flocks. In fact, there are a great many places grouped together and shown as sacred, which are quite impossible to be so, as the events with which they are connected happened at far greater distances than what these monks put them. It is all very well to see the places, but seeing is not always believing.

There is a very curious and valuable MS in the library. It is a copy of the Greek psalter written on 12 pages by a lady and is so small and neat that a microscope is required to read it. The rest of the library is an almost worthless collection of works in nearly every language. They are never meddled with except sometimes by a curious visitor, as was testified by a basket full of them on the floor having been half eaten and damaged by insects and waiting to be thrown away. Indeed, the monks are a bigoted, idle set, never studying except to pass time on as quickly and quietly as possible, as was told us by one who was a little more liberal and enlightened than themselves, and therefore considered heretic.

The convent itself is a jumble of buildings which seem to have been dropped down without the slightest regard to order or architectural beauty. Long passages and holes through which you have to grope in total darkness, and not over clean either. The visitors' apartments are the very best parts of the buildings and form a conspicuous object in any view of the convent. The brethren were very busy making everything look as respectable as possible, as they expect the Duke of Brabant in a few days.

February 11th 1863

Since I wrote the above, we have arrived safely in Cairo. We had nothing particular on the way except that our companion was very ill of his usual fever. Before leaving Cairo for Sinai, I called at the post and found a letter from you enclosing one from Rebecca dated December 31st, also one for Eli from a Mr Stead. In this were 24 pages of notepaper written close!! Another was from Louisa to Eli.

I was very sorry to hear of Mr Robinson's loss and I am afraid it will not only affect him but all connected with the firm. He seems to have a great deal of trouble as I learn from a letter I have received from Tom Wade that he had turned Daniel away and got another apprentice. I was at the post this morning, there was a letter from you dated January 9th enclosing one from Henry and one for Eli from Mr Joe Hammond.

You seem to have been much troubled about our supposed separation from Mr B, but I suppose by this time it has all been satisfactorily explained by Eli. I think he ought not to have mentioned it to Dr Morley. I have made enquiries of Mr Lancing about young Dufton but he has not heard anything, and he seems to think that something serious has happened. When I called at the Consuls for my passport, I found four letters posted on the Nile, one for which Eli had paid 4/- at Assouan. What an imposition!

The weather here is finer than ever, but it is getting so hot as to be uncomfortable. I suppose it will be temperate or even cold in Syria. You asked if we 'have been to the Pyramids'. I went just after Eli left, but it is no use attempting to describe them. Perhaps I may go again tomorrow (D.V.) We start on Friday to Alexandria, thence to Jaffa and Jerusalem where we intend staying 2 weeks.

Enclosed there is a note from Mr Brocklebank. With love to you, George, Eli, Louisa, Henry and all friends,

I remain, Dear Father and Mother,

Your very affectionate son,

J. E. Plummer



The town and port of Jaffa in 1900 – ‘the most disgusting place I was ever in’, writes John

Letter 12 - To Mr and Mrs Plummer

February 11th 1863

My dear Friends,

All is well! All is well! At least that is the case with your friends abroad, but I am exceedingly sorry to find from Mr P's letter to hand this morning, that you have been thrown into such a state of painful suspense at home by Eli's injudicious letter to Mr Morley, when the whole affair originated in the purest of motives and terminated in the best and most happy results.

It seems that Horeb is a range of mountains of granite stone, immensely high, of which Sinai forms a part, rearing its snowy peak in the centre of its fellows. The ascent, and more especially the descent, were very difficult and somewhat dangerous on account of the snow, 8 inches, and in some places almost knee-deep, and what is still worse, some of the steeps where the snow could not lay were all ice. Such an adventure, nothing but the sanctity and notoriety of Sinai would have induced me to make.

In my travels abroad, there are two things, especially, in which I am very firm, and indeed immovable, the one is, not to allow anyone to induce me to make dangerous adventures!, the other, not to alter my style and mode of travelling for the sake of company or example, i.e. to spend money too fast. However, being borne up by an Almighty Hand, we returned to the Convent safe and sound, thankful to God that we had not ‘dashed our feet’ or head ‘against a stone’.

John is very much improved. I hope this trip to the East will lay the foundation of a long, healthy, happy and useful life. He is now thoughtful and very diligent in research, indeed indefatigable, never tired, taking long notes and thus making the most and best of his time.

May I trouble you to write to my brother just two lines to say that we have got back from the desert to Cairo, highly satisfied with our Sinaitic excursion, and both of us in good health and spirits.

To our Father in heaven be all the praise.

Believe me, as ever,

Yours most affectionately and prayerfully,

John Brocklebank

8. Jerusalem to Beyrout

Letter 13

Jerusalem.

February 20th 1863

Dear Father and Mother,

Having just heard that the mail for England starts tomorrow, I thought I had better write a few lines instead of delaying till the next post. We left Cairo on Saturday. It was the time of the Carnival and there were the most abominable processions in Alexandria I ever saw, people dressed up in all sorts of costumes with masks, etc. They were all Europeans, and I think they have made themselves detestable enough to the natives already without anything further.

We were warned in Cairo not to be out after dark as since the succession of the new Pasha several acts of violence have taken place upon Europeans. Indeed, the night after we left, a fire burst out in the European part of the city and bazaar, which has caused an immense loss of property. It is supposed to have been the work of incendiaries. I should think by this you will have seen an account of it in the papers. We were kept in Alexandria longer than we expected as the French boat instead of leaving for Jaffa on Monday at 8 am did not start till Tuesday at 5 pm.

The town of Jaffa is the most disgusting place I was ever in, although like Constantinople it looks very well from the sea. The streets are just as if a cart load of stones had been thrown down and spread around a little, with large dunghills before the doors of the houses, and dead cats and dogs lying about.

We saw the house of ‘Simeon the Tanner’ where Peter had his vision. It is true it is close by the sea, but that is the only thing that makes it at all likely to be the ancient one. It is now used as a mosque by the Mohammedans. We next hired horses to carry us to Jerusalem. After leaving Jaffa, we passed through thick orange groves, the fruit being 3 or 4 times as large as those you get in England. We then entered the celebrated plain of Sharon, but saw nothing of the roses. After about 3 hours' ride we arrived at Ramleh where we put up at the convent for the night. On entering the city, we saw a number of lepers, who as in the olden time, are not allowed to reside within the walls. We found the monks of the convent exceedingly kind, although they could not give us meat in Lent, yet we managed very well on dried fish, eggs, etc.

Mr B. and I are not by ourselves as we have joined a young Englishman from college whom Mr. Brocklebank met in Cairo, and afterwards in the desert, also an American lady and gentleman, and today two Swedish Barons joined us. We started at 6 this morning and travelled 9 ½ hours over one of the roughest roads I think it is possible to find anywhere, in fact it was nothing but the bed of a mountain stream covered with immense stones.

Hail, Fellows well met!



Graduation day recently dawned for the Royal College of Organists, with the Cathedral making a strong showing with two new Fellows. Left is Christopher Too, who becomes Organ Scholar in September and on his left is our prize-winning present incumbent of the post, Carolyn Craig.



Candidates Elected

On the first weekend of Lent those who are preparing to enter the Church at Easter come together at the Cathedral for what is known as the 'Rite of Election', the beginning of the more intensive time of teaching and prayer before the Sacraments of Initiation are received. Names are read out and a book containing them all is presented before the candidates come forward personally with their sponsors to be welcomed by the bishops. In previous years this has been spread over Saturday and Sunday afternoons, but this year it was just on the Saturday, making it a slightly longer affair, but with a sense of joining a larger community.



New Saturday Vigil Mass Singers

March saw the first singing of the Saturday Vigil Mass by children from the Westminster Schools' Singing Programme, an offshoot of the National Programme (NSSP) which has been created for all Catholic dioceses in the UK to create or enhance their own music programmes for children educated in Catholic state schools. It has £2.325 million available to seed fund singing programmes for young people. This funding can be used to create independent, financially sustainable projects through the network of diocesan schools and directly benefit children and support the most poor, vulnerable and disenfranchised members

of our society, who have often been an afterthought for choral and church music. Weekly sessions take place during the normal school day and are tailored to suit each class and year group. They include music for school liturgies blended with interactive music education games and secular repertoire. The foundation of the Schools Singing Programme rests on a network of after-school choirs that support parish and cathedral liturgies. As well as enhancing the in-school experience of musical education, the programme engages the wider community with concerts and performances that all can enjoy.

Images of the Passion



Lay Clerks, Choristers and Orchestra all require rehearsal before the performance can begin to be brought together



No time for hesitation now



Solos in the spotlight



Applause all round; the performance complete



Art and Chris from Maintenance get to work dismantling the staging, preparing the Cathedral for tomorrow's early Mass

In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*

Varia

A coming event of importance is the 'Mission' to be given at the Cathedral by the Redemptorist Fathers. A Mission will be preached first for children only, from Sunday, April 15, to Sunday, 22nd, and from the latter date to Sunday, May 6, for adults. There will be a solemn opening of the Mission on Sunday, April 22, at the 12 o'clock Mass. The week-day services throughout the fortnight's Mission for adults will be as follows: Mass at every half hour from 7 to 9. There will be a short instruction after the 9 o'clock Mass, and a sermon every night at the 8 o'clock service. On the Sundays there will be Masses at the usual hours, with two sermons.

The term 'Mission' is used to designate certain special efforts on the part of the Church, either generally or locally, to impart, over a short period of time, intensive instruction to the faithful, and especially to the unfaithful, of her children. It might be called a spiritual stocktaking, or a spiritual spring cleaning, if this latter term did not connote, as alas it does for most of us, annual recurrence. For Missions do not come every year. As a matter of fact, it is 11 years since the Cathedral district was aroused by a Mission. The primary purpose of a Mission is to instruct, to arouse slackers, to make good people nice, and nice people good, to put some doctrinal solidity into the pious, and some piety into the lukewarm. The clear, forcible and consecutive exposition of the most important truths of salvation such as is given in a Mission affords a powerful means of arousing and renovating a parish spiritually. Everyone finds in the sermons and instructions something that appeals peculiarly to himself and is likely to bear fruit in the future.

.....

A Boy's Club is an admirable method of keeping in touch with our boys between the critical ages of 14 and 19, often preventing the loss of their religion and saving from the gutter and police courts lads who are capable, with a little encouragement, of developing into useful and law-abiding citizens, healthy sportsmen, and, above all, good Catholics. A club of this nature is especially wanted in Catholic Westminster, and the boys, who have themselves asked for one, are going to get one. In fact, a club has already been started in the Cathedral parish under the auspices of the local Conference of St Vincent de Paul; but the temporary premises are quite inadequate, and an earnest appeal has been issued asking for help to enable the promoters of the club to obtain spacious and permanent quarters.

The 'Mass in G Minor', by Vaughan Williams, will be sung on Easter Monday at the 10.30 Mass, the Cathedral choir being assisted by the choir of the Church of the Sacred Heart, Wimbledon. The same Mass will be sung on Easter Tuesday, but by the Cathedral choir alone. When this Mass was sung for the first time last month the daily Press gave prominence to reports on it. *The Daily Telegraph* concludes its generous estimate of this Mass by saying that it will 'most probably be set as a landmark in the history of Church music, as being a 20th-century revival of the vocal style of tradition'.

.....

The Catholic Evidence Guild is not quite five years old. The inaugural meeting was held in the Cathedral Hall in April, 1918. Since that time its membership has greatly increased, and the same work has been taken up in various parts of the country. Latterly the policy of the Westminster C.E.G. has been intensive, every endeavour being made to raise the general standard of efficiency.

The Guild is now endeavouring to make its work known among the senior pupils of our Catholic colleges, in the hope that every year a certain number of those who leave will be attracted towards it. Perhaps the most notable single event in its history has been the purchase for its use, early in 1920, of the Catholic Women's League Hut in the Cathedral grounds. This has given the Guild plenty of space for its training classes, and for a library and canteen, though at the same time it has imposed a heavy financial burden, the fabric of the Hut being in a parlous state, and in need of constant repairs.

In regard to the 'pitches', or speaking-places, the recent policy of the Guild has again been rather intensive than extensive; that is to say, it has sought rather to maintain a few well-staffed pitches than a larger number of poorly provided ones. That at Marble Arch is, of course, the best known, as it was the first to be opened. It is now kept going every evening, except Tuesday, and Catholics who wish to make a first acquaintance with the Guild's work usually go there to do so. The veterans of the Guild, however, by no means consider it the most valuable of their pulpits; indeed, one energetic and pugnacious speaker has been heard to compare addressing a Hyde Park audience to 'punching a feather bed'!

from the April 1923 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle

More Modern than Ancient

Richard Hawker, Head Sacristan

I have always liked this rather handsome 'Mannerist' pair of cruets, which we use on special occasions. The 'A' & 'V', as I'm sure you know, stand for *Aqua* and *Vinum*, that is water and wine, so as to distinguish between the two easily, in the heat of liturgy. Not, as a museum guide once tried to convince a friend of mine, made for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert!

They stand about 24cm tall, not quite flagons, but getting there, and are finely gilded inside, which is unusual for cruets. The hinged lids have a charming pie crust edge to them, and both have some very fine 'chased' work, of flowers, scrolls and shells. They carry no inscription, and as yet I have found no note of them in back editions of the *Cathedral Chronicle*. What they do have though is a fascinating set of hallmarks.



The front view

Regular readers of this column will know that I set a great store by provenance; and hallmarks are designed to help establish just that: who, when and where. The English have elevated this to an art form, telling in a few symbols and letters the silversmith, the year the piece was 'assayed', and at which 'assay' office: where an object of silver or gold is assessed as to the quality of the precious metal. The first assay marks date from 1544, and have been in continuous use ever since.

This particular set of hallmarks intrigued me; the usual set of English hall marks: a maker's mark, 'WM' in a diamond - most likely William Moering. A lion and a leopard, indicating the London Assay office, a date letter (e), indicating they were assayed in 1900. So far, so good; but then a second letter: an F. That's not right, why would there be two date letters? But Moering was generally an agent for importing foreign silver for sale; therefore, the Assay office would stamp it with F for foreign, if it was to be sold. Not much nuance there, but it makes the point.



Viewed from the side, with hallmarks just below the rim of the cruet

Next come an extraordinary set of markings, clearly not English, an A, and a P, both crowned, a fleur de lis, and a shield. At this point, I must confess, Google comes in very handy, and soon I am learning all about the pseudo-hallmarks of Hanau silver.

The town of Hanau, about 15 miles from Frankfurt, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, had a thriving industry of re-creating antique silver pieces, and using antique looking hallmarks on them. Anywhere else in the world this action would have been illegal, but since there was no silversmiths' guild to oversee hallmarks, the makers had free rein to do as they pleased. These marks, and the quality of the silver work, have convinced even experts that pieces are far older than they were. Whether the intention was to deceive or not is debatable.

What it means is that, with reasonable certainty, these cruets were made by the firm Woolf & Knell, who were operating from 1887-1914, which would tie in with the English hallmark of 1900. This would also date them to the time of the foundation of the Cathedral. Perhaps they were a necessary purchase for solemn liturgies, out of general expenses, or perhaps yet another anonymous gift.



No reason to confuse wine and water

A Remarkable Teacher – Mrs Maya Vati Rattan RIP

David Gully, former School colleague

Early on Friday 10 March, I woke to the news that my colleague and very good friend Maya Rattan, a teacher of 50 years at SVP School and volunteer in retirement, had died. Many will have had personal experience of her as a teacher and, I am sure, will have admired and loved her.

I met her first in 1990, when I joined the school as the new Science Co-ordinator, and from the start she made an immediate positive impression. Senior to me in years and with great experience, she welcomed me with enthusiasm and was keen to embrace the new Science element of the then brand new National Curriculum. It really helped me settle in as everyone respected what she thought, being willing to learn, even from a then young upstart! She was the sort of person for whom we had natural respect, and was always 'Mrs Rattan'; I only ever heard one person address her as 'Maya' in the staffroom and he soon changed his ways.

If I were to pick words to describe her they would be calmness, humility, dedication and service. Her demeanour meant that her classroom was an oasis of order and peace. The children in her care seemed to sense her calm and responded to her. As her expertise was Early Years, the children there had an excellent start to their learning. She put everyone else first and her constant kindness made you want to work with her. I was so lucky when placed in the classroom next to her as my mentor in working with younger children.

Working alongside, her I began to hear the story of her life. She was born in India and with her family lived under Imperial rule. At Independence her parents decided to move to a new life in East Africa, and there she married. Sensing instability in that country, like many at the time, they looked for a more stable life in England where some family already lived. Mrs Rattan always wanted to be a teacher and found employment at SVP under the headship of Sr Clara DC. As a devout Hindu, she was surprised to be appointed but Sister saw the bigger picture and they developed an excellent working relationship. In the 1970's Ms Johnson became the first lay headteacher at the new building in Morpeth Terrace and the rest is history. Mrs Rattan worked under the leadership of Mrs Weller, Mr O'Neal and was a volunteer under Mr Scott Cree until 2020, when the pandemic stopped all normal activity.

Professionally and personally, she was a person you could trust and the most committed teacher, working long after the children went home. Senior teachers can often fear or be resistant to change, but not her. The computers were on and booted first thing in the morning, as the old Nimbus



machines took a long time to load the floppy discs! A fantastic mathematician, what she didn't know about the subject and the latest resources wasn't worth knowing; but, most importantly, she shared that knowledge with you. What stands out for me was her sense of service. She was fulfilling her vocation, a calling from God. Her Hindu faith guided her and inspired her, and it was no surprise when she was nominated by the City of Westminster for the 'Teacher of the Year Award'.

So it's with great sadness in our hearts that all at SVP say goodbye to a really good friend. It was wonderful that the present headteacher released as many staff as possible to attend her funeral. It was a fitting tribute to a special person. She and her family are in our prayers and I have arranged a Mass to be said for the repose of Maya's soul. I think she would approve, remembering the many Masses she had attended in the school and the Cathedral. She said to me once: 'We are all on the same journey to God, only different paths'. The Preface of the Requiem Mass says: 'Indeed for your faithful, Lord, life is changed not ended, and when this earthly dwelling turns to dust, an eternal dwelling is made ready for them in heaven'.

As Maya's ashes are lowered into flowing water, there is a pious belief in Hinduism that all rivers and streams are linked to the Holy Ganges, the gateway to heaven for them. May she flow to the God of All, may she come to the God, who is Love to be born again in Him. Amen.

CATHEDRAL HISTORY – A PICTORIAL RECORD

The Chrism Mass in the Nave during the 1980s



Paul Tobin

For a number of years in this period, the Chrism Mass was celebrated in the Nave rather than in the Sanctuary. A major seating change, involving turning all the seats through 90 degrees, saw the focal point for the liturgy being an altar situated in the middle of the nave. To the left in the picture are seated the Auxiliary Bishops, including the tall figure of Bishop Philip Harvey with Bishop James O'Brien to his right. Cardinal Basil Hume as Principal Celebrant can be seen preaching from the pulpit.

These Masses were attended by members of the Altar Servers' Guild of St Stephen from many parishes in the diocese in addition to the clergy. With so many seats required for the participants, the galleries were used to accommodate some of the congregation who were unable to find seating in the main body of the Cathedral nave.

Although this picture is undated, it was probably taken in 1982, when diocesan vestments for the clergy were first introduced and worn for the Mass celebrated by Pope St John Paul II at Wembley that year.

As a footnote, during this period in the history of the Cathedral, the crucifix of the High Altar, along with all the statues, were not veiled during the last week of Lent and Holy Week.

Image from Westminster Cathedral 1895-1995 by Peter Doyle – no credit indicated

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Tales of the English Martyrs

St John Payne, Priest, was arrested in 1579 by means of 'Judas Eliot'. This man had been employed in positions of trust in Catholic households, to their great loss. He had embezzled monies of Lady Petre and had enticed a young woman away from the Roper household and had then applied to Fr Payne to marry them, and on his refusal determined to be avenged. The charge of theft and murder was now hanging over him, but by betraying a priest he escaped from both and filled his pockets as well. On his perjured evidence alone, though refuted in court, Fr Payne was sentenced, and hung at Chelmsford on 2 April 1582.



The Month of April

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention

For a culture of peace and non-violence

We pray for the spread of peace and non-violence, by decreasing the use of weapons by states and citizens.

Saturday 1 April

Ps Week 1

Lent feria

4pm Monthly Low Mass (Blessed Sacrament Chapel)

Sunday 2 April

Ps Week 2

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

11.30am Procession from Cathedral Hall and Solemn Pontifical Mass (Full choir)

Byrd – Mass for four voices

Byrd – Ne irascaris

Byrd – Civitas sancti tui

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction

Marenzio – Magnificat octavi toni

Poulenc – Timor et tremor

4.30pm Deaf Service Mass in Cathedral Hall

Monday 3 April

MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

Tuesday 4 April

TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

12 noon Solemn Pontifical Mass of Chrism (Full choir)

Mozart – Spatzenmesse (K.220)

Croce – In spiritu humilitatis

Byrd – Civitas sancti tui

Organ: *J.S. Bach* – Pièce d'orgue (BWV 572)

Wednesday 5 April

WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

1.15pm Lunchtime Concert

Thursday 6 April

MAUNDY THURSDAY

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

Vaughan Williams – Mass in G minor

Durufle – Ubi caritas

11.45pm Compline

Friday 7 April

Fast and Abstinence

GOOD FRIDAY

9am – 5pm NHS Blood Transfusion Service in Cathedral Hall

10am Office of Readings (Full choir)

Victoria – Tenebrae Responsories

Anerio – Christus factus est

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, Benediction 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.

For full opening and closure times of the Cathedral and for confession and service times during Holy Week and the Easter Octave, please see flyers available from the Cathedral or consult the Cathedral diary on the website.

* Live streamed via the Cathedral website

3pm Solemn Liturgy of the Passion (Full choir)

Bruckner – Christus factus est

Byrd – Passion according to John

Victoria – Improperia

King John IV of Portugal – Crux fidelis

Lotti – Crucifixus

Casals – O vos omnes

6.30pm Stations of the Cross

Saturday 8 April

Fast as desired

HOLY SATURDAY

10am Office of Readings (Full Choir)

Victoria – Tenebrae Responsories

Anerio – Christus factus est

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

Lassus – Iubilare Deo omnis terra

Reid – Exodus canticle

Palestrina – Sicut cervus

Vierne – Messe solennelle in C sharp minor

Palestrina – Dexter Domini

L'Héritier – Surrexit pastor bonus

Organ: *Widor* – Final (Symphonie VI)

Sunday 9 April

EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION

12 noon Solemn Pontifical Mass (Full choir)

Rheinberger – Cantus missae

Bassano – Dic nobis Maria

Organ: *Dupré* – Prelude & Fugue in B major

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

Palestrina – Magnificat primi toni

Byrd – Victimae paschali laudes

Organ: *Langlais* – Incantation pour un jour saint

No 7pm Mass

Monday 10 to Friday 14 April

The Cathedral opens at 9.30am and closes at 6pm;

10am Morning Prayer

10.30am Mass

11.30 – 12.30pm Confessions

12.30pm Mass

5.30pm Mass

Monday 10 April

MONDAY IN EASTER OCTAVE

Tuesday 11 April

TUESDAY IN EASTER OCTAVE

Wednesday 12 April

WEDNESDAY IN EASTER OCTAVE

1.15pm Lunchtime Concert

Thursday 13 April

THURSDAY IN EASTER OCTAVE

9am – 5pm NHS Blood Transfusion Service in Cathedral Hall

Friday 14 April

No Friday Abstinence

FRIDAY IN EASTER OCTAVE

9am – 5pm NHS Blood Transfusion Service in Cathedral Hall

Saturday 15 April

SATURDAY IN EASTER OCTAVE

Normal timetable resumes

Sunday 16 April

Ps Week 2

2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER (or of Divine Mercy)

12 noon Solemn Mass (Cantor)

4pm Solemn Vespers (English) and Benediction

Monday 17 April

Easter feria

Tuesday 18 April

Easter feria

Wednesday 19 April

St Alphege, Bishop & Martyr

9am – 5pm NHS Blood Transfusion Service in Cathedral Hall

Thursday 20 April

Easter feria

Choral services resume

Friday 21 April

Friday Abstinence

Easter feria

(St Anselm, Bishop & Doctor)

2.30pm Memorial Service for Lord Camoys RIP (Cardinal Nichols)



Sculpture of St Anselm, Church of Sant'Anselmo, Rome

© Elijah Owens / CC BY-SA 4.0

Saturday 22 April

Easter feria

6pm Vigil Mass with Adult Confirmations (Bishop McAleenan)

Sunday 23 April

Ps Week 3

3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER

11am – 3pm SVP Book Sale in Cathedral Hall

12 noon Solemn Mass (Full choir)

Bingham – Mass for Westminster Cathedral

Palestrina – Angelus Domini descendit

Bingham – Et aperti sunt oculi

Organ: *Widor* – Final (Symphonie romane)

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction (Full choir)

Lassus – Magnificat octavi toni

Palestrina – Et introeunt in monumentum

Organ: *Widor* – Moderato (Symphonie romane)

Monday 24 April

ST GEORGE, Martyr, Patron of England

5pm Second Vespers

5.30pm Solemn Mass (Full choir)

Berkeley – Missa brevis

Byrd – Iustorum animæ

Byrd – Beati mundo corde

Organ: *Elgar* – Allegro Maestoso (Organ Sonata in G major)

Tuesday 25 April

St MARK, Evangelist

Wednesday 26 April

Easter feria

1.15pm Lunchtime Concert

Thursday 27 April

Easter feria

Friday 28 April

Friday abstinence

Easter feria

(St Peter Chanel, Priest & Martyr; St Louis M Grignon de Montfort, Priest)

9am – 5pm NHS Blood Transfusion Service in Cathedral Hall

Saturday 29 April

St CATHERINE OF SIENA, Virgin & Doctor, Patron of Europe



St Catherine, in the House of St Catherine, Siena

© José Luiz Bernardes Ribeiro / CC BY-SA 4.0

Sunday 30 April

4th SUNDAY OF EASTER

• World Day of Prayer for Vocations

12 noon Solemn Mass (Full choir)

Tye – Missa Euge bone

L'Héritier – Surrexit pastor bonus

Organ: *Tournemire* – Choral-Improvisation sur le "Victimæ Paschali"

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction (Full choir)

Marenzio – Magnificat octavi toni

Victoria – Laudate Dominum

Organ: *Langlais* – Mors et Resurrectio (Trois Paraphrases Grégoriennes)

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

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

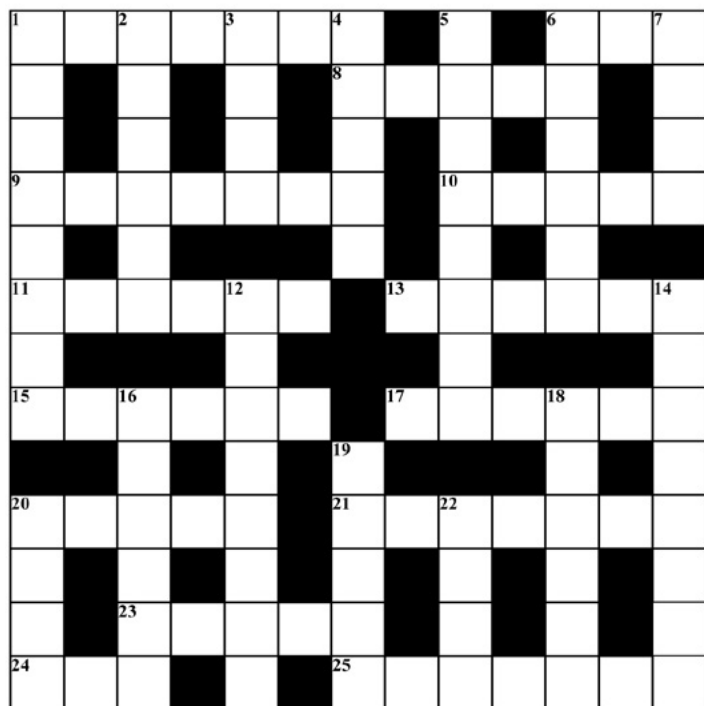
St George's Chapel,

First Tuesdays 2.30-4pm

Yoruba Association

Hinsley Room,

Third Sundays 1.30-3pm



Alan Frost April 2023 – No. 109

Clues Across

- 1 Football Hamlet and school in south London (7)
 6 German city with world's highest church steeple (3)
 8 Brother of Moses and his 'prophet' (5)
 9 Dominican Saint, Catherine -- ----, Doctor of the Church, Feast Day 29 April (2,5)
 10 National and Orthodox Church (5)
 11 European capital, about 80 miles from Fatima (6)
 13 Lunatic asylum, name derived from the birthplace of Jesus (6)
 15 One taking pleasure in people's sufferings (3)
 17 William -----, inventor of printing press, memorial in Westminster Abbey (6)
 20 Order on the way to ordination, such as 'acolyte' (5)
 21 & 23 Across: She visited Solomon, making a famous entry in a work by Handel (5,2,5)
 23 See 21 Across (5)
 24 First note on tonic-solfa scale (3)
 25 Information or advertising flier (7)

Clues Down

- 1 'Sword of -----', literary metaphor about danger hanging by a thread (8)
 2 Orlando de -----, 16th c. composer of many sacred works (6)
 3 Of Dogs or Wight (4)
 4 Mother of Ishmael by Abraham (5)
 5 Town in Ireland with Shrine to martyr St Oliver Plunkett (8)
 6 Reveal identity of nun? (6)
 7 Nature of those inheriting the earth in the Sermon on the Mount (4)
 12 Watcher of famous newspaper from Fleet Street days? (8)
 14 St Louis-Marie de -----, Order founder and writer of True Devotion to Mary (8)
 16 Of European country famous for bacon (6)
 18 Underground passageway, as at Blackwall and Dartford (6)
 19 Fair shares and rights (5)
 20 Tonic wine for which Buckfast Abbey famous (4)
 22 Prophet and Book of the OT (4)

ANSWERS

Across: 1 Dulwich 6 Ulin 8 Aaron 9 Of Siena 10 Greek 11 Lisbon 13 Bedlam 15 Sadist 17 Caxton 20 Minor 21 Queen Of 23 Sheba 24 Doh 25 Leaflet
 Down: 1 Damiocles 2 Lassus 3 Isle 4 Hagar 5 Drogheda 6 Unveil 7 Meek 12 Observer 14 Montfort 16 Danish 18 Tunnel 19 Equal 20 Mead 22 Ezra

Good Friday Evening

Christina Rossetti

No Cherub's heart or hand for us might ache,
 No Seraph's heart of fire had half sufficed:
 Thine own were pierced and broken for our sake,
 O Jesus Christ.

Therefore, we love Thee with our faint good-will,
 We crave to love Thee not as heretofore,
 To love Thee much, to love Thee more, and still
 More and yet more.

Easter

Edmund Spenser

Most glorious Lord of Lyfe! that, on this day,
 Didst make Thy triumph over death and sin;
 And, having harrowd hell, didst bring away
 Captivity thence captive, us to win:
 This joyous day, deare Lord, with joy begin;
 And grant that we, for whom thou diddest dye,
 Being with Thy deare blood clene washt from sin,
 May live for ever in felicity!

And that Thy love we weighing worthily,
 May likewise love Thee for the same againe;
 And for Thy sake, that all lyke deare didst buy,
 With love may one another entertayne!
 So let us love, deare Love, lyke as we ought,
 —Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

Easter Hymn

A E Housman

If in that Syrian garden, ages slain,
 You sleep, and know not you are dead in vain,
 Nor even in dreams behold how dark and bright
 Ascends in smoke and fire by day and night
 The hate you died to quench and could but fan,
 Sleep well and see no morning, son of man.

But if, the grave rent and the stone rolled by,
 At the right hand of majesty on high
 You sit, and sitting so remember yet
 Your tears, your agony and bloody sweat,
 Your cross and passion and the life you gave,
 Bow hither out of heaven and see and save.

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

Watch this space

Joe Allen, Co-ordinator

Since the last issue of *Oremus*, it has been good to have run two events, and very heartening to have received positive and grateful feedback from attendees.

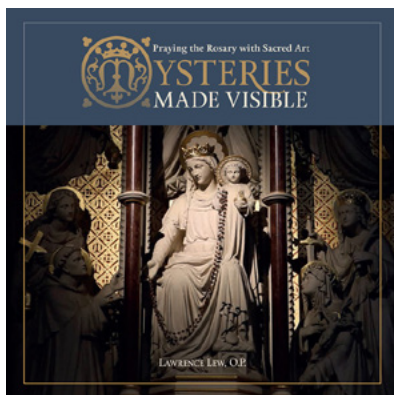


One event saw Head Sacristan Richard Hawker give a tour of the Sacristy and some of its contents. Through the medium of chalices, chasubles, and cappæ (worn in their newer version by the Cathedral Canons and Chaplains as choir dress today) we did not merely step behind the scenes, but rather were immersed in the history and traditions of the Church,

the annals of our own building, and the venerable world of art and design in service of the liturgy. Pictured is one tour attendee inspecting the episcopal winter *cappa magna*.

Later in March we were pleased to welcome Fr Lawrence Lew OP, Rector of the Rosary Shrine at Haverstock Hill and Dominican Promoter General of the Holy Rosary. He gave an accessible, engaging, and rousing talk on the history and understandings of this Christ-centred Marian devotion. All those who attended came away with words of wisdom and guidance, for example, praying a decade of the Rosary as a better use of our time than mindlessly 'doomscrolling' through social media! Our thanks go to those who attend our events and those who make them possible - they make all the difference in our continual fundraising mission for the Cathedral.

Looking forward - 'watch this space'. Very soon details of our events for post-Easter and through summer will be publicized and shared through all our usual channels such as social media, the Cathedral website and newsletters. As we celebrate the joy of Easter, witness the Coronation of His Majesty the King, and enjoy the longer and warmer days - there will be many opportunities around the Cathedral and beyond to gather, socialise, and support our Mother Church.



Mysteries Made Visible: Praying the Rosary with Sacred Art by Fr Lawrence Lew OP is available as a paperback from the Catholic Truth Society.

The friends
OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

Eight Thames Bridges Walk 2023

The annual Sponsored Walk initiated by the late Eric Considine in aid of Filipino children with disabilities In Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya will be held on Saturday 15 April.

In this 12th year of fundraising for the Sunshine Project, participants are invited to meet on the Cathedral steps at 10.30am, to start the Walk promptly at 11am. We will walk at our own pace and normally finish within three hours, with a get-together in the Cathedral café.

All are welcome to donate / support this worthwhile event; please follow us on Facebook or contact Flora for sponsorship forms and further information on **07375 649160**.



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Clean Water for Namakeba School, Uganda



Students of Namakeba School collecting water from Lake Victoria

Namakeba School is located on an island in Lake Victoria. Like many schools in the developing world, there is no running water on tap and the students must collect whatever water is needed in containers from the nearest source. This can be a dangerous task as there is always a risk of accidents, contamination and crocodiles in Lake Victoria. Br Godfrey Onyango is a Marian Brother and Deputy Head of the school. He has asked SPICMA for funds to purchase tanks and guttering so that the school roofs can be used to harvest the rainwater. The amount needed is £7,050.

SPICMA receives more requests for sourcing clean water than for any other type of project and far more than we can possibly fund. Should this appeal raise more than the amount required for Namakeba School, we'll direct the additional donations towards other communities seeking similar help.

There is a video of Br Godfrey and Namakeba School made by a local Ugandan television station available to view on our website: www.spicma.org



Please send your donation and return this form to: SPICMA, P.O. Box 299, Cirencester GL7 9FP

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