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Oremus

Westminster Cathedral Magazine



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Vainly with gifts would his favour secure
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Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

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This oil on wood panel painting of the Epiphany is in Barcelona's National Museum of Art of Catalonia. The work of an unknown artist, it is dated to 1520 and measures 15" x 11"

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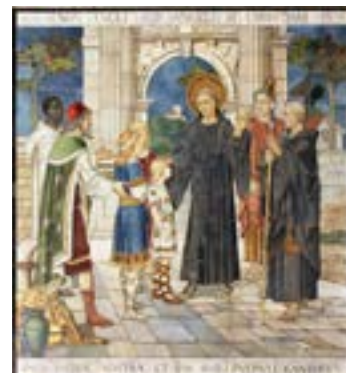
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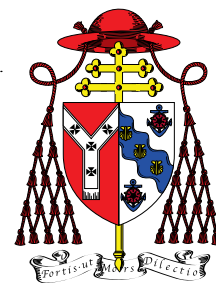


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From the Cardinal

Some verses of St John of the Cross begin with these words:

*'How well I know the spring that brims and flows
Although by night.'*

As his poem unfolds he explores those two images: living water and the night. Both are fitting for our Christmas reflection, for it is no coincidence that Christ comes to us in the dead of the night, and from there flow streams of living water.

The night is often our lowest moment. Separated from the activities of the day we are left face to face with the many things that cause us dread, distress or just a sense of emptiness. The angels break into this darkness proclaiming the coming of our Saviour. He comes, embracing our helplessness, bringing a light to cast away the fears of darkness and to open for us the pathway of peace. No longer is the dark a place of distress, but it becomes a place in which, in all our weakness, we are seen and loved by God. The darkened stable becomes the shining palace of our mighty king!

Speaking of the spring of living water, St John continues:

*'Its deathless spring is hidden. Even so
Full well I know from whence its sources flow
Although by night.'*

Indeed, the living water brought to us by Jesus flows from the inner mystery of God, Creator, Father, Spirit, Word, Source of all consolation. In these waters we find refreshment, even in the midst of our darkness. In the waters of baptism, in the cleansing waters of forgiveness, in the refreshing waters of the love we receive, it is this one stream which flows from God by which we are reborn, again and again.

St John then takes a further step. He writes:

*'The eternal source hides in the Living Bread
That we with life eternal may be fed
Though it be night.'*

In our darkest days, then, the light of God comes, in Jesus. So too comes the living water. So too is he the Living Bread, for the name Bethlehem means 'the House of Bread'. Let us adore him, helped by the images of the crib. Let us kneel before him, contemplating him, forgetful of ourselves. As St Bernard said:

'From the contemplation of ourselves we gain fear and humility; but from the contemplation of God, hope and love.

A happy Christmas to you all!

Cardinal Vincent Nichols

12 December 2023

Working for Health and Healing



The UK-based health charity Lepra invites all to Mass at Westminster Cathedral on Friday 26 January 2024 at 2.30pm, to celebrate and mark the start of its centenary year.

For 100 years, Lepra has specialised in the detection and treatment of leprosy, an ancient disease which can have a profound physical and psychological effect on people in some of the most remote, and hard to reach communities around the world. The organisation has a rich history of research and development, helping to develop vital detection methods, effective treatments and recovery programmes for people affected.

Leprosy is thought to be the oldest disease known to mankind, and carries with it extraordinary myths, misunderstandings and prejudice which serve only to create a cycle of fear, which in turn prevents people from accessing the early treatment which can prevent disability. Lepra also provide programmes of support to allow people to recover from the emotional, social and financial impact of a diagnosis.

Lepra was founded in 1924, from the founders' experience in India, when they saw a need for an organisation dedicated

to studying and eradicating the disease. In 1945, Lepra's Dr Robert Cochrane began studies with sulfone derivatives, and was the first to use dapsone in the treatment of leprosy, laying the groundwork for treatments still used today. In 1975, Lepra became one of the first organisations to implement the use of multidrug therapy (MDT). Since 1981, the World Health Organization (WHO) has provided MDT across the world free of cost. According to WHO, over 16 million people have been treated with MDT over the past 40 years.

As Lepra approaches its centenary, its focus remains on supporting people most in need and most impacted by health inequalities. Its 100 years of research has led to new and innovative approaches to healthcare programmes. Seeking to provide better detection, treatment and support mechanisms, to advocate for those without a voice, to challenge prejudice wherever it exists, to strengthen local healthcare systems, and to help provide sustainable healthcare in partnership with local communities for a future free from the terrible impact of neglected tropical diseases, and to look to the future when we will be free from the scourge of leprosy.

Fr John writes



It is with pleasure that *Oremus* can record the completion by the Friends of the Cathedral and associated supporters of their Sanctuary Lighting Pledge Project, swiftly followed by a happy and profitable Christmas Fair (see p 26 and the Monthly Album pages). Another project under consideration is the creation of mosaics for the vault of the Baptistry, and Peter Howell describes for us how discussions

in previous decades led to the marble revetment of the Chapel walls, but nothing more (pp 6/7); perhaps our own generation may make good that failure?

Within the Universal Church we are encouraged to look forward to 2025 as a Jubilee Year, for which resources are starting to appear. One such is an ordered catalogue of catecheses from Papal audiences, and so I include one on Christian meditation as a taster; it is not difficult to imagine Pope Francis' voice as one reads. In October, of course, the Synod met in Rome and I am glad to have persuaded Bishop Nicholas Hudson to write about his experience of being a participant (pp 8/9); it certainly seems that great care was taken to promote the engagement of all present.

I draw your attention to two exhibitions running currently (see pp 13 & 22); up on Piccadilly the Royal Academy is demonstrating how Impressionists developed drawings on paper as an art form quite distinct from painting. Down in Docklands, by contrast, the contribution of Jewish immigrants to the 'rag trade' is on display; without their flair, would we all be more sombrelly attired than we are now? One area that promoted fashion was, of course, Soho and (in my youth) Carnaby Street in particular. Almost invisible amid all the gaudiness of the area is the historic Catholic church in Warwick Street; Fr Gerard Skinner has reviewed for us a new guidebook to the building, peeling back, so to speak, the many layers of its history (see p 12).

As you know, we are committed to keeping *Oremus* available to all as a free publication and this would not be possible without the continued generous support of the Companions and a number of subscribers who kindly donate regularly. Production costs continue to rise and so you will see a small note on the front cover inviting those who can to make a donation for your copy. The *Oremus* stand in the Cathedral has always had a notice inviting donations, so this is nothing new; and we are grateful for all help received and for the ways in which many of you take your copies, read them and pass them on to others, so that the life and witness of the Cathedral is more widely shared and appreciated.

With my best wishes and prayers for the New Year

Fr John Scott

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Vor Frue Kirke (the Cathedral) in Copenhagen houses a significant collection of statuary

Seeking New Mosaics

Peter Howell

The Cathedral's Art and Architecture Committee is currently seeking designs for the mosaic decoration of the Baptistry. The matter was also under discussion 70 years ago.

The *Westminster Cathedral Record* for June 1902 recorded that the font of Italian and Greek marbles, designed by Bentley (who had died in March), had arrived from Rome some months before, but was still packed up awaiting a Roman sculptor to come and finish it. Its diameter is 7 feet 6 inches. It was the gift of the Dowager Lady Loder. In the niche on the south wall would be placed the 'fine copy of Thorwaldsen's *John the Baptist* ordered by the late Marquess of Bute a few months before his death' in 1900. The original is one of the statues in *Vor Frue Kirke* (the Cathedral) in Copenhagen. 'Lord Bute was one of the first founders of the Cathedral and has left us for all time this acceptable memento of his well-known devotion to St John the Baptist, his own patronymic. It is at present at St John's Lodge, his home in Regent's Park.' Made of Cornish tin from Bute's mines, unfortunately it was not always appreciated, and spent some years over the porch of the Convent of St Vincent de Paul in Carlisle Place, before coming back to the Baptistry in 1998. It should be in the centre of the arched space on the north side.

The marble floor was carried out in 1912, by the firm of Farmer and Brindley. It is of white marble, inset with squares

of Siena, alternately plain or enclosing circles of Connemara, of a size difficult to obtain. The Baptistry is separated from the Chapel of Ss Gregory and Augustine by a beautiful marble screen. Its two columns of white *pavonazzo* were quarried in Greece, and like the *verde antico* columns in the nave were captured by the Turks in 1897.

The Baptistry still lacked its marble revetment, though in 1948 a small marble-clad altar dedicated to St Anne was set against the west wall, and panels placed in the reveals of the windows, as a Canadian Second World War memorial. In September 1955 the architect and writer H S Goodhart-Rendel, a distinguished member of the Art Committee (who thought the Canadian work 'not correct' – it was later removed, and replaced by the Canadian Air Force memorial in the south transept), sent Mgr Gordon Wheeler, the Administrator, a drawing of the Baptistry to enable Stanley Spencer to design mosaics. Spencer might seem a surprising choice, but it was probably his murals in the Sandham Memorial Chapel at Burghclere that suggested him. Sir John Rothenstein, Director of the Tate Gallery, and also a member of the Art Committee, sent a 'very confidential' letter to Wheeler, telling him that he didn't think Spencer suitable. He didn't like mosaics, thinking the colour 'not brilliant'. Also he was too keen

on the audience, and could be 'slightly grotesque'. Rothenstein suggested Henry Moore instead - 'he could do mosaics'. The Baptistery could be 'like Matisse at Vence'. Wheeler and Fr Francis Bartlett (who would succeed Wheeler as Administrator) did not want 'another piece of egoism'. Rothenstein thought they should get the marble done first and leave the tympana for mosaics.

The Committee took up this suggestion, noting that two drawings by Bentley gave a clear idea of the revetment. Goodhart-Rendel offered to make drawings of the walls to show the spaces for mosaics. Spencer was mentioned, and rather surprisingly Rothenstein expressed 'marked approval', and offered to contact him. Soon after this Arthur Pollen wrote to Goodhart-Rendel. Pollen, a sculptor, was another member of the Committee. Goodhart-Rendel had 'kindly offered' to see his son Francis and his work. Pollen told him that Sir Albert Richardson (soon to be another Committee member) had praised him. He had designed the Carmelite chapel at Presteigne. A distinguished architect, who practised for some time in partnership with Lionel Brett (Lord Esher), he was later a member of the Art Committee himself. He is best known for the Abbey Church at Worth.

Wheeler had obviously not liked the idea of Spencer, and Goodhart-Rendel agreed. He was not keen on Moore, and suggested Boris Anrep, who had done small mosaics in the Crypt (and later did the Blessed Sacrament Chapel). He thought the mosaicist should choose the marbles. He told Pollen that Francis might be useful as 'co-ordinator, perhaps as Clerk of Works'. Pollen was pleased, writing that 'Shattock would have to lump it'. Poor Lawrence Shattock was the Cathedral architect, but he was not highly thought of (Francis Bartlett said he was 'good at drains'), and was often ignored.

In December Francis Pollen was asked to design the marble revetment, and the next month he showed the Committee his designs. His brother Patrick, best known as a stained glass designer, had 'painted in specimen mosaics'. His drawings survive at the Cathedral. The designs were 'roughly approved'. The mosaics were to be made in Ravenna. However, in April Pollen told Goodhart-Rendel that 'the Baptistry is off'.

The Committee now concerned itself with the marble revetment of the nave. This was entrusted to Aelred Bartlett, brother of Francis. He faithfully followed Bentley's drawings, but Pollen became violently opposed. He complained about Bartlett family nepotism, though Francis Bartlett later pointed out that his promotion of his sons was an egregious example.

Designs for the marble revetment of the Baptistry were finally obtained in 1966 by the Administrator, Mgr Tomlinson, from Aelred Bartlett and his partner Douglas Purnell. His brother Francis became Administrator in 1967, and the work was executed in 1969 by the firm of J Whitehead and Sons, of Kennington. It was paid for by two of Bentley's daughters, Winefride de l'Hôpital and Miss H M Bentley. At the same time designs for mosaics were obtained from Marcello Avenali, of Rome (1912-81). He was responsible for murals, mosaics, stained glass, and tapestries in Rome and elsewhere. Winefride de l'Hôpital thought his designs would be in harmony with the font, but the Committee did not agree to commission them, and he lost interest and withdrew. By 1972 the areas not covered in marble were whitewashed, which is how they remain today.

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Experiencing the Synod

Bishop Nicholas Hudson

The Synod in Rome was a remarkable experience! It was quite unique to spend a full four weeks with the same large group of 400 people. Yet the truth is there was never enough time to have all the conversations one might have wished for. The key to the whole process was that you belonged to a sub-group of 12 people for five whole days at a time. They were the 12 people on your table; and, in the course of the month, you belonged to four different tables.

Each table was arranged according to your preferred language group. At one point I shared a table with a Nigerian, a Sri Lankan, a Burmese, a Belgian, an Australian, an American, a Lebanese, and four other nationalities. The majority at every table were Bishops; but there were also Religious Sisters and Brothers, lay women and men. There would often be as well what was nicely described as a 'fraternal delegate', a member of another ecclesial communion: their presence served to remind us that Pope Francis' vision of the Synod has been ecumenical from the outset.

Each table had a trained Facilitator – always a woman, in my case. This too seemed right, given that greater leadership roles for women had been a dominant plea in our own Diocesan process, as it would be in the Synod also. Being at these tables meant one got to know well a large portion of the full Assembly. 340 had voting rights: of this 340, 270 were bishops. Even on retreat, you were part of another such group of 12.

It was on the retreat that we began *Conversations in the Spirit* – with the same group every day. Every morning and afternoon of the retreat, we had conferences from Fr Timothy Radcliffe, the former Master General of the Dominicans. He was outstanding; and, if you have not had a chance to sample his talks, they are available both online and in book form.¹ He hit the right note when, in his first address, he had

the courage to say: 'We're gathered here because we're not united in heart and mind ... some of us are afraid of this journey and of what lies ahead. Some hope that the Church will be dramatically changed, that we shall take radical decisions ... Others are afraid of exactly these same changes and fear that they will only lead to division, even schism. Some of you would prefer not to be here at all'.²

But he dared also to suggest, even at that early point in the proceedings, that, once it was all over, we would most likely find ourselves looking back over the whole experience with quite considerable joy – a joy, he said, analogous to that experienced by Cleopas and the other disciple as they thought back over all they had experienced. And that has certainly been my experience – of remembering with joy this unique time we shared together; the joy as well that we experienced at the completion of voting on the Synthesis; at the fact that every one of the 81 paragraphs was passed – each with at least 80% approval. Even if the 70 non-bishops had not voted, every paragraph would still have passed with a 75% approval rate.

The Synthesis produced by this Synod runs to some 40 pages. You can find it on the Vatican website. It is in 20 sections. Within each section, there are Convergences, Points for Discussion, and Proposals. Topics ranged (in addition to those cited in a different part of this article) from Catechesis and Formation – the formation of laypeople, seminarians and clergy alike; to people who feel marginalized from the Church because of their status, identity or sexuality; to the cry of the poor echoing the cry of the earth; to how to engage the laity in decision-making at all levels in the Church; to the possibility of women's access to diaconal ministry; to clericalism; to spiritual and sexual abuse; to whether Bishop's Councils and Diocesan Pastoral

Councils should be required in Law; to the accountability and auditing of bishops and priests; to consulting more laity in the appointment of Bishops; to the possibility of re-inserting priests who have left the ministry in pastoral services; and much more besides.³ There were some 80 proposals in total. Some of these were suggestions, some recommendations, some requests. They were mostly suggestions, recommendations and requests for further study, for clarification. In all there were some 20 calls for deeper theological, canonical and pastoral exploration of particular issues.

The topics for each table we had each chosen from the *Instrumentum Laboris* (Working Document). This Working Document we all received several months before the Synod began. I had chosen to discuss, at my first table, what Synodality is teaching us about the Church's Mission; at the second, Truth and Love and how they inform difficult moral situations; at the third, Synodality as an expression of episcopal collegiality. You had four minutes each to share; then there would be silence after four of you had spoken. When everyone had shared, you went around the table again, each to speak for a further three minutes. This was followed by a long discussion across the table about what you wished the *Relator* to feed into the whole Assembly. The structure of his or her report would be under the three headings of Convergences, Divergences and Questions.

Next you heard – and this is where it began to be interesting – the other 37 Relators, each allowed to speak for three minutes. Then the Assembly floor was open to anyone who wished to speak for three minutes. So ended the fourth day!⁴

1. Timothy Radcliffe, *Listen to Him A Spirituality of Synodality*, Rome 2023
2. *ibid.* 10
3. *Synthesis*, Sec 11 #1
4. *cf.* Gen. 1, 9

Finally, you would discuss at your table all that you had heard in the Assembly; and spend several hours drawing up and agreeing a two-page summary of your discussion. It was these, plus individual submissions, which formed the basis of the Synthesis. These *Conversations in the Spirit* proved to be a most effective way of sharing perspectives. The method owes much to Ignatian spirituality; but had clearly been adapted for the Synod. Many participants described the method as a major fruit itself of the Synod; and said they would be taking it back into their local Churches. It is an approach to group discernment that we could well harness to parish life and other situations in our own Diocese.

Many of us had a first taste of it more than a year ago when we first embarked on Synodal conversations. We had begun to meet in groups, around the different parishes and communities of the Diocese, to discuss our experience of *Journeying Together as Church*. A Diocesan Steering Group brought all our findings together into a Diocesan Synthesis. This was presented last February to a full Westminster Cathedral by a lay man and a lay Religious woman. The lay leadership of our Diocesan process was of a piece with another dominant theme of the Synod, namely the need to harness lay people's charisms to the mission of the Church. Co-responsibility is a term one finds right across the Synthesis: honouring the shared dignity of all the baptised. That every baptised person has a unique charism to contribute to the life and work of the Church is one of the most frequent observations of the Synthesis.

When Danny Curtin and Sister Cathy Jones r.a. presented our Synthesis in the Cathedral, all, I think, were heartened to hear the acclaim with which it was greeted. The vast majority seemed to judge it to be a faithful reflection of what had emerged in the Conversations of which they had been a part around the Diocese. On that day, we deepened the Diocesan Synthesis with further Conversations in small groups spread around the Cathedral; and submitted our finalised Synthesis to the Bishops' Conference. From all the Diocesan reports was drawn up a National Synthesis which was forwarded to a body formulating a European response. It



Left to right: Archbishop John Wilson (Southwark), Bishop Marcus Stock (Leeds), Fr Jan Nowotnik (Bishops' Conference) and Bishop Nicholas Hudson

was these Continental responses which went to form the *Instrumentum Laboris*. What struck one on reading this Working Document was just how comprehensive it was: it seemed to contain everything we had discussed!

The Synod's Synthesis has a similar feel. It was created to be as comprehensive as possible. Those who had been part of the month-long journey in Rome were impressed to find how full it was. There were 1450 modifications suggested for the first draft; and I lost count of the number of people I heard saying how gratified they were to see their own modification included. For example, I felt the draft Synthesis was unaffirming of priestly celibacy. So I suggested it affirm the richly prophetic and profound witness to Christ of priestly celibacy: so it did.⁵ I also said, when I saw the first draft of the Synthesis, that I felt it needed to say more about the kerygma. And so it did.

Some months earlier, I had told the Continental Assembly in Prague that the process had not given clear enough

indication to priests of what their role should be in the process. This I raised in Rome; and was gratified to find that the Synthesis mentions in a large number of places the need for priests to be affirmed, encouraged, and included in the Synodal process. We received, in the middle of Advent, details from the Synod Office of what is envisaged for the next stage. It calls for engagement with the Synthesis text in a way that is best suited to one's context. We are told the overarching question of this next phase is *How can we be a Synodal Church in Mission?* It will require a brief period of discernment as to how we wish to approach this nationally and then as a Diocese before we can begin to engage with the process. I look forward to having my own perspective deepened on all the issues named in the Synthesis which are most vital to this, our local Church of Westminster. I will then strive to communicate this perspective as faithfully as I can back into the Synodal Assembly when we reconvene in October 2024.

5. Synthesis, Sec 11 #f



Pope Francis catches a flag in St Peter's Square at a Papal Audience

Christmas and the Feast of the Holy Family 30 December 2023

Pope Francis

The feasts of Christmas and the Holy Family help us to marvel at the incarnation, and God's choice of Mary and Joseph to provide human nurture and love for the Son of God. We can only be filled with wonder as we ponder these great events, these great mysteries. On 5 May 2021 Pope Francis, in his catechesis on prayer, turns our focus on the prayer of meditation, seeking meaning, through prayer on these, and all other mysteries of our salvation.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

Today we will talk about the form of prayer called *meditation*. For a Christian, to 'meditate' is to seek meaning: it implies placing oneself before the immense page of Revelation to try to make it our own, assuming it completely. And the Christian, after having welcomed the Word of God, does not keep it closed up within him or herself, because that Word must be met with 'another book' which the *Catechism* calls 'the book of life' (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2706). This is what we try to do every time we meditate on the Word.

The practice of meditation has received a great deal of attention in recent years. It is not only Christians who talk about it: the practice of meditation exists in almost all the world's

religions. But it is also a widespread activity among people who do not have a religious view of life. We all need to meditate, to reflect, to discover ourselves, it is a human dynamic. Especially in the voracious western world, people seek meditation because it represents a barrier raised against the daily stress and emptiness that is rife everywhere. Here, then, is the image of young people and adults sitting in recollection, in silence, with eyes half closed ... But what are these people doing, we might ask? They are meditating. It is a phenomenon to be looked on favourably. Indeed, we are not made for rushing all the time, we have an inner life that cannot always be trampled on. Meditating is therefore a need for everyone. Meditating, so to speak, is like stopping and taking a breath in life.

But we realise that this word, once accepted in a Christian context, takes on a uniqueness that must not be eradicated. Meditating is a necessary human dimension, but meditating in the Christian context goes further: it is a dimension that must not be eradicated. The great door through which the prayer of a baptised person passes — let us remind ourselves once again — is Jesus Christ. For the Christian, meditation enters through the door of Jesus Christ. The practice of meditation also follows this path. And when Christians pray, they do not aspire to full self-transparency, they do not seek the deepest centre of the ego. That is legitimate, but the Christian seeks something else. The prayer of the Christian is first of all an encounter with the Other, with a capital 'O': the transcendent encounter with God. If an experience of prayer gives us inner peace, or self-mastery, or clarity about the path to take, these results are, so to speak, side effects of the grace of Christian prayer, which is the encounter with Jesus. That is, meditating means going to the encounter with Jesus, guided by a phrase or a word from Holy Scripture.

Throughout history, the term 'meditation' has had various meanings. Even within Christianity it refers to different spiritual experiences. Nevertheless, some common lines can be traced, and in this we are helped again by the *Catechism*, which says the following: 'There are as many and varied methods of meditation

as there are spiritual masters ... But a method is only a guide; the important thing is to advance, with the Holy Spirit, along the one way of prayer: Christ Jesus' (n. 2707). And here, a travelling companion is indicated, one who guides us: the Holy Spirit. Christian meditation is not possible without the Holy Spirit. It is he who guides us to the encounter with Jesus. Jesus said to us: 'I will send you the Holy Spirit. He will teach you and explain to you. He will teach you and explain to you'. And in meditation too, the Holy Spirit is the guide to going forward in our encounter with Jesus Christ.

Thus, there are many methods of Christian meditation: some are very simple, others more detailed; some highlight the intellectual dimension of the person, others the affective and emotional one instead. They are methods. They are all important and all worthy of practice, inasmuch as they can help the experience of faith to become an integral act of the person: one does not only pray with the mind; the entire person prays, the person in his or her entirety, just as one does not pray only with one's feelings. The ancients used to say that the organ of prayer is the heart, and thus they explained that the whole person, starting from the centre — the heart — enters into a relationship with God, not just a few faculties. We must thus always remember that the method is a path, not a goal: any method of prayer, if it is to be Christian, is part of that *Sequela Christi* that is the essence of our faith. The methods of meditation are paths to travel in order to arrive at the encounter with Jesus, but if you stop on the road, and just look at the path, you will never find Jesus. You will make a 'god' out of the path. However, the path is a means to bring you to Jesus. The *Catechism* specifies: 'Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion and desire. This mobilisation of the faculties is necessary in order to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and strengthen our will to follow Christ. Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ' (n. 2708).

Here, then, is the grace of Christian prayer: Christ is not far away, but is always in a relationship with us. There is no aspect of his divine-human person that cannot become a place of salvation and happiness for us. Every moment of Jesus' earthly life, through the grace of prayer, can become immediate to us, thanks to the Holy Spirit, the guide. But, you know, one cannot pray without the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is he who guides us! And thanks to the Holy Spirit, we too are present at the River Jordan when Jesus immerses himself to receive baptism. We too are guests at the wedding at Cana, when Jesus gives the best wine for the happiness of the couple, that is, it is the Holy Spirit who connects us with these mysteries of the life of Christ because in contemplation of Jesus we experience prayer, to join us more closely to him. We too are astonished onlookers of the thousands of healings performed by the Master. We take the Gospel, and meditate on those mysteries in the Gospel, and the Spirit guides us to being present there. And in prayer — when we pray — we are all like the cleansed leper, the blind Bartimaeus who regains his sight, Lazarus who comes out of the tomb ... We too are healed by prayer just as the blind Bartimaeus was healed, the other one, the leper ... We too rose again, as Lazarus rose again, because prayer of meditation guided by the Holy Spirit leads us to relive these mysteries of the life of Christ and to encounter Christ, and to say, with the blind man, 'Lord, have pity on me! Have pity on me!' — 'And what do you want?' — 'To see, to enter into that dialogue'. And Christian meditation, led by the Spirit, leads us to this dialogue with Jesus. There is no page of the Gospel in which there is no place for us. For us Christians, meditating is a way to encounter Jesus. And in this way, only in this way, we rediscover ourselves. And this is not a withdrawal into ourselves, no: going to Jesus, and from Jesus, discovering ourselves, healed, risen, strong by the grace of Jesus. And encountering Jesus, the Saviour of all, myself included. And this, thanks to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

From the Catechism:

2705 Meditation is above all a quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking. The required attentiveness is difficult to sustain. We are usually helped by books, and Christians do not want for them: the Sacred Scriptures, particularly the Gospels, holy icons, liturgical texts of the day or season, writings of the spiritual fathers, works of spirituality, the great book of creation, and that of history — the page on which the 'today' of God is written. 2706 To meditate on what we read helps us to make it our own by confronting it with ourselves. Here, another book is opened: the book of life. We pass from thoughts to reality. To the extent that we are humble and faithful, we discover in meditation the movements that stir the heart and we are able to discern them. It is a question of acting truthfully in order to come into the light: 'Lord, what do you want me to do?' 2707 There are as many and varied methods of meditation as there are spiritual masters. Christians owe it to themselves to develop the desire to meditate regularly, lest they come to resemble the three first kinds of soil in the parable of the Sower.

Soho's Older Catholic Church

Fr Gerard Skinner

The Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and St Gregory, Warwick Street, 1724-2024: A Short History and Guide by Michael Hodges; available from peter@seftonwilliams.com, price £10 (+£2.50 P&P)

Walking along Warwick Street, just behind Regent Street, you could easily miss this church – no grandeur to attract one's attention here. Yet Canaletto, Mozart and Haydn probably worshipped here whilst lodging nearby, Maria FitzHerbert, the first wife of the Prince Regent (later King George IV) certainly did as did the saintly Bishop Richard Challoner, perhaps the most famed of the Vicars Apostolic, who lived nearby.

The roll call of famous worshippers goes on: the Irish politician Daniel O'Connell, the explorer Sir Richard Burton, the author Evelyn Waugh, the actor Sir Ralph Richardson, Queen Mary came to pray. Indeed a young St John Henry Newman visited the church, writing later in life: 'Were St Athanasius or St Ambrose in London now, they would go to worship not at St Paul's Cathedral but at Warwick Street.'

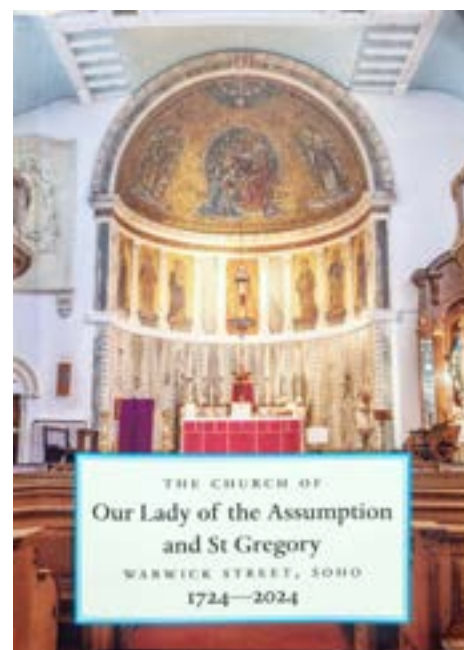
This significant London church, the only Catholic London chapel built during Penal times to remain standing, is celebrating its tercentenary this year and this newly commissioned guide is the opening fanfare for celebrations that are surely yet to come. In just 42 richly illustrated pages, Michael Hodges guides the reader through the fascinating history and architecture of the former Bavarian Chapel that is now the mother church of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham. In doing so he is refreshing and updating a guide first published in the 1950s by the then rector of the church, Fr Reginald Fuller.

The church has its origins in a small chapel built by the Portuguese envoy to the Court of St James shortly after he moved into 23 and 24 Golden Square in 1724. The chapel was probably

invisible from either Golden Square or Warwick Street and was built to serve the Portuguese Minister and his household, diplomatic immunity allowing Catholic worship in the embassy. The chaplains lived nearby and ministered to the few Catholics then living in the area.

In 1747 the Portuguese were succeeded in Warwick Street by the Bavarians and it was during their tenure that the Gordon Riots of 1780 occurred. An increasingly intoxicated crowd of over 50,000 men and women, inflamed by Lord George Gordon's opposition to the Catholic Relief Act, marched through London to present a petition to Parliament to repeal the Act. As Hodges recounts, a 'mob moved off towards Piccadilly and attacked the chapel of the Bavarian Minister in Warwick Street. Windows were smashed, the doors broken open and the contents of the chapel thrown into the street and burned. Chairs, pews, altar ornaments, candlesticks, pictures, vestments, prayer books and sacred vessels were wantonly destroyed.'

Although seriously damaged, the chapel was soon back in service and in 1788 it and the former residence of the Bavarian Minister had been bought by the Vicar Apostolic of the London District, Bishop James Talbot. A new chapel was designed by Joseph Bonomi the Elder and it was opened on the then Feast of St Gregory the Great, 12 March, in 1790. The cunning plan was that from the outside the church should appear no different to a nonconformist chapel, all the better to not attract unwelcome notice. Further precautions were that no windows were constructed at ground level on the Warwick Street façade and the heavy oak doors were lined with sheet metal on the inside.



The 1830s saw a rapid increase in the local Catholic population, the Baptism Registers giving witness to the burgeoning congregation. By the 1870s the church was somewhat dilapidated and so John Francis Bentley was commissioned to, in effect, design a new church within the shell of the old one. But money was in short supply, despite the appeal being personally endorsed by Cardinal Manning. The current apse was constructed, as was the sanctuary and a shrine to Our Lady was erected, the popularity of which was soon evident by the numerous votive hearts and medals that adorned it.

The church remained close to the hearts of those who lived and worked in its environs, the Rector noting an attendance of 3,000 people during the course of All Saints' Day in the late 1950s. By the end of the 20th century numbers had declined massively yet a new chapter in the church's life was to begin when Archbishop Vincent Nichols offered the church to the relatively newly established Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, led by Mgr Keith Newton, as their spiritual home.

Michael Hodges is a skilled raconteur and sets the story of this particular church within the history of the English Catholic Church from 1724 to the present day. Armed with this guide the architectural gems that are to be discovered in Warwick Street will appear with enhanced lustre and richer meaning.

Impressionists on Paper: Degas to Toulouse-Lautrec

The Royal Academy of Arts is currently showing *Impressionists on Paper: Degas to Toulouse-Lautrec*, an exhibition exploring how Impressionist and Post-Impressionist artists in late 19th-century France radically transformed the status of works on paper. During this period, drawings, pastels, watercolours, temperas and gouaches were increasingly perceived as more than just preparatory techniques, and became autonomous works of art, claiming a shared aesthetic with painting.

Featuring around 80 works on paper, by artists including Mary Cassatt, Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas, Paul Gauguin, Eva Gonzalès, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, Odilon Redon, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Georges Seurat, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Vincent van Gogh, amongst others, the exhibition focuses on this crucial shift in how these works were viewed.



At the Circus, by Henri Toulouse-Lautrec

The avant-garde artists known as the Impressionists came to prominence during the late 1860s and early 1870s, first exhibiting in Paris as a group in 1874. They shared a concern to depict scenes from everyday life and to address contemporary issues, which encouraged them to challenge traditional attitudes to drawing

and seek innovation. Vivid colour, a quick, loose touch, and daring viewpoints, together with a deliberate lack of finish, were their means of capturing the fugitive effects of nature as well as vignettes of modern life. Moreover, the portability of drawing materials greatly facilitated direct observation and the recording of scenes on the spot. The eight Impressionist exhibitions, held in Paris between 1874 and 1886, included a large number of works on paper and reflected their shift in status. This was also encouraged by dealers who recognised the economic advantage of exhibiting and selling works on paper.

Impressionists on Paper is in the The Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries at the Royal Academy on Piccadilly until 10 March 2024.



Landscape, by Paul Cézanne



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Cathedral Mosaics – A Rich Variety of Styles

Patrick Rogers

The decoration in the Chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine was installed at the same time and by the same group of mosaicists as that in the Holy Souls Chapel across the nave. But despite this it is in complete contrast – the result of having a very different donor, designer, producer and method of installation.

Lord Brampton, the donor, was a distinguished advocate and judge and a friend of Cardinal Manning, the second Archbishop of Westminster. He joined the Catholic Church in 1898 and paid £8,500 (£400,000 today) for the decoration of St Gregory and St Augustine's, which was intended to be both a thanksgiving offering and a chantry chapel for his wife and himself. The theme is the conversion of England, with the saints, who brought this about from Rome, portrayed in *opus sectile* above the altar, and those who subsequently kept the faith alive in this country shown in mosaics on the side walls and vault.

The story starts with the panel on the right of the entrance. Here is St Gregory the Great, then a Benedictine monk in about the year 587, with three English children in the Roman slave market and remarking "Not Angles but Angels if Christian." It was said that it was then that he conceived the idea of the evangelisation of England. Next Pope Gregory, as he had become, is shown above the altar with the dove of divine inspiration, together with another Benedictine in black, St Augustine, carrying the picture of Christ which he and his companions brought to England in 597. On either side are Saints Paulinus (Bishop of York), Justus (Bishop of Rochester), Mellitus (Bishop of London) and Laurence (successor to St Augustine as Archbishop of Canterbury). Both Mellitus and Justus also subsequently held this position.

The upper mosaics above the altar show an enthroned Pope Gregory, sending St Augustine and his companions off on



Lord Brampton is commemorate in Solomonic terms as the Wise Judge

their journey to England, while above that they are seen meeting Ethelbert, King of Kent, and Bertha, his Christian wife, after their arrival. Opposite, above the entrance to the Baptistry, are St Augustine and St John the Baptist with the four Rivers of Paradise (Euphrates, Gehon, Phison and Tigris), emphasising the link between baptism and conversion. The other saints portrayed in mosaic are (facing the entrance) Wilfred, Bishop of York, and Benedict Biscop, founder of Benedictine monasteries at Wearmouth and Jarrow, who together consolidated the link with Rome at the Synod of Whitby in 664. On



The Choir School paid for 'Not Angles, but Angels, if Christians'

the right is Cuthbert, the 'Apostle to the Lowlands' and later Bishop of Lindisfarne, who attracted many Northerners to Christianity. He is shown carrying the head of St Oswald, Christian King of Northumbria, killed by the pagan king Penda of Mercia in 642, after which his head was placed in St Cuthbert's coffin on Lindisfarne. St Oswald himself appears opposite above the entrance and beside him are St Bede – a Benedictine monk and the 'Father of English history' – and St Edmund, Christian King of East Anglia, slain by Danish archers in 870.

The donor of the chapel, Lord Brampton, selected Clayton & Bell of 311 Regent Street, renowned for their ecclesiastical stained glass, to design the decoration. It was decided to use *opus sectile* for the panels above the altar showing St Gregory, St Augustine, his companions and successors, and these were made by James Powell & Sons (Whitefriars Glass), of 26 Tudor Street, Whitefriars. *Opus sectile* was originally a term for flat pieces of naturally coloured stone, larger than *tesserae*, which were cut to shape to form geometrical patterns and pictures on Greek and Roman pavements from the second century BC. In the Cathedral, examples laid in 1903 can be found on the floor outside both the baptistry and the gift shop. But in the 1860s Powells had started grinding up waste glass and baking it, to produce panels of opaque material with an eggshell finish which were then cut into suitable shapes, painted with ceramic paint, fused in the kiln and assembled to form pictures and patterns. These manufactured tiles they also named *opus sectile*. Those above the altar were made by Powells in 1901 and designed and painted by Clayton & Bell. The panels either side of the entrance are later: 'The Just Judge' – Clayton & Bell's memorial to Lord Brampton, who died in 1907, and 'Not Angles but Angels' – given by the Choir School in 1912 from the proceeds of a nativity play.



St John the Baptist and St Augustine of Canterbury preside over the Baptistry arch

John Richard Clayton, who had co-founded Clayton & Bell in 1865, believed that any attempt to revive the dead in art was a profound mistake and he ignored the wishes of Cathedral Architect, J F Bentley, that the Byzantine style should be adopted. Instead his designs were similar to those he produced for Victorian Gothic churches. Clayton & Bell's standard procedure with mosaic commissions was to produce full-size, coloured cartoons in reverse which were then passed to Salviati & Co (Compagnia Venezia-Murano, or Venice and Murano Glass Company). They in turn employed a technique practised in Venice from the mid-19th century, and hence popularly known as 'the modern Italian method,' and attached standard sized, glass tesserae of matching colour face downwards onto the cartoons before returning them in sections to Clayton & Bell in England. George Bridge later

confirmed that J R Clayton wished the mosaics in the Chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine to be in this, the 'modern Italian method,' which Bridge personally disliked and believed 'rendered the work flat and lifeless.' Nevertheless from December 1902 to May 1904 his young mosaicists, already working in the Holy Souls Chapel, hammered each section into place with mallets and flat pieces of boxwood, before soaking and removing the drawings to reveal the mosaics, now face up.

In the Holy Souls Chapel opposite, Bentley and Symons were clearly given a pretty free hand in the designs by the donors, the Walmesleys, though the result is more Victorian (verging on the Art Nouveau in the case of the mosaic of Adam) than the Byzantine which Bentley sought. After an unsuccessful attempt at prefabrication in the studio, installation of the mosaics was by the traditional, direct method and the tesserae were inserted individually into oil-based putty on the chapel walls and vault. George Bridge had installed the mosaics for the façade of the Horniman Museum in 1900-01, using *tesserae* he had largely made himself. In 1903, according to Symons, Bridge also claimed to have mixed gold with glass and fused it to produce gold tesserae impervious to the weather. So it is possible that he may have made tesserae for the Holy Souls Chapel, though the gold and silver tesserae, on some of which the protective glass layer (*cartellina*) had flaked off by 1918, were also described as Italian. Among those working on the Holy Souls mosaics was 22 year old Gertrude Martin, later to become a well-known mosaicist in her own right; while working on the figure of St Oswald in the Chapel of St Gregory



In the Holy Souls Chapel, Adam is entangled in the coils of the serpent

and St Augustine was 17 year old Ethel Linfield, a student at the Slade School of Art. So the more experienced of Bridge's girls may well have been given the more demanding direct method work in the Holy Souls.

The Chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine is in complete contrast to that of the Holy Souls. Lord Brampton knew exactly what he wanted and chose Clayton & Bell to carry it out. J R Clayton disregarded Bentley's instructions to avoid anything Gothic and used the style he normally used. James Powell & Sons had invented the modern technique of *opus sectile* and were expert at it. The Venice and Murano Company was equally accomplished at producing mosaics and Antonio Salviati claimed to have invented the 'modern Italian method' in which they were prepared face downwards on paper in reverse – the method employed here. Bentley much preferred the direct method but approved of *opus sectile* and, before his premature death, intended to use it extensively both in another chapel on the north aisle and for the Cathedral Stations of the Cross. In the event the Holy Souls Chapel mosaics are sombre, funereal, late Victorian pictorial on a background of silver. Those of the chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine are glowing, vibrant, late Victorian Gothic on gold. Both are impressive in their own way but they have little in common.



Beside the Holy Souls altar, angels display the corporal works of mercy

Lilian Bayliss at the Old Vic, A Phobia of Cats and Mgr Howlett in Action

Philip Hodges

About this time Gustav Holst had established himself at Morley College in the Waterloo Road. It was a workers' educational establishment and ideally suited for the promotion of music-making among the masses to which Holst was deeply committed. A west country man, and great friend of Vaughan Williams, Holst was an innovator and a composer who laboured for higher standards of music for common folk. It was his strong and accurate modal harmonies which appealed to Terry who always referred to him as 'Von Holst'.

Vaughan Williams had volunteered for ambulance work and had gone to France with 'Kitchener's Army'. Holst had been rejected on medical grounds for military service, but the War Office had discovered the morale-building effect of community singing and had arranged for him to go to Salonika to take up the job of teaching the joys of choral singing to the troops stationed there. He was as successful here as he had been both at Morley College and at the village of Oxted. Terry had accepted the position of musical caretaker at Morley College during Holst's absence and we boys went there with him to illustrate his lectures.

Terry was also on very good terms with Lilian Bayliss, the famous 'queen' of the Old Vic. It was through him that she invited us boys to see *The Merchant of Venice* from a stage box at the 'Vic.' I well remember the zeal of this most unprepossessing woman with her tatty gown, lopsided jaw and pince-nez as she ushered us from backstage to the box. Many actors now at the top of their profession have reason to be grateful to her for a start in life.

At such close proximity to the stage, we noticed the poverty of the costumes and the make-shift furniture. Antonio sat on a velvet-fronted settle whose tea-chest

origin was confirmed by the words *Assam Tea* clearly stencilled on its side. But the delivery of the blank verse by these trained actors was a startling delight to the ear and their precise elocution converted the tedious lines of our text books into exciting drama.

During my six months probationership I was ever conscious and fearful that I might fail to attain the very high standard of voice production and musicianship demanded by Terry. Every year one or two names would disappear from the roll-call and it was guessed that they had failed their apprenticeship. About once a month Terry would leave his office and stump down the stairs to the Song School and take over voice production from his assistant. His short tread and dramatic flinging open of the door was like the entrance of the hated evil ogre in a pantomime.

He would ask us individually to sing scales to the syllable 'coo' and 'awe' and explode in anger at the slightest defect. 'Let me remind you,' he would say, 'that there's a big push coming on the Western Front and it won't only be there.' The newspapers, lacking authentic, factual news from France and always endeavouring to keep up home morale, would promise their readers that shortly, the Allies would drive the German forces back into their own territory – and this, they called 'The Big Push'. Terry's use of this phrase was not lost on us probationers.

The fear of cats is an unusual phobia and quite distinct from the mere dislike of them. Terry had this phobia. One day during one of his bellicose visits to the song school a cat had gained an entry and he retreated behind the boys. 'Boy, remove that cat!' he said in a shaky voice.

He would endeavour to illustrate the quality of tone he required by singing

himself which invariably ended in a croak. 'No matter,' he would say angrily. 'You see I've lost my voice trying to get you boys to sing properly'. It would have been more nearly to the truth to say that he had lost his voice from smoking cigarettes. He would arrive from his Hampstead flat each morning smoking a slim pipe. Thereafter he would chain-smoke cigarettes with much coughing and dispersing of cigarette ash from his corpulent front. Not only were the ash trays in his office heaped with cigarette butts but the two candle sconces on his piano were also full.

I had always felt that he was a figure of renown in the musical world though, at this time, I hated and feared him. But towards the end of my career at the Choir School when my voice was breaking, I got to know him more intimately and came to understand the cause of his splenetic behaviour if not to condone it. He was trying to keep up perfectionist standards of choral singing on a shoe-string. The frustrations of the creative musician which he had to endure go a long way to explain his violent ill-temper.

Having 'lost my voice,' he appointed me as his 'runner' and as such I would have to journey to his flat in Belsize Park or take MSS to his collaborators on the Carnegie Musical Trust. At this time he would always address me as 'Sheffield'. He would say to me: 'Sheffield, I want you to be 16' (i.e. the legal age for purchasing tobacco) and off I would go to Victoria Station and bring back a packet of *Abdullas* the oval-shaped cigarettes which were his favourite brand.

During a service in the Cathedral he would leave the choir in charge of an assistant and, taking me with him, we would go together to the West Doors to check the sound of the choir from this extreme distance. It was on these

occasions that I was proud to belong to this most competent and impressive vocal orchestra. The harmony of Byrd and Tallis would come rolling down the nave in glorious clouds of sonority. But Terry, the perfectionist, was forever finding fault. 'Go and tell Mr Collis that the tone is getting slack,' he would command. I would hasten down the Cathedral, pass through the sacristy and up the circular stairway to the apse but, by this time, the motet or whatever would be over. In his more vituperative moments in the Song School he would bellow: 'Bad tone should sound in your ears like the stink of a bad smell in your nose.'

On occasion, he would bring his two young children, Marion and Patrick, to the Capitular High Mass on a Sunday morning. He would put them at the back of the choir where, they said, they could 'watch Daddy making faces at the choir boys'. Lady Terry rarely came but I would always see her on my errands to his flat in Hampstead. She was a woman of few words, young, slim, and immaculately dressed. She was the first woman I ever saw to have adopted the then fashionable 'Eton crop'. In *Westminster Retrospect* Hilda Andrews treads carefully over the Terry domestic scene and contents herself by saying that the home to which he returned did not provide that reposeful background which a tired man might expect and that he had no talent for grappling with the fluctuating phases of domestic life.

The style, quality and reputation of Westminster Cathedral Choir was well established before I came, not only in the esteem of the Catholic body but by discerning teachers in the Colleges of Music. Among them, Percy Buck, Ralph Dunstan, Granville Bantock, Charles Wood and other well-known musicians could be found in the Cathedral to hear music that was different from the stock repertoire of Anglican cathedral choirs. Charles Villiers Stanford would send his students to the Cathedral to soak up a *capella* music of the golden age.

As the war dragged on, Terry was losing his regular salaried male singers and was plagued by the 'deputy' system. This system in the orchestral world was a headache to many conductors whereby an instrumentalist would attend rehearsals but send his deputy on the day of performance. At this time the system

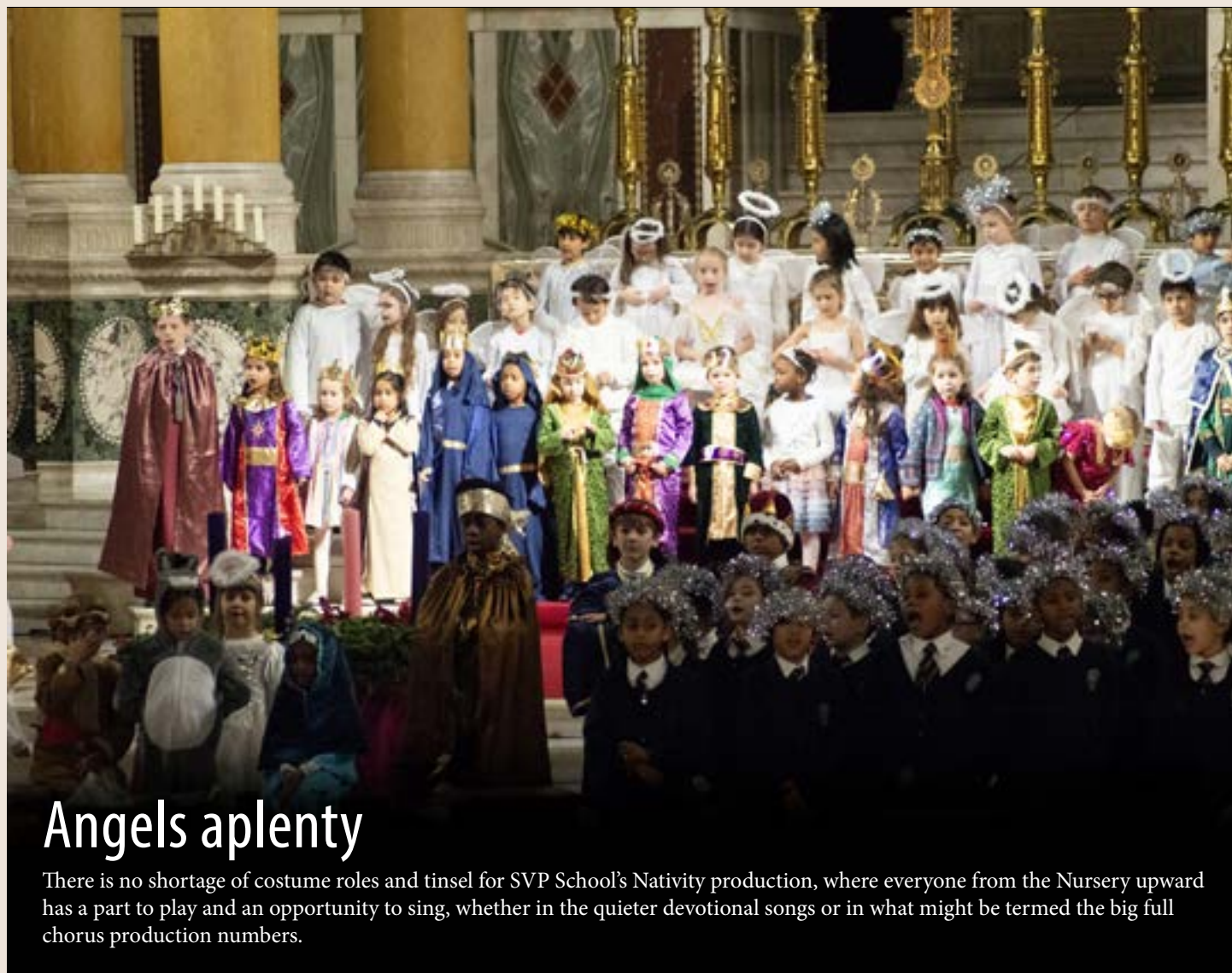


Mgr Howlett had the singular distinction of leading the Cathedral as Administrator through two World Wars

was being extended to choirs. By 1918 he was reduced to four regular men whose number would be augmented to seven on Sundays. These were working musicians who had to earn a living by teaching and chorus work in the London theatres. They were paid by the hour and had to attend on five days of the week for both morning and afternoon services. If unable to attend they would have to provide a deputy. Terry would have the anxiety of not knowing if he had the minimum of men's voices required to carry out the music lists.

The senior choirman was Mr Gee, a bass, who had been with Terry for many years. In an emergency he could conduct the choir whilst performing himself and he was an able exponent of the singing of plainsong. Since the choir could not hear sermons and were generally cut off from the main concourse of the building, Mr Gee and his colleagues would bring novels to read during the non-musical parts of the liturgy. One of them was Mr A Whitehead, a counter-tenor, who could hold his own alto part against the rest of the choir.

Mgr Maurice Howlett was Administrator of the Cathedral. He was a heavily built man of Irish descent with grey, curly hair and a powerful voice. It was the custom of the Cardinal to grant to the congregation 'two hundred days of true indulgence in the customary form of the Church' when he pontificated in state. After the Cardinal had invoked the help of the Lord and had blessed the people, Mgr Howlett would advance to the front of the sanctuary and read out the terms of the indulgence first in Latin and then in English. The florid Latin periods would flow mellifluously over the kneeling congregation: *Eminentissimus ac Reverendissimus Pater et Dominus in Christo, Franciscus Bourne, Cardinalis Sacerdos Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae sub titulo Sancta Prudentiana etc, etc*. This proclamation would be wisely followed by its equivalent in English since very few would understand the Latin (the Most Eminent and Most Reverend Father and Lord in Christ, Francis Bourne, Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman Church of the title of Saint Prudentiana, etc).



Angels aplenty

There is no shortage of costume roles and tinsel for SVP School's Nativity production, where everyone from the Nursery upward has a part to play and an opportunity to sing, whether in the quieter devotional songs or in what might be termed the big full chorus production numbers.

© Fr Vincent Mbu'i

The Christmas Fair

Announcements in advance of the Christmas Fair, the first since Covid, asked us to ensure that it would go well, and so it did. All the effort was rewarded by a strong attendance and a financial result of £6,318. Thanks and congratulations to all!



Thanks above all to Eleanor Dawayon for organisation and to Mary Maxwell for her tireless work with Cathedral volunteers



Fr Vincent seized the opportunity of relaxing from the stress of being a Cathedral Chaplain with a massage.



Sunday lunch was available in several different styles!

Hosanna House and Children's Pilgrimage Trust Carols with Archbishop Leo Cushley

The Cathedral resounded with the action hymn 'Rise and Shine' as hundreds of HCPT supporters gathered for its biennial Carol service. Trust president, Archbishop Leo Cushley of St Andrew's and Edinburgh, presided. He thanked HCPT for its culture of love and respect, especially for the children it takes on pilgrimage holidays to Lourdes. The singing was from school choirs with strong links to HCPT: Coloma Convent Girls' School, Croydon, St Richard's Catholic College, Bexhill-on-Sea, Salesian College, Farnborough, St John's Roman Catholic Special School, Woodford Green and St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School in Harrow.



Archbishop Leo presided



Choirs from the schools supporting HCPT sang



Hosanna House, HCPT's pilgrimage base near Lourdes

A Farewell Party

A gathering in the Common Room took place to say goodbye to Richard Hawker as Head Sacristan. Richard has now gone to Farnborough Abbey, to test a vocation to the Religious Life as a Benedictine monk, for which we assure him of our best wishes and prayers.



CATHEDRAL HISTORY A PICTORIAL RECORD

The Episcopal Ordination of Mgr Vincent Nichols as Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster, 24 January 1992

Paul Tobin

Following the retirement of Bishop Philip Harvey as Auxiliary Bishop with special responsibility for the North London section of the Diocese in 1990, he was succeeded in this post by Mgr Vincent Nichols, then General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

The Ordination to the Episcopate took place on the Feast of St Francis de Sales with Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, as the Principal Consecrator. The two Co-Consecrators were Archbishop Derek Worlock of Liverpool (1976-1995) and Bishop Alan Clark of East Anglia (1976-1995). They are seen on either side of Cardinal Hume with the Bishop-Elect standing before the Cardinal during the Examination before the actual rite of Ordination.

The Tablet in its report described the Cathedral being 'packed out, with much uninhibited singing, perhaps without the split-second timing of the



terraces'. Continuing the theme of its account in footballing terminology in view of Cardinal Nichols' allegiance to Liverpool FC, it added that 'trainloads of supporters had come down from Liverpool for the occasion'.

The late Peter Lascelles, very well known to the Cathedral as a regular attender at both Solemn Masses and Solemn Vespers over many years, was also an assiduous diarist who kept

detailed accounts of every ecclesiastical event he attended, mainly Anglo-Catholic, Orthodox and Roman Catholic ceremonies. He described how he had counted 34 mitres in the entrance procession and 35 in the recession at its end with Bishop (now Cardinal) Nichols being the addition to that number.

Sources:

The Tablet: 1 February 1992

Image: Unknown, supplied by Paul Barber

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In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*

Varia

The new chapel of ease to the Cathedral, to which reference was made in the November issue, was duly opened on December 8. All who visit it are full of praise of this perfect little chapel of St Anne, in Orchard Street, Victoria Street. Before the Reformation there stood here a chapel dedicated to St Anne, belonging to a confraternity of which there seem to survive no records. It stood at the end of the Almonry near the almshouses founded for poor women by the Lady Margaret, mother of King Henry VII. It must have been a little way outside the monastery orchard, the site of which is still indicated by Orchard Street. The lane in which it stood – long called St Anne's Lane, and now known as St Anne's Street – ran down southwards from the orchard to Great Peter Street.

Readers of the *Spectator* will remember Addison's story of Sir Roger de Coverley in connection with this lane; but as few people read Addison nowadays we may repeat it here: 'My worthy friend, Sir Roger, when we are talking of the malice of parties, very frequently tells us an accident that happened to him when he was a schoolboy, which was at the time when the feuds ran high between the Roundheads and the Cavaliers. This worthy knight, being then but a stripling, had occasion to inquire which was the way to St Anne's Lane; upon which the person whom he spoke to, instead of answering his question, called him a young Popish cur, and asked him who had made Anne a saint? The boy, being in some confusion, inquired of the next he met, which was the way to Anne's Lane, but was called a prick-eared cur for his pains, and instead of being shown the way, was told that she had been a saint before he was born, and would be one after he was hanged. "Upon this," says Sir Roger, "I did not think fit to repeat the former question, but going into every lane in the neighbourhood, asked what they called the name of that lane." By which ingenious artifice he found out the place he inquired after without giving offence to any party.'

After the Reformation the chapel was taken over by the parish authorities, and used as a store-house for wood to be given to the poor. It is not known when it was finally destroyed, but the neighbouring almshouses survived, under the name of Choristers' Rents, until the beginning of the 19th century. Purcell, the musician, and Herrick, the poet, lived at one time in St Anne's Lane.

The marble and mosaic work and the fittings of St Andrew's Chapel have been thoroughly overhauled and cleaned, through the generosity of the donor of the chapel. Arrangements are being made to construct a confessional as a permanent addition to the chapel, and also to supply suitable kneelers and chairs for use therein. These are being designed in harmony with the rest of the fittings.

.....

Archbishop's House Christmas Tree Party takes place on the tenth of the month – 3 to 6.30 and 7 to 10 o'clock. Tickets cost five shillings each for the afternoon or for the evening. Any assistance in making the Party a success as a party, and as a help to the charities on behalf of which it is being organised will be greatly appreciated by those who have undertaken it. It is whispered that the famous trio Pip, Squeak and Wilfrid will honour the occasion in the afternoon. There will be some dancing in the evening.

from the January 1924 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle

.....

The Hostel of St Martin of Tours

Mr C. Reid Sharman, Chairman of the Catholic Fund for Homeless and Destitute Men, writes from the Hostel of St Martin of Tours, 12 Penzance Place, Holland Park, London, W11:

'There is, unfortunately, no slackening in the numbers who come to this Hostel for help. The average of over 2,000 men a year is still being maintained and we have to find at least £2,000 annually to enable us to care for them ... We have given shelter since the beginning of the year to 1,771 men, provided 7,184 free meals, found employment for 280 men and given clothing and footwear to 210 men. Once again we beg subscribers to make use of this Hotel. If they will send to us those men who call upon them for assistance we will help the genuine, discover the frauds, and save subscribers' pockets and their patience. If they so wish, we will also give them an account of what we have done for anyone whom they have sent.

from the January 1954 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle

Fashion City Exhibition

Genevieve Muinzer

The Museum of London, now situated in Canary Wharf, is always at the forefront when it comes to documenting the influx of the many different ethnic and religious groups that the capital has witnessed over time. For many centuries the UK fashion industry has profited enormously from the talents of Huguenot immigrants, Irish weavers and the 20th-century Asian population, among others. Now the museum has launched its most recent exhibition, *Fashion City*, a fascinating display showing how Jewish Londoners shaped global style. From fleeing Eastern Europe to arriving in London, surviving in the East End, and then conquering the West End – and beyond – it is an absorbing and touching story. The exhibition is set out as if you are walking down London streets, looking into shop windows, showing the suitcases immigrants arrived with, their sewing machines, and fabrics and clothes of all styles and classes, displayed to great effect.

From the couturier David Sassoon of Belville and Sassoon, to Marks and Spencer, cornerstone of the high street, the exhibition pays tribute to the Jewish designers, tailors and dressmakers and the powerful effect they had, not just on UK trends, but on world fashion. Of the 100,000 Jewish immigrants who came to the UK throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, many of them refugees, 60% found work in the fashion or textile trade, shaping the design of clothing and markedly enhancing the growth of the British economy. Talented, hard-working, and willing to train for the abundant tailoring and dressmaking opportunities the British market provided, they became leaders in the field. Fashion houses such as Wallis, River Island, Moss Bros, Cecil Gee and Mothercare, to name just a few, sprang up and became high street staples.

Stores such as M&S and Wallis started out as market stalls or in modest workshops. Wallis became adept at copying Parisian fashions in silks and wools for emerging numbers of working



Wedding dress by Netty Spiegel

women. Bernard Lewis through his Chelsea Girl store, now known as River Island, was shrewdly able to anticipate the newest fashion trends. M&S was at the forefront of using fibres like nylon that were long lasting, easy to maintain and wash. The ready-to-wear collections of these stores dramatically transformed the lives of working people. Throughout the 20th century the West End began to fill with fashion retailers, many of them Jewish, and became the home of notable, flagship stores. In the 1960s boutiques began to spring up and brought fashionable, affordable shopping across the capital.

Individual couture names began to emerge like Isobel, and Belville Sassoon. The latter became one of the most influential couture houses in Europe, dressing most of the British Royal family, the aristocracy and their European counterparts. David Sassoon had a special relationship with Princess Diana, designing some of her most stunning dresses. One of her memorable maternity coats is included in the exhibition. In a filmed memoir, Sassoon remembers Diana with great fondness as someone

he loved working with, and one of her touching thank-you letters to him is in the exhibition.

Cecil Gee made an array of snappy clothes for John Lennon. The company had been started by Sasha Goldstein. He had come to the UK in 1913 from Lithuania and moved his company base from the East End of London to Charing Cross Road in 1936. Harry Moss, the third CEO of Moss Bros, started working for the family firm in 1909 when he was only 13. He targeted a more affluent middle-class clientele by strategically siting large advertisements for the firm in train and tube stations to catch the eyes of male commuters. Although the flagship store in Covent Garden closed in 1989, there are still 105 Moss Bros branches on UK high streets today.

Men's fashions boomed in the 1960s with the popularity of cult venues like Carnaby Street, filled with Jewish designers. The colourful designs of Michael Fish, who is attributed with inventing the kipper tie, took the world by storm and soon he was designing for Muhammad Ali, Sean Connery, Pablo Picasso, Mick Jagger and the Beatles. His colourful and occasionally shocking styles were often influenced by the Far East, such as his kaftan dress for David Bowie which became an overnight sensation. He took men away from dark-coloured three-piece suits to the exuberant styles and vibrant hues from the East.

The exhibition also charts the difficulties some encountered trying to establish their businesses, only to be forced to try other fields. But the inventiveness and talent of the Jewish craftspeople and designers is manifest throughout, and makes you realise how much pleasure they have brought to people's lives through the ingenuity of their creations.

Fashion City runs till 14 April 2024, Mon–Sun, 10am–5pm, last entry 3.15pm; tickets from £13 online.

© Museum of London Docklands Fashion City © Museum of London

The Dishcloth's Glory

V.M.A

*I admit
it was only a dishcloth
that had been left,
scrunched up
on top of a green wheelie bin.*

*Yet the heavy hoar frost
that had come in the night
had decorated it
with fine shards of ice
that bristled out
into the cold morning light
like a diamond halo.*

*Or a headdress belonging
to some lost civilisation,
intended perhaps
for a sacred purpose,
now forgotten.*

*There it was
the gorgeous artifact
sparkling wildly
on our unworthy plinth.*

*My family stood around it
speechless
but only for a moment
until uncertainly crept in
and then
there was a shifting of feet
a blinking back of beauty
whose gaze they could not meet.*

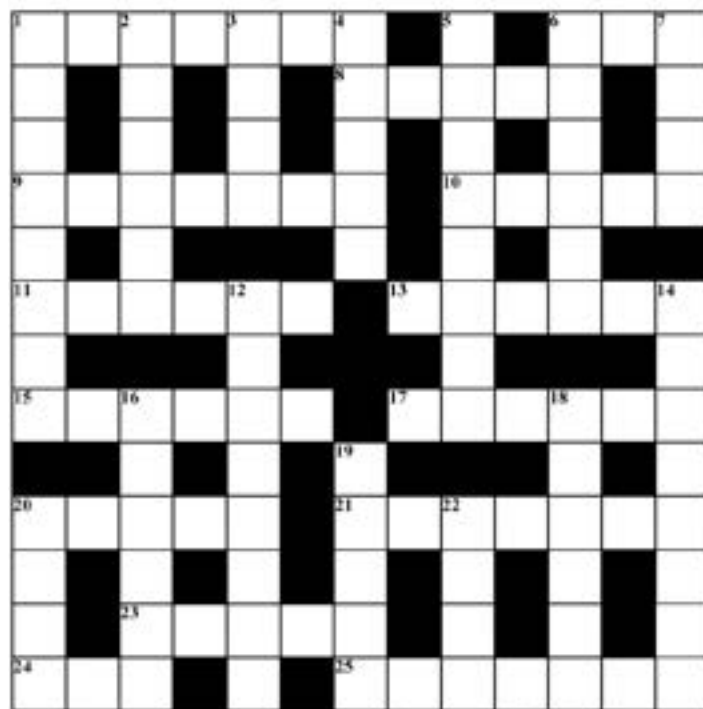
*Meteorological facts
were thrown out
just one or two to break the spell
and allow everyone
to go back into the house
to watch TV
and open Christmas presents.*

*I stayed however
suffering my joy alone
until the day itself
took
the dishcloth's glory.*

Previously published in *Amethyst Review*, November 2023



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



Alan Frost January 2024 – No. 117

Clues Across

- 1 Tragic young woman in Shakespeare's Hamlet (7)
- 6 & 5 Down: Dominican friar, one of the greatest painters of the Renaissance (3,8)
- 8 Poet of the 'Divine Comedy' with its ominous Inferno (5)
- 9 The founding father of religions, the patriarch of the OT (7)
- 10 Type of large antelope (5)
- 11 Tuneless direction for Christian Soldiers (6)
- 13 They played on the eleventh day of the Christmas Partridge carol (6)
- 15 Portrait of the ----- As A Young Man, novel by James Joyce (6)
- 17 A Conquest and influential style of church architecture (6)
- 20 North of Ireland ferry port with near link to Scotland (5)
- 21 Village in London suburbs famous for associated film studios (7)
- 23 Former Province of S. Africa discovered in 1497 on Christmas Day (5)
- 24 State and RC Archdiocese in India (3)
- 25 School of Art named after town associated with St Catherine (7)

Clues Down

- 1 State in the USA and famous Hollywood musical (8)
- 2 Famous London public school with a RC chaplain (6)
- 3 Wife of Jacob, mother of Reuben (4)
- 4 John -----, second President of USA, a leader of the American Revolution (5)
- 5 See 6 Across
- 6 Designation according to sex or gender (6)
- 7, 20 & 22: New Year sing-song by poet Robert Burns (4,4,4)
- 12 Pre-Raphaelite painter whose sister wrote In The Bleak Midwinter (8)
- 14 Grammatical structure frequently handed out at The Old Bailey! (8)
- 16 European capital whose St Paul's cathedral houses a statue of Mother Teresa (6)
- 18 London Arch by the site of the Tyburn Martyrs scaffold (6)
- 19 English cathedral not short of water? (5)
- 20 See 7 Down
- 22 See 7 Down

ANSWERS

Across: 1 Ophelia 6 Fra 8 Dante 9 Abraham 10 Eland 11 Onward 13 Pipers
15 Artist 17 Norman 20 Larne 21 Elstree 23 Natal 24 Goa 25 Siennese
Down: 1 Oklahama 2 Harrow 3 Leah 4 Adams 5 Angelico 6 Female 7 Auld
12 Rossetti 14 Sentence 16 Tirana 18 Marble 19 Wells 20 Lang 22 Syne

Tales of the English Martyrs

Speech of Abbot Feckenham OSB of Westminster Abbey in the House of Lords:

'My good Lords, when in Queen Mary's days your honour do know right well how the people of this realm did live in order and under law. There was no spoiling of Churches, pulling down of Altars and most blasphemous treading down of the Sacrament under their feet ... But now since the coming of our most sovereign and dear lady Queen Elizabeth, by the only preachers and scaffold-players of this new religion all things are changed and turned upside down. Obedience is gone, humility and meekness clean abolished, virtuous, chaste, and straight living abandoned.'

Feckenham parish church



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Thompson

The Month of January

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention:

For the gift of diversity within the Church

Let us pray that the Spirit may help us to recognise the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church

Monday 1 January 2024

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

(Bank Holiday timetable: Masses at 10.30am, 12.30 and 5.30pm)

Tuesday 2 January

Ps Week 2

Ss Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen,
Bishops & Doctors
5.30pm Chapter Mass



St Basil the Great in St Paul the Apostle church, Dayton, Ohio

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 (Choir) 12noon *, Solemn Vespers and Benediction (Choir) 4pm, 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, please consult the Cathedral diary on the website.

* Live streamed via the Cathedral website

Wednesday 3 January

The Most Holy Name of Jesus
1.15pm Lunchtime Concert

Thursday 4 January

Christmas feria

Friday 5 January

Friday abstinence

Christmas feria

Saturday 6 January

Christmas feria

4pm Low Mass (Blessed Sacrament Chapel)

5.30pm Vigil Mass of the Epiphany

Sunday 7 January

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Choral services resume

12pm Solemn Mass (Men's voices)

Palestrina – Missa O magnum mysterium

Palestrina – Surge illuminare Ierusalem

Palestrina – Et ambulabunt gentes

Organ: *Cochereau* – Toccata 'Marche des Rois'

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction

(Men's voices)

Bevan – Magnificat primi toni

Palestrina – Videntes stellam

Organ: *Messiaen* – Les Mages (La Nativité)

4.30pm Mass for the Deaf Service

(Cathedral Hall)

Monday 8 January

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Tuesday 9 January

Ps Week 1

Feria – Weekday Lectionary readings of Year 2 begin

Wednesday 10 January

Feria

1.15pm Lunchtime Concert

Thursday 11 January

Feria

Friday 12 January

Friday abstinence

Feria

(St Aelred of Rievaulx)

Saturday 13 January

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

6pm Visiting Choir at Mass

Sunday 14 January

Ps Week 2

* Peace Day

2nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

12pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Mozart – Krönungsmesse (K. 317)

G. Gabrieli – Iubilare Deo omnis terra

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

Cantata 29

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction

(Full Choir)

Marenzio – Magnificat octavi toni

Victoria – Alma redemptoris mater a 5

Organ: J.S. Bach – Allein Gott in der Höh'

sei Ehr (BWV 664)

Monday 15 January

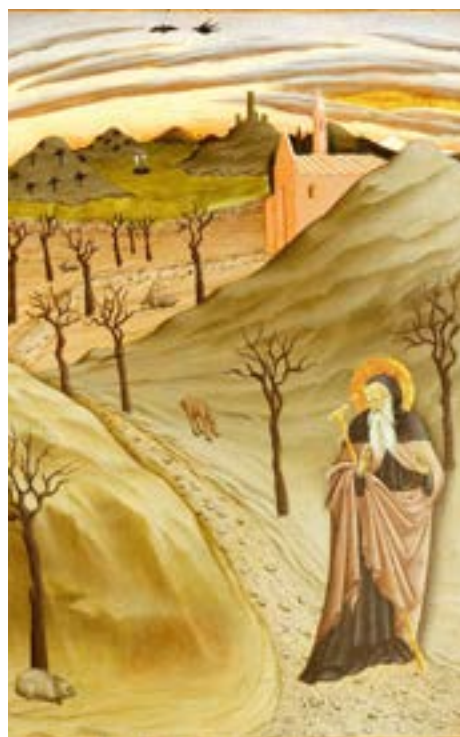
Feria

Tuesday 16 January

Feria

Wednesday 17 January

St Anthony, Abbot

1.15pm Lunchtime Concert

St Anthony in the Wilderness by the Master of the Osservanza Triptych (1420 until 1440)

Thursday 18 January

Feria

The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place until Wednesday 25 January

Friday 19 January*Friday abstinence*

Feria

(St Wulstan, Bishop)

8am – 6pm NHS Blood Transfusion Service in Cathedral Hall

5pm The Choir sings Solemn Vespers in St Paul's Cathedral

5.30pm Said Mass**Saturday 20 January**

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

(St Fabian, Pope & Martyr; St Sebastian, Martyr)

6pm Vigil Mass with Adult Confirmations

(Bishop Sherrington)

Sunday 21 January*Ps Week 3***3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME****(OF THE WORD OF GOD)**

* Openness to the Word of God

12pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)*Palestrina* – Missa brevis*MacMillan* – A new song

Organ: *Buxtehude* – Præludium in F sharp minor (BuxWV 146)

4pm Solemn Vespers and Benediction*Bevan* – Magnificat primi toni*Palestrina* – Exsultate DeoOrgan: *Franck* – Pastorale**Monday 22 January**

Feria

(St Vincent)



St Vincent's 13th century church, Littlebourne, Kent

Tuesday 23 January

Feria

5pm The Choir of St Paul's Cathedral sings

Evensong

6pm Said Mass**Wednesday 24 January**

St Francis de Sales, Bishop & Doctor

Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of Cardinal Nichols (1992)

1.15pm Lunchtime Concert**Thursday 25 January**

THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL THE APOSTLE

The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity ends

8, 10.30am Mass in St Paul's Chapel**Friday 26 January***Friday abstinence*

Ss Timothy and Titus, Bishops

2.30pm LEpra Centenary Mass (Bishop Lang)**Saturday 27 January**

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

(St Angela Merici, Virgin)

Sunday 28 January*Ps Week 4***4th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME****12pm** Solemn Mass (Full Choir)*Rheinberger* – Cantus Missae*Croce* – In spiritu humilitatisOrgan: *Pott* – Toccata**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction*Palestrina* – Magnificat primi toni*Dupré* – O salutaris hostiaOrgan: *Dupré* – Cortège et litanie**Monday 29 January**

Feria

Tuesday 30 January

Feria

Wednesday 31 January

St John Bosco, Priest

1.15pm Lunchtime Concert

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

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© Metropolitan Museum of Art

A Resounding Success

Joe Allen, Friends' Co-ordinator

In the last *Oremus*, I led with the title: *Raising £80,000 in one week*. Such a title is a blessing and a curse: people knew exactly the task in hand, but also the precise number which would mark success or failure. This certainly made for nerve-racking times with all eyes on us! Hours of preparing, designing, and promoting all came down to the campaign week. Would we do it?

I am pleased to report that at 11:30am on Tuesday 5 December, with a full half hour to spare, the £40,000 mark was reached. In total, £40,025 was given online by parishioners and Friends which together with the maximum available matched funding enables us as The Friends to pay the final £80,000 due on our sanctuary lighting pledge. However, the good news does not stop there. Most donations also

qualified for Gift Aid, which will enable us to contribute to other lighting costs. The ball is now rolling to determine how this will play out, so check back in to see what else we will be able to support! Hence, a resounding success that we not only met our pledge but have exceeded it, allowing for more extensive support of the Cathedral than we had envisaged and hoped for! I write on behalf of Andrew Hollingsworth, our Chair, and the Council (Trustees) of The Friends, who wish to record their profound thanks and gratefulness to each and every person who made the campaign a success. It was a real team effort, from those who helped with the preparation and promotion, through to those who for the first or most recent time, made a contribution. Our campaigns constitute large figures, but come to fruition through the generosity of



each single penny and pound donated. So regardless of the amount you donated, you have helped us reach our goal, for which we are all profoundly grateful, enabling us to finish 2023 on a high note. With the lighting project complete, and January dawning we set the ball rolling on a new set of events and projects, hoping to eclipse even the work of 2023. So, keep your eyes peeled – join us if you are not a member, come along to our events when they are announced, and join us as we continue to care and provide for the Cathedral.

Thank you to those leaving a gift to the Cathedral in their will.

This is easy to do and makes a real difference to the Cathedral. Simply provide your solicitor with the following recommended wording:

Westminster Cathedral, part of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustee
Registered Charity Number 233699

‘God has blessed us with many gifts.

Let us return them to Him with increase so that we can help future generations and enable our Church to grow.

That's why I'm remembering Westminster Cathedral in my will. ’

Mary



If you would like to find out more or talk about the impact that you would like your gift to have, please contact Laura on the Cathedral's Fundraising Team:
cathedralgiving@rcdow.org.uk or call 020 7798 9058

When Does Christmas End?

Sophia and Tiana, Year 6



We all know that Christmas officially begins on Christmas Eve, but when does Christmas officially end? The answer is a little complicated. We often hear people say: 'Oh, Christmas is all over in a day, after all that build up....', but is it really?

On 6 January, the Feast of the Epiphany, the Church celebrates the biblical event where the Magi, also called the Three Wise Men or Three Kings, travelled from

the East to pay homage to the new born King, Jesus Christ.

Many believe that this is the date when the Christmas season officially ends, as it is the end of the traditional 12 days of Christmas. In some countries, many people exchange gifts with one another on 6 January, as that is the date when baby Jesus received the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh from the Wise Men.

However, according to the Catholic calendar, Ordinary Time does not officially begin until the Monday after the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which falls on the Sunday after Epiphany. This means that the Christmas season actually extends well beyond the popular 'Twelve Days of Christmas'.

As Catholics, we believe that Christmas actually continues on into February. On 2 February we keep the feast of Candlemas, which falls 40 days after Christmas

Eve. Candlemas is a celebration of when Mary and Joseph brought Jesus and presented him in the Jerusalem Temple. This is the end of what is known as 'Christmastide'. 40 is obviously a significant number as, if you think about it, there are also 40 days of Lent, before Easter. The word 'Candlemas' comes from 'Candle-mas' because Simeon had a prophecy that Jesus would come as a light of the world.



We both really enjoy Christmas time and do not want it to end too soon. It is a special time for us to gather with our friends and families. Our parents have time away from work, we have time away from school and this is an important time where we can be together with feelings of joy and happiness.

We have also enjoyed Advent, when we prepare for Christmas. In December, the whole of St Vincent de Paul Primary School performed our Nativity on the sanctuary of Westminster Cathedral. It was such a privilege.

We also have a Penitential Service where the priests from Westminster Cathedral and Holy Apostles in Pimlico offer the sacrament of Reconciliation. This is our way of giving 'a present' to Jesus for Christmas time.

So the next time somebody says Christmas is all over on 25 December, you can share the truth with them.



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INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC FUNERAL
DIRECTORS

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 funeral arrangements by
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**King's Cross: 166 Caledonian Road,
 King's Cross London N1 0SQ**
**Hendon: 14 Watford Way,
 Hendon Central, London NW4 3AD**
Tel: 020 7405 4901
www.afrance.co.uk info@afrance.co.uk



Urgent Food Aid

East Africa



Photo provided by Fr Philip Adede from Kisumu, Kenya

The historic drought over the last four years in East Africa has now given way to heavy rains, leading to severe flooding. In many areas there has been loss of life, widespread displacement of communities and the destruction of crops. Food prices are therefore rising, made even worse by high fuel costs and depreciating currencies.

It's a terrible situation which has driven many Catholic priests and sisters to contact SPICMA for help in feeding those around them. We'll do all we can, but the need is great and our funds are limited. If you're able to help, we would be extremely grateful for any amount you can give.

SPICMA is an all voluntary charity - no wages are paid to anyone. That means more of every donation reaches those who need it most.



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

Cheques should be made out to SPICMA

For direct bank transfer, our account details are:

CAF Bank, Account 00095877, Sort Code 40-52-40

Name: _____

Email address (if you wish to receive emails of future appeals): _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

☐ GIFT AID ☐ Due to the cost of postage - no receipt please ☐ I would like an email / postal receipt

Gift Aid Declaration: I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Registered Charity: 270794 | Email Address: spicma@gmail.com | Telephone: 0300 3020016 | Website: www.spicma.org